Family Studies Program Assessment, 2010-2011

**Goal #1 -**
Family Studies majors will develop strong critical thinking skills.

**Associated Outcome**
Family Studies majors will demonstrate abstract and critical thinking skills in applying Family Systems concepts to family problems and interventions.

**Measurement Strategy**
Family Studies students will be required to submit a research paper in FCSF 334 demonstrating critical integration of theory, research and practice. Rubric for assessment indicates that a level of “proficient” for this assignment requires that “all theoretical principles are explained accurately”, “each of the theoretical principles are used to explain the thesis of the paper” and that “the application of the principles to the thesis is accurate and clearly explained”.

**Performance Objective**
It is expected the 80% of students will score at the level of “proficient”

**Results**
A total of 29 Family Studies majors were assessed for critical thinking skills in FS 334 in the Winter 2011. For “all theoretical principles are explained accurately” 5 students scored “excellent”, 21 students scored “proficient”, and 3 students scored below proficient. 89% of students scored proficient or higher.

For “each of the theoretical principles are used to explain the thesis of the paper” 3 students scored “excellent”, 20 students scored “proficient”, and 6 students scored below proficient. 79% of students scored proficient or higher.

For “the application of the principles to the thesis is accurate and clearly explained” 4 students scored “excellent”, 22 students scored “proficient”, and 1 student scored below proficient. 96% of students scored proficient or higher.

These results suggest that Family Studies majors are learning strong critical thinking skills. For the few students who are scoring below expectations, the family studies faculty will invest in strategies to increase access to critical thinking activities, and provide out of the classroom help to students who are struggling. It seems as though the 80% threshold can be increased to 90% for next years assessment.
Goal #3 -
Family Studies majors will demonstrate excellent relationship and interpersonal skills.

Associated Outcome
Family Studies students will be able to demonstrate Empathy, Ownership of Feelings, and Conflict Resolution Skills effectively.

Measurement Strategy
Family Studies majors will be required to complete a journal and reflection paper analyzing their own relationship communication in FCSF 235. Rubric for assessment indicates that a level of “proficient” of both ownership and empathy includes
- Description of the nature and purpose of empathy is accurate and complete
- Description of the nature and purpose of ownership is accurate and complete
- Levels of empathy (QRST) are explained with a description of their effectiveness
- Levels of ownership (QRST) are explained with a description of their effectiveness
- Examples from journals are accurately identified as QRST with clear explanation
- All levels of responses are addressed
- Examples from journals are accurately identified as QRST with clear explanation
- All levels of responses are addressed

Open ended exam questions will assess skill at conflict resolution. Rubric for assessment indicates that a level of “proficient” of both ownership and empathy includes
- All of the steps for conflict resolution are listed and clearly integrated with problem
- Answer demonstrates creativity and flexibility where appropriate
- Answer clearly reflects an understanding that conflict resolution must dig deeper to the “why” of each issue

Performance Objective
It is expected the 80% of students will score at the level of “proficient”.

Results
A total of 25 family studies majors participated in the assessment for goal 3 in 2010-2011. The specific goal and the % of students achieving the outcome level of “proficient” or higher follows:

- Description of the nature and purpose of empathy is accurate and complete 93%
- Description of the nature and purpose of ownership is accurate and complete 88%
- Levels of empathy (QRST) are explained with a description of their effectiveness 93%
- Levels of ownership (QRST) are explained with a description of their effectiveness 93%
- Examples from journals are accurately identified as QRST with clear explanation 80%
- All levels of responses are addressed 96%
- Examples from journals are accurately identified as QRST with clear explanation 76%
- All levels of responses are addressed 96%
- All of the steps for conflict resolution are listed and clearly integrated with problem 84%
- Answer demonstrates creativity and flexibility where appropriate 60%
- Answer clearly reflects an understanding that conflict resolution must dig deeper to the “why”
of each issue  72%

These results suggest that family studies majors are proficient at communication skills such as demonstrating empathy and owning feelings. They also suggest that further work needs to be done to train students on skills of conflict resolution. The family studies faculty will examine the curriculum, and investigate options for increasing training and experience with conflict resolution, either in the FS 235 class, or integrated into another required course.

One barrier to achievement of this outcome is that many family studies majors take this course from the psychology department, where the course does not focus on relationship and interpersonal skills. It is recommended that a course be constructed that focuses on this content and is required by all family studies majors.
Goal # 6-
Family Studies majors will be well prepared for professional or volunteer service in Family Life Education.

Associated Outcome
Family Studies majors will graduate with all of the qualifications to be certified as Family Life Educators by the National Council on Family Relations.

Measurement Strategy
Student transcripts will be evaluated at graduation to determine if all of the curricular requirements have been met per NCFR standards.

Performance Objective
It is expected the 90% of students will complete the requirements for CFLE certification

Results
Of 15 students completing the Family Studies curriculum in 2010-2011, the requirements for CFLE certification were met by 14 of them 93%. The one student who did not meet criteria was due to an inappropriate course substitution, which would not have been permitted if it had been shown to the program coordinator. With changes in the family studies curriculum this year, it is reasonable to expect a 100% threshold for next year's assessment.