

Program-Level Assessment: Annual Report

Program: **Organizational Leadership**

Department:

Degree or Certificate Level: **Post-Baccalaureate**

College/School: **School for Professional Studies**

Certificate

Date (Month/Year): **August 2023**

Primary Assessment Contact: **Steven Winton PhD**

In what year was the data upon which this report is based collected? **2022-2023**

In what year was the program's assessment plan most recently reviewed/updated? **2021**

1. Student Learning Outcomes

Which of the program's student learning outcomes were assessed in this annual assessment cycle?

The post-baccalaureate certificate in Organizational Leadership (PBC OL) program has the following learning outcome (LO):

LO1: Graduates will be able to apply leadership competencies appropriate for a given situation or context.

The PBC OL certificate is embedded within the MA Leadership and Organizational Development (MA LOD) program. Our assessment, therefore, is part of that program where we analyze/review the data for all LO's each year. We select one or two LO's to focus our efforts. Because we directed our attention to this LO last year, and it is doing quite well, this LO was not a major focus this year.

2. Assessment Methods: Student Artifacts

Which student artifacts were used to determine if students achieved this outcome? Please identify the course(s) in which these artifacts were collected. Clarify if any such courses were offered a) online, b) at the Madrid campus, or c) at any other off-campus location.

Our new overall assessment protocol integrates data from three sources to evaluate student learning:

1. Each program LO is mapped to specific courses and artifacts within those courses. In Canvas, instructors complete an assessment of learning that is attached to the rubric of the artifact's grading rubric. It is important to note that this process is meant to gather data that is independent of grades given.
2. Faculty mentors complete a summative assessment on each student at the conclusion of their capstone. Mentor's assess the student's performance for each of the learning outcomes.
3. A student assessment of learning outcomes is also completed by students at the end of their degree. This indirect measure asks students to rate the extent they learned and developed on each LO. They also indicate what specific competencies they developed and which they feel they need additional development.

Specific to the PBC we also look closely at the final projects submitted in ORLD 5650: Future-Focused Leadership and ORLD 5250: Leading a Healthy Organization.

**If we have a Madrid student in the program, then they would be fully admitted into the program.

3. Assessment Methods: Evaluation Process

What process was used to evaluate the student artifacts, and by whom? Please identify the tools(s) (e.g., a rubric) used in the process and include them in/with this report.

Each artifact is assessed according to a standard rubric in Canvas. Within Canvas we then attach associated learning outcome measures to those rubrics. Instructors, after grading the artifact, rate the student in terms of their learning mastery. The learning outcome assessment is separate from the grade given on the assignment. We pulled raw survey data from each of the courses in Canvas. We then tabulated the quantitative data to provide a high-level overview.

4. Data/Results

What were the results of the assessment of the learning outcomes? Please be specific. Does achievement differ by teaching modality (e.g., online vs. face-to-face) or on-ground location (e.g., STL campus, Madrid campus, other off-campus site)?

Overall, we learned that students had favorable perceptions of learning like previous years. On the formative survey, instructors also perceived student achievement of LOs to be like previous years:

- When looking at student achievement across courses, LO1 (applying leadership) was the highest-rated outcome within the MA LOD program (100% of students indicated they learned to a great or moderate extent). Instructors rated this slightly lower than last year, but it was still rated high (70% full student achievement, 24% partial achievement).
- When looking at student achievement, specifically on the final artifacts 5250, there was 50% full student achievement and 31% partial achievement. We did not have data from 5650 this year.

5. Findings: Interpretations & Conclusions

What have you learned from these results? What does the data tell you?

Overall, the results tell us that students self-report that they are learning a great extent. Faculty generally agree that most students are demonstrating full achievement of LOs, but there are a percentage of students only partially demonstrating learning. Over the years faculty have noted that most student weaknesses are related to student writing abilities and APA knowledge, utilizing sources and instructor feedback, and forming logical arguments – and that these issues detracted from focusing on leadership content.

6. Closing the Loop: Dissemination and Use of Current Assessment Findings

A. When and how did your program faculty share and discuss these results and findings from this cycle of assessment?

Each year a complete report is distributed among key faculty and administrators associated with the program for feedback. Recommendations and action items are discussed, shared, and implemented.

B. How specifically have you decided to use findings to improve teaching and learning in your program? For example, perhaps you've initiated one or more of the following:

Changes to the Curriculum or Pedagogies

- Course content
- Teaching techniques
- Improvements in technology
- Prerequisites
- Course sequence
- New courses
- Deletion of courses
- Changes in frequency or scheduling of course offerings

Changes to the Assessment Plan

- Student learning outcomes
- Student artifacts collected
- Evaluation process
- Evaluation tools (e.g., rubrics)
- Data collection methods
- Frequency of data collection

Please describe the actions you are taking as a result of the findings.

We continually work to improve the curriculum. Regarding writing we have:

- Implemented a series of orientation and graduate preparation courses (i.e., general orientation, writing, stats) to be taken prior to enrolling in the first course. As we cannot require these courses, we are working on different approaches to better direct students into these modules/courses.
- SPS faculty continue to refer students to our online tutorial platform, SmartThinking.
- Built rubrics and provided tutorials and coaching to assist with APA and general writing. Several classes updated resources and changed assignments (e.g., scaffolding, argument maps) to help students build stronger arguments.

Regarding the leadership LO we have:

- Within the last 3 years we have made significant changes to all of the PBC OL courses (ORLD 5010, ORLD 5250, ORLD 5350, ORLD 5100, 5150, and 5650). Changes include a stronger connection to contemporary conceptualizations of leadership, more reflection on personal leadership and student leadership development plans, and more opportunities for application. In 2022, both ORLD 5100 and 5350, and 5150 were completely revamped. In 2023, changes were made to 5010.

If no changes are being made, please explain why.

7. Closing the Loop: Review of Previous Assessment Findings and Changes

A. What is at least one change your program has implemented in recent years as a result of assessment data?

We continue to “close the loop” on past assessment work. Past analyses of assessment data were used to inform recent curricular changes, some of which were made to influence student learning directly. For example, the data suggests that the program is doing quite well on LO4 (i.e., recent changes are working to improve student learning).

B. How has this change/have these changes been assessed?

It should be noted that the PBC OL is new, and we have limited comparative data. Furthermore, the sample sizes are small, and the faculty who rate these each year also vary from year to year. Taken collectively, however, the data tells a story of improvement and is supplemented with qualitative data that provide additional clarification.

C. What were the findings of the assessment?

Formative data suggests that LO1, and the PBC OL cert, is doing well. Given that students are learning the content, however, there is still opportunity to improve upon student writing and argumentation skills. We intend to continue our focus on this.

D. How do you plan to (continue to) use this information moving forward?

We take a holistic approach to assessment. The plan will be reviewed annually to ensure it continues to meet the program’s needs. If a given learning outcome indicates areas in need of focused assessment, especially as it relates to one or more courses within the program or a foundational competency, then the schedule may be altered as needed, but this alteration will be temporary rather than permanent. As SPS programs continually evolve to meet changing market needs, this assessment plan will be considered dynamic and subject to change as the program evolves and new programs are offered.

IMPORTANT: Please submit any assessment tools and/or revised/updated assessment plans along with this report.