



UMass Amherst’s Educational Effectiveness Plan (EEP) provides departments with an ongoing structure for conducting systematic inquiry into the effectiveness of their efforts to support student success. Departments initially developed and submitted their EEP inquiry plans and evidence gathering strategies in spring 2018 and are asked to provide updates on their progress on a regular basis. EEP activity is also incorporated into the University’s strategic planning process – with departments including their EEP progress and findings into their [2021 Strategic Planning Refresh](#). What follows is the department’s most current reporting, as synthesized by the Office of Academic Planning and Assessment (OAPA).

Kinesiology EEP

Identify the evidence you currently use (beyond GPA) to determine that your undergraduates have achieved the objectives you have for them.

Currently, we look at AQAD reports, senior survey results, and academic analytics.

Please describe the focus of your inquiry and explain why this inquiry is important to your department right now.

Line of inquiry 2018: We are invested in evaluating and continuing to provide a high-quality education at the undergraduate and graduate level. The faculty has discussed this at several meetings and would like to use the grades earned in our 4 capstone courses (400-level laboratory courses in the primary areas of our field) to measure the success of meeting our learning objectives. The faculty feels if our learning objectives are sound, and our mapping is accurate, then the appropriate way to assess undergraduate student success is via the faculty with expertise in each of these courses.

Progress your department has made toward addressing your line of inquiry, and the types of evidence that you have collected to inform your inquiry.

Assessing learning outcomes has been a more difficult aspect of the EEP process for our department, mostly because of the large amount of instructional stress and lack of resources. The faculty strongly feels that grades from the 400 level courses are a good measure of overall student success in meeting our learning objectives. However, the department has remained receptive and actively engaged throughout the EEP process. Members of the curriculum committee have continued to attend workshops and work with OAPA. The faculty now sees that assessing general outcomes is different from assessing specific elements of our learning objectives and the value of being able to do this in an efficient manner. We are still concerned with the lack of resources and instructional stress that makes this difficult for our department to achieve, but we are actively engaged in seeking effective solutions.

Over the last 2 years the department took several positive steps in assessing learning outcomes. The Junior Year Writing Class (Kin355) was used as a pilot course to test the efficiency and value of direct measurement in our department. The instructor of the course worked with OAPA and graduate teaching assistants to adapt rubrics (TEval Rubric, VALUE rubric, and Critical thinking and Written communication) by adding relevant Kinesiology Undergraduate Learning Objectives. The rubric was then used by a small committee comprised of OAPA members, 2 graduate students, and the instructor to review several student papers. The process was repeated this year with 2 faculty members and no OAPA members or graduate students. The result was positive. This is what we learned: 1. The results of the measurement were not a surprise to the instructor. 2. The measurement revealed more information than just that course, as many skills build from earlier course work. 3. It was not intimidating or threatening to the instructor. 4. It provided an opportunity for deeper curriculum conversations among faculty. The faculty has approved a plan to try additional measurements of student learning outcomes. COVID-19 has delayed this timeline, which originally was to start during the Spring 2020 semester.

Activities will proceed during the 2020-2021 academic year, barring further delays from the pandemic. The plan is as follows: 1. The curriculum committee will create a “Kinesiology Universal Rubric” similar to the one used in the Junior Year Writing course. 2. During a faculty retreat, the faculty will practice using the rubric, which will increase confidence in the process, decrease any feelings that this tool will be used to rate instructor performance, and provide feedback on how to improve the rubric. 3. Faculty will voluntarily use the rubrics in their classes and at our annual spring retreat we will review the results. Objective of rubric: Provide more insight about specific learning objectives. Although not direct measurement, it is more in depth than our original plan.

What are your department’s next steps regarding your continuing and/or upcoming EEP line of inquiry?

Improved measurement of Student Outcomes: 1. The curriculum committee will create a “Kinesiology Universal Rubric” similar to the one used in the Junior Year Writing course. 2. During a faculty retreat, the faculty will practice using the rubric, which will increase confidence in the process, decrease any feelings that this tool will be used to rate instructor performance, and provide feedback on how to improve the rubric. 3. Faculty will voluntarily use the rubrics in their classes and at our annual spring retreat we will review the results. In addition, we have a very active curriculum committee that works on all curriculum matters regularly.

Our timeline is as follows. Fall 2020: The curriculum committee will create a “Kinesiology Universal Rubric” similar to the one used in the Junior Year Writing course. Spring 2021: During a faculty retreat, the faculty will practice using the rubric, which will increase confidence in the process, decrease any feelings that this tool will be used to rate instructor performance, and

provide feedback on how to improve the rubric. Fall 2021: Faculty will voluntarily use the rubrics in their classes and at our annual spring retreat we will review the results.

What are the Student Learning Objectives for your department or program(s)?

Kinesiology, B.S.

- Explain the scientific foundations of human movement including: physiology, biomechanics, motor control, behavior, and the relevance of physical activity to human health.
- Demonstrate the knowledge and practical skills necessary to work in kinesiology and related fields.
- Effectively analyze and interpret numerical and statistical information relevant to kinesiology.
- Successfully communicate scientific information about kinesiology to a diverse population.

Experiential Goals

- Laboratory settings
- Presentations and public speaking
- Scientific writing
- Team based learning/group learning

Kinesiology Department; Kinesiology, M.S.; Kinesiology, Ph.D.

- Provide a comprehensive understanding of fundamental concepts in kinesiology as they apply to a wide range of populations.
- Ensure competency in communication of scientific principles to a diverse audience.
- Encourage broad exploration of interdisciplinary approaches to science and discovery.
- Provide teaching and research opportunities that prepare students for the workforce.
- Promote career training for diverse career paths.