



University of Puerto Rico  
Mayagüez Campus  
Office of Continuous Improvement and Assessment  
Mayagüez, Puerto Rico



## Department of Humanities Student Learning Assessment Report

### SECTION I: Mission and Student Learning Outcomes (Graduating Student Profile)

#### Mission Statement

The mission of the Department of Humanities is to cultivate an appreciation of the diversity of human culture by examining and analyzing the artistic and intellectual achievements of humanity. The Department endeavors to foster students to think critically across disciplines so as to stimulate the development of creative and intellectual curiosity, promote the ability to form sound intellectual judgments and ethical values, and foment creativity and innovation. The faculty of the Humanities Department emphasizes the study of multiple cultural expressions, especially those that open new avenues for research, and how these relate to the Puerto Rican cultural reality. The integration of a liberal, fine arts program with professional learning provides the knowledge, skills, and values needed to be a responsible, successful, and creative citizen. For the people of Puerto Rico it provides educational programs, public cultural events, and community services that enhance the quality of life.

#### Departmental Objectives

1. To provide the humanities majors with a broad, well founded, and solid education that enables them to pursue their academic and professional goals.
2. To familiarize students with the major intellectual and artistic traditions through an interdisciplinary approach so as to broaden their critical perspective and heighten their appreciation of diverse cultural values through the Introduction to Western Culture course.
3. To provide all the students of the campus with the best humanistic education thus contributing to the cultivation of professionals with a well-rounded, universal perspective.
4. To promote the importance of the humanities for science, business administration and engineering students through the philosophical study of their ethical and humanistic impact on society.
5. To promote the appropriate environment for the study of, respect for and dialogue about the intellectual, artistic and humanistic enterprise through excellence in teaching.
6. To promote knowledge of the humanities and the arts through research, publications, symposia, seminars, conferences, colloquia, and other special projects.
7. To promote and contribute to the cultural life of the Mayagüez Campus, of Puerto Rico, and the international community through theatrical and musical performances and art exhibitions.

### SECTION II: Student Learning Assessment Results



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Sub-section		Content
<i>Focus of Assessment Project</i>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The focus of the student learning assessment was the skill of critical thinking.</li> <li>Critical thinking is a skill necessary to be cultivated in all students in accordance with the department's mission statement: "The Department endeavors to foster students to think critically across disciplines so as to stimulate the development of creative and intellectual curiosity, promote the ability to form sound intellectual judgments and ethical values, and foment creativity and innovation."</li> </ul>
<i>Justification</i>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The skill was identified as an area of possible improvement through the evaluation of a survey questionnaire administered to students of the department's core course (HUMA 3111-3112). In this questionnaire of students questions related to critical thinking scored noticeably lower than other types of questions.</li> </ul>
<i>Population</i>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The project involved the participation of a group of 118 students, divided in the following manner: 68% outside of the department of humanities, and 32% from the department, of which the division between students of the five sections of the Humanities department was roughly proportionate to the size of the section.</li> <li>The project achieved the involvement of a group of students representative of the department's diversity.</li> </ul>
<i>Assessment</i>	<i>Pre-intervention</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A preliminary critical thinking exercise, the first part of an assessment tool that was implemented in one week April of 2006 in various classes of the Humanities Department, was administered.</li> <li>The results were analyzed afterward.</li> </ul>
	<i>Intervention</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A textual intervention, the second part of the assessment tool, in the form of descriptions of the basic concepts of critical thinking was administered to stimulate critical thinking.</li> </ul>
	<i>Post-Intervention</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A second and distinct critical thinking exercise but with a slightly more challenging level of difficulty, the third part of the assessment too, was administered.</li> <li>The results were analyzed afterward.</li> </ul>
<i>Results</i>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students in the Department of Humanities reveal the same level of critical thinking skills as students in other departments</li> <li>Students in the Department of Humanities achieved higher scores corresponding to the number of years of study from 1 to 4</li> <li>The improvement of critical thinking is an urgent necessity for the department and the university.</li> <li>The intervention did not produce the considerable improvement of exercise scores that was desired.</li> </ul>
<i>Possible Reasons or Hypotheses</i>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>While the results affirm that students in the Humanities department are equally adept in the use of critical thinking skills and that the skills improve over the course of the students studies in the Department, the intervention tool used was not sufficient to produce the improvement desired in the scores on the critical thinking exercises. Additionally, the pre and post intervention exercises should have had the same level of difficulty, to ensure accurate evaluation.</li> </ul>
<i>Course of action</i>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To develop an intervention tool that will more successfully achieve an improvement in the deployment of critical thinking in students.</li> </ul>



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<i>Next learning assessment closing the loop project</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The next learning assessment focused on the same skill, critical thinking, with the view toward achieving greater improvement.</li></ul>
<i>Appendices</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Copies of the critical thinking exercises and their evaluation.</li></ul>