

Liberal Studies Program Assessment (October 2002 -May 2004)

The objective of the assessment project is to use qualitative and quantitative measures to obtain a wide range of data evaluating student learning and describing the educational effectiveness of the Liberal Studies Program. The survey is to be administered to Liberal Studies graduates. An alternate version of the survey that features an additional portfolio assessment will be given to current students. Interviews with current Liberal Studies undergraduates will also be included to give this assessment greater detail and depth.

We have so far completed the final draft of the alumni survey, and are preparing to mail them to 500 Liberal Studies majors who have graduated from the program in the last five years. We are also preparing an alternate survey for the current students to be administered electronically in the spring of this year to our 227 majors. In Spring 2003, we will collect information from both surveys and organize the quantitative and qualitative data into a readable and understandable assessment of the Liberal Studies Program contribution.

In portfolio assessments, we have selected twenty students who will participate in the portfolio project. Selected students will develop a portfolio of their work samples (written work, verbal presentations, class projects, and personal reflections of the learning process) to be kept through their junior or senior year at UH during Spring, Summer, and Fall 2003. We will also ask students to submit the syllabi of the courses in their major equivalents. We will analyze the course syllabi and curricula to see if the courses in fact covered the areas, issues, or themes that were part of the proposed curriculum. Students will receive a stipend of \$100 when the portfolio is completed in Fall 2003.

We are using Blackboard Learning Management System to allow students to develop an electronic portfolio. Students will have their own private space to post papers and personal reflections, and they will have opportunities for group discussion. The benefits of creating a web-based portfolio are that it will allow students to post their work samples remotely in one place and to create links between their Portfolio entries. We will also create a discussion board for project participants and ask them to share their thoughts about their experiences with the Liberal Studies Program in general and with the portfolio project in particular. The portfolios will be reviewed in Spring 2004. The data from the portfolio assessment will provide a clear picture of individual students' development during their academic career, and will help us understand how the interdisciplinary coursework experiences in the major contribute to student learning.

The results of this assessment, when completed in Spring 2004, will be presented to the University of Hawai'i at Manoa administration in order to provide an overview of the Liberal Studies Program's former, current and projected performance and implementation of educational objectives. Results will also be analyzed and used internally to strengthen the programs' curriculum and advising.