1. What student learning outcomes were assessed this year, and why?

We assessed SLOs related to two of six program goals.

**Goal 1 (Knowledge):** *Primate Behavior and Ecology students will demonstrate basic knowledge of concepts, terminology, and theories relevant to Primatology.*

SLOs 1-3: At least 80% of students will demonstrate “proficiency” (score 4 or 5 on a 5 point scale) in their usage of primatological concepts (SLO 1), terminology (SLO 2), and theories (SLO 3) from a grading rubric applied to a project submitted in ANTH 313 Primate Social Behavior.

**Goal 3 (Skill):** *Primate Behavior and Ecology students will be able to apply and use the scientific method.*

SLO 2: Every PBE student (100%) will participate in a credit-bearing, faculty-mentored research project.

We assessed these particular goals because they enable us to explore knowledge- and skill-related program goals. Primate Social Behavior (ANTH 313) is usually taken soon after the student has declared the major and thus samples students who are early in their experiences with the program. Students are initially exposed to behavioral research during PRIM 220 Intro to Primate Lab Procedures. The advanced research project assessed here occurs during the student’s junior or senior year, and thus samples students who are preparing to graduate from the program. The advanced research project entails greater autonomy in research design, data collection, and analysis and ideally culminates in professional presentation and/or publication of the student’s results.

2. How were they assessed?
   2a. What methods were used?

We assessed the SLOs related to Goal 1 using a *rubric* for the assigned project. Students were assessed on a 5 point scale, with 4-5 considered “proficient”, for their use of terms, concepts, and theories in primatology in the project.
Participation in a faculty-mentored research project is a hallmark of the PBE program and of the CWU experience. This research experience enables students to hone their skills using the scientific method. We used Plan of Study forms to check how many of the eight students graduating between fall 2009 and summer 2010 completed an advanced research project, and what type of project (internship, research at CHCI, research abroad, or other) occurred.

2b. Who was assessed?

Twenty five students were enrolled in ANTH 313 Primate Social Behavior. We reviewed the Plan of Study forms for the eight students who graduated August 2009-June 2010.

2c. When was it assessed?

Goal 1 and its three accompanying SLOs were assessed during fall quarter 2009, when 25 students were enrolled in ANTH 313 Primate Social Behavior.

Goal 3.SLO 2 was assessed at the end of spring 2010 based on the list of PBE students graduating between August 2009 and June 2010.

3. What was learned?

Goal 1.SLO 1-3: At least 80% of students will demonstrate proficiency (score 4 or 5) in their usage of primate conceptual (1), terminology (2), and theories (3) from a grading rubric applied to a project submitted in ANTH 313 Primate Social Behavior.

The goals set in SLOs 1-3 were not met. Students were asked to write a 5-page review of a popular (fictional) movie that focused on nonhuman primates. They were required to compare how the primate was portrayed in the film to what they had learned about its biology and behavior in class and/or in the text. Students were graded on a 5 point scale on their ability to accurately apply primate conceptual theories, concepts, and terminology in their comparison of fiction and reality. Only 76% (19/25) of students scored 4 or 5 on these aspects of the assignment. Six students (24%) fell below this standard. This latter number included two students who did not turn in the assignment.

Goal3.SLO 2: Every PBE student (100%) will participate in a credit-bearing, faculty-mentored, advanced research project.

The goal set in SLO 2 was met. Eight students (100%) participated in faculty mentored research projects and enrolled in courses numbered PRIM 320, 495A, 495C, and/or 490. These advanced research courses build on scientific skills developed earlier in the program in PRIM 220 Intro to Primate Lab Procedures. Many graduating students engaged in more than one such experience, with an average of 2.5 courses completed per student. Projects were based at CHCI (7 of 8 students) and at the molecular genetics lab in the anthropology department (1 of 8 students). Three of 8 students also had faculty-mentored research experiences through the McNair Scholars program (all based at CHCI). One student won an award for outstanding student presentation at SOURCE,
based on research she completed in the molecular genetics lab. Four of the eight students presented their work at SOURCE and/or at other professional venues.

4. **What will the department or program do as a result of that information?**

This assessment report will be provided to all program faculty, and we will meet early during fall quarter 2010 to discuss the results and to lay the ground work for assessing other goals.

During our fall meeting, I will recommend that we spend the coming year developing the capstone course (PRIM 450) to focus on students’ disposition and values, an area which has not yet been assessed.

5. **What did the department or program do in response to last year’s assessment information?**

We developed rubrics to be used in select courses that cover primatological concepts, terminologies, and theories to enable us to assess students’ knowledge. We began applying rubrics in these courses. We collected data on each student’s exposure to the scientific method (skill) from the program’s beginning (PRIM 220) to its end (PRIM 320, 495A, 495C, 490), including professional presentation of the student’s work at SOURCE or other venues.

6. **Questions or suggestions concerning assessment of student learning at Central Washington University**

None.

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