

Salt Lake Community College
Civic Literacy Student Learning Outcome Assessment Report
Academic Year 2021-2022
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This report summarizes the results of the assessment of the Salt Lake Community College (SLCC) civic literacy student learning outcome (CLSLO) during the 2021-2022 academic year and key takeaways from our involvement in the national Civic Evidence Assessment Project conducted by the American Association Colleges & Universities (AAC&U). Traditionally, we compare current SLCC assessment data alongside data from previous years. However, our comparisons are more generalized this year since the methods and sampling changed due to our involvement in the Civic Evidence Project. This report documents findings from our internal assessment which mirrored the AAC&U Civic Evidence project framework. We outline what we learned from the process because SLCC methods mirrored that of AAC&U, but we evaluated the student artifacts using slightly different assessment rubrics.

Each year, the Engaged Learning Office leads assessment efforts to determine how well community-engaged learning (CEL) students achieve gains with the CLSLO at SLCC.

In 2014, the Engaged Learning Office started assessing the SLCC CLSLO. Since then, assessment efforts have occurred annually, but the methods under which this learning outcome is evaluated have evolved. Usually, we pull a random selection of students enrolled in CEL courses from the recent academic year. The CEL components must be required for all students in the course and our average sample is 100-200. We then assess the students' CEL course assignments via their ePortfolio using the CLSLO Rubric.

When we started evaluating the CLSLO, we used the original unmodified AAC&U Civic Engagement VALUE rubric. Then, working with the SLCC Assessment Office, we revised the rubric so that it more closely mirrors the language of the SLCC CLSLO. The revised rubric uses components of the AAC&U VALUE rubric and the Civic Minded Graduate Rubric 2.0 from the Center for Service and Learning at Indiana University, Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI).

In the 21-22 academic year, we applied and were accepted to participate in AAC&U's Civic Evidence Project. We decided to take the opportunity to compare our process to that of AAC&U's. We solicited assignments from both CEL and non-CEL faculty that aligned with the CLSLO rubric and submitted these (along with additional demographic information) to AAC&U for review. National teams of scorers used the AAC&U Civic Engagement VALUE rubric to assess those artifacts. SLCC reviewers reviewed the same artifacts using the SLCC CLSLO rubric.

The sample included CEL designated sections that require CEL and select Humanities courses, including but not exclusive to General Education. The Humanities sections had civic engagement incorporated but were not CEL-designated—the total sample of 93 artifacts was comprised of 40 CEL and 53 humanities assignments. Assignments were not reviewed directly from the ePortfolio. Instead, faculty voluntarily submitted works aligned with the CLSLO, which were converted into PDFs for assessors. Our internal process was slightly different this year because we added non-CEL courses, dropped the use of ePortfolio, and solicited assignments from faculty instead of pulling a random sample of designated CEL

courses. Previously, it was assumed that any faculty using CEL pedagogy in their courses would integrate components of the civic literacy student learning outcome (and thereby align with the CLSLO rubric) since civic knowledge, critical thinking about social issues, learning how to work with others, and civic action are integrated into any quality CEL course.

Teams of faculty assessors from AAC&U and SLCC evaluated the same assignments. The teams participated in similar calibration processes.

AAC&U provided us with a final report of the results from their assessment of our artifacts, which is posted on the Engaged Learning Office [CEL faculty website](#). Unfortunately, over half of the demographic information was excluded from our report due to a data mix-up. Therefore, we did not attempt to disaggregate the data by demographics.

Scores from the AAC&U assessment were similar to those of our internal assessment. Specific areas of similarity include:

- In the AAC&U *diversity of community and cultures*, 77% of students received a 2. This category mirrors the CLSLO rubric in *perspective taking*, where, on average, students scored a 2, and in *openness*, where students scored a 1.
- In the AAC&U *analysis of knowledge*, 69% of students scored a 2, and 29% scored a 1. This category mirrors the CLSLO rubric, which includes *civic knowledge through a disciplinary lens* where the average student scored a 1.
- In the AAC&U *commitment to community engagement*, 79% of students scored a 2. This mirrors the CLSLO rubric *commitment to community engagement*, where the average score is 2.
- In the AAC&U *civic action and reflection*, 65% of students scored a 2, and 33% scored a 1. This mirrors the CLSLO rubric, which includes breadth and depth of civic action, where the average student scored a 1.

Key findings

- The scores from the AAC&U project and the SLCC assessment were largely similar. This is heartening because faculty previously involved in assessment have questioned our students' lower scores. Specifically, we have had some concerns that our students' scores are too low. The AAC&U report indicates that "it is not unreasonable to say that the scores at the two milestone levels (i.e., a score of 2 or 3) are appropriate for students who have completed most of the coursework for an associate degree." The students in our sample fit this category, so it is validating to have AAC&U state that our scores are typical of students at an associate's level. Scores have been consistent since 2014. Because of this, students may also be on track to score a four when they graduate with a Bachelor's degree.
- It is also interesting that our scores were largely similar, but our rubrics varied slightly. Perhaps assignments don't have to be constructed in perfect alignment with their corresponding grading rubric. Maybe it is safe to assume that a well-constructed CEL course covers most aspects of the CLSLO.
- The SLCC AY 21-22 assessment report scores are higher than the scores from 20-21 (when comparing SLCC data to previous SLCC data). This may be because faculty who voluntarily submit assignments for assessment may be more confident that their assignments align with the rubric. Although it may be best practice to evaluate assignments using a grading rubric that

closely align with those assignment, valuable learning still occurs from assessing civic evidence from a random assignment of courses designated with community-engaged learning. Doing this helps us evaluate a broader spectrum of courses versus only considering classes from faculty who volunteer to participate. Pulling a random sample allows us to get an unfiltered view of what is happening in courses.

- The study was conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic, which may have influenced the results.
- One assignment in a course may not be able to address every component on the rubric.
- A zero is not necessarily negative. It may simply represent a lack of evidence.

Recommendations

- **Overall, the SLCC CLSLO rubric is functioning well and working as it should. We can continue to conduct assessments similarly in the future with confidence that our rubric and methods are good!**
- Based on our sample, we are hitting the foundational steps for civic literacy and civic learning. This said, we still need to ensure that we address equity by disaggregating the data in the future. We have an excellent foundation to expand our assessment efforts across the college if we can identify additional areas where civic learning is occurring beyond the CEL program.
- We should consider looking at categories that received lower scores and target faculty development toward these areas. We might also tweak these categories on the CLSLO rubric. The categories of civic communication and civic context and structures receive lower scores, so perhaps we should address these areas in the future.
- We may investigate if reviewers from AAC&U can participate in our assessment in the future.