

Competency: To know the nature and value of the visual and performing arts

Competency Description: Northwestern has a broadly based core curriculum that is central to the University's mission and consistent with the Louisiana Board of Regents requirements for general education. The competency "to know the nature and value of the visual and performing arts" requires undergraduate students seeking a bachelor's degree to take three (3) hours of Fine Arts Survey 1040.

Student Learning Outcome: Students completing FA 1040 will be able to identify major artists and their works, recognize major trends and style periods of the various art forms, and become familiar with the ideas and terminology involving the visual and performing arts.

Measure: this competency is measured using two assessments, a Pre-test, and a Post-test. The first assessment measures student knowledge before the course begins and the second exam measures knowledge after the course is complete. The assessment is in the form of an online exam which includes multiple choice, matching and fill in the blank questions. The two assessments are identical in content but vary in question order and order of appearance from student to student and from exam to exam. A formula would then be applied to determine the amount of growth measured over the course of the semester:

Posttest – Pretest = change; change/Pretest = growth x 100

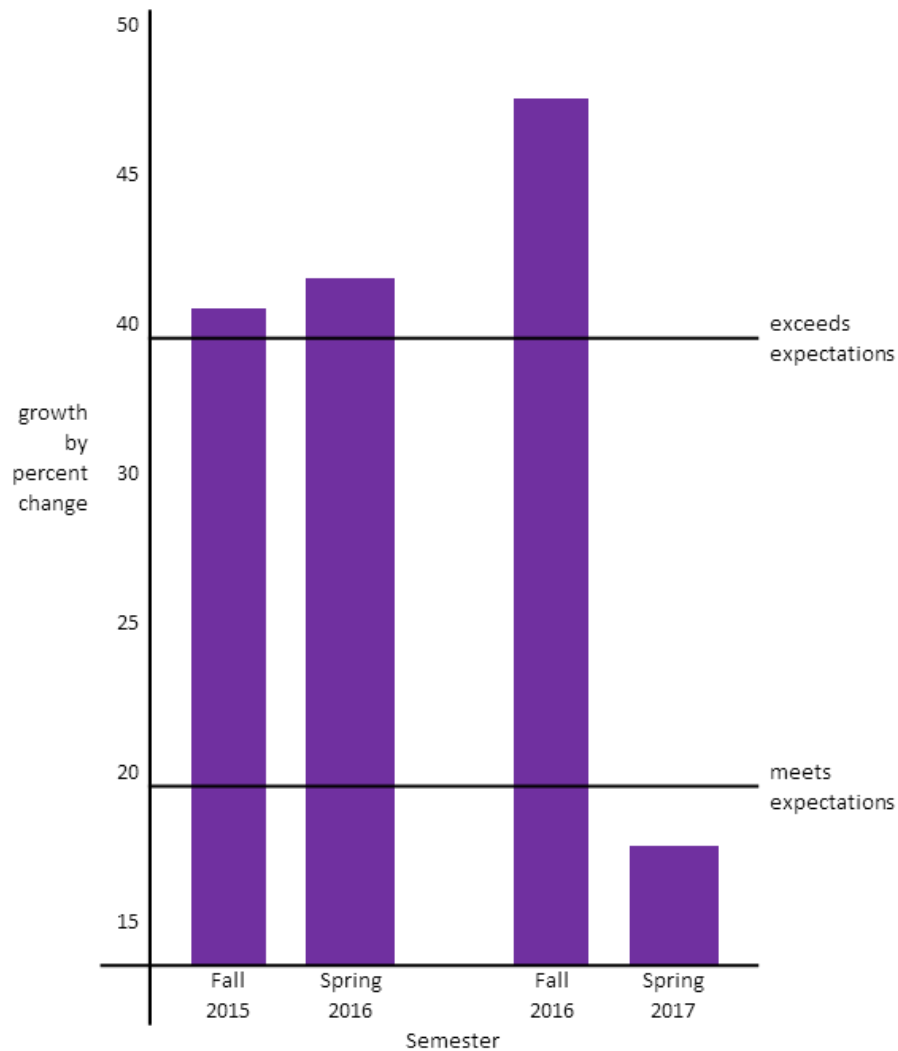
(Example: a student scored a 35 on the Pretest and a 45.5 on the Posttest.

$45.5 - 35 = 10.5$ $10.5 / 35 = .3 \times 100$ **(30% growth)**

A student with 20% growth over the course of the semester meets expectations.

A student with 40% growth over the course of the semester exceeds expectations.

Findings: Based on data derived from these assessments, most students from 2015-2017 met and exceeded expectations of 20% and 40% growth. The exception were those students in the spring 2017 semester, with a growth rate of 17%. This was due to a data collection error from a new adjunct who was teaching multiple sections of FA 1040.



Analysis:

AY 14-15:

The Pretest and Posttest was still being created during this time, and it will be ready in the fall 2015 semester. At this time, the exams will cover questions from three different competencies: (to know the nature of cultural diversity, to know the nature and value of the visual and performing arts, and to increase knowledge of international education).

AY 15-16:

This was the first semester the new pre-test and post-test were administered to Fine Arts students. We had exam uploaded to all sections of FA 1040, but some sections either did not

administer the exams, or had trouble getting the exams to work, so they did not report findings. Out of 29 total sections offered, only 15 sections reported findings in the fall, and 14 out of 21 total sections in the spring. Some adjunct professors did not get up to speed until after the period of the pre-test had passed, so the numbers are a little lower than they would be. Even with only half the sections reporting in, there is a large enough cohort to measure results: with semester average pre-test scores of 46.74 and 36.28, and semester post-test averages of 65.49 and 51.36, there was enough percent change in these scores to meet the ideal standard for the year (40% growth). The fall semester students averaged 40.11% growth and the spring semester students averaged 41.54%. These numbers were calculated from the number of students who took the assessment, not the total number of students enrolled.

AY16-17:

Adjunct instructors are still having issues getting the pre-test and post-test, some even questioned the need for the exam. As a result, the fall 2016 section involvement is the lowest yet: only 14 out of 29 sections reported findings. The trend of meeting the ideal target was sustained in this semester, with an average of a 47.07% growth rate. After repeated reminders of the necessity for these exams, the spring 2017 sections reported the highest number of section involvement: 18/21 sections reported findings. But, there was an error in the way some sections reported their findings (some averages included all students rather than just the students who took the assessments), as a result, the pre-test and post-test averages are very low: only 17% growth, which did not meet the acceptable target of 20% growth. Before the next year of exams are administered, the plan is to meet with all Fine Arts faculty in order to standardize the way in which the exams are administered and the scores are tallied, there were assumptions made in previous semesters that faculty knew how to administer an online exam and average scores. These assumptions will not be an issue moving forward.

Decision / Recommendation

In collecting data for the 2015-2016 and 2016-2017 Fine arts pre-tests and post-tests, only one exam was given due to ease of delivery and variety of subject matter covered. Since this course covers three outcomes (to know the nature of cultural diversity, to know the nature and value of the visual and performing arts, and to increase knowledge of international education), the decision was made that the Fine Arts pre-test and post-test needed to be split up into separate assessments for each outcome. A test run was made in one section in the summer 2017 semester that seemed to work out, so moving forward there will be three pre-tests and three post-tests measured. This creates more work for students and faculty but will lead to more accurate measures of each learning outcome.

The above data is from Taskstream TK20, the University's assessment management system.