



Degree Qualifications Profile in Oregon
Year Two Progress Report

April 29, 2013

Submitted by

Stefani Dawn
Interim Director, Academic Programs,
Assessment & Accreditation



Progress to Date - Year 2 Work Plan Goals and Objectives

Year 2 - Institutional Engagement

Institutional Objectives - Outcome to be achieved

A: OSU will engage leadership in written communication (the Writing Director, the WIC Director, and other writing leadership in colleges) and quantitative literacy (the mathematics department chair, College of Science Associate Dean, and other Associate Deans in fields closely tied to quantitative literacy, such as Engineering and Applied Economics) to explore the relationship (horizontal and vertical alignment) between the OSU written communication and quantitative literacy learning outcomes and assessment, the LEAP VALUE rubrics, and learning outcomes for key transfer partners (e.g. LBCC). Faculty will also be engaged in these processes.

Progress: We have made progress on the written communication partnership with LBCC. On 10/17/2013 OSU's recently hired Director of Writing met with representatives of LBCC's English department to discuss curricula alignment. On 01/06/2014 OSU and LBCC faculty and leadership responsible for overseeing Writing 121 and lower division writing courses met to share and compare institutional and course level student learning outcomes. We also shared assessment of student learning approaches. Subsequent work from that meeting included a comparative analysis of written communication student learning outcomes at the institutional level and in WR 121. On March 1, 2014 that work was presented at a DQP panel session at the AAC&U conference "General Education and Assessment: Disruptions, Innovations" in Portland, OR. On March 20, 2014 OSU leadership participated in the LBCC holistic grading session for WR 121. The LBCC/OSU group will be meeting to continue the writing 121 outcomes and assessment conversations the first week in May 2014.

Less progress has been made on the quantitative literacy (QL) conversation, however OSU will be sending faculty to attend the statewide conference "Teaching T.A.L.K.S. II: Today's Academics Linking Knowledge and Skills" on written communication and quantitative literacy (May 30-31, 2014). This will begin the dialogue on QL for OSU.

Insights and Lessons Learned: It is helpful to do this work with LBCC, which is the largest single feeder school for OSU transfer students. The interconnectedness between LBCC and OSU generates an authentic need for alignment, not only for the benefit of the students but for the benefit of the upper division courses for which these writing skills are needed. The greatest success and movement comes from picking one topic to work on (in this case writing), so that no one gets overwhelmed and can keep things moving forward in a steady, but doable manner. It was too ambitious to try to engage in the QL conversation at the same time, particularly since QL is still under the radar and people perceive it to be "busy work" or "created work" at a point in time where we do not need one more thing to do. That is not to say that people don't value the concepts presented in QL, they do, but when your institutional learning outcomes are specifically focused from the mathematics paradigm, that is where the energy resides and the activation energy to move beyond that is high. We have found written communication to be an excellent area in which to put our energies, for the reasons described above, but also because written communication (and its assessment) is a mature field, it just needs to be refined at the institutional level.



Adjustments: We will continue moving forward with the written communication partnership with LBCC (horizontal alignment), as well as explore the vertical alignment for written communication in OSU. QL will likely remain in the conversational, exploratory phases.

B: OSU will incorporate Baccalaureate Core learning outcomes and VALUE Rubrics into the Blackboard Course Management System. We will conduct workshops and engage Baccalaureate Core instructors with those resources.

Progress: In the spring 2014 term OSU upgraded its Blackboard Learning/Course Management Systems, which now allows for the incorporation of student learning outcomes (SLOs) and rubrics (however, unless you have the “Outcomes” software, we discovered there is very little that can be done with data collection for SLOs – putting in the outcomes is essentially an exercise.). We did begin incorporating the SLOs into the system, however, because OSU does not have the Blackboard “Outcomes” software this activity has temporarily stalled. Six months ago OSU decided that it is going to replace its learning management system, thus OSU has been in the midst of a rigorous review of products via an RFP. As of this report, OSU has narrowed the potential vendors down to two – the next generation of Blackboard combined with Outcomes and Canvas. The Office of Academic Programs, Assessment, and Accreditation has been an active participant in the RFP writing and vendor review process, to ensure that the product that is selected has a robust student learning outcomes assessment feature.

Insights and Lessons Learned:

Adjustments: We will resume this activity once the new system is in place.

C: OSU will participate in the DQP conference calls and meetings.

Progress: We have participated in all conference calls and meetings.

Linkages - Related institutional initiatives/projects

A: The DQP work links with the multi-state collaborative work in which OSU is engaged.

Progress: Because of the energy we have been putting into writing outcomes and assessment, the connection between the DQP and the Multi-state Collaborative is a good fit, but they are not an overlap of efforts. Currently the DQP work in writing is at the freshman/sophomore levels and the Multi-state collaborative work is at the junior/senior level. As these activities continue to develop, the intention is to connect them for an in-depth look at vertical alignment, addressing the questions of progression of student writing development. This vertical alignment conversation has begun, but there is still a lot of individual (differentiated) attention being given to the respective DQP (lower division)/Multi-state collaborative (upper division) activities. Data collection for the Multi-state Collaborative will begin Fall 2014. We will see whether the results from the Collaborative are valid and reliable and, if so, how the results support or differ from our findings via our Baccalaureate Core Category Review (which is discussed in Linkages B section below).



Insights and Lessons Learned: Vertical alignment in a general education skill, such as writing, is complex because of the university-wide curricular structure. All students receive credit for WR 121, but clearly defining the most important baseline skills students need to have from a WR 121 course that will support them as they progress into a writing II course, Synthesis courses, and the in-program Writing Intensive Course, is a challenge. This is because after WR 121, the other writing-based courses are diffuse and variable and spread across all colleges in the university. Other than the WIC and WR 121 courses, writing-based courses at OSU have not really been “owned” by anyone but the faculty member who is teaching the course. OSU’s new Baccalaureate Category Review process is shifting some of that ownership back to the University, via oversight from the Baccalaureate Core Committee (this is discussed further in the Linkages B section below). The non-WR 121 and non-WIC writing courses are diffuse and variable because some focus on research, some on creative writing, some on essays, some have better editing training and expectations than others, etc. In order to meet these diverse needs, WR 121 has, by necessity, adopted a “kitchen sink” approach, introducing student to lots of aspects of writing, but in some cases resulting in a “jack of all trades and master of none.” OSU is looking at this very carefully, by asking the question “What are the key, most critical skills and knowledge students should have and master from WR 121 or before progressing to other writing?” OSU’s WR 121 is currently under revision, and the University may also reflect further upon the institutional writing outcomes (which are progressive, but very broad) in light of the WR 121 mastery question.

Adjustments: None, we will continue as is.

B: We will explore how the DQP connects with the annual Baccalaureate Core assessment activities, in particular the Writing Intensive Courses.

Progress: Last year was the first year the Baccalaureate Category Review process began including assessment of the Baccalaureate Core Category Student Learning Outcomes. All Synthesis category courses, which have a required writing component, were reviewed. The review revealed potential weaknesses in certain areas of student writing that need to be explored more rigorously. This year is the first year the WIC courses (for the Colleges of Agriculture, Business, and Public Health and Human Sciences) are undergoing the Baccalaureate Core Category Review, results from the review will be compiled in May/June 2014. At that time we will consider how well the Baccalaureate Core Category Review process informs our understanding of student attainment of writing skills and possible, as well as use that data to advance the vertical alignment conversation for writing.

Insights and Lessons Learned: We have made adjustments to the Baccalaureate Review Process to improve the type of information we receive from faculty during the review.

Adjustments: None

Processes - How outcome will be achieved



A: The outcome will be achieved by meeting with the leadership on a 1-on-1 basis, as well as bringing work and specific questions to the University Assessment Council. These people will also be invited to participate in the Oregon-ized conference and other relevant state-wide meetings.

Progress: The outcomes have been achieved by using the process described above, and also engaging the Baccalaureate Core Committee on a regular basis.

Insights and Lessons Learned: Keep people in the loop. Have doable goals and time frames. Follow-up.

Adjustments: None.

B: OSU is currently upgrading Blackboard. Once the upgrade is complete, we will utilize the new learning outcomes and rubrics features. We will also host some faculty workshops on how to use the features.

Progress/Insights/Adjustments: This is described in the Institutional Objectives section B.

C: At least one OSU representative will be present at these events.

Progress: This has been accomplished and we will continue to attend/participate in events.

Insights and Lessons Learned: Put it on the calendar!

Adjustments: None

Progression - Milestones and dates to achievement

A: Ongoing - at least 2-4 meetings on the topic(s) will occur by Summer 2014. Depending on the progress in those meetings concentrated work may occur over the Summer.

Progress: This has occurred and more meetings are planned (meetings with LBCC were described in the Institutional Objectives section A); The Baccalaureate Core Category review meetings have been occurring 2-3 times per month through the Winter and Spring 2014 terms; Meetings with writing leadership occur approximately every-other month.

Insights and Lessons Learned: Follow-up and put it on the calendar.

Adjustments: None

B: Learning outcomes and VALUE rubrics will be uploaded in Blackboard by the end of the Winter term 2014. Workshops will occur in the Spring 2014.



Progress: Initial uploads of learning outcomes into the current (upgraded) version of Blackboard occurred in December 2013 – but as noted those are not useful without BlackBoard’s Outcomes Software. Assessment related functional requirements for the Learning Management System RFP were submitted in September 2013. Two vendors were selected from the RFP process and outcomes-assessment-specific presentations were given by the vendors on April 18, 2014 and April 21, 2014. A decision will be made in the Summer 2014. Migration will begin in the Fall of 2014. At that point we will begin to set up the learning outcomes assessment.