

In Family and Consumer Sciences (FCS), we seek to improve the quality of life for individuals, families and communities. In pursuit of that mission, department faculty goals focus on guiding students on their journey to become professionals who will serve others and who hold Christ as their example of servant-leadership.

The FCS faculty are thus committed to providing the environment for effective student learning, in order to meet individual student needs and academic pursuits. Evidence-based and varied teaching methods and instructional tools are integrated into all department academic programs (“majors”). Core elements in the science and art of advanced instruction include needs assessment, planning, data collection and analysis.

In Summer 2015, core FCS faculty evaluated current learning outcomes for each academic program. From this in-depth deliberation came the conclusion that the learning outcomes were too numerous and broad for effective analysis of outcomes data and assessment of needs. Faculty re-directed its efforts to streamline and prioritize the data, also relying on review of best practices and feedback from the university’s own Institutional Effectiveness team. The end result was fewer but more powerful Program Learning Outcomes which would provide the framework to examine outcomes data and provide the evidence for a valid needs assessment and the premise for meaningful, effective change.

Change 1: Five Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) were developed for each of the FCS academic programs that will remain after University Prioritization. Fashion and Interiors and the generalist FCS major will be completely phased out by 2018.

Change 2: The five PLOs were carefully aligned with each course in the four academic programs. One to two PLOs will be evaluated at a time, using a three-year evaluation cycle to complete the entire group.

Change 3: FCS faculty members are now designing new Assessment Rubrics to assess PLOs, instead of relying on their previous grading rubrics. The Assessment Rubrics will be developed to align with each of the PLOs. In some cases, only one Assessment Rubric will be used across all four academic programs. Otherwise, each academic program will employ one Assessment Rubric for each PLO in its own curriculum.

Change 4: FCS Faculty will evaluate each PLO at the “Introduce” and the “Master” levels of learner competence. These evaluations will allow instructors to view the development

of content knowledge and comprehension in learners in order to improve the curricula. The FCS assessment plan collects both direct and indirect data for each PLO, and includes at least two FCS faculty members to employ the rubric and calibrate its measures. In a three-year cycle of assessments, all four department programs will be evaluating the same PLOs simultaneously as a means of improving administrative efficiencies.

The 2014-15 Assessment Plan incorporates the changes previously discussed as well as components of the department's previous process which FCS faculty determined to be still-valuable for important data. These components focus on seniors and include: a Core Competency Assessment of oral and written communication skills and information literacy, which are evaluated using AACU rubrics and submitted on LiveText; an exit survey for their perceptions of experiences in their department programs; and an exit exam for core knowledge from their department coursework. The GE course, FCS 315 Personal, Family and Community Health, is evaluated each semester using the GE Learning Objectives assessment process.