WHAT SHOULD STUDENTS KNOW AND BE ABLE TO DO?:

CONNECTING MEANINGFUL ASSESSMENT WITH MEANINGFUL QUESTIONS

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How should students be different when they leave NYU?
[NYU’s] mission is to be a top quality international center of scholarship, teaching and research. ...NYU seeks to take academic and cultural advantage of its location and to embrace diversity among faculty, staff and students to ensure a wide range of perspectives...in the educational experience.

[NYU] is a dynamic urban global research university whose students, faculty, & graduates generate new understandings & innovation for vital & sustainable communities within a complex interdependent world.

Undergraduate life...is made up of a unique combination of experiences that stem from... learning opportunities inside & outside the classroom, the rich culture & excitement of [NYC], & numerous options for international experiences...Students will have countless ways to connect with other students....
WHAT DOES LEARNING LOOK LIKE?
After the semester is over, you still have that information. You didn’t just cram for it for the test, but you can bring it up and dialogue with other people [about it].”

- Student (Wisconsin)

I think it has to do with not just receiving the information, but understanding it...like actually being able to apply it. [B]ecause you can receive all the information in the world, but it doesn’t mean you understand it.”

- Student (California)

You read materials that are unassigned. You look stuff up...you buy books and read stuff that you don’t have to...[Y]ou kind of make it part of your life.”

- Student, (Oregon)

It’s like a joy that comes over you because all of a sudden you’re studying, and you’re going over it and you’re going over it, and all of a sudden, it’s like a light comes on...”

- Student (Wisconsin)
Liberal Education: A philosophy of learning that empowers & prepares individuals to deal with complexity, diversity, & change.

- Broad knowledge combined w/ in-depth study
- To help students develop a sense of social responsibility, strong & transferable intellectual and practical skills & a demonstrated ability to apply knowledge.

“Knowledge is nothing without imagination”
The aim of education should be to teach us rather how to think, than what to think -- so as to enable us to think for ourselves, than to load the memory with the thoughts of other men.
The Core Curriculum of the [CAS] provides a foundational academic experience... Courses... are designed to give students... the skills and breadth of intellectual perspective to flourish in their major programs of study and in their later careers.

Even more than this, education in the liberal arts is preparation for life as a responsible, actively engaged citizen, equipping you with the curiosity, open-mindedness, and soundness of judgment necessary to reason, act, and lead. This University—and the whole enterprise of higher education in the United States—was founded on the belief that college graduates have a special opportunity & responsibility to contribute to the common good.
Education in the liberal arts doesn’t involve a fixed canon of knowledge; instead, it builds your critical, analytic, & communications skills, hones the imagination, & promotes creative thinking.

- Core course seeks to ensure that you will expand your capacity to communicate effectively.
- Quantitative skills...give you the knowledge you need to be an independent-minded citizen.
- Think of yourselves as citizens of a larger world by gaining the ability to comprehend how people different from you understand, experience, and imagine their lives.

Institutional Outcomes

Core Curriculum & Majors

Courses & Experiences
SCAFFOLDING! ➔

Random Scaffolding ➔

Program Scaffolding ➔
Good Assessment = Transparency (of goals, of findings, of improvement)

“I don’t know too many jobs that the job is being well-rounded. You know, it’s not like you’re going to work at ‘Well-Rounded, Inc’ or something.”
- Student (Wisconsin)

“Tell me why this is important or at least tell me what your end goal is. ‘When you learn this, you’re going to become [a] better adult because blah-blah-blah-blah.’ Tell me why this matters.”
Student (Wisconsin)
What defines improvement toward expertise?

- Demonstrated competence
- Across multiple dimensions
- Over time
CAPTURING WHAT MATTERS: VALUE ASSESSMENT INITIATIVE

Instrument Development
- 16 rubrics
- Created primarily by teams of faculty
- Inter-disciplinary, inter-institutional
- Three rounds of testing and revision on campuses with samples of student work
- Intended to be modified at campus-level

Utility
- Assessment of students’ demonstrated performance and capacity for improvement
- Faculty-owned and institutionally shared
- Used for students’ self-assessment of learning
- Increase transparency of what matters to institutions for student learning
VALUE RUBRICS
(www.aacu.org/value)

- Knowledge of Human Cultures & the Physical & Natural Worlds
  - Content Areas → No Rubrics
- Intellectual and Practical Skills
  - Inquiry & Analysis
  - Critical Thinking
  - Creative Thinking
  - Written Communication
  - Oral Communication
  - Reading
  - Quantitative Literacy
  - Information Literacy
  - Teamwork
  - Problem-solving

- Personal & Social Responsibility
  - Civic Knowledge & Engagement
  - Intercultural Knowledge & Competence
  - Ethical Reasoning
  - Foundations & Skills for Lifelong Learning
  - Global Learning

- Integrative & Applied Learning
  - Integrative & Applied Learning
INTEGRATIVE LEARNING VALUE Rubric

for more information, please contact value@aamu.org

The VALUE rubrics were developed by teams of faculty experts representing colleges and universities across the United States through a process that examined many existing campus rubrics and related documents for each learning outcome and incorporated additional feedback from faculty. The rubrics articulate fundamental criteria for each learning outcome, with performance descriptors demonstrating progressively more sophisticated levels of attainment. The rubrics are intended for institutional use in evaluating and discussing student learning, not for grading. The core expectations articulated in all 15 of the VALUE rubrics can and should be translated into the language of individual campuses, disciplines, and even courses. The utility of the VALUE rubrics is to position learning at all undergraduate levels within a basic framework of expectations such that evidence of learning can by shared rationally through a common dialog and understanding of student success.

Definition

Integrative learning is an understanding and a disposition that a student builds across the curriculum and co-curriculum, from making simple connections among ideas and experiences to synthesizing and transferring learning to new complex situations within and beyond the campus.

Framing Language

Fostering students' abilities to integrate learning—across courses, over time, and between campus and community life—is one of the most important goals and challenges for higher education. Initially, students connect previous learning to new classroom learning. Later, significant knowledge within individual disciplines serves as the foundation, but integrative learning goes beyond academic boundaries. Indeed, integrative experiences often occur as learners address real-world problems, unsuited and sufficiently broad, to require multiple areas of knowledge and multiple modes of inquiry, offering multiple solutions and benefiting from multiple perspectives. Integrative learning also involves internal changes in the learner. These internal changes, which indicate growth as a confident, lifelong learner, include the ability to adapt one's intellectual skills, to contribute in a wide variety of situations, and to understand and develop individual purpose, values and ethics. Developing students' capacities for integrative learning is central to personal success, social responsibility, and civic engagement in today's global society. Students face a rapidly changing and increasingly connected world where integrative learning becomes not just a benefit...but a necessity.

Because integrative learning is about making connections, this learning may not be evident in traditional academic artifacts such as research papers and academic projects unless the student, for example, is prompted to draw implications for practice. These connections often surface, however, in reflective work, self-assessment, or creative endeavors of all kinds. Integrative assignments foster learning between courses or by connecting courses to experientially-based work. Work samples or collections of work that include such artifacts give evidence of integrative learning. Faculty are encouraged to look for evidence that the student connects the learning gained in classroom study to learning gained in real-life situations that are related to other learning experiences, extra-curricular activities, or work. Through integrative learning, students pull together their entire experience inside and outside of the formal classroom, thus, artificial barriers between formal study and informal or tacit learning become permeable. Integrative learning, whatever the context or source, builds upon connecting both theory and practice toward a deeper understanding.

Assignments to foster such connections and understanding could include, for example, composition papers that focus on topics from biology, economics, or history; mathematics assignments that apply mathematical tools to important issues and require written analysis to explain the implications and limitations of the mathematical treatment, or art history presentations that demonstrate aesthetic connections between selected paintings and novels. In this regard, some majors (e.g., interdisciplinary majors or problem-based field studies) seem to inherently evolve characteristics of integrative learning and result in work samples or collections of work that significantly demonstrate this outcome. However, fields of study that require accumulation of extensive and highly conscious content knowledge (such as accounting, engineering, or chemistry) also involve the kinds of complex and integrative constructions (e.g., ethical dilemmas and social consciousness) that seem to be highlighted so extensively in self-reflection in arts and humanities, but they may not be embodied in individual performances and less evident. The key to the development of such work samples or collections of work will be in designing structures that include artifacts and reflective writing or feedback that support students' examination of their learning and give evidence that, as graduates, they will extend their integrative abilities into the challenges of personal, professional, and civic life.

Glossary

The definitions that follow were developed to clarify terms and concepts used in this rubric only.

- Academic knowledge: Disciplinary learning, learning from academic study, texts, etc.
- Content: The information conveyed in the work samples or collections of work.
- Context: Actual or simulated situations in which a student demonstrates learning outcomes. New and challenging contexts encourage students to stretch beyond their current frames of reference.
- Co-curriculum: A parallel component of the academic curriculum that is in addition to formal classroom (student government, community service, residence hall activities, student organizations, etc.).
- Experience: Learning that takes place in a setting outside of the formal classroom, such as workplace, service learning site, internship site or another.
- Form: The external frameworks in which information and evidence are presented, ranging from choices for particular work sample or collection of works (such as a research paper, PowerPoint, video recording, etc.) to choices in make-up of the portfolio.
- Performance: A dynamic and sustained act that brings together knowing and doing (creating a painting, solving an experimental design problem, developing a public relations strategy for a business, etc.); performance makes learning observable.
- Reflection: A meta-cognitive act of examining a performance in order to explore its significance and consequences.
- Self-Assessment: Describing, interpreting, and judging a performance based on stated or implied expectations followed by planning for further learning.
The Anatomy of a VALUE Rubric

### Criteria

#### Cognitive Levels

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Connections to Experience</th>
<th>Capstone 1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>Benchmark 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Meaningfully synthesizes connections among experiences outside of the formal classroom (including life experiences and academic experiences such as internships and travel abroad) to deepen understanding of fields of study and to broaden one’s own points of view.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Identifies connections between life experiences and those academic tasks and ideas perceived as similar and related to one’s own interests.</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Connections to Discipline</th>
<th>Milestone 1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>Benchmark 1</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Independently creates wholes out of multiple parts (by synthesis) or class conclusions by combining examples, facts, or theories from more than one field of study or perspective.</td>
<td></td>
<td>When prompted, connects examples, facts, or theories from more than one field of study or perspective.</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Transfer</th>
<th>Milestone 1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>Benchmark 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adapts and applies skills, abilities, theories, or methodological gained in one situation to new situations to solve difficult problems or explore complex issues in original ways.</td>
<td>Uses skills, abilities, theories, or methodological gained in one situation to contribute to understanding of problems or issues.</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Integrated Communication</th>
<th>Milestone 1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>Benchmark 1</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prepares the assignment(s) by choosing a format, language, or graph for other representation in ways that enhance meaning, making clear the interdependence of language meaning, thought, and action.</td>
<td>Prepares the assignment(s) by choosing a format, language, or graph for other visual representation of ideas in a basic way that is effectively communicated (content) with how it is said (form).</td>
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<td></td>
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</tbody>
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<tr>
<th>Reflection and Self-Assessment</th>
<th>Milestone 1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>Benchmark 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Envisions a future self, identifies ways to make plans for learning, and experiences highlighted across multiple contexts.</td>
<td>Articulates strengths and challenges with specific performances or events to increase effectiveness through increased self-awareness.</td>
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</tbody>
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**INTEGRATIVE LEARNING VALUE Rubric**

**Definition**

Integrative learning is an understanding and a disposition that a student builds across the curriculum and co-curriculum, from making simple connections among ideas and experiences to synthesizing and transferring learning into complex situations within and beyond the context.

Evaluators are encouraged to assign a zero to any work sample or collection of work that does not meet benchmark (cell one) level performance.
HOW HAVE CAMPUSES USED RUBRICS TO IMPROVE LEARNING?

- Using the VALUE Rubrics for Improvement of Learning and Authentic Assessment
- 12 Case Studies
- Frequently asked questions

http://www.aacu.org/value/casestudies/
Resources:
Me: finley@aacu.org
VALUE Rubrics: http://www.aacu.org/value/
Additional Campus Examples: http://www.aacu.org/peerreview/pr-fa11wi12/