

***Immediate past plans and assessments are submitted. The Higher Education program assessment plan is being reconfigured as per the ADHE template.**

Graduate Degree Program Assessment Progress Report Cover Sheet:

Degree: MA-Higher Education **For Calendar Year** 2010-
(Date submitted to college committee: 4-20-11 By: Mark Fincher)
(Date posted on college assessment website: _____)

Overall Rating: _____

Respond to all six parts following the “Degree Program Assessment Progress Report Instructions.” (NOTE: Parts 1 through 4 can be copied from the relevant sections of your assessment plan.) Attach additional pages as needed.

(1) Student learning goal(s) addressed this year:

The Master of Arts in Higher Education is a result of the combination and reconfiguration of the previously offered MA in Two-Year College Teaching and the MA in College Student Affairs. This new program has two specializations that represent the previous fields of study. The consolidated program provides a thorough grounding in the knowledge relating to the field of Higher Education, as well as the theory, practice, and scholarship of Higher Education.

As an MA program with two specializations of Two-Year College Teaching and College Student Affairs, some goals are in common throughout the program. Others are specialization specific. Specialization specific goals and activities will be denoted as such.

The Two-Year College Teaching program at UALR serves as an educator of educators, preparing faculty, educational researchers, and administrators who demonstrate high levels of mastery in leadership, research, communication, assessment and evaluation, and technology skills, in addition to the knowledge of the educational foundations that form the basis of informed and effective two-year college teachers and leaders.

The program produces individuals concerned who will work in the academic realm of two-year colleges by:

- 1) developing the intellect of students
- 2) promoting human sensitivities and understanding of interdependence
- 3) serving and strengthening society by enhancing awareness in scientific, technical, and cultural arenas and

Develop “Leaders in Learning” who demonstrate *competency dispositions, and behaviors* in:

- a) Leadership in Learning
- b) Communication
- c) Specialized Expertise
- d) Professional Development
- e) State-of-the-art methodologies and technologies

The College Student Affairs program at UALR prepares administrators who demonstrate high levels of mastery in leadership, research, communication, assessment and evaluation, and technology skills, in addition to the knowledge of the educational foundations that form the basis of informed and effective student affairs professionals.

Student Learning Goal(s) addressed this year: Two-Year College Teaching Specific

- (1) Students will be able to describe the history, role, characteristics, and purposes of two-year colleges.
- (2) Students will demonstrate the skills of effective instruction.
- (3) Students will be able to apply the principles of adult learning theory.
- (4) Students will be able to apply legal concepts involved in the roles of a college level instructor.

Student Learning Goal(s) addressed this year: College Student Affairs Specific

- (5) Students should demonstrate knowledge relating to student affairs as a field of study, as well as the theory, practice, and scholarship of student affairs.
- (6) Students should demonstrate knowledge of the acquisition of administrative competencies in order to function successfully as leaders in student affairs settings.
- (7) Students should conduct research for new knowledge and disseminate this knowledge for the benefit of post-secondary education students and student affairs environments.
- (8) Students should demonstrate a desire for professional development and lifelong learning.

- (2) Learning outcomes/objectives for those goals addressed this year:

Objective 1: Program graduates will demonstrate mastery of the historical, philosophical, social, and cultural contexts of education, understanding the role of education in general, and higher education specifically, as a key social institution of a democratic society.

- Historical, philosophical, social, cultural, political, and organizational contexts and influences on higher education;
Knowledge: The graduate has a foundational understanding of:

Students will be able to describe the historical periods as well as the unique roles, characteristics, and purposes of two-year colleges. Students will be able to present a lesson using at least two active learning strategies.

Students will be able to produce a Student Oriented Learning Outline. When given a teaching scenario containing one or more legal issues, students will be able to correctly identify the legal issues involved.

- Students will be able to determine legally defensible instructor behavior for any given legal issue or
- Different orientations and thought that support democratic systems of government and their relationships to higher education;
- Ethics inherent in being an educational professional;
- Respect for all learners as individuals;
- Adding value to all students' learning and knowledge base.

Objective 2: Program graduates will demonstrate mastery of data interpretation to assess and evaluate issues and improvement strategies for improved instruction and academic programming.

Knowledge: The graduate has knowledge and understanding of:

- Appropriate evaluation and assessment processes for various contexts or settings;
- Appropriate standards and benchmarks for performance in the field;
- Application of evaluation and assessment findings to inform practice and decision-making.

Dispositions: The graduate believes in, values, and is committed to:

- Ongoing critical analysis of the assumptions, performance, and instruments used in assessment and program evaluation;
- Ethical use of data and analyses;

Objective 3: Program graduates will complete a specialization course of study that comprises a specific teaching field. The purpose of this objective is to qualify the graduate to teach in that academic field on the collegiate level.

- Graduates in the Two-Year College Teaching specialization are required to successfully complete 18 graduate hours in the chosen academic teaching field.
- Graduates in the College Student Affairs specialization are required to successfully complete 18 graduate hours in College Student Affairs courses.

- Graduates are required to develop a supervisory relationship with a faculty advisor in the academic teaching field to facilitate the selection of an appropriate course of study within the field.

3. Where will the objectives be addressed in your program? In which courses and through which activities will they be assessed? (Attach Curriculum Assessment Map.)

Courses & activities where assessed:

Evaluation Steps

Major papers and examinations in each higher education course are evaluated according to rubrics.

Each graduate is required to complete a capstone experience that successfully demonstrates a good knowledge of the material in the Two-Year College Teaching specialization and the College Student Affairs, respectively.

Performance Indicators: The program graduate will demonstrate the ability to:

- Articulate the underlying philosophical and theoretical foundations of projects undertaken;
- Articulate, in writing and orally, an understanding of cultural, historical, social, political, organizational contexts, and influences of higher education;
- Articulate an understanding of the place of the independent research project in the historical, philosophical, cultural, social and political contexts of higher education.

Curriculum Assessment Map: Two-Year College Teaching Courses

Emphasis: Extensive Somewhat Little None
Assessed: Exam Paper Project Other Not Assessed

		Goal #					
Courses and Activities	How Outcomes are Addressed and Assessed	Outcome # 1	Outcome # 2	Outcome # 3	Outcome #4	Outcome# 5	Outcome # 6
HIED 8320	Emphasis: Assessed:	Extensive Exam Project	Extensive Paper	Not Assessed			
HIED 7331	Emphasis: Assessed:	Extensive Exam Project	Extensive Paper	Not Assessed			
HIED 8343	Emphasis: Assessed:	Extensive Exams	Little Exams	Not Assessed			
Portfolio Exam	Emphasis: Assessed:	Extensive Project	Somewhat Project	Extensive Project			
Teaching Field Advising	Emphasis: Assessed:	Little Other	Somewhat Project Other	Extensive Exam/Pape r/Other			
	Emphasis: Assessed:						
	Emphasis: Assessed:						
	Emphasis: Assessed:						

Curriculum Assessment Map: College Student Affairs Specific Courses

Emphasis: Extensive Somewhat Little None
Assessed: Exam Paper Project Other Not Assessed

Courses and Activities	How Outcomes are Addressed and Assessed	Goal #					
		Outcome # 1	Outcome # 2	Outcome # 3	Outcome #4	Outcome# 5	Outcome # 6
HIED 7300	Emphasis: Assessed:	Extensive Exam	Extensive Paper	Not Assessed			
HIED 7351	Emphasis: Assessed:	Extensive Exam	Extensive Paper	Not Assessed			
HIED 8343	Emphasis: Assessed:	Extensive Exams	Little Exams	Not Assessed			
HIED 7354	Emphasis: Assessed:	Extensive Project	Little Project	Extensive Project			
HIED 7360	Emphasis: Assessed:	Little Other	Little Other	Extensive Paper			
HIED 8350	Emphasis: Assessed:	Somewhat Paper	Little Project	Extensive Paper			
HIED 8353	Emphasis: Assessed:	Little Test	Extensive Test	Extensive Test			
HIED 7303	Emphasis: Assessed:	None	Extensive Test	None			

(4) Methods used:

- a. The measurement of field mastery of college teaching is accomplished through course rubric evaluations and evaluation of the capstone experience. Teaching field evaluation is done to the standards of the appropriate academic department.
- b. Overall Project Design:
 - Entrance standards
 - Entrance interview
 - Multi-disciplinary advising
 - Teaching field standard assessment
 - Rubric grading in HIED core courses
 - Capstone experience assessment
 - Graduate Survey
 - Constituent meeting/discussion
- c. Assessment Cycle:

All steps in the assessment plan will be carried out annually. Additionally, the program itself is re-evaluated annually for overall performance.
- d. Stakeholder Involvement:

Stakeholders are invited to campus annually to give advice and raise concerns about the overall health of the program. Alumni and potential regional employers are invited and their input is solicited.
- e. The assessment plan and programmatic effectiveness are evaluated annually. Proposed improvements in the program and the evaluation method are considered from this method. Currently, a re-configuration of all HIED masters programs has been proposed by the faculty and is under consideration by the Academic Policies Committee of the College of Education. This contains an improved capstone evaluation.
- f. The HIED 7331 and HIED 8320 courses have been rebuilt around applied research projects. These projects are developed, under faculty guidance, by the students after preliminary research. The goal of this approach is to equip students to perform applied research that is relevant to the collegiate instruction process. Students are also challenged to understand the issues relevant to college instruction.

(9) What are the assessment findings? How did you analyze them?

Objective 1 is being achieved at a questionable level. Extensive testing has indicated that the categories were being addressed consistently but the performance of the students has varied widely. Effectiveness of the teaching methods with the selected students has been inconsistent, with some students doing very well and others producing mediocre performance. These results were analyzed through examining the performance of students in HIED 7331, HIED 8320, and the portfolio capstone project.

Objective 2 is being achieved at a very high level. HIED 7331 and HIED 8320 are producing publishable research in the field and demonstrating an ability on the part of the students to understand important topics, develop research projects/agendas, and analyze data. These findings were analyzed through the examination of student led applied research projects in process and upon completion.

Objective 3 is being achieved. The capstone portfolio project provides a good description and reflection of the overall educational experience. Students consistently show a good understanding of the specific program of study they have completed.. This data is analyzed through a committee examination of the portfolio and the portfolio presentation.

Overall performance can also be seen through program graduates and their performance in the capstone experience. The program produced 4 Two-Year College Teaching graduates and 5 College Student Affairs graduates during the 2010 calendar year. Each of these students developed a portfolio that was reviewed by and presented to a committee of full-time faculty members from the HIED program.

An additional quantitative measure of the experience of the MA in Higher Education is the performance of the students in scholarly research. During 2010, projects executed by HIED classes that included masters students produced two peer-reviewed national conference presentations and one peer-reviewed scholarly article acceptance. Program students were involved in the production of additional papers that are currently under consideration for publication in peer-reviewed journals.

An additional qualitative indication of the health of the program comes in the employment of the 2010 graduates. These graduates consistently gained and/or sustained employment in the fields of higher education and government policy.

(6) What conclusions were drawn and what decisions were made as a result? How were stakeholder groups involved?

- a) The applied research project approach is working. Three years of performance can now be evaluated. The performance has been excellent. Students are indicating a greater interest in the pertinent issues and are gaining critical skills. Publishable research is being consistently produced. Current and former student have expressed increased interest in exploring important issues.

- b) Retention of student general knowledge shows the potential for improvement. Testing in the appropriate courses has produced inconsistent scores. Performance on tests has not been consistently equal to that of the research projects and other applied activities.

- c) Teaching fields are being effectively represented in the student degree plans. The fields are being adequately covered to prepare students to teach on the collegiate level. The primary aspects of College Student Affairs are being well represented in the MA in HIED curriculum.

- d) Exit discussions with students indicate a strong sense of preparation. Students moving on to teaching positions after graduation have reported strong preparation and the ability to impress hiring committees.

- e) In the past, the program suffered from a lack of a critical mass of students in both Two-Year College Teaching and College Student Affairs. A larger number of students have entered the program during the time from the Fall of 2009 through the Fall of 2010 has produced a sufficient student body to improve course scheduling and student interaction. These changes have substantively improved the learning experience of the students.

- f) Stakeholders were surveyed in the Fall of 2010. The rigor and functional value of the Higher Education program was strongly supported by recent MA graduates. The overall experience and support of the faculty were noted as strengths of the program.