

July 20, 2003

Report on the 2003 UHWO Senior Project External Evaluation,

February 1-2, 2003

By Michael Delucchi, Assessment Office - Interim Director

Description of the Process

The Senior Project External Evaluation for UH-West Oahu was held on February 1-2, 2003 from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. The external evaluators were chosen by the Director of the Assessment Office based upon the recommendations of UHWO faculty. The evaluators represented the Divisions of Professional Studies (Shelly Ota – LCC and Maureen Bogdanowicz - KCC), Social Sciences (Patrick Uchigakiuchi – Chaminade and Ida Yoshinago - LCC), and Humanities (Gail Harada – KCC and James De St. Croix - LCC). A one hour training session was held on the morning of February 1, 2003, during which time the evaluators were given instructions on how to use the Senior Project Criteria sheet to evaluate the papers. The evaluators spend the rest of the morning and the afternoon reading and evaluating the senior projects. They returned on the morning of February 2, 2003 and evaluated papers through the mid-afternoon. At the end of the reading period, a debriefing was held to solicit feedback from the evaluators.

A total of 37 different senior project papers were read during the two day evaluation. These 37 papers received a total of 90 readings by six evaluators. In other words, nearly every senior project paper was read by at least two different evaluators. Specifically, of the 37 senior projects, 2 were read by only one evaluator, 21 projects were read by two evaluators, 10 projects were read by three evaluators, and 4 were read by four different evaluators. The 37 senior projects included 11 papers from Professional Studies (Business Administration=6; Accounting=5) that received 27 readings; 18 Social Science papers (Anthropology=1; Economics=3; Psychology=11; Sociology=3) that received 42 readings; and 8 Humanities papers (Literature=4; History=3; Hawaii Pacific Studies=1) read 21 times.

Results

For the purpose of comparison, results for 2003 will be presented with the findings for 2001 and 2002. The results for all readers and all readings for 2001, 2002, and 2003 appear in Table 1. A comparison of ratings by skill categories and grades reveals the following about the 2003 external evaluation.

Written Communication:

- The means for all seven categories in 2003 exceed those for 2002.
- The means for 6 of the 7 categories in 2003 are below those for 2001.

Analytical, Quantitative and Qualitative Reasoning:

- The means for all six categories in 2003 exceed those for 2002.
- The means for 5 of the 6 categories in 2003 are below those for 2001.

Research Skills:

- The means for all four categories in 2003 exceed those for 2002.
- The means for 2 of the 4 categories in 2003 are below those for 2001.

Grades:

- 2003 Reviewer's Project Paper GPA (2.46) was higher than 2002 (2.39).
- 2003 Reviewer's Project Paper GPA (2.46) was lower than in 2001 (2.55).
- 2003 Instructor's Project Paper GPA (3.45) was higher than Reviewer's (2.46).
- 2003 Instructor's Senior Project Course GPA (3.51) was higher than 2002 (3.44).
- 2003 Instructor's Senior Project Course GPA (3.51) was lower than 2001 (3.60).

Summary of Findings

On the positive side, the results for 2003 exceed those for 2002 in all skill categories. On the negative side, however, the results for 2003 are below those for the 2001 in 13 of the 17 skill categories. Similar patterns appear for grades in which the reader's GPA for the senior project papers in 2003 is higher than it was for 2002, but lower than the GPA for 2001. These variations in findings are probably best explained by the use of different evaluators from year-to-year rather than any substantive changes in the quality of the senior projects. Consequently, the results of the 2003 evaluation in comparison to 2001 and 2002 reveal little overall change in the quality of the senior projects.

One finding for 2003 warrants attention. For the first time since the external evaluation process was implemented, faculty were asked to report the grade each student received on their senior project paper, in addition to the grade each student received in the course. This new data reveal that faculty award substantially higher grades (GPA = 3.45) on the senior project papers than do the external reviewers (GPA = 2.46). The difference in grading standards indicate that the reviewers rate the overall quality of the papers to approximate a C+ in comparison to a faculty rating of B+. (NOTE: See the "2003 Senior Project External Review Descriptive Statistics" summary sheets for a breakdown of the senior project paper GPA data by Division, Specialization, and Instructor.)

Table 1. Senior Project Evaluation Summary: 2001, 2002, 2003

Rating Scale:

5 = *Exemplary Evidence*

4 = *Very Good Evidence*

3 = *Satisfactory Evidence*

2 = *Minimal Evidence*

1 = *No Evidence*

Category:	2001	2002	2003
Written communication			
1. Purpose of the paper is clearly stated or implied.	3.83 103	3.61 106	3.94 88
2. Develops a theme, thesis, or hypothesis pertinent to this field.	3.79 101	3.46 105	3.74 87
3. Style and content are appropriate for an audience of peers in the discipline.	3.92 103	3.29 105	3.60 88
4. Demonstrates an orderly and logical chain of reasoning.	3.75 101	3.23 105	3.48 88
5. Presents sound evidence using appropriate data and examples.	3.55 101	3.21 101	3.37 84
6. Shows an understanding of what constitutes plagiarism.	3.86 96	3.91 76	3.59 87
7. Demonstrates proficiency in the mechanical and grammatical skills appropriate to the writing task.	3.79 101	3.25 105	3.44 88

Category:	2001	2002	2003
Analytical, Quantitative and Qualitative Reasoning			
1. Uses theoretical concepts from this field.	3.33 100	3.50 103	3.69 85
2. Presents and integrates ideas from different sources.	3.47 102	3.32 105	3.50 86
3. Draws sound conclusions and interpretations from the data and/or material.	3.38 102	3.03 102	3.30 86
4. Analyzes and discusses the data and/or material in a meaningful way.	3.45 101	3.12 104	3.25 84
5. Collects and organizes appropriate data and examples.	3.46 101	3.18 105	3.44 85
6. If appropriate, uses statistics in analyzing the data.	3.94 64	3.19 53	3.55 56

Category: Research Skills	2001	2002	2003
1. Uses research skills accepted in the field.	3.53 101	3.48 103	3.62 87
2. Uses appropriate, traditional and/or electronic sources for data.	3.61 102	3.40 102	3.66 87
3. Uses methods of citation and documentation appropriate to this field.	3.58 101	3.17 99	3.46 84
4. Shows an understanding of ethical concerns in research as appropriate.	3.89 79	3.60 47	3.57 68

Grade Scale:
4 = A - *Excellent*
3 = B - *Good*
2 = C - *Fair*
1 = D - *Poor*
0 = F - *Failing*

Category: Grades	2001	2002	2003
1. Reader's overall grade	2.55 103	2.39 106	2.46 89
2. Senior Project paper grade			3.45 56
3. Senior Project course grade	3.60 102	3.44 106	3.51 90