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Capstone Courses at Winthrop University: What Are They?

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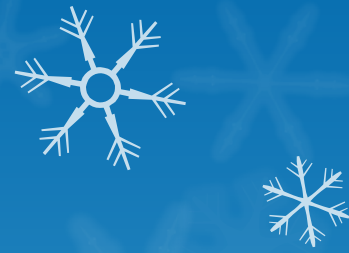
Capstone Courses at Winthrop University

Dr. Marsha Bollinger

What are they?

How do they compare with national trends?

What can be learned from this analysis?

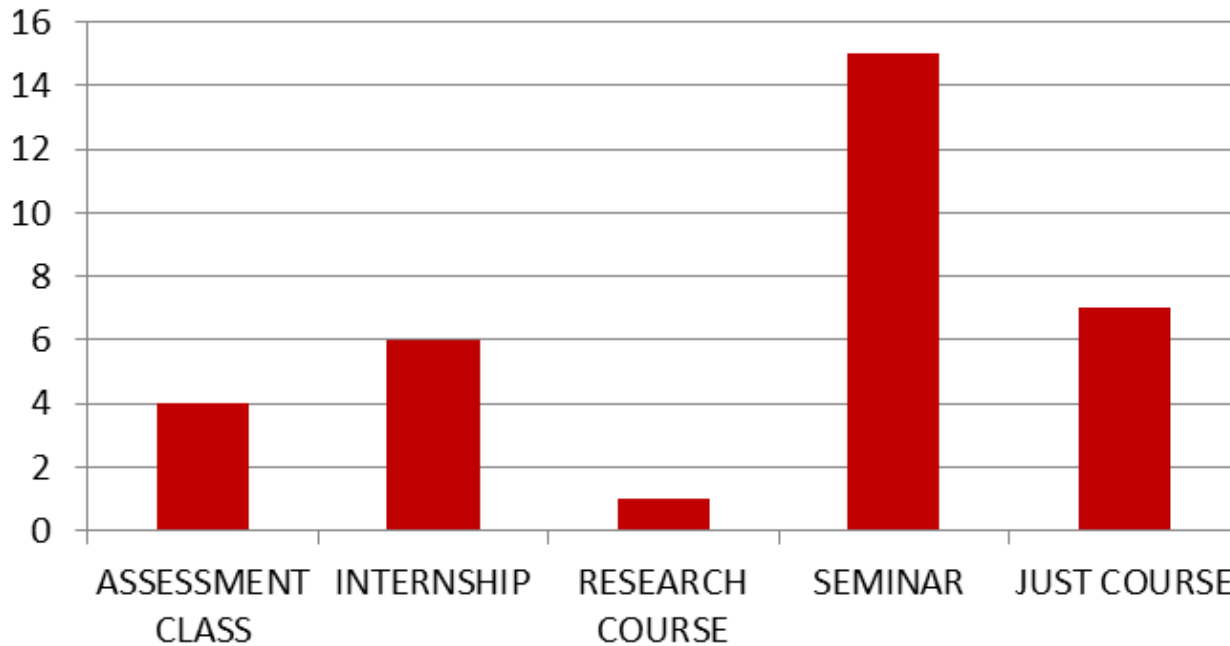


Some background

- Motivation
- Quick review of the literature
 - Kuh, 2008
 - Padgett and Kilgo, 2012
 - Kinzie, 2013
 - Kuh, O'Donnell, and Reed, 2013
- Methods

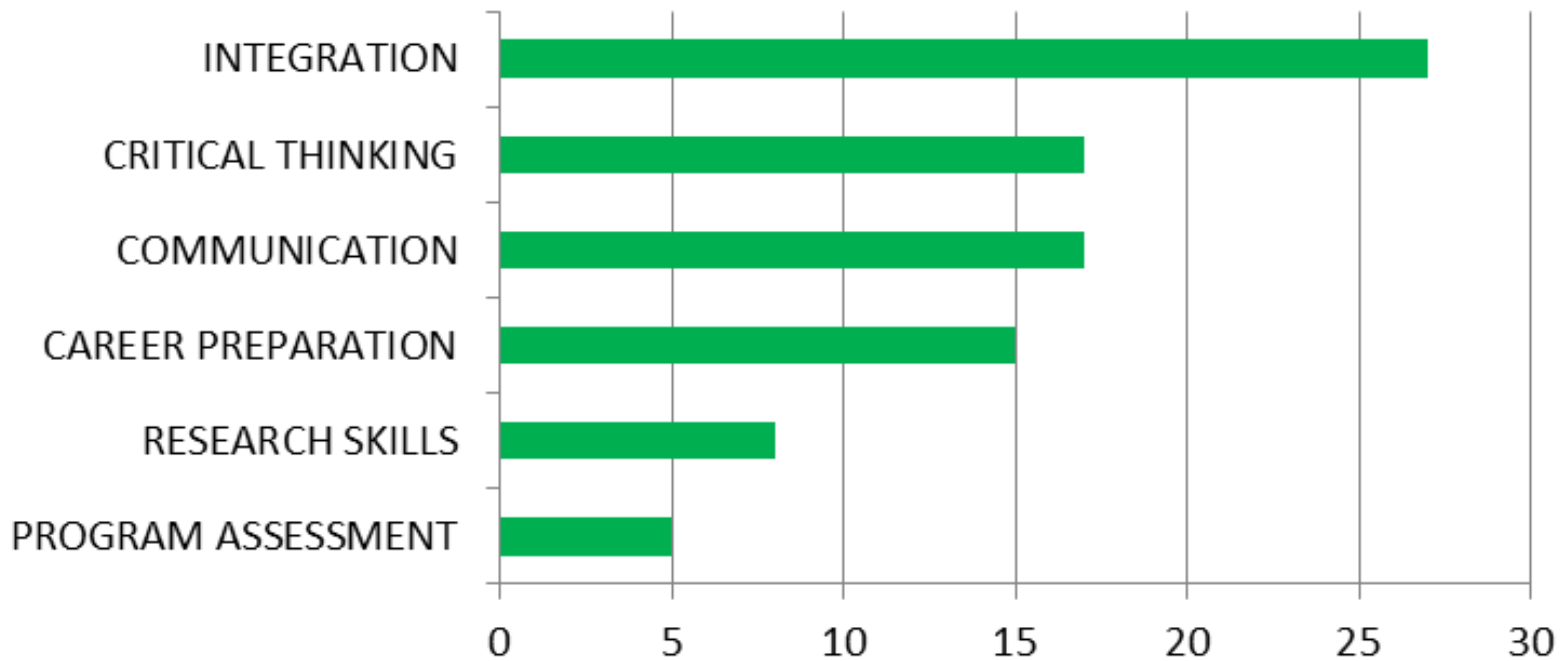


Course category (# of courses)

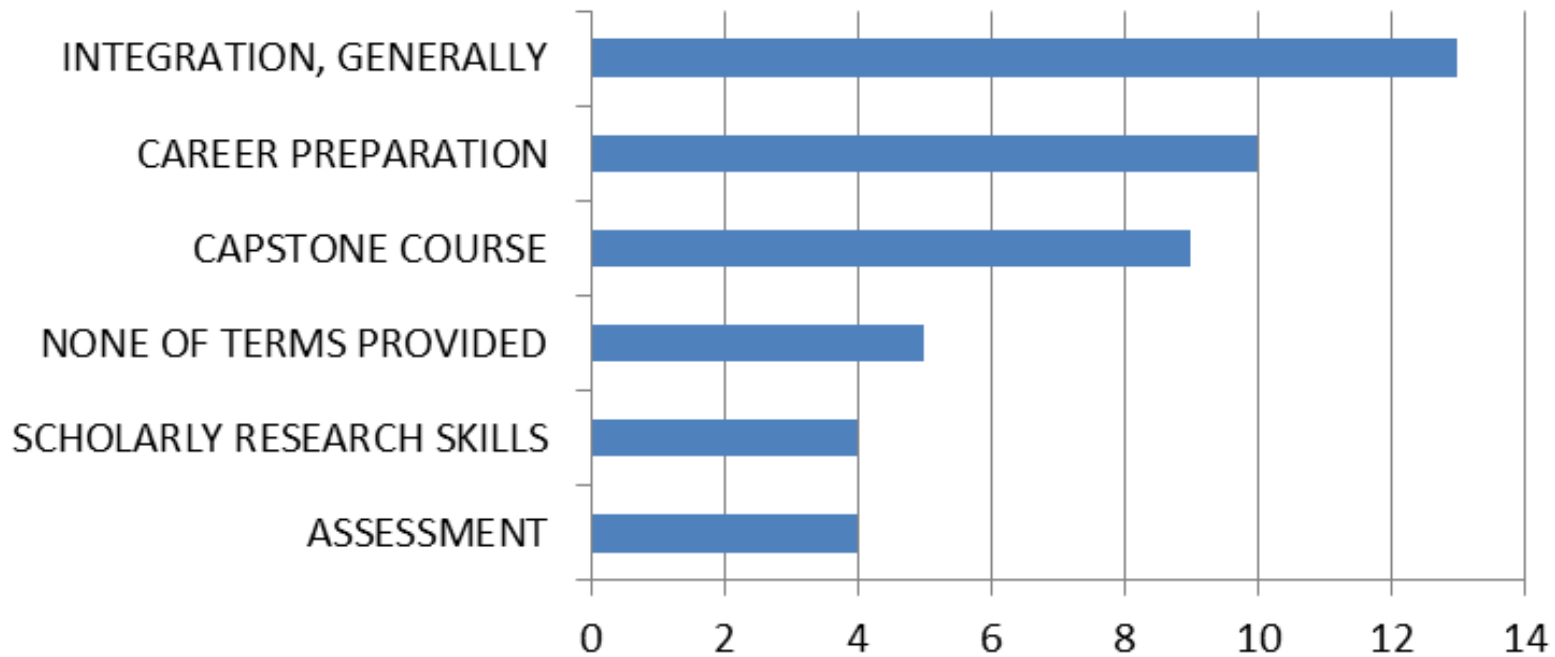


Course Credits	# of courses
Less than 3 credits	6
3 credits	23
More than 3 credits	3

Goals and SLOs from syllabi (# of courses)



Catalog descriptions that mention selected terms (# of courses)



GOALS, SLOs, OBJECTIVES	WU syllabi	WU catalog	Padgett and Kilgo, 2012
INTEGRATION, GENERALLY*	84.4%	40.6%	59.6%
CRITICAL THINKING, GENERALLY**	53.1%		49.6%
CAREER PREPARATION	46.9%	31.3%	25%
WRITTEN COMMUNICATION	43.8%	21.9%***	22.8%
SCHOLARLY RESEARCH SKILLS	25.0%	12.5%	27.6%

*INTEGRATION, GENERALLY here includes connections/integration within discipline, connections with other disciplines, evaluations of the social and ethical contexts of issues, examination subfields within a discipline, or investigation of diverse perspectives about an issue

**CRITICAL THINKING, GENERALLY here includes critical thinking, analytical reasoning, and problem solving

***intensive writing listed as attribute of course

COURSE ACTIVITIES	WU syllabi	Henscheid, 2000*
SHORT WRITING ASSIGNMENTS	65.6%	
MAJOR PRESENTATIONS	59.4%	75.1%
TEST of skills or content	53.1%	
MAJOR PAPER OR PROJECT	53.1%	71.9%
PROGRAM ASSESSMENT	40.6%	46.2%
PLACEMENT OR INTERNSHIP	21.9%	
DISCUSSION LEADERSHIP	21.9%	

*As reported by Padgett and Kilgo, 2012

Learned from this study

- Winthrop's capstone courses come in many forms and have a wide-variety of goals and course activities.
- As a group, our goals are consistent with national "norms".
- Our syllabi do not necessarily match catalog descriptions.
- The ENVS program capstone is in line with others on campus and across the nation. However, there is room for improvement.

Recommended “activities” of high-impact practices (after Kuh et al., 2013)

- High expectations
- Significant investment of time and effort
- Faculty and peer interactions
- Experiences with diversity
- Frequent feedback
- Reflection and integration of learning
- Real-world applications
- Public demonstration of competence