Students Learning Assessment Report for 2016-2017

Faculty Arts and Sciences   **Department** Humanities

SECTION I: Mission and Student Learning Outcomes (Graduating Student Profile)
State the department's mission and list the student learning outcomes (graduating student profile).

Mission
The mission of the Department of Humanities is to cultivate an appreciation of the diversity of human culture by examining and analyzing the artistic and intellectual achievements of humanity. The Department endeavors to foster students to think critically across disciplines so as to stimulate the development of creative and intellectual curiosity, promote the ability to form sound intellectual judgments and ethical values, and foment creativity and innovation. The faculty of the Humanities Department emphasizes the study of multiple cultural expressions, especially those that open new avenues for research, and how these relate to the Puerto Rican cultural reality. The integration of a liberal, fine arts program with professional learning provides the knowledge, skills, and values needed to be a responsible, successful, and creative citizen.   For the people of Puerto Rico it provides educational programs, public cultural events, and community services that enhance the quality of life.

Student learning outcomes
1.   To provide the humanities majors with a broad, well founded, and solid education that enables them to pursue their academic and professional goals.

2.   To familiarize students with the major intellectual and artistic traditions through an interdisciplinary approach so as to broaden their critical perspective and heighten their appreciation of diverse cultural values through the Introduction to Western Culture course.

3. To provide all the students of the campus with the best humanistic education thus contributing to the cultivation of professionals with a well-rounded, universal perspective.

4.   To promote the importance of the humanities for science, business administration and engineering students through the philosophical study of their ethical and humanistic impact on society.

5. To promote the appropriate environment for the study of, respect for and dialogue about the intellectual, artistic and humanistic enterprise through excellence in teaching.

6.   To promote knowledge of the humanities and the arts through research, publications, symposia, seminars, conferences, colloquia, and other special projects.

7.   To promote and contribute to the cultural life of the Mayagüez campus, of Puerto Rico, and the international community through theatrical and musical performances and art exhibitions.

Graduate Profiles:

Plastic Arts
Graduates of this program become professionals with some technical and theoretical knowledge balanced between the aesthetics, criticism, and history of art. Furthermore, they have developed the skills necessary for the creative execution of ideas of a visual character in traditional and non-traditional media, such as those new media developed with computer technology. This program is directed to prepare and educate the best artists, educators of art and illustrators. The graduate of this program might direct his or her employment search toward various profession, such as: pedagogy, commercial art, medical illustration, graphic illustration, sculpture, painting, and graphic art.

Theory of Art
Graduates of this program develop the perception and the sensibility for esthetic values. They succeed in the appreciation and evaluation of diverse works of art and apply their knowledge to the criticism of art, whose technical, practical, theoretical and esthetic aspects they have studied.   These students can pursue graduate studies in the theory of art, criticism of art, or philosophy. Some become teachers of the history of culture and of art, art critics, directors of museums and galleries, curators and restaurateurs.

Philosophy
Graduates of philosophy have an ample preparation in the history of philosophy and in the formulation of problems and questions that emerge in the context of contemporary life. Students develop rigorous critical thinking skills and skills of argumentation and written and verbal expression, which require innovative reflection about the issues concerning public and private life in the context of a changing and dynamic world such as ours. Students in the philosophy program develop the attitudes of love for truth and a profound respect for, and commitment to, the search for truth that philosophical life requires.

French Language and Literature
The graduate of French Language and Literatures leaves capable of accomplishment in the professional worlds of tourism, travel, editing, publishing, and education, among others. Many graduates continue with graduate studies in French, linguistics, communications, law and international affairs. Students' knowledge of the language, culture, and history of France and francophone countries together with their knowledge of other languages such as English, German and Italian prepare graduates to enter the professional world and to continue postgraduate studies in the diverse disciplines of the humanities.

Comparative Literature
Graduates of Comparative Literature possess multiple skills in reading, writing, oral expression and comparative literary analysis. That is to say, critical problems may be planted and hypotheses proposed that enrich literary studies and cultural reflection on contexts, epochs, and diverse languages. Graduates also exhibit aptitude for the articulation of comparative approaches linked to various disciplines like anthropology, cinema, philosophy, religion, history, sociology. This transdisciplinary focus allows students to opt for various postgraduate programs, so as to be able to exercise successful careers in law, library studies, and editing. Graduates stand out particularly in education and academic research, however, their versatility and command of contents, analytical strategies and theories make them desirable candidates for any professional career.

SECTION II: Student Learning Assessment Results

Sub-section	Content description	Program assessment
Focus of Assessment Project	• What was assessed – a particular skill or content area, a course, or a learning outcome? • How is it related to your department learning outcomes? Be specific.	• The focus of the student learning assessment is to evaluate the use of blogs as a pedagogical device, and in particular to examine their function in critical thinking; thus, this activity assesses how well the HUMA 3111/2 course addresses number 1, 2, 3, and 5 our departmental student learning outcomes.
Justification (data-based)	• What facts (e.g., student performance, faculty evaluations, pre-study) motivated the department/assessment committee to focus on the selected skill/content/outcome(s)?.	• The widespread and increasing use of the internet by professors and students represents a pedagogical challenge. On the one hand, students often use websites to prepare for class activities and assignments without the direction of the professor. A more widespread use of Blogs (a virtual interactive space where students and the instructor can interact outside of class) as course components could facilitate more active participation from students and aid in the development of critical skills.
POPULATION Student Faculty	• What were the numbers of students and faculty members impacted by the project? • Was the focus on all students or on a sub-group of students (e.g., second year students)? • Are the students department majors?	• The project involves the participation of approximately 90 students who are enrolled in the Humanities department basic course (HUMA 3111 and Huma 3112); there is a broad representation of degree majors and years of study. • While our HUMA 3111 and 3112 courses are required for all our majors, the enrollment includes students from other concentrations and faculties; the study was not specifically aimed at students who are in their first or second year, but many in the course are first-year students.

Assessment Cycle	Pre-intervention	• What measures or tools (e.g., pretest, critical thinking essay) were applied to determine the student status on the chosen skill or content before the intervention? • Note: Pre-intervention may be the same as Justification (above)	• Each professor carries out an in-class discussion of the target subject, which includes a short demonstration of how the blog functions as an educative tool. • Part of the pre-intervention includes the design of the blog assignment and rubric (done collaboratively by several faculty members). • As this is a comparative loop, student-work in traditional pedagogical modes (i.e., in a non-digital format) was used as a base of measure.
	Intervention	• What activities (e.g., workshop, lecture) were implemented to improve student performance in the chosen skill or content?	• Students complete a written reflection on the blog that includes 1) a search for new material on the subject, 2) a reflection on the new material, and 3) a peer-review of another student's work. The assignment is designed for the critical interpretation of humanities-related content.
	Post-intervention	• What are the criteria for success and how was the effectiveness of the intervention determined? • What tools (e.g., post-test, post essay, exam) were used to determine student progress on the chosen skill or content? • How were the tools applied and to whom?	• After completing the assignment, students complete an assessment survey about the activity (see anejo). • Faculty and students reviewed the results and discussed their findings; the stakeholders had the opportunity to make observations, recommendations, and suggest future actions based on the findings. • As faculty design course modules (in traditional and digital capacities) and students participate (in conventional and digital activities), the instrument engages both stakeholders—the instructor and students.
Results		• What results were obtained? Indicate date of review. • What do the results imply about the effectiveness of the intervention to improve student learning? • Does performance differ by student group (e.g., gender)?	• (See data.) Perhaps the most striking outcome of the data is that over 90% of students responded in agreement to questions 7 (Does the electronic format offer a more profound learning dynamic than a traditional assignment?), 8 (Was the collaborative dimension of the assignment important to your response?), and 10 (Does having the response in public influence how much attention you gave to the assignment?). These indicate favorable outcomes is digital vis-à-vis conventional formats.

Dissemination of Results	• How, when, and to whom were the results of the assessment project disseminated?	• The results of this assessment loop were made available for members of the department (students, staff, and faculty); the use of blogs will discussed in a division meeting, perhaps resulting in a recommendation that faculty members increase the use of blogs in HUMA courses.
Possible Reasons or Hypotheses	• What are possible explanations for the results, be they positive or negative, e.g., intervention was not effective to improve student performance?	• As nearly all of our students use digital devices each day, the blog format appears to offer a learning environment that corresponds to the culture of this online generation, a circumstance which complements the aims of the assignment. The research segment of the assignment, moreover, seems to contribute to student learning by allowing each person to encounter new material and to express opinions on how it relates to the topic in general. Due to these factors (and the general student preferences for digital materials) in the post-activity survey, students confirm that the online module offers a significant amount of dialogue and interaction, and, possibly, a more lively forum of critical thinking than would be possible in a similar assignment in a traditional learning space. In the context of these data, it appears that the use of blogs could be an excellent strategy for promoting critical thinking in relation to content taken from the internet, as students work more collaboratively and have the opportunity to find their own material. The students' interaction with one-another appears to reinforce the attention that is given to the assignment.
Course of Action	• What actions have been or will be taken based on these results? Will the action require more assessment? Be explicit.	• The department is considering a workshop for HUMA professors that would demonstrate the blog software we have available, make clear their pedagogical potential, and facilitate the implementation (if there is interest in doing so).
Next Assessment Priority	• What do you plan to assess next? Will you continue on this same item or assess a different skill or content?	• The next loop is tentatively being designed for a Philosophy course and will assess critical thinking skills as they are applied to the knowledge to contemporary

		Puerto Rico, in consonance with the goals of our department.
Appendix	• Include copies of all assessment tools (unless distribution is restricted)	• Evaluation sheet, survey, and rubric used in the assessment loop; see: 1_A_Humanities Loop Introduction and Plan 2016 1_B_Humanities Loop Activity and Reponses 2016 1_C_Humanities Post-Loop Survey and Data 2016

Department of Humanities
Student Learning Assessment 2016

Tell Me More is a digital platform for language learning.

Sub-section	Content
Focus of Assessment Project	• The purpose of this student learning assessment loop is to evaluate the pedagogical effectiveness of language courses that involve language-learning software vis-à-vis those without a speech laboratory component as a pedagogical device; this activity endeavors to assess how well the French and Italian courses addresses numbers 1, 2, 3, and 5 of our departmental student learning outcomes.
Justification	• The widespread and increasing use of the web-based and digital-based platforms for language learning represents a challenge for institutions that lack funds for purchasing software licenses. A more widespread use of a sole platform could facilitate more active direction and guidance in the use of the internet resources and aid in the development of critical skills. As our department had access to *Tell Me More* for several terms, this loops will have a comparative dimension that involves students who have had courses with and without such modalities.
Population	• The project involves the participation of approximately 20 students who are enrolled in the Humanities department language courses (FRAN and ITAL) who have taken courses

		both with and without *Tell Me More*; there is a broad representation of degree majors and years of study.
Assessment	**Pre-intervention**	• Faculty members discuss lack of software and how it has influenced their pedagogical techniques and student learning. • Faculty who have used *Tell Me More* compose a survey that examines the nature of student learning in courses that use the program in comparison to sections that do not use any digital lab software.
	Intervention	• Solicit feedback from students about use of *Tell Me More* in their language courses. • Each professor carries out an in-class discussion of the target subject, which includes guidance about the topic and information to submit; students complete an online survey with short answers.
	Post-Intervention	• Faculty discuss survey results with their students and other faculty, and consider new action given the data.
Results		(See data.) Perhaps the most striking outcome of the data is that over half of students responded in disagreement to questions 2 (*Tell Me More* was integral to my acquisition of the target language), 7 (Does the electronic format offer a more profound learning dynamic than a traditional assignment?), 8 (Was the collaborative dimension of the assignment important to your response?). These indicate that while a digital component may be useful, but *Tell Me More* was a platform that students did not associate to their learning process in a positive sense.
Possible Reasons or Hypotheses		Many students complained in the survey as well as during the term that the *Tell Me More* equipment, in particular the microphone, did not function as intended. As the students could not use the platform via smartphone, it was not only limiting but also a time concern, as part of the purpose of the software is to allow students to work independently, without the need to be in any particular location (aside from a quiet space) in order to practice. As nearly all of our students use digital devices each day, the online format of some pedagogical tools appears to offer a learning environment that corresponds to the culture of this connected generation, a circumstance which complements the aims of the department. In a general sense, such platforms seem to have the

	capacity contribute to student learning by allowing each person to encounter new material and express opinions on how it relates to the topic in general, independently and without the anxiety of a classroom setting. However, *Tell Me More* fell short of student expectations. Due to these factors (and the general student preferences for digital materials) in the post-activity survey, students confirm that the online module offers a significant amount of dialogue and interaction, and possibly, a more lively forum of critical thinking and language use than would be possible in a similar assignment in a traditional learning space—but *Tell Me More* was an insufficient tool. In the context of these data, it appears that the use of such programs could be an excellent strategy for promoting critical language use, critical thinking, student retention, and cultural understanding—when the platforms are adequately designed and realized.
Course of action	The results of this assessment loop will be made available for members of the department; the use of digital platforms will discussed in a division meeting, perhaps resulting in a recommendation that faculty members increase the use of an online platform across our language offerings. The department is also considering soliciting external funds for the purchase of such software; alternatively, we are considering a proposal for external funds for a language laboratory.
Next learning assessment closing the loop project	The next loop is tentatively being designed for a Comparative Literature course and will assess critical thinking skills as they are applied to the knowledge to contemporary Puerto Rico, in consonance with the goals of our department.
Appendices	See: 2_A_Humanities Loop Tell me More Survey 2_B_Humanities Loop Tell me More Data

(This activity is presently underway)

Sub-section	Content
Focus of Assessment Project	The purpose of this student learning assessment loop is to evaluate students' critical thinking skills (in particular, their "ability to make informed judgements in computer practice based on legal and ethical principles"); this activity endeavors to assess how well the student learning process in FILO3185 addresses the objectives in critical thinking, in function of the CS Bachelor in the Math Department and the objectives of the Humanities Department. It measures our SLO 1, 2, and 4.
Justification	• Ethics is a field that discusses a set of rules which define correct behavior. These ways of understanding correct behavior are used for moral decision making. Computer ethics is a major issue in information technology and development. Some feel that the process of forming ethical approaches to new technologies needs to be studied in order to address themes like hacking and software piracy, among other legal violations. This assessment instrument attempts to examine the ways computing ethics are studied and learned. The assessment tool uses student reflections and computer-related scenarios as a method to evaluate the students' learning about legal and ethical computing. This activity is relevant and timely, as students often use computing processes to prepare for class activities and assignments, and in their daily lives. A comprehensive reflection on those processes is needed so that students may better apply their knowledge, learning process, and experiences to a broad spectrum of social spheres. This activity will facilitate a more active and reciprocal learning environment, and offer an opportunity for students to give feedback and input on how their course has cultivated their sense of ethical and legal responsibility about computing in a global sense.

Population		The project involves the participation of approximately xx students who are enrolled in the Humanities department Philosophy courses (FILO 30185) that is cross-listed with Math Department; there is a broad representation of degree majors and years of study.
Assessment	***Pre-intervention***	• The Instructor discusses potential ways that the course addresses the ethical and legal implications of computing, and foments a discussion about the civic consequences of studying such a topic. • The Instructor and the Assessment Coordinator from the Humanities Department, and a representative of the Math Department, draft a survey about how the course addresses computing from a socially conscious, ethical and legal stance, one that offers a platform for students to give feedback on that topic.
	Intervention	• The instructor discusses the importance of Assessment with the students during an in-class conversation, noting the course and departmental goals, how the material aims to achieve those ends, and commenting about the importance of a reflective and contemplative evaluation not only can enhance students' learning but also offer an opportunity to improve the ways target subjects are taught and learned. • Each professor carries out an in-class discussion of the assessment activity, which includes guidance about the topic and information to submit; students complete an online survey with short answers.
	Post-Intervention	• Faculty discuss survey results with their students and other faculty, and consider new action given the data.
Results		(See data.) Perhaps the most striking outcome of the data is that over xx% of students responded in agreement to questions XX ()
Possible Reasons or Hypotheses		(possibly reasons) As nearly all of our students use digital devices each day, the ways course material applies to thinking ethically and legally, the social responsibility of computing appears to mesh well (or not link well) with the critical questions posed in the course.

| | Due to these factors (and the general student preferences for digital materials) in the post-activity survey, students confirm that…

Students also express an interest in more…

The potential enhancements that students mention involve…

In the context of these data, it appears that the course as programmed engages (or does not engage sufficiently) critical thinking, civic awareness and cultural understanding, as they relate to computing. |
|---|---|
| *Course of action* | The results of this assessment loop will be made available for members of the department; the social impact of computing will discussed in a division meeting, perhaps resulting in a recommendation that faculty members |
| *Next learning assessment closing the loop project* | The next loop is tentatively being designed for a Philosophy course and will assess the texts assigned for class, and concern how they are applied to the knowledge to contemporary Puerto Rico, in consonance with the goals of our department. |
| *Appendices* | See:
3_A Humanities Loop FILO 3185 survey on Computing and Ethics judgments |