

Common Learning Outcome 2: Approach knowledge with a liberal arts foundation

Hope graduates engage with aesthetic, historical, theoretical, technological, scientific, cultural, and religious approaches to knowledge.

Assessment Tools

Common Learning Outcome 2 assessment uses three tools: the National Survey of Student Engagement, the Intellectual Engagement with the Christian Faith Survey, and the AAC&U Value Rubric for Inquiry and Analysis applied to a sample of student work.

The National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) is an indirect assessment using a standardized, benchmarked tool developed by Indiana University. For Outcome 2, the portion of the NSSE survey used is the Quantitative Reasoning section.

The Intellectual Engagement with the Christian Faith Survey is a Hope-developed indirect assessment of how our students engage with the Christian Faith in their majors, general education, and other academic areas.

The American Association of Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) Value Rubric for Inquiry and Analysis is a best practice for assessing artifacts of student work. Hope applies the rubric to a sample of written student work across disciplines. The AAC&U Quantitative Literacy Rubric assesses Outcome 2 for courses where mathematical forms and calculations demonstrate student progress. Results from assessments completed using the Quantitative Literacy Rubric are then cross-walked to the Inquiry and Analysis rubric.

Assessment Schedule

Results from the following assessments are reviewed every two years in the summer of odd years by teams of faculty, staff, and students organized by the Assessment Committee.

The Heighten Critical Thinking Assessment is administered annually to seniors identified by their academic departments. All Hope academic departments will participate.

The National Survey of Student Engagement is administered each Spring Semester of even years to first-year and senior students.

Artifacts of student work are collected every semester from courses across disciplines in the Social Sciences, Natural Sciences, Humanities, and Arts, consistent with the

sample collection for assessing Anchor Plan Outcome 1. The AAC&U Inquiry & Analysis rubric is applied to a sample of these artifacts biannually, in odd years.

Assessment Targets

Eighty percent of Hope seniors will be proficient or advanced in overall critical thinking on the Heighten Critical Thinking Assessment.

Hope College seniors' mean NSSE score for each item will be equal to or greater than the Great Lakes Private institution's aggregate score. Over time, Hope will decrease the gap between our seniors' mean score and that of our Carnegie Class institutions.

Among artifacts collected from 100 and 200-level Anchor Plan courses mapped to Anchor Plan Outcome 1, 80% will have an average rubric score (the average of all rubric items) between 2.00 and 3.99.

Assessment Sample and Process

Assessment sample

Each year, department chairs provide Frost Center with lists of senior students to participate in the Heighten Critical Thinking Assessment. Some are enrolled in a specific program course, while others are in their last year or semester. While each academic department participates, they have the latitude to determine how best to identify the students. Frost Center for Data and Research administers the assessment with invitations and reminders across the semester. The Director of Assessment and Accreditation compiles annual survey results.

Hope's senior students' results from the most recent NSSE administration. All senior students receive a series of invitations and email reminders administered by Indiana University. Frost Center for Data and Research receives aggregate results, comparison reports, and individual student scores.

To assess Anchor Plan Learning Outcome 1, faculty members from across disciplines assess collected artifacts of student work using the AAC&U Value Rubric for Inquiry and Analysis in August of each odd year. A report of the assessment results is prepared collaboratively by the Director of Assessment and Accreditation and the Math/Natural Science, Social Science, Health Dynamics, Religion, Fine Arts/Arts in Practice, and Human Perspectives Directors of the General Education Council.

Assessment process

In the summer of each odd year, staff, faculty, and Student Congress representatives participate in the Common Learning Outcome 2 assessment using the results from the above three samples. Compensation for faculty member's assessment work is at the rate approved by the Deans' Council. The Assessment Committee and the Director of Assessment and Accreditation lead the assessment process.

Members of the assessment team receive the report from the previous assessment of Common Learning Outcome 2 and the results from the assessments described above. The assessment team convenes for a half-day discussion of the results and develops recommendations for action to improve student learning. They also consider any changes needed in the assessment targets.

The Director of Assessment and Accreditation prepares a summary of the Common Learning Outcome 2 assessment results, discussion, and recommendations. It is approved by the assessment team and provided to the Assessment Committee for review and approval in the Fall Semester of that year.

The Director of Assessment and Accreditation maintains data reports, assessment reports, and other documentation and correspondence related to this assessment within the shared data storage of the Frost Center for Data and Research.

Review of Results

Following their review and approval of the Common Learning Outcome 2 Assessment Report, the Assessment Committee shares the report and recommendations for actions to improve student learning with the Academic Affairs Board and the Deans' Council. The report is made available to the campus community through the Assessment Portal. The Assessment Committee and Director of Assessment and Accreditation are responsible for tracking the actions taken in response to the recommendations.