

CHICO STATE UNIVERSITY
ASSESSMENT SUMMARY UPDATE

PROGRAM: BA in Latin American Studies

Year of review	Student Learning Outcome	Describe assessment activity done this year for this SLO	Findings	Based on the results or evidence, what action was taken regarding program improvements?
<p style="text-align: center;">2012 – 2013</p>	<p>SLO 5: Graduates will attain knowledge of the cultural heritage and diversity among the people of the region.</p> <p>Students can describe, contrast and summarize patterns or cultural diversity and/or heritage in at least two regions of Latin America.</p>	<p>We assessed the final research paper in LAST 495, our capstone seminar. This course is offered every spring, and all majors and minors must take it. Therefore, we believe that this is the best class and assignment for assessment.</p> <p>Professor Steve Lewis assigned a twelve-page paper on the topic of Indigenismo in Latin America. Indigenismo was the main theme of the Spring 2013 course.</p>	<p>Jacque Chase and Sarah Anderson reviewed fifteen of the papers.</p> <p>All of the papers dealt with the indigenous populations of Latin America. However the scope and topic of the papers varied greatly. Some of the papers covered multiple countries within Latin America while others were highly focused on one region, mainly Chiapas in Mexico. Some of the topics covered were: the successes and failures of Indigenismo, Anthropology as a tool for nation building within Indigenismo, feminist indigenous groups, Mayan coffee producers and the history of coffee from plantation to fair-trade, education, and the effects of neo-liberalism on the indigenous populations.</p> <p>Most of the students were successful at producing a paper in which they demonstrated knowledge of the cultural</p>	<p>We are looking at how to offer more writing practice for our majors before they take the capstone course to hopefully eliminate any “not achieving” projects.</p> <p>In our 100 level courses, we plan to integrate more writing into the courses, where we can address the topics of writing a good thesis statement, research methods, citing correctly and writing a clear and concise essay.</p>

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			<p>heritage and diversity of Latin America. However, some of the students' writing skills hindered their ability to produce a clear and concise essay. A few students' papers we categorized as "high achieving", most as "achieving" with only a few "not-achieving". In the most successful papers, it is evident that students are utilizing knowledge from other courses within our major, which is a goal of this assessment project.</p>	
<p>2013 – 2014</p>	<p>SLO 6: Graduates will develop an understanding of the economic, political, cultural, ideological and environmental impact of globalization on the region.</p>	<p>We assessed the final research paper in LAST 495, our capstone seminar. This course is offered every spring, and all majors and minors must take it. Therefore, we believe that this is the best class and assignment for assessment.</p> <p>Professor Steve Lewis assigned a twelve to fifteen page paper on the topic of Indigenous people in Latin America. This was the main theme of the spring 2014 course.</p> <p>The process for the paper was as follows: Students turned in a 2-3 page prospectus and bibliography. 25 points</p>	<p>Steve Lewis and Sarah Anderson reviewed ten of the papers.</p> <p>All of the papers dealt with the indigenous populations of Latin America. However, the scope and topic of the papers varied greatly. The majority of the papers focused on one region or country. Some of the topics covered were: Indian policy in Brazil, Ethnographic film in Brazil, Marginalization of indigenous populations in Costa Rica, The new urban Mapuche Identity in Chile, Indigenous Identity construction in Ecuador, Indians and Alcohol in Chiapas, The Charrúa of Uruguay, Accusations against the Summer Institute of Linguistics missionaries and their role in the conversion of indigenous</p>	<p>We are looking at how to offer more writing practice for our majors, where we guide them through the writing process. The three-step process used for this assignment produced good results. We would like to implement a similar strategy in our lower division courses so that students develop not only their own writing skills but also the ability to offer constructive criticism to other writers through the peer edit process. We believe this will yield even higher quality work by the time students reach the 495 course.</p>

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		<p>Two weeks later students turned in an 8 page rough draft. Peer editing was done in class. Students received a grade and significant comments for this first draft. These were worth 25 points.</p> <p>The final draft of the paper was worth 150 points. Students also prepared a brief presentation on their research.</p>	<p>groups from Catholic to Protestant.</p> <p>Most of the students were successful at producing a paper in which they demonstrated knowledge of the indigenous group and therein analyzed political, economic and environmental issues that have impacted these communities due to globalization.</p> <p>Of the papers included in this assessment, we categorized four as “high achieving”, five as “achieving” and only one as few “not achieving”.</p> <p>In the best papers, it is clear that students are utilizing knowledge from other courses within our major, which is a goal of this assessment project.</p>	
2014 – 2015	<p>SLO 1: Graduates will have the ability to communicate effectively about the history, geography, political and economic systems, achievements in literature and the arts, cultural characteristics and current events of the region. *Students can write a coherent essay on two or more of the domains and/or make an effective oral</p>	<p>We assessed the final research paper in LAST 495, our capstone seminar. This course is offered every spring, and all majors and minors must take it. Therefore, we believe that this is the best class and assignment for assessment. Professor Steve Lewis assigned a twelve to fifteen page paper on the topic of Indigenous people and</p>	<p>Jacque Chase and Sarah Anderson reviewed nine of the papers. All of the papers dealt with the indigenous populations of Latin America. However, the scope and topic of the papers varied greatly. A few of the papers focused primarily on one country while the others compared and contrasted one theme in multiple countries. Some of the topics covered: Loss of linguistic diversity in</p>	<p>We are planning on meeting as a faculty in the fall to address this very topic. We are concerned that our second language learners, in particular, are not developing the writing skills necessary to be successful in our capstone course. One of the ideas we discussed in an informal meeting between Jacque Chase, Steve Lewis and Sarah Anderson was the need to communicate more as a faculty as to how we are implementing writing in our courses. Furthermore, we questioned how we can as a group, strategize methods and procedures</p>

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	presentation with broad regional and temporal space.	policy in Latin America. This was the main theme of the spring 2015 course. The process for the paper was as follows: Students turned in a 2-3 page prospectus and bibliography. 25 points. Two weeks later students turned in an 8 page rough draft. Peer editing was done in class. Students received a grade and significant comments for this first draft. These were worth 25 points. The final draft of the paper was worth 150 points. Students also prepared a brief presentation on their research.	Indigenous populations due to 16th century Spanish infiltration and modern day globalization, The Tarahumara of Northern Mexico, The relationship between drug trafficking in Peru, Colombia and Central America on local Indigenous populations, The exploitation of the Yanomamo tribe of the Amazon Rainforest, a study of the urban versus rural Mapuche of Chile and the 1940 Inter-American meeting of indigenistas from all of Latin America. Some of the students were successful at producing a paper in which they demonstrated knowledge of the indigenous group as well as an understanding of the history, geography, political and economic systems of the region. It was clear that students had utilized background knowledge gained in other Latin American Studies courses to develop their ideas for these papers, which is a goal of this assessment project. Of the papers included in this assessment, we categorized three as "high achieving", three as "achieving" and three as "not-achieving" (i.e., 33% High Achieving; 33% Achieving; 33% Not Achieving).	to strengthen the writing skills of all of our students, but most importantly, our second language learners. We also discussed the possibility of converting one of our lower division course offerings, either LAST 110 or LAST 120 into a Writing Intensive (W.I.) course. Our task is complicated by that fact that LAST is mostly a GE major and our caps in our classes are high. This makes it difficult to teach writing. Furthermore, most LAST students have another major. When that other major teaches writing, the students tend to do well in our classes. But when the other major does not (like Business), or when it does not teach writing in English (like Spanish), the students are not likely to do well in LAST 495.
2015 – 2016	SLO 1 (reassessment): Graduates will have the	We are revisiting SLO 1 to look more carefully at	Sarah Anderson and Steve Lewis reviewed eight papers. Even	While we were encouraged to read that our students are grasping the content and are

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	<p>ability to communicate effectively about the history, geography, political and economic systems, achievements in literature and the arts, cultural characteristics and current events of the region.</p> <p>*Students can write a coherent essay on two or more of the domains and/or make an effective oral presentation with broad regional and temporal space.</p>	<p>writing in different cultural contexts. In May 2015, the LAST program assessed the final research paper in LAST 495, our capstone seminar. To meet the new assessment requirements, we chose to assess six-page papers written by LAST students in Steve Lewis's upper-division GE course on modern Mexico (HIST 350/LAST 350). We ended up assessing eight papers on the Mexican Revolution and its legacy.</p>	<p>though HIST 382/LAST 350 is clearly a History class, the papers dealt with geography (regional differences within Mexico) and politics. Some of the papers also talked about the arts (Muralism, Frida Kahlo, film) and religion (official anticlericalism and resistance to this policy). It is clear that students had been exposed to these topics in earlier courses, as they were able to integrate this content into a historical paper. Of the papers included in this assessment, we categorized two as "high achieving", six as "achieving" and none as "not-achieving". 25% High Achieving; 75% Achieving; 0% Not achieving</p>	<p>able to apply and cite course content as they formulate arguments, some of the writing itself was unacceptably bad. It is worth noting that every one of the students whose writing we assessed has a Hispanic surname and struggles to a greater or lesser degree with their writing in English. We are concerned that our second language learners, in particular, are not developing appropriate writing skills. In our LAST program meetings, we have discussed the need to communicate more as a faculty as to how we are implementing writing in our courses. Furthermore, we have questioned how we can, as a group, strategize methods and procedures to strengthen the writing skills of all of our students, but most importantly, our second language learners. Our task is complicated by that fact that LAST is mostly a GE major and our caps in our classes are high. This makes it difficult to teach writing. Furthermore, most LAST students have another major. When that other major teaches writing, the students tend to do well in our classes. But when the other major does not (like Business), or when it does not teach writing in English (like Spanish), the students are not likely to do well in LAST 495.</p>
<p>2016 – 2017</p>	<p>SLO 4: Graduates will be aware of the cultural heritage and diversity among the people of the region. *Students can describe, contrast and summarize patterns of cultural diversity and/or</p>	<p>We assessed the final research paper in LAST 495, our capstone seminar. This course is offered every spring, and all majors and minors must take it. Therefore, we believe that this is the best class and</p>	<p>When Jacque Chase received the papers from LAST 495, the professor of that course, Matt Looper, had already sorted the papers into three groups of achievement as shown in the last column: Highly achieving: 4 papers</p>	<p>Cultural diversity is a core concept in Latin American Studies curricula. It is introduced and practiced throughout courses in the major and thus we have an expectation that students can explore, identify and clearly express patterns and issues of cultural identity, including hybrid and syncretic manifestations of culture, in the region</p>

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	<p>heritage in at least two regions of Latin America.</p>	<p>assignment for assessment.</p> <p>Professor Matt Looper assigned a 7-8 page paper on the topic of indigenous and colonial art. Students were required to incorporate specific readings into their papers and the professor asked them to address a set of questions and to fully document their research. The assignment was focused on the colonial period, and on relations between Spanish colonial society and indigenous culture and society. Concepts of hybridity and syncretism were expected to be incorporated.</p> <p>Our assessment attempted to focus only on the content related to cultural diversity, as detailed below in our simple scoring rubric, and to suspend attention to writing skills.</p> <p>Highly achieving—reference to cultural diversity is clearly stated and explained, with appropriate examples and with thorough development of historic, cultural, and geographic bases of diversity.</p>	<p>Achieving: 5 papers Developing: 4 papers Jacque Chase removed references to these previous results and read each paper. Although she did have knowledge of each paper’s author, she assigned scores independently, without observing the scores assigned by Dr. Looper.</p> <p>Chase’s summary scores were as follows:</p> <p>Highly achieving: 7 papers Achieving: 4 papers Developing: 2 papers</p> <p>Chase upgraded four scores but otherwise agreed with Dr. Looper’s assessments (in no case did Chase assign lower scores).</p> <p>Dr. Sarah Anderson independently reviewed the four papers that Chase and Looper did not agree on. As a result, the scores were revised to this final distribution:</p> <p>Highly Achieving: 4 papers Achieving: 6 papers Developing: 3 papers</p> <p>See Column 5 of this document for a discussion of how an</p>	<p>(historically and in the present, with important geographic variation).</p> <p>To what extent are conceptual limitations related to writing abilities? We will continue to focus on helping students improve their writing. Writing was assessed last year and about 1/3 of students did not achieve minimum standards for writing. The ability to express complex ideas is compromised by poorly developed writing skills. Even though we might try to ignore “surface errors,” the writer is hampered by the inability to write with fluency and nuance. Writing and thinking are not separate activities.</p>

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		<p>Achieving—cultural diversity is implied or partially explained, with some examples and some historic, cultural and geographic references mentioned or discussed</p> <p>Developing --cultural diversity is not mentioned or acknowledged; Or, substantial confusion about historic, cultural, and geographic foundations of cultural diversity.</p> <p>The papers were scored by Dr. Looper (the instructor), Dr. Chase, and by Dr. Anderson. Dr. Anderson was not able to see authors' names, nor did she know either of the other professor's scores. Dr. Chase did know the identity of the authors but did not know Dr. Looper's scores when she was assigning her own scores. She was able to compare her scores to those of Professor Looper for each paper (discussed in next column).</p>	<p>assignment, if stated very clearly, could produce high results.</p> <p>To what degree are the discrepancies a result of (1) the course professor being involved in the assessment; (2) the effect of poor writing on our judgment of students' intellectual mastery of a topic? (3) the expectations of the assignment itself being clearly stated? (In other words, would students have achieved or highly achieved at the same level had the assignment been more open ended?)</p>	