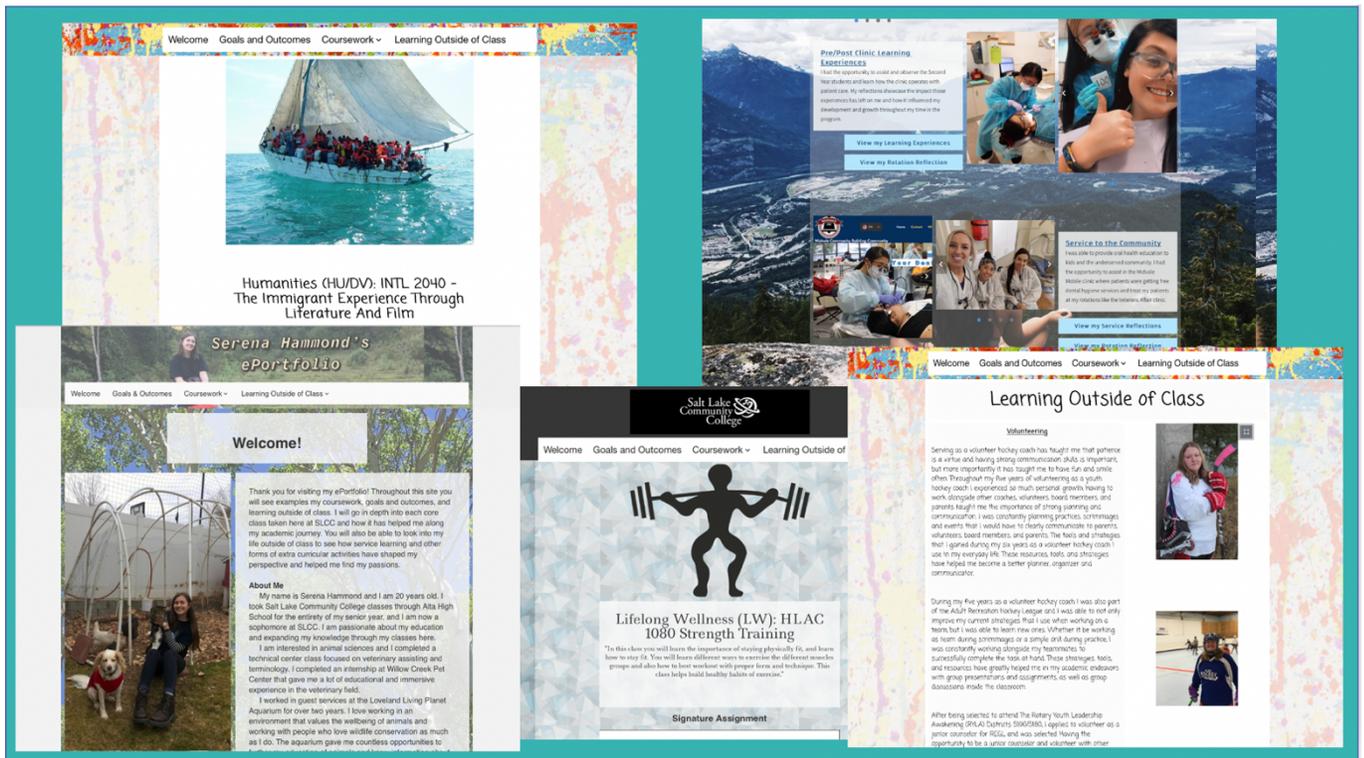# Salt Lake Community College

General Education Assessment Report 2020

Emily Dibble, Tiffany Rousculp, Keith Slade, Michael Toy, and Michael Young

All ePortfolio images from SLCC students used by permission.

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Assessment Methods

Salt Lake Community College has officially been using ePortfolios as a requirement in General Education courses for a decade now and it has been an effective way to assess the way students at the college experience general education since 2012. Salt Lake Community College uses student ePortfolios to assess the learning outcomes of the General Education program. Each assessment examines whether the General Education program offers students sufficient opportunities to progress toward Salt Lake Community College's (SLCC) General Education learning outcomes, and whether graduating students are adequately meeting those learning outcomes.

This year we took a bit of a different approach to our assessment. As part of our effort to be more equity-minded, we started disaggregating the assessment data last year. However, after doing so we ran into several challenges and found that we were falling short in our attempt to disaggregate and analyze the data in a meaningful way. This year we decided it would be beneficial to work more closely with our Data Science and Analytics Office. They helped us find a sample of students for our assessment, which we felt was much more representational. Data Science and Analytics made sure we considered the intersectionality of student groups at SLCC.

The parameters for this sample were as follows: they must have graduated from SLCC in May 2019 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 Salt Lake Community College. 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 138 students who fit these parameters and had submitted ePortfolio links to our Banner system. While this part of the assessment report will take a more holistic look at all the students, we will examine our approach to disaggregating the data in an additional section.

As in the past, 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.

We took a different approach this year 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 that project in the Effective Communications part of this report. The Information Literacy teams were organized by the Assistant Director of the Library, Zack Allred, who invited other librarians to participate. All other assessment teams were arranged by the ePortfolio Coordinator, Emily Dibble, and were comprised of teams of two 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 138 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.

- *Working with Others*—We decided that this learning outcome was too difficult to assess using the artifacts found in student ePortfolios.

- *Computer Literacy*—This learning outcome is not assessable as it is currently written. This outcome is currently 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 2019 General Education Assessment Report, the SLCC Writing Across the College (WAC) program had set a goal to work with the Associate Dean of General Education and the Associate Provost of Learning Advancement to determine the feasibility of conducting a longitudinal assessment of this student learning outcome in 2019-2020. In Fall 2019, it was determined that the potential findings from a longitudinal assessment of SLCC general education courses (nearly all 1000-level courses) currently do not merit the extensive, and expensive, labor required to conduct such a study.

Instead, the WAC director proposed a two-year assessment project that seeks to answer the question of whether and how signature assignment design impacts how well students demonstrate their achievement of the Effective Communication student learning outcome. This assessment intends to provide immediately usable data that can close the loop and positively impact student learning experiences. It also will provide faculty with best practices in transparent assignment design.

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 will invite faculty participating in Year 1 to a professional development workshop and follow-up support through which they will revise their signature assignments to meet the experiential goals and standards noted above. Randomized selections of student writing from the original and revised signature assignments will then be assessed using the faculty member's evaluative criteria. This assessment will seek to determine if the signature assignment has an impact on how well students meet the Effective Communication student learning ouotcome.

Assessment Process

The WAC director recruited four consultants from the SLCC Student Writing and Reading Center (SWRC) to participate in the assessment. SWRC consultants have more experience interpreting writing assignments than anyone else at the college. The

consultants each were hired by the SWRC while enrolled as students at SLCC and have continued to work there while completing undergraduate and graduate studies at nearby universities.

The WAC director drafted a signature assignment assessment rubric based on the experiential goals in the [Framework for Success in Post-Secondary Writing](#) and the standards derived from the [Transparency in Learning and Teaching](#) project. The SWRC consultants and the SWRC Program Manager gave feedback on the draft rubric and approved the final version (Appendix A).

The WAC director sent out a call for signature assignments to associate deans responsible for general education courses. The call described the two-year project and invited participation from all faculty who teach general education courses. Associate deans encouraged faculty to submit their assignments. Fifty faculty members submitted a total of 69 assignments. Of the 69 assignments, seven had to be removed from the data set because of duplication or problems with uploaded documents. Of the 62 assignments, 17 were noted as being a "department-wide" signature assignment used for all sections of a course. Assignments were collected from the following disciplines: Anthropology, Biology, Business, Communication, Composition, Criminal Justice, Economics, English Literature, Family and Human Studies History, Humanities, Math, Music, Nutrition, Philosophy, Political Science, Psychology, Religious Studies, Sociology, and Theater.

Half of the faculty who submitted assignments indicated that they wished to participate in Year 2 of the study, for a total of 25 potential participants.

The four consultants and the WAC director conducted two norming sessions. In the first, all rubric criteria were discussed, and two assignments were assessed together. The assessment team individually scored five more assignments, then met again to norm these scores. The consultants stated that they felt somewhat uncomfortable assessing the work of faculty members, some who had taught them while they were students at SLCC. The WAC director assured the consultants that they were, indeed, the experts on interpreting writing assignments. The team then scored the rest of the assignments individually. After the assignments were scored, the team met again to discuss outlier scores and debrief from the experience.

Findings

Total Scores

The 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. [1]

Collectively, the 62 assignments scored an average of 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. [2]
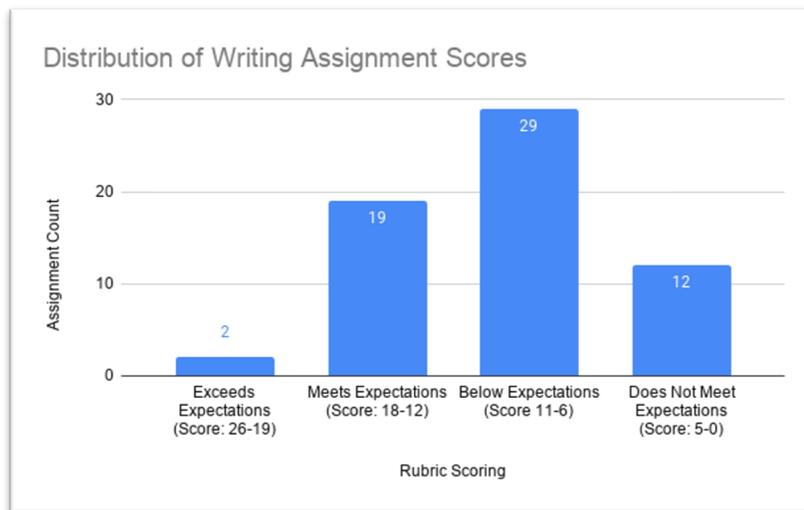

Separate Criteria

The scores for the assignments were also analyzed based on each separate criterium. Each criterium could Exceed Expectations (3 points), Meet Expectations (2 points), be Below Expectations (1) or Not Meet Expectations (0 points). Total scores for each criterium were divided by five (for the five assessors) for an average score. For example, a total score of 13 for a single criterium would result in an average score of 2.6, falling between Exceeds and Meets Expectations.

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[1] The assessment also noted whether the assignment indicated that it was a signature assignment, but this element did not have a score associated with it. Additionally, up to two bonus points for examples of the assignment were available.
[2] It should be noted that the WAC director will not be providing individual scores to associate deans or faculty. This assessment intended to discover how signature assignments, in general, meet certain criteria in order to improve student success. Instead, associate deans and faculty may use the attached rubric (Appendix A) to self-assess their assignments and may request support from the WAC director in making revisions if they so choose.

The first criterium, Purpose, assessed how well the signature assignment "explains how it connects with the course learning outcomes." The average score for Purpose was 0.8, below expectations.
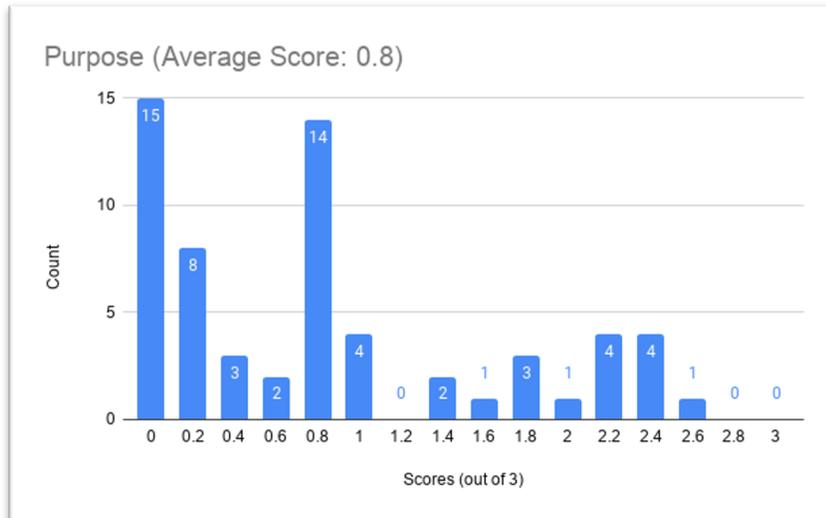

The second criterium, Rhetorical Situation, assessed how well the assignment, "provides sufficient context for the student author to understand the circumstances within which and the purpose(s) for which they are writing." The average score for Rhetorical Situation was 1.3, below expectations.
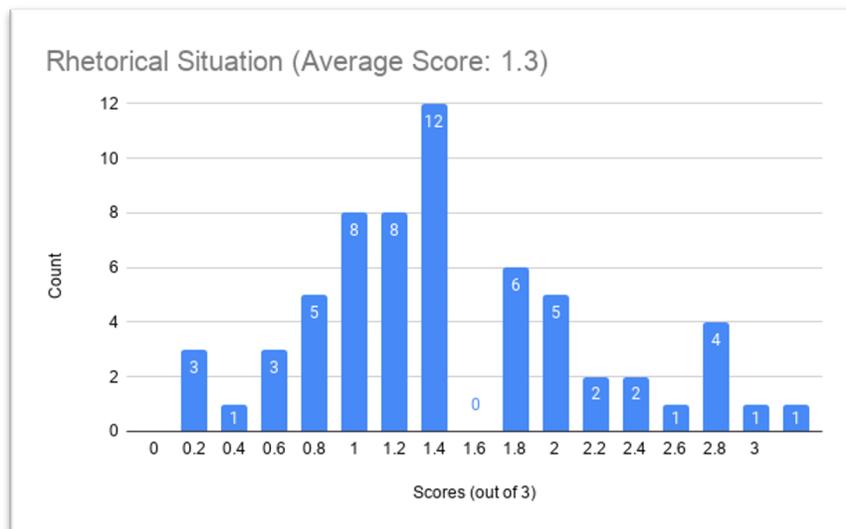

The third criterium, Audience, assessed how well the signature assignment "provides a clear description of the student author's intended audience or allows the student to

select an audience." The average score for Audience was 0.6, well below expectations, and with nearly half of the assignments with no mention of audience at all.
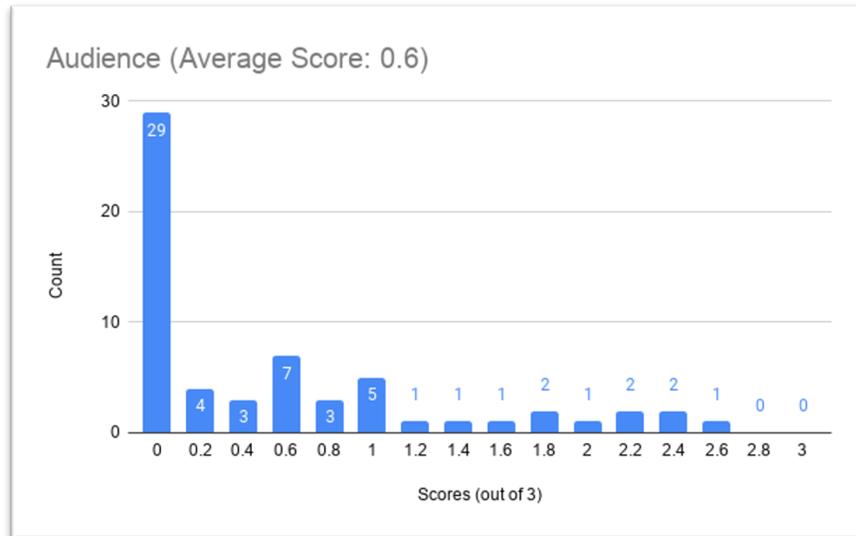
The fourth criterium, Critical Thinking, assessed how well the signature assignment "describes the critical thinking processes that the writer is expected to engage in (e.g. summarize, analyze, synthesize, create, reflect)." The average score for Critical Thinking was 1.5, half-way between meeting and below expectations.
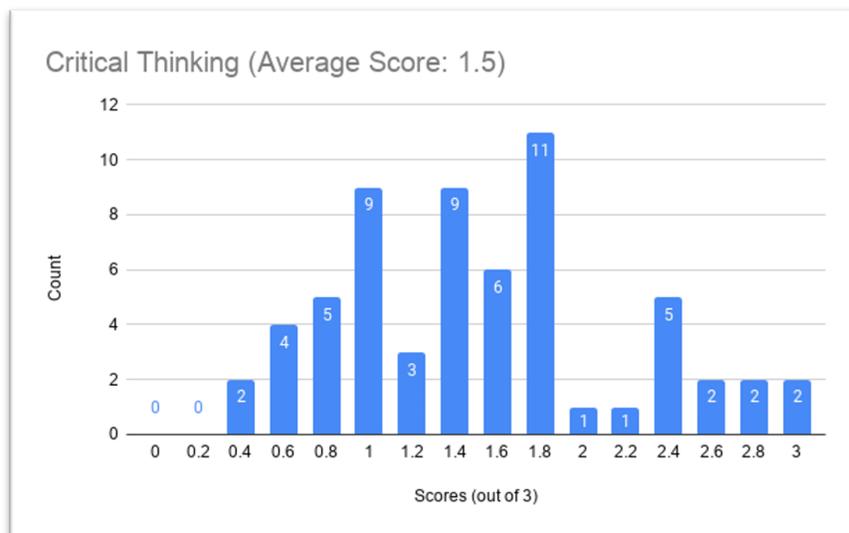
The fifth criterium, Writing Process, assessed how well the signature assignment "describes the writing processes to complete it (e.g.: brainstorming, research, planning, drafting, revision, editing)." The average score for Writing Process was 0.9, below expectations.
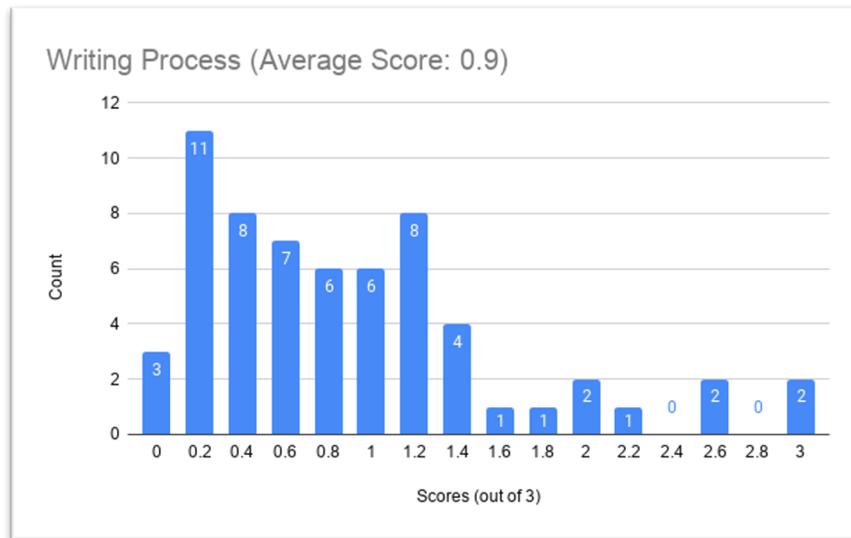
The sixth criterium, Assignment Procedures, assessed how well the signature assignment "provides the steps and activities that the students will take to complete the assignment." The average score for Assignment Procedures was 1.5, half-way between meets and below expectations.
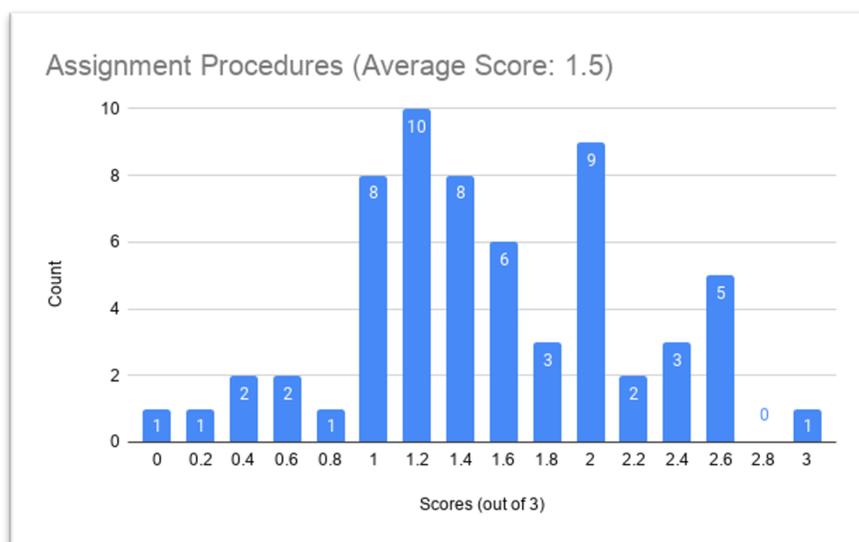
The seventh criterium, Conventions, assessed how well the signature assignment "provides descriptive evaluative criteria for the genre or disciplinary conventions. This may be in a rubric or in another form." The average score for Conventions was 1.3, below expectations.

Conventions (Average Score: 1.3)
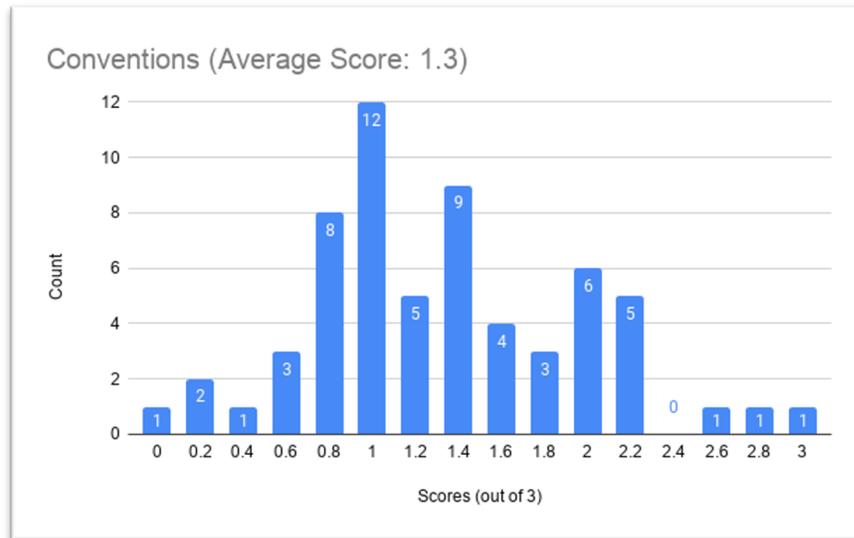
The final criterium, Readability, assessed the level of which the content in the signature assignment "is cohesive and easy to understand. The assignment is logically organized and easily navigable." The average score for Readability was 1.5, half-way between meets and below expectations.

Readability (Average Score: 1.5)
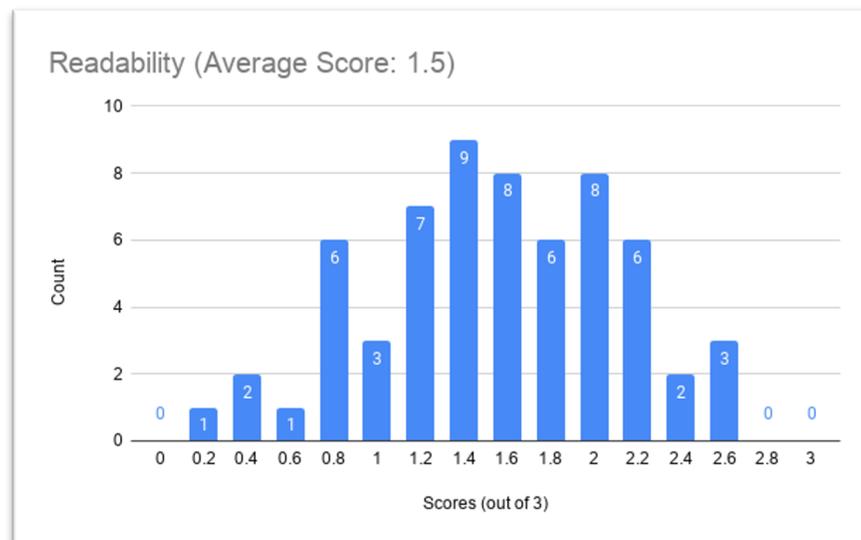
Discussion

The findings indicate a need for the college to provide faculty with support in their development of signature assignments. The majority of graduate programs do not provide pedagogical training for would-be college professors, and even rarer is adequate preparation to write for a student audience. Year 2 of this study will explore whether more transparent signature assignments will positively impact the Effective Communication student learning outcome but raising the communicative quality of SLCC's signature assignments should be a priority, nonetheless.

Some criteria are easier to address than others. First of all, alerting students to the audience for their signature assignment (even if it is the teacher) is a straightforward way to create a more transparent assignment and places students in an authentic writing situation. When writers are conscious of their audience, they can make better choices in their writing.

While audience is a relatively easy criteria to remedy, there are others that are more important, according to the debriefing with the SWRC consultants who participated in the assessment. All 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. Writing Process and Assignment Procedures also ranked high in importance for the consultants; this echoes the arguments made by the Transparency in Learning and Teaching project referenced earlier. Finally, Readability was cited as a priority for signature assignments because disorganized or unclear assignments add to frustration for students, which can also lead to apathy.

This assessment's findings are not cause for alarm or concern specific to Salt Lake Community College. There is little doubt that these findings would be very similar at other institutions of higher education. Instead of concern, these findings represent an opportunity to meaningfully impact student success here at SLCC. That 25 faculty are interested in participating in Year 2 of this project demonstrates the commitment that our faculty have to their students' success. This is unusual, since it can be quite difficult for faculty holding post-graduate degrees to seek assistance with their own writing: faculty are supposed to be "experts" and asking for support can feel risky. Yet, fully half of the participants are eager to do this work.

Oral Communication

For the last three years, we made the decision to focus this portion of the assessment on COMM 1020 (Public Speaking) because that course is one of the few that consistently requires a video of a student presenting a speech as an artifact on the student's ePortfolio. Faculty from the Communications department looked at the VALUE rubrics and then came up with a modified rubric, which they felt would effectively assess the quality of student oral presentations.

By focusing on COMM 1020 for our sample, we had a much more robust group of assignments, which led to a more thorough qualitative assessment. Table 1 (page 6) shows the data from this group of student portfolios. Over 75% of students either met or exceeded expectations in all areas, and mean scores for all areas were 3.01 and above.

Table 1: Percentage of Assignments' Scores for Evidence that Students Communicate Orally.

Performance Levels

|	1	2	3	4
Organization Follows the established Introduction. Each main point flows into the next with clear transitions between ideas. Follows established Conclusion. Easy to follow, logical connection of ideas	Student meets little to no (30% or below) college-level expectations outlined in this category.	Student only meets a few (less than 50%) of the college-level expectations outlined in this category.	Student meets the large majority (more than 70%) of the college-level expectations outlined in this category.	Student meets all the college-level expectations in this category and performs above and beyond these expectations in some areas outline in the category.
n=100 mean 3.11	0%	12%	65%	23%
Content and References Creates a connection with audience by adapting to this audience's interest, attitudes, and knowledge. Researched facts, statistics, examples, charts are used which include references that are orally cited, and it is clear how these references are authoritative for the topic. Brief stories, comparisons, personalized comments, and vivid word pictures are used.	Student meets little to no (30% or below) college-level expectations outlined in this category.	Student only meets a few (less than 50%) of the college-level expectations outlined in this category.	Student meets the large majority (more than 70%) of the college-level expectations outlined in this category.	Student meets all the college-level expectations in this category and performs above and beyond these expectations in some areas outline in the category.
n=100 mean 3.33	0%	1%	65%	34%

Delivery Used constant eye contact. Oral speaking style: non-complex, conversational tone used, pace of speech isn't too fast or too slow. Body movements and gestures used effectively. Use of vocal & facial variety. Fluency: no hesitant speech, proper pronunciation, proper articulation, proper grammar, free from disfluencies such as: "um, uh, so, like…"	Student meets little to no (30% or below) college-level expectations outlined in this category.	Student only meets a few (less than 50%) of the college-level expectations outlined in this category.	Student meets the large majority (more than 70%) of the college-level expectations outlined in this category.	Student meets all the college-level expectations in this category and performs above and beyond these expectations in some areas outline in the category.
n=100 mean 3.01	1%	22%	52%	25%

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 fifty-six percent of all students had "some" (two artifacts) or "considerable" (three or more artifacts), evidence of interpreting information. The twenty-eight percent had "considerable" evidence. Fifty-five percent had "little" or "no" evidence. The "no" evidence category showed the largest increase from last year by 14 percentage points.

Figure 1
Indicator 6: Student Uses, Interprets or Manipulates Information Represented as Data, Graphs, Tables or Schematics
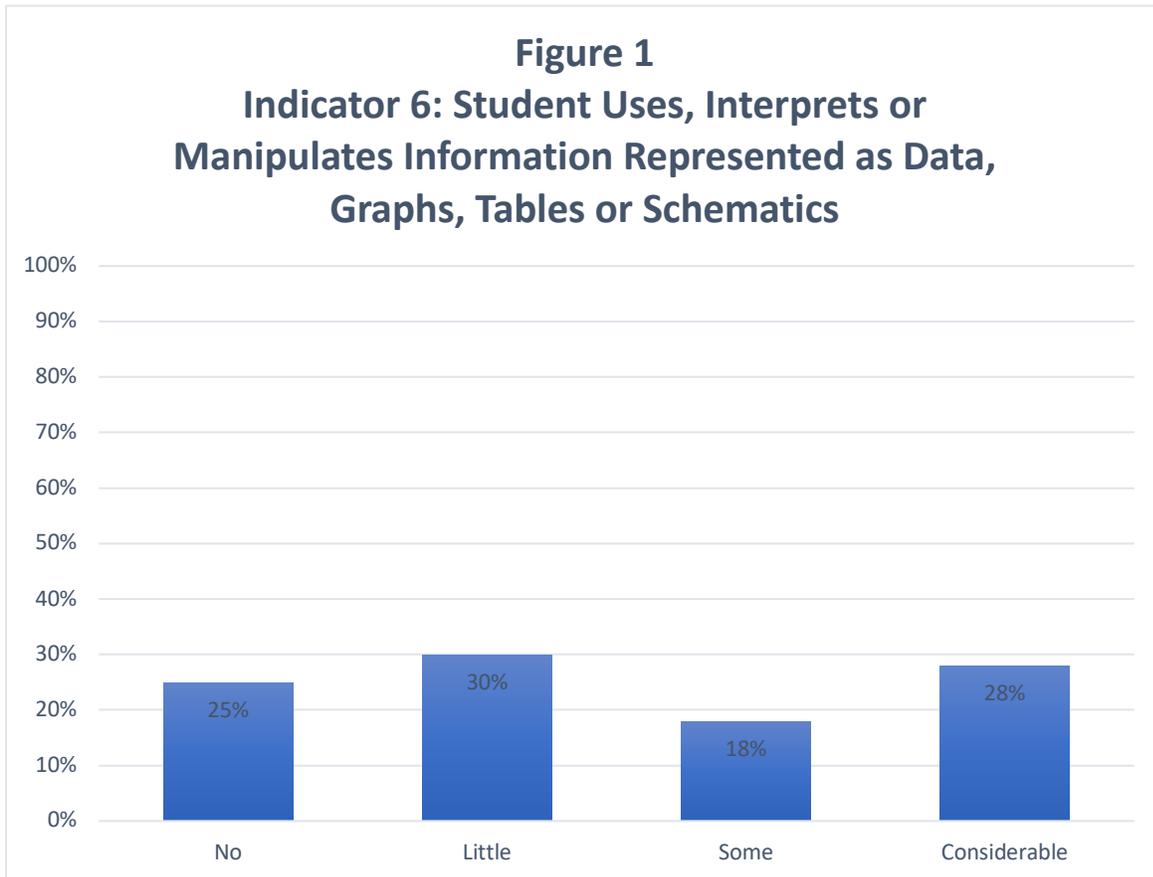
Reviewers also looked at how well students interpreted quantitative information in various forms. Out of 100 ePortfolios, they found 172 artifacts where students attempted to interpret quantitative information. By comparison, this is a decrease in sample size of 110 artifacts from what was reviewed last year.

As seen in Table 2, 6% of student work fell in the "well below" and "below" categories, and 94% of the artifacts scored in the top two performance levels, meaning the majority of students were providing accurate explanations.

Table 2 **Percentage of Artifacts (n=172) with Scores for the Interpretation of Quantitative Data in the VALUE Rubric Categories. (mean=2.95)**

Interpretation *Ability to explain information presented to the student in the form of equations, graphs, diagrams, tables, words, etc.* Total # Assignments = 94 Mean Score = **2.95**	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.
	1%	5%	93%	1%

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 3 we can see that once again, very few (only 1%) of students' artifacts had inaccurate or inappropriate mathematical portrayals while 91% competently converted relevant information into desired mathematical portrayals.

Table 3 **Percentage of Artifacts (n=172) with Scores for the Manipulation of Quantitative Data in the VALUE Rubric Categories. (mean=2.90)**

Manipulation *Ability of the student to convert relevant information from one form—such as equations, graphs, diagrams, tables, words—to another.* Total # Assignments = 94 Mean Score = **2.90**	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.
	1%	8%	91%	0%

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 4 shows that twelve percent provided arguments where quantitative evidence is pertinent but did not provide adequate numerical support. Thirty percent of assignments used quantitative information but did not effectively connect it to the argument or purpose of the work. The majority (50%) used the information to connect with the argument of the work, although it may have been less effectively presented. Eight percent of students used quantitative information to connect to the argument and presented it in a high-quality and effective format.

Table 4 **Percentage of Artifacts (n=172) with Scores for the Communication of Quantitative Data in the VALUE Rubric Categories. (mean=2.53)**

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 = 94 Mean Score = **2.53**	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.
	12%	30%	50%	8%

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 no 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 12% of students' ePortfolios showed "considerable" evidence (three or more artifacts) that they were getting practice grappling with unstructured problems and another 20% indicated that student ePortfolios had "some" evidence (two artifacts).

Figure 2
Indicator 14: Student Demonstrates Problem-Solving Skills
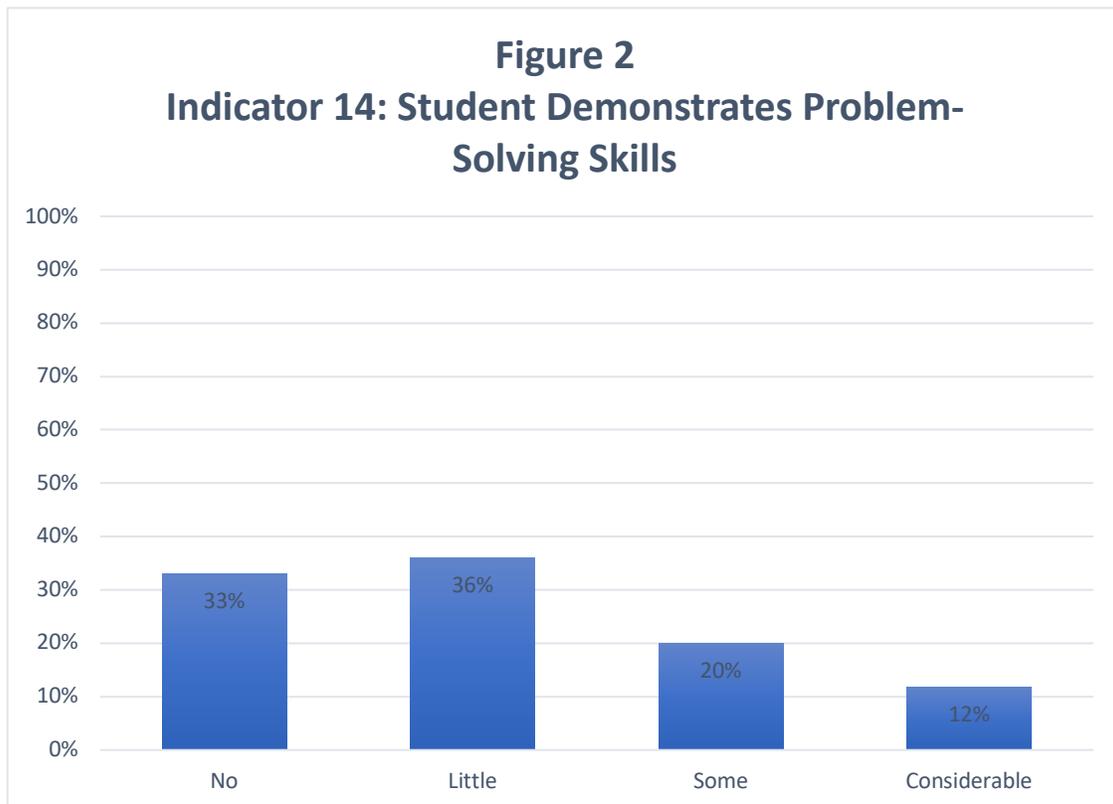
Student reflections are another area where we felt students demonstrate critical thinking. Every General Education course requires students to reflect on their learning or coursework, to self-reflect on who they are as learners, and then to place their learning in a broader context of either their lives or experiences or other classes they have been taking.

Figure 3 demonstrates that 46% of students are engaging in at least some reflection (six to twelve reflections in each ePortfolio) and an additional 7% are doing "considerable" reflection (thirteen or more reflections). Only 4% of student ePortfolios showed no evidence of reflection, an increase of 3 percentage points from last year. 42% 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 would expect the number of student reflections to increase.

Figure 3
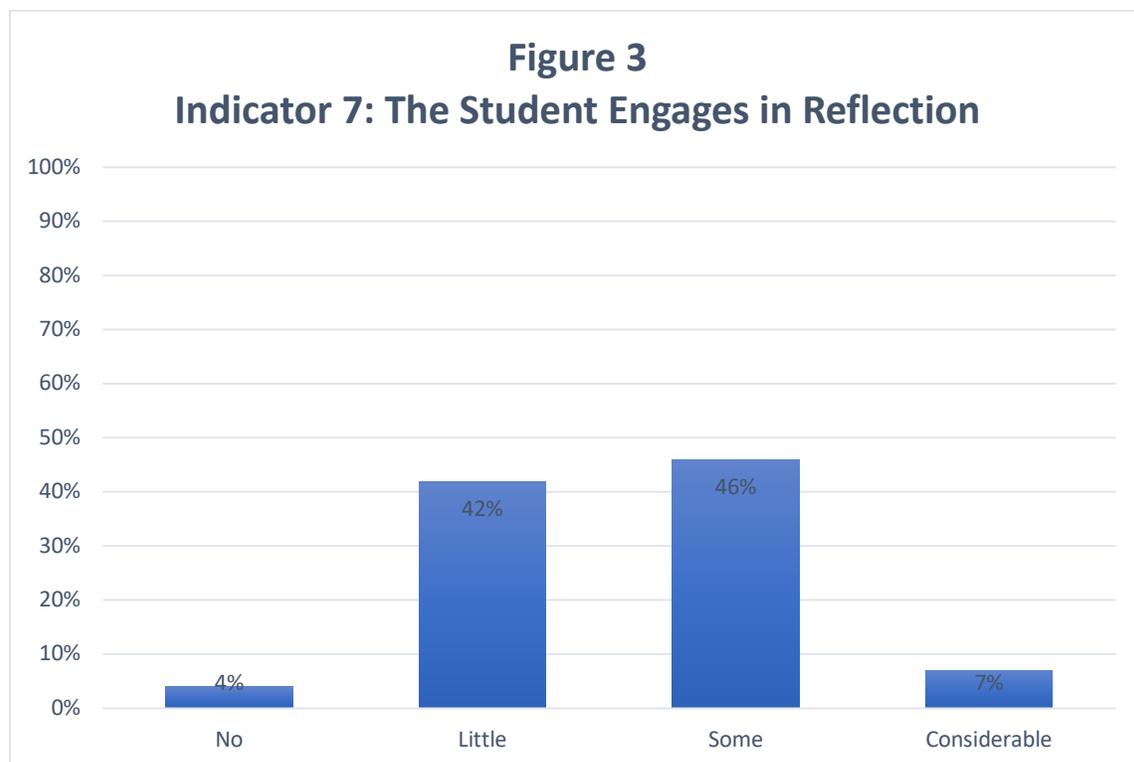**Indicator 7: The Student Engages in Reflection**

Figure 4 and Figure 5 (pages 13 & 14) examine where students made connections in their reflections. Just like last year, Figure 4 indicates that only 33% of student reflections made "considerable" (five or more) academic connections. Still 38% of

students' portfolios showed "little" (one or two academic connections) to "no" evidence of academic connections. While the number of students (30%) who have done "some" has increased, this is continuing to be an area where we need improvement.

Figure 4
Indicator 8: Student Makes Connections Across Disciplines, Courses, or Assignments in their reflections
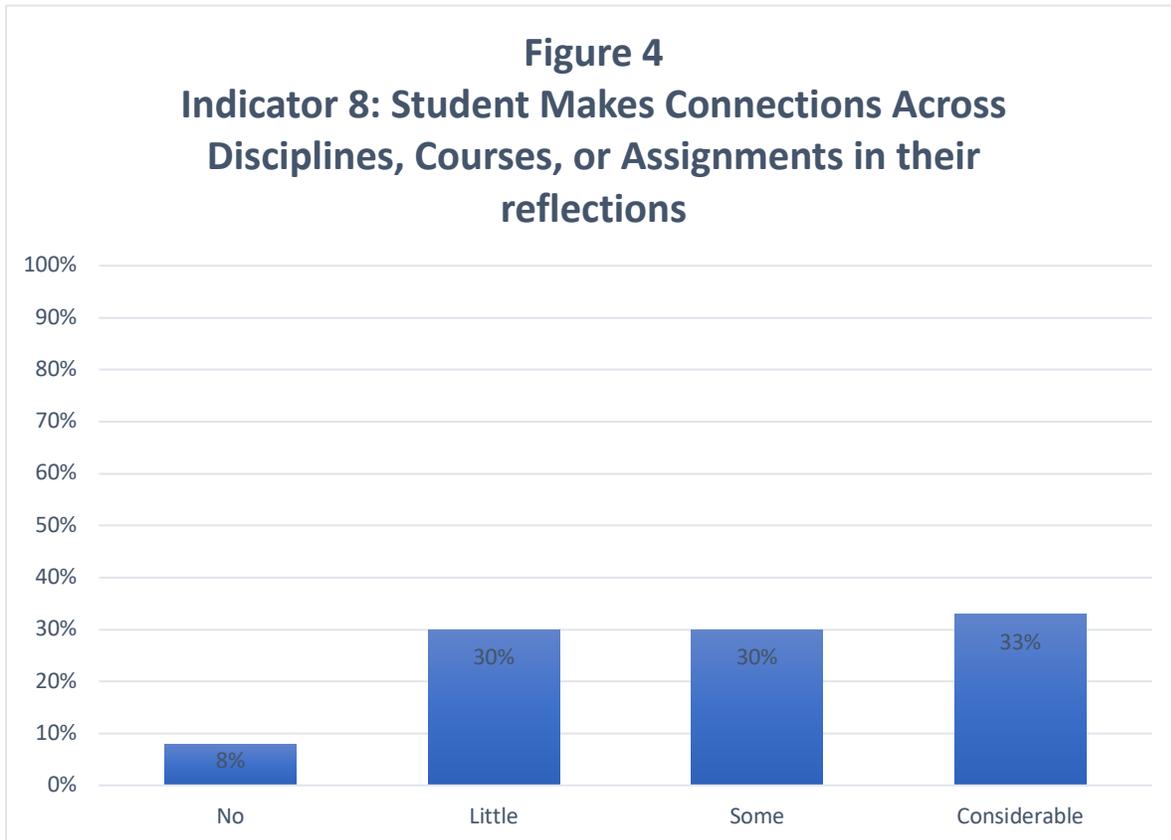
In Figure 5 we can see that students tend to be more consistent about making personal connections to their lives in their reflections. Eighty-two percent of students' ePortfolios contained "some" (three or four) or "considerable" (five or more connections) evidence of reflections which made personal connections. Only 5% of student ePortfolios contained no evidence of personal connections in reflections. This is an increase of 4 percentage points from last year.

Figure 5
Indicator 9: Student Makes Connections From
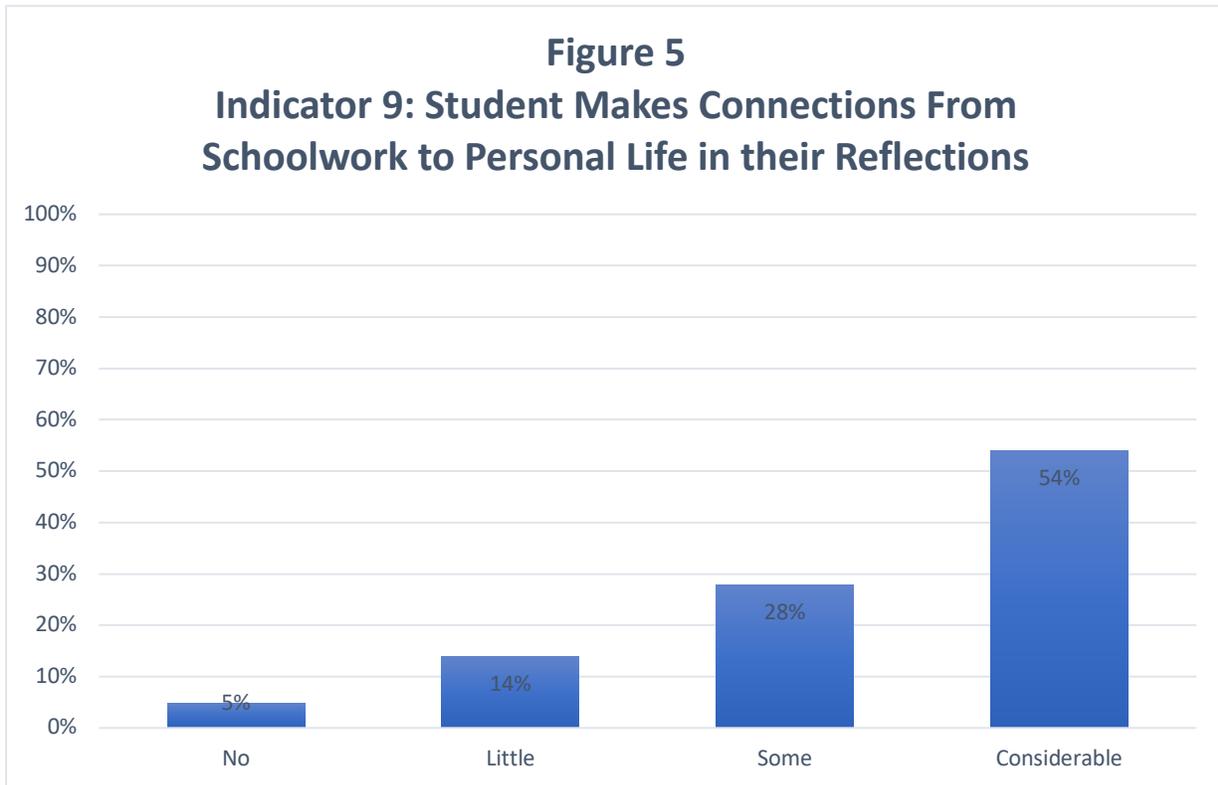**Schoolwork to Personal Life in their Reflections**

Table 5 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. The mean for reflections in the sample of 100 ePortfolios this year increased from 2.31 last year to 2.70 this year. Twenty-five 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 24% in the "exceeds" expectations category made strong connections and highlighted new insights and perspectives. A total of 59% of reflections fell into the top two categories which is a significant improvement. 13% of students failed to address the reflection prompt(s) and contained no elaboration in their ePortfolio. This number decreased by 10 percentage points from last year, demonstrating an improvement in the area of emphasizing student reflections as an important part of the ePortfolio signature assignment.

Table 5: Percentage of Student Reflections (n=375) with Scores for Reflection Quality in the Rubric Categories. (mean=2.70)

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.
13%	29%	34%	25%

In Table 6 we can view the way artifacts scored for scientific thinking. There was a significant decrease from n=242 in 2019, to an n=27 in 2020. Reviewers found 27 artifacts where they saw students attempting to demonstrate an understanding of scientific thinking. Out of this sample, none of the artifacts demonstrated that students did not clearly understand the scientific method. Sixty-four 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 4% showed an understanding of all components of scientific method including appropriate use of hypotheses, observation, collecting data, interpreting data and formulating conclusions.

Table 6: Percentage of Assignments (n=27) with Scores for Scientific Thinking in the Rubric Categories. (mean=2.00)--

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.
0%	64%	32%	4%

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.

As with previous years the 2020 Information Literacy General Education ePortfolio assessment was conducted by a team of two SLCC Librarians. We decided to begin the assessment of information literacy by having the team look at the sample of 138 ePortfolios and count the number of assignments that asked students to gather information using technology, library resources, or other modalities.

This team looked for assignments where students were using outside-of-classroom information sources to complete signature assignments. Figure 6 shows that the majority (72%) demonstrated "considerable" (four or more artifacts) evidence of doing so. Only 9% showed no evidence of using outside information sources.

Figure 6
Indicator 11: Student Gathers Information Using Technology, Library Resources & Other Modalities
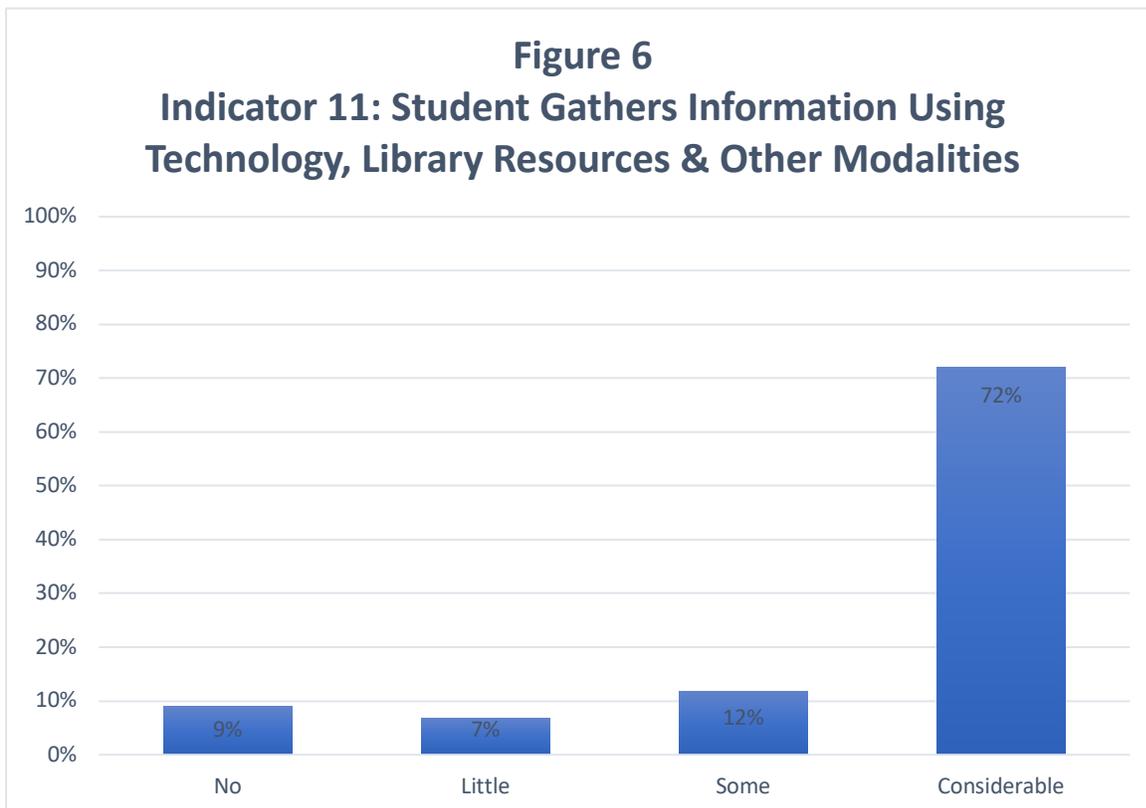
The next part of the assessment this team did was completed using the SLCC information literacy assessment rubric. The assessment team conducted a norming process to establish mutually agreed upon levels of quantitative and qualitative student performance levels. Review of the remaining ePortfolios were divided equally among the team. This assessment was separate and different in context than the 2020 Information Literacy Intervention analysis.

Evaluation was limited to written research by students that were of a persuasive or informative nature, as well as other assignments in formats such as PowerPoint slide presentations and screencasts. Due to evaluation criteria constraints, the team did not evaluate works like art slideshows or creative writing.

The evaluation of student work was based on six criteria that were internally developed using the ACRL Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education. Simplified, these six criteria are: 1) credible sources used, 2) intended audience or purpose established, 3) sources cited in a consistent format, 4) synthesis of ideas, 5) original thoughts and ideas, and 6) topic/research question developed. The criteria were scored on the following scale: 1) well below expectations, 2) below expectations, 3) meets expectations, and 4) exceeds expectations. Additionally, a quantitative analysis occurred where the number of sources students used were counted. The volume of sources was ranked as: 1) no evidence, in which no outside sources appear 2) little, in which 1 source appears, 3) some, in which 2 or 3 sources appear, and 4) considerable, in which 4 or more sources appear.

Table 7 shows that like previous years of the Information Literacy assessment most students included a considerable number of outside sources (more than 4 external sources). And the qualitative analysis followed the usual Gaussian distribution we have seen in previous years, with most students falling in the below expectations or meets expectations scale, with smaller distributions in the well below expectations or exceed expectations range.

Table 7: 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=2.56)	**6%**	**47%**	**41%**	**5%**
Student will indicate the intended audience/purpose of their project	No audience/purpose.	Audience/purpose is minimally indicated.	Audience/purpose is indicated.	Audience/purpose is indicated in an academic or professional manner.
(Mean=2.64)	**5%**	**44%**	**48%**	**3%**
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=2.67)	**10%**	**38%**	**42%**	**9%**
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/professional manner.
(Mean=2.82)	**4%**	**33%**	**48%**	**14%**
Student will use appropriate/credible/ authoritative 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=2.67)	**10%**	**38%**	**42%**	**9%**
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=2.37)	**23%**	**38%**	**37%**	**2%**

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. Table 8 shows that out of the 138 ePortfolios reviewed 101 of those students completed a lifelong wellness assignment. Fully 18% of students' artifacts scored in the "well below" range. Another 24% minimally expressed understanding of the importance of physical activity and its connection to lifelong wellness. Forty percent of students adequately expressed understanding and 19% effectively understood the importance and made connections. Overall, the quality of student artifacts fell just below expectations with an average score of 2.59.
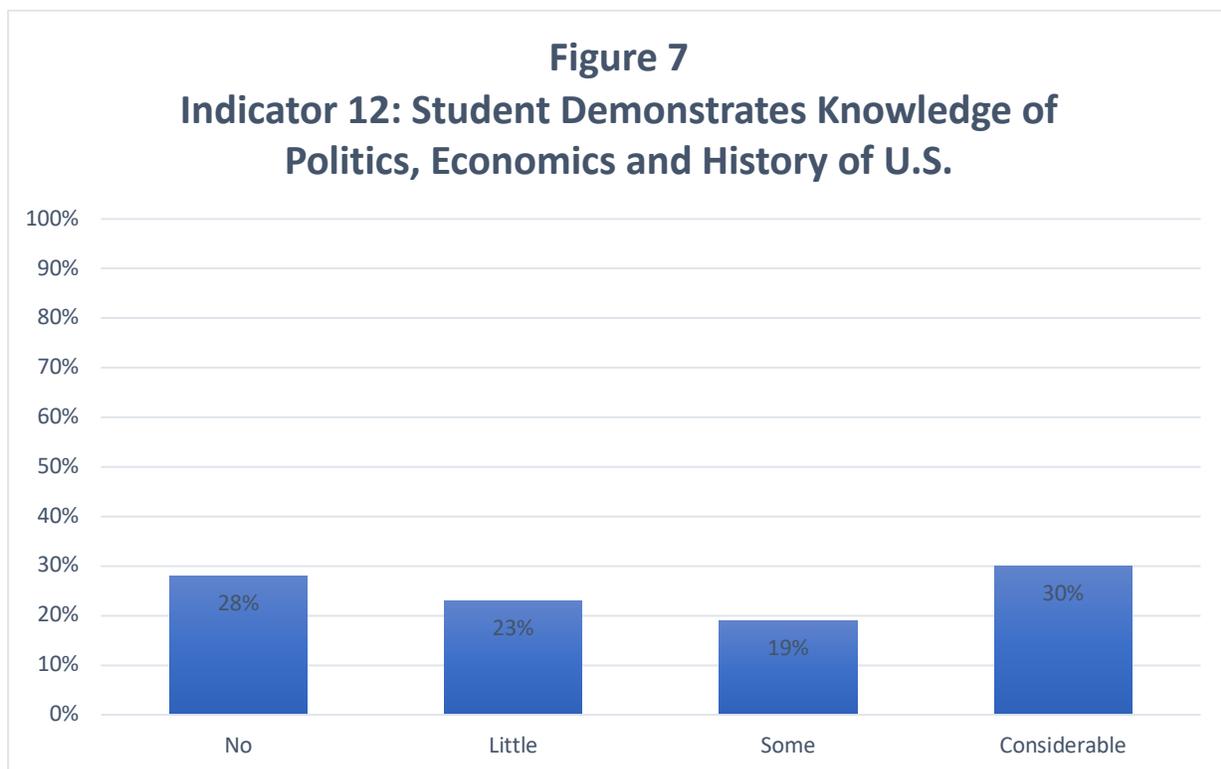
Table 8: Percentage of Students Whose Mean Scores for Lifelong Wellness Fell into These Ranges.

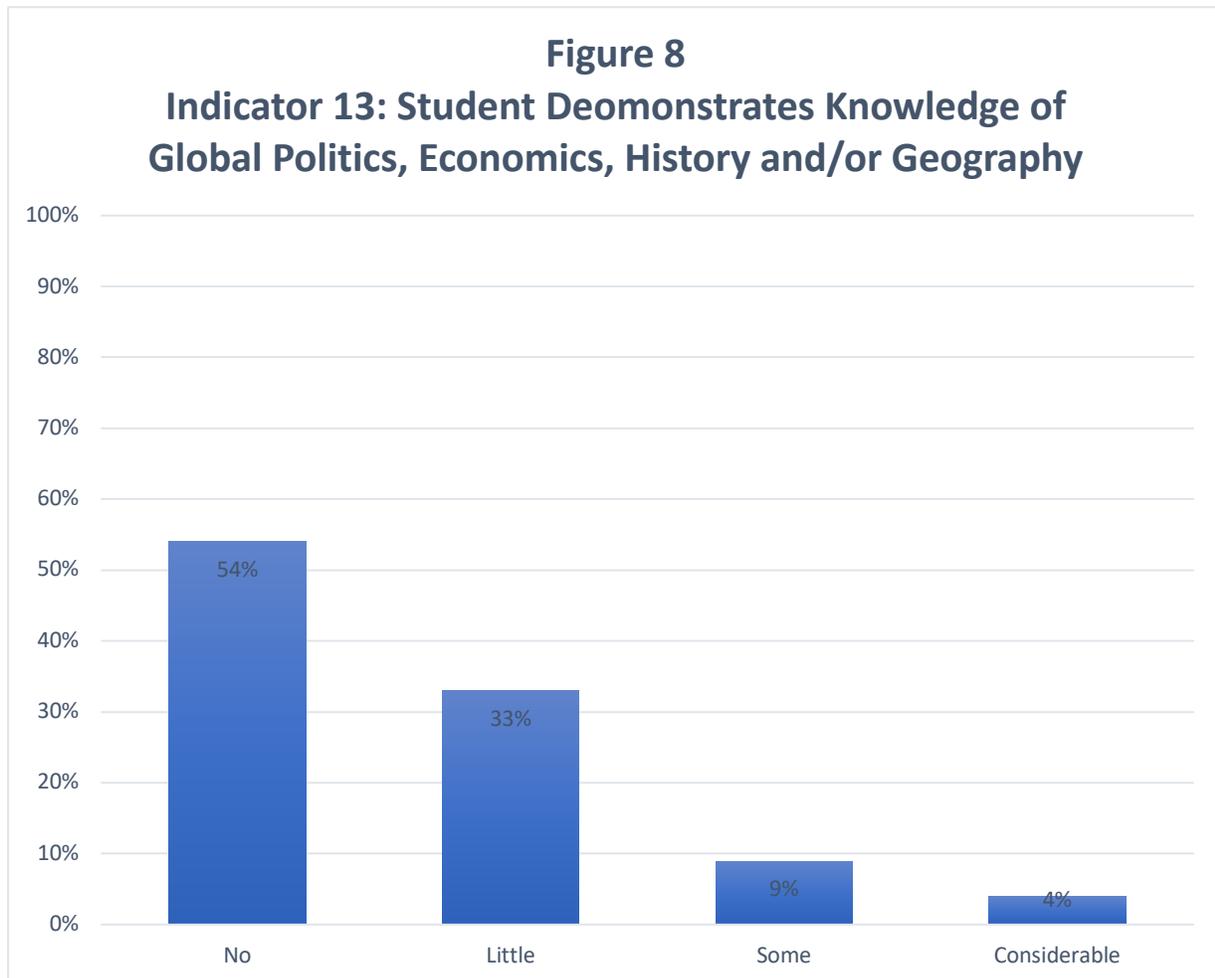| 1	2	3	4
The posted artifact or instance of reflection was completely unsatisfactory.	At least one artifact or instance of reflection in which the student minimally expresses an understanding of the importance of physical activity and its connection to lifelong wellness.	At least one artifact or instance 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.
18%	24%	40%	19%

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 later. 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 the world outside of the United States. Figure 7 shows that 51% of students had either no or "little" (one artifact) evidence while 30% of students had "considerable" (three or more) evidence that demonstrated knowledge of U.S. civic literacy.

Figure 7
Indicator 12: Student Demonstrates Knowledge of Politics, Economics and History of U.S.

Bar chart: No 28%, Little 23%, Some 19%, Considerable 30%.

When we looked at students' global knowledge in Figure 8, only 4% of students had "considerable" evidence (three or more artifacts) and 54% had no evidence. 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 Deomonstrates Knowledge of Global Politics, 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 we can help faculty help students do ePortfolios well.

Signature Assignments:
- Intentionally state the value of having signature assignments in the ePortfolio early in the semester.
- Consider allowing students (particularly those in QL courses) to delve more into the meaning of their results rather than just the results.
- Give students an opportunity to demonstrate their learning in a way that prompts them to articulate their reasoning and not just fill in blanks or respond with one-sentence answers.
- Ask students to post two signature assignments (perhaps one from earlier in the semester and one from later) to help them demonstrate their growth.
- Incorporate more research and writing rigor into assignments.
- For science classes, consider incorporating more signature assignments which demonstrate the scientific method.

Reflection:
- Ask students to make meaningful connections with other classes, their personal lives, and learning outcomes in the reflection prompts you create.
- Provide students with clear, carefully designed and thought-provoking reflection prompts.
- Emphasize the value of students seriously reflecting on and considering their learning and growth.
- Consider asking students to peer-review each other's reflections.

ePortfolio Design:
- Provide feedback to students about ePortfolio design as well as assignment quality.
- Allow more engaging and creative ways for students to present assignments and reflections (for example, allow audio, video, written and visual reflections and assignments).

- Provide students with incentives to further improve their ePortfolios. If possible, provide time each semester to prepare their sites and do periodic check-ins.
- Encourage them to personalize their ePortfolio in a way that will showcase the "whole student" and allow them to explore and express their identity.

Context/Content:
- Show students examples of excellent student ePortfolios (many great examples can be found on slcc.edu/eportfolio/examples)
- Talk about the ePortfolio early in your classes and help students understand the purpose and value of doing an ePortfolio well.

Other:

Participants strongly recommended the following to faculty:
- More ePortfolio pedagogy training for all faculty who teach general education courses.
- Find a way to provide more ePortfolio training for students.
- Review the assessment rubrics and goals so they are more aware of what is being evaluated.
- Be aware that there was concern over the number of incomplete ePortfolios which lacked many assignments from general education courses.
- More faculty from each department participate each year so more faculty can have this experience.

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 assessment.

Appendix A: Year 1 General Education Effective Communication Assessment Rubric for Signature Assignments

This rubric was used to assess signature assignments in the 2020 SLCC General Education Effective Communication Assessment project. Questions should be directed to Tiffany Rousculp, WAC Director.

The criteria in this rubric derive from the following two projects:
- the Framework for Success in Post-Secondary Writing
- standards for Transparency in Learning and Teaching

	Exceeds (3)	Meets (2)	Below (1)	None (0)
Purpose: The signature assignment explains how it connects with the course learning outcomes.	The assignment describes and explains how it addresses the course learning outcomes.	The assignment lists relevant course learning outcomes but does not necessarily explain the connection.	The assignment refers to the course learning outcomes in general terms.	There is no mention of the course learning outcomes.
Rhetorical Situation: The signature assignment provides sufficient context for the student author to understand the circumstances within which and the purpose(s) for which they are writing.	The assignment details the context—both the circumstances and purpose(s)—that the student should think about and strive for in their writing. The assignment explains how the student can succeed.	The assignment details either the purpose or the circumstances of the writing and explains how the student can succeed. The assignment explains the context—both the circumstances and purpose(s)—that the student should think about and strive for in their writing.	The assignment generally or vaguely refers to a purpose and/or circumstances for the writing.	There is no mention of the purpose for the writing.
Audience: The signature assignment provides a clear description of the student author's intended audience or allows the student to select an audience.	The assignment states the assignment's audience or requests that the student select a specific audience. The assignment includes analysis of the audience's needs or expectations.	The assignment states the assignment's audience or requests that the student select a specific audience.	The assignment makes general reference to an audience.	There is no mention of an audience.

Critical Thinking: The signature assignment describes the critical thinking processes that the writer is expected to engage in (e.g. summarize, analyze, synthesize, create, reflect).	The assignment provides specific descriptions and explanation of the critical thinking processes that the student will need to engage in to complete the assignment successfully.	The assignment specifically names critical thinking processes that the student will engage in during the assignment.	The assignment refers vaguely to critical thinking processes in the assignment.	There is no mention of critical thinking processes in the assignment.

Writing Processes: The signature assignment described the writing processes to complete it (e.g.: brainstorming, research, planning, drafting, revision, editing).	The assignment names and explains multiple writing/research processes that the student will need to engage in to complete the assignment successfully.	The assignment names specific writing/research processes that the student will engage in during the assignment.	The assignment generally refers to the need to complete the assignment using writing process or over time.	There is no mention of process in the assignment.
Assignment Procedures: The signature assignment provides the steps and activities that the students will take to complete the assignment.	The assignment provides specific explanations for each step necessary to complete the signature assignment (may or may not include deadlines).	The assignment lists the steps necessary to complete the signature assignment.	The assignment refers to steps necessary to complete the assignment but they may be vague or generalized.	There is no mention of steps to complete the assignment.
Conventions: The signature assignment provides descriptive evaluative criteria for the genre or disciplinary conventions. This may be in a rubric or in another form.	The assignment includes criteria that are specific to a genre or disciplinary ways of thinking (epistemologies). These criteria are described or explained.	The assignment includes criteria that are specific to a genre or disciplinary ways of thinking (epistemologies).	The assignment's evaluative criteria are not specific to a genre or disciplinary ways of thinking. They are generalized criteria of correctness or academic norms.	There are no evaluative criteria included in the assignment.
Readability: The content in the assignment is cohesive and easy to understand. The assignment is logically organized and easily navigable.	The assignment's organization is logical and effectively signposted with subheadings, lists, or other effective formatting features. The content does not repeat, contradict itself, nor ramble	The assignment's organization is mostly logical but may not have signposting features. The content is mostly on point to the assignment. The reader may need to re-read it one time to understand it.	The assignment's organization is not obviously logical and requires re-reading multiple times to understand it.	The assignment's organization is detrimental to understanding and/or multiple re-readings may not result in understanding.

	with unnecessary or distracting content.			
(Bonus) Examples: The assignment provides examples of successful signature assignments or professional documents.	The assignment provides multiple examples of the signature assignment. +2	The assignment provides a single example of the signature assignment. +1	NA	NA