

Teaching and Learning Project Assessment Report

Program or Unit: Travel Marketing Program

Submitted by: Debbie Wilson

Date: December 10, 2010

What we wanted to learn about our students:

This project assesses PSLO #3: Apply critical thinking to research, evaluate, analyze, and synthesize travel-related information.

What we did:

Students studied were from the TRAVL 95, Spring 2010, class. This course, called Advanced Travel Concepts, is typically one of the last courses our students take before finishing their travel certificate or their Travel Marketing degree.

As part of TRAVL 95, each student is asked to complete a course project. Students choose their topic, based on personal interest. Typical projects include: investigating host agencies, creating a newsletter to market a travel specialty, setting up a travel website, researching a travel niche, and investigating ways to use social networking to market and promote a travel business. Students are expected to apply what they have learned in TRAVL 95 and other courses to their project. The first step is to complete a planning form which includes: project description, statement of objectives, description of steps to take in completing the project, and project timeline. The project is posted in the online classroom where students give feedback. Each student fills out a rubric assessing his/her own work and turns it in to the instructor.

A detailed grading rubric is posted in the online classroom along with instructions for the project. Work is evaluated on the basis of: professional presentation, practical application/ adding value, creativity, effective use of resources, and achievement of objectives.

What we learned about our students:

Twenty-eight students completed course projects. Nineteen students were above proficiency, with at least 36 out of 40 points. Nine of those students received 40 out of 40 points. For the nine students who were at or below proficiency, the rubric for their project indicated work needed in the following areas:

- Practical/adds value – failed to draw conclusions, needed more detailed support for conclusions, and/or application of course concepts was weak.
- Effective use of resources – failed to identify resources and/or use them appropriately.
- Achievement of objectives – either didn't follow through with some objectives listed on the student planning form and/or objectives weren't clearly related to the planning form.

What we plan to do next to improve student learning:

In order to make sure students understand the importance of thinking through and clearly stating their objectives and then producing a detailed course project that matches their objectives, we will hold online meetings where students can ask questions real-time (in advance of completing their projects). We will consider introducing the course project earlier in the semester so that students can start

thinking about it earlier. We will consider modifying the student planning sheet to reflect different types of course projects; e.g., different “flavors” of the planning sheet for newsletters, websites, report/research projects. We will also consider forming support “teams” to give informal feedback and suggestions as the students work on their projects.