

Best Practices in Student Learning and Assessment at WSC

- **Zero Credit Courses.** The Art & Design Department of the School of Arts and Humanities has implemented a Zero Credit course to provide a formalization of an existing review process designed to 1) confirm student competency in visual art foundations and 2) serve as a method of program review. This course ensures that 1) all eligible students will participate in the process; 2) that students will maintain the portfolio necessary for program and student outcome assessment; and 3) that faculty advice and direction given the student will be followed.

The specific catalog description is: ART 200 Sophomore Review (0) A review of first semester sophomores and transfer students who have completed Drawing I and Design. Assess student progress, ensure that the required portfolio is being maintained and that the student is actively engaged and responsible for his or her progress. All eligible students will be notified in a timely fashion by the Department of Art & Design prior to the reviews. The department will notify students of the results in writing and forward a list of those who have successfully completed the review to the registrar. Entering transfer students meeting all other prerequisites may enroll in upper-division classes prior to the review, but failure to successfully complete the review will negate their ability to enroll in subsequent upper-division classes. Successful completion of the review is a prerequisite for all Art & Design studio courses 300 level or above...Carries no credit.

A zero-credit course in Mass Communication was created because the program area does not otherwise have a course that we can guarantee will be taken in the final semester before graduation. In addition, the course does not really represent NEW work, but rather an assembly by the student of work done in previous classes. For the department, it assists program review and assessment. It also helps the individual students develop portfolios for use in job applications, because creative work is SUCH an important part of the hiring process in this field.

The catalog description is: Portfolio Seminar (0) Prerequisite: 90 Hours Students will present a cumulative portfolio of work that demonstrates the growth of their abilities in multiple areas of mass communication. The portfolio may include any of the following type of student work: writing, photography, audio, video or electronic media projects. Faculty will review the portfolio and conduct a qualitative exit interview for the purpose of program review and assessment. The review of the portfolio and the exit interview must be completed in order to graduate. Carries no credit; Pass Fail

In addition, other units are considering this zero option: The Wayne State College psychology program is developing a zero credit hour course that majors must complete as a requirement for graduation. The sole purpose of the course is to collect program assessment data. The course will be taken on a satisfactory-no credit basis toward the end of the student's final semester. Satisfactory completion of the course will be based on the student's completing the Comprehensive Psychology Exam, and possibly other program assessment instruments (e.g., psychology program survey).

- **Capstone Courses/Projects.** Most majors require a capstone course and/or senior research project for program assessment requirements. For example:

Art 411 Senior Portfolio (1) students make arrangements, advertise and present their individual portfolios at a Senior Portfolio public presentation.

BIO 470 Research Project (1) students complete an individual research project under the direction of a chosen instructor. A presentation of this research in both oral and written form is required at the conclusion of the course.

BUS 420 Strategic Management (3) involves analysis of cases in which knowledge from basic courses in marketing, accounting, finance, management, and economics is integrated and applied. Demonstrated interrelationship between the functions of business, complexities of business problems, and strategic management models are addressed.

CHE 470 Research Project (1) students will take this course as a means of completing their individual research project. A presentation of this research in both oral and written form is required at the conclusion of the course.

CIS 480 Seminar in Computer Information Systems (3) a capstone course with emphasis on the management of information systems. Students will work with theoretical and practitioner literature from the information systems field in addressing several cases and/or projects in preparing and delivering presentations.

CSC 480 Seminar in Computer Science (3) a project-oriented course where students, with the assistance of the instructor, explore one or more areas of current importance in computer science. The students will design and develop a sophisticated software project that will be presented and discussed for critical evaluation.

ITE 493 Advanced Studies in Technology (3) students will complete their senior project while in this course. The senior project will demonstrate what the student has learned during their four years in the program. The project will be completed using a standard format developed by the department.

MAT 460 Senior Seminar in Mathematics (3) a research and discussion course in which one or more advanced topics will be discussed based upon faculty and student interest. Students will be required to research a mathematics topic and will make a public presentation of their findings.

MUS 454 Senior Recital (1) the presentation of a 30-minute senior recital in a student's primary performance medium.

PED 493 Fieldwork in Exercise Science (1-12/1-9) a supervised field-based experience to familiarize the student with the conditions, practices, and environmental settings where the aspired vocational roles are conducted.

SSC 485 Social Sciences Senior Seminar (1) students will complete a written project on a topic chosen with their advisor. This project is intended to integrate all of the disciplines and approaches taken in the major.

SSC 490 Social Sciences Research Seminar (3) a study of the techniques of historical and Social Sciences research and writing. Students will complete a major research project on a topic of their choice and present the results to the seminar.

- The Department of HHPS offers four undergraduate and two graduate programs. In 2003 we began a systematic review of program goals, objectives and measures. At that time, we established a three year rotation, reviewing two programs each year. Beginning in 2004, we collected data for the two programs scheduled for review, and then held an HHPS faculty retreat in the spring to collectively review and analyze the measures for those programs. We found this enormously helpful. We had completed the first cycle of program reviews prior to this year's new Assessment directives, and have merged our previous routine with the new campus wide assessment activities.

With the new campus wide format, we have decided to submit Phase II reports for all undergraduate programs each spring (see HHPS Phase II 2008 Reports). However, the value of interdisciplinary review, discussion and collaboration is seen as extremely helpful – therefore, in the fall of each year, we will 1) address any Academic Policy changes arising from the Spring Assessment Retreat, and 2) collaboratively review the selected two programs. For each 3-year cycle we will review: Year 1- AHSP and Exercise Science; Year 2- HPE and Sport Management; Year 3- Grad Programs and General Education.

This serves two purposes: 1) Provides valuable 'external' perspective about program quality and direction, and 2) Increases understanding and collegial interaction within a department of very diverse disciplines.

- Assessment Director. In July 2007, the college added the professional staff position of assessment director to coordinate a systematic method of assessment activities across

the institution. In addition, a substantial budget was appropriated for the assessment office to assist in assessment projects and initiatives. A campus website for assessment has been established at www.wsc.edu/assessment. The responsibilities assigned to the assessment director include:

- Work with academic school deans, department chairs and faculty in developing, maintaining, and conducting effective assessment activities.
- Provide assistance to academic and administrative departments in conducting assessment activities.
- Design and develop an assessment handbook for annual assessment plans and reports.
- Review and gives feedback, as appropriate, on assessment plans and annual assessment program reports.
- Serve as chair of the Assessment Oversight Committee.
- Plan and conduct workshops and other faculty development programs to assist faculty in conducting effective and meaningful assessment activities.
- Assist in AQIP evaluation process.

Good things WSC has done to get our institution thinking and talking about student learning and assessment

- All-Campus Assessment Retreat. All classes were suspended on September 21, 2007, for the first ever all-campus assessment retreat. Each school held departmental meetings that allowed time for collaboration on assessment between the department chairs and department faculty. This retreat created the opportunity for faculty to share assessment data, analyze assessment results and complete assessment work. Some departments initiated program assessment planning for the first time, which created a growing awareness and commitment to assessment. A similar retreat is planned for the spring semester on April 28, 2008.
- General Education Program Revision. The General Education Committee designed a “General Education Course Submission Form” that was completed for all courses considered for the new general education program. This process required mapping the new general education goals to course outcomes and identifying both direct and indirect measures of course assessment. This requirement emphasized the importance and relevance of course assessment of outcomes to the program goals.
- External Accreditation. Wayne State College is an accredited AQIP institution. In addition, two schools have external accreditation bodies that evaluate and promote improvement of student learning through the documentation of outcomes assessment. The School of Business and Technology is accredited through the International Assembly for Collegiate Business Education (IACBE) and the School of Education and Counseling is accredited through the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE). Two additional departments in the School of Arts and Humanities are in initial stages of external accreditation approval. These departments are Music, which is seeking accreditation from the National Association of Schools of Music (NASM), and the Art and Design department which is seeking accreditation from the National Association of Schools of Art and Design (NASAD).
 - ▶ NCATE--The National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education is the teaching profession’s mechanism to help to establish high quality teacher, specialist, and administrator preparation. Through the process of professional accreditation of schools, colleges and departments of education, NCATE works to make a difference

in the quality of teaching, teachers, school specialists and administrators. NCATE believes every student deserves a caring, competent and highly qualified teacher.

- ▶ IACBE--The International Assembly for Collegiate Business Education is the premier professional accreditor for business programs in student-centered colleges and universities throughout the world. The IACBE exists to promote, develop, and recognize excellence in business education. The IACBE's philosophy of accreditation is centered on student learning and operational outcomes, which makes it flexible and adaptable. The IACBE accredits business degree programs in colleges and universities through the United States and internationally.
- ▶ NASM--The National Association of Schools of Music is an organization of schools, conservatories, colleges and universities with approximately 615 accredited institutional members. It establishes national standards for undergraduate and graduate degrees and other credentials.
- ▶ NASAD—The National Association of Schools of Art and Design is an organization of schools, colleges, and universities. It has approximately 280 accredited institutional members. It establishes national standards for undergraduate and graduate degrees and other credentials. Institutional membership is gained only through the peer review process of accreditation.