

CHAMINADE ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES

Program Assessment Report

Fall 2014

Submitted by Gail Grabowsky

Introduction:

Chaminade's Environmental Studies Program was initiated as a new major at the University in the Fall of 2002. The 2012 academic year marked its ten-year anniversary. The Program's first full program-level assessment review: *Environmental Studies: Program Assessment*, was conducted in the Fall of 2009. Prior to that first program review, yearly course assessments and course assessment reports were completed.

It was the goal of the Program Director, Dr. Gail Grabowsky, to conduct program-level assessments every five years. The next full program assessment was to be conducted in the Fall of 2014. However, incomplete assessment data were gathered beginning in the Fall of 2011 and lasting through the summer of 2013 due to the illness (colon/rectal cancer) of the Program Director. Dr. Grabowsky is the only faculty member tenured to the Environmental Studies Program, thus there is no one to gather, analyze, interpret or report out on program assessment in her absence. Dr. Grabowsky has begun to gather a full set of course- and program-level assessment data as of this Fall, 2014, semester. For these reasons the next Environmental Studies program assessment cannot be conducted until the Fall of 2015 when there will exist one full recent academic year's data to interpret and react to. The next Environmental Studies review will therefore be undertaken in the Fall of 2015 at the earliest.

The University is currently developing a program assessment template. It is the intention of the Environmental Studies Program Director to use this template once it has been finalized. Since the Environmental Studies program has between 30 and 40 majors and only one faculty member tenured to it, the Program Director very much looks forward to the development of the Provost's new faculty development office which may offer some program assessment assistance.

This assessment report will act as another interim report. It lists the full set of assessment measures being conducted this year and, like last year's assessment report, also contains a special supplementary section summarizing the course evaluations from the Fall 2013 and Spring 2014 semesters. This analysis is conducted on a yearly basis and provides Dr. Grabowsky with a quick baseline measure of student satisfaction.

Finally, this report also contains an assessment summary of the ENV 385 Capstone Experience projects that all ENV seniors have participated in since the course's creation in 2008. This analysis is being conducted because the Program Director would like to gain an understanding of the kinds of projects the students have engaged in. Since Environmental Studies students have had science-, business-, policy-, communication-, international relations- and ethics/religion- interests it would be interesting to look into the frequencies with which their senior capstone experiences – which they choose – fall into each of these categories. The Environmental Studies Program may soon be accompanied by a "sister" science-focused program and the Environmental Studies Director is curious about just how many of the ENV graduates would have likely chosen an environmental science degree if we had one. In addition, there are always also a number of Environmental Studies majors who do not wish to be science majors or scientists. It is important to know that percentage as well. The Capstone Experience projects will therefore be used as a proxy for identifying the students' main area of interest.

Ongoing Assessment Efforts:

The Environmental Studies Program's Student Learning Outcomes were developed through (1) the examination of over 40 existing environmental studies programs, (2) surveys administered to professionals with diverse careers

in the environment, and (3) consensus decision-making among Chaminade’s Environmental Studies faculty and our top-level academic administrators. Since its inception many courses within the program have been assessed a number of times. In 2006 we began to design program assessment vehicles for our freshmen, seniors and graduates. These assessment vehicles are the following:

- ENV 100 perceived learning and direct assessment pre and post-tests (baseline data)
- ENV 400 perceived learning and direct assessment pre and post-tests (exit data)
- ENV 400 essays portfolio (exit data)
- ENV 485 senior research and reflection papers (exit data)
- ENV course evaluations (summary data)
- Alumni Survey (reflection data)

These data are being gathered this 2013-14 academic year and will be analyzed this summer so that they can be used in the next full program assessment.

Supplementary Course Evaluation Summary

Table 1 below summarizes all of the student evaluation results for five key questions for all ENV-prefixed courses within the Environmental Studies major from the Fall of 2013 and the Spring of 2014 and compares these recent results to those for 2012-13 academic year, the Fall 2011 semester (when the Director became ill) and the 2006 through 2008 academic years (from the first program assessment report). The five questions that were selected were chosen because they spoke to issues deemed particularly important to WASC, Chaminade and the Chaminade Environmental Studies Program Director at that time.

Students are asked in the course evaluations to respond: “Strongly Agree”, “Agree”, “Neutral”, “Disagree” or “Strongly Disagree” to each item. For the purposes of this assessment report “Strongly Agree” responses were given a numerical value of 5, “Agree” = 4, “Neutral” = 3, “Disagree” = 2 and “Strongly Disagree” = 1.

| Evaluation Item | Mean | 2013-14 Percent Strongly Agree & Agree | 2012-13 Percent Strongly Agree & Agree | Fall 2011 Percent Strongly Agree & Agree | 2008 Percent Strongly Agree & Agree |
|--|-------------|---|---|---|--|
| Course requirements were clearly stated | 4.48 | 92.2% (N = 167) | 97.6% (N = 166) | 80% (N = 92) | 98.7% (N = 307) |
| Course requirements were challenging | 4.39 | 89.2% (N = 167) | 91.6% (N = 166) | 82% (N = 92) | 92.3% (N = 288) |
| Quality of instructors teaching was high | 4.48 | 90.4% (N = 166) | 94.0% (N = 166) | 84% (N = 92) | 99.4% (N = 303) |
| I gained significant knowledge from course | 4.43 | 89.2% (N = 166) | 93.3% (N = 165) | 82% (N = 92) | 97.0% (N = 299) |
| Overall I feel this was a good course | 4.5) | 90.4% (N = 167) | 93.4% (N = 166) | 79% (N = 92) | 98.0% (N = 304) |

Past year

Year director was ill

First program assessment

Table 1. This table summarizes student Fall 2013 and Spring 2014 ENV course evaluation responses for five key course evaluation items and compares these recent results to those for 2012-13 academic year, the Fall 2011 semester (when the Director became ill and had to stop teaching) and the 2006 through 2008 academic years (reported in the first program assessment report).(See Appendix 1 for data.)

Results of the Supplementary Analysis:

The summarized values from the first program assessment report (2006-2008) reflect a very high degree of satisfaction with courses and instructors, in every case being over 90% and for four of the five questions over 97% satisfaction (see Table 1). It was clear from the 2011 data that the students were less satisfied with the adjuncts in the Fall of 2011. So the program-wide goal in 2012-13 was to achieve 90% satisfaction with 90% of respondents choosing Agree or Strongly Agree for all evaluation questions. Since this situation did exist in prior years and it is a general benchmark in the Behavioral Sciences Division it seemed to be a good and reasonable goal. This goal was achieved in 2012-13.

This past year the percent satisfaction values dropped in all categories. While they still remain above or very near the benchmark goal of 90% satisfaction in all categories, 89.2% of students responded “Strongly Agree” or “Agree” to “Academic requirements for this course were challenging” and “I gained a significant amount of knowledge from this course.” While 89% is close to 90%, it is not 90%, thus the Program Director wants to react to this data by making changes to the program that may increase the degree of challenge for each course and the amount of knowledge gained. Two specific actions have been planned:

Actions to be taken in an effort to raise evaluation scores to \geq 90%:

1. A new adjunct instructor will be hired to teach one of the courses that was regularly obtaining evaluation scores below 90%. This new instructor will teach the course in the Spring of 2014.
2. A meeting will be called for all the professors who teach in the Environmental Studies Program. We have not had a collective meeting altogether since the Program’s inception. This Program is the only one like it on campus in which all the professors who teach in it, with the exception of the Program Director, are tenured to other programs. In fact, the majority of the professors in the Environmental Studies major are in other Divisions of the University. This means that the Director has less control over their actions and meets with them less regularly. The focus of the meeting will be to gather information from all and do a SWOT analysis of the Program that includes a review of our courses and program learning outcomes.

Survey of Capstone Experience Projects:

In an effort to discover and summarize the interest-areas of each of the senior Environmental Studies majors a supplementary analysis was conducted categorizing each of the ENV 485: Environmental Capstone Experience projects since the course began in 2008. The results of that analysis are shown in Table 2 and illustrate the array of interests of the majors.

ENV 485: Capstone Experience Topic Assessment

| Topic of Senior Capstone Project | Frequency | % |
|---|------------------|-------------|
| Science/Research | 7 | 16% |
| Conservation-related | 17 | 40% |
| Economics-related | 4 | 9% |
| Policy-related | 7 | 16% |
| Arts/Com/Ed-related | 8 | 19% |
| TOTAL | 43 | 100% |

Table 2. Survey of areas of interest of all of the ENV 485: Environmental Capstone Experience senior projects. Students choose their projects.

As can be seen in the Table, student interests vary, with 40% participating in some kind of conservation-related activity or project usually with a non-governmental organization like the Sierra Club or a public agency like DLNR. These projects vary from science to advocacy to information gathering. The remaining 60% of the students participate in summer research internships, intern with a green business, or work on a policy-related or education/art related project.

The Program Director felt this analysis was important because it documents the diverse array of interests and career foci for students that major in Environmental Studies. Clearly about half of the students could benefit from a science-focused education, while the remaining roughly half of the students are policy-, economics- and education focused. If Chaminade begins an environmental science/biology degree, the 50% who are science-minded will benefit from the intensification of their preferred focus, while the Environmental Studies Program can continue to serve the other half of the students.

Assessment and Program Goals for the 2014-15 Academic Year:

In bulleted formatting, the Environmental Studies Program and assessment goals for this academic year are:

- Continue to get back on schedule with the implementation of all of the Program Assessment Goals described in the beginning of this Plan and derived from the *2009 Program Assessment Report*.
- Expand the Environmental Studies Program's ideological reach on campus and connection to other programs with the goal of eventually initiating a Chaminade Environmental Center and an environmental/conservation science-focused major.
- Complete the action items described above in attempt to bring the course evaluation mean for the five pivotal questions up above 90%.

Appendix 1: 2013-14 Course Evaluation Data

Course requirements were clearly stated

| Courses | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly Disagree | |
|----------------|----------------|-----------|----------|----------|-------------------|------------|
| ENV 100 FA13 | 7 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 1 | |
| ENV 115 FA13 | 6 | 2 | | | | |
| ENV 115L FA13 | 6 | 2 | | | | |
| ENV 201 FA13 | 12 | 6 | | | | |
| ENV 201L FA13 | 13 | 5 | | | 2 | |
| ENV 201 SP14 | 9 | 7 | 1 | | | |
| ENV 201L SP14 | 10 | 4 | | | | |
| ENV 202 SP14 | 8 | 6 | 1 | | 1 | |
| ENV 202L SP14 | 9 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 1 | |
| ENV 300 FA13 | 3 | 6 | | | | |
| ENV 313 FA13 | 2 | 4 | 1 | | | |
| ENV 380 SP14 | 8 | 1 | 2 | | | |
| ENV 400 SP14 | 7 | 1 | | | | |
| ENV 431 SP 13 | 4 | | | | | N |
| TOTALS: | 104 | 50 | 7 | 1 | 5 | 167 |

| | |
|------------------------------|------|
| % Strongly Agree = | 62.3 |
| % Agree = | 29.9 |
| % Neutral = | 4.2 |
| % Disagree = | 0.6 |
| % Strongly Disagree = | 3.0 |

% Strongly Agree & Agree = 92.2

Mean Score = 4.48

Course requirements were challenging

| Courses | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly Disagree | |
|----------------|-----------------------|--------------|----------------|-----------------|--------------------------|------------|
| ENV 100 FA13 | 6 | 3 | 2 | | 1 | |
| ENV 115 FA13 | 6 | 2 | | | | |
| ENV 115L FA13 | 6 | 2 | | | | |
| ENV 201 FA13 | 13 | 5 | | | | |
| ENV 201L FA13 | 12 | 6 | | | 2 | |
| ENV 201 SP14 | 9 | 8 | | | | |
| ENV 201L SP14 | 7 | 7 | | | | |
| ENV 202 SP14 | 8 | 4 | 3 | | 1 | |
| ENV 202L SP14 | 9 | 3 | 2 | | 1 | |
| ENV 300 FA13 | 2 | 5 | 2 | | | |
| ENV 313 FA13 | 2 | 3 | 2 | | | |
| ENV 380 SP14 | 6 | 3 | 1 | | 1 | |
| ENV 400 SP14 | 5 | 3 | | | | |
| ENV 431 SP 13 | 4 | | | | | N |
| TOTALS: | 95 | 54 | 12 | 0 | 6 | 167 |

| | |
|------------------------------|-------------|
| % Strongly Agree = | 56.9 |
| % Agree = | 32.3 |
| % Neutral = | 7.2 |
| % Disagree = | 0.0 |
| % Strongly Disagree = | 3.6 |

% Strongly Agree & Agree = 89.2

Mean Score = 4.39

Quality of instructor's teaching was high

| Courses | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly Disagree | |
|----------------|-----------------------|--------------|----------------|-----------------|--------------------------|------------------|
| ENV 100 FA13 | 9 | 2 | | | 1 | |
| ENV 115 FA13 | 7 | 1 | | | | |
| ENV 115L FA13 | 6 | 2 | | | | |
| ENV 201 FA13 | 13 | 5 | | | | |
| ENV 201L FA13 | 14 | 4 | | | 2 | |
| ENV 201 SP14 | 12 | 3 | 2 | | | |
| ENV 201L SP14 | 12 | 1 | 1 | | | |
| ENV 202 SP14 | 9 | 5 | | | 2 | |
| ENV 202L SP14 | 7 | 5 | 1 | 1 | 1 | |
| ENV 300 FA13 | 2 | 7 | | | | |
| ENV 313 FA13 | 2 | 2 | 1 | | 2 | |
| ENV 380 SP14 | 8 | 1 | 2 | | | |
| ENV 400 SP14 | 8 | | | | | |
| ENV 431 SP 13 | 3 | | | | | |
| TOTALS: | 112 | 38 | 7 | 1 | 8 | N 166 |

| | |
|------------------------------|-------------|
| % Strongly Agree = | 67.5 |
| % Agree = | 22.9 |
| % Neutral = | 4.2 |
| % Disagree = | 0.6 |
| % Strongly Disagree = | 4.8 |

% Strongly Agree & Agree = 90.4

Mean Score = 4.48

Gained significant knowledge from this course

| Courses | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly Disagree | |
|----------------|-----------------------|--------------|----------------|-----------------|--------------------------|------------|
| ENV 100 FA13 | 9 | 2 | | | 1 | |
| ENV 115 FA13 | 7 | | 1 | | | |
| ENV 115L FA13 | 6 | 2 | | | | |
| ENV 201 FA13 | 14 | 4 | | | | |
| ENV 201L FA13 | 13 | 5 | | | 2 | |
| ENV 201 SP14 | 10 | 6 | 1 | | | |
| ENV 201L SP14 | 10 | 3 | 1 | | | |
| ENV 202 SP14 | 9 | 4 | 1 | | 2 | |
| ENV 202L SP14 | 7 | 5 | 2 | | 1 | |
| ENV 300 FA13 | 2 | 7 | | | | |
| ENV 313 FA13 | 1 | 1 | 3 | | 2 | |
| ENV 380 SP14 | 7 | 3 | | 1 | | |
| ENV 400 SP14 | 8 | | | | | |
| ENV 431 SP 13 | 3 | | | | | N |
| TOTALS: | 106 | 42 | 9 | 1 | 8 | 166 |

| | |
|------------------------------|-------------|
| % Strongly Agree = | 63.9 |
| % Agree = | 25.3 |
| % Neutral = | 5.4 |
| % Disagree = | 0.6 |
| % Strongly Disagree = | 4.8 |

% Strongly Agree & Agree = 89.2

Mean Score = 4.43

Overall good course

| Courses | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly Disagree | |
|----------------|-----------------------|--------------|----------------|-----------------|--------------------------|------------|
| ENV 100 FA13 | 9 | 1 | 1 | | 1 | |
| ENV 115 FA13 | 6 | 2 | | | | |
| ENV 115L FA13 | 7 | 1 | | | | |
| ENV 201 FA13 | 15 | 3 | | | | |
| ENV 201L FA13 | 15 | 3 | | | 2 | |
| ENV 201 SP14 | 12 | 5 | | | | |
| ENV 201L SP14 | 10 | 4 | | | | |
| ENV 202 SP14 | 9 | 4 | 1 | | 2 | |
| ENV 202L SP14 | 8 | 4 | 1 | 1 | 1 | |
| ENV 300 FA13 | 3 | 6 | | | | |
| ENV 313 FA13 | | 2 | 4 | 1 | | |
| ENV 380 SP14 | 8 | 2 | 1 | | | |
| ENV 400 SP14 | 7 | 1 | | | | |
| ENV 431 SP 13 | 4 | | | | | N |
| TOTALS: | 113 | 38 | 8 | 2 | 6 | 167 |

| | |
|------------------------------|-------------|
| % Strongly Agree = | 67.7 |
| % Agree = | 22.8 |
| % Neutral = | 4.8 |
| % Disagree = | 1.2 |
| % Strongly Disagree = | 3.6 |

% Strongly Agree & Agree = 90.4

Mean Score = 4.50