

University of Dayton Chaminade Scholar Cluster
Coordinator: Maura Donahue
AY 2003-04

I. Introduction

Two classes in the Chaminade Scholar cluster were taught during AY03-04. These were REL356 Christian Traditions of Prayer (Fall 2003) and ASI357 Vocation and the Arts (Winter 2004). Dr. Conniff's ASI357 course in Winter 2004 was selected for assessment this academic year.

II. Analysis of Student Interviews

No students have completed the entire cluster as of this date. At the end of the next academic year, exit interviews will take place with students who have completed the Chaminade Scholar cluster.

III. Analysis of Written Work

A. Summary.

Two sets of written work were provided. Dr. Conniff provided the cluster coordinator with final papers for 1/3 of the students in the class (5 students out of 15). These papers were reviewed and analyzed by the cluster coordinator to assess whether the cluster is achieving the outcomes as described below.

Dr. Conniff also provided the coordinator with access to the class's threaded discussion site. A sample of 1/3 of the student responses to a question posed by Dr. Conniff on the website were reviewed and analyzed by the cluster coordinator. This assignment was a much less formal writing assignment than the final paper.

B. Outcome 1, measure 2: "Analysis of portfolios will indicate that students are further developing skills in reading, writing, and information literacy."

Results: A review of the sample of students' final papers indicates that: 100% (5/5) demonstrated the ability to comprehend texts and articles; 100% (5/5) were able to demonstrate satisfactory progress in writing ability; 100% (5/5) were able to correctly cite references, and 100% (5/5) were able to use the library in obtaining references (unassigned texts & articles).

Results: The review of a sample of the less formal "online responses" to a question posed by Dr. Conniff showed that 100% (5/5) of the students demonstrated satisfactory progress in writing ability. This particular assignment did not require the use of external library sources, references or citations.

C. Outcome 2: "...make connections across disciplines and so address fundamental questions..." The cluster coordinator did not administer a survey to students in the Chaminade Scholar cluster this year.

D. Outcome 3: Students will be able to demonstrate that they understand and can use appropriate concepts, ideas, or methods from multiple disciplines in relation to the cluster theme in courses they have taken.

Measure 3: Analysis of papers will indicate that the cluster theme is enabling students to develop understandings that cross disciplinary boundaries.

Results: A review of the sample of students' final papers indicates that:

80% (4/5) of student papers analyzed showed relation to HST;

80% (4/5) of student papers analyzed showed relation to REL;

20% (1/5) of student papers analyzed showed relation to PHL;

40% (2/5) of student papers analyzed showed relation to some other discipline.

Results: A review of the sample of students' online responses to a question indicate that:

80% (4/5) of student online responses showed relation to HST;

60% (3/5) of student papers analyzed showed relation to REL;

20% (1/5) of student papers analyzed showed relation to PHL;

40% (2/5) of student papers analyzed showed relation to some other discipline.

E. Analysis relative to specific cluster goals:

Specifically, the courses in the Chaminade Scholars cluster will afford students and faculty the opportunity to:

1. explore vocational discernment and awareness, particularly as it intersects with living and working as a faith-filled professional, committed to a life of service;

Results: Student Papers: 5/5

Online Responses: 5/5

2. examine the integration of one's faith and professional life;

Results: Student Papers: 5/5

Online Responses: 5/5

3. refine and expand critical thinking through the development of reasoning skills and argumentation, with an emphasis on articulation and clarification of moral issues;

Results: Student Papers: 3/5

Online Responses: 1/5

4. explore, in an intellectually rigorous environment, the social, moral, and spiritual dimensions of calling;

Results: Student Papers: 5/5

Online Responses: 4/5

5. examine the relationship of Christians in today's secular state, the notion of call being mediated through one's community, the church as community, and the importance of both personal and communal prayer and discernment;

Results: Student Papers: 2/5

Online Responses: 2/5

6. evaluate the assumptions underlying one's faith, as well as the impact of that faith on one's self and others, particularly in context of power structures in society;

Results: Student Papers: 5/5

Online Responses: 2/5

7. study the ways in which the works of artists have been influenced by their thoughts regarding vocation, particularly as it has impacted the role of faith on one's work;
Results: Student Papers: 4/5 Online Responses: 2/5
8. develop an understanding of the ways in which prayer and the arts can serve as means of discernment of God's ways in one's own life and of God's activities in different periods of history and the present;
Results: Student Papers: 4/5 Online Responses: 3/5
9. explore the lives of persons who have made an impact on the church and society.
Results: Student Papers: 4/5 Online Responses: 3/5

F. Conclusion

It is not necessary that each course in the cluster achieve every cluster goal; rather, the all goals should be achieved in a comprehensive way by the end of the student's cluster experience. An analysis of the ASI 357 syllabus and student work indicates that many of these goals are being met in this course, especially goals 1, 2, 4 and 9, with goals 7 and 8 achieved in more formal work (student paper). It is expected that goals 3, 5 and 6 will be addressed deliberately in the senior-year cluster class, ASI 358 Christianity, Citizenship, and Society.

IV. Comments on Syllabi

The course ASI357 was used for assessment during Winter 2004. Dr. Brian Conniff was the professor for the course. A review of his syllabus found that, although he and all the students understood that ASI357 is a required component of the Chaminade Scholar cluster, this fact was not explicitly stated on the syllabus. The Cluster Coordinator has already communicated to Dr. Conniff that the syllabus should clearly state that ASI 357 is part of the Chaminade Scholar cluster.

V. Comments on programs, workshops, and other faculty activities

The most noteworthy element of the ASI357 course during Winter 2004 was the class cultural immersion experience in Florence, Italy during the spring break week of March 13-20. Dr. Conniff and Dr. Roger Crum traveled with the students to Florence.

The Chaminade Scholar cluster was represented (with the CIT cluster) at the Spring Cluster Workshop.

VI. Summary

An interview with Dr. Conniff revealed that it would be helpful if the instructors for REL356 and ASI357 could collaborate to choose readings that could be used in both courses. This is something to work toward in the future. The cluster coordinator will be meeting in July 2004 with all cluster faculty to further develop integration among the topics presented in the classes and to share syllabi, etc.

The first class of Chaminade Scholars will be graduating in May 2005. At that time, a more comprehensive assessment, complete with exit interviews, will be possible.