



Common Learning Outcomes: A New Partnership Between Academic and Student Affairs

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Institutional Context

- 4500 undergraduates and 650 graduates
- Liberal Arts emphasis with pre-professional preparation programs
- One of six senior military colleges, about 14% of students are participants in military program
- New President in Jan 2005
 - Chaired *Powerful Partnerships: A Shared Responsibility for Learning* (1998)



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Historical Timeline

- Spring 2005
 - Student Affairs' paradigm shift
- Summer 2005
 - New Vice President of Academic Affairs
 - AAC&U Institute on General Education
 - AAC&U Greater Expectations Institute
- Fall 2005
 - New Executive Director of Institutional Effectiveness
- Spring 2006
 - Adoption of new learning outcomes
- Summer 2006
 - AAC&U Institute on General Education
- Fall 2006
 - Began integrating learning outcomes into core, major, and co-curriculum
- Fall 2007
 - Strategic Planning



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Previous Gen Ed Outcomes

- Communicate effectively in standard English
- Find information and evaluate it quantitatively, qualitatively, and analytically
- Use mathematics and solve problems
- Observe natural phenomena and use data to test an hypothesis
- Knowledge of the history, values, and culture of the United States and world civilizations
- Knowledge of wellness principles/strategies related to the maintenance of a healthy lifestyle
- Knowledge of literature

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A New Vision of Learning

- Shift from content-based outcomes
- From "silos" to an integrated conceptualization of learning
- Learning as the foundation across the entire educational landscape
- Develop and educate for diverse lives
- Knowledge for practice



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New Learning Outcomes

- Communicate effectively using multiple literacies and forms of expression
- Demonstrate analytic, contextual, and holistic thinking
- Engage in integrative learning
- Reflect critically and take informed action individually as a citizen
- Analyze ethical interactions in the local and global communities



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Assessment of Learning Outcomes

- Multiple methods
 - Primarily embedded measures
 - Supplement with nationally normed assessments
- Multiple points
 - General Education
 - Major
 - Capstone experiences
 - Co-curriculum



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Examples:
Assessment of Learning Outcome on Integrative Learning




- Criminal Justice & Political Science: Students will complete journal integrating classroom learning with in-field internship projects. 75% will score "C" or better on assignment
- Physics 1111 & 1112 (Core): Physics concepts are often used to describe phenomena from biology and chemistry. Record grades on homework problems specifically related to biology, chemistry and other natural sciences.

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Examples:
Assessment of Learning Outcome on Analysis of Ethical Interactions




- GEOG 1111 (Core): Essay question on test that asks student to describe any of their activities that impacts Earth's energy balance, being specific about the activity and the impact. Class average of 70% or better on this question represents successful outcome.
- Political Science: Students in Senior Seminar will be required to attend and analyze an open meeting of some governmental entity.




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Student Affairs Paradigm Shift




- Shift emphasis from participation and satisfaction to learning outcomes
- *Learning Reconsidered: A campus-wide focus on the student experience* (2004, NASPA & ACPA)
- "Learning is a comprehensive, holistic, transformative activity that integrates academic learning and student development" (p. 4)



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Re-Inventing Liberal Education




Formative Themes

- Intellectual Judgment
- Social Responsibility
- Integrative Learning

(from AAC&U's *Practicing Liberal Education: Formative Themes in the Re-invention of Liberal Learning, 2007*)


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Student Affairs Visioning Exercise




Essential Questions

- What do we want our students to know, to do and to be?
- In what ways do we contribute to their learning and overall educational experience?
- How do measure co-curricular learning?




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Co-curricular Education




- Traits and skills we want students to develop and learn through participation in student affairs programs and services
 - Leadership
 - Communication
 - Healthy Behaviors
 - Responsibility and Accountability
 - Integrity and Ethics
 - Interdependence
 - Practical Applications
- Lacked measurement/assessment methods

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 **Co-Curricular Learning Matrix**


- Connection between traits/skills desired by Student Affairs and the academic learning outcomes
- Initial idea by Associate Dean of Students and Exec Director of Institutional Effectiveness
- Support by President and VPAA resulted in collaborative team (originators + 4 faculty) at 2006 AAC&U Institute on General Education
- Refinement by Student Affairs
- [Examples](#)

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 **Examples:
Assessment of Learning Outcomes in Co-curriculum**


- Effective Communication: Career Services
 - Survey employers at career fairs and on-campus recruiting about quality of students' written (cover letters, resumes) and oral (interviews) communication skills
- Integrative Learning: Student Health Services
 - 85% of new freshmen will satisfactorily complete the Alcohol Edu Program. Report behavior changes.

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 **Learning Outcomes Assessment Matrix**

Learning Outcome	Your Department	Another Division	Student Organizations/Activities	Residence Life	Student Health
EXAMPLE: Communicate Effectively				Roommate Negotiations (Roommate Contracts)	
EXAMPLE: Ethical Interactions			Holding members accountable for policy (number of referrals to internal judicial processes within organizations)		

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 **Examples:
Assessment of Learning Outcomes in Co-curriculum**

- Critical Reflection/Taking Action: Discipline Process
 - Participants (accused, accusers, and discipline committee members) will answer reflective questions on what they have learned. Track number of repeat offenders in discipline process
- Analysis of Ethical Interactions: Student Counseling
 - Counselors will be surveyed at end of each semester regarding how frequently values and ethics exploration are part of therapeutic process in outreach or individual counseling


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 **NGCSU's Strategic 5-Year Plan**


- Strategic Theme 1: Leadership In Innovative Teaching And Learning
 - Strategic Direction 1.3 Institutionalize undergraduate research



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 **AAC&U and CUR Stance**

- Both organizations, as well as NGCSU, recognize the merit of undergraduate research in the development of students within the academic curriculum.




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What is undergraduate research?





- “an inquiry or investigation that makes an original intellectual or creative contribution to the discipline” (CUR)
- Obstacles
 - Perceptions by academic areas of what constitutes undergraduate research
 - The old “carrot and stick” or “stick and carrot” attitude



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What is undergraduate research?


- Hurdles
 - Standardize the research experience
 - Time commitment and credit hours earned
 - Appropriate and proper experimental design consistent across programs and departments
 - Expand participation
 - Build collaborations
 - Develop an effective means of assessment

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EVEN BIGGER HURDLE




- Pretty easy to incorporate undergraduate research into academic areas, although some areas are easier than others.
- Pretty easy to address (i.e. incorporate) the NGCSU learning outcomes in the undergraduate research experience



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Learning Matrix: Academic/Undergraduate Research



Academic Area	BIOLOGY	MATHEMATICS	HISTORY	CRIMINAL JUSTICE
Learning Outcome				
Communicate Effectively				
Analytical/Holistic Thinking				
Integrative Learning				
Reflect Critically/ Informed Action				
Ethical Interactions				

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Learning Matrix: Academic/Undergraduate Research



Academic Area	BIOLOGY	MATHEMATICS	HISTORY	CRIMINAL JUSTICE
Learning Outcome				
Communicate Effectively			Write proposal or research paper.	
Analytical/Holistic Thinking				
Integrative Learning				
Reflect Critically/ Informed Action				
Ethical Interactions				

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Learning Matrix: Academic/Undergraduate Research



Academic Area	BIOLOGY	MATHEMATICS	HISTORY	CRIMINAL JUSTICE
Learning Outcome				
Communicate Effectively			Write proposal or research paper.	
Analytical/Holistic Thinking		Design of experiment to address the null hypothesis		
Integrative Learning				
Reflect Critically/ Informed Action				
Ethical Interactions				

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Learning Matrix: Academic/Undergraduate Research

Academic Area Learning Outcome	BIOLOGY	MATHEMATICS	HISTORY	CRIMINAL JUSTICE
Communicate Effectively			Write proposal or research paper.	
Analytical/Holistic Thinking		Design of experiment to address the null hypothesis		
Integrative Learning	Reliance on chemistry, physics, math.			
Reflect Critically/ Informed Action				
Ethical Interactions				

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Learning Matrix: Academic/Undergraduate Research

Academic Area Learning Outcome	BIOLOGY	MATHEMATICS	HISTORY	CRIMINAL JUSTICE
Communicate Effectively			Write proposal or research paper.	
Analytical/Holistic Thinking		Design of experiment to address the null hypothesis		
Integrative Learning	Reliance on chemistry, physics, math.			
Reflect Critically/ Informed Action				Analysis of data and discussion of results.
Ethical Interactions				

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Learning Matrix: Academic/Undergraduate Research


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Communicate Effectively			Write proposal or research paper.	
Analytical/Holistic Thinking		Design of experiment to address the null hypothesis		
Integrative Learning	Reliance on chemistry, physics, math.			
Reflect Critically/ Informed Action				Analysis of data and discussion of results.
Ethical Interactions	Shared lab space and resources.			

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EVEN BIGGER HURDLE

- THE FUSION
 - How is undergraduate research incorporated into the co-curriculum, **within the framework of the learning outcomes**, in an attempt to make the undergraduate experience a true integration of academic experiences and program participation?



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Learning Matrix: Undergraduate Research/Co-Curricular

Is there a correlation between the new turf on the athletic fields and sports injuries?

OR

Co-curricular Area Learning Outcome	Intercollegiate Athletics			
Communicate Effectively				
Analytical/Holistic Thinking				
Integrative Learning				
Reflect Critically/ Informed Action				
Ethical Interactions				

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Learning Matrix: Undergraduate Research/Co-Curricular

Is there a correlation between the new turf on the athletic fields and sports injuries?


Co-curricular Area Learning Outcome	Intercollegiate Athletics			
Communicate Effectively	Report, oral or written			
Analytical/Holistic Thinking	Data, retrospective study			
Integrative Learning	Consult academic programs such as physical therapy			
Reflect Critically/ Informed Action	Make recommendations			
Ethical Interactions	Don't necessarily have to address every outcome			

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OR


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Learning Matrix: Undergraduate Research/Co-Curricular

Question Learning Outcome	Is there a correlation between the new turf on the athletic fields and sports injuries?			
Communicate Effectively				
Analytical/Holistic Thinking				
Integrative Learning				
Reflect Critically/ Informed Action				
Ethical Interactions				


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Learning Matrix: Undergraduate Research/Co-Curricular

Question Learning Outcome	Is there a correlation between the new turf on the athletic fields and sports injuries?			
Communicate Effectively	Final report to <i>Intercollegiate athletics</i>			
Analytical/Holistic Thinking	?			
Integrative Learning	Student Health & Health Education			
Reflect Critically/ Informed Action	Student Government			
Ethical Interactions	Inform all users of athletic fields	Corps of cadets, Student Activities	Student Organizations, etc.	


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Learning Matrix: Undergraduate Research/Co-Curricular

Question Learning Outcome				
Communicate Effectively				
Analytical/Holistic Thinking				
Integrative Learning				
Reflect Critically/ Informed Action				
Ethical Interactions				


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Co-Curricular Areas

- Residence Life
- Corps of Cadets
- Career Services
- Student Counseling
- Student Activities
- Student organizations
- Greek Life
- Discipline
- Commuter services
- Internships
- Student Health and Health Education
- Alcohol education
- Intercollegiate Athletics
- Recreational Sports
- Wellness Center/Programs
- Multicultural Affairs

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Conclusion

“The assessment of general education is about examining the consequences of not any particular body of coursework that may be labeled as “general education” but of the undergraduate experience as a whole.”

--- Peter Ewell
General Education and the Assessment Reform Agenda (pp 5-6, AAC&U)

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Questions/More Information

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Learning Outcomes Assessment Matrix

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Learning Matrix: Undergraduate Research /Co-curricular

Learning Outcome				
Communicate Effectively				
Analytical/Holistic Thinking				
Integrative Learning				
Reflect Critically/ Informed Action				
Ethical Interactions				