

Annual Assessment Report

1. Rationale for Assessment

WCU's Liberal Studies Program engages in an on-going assessment of student learning within its curriculum. This curriculum consists of approximately 220 courses, and its size means that it touches

3. Assessment Methodology and Timeline

For this cycle of assessment, *Information Literacy* and *Means of Expression* artifacts were collected in the Fall 2019 semester, and *Awareness of Impact* artifacts were collected in Spring 2020.

All faculty teaching LS courses aligned with these outcomes were notified that their course would be included in assessment at least one month before the start of the semester. That initial email contained a copy of the LS rubric for the outcome being measured, and faculty members were informed that the rubric would be utilized in assessment of student work (also known as “student artifacts”). That same email asked each faculty member to consider thoughtfully how they might design an assignment for their course that would align appropriately with the applicable rubric.

Approximately three weeks after the start of each semester, those same instructors were sent a second email

committed to assessment during this difficult period, as only two instructors (out of 26 total) did not submit their student artifacts.

Ultimately, the LS Program received a total of 2,753 student artifacts from our LS instructors during AY 2019-2020. After random sampling, the seven teams of faculty in our summer workshop scored a collective **1,464 student assignments**, distributed across the three student learning outcomes.

Quantitative assessment results are outlined in the following sections of this report.

5. Quantitative Data – MEANS OF EXPRESSION

A total of 688 artifacts were scored for *Means of Expression*, representing a random

Rubric for SLO #8: Awareness of Impact

Students will evaluate the impact of their own and others' actions on the human and/or natural worlds.

**Exceeds
Expectations
(3)**

**Meets Expectations
(2)**

9. Qualitative/Formative Feedback

After scoring each course's student artifacts and evaluating the LS language within the syllabus, assessors were asked a series of questions relating to the assignment's alignment with its relevant LS learning outcome. A summary of those questions appears in the box below (full survey appears in Appendix 1):

Did the instructor provide the assignment guidelines/instructions?

How strongly did the assignment align with the outcome it was designed to measure?

Please provide detailed feedback on the assignment design as it relates to the relevant student learning outcome (including both compliments and suggestions, as n

10. Summary and Recommendations

This section of the report summarizes the assessment data in the three areas suggested by the current Liberal Studies Assessment Plan –

- a) how strongly does student work demonstrate the learning goals within the LS Program,
- b) are there changes that should be made to the assessment process itself, and
- c) what actions should the LS Program take in the future to strengthen learning within its curriculum?

Each of these areas is addressed in detail below.

A. How strongly does student work demonstrate the learning goals within the LS Program?

The results this year were encouraging all around.

On every single rubric category assessed over all three learning outcomes, student performance surpassed, equaled, or came within one percentage point of meeting the LS Program's 70% baseline goal for achievement.

Additionally, comparing the results to previous years indicates substantial improvement. As the current

The table below summarizes the strengths of the current assessment process, and it also highlights potential areas for improvement.

Strengths
<p>Over the course of AY 2019-2020 (including both fall and spring semesters), 84% of instructors submitted LS artifacts, which is three percentage points higher than last year's response rate. The response rate in Spring 2020, in particular, was especially encouraging at 93%.</p>
<p>The LS Assessment Director and the LSC have previously emphasized the inclusion of Department Heads in the assessment process, and following through on that inclusion has likely helped improve artifact submission rates.</p>
<p>Every single artifact received this year was of good quality – meaning that it was in an accessible electronic format and could be easily interpreted by our faculty scorers. This is a marked departure from two years ago, in AY 2017-2018, when ~30% of artifacts submitted were illegible documents or corrupted digital files.</p>

C. What recommendations do the data suggest for strengthening the Liberal Studies Program?

1. The Liberal Studies Committee should consider revising the Recognition of Audience component of the outcome.

Means of Expression
Information Literacy
Awareness of Impact

12. APPENDIX 2: Sample Feedback sent to Department Head

Name of Department

The Liberal Studies Program's goal for each learning outcome is that at least 70%

The assessment results for COURSE # and its relationship to the *Awareness of Impact* learning outcome appear below. These scores are aggregated, so if one course had multiple sections, the scores for all sections have been combined.

Awareness of Impact

COURSE # – COURSE NAME

	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	Median	Std. Deviation
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13. APPENDIX 3: Sample Feedback sent to Individual Instructor

