

Program Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Summary (AY 2014-2015)

Program Student Learning Outcomes (PSLOs)

At the completion of the **Micronesian Studies Program**, the student will be able to:

1. Demonstrate the ability to read, speak and write critically and effectively in English about Micronesian Studies Program course content.
2. Demonstrate proficiency in the geographical, historical, and cultural literacy of the Micronesian region.
3. Demonstrate proficient knowledge of the structure and functions of the government and social, political, and economic issues concerning the Micronesian Studies course content.
4. Demonstrate the ability to perform research and write papers relevant to Micronesia using different methods and technologies.
5. Demonstrate an appreciation of the requirements of good citizenship in the FSM.

PSLO Assessment Report Summary

What we looked at:

PSLOs 2, 3, & 4 were identified to be assessed for the 2014-2015 cycle based on the previous assessments and recommendations.

PSLO 2 was assessed, using pre and posttests with a scoring rubric, in SS introductory courses. The aim is to assess students' knowledge on major concepts in the SS courses at the beginning and at the end of a course. The courses assessed include Introduction to Political Science (SS101), Introduction to Geography (SS120), Geography of the Pacific (SS125), and Micronesian Cultural Studies (SS195).

PSLO 3 was assessed, using reflective writing which focuses on students' understanding of specific course concepts. The courses assessed include Micronesia Cultural Studies (SS195), Micronesia Government & Politics (SS205), Economy of Micronesia (SS212) and Contemporary Issues in Micronesia (SS220).. The rubric rated students' knowledge, reasoning, and communication of the core concepts for each course.

PSLO 4 was assessed, using final research papers in two research courses in the program. The courses include Research methods (SS200) and Directed Study (SS280). The rubric looked at the following criteria: Thesis formulation, reliability of sources, analysis, synthesis, and process. Each category will be worth 4 points.

What we found:

PSLO#2: Demonstrate proficiency in the geographical, historical, and cultural literacy of the Micronesian region.

- The following was found:

Results for all courses that utilized pre and posttest to assess student learning show an increase in scores average score from pretest to post-test. While the average overall score from the courses showed an increase for the post tests, the score is still below the passing score. Detail results of the pretest and posttest on individual courses that utilize the pretest and posttest as assessment tools are depicted in Table 1. Base on experience, division faculty think that there are actors that may have influenced students' performance on the program assessment result which can be attributed to the following:

1. Level of sincerity in taking the pretest and thepost test. Because these assessments are not graded, students put less time and effort in taking them. When it comes to assessing program learning outcomes from the pretest and the posttest, a minor improvement in student learning is shown.

2. There is a need to review and to map the program learning outcomes with the course learning outcomes because it may be possible that the program assessment tool (pre & posttest) used for assessing program learning outcome may not be directly linked or aligned to outcomes of courses assessed.
3. Inconsistent number of test takers. It is shown in Table 1 that some courses, more students take the pretest at the beginning of the semester and few take the post test at the end of the semester, while for some courses, this problem is reversed. This means few students are assessed at the beginning and more students are assessed at the end of the semester.

For further information and detail results on students' performance on the assessment from the selected courses are indicated in Table 1.

Table 1 shows results of pre-post tests for AY 2014-2015.

Courses assessed for SY 2014-2015	Total Assessed	Average score/class	
SS101-Political Science	23	Fall 2014- No assessment done Pretest= Post-test=	Spring 2015 Pretest=39% Post-test=58%
SS120-Introduction to Geography	77	Fall 2014 Pretest=29% Post-test=43%	Spring 2015 Pretest=33% Post-test=46%
SS125-Pacific geography	48	Fall 2014 Pretest=3% Post-test=79%	Spring 2015-No results? Pretest=14% Post-test=94%
SS195-Micronesian Cultural Studies	51	Fall 2014 Pretest=64% Post-test=76%	Spring 2015 Pretest=52% Post-test=68%

PSLO # 3. Demonstrate proficient knowledge of the structure and functions of the government and social, political, and economic issues concerning the Micronesian Studies course content.

Table 2 shows class results on common essay that assessed students' understanding of major concepts in Micronesian Cultural Studies (SS195), Micronesian Government & Politics (SS205), Economy of Micronesia (SS212), and Contemporary Issues in Micronesia (SS220). Three aspects of performance were assessed as can be seen in Table 2 below.

Table 2. Students' Essays

Courses	Knowledge	Reasoning	Communication
SS195	80%	61%	60%
SS205	74%	74%	74%
SS212	80%	61%	67%
SS220	90%	71%	75%
Average Score for each category	81%	68%	69%

Overall results show that students have proficient knowledge on core concepts in the selected courses. However, their level of reasoning and their ability to communicate the issues are the two weak areas. Students were able to identify issues and topics.

The criterion on *Knowledge* was highest in all 4 courses assessed. The criterion on *Reasoning* appeared the weakest area which shows students' difficulty in looking beyond the concepts. For example, students who are weak in the reasoning category had difficulties to link and to articulate how the changes to the past events affect Micronesia culture, economy and government. Furthermore, they also failed to discuss whether these changes were positive changes or negative changes on Micronesia culture, economy or government. are how changes can be advantageous or disadvantageous.

On the *Communication* criterion, students were able to identify the issue, yet had challenges in communicating their understanding of concepts, as there were mechanical errors in grammar and sentence structure.

PSLO # 4. Demonstrate the ability to perform research and write papers relevant to Micronesia using different methods and technologies.

Assessment results in both semesters reveal that Analysis continues to be the weakest area for research papers, while Thesis formulation remains the strongest area. Detail result of students rating on the seven areas is stated in Table 3.

Table 3 shows class results for final research papers that assessed 6 different criteria of performance.

Category	Thesis formulation	Info Seeking	Analysis	Synthesis	Documentation	Product& Process	Score/class by %
SS280 (1)	3.25	3.17	2.58	2.58	2.92	2.83	73%
SS280 (2)	3.09	2.72	1.9	2.00	2.09	2.00	58%
SS200(1)	3.55	2.82	2.09	2.36	2.00	3.36	67%
SS200 (2)	3.27	2.64	2.30	2.60	2.33	2.44	65%
Average	3.28	2.83	2.22	2.39	2.34	2.55	
Score/category by %	82%	71%	56%	60%	58%	64%	63%

The results reported here reflect only the final paper, as dictated by the Micronesian Studies Assessment plan for the SY 2014-2015. Upon submission, the final paper was expected to be written in APA format with a cover page, an Abstract, Introduction, Methodology, Findings and results, Analysis, and a Conclusion and Discussion. Assessment results for both semesters (Fall 2014 & Spring 2015) reveal that Analysis continues to be the weakest for research papers while Thesis formulation remains the strongest area.

What we are planning to work on:

- **Maintain same assessment strategies to assess the same program outcomes.**
- **Maintain Research courses at a minimum of 15 students each section.**
- **Employ more writing exercises in SS courses**
- **Re-evaluate the validity of pre-post tests**
- **Pilot the 6-week session for SS course(s) vs. the 16-week session**

Recommendations for students:

- **Students must have good reading and writing skills to articulate ideas, both in written and oral communication.**

- **Students seek advice of the Micronesian Studies Program advisors in terms of course-planning**
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