

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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Learning objective assessed	Understanding of plagiarism, formatting using the Chicago B style and general library research skills.
Justification	Students are not very familiar with the Chicago B style or with general library research skills.
Impacted Population	Fifty undergraduates from the College of Business Administration taking the required elective course <i>Business communication</i> (ESPA 3215).
	Pre intervention 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
	Intervention Listen to a 50 minute lecture (assisted with Powerpoint) given by library personnel concerning the topics of interest in this assessment.
	Post intervention Filling the same instrument used in the preintervention
Results	<p>Overall results. When looked globally, the intervention was successful in increasing student's knowledge and skills in the vast majority (90%) of the knowledge and skills tested. The intervention's highest successes were in increasing students' knowledge of: the definition of "Chicago style", the number of at least one database used in business administration; and to at least partially arrange bibliographic data into Chicago style. This finding must be qualified by stating that the intervention was not as effective at reducing students' ability to define certain concepts, such as "final bibliography", "working bibliography" and "annotated bibliography"; increasing the students' ability to mention two techniques to reduce plagiarism; and name two databases used in business administration. In sum, although the intervention was not effective at improving all the knowledge and skills tested, at a minimum it was effective at reducing all except one set of knowledge and at most significantly increased subjects' knowledge in several of the dimensions tested. The sections below provide more information about each of these dimensions.</p> <p>Knowledge and skills-Chicago style: Most students (85%) either were unable to define or defined incorrectly the "Chicago style" in the pretest. However, this figure was reduced considerably in the post test (67%). In a similar trend, most students (73%) 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 (40%) in a post test.</p> <p>Knowledge and skills-RUM library. Knowledge of the hiperlink to access the UPRM library was very good in a little more than half of the students surveyed (56%) and improved (75%) after the intervention. In a similar trend, although a small percentage of</p>

	<p>students were cognizant of online databases that could be used to obtain information about business administration (7%), the intervention increased this figure threefold (23%).</p> <p>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” (69% was unable to answer or answered incorrectly), “annotated bibliography” (100%) or “final bibliography” (69%). In the only inverse trend observed in this assessment, the intervention was not effective at improving students' already poor understanding of “working bibliography” (85% was unable to respond or responded incorrectly, up from 69% in the pretest). On the other hand, the intervention helped reduce students' understanding of the other two concepts presented (for “annotated bibliography” the post test result was 85%, down from 100%; for “final bibliography” the figures were 68% in the post test, marginally down from 69% in the pretest).</p> <p>Knowledge about plagiarism. A high percentage of students were cognizant of what “plagiarism” was (87% were able to define it correctly or partially in the pretest) and the intervention increased this margin lightly (90%). The highest contribution of the intervention was to reduce the percentage of partially correct responses in favor of completely correct responses (from 29% partially correct in the pretest to 10% in the post test). Students were not as knowledgeable about techniques to prevent plagiarism. In the pretest 44% of the students were able to advance at least one such technique. The intervention increased that figure to 61%.</p>
<p><i>Possible Reasons or Hypotheses</i></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 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.</p>
<p><i>Course of Action</i></p>	<p>In light of the results obtained and of the subsequent reflection about its possible causes the following steps will be taken:</p>

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continue providing this intervention to all students. 2. Create a new intervention that explains the definitions of “working bibliography”, “annotated bibliography” and “final bibliography” 3. Create a practical exercise that allows students to identify and use two business administration databases 4. Provide practical exercises to improve students' ability to convert bibliography data into a proper Chicago style bibliographic entry 5. Create an intervention that shows students two ways to prevent plagiarism 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)
<i>Results Dissemination</i>	College of Arts and Sciences assessment presentations and Department of Hispanic Study presentation during an assessment activity or during a regular faculty meeting.
<i>Next learning assessment loop project</i>	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.
<i>Appendix</i>	Copy of the open-ended questionnaire used in this study.