

**ESSENTIAL LEARNING & ASSESSMENT REVIEW COMMITTEE
2013 Report, Recommendations, and Instructions for next reports**

Introduction

The Essential Learning & Assessment Review Committee (ELARC) reviews assessment data from across campus and uses the data to make recommendations to improve teaching, learning, and assessment at UW-Whitewater. The committee focuses on data related to student achievement of the UWW baccalaureate learning goals, currently defined as the LEAP essential learning outcomes (available at <http://www.uww.edu/acadaff/assessment/academic/wofiassess.html>) from the Association of American Colleges & Universities. The committee receives assessment summaries from the Colleges and other constituencies on campus and integrates the findings using the baccalaureate learning outcomes as the organizing framework. The ELARC recommendations discussed here reflect attention to blending the curricular, co-curricular and extra-curricular student experiences.

During the academic year 2012-2013, ELARC received and reviewed assessment summaries from:

- College of Arts & Communication
- College of Business & Economics
- College of Education & Professional Studies
- College of Letters & Sciences
- Student Affairs
- Audit & Review (of programs reviewed during 2011-2012)
- Institutional Research
- General Education Review Committee

Data on Student Learning:

In Spring 2010, UW-Whitewater adopted the LEAP essential learning outcomes as the campus definition of learning expected for all bachelors degree recipients. Departments, programs, colleges, and other units are in the early stages of integrating these learning outcomes into their systems for assessing student learning. At this point, our most informative areas of direct assessment relate to writing and critical thinking. An Open Pathways Project for the Higher Learning Commission will extend our data collection to additional learning outcomes. Many academic departments are making good use of the Senior Outcomes Assessment Survey (SOAS) which is an indirect assessment tool that provides perceptual data from graduating seniors.

Appendix 1 provides brief descriptions of assessment results that are related to our campus baccalaureate learning outcomes, culled from reports received by ELARC during 2012-2013. It is clear that a number of departments and programs are actively assessing student learning, but with these individual projects (and relatively small sample sizes), we cannot determine the degree to which these assessment results represent student learning across our entire student body.

Recommendations from ELARC in 2012, with examples of campus progress:

Appendix 2 lists the recommendations ELARC made in 2012 along with a summary of responses from university, college, department, and unit reports about their progress related to these 2012

recommendations. ***Only a few examples of campus activity or progress are highlighted below***—see Appendix 2 for more examples and details.

Recommendation #1: Enhance a positive culture of assessment that facilitates active faculty, staff, and student engagement.

Examples of increased engagement are noted all around campus, but we still need to find effective ways to recognize the value of assessment work. Establishing campus-wide awards for excellence in assessment would be one example of recognition.

Examples of progress:

- Assessment committees have been established at the college level in all four academic colleges and in the Division of Student Affairs (Division Leadership Group).
- Academic Staff Assembly has convened a subcommittee to review Academic Staff personnel Rules during 2012-2014 and will address ELARC recommendations during this time frame. They also have plans for integrating assessment into their system of rewards and recognition with new criteria for 2013-2014.
- UW-Whitewater held its first Assessment Day on April 18, 2013, with 28 poster presentations and several oral presentations highlighting assessment activities across campus.

Recommendation #2: The institution should evaluate resources allocated for assessment to determine types and levels or additional resources needed to enhance efforts.

A systematic analysis of assessment resources has not been conducted, but it's clear that units around campus have invested significantly in assessment activity. These include:

- Hiring a Director of Academic Assessment
- Search for a Director of Institutional Research and Planning
- Funding of 10-person team to participate in AAC&U Institute on General Education Assessment (Maryland, 2012)
- Four colleges and four academic departments engaged in an intensive project (DQP) for the Quality Initiative as part of UW-Whitewater's reaffirmation of campus accreditation.

Recommendation #3: Develop rubrics that define student learning and the progression of student learning for the essential learning outcomes.

Projects are underway to develop and use rubrics that define learning related to our campus baccalaureate learning outcomes (LEAP ELOs), and we encourage progress to continue toward developing rubrics for all of these outcomes.

Examples of progress:

- *Critical Thinking*. Joan Cook (Director of Assessment) and Jolly Emrey have submitted a proposal for a Strategic Initiative Grant for a workshop to develop a Critical Thinking Rubric. The workshop was held during Summer 2013, and a draft rubric was developed.

- *Intercultural Knowledge and Awareness.* Pilar Melero (Administrative Fellow), Lauren Smith, and Denis Kopf held a faculty/staff workshop in Winterim 2013 to develop learning outcomes for diversity and intercultural knowledge and awareness. Definitions of key concepts were created and a draft rubric was developed.
- *Quantitative Literacy.* Mathematics & Computer Science faculty developed an algebraic problem solving skills test. This may be transformed into a rubric for assessing one aspect of Quantitative Literacy.
- *Oral Communication.* Sally Vogl-Bauer (A&C College Assessment Coordinator), Tammy French, Barb Penington, and Kathy Brady led a faculty/staff workshop in May 2012 that resulted in the creation of the Speaking Well Rubric to assess students' oral presentation skills. A Strategic Initiative Grant funded this work.

Recommendation #4: Improve Students' Writing

The Writing Matters rubric is being used more broadly across campus as a tool to define and assess effective writing, and many departments and units have been more intentional about assessing and improving student writing. Work can still be done to coordinate efforts, improve the use of the rubric, and assess student writing as it occurs in Student Affairs, student employment settings, and other situations outside the classroom.

Examples of progress:

- An L & S College Curriculum Subcommittee is developing guidelines for defining "writing intensive" courses, to be shared across campus.
- The Writing Matters rubric is being used by many departments and programs across campus.
- The LEARN Center sponsored three lunchtime workshops on writing instruction in 2012-2013.

Recommendation #5: Improve Students' Critical Thinking.

Many departments and units across campus have emphasized critical thinking as a learning outcome for their programs. Assessment efforts are underway and expanding. Campus coordination would be useful in defining critical thinking and creating a variety of ways to assess critical thinking.

Examples of progress:

- Nine university-level sessions (e.g., LEARN Center events) were held that addressed instruction and/or assessment of critical thinking.
- General Education Core Course Instructors' annual Workshop focused on critical thinking in the Core (August 2012).
- Four Student Affairs departments developed student initiatives and related assessment tools that promoted critical thinking in student employment, leadership involvement, and personal development.

Many other activities and accomplishments were reported: see Appendix 2 for details.

ELARC Committee Recommendations for 2013-2014:

The information summarized in this report and appendices provides substantial evidence that progress is being made all across campus to assess student achievement of the UW-Whitewater baccalaureate learning outcomes. As demonstrated in this report, assessment data have already been used to inform faculty development programs, new assessment projects, curricular revisions, and many other activities to improve student learning and to better define and assess student learning. Assessment, and the use of assessment data, takes time and considerable effort, and the five recommendations discussed in this report are too large to accomplish in just one year. ***Members of the Essential Learning and Assessment Review Committee therefore voted to recommend that the campus continue to work toward the 2012 recommendations, with two new sub-recommendations added based on ELARC discussions during 2012-2013.***

Recommendations for 2013-2014:

1. Assessment work is vital to our understanding of the strengths and areas for improvement in all areas of student learning—curricular, co-curricular, and extra-curricular. To be most meaningful, assessment work should be ongoing, occur as an integral part of campus life, and involve active engagement of faculty, staff, and students. To **enhance a positive culture of assessment** that facilitates engagement, we recommend that:
 - a. The campus divisions, colleges, academic departments, and other appropriate governing bodies and administrators review and if necessary revise personnel policies (e.g., job descriptions and reward structures) to support faculty and staff engagement in assessment.
 - b. Administrators support the positive culture of assessment in their various addresses and interactions on campus.
 - c. The campus establishes (and continues) an annual “Assessment Day” to recognize and share best practices and innovation in assessment.
 - d. Colleges, departments, and other units create ways to acknowledge and reward faculty, staff, and students for their work on assessment.

New sub-recommendation for 2013-2014 and beyond: UW-W expand its array of annual university-wide awards to include assessment awards recognizing both individuals (a faculty, staff, classified staff member) and one or more groups for distinguished contributions to the assessment of student learning.

2. **Resources** are important for enhancing and sustaining our assessment capacity on campus. The Provost’s Office should collect feedback and suggestions about resource allocation for assessment, and work with colleges and other units to establish or revise budget lines and allocations for assessment work. We recommend that colleges/divisions and departments/units evaluate the resources they allocate or have available for assessment and work to determine the types and levels of resources they need to enhance their work.

New sub-recommendation from 2012-13: The Academic Assessment Council prepare by May 1, 2014, a *Five Year Strategic Plan* that includes a statement of goals, strategies, and resource needs to advance assessment of the ELOs. This effort should be chaired by the Director of Academic Assessment, and include participation from the University

Assessment Committee and representation from academic staff and classified staff assemblies.

3. We agree with the recommendation of the General Education Assessment Summit 2011 that campus should develop rubrics that **define learning** and the progression of learning (e.g., from freshman to senior levels) for all of the essential learning outcomes, starting with critical thinking, intercultural knowledge and awareness, and quantitative literacy. The AAC&U VALUE rubrics can be used as guides or starting points. Using Writing Matters as a model, these new rubrics can be used to (a) define our campus consensus about learning, (b) communicate our expectations to students across disciplines, and across the curriculum and co-curriculum, and (c) collect and coordinate direct assessment data.
4. Based on our review of data, and to **improve student writing**, the ELARC concurs with the recommendations from the Writing Still Matters 2011 assessment project to:
 - a. Define “writing intensive” courses at the college and university level.
 - b. Enhance department-level writing instruction and assessment projects.
 - c. Annotate the Writing Matters document to provide models of effective components of writing and to foster cross-disciplinary discussion.
 - d. Facilitate faculty and staff professional development to enhance writing instruction.
 - e. Create a structure through which faculty and staff representatives can work toward improving student writing across the curriculum and co-curriculum and in the disciplines.
 - f. Explore ways that all divisions—Academic Affairs, Administrative Affairs, and Student Affairs —may contribute to Writing Still Matters recommendations, particularly in relation to student employment, student organization participation, and unit-driven initiatives.
5. Based on our review of data, and to **improve critical thinking in students**, we recommend faculty and staff development sessions aimed at improving the instruction and assessment of critical thinking. Where appropriate, the focus should be on improving students’ skills in summarizing patterns of results, evaluating and interpreting correlations, and separating relevant from irrelevant information. This effort should take into consideration student curricular, co-curricular and extra-curricular experiences.

Instructions for 2013 Reports:

Each constituency listed below is asked to submit an assessment report to ELARC by November 1, 2013 that addresses Questions 1-4 below. Send reports to Dr. Joan Littlefield Cook, ELARC Chair, at cookj@uww.edu.

- All academic colleges
- General Education Review Committee
- Multicultural Affairs and Student Success
- Office of Academic Assessment
- Office of Institutional Research and Planning
- University Audit and Review Committee
- Enrollment and Retention Services
- Student Affairs
- Whitewater Student Government
- Any other constituencies that wish to report

Questions to address in the report:

1. How has your unit advanced, participated in, or responded to the five ELARC recommendations since your last report?
2. How is your unit using assessment data to improve teaching, learning, and assessment of student learning related to our campus baccalaureate learning outcomes (LEAP essential learning outcomes)? **Describe the most important actions that your unit has taken since your last ELARC report that are based on assessment data related to the ELOs.** Be sure to address the progress your unit has made in implementing the recommendations and plans outlined in your 2012 report.
3. Summarize the assessment results that were collected within or pertaining to your constituency during the past year (since your last report to ELARC) that address student achievement of the baccalaureate ELOs . Examples include results of systematic assessments of student writing, critical thinking, intercultural knowledge, or other essential learning outcomes.
4. What are the most important actions that you recommend or plan to take that use the assessment results described in #3 above for the improvement of teaching, learning, and/or assessment of student learning?
5. What recommendations do you have for further data collection, analysis, or other assessment work within your constituency or elsewhere on campus that would lead to important improvements in student learning?

ELARC Members (2012-2013):

| | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| Greg Cook (out-going Chair) | Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs |
| Brent Bilodeau | Assistant Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs |
| Joan Littlefield Cook (Chair elect) | Director of Academic Assessment |
| Liz Hachten | Coordinator, General Education |
| Sally Vogl-Bauer | College of Arts & Communication |
| Melanie Agnew | College of Education and Professional Studies |
| Lois Smith | College of Business and Economics |
| Jolly Emrey | College of Letters and Sciences |
| John Stone | Graduate Studies & Continuing Education |
| Mark Schroeder | General Education Review Committee |
| Rowand Robinson | Audit and Review Committee |
| Paul Ambrose | University Assessment Committee |
| Leda Nath | Academic Development Committee |
| Denise Ehlen | Academic Staff Assembly |
| Joe Gaudet | Whitewater Student Government |
| Michael Heck | Whitewater Student Government |

Document last revised November 25, 2013.

APPENDIX 1:
Summary Table
Assessment Conclusions Related to Essential Learning Outcomes
For the Spring/Summer 2013 ELARC Report

To help organize assessment conclusions from around campus, ELARC members reviewed the reports received this year for ELARC and identified conclusions about student achievement of ELOs that seemed warranted from the data described in the reports. The table below shows ***brief descriptions*** of these conclusions (with references to where they can be found in the reports). For this exercise, we relied primarily on the authors of each report to complete this table.

The purpose of this table is to demonstrate the learning areas where we can document assessment activities and to provide a general idea about the areas where we have the most and least assessment activity (as reported to date to ELARC).

Note: the Essential Learning Outcomes below have been endorsed as the learning outcomes that all UW-Whitewater undergraduate students are expected to achieve by the time of graduation, regardless of major, minor, college, or other program.

LEGEND: A&R = Audit & Review Report (of programs reviewed during 2011-2012)
 COBE = College of Business & Economics Report
 CoEPS = College of Education & Professional Studies Report
 L&S = College of Letters & Sciences Report
 SA = Student Affairs Report

| AAC&U LEAP Essential Learning Outcomes | Brief description of conclusion | Report, p. # |
|---|---|---|
| Knowledge of Human Cultures and the Physical and Natural World <i>Focused by engagement with big questions, both contemporary and enduring</i> | | |
| Through study in the sciences and mathematics, social sciences, humanities, histories, languages, and the arts | | L&S |
| Intellectual and Practical Skills <i>Practiced extensively, across the curriculum, in the context of progressively more challenging problems, projects, and standards for performance</i> | | |
| Inquiry & analysis | <p>SOAS: seniors reported good ability to research problems by formulating hypotheses, collecting and analyzing information, and drawing appropriate inferences (5.8 on 7-pt scale).</p> <p>Chemistry Majors: Employer survey (N = 8) indicates students showed good “ability to research problems by formulating hypotheses, collecting and analyzing information, and drawing appropriate inferences”. Mean = 4.3 where 1 is “disagrees” and 5 is “strongly</p> | <p>A&R, p. 1</p> <p>A&R, p. 9</p> |

| | | |
|-------------------|---|---|
| | <p>agrees”.</p> <p>History majors: Faculty scorers rated majors’ research and analytical skills on papers written in a gateway [N=15] and senior capstone course [N=15]. The average research dimension score rose from 2.63 to 3.3 and the analytical (interpretation) dimension scores rose from 2.97 to 3.70 (on a scale of 1-5 with 3 = competent). The same results were reflected in the sub-group of longitudinally sampled papers.</p> | L&S, p. 12 |
| Critical thinking | <p>SOAS: seniors reported good ability to make sound decisions by assessing situations, prioritizing, and applying critical reasoning to complex information (5.7 on 7-pt scale).</p> <p>Chemistry Majors: Employer survey (N = 8) indicates students showed good “ability to make sound decisions by assessing situations, prioritizing, and applying critical reasoning to complex information”. Mean = 3.9 where 1 is “disagrees” and 5 is “strongly agrees”.</p> <p>Political Science Majors: In a 5-year alumni survey (N = 30), 100% of alums agreed or strongly agreed that they developed critical thinking skills.</p> <p>Psychology Majors: Five instructors provided evidence that in undergraduate courses with repeated assessments of critical thinking (i.e., pre and post-tests, draft and final versions) , the second and third time scores were significantly higher than the pre-test or initial score, suggesting that students’ CT skills improved during the semester.</p> <p>The Psychological Critical Thinking Exam or PCTE was administered to 48 students (both majors and non-majors) in a 300-level course. Results indicated that students who had taken Research Methods scored significantly higher than students who had not taken that course. Students in the sample scored lowest on the three CT skills of evaluating evidence, making appropriate inferences, and considering alternative explanations/ hypotheses/ confounds.</p> <p>CoBE: 77% of BBA students were able to</p> | <p>A&R, p. 1</p> <p>A&R, p. 9</p> <p>A&R, p. 25</p> <p>L&S, p. 3</p> <p>L&S, p. 3</p> <p>COBE</p> |

| | | |
|-------------------|--|---|
| | <p>identify a problem in a critical thinking case scenario. The students performed better on generating alternative actions (91% “good” + “very good”) but had more challenges in using quantitative and qualitative techniques to analyze problems (75%).</p> <p>Student Affairs: First year students in Career and Leadership Development’s U Lead program (N=90) reported that the program enhanced critical thinking/decision making skills in the contexts of student leadership and overall life management.</p> <p>Student Affairs: Student employment survey and focus group efforts of Career and Leadership Development (N=13), Recreation Sports and Facilities (N=167), and the University Center (N=100), indicated that students were applying critical thinking skills in a wide range of campus employment contexts.</p> | <p>SA, p. 1</p> <p>SA, p. 1</p> |
| Creative thinking | <p>SOAS: seniors reported good ability to be creative (5.1 on 7-pt scale).</p> <p>Chemistry Majors: Employer survey (N = 8) indicates students showed good “ability to be creative”. Mean = 4.0 where 1 is “disagrees” and 5 is “strongly agrees”.</p> | <p>A&R, p. 2</p> <p>A&R, p. 9</p> |
| Problem solving | <p>SOAS: seniors reported good ability to formulate and implement problem solving strategies and techniques consistent with the changing needs of your discipline (5.7 on 7-pt scale).</p> <p>Chemistry Majors: Employer survey (N = 8) indicates students showed good “ability to formulate and implement problem solving strategies and techniques”. Mean = 4.3 where 1 is “disagrees” and 5 is “strongly agrees”.</p> <p>Information Technology Infrastructure Majors: Assurance of Learning assessments (N = 14 students) showed that the performance of 93% of students was good or very good in “identifying possible solutions to a given problem”.</p> | <p>A&R, p. 1</p> <p>A&R, p. 9</p> <p>A&R, p. 18</p> |

| | | |
|-----------------------|---|--|
| | <p>Physics Majors: Graduating seniors in Fall 2011 took the Physics Major Field Test, which focuses on concepts and problem solving and achieved an average score of 39%. This represents a decline since the period 2000-2009, when scores averaged 50%.</p> <p>Students in the GENED 140-Global Perspectives core course: mean scores rose measurably on a pre/post-test of achievement of the course objective that students will “develop problem - solving skills using maps, graphs, and tables of descriptive statistics”(in Fall: from 5.662 to 6.207; in Spring from 5.723 to 6.03).</p> <p>Political Science Majors: In a 5-year alumni survey (N = 30), 94% of alums agreed or strongly agreed that they developed problem-solving skills.</p> <p>Student Affairs: University Health and Counseling Services’ LO/SS Survey (N=103) indicated that 82% of students who participated in counseling agreed with the statement, “I have increased my ability to think critically and clearly about my problems.”</p> | <p>L&S, p. 4-5</p> <p>L&S, p. 4</p> <p>A&R, p. 25</p> <p>SA, p. 2</p> |
| Written communication | <p>SOAS: seniors reported strong skills in writing (6.0 on 7-pt scale).</p> <p>Chemistry Majors: Employer survey (N = 8) indicates students showed good “writing skills necessary to prepare clear, concise, and persuasive reports”. Mean = 4.2 where 1 is “disagrees” and 5 is “strongly agrees”.</p> <p>History Majors: Faculty scorers rated the dimension of “organization and mechanics” on sample essays. Average scores rose from 3.0 out of 5 in the gateway course [N=15] to 3.67 out of 5 in the senior capstone course [N=15]. The same results were reflected in the sub-group of longitudinally sampled papers.</p> <p>International Studies majors: 11 of 22 capstone papers were scored at the competent or accomplished level by faculty scorers using the Writing Matters rubric.</p> <p>Human Resource Mgt: 15 out of 15 internship</p> | <p>A&R, p. 1</p> <p>A&R, p. 9</p> <p>L&S, p. 12</p> <p>L&S, p. 2</p> <p>A&R, p. 17</p> |

| | | |
|--------------------|---|---|
| | <p>supervisors reported students write clearly and with acceptable English usage.</p> <p>Information Technology Infrastructure Majors: Assurance of Learning assessments (N = 14 students) showed that the performance of 93% of students was good or very good in “writing a business proposal recommending the best solution to a problem”.</p> <p>Integrated Science & Business Majors: 91% of internship supervisors (N =36) strongly agreed that students’ written communication was good.</p> <p>Political Science Majors: In a 5-year alumni survey (N = 30), 93% of alums agreed or strongly agreed that they developed research paper writing skills, and 96% agreed or strongly agreed that they developed analytical paper writing skills.</p> | <p>A&R, p. 18</p> <p>A&R, p. 19</p> <p>A&R, p. 25</p> |
| Oral communication | <p>SOAS: seniors reported good skills in oral communication (5.7 on 7-pt scale).</p> <p>Chemistry Majors: Employer survey (N = 8) indicates students showed good “oral skills necessary to deliver clear, concise, and persuasive reports”. Mean = 4.2 where 1 is “disagrees” and 5 is “strongly agrees”.</p> <p>Human Resource Mgt: 15 out of 15 internship supervisors reported student’s oral communication is clear and understandable.</p> <p>Integrated Science & Business Majors: 100% of internship supervisors (N =36) strongly agreed that students’ written communication was good.</p> <p>Political Science Majors: In a 5-year alumni survey (N = 30), 73% of alums agreed or strongly agreed that they developed public speaking skills. 26% reported “neutral” to “strongly disagree”.</p> <p>CoBE: On all measures of oral communication from organization to delivery, over 95% of business students perform in a “good enough” or “very good” manner.</p> | <p>A&R, p. 2</p> <p>A&R, p. 9</p> <p>A&R, p. 17</p> <p>A&R, p. 19</p> <p>A&R, p. 25</p> <p>COBE</p> |

| | | |
|-----------------------|---|--|
| | <p>Student Affairs: The University Health and Counseling Services' L0/SS Survey (N=103) indicated that as a result of their work in counseling, 71% agreed with the statement, "I have improved my (personal) communication skills."</p> <p>Student Affairs: University Center student employee focus groups (N=100) identified Roberta's Art Gallery as a place where students learned to "communicate professionally and effectively, solving problems as a team."</p> <p>Student Affairs: The Department of Residence Life surveyed 2,834 hall residents (N=2,834) with the ACUHO-I EBI satisfaction survey. Factor 13, satisfaction with "personal interactions," was defined as satisfaction with the ability to meet others, improve relationships, live cooperatively, and resolve conflict. UW-Whitewater ranked #1 in this category in comparison to its 6 EBI benchmark universities and ranked #13 in a national comparison of 300 EBI colleges.</p> | <p>SA, p. 2</p> <p>SA, p. 2</p> <p>SA, p. 1</p> |
| Quantitative literacy | <p>SOAS: seniors reported good ability to use computer technology and applied quantitative methods (5.4 on 7-pt scale).</p> <p>Business Education Major: Senior exit survey results show very low level of satisfaction with teacher preparation in BME course content in trig/calc/algebra. Mean = 1.0 where 1 is "dissatisfied" and 4 is "very satisfied." [Note: does this refer to content in the BME courses or to students' satisfaction of their learning in math?].</p> <p>Chemistry Majors: Employer survey (N = 8) indicates students showed good "ability to use computer technology and apply quantitative methods of analysis". Mean = 4.3 where 1 is "disagrees" and 5 is "strongly agrees".</p> <p>Integrated Science & Business Majors: Internship supervisors (N =27) rated students' quantitative skills as excellent: Mean = 2.8 where 1 is "poor" and 3 is "excellent".</p> | <p>A&R, p. 2</p> <p>A&R, p. 4</p> <p>A&R, p. 9</p> <p>A&R, p. 19</p> |

| | | |
|---|---|--|
| | <p>Political Science Majors: In a 5-year alumni survey (N = 30), 74% of alums agreed or strongly agreed that they developed quantitative literacy skills. 13% reported “neutral” or “disagree”.</p> <p>CoBE: College-wide assessments show students have some difficulty with quantitative measures. Results on content exams for accounting and statistics fall below other average content measures.</p> | <p>A&R, p. 25</p> <p>COBE</p> |
| Information literacy | CoBE: 84% of business students perform well on measures of identifying information that is relevant to decision making in case-based situations. | COBE |
| Teamwork | <p>SOAS: seniors reported strong ability to interact with peers in-group settings (6.0 on 7-pt scale).</p> <p>Business Education Major: Cooperating teachers and university supervisors rated students from 1 (minimal/unacceptable) to 4 (advanced) on “values professional collaboration and consultation”. N=43; Mean = 3.5, over 6-year period.</p> <p>Chemistry Majors: Employer survey (N = 8) indicates students showed very good “ability to interact with peers in group settings”. Mean = 4.8 where 1 is “disagrees” and 5 is “strongly agrees”.</p> <p>Student Affairs: Recreation Sports and Facilities conducted a Student Employment Learning Outcomes Survey (N=167). 92% of participants agreed or strongly agreed that they had made progress on a range of employment-related outcomes, including teamwork.</p> | <p>A&R, p. 1</p> <p>A&R, p. 4</p> <p>A&R, p. 9</p> <p>SA, p. 1-2</p> |
| <p>Personal and Social Responsibility <i>Anchored through active involvement with diverse communities and real-world challenges</i></p> | | |
| Civic knowledge & engagement (local & global) | Students in several Political Science courses completed a survey assessing their political engagement (voting and political participation both on and off campus) and political knowledge (U.S. and foreign political systems and public affairs). Scores on both outcomes were positively correlated with increased | L&S, p. 5 |

| | | |
|---|---|---------------|
| | political science instruction; however, results also revealed a measureable gender gap, with female students scoring lower on the measures of political knowledge at all levels of political science instruction. | |
| Intercultural knowledge & competence | SOAS: seniors reported good level of appreciation of the effects of international, multicultural, ethnic factors in their majors (5.7 on 7-pt scale). | A&R, p. 2 |
| | Business Education Major: Cooperating teachers and university supervisors rated students from 1 (minimal/unacceptable) to 4 (advanced) on “demonstrates equitable treatment and respect for all individuals”. N=43; Mean = 3.6, over 6-year period. | A&R, p. 4 |
| | Business Education Major: Alumni survey (N = 27) showed 63% of alumni reported being well or very well prepared to create instructional opportunities that are adapted to diverse learners. | A&R, p. 7 |
| | CoBE: In skills measures across graduating BBA students, one of the lower measures is students’ ability to understand cultural characteristics and their impacts on business decisions. | COBE |
| | Foreign language majors: Faculty scorers rated the cultural awareness demonstrated in Spanish, French, and German essays written by majors in 300-level courses on a scale from 1 (does not meet expectations) to 3 (exceeds expectations). Spanish essays averaged 2.23 while French and German essays averaged 1.5. | L&S, p. 16-18 |
| | Student Affairs: The Residence Life ACUHO-I EBI survey reported that Resident Assistants (N=117) ranked their highest satisfaction factor (of 18 “factor” choices) as “diverse interactions” — defined on the survey as “interacting with people different than you,” interacting with “diverse populations,” and “valuing and respecting differences.” UW-Whitewater ranked #1 in this category in comparison to its 6 EBI benchmark universities. | SA, p. 2 |
| Student Affairs: Data from the University | SA, p. 2 | |

| | | |
|----------------------------|--|---|
| | <p>Center's focus groups (N=100), Recreation Sports and Facilities Learning Outcomes survey (N=167), and Career and Leadership Development's U-Lead Program (N=90) all indicated the significance of student learning that occurred through interaction with diverse populations.</p> <p>Student Affairs: The Office of the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs sponsored a graduate student assessment project that examined the cross-cultural interactions/immersion experience of international students. Findings suggested that while international students interacted with American students, most often their closest friends and acquaintances were not American students, thus minimizing their quality of campus immersion.</p> <p>The Department of Residence Life's MapWorks assessment tool indicated that in fall 2011, first-year students of color and international students (add N=) experienced a higher degree of "distressed homesickness" than white students. "Distressed Homesickness" is a metric identified by MapWorks as a persistence risk factor. Because MapWorks allows students to self-identify their desire for follow-up support, the Residence Life \was able to do so.</p> | <p>SA, p. 2</p> <p>SA, p. 3</p> |
| Ethical reasoning & action | <p>SOAS: seniors reported good ability to appraise ethical consequences of a decision (5.5 on 7-pt scale).</p> <p>Business Education Major: Cooperating teachers and university supervisors rated students from 1 (minimal/unacceptable) to 4 (advanced) on "respects the legal and ethical norms of the profession". N=43; Mean = 3.6, over 6-year period.</p> <p>Business Education Major: Alumni survey (N = 27) showed 66% of alumni reported being well or very well prepared in ability to model and teach legal and ethical practices related to technology use.</p> <p>Chemistry Majors: Employer survey (N = 8)</p> | <p>A&R, p. 2</p> <p>A&R, p. 4</p> <p>A&R, p. 7</p> <p>A&R, p. 9</p> |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | <p>indicates students showed very good “ability to appraise the ethical consequences of decisions”. Mean = 4.7 where 1 is “disagrees” and 5 is “strongly agrees”.</p> <p>Human Resource Mgt: 13 out of 15 internship supervisors reported trust and confidence that students respect privacy of personal and organizational information.</p> <p>CoBE: Measures of ethical understanding and application of professional codes of ethics show very high performance among BBA students.</p> <p>Student Affairs: The Dean of Students Office Conduct Survey (N=200) indicated that 97% of student participants agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, “My experiences with the conduct process will influence my future behavior choices as a student.”</p> | <p>A&R, p. 17</p> <p>COBE</p> <p>SA, p. 1</p> |
| <p>Foundations & skills for lifelong learning</p> | <p>SOAS: seniors reported good skills to pursue lifelong learning, professional growth and career progress (5.8 on 7-pt scale).</p> <p>Business Education Major: Cooperating teachers and university supervisors rated students from 1 (minimal/unacceptable) to 4 (advanced) on “demonstrates commitment to learning as a lifelong pursuit”. N=43; Mean = 3.5, over 6-year period.</p> <p>Business Education Major: Alumni survey (N = 27) showed 78% of alumni reported being well or very well prepared in using technology resources to engage in ongoing professional development.</p> <p>Chemistry Majors: Employer survey (N = 8) indicates students showed good “skills to pursue lifelong learning, professional growth, and career progress”. Mean = 4.2 where 1 is “disagrees” and 5 is “strongly agrees”.</p> <p>Student Affairs: Assessment data from the 2012 Children’s Center Parent Support Group (N=5) indicated that the group helped prepare student parents for long-term parenting success.</p> | <p>A&R, p. 1</p> <p>A&R, p. 4</p> <p>A&R, p. 7</p> <p>A&R, p. 9</p> <p>SA, p. 3</p> |

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| | | |
| Integrative Learning <i>Demonstrated through the application of knowledge, skills, and responsibilities to new settings and complex problems</i> | | |
| Synthesis and advanced accomplishment across general and specialized studies | | |

**APPENDIX 2:
Progress Related to the 2012 ELARC Recommendations:**

Our 2012 ELARC report provided five areas of recommendation to improve teaching, learning, and assessment at UW-Whitewater. Those five areas are listed below along with brief notes about campus activity and progress as indicated.

Recommendation #1

Assessment work is vital to our understanding of the strengths and areas for improvement in all areas of student learning—curricular, co-curricular, and extra-curricular. To be most meaningful, assessment work should be ongoing, occur as an integral part of campus life, and involve active engagement of faculty, staff, and students. To **enhance a positive culture of assessment** that facilitates engagement, we recommend that:

Sub-Recommendation 1.1

- a. The Faculty Senate, Academic Staff Assembly, and other appropriate governing bodies and administrators review and revise personnel policies (e.g., job descriptions and reward structures) to support faculty and staff engagement in assessment.

Reported Progress Made on Sub-Recommendation 1.1 During 2012-13

- With the establishment of Assessment Committees at the college level, faculty and staff will have the opportunity to include work on assessment as part of their service to their colleges regarding evaluation, promotion and tenure decisions as well as merit, should that process become relevant again.
- The Faculty Senate has indicated that assessment-related activity would be evaluated as service under the heading:
 - III G. Standard Classification of Performance Data
 - b. Service to the Department, Constituency, University and/or System
 - (3) Contributor to department, constituency, or university reports i.e., audit, accreditation, self-studies
- The Academic Staff Assembly convened a subcommittee to review the Academic Staff Personnel Rules during 2012-2014. The subcommittee will address the ELARC recommendations as work continues in 2013-2014. Additional recommendations are being developed for the Titling process and the Distribution of Effort Form to include academic staff engagement in assessment. Finally, the Awards Committee and Non-instructional Academic Staff Rewards and Recognition Committee liaisons have received a copy of the ELARC recommendations and will revise the criteria for the programs to specifically address recognition of assessment as a vital component of staff work worthy of recognition. New criteria will be released in 2013-2014.
- The College of Arts and Communication is working on integrating assessment into its college standards before they go forward to be formally approved.
- Refereed journal publications and refereed conference presentations are applied towards evaluation processes, but challenges still remain concerning the value of SOTL research as contrasted to discipline-based research, especially for tenure-track faculty.

Committee Comment on Sub-Recommendation 1.1

It seems that there is continued work to be done on this area.

Sub-Recommendation 1.2

- b. Administrators support the positive culture of assessment in their various addresses and interactions on campus.

Reported Progress Made on Sub-Recommendation 1.2 During 2012-13

- Chancellor Telfer mentioned LEAP and assessment in his State of the University Address in August 2013.
- LEAP and associated learning outcomes are addressed by administrators at every Plan-it-Purple Day.
- In a LEAP workshop team comprised of some college advisers and advisers from the Academic Advising and Exploration Center, the group agreed to spend time with each student during advising sessions explaining what LEAP is and what its value is to student outcomes.
- The Provost has been a strong supporter of LEAP and related assessment activities in providing stipends to faculty, staff, and students who attend LEAP workshops and completed concrete 3-semester, measurable plans. In 2013, over 110 participants completed the January workshop and submitted plans for approval.
- Each college takes a different approach to integrating assessment into daily interactions:
 - In the College of Arts and Communication, the topic of assessment is a regular agenda item at Administrative Council meetings.
 - In the College of Business and Economics, each year in a fall retreat prior to the beginning of classes, a half-day is spent on reviewing assessment data and making plans for changing pedagogy and/or curriculum.
 - In the College of Letters and Sciences, several initiatives are underway to enhance the visibility and support for assessment work, including the development of a yearly college “Assessment Showcase” (perhaps in conjunction with the fall or winter college retreat). This will be an opportunity to highlight the excellent work that is being done across the college as well as share best practices, results, and recommendations for action. During 2012-13, the college’s Administrative Council is reviewing the current reward structure(s) for assessment work (including departmental standards for promotion and tenure) and discussing ways to enhance support for faculty and staff engagement in assessment activities. And the college’s Assessment Committee regularly discusses strategies for enhancing the culture of assessment at the departmental level.
 - In the College of Education and Professional Studies (COEPS), an assessment committee has been established with the charge of coordinating and organizing data across all departments. In this way, data can be strategically collected, organized, accessed, analyzed, and used to inform curricular renewal and for meeting the numerous state and federal accrediting and compliance demands. Beyond institutional assessments such as LEAP and Audit & Review, the COEPS collects data for compliance and accreditation purposes. The current challenge is to organize the vast amount of data in the COEPS such that data can be accessed more easily to better inform curricular decision-making and made more easily available for reporting purposes. The data demand on the COEPS necessitates a coordinated process for collecting and analyzing data. While the COEPS early in the organizational process, the COEPS assessment committee is working to create a data matrix (map/bank) to determine existing data sources and data type.
 - Support has also been available for faculty and staff to work campus-wide on Inclusive Excellence and to use a rubric for assessing inclusive excellence.

- Dean Clements, CoBE, has addressed the college concerning assessment plans for the new MBA curriculum. The college gathers each year during its retreat schedule to review data and close the loop concerning improvements to teaching and curriculum.
- In Student Affairs, the Division Leadership Team (unit directors and assistant/associate directors) serves as the assessment committee. This approach is used to promote commitment and accountability across all levels of staff. In fall 2012, the Leadership Team participated in a comprehensive qualitative analysis of ELARC data from across nine departments. This process led to the development of a coding scheme used to identify major themes from data. Ultimately, these themes formed the core of the Division's 2012 ELARC report.

Sub-Recommendation 1.3

- c. The campus establishes an annual "Assessment Day" to recognize and share best practices and innovation in assessment.

Reported Progress Made on Sub-Recommendation 1.3 During 2012-13

- The first annual Assessment Day for UW-Whitewater was held on April 18, 2013. This event showcased 28 poster presentations and several oral presentations highlighting assessment activities across campus.

Sub-Recommendation 1.4

- d. Colleges, departments, and other units create ways to acknowledge and reward faculty, staff, and students for their work on assessment.

Reported Progress Made on Sub-Recommendation 1.4 During 2012-13

- The Provost supported travel for selected LEAP teams including students to present a workshop and poster sessions at the Student Success and Quality conference sponsored by AAC&U in April, 2013.
- The Provost and colleges supported travel for ten faculty to AAC&U's summer General Education and Assessment Institute.
- The College of Business & Economics has supported travel for a number of CoBE faculty to AACSB International Conferences on assessment. Both CoBE and the College of Letters and Sciences have also sent faculty to the IUPUI Conference on assessment each fall.
- LEAP Workshop stipends are other rewards for the completion of team projects on assessment.
- The College of Letters and Sciences and the College of Arts and Communication are supporting summer stipends for assessment-based projects for majors and departments. The College of Letters and Sciences has also begun to explore the possibility of providing course releases to selected departments to support particularly time-intensive assessment projects. The COEPS is considering summer stipends for faculty who may be interested in continuing to work on developing a data matrix (or bank) in the organization of data.

Committee Comment on Sub-Recommendation 1.4

The concept of “rewards” remains nebulous. Could there be an assessment award for colleges or the university? What would be the basis for that award and how would applicants be evaluated?

Recommendation #2

Resources are important for enhancing and sustaining our assessment capacity on campus. The Provost’s Office should collect feedback and suggestions about resource allocation for assessment, and work with colleges and other units to establish or revise budget lines and allocations for assessment work. We recommend that colleges/divisions and departments/units evaluate the resources they allocate or have available for assessment and work to determine the types and levels of resources they need to enhance their work.

Reported Progress on Recommendation #2 During 2012-13

- A systematic analysis of assessment resources has not been conducted. The Provost’s Office, the academic colleges, the School of Graduate Studies and Continuing Education, Student Affairs, and other units have devoted resources to assessment, including:
 - Hiring a full-time Director of Academic Assessment and remodeling a suite of offices in Heide Hall to house assessment with Institutional Research and Planning.
 - A search is being conducted for a new campus position as Director of Institutional Research and Planning.
 - Funding a 10-person team to participate in the AAC&U Institute on General Education and Assessment held in Maryland, summer of 2012. The team worked on plans to develop a comprehensive system for assessing general education at UW-W.
 - During 2012-2013, four academic departments (Accounting, Communication, Psychology, and Special Education) engaged in an intensive project to explore their curricula and learning outcomes especially as they relate to the Lumina Foundation’s Degree Qualifications Profile. As part of this project, departments engaged in direct assessment of both undergraduate and graduate student learning in applied and specialized knowledge areas. This project also engaged students from these departments in an assessment center project to assess their knowledge and skills in general education learning areas, critical thinking, information literacy, and writing. This project is the Quality Initiative that UW-Whitewater is engaging in as part of our reaffirmation of campus accreditation through the new Open Pathways model with the Higher Learning Commission.
 - Funding seven faculty and staff members to attend the IUPUI Assessment Institute in Indianapolis in October, 2012 to learn more about best practices in assessment.
 - The College of Arts & Communication created a half time, 9-month position for a Director of Assessment. The college also created summer assessment grants to develop or improve systems for assessing student learning in college programs
 - The College of Business & Economics funded several faculty members to attend the AACSB International Assessment Conferences to learn about assessment and accreditation.
 - The College of Education & Professional Studies created a new College Assessment Committee to develop and guide assessment of student learning in the college.
 - The College of Letters & Sciences continued their funding of summer assessment projects for faculty and academic departments.

- Departments in Student Affairs covered costs of conference participation and large-scale assessment initiatives. The University Center supported funding for staff and students to attend the April 2013 Student Success and Quality Conference. University Health and Counseling Services provides funding support for the UW System Learning Outcomes and Satisfaction Survey and the National College Health Assessment. The Department of Residence Life provides substantial funding to cover the costs of its MAP-Works on-line assessment program.

Recommendation #3

We agree with the recommendation of the General Education Assessment Summit 2011 that campus should develop rubrics that **define learning** and the progression of learning (e.g., from freshman to senior levels) for the essential learning outcomes of critical thinking, intercultural knowledge and awareness, and quantitative literacy. The AAC&U VALUE rubrics can be used as guides or starting points. Using Writing Matters as a model, these new rubrics can be used to (a) define our campus consensus about learning, (b) communicate our expectations to students across disciplines, and across the curriculum and co-curriculum, and (c) collect and coordinate direct assessment data.

Reported Progress on Recommendation #3 During 2012-13

- **Critical Thinking:** Joan Cook and Jolly Emrey have received a Strategic Initiative Grant for a Summer 2013 workshop to develop a Critical Thinking Rubric.
- **Intercultural Knowledge & Awareness:** Administrative Fellow Pilar Melero, with Lauren Smith and Dennis Kopf, led a faculty and staff workshop during Winterim 2013 to discuss and develop learning outcomes in the area of diversity and intercultural knowledge and awareness. The group defined what UW-W undergraduates should know and be able to do in the area of diversity by the time they graduate. The group also created a draft rubric useful for assessing student achievement in this area. This work will continue throughout 2013.
- **Quantitative Literacy:** Math developed an algebraic problem solving skills test that includes 5 distinct skills. This might be transformed into a kind of rubric for one aspect of Quantitative Literacy.
- **Oral Communication:** Sally Vogl-Bauer (College Assessment Coordinator), Tammy French, Barb Penington, and Kathy Brady led a faculty/staff workshop in May 2012 to examine students' oral communication skills. The end result was the creation of the Speaking Well Rubric to assess students' oral presentation skills. A Strategic Initiative Grant funded this work.

Emerging Initiatives/Rubrics

Valuable work was launched during the reporting period to define campus learning outcomes for several other high-priority essential learning outcomes.

The Speaking Well Rubric. In May 2012, a group of colleagues (18 in all) from each of the four academic colleges and Student Affairs worked together to create the "Speaking Well" rubric to help assess students' presentation skills. This workshop was created to

formally introduce the rubric to campus. Sally Vogl-Bauer, Kathy Brady, Tammy French, and Barb Penington introduced the rubric to campus at a LEARN Center workshop on March 11, 2013.

- **Information Literacy.** Andersen Library has participated in the administration of the iSkills test and Martha Stephenson has led this effort for the Degree Qualifications Profile (DQP). Their LEAP team is working on a rubric for evaluating bibliographies of student papers. The Reference and Instruction Librarians have also drafted rubrics for New Student Seminar (Information Literacy Rubric – New Student Seminar Treasure Hunt); English 102 (Information Literacy Rubric – English 102); and for the undergraduate in general, (Information Literacy Progression Rubric).
- **Foreign Language Writing Rubric:** In 2012, Foreign Languages piloted a four dimension (i.e., task, content, language use, cultural awareness) rubric and assessment of writing skills of students in the French, German, and Spanish programs.
- **Global Learning Value Rubric.** GENED 140 instructors are in meetings to create this rubric that aligns with ELARC’s recommendation related to intercultural knowledge and awareness.

Other Assessment Activities

A number of departments/units, colleges/divisions, and working groups engaged in other assessment activities that support our baccalaureate learning outcomes. Evidence of exemplars of this work across the spectrum—from critical preliminary discussions to development of rubrics—was provided to ELARC.

College of Arts and Communication. Departments examined many LEAP ELOs in 2011-2012. Some recommendations include (a) intentionally gathering data tied to specific student learning outcomes, (b) identifying and labeling existing departmental practices that provide students with formative and summative feedback on their learning, but are not presently labeled assessment activities, (c) offering regular, programmatic training in assessment-related activities for faculty and staff to make assessment work less mysterious, more pragmatic and manageable, and (d) recommending an intentional, systematic approach by the University in forwarding assessment goals at the start of an academic year to improve College and departmental opportunities to plan and meet institutional goals and objectives. Resulting actions for majors were as follows:

- *During Spring 2012, there was a campus-wide workshop, with faculty and staff (both curricular and co-curricular) participating to create the current version of the “Speaking Well” rubric.*
- *Music* engaged in efforts to offer a world music course that would satisfy the general education diversity requirement and explore learning outcomes associated with intercultural knowledge and awareness.
- *Art, Music, and Theatre/Dance* provided formative and summative experiences for their majors (and often for their minors). At various milestones, students were assessed on the progress they had made in their majors, which may have included: reviewing GPAs, presenting portfolios of their work for review, receiving feedback on live performances, or examining progress within the major. The commitment by departmental faculty and staff was very labor-intensive, but the learning opportunity this provided students was significant and substantial.

- *Media Arts and Game Development* revised the curriculum of MAGD 150 Introduction to Multimedia. Specifically, learning outcomes emphasizing written communication will play an integral role in how the assignments in this course are developed and evaluated. These curricular changes were piloted in a section of MAGD 150 during the Spring 2012 semester.

College of Business and Economics. In a response to the LEAP initiative and the greater emphasis on assessment in Audit & Review processes, the majors in the college have initiated several activities to develop missions specific to majors, to designate outcomes for student learning within the majors, and to map those outcomes to specific courses with associated measurement tools. In January 2012, all departments in the college sent two representatives to an assessment workshop led by Director of Assessment Greg Cook. Resulting actions for majors were as follows:

- *Human Resources* developed an elaborate rewrite of the mission, goals, course mapping, and measurement along with rubrics. They will be initiating measurement beginning 2012-2013.
- *Entrepreneurship*, a new major in the college, developed a mission and learning goals along with ideas for measuring outcomes in a capstone course.
- *Finance* has developed a mission, goals, and course mapping as well. They have a rotation schedule for measurement of goals and some of the assignments and rubrics are complete. They begin their first measurement in fall 2012.
- *Marketing* has a revised mission and goals as well as course mapping for assessment.

College of Education and Professional Studies. The college engaged in strategic planning, leading to a series of retreats, discussions and information gathering—including the development of an Assessment Committee. Key departmental/unit initiatives were as follows:

- *Educational Foundations* asks cooperating teachers to evaluate fieldwork students in the diverse Observation and Participation experience (using a department-designed rubric).
- *Dean's Office:* The Assistant Dean now has significant responsibility for assessment across the college programs ensuring an intentional and systematic college approach to gathering data tied to specific student learning outcomes and identifying and labeling existing departmental practices that provide students with formative and summative feedback on their learning, but are not presently labeled assessment activities.
- *Special Education* has been working with the registrar's office to allow input of all key assessment data into the WINS system.
- *The MSE-PD Council* has been created with six departmental representatives and two ex-officio members to oversee program evaluation (establishment of outcome criteria and rubrics, administration and surveys, student tracking, etc.).

College of Letters and Sciences. The College engaged in important assessment activities in support of ELARC recommendations. Key departmental/unit initiatives were as follows:

- *History* has engaged in a longitudinal assessment project, evaluating writing in the entry to the major course (Historical Methods) and writing submitted by the same individuals as part of the History Senior Seminar capstone course.
- *Women's Studies* engaged in a portfolio assessment. This project evaluated portfolios presented as part of the capstone in Women's Studies in terms of cognitive, skill, and knowledge objectives.

- *A Scientific Literacy Initiative* was launched to define learning outcomes and develop recommendations for improving pedagogy and curriculum in the natural sciences, particularly the course offerings in the general education program.
- *Liberal Studies and the Global Engagement Certificate* became the first programs in the college to formally adopt ePortfolios as tools for learning and assessment.
- *Social Work* conducted a survey of majors to determine the extent of their participation in high-impact practices. Upon finding that few Social Work majors engage in undergraduate research, the department implemented curricular changes designed to encourage more involvement in that high-impact practice.

Student Affairs

The Student Affairs departments that engaged in assessment efforts in 2011-2012 include: University Bookstore, Career and Leadership Development, Center for Students with Disabilities, Children's Center, Dean of Students Office, Recreation Sports and Facilities, the Department of Residence Life, the University Center (UC), Chartwells, and University Health & Counseling Services (UHCS).

- Student Affairs departmental assessment is guided by a premise that learning occurs across multiple dimensions of students' lives and can be enhanced through intentional opportunities for students to integrate and make meaning of their experiences. 2011-2012 assessment efforts were intentionally exploratory in nature, while simultaneously attending to LEAP-related learning outcomes. Regarding ELOs, qualitative analysis of data from all departments indicated that the most significant student learning trends were related to critical thinking, ethical reasoning and action, oral communication, and intercultural knowledge and competence. These trends were characterized as holistic student learning, reflecting the interplay of cognitive growth, personal and professional skill building, and identity development.
- The Student Affairs assessment emphasis reflects Barr and Tagg's (1995) seminal article, *From Teaching to Learning - a New Paradigm for Undergraduate Education*. At the core of this learning paradigm is environmental management: If learning occurs, then the environment has power. Learning occurs within the context of students' lives and in the unique context of the learning environment. The following distinctive UW-Whitewater learning contexts were discovered in 2011-2012 assessment efforts: family relationships, staff roles in integration and meaning making, student employment as a high-impact practice, impact of technology, and student health, wellness and alcohol use.

Multicultural Affairs and Student Success. The division engaged in a variety of efforts to intentionally incorporate assessment of LEAP essential learning outcomes across programs, services, and activities. Key unit initiatives were as follows:

- *Pre-College Programs* identified existing assessment methods used to evaluate knowledge of human cultures and the natural world, critical and creative thinking skills, effective communication skills, intercultural knowledge and competence, and integrative learning.
- *Tutorial Center* continued work in core learning outcomes and also explored new areas (for example, and the use of intentional methods to assess tutor learning outcomes).
- *McNair Scholars and King/Chavez Scholars* focus on student engagement in intensive research to achieve key learning outcomes. For example, students engage in a summer research experience in which they work together as a cohort. Teamwork and problem solving learning is deepened because they all must have their research proposal done and

present their research findings to the campus community at the end of their summer program.

Recommendation #4

Based on our review of data, and to **improve student writing**, the ELARC concurs with the recommendations from the Writing Still Matters 2011 assessment project to:

Sub-Recommendation 4.1

- e. Define guidelines for “writing intensive” courses at the college and university level.

Reported Progress on Sub-Recommendation 4.1 During 2012-13

In Spring 2012, a sub-committee of the L&S College Curriculum Committee was charged with the task of defining guidelines for writing intensive courses and their role in the curriculum, and developing recommendations for effective curricular pathways for ensuring that students meet the university requirement that students develop writing proficiency in their major discipline. The sub-committee researched the literature and examples of best practices at other institutions, and prepared a draft report. The sub-committee received feedback on the draft report from departments and the curriculum committee in Fall 2012 and plans to submit a final report to the College Curriculum Committee in April 2013 for adoption and further dissemination across the university.

Sub-Recommendation 4.2

- f. Enhance department-level writing instruction and assessment projects.

Reported Progress on Sub-Recommendation 4.2 During 2012-13

In the College of Letters and Sciences, a majority of departments have turned their attention to improving student writing, often as a result of feedback from external stakeholders such as accrediting bodies, employers, and advisory boards (e.g., the departments of Chemistry and Social Work). Several departments worked during the summer to enhance writing assessment, usually with stipend support from the College. The International Studies program adopted the Writing Matters rubric as a tool for assessing capstone papers in the major. Other programs, including Political Science and Liberal Studies, have developed new assessment plans that will incorporate the use of the WM rubric. The Liberal Studies program will assess student writing across the major via students' ePortfolios. The History Department implemented a longitudinal assessment of writing in the major by collecting and evaluating individual students' papers from the required gateway and capstone courses. This process allowed the department to confirm that individual history majors did make significant progress across the program towards achieving the learning outcomes measured by the departmentally designed rubric. In the Foreign Languages program, faculty piloted an assessment of majors' ability to communicate in writing in the target language (Spanish, French or German) after six semesters of instruction. Finally, several departments added new, required writing intensive courses to their curricula in order to enhance writing instruction, including History (HISTORY 399 – Research Methods) and Sociology, Anthropology and Criminal Justice (SOCIOLOGY 475 – Criminological Theory).

The College of Letters and Sciences is considering possible revisions to ENGLISH 372 – Scientific and Technical Writing to better meet the needs of science majors who take the course to satisfy the writing proficiency requirement in their major. The English program fully acknowledges that ENGLISH 372 currently focuses primarily on technical writing and

plans are underway to create a new course that emphasizes in the genres and expectations for writing in the sciences.

Several initiatives are underway to improve writing instruction in the General Education program. The Freshman English program has recently revised the guidelines for English 101 and 102 to clarify the program outcomes, and is planning to assess sample papers from the courses using the WM rubric in Spring 2013. And in May 2012, World of Ideas instructors gathered for a workshop on best practices in designing writing assignments and responding to student writing.

A team composed of faculty members from the Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders used the LEAP and Writing Matters initiatives to help shape their plans for curricular and assessment revision. This has resulted in a renewed emphasis on development and assessment of writing across the major. Currently, they are piloting a longitudinal evaluation of student writing samples from General Education and major courses using the Writing Matter rubric; the College of Education and Professional Studies is providing stipends to the participants.

Several departments in the College of Business and Economics have adopted the Writing Matters rubric in evaluating student papers.

Sub-Recommendation 4.3

- g. Annotate the Writing Matters document to provide models of effective components of writing and to foster cross-disciplinary discussion.

Reported Progress on Sub-Recommendation 4.3 During 2012-13

A cross-campus team made up of past participants in Writing Matters assessment projects (Janine Tobeck, Ellen Davis, Giuliana Miolo, Dana Prodoehl, and Liz Hachten) has been meeting since summer 2012 to develop an annotated version of the Writing Matters rubric that will provide both faculty and students with a stronger understanding of the expectations embedded in the document. One member of the team, Dana Prodoehl, also received an Academic Staff Development grant in 2012 to develop a website that will feature the annotated rubric and other resources aimed at supporting writing instruction and student writing across the curriculum.

Sub-Recommendation 4.4

- h. Facilitate faculty and staff professional development to enhance writing instruction.

Reported Progress on Sub-Recommendation 4.4 During 2012-13

Over the past year, the LEARN Center sponsored three lunchtime workshops focused on writing instruction: "Improving Students' Writing Skills" (presented by Lujan Davis and Roger Yin on March 14, 2012); "Designing Effective Writing Assignments" (presented by Dana Prodoehl on November 19, 2012); and "Incorporating Low-Stakes Writing into Any Sized Class" (presented by Dana Prodoehl on January 29, 2013). A total of 54 faculty and staff attended these workshops (8 of the 54 attended two or more workshops). Attendees were drawn from all four colleges as well as Multicultural Affairs, the Academic Advising and Exploration Center, and Residential Life. One more workshop on responding to student essays is planned for later in Spring 2013.

The LEARN Center is sponsoring a book discussion group in Spring 2013 on *Engaging Ideas: The Professor's Guide to Integrating Writing, Critical Thinking, and Active Learning in the Classroom* by John Bean. The group is facilitated by Marilyn Durham and Liz Hachten and includes about a dozen participants from the departments of Biological Sciences, Curriculum and Instruction, ITBE, Chemistry, Educational Foundations, and Communication Sciences and Disorders.

The College of Letters and Sciences sponsored a number of professional development opportunities in this area in addition to the World of Ideas workshop mentioned above. The College's Fall 2012 retreat included the workshop on "Creating Effective Writing Assignments" at the College retreat in August 2012 led by Marilyn Durham and Dana Prodoehl (Department of Languages and Literatures) and attended by approximately 130 faculty and academic staff members. In addition, the College purchased copies of John Bean's *Engaging Ideas: The Professor's Guide to Integrating Writing, Critical Thinking, and Active Learning in the Classroom* for each department in the College.

Over the past year, the College of Education and Professional Studies has featured sessions on writing at college retreats. In January 2012, Marilyn Durham conducted a plenary session on integrating and improving writing across the curriculum while Giuliana Miolo and Liz Hachten provided an update on the Writing Matters Initiative at a breakout session at the Fall 2012 retreat.

It has become evident that one of the best ways to develop faculty expertise is to involve them in actual writing assessment projects, including campus-wide efforts such as Writing Still Matters assessment project in 2011. During 2012-13, the writing assessment portion of the Degree Qualifications Project (DQP) has provided such an opportunity. Faculty participated in the Writing Matters portion of the DQP Assessment Project by reading and assessing approximately 400 samples of student writing from the associates, bachelors and masters levels. The Workshop during Winterim 2013 (January 7 - 11) provided training in scoring the essays using the Writing Matters rubric and produced data concerning the writing ability of UW-W students across multiple departments and colleges. Sixteen faculty and academic staff members from the departments of Biological Sciences, Communication, Communication Science and Disorders, Curriculum and Instruction, Languages and Literatures, Marketing, Political Science, Psychology, and Special Education took part in the DQP assessment project.

Other possible models for providing professional development are currently being explored, including the possibility of developing an annual multi-day Writing Academy for instructors and/or providing more targeted professional development at the departmental level.

Sub-Recommendation 4.5

- i. Create a structure through which faculty and staff representatives can work toward improving student writing across the curriculum and co-curriculum and in the disciplines.

Reported Progress on Sub-Recommendation 4.5 During 2012-13

The Department of Languages and Literatures is currently searching for a WAC/WID (Writing Across the Curriculum/Writing In the Disciplines) specialist who will fill a new tenure track line. Hopefully, this will allow the campus to move forward with creating a permanent all-

campus WAC/WID advisory group that could support writing instruction across the curriculum and the co-curriculum.

Sub-Recommendation 4.6

- j. Explore ways that all divisions—Academic Affairs, Administrative Affairs, and Student Affairs —may contribute to Writing Still Matters recommendations, particularly in relation to student employment, student organization participation, and unit-driven initiatives.

Reported Progress on Sub-Recommendation 4.6 During 2012-13

No reported progress on this recommendation.

Recommendation #5

Based on our review of data, and to **improve critical thinking in students**, we recommend faculty and staff development sessions aimed at improving the instruction and assessment of critical thinking. Where appropriate, the focus should be on improving students' skills in summarizing patterns of results, evaluating and interpreting correlations, and separating relevant from irrelevant information. This effort should take into consideration student curricular, co-curricular and extra-curricular experiences.

Sub-Recommendation 5.1

- a. Faculty and staff development sessions aimed at improving the instruction and assessment of critical thinking:

Reported Progress on Sub-Recommendation 5.1 During 2012-13

Nine university-level sessions were held that addressed at least in part instruction and/or assessment of critical thinking. In several cases, critical thinking was embedded within discussion of instructional approaches or within discussion of development of other skills (e.g., writing).

The annual General Education Core Course Instructors' Workshop in August 2012 focused on enhancing critical thinking in the Core. Thirty instructors from all five Core courses (including WOTA) participated in a workshop focused on defining critical thinking outcomes and pedagogical best practices across the Core curriculum.

Sub-Recommendation 5.2

- b. Focus on improving students' skills in summarizing patterns of results, evaluating and interpreting correlations, and separating relevant from irrelevant information.

Reported Progress on Sub-Recommendation 5.2 During 2012-13

In LEAP-related outcomes, CoBE BBA students were more challenged by quantitative skill areas as well as in sifting relevant from irrelevant data in critical thinking processes. Faculty have begun working on initiatives to improve these results.

The Psychology Department reported the results of several recent direct assessments of the psychological critical thinking skills of their majors and minors. The data indicate that students need more instruction and practice in the critical thinking skills of evaluating evidence, making appropriate inferences, and considering alternative explanations/hypotheses/confounds—areas similar to those in the ELARC recommendation.

Several GENED 140-Global Perspectives instructors from the Political Science Department developed and piloted a pre/post-test of critical thinking designed to assess achievement of the course objective that students will “develop problem -solving skills using maps, graphs, and tables of descriptive statistics.” Mean scores rose measurably (in Fall: from 5.662 to 6.207; in Spring from 5.723 to 6.03). A revised version of the instrument was piloted in a summer 2012 section of GenEd 140. The team has shared these findings with colleagues in the Political Science Department and with Global Perspectives instructors from other departments.

The Mathematics Department developed and piloted a course embedded test of quantitative problem-solving skills to administer to students in MATH 141 – Intermediate Algebra. The instrument assesses five algebraic problem-solving skills, including summarizing the pattern of results. The test was piloted in Summer 2012, then revised and refined. The revised version was administered as an end-of-semester test in Fall 2012 and spring 2013 MATH 141 classes.

In addition to the skills listed in the recommendation, other specific critical thinking skills have been investigated:

- The Department of Marketing summarized results of a review of core competencies. Students were stronger in the critical thinking skills of “personal perspective and position” and weaker in “quality of evidence.”
- The History department’s assessments of the writing, research, and interpretive skills of History majors indicated that students improved in skills related to critical thinking (research, interpretation). This improvement was found in both their longitudinal and cross-sectional assessments. To further improve performance by senior year on these and other student learning outcomes, the department converted the senior seminar capstone course into a two-semester sequence of HISTRY 399 – Research Methods and HISTRY 499 – Senior Thesis.
- Analysis of papers from the International Studies capstone course showed that 11 of 22 papers scored using the UWW Writing Matters rubric received the lowest score in “analysis/interpretation” (an area related to critical thinking). The program coordinator is consulting with instructors to identify potential changes to course assignments, instructional methods, and expectations that could be implemented in the Spring 2013 seminar to address weaknesses. The International Studies Advisory Board will consider these results in Spring 2013 and develop recommendations.
- The Psychology department analyzed course embedded items related to critical thinking in their Spring 2012 classes. In the undergraduate courses with repeated assessments, the second and third time scores were significantly higher than the pre-test or initial score, suggesting that students’ CT skills improved during the semester. Qualitative data from single-time embedded assessments were also informative as instructors shared activities, assessments, and pedagogical strategies.

Sub-Recommendation 5.3

- c. Take into consideration student curricular, co-curricular and extra-curricular experiences.

Reported Progress on Sub-Recommendation 5.3 During 2012-13

In addition to the information about critical thinking in curricular areas, the Office of Student Affairs identified “Critical thinking, ethical reasoning and action” as a theme across five of their nine departments:

- In University Health and Counseling Services, counseling clients were invited to complete the Learning Outcomes and Satisfaction Survey. Of 103 students who completed this survey, 82% agreed with the statement, “I have increased my ability to think clearly and critically about my problems,” and 65% agreed with the statement, “I have learned how to engage in an effective decision making process.”
- In Recreation Sports and Facilities, 167 student employees completed a learning outcomes survey that included “practical competence with decision making, time management, and organizational skills.” Of survey respondents, 92% agreed or strongly agreed that department employment had assisted them in meeting these learning outcomes.
- In Career and Leadership Development, “decision-making skills” were assessed with 90 first-year student participants in the U-LEAD program, and with 13 student employees who were part of the SEAL Leadership Team. U-Lead students viewed decision-making skills as important in both effective leadership and life management. SEAL Leadership Team students self-reported that the employment experience led to “improved personal decision-making skills.”
- The role of staff in helping students make meaning of their learning and integrate it into their lives and identities also appeared as an important theme in the Student Affairs analyses. Six units outlined action plans for continuing staff interactions as central to students’ meaning making and integration of their university experiences. For example, the University Center’s assessment process included ongoing focus groups for students to discuss and reflect on each ELO. A staff member commented, “By having these regular, intentional conversations with students, they reflect more deeply and are willing to share their thoughts. It gives staff an opportunity to listen, learn, and provide students with feedback. And, students can think more deeply about the merits of the ELO and how it applies to aspects of their lives, classes, work (UC employment) and careers.”

Additional information on critical thinking:

- CoBE revised its mission statement. In part, this new mission asks for student outcomes regarding entrepreneurial (or innovative) leadership and critical thinking. The Assurance of Learning objectives (which are the college learning goals) are being reviewed to align with the new mission. Critical thinking outcomes will be addressed more directly; new assignments and assessments of critical thinking are being developed.
- Linda Yu, Chair of the Department of Finance & Business Law attended a workshop on the critical thinking assessment test (CAT) as part of professional development of the faculty in the college. As a result, she is working with the college Assurance of Learning Committee to revise goals and measures of critical thinking with the faculty teaching the Business Finance core course in the college.
- Finance faculty have met and rewritten objectives and traits regarding critical thinking. In 2012-2013, they are planning a pilot using cases in the Business Finance class and evaluating the written assignments for critical thinking skills with multiple raters within the department.

- Department of Finance & Business Law is working on a critical thinking rubric to assess student case papers.
- One Economics faculty member has worked on the campus critical thinking project; he was trained in applying the rubric and then worked as a rater.
- Four items from the UWW Senior Outcomes Assessment Survey (SOAS) involve aspects of critical thinking (listed below). A total of 1,560 seniors from Fall 2011 and Spring 2012 reported that they felt well prepared in each area (average ratings ranged from 5.68 to 5.88, with 7=Very Well Prepared; 1=Very Poorly Prepared). However, for each item, students rated the importance of the ability as being higher than their degree of preparedness (average ratings of importance ranged from 5.92 to 6.43). Students ranked “ability to make sound decisions...” and “ability to formulate and implement problem solving strategies...” as being high in importance relative to all the other SOAS areas (2nd and 5th in importance, respectively, of 18 items).
 - Ability to integrate and transfer knowledge from relevant majors
 - Ability to formulate and implement problem solving strategies and techniques consistent with the changing needs of your discipline
 - Ability to make sound decisions by assessing situations, prioritizing and applying critical reasoning to complex information
 - Ability to research problems by formulating hypotheses, collecting and analyzing information, and drawing appropriate inferences
- The Chemistry department’s 2010 Employer Survey (N=8) included three items that involved aspects of critical thinking (same as the SOAS items on “...problem solving strategies...”, “...sound decisions...”, and “...research problems...”). Employers agreed that UWW Chemistry graduates had the skills listed (average ratings ranged from 3.9 to 4.3; 5=strongly agree, 1=disagree).