Better Together: The Multi-State Collaborative to Advance Learning Outcomes Assessment

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Who We Are: Distinct and Compatible Visions for Student Learning

Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U)

- Advance a Liberal Education for all students across all institutions of higher learning
- A philosophy of learning that empowers & prepares individuals to deal with complexity, diversity, & change.
- Broad learning outcomes
- Emphasis on quality
- Authentic student work

State Higher Education Executive Officers Association (SHEEO)

- An advocate for state policy leadership
- A liaison between states and the federal government,
- A vehicle for learning from and collaborating with peers,
- A source of information and analysis on educational and public policy issues.
- Emphasis on success
Purpose and Vision for the Multi-State Collaborative

Change the dialogue currently focused on:

Access ➔ Completion

To...

Quality ➔ Success
"...existing assessment methods (e.g., grades, standardized tests, student surveys, etc.) are inadequate to accurately gauge and consistently share information about important college-level learning outcomes, including what students know, understand and how they apply their knowledge." – SHEEO press release (11/15/2013)
What is Needed for the Vision:

- Direct assessment of student learning
- Use of students’ authentic demonstrations of learning
- Student understanding of how to use their best work
- Faculty involvement
- Statewide collaboration
- Project database capability to promote transparency and accessibility of demonstrated learning
Direct assessment across a range of learning outcomes that exemplify what a student should know for life and career success (i.e. AAC&U Essential Learning Outcomes)

Demonstrations of learning that exemplify a range of student work products (e.g. projects, papers, presentations, performances, portfolios) assessed using rubrics developed by national teams of faculty (i.e. AAC&U VALUE Rubrics)

Direct assessment of learning at multiple points throughout a student’s time in college to illustrate development over time

A representative sample of states, institutions and students in order to create useful benchmarks of learning to guide and inform campus-level work and accountability

Assessment management system (i.e., database) that will enable electronic uploading of campus-level data, online access of student work for scoring, analysis of state data, generation of reports, while assuring confidentiality and security of data
## From Model to Pilot

**The Model**

- Direct assessment across a range of learning outcomes
- Demonstrations of learning that exemplify range of work products
- Assessment of learning at multiple points throughout a student’s time in college
- A representative sample of states, institutions
- Assessment management system (i.e. database) that will enable electronic uploading of campus data, online access of student work for scoring, analysis of state data, generation of reports, confidentiality & security of data

**The Pilot**

- Written communication, Quantitative literacy (Critical thinking, optional)
- Assignment guidelines have been developed (targeted minimum of 75-100 work products/outcome)
- Sample of students who have completed 75% of total number of credits required to graduate
- 9 states, approx. 70 public institutions, 2 & 4 year
- Management system chosen for pilot study
Multi-State Collaborative to Advance Learning Outcomes Assessment

**MSC Participants:**
CT, IN, KY, MA, MO, MN, OR, RI, and UT

**Possible Next MSC:**
CO, TX, ME, NC

**GLCA**
IN, MI, OH, PA

85 campuses – 2–4-year, res., comp., lib arts (pub/priv)
Foundational Work for Success of the MSC Pilot:

**State-Level Capacity and Objectives**

- States bringing assessment experience to the table
  - Vision Project in Massachusetts
  - Institution-based assessment in Missouri
  - Indiana, Kentucky, Oregon, Utah, MA, TX - LEAP states

- States interest in changing the culture of assessment across their states

- States being responsive to business leaders and employers needs for employees who can do the work that they need

- MSC model seeks to draw from and satisfy a number of assessment needs
VALUE Rubrics: Commonalities among rubrics

Motivated by:
- Need for among–campus communication
- Mobile students, transfer
- Belief that, in spite of uniqueness, core outcomes are shared
VALUE Project (www.aacu.org/value)
- 16 national rubrics
- Created to:
  - Develop shared understanding of common learning outcomes
  - Improve direct assessment of student learning (in text and non-text formats)
  - Encourage transparency and student self-evaluation of learning

Rubric Development & Use
- National Advisory Panel (12 people)
- 16 Inter-disc/Inter-institutional teams of faculty/scholars (Over 100)
- Reviewed existing rubrics to develop broad agreement on dimensions of outcomes
- Tested in 2–4 waves on over 100 campuses
- National reliability study
- To date accessed by over 6500 institutions/organizations, 40,711 individuals
- Domestic & international, K–12, state university systems
- 3 Consortia: RAILS, Connect2Learning, South Metropolitan Higher Education Consortium
- Approved for use in Voluntary System of Accountability (VSA)
The Anatomy of a VALUE Rubric

### Criteria

**Connections to Experience**
Connects relevant experiences and academic knowledge.

**Connections to Discipline**
Seamlessly connects technical, disciplinary, and cross-disciplinary concepts.

**Transfer**
Adapts and applies skills, abilities, theories, or methodologies gained in one situation to new situations.

**Integrated Communication**
Fulfills the assignment goals by choosing a format, language, or graph (or other visual representation) in ways that exploit the meaning, clarify the interdependence of ideas, or highlight important new insights.

**Reflection and Self-Assessment**
Demonstrates a developing sense of self as a learner, builds on prior experiences to respond to new and challenging contexts (may be evident in self-assessment, reflection, or creative work).

### Levels

- **Capstone 4**
  - Performance Descriptors:
    - Meaningfully synthesizes connections among experiences outside of the formal classroom (including life experiences and academic experiences such as internships and travel abroad) to deepen understanding of fields of study and to broaden one’s own points of view.
    - Independently creates wholes out of multiple parts (hypothesis or class conclusions) by combining examples, facts, or theories from more than one field of study or perspective.
    - Adapts and applies skills, abilities, theories, or methodologies gained in one situation to new situations to solve difficult problems or explore complex issues in original ways.
    - Fulfills the assignment goals by choosing a format, language, or graph (or other visual representation) to explicitly connect content and form, demonstrating awareness of purpose and audience.
    - Demonstrates a developing sense of self as a learner, builds on prior experiences to respond to new and challenging contexts (may be evident in self-assessment, reflection, or creative work).

- **Milestone 3**
  - Performance Descriptors:
    - Effectively selects and develops exemplars of life experiences, drawn from a variety of contexts (e.g., family life, artistic participation, civic engagement, work experience), to illuminate concepts, theories, frameworks, or fields of study.
    - Independently connects examples, facts, or theories from more than one field of study or perspective.
    - Adapts and applies skills, abilities, theories, or methodologies gained in one situation to new situations to solve problems or issues.
    - Fulfills the assignment goals by choosing a format, language, or graph (or other visual representation) to exploit the meaning, clarify the interdependence of ideas, or highlight important new insights.
    - Demonstrates a developing sense of self as a learner, builds on prior experiences to respond to new and challenging contexts (may be evident in self-assessment, reflection, or creative work).

- **Milestone 2**
  - Performance Descriptors:
    - Compares life experiences and academic knowledge to infer differences, as well as similarities and acknowledge perspectives other than one’s own.
    - Independently connects examples, facts, or theories from more than one field of study or perspective.
    - Uses skills, abilities, theories, or methodologies gained in one situation in a new situation to contribute to understanding of problems or issues.
    - Fulfills the assignment goals by choosing a format, language, or graph (or other visual representation) that connects in a basic way how what is being communicated (content) with how it is said (form).
    - Describes own performances with general descriptors of success and failure.

- **Milestone 1**
  - Performance Descriptors:
    - Identifies life experiences and academic knowledge to infer differences, as well as similarities and acknowledge perspectives other than one’s own.
    - Independently connects examples, facts, or theories from more than one field of study or perspective.
    - Uses skills, abilities, theories, or methodologies gained in one situation in a new situation.
    - Fulfills the assignment goals by choosing a format, language, or graph (or other visual representation) to produce an essay, a poster, a video, a PowerPoint presentation, etc. in an appropriate form.

**Evaluation**
Evaluators are encouraged to assign a zero to any work sample or collection of work that does not meet benchmark (cell color) level performance.
Foundational Work for the MSC Pilot: National Capacity for Direct Assessment using the VALUE Rubrics

Chart 1: Number of People Who Have Viewed or Downloaded the VALUE Rubrics Since 2010
MSC Pilot Study Timeline & Milestones

**Phase 1 (completed)**

- **Spring/Summer 2014**
  - Development of protocols, templates and guidelines for selecting pilot campuses
  - Identification of campuses and state and campus liaisons
  - Development of campus plans for collection of artifacts
  - Faculty development workshops and summits

- **Fall 2014**
  - Collection, coding, and uploading of artifacts – targeted minimum of 75-100 student artifacts per outcome per institution
  - Continued faculty development

**Phase II (currently underway)**

- **January - August 2015**
  - Scoring of artifacts at state and multi-state levels
  - Analysis of data and revision of protocols

**Phase III (demonstration/implementation year)**

- **September 2015 – August 2016**
Information on Multi-State Collaborative:

**SHEEO:**


**AAC&U:**

http://www.aacu.org/current-value-project

Questions?