

# Assessment of Student Learning Plan (ASLP): HONORS Program

2017-18 Academic Year

University of Southern Maine

## A. College, Department, Date

<i>College</i>	n/a
<i>Department</i>	Honors Program
<i>Date</i>	June 8, 2018

## B. Contact Person for the Assessment Plan

Rebecca S. Nisetich, Honors Program Director

## C. Degree Program

Honors Program, Honors Interdisciplinary Minor

## D. Assessment of Student Learning: Program Assessment

### Step 1: Identify the Student Learning Outcomes (SLO's)

- a. *Do you have your student learning outcomes published on your department's website?*

No. See attached Honors Program Goals and Learning Outcomes.

- b. *Please identify **which of your student learning outcome(s) were assessed this past academic year.** (One or more of the outcomes and corresponding assessment plans could come from your department's CORE Course Blueprint(s)).*

The Honors Faculty Council voted to assess "Self-Reflection" Learning Outcome from area 1: "Illustrate an ongoing process of self-reflection about their development as a scholar, engaged citizen, and lifelong learner." We decided to assess first-semester students taking HON 100: Writing in Honors to establish a benchmark by which we can measure student growth and development as this cohort makes their way through the Honors Program curriculum.

- c. *Do you have a **matrix or curriculum map** showing when your student learning outcomes are assessed and in which courses?*

Yes, see attached draft document. [Note this is a version we created during the Honors Program Faculty Retreat. The Honors Assessment Subcommittee is planning to revise/expand this document in AY 2018-19.]

### **Step 2: Assessment Methods Selected and Implemented**

- a. *Identify which direct measures (other than course grades), that were used to determine whether students achieved the stated learning outcomes for the degree.*

This first effort was a pilot assessment: we collected a reflective writing assignment from a section of HON 101 (attached), we randomized the sample and removed student identifiers.

- b. *Briefly describe when you implemented the assessment activity, and if a scoring rubric was used to evaluate the expected level of student achievement. (This information may be shown on your curriculum map).*

We used the AAC&U's VALUE Rubric for "Integrative Learning" in the "Reflection and Self-Assessment" area. As a committee, we read a few essays together to calibrate. Then we read all the essays and scored them separately. Finally, we met to discuss our results. Most of the time, we had scored student essays identically; the few times our scores differed, we discussed our rationale and came to consensus.

### **Step 3: Using the Assessment results to Improve Student Learning**

- a. *Briefly describe your unit's process of reviewing the program assessment results (i.e. annual process by faculty committee, etc).*

Results are presented in Honors Faculty Council meetings. During the annual Honors Faculty retreat, we study assessment results and charge the Assessment Subcommittee with upcoming tasks. Currently, the Honors Council will continue to administer a self-reflection assessment in HON 100. We also plan to create and administer a self-reflection assessment in HON 215: Thinking in Honors and HON 415: Capstone. Collecting assessment data from 3 tiers of the Honors Program (introductory, mid-career, capstone) will allow us to set benchmarks and measure growth. We plan to continue this assessment for a few years, as our program is growing exponentially and the curriculum is very new. When we have sound data for all levels of Honors education regarding Self-Reflection, we will work as a Faculty Council to select a new area of assessment. We will continue to use a mix of embedded and off-the-rack assessments.

The AAC&U VALUE Rubrics have worked well for us, and we plan to continue to use them to evaluate our student learning (notably, many of our peer institutions also use AAC&U Rubrics for assessment).

- b. What specific changes have been or will be made to improve student learning, as a result of using the program assessment results?*

I am planning a summer workshop for faculty teaching HON 100, HON 215, and HON 415 so that we can design strong embedded assessments for these courses. Our initial assessment of Self-Reflection area 1 was successful, and now we would like to expand our assessment work to more areas of the curriculum. We may consider adding off-the-rack pre/post testing to HON elective courses, to gather additional data.

- c. Date of most recent program review/self-study?*

Completed during AY 2013-14, submitted May 2014.

**E..Course Assessment Activities:** *Is your program able to report any assessment-related activities at the Course-Level... (i.e. created grading rubrics to use in required courses, examined student progress in entry-level courses, developed a new course, etc)? Please briefly explain any assessment projects.*

At this time, there are no additional assessment-related activities planned.

**F. Community Engagement Activities in your departmental curriculum:**

- a. Does your department have a student learning outcome that is related to any community engagement activities? If so, please state the outcome.*

Not specifically, but our Learning Outcome areas “Diversity,” “Critical Thinking” and “Self-Reflection” could be used to assess community engaged activities. Please note that we do have a specific Honors Community-Based Learning Course which is offered annually.

- b. Please indicate if any of the community engagement activities listed below are included in your program’s curriculum, by noting which activities are required or optional for students in your major.*

<u>Community Enqaqement Activity</u>	<u>Required/Optional</u>	
Student Research (related to a community-based problem)	R	O
Student-Faculty Community Research Project	R	O
Internship, or a Field Experience	R	O
Independent Study (community-related project)	R	O

Capstone Course (community-related project)	R	O
Service-Learning (course-based)	R	O
Study Abroad, or an International Program	R	O
Interdisciplinary Collaborative Project (community related)	R	O
Student Leadership Activities (related to a team project)	R	O
Students/Faculty Community Leadership (advisory boards, committees, conference presentations)	R	O
Other activities:		

*c. Please list any courses (i.e. EDU 400) that have a community engagement activity in your program.*

*Entry-level courses:* HON 101, HON 103, H

*Mid-level courses:* HON 310, HON 311, HON 321, HON 331

*Upper-level courses:* HON 415

## Appendix: Honors Assessment Documents

### I. Honors Program Mission and Goals

#### Honors Mission:

The Honors Program provides high-achieving students with a diverse and rigorous curriculum, devoted faculty and staff, and a collaborative environment that emphasizes research, community engagement, leadership, social responsibility, international experience, and intellectual independence.

#### Honors Program Goals:

Honors students will have demonstrated the ability to foster scholarly and independent habits of mind:

- Develop and master critical thinking skills;
- Use self-reflection to engage in an emergent awareness of the self as a learner;
- Apply intellectual curiosity in research to real-world problems.

Honors students will create a culminating signature work in which they:

- Synthesize oral, written, graphical, qualitative, and quantitative communication skills;
- Engage with workplace, civic, and research communities;
- Present their work in a public forum with feedback and self-assessment.

Honors students will become scholar-leaders who are able to:

- Participate in and moderate complex, potentially contentious, conversations;
- Understand intersections of power relations and cultural lenses in global and U.S. contexts;
- Identify ethical issues in society, perform sound ethical reasoning, and make informed moral judgments.

### II. Honors Student Learning Outcomes

#### 1. INTELLECTUAL INDEPENDENCE

Honors graduates should be able to:

- Approach, define, and research complex problems
- Design and produce independent and/or creative projects

- Contextualize and/or situate their work in an appropriate disciplinary or multidisciplinary context
- Present their work publicly to their faculty and peers

## 2. COMMUNICATION

Honors graduates should be able to:

- Understand the interdependence of audience, context, and message construction
- Use effective organizational patterns when communicating messages
- Present content textually, visually, and orally
- Participate in and moderate complex, potentially contentious conversations

## 3. INFORMATION LITERACY

Honors graduates should be able to:

- Evaluate and responsibly use information
- Properly attribute ideas, texts, etc. where necessary
- Formulate and develop claims with sufficient and appropriate support--including reasoning, evidence, and persuasive appeals

## 4. DIVERSITY

Honors graduate should be able to:

- Intentionally engage with ideas, beliefs and practices of diverse cultures and peoples
- Ask substantive questions, seek out, and articulate answers to those questions in ways that integrate multiple cultural perspectives
- Embrace contradictions by integrating alternative, divergent, or contradictory perspectives in formal assignments and in-class discussions

## 5. SELF-REFLECTION

Honors graduates should be able to:

- Illustrate an ongoing process of self-reflection about their development as a scholar, engaged citizen, and lifelong learner

- Articulate a plan to attain the requisite knowledge and skills to succeed in a chosen career or graduate program

**III. Area of curriculum to be assessed in 2018-19 academic year:**

The Council voted to select “Self-Reflection” area 1: “Illustrate an ongoing process of self-reflection about their development as a scholar, engaged citizen, and lifelong learner.” The Assessment Subcommittee has been charged with overseeing the planning and implementation of this assessment plan:

1. Faculty teaching HON 100, HON 215, and HON 415 will create common embedded assessments for these courses, to be administered in Fall 2018 (HON 100, HON 215) and Spring 2019 (HON 415). Assessment plan will be finalized in July 2018 (after Director/CTEL facilitate workshop series on curriculum development and assessment).
2. Assessment subcommittee will collect materials from instructors and review during May 2019.
3. Data will be presented to the Honors Faculty Council for review and planning.
4. We will continue to assess these outcomes as our students make their way through our curriculum. For a complete trajectory, we should run this assessment from Fall 2017-Spring 2021.
5. We *may* decide to code and track specific students through the curriculum.

***Intellectual Independence***

	Approach, define, and research complex problems	Design and produce independent and/or creative projects	Contextualize and/or situate their work in an appropriate disciplinary or multidisciplinary context	Present their work publically to their faculty and peers
Year 1	I			I
Year 2	P	I	I	P
Year 3	M	P	P	P
Year 4		M	M	M

*revised wording:*

*notes:*



**Communication**

	Understand the interdependence of audience, context, and message construction	Use effective organizational patterns when communicating messages	Present content textually, visually, and orally
Year 1	I	I	I
Year 2	P	P	P
Year 3	P	P	P
Year 4	M	M	M

*revised wording:*

*notes:*

**Information Literacy**

Evaluate and responsibly use information	Properly attribute ideas, texts, etc. where necessary	Formulate and develop claims with sufficient and appropriate support-- including reasoning, evidence, and persuasive appeals
I	I	I
P	P	P
M	M	P
		M

Year 1
Year 2
Year 3
Year 4

*revised wording:*

*notes:*

**Diversity**

Intentionally engage with ideas, beliefs, and practices of diverse cultures and peoples	Ask substantive questions, seek out, and articulate answers to those questions in ways that integrate multiple cultural perspectives	Embrace contradictions by integrating alternative, divergent, or contradictory perspectives in formal assignments and in-class discussions
Year 1		
Year 2		
Year 3		
Year 4		

revised wording:

notes:

***Self-Reflection***

<p>Articulate a plan to attain the requisite knowledge and skills to succeed in a chosen career or graduate program</p>	<p>Illustrate an ongoing process of self-reflection about their development as a scholar, engaged citizen, and lifelong learner</p>
<p>Year 1</p>	<p>I</p>
<p>Year 2</p>	<p>P</p>
<p>Year 3</p>	<p>M</p>
<p>Year 4</p>	<p>M</p>

*revised wording:*

*notes:*

# INTEGRATIVE LEARNING VALUE RUBRIC

for more information, please contact [valve@aaan.org](mailto:valve@aaan.org)



## Definition

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

*Evaluators are encouraged to assign a zero to any work sample or collection of work that does not meet benchmark (cell one) level performance.*

	Capstone 4	Milestones		Benchmark 1
		3	2	
<b>Connections to Experience</b> Connects relevant experience and academic knowledge	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 own points of view.	Effectively selects and develops examples of life experiences, drawn from a variety of contexts (e.g., family life, artistic participation, civic involvement, work experience), to illuminate concepts/ theories/ frameworks of fields of study.	Compares life experiences and academic knowledge to infer differences, as well as similarities, and acknowledge perspectives other than own.	Identifies connections between life experiences and those academic texts and ideas perceived as similar and related to own interests.
<b>Connections to Discipline</b> Sees (makes) connections across disciplines, perspectives	Independently creates wholes out of multiple parts (synthesizes) or draws conclusions by combining examples, facts, or theories from more than one field of study or perspective.	Independently connects examples, facts, or theories from more than one field of study or perspective.	When prompted, connects examples, facts, or theories from more than one field of study or perspective.	When prompted, presents examples, facts, or theories from more than one field of study or perspective.
<b>Transfer</b> Adapts and applies skills, abilities, theories, or methodologies gained in one situation to new situations	Adapts and applies, independently, skills, abilities, theories, or methodologies gained in one situation to new situations to solve difficult problems or explore complex issues in original ways.	Adapts and applies skills, abilities, theories, or methodologies gained in one situation to new situations to solve problems or explore issues.	Uses skills, abilities, theories, or methodologies gained in one situation in a new situation to contribute to understanding of problems or issues.	Uses, in a basic way, skills, abilities, theories, or methodologies gained in one situation in a new situation.
<b>Integrated Communication</b>	Fulfills the assignment(s) by choosing a format, language, or graph (or other visual representation) in ways that enhance meaning, making clear the interdependence of language and meaning, thought, and expression.	Fulfills the assignment(s) by choosing a format, language, or graph (or other visual representation) to explicitly connect content and form, demonstrating awareness of purpose and audience.	Fulfills the assignment(s) by choosing a format, language, or graph (or other visual representation) that connects in a basic way what is being communicated (content) with how it is said (form).	Fulfills the assignment(s) (i.e. to produce an essay, a poster, a video, a PowerPoint presentation, etc.) in an appropriate form.
<b>Reflection and Self-Assessment</b> Demonstrates a developing sense of self as a learner, building on prior experiences to respond to new and challenging contexts (may be evident in self-assessment, reflective, or creative work)	Envisions a future self (and possibly makes plans that build on past experiences) that have occurred across multiple and diverse contexts.	Evaluates changes in own learning over time, recognizing complex contextual factors (e.g., works with ambiguity and risk, deals with frustration, considers ethical frameworks).	Articulates strengths and challenges (within specific performances or events) to increase effectiveness in different contexts (through increased self-awareness).	Describes own performances with general descriptors of success and failure.