

## Student Learning Assessment Template (SLAT)

### SECTION I: Department Student Learning Outcomes

**NOTE:** The course ESPA 3215 (*Business expression and communication*) is a required elective course in the Business Administration Bachelor of Arts degree, although it is taught by Hispanic Studies Department professors. Therefore, the relevant - and re - Student Learning Outcomes are those included in the College of Business Administration Assessment Plan, not the Department of Hispanic Studies Assessment Plan.

The academic programs at College of Business Administration at UPR - Mayagüez are intentionally designed, and continuously revised to help students demonstrate the following competencies:

1. Interpersonal Skills – (Oral and written communication skills in English and Spanish, and team work)
2. Information Technology skills
3. Ethical and professional behavior
4. Entrepreneurship Skills
5. Business management knowledge and skills with national and international perspective
6. *Research and critical analytical skills for problem solving*
7. Knowledge, Skills and Abilities in their option of studies
  - A. Accounting
  - B. Computerized Information Systems
  - C. Finance
  - D. Human Resources
  - E. Marketing
  - F. Operations Management

**SECTION II: Student Learning Assessment Cycle**

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**Department:** Hispanic Studies

<b>Learning objective assessed</b>	Understanding of plagiarism, formatting using the Chicago B style and general library research skills.
<b>Justification</b>	Students are not very familiar with the Chicago B style or with general library research skills. This assessment cycle also extended the cycle conducted last year by including a second assessment with the purpose of increasing students learning of the topics investigated.
<b>Impacted Population</b>	Fifty undergraduates from the College of Business Administration taking the required elective course <i>Business communication</i> (ESPA 3215).
	<p data-bbox="289 552 1346 737"><b>Pre intervention</b> Filling a 9-item open-ended questionnaire developed by the researcher. The nine questions were divided into: (a) two questions about the Chicago bibliographic styles; (b) two general questions about the UPRM library search services; (c) three general questions about bibliographies; and (d) two questions about plagiarism</p> <p data-bbox="289 737 1346 1031"><b>Intervention</b> There were two interventions:  First one: Listen to a 50 minute lecture (assisted with Powerpoint) given by library personnel concerning the topics of interest in this assessment.  Second one: One of the group sections read a review module of the selected topics with the instruction that the contents would be included in the the final class exam. The other group did not review the module.</p> <p data-bbox="289 1031 1346 1115"><b>Post intervention</b> Filling the same instrument used in the preintervention.</p>
<b>Results</b>	<p data-bbox="488 1115 1346 1188"><b>First intervention</b></p> <p data-bbox="488 1188 1346 1665"><b>Overall results.</b> When looked globally, the first intervention was successful in increasing student's knowledge and skills in all (100%) the knowledge and skills tested. The intervention's highest successes were in increasing students' knowledge of: the definition of "Chicago style"; to at least partially arrange bibliographic data into Chicago style; and define "annotated bibliography". This finding must be qualified by stating that the intervention was not as effective at reducing students' ability to define certain concepts, such as "working bibliography" and "annotated bibliography"; or name two databases used in business administration. In sum, although the first intervention was not effective at significantly improving all the knowledge and skills tested, at a minimum it was effective at improving all the dimensions tested. The sections below provide more information about each of these dimensions.</p> <p data-bbox="488 1665 1346 1881"><b>Knowledge and skills-Chicago style:</b> Most students (84%) either were unable to define or defined incorrectly the "Chicago style" in the pretest. However, this figure was reduced considerably in the post test (39%). In a similar trend, most students (86%) in the pretest were either unable or incorrectly converted bibliographic data into the corresponding bibliographic entry in Chicago style, but were less likely to fail this skill</p>

(54%) in a post test.

**Knowledge and skills-RUM library.** Knowledge of the hiperlink to access the UPRM library was good in a little less than half of the students surveyed (47%) but improved (85%) after the intervention. In a similar trend, although a small percentage of students were cognizant of online databases that could be used to obtain information about business administration (12%), the intervention increased this figure twofold (26%).

**Knowledge about bibliography definitions.** As stated, the open-ended questionnaire included three questions concerning bibliographies. In general, before the intervention students were not very good at defining “working bibliography” (80% was unable to answer or answered incorrectly), “annotated bibliography” (100%) or “final bibliography” (76%). The intervention helped reduce students' understanding of the three concepts presented; for “working bibliography”, the post test result was 63%, down from 80%; for “annotated bibliography” the post test result was 85%, down from 100%; and for “final bibliography”, the figure was 50% in the post test, down from 76% in the pretest).

**Knowledge about plagiarism.** A high percentage of students were cognizant of what “plagiarism” was (89% were able to define it correctly or partially in the pretest) and the intervention increased this margin to all students (100%). The highest contribution of the intervention was to reduce the percentage of partially correct responses in favor of completely correct responses (from 24% partially correct in the pretest to 13% in the post test). Students were somewhat knowledgeable about techniques to prevent plagiarism. In the pretest 59% of the students were able to advance at least one such technique. The intervention increased that figure to 73%.

## **Second Intervention**

**Overall results.** As discussed in the previous section, the first intervention was successful in increasing student's knowledge and skills in all the knowledge and skills tested. The second post test, which allowed, on the one hand, to measure memory decay after two months of the first intervention and, on the other hand, measure the effectiveness of a refresher module, shows decreases (some dramatic) in seven of the nine dimensions tested and gains (some significant) in eight of the nine dimensions tested (the last dimension remained constant). This discussion will emphasize the gains obtained by including a second intervention.

The second intervention's highest successes were in increasing students' knowledge of the definition of “annotated bibliography, “working bibliography” and to name at least one database used in business administration. The sections below provide more information about each of these dimensions.

	<p><b>Knowledge and skills-Chicago style:</b> There was a marked increase in students' ability to at least partially define the "Chicago style" (88%) following the second intervention, compared from the results of the first intervention (61%). In a similar trend, the second intervention improved subjects' ability to convert bibliographic data into the corresponding bibliographic entry in Chicago style (62%) when compared to the first intervention only (46%).</p> <p><b>Knowledge and skills: RUM library:</b> The second intervention was also successful at increasing the percentage of students who could partially or completely state the hiperlink to access the UPRM library website (96%, up from 85% after the first intervention). Also, students improved their knowledge of at least one database available to access business data on UPRM's library after the second intervention (35%, up from 26% after the first intervention). Knowledge about bibliography definitions: The second intervention was very successful at – at least, partially - increasing students' understanding of the concepts "working bibliography", "annotated bibliography", and "final bibliography". The second intervention figures were: 62%, up from 37% after the first intervention; 48%, up from 15%; and 77%, up from 50%, respectively.</p> <p><b>Knowledge about plagiarism.</b> In the only reversal of a gain obtained after the first intervention, 96% of students were able to at least partially define "plagiarism", compared to 100% after the second intervention. On the other hand, the second intervention students' understanding of at least one technique to prevent plagiarism. After the first intervention 73% of the students were able to advance at least one such technique, and increased to 81% after the second intervention.</p> <p>Whereas the second intervention was overwhelmingly successful among the group of students in the manipulation group, the lack of this intervention in a second group led to knowledge or skill decay in five of the nine dimensions surveyed. The biggest drop in percentage of skill attained was that related to students' ability to convert information into the proper Chicago bibliographic entry (from 46% after the first intervention to 23% after the second administration of the instrument).</p>
<p><b>Possible Reasons or Hypotheses</b></p>	<p>In hindsight, it is not surprising that students are not very knowledgeable about the Chicago style, about bibliographic knowledge or library database usage. The vast majority of the courses these students take before enrolling in this class are not writing-oriented, and if students have taken other writing-oriented courses, these courses tend to utilize other styles (MLA and APA), and most likely have not asked students look for information in business oriented databases (a very specific domain).</p> <p>On the other hand, students showed a very sophisticated knowledge of what "plagiarism" is. This result is not surprising for various reasons. One of them is that it is unlikely (though not tested in this study) that this is the first time that students encounter this concept. For instance, UPRM's</p>

	Student Manual presents “plagiarism” as an act of academic dishonesty that will lead to academic sanctions. Additionally, the issue of plagiarism is often presented in the course syllabus or in the first day of class statements of course policies.
<b><i>Course of Action</i></b>	In light of the results obtained and of the subsequent reflection about its possible causes the following steps will be taken: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Continue providing this intervention to all students.</li> <li>2. Create a new intervention that explains the definitions of “working bibliography”, “annotated bibliography” and “final bibliography”</li> <li>3. Create a practical exercise that allows students to identify and use two business administration databases</li> <li>4. Provide practical exercises to improve students' ability to convert bibliography data into a proper Chicago style bibliographic entry</li> <li>5. Create an intervention that shows students two ways to prevent plagiarism</li> <li>6. Reduce the intervention's coverage of the definition of plagiarism and provide more weight to other areas that require more attention (see 1-5 above)</li> </ol>
<b><i>Results Dissemination</i></b>	College of Arts and Sciences assessment presentations and Department of Hispanic Study presentation during an assessment activity or during a regular faculty meeting.
<b><i>Next learning assessment loop project</i></b>	Conduct a follow-up study that incorporates the present assessment plus a series of other mini-interventions and exercises that reinforce the content addressed in the present intervention.
<b><i>Appendix</i></b>	Copy of the open-ended questionnaire used in this study. Excel raw data Stacked bar charts showing results

