

# **FIVE PROFICIENCIES TASK FORCE REPORT**

*Spring 2013*

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Report written by Anne Marie Todd

## **OVERVIEW**

We envision this essay to address graduation proficiencies overall, drawing from what we know from assessment in the major in SJSU Studies courses. We also aim to focus on integrative program learning outcomes, what they are, how we assess them, and what we know about student mastery of proficiencies.

This essay asks us to assess the graduation proficiencies of our senior for these five areas:

- Information literacy
- Quantitative literacy
- Critical Thinking
- Oral Communication
- Written Communication

After the constitution of our task force in Spring 2012, we identified potential data sources for 5 proficiencies. Overall we concluded that SJSU does not assess the five proficiencies in a systemic way. We then developed and supported several pilot projects to gather data in these five areas and test methods to assess the 5 proficiencies in a programmatic way.

Pilot projects:

- Area R GEPA project (building on Area S GEPA project)
- Oral communication pilot project
- Information literacy assessment
- Program assessment: data analysis of program plans

This report includes descriptions and outcomes of these projects, notes about data sources and assessment processes and recommendations.

**Separate, attached documents:**

- Oral Communication Pilot Data
- Oral Communication Rubric

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**Five Proficiencies Essay – Initial Outline, Summer 2012 .....Error! Bookmark not defined.**

## TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS

For a successful data collection regarding the five proficiencies, it is important to build sustaining innovative and inclusive assessment. This taskforce experience has led to the following conclusions:

- Support structure for coordinated data collection is essential for university wide assessment.
- Supportive culture of assessment is essential for data collection and meaningful WASC reporting. We need to address resistance to assessment on campus. The WASC teams are doing the work that no one else on the campus will do. If we do not change the culture on this campus, we will not be able to collect meaningful data about the quality and accountability of the education we offer.
- **All program plans should be assessed for five proficiencies.** Program assessment will be critical to demonstrating the five proficiencies. Program planning guidelines should guide assessment. The campus should connect program planning with strategic planning to standardize program assessment. This essay should include explanation of the evolution in the process.
- Need to survey existing SLOs and assessment data for undergraduate and graduate programs.
- Need to draw from and feature existing data sources and planned assessment projects.
- Oral Communication Recommendations
  - Recommend featuring College of Business Accreditation Reports regarding May 2013 assessment of oral communication.
  - Recommend a campus wide assessment of oral communication projects in Senior Seminar/Capstone courses across campus.
- Written Communication Recommendations
  - Recommend intensive survey of existing data sources of student writing:
    - Writing Requirements Committee
    - Writing Center
    - AANAPISI writing grant projects
    - College of Business Writing Assessment: Development of working rubrics among COMM, LLD, ENG and COB 100W faculty. Assessment of 60 student papers with rigorous norming process.
    - Writing Across the Curriculum: Seek existing data with writing across the curriculum/100W classes.
- Information Literacy Recommendations
  - Recommend launching 100W Assessment project campus wide Fall 2013 - Spring 2014: Needs WASC taskforce member to present to librarians who have 100W assignments in Summer 2013 and to contact 100W instructors for Fall 2013 to urge them to get their students to complete the survey. Need to have explicit campus-level support.
  - Recommend developing existing library data (InfoPower & Plagiarism)
  - Consider proposing revised greensheet policy from *recommending* library information be included on greensheets to *requiring* this information be included on greensheets.
- Quantitative Literacy Recommendations
  - This as a hole in assessment data. Will have to come from GEPA and program assessment.
- Critical Thinking Recommendations
  - There are many data here, need broader assessment of critical thinking in SJSU Studies.

# **ORAL COMM PILOT PROJECT REPORT**

*Anne Marie Todd*

## **Project Description**

Because SJSU does not yet assess Oral Communication in a systematic way, we developed a pilot project is designed to assess how our graduating seniors have advanced their oral communication abilities beyond the basic skills learned in lower division courses.

In Spring 2012 and Fall 2012, we attempted to recruit faculty members teaching senior seminars in which students were giving final presentations to ask/encourage/require their students to record and upload their speeches for the purposes of assessment. We aimed to recruit 100 students from senior seminars or capstone courses.

Anticipated benefits to students included:

- Participating students received a booklet that includes a guide to public speaking with advice on outlining and organization and tips for delivery.
- Students gain experience in recording and uploading speeches, a skill transferrable to other courses and the workplace.
- Agreement to record their speech provides students an added incentive to practice their speeches at least once before giving it in class. Practice generally improves in-class performance.

## **Data Collection**

### ***Instructor Responsibilities***

Instructors were asked to recruit students by announcing in class, posting on course website, etc. (invitation to students provided). We suggested they encourage students by direct appeal, extra credit, incorporating into assignment. Once students were recruited, instructors were asked to remind students to record and upload their speeches. Instructors received the public speaking guide and rubric used to evaluate the speech.

Instructors were asked to recruit and encourage students to record a presentation they are already giving for the class. We provided the following details.

- Assigned presentations can be at any point of the semester.
- Presentations should be 5-10 minutes; students may record part of a presentation to fit within this time limit.
- Students may present their individual portions of group presentations for this project.
- Students record speeches outside of class: this presentation is in addition to, and separate from, their in-class presentation.
- Many students can use their personal computers to record and upload their presentations.

- Students upload the video to a secure website, where the video is unaffiliated with student names/ID. Videos will be viewed by outside evaluators who will score the video presentations as part of an assessment of SJSU students' proficiency in oral communication.
- This was envisioned to be a simple request of students familiar with recording technologies and take about an hour of their time.

### ***Technical Support***

- Students were to upload their speeches to Speech Studio, a software/website that enabled uploading of speeches and easy evaluation using rubrics. Technical support for the website was supplied by Cengage, publisher of the public speaking guide and developer of Speech Studio.
- The Communication Center (Hugh Gillis Hall 229, <http://commcenter.sjsu.edu/>) was available to support students' recording of presentations. Students could make an appointment with a trained student coach who would help them record and upload their speech.

### ***Recruitment Results***

- Initial emails to senior seminar/capstone course instructors in Spring 2012 revealed the need for more lead time for instructors to incorporate in the course.
- A more robust recruitment effort in Fall 2012 involved:
  - Personal emails to 35 faculty teaching Senior Seminars/Capstone Courses (culled from the course schedule)
  - Email to UCCD with requests to forward to faculty
  - Follow-up emails responding to questions and concerns and to nonresponsive faculty
- Eleven (11) faculty agreed to participate, with an anticipated 200+ student speeches to be recorded. Faculty represented 4 colleges (CASA, COB, COE, COSS).
- Follow-up emails, phone calls to faculty who agreed to participate resulted in three (3) faculty actually participating (with 125 student speeches anticipated).
- Public speaking booklets were sent to students in these three courses. Because these were high enrollment courses, not all students received booklets, thus not all students received access codes and instructions to Speech Studio.
- Alternative arrangements were made for these students—who would upload to Dropbox or Youtube.
- Students with the Speech Studio booklets discovered that the listed access codes were inaccurate and they did not have access to the website. Cengage support was too late for students.
- One instructor required students to upload (resulting in 15 speeches), another encouraged them to upload (resulting in 10 speeches), the third did not have students send him the video (resulting in 0 speeches).

### ***Speech Collection Results***

- Students uploaded speeches via Dropbox and YouTube.

- Accessible YouTube videos: 3 speeches, featuring 12 students. (Several student speeches on YouTube became unavailable; removed by user, marked private, or marked unavailable.)
- Students speeches collected by Dropbox: 15 speeches, featuring 21 students
- Technical issues reported included: videos downloading or buffering slowly, some unable to be paused without restarting the video.
- Recording quality varied. Video quality was low: visually, particularly when audio and video were misaligned.
- Inconsistency in recording made evaluation more difficult. Some students recorded presentation slides with a voiceover rather than their own images. Students recorded group speeches—not individual portions of group speeches.

### **Assessment Process**

- Evaluators recruited from Communication Studies Graduate Teaching Assistant and TA pool (experts in evaluating public speaking).
- Agreed upon rubric developed by Jessica Kaven (SJSU COMM Studies Alumna), Professor and Chair, Cañada College (See Attached). This rubric best applies to presentations of sufficient length such that a central message is conveyed, supported by one or more forms of supporting materials and includes a purposeful organization. An oral answer to a single question not designed to be structured into a presentation does not readily apply to this rubric. The rubric worked well to grade a large quantity of speeches in a short amount of time.
- **\*\*Note-** we revised rubric to include whole integers, rather than half points – the COB follow-up assessment did this as well. **\*\***
- Evaluators participated in assessment training to provide assessment instructions, discuss the rubric and calibrate assessment procedures.
- Evaluators assessed speeches individually—recording three ratings per speech.
- The pilot data are attached.

### **Recommendations**

#### **Recruitment**

Impress on instructors the importance of recruitment for the purposes of WASC assessment. Responses from instructors who ended up not participating (other than the most typical—no response) included: reluctance to create more work for students, disinclination to add another syllabus requirement, concern that their students' would not meet project expectations, concern that students would not receive guidance beyond a booklet, and, perhaps most surprisingly, a belief that their students did not need extra practice and that the exercise seemed like a waste of time.

#### **Recording & Uploading**

- Require students to record individual speeches (portions of group speeches) for easier assessment. Recorded group presentations are difficult to assess because reviewers must keep track of speakers.

If it must be group presentation, students should have an assigned speaking order, which is made known to the reviewers.

- Students should appear in the video (slides with voiceover are not easy to evaluate). Film angle: Students should stand away from the camera, so upper body is visible (for evaluation of non verbal communication).
- Students should use streamlined uploading site (i.e. youtube) or Canvas. so file formatting is not an issue. Ideally, develop a centralized hub with very easy access for students, instructors and evaluators (suggest Canvas). If using Canvas, rubric could be integrated into course, to make evaluation of a greater number of students easier.

### **Reviewer Process**

- Assessment process recommendations – for outside reviewers, set disciplinary expectations to contextualize assignments in the following categories for selecting a meaningful topic and appropriate language – jargon. Also set assignment expectations so reviewers know what type of speeches they are to be evaluating.
- Input of data needs to be consistent – only use whole numbers. (Assessment Instructions have been updated)
- Recommend more reviewer calibration using sample speeches.

## **INFO LITERACY REPORT**

*Anne Marie Todd & Diana Wu*

The Library is the linchpin of information literacy assessment at SJSU. The library is engaged in a variety of projects designed to assess information literacy.

The library is committed to assessment. Two library faculty supported GEPA that measured information literacy in both a select number of Area R general education (Earth and Environment). The library sent two library faculty to the WASC Core Competencies retreat on critical thinking and information literacy in Anaheim, October 2012. The project resulting from that visit is described below.

The library classes are part of a systematic, outcomes-driven, tiered information literacy program that targets research skills in three populations: lower division general education, upper-division general education and capstone, and graduate students. The assessment is being measured via an in-house assessment instrument matched to ACRL information literacy learning objectives and with a Google form embedded in an online research guide. Research skills being measured both formatively and summatively in target classes include developing effective keywords, avoiding plagiarism, and evaluating websites.

Data gathered via the library information literacy program will be aggregated and used to improve both teaching and learning. Data will be shared at the department and campus administrative levels as well as with all library faculty and library administration.

### **Existing/Ongoing Data**

#### ***InfoPower Tutorial***

Data collected from Fall 2003 to Spring 2012. The sample size is 409 that have the most completed answers. The scores range from 37% to 100%. More analysis will be needed to see how to modify those questions that students constantly score lower on those also are the areas that librarians will focus more in their future InfoLit lecture.

#### ***English 1B Assessment***

the English 1B test results are from 9/17/2012 to 11/20/2012. Of the 791 pre-test takers, We were able to match 343 with post-tests, even though 492 of them took the post-test. We switch from 5 to 3 questions around the end of September. The average pre-test score for the 3-question test was 91. This rose to 96 for the post-test. For the 5-question test, the scores rose from an average of 90 to 93. The sample size is 595. We will analyze the data from other semesters later. Most students claimed themselves as undergraduate studies (didn't specify a major). See the summary in the attachment.

### ***Plagiarism tutorial***

Data collected from Fall 2003 to Spring 2012; the sample size ranges from 200 to 3500. Students scored high (80% or above) on questions 1-10, but below 55% on Q11 and Q12 so we received feedback from our student workers at King. We will use their comments to revise these 2 questions in the hope that students will perform better.

### ***Data Mining tool***

Campus instructors and librarians also partnered to develop a new data mining information literacy assessment tool. This tool can be used to collect data and guide creation of guidelines for more effective, outcomes-driven composition writing intensive classes (100W) in the majors and improved library instruction. This project requires standardized accessible 100W syllabi so they can be read by PDF reader. Requests to 100W coordinators for these materials were rebuffed, low participation from faculty prevented sufficient 100W materials for full testing and implementation. This is a potential source of data.

### **Ongoing Projects**

#### ***Pilot project for 100w assessment***

Pilot project for 100W assessment—library faculty who visit 100W classes to discuss library research assessed students' information literacy skills. Developed 15 standardized questions that have been tested and honed by library 100W faculty that they can choose from the list. Library does pre-test before presentation. Currently, a small sample size (no more than 100) of students participated from Engineering and Business. We need to analyze the data to assess how this pilot works. We will share this experience with other librarians who then will implement it in the fall. To support this effort, we have revised a set of standardized questions based on AAC&U IL rubrics for standards 1, 2, and 3. There is no need to assess standard 5 because we already have been collecting data with the Plagiarism tutorial. The campus will have to decide how to fully assess this standard from legal and ethical perspectives. AY 2011-2012, librarians have delivered 157 sessions of InfoLit lectures to 100w classes. We have been successful because of librarians working with department – sample size depends on participation. In order to have participation, up to instructors to require students to engage.

**This pilot can launch campus wide Fall 2013 – Spring 2014:** Needs WASC taskforce member to present to librarians who have 100W assignments – in Summer 2013. Then need to contact 100W instructors for Fall 2013 to urge them to get their students to complete the survey. Need to have some kind of support from campus level to encourage instructors.

#### ***Information literacy Faculty Development Program***

This project is an extension of the InfoLit Symposium conducted in April 2012. (See related materials <http://libguides.sjsu.edu/content.php?pid=68667&sid=3724221>) Twenty-one (21) professor/librarian

pairs attended the symposium, library faculty attempted a follow-up survey last week, only 6 responded to the survey (one of them is a test). Even though the sample is very small, the outcomes are very positive. The challenge is how to implement this practice across the campus. At the WASC Core Competencies retreat, WASC task force members and librarians developed an action plan for developing this program:

1) Goals of Action Plan

- a. Expand campus efforts in integrating and assessing information literacy into curricula.
- b. Increase support for best practices in information literacy assignment development and assessment.
- c. Showcase campus partnerships in information literacy between teaching and library faculty.

2) Actions

- a. Document the history and gather assessment data of this project for university assessment (WASC). Gather assessment data from library information literacy project and from departments for inclusion in university assessment efforts.
- b. Showcase Event
  - i. Co-sponsored by Library and Center for Faculty Development and Undergraduate Studies or Academic Affairs
  - ii. Early adopters showcase models of excellence in assignments and assessment. Cross-pollinate best practices on campus and develop a faculty learning community around information literacy.
- c. Communication Strategies & Outreach
  - i. Campus meetings
    1. Departmental promotion by faculty involved in info lit efforts. Share assignments and greensheets.
    2. Info literacy brown bags. Align IL standards and AAC&U rubrics with program learning outcomes.
    3. UCCD (Chairs' Council) and Deans' Council, College meetings.
  - ii. Develop ongoing web presence
    1. Promote and increase internal links between campus efforts
    2. Share models of excellence.
    3. Increase partnerships between library faculty and teaching faculty.
- d. **RECOMMENDATION: Consider proposing revised greensheet policy from *recommending* library information be included on greensheets to *requiring* this information be included on greensheets.**

## **Program Assessment**

*Anne Marie Todd*

### **Data Mining Tool**

Under the direction of Debra Caires, a group of 9 graduate and undergraduate students in Computer Science developed a data mining tool to evaluate program plans. The project focused on developing an online application/tool that reads each college departmental program plans, read these documents via OCR and using a java application, searches certain keywords, counting the frequency each word appears. A list of key words was developed to get at each of the five proficiencies (see attached table). This application/program is similar to a resume scanner (ie: resuscan) that scans each documents or pdfs. In addition we need a feature that search for multiple keywords and, with the use of Google analytics, separate the departments to their respectable proficiency based on the keywords. This project developed a program that reads in documents and pdf using java and looked for a way to use Google drive to funnel/upload electronic program plans. Students hope to expand this project in future semesters.

### **Graduate Program Assessment**

At present there is no coordinate graduate program assessment. Need to develop strategies for including graduate programs.

- Coordinate Graduate Program Data from Program Assessment and/or GSR. What type of departmental assessment exists? How can we collect culminating experience data?
- How might VALUE rubrics be used for graduate programs? Do graduate program advisors evaluate info literacy and critical thinking? Graduate programs should have revised expectations for outcomes, for example, information literacy might be better oriented as literature review- synthesis.

## **General Education Program Assessment**

### **Spring 2013 Report**

*Anne Marie Todd and Steve Branz*

#### **Model**

- Modeled after a successful pilot project in 2010 in which three teams of faculty (Areas R, S, & V, chosen to represent multiple colleges on each team).
- Faculty discussed & chose assignments assessable with VALUE Rubrics; randomly collected samples and collectively read and rate student work across multiple sections represented on each team
- RESULTS: Beyond the actual assessment results, there was great value in regular meetings/conversations among team members.

#### **Process**

- In Spring 2012, recruited faculty teaching Area R because most likely to enable assessment of Quantitative Literacy (already identified as a hole in our data).
- Also recruited two librarians for expertise in information literacy.
- Identified one or more assignments that align with Area R SLO #3 and 3 of the WASC Proficiencies (Critical Thinking, Quantitative Reasoning, Info Literacy) that can be assessable using a common rubric.
- Courses and Assignments:
  - Biology 101: Origins of Life, Elizabeth McGee
    - Card Exchange; Hardy Weinberg Exercise; Origins of Bipedality; Consider the Source
  - Anthropology 160: Reconstructing Lost Civilizations, Marco Meniketti
    - Narrative Cemetery Simulation Exercise
  - Geology/Environmental Studies 111: Geology and the Environment, June Oberdorfer
    - Hydraulic Conductivity Exercise; Climate Change essay; Field Trip guide

#### **Rubrics**

- Created a common rubric (similar to VALUE rubrics, with a 0-5 point rating scale and at least 3 rating items)
- Area R SLO #3 ("Within the particular scientific content of the course, a student should be able to apply a scientific approach to answer questions about the earth and environment.")
- Discussed and modified VALUE rubrics for Critical Thinking, Quantitative Reasoning, & Info Literacy
- Discuss each others assignments to find best practices and modify assignments as needed to better fit rubrics
- Modifications:
  - Critical Thinking -- consensus to remove 4th row ("Student's position...")

- Quantitative Literacy -- consensus to remove 2nd row ("Representation") and 5th row ("Assumptions"); combine 4th & 6th rows.
- Information Literacy -- consensus to remove 1st row ("Determine the extent of information needed") and 5th row ("Access & use information...")
- Area R/SLO 3 -- Reformat with "Competency" column relabeled as Rating Item (parallel to VALUE rubric layout); consider adding a column (but not a requirement to do so). Consensus to remove rows 4-6.

**Assessment**

- Instructors chose assignments that aligned with the chosen rubrics and learning objectives.
- Instructors randomly selected student work (~15 per section; 45 total).
- Instructors introduced assignment including a short paragraph on context (especially how much reading or other assignments did the students have prior to undertaking the assignment).
- Conducted calibration reading face-to-face with 2 randomly selected papers; adjusted ratings as needed prior to reading full set of papers.
- Instructors input ratings on spreadsheet/s.

**Outcomes**

For each rater the various rubric items were averaged to create a single score per assignment per rater. Then the scores for each assignment were averaged to create an average for the raters. This rough analysis shows there was more variation than desired among the raters, despite calibration efforts.

RATER NAME	June O	Liz M	Marco M	Grand total averages
Area R SLO #3	2.2	2.8	3.0	2.7
Critical Thinking	1.9	2.4	2.4	2.2
Quantitative Reasoning	2.1	2.9	2.1	2.4
Information Literacy	2.35	3.3	2.0	2.6

Summary: -- our students were "between 2 and 3" on the 4 point rating scale for all assessed items. The rating scale was the standard with 1 (lowest) and 4 (highest) as is done on all the VALUE Rubrics and the one created for Area R SLO #3. This was consistent with the results from our earlier Area S GEPA assessment projects.

**Recommendations**

- Assignment recommendations
  - Assignments should be free from grade, instructor notation or anything else that provides feedback
  - Instructors should upload assignments singly.
- Recommendations for calibration
  - No half points – if question about in what category, round down.
  - Make sure to include instructor name and student number in rating sheet.

- Don't change ratings. Don't compare ratings.
- Need to calibrate the rubric: should have specific instructions about assessment
- Need to discuss issues of gray areas: 1) how do we distinguish between students that meet some parts of the rubric but not others. 2) Gray areas within categories: Descriptions between a three and a four are subtle – adjective sensitive. If it's in between and an evaluator is equivocating, we recommended to stick with lower number.
- Conversation about assessment is useful: Open dialog with Area R instructors about the assessment process itself was important in changing the culture of assessment on campus. This confirms recommendations from Area S GEPA report (below). Instructors introduced assignment including a short paragraph on context (especially how much reading or other assignments did the students have prior to undertaking the assignment). This was an important part of the calibration – without the instructor explaining the assignment, readers didn't have a sense of how to evaluate. We also noted a difference between non-experts and experts viewing – non-experts found context of the assignments and the connections between the parts of the assignments useful. As part of calibration, in addition to paragraph of context, important to have a conversation about what assignments to choose, how they meet the rubrics and how to assess them.
- Using rubrics: Use rubrics to design the class and assignment. Knowing that will be assessed according to the rubric will be students and faculty. Faculty expressed concerns that rubrics will determine curriculum and that teaching to the rubric will be valued. Developing and adapting assignments with rubrics in mind is useful for faculty who reported that it helped student learning. Looking at AAC&U rubrics however, should not supercede assessment of program and course learning outcomes.
- Need to establish expectations: What is level for graduation proficiency in GE courses? If a GE student formulates a hypothesis at all, that's an achievement. Getting all the calculations correct in a field that's not within the student field is an achievement. So evaluators need to understand what is adequate and satisfactory for our students.
- Recommend GE Program assessments be developed and instituted. Use people that have already participated to seed the next round – passing along expertise is essential to supporting a culture of assessment.
- Group will meet in Summer 2013 to discuss what the ratings mean. Instructors will provide recommendations for additional SLOs and outcomes.

## **AREA S GEPA Report**

Spring 2011

Scot Guenter, Matthew Masucci, Wendy Ng, Anne Marie Todd

### **1. Intro**

#### ***SLOs***

We evaluated AAC&U LEAP SLOs of : Inquiry & Analysis, Critical Thinking & Integrative Learning, and SJSU Studies Area S: Self Society & Equality in the United States, Learning Objective 1: describe how identities (i.e. religious, gender, ethnic, racial, class, sexual orientation, disability, and/or age) are shaped by cultural and societal influences within contexts of equality and inequality.

#### ***Courses & Assignments***

Assignment S (for assessing SLO 1, Inquiry and Analysis, and Critical Thinking) was an essay assignment from AMS/HUM 169: The American Dream.

Assignment M (for assessing SLO 1, Inquiry and Analysis, and Critical Thinking) was a research paper assignment from KIN 101: Sport in America.

Assignment W (for assessing SLO 1, Inquiry and Analysis, and Critical Thinking) was a research paper assignment from SOC 162: Race and Ethnic Relations

Assignment A: Integrative learning: assignment assessed was a short essay question on the final exam of COMM/ENVS/GEOL/HUM/METR 168W: Global Climate Change II.

#### ***Assessment Process***

The assessment process involved four individuals from various departments/disciplines, all of whom teach in Area S courses. We each contributed 5-7 written papers from assignments that were appropriate for assessing the learning objectives. We created matrices for the rubrics we chose, and each evaluated the papers based on the rubrics as written. We conducted assessment both as a group and as individuals, and in this report we make observations based on the differences between these processes.

### **2. Findings**

#### ***2.1 SLO 1 (Area S)***

##### **Strengths (what we liked about the rubric/assessment of assignment)**

Rubric: Distinctions between beginning - exemplary were well explained. This rubric included an embedded component on writing and/or speaking effectiveness, to emphasize need for clear communication across all disciplines. Rubric covers major areas of evaluation.

Assessment: Reading diverse assignments from several classes of Area S was informative regarding the various ways instructors teach. Some of the assignments revealed the diverse backgrounds of our students.

Weaknesses (or what we didn't like about the rubric/assessment of assignment)

Rubric: potentially broad interpretations of power, societal and cultural influences may account for differences in interpretations of how well papers met learning objectives. The exemplary categories didn't match up "one marker category," or "three marker categories."

Assessment: Looking back, it might have been better to spend some time carefully reading and discussing each other's assignment sheets (prompts) just prior to the assessing of the student work itself.

Findings

There weren't a lot of 1 & 4s for SLO 1, which means that most students performed in the middle range of the learning objective assessment. We had a few items that had a spread among the ratings: 2,3,4, or 1, 2, 3. These were items B & C: in the area of distribution of power, inequality and depth of the identity categories.

Some of the wording was a little ambiguous, and so either more precise language, or prior context will help assessors find common ground on SLOs such as "struggles for social justice can cut across marker categories."

**2.2 Inquiry & Analysis (AAC&U Leap)**

Strengths (what we liked about the rubric/assessment of assignment)

Rubric: Broadly worded so as to account for various approaches to inquiry and analysis. It is good to see some important "Limitations and Implications" category is included, conceptually.

Assessment: This rubric and assessment covers what kind of steps students took to do the assignment, what sources were used, etc.

Weaknesses (or what we didn't like about the rubric/assessment of assignment)

Rubric: 6 categories seems too bulky, some of the categories could be reorganized/grouped together for ease of assessment. The benchmark statements were inadequate: for example "presents information from irrelevant sources," and "ambiguous, illogical, unsupported conclusions" do not indicate benchmark work. Perhaps the term "benchmark" is problematic because it suggests meeting a certain level.

Assessment: Theoretical frameworks and methodology categories were difficult to assess because it implies a certain research approach. This interpretation of inquiry and analysis was hard to apply in in these papers. For Area S, oral history and ethnography are not incorporated in the design process. "Design process" is a vague term and doesn't adequately cover the way that students designed their papers, or their own investigation in terms of the assignment.

## Findings

For this rubric, we seem to have a shared understanding of the intellectual process covered by this rubric regardless of discipline. This rubric covers the major steps in a research paper or project and this is why we had convergence on a lot of our evaluations.

### ***2.3 Critical Thinking (AAC&U Leap)***

#### Strengths (what we liked about the rubric/assessment of assignment)

Rubric: Good differentiation between areas on spectrum. Provides basic elements for evaluating critical thinking.

Assessment: This assessment process was very instructive in terms of how we evaluate the process of comparative analysis, and also how we develop assignments that clarify our expectations that students demonstrate advanced critical thinking skills.

#### Weaknesses (or what we didn't like about the rubric/assessment of assignment)

Rubric: "Influence of context and assumptions" category is a bit hard to work with, not sure our assignments ask for this. Assessors noticed after the fact the fine print that encouraged us to assign a "zero" for projects that failed to meet the basic requirements of the assignment. This is problematic because we inferred that "one" was a failing grade.

Assessment: This one required very careful interpretation of the papers, because our assignments did not address critical thinking explicitly. Some assignments lend themselves better to this than others.

## Findings

We found convergence on this rubric. There is not the big spread of Area S, SLO 1. Most of the ratings fall within 2-3 range, and assessors found agreement in many categories with  $\frac{3}{4}$  or  $\frac{4}{4}$  assessors agreeing. In our meetings, we found this rubric the most effective in evaluating the papers with the exception of distinguishing at what level "capstone" emerges.

### ***2.4 Integrative Learning (AAC&U Leap)***

#### Strengths (what we liked about the rubric/assessment of assignment)

Rubric: The "reflection and self-assessment" component is crucial to students' long term education perceptions, so it needs to be introduced somewhere, and it makes sense for AAC&U to put it here.

Assessment: Fun to evaluate for integration of concepts. The random sample provided a diversity of student work. The assessment of "reflexive" and "personal experience" categories of the rubric provided numerous interpretations of what are appropriate reflexive responses.

#### Weaknesses (or what we didn't like about the rubric/assessment of assignment)

Rubric: Didn't match assignment (or vice versa), so perhaps we should think about teaching to the rubric to assess how well students do when the rubric and the assignment match.

Assessment: The "connections to experience" component is dependent upon prompts better suited to a take home writing assignment, and the prompt must be tailored to specifically elicit it. The students' combinations of different course concepts was geared toward a different type of assignment.

### Findings

The in-class writing assignment is a really useful snapshot to evaluate the learning objectives as it offers specific prompts for students to integrate the course concepts. Even on take-home assignments, students don't often write the conclusions about integrative learning. Assignments need to be specifically tailored and focused on these concepts to provide the important response.

Particularly for integrated courses, this rubric doesn't capture the interdisciplinary nature of integrated knowledge. Like many things, there are different levels and degrees of integration, and so providing assessment rubrics and assignments for all of these levels is difficult.

### **3. Recommendations**

Overall, the committee determined that the rubrics were useful. Assessors didn't use the lowest score (not many "ones"), and not too many outliers. The instructor of the assignment demonstrated different interpretation of learning objectives. Did professors rate it more leniently because they understood the assignment, or did they grade it harsher because they had higher standards?

Recommendations: assessors should read assignment prompts, because there needs to be better understanding of the assignment intention. In developing programmatic assessment processes, it is important to provide greater context (i.e. the assignment rubrics, course context etc. )

Broad question: How do we assess learning that doesn't happen on the written page? How can we evaluate knowledge and application of course concepts that are not easily captured in course concepts? Learning occurs in many different capacities and some are quite difficult to capture via rubrics and assignments.

Open dialog with Area S instructors about the assessment process itself was extremely enriching. Assessors enjoyed reading the student papers: most of them were satisfactory writers. Having conversations between faculty across programs, talking about what their courses are doing and learning about each others' classes could be helpful. These conversations are useful to cut across the disciplinary silos and provide faculty understanding of cross-campus learning. Having the conversation by specific objectives and rubrics across disciplines will contribute to program-level GE assessment. These meetings should be informal, nonjudgmental and provide tangible assessment techniques such as embedded assessment strategies.

