Departmental and Program Assessment
Annual Assessment Plan Report

Academic Year: 2011-2012

Academic Unit: Gender Studies

Chair: Chris Campolo & Rebecca Resinski

Student Assessment Plan (SAP) – Basic Check-list – If your answers are "yes" a question in this section, no further explanation is necessary.

1. Is there a current assessment plan for your department, program, or general education component? Current implies that this SAP is used by the department. It does not have to be rewritten unless your assessment plan has changed. It should be on the web at http://www.hendrix.edu/academics/academics.aspx?id=7264.

   yes -- We submitted the updated/revised Gender Studies assessment plan with our report last year, but the one on the web at the URL given above is still an outdated one. We will resubmit the current assessment plan with this report.

2. Does the current SAP include student learning goals? Departmental/programmatic/general education component student learning goals should be able to stand alone as a list without pages of explanatory commentary.

   yes

3. Does your SAP include a list of assessment data collected yearly? Assessment data lists should be able to stand alone without pages of explanatory commentary. Additionally, collected data should be of enough value to the department that it is read yearly. If not, it is probably not of sufficient use to collect.

   yes

4. Are student learning goals available to students on the web on the departmental/programmatic page(s)?

   yes -- The description of the GS program online is based on the learning goals articulated in the SAP.

5. Are student learning goals, appropriate for each course, included in the course syllabi in your department or program?

   yes -- The co-chairs remind the GS faculty at the beginning of every semester to include these.

6. Does your SAP include direct assessments? "Direct" refers to evaluated student work.

   yes

7. Describe which indirect assessments in your assessment plan have been collected for the year and which have not. "Indirect" refers to student surveys, interviews, or opinions.

   Every professor who taught a GS course this year was reminded to include some questions geared toward indirect assessment on their end-of-semester course questionnaires.

Student Assessment Plan Development - Departments and programs who have a complete and current SAP should consider the next step in SAP development. *This could easily be the annual action item for your department or program (next section #5).*

1. As a next step in SAP development, departments/programs are encouraged begin working on an assessment audit to determine how student learning goals fit across the courses in the major. This could be as complicated as a full grid of student learning goals, or a single learning goal, across the courses in the major. (This has not been required of departments, but it is a recommended next step when the SAP is up to date.)

   There is no major in Gender Studies and no common curriculum for minors. The learning goals for the program are articulated in such a way that every course in the minor fulfills them.

Yearly Assessment Report – each department or program is expected to have assessment discussions for at least two hours each academic year. If necessary, help is available from David Sutherland, just call.

1. What was your planned action item identified in your last report?

   We aimed to have more and different professors volunteer to participate in assessment. We were not successful.

1. Briefly summarize the topics discussed in your annual assessment meeting. (If you have not met this year, why not and when do you plan to meet?)

   We did not have an assessment meeting this year because no Gender Studies professors volunteered to participate in assessment.

2. What was the conclusion of your assessment discussion and how did the collected assessment data inform your conclusion? Specifically describe any curricular or programmatic changes that have been made that were based, at least in part, on the data in your SAP.

   Our conclusion, based on minimal faculty participation in assessment in 2010-2011 and no participation in 2011-2012, is that the Gender Studies assessment plan needs to be revised. When we became co-chairs we implemented a plan which grew out of discussion with the GS faculty and seemed to respond to their hopes and inclinations. The components of the assessment plan which we thought were promising were:
   - It grew out of the expressed desire of the faculty for more conversation about what they do in their particular GS courses.
   - It provided a structure for productive conversation about our courses while also fulfilling the needs of assessment.
   - It was realistic about what the GS minor is: a collection of courses which students are free to choose among. The assessment plan, therefore, looked at individual courses rather than at a non-existent unified whole.
   - It was voluntary and distributed the work of assessment in such a way that it wouldn't be burdensome. Participation in GS is completely voluntary on the part of faculty, so we wanted the assessment plan to be something which people would enjoy doing and which would promote dialogue about our various courses.

3. What are the plans for improving student learning in your unit?

   We believe that the individual GS courses are doing very well at Hendrix. Over the past three years the GS program and the courses in it have become more visible and more popular than ever. The professors who teach in the GS program are committed to the academic study of

gender, to their courses, and to the existence of the GS program. But right now they seem to be stretched too thin to be interested in a collective discussion of student learning through assessment. So while we believe that individual professors are working hard to refine their courses and make them cogent, effective, and rewarding, there is no collective plan for improving student learning other than through the ongoing development of everyone's individual courses.

4. Define at least one new action item for your unit that will be a goal of your assessment discussions next year?
(This action item could be to work on the SAP or on the assessment audit to correlate student learning goals with specific courses, described above.)

   We will not be co-chairs next year, so the action item will be up to the new chair to decide, but we imagine a revision of the assessment plan will be in order.