***STUDENT LEARNING ASSESSMENT PROGRAM***

***SUMMARY FORM AY 2016-2017***

Master of Arts in Aging Studies

**Degree and**

**Program Name:**

**Kathleen O’Rourke, Graduate Coordinator**

# Submitted By:

**PART ONE**

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| **What are the learning objectives?** | **How, where, and when are they assessed?**  | **What are the expectations?** | **What are the results?** | **Committee/ person responsible? How are results shared?** |
| **1. Content Area Knowledge**: Students will demonstrate knowledge and understanding representing appropriate breadth and depth in the physical, emotional, social, and economic aspects of aging. Students will also demonstrate an understanding of current theories of aging. | a) **Certification of Comprehensive Knowledge (CCK) Written Paper Capstone Rubric** [a direct measure]: Students completing the written capstone will be evaluated on their knowledge and understanding of specialized aging content.b) **Thesis Rubric** [a direct measure]: Students defending theses will be evaluated on their knowledge and understanding of specialized aging topics and the research methods process. c) **Internship Mid-term and Final Self-Evaluation Form** [an indirect measure]: Students indicate their perceived knowledge and understanding of aging studies content criteria and their professional performance levels (e.g., aging issues/trends, communication, ethical practice).d) **Certification of Comprehensive Knowledge (CCK) Oral Presentation Capstone Rubric** [direct measure; course embedded]: Students completing the oral presentation capstone will be evaluated on their knowledge and understanding of specialized aging content and ability to apply knowledge/understanding to professional career development.. | a) At least 85% of the evaluations submitted by faculty reviewer will rate students as competent (4 on a 5 pt scale) or higher in their knowledge and understanding of aging topics and theories. The 5-point scale described here and throughout the report includes: 5=high competent4=competent3=somewhat competent2=minimally competent1=not competent b) At least 85% of the evaluations submitted by faculty reviewer will rate students as competent (4 on a 5 pt scale) in their knowledge and understanding of gerontological topics and theories.c) At least 85% of students completing internship evaluations will indicate being competent and average a 4 on a 5 point scale.d) At least 85% of the evaluations submitted by faculty reviewer will rate students as competent (4 on a 5 pt scale) or higher in their knowledge, understanding, and application of aging topics and theories.. | a) Using the CCK rubric, 100% of the evaluations rated students higher than the expectations. All students earned ratings of a 5 (highly competent) on a 5 point scale. b) 100% of Aging Studies students completed a thesis were rated a 5 (highly competent) on a 5 point scale. In addition, one Aging Studies thesis will be submitted for consideration in the *Distinguished Thesis Award* pool for the Lumpkin College of Business and Applied Sciences in Fall 2017. c) 100% of the students who completed the internship (N= 2 students) rated themselves as “highly competent” (5 on a 5 point scale) on both sets of evaluations.d) Using the data gathered from the CCK rubric, 100% of the evaluations submitted rated students higher than the expectations in the previous column. All students earned ratings of a 5 (highly competent) on a 5 point scale.  | a) The CCK capstone is evaluated by the student’s academic advisor, who is also the graduate coordinator. If needed (e.g., average rubric rating below a 3, unforeseen problematic circumstances), additional Aging Studies or FCS graduate faculty reviewers evaluate the CCK capstone.Results are disseminated to the Aging Studies Board faculty/administrators during semester meetings and discussed to ascertain where and how changes or improvements need to be made. Due to a decrease in faculty members and additonal home department teaching loads of interdisciplinary faculty, committees of three reviewers were eliminated after a unanimous vote of Aging Studies faculty and support of the LCBAS and Graduate School Deans. b) Thesis committee members evaluate the student’s performance. (Each thesis committee consists of 3 faculty members). Results are disseminated to the Aging Studies Board faculty/administrators during semester meetings and discussed to ascertain where, how, and if changes or improvements need to be made. c) Students completing internships submit an “Internship Self-Evaluation” at the mid-term and conclusion of the semester.Results are disseminated to the Aging Studies Board faculty/administrators during semester meetings and discussed to ascertain where, how, and if changes or improvements need to be made. d) The CCK capstone is evaluated by the student’s academic advisor, who is also the graduate coordinator. Results are disseminated to the Aging Studies Board faculty/administrators during semester meetings and discussed to ascertain where and how changes or improvements need to be made.  |
| **2. Critical Thinking**: Students will demonstrate critical thinking skills with regards to aging topics. | a) **CCK Capstone Rubric** [a direct measure]: Students completing CCK capstone written papers and oral presentations will be evaluated on their ability to think critically regarding aging topics.b) **Thesis Rubric** [a direct measure]: Students defending theses will be evaluated on their ability to think critically regarding aging topics.c) **Research Proposal Paper Rubric** [direct measure; course embedded]: Students enrolled in the FCS 5900 Research Methods (a required course) will be evaluated on their ability to think critically regarding aging research. | a) At least 85% of the evaluations submitted by faculty will rate students as competent (4 on a 5 pt scale) in their ability to think critically regarding aging topics.b) At least 85% of the evaluations submitted by faculty will rate students as competent (4 on a 5 pt scale) in their ability to think critically regarding aging topics. c) At least 85% of the evaluations submitted by faculty teaching the course will rate students as competent (4 on a 5 pt scale) in their ability to think critically regarding aging research. | a) Faculty evaluations were rated 100% of students as highly competent (5 on a 5 pt scale) in their ability to think critically regarding aging topics. b) 100% of students completing a thesis during the assessment period were evaluated as being at highly competent (5 on a 5 point scale) in their ability to think critically regarding aging topics. c) Evaluations were submitted for all 6 Aging Studies students taking FCS 5900. 100% of the evaluations rated students as highly competent (5 on a 5 pt scale) in their ability to think critically regarding aging research. | a) The CCK capstone is evaluated by the student’s academic advisor, who is also the graduate coordinator. Results are disseminated to the Aging Studies Board faculty/administrators during semester meetings and discussed to ascertain where and how changes or improvements need to be made. b) Thesis committee members evaluate the student’s performance. (Each thesis committee consists of 3 faculty members). Results are disseminated to the Aging Studies Board faculty/administrators during semester meetings and discussed to ascertain where and how changes or improvements need to be made. c) Faculty teaching FCS 5900 evaluate each student who writes a research proposal paper in the course. Results are disseminated to the Aging Studies Board faculty/administrators during semester meetings and discussed to ascertain where, how, and if changes or improvements need to be made. Follow up discussion is initiated with course instructor, as well.   |
| **3. Communication:** Students will display the ability to communicate information about aging effectively and professionally in their written and oral work. | a) **CCK Capstone Rubric** [a direct measure]: Students completing the CCK Capstone will be evaluated on their ability to communicate effectively and professionally. b) **Internship Supervisor’s Evaluation Forms (Mid-term & Final):** On-site internship supervisors will evaluate interns on their ability to communication effectively and professionally in their written and oral work. c) **Resource Management & Case Study Paper Rubric** [direct measure; course embedded]: Students enrolled in FCS 5301 Consumer and Management Problems of Older People (a required course) will be evaluated on their ability to communicate information about aging and resource management effectively in writing.. | a) At least 85% of the CCK evaluations submitted by faculty will rate students as competent (4 on a 5 pt scale) in their ability to communicate information about aging effectively orally and in writing. b) At least 85% of the internship evaluations submitted by supervisors will rate students as competent (4 on a 5 point scale) in their ability to communicate information about aging effectively orally and in writing. c) At least 85% of the evaluations submitted by faculty will rate students as competent (4 on a 5 point scale) in their ability to communicate effectively (in writing) in their papers.  | a. **Written and oral communication**100% of the evaluations rated students as highly competent (5 on a 5 pt scale) in their ability to communicate effectively in their writing and oral presentations.b) 100% of the mid-term and final evaluations rated students with at least a 4 and, for the majority, a 5 on a 5 pt scale) in their ability to communicate effectively in their writing and oral presentations.c) Evaluations were submitted for all Aging Studies students taking FCS 5301. 100% of the evaluations rated students as highly competent (5 on a 5 pt scale) in their written communication skills.  | a) The CCK capstone is evaluated by the student’s academic advisor, who is also the graduate coordinator. Results are disseminated to the Aging Studies Board faculty/administrators during semester meetings and discussed to ascertain where, how, and if changes or improvements need to be made. b) The internship supervisor completes the evaluation and submits the evaluation to the student and the academic adviser, who is also the graduate coordinator. Results are disseminated to the Aging Studies Board faculty/administrators during semester meetings and discussed to ascertain where and how changes or improvements need to be made. c) Faculty teaching FCS 5301 evaluate each student who writes the paper in the course. Results are disseminated to the Aging Studies Board faculty/administrators during semester meetings and discussed to ascertain where, how, and if changes or improvements need to be made. Follow up discussion is initiated with course instructor to provide feedback opportunity, as well.  |
| **4. Research:** Students will demonstrate an understanding of research design and implementation, data analysis, interpretation, and dissemination of results in the context of current theories in aging. Students will also exhibit understanding of current research in the older adult population.  | a) **Thesis Rubric** [a direct measure]: Students defending theses well be evaluated on their understanding of research design and implementation, data analysis, interpretation, and dissemination of results.b) **Research Proposal Paper Rubric** [direct measure; course embedded]: Students enrolled in FCS 5900 Research Methods will be evaluated on their ability to understand aging research. | a) At least 85% of the evaluations submitted by faculty will rate students as competent (4 on a 5 pt scale) in their understanding of research design and implementation, data analysis, interpretation, and dissemination of results. b) At least 85% of the evaluations submitted by faculty will rate students as competent (4 on a 5 pt scale) in their understanding of aging research. | a) One student completed a thesis during the assessment period. The student was rated as highly competent (5 on a 5 pt scale) in their understanding of research design and implementation, data analysis, interpretation, and dissemination of results.b) Evaluations were submitted by faculty examining the students’ understanding of aging research. 100% of the evaluations rated students as highly competent (5 on a 5 pt scale).  | a) Thesis committee members will evaluate the student’s performance. (Each thesis committee consists of 3 faculty members). Results are disseminated to the Aging Studies Board faculty/administrators during semester meetings and discussed to ascertain where, how, and if changes or improvements need to be made. b) Faculty teaching FCS 5900 evaluate each student who writes a research proposal paper in the course. Results are disseminated to the Aging Studies Board faculty/administrators during semester meetings and discussed to ascertain where, how, and if changes or improvements need to be made. Follow up discussion is initiated with course instructor, as well.  |
| **5. Ethical Behavior:** Students will interact effectively, sensitively, and ethically with older adults; and demonstrate understanding of the cognitive, physical, emotional, and sociocultural challenges specific to older adults and their families and caregivers. Students will also exhibit an awareness of the diversity of the older adult population through their coursework in the program. | a) **Thesis Rubric -** Thesis [a direct measure]: Students defending theses well be evaluated on their ability to demonstrate an understanding of the challenges specific to older adults and their caregivers, and exhibit an awareness of the diversity of the older population.**b) Supervisors' Mid-term and Final Evaluations (Forms) of Interns** [a direct measure]: On-site internship supervisors will evaluate interns on their ability to interact effectively, sensitively, and ethically with older adults.c) **Internship Mid-term and Final Self-Evaluation Form** [an indirect measure]: Students indicate their perceived (1) ability to interact effectively, sensitively, and ethically with older adults, (2) understanding of the cognitive, physical, emotional, and sociocultural challenges specific to older adults and their families and caregivers, and (3) awareness of the diversity of the older adult population.. | a) At least 85% of the evaluations submitted by faculty will rate students as competent (4 on a 5 pt scale) in their ability to demonstrate an understanding of the challenges specific to older adults and their caregivers, and exhibit an awareness of the diversity of the older population.  b) At least 85% of the internship evaluations submitted by supervisors will rate students as “Good” (4 on a 5 pt scale) in their ability in their ability to interact effectively, sensitively, and ethically with older adults.c) At least 85% of students completing internship will indicate a “good” level of confidence (4 on a 5 pt scale) confidence in their (1) ability to interact effectively, sensitively, and ethically with older adults, (2) understanding of the cognitive, physical, emotional, and sociocultural challenges specific to older adults and their families and caregivers, and (3) awareness of the diversity of the older adult population. | a) 100% of the students completing a thesis during the assessment period were rated as *Highly Competent* (5 on a 5 point scale) in their ability to exhibit an understanding of ethics related to their field and research projects. b) 100% of the students completing an internship were rated as either Good (4) or Excellent (5) in their ability in their ability to interact effectively, sensitively, and ethically with older adults.c) 100% of the students completing an internship indicated a “good” (4) or “excellent (5) level of confidence (4 on a 5 pt scale) confidence in their (1) ability to interact effectively, sensitively, and ethically with older adults, (2) understanding of the cognitive, physical, emotional, and sociocultural challenges specific to older adults and their families and caregivers, and (3) awareness of the diversity of the older adult population. | a) Thesis committee members will evaluate students’ performance. (Each thesis committee consists of 3 faculty). Results are disseminated to the Aging Studies Board faculty/administrators during semester meetings and discussed to ascertain where, how, and if changes or improvements need to be made. b) On-site internship supervisors will evaluate each student under their supervision. Results are disseminated to the Aging Studies Board faculty/administrators during semester meetings and discussed to ascertain where, how, and if changes or improvements need to be made. c) Students completing internships will complete an “Internship Self-Evaluation.” Results are disseminated to the Aging Studies Board faculty/administrators during semester meetings and discussed to ascertain where, how, and if changes or improvements need to be made.  |
| **6. Integration:** Students will demonstrate the ability to connect and apply knowledge gained in Aging Studies coursework, internships, and research experiences in professional settings; and will reflect on such learning with meaning and purpose as part of their intellectual and personal development. | a) **CCK Capstone** **Rubric** [a direct measure]: Students completing the CCK capstone will be evaluated on their ability to connect and apply knowledge and reflect on their learning.b) **Supervisor’s Mid-Term and Final Evaluation (Forms) of Interns** [a direct measure]- On-site internship supervisors will evaluate interns on their ability to connect and apply knowledge gained and reflect on their learning with meaning and purpose.c) **Internship Mid-term and Final Self-Evaluation Forms** - [an indirect measure]: Students indicate their perceived ability to integrate knowledge gained in their course work to their internship experience | a) At least 85% of the CCK evaluations submitted by faculty will rate students as competent (4 on a 5 pt scale) in their ability to connect and apply knowledge gained and reflect on such learning with meaning. b. At least 85% of the internship evaluations submitted by supervisors will rate students as at least “Good” (4 on a 5 pt scale) on questions related to interns’ ability to integrate knowledge and reflect on it.c) At least 85% of students completing internship will indicate a “good” level of confidence (4 on a 5 pt scale) in their ability to ability to connect and apply knowledge from coursework into their internship experience.. | a) 100% of the evaluations rated students as highly competent (5 on a 5 pt scale) on their ability to integrate knowledge gained and to reflect on it with meaning and purpose.b) 100% of internship supervisors rated students’ ability to integrate knowledge as “Good” (4) or “Excellent” (5) on a 5 point scale.c) 100% of students completing their internship rated their level of confidence as “Good” (4) or “Excellent” (5) (on a 5 point scale) in their ability to connect and apply knowledge from coursework and research into their internship. | a) The CCK capstone is evaluated by the student’s academic advisor, who is also the graduate coordinator. Results are disseminated to the Aging Studies Board faculty/administrators during semester meetings and discussed to ascertain where, how, and if changes or improvements need to be made. b) Internship site supervisor will complete final evaluation of interns’ performance. Results are disseminated to the Aging Studies Board faculty/administrators during semester meetings and discussed to ascertain where, how, and if changes or improvements need to be made. c) Students completing internships will complete an “Internship Self-Evaluation.” Results are disseminated to the Aging Studies Board faculty/administrators during semester meetings and discussed to ascertain where, how, and if changes or improvements need to be made.   |

**PART TWO**

*Describe your program’s assessment accomplishments since your last report was submitted. Discuss ways in which you have responded to the CASA Director’s comments on last year’s report or simply describe what assessment work was initiated, continued, or completed.*

Aging Studies faculty members, Departmental Chairs, and College Deans comprise EIU’s Aging Studies Board, which meets once each fall and spring semester. Before those meetings, assessment plans and data are disseminated and they are discussed at the meetings. For AY 2016-2017, there has been 100% “buy-in” of the entire board on the direction of program-related assessment (e.g., rubrics, informational materials on internships/theses, capstone procedures).

**How, Where, and When Assessed:**

-Clarification was made to distinguish between usage of rubrics and evaluation forms in the **How, where, and when are they assessed?** column.

**Expectations**

-Rating expectations were raised from a 3 on a 5 point scale to a 4 on a 5 point scale for all items to implement more rigor for graduate study.

-Percentage benchmarks were raised from 80% to 85% for all items to implement more rigor for graduate study.

**Results**

-Results have improved since the last assessment report and all expectations were achieved and, in most cases, exceeded. 100% of students were rated as at least a 4 on all 5 point scales (the vast majority being ratings of 5) and the majority were rated as 5 on a 5 point scale.

-Results provide a formative (course data from major assignments; mid-term self- and site supervisor evaluations for internships) and summative (CCK Capstone; theses; final self- and site supervisor evaluations for internships) picture of data to illustrate students’ mastery and comprehension of aging studies content.

**How Results Will Be Used**

-Data collection has been continued in select required courses, internships, theses, and the certification of comprehensive knowledge capstone.

-No difficulty exists with faculty buy-in to the assessment of Aging Studies. We have achieved full faculty and administrative cooperation and collaboration within Aging Studies through individual and collective work. The Graduate Coordinator, EIU Aging Studies Board, and Graduate School worked as a unified team during AY 2016-2017 with shared goals and vision.

-For data collected from courses, follow-up reflection and discussion occur between the Graduate Coordinator and course faculty member.

**PART THREE**

Summarize changes and improvements in **curriculum, instruction, and learning** that have resulted from the implementation of your assessment program. How have you used the data? What have you learned? In light of what you have learned through your assessment efforts this year and in past years, what are your plans for the future?

Our assessment reviews, in conjunction with a holistic examination of our entire program over the past 2 years, have resulted in the following:

**Curricular Changes**

-Reduction of a 36-credit hour program to a 33-credit hour program

-Instead of only having all courses required, we have implemented 6 elective hours from a list of 14 elective courses in 5 different academic units.

-We have merged the course content in our two consumer- and policy-focused courses.

-The traditional 4-question comprehensive exam was changed to a capstone experience – written paper and oral presentation based on internship or independent study experience – while still maintaining rigor in requiring summarization and synthesis of course content knowledge.

**Changes in Instruction**

-Program has transitioned from a face-to-face model to a fully online program.

-Several courses are taught in 6- to 8-week formats instead of all courses spanning a full semester.

-Course content has been modified to continue best preparing students for entry into the aging field or continuing their existing aging-related careers, as needed, in response to feedback gained from both recent alumni working in the aging field and “seasoned” professionals in the aging field.

**What have we learned?**

-Reduction of required hours reduces the time-to-completion and cost for the degree program, which is appealing to prospective and current students and does not compromise program quality.

-The interdisciplinary nature of the elective hours allows for students to more heavily specialize in an aging-related area (e.g., family services, health, public policy) or to pursue a diverse mix of aging-related courses in multiple academic units.

- The merger of the consumer- and policy-focused courses eliminates course content overlap that had become evident with societal changes (e.g., home resource management, insurance changes, expansion or elimination of health care options). The course revisions have been in response to a societal shifting in public policy and resource management issues and trends of the aging population and our program is better positioned to educate our students who serve or will serve the aging population.

-Changing the certification for comprehensive knowledge (CCK) format has allowed our students to apply critical knowledge gained from course content to professional practice experiences (internships) or research- or education-based projects (independent studies). In addition, loss of University faculty and higher teaching loads in home departments had significantly hindered our ability to provide the students with fully involved committees of 3 faculty reviewers. The logistics became a heavy burden for all involved and, after much conversation among faculty and LCBAS and Graduate School administrators, a unanimously supported decision was made to revise the CCK structure. The academic adviser (who is also the graduate coordinator) serves as the primary reviewer of CCK capstones, internships, and independent studies. There are safeguards in place – a graduate review committee comprised of 3 FCS graduate coordinators or a review committee comprised of Aging Studies faculty members - in the event of a below-average performance or other problematic situation.

-Transitioning to a fully online program has helped to increased program accessibility for students, the majority of whom are employed full-time in the aging field and living in other geographic areas outside of Charleston. Fully online programs at EIU enjoy the benefit of offering in-state tuition to all students, which helps recruitment efforts and reduces financial burden to students.

-Courses taught during fall or spring in a 6- or 8-week format continue to fulfill the required hours to earn 3 credits. The shortened and intensified time frame allow students to take, on average, 3 courses in fall or spring, as opposed to only taking 2 (the past average, especially for those working full-time). A typical fall or spring semester for a student is: one course taken in first half of semester, one course taken in last half of semester, and one course taken for full semester. All Aging Studies academic units have supported this structure and there is a set course rotation plan in place, thanks to the cooperation among Aging Studies faculty, Department Chairs, and College Deans.

-Over the past 2 years, much time has been spent “in the field” by the graduate coordinator – visiting aging services sites, talking with alumni, networking with professionals in the aging network, attending aging conferences, and participating in senior expos and recruitment fairs. The face to face time with professionals, alumni, and prospective students has been time very well spent for the main reason of maintaining or increasing the currency and applicability of our course content to best prepare students to either enter or continue in aging careers. In the past 2 years, 100% of our graduates are employed in aging careers and regular contact is maintained with the majority. Our program networking is widespread, as we maintain an active presence ranging from local area senior expos in Coles County to premiere national aging conferences with attendee numbers of over 3,000.

**Future Plans**

-Continue with existing data collection and analysis

-Expand data collection and analysis to include a direct measure from most or all required courses

-Reinstate an Aging Studies-specific online exit survey and collect/analyze exit survey data

-Develop and implement a formal alumni online survey to assess program and course quality, course applicability to career practice, and perception of career readiness for entering or continuing in the aging field