

Learning Outcomes Assessment: Wellness & Alternative Medicine Program:

Review Process: Data was collected from students enrolled in the Wellness and Alternative Senior Seminar on achievement of learning outcomes in the major. Students completed 4 tasks to create a requisite data pool to assess learning outcomes. Data in this review is based on data collected from the Wellness & Alternative Medicine Senior Seminar courses in Spring 2009 and 2010.

1.A Narrative Approach: Students completed stories that were reviewed and compared as per WAM Learning Outcomes as a group:

a)The story of how they came to choose to enroll in the JSC WAM program—their expectations and perceptions of the program at the beginning,

b)The story of what they learned in the JSC WAM degree program with a particular focus on WAM Learning Objectives and

c)The story of what their future plans are—and how WAM prepared them—or not—for this.

2.A Comparative Evaluation Approach: Students were required to complete—and pass-- the National Institutes of Health 10 hour Complementary and Alternative Certification Exam online. Each student received Certificates of Completion—currently the “gold standard” as per NIH guidelines in this new field. Students wrote reports comparing their preparation in the JSC WAM program with knowledge and science required by the top federal agency in the United States in this emerging field of interdisciplinary study.

3.A Qualitative Approach-Interviews: Students choose to interview either entering students in the WAM program or alumni already involved in graduate school or careers after having graduated from the program. The provided data on new student expectations and current program access and quality as well as post-graduate reflections on how the JSC WAM program prepared them for their future.

4.A Focus Group Approach: WAM Seniors invited younger WAM students to a storytelling session where seniors told their stories of their experiences in the WAM program and invited discussion of the pros and cons of the major with younger students.

<p>WAM Pilot Program: Learning Outcomes Assessment Summary for Wellness and Alternative Medicine Majors</p>
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1. Students will demonstrate interdisciplinary knowledge of the behavioral and biological evolution, principles and scientific evidence for healing claims of conventional allopathic medicine and of diverse multicultural alternative health care systems.

a. Student interdisciplinary knowledge and science learned in the WAM program went far beyond what was asked of them in the NIH Complementary and Alternative Medicine Certification exam in most areas. Students noted the use of old research and outdated knowledge in several parts of the NIH training certification. Areas of omission in the WAM curriculum include lifespan information on the elderly and the very young, the emerging area of energy medical modalities and on diversity issues of racial, ethnic and gender based healthcare in alternative medicine.

2. Students will develop integrative critical thinking and investigative and evaluative skills for making optimal health care choices through scientific comparison of healing and wellness claims of diverse health care models.

a. Students noted integrative critical thinking skills were more often encouraged in behavioral sciences classes. While some behavioral sciences classes include a focus on investigative and evaluative skills, it is recommended that research methods and scientific comparative evaluation be integral parts of every behavioral science class.

b. Students noted that a relative lack of integrative critical thinking skills in their biology, chemistry and physics classes with a heavier focus on memorizing facts within each discipline. Investigative and evaluative skills were encouraged to them via research internships with selected professors.

c. Students would like to see more opportunities for scientific research opportunities as well as increased experiential hands-on opportunities with alternative medical professionals.

3. Students will demonstrate their competency as multilingual integrative health care translators who are fluent in the concepts, principles and integration of multicultural models of health care and who assist professional in the comparison of diverse sources of evidence for healing claims.

a. Students said they were well prepared via communication and knowledge diversity by sociology, anthropology courses to “cross-talk” competently among the diverse types of health care modalities. Their disciplinary preparation in biology, chemistry and physics was adequate for translating a multicultural view of health to allopathic professionals.

4. Students will prepare for alternative and allopathic medical careers as integrative physicians, nurses, nurse practitioners, Chinese medical doctors, naturopaths, chiropractors, massage therapists, health research scientists, epidemiologists and health policy planners.

a. Students who have graduated felt very well prepared in their integrative understanding and application of various healthcare modalities in an integrative approach to healing in most of their sociology, anthropology and health science classes.

b. Students noted that attending international integrative medical conferences with JSC faculty was one of the most helpful features for assessing and expanding their learning in a wider context. This exposure to professionals in the field greatly assisted them in preparing for their future careers.

c. Students felt unprepared for the biology, chemistry and physics required in their post-graduate programs. They suggest that JSC biology chemistry and physics courses become more challenging, rigorous and knowledge intensive to better prepare them for post-graduate clinical careers in allopathic and alternative medicine.