

Implementation of APDM Program Assessment

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The assessment award provided released time for our primary assessment faculty member to develop and present workshops for program faculty during the Fall 2002 term, and to provide stipends to regular lecturers for their participation in assessment activities. Four assessment workshops were held. Participating faculty: were introduced to the philosophy of the assessment movement, the University's position relative to assessment activities, and to CTAHR's criteria and guidelines for program assessment; critiqued and proposed modifications to the APDM Mission and Goals statements; critiqued the existing instructional program and its ability to deliver instruction to meet program goals and objectives; reconsidered the relative importance of the materials of their own courses in terms of meeting program goals; rewrote the objectives for core courses to reflect the APDM Program Objectives; and evaluated final assessment presentations and portfolio submissions of students in the capstone course. Outcomes of assessment-related activities this term include: revised APDM Mission, Goals, and Objectives statements; core course objectives restructured in behavioral terms and directly addressed to program objectives; modifications to and simplification of the scoring rubrics; outcomes data collected from students in the capstone course; and procedures and a time-line in place for complete implementation of the APDM Program Assessment Plan.

Program Assessment of Student Learning

Program: Apparel Product Design and Merchandising

Sponsor: Department of Family & Consumer Sciences, CTAHR

Project Title: Implementation of APDM Program Assessment Plans

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1. Student Learning Objectives (list)

1. (a) From a physical examination of at least 20 textile samples, the student will correctly identify fibers, fabrics, and finishes, describe performance characteristics, and propose appropriate end product uses with at least 75% accuracy, and (b) given any apparel item, the student will conduct a systematic assessment of the product, correctly identifying and distinguishing among at least 12 discrete intrinsic and extrinsic apparel quality indicators, product standards and/or performance measures, and will evaluate the item based on the results of the assessment of those factors with 75% accuracy;
2. Given any apparel item or illustration, the student will score at least 75% in a systematic analysis and evaluation of the total form in terms of all aspects and variations of relevant design elements and

organization

principles; and will assess expressive and symbolic aspects of the design and the likely effects of these on

apparel product gatekeepers, promoters, and specific consumer markets.

3. The student will exhibit effective written, oral, and visual methods of communication, and appropriate technologies to locate, analyze, synthesize, and present information regarding current issues in the design, manufacture, and distribution of textile and apparel products and the impact of global production and distribution practices on workers, consumers, and the environment, and will describe social and ethical consequences of these, earning scores of at least 75% on both communication and content aspects of the presentations;

4. Given a fashion forecasting, apparel design, merchandising, and/or marketing problem, the student will generate creative solutions, and will explain the solutions in terms of the synthesis of design, merchandising, and/or marketing theories, principles, and industry practices, earning scores of at least 75% on both the outcome of the creative endeavor and the explanation of the criteria guiding the solution.

5. The student will integrate concepts, theories, and principles of human behavior to conduct and present research on the role of dress and fashion in expressing individual and group identity, and/or to document examples of social controls on clothing and appearance-related phenomena, earning scores of at least 75%

6. The student will conduct a comprehensive assessment of a garment of unknown origin and will: identify its likely origin; place it in its appropriate historical time frame; describe the social and cultural contexts of its use; and identify its component parts, including symbolic elements in its design and aspects of its fabrication and construction, earning performance ratings of at least 75%;

7. In the exit portfolio, the student will score performance ratings of at least 75% in faculty assessments of the student's ability to exhibit overall subject matter knowledge, to utilize word processing and software common to the profession, and to present written and visual materials in a manner appropriate to an emerging apparel industry career professional.

8. In an exit oral presentation to the faculty, the student will score performance ratings of at least 75% in faculty assessments of the student's ability to: (a) exhibit poise, confidence, organization, effective use of visuals; (b) exhibit textiles and apparel subject matter knowledge in oral communication; and (c) utilize presentation software common to the profession.

9. The student will score performance ratings of 75% or better in: (a) written and oral communication skills; (b) analytic and problem-solving skills, and in (c) business management and human relation skills, as these are identified in the student's internship assessment contract and as these are evaluated by a committee consisting of the student's work supervisor, the internship faculty, and the student's academic advisor.

2. Assessment Question or Goal of Study

(a) What is the research question(s) or goal of the assessment study?

The overall goals of assessment are to (a) clarify the specific knowledge and skills we believe majors should acquire in their undergraduate program; (b) set standards against which to measure student mastery of critical knowledge and skills, and set expected performance levels; (c) identify strengths and weaknesses in the current instructional program - in particular, to identify areas wherein the program falls short of meeting its objectives for student learning; and to (d) address those weaknesses through modifications in instructional methods, course contents, and/or curriculum revisions.

The lead faculty for the program's assessment plan developed assessment tools and prepared evaluation rubrics which were pilot tested at the close of the Spring 2002 term. Reports on the development of the plan, along with opportunities to contribute to and critique it, were provided at monthly department meetings. However, program assessment was an abstraction for most faculty; they were busy with other affairs and were not inclined to participate. Thus, the goals of assessment activities for the Fall '02 period were to (a) bring all APDM faculty into assessment planning & implementation; (b) provide conditions that encourage faculty to see themselves as stakeholders in the successful design and implementation of the assessment plan; (c) modify existing program mission and goals statements to reflect the outcomes of faculty discussion on these; (d) pare down the numbers of objectives, and modify these to reflect faculty sentiment; and to (e) encourage and guide faculty toward rewriting all APDM course objectives in behavioral terms.

(b) Which learning outcomes are being assessed?

Twelve students served as subjects for assessment at the end of the Fall 2002 term. All provided data on the outcomes of program Objectives #8 (oral presentation skills) and #9 (communication,

problem solving, management skills). Subjects individually selected any two of Objectives #1 through #6 (discipline-specific content) for outcomes evaluation; their choices included objective #1 (textile knowledge), #2 (design knowledge), #4 (merchandising and marketing knowledge), and #6 (historic costume and culture knowledge), and data was collected relative to these. Of the twelve student subjects, two were graduating seniors. Objective #7 (portfolio presentation) was assessed relative to these students.

3. Population (describe)

Twelve of the fifteen senior APDM majors enrolled in APDM 492: Internship during the Fall 2002 term served as subjects for assessment.

4. Data-Gathering Approach

(a) Each student prepared and delivered a 15-minute formal oral presentation which was evaluated (in terms of form and content) by APDM line faculty and lecturers using a rubric designed for that purpose (see Objective #8). (b) The two graduating seniors additionally submitted portfolios containing examples of projects, papers, and other documents which address the learning objectives, and these were evaluated (in terms of form and content) by APDM line faculty and lecturers using a rubric designed for portfolio evaluation (see Objective #7). (c) The instructor of the internship class conducted an independent global evaluation of each student based on on-the-job and class performance (see Objective #9).

Thirteen of the fifteen students in last semester's course will graduate at the end of the Spring 2003 term, and will submit their portfolios for evaluation at that time. Of those, three requested, and were granted, extensions for preparation of their oral presentations, and will make these simultaneous with their portfolio submissions in May.

5. Time Line/Dates

SPRING 03:

- Assessment-related program requirements announced in all APDM classes
- All students receive copies of announcement letter and guidelines via mail
- Portfolio - students in APDM 491 are required to select materials to fulfill any 4 of objectives #1- #6
- Presentation - Students in APDM 492 are required to prepare a formal, 15 minute presentation on any 2 of the 4 selected portfolio materials. Presentations will be scheduled during the last Friday preceding final exams, and are formal (i.e., prepared & rehearsed)
- Internship Assessment - criteria & rubric for Objective #9 developed and tested

FALL 03 & SPRING 03:

- Assessment-related program requirements announced in all APDM classes;
- Portfolio - select materials to fulfill any 5 of the 8 objectives

FALL 04 & SPRING 04:

- Assessment-related program requirements announced in all APDM classes;
- Portfolio - select materials to fulfill any 6 of the 8 objectives

FALL 05 & SPRING 05:

- Assessment-related program requirements announced in all APDM classes;
- Portfolio - all objectives addressed

6. Highlights of results

(a) Results relative to learning outcomes:

Objectives #1 - #6 (discipline-specific knowledge): Although students demonstrated discipline-specific knowledge in their oral presentations, as well as in their portfolios, we believe (at this time) that the appropriate data is best accessed through the portfolio materials. There were insufficient portfolio submissions this term to assess outcomes relative to these objectives.

Objective #7 (portfolio): insufficient data collected this term.

Objective #8 (oral presentation skills): individual average scores ranged from a low of 2.96 (on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 = performance does not meet criteria, 3 = performance adequately meets criteria, and 5 = performance exceeds criteria) to a high of 4.81. The average score on objective #8 was 4.21.

Objective #9 (communication, problem solving, management skills): these scores have not yet been tabulated. However, a cursory examination of the data strongly suggests performance was very strong. Scores on this objective will be available at the end of January.

(b) Results relative to assessment activities

- As a result of assessment-related activities this term:
- modifications were made to the program's Mission, Goals, and Objectives statements, and to the assessment tools;
- the numbers of objectives were reduced and the objectives simplified by collapsing the numbers of dimensions on each;
- all APDM line faculty and permanent lecturers were brought into and participated in the assessment process, including providing input into the plan and taking part in the evaluations;
- the objectives for nine of the eleven APDM core courses have been rewritten to reflect program objectives, and have been cast in behavioral terms; objectives for the remaining two core courses are in work and will be complete at the end of January;

7. Interpretation of Results

(a) Who receives results? Results will be distributed to all APDM line faculty and lecturers, the FCS Department Chair, and to the CTRHR Associate Dean of Instruction. Students have access to their individual average scores. Yet to be addressed is the question of publishing results to all student majors.

(b) What conclusions were reached after interpreting results? (i) student performance overall (and at all levels of the program) has markedly improved as a result of implementing the assessment plan; (ii) it appears the objectives (based on competencies identified by the discipline) and the assessment rubrics are appropriate to the program; (iii) data indicates that the program appears to be meeting Objective #8, and is likely meeting Objective #9; (iv) the extent to which the program is appropriate to the needs of local business and industry (as distinguished from meeting discipline-identified competencies) remains to be addressed.

8. Use of Results/Next Steps

- the objectives for all APDM courses will be cast in behavioral terms by the end of the semester;
- data relative to Objectives #1 - #6 will be collected at the end of this term, allowing for a more complete picture of program results;
- a more systematic method of communicating expectations and assessment procedures to majors must be developed and implemented;
- vehicles for drawing potential employers into the assessment planning and evaluation need to be developed.

9. Lessons Learned/Tips for Colleagues

Assessment is an immensely time-consuming activity. Responsibility for assessment-related activities must be accompanied by released time devoted to the endeavor and/or by an equal sharing of assessment responsibilities among program faculty.

10. Links to Additional Information

All APDM assessment related documents, including rubrics and outcomes data, are on file and available for inspection in the office of the Chair of the Department of Family and Consumer Sciences and in the office of the CTAHR Associate Dean of Instruction.