

# University Scholar Self-Assessment Tool

## What is a University Scholar?

A university scholar is a master learner and thinker – an educated person. A university scholar has excellent communication, quantitative, study and research skills developed through years of practice. University scholars have breadth and depth of knowledge and can use that knowledge in a variety of situations. The knowledge of a university scholar is broad in the areas of science, humanities and social sciences (a liberal education), as well as in-depth in a particular area of study (the major). A university scholar can critically analyze arguments and assumptions, find relevant information, make sense of ambiguous and complicated information, and can use and share what he or she knows through effective communication skills. A university scholar can use and integrate knowledge and skills to new situations and issues and is thus, well prepared to pursue a life of learning, exploration, and discovery. An educated person exercises personal responsibility for continued learning and intellectual development. Individuals become university scholars not by acting as empty vessels to be filled, but as active and responsible learners who continue to build their knowledge base to create deeper understandings of themselves and the world. The abilities of university scholars are valued not only in a university, but also in the work world where these scholars will need to re-tool and prepare themselves for the many phases of their careers. Educated persons are crucial to the continued vibrancy and functioning of our communities that need informed citizens who can identify and understand issues and opportunities and help identify and implement appropriate solutions to a variety of problems.

SJSU provides its students with the necessary courses, activities, advising, and assistance to guide students on a pathway to the “educated person” level. Reaching that level requires more than attending classes and checking off completion of a list of classes to satisfy degree requirements. It also involves self-discovery; engagement with other students, faculty, and staff; self-assessment and discussions with faculty and others to help gauge progress; and development of skills, a knowledge base, habits and motivation to continue to learn throughout life.

The chart\* on the following page is designed to help you gauge your progress towards becoming a university scholar. It will help you to understand this goal as well as what is involved in reaching the goal. The chart describe a university scholar as someone who:

- 1) Has learning and social interaction skills
- 2) Has knowledge for lifelong learning and living
- 3) Uses cognitive processes
- 4) Takes responsibility as an engaged person in various roles: student, learner, professional, and global citizen

There are also three tables that describe these traits at three levels:

1. Beginning
2. Middle years
3. Educated person

Use these tables to gauge your progress and to plan your program of study and involvement in activities. Review these tables and your progress at least twice each year, such as before the start of each semester.

\* Originally developed by Annette Nellen for use in MUSE seminars. Subsequently expanded and modified for use with SAIL by Debra David, Gail Evans, David Mesher, Annette Nellen, Dorothy Poole, Eloise Stiglitz, , and Emily Wughalter.

**A University Scholar/Lifelong Learner ...**

<b>Has Learning and Social Interaction Skills</b>	<b>Has Knowledge for Lifelong Learning and Living</b>	<b>Uses Cognitive Processes</b>	<b>Takes Responsibility as an Engaged Person: Student, Learner, Professional, and Global Citizen</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Reading skills</li> <li>▪ Communication skills (written, oral, listening)</li> <li>▪ Technology skills (use of word processing, spreadsheet and presentation software, Internet navigation and search skills)</li> <li>▪ Information literacy skills (abilities as defined by ALA;<sup>1</sup> how to keep current in an area)</li> <li>▪ Quantitative and qualitative literacy skills (understand graphic depictions of data, create graphics, interpret data, basic financial literacy, grouping information into thematic categories, content analysis)</li> <li>▪ Study and learning skills (note-taking, studying, knowledge of own learning style, time management)</li> <li>▪ Social skills (intrapersonal, interpersonal, civil discourse)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Broad knowledge in the social sciences, humanities, arts and sciences and in-depth knowledge of a major field of study</li> <li>▪ Cultural competency – understanding and appreciation of multicultural and global perspectives</li> <li>▪ Knowledge to maintain personal health and wellness.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Critical thinking (identify assumptions and missing information, evaluate and analyze data and arguments; reflect on impact of one’s own values and beliefs on the analysis and outcome)</li> <li>▪ Creative thinking (open-minded; uses techniques to derive new ideas and approaches)</li> <li>▪ Integration (consideration of problems and situations in ways that integrate factual, cognitive, affective, social and physical aspects to derive answers)</li> <li>▪ Application (problem solving skills, decision-making skills, ethical standards,<sup>2</sup> ability to form reasoned independent judgment, ability to deal with ambiguity)</li> <li>▪ Evaluation (ability to develop and implement appropriate assessments; ability to use constructive criticism; ability to use assessment data for continuous improvement)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Knowledge of and adherence to university rules, procedures and requirements.</li> <li>▪ Ability to set and achieve goals, including degree attainment (self-reflection, planning, motivation, flexibility, completion)</li> <li>▪ Initiative to seek information and knowledge, explore and question ideas and connect thoughts with one’s own and others’ in order to create meaning</li> <li>▪ Has an integrated identity (self in relation to others and the community, in a global context; aware of one’s values and behaves in an ethical manner; expresses aesthetic preferences; career goal consistent with values; understands limits and strengths; seeks purpose; takes responsibility for actions)</li> <li>▪ Exercises responsible citizenship (civic engagement; social justice; active participation in professional, artistic, ethnic and other communities)</li> <li>▪ Possesses and uses practical skills for everyday living (knowledge, skills and motivation for physical, emotional, occupational , financial, spiritual, social well-being)</li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup> See American Library Association list at <http://www.ala.org/ala/acrl/acrlstandards/informationliteracycompetency.htm#ildef>.

<sup>2</sup> See five ethical approaches at <http://www.scu.edu/ethics/practicing/decision/framework.html>.

A University Scholar/Lifelong Learner ...Beginning			
Has Learning and Social Interaction Skills	Has Knowledge for Lifelong Learning and Living	Uses Cognitive Processes	Takes Responsibility as an Engaged Person: Student, Learner, Professional, and Global Citizen
<p>Reading</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You can read complex texts.<sup>3</sup></li> <li>You have read the campus reading selection for the year, and participated in at least one discussion/activity related to the book.</li> </ul> <p>Communication</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You are starting to get a better idea of your abilities to communicate verbally and in writing and where improvement is needed.</li> </ul> <p>Information Literacy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You have demonstrated an understanding of what constitutes plagiarism.</li> <li>You are learning how to locate and retrieve information relative to a research topic.</li> </ul> <p>Quantitative Literacy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Basic math skills through algebra and geometry</li> <li>Ability to read graphs</li> </ul> <p>Technology</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You access your records/information on my.sjsu at least once per week.</li> <li>You are proficient at word processing and basic Internet searches.</li> </ul> <p>Study and Learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You are beginning to identify your learning style and how to study to make the most of that style.</li> <li>You are evaluating your skills for note taking, studying, time management, and reading to identify techniques that work effectively for you.</li> </ul> <p>Social Skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You have made friends and are becoming comfortable at SJSU.</li> </ul>	<p>Lifelong Learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You have successfully completed range of courses required to enter a CSU.</li> </ul> <p>In-Depth Knowledge</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You have a rudimentary understanding of what your major is about.</li> </ul> <p>Multicultural &amp; Global Perspective</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You are aware that many differences exist between peoples of different countries, regions, cultures, etc., and you are beginning to articulate them in detail or use that knowledge in discussion or analysis.</li> </ul>	<p>Level of Exploration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Your questions tend to be focused on comprehension (understanding), rather than going beyond the materials provided to explore other concepts or views.</li> </ul> <p>Critical &amp; Creative Thinking</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You are starting to get a better idea of your ability to think critically and where improvement is needed.</li> </ul> <p>Ability for Thoroughness/Problem Solving</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You have some difficulty and/or low confidence in comparing and contrasting the subject matter to other areas studied.</li> <li>Your confidence level is low that you will find the best and most relevant reference materials for a research project.</li> </ul>	<p>Responsibility for Learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You primarily rely on your instructor to set the tasks for learning the material.</li> <li>You are beginning to learn of resources and steps to understanding a subject matter. You are learning the skills to be an information literate person.</li> </ul> <p>Engagement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You are trying different techniques for effective studying.</li> <li>You are likely to take instructor comments about your work (criticism) as a setback (or even mean spirited) rather than as a learning opportunity.</li> </ul> <p>Motivation for Learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Your motivation to learn is focused more on getting a good grade rather than learning the subject matter to broaden your knowledge base, skill set and move on to more challenging work.</li> </ul> <p>Ethical Choices</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You are beginning to recognize your values in various situations.</li> </ul>

<sup>3</sup> See the definition of “complex texts” in the ACT report: *Reading Between the Lines*, page 6; available at [http://www.act.org/path/policy/pdf/reading\\_summary.pdf](http://www.act.org/path/policy/pdf/reading_summary.pdf).

**A University Scholar/Lifelong Learner ...Middle Years**

<b>Has Learning and Social Interaction Skills</b>	<b>Has Knowledge for Lifelong Learning and Living</b>	<b>Uses Cognitive Processes</b>	<b>Takes Responsibility as an Engaged Person: Student, Learner, Professional, and Global Citizen</b>
<p>Reading</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You read everyday.</li> </ul> <p>Communication</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You are able to effectively explain (both verbally and in writing) the key issue(s) and point(s) in a book or presentation.</li> <li>You continue to work on weaknesses in your written and verbal skills. You receive few, if any corrections for grammar or clarity of writing.</li> </ul> <p>Information Literacy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You know the difference between an Internet search and skilled research.</li> <li>You know about and have used at least ten library databases.</li> </ul> <p>Quantitative Literacy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You ask questions about quantitative data rather than taking it at face value.</li> </ul> <p>Critical Thinking</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You are able to identify some flaws in arguments and missing assumptions.</li> </ul> <p>Study and Learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Your confidence to ask questions in class and of your instructors during office hours is fairly high.</li> <li>You know what your learning style is and are exploring ways to use it to best utilize study time.</li> <li>You continue to improve note taking, reading, study and time management skills.</li> <li>Your confidence in approaching new assignments continues to increase.</li> </ul> <p>Social Skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You are involved in at least one co-curricular activity at SJSU.</li> </ul>	<p>Lifelong Learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You continue to gain breadth and depth of knowledge through your General Education curriculum, which covers social systems and issues, physical and biological sciences, the arts, technology, philosophy, and human interaction.</li> </ul> <p>In-Depth Knowledge</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You begin an in-depth study of a particular discipline (your major!).</li> </ul> <p>Multicultural &amp; Global Perspectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You have a greater understanding of differences between peoples of difference countries, regions, cultures, abilities, gender, sexual orientation, etc., and you're beginning to use that knowledge in discussion or analysis.</li> <li>You attend or participate in at least one campus event or activity each semester that exposes you to something new.</li> </ul>	<p>Level of Exploration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You are beginning to recognize similarities and differences in topics.</li> <li>You are feeling more confident in being able to separate relevant from irrelevant information.</li> </ul> <p>Critical &amp; Creative Thinking</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You are often able to derive examples of your own to explain information.</li> <li>You often do not take information at face value, but instead ask questions to help determine its validity and completeness.</li> </ul> <p>Ability for Thoroughness/Problem Solving</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You are starting to appreciate that learning is an interactive process (with other learners and/or authors); you can learn through dialogue and debate with professors and fellow students.</li> </ul>	<p>Responsibility for Learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You come to class prepared.</li> <li>Your course work (readings, notes, calendar, additional resources) are organized. You are aware of the importance of having a good study environment and schedule and of working with others sometimes (such as a study group).</li> <li>You appreciate the importance of being information literate and practice these skills and seek assistance in further developing them.</li> </ul> <p>Engagement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You are becoming better aware of university rules and policies and working within them.</li> <li>You feel more confident asking questions in class and during professors' office hours.</li> </ul> <p>Motivation for Learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Your motivation to learn is increasing and you find yourself discussing course subject matter with people outside of class and seeking additional resources.</li> <li>You are starting to appreciate that even a subject that you don't particularly enjoy offers opportunities to improve your academic foundation, intellect and ability to learn.</li> <li>When you come across something you don't know, you take the initiative to find out.</li> </ul> <p>Ethical Choices</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You are aware of your values and beginning to critically assess them.</li> </ul> <p>Global Citizenship</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You keep up with news daily through print and/or electronic media.</li> </ul>

A University Scholar/Lifelong Learner ... Educated Person			
Has Learning and Social Interaction Skills	Has Knowledge for Lifelong Learning and Living	Uses Cognitive Processes	Takes Responsibility as an Engaged Person: Student, Learner, Professional, and Global Citizen
<p>Communication</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You are able to explain (both verbally and in writing) the key issue(s) and point(s) in a book or presentation.</li> <li>You receive few, if any corrections for grammar or clarity of writing.</li> </ul> <p>Information Literacy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You can use appropriate editorial standards for citing primary and secondary sources.</li> </ul> <p>Quantitative Literacy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You are able to point out limitations and flaws with quantitative information.</li> <li>You are able to represent information in quantitative form that is informative and accurate.</li> </ul> <p>Study and Learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Your confidence to ask questions in class and of your instructor during office hours is high.</li> <li>You know what your learning style is and how to use it to maximize learning and best utilize study time.</li> <li>You have excellent skills in note-taking, reading, study and time management.</li> <li>Your confidence in approaching new assignments is high.</li> </ul> <p>Social Skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You are productively engaged in activities at SJSU outside of the classroom.</li> </ul>	<p>Lifelong Learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You are integrating your knowledge learned in GE courses with those in your major, as well as between curricular and co-curricular activities.</li> <li>You understand how this knowledge can be used as a foundation to further learning.</li> </ul> <p>In-Depth Knowledge</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You see the importance of understanding the underlying principles, rules and concepts to comprehend, utilize and appreciate a subject or discipline.</li> </ul> <p>Multicultural &amp; Global Perspectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You are able to use your understanding of differences between peoples in discussion and analysis.</li> <li>You are able to participate in dialogues in a reasoned, civil way and to understand others' views, even when you disagree with them</li> <li>You have an understanding of how the world works economically, politically, socially, culturally, technologically, and environmentally.<sup>4</sup></li> </ul>	<p>Level of Exploration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You recognize similarities and differences in topics.</li> </ul> <p>Critical and Creative Thinking</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You are confident in being able to separate relevant from irrelevant information.</li> <li>You are able to derive examples of your own to explain information.</li> <li>You are able to identify flaws in arguments.</li> <li>You do not take information at face value, but instead ask questions and find the answers in order to help determine its validity and completeness.</li> <li>You appreciate that learning is an interactive process (with other learners); you can learn through dialog and debate with professors and fellow students.</li> <li>You are able to lead discussions on critical analysis of information.</li> <li>You can "recognize and deal with complexity, ambiguity, and uncertainty. [You] can think logically, critically, and, where necessary, abstractly, in order to synthesize reasoned conclusions from information."<sup>5</sup></li> </ul> <p>Ability for Thoroughness/Problem Solving</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You "think outside of the box" and exercise creativity in looking at and exploring new areas.</li> </ul>	<p>Responsibility for Learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You have successfully navigated the university so as to complete the requirements to earn your degree.</li> <li>You come to class prepared no matter what.</li> </ul> <p>Engagement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You engage daily in activities to broaden your horizons (read the newspaper, listen to the news, read, etc.).</li> <li>You can assist others in learning new things and becoming better learners.</li> </ul> <p>Motivation for Learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Your motivation to learn is high and you find yourself discussing course subject matter with people outside of class and seeking additional resources.</li> <li>You appreciate that there is always more to learn and that continued learning is important to be a productive member of society and to effectively deal with the constant change in the world around you.</li> </ul> <p>Ethical Choices</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You are clear about your own values and your reasons for holding them, and you live by them.</li> </ul> <p>Global Citizenship</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You have the communication and collective decision-making skills needed to participate effectively in civic roles.</li> <li>You understand how to be effectively involved in your local and national communities.</li> <li>You have a very good understanding of yourself and your abilities and limits.</li> <li>You seek out avenues to "push" your boundaries of understanding with people who are not like you.</li> <li>You are aware of the wider world and have a sense of your own role as a Global citizen.</li> </ul>

<sup>4</sup> Adapted from Oxfam as found at: <http://www.oxfam.org.uk/coolplanet/teachers/globciti/whatis.htm>

<sup>5</sup> From CSU Academic Senate Policy - *Baccalaureate Education in the California State University*; available at <http://www.calstate.edu/acadsen/actions/1997-98/2388a.shtml>.