

Human Services 2014-2015 Assessment Summary

In 2014-2015, the Human Services program implemented five evaluation measures to assess both student and program outcomes: Alumni Survey, INtopFORM, California Critical Thinking Skills Test (CCTST), Undergraduate Focus Groups, and the Advisory Council. A summary of each of the four measures is listed below.

Alumni Survey: The Alumni Survey was administered to the alumni in order to obtain feedback about the program of study and graduates' perception of how effectively the program met their academic needs. In the Fall of 2014, the faculty developed an Alumni Survey in order to obtain feedback about the Human Services Program. A ListServ of our alumni was created so that we could begin collecting the data from the alumni. The 20 item survey was administered electronically to 183 alumni who graduated from Fall 2010-Fall 2014, to date, 16 surveys have been returned (See Appendix A Alumni Survey and Responses). Note that these alumni graduated prior to a major revision of the curriculum that was done in response to previous feedback and review of the CSHSE standards which was implemented in 2014-2015. In general, alumni indicated that writing and research skills were developed in the program and the skills/opportunities in field experience such as working with others professionally and personally were assets of the program. Additionally, there was a theme of being prepared to transition to graduate programs.

There are three questions from that survey that specifically address feedback regarding the Human Services program of study and perceived level of practitioner preparation:

- **Question #3: Are you currently employed?** 75% of the respondents indicated that they were currently employed
- **Question # 7: Is your job related to your degree in Human Services?** 43% of the respondents indicated that they were employed in a Human Services position; 40% of the respondents indicated that they were not employed in a Human Services position; and 7% are currently enrolled in a graduate program.
- **Question #14 What do you consider the greatest educational information/skills that you obtained in the Human Services degree program that have prepared you for your current position?** The following are some of the replies that were identified by the respondents:
 - *Research and writing skills. Field experience*
 - *Practicum and Internship through the Program helped me solidify what I wanted to do in the future.*
 - *The curriculum was a great transition into counseling classes.*
 - *Counseling education*
 - *My hands on training. I did my internship at my place of employment, and that is what landed me my job.*
 - *None. I do not believe that the degree is useful*
 - *All of the psychology based courses helped me be able to read people and help meet them on their level. Also the family and community classes allowed me to see the importance of relationships*
 - *..... Research Methods class. I learned so much amazing information in that class on how to write and conduct research. This information has been VERY helpful to me in my current master's program.*
 - *I often find that my ability to understand situations from a counseling viewpoint is beneficial in a variety of situations, both professional and personal.*
 - *Courses. The knowledge learned through those helps to work with others*
 - *Public speaking*

- *Working with different populations*
- *none*

Question #17 Please include any other information or comments that may help us to understand your educational experiences in the B.S. in Human Services program. Below are listed some of the responses we received:

- *Would have liked to have assistance finding an internship placements instead of it just being up to me to find*
- *I thoroughly enjoyed the Human Service program, however, I do find it harder to learn in an online class setting.*
- *I would encourage the students to take their internships and practicums seriously, and to do them at places they would eventually like to work. That is how I found my job, and I do LOVE it.*
- *I absolutely loved this major and I am very excited to hear about the changes being made to make it even better!!*
- *I think that there would be a notable benefit to advertising more explicitly the kind of work a Human Services major in each concentration can find after graduating. I remember thinking it was kind of unclear about what I could do with just a BA.*
- *There needs to be more help given to those about to graduate to find a job in their field or at least a good idea of what the individual wants to do after graduation.*
- *I have not been able to gain employment in my field since graduating. I am disappointed at this lack of employment. I want nothing more than to be in a career that helps others and allows me to support my family.*

INtopFORM: INtopFORM, a university initiative, aims to promote excellence in information fluency. Information fluency is a core critical thinking skill. It includes the ability to seek, evaluate, and use diverse sources of information when resolving difficult questions, addressing challenging problems, achieving creative aims, and pursuing new lines of inquiry in scholarly and real-world contexts. Attitudes of curiosity, disciplined skepticism, and independence of thought support all of these abilities. INtopFORM advances the university's foremost mission—preparing students to become productive, enlightened citizens who actively serve their communities and our world. Additionally, these objectives dovetail with the mission and curriculum of the B. S. in Human Services as these knowledge and skills are critical to becoming competent human services professionals who serve a diverse clientele in a variety of settings.

Learning Outcomes:

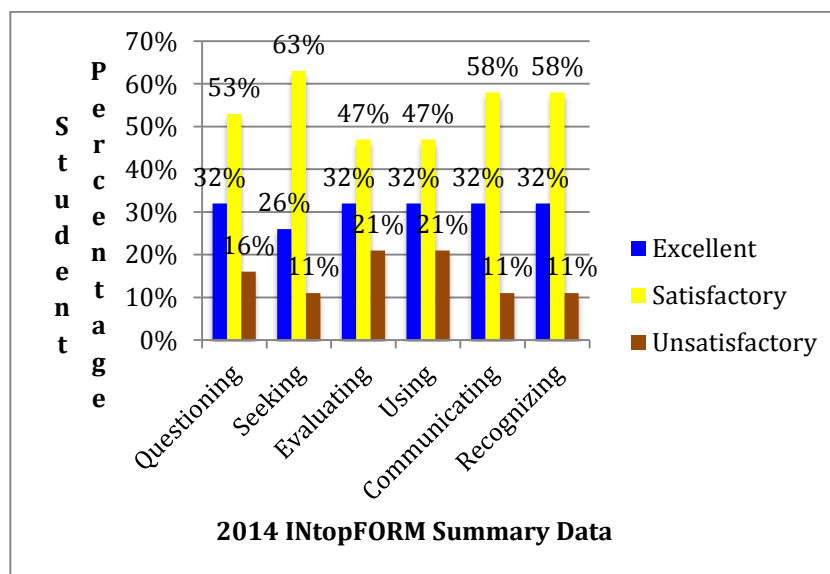
Information fluency encompasses six abilities central to every academic discipline at ETSU and essential for students' professional success and active citizenship:

- **QUESTIONING:** Students ask questions that facilitate the solution of problems and the pursuit of opportunities.
- **SEEKING:** Students identify information sources appropriate to questions of interest.
- **EVALUATING:** Students apply critical thinking skills in evaluating information, information sources, and their own search processes.
- **USING:** Students accumulate, synthesize and/or create information to address questions of interest.
- **COMMUNICATING:** Students communicate information effectively
- **RECOGNIZING:** Students recognize the responsibilities and consequences related to information ethics and intellectual property.

The Human Services program volunteered to participate in the first data collection of the INtopFORM initiative.

HDAL 4950 Research in Learning & Development, a senior level course required of all majors, was identified as the course that would serve as the measure of students' success in the above listed learning outcomes. The course instructor completes the instrument on all students enrolled in the course. Thus, all of our graduates will be evaluated on these learning outcomes. In the Spring of 2014 the baseline data were collected by the HDAL 4950 course instructor. This instrument will continue to be administered in both the Fall and Spring of each subsequent academic year (analysis of the data for 2014-2015 academic year are not yet available). The results of the Fall 2014 data collection are listed below.

- 19 students were enrolled in the course in Fall 2014
- The criteria: excellent, satisfactory, or unsatisfactory was used to evaluate each of the students on the six learning outcomes: the criteria established for the Human Services majors' performance in the capstone course (HDAL 4950) was <90% of the students would achieve rubric ratings demonstrating 'satisfactory' performance on all of the INtopFORM learning outcomes. On the Questioning Learning Outcome 85% of our students met the predetermined criteria; on the Seeking Learning Outcome, 89% of our students met the predetermined criteria; on the Evaluating Learning Outcome, 77% of our students met the predetermined criteria; on the Using Learning Outcome, 77% of our students met the predetermined criteria; on the Communication Learning Outcome, 90% of our students met the predetermined criteria; and on the Recognizing Learning Outcome, 90% of our students met the predetermined criteria.
- The Learning Outcome Measures are summarized in the chart below:



California Critical Thinking Skills Test (CCTST)

The CCTST is the exit exam all graduating seniors must complete. It is also an additional measure of the INtopFORM learning outcomes. Forty-nine Human Services majors completed the CCTST in 2014. The national average for this text in 2014 was 17.1 and the ETSU Mean was 17.00. The College of Education (where Human Services is housed) mean score was 15.63, and the Human Services students' mean score was 14.71. Based on the national CCTST score interpretation, our students' performance was 'moderate'.

Undergraduate Student Focus Group

In the Spring of 2014, a student focus group was scheduled in order to evaluate students' perception of the program. Questions were identified by faculty members and presented to the students in a focus group format including: a) *From the student perspective, what is the human services program like?* b) *What are some of the issues you have with the Human Services program?* c) *What has been the most beneficial to you in these classes?* Ten students were present for the focus group. In general, students find the courses and

program rewarding in terms of focusing on helping others. They indicated that they believed the faculty care about the students and the quality of program. In terms of issues, there was a focus on course delivery in terms of online vs on-ground with varying concerns. One theme is the need for consistent (better) distance communication.

Site Supervisors' Perceptions of Human Services Students

The Human Services collect data from the field supervisors who evaluate the students enrolled in both HDAL 4710 Human Services Practicum and HDAL 4720 Human Services Internship. The data presented below were collected on these two courses in Spring 2015.

In general, the site supervisors were pleased with the performance of the interns and described them as conscientious and diligent and energetic. As to recommendations for preparation, focus on professionalism was highlighted in terms of office attire and maintaining focus on the work. Interns are also encouraged to take initiative.

Advisory Council

At the 2015 Advisory Council meeting, the members discussed important concepts learned/taught in the human services program, the competencies in which students may be least prepared, their perspectives of the changes to the curriculum, ways in which students are prepared for the intensity of field experiences, general advice from the field for students, and job opportunities/placement experiences. In general, the focus on communication skills, developing relationships and reflection were considered vital concepts in the program. Students felt least prepared for the intensity of the workforce. In terms of changes to the curriculum, the focus on the field experience was strong as well as the implementation of new courses. Council members recommended that students experience diverse field experiences to expand their networking, exposure and skills. The importance of instructor site visits was also mentioned. It was the view of the council that the degree is relevant to a variety of job opportunities and that there were several opportunities for work in a related job.

PROGRAM RESPONSE to Summary of Findings:

As part of our assessment plan, faculty members scrutinize the results as a method of implementing program improvement.

Process:

Based on a review of the process of our assessment plan as well as a review of CSHSE standards and feedback from alumni, students, and our constituents, we intend to make the following changes in program processes:

- Update the alumni surveys and develop a plan to increase response rate
- Add site supervisor and employer surveys to assess program goals
- We continue to examine our field placement process, sites, support for, and communication with, field experience supervisors, and record keeping of field hours. We are exploring the possibility of requesting university support for a field experience coordinator.
- Based on program enrollment data, we are working with the department to focus on recruitment of underrepresented groups (racial/ethnic diversity and gender diversity).

Outcomes:

- Based on feedback from sites and alumni, we are focusing on the development of the key communication skills of active listening and empathy in our next evaluation cycle
- Based on results of our evaluation of learning outcomes reflecting information literacy and critical thinking, we are focusing on implementing steps to improve these outcomes (i.e., INtopFORM). Steps will include designating a specific time for students to take the CCTST exam; linking human services knowledge and skills directly to critical thinking and information literacy skills and including in course assignments and assessments.