



**Annual Assessment Report AY 10-11
Annual Assessment Plan AY 11-12
For Undergraduate & Graduate Degree Programs**

Program Information

Name of Program:	Human Development B.A.	College:	CoAS
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PART A: Annual Assessment Report AY 10-11 Due by May 27, 2011
 Please note: Should you need additional time to analyze data gathered in Spring 2011, please send an email requesting an extension to Jennifer Jeffries (jjeffrie@csusm.edu).

- 1) Please describe:
- A. the program student learning outcomes you focused on for assessment this year.
 - B. the assessment activities you used to measure student learning in these areas.
 - C. the results of your assessment(s).
 - D. the significance of your results.

A. AY 2010-2011 SLO Focus

In their response to the Human Development Program Review, the Program Assessment Committee (PAC) recommended, among other recommendations, that the Human Development (HD) Department develop a coherent vision for the future to resolve the lack of alignment among the name, the focus, and the curriculum and also encouraged the HD Department to develop other courses that promote critical thinking skills in applied settings or to integrate such applications into already existing courses.

In the response to the 2008-2009 assessment report, the AVP for Academic Programs and Learning Outcomes Assessment Faculty Fellow recommended that future assessments be designed to gather more specific data to better identify and understand student weaknesses and how to improve student learning.

The 2010-2011 assessment plan was designed to address these recommendations by gathering foundational data which will be used to align the focus and curriculum and identifying what specific skills HD graduates feel they learned and have found to be important in their applied settings to guide further curriculum development. Unlike previous assessments (2007-2008 SLO 4, 2008-2009 SLO 3, 2009-2010 SLO 6), this year's assessment gathered data from Alumni. The assessment focused on SLOs 1 and 6, as follows:

Students who graduate with a Bachelor of Arts in Human Development will be able to:

- 1 Conceptualize human development over the life span in terms of complex interactions among cultural, biological, psychological, and social processes.
- 6 Understand social service organizations, including their operation, funding, staffing, and successful delivery of services.

B. Assessment Activities

The assessment activities used to measure student learning in these areas this academic year included: 1.) a focus group, 2.) a survey fielded to Alumni, and 3.) a survey of current seniors.

Focus Group

A group of eleven current students who actively engage in HD Club activities participated in a discussion about the process and project and provided input on the proposed survey content and questions. Input from this

activity, along with feedback from the Learning Outcomes Assessment Fellow (Dr. Marie Thomas) and Associate Vice President (Dr. Jennifer Jeffries), led to the development of the survey.

Alumni Survey

The survey was fielded to CSUSM HD alumni through the Institutional Planning and Analysis (IPA) Department.

Item Development - To better understand the alignment among the degree program's name and the curriculum, three content topics were identified to sample a developmental SLO and a service oriented SLO, as follows:

SLO1 Content Topics (Developmental)

1. The role of culture on intergenerational behaviors (for example, individualistic versus collectivism)
2. The role perceived societal norms on beliefs and perspectives (for example, women's roles in family and the workplace)
3. How changes in the members of a family impacts behavior (for example, how family members adjust their roles to accommodate to the death of a family member)

SLO6 Content Topics (Service Oriented)

1. Management topics in social service organizations (for example, theories, leadership and public relations regarding the successful delivery of services)
2. Important clinical issues (for example, supervision, ethics, and program evaluation)
3. Basic grant skills (for example, grant writing, grant managing, and grant reporting)

Level of Knowledge – A Knowledge Survey format (based on the work of E.B. Nuhfer, Idaho State University) was used to elicit evidence of student strengths/weaknesses and provide guidance for improving student learning for each of the two SLOs of interest. Participants were asked to respond to items, not by answering questions, but rather by rating their *Level of Knowledge* for each item. The prompt read "Please indicate the YOUR LEVEL OF KNOWLEDGE for each of these topics." Response options included these concepts:

1. I do not know it
2. I am 50% confident that I know it
3. I know it

Level of Importance - To better understand the degree to which students were using the knowledge and skills learned in their applied settings, participants were then asked to indicate how important (*Level of Importance*) each of these same 6 content topics is in their current or chosen career. The prompt read "Please rate the IMPORTANCE of these topics in your current, or preferred, career." Response options included these concepts:

1. Unimportant or Very Unimportant
2. Somewhat Important or Unimportant
3. Important or Very Important

Alumni were also asked "What knowledge or training would you have liked to have had in your Human Development B A curriculum?".

Survey of Current Students

The items were also sent to current HD seniors so that the Alumni sample could be compared to current students, to better understand how the Alumni's experiences after graduation have influenced their responses.

C. Assessment Result

General Results

There were 57 Alumni respondents who were primarily recent graduates (see Figure 1). Responses to each grouping of 3 items (3 Knowledge items for SLO1, 3 Knowledge items for SLO6, 3 Importance items for SLO1, and 3 Importance items for SLO6) were reviewed. Most of the respondents indicated that they knew the content and that it was important in their career (see domain averages in Figure 2).

There were 28 Senior respondents. The Human Development B.A. degree program has 4 emphasis areas. The emphasis areas for both the Alumni and Senior respondents were similar and consistent with prior reports regarding the distribution among the emphasis areas (see Figure 3).

Conclusions:

- Respondents rated SLO1 Knowledge and Importance higher than SLO6 but both were high.
- Knowledge was rated higher than Importance for both SLOs but both somewhat high.

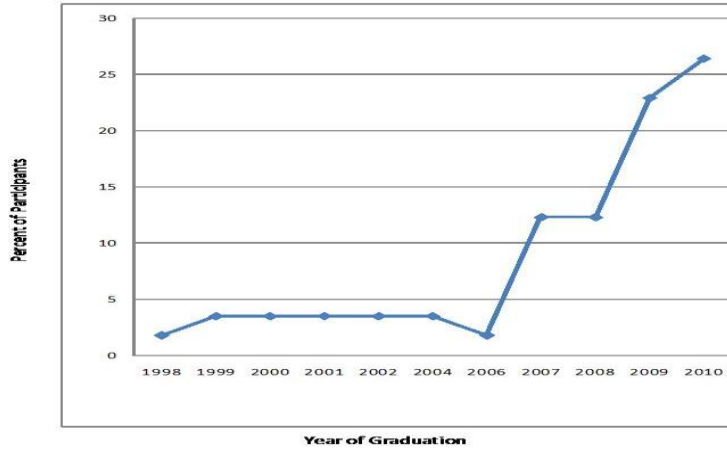


Figure 1. Alumni respondents were primarily recent graduates.

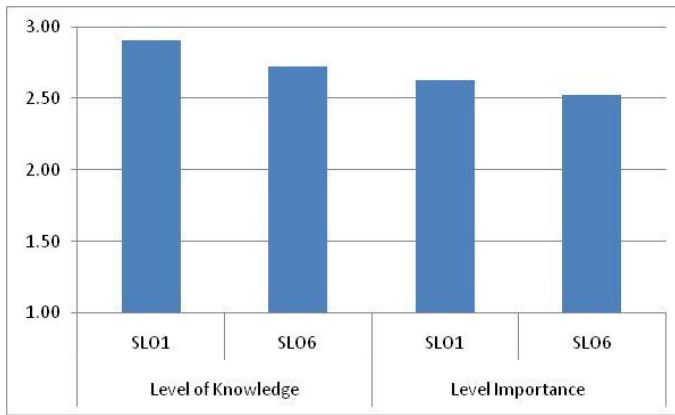


Figure 2. Participants mostly indicated that they knew the content topics (Level of Knowledge response 3 = I know it) and that it was important in their career (level of Importance response 3 = Important or Very Important).

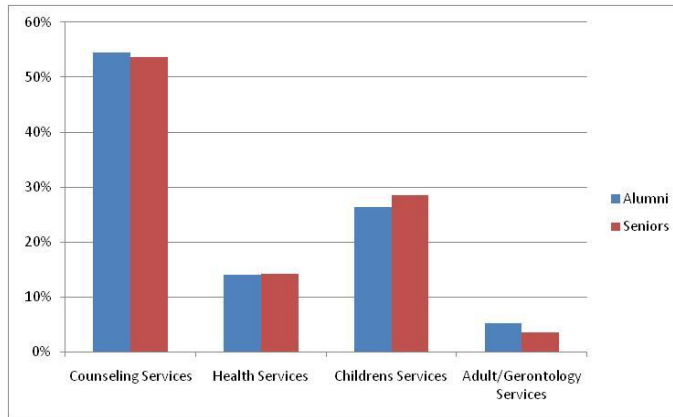


Figure 3. Emphasis area distributions were similar for Alumni and Senior Respondents.

Alumni and Seniors Results

Responses indicate that both Alumni and Seniors felt that they knew the sample content from SLO1 (conceptualize human development over the life span in terms of complex interactions among cultural, biological, psychological, and social processes). They were also confident that it was important in their career (see Figure 4). Participants' confidence in their knowledge of the content from SLO6 (understand social service organizations, including their operation, funding, staffing, and successful delivery of services) was lower as was their confidence that it was important in their career (see Figure 5). Content Topics items are listed in Assessment Activities section above.

Conclusions:

- Alumni and Seniors had similar ratings of SLO1 content topics Knowledge (very high) but Seniors rated SLO1 content topics Importance higher than Alumni.
- Alumni rated SLO6 content topics Knowledge higher than Seniors but Seniors' ratings of the Importance of SLO6 content topics 1 and 2 were higher while Alumni's ratings were higher for content topic 3.

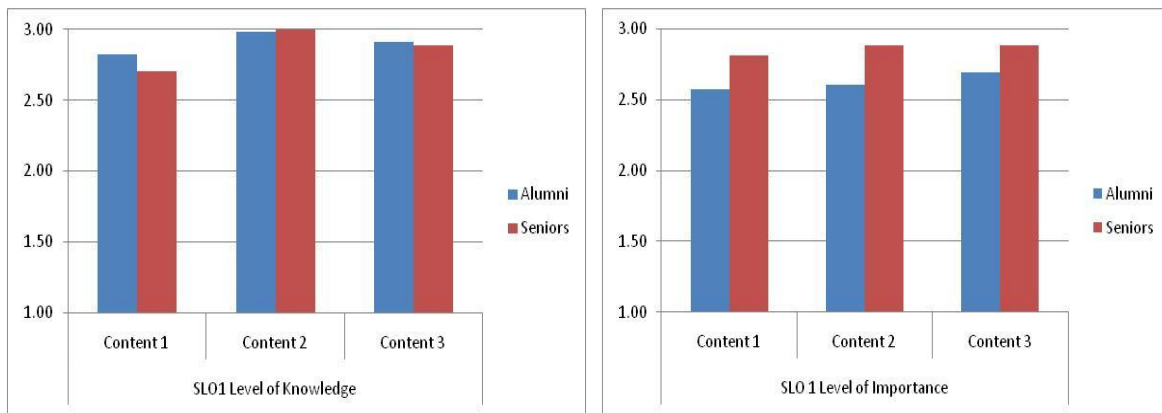


Figure 4. Participants were confident in their knowledge related to SLO1 and its importance.

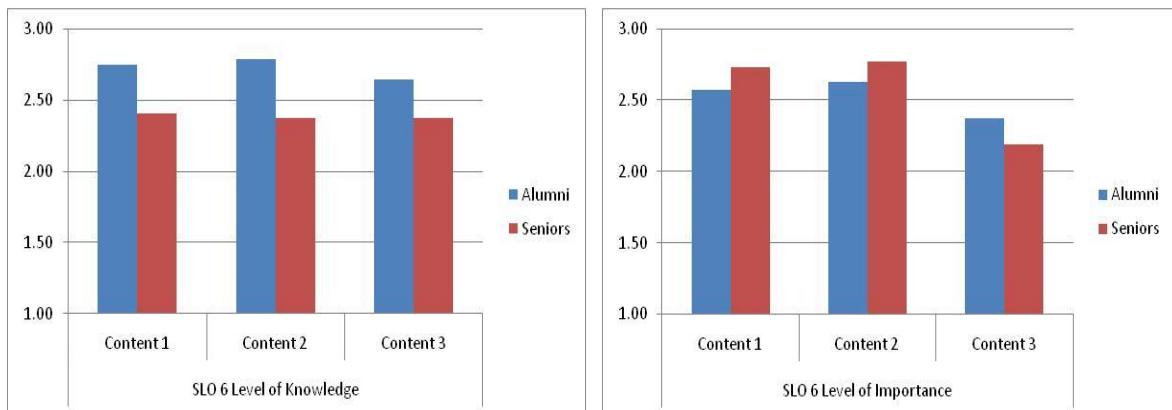


Figure 5. Participants were somewhat confident in their knowledge related to SLO6 and less confident about its importance.

Emphasis Area Results

Students in the four emphasis areas in the HD B.A. degree program choose from a menu of courses to fulfill their degree requirements. Thus, given the large number of potential combinations of courses, comparison of knowledge by emphasis area has many confounds in addition to the challenge of collecting specific data when coursework is primarily provided by the allied disciplines. However, an examination of responses by emphasis area and by level (Alumni vs. Seniors) provides some interesting data. Respondents in most emphasis areas had higher confidence in their Level of Knowledge for SLO1 than SLO6 in both the Alumni and Senior groups (see Figure 6). The biggest

change is seen in the Adult/Gerontology Services emphasis area (rating for Knowledge and Importance of SLO 1 were higher than rating of Knowledge for SLO6). Alumni ratings of the Level of Importance of SLOs 1 and 6 were lower than Seniors' ratings for most emphasis areas (see Figure 7). Again, the biggest difference is seen in the Adult/Gerontology emphasis area where the Level of Importance is much higher for Alumni than Seniors. Note that the Aging/Gerontology Services groups have a very low N.

Conclusions:

- Respondents in most emphasis areas had higher confident in their Level of Knowledge for SLO1 than SLO6 in both the Alumni and Senior groups (see Figure 6).
- Alumni ratings of the Level of Importance of SLOs 1 and 6 were lower than Seniors' ratings for most emphasis areas (see Figure 7).

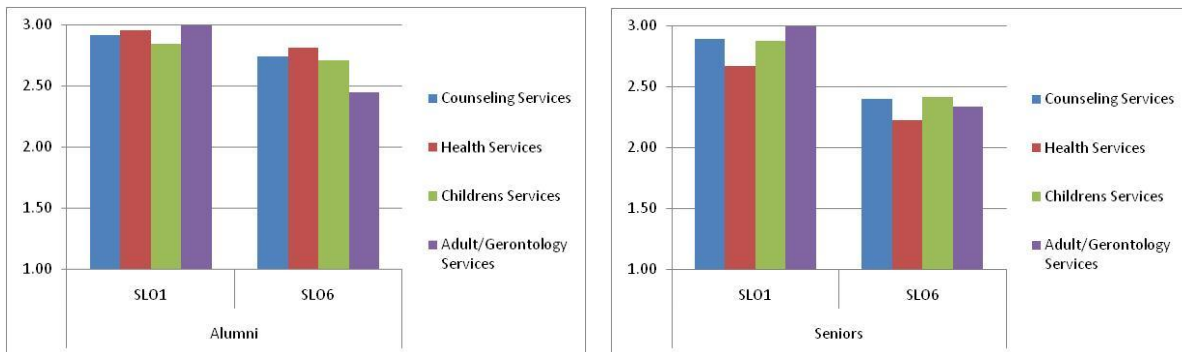


Figure 6. Level of Knowledge for SLO1 was higher than SLO6 in both the Alumni and Senior groups in all emphasis areas.

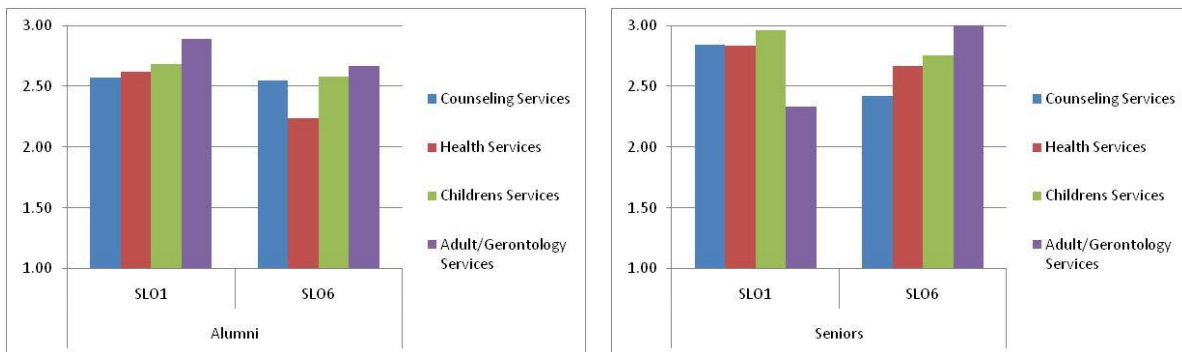


Figure 7. Overall, Alumni ratings of the Level of Importance of SLOs 1 and 6 were lower than Seniors' ratings.

Open Ended Alumni Question

When asked "What knowledge or training would you have liked to have had in your Human Development B A curriculum?", participants responses fell into 4 categories; curriculum, field experience, career information, and service administration. Curriculum was the most frequent theme. Respondents commented that, due to difficulty getting courses from the other departments, they were forced to take courses that they were not interested in just to keep on track with graduation and that more counseling courses are needed. Respondents indicated that more field experience is needed. They suggested that a year-long or two separate semester-long internships would help students to gain skills and be better prepared. The respondents also indicated that more information should be provided to support them in making career decisions. This included basic and practical suggestions, such as clarifying what education is needed for social work and how to get it, providing the information early in the degree program, and establishing more opportunities to develop the needed skill sets. Respondents indicated that more training in grant writing is needed, noting that this would be specialized training and make them stand out from other job applicants.

D. Significance of Results

The results of this assessment provide a critical step in the path to understanding and revising the curriculum for the Human Development B.A. degree program.

Previous and current students indicated that they were confident in their knowledge related to human development but less confident of their knowledge about social service topics. The findings of this assessment are significant because a large portion of the HD students indicate that they plan to have careers in the social services (i.e. social worker, special education teacher, human resources), fields that need the service oriented knowledge and skill set. Several previous reports have also noted that the name, focus, and curriculum of the Human Development B.A. degree program are not aligned.

Another theme that emerged was that their perceptions of how important specific knowledge was in their career seemed to decrease as they gained experience in the field, except for the Adult/Gerontology Services emphasis area. These findings may suggest that students are not gaining the critical thinking skills needed in the careers they choose or that they do not understand how to use these skills in applied settings. Knowledge was higher for Alumni than seniors in the content topics of SLO6 which may indicate that they are gaining confidence in their knowledge as they get more experience in the field. One example was grant writing which seemed to become more important after entering the work force.

Responses to the open ended question regarding what knowledge or training should be added addressed curriculum, field experience, career information, and service administration. The comments included mostly practical, versus academic, needs. This maybe reflecting the current economic climate (in that it is difficult to find employment at this time), however, these suggestions should be followed up with a focus group of social service agency professionals to clarify what skills are needed.

2) As a result of your assessment findings, what changes at either the course- or program-level are being made and/or proposed in order to improve student learning? Please articulate how your assessment findings suggest the need for any proposed changes.

The conclusion of this review comes at the time of the formation of the new college and the addition of two tenure track faculty in the Human Development department. Further, the interdisciplinary nature of the HD B.A. degree program is likely going to be re-evaluated in this new context. It has been said that the danger to interdisciplinary programs is that they become departments and, on the CSUSM campus, this has, in fact, become the case. Further, with the development of the new College of Health and Human Services, the HD Department will soon be isolated from the allied disciplines that provide courses for this interdisciplinary degree program.

One of the difficulties of interdisciplinary programs is in the rigor of assessment. In the case of the HD degree program at CSUSM, the menu of choices from different courses (housed in different degree programs) makes collegiality an essential administrative component of the program. The same menu of choices presents numerous assessment challenges. While this program does have a capstone course, the addition of a capstone project which is consistent across the sections of the capstone course would allow for a consistent indicator of the student learning outcome(s). A systematic approach might provide useful insight into the strengths and weaknesses of the curriculum.

Since I used IPA, a large number of email addresses were no longer valid as only those who joined the Alumni Association still have csusm.edu emails. Those who had graduated further back and still had csusm.edu emails were probably activity HD Alumni Association members (i.e. on the HD Chapter Board) and may represent a unique/biased sample. Thus, Alumni respondents were mostly recent graduates who, perhaps, have not had sufficient time in the field to grasp what is needed in their field. A focus group of local professions in the field should be conducted to better understand what knowledge and skill sets are needed in these settings.

The findings of this assessment indicate that students feel that they learned about development but more practical and service related information and experience is needed to prepare them to work in the field. They also indicated that courses related to applied services, such as counseling, are needed. This is consistent with previous reports which have indicated that the Human Development B.A. degree program needs to create a plan to develop courses specific to its degree program.

A curriculum map needs to be developed as the current curricular structure and sequence are difficult to pinpoint due to the menu of course options. It is therefore also difficult to identify where the SLOs are being met both within

the HD B.A. degree program and within the emphasis areas. A curriculum map would also provide a context for the interpretation of data such as the data in this assessment. For example, a curriculum map would show that SLO 6 is primarily addressed in HD300, one of the few courses that is required for all HD students and which would have been taken by all the respondents in this study. Also that the Alumni, however, might not have taken HD101 which currently serves as the foundational course for SLO1 but is a recently added course thus would have not been taken by 2009 and earlier graduates.

The disciplinary perspective breath is a strength of the program thus effort should be put into maintaining this breath while clarifying core requirements and menu choices for the emphasis areas. The curricular planning should be conducted with colleagues in the allied disciplines.

3) If you used the resources that were given to you as stated in your plan, please check here.
If you used them differently, please provide specifics.