Use of the VALUE Rubrics in the College of Business of Lewis University
Submitted by George G. Klemic

Which rubrics are you currently working with?

We have worked with the VALUE rubrics for quantitative literacy, critical thinking, written communication, and oral communication.

At Lewis University’s College of Business (COB), we began our assessment plan two years before the publication of the VALUE rubrics. We assessed “use of quantitative and qualitative models” in 2008, “critical thinking” in 2009, “written communication” in 2010, and “oral communication” in 2011. The rubrics we developed on our own required heavy resource expenditure in terms of research time, consensus building, calibration, and so on. If the VALUE rubrics had existed earlier, we would have been able to save much time and effort. After the fact, we used the rubrics for quantitative literacy, critical thinking, and written communication to validate our choice of criteria and elements for our rubrics. Our rubrics included the criteria of the VALUE rubrics. After comparison to existing COB rubrics, the VALUE rubric for oral communication was adapted and used with little change into a scan-capable form. This rubric was at least as thorough as those we already had in use.

How are you using the rubrics?

- General education: The only direct connection to the general education requirements occurred coincidentally, when we assessed critical thinking in basic economics classes that also satisfied general education requirements. The student assignments used were long-standing embedded assignments that were scored by economics and other COB faculty, led by the chair of the COB assessment committee.
- Our rubrics, now seen as based on the VALUE rubrics, are used throughout the COB’s programs, but largely in common core classes and capstone classes. The common core
allows us to cover assessment in many majors for analytical entry and in-progress assessment. Summative assessment occurs in the capstones.

- Student portfolios: We do not have a portfolio requirement in the COB.
- Cocurricular assessment is expected to be a university-wide effort, not limited to the COB. Thus far, the VALUE rubrics have not been used for cocurricular assessment.

Who is primarily working with the VALUE rubrics on your campus?

- Faculty throughout Lewis University use the VALUE rubrics. In the COB, faculty in all departments have used the VALUE rubrics as described above.
- Student affairs professionals have examined and considered the VALUE rubrics but have not yet done an assessment using them.
- Campus committees (especially the COB’s assessment committee), the Lewis University Assessment Committee, other college assessment committees, and departments use the VALUE rubrics as well.
- Other campus administrators (including deans, department/division chairs, institutional research) throughout the university are aware of and consider the use the VALUE rubrics.

What have the data you’ve collected from the VALUE rubrics told you about student learning on your campus?

Data collected from our use of the rubrics have suggested that COB student performance levels are at the hypothesized levels. The rubrics have allowed us to identify specific problem areas for attention. We have shared the findings within the COB and with the university at large. Presentations about our activities have been made at conferences (e.g., the Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis Assessment Institute) and published (e.g., in Assessment Update). Discussion in all these forums allowed us to receive much feedback and many suggestions. We have subscribed to improvement goals in each area assessed. Critical thinking proved to be an area of particularly great challenge. Here, our faculty developed and implemented a three-year accomplishment plan involving fifteen activities. We now are
Considering deployment of an assessment dashboard that will allow at-a-glance understanding of where we stand on assessment.

*What else should we know about the use of rubrics on your campus?*

The data and information made available by way of the use of these rubrics enables intra- and inter-departmental targeting of specific student learning issues, as opposed to overly broad approaches to improvement.