

# Wright College Academic Department/Program Assessment project Results Fall 2017

## What?

The biology department is in the process of assessing how students develop and demonstrate an understanding of ethical values, life goals, and interpersonal skills that will prepare them for life-long learning, and how our student learning outcomes (SLO's) are linked to the Colleges' educational mission. The goal of this year is designate specific course level activities as assessment tools, and then collect data to assess how our students are meeting this SLO. By the end of the fall semester we have collected data across our courses and are using these results in to institute meaningful change.

---

## Why?

The biology department is currently examining how well our department SLO's link with the College SLO's, and this year we are examining how our students develop and demonstrate an understanding of ethical values, life goals, and interpersonal skills. In our previous assessment activities we have determined that we need to build a stronger culture of assessment in our courses and in our department. With this fourth assessment project we continued to develop such a culture by using the same methodology to devise and analyze leaning assessments as we had used for previous SLOs.

---

## How?

All full-time faculty met in August 2017 to discuss how to implement our departmental assessment project for the current year (College SLO #4). In keeping with past semesters we chose to utilize classroom elements (labs, tests, etc.) as assessment tools, which continues to develop our long-term goal of building a culture of assessment in our department. Each course has a designated coordinator, and each coordinator has been tasked with identifying an assessment tool and a submitting a plan of how this tool will be used to assess SLO#4. To assist in this effort we as a department consulted our SLO map, which connects the college SLO's to our department SLO's, which in turn are linked to course specific SLO's. From our course specific SLO's we then selected coursework-based assessment tools. Each coordinator was the responsible for analyzing the results of their assessments and reporting back using a standardized form. These results then served as the basis for potential changes to be implemented in the spring 2018 semester.

---

## What we found so far

The goal of this project is to collect data in order to assess how our students are meeting SLO#4 (develop and demonstrate an understanding of ethical values, life goals, and interpersonal skills). For the majority of courses they were able to report their results and

possible changes needed if required. For Bio 121 a lab on the scientific method was used in measure SLO4. From approximately 500 students who participated over 99% passed this activity. As such no interventions are planned for Bio 121 in the spring. For Bio 122 a presentation activity was selected as an assessment. Upon analysis students in Bio 122 met the success criteria for this presentation assessment so no changes are planned for spring 2018. In Bio 114, and in Bio 115 a survey of career goals was implemented in the beginning of the semester. For Bio 114 the results indicated that students were thinking about and prepared for lifelong learning and as such no intervention was required. However, in Bio 115 the results were lower than the selected benchmark so a revised survey is being prepared for the spring 2018 semester. In Bio 119 students were asked to prepare a short paper regarding ethical values in relation to the environment. These results are still being analyzed, and if necessary changes to the course will be made. For Bio 226 and Bio 227 these classes are currently under revision in regards to course SLOs, lecture content, final exam questions, etc., and as such there were no selected assessments until these activities are complete. Finally, for Micro 233, a lab was selected to serve as an assessment tool. This particular lab involved the development of skills related to using a microscope, which will carry over to other courses and/or careers in the scientific field. The success rate for this lab was higher than the selected benchmark rate so no further interventions are required. In spring 2018 these assessments will be looked at again and data collected. For those courses that did not require an intervention we will look to see if success rates persist, and for classes that required an intervention we shall see if proposed changes worked as intended.