



## Democracy & Justice Studies | | 2013-2014 Assessment Plan

DJS selected the fourth learning outcome for assessment for the 2013-2014 academic year: “Speak and write as an engaged citizen on questions of democracy, justice, freedom, and equality, and connect them to the issues of the day.” Two of the five methods identified on the assessment plan, namely authentic assessment and alumni survey, are still in development and won’t be used in this round of assessment.

The methods that will be used in this round are essay testing, internship performance, and the senior seminar (our capstone experience). In the original assessment plan, an essential knowledge test was proposed to be administered in DJS 101 and again in DJS 470 to gauge student learning over their career. However, the instrument has proven difficult to develop and the unit has become skeptical of the usefulness of an “objective” test for evaluating student understanding and growth. The current working plan is to replace a test with a broad essay question. For the essay testing piece currently in place, instructors in DJS 101 and DJS 349 assign essays to gauge how students have improved their abilities to meet all program learning outcomes, with attention focused on the fourth outcome. Alison Staudinger, the unit’s internship coordinator, will evaluate performance in the internship program, examining student internship portfolios with a simple rubric, which also takes into account the external internship supervisor’s assessment. For the capstone experience, DJS 470, evidence was collected in the fall 2013 and spring 2014, in evaluation of written work and a service learning experience that directly relates to outcome four.

DJS 101, Introduction to Democracy and Justice Studies, is our team-taught introductory course. Jon Shelton was the instructor of record for both semesters. DJS 349, American Political Thought, is our upper division theory course. Alison Staudinger was the instructor of record. These data are gathered in the spring. Both courses use D2L, so there is an extensive electronic record of student performance. For the capstone experience, Harvey Kaye conducted the seminar *Why Not a New New Deal?* in fall 2013 and Eric Morgan conducted the seminar *Wilderness, Conservation and Land Ethics in America* in spring 2013. The

evaluation of these pieces will be conducted in the fall semester. Evaluation will be conducted in teams, or by the unit as a whole, with participants reviewing the materials for evidence that allows faculty to determine student progress and efficacy of curriculum content and delivery. From this initial analysis, we'll fine-tune our measures and assessment strategy, and identify initial areas to target for improvement in the next year.