

ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES

Program Assessment Report

Fall 2012

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The following is the second evidence-based Program Assessment Report for the Chaminade University Environmental Studies Program. Chaminade’s Environmental Studies Program was initiated as a new major at the University in the Fall of 2002. The 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 course evaluations (summary data)
- ENV 400 perceived learning and direct assessment pre and post-tests (exit data)
- ENV 400 essays portfolio (exit data)
- ENV 485 senior research papers (exit data)
- ENV 485 multiple choice exit exam (exit data)
- Alumni Survey (reflection data)

This report summarizes the program-related results and conclusions from ENV course evaluations for the Fall 2011 semester.

Overall ENV Course Evaluations

Table 1 below summarizes all of the student evaluation results for all ENV-prefixed courses within the Environmental Studies major from the Fall of 2011. It also compares the Fall 2011 values to five of the nine course evaluation question results which were summarized from 2006-2008 and presented in the Fall 2009 Program Assessment Report. The five questions that were selected in 2009 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	Number of Respondents	Mean	2012 Percent Strongly Agree & Agree	2008 Percent Strongly Agree & Agree
Course requirements were clearly stated	92	4.14	80%	98.7% (N = 307)
Class time was used productively	92	4.26	85%	
The instructor was consistently well prepared for class sessions	92	4.30	86%	
Course requirements were challenging	92	4.26	82%	92.3% (N = 288)

The instructor demonstrated knowledge of the subject	92	4.39	87%	
Quality of instructors teaching was high	92	4.27	84%	99.4% (N = 303)
I gained significant knowledge from this course	92	4.21	82%	97.0% (N = 299)
Overall I feel this was a good course	92	4.20	79%	98.0% (N = 304)
I would recommend this instructor's course to another student	91	4.15	78%	

Table 1. This table summarizes student Fall 2011 course evaluation responses and compares them to five key course evaluation items for all ENV courses from 2006-2008.

Results:

During the Fall 2011 semester the Director of Chaminade’s Environmental Studies Program was battling cancer and began the semester while concurrently undergoing chemotherapy. In early September Dr. Grabowsky was hospitalized for complications. Her stay in the hospital was for an extended period of time (44 days) and so she had to hire replacements for her three courses. While these three replacements were well-qualified, had some teaching and were very enthusiastic, their teaching evaluations reflect less satisfaction than has been typically the case for the Environmental studies program.

The summarized values from 2006-2008 reflect an 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. It is clear from these data that the students were less satisfied with the adjuncts in the Fall of 2011. It is very possible that much of their dissatisfaction was caused by their having to change instructors six week into the courses and is not a reflection of the skill of the adjunct replacement instructors. These data however do not allow one to discern the cause of the lower values to that degree of detail.

The values for the Fall of 2011 are not satisfactory to the ENV Program Director. The program-wide goal is to achieve 90% satisfaction with 90% of respondents choosing Agree or Strongly Agree for all evaluation questions. This situation did exist in prior years and should re-occur this 2012-2013 academic year.