

2009 End-of-Year Report for Capstone Experience Grants

Women's Studies: Past, Present & Future Trends

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Did you complete your capstone project as planned? What changes and modification to the original project did you make, if any?

The Women's Studies Spring '09 capstone course exceeded the original plans in that the twenty students, who participated in the Delaware Oral History Project, exhibited their three-minute Latina Oral history documentaries on the University's island in Second Life in a final show "Latinas Speak Out" at the Delaware Art Museum in Wilmington. Although our capstone project received a great deal of positive publicity from both inside and outside the university, it is important to note that four students felt uncomfortable with Afro-Latinas focus. Their resistance to the focus on the intersection on race and ethnicity necessitated a minor change to the original project. This group of four students were released from the project focus and given opportunity to select a Caucasian subject to interview. In the end they conducted two oral history interviews and produced short documentaries focused on midwives working in Wilmington, Delaware.

Please attach a copy of the final syllabus.

What concrete results have you, your students, and your department seen from your project? Please give specific examples of what has worked well and what needs further refinement.

Students worked in groups, working collaboratively to create interview questions, conducting interviews, video-taping and editing the films, and producing first and final versions of their videos. The Women's Studies video presentation of six of the Afro-Latina student documentaries was featured on Second Life and has attracted more than 600 visitors, giving the University of Delaware and the Women's Studies Program international visibility. Aside from the public "real life" exhibition featured in the Delaware Art Museum's show at the end of the Spring 09 semester, the project has also been featured at two academic conventions during the Fall 2009 semester: an international convention-- American Studies Association and the National Association of Women's Studies.

How have you assessed student-learning and what did you learn from the assessment? Please address the following: (a) the extent to which students met capstone learning goals; (b) how you might modify the capstone experience based on assessment data; (c) how capstone assessment results aligned with programmatic assessment goals; (d) what impact does this capstone experience have on the overall program curriculum; (e) how you might modify your program based upon the assessment data.

Student learning was assessed throughout the term and with a pre and post capstone survey; on-going weekly writing assignments; on-going feedback via sakai on weekly writing; feedback on first and final versions of their video projects. The students successfully applied their feminist theoretical training to projects in the community thus making the connection between theory and practice. In addition their collaborative work both inside and outside the university provided concrete experience with the notion of feminist activism. Programmatically speaking, the capstone experience illuminated many gaps in the existing women's studies curriculum and provided fuel for our future discussions on Women's Studies course requirements and overall student assessment.

Please attach supporting documentation (e.g. products of student work, writing samples, rubrics).

How will the capstone experience continue beyond the grant phase? If the capstone experience will be taught by multiple instructors, how will the transfer of this grant developed capstone experience be ensured?

Because the Women's Studies capstone is rotated among the faculty in the unit, it is doubtful that the 2009 capstone experience with its focus on race, ethnicity, theory, activism and technology will continue beyond the grant phase.