

**Student Learning Committee (SLC)**  
Minutes from Meeting on September 23, 2014

**Committee members present:** Kendrick Brown (chair), Nancy Bostrom, Keith Edwards, Polly Fassinger, Terri Fishel, Jim Hoppe, Diane Michelfelder, Kimerly Miller, Paul Overvoorde, Jaine Strauss

**Absent:** Student representatives yet to be named by MCSG.

**I. General Updates**

- SLC is currently without student representatives and hopes that student representatives will soon be appointed.
- The 2009 CLA subscores reported in earlier drafts were incorrect. The total scores for both years are correct and the 2013 CLA subscores are correct.

***Action Item: Institutional Research will contact CLA to discover options for producing longitudinal data on the subscores.***

**II. The committee reviewed data available for Learning Outcome #2 of “Think Critically and Analyze Effectively” (TCAE): “Students should be able to gather information (quantitative, qualitative, interpretive, aesthetic, normative) most relevant to an issue.”**

Last year, SLC conducted an “item analysis” of institutional measures connected to TCAE. Over the summer, Institutional Research gathered corresponding data and prepared information to share with the committee. Does this information help us to better understand student learning related to this outcome?

- There were two overarching questions related to this learning outcome:
  - How broadly should we understand the word “gather”?
  - What do we mean by “most relevant”?
- In addition to questions about the specific outcome, SLC may also want to discuss the context for results in general. For example, what data do we need to help us determine whether the results are “good” or need improvement:
  - Comparison data from other colleges?
  - Longitudinal data (how much growth would be considered “good”)?
  - Student self-reports indicating they’ve done a particular kind of coursework, e.g. writing?
  - Students’ self-reported gains?
  - Other information?

SLC considered each available survey item in turn, but held off on evaluating CLA data until more we have more clarity on those results. SLC recognizes that most survey items will not be an exact match with our learning outcomes. It may be helpful to think of these survey items in terms of a batch or combination of items that help SLC to understand student learning related to the requirement. In these cases, it may also be helpful for SLC to identify how an item best connects to a learning outcome, e.g. gathering information v. determining relevancy.

- **NSSE:** coursework emphasis on synthesizing ideas, information or experiences into new, more complex interpretations or relationships (one question, slides 8, 9 and 10)
  - The consensus was to keep this information, although it may not provide the best alignment with the learning outcome.
- **CSEQ:** coursework emphasis on summarizing major points and integration (two questions, slides 11, 12 & 13)
  - The consensus was to keep this information, although it may not provide the best alignment with the learning outcome.
- **CSEQ:** self-perceived growth in finding information (one question, slide 13)
  - The consensus was to keep this information, although it may not provide the best alignment with the learning outcome.
- **CIRP and CSS:** coursework emphasis on evaluating quality or reliability of information received (one question, slides 14-15)
  - The consensus was to keep this information. Evaluating quality or reliability helps a student establish the information's relevance. At the same time, the survey item does not address the outcome's emphasis on gathering information.
  - Note that we may not name the comparison schools grouped in slide 15.
- **CIRP and CSS:** emphasis on looking up scientific research articles (one question, slides 16 & 17)
  - Consensus was not to keep this question in the pool of information. The results seem to be dramatic between first year students and seniors, but the question wording is problematic due to the emphasis on "scientific" research articles and resources. It's not clear how students would have interpreted this question.
- **HEDS:** self-perceived gains on locating, evaluating and using information (slide 18)
  - Consensus is to use this question.
- **RPS:** self-perceived challenge of narrowing a research topic, developing a list of sources and revising search strategy as needed (three questions, slides 19-21)
  - The library is starting to track the consultations it provides, but we don't have data telling us how many students use databases. The RPS

information could be somewhat challenging to interpret because if students gained a greater appreciation for the challenges of research, the numbers may reflect that sense of

- No consensus was reached on use of the RPS.
- **PSRI:** self-perceived gains in ability to gather and use evidence to support ideas (one question, slide 22)
  - This question is a good match with our learning outcome. The consensus is to use this question.

***Action Item: The Assessment Office will compile a list of items we plan to use. The compilation will also note any emphasis of a particular item and how it maps on to the learning outcome, e.g. gathering information v. determining relevancy.***

**III. The committee reviewed data available for Learning Outcome #3 of “Think Critically and Analyze Effectively” (TCAE): “Students should be able to recognize when further information is necessary.”**

- The committee briefly discussed the larger context for this outcome.
  - The key components may be “necessary” and “recognizing” when more information is needed.
  - The idea of this learning outcome is important, but do other outcomes (e.g. #5) already subsume the learning described in #3? Would we be better served by an outcome related to critiquing data and responding to limitations? It doesn’t appear that we would lose anything if we dropped #3.
- **CLA:** Pending further information, the committee did not discuss CLA results.
- **CSEQ:** self report about whether students talk about exploring different ways of thinking about a topic (one question, slide 12)
  - An open question is whether or not students need to initiate the recognition. Consensus is that this question indirectly addresses the outcome.
- **CSEQ:** self-report on seeking additional information about a topic.
  - This question gets at intellectual curiosity, which is not explicitly included as one of our institutional goals or outcomes. It’s an important question but not connected to this learning outcome—don’t use.

#### **IV. Next Steps**

- For the next meeting, SLC will remain on the institutional level and review the learning outcomes #4 and #5 for TCAE. Once the committee has reviewed the institutional measures, it will turn attention to results from the General Education assessments.