

ASSESSMENT REPORT AY2013-2014

Program: Community Development Certificate **Department:** GSEA

Assessment Instruments and Outcomes Being Measured

Three assessment instruments are used to assess student learning: *student self-assessment*, *program assessment*, and a *capstone course*. The first instrument, *student self-assessment*, is for indirect assessment of learning, while the latter two are for direct assessment of learning. The *student self-assessment* instrument surveys student opinions about how much and what specific things student have learned during a specific period of time. The instrument consists of open-ended questions and closed-ended Likert-style survey questions.

The *Program assessment* instrument consists of five essay questions and students have to answer any of the first three and one of the remaining two questions. The assessment is to be delivered as part of Test #1 in GEOG 5530 (Neighborhood Development).

The *capstone course*, *Geog 5550, Seminar in Community Development*, involves the creation, design, and implementation of a community development study project involving and working closely with a community development organization. A **project portfolio** and a **poster** approved by the instructor of the course must be submitted for a successful completion of the capstone course and the Graduate Certificate in Community Development. This project should tie together the skills learned in the community development program as a whole to culminate the program.

Both the *Program assessment* and the *capstone* project assessment instruments measure the following outcomes:

1. Explain the social and economic processes that affect the dynamics and growth of American cities;
2. Explain how cities are governed and the role that public planning and community development plays within the governance structure;
3. Demonstrate familiarity with the history, theories, and practices of community organizing and community organizations;
4. Demonstrate a familiarity with the history, theories, and practices of community development and community economic development;
5. Use the methods and tools for analyzing the state of cities and their neighborhoods;
6. Design and complete a community development-related research and/or action project.

Methods of Assessment

The *student self-assessment* instrument is distributed to students and students are asked to complete and return them to their instructor. The **program assessment** instrument is administered to students in the graduate section of the Neighborhood Development class (GEOG 5530) as part of Test #1 for the course. As indicated above, the *capstone course*, *Geog 5550, Seminar in Community Development*, involves the creation, design, and implementation of a community development study project involving working closely with a community development organization. A **project portfolio** and a **poster** approved by the

instructor of the course must be submitted for a successful completion of the capstone course and the Graduate Certificate in Community Development.

Assessment Findings and Improved Student Learning

Since questions in the *student self-assessment* test instrument are open-ended, the assessment coordinator judges whether responses by a particular student would indicate *satisfaction* or *dissatisfaction*. If responses to the questions by the majority of the self-assessing students indicate *satisfaction*, the program gets a *satisfactory* grade. If responses to the questions by the majority of the self-assessing students indicate *dissatisfaction*, the program gets *unsatisfactory* grade. Overall, the program received better than a satisfactory grade. Included on the list of things that students said they could do compared to the previous year were that they could apply GIS to actual real-life situations and community analysis, that they had learned they could do a lot to help their communities, that they had a desire to be more involved in their communities, that they had more hunger for knowledge, that they were more self-motivated, etc. One student commented that students should not be allowed to take 4810/5810 before they take 4800/5800. A couple of students suggested there should be more interactive learning in Cartography/GIS classes; they said the traditional lecture format does not engage students or connects to the hands-on practice of map making.

As pointed out earlier, the **program assessment** test is designed to be administered to students taking the Neighborhood Development class (GEOG 5530) as part of the final exam of the course. The course was not offered during the 2013/2014 academic year and, therefore, there is no report regarding this assessment instrument for the 2013/2014 academic year.

The capstone course was not offered in the 2013/2014 AY & there is no report regarding this assessment instrument for the 2013/2014 AY.

Decision-making Using Findings

Curriculum revised during 2013/2014 AY to improve student learning & increase enrollment; marketing brochure in preparation for distribution on campus, at professional meetings, & at local high schools and community colleges.

Demonstrating Student Learning

Interest in the community development certificate program is growing. Previously, a total number of only four students completed the Community Development capstone project and thus the Community Development program, i.e., over a period of five years. In spring 2013, four students took the capstone course and two completed the capstone project and thus the certificate successfully. The two students who did not complete their projects successfully are expected to work on their projects and successfully complete their projects in the fall 2013 semester.??

Publicizing Student Learning

The Geography unit of the Department of Geography, Sociology, History, African American Studies, and Anthropology will published program outcomes, assessment plans, and the assessment report at its departmental web site.

Accomplishments and Challenges

Although enrollment in the Community Certificate program is growing, the enrollment number need to continue to grow. For this to happen, faculty need to market the program more aggressively, and faculty plans to do that starting in the 204/2015 AY. Marketing brochure in preparation for distribution on campus, at professional meetings, & at local high schools and community colleges.