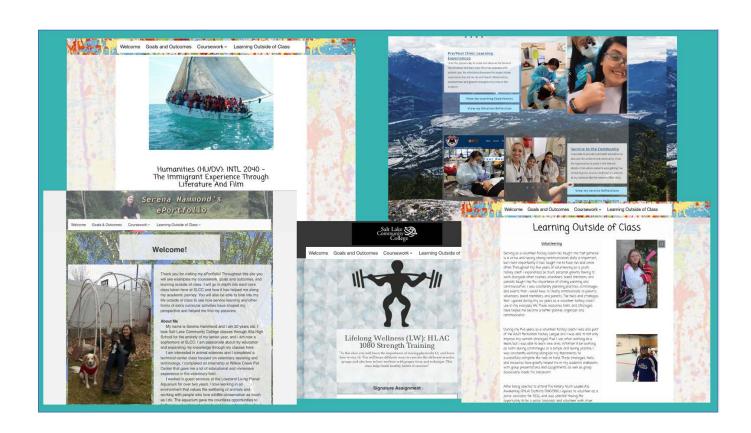
# Salt Lake Community College

# General Education Assessment Report 2020

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#### **Assessment Methods**

Salt Lake Community College has officially been using ePortfolios as a requirement in General Education courses for a decade now and it has been an effective way to assess the way students at the college experience general education since 2012. Salt Lake Community College uses student ePortfolios to assess the learning outcomes of the General Education program. Each assessment examines whether the General Education program offers students sufficient opportunities to progress toward Salt Lake Community College's (SLCC) General Education learning outcomes, and whether graduating students are adequately meeting those learning outcomes.

This year we took a bit of a different approach to our assessment. As part of our effort to be more equity-minded, we started disaggregating the assessment data last year. However, after doing so we ran into several challenges and found that we were falling short in our attempt to disaggregate and analyze the data in a meaningful way. This year we decided it would be beneficial to work more closely with our Data Science and Analytics Office. They helped us find a sample of students for our assessment, which we felt was much more representational. Data Science and Analytics made sure we considered the intersectionality of student groups at SLCC.

The parameters for this sample were as follows: they must have graduated from SLCC in May 2019 with either an A.A. (Associates of Arts) or A.S. (Associates of Science) degree. In addition, the entirety of their General Education coursework must have been completed at Salt Lake Community College. This assured us that we would not be looking at artifacts students completed while taking general education courses at other institutions. In the end, we pulled a random sample of 138 students who fit these parameters and had submitted ePortfolio links to our Banner system. While this part of the assessment report will take a more holistic look at all the students, we will examine our approach to disaggregating the data in an additional section.

As in the past, we used a holistic rubric to complete this assessment. This rubric is a combination of SLCC-specific internal measures, VALUE rubrics developed by the American Association of Colleges and Universities (AAC&U), and AAC&U VALUE rubrics modified for our circumstances at SLCC.

We took a different approach this year to assessing the Effective Communication learning outcome. Tiffany Rousculp, our Writing Across the College Director, organized the teams who assessed the signature assignments for this learning outcome. You can read more about the specifics of that project in an additional report. The Information Literacy teams were organized by the Assistant Director of the Library, Zack Allred, who invited other librarians to participate. All other assessment teams were arranged by the ePortfolio Coordinator, Emily Dibble, and were comprised of teams of two SLCC faculty, staff and/or administrators. Most teams were interdisciplinary, and all teams worked together using the rubrics to assess different learning outcomes and calibrate their scores. We assessed all 138 ePortfolios using this method.

This year we decided not to assess a few of the components that we have looked at in years past. We determined that the following--for various reasons-- could not adequately be assessed using ePortfolios at the present time:

- \*Qualitative Effective Communication--For more information on why we did not assess this outcome this year, please see the Effective Communication section.
- Working with Others—We decided that this learning outcome was too difficult to assess using the artifacts found in student ePortfolios.
- *Computer Literacy*—This learning outcome is not assessable as it is currently written. This outcome is currently being reviewed by curriculum committees and stakeholders of the designation to determine if it can be revised to the point where we can effectively assess it in student ePortfolios.

#### **Oral Communication**

For the last three years, we made the decision to focus this portion of the assessment on COMM 1020 (Public Speaking) because that course is one of the few that consistently requires a video of a student presenting a speech as an artifact on the student's ePortfolio. Faculty from the Communications department looked at the VALUE rubrics and then came up with a modified rubric, which they felt would effectively assess the quality of student oral presentations.

By focusing on COMM 1020 for our sample, we had a much more robust group of assignments, which led to a more thorough qualitative assessment. Table 1 (page 6) shows the data from this group of student portfolios. Over 75% of students either met or exceeded expectations in all areas, and mean scores for all areas were 3.01 and above.

Table 1: Percentage of Assignments' Scores for Evidence that Students Communicate Orally.

#### **Performance Levels**

	1	2	3	4
Organization Follows the established Introduction. Each main point flows into the next with clear transitions between ideas. Follows established Conclusion. Easy to follow, logical connection of ideas	Student meets little to no (30% or below) college- level expectations outlined in this category.	Student only meets a few (less than 50%) of the college-level expectations outlined in this category.	Student meets the large majority (more than 70%) of the college-level expectations outlined in this category.	Student meets all the college-level expectations in this category and performs above and beyond these expectations in some areas outline in the category.
n=100 mean 3.11	0%	12%	65%	23%
Content and References Creates a connection with audience by adapting to this audience's interest, attitudes, and knowledge. Researched facts, statistics, examples, charts are used which include references that are orally cited, and it is clear how these references are authoritative for the topic. Brief stories, comparisons, personalized comments, and vivid word pictures are used.	Student meets little to no (30% or below) college- level expectations outlined in this category.	Student only meets a few (less than 50%) of the college-level expectations outlined in this category.	Student meets the large majority (more than 70%) of the college-level expectations outlined in this category.	Student meets all the college-level expectations in this category and performs above and beyond these expectations in some areas outline in the category.
n=100 mean 3.33	0%	1%	65%	34%
Delivery Used constant eye contact. Oral speaking style: non-complex, conversational tone used,	Student meets little to no (30% or below) college- level expectations outlined in this category.	Student only meets a few (less than 50%) of the college-level	Student meets the large majority (more than 70%) of the college-level	Student meets all the college-level expectations in this category and

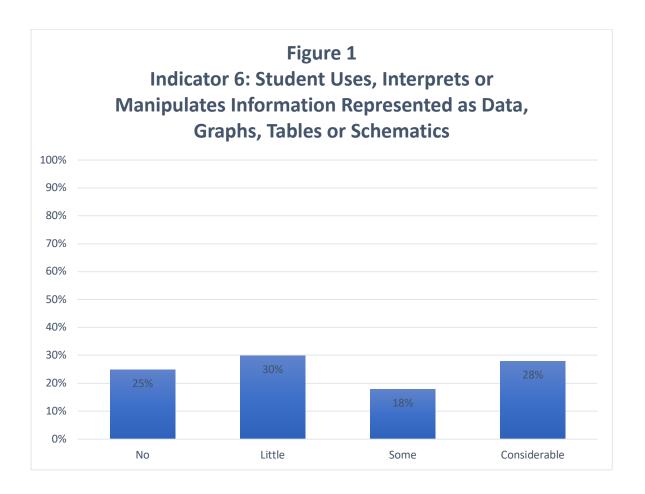
pace of speech isn't too fast or too slow. Body movements and gestures used effectively. Use of vocal & facial variety. Fluency: no hesitant speech, proper pronunciation, proper articulation, proper grammar, free from disfluencies such as: "um, uh, so, like"		expectations outlined in this category.	expectations outlined in this category.	performs above and beyond these expectations in some areas outline in the category.
n=100 mean 3.01	1%	22%	52%	25%

# **Quantitative Literacy**

Students develop quantitative literacies necessary for their chosen field of study. This includes approaching practical problems by choosing and applying appropriate mathematical techniques; using information represented as data, graphs, tables, and schematics in a variety of disciplines; applying mathematical theory, concepts, and methods of inquiry appropriate to program-specific problems.

We began our assessment of quantitative literacy by looking at the evidence in student ePortfolios and their ability to use or interpret information represented as data, graphs, tables and schematics in a variety of disciplines.

Figure 1 indicates that fifty-six percent of all students had "some" (two artifacts) or "considerable" (three or more artifacts), evidence of interpreting information. The twenty-eight percent had "considerable" evidence. Fifty-five percent had "little" or "no" evidence. The "no" evidence category showed the largest increase from last year by 14 percentage points.



Reviewers also looked at how well students interpreted quantitative information in various forms. Out of 100 ePortfolios, they found 172 artifacts where students attempted to interpret quantitative information. By comparison, this is a decrease in sample size of 110 artifacts from what was reviewed last year.

As seen in Table 2, 6% of student work fell in the "well below" and "below" categories, and 94% of the artifacts scored in the top two performance levels, meaning the majority of students were providing accurate explanations.

Table 2 Percentage of Artifacts (n=172) with Scores for the Interpretation of Quantitative Data in the VALUE Rubric Categories. (mean=2.95)

Interpretation Ability to explain information presented to the student in the form of equations, graphs, diagrams, tables, words, etc.  Total # Assignments = 94  Mean Score = 2.95	Attempts to explain information presented in mathematical forms but draws incorrect conclusions about what the information means.	Provides somewhat accurate explanations of information presented in mathematical forms, but occasionally makes minor errors related to computations or units.	Provides accurate explanations of information presented in mathematical forms.	Provides accurate explanations of information presented in mathematical forms. Makes appropriate inferences based on that information.
_	1%	5%	93%	1%

In addition, we also wanted to look at the students' ability to manipulate quantitative information from one form to another, such as converting a table of data to a graph or chart. In Table 3 we can see that once again, very few (only 1%) of students' artifacts had inaccurate or inappropriate mathematical portrayals while 91% competently converted relevant information into desired mathematical portrayals.

Table 3 Percentage of Artifacts (n=172) with Scores for the Manipulation of Quantitative Data in the VALUE Rubric Categories. (mean=2.90)

Manipulation	Completes	Completes	Competently	Skillfully converts
Ability of the	conversion of	conversion of	converts relevant	relevant information
student to convert	information but	information but	information into	into an insightful
relevant	resulting	resulting	an appropriate and	mathematical
information from	mathematical	mathematical	desired	portrayal in a way
one form—such as	portrayal is	portrayal is only	mathematical	that contributes to a
equations, graphs,	inappropriate or	partially	portrayal.	further or deeper
diagrams, tables,	inaccurate.	appropriate or		understanding.
words—to another.		accurate.		

Total # Assignments = 94 Mean Score = <b>2.90</b>				
	1%	8%	91%	0%

Finally, we felt the unaltered VALUE rubric for quantitative literacy did a sufficient job in aiding reviewers who assessed students' ability to communicate quantitative evidence in support of an argument or the purpose of their work. Table 4 shows that twelve percent provided arguments where quantitative evidence is pertinent but did not provide adequate numerical support. Thirty percent of assignments used quantitative information but did not effectively connect it to the argument or purpose of the work. The majority (50%) used the information to connect with the argument of the work, although it may have been less effectively presented. Eight percent of students used quantitative information to connect to the argument and presented it in a high-quality and effective format.

Table 4 Percentage of Artifacts (n=172) with Scores for the Communication of Quantitative Data in the VALUE Rubric Categories. (mean=2.53)

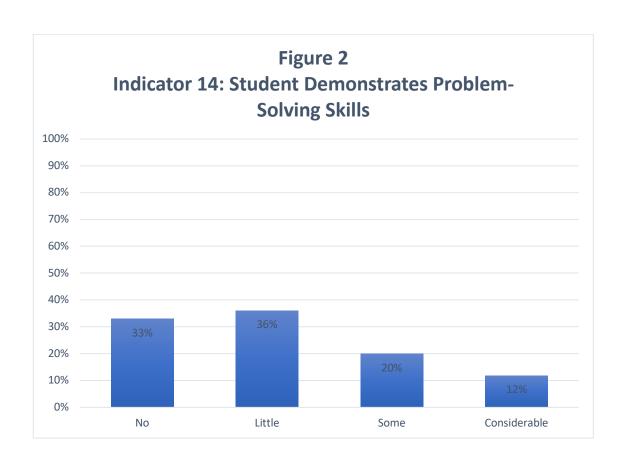
		•		
Communication	Presents an argument	Uses quantitative	Uses quantitative	Uses
Ability of the	for which quantitative	information but does	information in	quantitative
student to express	evidence is pertinent	not effectively	connection with	information in
quantitative	but does not provide	connect it to the	the argument or	connection
evidence in support	adequate explicit	argument or purpose	purpose of the	with the
of the argument or	numerical support.	of the work.	work, though data	argument or
purpose of the work	(May use quasi-		may be presented	purpose of the
(in terms of what	quantitative words		in a less than	work,
evidence is used	such as "many," "few,"		completely	presents it in
and how it is	"increasing," "small,"		effective format or	an effective
formatted,	and the like in place of		some parts of the	format, and
presented, and	actual quantities.)		explication may be	explicates it
contextualized)			uneven.	with
				consistently
Total #				high quality.
Assignments = 94				
Mean Score = <b>2.53</b>				
	12%	30%	50%	8%

Salt Lake Community College

### **Critical Thinking**

Students think critically. This includes reasoning effectively from available evidence; demonstrating effective problem solving; engaging in reflective thinking and expression; demonstrating higher-order skills such as analysis, synthesis, and evaluation; making connections across disciplines; applying scientific methods to the inquiry process.

One aspect of the critical thinking learning outcome we examined was whether SLCC students were getting experiences with unstructured problems (or problems where there was no clearly defined right or wrong answer). The team of assessors did a quantitative count of the number of assignments in students' ePortfolios where there were artifacts that dealt with these types of problems. As indicated in Figure 2 12% of students' ePortfolios showed "considerable" evidence (three or more artifacts) that they were getting practice grappling with unstructured problems and another 20% indicated that student ePortfolios had "some" evidence (two artifacts).



Student reflections are another area where we felt students demonstrate critical thinking. Every General Education course requires students to reflect on their learning or coursework, to self-reflect on who they are as learners, and then to place their learning in a broader context of either their lives or experiences or other classes they have been taking.

Figure 3 demonstrates that 46% of students are engaging in at least some reflection (six to twelve reflections in each ePortfolio) and an additional 7% are doing "considerable" reflection (thirteen or more reflections). Only 4% of student ePortfolios showed no evidence of reflection, an increase of 3 percentage points from last year. 42% showed "little" evidence in their reflections. We always hope to see reflection continue to increase in the future. As signature assignments and the accompanying reflection increasingly becomes the accepted norm at the college, we would expect the number of student reflections to increase.

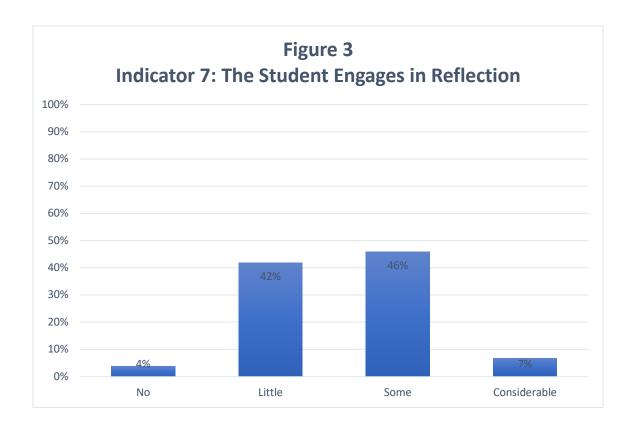
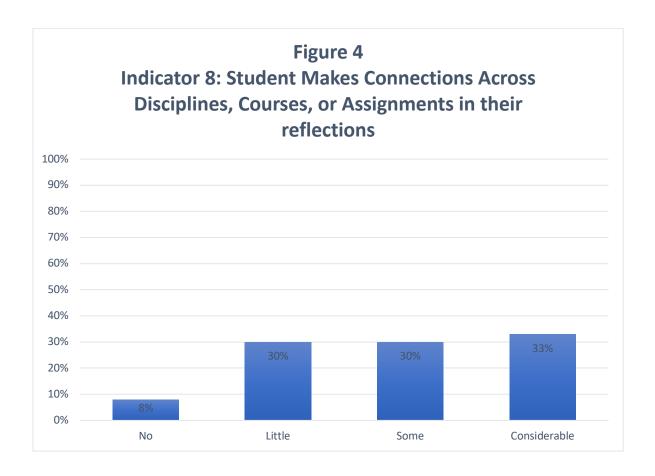


Figure 4 and Figure 5 (pages 13 & 14) examine where students made connections in their reflections. Just like last year, Figure 4 indicates that only 33% of student reflections made "considerable" (five or more) academic connections. Still 38% of

students' portfolios showed "little" (one or two academic connections) to "no" evidence of academic connections. While the number of students (30%) who have done "some" has increased, this is continuing to be an area where we need improvement.



In Figure 5 we can see that students tend to be more consistent about making personal connections to their lives in their reflections. Eighty-two percent of students' ePortfolios contained "some" (three or four) or "considerable" (five or more connections) evidence of reflections which made personal connections. Only 5% of student ePortfolios contained no evidence of personal connections in reflections. This is an increase of 4 percentage points from last year.

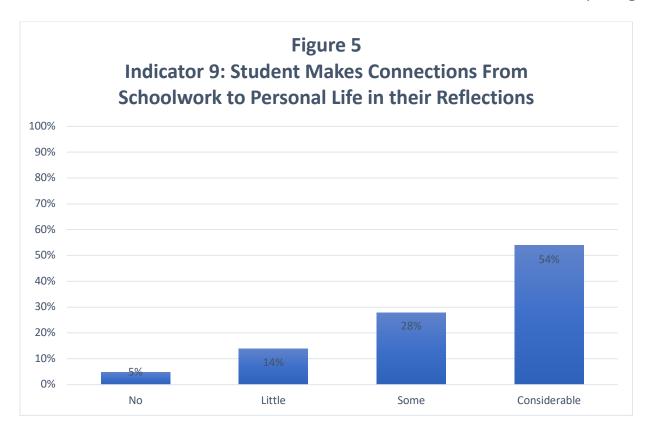


Table 5 displays the qualitative results for the students' reflections. We asked one team of reviewers to pick three of what they viewed as strong reflections from each ePortfolio. Next, they applied an in-house rubric to assess the reflections. Finally, they averaged the scores for each ePortfolio. The mean for reflections in the sample of 100 ePortfolios this year increased from 2.31 last year to 2.70 this year. Twenty-five percent of students' reflections directly addressed the prompt(s) given by the instructor, and demonstrated adequate elaboration, connections, insights and perspectives and used techniques such as analysis, comparison and interpretation. Another 24% in the "exceeds" expectations category made strong connections and highlighted new insights and perspectives. A total of 59% of reflections fell into the top two categories which is a significant improvement. 13% of students failed to address the reflection prompt(s) and contained no elaboration in their ePortfolio. This number decreased by 10 percentage points from last year, demonstrating an improvement in the area of emphasizing student reflections as an important part of the ePortfolio signature assignment.

Table 5: Percentage of Student Reflections (n=375) with Scores for Reflection Quality in the Rubric Categories. (mean=2.70)

1	2	3	4
The writer fails to address the reflection prompt(s) given by the instructor. The reflection piece contains no elaboration and is too short.	The writer partially addresses the reflection prompt(s) given by the instructor and fails to sufficiently elaborate his/her points. S/he makes few connections, offers few insights and perspectives, etc.	The writer addresses the reflection prompt(s) given by the instructor, and does a fairly good job with elaboration, making connections, offering new insights and perspectives, and/or uses techniques such as questioning, comparing, interpreting, and analyzing.	The writer directly addresses the reflection prompt(s) given by the instructor, elaborates his/her points, makes strong intellectual or personal connections, highlights new insights and perspectives, and/or uses techniques such as questioning, comparing, interpreting, and analyzing.
13%	29%	34%	25%

In Table 6 we can view the way artifacts scored for scientific thinking. There was a significant decrease from n=242 in 2019, to an n=27 in 2020. Reviewers found 27 artifacts where they saw students attempting to demonstrate an understanding of scientific thinking. Out of this sample, none of the artifacts demonstrated that students did not clearly understand the scientific method. Sixty-four percent of the artifacts indicated that students understood some aspects of the scientific method. An additional 32% of assignments showed students understood most of the method and only 4% showed an understanding of all components of scientific method including appropriate use of hypotheses, observation, collecting data, interpreting data and formulating conclusions.

Table 6: Percentage of Assignments (n=27) with Scores for Scientific Thinking in the Rubric Categories. (mean=2.00)--

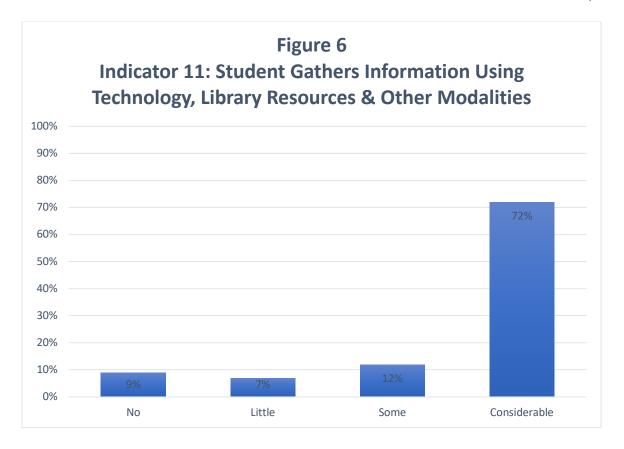
1	2	3	4
Student clearly does not understand hypotheses, observation, collecting data, interpreting findings or formulating conclusions consistent with data.	Student understands a few of the following: the appropriate use of hypotheses, observation, collecting data, interpreting findings, and formulating conclusions consistent with data.	Student understands most of the following: the appropriate use of hypotheses, observation, collecting data, interpreting findings, and formulating conclusions consistent with data.	Student understands all of the following: the appropriate use of a hypotheses, observation, collecting data, interpreting findings, and formulating conclusions consistent with data.
0%	64%	32%	4%

# **Information Literacy**

Students develop information literacy. This includes gathering and analyzing information using technology, library resources, and other modalities; understanding and acting upon ethical and security principles with respect to information acquisition and distribution; distinguishing between credible and non-credible sources of information and using the former in their work in an appropriately documented fashion.

As with previous years the 2020 Information Literacy General Education ePortfolio assessment was conducted by a team of two SLCC Librarians. We decided to begin the assessment of information literacy by having the team look at the sample of 138 ePortfolios and count the number of assignments that asked students to gather information using technology, library resources, or other modalities.

This team looked for assignments where students were using outside-of-classroom information sources to complete signature assignments. Figure 6 shows that the majority (72%) demonstrated "considerable" (four or more artifacts) evidence of doing so. Only 9% showed no evidence of using outside information sources.



The next part of the assessment this team did was completed using the SLCC information literacy assessment rubric. The assessment team conducted a norming process to establish mutually agreed upon levels of quantitative and qualitative student performance levels. Review of the remaining ePortfolios were divided equally among the team. This assessment was separate and different in context than the 2020 Information Literacy Intervention analysis.

Evaluation was limited to written research by students that were of a persuasive or informative nature, as well as other assignments in formats such as PowerPoint slide presentations and screencasts. Due to evaluation criteria constraints, the team did not evaluate works like art slideshows or creative writing.

The evaluation of student work was based on six criteria that were internally developed using the ACRL Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education. Simplified, these six criteria are: 1) credible sources used, 2) intended audience or purpose established, 3) sources cited in a consistent format, 4) synthesis of ideas, 5) original thoughts and ideas, and 6) topic/research question developed. The criteria were scored on the following scale: 1) well below expectations, 2) below expectations,

3) meets expectations, and 4) exceeds expectations. Additionally, a quantitative analysis occurred where the number of sources students used were counted. The volume of sources was ranked as: 1) no evidence, in which no outside sources appear 2) little, in which 1 source appears, 3) some, in which 2 or 3 sources appear, and 4) considerable, in which 4 or more sources appear.

Table 7 shows that like previous years of the Information Literacy assessment most students included a considerable number of outside sources (more than 4 external sources). And the qualitative analysis followed the usual Gaussian distribution we have seen in previous years, with most students falling in the below expectations or meets expectations scale, with smaller distributions in the well below expectations or exceed expectations range.

Table 7: Percentage of Portfolios (n=100) Whose Holistic Assessment Scores Fell into the ACRL-Inspired Information Literacy Rubric Performance Levels.

Indicators	1	2	3	4
Student will	Topic/research	Topic/research	Topic/research	Topic/research
articulate a topic/	question not	question is	question is	question is articulated
research question	articulated.	articulated late in	articulated early in	in an academic or
		the project.	the project.	professional manner.
(Mean=2.56)	6%	47%	41%	5%
Student will indicate	No	Audience/purpose	Audience/purpose	Audience/purpose is
the intended	audience/purpose.	is minimally	is indicated.	indicated in an
audience/purpose of		indicated.		academic or
their project				professional manner.
(Mean=2.64)	5%	44%	48%	3%
Student will draw	Synthesis is not	Synthesis is	Synthesis is	Synthesis is excellent
syntheses based	provided.	provided but is not	reasonable in	and point toward new
upon sources		logical or related	relation to	areas of research.
		to sources.	sources.	
(Mean=2.67)	10%	38%	42%	9%
Student will	Original	Original	Original	Original
distinguish their	thoughts/ideas are	thoughts/ideas are	thoughts/ideas are	thoughts/ideas are
original	not distinguished.	minimally	distinguished.	distinguished in an
thoughts/ideas from		distinguished.		academic/professional
sources				manner.
(Mean=2.82)	4%	33%	48%	14%
Student will use	Work does not	Work includes	Work includes	Work includes a
appropriate/credible/	include sources.	minimally	mostly	variety of sources
		appropriate/	appropriate/	identifiable as
				appropriate/

authoritative sources		credible/	credible/	credible/
to the scope of the		authoritative	authoritative	authoritative.
project		sources.	sources.	
(Mean=2.67)	10%	38%	42%	9%
Student will cite sources and use a consistent format (for each project)	No citations provided.	Citations are incorrectly done, or format has major errors.	Citations are mostly done correctly, or format has few minor mistakes.	Citations are perfect and format is professionally done.
(Mean=2.37)	23%	38%	37%	2%

# Lifelong Wellness

Students develop the attitudes and skills for lifelong wellness. This includes understanding the importance of physical activity and its connection to lifelong wellness; learning how participation in a fitness, sport, or leisure activity results in daily benefits including stress reduction, endorphin release, and a sense of well-being.

One of the requirements for earning an associate degree at SLCC is for students to take a Lifelong Wellness (LW) course. Table 8 shows that out of the 138 ePortfolios reviewed 101 of those students completed a lifelong wellness assignment. Fully 18% of students' artifacts scored in the "well below" range. Another 24% minimally expressed understanding of the importance of physical activity and its connection to lifelong wellness. Forty percent of students adequately expressed understanding and 19% effectively understood the importance and made connections. Overall, the quality of student artifacts fell just below expectations with an average score of 2.59.

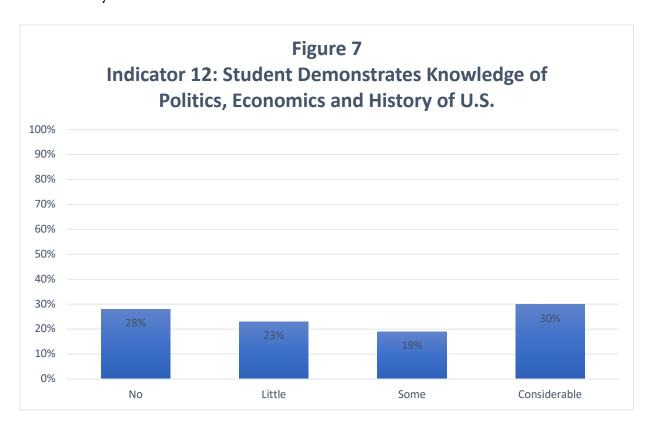
Table 8: Percentage of Students Whose Mean Scores for Lifelong Wellness Fell into These Ranges.

1	2	3	4
The posted artifact or instance of reflection was completely unsatisfactory.	At least one artifact or instance of reflection in which the student minimally expresses an understanding of the importance of physical activity and its connection to lifelong wellness.	At least one artifact or instance of reflection in which the student adequately expresses an understanding of the importance of physical activity and its connection to lifelong wellness.	At least one artifact or instance of reflection in which the student effectively expresses an understanding of the importance of physical activity and its connection to lifelong wellness.
18%	24%	40%	19%

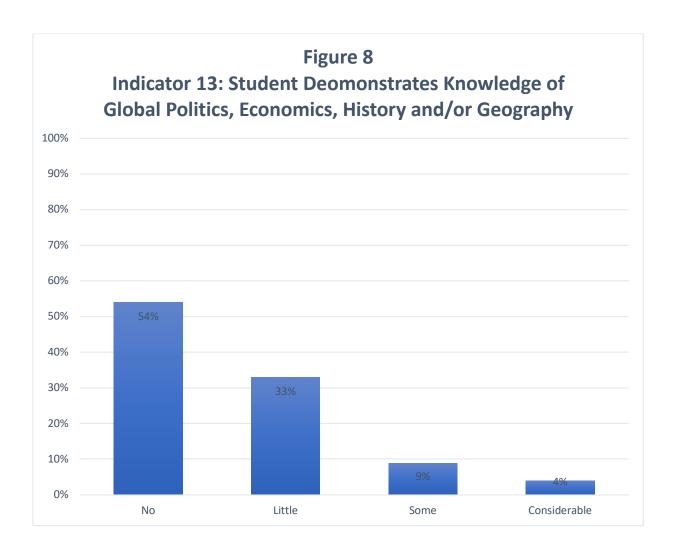
### Community and Civic Engagement

Students develop the knowledge and skills to be community engaged learners and scholars. This includes understanding the natural, political, historical, social, and economic underpinnings of the local, national, and global communities to which they belong...

The Community and Civic Engagement learning outcome is one that has been looked at from several different aspects. A more extensive analysis, using a slightly different methodology was conducted by a group of four faculty and our Coordinator for Engaged Learning, Lucy Smith. Their report will be published to the college later. Our assessment reviewed ePortfolios for only basic civic literacy competencies. The main issue we looked at here was whether students were creating signature assignments that asked them to demonstrate an understanding of politics, economics, and history either of the United States or of the world outside of the United States. Figure 7 shows that 51% of students had either no or "little" (one artifact) evidence while 30% of students had "considerable" (three or more) evidence that demonstrated knowledge of U.S. civic literacy.



When we looked at students' global knowledge in Figure 8, only 4% of students had "considerable" evidence (three or more artifacts) and 54% had no evidence. We hope that recent efforts made in curricular bodies (such as creating a specific International/Global (IG) general education designation) will ensure that students soon will have sufficient opportunities to develop global knowledge.



#### **Recommendations from Reviewers**

Each year we ask those who have participated in the General Education ePortfolio Assessment to reflect on their experience. Below are some of the insights and observations from this year's assessors about how we can help students improve their ePortfolios and how we can help faculty help students do ePortfolios well.

#### **Signature Assignments:**

- Intentionally state the value of having signature assignments in the ePortfolio early in the semester.
- Consider allowing students (particularly those in QL courses) to delve more into the meaning of their results rather than just the results.
- Give students an opportunity to demonstrate their learning in a way that prompts them to articulate their reasoning and not just fill in blanks or respond with one-sentence answers.
- Ask students to post two signature assignments (perhaps one from earlier in the semester and one from later) to help them demonstrate their growth.
- Incorporate more research and writing rigor into assignments.
- For science classes, consider incorporating more signature assignments which demonstrate the scientific method.

#### **Reflection:**

- Ask students to make meaningful connections with other classes, their personal lives, and learning outcomes in the reflection prompts you create.
- Provide students with clear, carefully designed and thought-provoking reflection prompts.
- Emphasize the value of students seriously reflecting on and considering their learning and growth.
- Consider asking students to peer-review each other's reflections.

### ePortfolio Design:

- Provide feedback to students about ePortfolio design as well as assignment quality.
- Allow more engaging and creative ways for students to present assignments and reflections (for example, allow audio, video, written and visual reflections and assignments).

- Provide students with incentives to further improve their ePortfolios. If possible, provide time each semester to prepare their sites and do periodic check-ins.
- Encourage them to personalize their ePortfolio in a way that will showcase the "whole student" and allow them to explore and express their identity.

#### **Context/Content:**

- Show students examples of excellent student ePortfolios (many great examples can be found on <a href="slcc.edu/eportfolio/examples">slcc.edu/eportfolio/examples</a>)
- Talk about the ePortfolio early in your classes and help students understand the purpose and value of doing an ePortfolio well.

#### Other:

Participants strongly recommended the following to faculty:

- More ePortfolio pedagogy training for all faculty who teach general education courses.
- Find a way to provide more ePortfolio training for students.
- Review the assessment rubrics and goals so they are more aware of what is being evaluated.
- Be aware that there was concern over the number of incomplete ePortfolios which lacked many assignments from general education courses.
- More faculty from each department participate each year so more faculty can have this experience.

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