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Leveraging a Capstone Revision for Core Program Assessment

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The School of Continuing and Professional Studies (SCPS) at Elizabethtown College has accelerated (5 week) courses that enable adult learners to complete their education in blended and online formats. SCPS had a Senior Research Project course that required all baccalaureate graduates to complete a significant research project presented orally and in writing. Because the project only required the integration of writing, speaking, and ethics, there was a missed opportunity to include the other aspects of the core curriculum. When the course was revised in 2017, it was transformed to integrate reflection and assignments on all aspects of the Core Program and renamed the “Core Program Capstone.” Bringing in all of the Core Program elements strengthened the students’ research projects. In the revised course, our adult learners identified the importance of their learning in the liberal arts in the past, present, and future. What they shared not only reinforced to us the significance of their learning, but also helped them understand its important impact. This poster will provide an overview of the Senior Research Project and how it was transformed into the Core Program Capstone. The key components and assignments of the capstone course will be outlined. Adjustments that had to be made along the way and highlights of the impact of this transformation will be shared. Ideas for future enhancements and opportunities to further assess the impact of the transformation will also be outlined.

Learning Outcome(s): 1. Identify how a core program capstone revision created the opportunity for SCPS to gain insights into the benefits of the core curriculum. 2. Recognize the role that reflection can play in learning assessment. 3. List the benefits and challenges of integrating reflection into an existing course. 4. Apply learning reflection as a technique to gain insight into student learning.