

Wright College Academic Department/Program Assessment Project Fall 2017

WHAT?

Describe the purpose of this assessment project.

A survey was constructed to determine if students completed assignments or projects that required incorporating information obtained from outside sources and to what extent did students learn how to ethically incorporate across the varying disciplines represented in the Visual & Performing Arts Department. All instructors (adjunct and full-time) teaching a class within the Visual and Performing Arts Department were asked to post the survey link to Blackboard for students to access easily and complete.

WHY?

Describe your department/program's reasons for taking on this project and the areas of your department/program that are involved.

VPA wanted to examine and ensure that each discipline had its own way of providing students with the general exposure to "understanding ethical values, life goals and interpersonal skills that will prepare students for life-long learning, employability and effective citizenship" as articulated within the department's general education requirement. To explore "ethical values" for all disciplines within VPA, it was decided that the survey items address the common academic issues of citing sources and avoiding plagiarism.

HOW?

Describe the participants, methods, and the timeline for this project.

The survey consisted of five items asking each participant to answer questions based within the context of the VPA class that provided the survey link. Survey items asked students to what extent (if any) they encountered assignments that required borrowing information from other sources and if instructions included how to ethically cite information. The survey also explored if the class provided opportunities for group interactions and if they believed the lessons of the course had a practical or "real world application" that would be beneficial to them later in life. Surveys were completed by students in Fall 2017.

WHAT WE FOUND

1. Describe the way in which your department/program will collect results.
2. Provide the results.

76 students completed the survey. The vast majority of these participants reported being enrolled in either a Speech, Art or Music class. Specifically, Speech had 32 respondents, while Art and Music were represented by 19 and 15 students respectively.

Understandably, these three main disciplines represented in the survey have very different ways of approaching academic course content and as a result they have unique assessment tools to best indicate student learning. Based on that notion, we may assume that disciplines/classes with more research-based assignments will also require students incorporate borrowed information respectively and thoroughly. Our survey results reflected this idea as students from Speech indicated that they had assignments and incorporated outside sources much more often than students from Art and Music classes. In fact, 87% of students from Speech indicated they utilized outside sources “more than once” or “regularly” where as most students from Music responded with “never” or “once” to the same question.

Moving forward, VPA should determine a way of measuring “ethical values” that can cross the curriculum and effectively represent ‘general education.’

