

Adult & Higher Education (AHE) Closing the Loop Report 2015-16

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Section 1: Program Assessment Plan Transition Point Assessments

For fall 2015, there were 58 AHE students registered out of 60 active students in the program (active” meaning those students attending three academic quarters in a single year), which shows an increase from the previous year and less disparities between registered and active students. 19 students graduated during the year, 15-16, which shows stability with the previous year having the same amount. The make-up of the AHE program in Fall 2015 is similar to previous years, with slight increases in under-represented students and male students. 78% are female, white (84%), and employed, attending the program on a part-time basis. A noticeable pattern of younger students had entered the program within the last year.

Admission	<p>There is no minimum MAT score for acceptance. Internal policies are that if MAT scores are low, applicants are interviewed. The minimum GPA for admission is 3.00 and if students score slightly below this they may be provisionally admitted to AHE or given a chance to non-matriculate for one quarter to raise their GPA to acceptable admission standards.</p> <p><u>Admission Data</u></p> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 70%;">Number of Applicants:</td> <td style="text-align: right;">26</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Number of Accepted/Admits:</td> <td style="text-align: right;">22</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Number of Matriculated:</td> <td style="text-align: right;">22</td> </tr> </table> <p><u>GPA Data</u></p> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 70%;">Average GPA of Applicants:</td> <td style="text-align: right;">3.36</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Average GPA of Accept/Admits:</td> <td style="text-align: right;">3.37</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Average GPA of Matrics:</td> <td style="text-align: right;">3.37</td> </tr> </table> <p><u>MAT Test Data</u></p> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 70%;">Average MAT of Applicants:</td> <td style="text-align: right;">407</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Average MAT of Accept/Admits:</td> <td style="text-align: right;">407</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Average MAT of Matrics:</td> <td style="text-align: right;">407</td> </tr> </table> <p>Although historically there has been a range of quality among students applying to and admitted to AHE, this year and last year’s admissions profile demonstrates that students are attracted to, and entering the program with good academic backgrounds and are well-prepared to learn. Noticeable this year was that fewer prospective students with GPAs lower than 3.00 were contacting the program and applying to it.</p>	Number of Applicants:	26	Number of Accepted/Admits:	22	Number of Matriculated:	22	Average GPA of Applicants:	3.36	Average GPA of Accept/Admits:	3.37	Average GPA of Matrics:	3.37	Average MAT of Applicants:	407	Average MAT of Accept/Admits:	407	Average MAT of Matrics:	407
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Retention	<p>The average GPA of students in AHE in 2015-16 --at 3.37-- is slightly lower than the previous year but demonstrates that applicants that are admitted (average 3.37 GPA) are performing at a level that would be expected. Since 2015, more rigorous requirements within the curriculum were instituted and so this may be why the average GPA of students slightly dropped. The Graduate school tracks quarterly GPA (3.00) and</p>																		

	notifies those students and the Director, if their grades dip below this requirement.
Entry to Fulltime Internship or Culminating Project	Students must complete and pass all core courses before entering the culminating project course, AHE 588 Portfolio and Applied Research, which was made more rigorous (in 2015). AHE has no formal internship. However students take a “Field Experience” course (which was a new program requirement, as of Fall 2015) due to the noticeable pattern of younger students with little career experience entering AHE.
Completion	AHE 588 is the culminating project for the AHE program and entails portfolio assessment as designed by the team and which fulfills the entire program Learning Outcomes and Learning Objectives. More than one faculty member grades and assesses student projects and presentations. In 2015-16, 19 students completed/passed the AHE 588 course and graduated, which was the same as the previous year. AHE students, on average, take 12 terms to complete the program due to many students using waivers and the fact that most students in AHE are employed while studying.
Post Completion	Career services data (from 2015-16) show that 14/19 AHE students were employed upon graduating, in fields related to their studies.

Section 2: Use of Data for Improvements of Programs and/or Operations

Admission: Starting in 2015, the AHE coordinator collects “lifecycle” data on prospective students, from hearing about the program to the Information Sessions to applying and becoming admitted to AHE. An analysis of the 26 applicants during this year showed that most heard about the program through word of mouth (from colleagues) while 4 heard about AHE through the website. While the former group consists mainly of “waivers” the latter group are often “revenue” generating students. This data signals a need to continue to improve the website to attract more revenue generating students including updating information and providing more of it so that they can make good decisions. Since 2015, the AHE Coordinator has scheduled bi-quarterly Information Sessions for the faculty to meet and greet prospective students. These have been better attended due to the Coordinator’s contact system form. She is systematically tracking participation rates and following up with those who signed up for Information Sessions but did not attend. Through tracking these rates, we found that those who attended the Information Sessions are much more likely to apply to the program. This year, 16/26 students attended the Information Session, and did so slightly more than the previous year. During the 2015-16 year, we also added an additional quarterly Information Session, which enables prospective students to further make good decisions and move towards the application stage. The AHE team is continuing to monitor and track the degree to which AHE is better “messaging” the program goals on its website to attract quality students and are accumulating data to this end. The pattern of attracting students with higher GPAs since 2013 and also seeing larger amounts of students graduating generally demonstrates the newer policies and their implementation (see previous reports, including the AHE appraisal, 2014). This, in conjunction with new data collecting procedures and measures, will more likely ensure that students will perform well in instructional settings and complete the program in a timely manner. Reducing the number of non-matriculated students in the program with a new internal policy (implemented Fall 2015), which is equitable but more rigorous, is another way to ensure a capable and committed applicant and admission profile.

Retention: During 2015-16, the AHE Coordinator started to track those students who ‘stop out’ and systematically contacts them as to whether or not they plan to return the quarter that they leave, with the director emailing them directly offering support and encouragement for them to

persist in the program after that point. The AHE team also has bi-quarterly program meetings focused on student progress in addition to bi-monthly Coordinator meetings focused on student progress and issues so we can address these as soon as possible. In 2015 the AHE team began to evaluate the student orientations, with those new students giving feedback for improvement and demonstrating that the sessions are generally successful in orienting and introducing them to WWU and AHE. We update the Orientation sessions each year. The advisory implementation meeting of 2016 focused specifically on developing leadership opportunities in the context of recruitment, retention, and the community of AHE with diversity and social justice issues as crucial to these ends. The AHE Student retreat in spring 2016 also focused on diversity and leadership of under-represented groups in higher education, with the aim to initiate a greater support structure for students, enable a greater pool of leadership, as well as to develop consciousness about diversity across the curriculum and within the AHE community. Speakers and activities focused on this topic, which was well received. A Curriculum Review, conducted in the Fall 2015 identified more courses to merge or terminate and made recommendations for updating the curriculum. This had the effect of aligning to current trends and issues in the field as well as ensuring that the program is becoming more consistent in terms of quality. Since 2015, and to focus on student leadership and research, the work-study and Graduate Assistant students engaged in research activities with faculty. This enables them to receive mentoring and opportunities to develop their research skills and knowledge bases in research and scholarship. In the spring of 2016, AHE underwent a 5-year program review by the Graduate School, but the release of the findings were not known until the following Fall, 2017.

Completion: During 2015-16 the director attended a graduate workshop on assessment and completed a graduate assessment plan with action points (to improve systems within AHE). Student Learning Objectives were aligned to Program Goals using a variety of data including a sampling of student assignments, interviews with graduating students, as well as advisory board feedback and quantitative program data. It was useful for the director to see how each course aligned to learning outcomes of the program and connect this to student completion---it became clear that more students were moving through AHE towards graduation because of the sequencing of courses and coherence with objectives and outcomes. All AHE course syllabi now clearly articulate learning objectives and which are normally in a bulleted list in all syllabi, identified as “course objectives.” No student can pass a course without fulfilling these objectives. Students are required to articulate in both oral and written form and in electronic and face-to-face formats the objectives, through graded discussions, presentations, and academic papers. All of the learning objectives for AHE are encapsulated in the culminating course, AHE 588, which demonstrates students’ comprehensive knowledge of the field of Adult & Higher Education. Students cannot graduate from the AHE program until they fulfill the requirements in this capstone course. Each project is evaluated by at least two faculty members. 19 students successfully completed AHE 588 and then graduated in 2015-16. Last but not least, the Sandy Daffron Scholarship fund was distributed in 2015-16 to one single mother student who graduated in 2016.

Post-completion: Most students are employed both during and after their tenure in AHE. The Coordinator keeps updated contact information for alumni along with Career Services data to learn about the employment rates of AHE graduates. In addition, a quarterly program newsletter (prepared by the Graduate Assistant) profiles graduating students and discusses their experiences and aspirations. Of the 19 students who graduated in 2015-16, 11 are employed full-time in a job related to their studies as are 3 who are part-time, 2 are unemployed and searching for work, and 3 others are either employed full-time or part-time, in jobs not related to their major. This is a typical pattern among AHE graduates.