Salt Lake Community College

ePortfolio General Education Assessment Report 2021

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All ePortfolio images from SLCC students used by permission.

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Assessment Methods

Salt Lake Community College (SLCC) has been using ePortfolios as a requirement in General Education courses for over a decade, and we have found it to be an effective way to assess the way students at the college experience the program and the extent to which student achieve the program's learning outcomes. Each assessment examines whether the General Education program offers students sufficient opportunities to progress toward SLCC's General Education learning outcomes and whether graduating students are adequately meeting those learning outcomes.

The parameters for the sample this year were as follows: the students must have graduated from SLCC in May 2021 with either an A.A. (Associates of Arts) or A.S. (Associates of Science) degree. In addition, the entirety of their General Education coursework must have been completed at SLCC. This assured us that we would not be looking at artifacts students completed while taking General Education courses at other institutions. In the end, we pulled a random sample of 100 students (50 who identified as female and 50 who identified as male) who fit these parameters and who had submitted an ePortfolio link to our Banner system.

We used a holistic rubric to complete this assessment. This rubric is a combination of SLCC-specific internal measures, VALUE rubrics developed by the American Association of Colleges and Universities (AAC&U), and AAC&U VALUE rubrics modified for our circumstances at SLCC.

As we did last year, we continued the assignment-centric approach to assessing the Effective Communication learning outcome. Tiffany Rousculp, our Writing Across the College Director, organized the teams who assessed the signature assignments for this learning outcome. You can read more about the specifics of this project in the Effective Communications portion of this report.

The Information Literacy team was led by the Assistant Director of the Library, Zack Allred. All other assessment teams were organized and led by the ePortfolio Coordinator, Emily Dibble, and were comprised of pairs of SLCC faculty, staff and/or administrators. Most teams were interdisciplinary, and all teams worked together using the rubrics to assess different learning outcomes and calibrate their scores. We assessed all 100 ePortfolios using this method.

This year we decided not to assess a few of the components that we have looked at in years past. We determined that the following--for various reasons-- could not adequately be assessed using ePortfolios at the present time:

- *Qualitative Effective Communication*--For more information on why we did not assess this outcome the same way this year, please see the Effective Communication section.

- *Oral Communication*—This is a learning outcome that we typically assess every other year. Since we looked at this extensively last year (2020) we have decided to revisit it in the 2022 assessment.

- *Computer Literacy*—This learning outcome is not assessable as it is currently written. This outcome is still in the process of being reviewed by curriculum committees and stakeholders of the designation to determine if it can be revised to the point where we can effectively assess it in student ePortfolios.

Effective Written Communication

As noted in the Effective Communication section of the 2020 General Education Assessment Report, the SLCC Writing Across the College (WAC) program conducted the first year of a two-year assessment project that sought to investigate whether and how signature assignment design impacts how well students demonstrate their achievement of the Effective Communication student learning outcome. This assessment was designed to provide usable data to close the loop and positively impact student learning experiences.

Year 1 of this project (the results of which comprise this report) posed two questions of signature assignments in general education courses: 1) how do signature assignments engage students with the experiential goals in the Framework for Success in Post-Secondary Writing and 2) how well do signature assignments meet standards for Transparency in Learning and Teaching?

Year 2 of this project invited faculty participating in Year 1 to individual consultations in which they revised their signature assignments to meet the experiential goals and standards noted above. Due to the limitations of COVID-19, assessment of subsequent student writing was gathered through grades on the assignments that had been revised. Additionally, revised assignments were re-evaluated according to the rubric used for assessment in Year 1 of the project.

Assessment Process

The WAC director invited all faculty who participated in Year 1 of the project to participate in Year 2. Adjunct faculty were compensated for six hours of work to engage in individual consultations, revise their assignments, and provide reflection at the end of the project. Full-time faculty can cite this work as professional development in their professional portfolios.

Half of the faculty who submitted assignments to Year 1 indicated that they wished to participate in Year 2 of the study, for a total of 25 potential participants. However, nine faculty ultimately agreed to participate in Year 2. It is believed that the COVID-19 pandemic had a negative impact on the participation rate, as faculty were burdened with adapting their teaching and pedagogies to virtual workspaces. Faculty were from Anthropology, Biology, Business, Communication, History, Political Science, and Sociology. Each course in the assessment was a high-enrollment, 1000-level course.

Using the Framework for Success in Post-Secondary Writing and the standards derived from the Transparency in Learning and Teaching project, the WAC director met with each participating faculty member to discuss the assignment they had submitted for Year 1 of the study. In this discussion, we discussed the concept of transparency and expectations for students in understanding writing assignments. Each participant was introduced to the SLCC Transparent Writing Assignment Template. This template contains the following sections:

1. Writing Situation/Context
2. Audience
3. Purpose
4. Type of Writing ("Genre")
5. Process
6. What You'll Turn In
7. Formatting Expectations/Evaluative Criteria
8. Examples

After this discussion, participants were invited to share drafts of their revised assignments with the WAC director or to move ahead without feedback. Two-thirds of the participants participated in follow-up feedback and revision before they introduced the assignments to their students.

At the end of the spring semester, participating faculty shared their revised assignments with the WAC director for re-assessment and responded to reflective questions. The participating faculty also gave permission for the WAC director to gain temporary access to their Canvas sites for the Spring 2021 semester and either the Fall 2020 or Spring 2020 semester in which they had used the previously revised assignment. The WAC director entered each Canvas site, downloaded the gradebook for each course, identified the relevant assignments, entered the data into a table for each participant (without any student information), and notified eLearning to remove temporary access. The WAC director had access to the Canvas sites for less than 24 hours. Downloaded gradebook data was destroyed after the relevant assignment grades were entered.

First, the WAC director assessed the revised assignments using the same rubric used in Year 1. Second, the WAC director calculated the change in assignment scores between the original assignment and the revised transparent assignment. Next, the WAC director shared the quantitative results and invited participants to reflect on them.

Findings

Assignment Assessment

The assignment rubric contained eight criteria and with four levels each: Exceeds Expectations (3 points), Meets Expectations (2 points), Below Expectations (1 point) and None (0 points). An assignment that met all expectations would earn a total score of **16 points**.

In Year 1, collectively, the 62 assignments scored an average o**f 9.52 points** and a median of **9 points.** Based on their total scores, 21 of the assignments (33.9%) either met or exceeded expectations while 41 assignments (66.1%) fell below expectations.

In Year 2, collectively, the 11 assignments scored an average of **21.57 points** (+127%) and a median of **23 points** (+156%).

The changes in individual evaluative areas of the rubric are indicated in the chart below:

Student Assignment Scores Change

Two sets of grades for the specific assignment were analyzed for their average and median scores. If the total number of points available differed for the two assignments, the average and median of the percentage was calculated. The change of the average and median was then calculated. Results are shown in the table below:

Seven of the 11 assignments showed an increase in average assignment score, ranging from a 13.06% increase to 2.58% increase. Four showed a decrease in the average score, ranging from -0.12% decrease to -6.77% decrease.

In order to remove outlier scores, the median scores were calculated. Six of the 11 assignments showed an increase in median assignment score, ranging from a 9.38% increase to 0.54% increase. Four assignments showed no change. One assignment showed a decreased median score of -4.84%.

Discussion

Assignment Assessment

The findings indicate that the intervention of individual consultations with faculty dramatically improved the quality of their writing assignments. All but one assignment met the criteria for Exceeding Expectations. Of particular note is the change in the transparency of Audience in the assignments. This is a simple and straightforward addition/modification to assignments that can be easily achieved. Transparency regarding audience creates a more authentic writing situation for students than when an audience is not mentioned.

Further, we see very large increases in the Purpose noted in assignments. This change indicates that the faculty articulated their rationale or reasoning for the assignment to students more clearly than before, allowing the students to understand why they were being asked to do an assignment. Closely related to purpose, the Rhetorical Situation for which students were writing improved the authenticity of the writing experience.

While Assignment Procedures and Critical Thinking improved, they were among the higher scoring elements of Year 1's assessment. Writing Processes, on the other hand, moved from

quite a bit below expectations to meeting expectations. Providing students with writing keywords (e.g.: summarize, analyze, draft, revise, etc.) helps students recognize that, even outside of composition classes, writing is an iterative process that requires time and different types of engagement with ideas and text. This is also a simple addition to an assignment that can scaffold learning processes for students.

Finally, Conventions (Formatting Expectations/Evaluative Criteria) and Readability improved across the assignments. In the process of revision, faculty became aware of how their writing was being taken up by students, specifically its clarity and organization and signposting. What must ask of ourselves the same that we ask of students: we must adapt our writing to our audiences to communicate clearly and effectively.

Student Assignment Scores

The change in the average and median scores indicates less conclusive results than the assignment assessment. While the average student scores increased for most of the assignments, some did decrease. The median scores increased for a majority of the assignments, yet four remained the same and one decreased.

Looking at the scores in a more granular manner may shed some light on the findings. For each of the assignments that showed no change in the median scores, the median score equaled the total points possible for the assignment. Only a small percentage of students in these courses earned less than full points. These generous graders did indicate that they saw an improvement in the assignment experience for their students. One participant wrote, "I could tell that the instructions were more clear and students were writing better assignments, more in line with the expectations. The quality improved and the students were answering every question we wanted them to." Another shared, "I think that students understand the purpose of the assignment more after the revision."

The HIST 1700 assignment showed a minimal increase in the median score (+0.54%), but the average score increased considerably (+5.76). Interestingly, the range of scores for the pre- and post-revised assignments increased by 33% (18 points to 24 points) which indicates a closer and more precise evaluative practice. This faculty member revised the assignment significantly, changing from a single assignment to multiple scaffolding assignments leading up to a final project. This faculty member stated, "I have seen loads of improvements in student papers. This breakdown will hopefully also prevent plagiarism. After revising my assignment, I was also able to get a better understanding of creating a rubric for the project."

The SOC 1010 and POLS 1100 assignments showed small increases in median scores (+2.54%, +2.00%). Interestingly, the range of scores for SOC 1010 increased significantly, with the pre-revised assignment scores all but one outlier assignment receiving the top points possible. In the post-revised assignment, the scores had a range of 30 points, with one outlier. This explains the small decrease in average scores yet the increase in median scores. Similar

to the HIST 1700 findings, while the median score increase was small, this faculty member has provided more precise evaluation of the signature assignment to students. (Notably, the BIOL 1610 scores increased in range post-revision as well, suggesting more precise evaluation. This, coupled with the generous grading in the pre-revision assignment accounts for the decrease in average grades.)

The POLS 1100 assignment comparison was slightly different than those in the other courses. The post-revision assignment was the second essay assignment in the semester. Both assignments were graded according to the same criteria. It is not possible to conclude whether the assignment revision had an impact on the student writing performance or whether it was perhaps familiarity with the genre.

The BUS 1010 assignments showed increases in median scores (+4.33%, +9.38%), yet the number of artifacts in the pre-revised assignment (N=5, 8) make this increase less conclusive than desired.

One of the ANTH 1010 courses showed meaningful increases in both average and median scores (+13.06, +5.81%). In addition to improving the transparency of the writing assignment to meet the assessment's evaluative criteria, this faculty member provided a number of modality options for students to demonstrate their learned beyond an essay. The faculty member wrote, "[Students] were much more engaged in the assignment, which was evident in their excitement levels while we went over it and their completed works." Additionally, the faculty member noted, "This is also the first semester I went over the assignment in class instead of just posting it to Canvas", another WAC best practice to support student success in writing assignments.

The COMM 1020 assignment was the only one that showed a decrease in average and median scores (-3.96, -4.84%). Upon reflection, the faculty member postulated that this effect was due to the newness of the assignment's design for the students. The revised assignment looked and was organized differently than the other assignments that students had encountered in the semester. The faculty member stated that, "Surprisingly, many of my students didn't do as well as they normally do on this last [assignment] because I require [an element] and at least half of them or more didn't have [one]. I do not remember seeing a time so many students failed to provide [this element] for the [assignment]." Although the students' scores decreased on this assignment, this finding does indicate that students adapt to the norms of their instructors' writing habits and the need for consistent presentation of assignments over the course of the semester. In other words, faculty writing assignments impact student success.

Student Experience

One qualitative finding that does not show up in the scores is the student experience of the assignments. Comments from the faculty clearly demonstrate that the assignments had an impact on how well students understood what was expected of them. A majority of the faculty

noted that students "asked fewer clarifying questions" of the assignment. Given that the median scores either remained the same or increased for all but one of the assignments, this seems to indicate that students were getting what they needed to succeed from the assignments. This means that faculty had more time to deal with substantive questions and issues, and the assignment itself was a useful resource to which they could turn.

Findings from Year 1 of this project showed that Purpose was one of the most important elements of an assignment for students. The Discussion of that assessment noted, "All [Student Writing and Reading Center] consultants stated that Purpose was an essential feature of a successful signature assignment. They stated that students already somewhat resist doing signature assignments and if it is not absolutely clear why they are being asked to do it, and how it relates to their learning goals, this resistance can turn to apathy." The clarity of Purpose increased in the assignments themselves by 275% and multiple faculty commented that students seemed more aware of the assignment's purposes. One faculty member wrote, "I learned how to better structure assignment instructions and ensure students knew the purpose behind it."
Student writing performance contains multiple variables and progresses slowly with time and effort. If faculty can influence student engagement with assignments through transparency practices, it will improve how the students experience their learning.

Conclusion

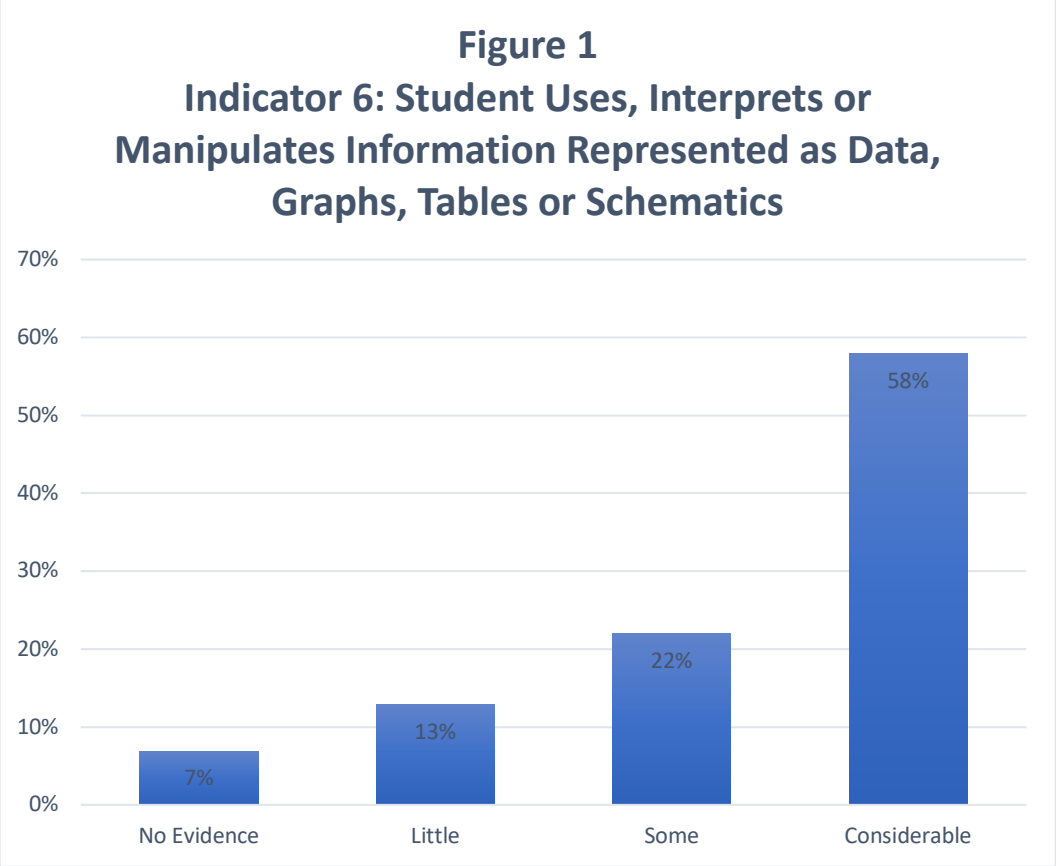
This assessment demonstrates that more transparent assignments lead to increases in the averages and median student scores and improved student experience. These findings reflect other research into how transparency impacts not only student outcomes, but also the experience that students have as they achieve those outcomes. There is a need to provide transparency in assignment training for faculty across all different areas of general education and programs. This is not an arduous process; in fact, one participating faculty member stated, "The revision was fairly simply to accomplish." It is recommended that areas and programs invest in this type of faculty development for the benefit of SLCC students.

Quantitative Literacy

Students develop quantitative literacies necessary for their chosen field of study*. This includes approaching practical problems by choosing and applying appropriate mathematical techniques; using information represented as data, graphs, tables, and schematics in a variety of disciplines; applying mathematical theory, concepts, and methods of inquiry appropriate to program-specific problems.*

We began our assessment of quantitative literacy by looking at the evidence in student ePortfolios and their ability to use or interpret information represented as data, graphs, tables, and schematics in a variety of disciplines.

Figure 1 indicates that 58% of all students had "considerable" (three or more artifacts) evidence of interpreting information. Twenty-two percent had "some" (two artifacts) with a combined 20% of students showing "little" or "no" evidence of interpretation.



Reviewers also looked at how well students interpreted quantitative information in various forms. Out of 100 ePortfolios, they found 174 artifacts where students attempted to interpret quantitative information.

As seen in Table 1, 32% of student work fell in the "well below" and "below" categories, and 90% of the artifacts scored in the top two performance levels, meaning the overwhelming majority of students were providing accurate explanations.

Table 1: Percentage of Artifacts (n=174) with Scores for the Interpretation of Quantitative Data in the VALUE Rubric Categories. (mean=2.82)

Interpretation *Ability to explain information presented to the student in the form of equations, graphs, diagrams, tables, words, etc.* Total # Assignments = 174 Mean Score = **2.82**	Attempts to explain information presented in mathematical forms but draws incorrect conclusions about what the information means.	Provides somewhat accurate explanations of information presented in mathematical forms, but occasionally makes minor errors related to computations or units.	Provides accurate explanations of information presented in mathematical forms.	Provides accurate explanations of information presented in mathematical forms. Makes appropriate inferences based on that information.
	14%	18%	73%	17%

In addition, we also wanted to look at the students' ability to manipulate quantitative information from one form to another, such as converting a table of data to a graph or chart. In Table 2 (page 13) we can see that 34% of students' artifacts had inaccurate or inappropriate mathematical portrayals while 95% competently or skillfully converted relevant information into desired mathematical portrayals.

Table 2: Percentage of Artifacts (n=174) with Scores for the Manipulation of Quantitative Data in the VALUE Rubric Categories. (mean=2.80)

Manipulation *Ability of the student to convert relevant information from one form—such as equations, graphs, diagrams, tables, words—to another.* Total # Assignments = 174 Mean Score = **2.80**	Completes conversion of information but resulting mathematical portrayal is inappropriate or inaccurate.	Completes conversion of information but resulting mathematical portrayal is only partially appropriate or accurate.	Competently converts relevant information into an appropriate and desired mathematical portrayal.	Skillfully converts relevant information into an insightful mathematical portrayal in a way that contributes to a further or deeper understanding.
	17%	17%	74%	21%

Finally, we felt the unaltered VALUE rubric for quantitative literacy did a sufficient job in aiding reviewers who assessed students' ability to communicate quantitative evidence in support of an argument or the purpose of their work. Table 3 (page 14) shows that 8% provided arguments where quantitative evidence is pertinent but did not provide adequate numerical support. Thirty-nine percent of assignments used quantitative information but did not effectively connect it to the argument or purpose of the work. The majority (55%) used the information to connect with the argument of the work, although it may have been less effectively presented. Twenty-seven percent of students used quantitative information to connect to the argument and presented it in a high-quality and effective format.

Table 3: Percentage of Artifacts (n=174) with Scores for the Communication of Quantitative Data in the VALUE Rubric Categories. (mean=2.80)

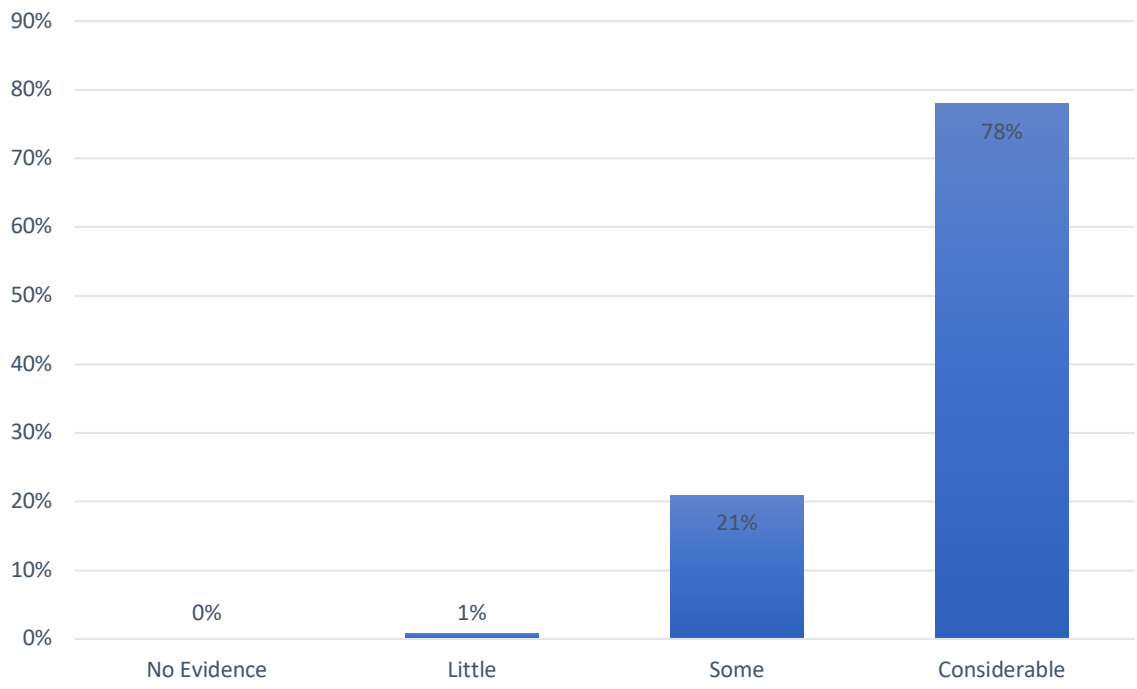
Communication *Ability of the student to express quantitative evidence in support of the argument or purpose of the work (in terms of what evidence is used and how it is formatted, presented, and contextualized)* Total # Assignments = 174 Mean Score = **2.80**	Presents an argument for which quantitative evidence is pertinent but does not provide adequate explicit numerical support. (May use quasi-quantitative words such as "many," "few," "increasing," "small," and the like in place of actual quantities.)	Uses quantitative information but does not effectively connect it to the argument or purpose of the work.	Uses quantitative information in connection with the argument or purpose of the work, though data may be presented in a less than completely effective format or some parts of the explication may be uneven.	Uses quantitative information in connection with the argument or purpose of the work, presents it in an effective format, and explicates it with consistently high quality.
	8%	39%	55%	27%

Critical Thinking

Students think critically. *This includes reasoning effectively from available evidence; demonstrating effective problem solving; engaging in reflective thinking and expression; demonstrating higher-order skills such as analysis, synthesis, and evaluation; making connections across disciplines; applying scientific methods to the inquiry process.*

One aspect of the critical thinking learning outcome we examined was whether SLCC students were getting experiences with unstructured problems (or problems where there was not a clearly defined right or wrong answer). The team of assessors did a quantitative count of the number of assignments in students' ePortfolios where there were artifacts that dealt with these types of problems. As indicated in Figure 2, 78% of students' ePortfolios showed "considerable" evidence (three or more artifacts) that they were getting practice grappling with unstructured problems and another 22% indicated that student ePortfolios had "some" evidence (two artifacts).

Figure 2
Indicator 14: Student Demonstrates Problem-Solving Skills



Student reflections are another area where students demonstrate critical thinking. Every General Education course requires students to reflect on their learning or coursework, to self-reflect on who they are as learners, and then to place their learning in a broader context of either their lives or experiences or other classes they have been taking.

Figure 3 demonstrates that 46% of students are engaging in "some" reflection (six to twelve reflections in each ePortfolio) and an additional 36% are doing "considerable" reflection (thirteen or more reflections). Only 1% of student ePortfolios showed no evidence of reflection. Seventeen percent showed "little" evidence in their reflections. We always hope to see reflection continue to increase in the future. As signature assignments and the accompanying reflection increasingly becomes the accepted norm at the college, we have seen the number of student reflections increase over time.

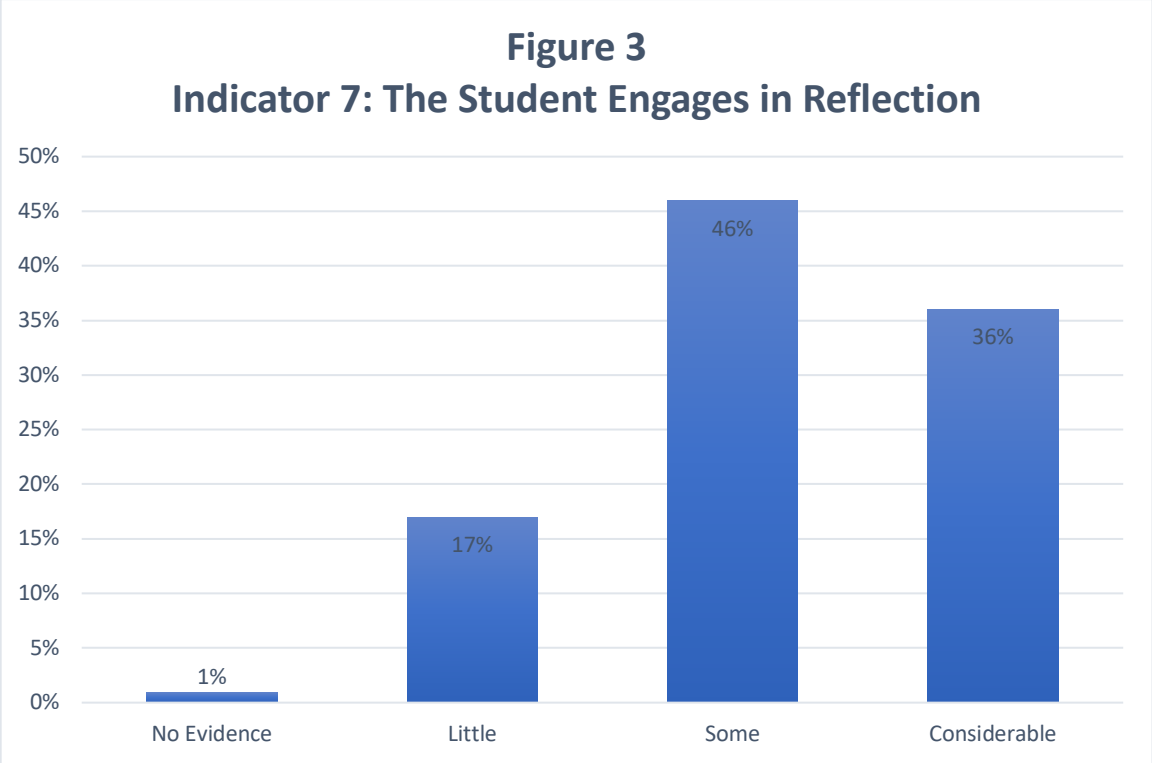
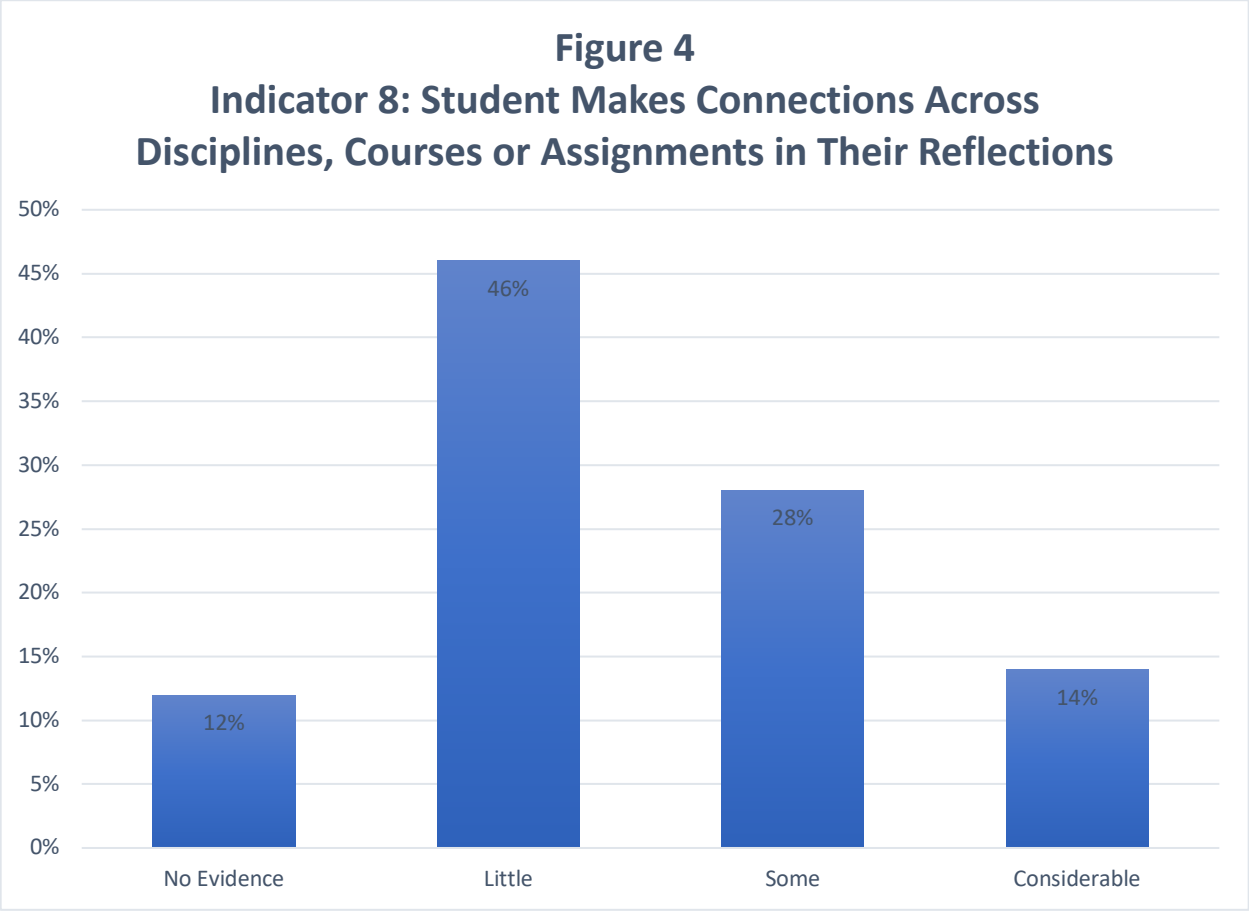


Figure 4 (below) and Figure 5 (page 18) examine where students made connections in their reflections. Figure 4 indicates that only 14% of student reflections made "considerable" (five or more) academic connections. Twenty-eight percent of students' portfolios showed "some" (three or four academic connections). Most students (58%) showed "little" (one or two academic connections) to "no" evidence of academic connections. A continued emphasis on making academic connections in the signature assignment and reflection portion of the ePortfolio will need to be advanced in General Education initiatives in order to improve these results.



In Figure 5 we can see that students tend to be more consistent about making personal connections to their lives in their reflections. Eighty-one percent of students' ePortfolios contained "some" (three or four) or "considerable" (five or more connections) evidence of reflections which made personal connections. Only 2% of student ePortfolios contained no evidence of personal connections in reflections.

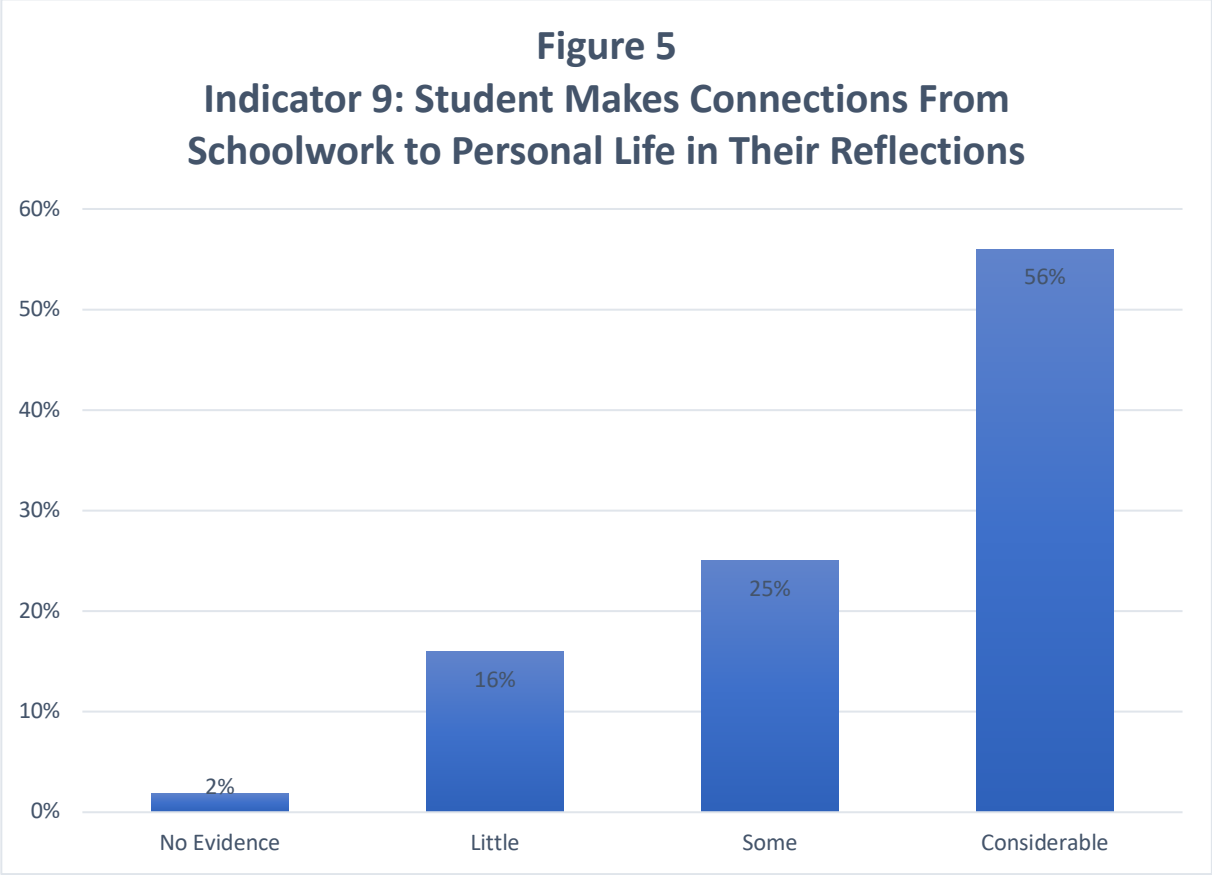


Table 4 displays the qualitative results for the students' reflections. We asked one team of reviewers to pick three of what they viewed as strong reflections from each ePortfolio. Next, they applied an in-house rubric to assess the reflections. Finally, they averaged the scores for each ePortfolio. Thirty-eight percent of students' reflections directly addressed the prompt(s) given by the instructor, and demonstrated adequate elaboration, connections, insights and perspectives and used techniques such as analysis, comparison and interpretation. Another 33% in the "exceeds" expectations category made strong connections and highlighted new insights and perspectives. A total of 71% of reflections fell into the top two categories which is a significant improvement. Twelve percent of students failed to address the reflection prompt(s) and contained no elaboration in their ePortfolio. This data demonstrates an improvement in the area of emphasizing student reflections as an important part of the ePortfolio signature assignment.

Table 4: Percentage of Student Reflections (n=297) with Scores for Reflection Quality in the Rubric Categories. (mean=2.92)

1	2	3	4
The writer fails to address the reflection prompt(s) given by the instructor. The reflection piece contains no elaboration and is too short.	The writer partially addresses the reflection prompt(s) given by the instructor and fails to sufficiently elaborate his/her points. S/he makes few connections, offers few insights and perspectives, etc.	The writer addresses the reflection prompt(s) given by the instructor, and does a fairly good job with elaboration, making connections, offering new insights and perspectives, and/or uses techniques such as questioning, comparing, interpreting, and analyzing.	The writer directly addresses the reflection prompt(s) given by the instructor, elaborates his/her points, makes strong intellectual or personal connections, highlights new insights and perspectives, and/or uses techniques such as questioning, comparing, interpreting, and analyzing.
12%	17%	38%	33%

In Table 5 we can view the way artifacts scored for scientific thinking with n=2.32. Reviewers found 72 artifacts where they saw students attempting to demonstrate an understanding of scientific thinking. Out of this sample, 22% of the artifacts demonstrated that students did not clearly understand the scientific method. Thirty-five percent of the artifacts indicated that students understood some aspects of the scientific method. An additional 32% of assignments showed students understood most of the method and only 11% showed an understanding of all components of scientific method including appropriate use of hypotheses, observation, collecting data, interpreting data and formulating conclusions.

Table 5: Percentage of Assignments (n=72) with Scores for Scientific Thinking in the Rubric Categories. (mean=2.32)

1	2	3	4
Student clearly does not understand hypotheses, observation, collecting data, interpreting findings or formulating conclusions consistent with data.	Student understands a few of the following: the appropriate use of hypotheses, observation, collecting data, interpreting findings, and formulating conclusions consistent with data.	Student understands most of the following: the appropriate use of hypotheses, observation, collecting data, interpreting findings, and formulating conclusions consistent with data.	Student understands all of the following: the appropriate use of a hypotheses, observation, collecting data, interpreting findings, and formulating conclusions consistent with data.
22%	35%	32%	11%

Information Literacy

Students develop information literacy. *This includes gathering and analyzing information using technology, library resources, and other modalities; understanding and acting upon ethical and security principles with respect to information acquisition and distribution; distinguishing between credible and non-credible sources of information and using the former in their work in an appropriately documented fashion.*

Methods

The 2021 Information Literacy ePortfolio assessment follows the same methods as most previous years; evaluation of 100 ePortfolios using a SLCC developed rubric based upon the ACRL Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education. The rubric consists of seven sections focusing on source credibility, audience and/or purpose, attribution, synthesis, original thoughts/ideas, topic development, and volume of sources used. One new thing this year was including faculty as reviewers for this outcome. This is something we had been hoping to do for a few years. Three reviewers participated in this year's assessment, two faculty members from the School of Social Science and Humanities and one Librarian. After a norming process, the remaining ePortfolios were divided into three groups with each reviewer taking one group for review. Review took place independently with scores tallied in the shared assessment spreadsheet.

Findings

Results of the assessment followed a traditional bell curve pattern; the majority of scores were in the "below expectations" and "meets expectations" with fewer results in the "well below expectations" and "exceeds expectations" categories (see Table 6 on page 23). This is relatively consistent with findings from previous years, however there was more concentration of scores in the center of the curve than on the margins of the curve compared to previous years. One unique outlier is in the Develops Original Thoughts/Ideas criteria where no student scored in the "well below expectations" category. The exception for this bell curve dispersal is the volume of sources used indicator where 85 out of the 100 ePortfolios reviewed fell into the "considerable" category, the highest of the four levels (see Figure 6 on page 22).

Perspectives and Recommendations

Reviewers felt the rubric was adequate to assess information literacy in student work. However, given the nature of the assessment there was a shared perspective that much of the assessment was an assessment of the assignments created by faculty as much as, if not more than, the performance of the students. This was particularly the case for the audience/purpose indicator used in the rubric. One suggestion put forward to address this would be for more

authentic assignments to be used in courses, and fewer which are only seen in a college environment.

Additionally, there was concern that the thresholds set for the volume of sources indicator were set too low to be meaningful. The threshold for a considerable amount was set at 4+ sources. One recommendation for this would be to set the minimum level for inclusion in the considerable threshold would be at 10 to 15+ sources.

Consistent with the findings of the 2020 Information Literacy Intervention Analysis, an increase in Library instruction and Library based learning would likely improve student outcomes regarding information literacy.

Figure 6
Indicator 11: Student Gathers Information Using Technology, Library Resources & Other Modalities

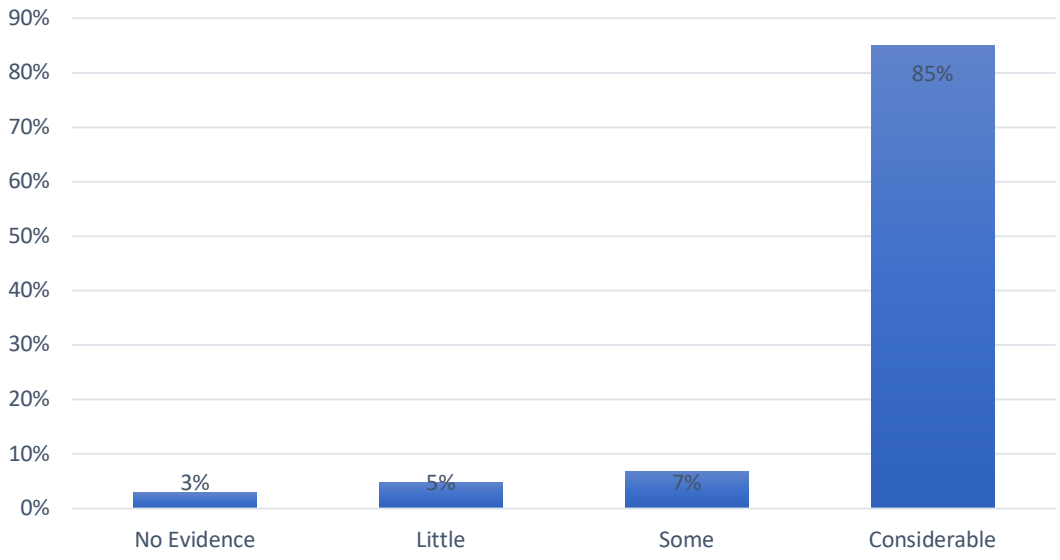


Table 6: Percentage of Portfolios (n=100) Whose Holistic Assessment Scores Fell into the ACRL-Inspired Information Literacy Rubric Performance Levels.

Indicators	1	2	3	4
Student will articulate a topic/ research question	Topic/research question not articulated.	Topic/research question is articulated late in the project.	Topic/research question is articulated early in the project.	Topic/research question is articulated in an academic or professional manner.
(Mean=2.53)	**7%**	**43%**	**40%**	**10%**
Student will indicate the intended audience/purpose of their project	No audience/purpos e.	Audience/purpos e is minimally indicated.	Audience/purpos e is indicated.	Audience/purpose is indicated in an academic or professional manner.
(Mean=2.51)	**6%**	**43%**	**45%**	**6%**
Student will draw syntheses based upon sources	Synthesis is not provided.	Synthesis is provided but is not logical or related to sources.	Synthesis is reasonable in relation to sources.	Synthesis is excellent and point toward new areas of research.
(Mean=2.51)	**7%**	**43%**	**42%**	**8%**
Student will distinguish their original thoughts/ideas from sources	Original thoughts/ideas are not distinguished.	Original thoughts/ideas are minimally distinguished.	Original thoughts/ideas are distinguished.	Original thoughts/ideas are distinguished in an academic/profession al manner.
(Mean=2.85)	**0%**	**28%**	**58%**	**14%**
Student will use appropriate/credible/authoritati ve sources to the scope of the project	Work does not include sources.	Work includes minimally appropriate/ credible/ authoritative sources.	Work includes mostly appropriate/ credible/ authoritative sources.	Work includes a variety of sources identifiable as appropriate/ credible/ authoritative.
(Mean=2.79)	**8%**	**22%**	**55%**	**15%**
Student will cite sources and use a consistent format (for each project)	No citations provided.	Citations are incorrectly done, or format has major errors.	Citations are mostly done correctly, or format has few minor mistakes.	Citations are perfect and format is professionally done.
(Mean=2.73)	**7%**	**31%**	**46%**	**16%**

Lifelong Wellness

Students develop the attitudes and skills for lifelong wellness*. This includes understanding the importance of physical activity and its connection to lifelong wellness; learning how participation in a fitness, sport, or leisure activity results in daily benefits including stress reduction, endorphin release, and a sense of well-being.*

One of the requirements for earning an associate degree at SLCC is for students to take a Lifelong Wellness (LW) course. Out of the 100 ePortfolios there were 91 assignments reviewed. Eighty-seven of the 100 students completed at least one lifelong wellness assignment. Table 7 shows that 3% of students' artifacts scored in the "well below" range. Another 18% minimally expressed understanding of the importance of physical activity and its connection to lifelong wellness. Thirty-nine percent of students' assignments adequately expressed understanding and 31% showed students effectively understood the importance and made connections. Overall, the quality of student artifacts met expectations with an average score of 3.08.

It should be noted that if a student did not have a lifelong wellness assignment in their ePortfolio, it was marked under the category of "well below."

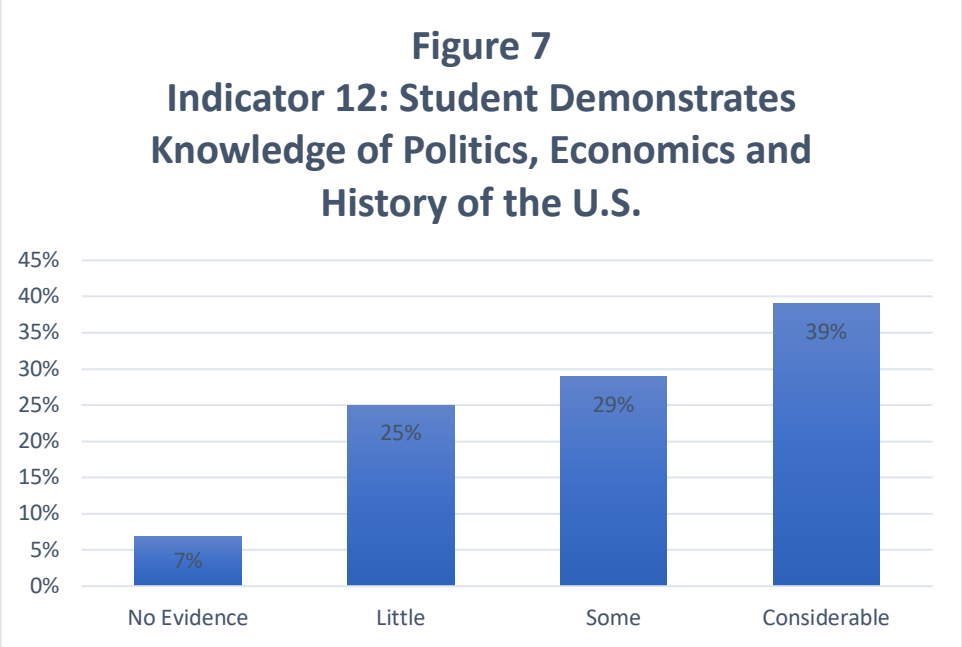
Table 7: Percentage of Students' Assignments (n=91) Whose Mean Scores for Lifelong Wellness Fell into These Ranges.

1	2	3	4
The posted artifact or instance of reflection was completely unsatisfactory.	At least one artifact or instance of reflection in which the student minimally expresses an understanding of the importance of physical activity and its connection to lifelong wellness.	At least one artifact or instance of reflection in which the student adequately expresses an understanding of the importance of physical activity and its connection to lifelong wellness.	At least one artifact or instance of reflection in which the student effectively expresses an understanding of the importance of physical activity and its connection to lifelong wellness.
3%	18%	39%	31%

Community and Civic Engagement

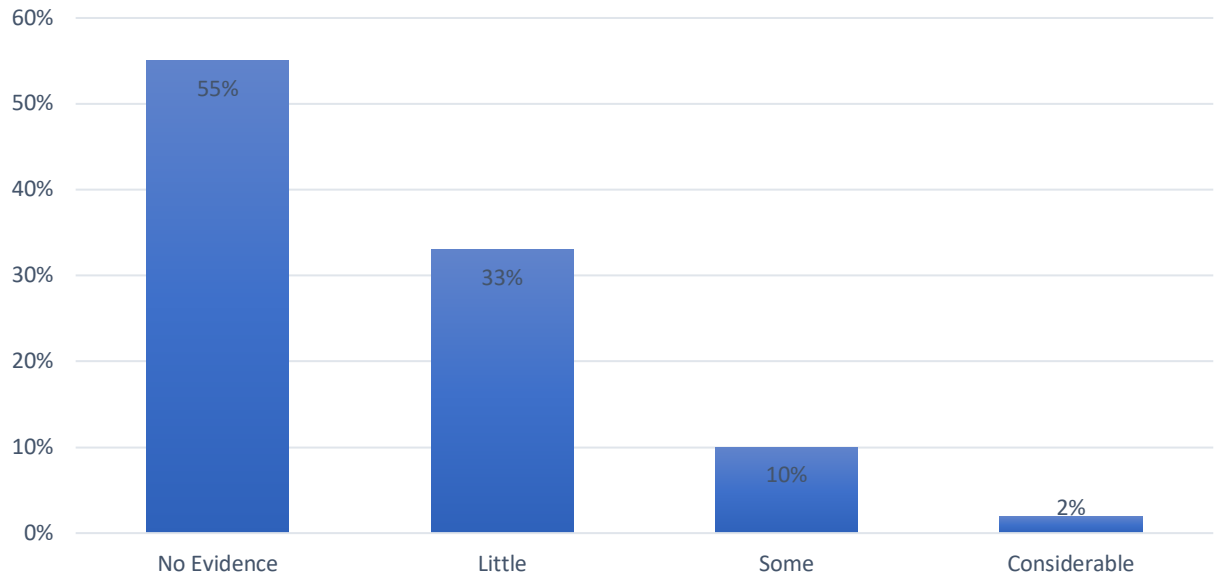
Students develop the knowledge and skills to be community engaged learners and scholars. *This includes understanding the natural, political, historical, social, and economic underpinnings of the local, national, and global communities to which they belong…*

The Community and Civic Engagement learning outcome is one that has been looked at from several different aspects. A more extensive analysis, using a slightly different methodology was conducted by a group of four faculty and our Coordinator for Engaged Learning, Lucy Smith. Their report will be published to the college in a separate report. Our assessment reviewed ePortfolios for only basic civic literacy competencies. The main issue we looked at here was whether students were creating signature assignments that asked them to demonstrate an understanding of politics, economics, and history either of the United States or of a global nature (outside of the United States). Figure 7 shows that 32% of students had either no or "little" (one artifact) evidence while 39% of students had "considerable" (three or more) evidence that demonstrated knowledge of U.S. civic literacy and another 29% had "some" (two artifacts).



When we looked at students' global knowledge in Figure 8, only 2% of students had "considerable" evidence (three or more artifacts) and 55% had no evidence. This is very comparable to what we saw last year. We hope that recent efforts made in curricular bodies (such as creating a specific International/Global (IG) General Education designation) will ensure that students soon will have sufficient opportunities to develop global knowledge.

Figure 8
Indicator 13: Student Demonstrates Knowledge of Global Politices, Economics, History and/or Geography



Recommendations from Reviewers

Each year we ask those who have participated in the General Education ePortfolio Assessment to reflect on their experience. Below are some of the insights and observations from this year's assessors about how we can help students improve their ePortfolios and how faculty can help students do ePortfolios well.

Signature Assignments:

- Scaffold signature assignments
- Develop a thoughtful, comprehensive signature assignment, provide explicit instructions and samples of high-quality work
- Include more group assignments as signature assignments

Reflection:

- Remind students to make connections to life and other courses in your ePortfolio instructions to students
- Create stronger reflection prompts for students where they can be prompted to think more deeply
- Discuss with students about the importance of connection and critically thinking about their reflections
- Focus reflection prompts on specific learning outcomes that are being addressed
- Have students write reflections in essay format rather than Q&A
- Provide prompts to students that gets them thinking about 1) how their learning in the classroom/signature assignments apply to the learning outcomes of the course and gen ed learning outcomes 2) connecting their experiences with their professional, academic, and personal goals and aspirations, and 3) what other connections can be made about their experience/signature assignment with what they have learned from other courses, gen ed, lectures/workshops/events, HIPs, etc.
- Intentionally state in the beginning of classes what a High-Impact Practice is, the importance of HIPs, and why ePortfolio is considered a HIP. State in the beginning of the course the importance of reflection and the importance of ePortfolio as a tool to document learning growth and development.
- Incorporate reflection not just at the end of the class but instill a culture of reflection that is ongoing – reflecting before, during and after the course through journaling, discussions, dialogue, and maybe asking students to do a pre-reflection and/or mid-reflection in their ePortfolios.
- Encourage students to make reflections not just through writing, but rather encourage students to submit their reflections through video, audio recording, poem, other creative works, etc. and maybe include supplemental materials like photos, quotes, etc.
- Have students peer review and provide feedback on each other's reflections.

ePortfolio Design:

- Emphasize with students that they have creative control over their ePortfolios.
- Be more transparent with students about how the college uses and reads ePortfolios.
- Prompt students to be more creative with the design of their ePortfoilos
- Help students understand the importance of design and layout of their ePortfolios.
- Let students know that when they take time to add pictures and change the formatting their ePortfolios are much more engaging and it shows pride and ownership of their ePortfolio.
- Less is more, organization is very important. Make sure they delete what is not used (many students leave template text and placeholder courses)
- Make the ePortfolio an important part of the class

Context/Content:

- Ask students to provide context about the course and assignment
- Modify your signature assignments or at minimum, instruct students on how to introduce these assignments before presenting them in their portfolio, which will provide the reader with the context needed to fully understand the assignment and its objectives.
- Ensure the assignment instructions are included in the ePortfolios for all signature assignments.

Other Suggestions:

- Show students the benefits of a strong ePortfolio
- Explain to students how they might use their portfolios in the future, and why it can be worthwhile to spend a little more time curating the content.
- As faculty, value the ePortfolio and grade it with more discipline.
- Get students working on their ePortfolios sooner in the semester
- Be more transparent on what learning outcomes you would like them to address in their assignment and offer pointers on how to address them.
- Have anyone who teaches a general education class or who is on the general education committee take part in this assessment
- Maintain high quality prompts with clear assignment design
- Have faculty take advantage of available trainings that help them see the purpose of the ePortfolio and what types of assignments to use
- Use ePortfolios in non-Gen Ed programs and classes

Takeaways from Assessors:

- "I... gained some valuable information I take into consideration when designing content for the Dev site, as well as making adjustments to the ePortfolio reflection prompts and signature assignments in the future."

- "I learned a lot from other signature assignments; the shortcomings of my own assignments, areas where I can improve were a great learning experience for me."

- "I loved this experience; it gave me a chance to evaluate my own signature assignments. I also got to see a variety of signature assignments and get inspired by those assignments. I also realized that in my courses, I need students to understand the value of ePortfolios, the importance of having good page and course layouts. In the near future, I plan on having students work towards their ePortfolios sooner than later in their semester."

- **"**As a faculty looking at e-portfolios in a more holistic manor one thing that I really noticed was the students who truly engaged with the material demonstrated a higher overall understanding and critical thinking. I particularly liked those who tied aspects of their portfolio together...Doing this clearly demonstrated why the ePortfolio is a "Best teaching practice", but students need to buy in. It is more than a place to submit your assignments, it is a place where the student can showcase and tie in related (an unrelated) material."

- "I get so many ideas from seeing the work students are doing in other classes. Our faculty is so creative!"

- "...Although it took some time and effort, I learned a lot in the process as I reconsidered my own understanding and biases."

- "Working on this assessment project was extremely helpful. Being the steward of a GE course and being on the GE committee, it gave me increased insight into what other courses are doing for their prompts, and the outcomes in practice for other GE designations. It also put into perspective how GE is assessed, as I never understood it until now."

- "It was very helpful seeing how specific disciplines had amazing prompts that guided student reflections to be exceptional... I took some great ideas and have incorporated them into my ePortfolio assignment! Specifically, updated the prompts for the final reflection."

- "I will definitely incorporate some ideas into my own courses, not only for the ePortfolio assignment, but for activities in general."

- "…[F]or me this was worthwhile to gain some perspective on the portfolios and their potential."

- **"**I... could see growth in the students over time with their submissions... For students I do think it is a way to learn and grow and see how much they do progress over time. I really enjoyed reading through their reflections on a course. It made it easy to see what was important to a student."

- "Our assessment focus was on the use of data and group work. We were surprised we had a hard time finding signature assignments with group work evidence. The challenge pushed me to reconsider the set-up of my courses. While most of the signature assignments for the courses I designed have group work included, it is not required for the student to post the assignment requirements along with their signature assignments. There were probably many more group assignments included in signature assignments, but without the details of assignment included with the signature assignment, we had no way of knowing whether or not it was a group assignment..."

- "I hope to rewrite my reflection prompts to lead students to produce a higher quality reflective statement."

- "I firmly believe that having students meaningfully engage in their coursework is very important and that is where I particularly liked the signature assignments that were accompanied by meaningful reflection prompts. End of the semester reflection prompts help students critically reflect upon the course and their learning. It's as though by the end of the semester they were able to put in all the missing pieces of a puzzle. Through their reflection, one can see how students can finally apply what they have learnt in their course with the real world."

- "As new faculty this exercise was very helpful for me to get a better sense of what others have done with the portfolios, and overall made me more confident that the approach I took this year has been good. One thing I will be doing more in my class is explaining to students how they might use their portfolios in the future, and why it can be worthwhile to spend a little more time curating the content."

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank the following faculty, staff and administrators for the time and effort they put into working on this year's ePortfolio assessment.

Zack Allred (Library)
Angela Belnap (Allied Health)
Emily Dibble (ePortfolio, Humanities)
Jed Doelling (Biology)
Jeri Eastman (Interior Design)
Craig Ferrin (Fine Arts)
John Gauthier (History)
Cassie Goff (English)
Victoria Harding (ePortfolio)
Sherry Jensen (Economics)
Andrea Johnson (Respiratory Therapy)
Jen Klenk (Marketing)
Aarti Nakra (History)
Chuck Rettberg (Biotechnology)
Tiffany Rousculp (English, WAC)
Jacquie Spoon (Exercise Science)
Kathy Tran-Peters (Honors)
Shayne Vargo (Mathematics)
Meredith Wismer (History)
Michael Young (General Education, Honors and IDS)

Special thanks to Laurie Rosequist, Administrative Assistant in the Office of Learning Advancement and for Data Science and Analytics for helping us pull the random student samples.