

Mellon Grant – Cultivating the Humanities

The Office of Institutional Research

Research on Outcomes/Assessment Design and Research Tracking Programs for Humanities at Elizabethtown College

Hannah Salai

The purpose of this project is to design, develop, and implement outcomes/assessment methods for the humanities majors and minors in the Traditional School of Elizabethtown College. The Elizabethtown College humanities departments are the English, History, PPLS (Politics, Philosophy, and Legal Studies), Modern Languages, Religious Studies, Sociology/Anthropology, and the Fine and Performing Arts. In addition, the following interdisciplinary majors/minors will be included as humanities in this research project: Asian Studies, Anabaptist & Pietist Studies, Creative Writing, Film Studies, International Studies, Peace & Conflict Studies, Women & Gender Studies, and Interfaith Leadership Studies. This project has two perspectives, the overall College perspective and the individual Mellon Grant project winners' perspectives.

From the overall College perspective, we will create processes to track how these initiatives effected the humanities enrollment, retention, and graduate trends. We will track College-wide trends as well as trends by department. Some trends may include:

1. incoming students intending humanities majors
2. retention of those incoming students intending humanities majors: retention in the humanities as well as retention with the College
3. students who declared humanities majors by semester
4. students who declared humanities minors by semester
5. humanities majors engaged in high-impact practices (number and type of SLEs)
6. humanities majors engagement in the College experience, as measured by NSSE
7. number of humanities class sections by semester
8. class size of humanities sections
9. number of humanities graduates
10. humanities graduate school placement
11. humanities prestigious scholarship winners
12. employment after graduation

From the Individual Mellon Grant project winners' perspective, we will work with the primary investigators of each project to create processes to assist them with assessing their project outcomes. We will meet with the primary investigators in April and May to develop a plan which will outline how we can assist them. Some possible ways to assist may be:

1. create pre and post surveys
2. track retention of those students involved with project

The majority of the design and creation of these processes will be completed during the summer of 2015. Following the summer of 2015, we will continue to tweak the monitoring processes and monitor the impact of our efforts.