

**CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, CHICO**  
**ANNUAL PROGRAM ASSESSMENT REPORT**

Date: October 10, 2022

**I. Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes**

**1. Name and Contact Information of Program Assessment Coordinator:**

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**2. Student Learning Outcomes**

1. Students demonstrate foundational understandings, concepts and values in: reading, language and literature; history and social sciences; mathematics; science; visual and performing arts; health; and human development.
2. Students apply methodologies from multiple disciplines to real-world situations.
3. Students will communicate clearly and effectively (both verbally and in writing) with a variety of audiences, using appropriate academic discourse and technology
4. Through coursework and education-based experiential learning opportunities, students will develop interpersonal and collaboration skills, as well as develop interpersonal and collaboration skills, as well as develop an awareness of culturally diverse perspectives.
5. **Students will acquire the qualities needed to become life-long learners who can critically analyze, reflect upon experiences, and apply their learning to develop research skills to draw conclusions.**

**3. Student Learning Outcome(s) Assessed in AY 2021-2022:**

**SLO 5: Critical Thinking and Writing Skills.** Students will acquire the qualities needed to become life-long learners who can critically analyze, reflect upon experiences, and apply their learning to develop research skills to draw conclusions.

**Background to SLO 5 Assessment:**

In fall 2020, the Liberal Studies Program began requiring the Liberal Studies Capstone (EDTE 490W) for all majors. EDTE 490W is a graduation, writing assessment (GWAR) course and is the culminating learning experience in the Liberal Studies major. Because Capstone requires students to synthesize their learning over their entire program, it serves as an ideal measure of program assessment. EDTE 490W was designed by faculty who attended the Institute on Teaching Writing in summer 2019 as well as the Go Virtual Institute in summer 2020. It was designed to be taught in multiple modes of instruction (face to face, online synchronous and asynchronous). The Senior Capstone requires students to demonstrate their learning across all elementary subject matter disciplines through a well-defined Capstone paper. In the course, emerging teacher scholars learn to utilize some of the research approaches and methodologies commonly used in critical educational research. Students learn about the research process and must 1) Identify a problem of practice and a rationale for its investigation 2) Review the literature concerning this problem 3) Identify data needed to help address the problem 4)

Collect data and consult a community partner/s to better understand this problem 5) Interpret the results, draw implications and give recommendations for future action.

All students participate in an end of semester Capstone Symposium where they share out their work and receive evaluative feedback from Liberal Studies faculty and peers. Students incorporate feedback into the final draft of their Capstone Papers. Thanks to a new initiative with library archivists in the Meriam Library, Capstone Papers have now become part of the permanent collection of the *CSU Chico Scholarworks Repository* (See Appendix C). After instructional faculty give final approval, students upload final drafts into the repository where they are formatted and made accessible. We now have 161 accessible Liberal Studies Capstone papers in the repository.

#### EDTE 490W: Student Learning Objectives:

- Demonstrate knowledge of effective verbal, nonverbal, and media communication techniques.
- Analyze, summarize, and reason from evidence (i.e., interviews, document analysis, literature reviews, curricula, policies, laws, podcasts, etc.)
- Analyze disciplinary (Kinesiology, Science, VPA, Math, English, Human Development, History/Social Science) problems in the field of education (curriculum, pedagogy, policy, or assessment), apply principles of critical theory, present implications and make recommendations for taking action to forward a more just and equitable society.
- Write an inquiry paper and present these findings in a Capstone presentation demonstrating fluency with academic writing and APA (American Psychological Association) format in research paper writing.
- Demonstrate basic knowledge of how one or more of the Liberal Studies disciplines is/are related to such issues (including by not limited to) as educational policy, pedagogy, curriculum, assessment, socio-historical positioning, school culture.

### **Assessment Methodology**

#### **Instrument 1: Liberal Studies Capstone Faculty Moderator Survey (Appendix A)**

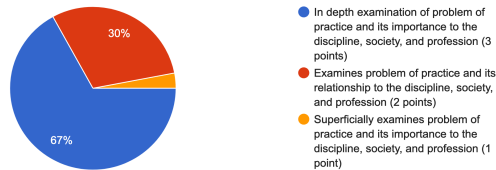
Faculty who teach service courses to LBST students are asked to participate in the Capstone symposium, providing feedback to students and written evaluation of students writing and presentation skills through a Faculty Moderator Survey. In fall 21 and Spring 22, 45 faculty members participated in the Capstone Symposium (many did both semesters). In fall 21, faculty evaluated 54 capstone presentations and papers. In spring 2022, faculty members evaluated 100 Capstone Student papers and presentations for a total of 154 evaluations. Faculty were given a moderator feedback form in a google doc to elicit both quantitative and qualitative data on student papers/presentations and rate the quality of student work on a scale from 1 to 3. “1” being the highest rating and “3” being the lowest in a rubric which included the following five categories:

- 1) Clarity of Purpose/Urgency of the Study
- 2) Ability to analyze, summarize and reason from evidence
- 3) Application of theory to practice
- 4) Professional (Presentation) Communication Skills
- 5) Recommendations for taking future action toward a more just society

#### **Area 1: Clarity of Purpose/Urgency of Study**

Faculty reported that 67% of papers included an “In depth examination of Problems of Practice and its importance to the discipline, society, and profession”, while 30% included “a generalized examination of problem of practice” and 3% included “a superficial examination of problem of practice and its importance to the discipline”.

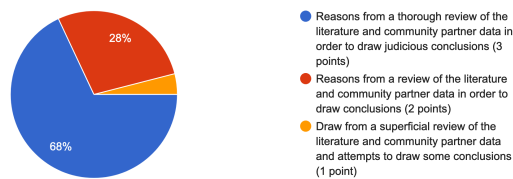
Clarity of Purpose/Urgency of the Study  
100 responses



## Area 2: Ability to Analyze, Summarize, and Reason from Evidence

In Area 2, faculty reported that 68% of papers included “reasoning from a thorough review of the literature and community partner data to draw judicious conclusions”, 28% of papers provided a general reasoning from evidence and 4% presented a superficial reasoning from evidence.

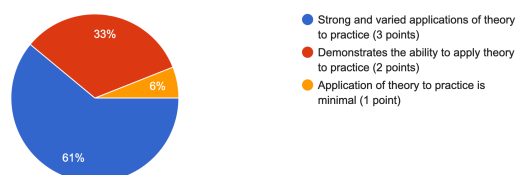
Ability to analyze, summarize and reason from evidence  
100 responses



## Area 3: Application of Theory to Practice

In Area 3, faculty reported 61 % of papers provided a “strong and varied application of theory to practice”, 33% “demonstrated the ability to apply theory to practice” and 6% demonstrated “minimal application of theory to practice.”

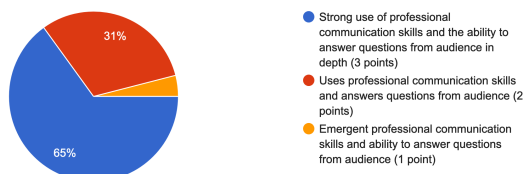
Application of theory to practice  
100 responses



## Area 4: Professional Communication Skills

In area 4, faculty reported that 65% of student work demonstrated “strong use of professional communication skills and the ability to answer questions from audience in depth”, 31% demonstrated a general use of professional communication skills and 4% used emergent professional communication.

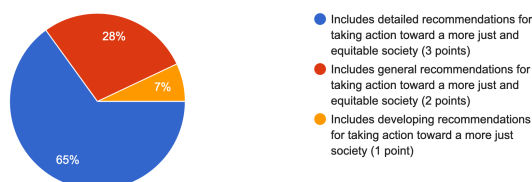
Professional (Presentation) Communication Skills  
100 responses



## Area 5: Recommendations for Taking Action Toward a More Just and Equitable Society

In area 5, faculty reported that 65% of student work provided “detailed recommendations for taking action toward a more just and equitable society”, 28% provided general recommendations for taking action and 7% provided developing recommendations for taking action.

Recommendations  
100 responses



The last two questions in the survey elicited general evaluative commentary. Faculty praised student selection of topics and their ability to articulate topic urgency and relevancy to the profession. They commended student ability to reason from evidence and draw conclusions. They also noted the strength of student presentation skills and ability to field questions during the Q/A. Faculty also commented that many students needed to develop a stronger theoretical framework for their studies and clearer recommendations for taking action. Examples of comments included:

*“WOW WOW WOW, so well done! Student A’s personal experience as a student with disabilities, her examination of her privilege as a person who had resources to circumvent those obstacles, and her thoughtful reflection of how those from marginalized groups may not have the same resources was fantastic and demonstrates the exact dispositions we hope to instill in our pre-service educators. BLOWN AWAY with her poise, professionalism, and positionality. The history, the research, her recognition of experiential bias were all so well communicated. Top notch work!”*

*“Student B touched on formative, summative and self-assessment (for both students and educators). Discussing self-assessment as a high-impact practice for students AND as reflective practice for educators was timely and creative. I would be interested in hearing some ideas or strategies that she has for educators to promote meaningful assessment of students across the elementary grades.”*

*“Student C’s study is interesting but she needed some specific examples of ways that teachers have integrated culturally and linguistically rich curriculum.”*

*“Good topic, not articulated well. Need more evidence to make a case for importance. Weak recommendations.”*

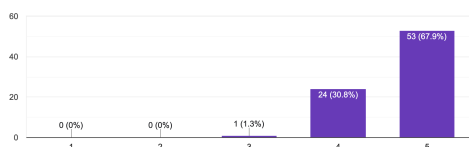
## Instrument 2: Liberal Studies Capstone Student Survey (Appendix B)

During AY 21-22, Capstone students were asked to take a survey after completing the course to identify areas for course and program improvement. 58 students responded to the survey in fall 2021 and 78 students responded to the survey in Spring 2022 for a total of 136 respondents.

Capstone students were asked to take a survey after completing the course to identify areas for course and Symposium improvement and program improvement in terms of preparation for capstone. 58 students responded to a survey in fall 2021 and 78 students responded to the survey in Spring 2022 for a total of 136 respondents.

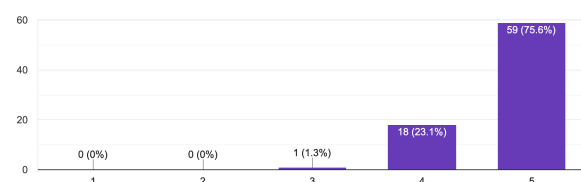
**Participation in Capstone:** Students were asked to respond to: How helpful did you find participating in the Capstone Symposium to your own development as a teacher-scholar? and rate their experience of participating on a scale of 1-5 (5 being very helpful and 1 being least helpful). 67.9% rated the experience very helpful and 30.8% rated this helpful while 1.3% were neutral.

How helpful did you find participating in the Capstone Symposium to your own development as a teacher-scholar? (Leave blank if you did not present)  
78 responses



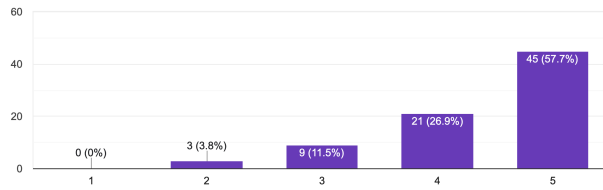
**Course Preparation for Inquiry Paper and Symposium:** Students were asked to respond to: How well did the course content (instructor feedback, assignments, check ins, etc.) prepare you for the culminating assignments? 75.6% rated the course preparation as very helpful, 23.1% rated this as helpful and 1.3% neutral.

How well did the course content (instructor feedback, assignments, check ins, etc.) prepare you for the culminating assignments?  
78 responses



**Liberal Studies Program preparation for Capstone:** Students were asked to respond to: How well did the Liberal Studies program (major courses) prepare you for the capstone? 57.7% rated this as very helpful, 26.9% rated this as helpful, 11.5% rated this as neutral and 3.8% rated this as unhelpful.

How well did the Liberal Studies program (major courses) prepare you for the capstone?  
78 responses



Students were also asked open ended questions about ways to strengthen the student experience in the Symposium. Many commented that they liked the symposium format, appreciated small breakout rooms, appreciated feedback from faculty and peers, and liked being grouped by topics. Students also noted they wanted more opportunities to practice presenting prior to the symposium, more time to present, opportunities to present in person, and opportunities to work with the presentation rubric ahead of time.

### Assessment Results:

**# 5: Critical Thinking and Writing Skills.** Students will acquire the qualities needed to become life-long learners who can critically analyze, reflect upon experiences, and apply their learning to develop research skills to draw conclusions.

In summarizing the degree to which the Capstone course is helping students to meet SLO # 5, faculty feedback provides evidence that a majority of students are demonstrating their ability to critically analyze key issues in education and apply their newly learned research skills to draw conclusions and make recommendations for the profession. Given that for most students, this is the first time they have taken a research class, this is especially encouraging. Scores on the evaluation consistently cluster around 3 and 2 points on a 3 point scale for all five areas of evaluation. Faculty rated students the highest (68%) in the “Ability to Analyze, Summarize, and Reason from Evidence” while they rated students the lowest (61%) in the ability to demonstrate “strong and varied application of theory to practice”. According to this feedback, students are doing well critically analyzing their problems of practice and reasoning from the evidence they collect in their literature reviews and interviews with community experts. However, we would certainly like to see a higher percentage of student papers and presentations achieve a 3 in this area given this is the central aspect of SLO 5. In terms of applying their learning to practice and/or making recommendations for practice, we would like to see an increase in students who receive a 3 in this area as well. Instructors in the course meet monthly and often discuss this as being a key concern. Students ability to make recommendations for the profession or to confidently discuss “implications” and “recommendations” is consistently a challenge. However, we often note that these are undergraduate students who have yet to enter a credential program nor have they had much sustained contact with clinical settings in which to understand this larger context of the K-12 profession.

In terms of student feedback on the degree to which the Liberal Studies program prepares students to do the kind of thinking, reasoning, and writing required for SLO #5, 57.7% of students noted the program was very helpful in preparing them, while 26.9% rated this as helpful and 11.5% rated this as neutral. This is helpful in understanding that while a majority feel they have been very prepared to do the kind of synthesis based thinking and writing required in the capstone, 27 % felt this was just

adequate and 11.5% were neutral on this question. Clearly, there is work to be done across the Liberal Studies courses in terms of preparing students for the kind of rigorous thinking and writing needed for SLO #5.

## **Planned Program Improvement Actions**

### **1: Continued Course Revision of EDTE 490W:**

EDTE 490 Liberal Studies Capstone is a relatively new course for the major and is still in its early phases of development. While faculty responsible for the design of the course participated in extensive training around writing instruction and effective online pedagogy, there is still work to be done in adjusting signature assignments to better prepare students to become proficient writers and researchers in one course. Also, because we run a large number of sections every fall and spring, different faculty teach the course during different semesters depending on their teaching commitments. To ensure consistency in pedagogy, writing instruction, and calibration of student paper scores and grading, I have held informal capstone faculty meetings during each semester to share out ideas and calibrate scoring practices, as well as prepare for the symposium. We need to better formalize these monthly meetings and consider archiving some of this important work in either the Faculty Development model course archive or some other space for new faculty to go when they agree to teach capstone.

### **2: Adding in Elements of SLO 5 into LBST Course Learning Outcomes**

In monthly meetings of the Liberal Studies faculty, we meet to discuss best practices across our courses, ways to strengthen curricular alignment, and address student concerns as it relates to equity and retention. These meetings are an ideal opportunity to address SLO 5 and ways that each of our courses can address student preparation needed to critically analyze, reflect and apply research skills in a variety of disciplinary settings. For example, at our meeting last week faculty discussed how each of their courses could include a strand or element of SLO 5 without being a dedicated writing or research class. This might mean some courses add key research articles that address problems in their disciplines and have students analyze for a short writing assignment. Or, it might mean faculty consider adding in shorter, formative writing assignments as part of their final portfolio and grading. Weaving in opportunities to focus on critical analysis of disciplinary issues and opportunities to develop academic writing and research skills and their applications in K-12 education is a massive ask for one course. The development of these skills must be iterative and spiraled throughout the curriculum.

**Name, Title, and E-Mail Address of Person Completing this Form:**

**Maris Thompson, Coordinator Liberal Studies Program, mrthompson@csuchico.edu**

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**10. Acknowledgement and Signatures:**

**a) Department Chair: Maris Thompson**

**Comments (if desired):**



## **APPENDIX A**

**EDTE 490W Faculty Moderator Evaluation Form**

<https://forms.gle/ruA3yv2HBUZBg1wLA>

## **APPENDIX B**

**EDTE 490W Capstone Student Survey**

<https://forms.gle/AkeRAG3NBEpU9fzi8>

## **APPENDIX C**

**CSU Chico Scholarworks Digital Repository Capstone Papers**

[https://scholarworks.calstate.edu/catalog?f%5Bcampus\\_sim%5D%5B%5D=Chico&f%5Bdepartment\\_sim%5D%5B%5D=Liberal+Studies&locale=en](https://scholarworks.calstate.edu/catalog?f%5Bcampus_sim%5D%5B%5D=Chico&f%5Bdepartment_sim%5D%5B%5D=Liberal+Studies&locale=en)