Civic Engagement Student Learning Outcome ePortfolio Assessment
Academic Year 2016-2017

The Study

Purpose

The Engaged Learning Program collaborated with the ePortfolio Office to comparatively assess two groups of students with respect to Salt Lake Community College's (SLCC) civic engagement student learning outcome (CESLO). The purpose of this study was to provide a framework that assesses if there is evidence that Salt Lake Community College students are achieving gains within the civic engagement student learning outcome.

We also want to discover if General Education service-learning (SL) courses influence students' gains within the CESLO differently than other General Education courses. In addition, we strive to help students better display their civic engagement signature work in their ePortfolios.

SLCC's General Education CESLO reads as follows:
Students develop civic literacy and the capacity to be community-engaged learners who act in mutually beneficial ways with community partners. This includes producing learning artifacts indicating understanding of the political, historical, economic or sociological aspects of social change and continuity; thinking critically about—and weighing the evidence surrounding—issues important to local, national, or global communities; participating in a broad range of community-engagement and/or service-learning courses for community building and an enhanced academic experience.

Sample

The two groups were comprised of AS or AA graduating students with these characteristics:
1. 50 randomly chosen graduates who had taken one service-learning course while at SLCC. Referred to hereafter as the SL group.
2. 76 randomly chosen AS or AA graduates, who had not taken a service-learning course. Referred to hereafter as the Random group.

Method

Two teams consisting of two readers each scored the ePortfolios. The teams of readers each took half of the students from both samples and each team's scores were averaged. A modified version of the Civic Engagement Valid Assessment of Learning in Undergraduate Education (VALUE) rubric from the Association of American Colleges & Universities (AAC&U) was utilized. The review teams checked interrater reliability with ten ePortfolios to ensure that the rubric could be used as created. The rubric is appended to the end of this report. The rubric used a scoring system of 3-exceeds expectations, 2-meets expectations, 1-below expectations, and 0-no evidence on three dimensions:

- *Students develop civic literacy/knowledge-*Students recognize, identify, and understand facts surrounding social change movements, key historical events, and/or the political and economic structures that promote or inhibit social change. They express familiarity with key democratic principles.
- *Analysis of social Issues/student develop the capacity/skills to become community engaged learners-*Students present facts about issues important to local, national, or global communities (as stated above) but then use critical thinking to examine the issues and discuss the potential impact that they might have on their own participation in civic life or impact on society.
- *Civic Action/students act in mutually beneficial ways-* Students participate in service in the community.

For the SL group, the reviewers examine signature assignment from their General Education courses. For the Random group—that did not have service-learning courses—the reviewers also examined signature assignments from all General Education courses.

Finding #1 Percentages by group

Figures 1, 2 and 3 show the proportion of students' courses at each level for development of civic literacy, analysis of issues, and civic action for each of the student groups. We note the difference in percentages between the SL group and the Random group—in all cases the SL group scored higher. It also appears that the SL group is less likely to fall into the well below category. We expected this result, given that service-learning students are exposed to more civic knowledge, community engagement experiences, and opportunities to analyze their service.
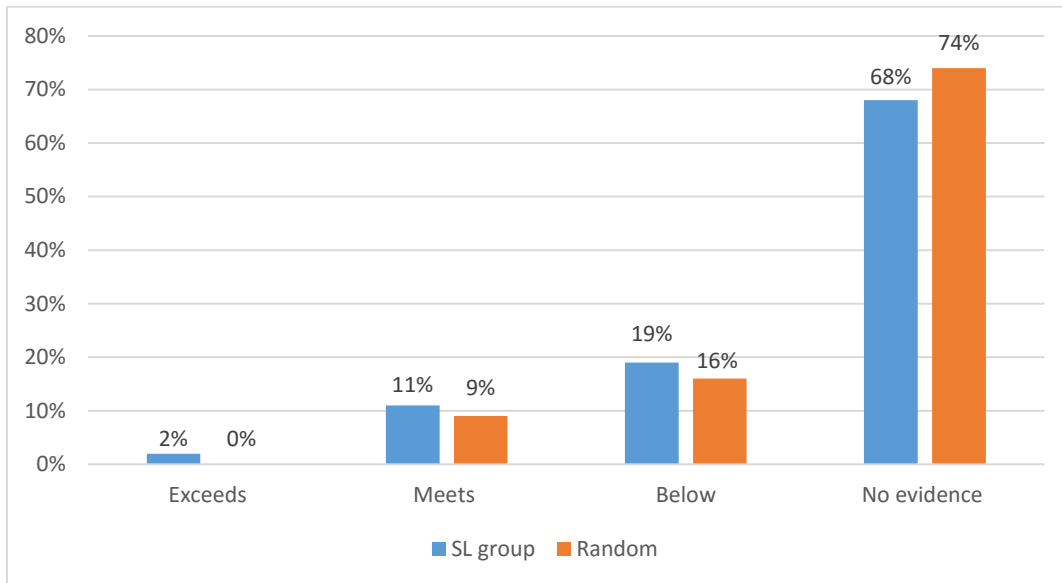
Figure 1: Percent of all students' courses at each level within Civic Literacy.

In this category, students were to explain social change movements, key historical events, and/or the political and economic structures that promote or inhibit social change. Alternately, students could express familiarity with key democratic text and principles. In this area, service-learning students had a higher percentage of courses that met criteria on the rubric.
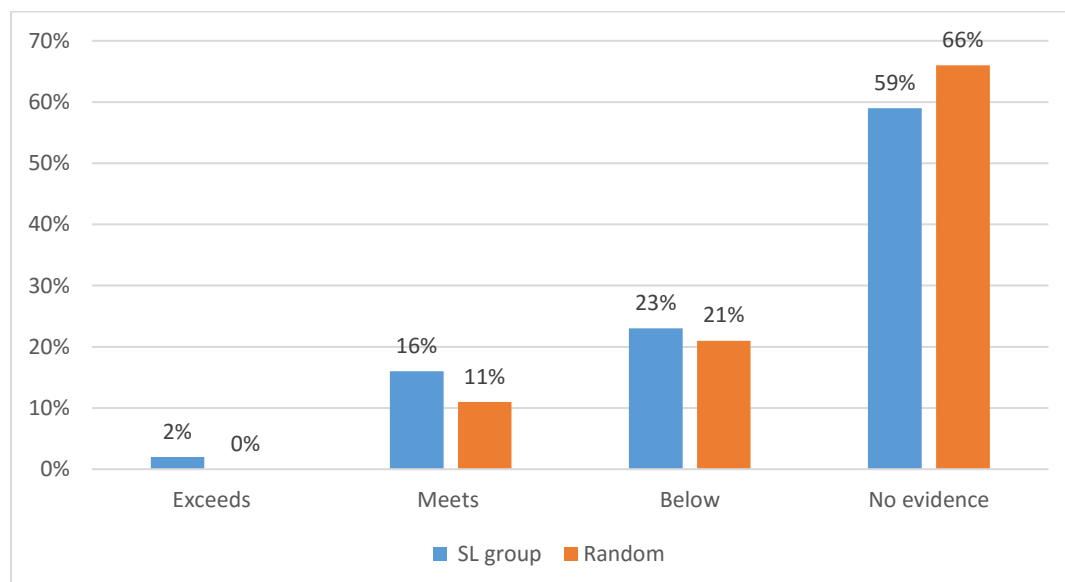
Figure 2: Percent of all students' courses at each level within Analysis of Knowledge.

In this category students took the knowledge gained in the aforementioned Civic Literacy category and then critically analyzed it, making relevant connections to one's own possible civic engagement and/or its impact on individuals/society. The pattern of the literacy criterion—in which the SL group outscores the Random group—also occurred in this area.

Figure 3: Percent of all students' courses at each level within Civic Action.

The pattern of the literacy criterion—in which the SL group outscores the Random group—occurred across the board. It is heartening to see that the SL Class students did well, and attest to the positive impact of service-learning opportunities for SLCC's students. This said, the percentages for Civic Action are relatively low indicating that there is still work to be done to help students adequately showcase their civic engagement work via ePortfolio.
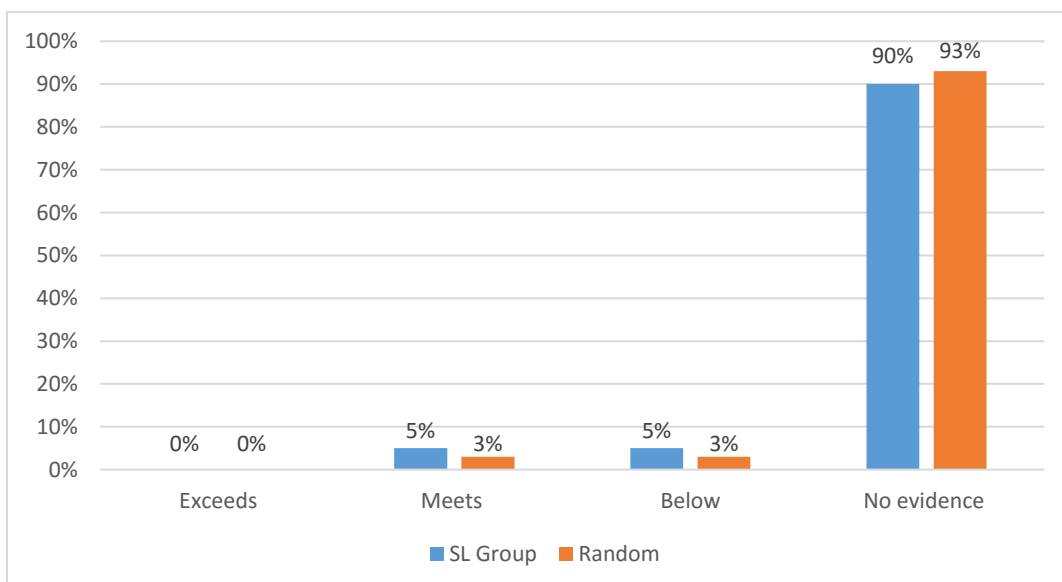
Finding #2: Mean score for each group based on category.

Table 1 indicates the mean score for each group based on category. In every category, the SL group outscored the random group and were closer to meeting expectations in the literacy and analysis of issues categories. Civic Literacy and Analysis of Knowledge are statically significant.*

Table 1: Mean scores by group

	SL Group	Random
Civic Literacy	1.6	1.4
Analysis of Knowledge	1.5	1.3
Civic Action	1.1	1.0

*Significant at the 0.05 confidence interval.

Welcome Page, Goals and Outcomes, and Learning Outside the Classroom

Our reviewers looked at Welcome, Goals and Outcomes, and Learning Outside the Classroom pages of student portfolios. They were interested generally in how students portrayed their civic engagement on these pages. Ten percent of SL Group met or exceeded expectations on the Welcome page, and only 2% of the Random sample did. Five percent of SL Group met or exceeded expectations on the Goals and Outcomes page, while 2% of the Random sample did. Thirteen percent of the SL Group met or exceeded expectations on the Learning Outside the Classroom page, while 10% the Random groups did. Evidence of civic engagement permeated these pages more for the SL group's portfolios than it did for the random group.

Recommendations

Based on the data in this report, we make the following recommendations:
- Both the SL program and ePortfolio program should strongly encourage SL faculty to require students to consistently upload a signature assignment focused on civic literacy, analysis of issues, and civic action in ePortfolio. Currently, existing SL faculty do not always require that the signature assignment posted in ePortfolio for their class focus on civic engagement. Therefore, the assignment posted does not appear to adequately reflect the SL students' scores in the literacy, knowledge, and action categories. This is especially true regarding the lack of evidence in the scores for civic action. Although civic action in the community is required for all service-learning courses, this is not reflected in students' ePortfolio assignments.
- The SL program and ePortfolio programs should continue to collaborate to ensure that all faculty teaching SL courses also receive training in ePortfolio pedagogy. We look forward to further to aligning ePortfolio and service-learning training.

Guiding Resources:

Association of American Colleges and Universities. (2009). Civic Engagement VALUE rubric. Retrieved from https://www.aacu.org/civic-engagement-value-rubric

Maki, P. (2015) *Assessment That Works: A National Call, A Twenty-First-Century Response.* Washington DC: Association of American Colleges and Universities.

Sullivan, D. F. (2015). *The VALUE Breakthrough: Getting the Assessment of Student Learning in College Right.* Washington DC: Association of American Colleges and Universities.

Clayton, P.H., Bringle R.G. & Hatcher, J.A. (2013). *Research on Service-Learning: Conceptual Frameworks and Assessment. Volume 2A: Students and Faculty.* 3-111

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Assessment Team

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Civic & Community Engagement	Exceeds-3	Meets-2	Below-1	No evidence-0
Students develop civic literacy/knowledge	Explains in depth social change movements, key historical events, and/or the political and economic structures that promote or inhibit social change. Has familiarity with key democratic text and universal democratic principles as well as diverse cultures, histories values and contestations that shape U.S. and world societies.	Explains social change movements, key historical events, and/or the political and economic structures that promote or inhibit social change. Expresses familiarity with key democratic text and universal democratic principles.	Minimally mentions social change movements, historical events, and/or key democratic principles or text.	Student makes no mention
Analysis of Social Issues/Students develop the capacity [skills] to become community engaged learners	Connects and extends issues (facts, theories, etc.) from one's own academic study/field/discipline to civic engagement and to one's own participation in it and/or its impact on society. Creating new knowledge, proposing new solutions and/or ways to engage based on what they have learned. Understands why it is important to be engaged. Demonstrate evidence of adjustment in own attitudes and beliefs because of working with and learning from diversity of communities and cultures. Promotes others' engagement with diversity.	Analyzes issues (facts, theories, etc.) from one's own academic study/field/discipline making relevant connections/implications to civic engagement and one's own participation in it and/or its impact on society. Evaluates facts and knowledge from the discipline and connecting this to civic action/ service and how it impacts individuals and communities. Reflects on how attitudes and beliefs are different from those of other cultures and community. Exhibits curiosity about what can be learned from diversity of communities and cultures.	Begins to Identify and Connect issues (facts, theories, etc.) from one's own academic study/field/discipline to civic engagement and to one's own participation it and/or its impact on society. Understands connections made between individual civic action/service and course content. Has awareness that attitudes and beliefs are different from those of other culture and communities. Exhibits little curiosity about what can be learned from diversity of community and cultures.	No connections Expresses attitudes and beliefs as an individual, from a one-sided view. Is indifferent or resistant to what can be learned from diversity of communities and cultures.

Civic Action/Students act in mutually beneficial ways	Demonstrates independent, interdependent experience and/or team leadership of complex or multiple civic engagement activities, accompanied by reflective insights or analysis about the aims and accomplishments of one's actions. Served and then demonstrates intent to continue to serve or help others.	Demonstrates independent experience and/or team leadership of civic action with reflective insights or analysis about the aims and accomplishments of one's action Showed up and served and generally expresses value of continuing to serve.	Has clearly participated in civically focused action or activities. Required for a class.	Not clear what they have done. Has not participated in any service.