Central Washington University
Assessment of Student Learning
Department and Program Report

Academic Year of Report: 2009-2010
College: Arts and Humanities
Department: Asia/Pacific Studies
Program: Asia/Pacific Studies Major and Minor

1. What student learning outcomes were addressed?

Programmatic educational goal. The program will encourage an understanding and appreciation of the diverse traditions, perspectives, and ideas in the Asia/Pacific region. This is related to CWU Goal 1, which is to “maintain and strengthen an outstanding academic and student life on the Ellensburg campus,” as well as Goal IV, to “Promote intellectual inquiry and encourage civility.” CAH goals met include SL Goal 1: “Ensure that students develop disciplinary specific competencies”; SL Goal 2: “Improve students’ knowledge of human cultures”; SL Goal 3: “Facilitate disciplinary and interdisciplinary integrative learning”; and SL Goal 5: “Enhance students’ civic knowledge and engagement locally and globally.”

Outcome 1. Students will demonstrate an understanding of the Asia/Pacific region’s diversity. This outcome is related to the programmatic goal 1, which is to encourage an understanding and appreciation of the diverse traditions, perspectives, and ideas in the Asia/Pacific region. Likewise it is related to CWU Goal 1, which is to “maintain and strengthen an outstanding academic and student life on the Ellensburg campus.” It is related to four CAH goals: SL Goal 1: Ensure that students develop disciplinary specific competencies”; SL Goal 2: “Improve students’ knowledge of human cultures”; SL Goal 3: “Facilitate disciplinary and interdisciplinary integrative learning”; SL Goal 5: “Enhance students’ civic knowledge and engagement locally and globally.”

Outcome 2. Students will demonstrate the ability to engage the study of the Asia/Pacific region from an interdisciplinary perspective. This outcome is related to programmatic goal #2, which is to provide a foundation for the interdisciplinary study of Asia/Pacific. It is related to CWU Goal 1, which is to “maintain and strengthen an outstanding academic and student life on the Ellensburg campus,” as well as Goal IV, to “Promote intellectual inquiry and encourage civility.” It also meets CAH student learning goals SL Goal 3: “Facilitate disciplinary and interdisciplinary integrative learning” and SL Goal 4: “Develop students’ intellectual and practical skills.”

2. How were they assessed?

Programmatic goal. Assessed through the senior exit survey, in which 67% of students answering the exit survey mark “4” or higher for question #4, and required coursework, within which at least 85% of majors/minors receive a C or better in required courses. It is also assessed through student participation in study abroad experiences, with at least 5% taking advantage of CWU opportunities.
Outcome 1. Assessed through the senior exit survey, in which 67% of students answering the exit survey mark “4” or higher for question #4, and required coursework, within which at least 85% of majors/minors receive a C or better in required courses.

Outcome 2. At least 85% of majors/minors receive a C or better in required courses. 67% of students answering the exit survey mark “4” or higher for question #3. At least 85% of majors/minors receive a C or better in AST 102.

3. What was learned?

General observation.
Of thirteen exit surveys distributed, 54% or seven were returned. This sample does provide adequate data for inclusion. We would like to note that the higher rate of return is a result of a much stronger effort on the part of the program to administer the survey. Last year only one student returned the survey. This year the program director called all graduates to ask for the students to return the survey.

Programmatic educational goal.
The programmatic education goal is directly assessed in the Exit Survey in Question #4 (“How would you rate your ability to recognize and engage with the regional diversity of the Asia/Pacific region?”) where 67% of students answering the exit survey must mark “4” or higher. 100% of those surveyed marked either 4 or 5, with an average survey result of 4.42. Results display that the program is providing a solid overview into the region’s tremendous diversity from China to Indonesia.

By and large, Asia/Pacific majors and minors performed very well in the program’s core courses. As noted above, given the options that students have in both their core requirements and electives, overall GPA’s were compiled for all current and graduating majors and minors. The average GPA for core courses for the 26 students for whom data was available was 3.134.

Asia/Pacific Studies students far exceed program expectations for participating in study abroad experiences. Majors and minors alike take full advantage of the International Study opportunities afforded by Central Washington University, including both long- and short-term programs. Of the thirteen graduates, 77% (20) have some type of Asia-related study abroad experience. Several have spent at least a quarter or more studying in either Japan or China, with the remainder participating in faculty-led programs to such destinations as Southeast Asia, India, and China. Some of this success is undoubtedly linked to the fact that some of our majors and minors are also Chinese or Japanese language majors, who are required by their program to study abroad, but just as many understand the need to experience the Asia being studied first-hand. While we have not formally surveyed our students as to the benefits of study abroad, anecdotal evidence suggests that they gain both value added elements to their education, and return to CWU prepared to utilize that experience in the classroom.

Outcome 1
Outcome 1 is directly assessed in the Exit Survey in Question #4 (“How would you rate your ability to recognize and engage with the regional diversity of the Asia/Pacific region?”) where 67% of students answering the exit survey must mark “4” or higher. 100% of those surveyed marked either 4 or 5, with an average survey result of 4.42.

Asia/Pacific majors and minors performed very well in the program’s core courses. Overall GPA’s were compiled for all current and graduating majors and minors in their core course requirements, which include two years of foreign language (Chinese or Japanese) and upper-division courses in Geography (475), Political Science (366), and History (380 or 383). The average GPA for core courses for the 26 students for whom data was available was 3.134. Students with a 2.0 or better GPA in required core courses totaled 94% (25 of 26).

Given the difficulty of the language courses required of our majors and minors (two years of either Chinese or Japanese for majors, one year for minors), and the tendency for students to have lower overall GPA’s in those courses, the program believes this is an outstanding record of student achievement and is satisfied that our majors and minors are emerging from the program with a solid grasp of the program’s desired academic content. This is buttressed by the fact that both the core and elective requirements are for the most part upper division courses in academic disciplines foreign to our students’ previous training. In other words, our majors and minors find themselves in upper division courses in disciplines such as Political Science, History, Religious Studies, etc., for which they have little previous exposure. In addition, they are classes dominated for the most part by discipline specific majors and minors. Therefore, it is our conclusion that A/PS majors and minors are receiving sufficient training within the program requirements to perform very well in comparison to more advantaged colleagues from the home disciplines.

Outcome 2.
Outcome 2 is directly assessed in the Exit Survey in Question #3 (“How well did the program prepare to engage the study of Asia/Pacific from an interdisciplinary perspective?”) where 67% of students answering the exit survey must mark “4” or higher. 100% of those surveyed marked either 4 or 5, with again an average survey result of 4.42. Results display that the program is providing a solid interdisciplinary curriculum for its majors and minors.

In addition to the information noted above, 26 of 26 students for whom data was available have completed AST 102, the basic introductory course for the major and minor. Once again, our students perform well above expectations in this required course. Of the 26, 96% (25) received a C or better. Indeed, 69% (18) received a grade of A or A-.

Finally, graduates noted a high level of overall satisfaction with the program. Replies to Question #9 (“Please rate your overall satisfaction with your experience in the program.”) again saw 86% (6 of 7) answer with “4” or higher. Average was 4.29.

4. What will the department or program do as a result of that information (feedback/program improvement)?
This assessment report will be distributed to program faculty and discussed at the first meeting for Fall 2010. If an action plan is needed, it will be assigned to the appropriate committee.

Programmatic Educational Goal
Over the course of their academic careers, A/PS students have outperformed programmatic goals for study abroad/international experiences. Subsequent programmatic assessments will focus on annual performance in this area, and we will monitor the frequency of participation by students outside of the foreign language requirement. In addition, we recognize that the academic value of such programs for our students requires more systematic, focused evaluation, and will institute appropriate measures for next year’s assessment plan.

Outcome 1
No shortcoming in programmatic goals was noted. We will continue to coordinate programmatic goals with the faculty teaching the core courses and monitor student performance. Any deficiencies will be addressed by individual faculty.

Outcome 2
A/PS students again perform very well in the Introductory course. As we add new faculty to the rolls of AST 102 instructors (over the past seven years only two faculty have been involved), more coordination of course and programmatic outcomes will be instituted. Various methods of specifically assessing major and minor performance will be explored.

Overall
The program recognizes the shortcomings of its assessment planning up to this point. Improvement was certainly made in the distribution of student surveys, but improvements can be made to distribute in a more efficient manner to ensure an even higher response rate. While overall GPA and course specific GPA’s provide some useful measure of student achievement, they are neither statistically nor pedagogically sufficient to measure actual student learning as relates to the learning goals. Because program faculty numbers have been depleted in the last two years due to sabbatical and other academic release times, we have not been able to collectively determine the best means of future assessment and where that assessment should take place.

One area of concern expressed by students in written comments was a frustration over the regular delivery of core courses. We are in the process of solving that issue through a restructuring of both the major and the minor. Other obvious areas of discussion include instituting an end of the program capstone project, or course; specific assignments to be completed in selected required courses; and other potential means of assessment.

5. How did the department or program make use of the feedback from last year’s assessment?

In conjunction with the results from our recently-completed five-year review, we are in the process of restructuring the major in order to assess student concerns over the availability of core classes. Our old system required that five core courses be offered on a regular basis. This put a great strain on instructors to ensure that the course they were responsible for teaching was
offered regularly. Unfortunately if core-course instructors were on sabbatical or saw their teaching responsibilities reduced owing to administrative assignment, students found it difficult to fulfill requirements. The new system will reduce these pressures on instructors and majors by allowing a much broader selection of courses to stand as core requirements. It also incorporates new coursework in Aesthetic Expression designed by APS faculty.

In order to streamline and provide flexibility, we have proposed to replace the old 63-credit core/elective requirements with a more flexible list of classes determined by discipline. Required classes will now consist of AST 102--Introduction to Asian Studies, two years of either Chinese or Japanese, and, additionally, students will now be required to complete a capstone course, AST 401 for three credits. Required courses will total 33 credits. Majors will then choose a course from one of three disciplines: social sciences, aesthetic experience, and humanities for a total of 13-14 core credits. Remaining credits will be filled via electives from an approved list of classes.
Asia/Pacific Studies
Exit Survey

As you complete your major or minor, we would like to know a few things about what you’ve learned. Please complete this form and return it to the Program Director (Dr. Dippmann L & L 337C).

1. Are you a: Major Minor

2. What is your area of concentration? Chinese Japanese Other

3. How well did the program prepare you to engage the study of Asia/Pacific from an interdisciplinary perspective?
   - 5 Very well
   - 4 Somewhat
   - 3 Not at all
   **Average score: 4.42**

4. How would you rate your ability to recognize and engage with the regional diversity of the Asia/Pacific region?
   - 5 Very strong
   - 4 Fair
   - 3 Poor
   **Average score: 4.42**

5. How would you rate your ability to recognize and engage the interactive nature of the region’s diverse traditions and overarching community of nations?
   - 5 Very strong
   - 4 Fair
   - 3 Poor
   **Average score: 4.42**

6. How much has the program contributed to your engagement with multiple points of view, and an attitude of open-mindedness with regard to those views?
   - 5 A great deal
   - 4 Somewhat
   - 3 Not at all
   **Average score: 4.71**

7. How beneficial to your education and future goals was the language requirement?
   - 5 Very beneficial
   - 4 Somewhat
   - 3 Irrelevant
   **Average score: 4.29**

8. How would you rate your ability to analyze and assess issues from a perspective other than your own?
   - 5 Very strong
   - 4 Fair
   - 3 Poor
   **Average score: 4.42**

9. Please rate your overall satisfaction with your experience in the program:
   - 5 Very satisfied
   - 4 Satisfied
   - 3 Unsatisfied
   **Average score: 4.29**
10. Which of your skills have improved the most, due to your work in this program?

11. What is the most important academic experience you’ve had in this program?

12. What should be done to improve the major/minor?

13. What do you plan on doing in the next few years?

14. The top part of this survey will be detached in order to maintain your anonymity. But we would like to know how to stay in touch with you, so please provide contact information for after graduation:
   - Name:
   - Email address (not your CWU account):
   - Mailing address: