

Legal Research and Writing Assessment Report

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1 INTRODUCTION

Florida SouthWestern State College's Paralegal Studies Department gathers a multitude of data from various courses as assessment tools. One of the courses included in assessment is PLA 1103 *Legal Research and Writing I*. The assessment outcomes are intended to provide a baseline and measurement of achievement moving forward as well as investigate the strength and performance of items in the exam. The assessment plan also provides comparisons between dual enrollment (concurrent) and non-dual enrollment students, online versus traditional students, and by site, where possible. Where data is sufficient, additional analyses are provided including distribution studies and longitudinal studies.

For additional detail or further analysis not provided in this report, please contact Dr. Joseph F. van Gaalen, Asst. VP, IR, Assessment & Effectiveness, Academic Affairs (jfvangaalen@fsw.edu; x16965).

2 PLA 1103

2.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES AND DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

The FSW Paralegal Studies faculty defined one area of interest for evaluation in support of the state framework outcome in which students will cite and re-create litigation techniques & procedures in the Litigation course. The SLO related to PLA 1103 is:

- SLO 1 – Demonstration of this assessment method will be measured from the Florida Case Brief assignment(s) from the Legal Research & Writing I course (PLA 1103) with a benchmark of 85% achieving 85% or higher.

During the spring 2019 semester, 20 artifacts were scored tallied from 1 of 1 sections of PLA 1103 with an enrollment of 24. Of the 20 artifacts, 20 scored an 85% or higher meaning 100% achieved the benchmark. Results are shown in Table 1.

	n	Artifacts Achieving 85% or Higher	% Achieving Benchmark
Florida Case Brief	20	20	100%
	n	Mean Rubric Score (Max=5)	% Scoring 3 or Higher
PLA PO 02.0: Demonstrate the ability to utilize the law library and apply this knowledge to legal writing.	20	5.0	100%
PLA 1103 LO 02.06: Discuss case law, how it is made, its component parts, and how to use cases to resolve a legal problem.	20	5.0	100%
PLA 1103 LO 02.08: Demonstrate how to "brief" a case	20	5.0	100%

Table 1. Florida Case Brief assessment statistics.

2.2 EXPLORATORY ANALYSIS AND SIGNIFICANCE TESTING

Multiple comparisons of artifact scores across varying formats, campuses, and student types were made, where possible, in order to add depth to the causes of the distribution of the artifacts. Each course was divided into the appropriate subgroups to perform the analysis. In cases where a subgroup is not represented in the course comparisons were not conducted and are noted for comprehensiveness.

2.2.1 Dual Enrollment (Concurrent) to Non-Dual Enrollment Comparison

No dual enrollment (concurrent) sections of the course were run during spring 2019 so no comparison study between dual enrollment and non-dual enrollment could be completed.

2.2.2 Online to Traditional Comparison

No sections of this course are offered online so no comparison is ever completed.

2.2.3 Comparison by Campus/Site

Only one section of the course was run during spring 2019 so no cross-campus comparison study could be completed.

2.3 LONGITUDINAL STUDY

As further data is collected in coming terms, this section will track achievement through time and highlight strengths, weaknesses and any long-term trends beginning fall 2019.

3 CONCLUSIONS

FSW's Paralegal Studies Department has employed a common assignment for PLA 1103 to assess achievement in the course and measure the outcome in which students learn legal research and writing. The results are intended to provide a baseline achievement moving forward.

3.1 PLA 1103

A drill-down of PLA 1103 results are as follows:

1. In a study of outcome objective, "Demonstration of this assessment method will be measured from the Florida Case Brief assignment(s) from the Legal Research & Writing I course (PLA 1103) with a benchmark of 85% achieving 85% or higher.", during the spring 2019 semester, 20 artifacts were scored tallied from 1 of 1 sections of PLA 1103 with an enrollment of 24. Of the 20 artifacts, 20 scored an 85% or higher meaning 100% achieved the benchmark.
2. No dual enrollment (concurrent) sections of the course were run during spring 2019 so no comparison study between dual enrollment and non-dual enrollment could be completed.
3. No sections of this course are offered online so no comparison is ever completed.
4. No cross-campus comparison study could be completed because only one section of the course was offered during spring 2019.