



2020 -2021 Student Affairs Assessment Plan

Department: KU Memorial Union

Union Programs Assessment- Proactive Leadership in Times of Crisis

Division Mission

To engage the KU community in services and programs that make learning possible.

Department Mission

To be an open, dynamic environment where the KU community comes together for individual and collective discovery.

Department Student Learning Outcomes

Students who provide, utilize or interact with services and programs provided by KU Memorial Unions will be able to:

1. Develop leadership skills (such as community building, goal setting and pursuit, and decision-making) that allow them to effectively guide others in pursuit of common goals. (*Interpersonal Competence*)
2. Develop event management skills (such as time management, budgeting, and risk management strategies) that can be applied at KU and beyond. (*Practical Competence*)
3. Develop personal life skills that will enable them to hold a realistic self-view, demonstrate personal responsibility and accountability, and seek emotional balance. (*Practical Competence and Intrapersonal Development*)
4. Develop interpersonal skills that will enable them to form meaningful and healthy relationships and communicate effectively with others. (*Interpersonal Competence*)
5. Demonstrate their commitment to creating safe, equitable, and inclusive communities at KU and beyond. (*Humanitarianism & Civic Engagement*)
6. Develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills that will enable them to apply and connect acquired knowledge. (*Cognitive Complexity*)

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Description of Service/Program

Covid 19 has created numerous difficulties across all areas of campus, including Union Programs. Often, leadership training can be relegated to the realm of the abstract, even though students tend to learn best when they can see how it applies to them directly. While there are currently very real and existential threats to all campus organizations, this time also represents a significant real-world learning opportunity for students; how do you plan and lead proactively through a crisis? In this program, student leaders of KJHK, SUA, and TBE will attend a Winter Retreat, in which they will work with advisors to identify the biggest challenges to their organizations for the Spring semester and set goals to proactively respond to these threats. Through this process, they will create a document outlining their goals and timelines for the completion of these goals. At the end of the semester, students will evaluate their own leadership tendencies based on how they planned for, and reacted to, a real crisis. Throughout this process they will receive training and guidance in best practices, will gain a greater understanding of their own strengths and weaknesses as leaders, and will emerge with tangible, real-world, crisis management experience.

Service/Program Student Learning Outcome(s)

Students participating in the Proactive Leadership program will be able to:

- Identify potential difficulties, challenges, inefficiencies, and obstacles to their respective organizations for the spring semester (Union #1,2,6)
- Create specific goals to effectively counteract perceived challenges (Union #1,2 6)
- Create a document that identifies action steps and completion timelines for reaching identified goals (Union #1,2,6)
- Evaluate progress toward stated goals (Union #1, 2)
- Evaluate their overall effectiveness in achieving their goals at the end of the semester (Union #3)

Divisional Student Learning Outcomes: *Check all that apply*

- Knowledge Acquisition
- Cognitive Complexity
- Intrapersonal Development
- Interpersonal Competence
- Humanitarianism & Civic Engagement

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Practical Competence

Project Specifics

Project Title: Union Programs Assessment- Proactive Leadership in Times of Crisis

Purpose of the project: Through this program, advisors and staff to KJHK, TBE, and SUA hope to use the current unprecedented challenges to all three organizations to help students learn to think proactively as leaders. As part of this project, staff and advisors of all three organizations hope to show gains in students' abilities to identify and plan for future difficulties instead of reacting to them. Students will also be guided through the process of setting challenging but realistic goals for themselves in their respective organizations based on their identified challenges. Through this process, advisors and staff hope to see student leaders better prepared to deal with real-world problems by anticipating and planning for them. In the students' self-evaluation at the end of the project, we hope to see leaders that have learned where their own strengths and weaknesses lie by evaluating how accurately they predicted the challenges they would face, how well they adhered to or adapted their goals based on those predictions, and what these reflections tell them about themselves that can be used to proactively plan in the future to play to strengths and negate weaknesses in their own leadership styles. Through this process students will learn that while truly effective leadership requires effective planning and execution, it is also essential that good leaders assess and take ownership of their own limitations, shortcomings, and missteps, so that true learning and growth can occur.

Assessment method(s):

- **Phase 1:** During the retreat, each student will create a document that identifies major challenges to their specific branch of their org, sets goals to negate those challenges, and lists action steps to achieve the goals. These will be assessed by advisors using a rubric outlining criteria for assessing identified challenges, goals, and action steps. Depending on results, some follow-up training and/or fine-tuning of the documents may be necessary.
- **Phase 2:** Students will be given a self-evaluation that uses open-ended questions to gather qualitative responses. These will be evaluated by advisors using a rubric that captures what the students have learned about their own leadership tendencies through the process of proactive leadership.

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Staff contact(s): Mike MacFarland (mjmac@ku.edu)

Timeline/frequency:

- Students will attend a Winter Retreat with their respective organizations prior to the start of the Spring semester at which they will receive training and complete their guiding documents. These will be assessed by advisors after the completion of the retreat.
- Progress check-ins throughout the semester will be determined by goal timelines created by the students, and where necessary, additional feedback and training will be given based on the initial assessments.
- Final self-evaluations will be administered in May and assessed by advisors.
- Results of the project will be tabulated and presented in the Annual Report in June.

Population/Sample: Union Programs student leaders; 40-50 total students across all three groups.

Special challenges to this assessment:

- Calibrating scoring of rubrics between different advisors in different organizations.
- Ensuring that students feel comfortable and empowered enough to give honest and valuable responses to their self-evaluations.

Use to inform current practice:

- The results of the assessment will inform Union Programs Advisors of how adequately they are preparing and training students to face difficult challenges in the real world. It will also shed light on the students' own self-image through this process.
- Should students struggle to plan and/or achieve goals, but still assess their own leadership as being exceptional, this would indicate that emphasis needs to be placed on intrapersonal development.

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- If students struggle with the mechanics of identifying and drafting goals and timelines, then more training would be required in practical competence, event management, risk assessment, and critical thinking skills.
- If students struggle with the execution of the goals, then more time needs to be spent developing interpersonal skills.

Plans for reporting results:

Share results with Student Affairs to be reported in Annual Report.

Share results with KUMU Corporation board members, KUMU Management Team, Union Programs Professional Staff and Students