

# GENERAL EDUCATION ANNUAL REPORT

Curriculum Committee 2020-2021

## Abstract

Annual assessment of General Education Content  
Areas: Ethics, Meaning, and Critical Thinking  
Juried Assessment completed Summer 2021 with  
reflection and comments provided Academic year  
2021-2022.

Respectfully submitted, The Curriculum Committee

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# General Education Annual Assessment Report

## Curriculum Committee

### 2019-2021

#### Overview/History of General Education

Starting in 2007, the General Education program began collecting data on the performance of students in those classes listed as “General Education.”

Students in classes that satisfied each of the ten general education classes were assessed on a three-year rotation: in the first year of rotation, three of the ten areas were assessed; in the next year, three other areas were assessed. In the third year, the remaining four areas were assessed, and the data collected through these methods was stored in our then assessment system, tk20.

Students’ work in general education classes was assessed in the following way: if a student was enrolled in a general education class in an area scheduled for assessment, artifacts (essays, portfolios, etc.) were collected of all students enrolled in the class. Those artifacts were then evaluated after the end of the semester using rubrics developed by faculty in those areas (in most cases, the assignments were evaluated by instructors before the end of the semester, and used in that manner as part of the grade for the class—the general education assessment, taking place after the end of the semester, had no direct effect on a student’s grade in the class, even in those cases where the assessors’ evaluation coincided with that of the instructor). It is the data collected by scoring with rubrics that was then stored. The data for the general education assessment is neutral to the course content, as it is assessed by a neutral member of the faculty.

The General Education program was restructured in the fall semester 2015 moving the content areas into four clusters to assist in the coordination of assessment and evaluation of the General Education program. The General Education assessment has moved to a 4-year cycle focusing on one cluster each year.

The university implemented a new assessment software Fall 2016 prompting the curriculum committee to hold on assessing the necessary content areas until a sufficient pool of samples within the new system was collected. Faculty began utilizing Via by Watermark in the fall 2016 and are required to have students upload an assignment each GE course through the Via software. At the end of the spring 2018 academic semester, the curriculum committee moved forward with assessing 2 of the 4 general education clusters. By the spring of 2019 the rotation was fully on track and assessment of the general education clusters is as planned on the map of assessment.

The Associate Dean of Academic Assessment audited the courses within the GE curriculum and determined which courses complied with the GE requirement of uploading an assignment (data provided). From the identified courses, random samples of student work were identified and pulled in order to create the Juried Assessment process in Via.

Following the Fall 2021 semester, Curriculum Committee invited Meaning, Ethics, and Critical faculty to an assessment retreat. This assessment model was initiated in the Fall of 2019 due to time limitations for faculty to meet during the traditional semester. The committee felt it was easier to get allocated time at the end of the term for faculty to review the assessment from the previous summer. The data sample was also provided for the faculty to review.

## General Education Purpose Statement

*Approved April 5, 2016 Faculty Assembly*

William Woods University strives to build upon student knowledge beyond their academic specialty areas. To supplement varied student goals and aspirations with core learning experiences, the University General Education curriculum engages all students in critical analysis, quantitative inquiry, creative expression, and substantive understanding of the relationships between individuals and societies. Accordingly, all undergraduate students must complete the required General Education credits in addition to the coursework for their respective majors.

### Structural Changes to General Education (Fall 2015):

**Critical Analysis: (9 credit hours)** Students apply logical and analytical reasoning skills to diverse source materials in the interest of discerning and debating aesthetic, thematic, and ethical content.

- Critical Thinking (3 credit hours)
- Ethical Reasoning (3 credit hours)
- Meaning (3 credit hours)

**Creative Expression: (12 credit hours)** Students develop the ability to express ideas and concepts, both logically and creatively, through written, oral, reflective, and aesthetic practices utilizing various media forms.

- Communication (9 credit hours)
- Fine & Performing Arts (3 credit hours)

**Quantitative Inquiry: (10 credit hours)** Students will develop and practice quantitative problem-solving skills in order to analyze and critically evaluate information in a larger context.

- Natural Sciences (7 credit hours)
- Mathematics (3 credit hours)

**Society & the Individual: (12 credit hours)** Students integrate knowledge to articulate an understanding of diverse cultures, historical contexts, and human behaviors.

- Social Science (3 credit hours)
- Diversity (3 credit hours)
- Historical Perspective (6 credit hours)

Current General Education Assessment Cycle  
(updated beginning Fall 2016 to reflect new structure)

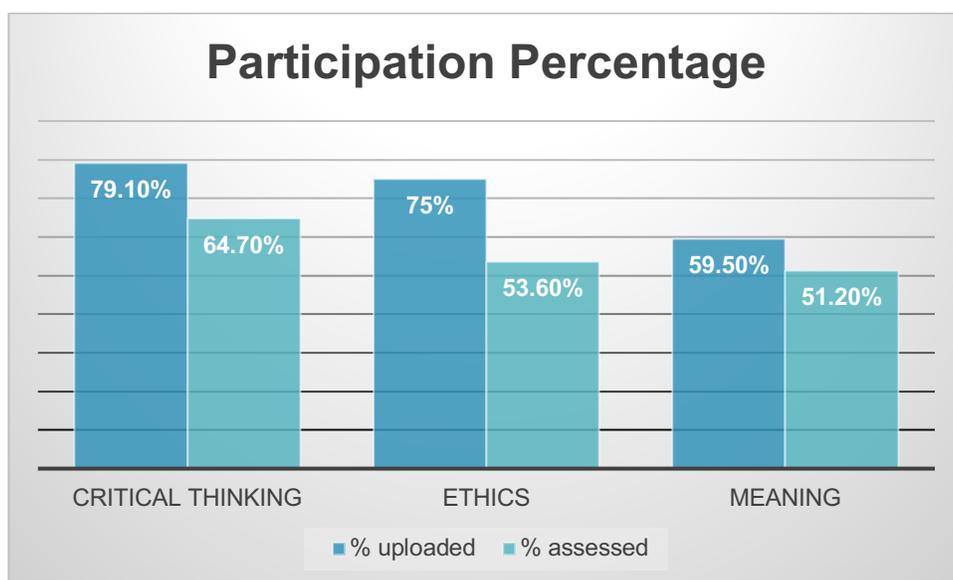
| Outcome Area   | Learning Outcomes  | Assessment<br>*Standardized<br>Measures  | Expected use for Assessment  | Schedule for<br>Analysis of<br>Assessment<br>Data |
|--|--|--|--|---|
| <b>Critical Analysis: Students apply logical and analytical reasoning skills to diverse source materials in the interest of discerning and debating aesthetic, thematic, and ethical content</b> |  |  |  |   |
| <b>Critical Thinking</b>   | Students will use the principles of logic to develop analytical and reasoning skills   | CLA<br><br>Rubric developed by Legal Studies, Sociology, Philosophy, and other designated faculty. | Value Added scores on CLA Critical Thinking<br><br>Assess sample work to determine if the set benchmarks are met and to assess course/assessment changes in the future.  | Spring 2017<br>Spring 2021<br>Spring 2025         |
| <b>Ethical Reasoning</b>   | Students will consider ethical problems in terms of competing interests, historical and cultural roots of conflict, and use various models or theories of ethical reasoning to resolve moral dilemmas. | CLA<br><br>Rubric developed by Legal Studies, Sociology, Philosophy, and other designated faculty. | Value added scores on CLA Analytic Reasoning<br><br>Assess sample work to determine if the set benchmarks are met and to assess course/assessment changes in the future. | Spring 2017<br>Spring 2021<br>Spring 2025         |
| <b>Meaning</b>   | Students will analyze texts (broadly defined) in order to identify central themes and interpret underlying meaning.  | CLA<br><br>Rubric developed by English faculty.  | Value added scores on CLA Analytic Reasoning<br><br>Assess sample work to determine if the set benchmarks are met and to assess course/assessment changes in the future. | Spring 2017<br>Spring 2021<br>Spring 2025         |
| <b>Society &amp; the Individual: Students integrate knowledge to articulate an understanding of diverse cultures, historical contexts, and human behaviors.</b>                                  |  |  |  |   |
| <b>Social Science</b>  | Students will study the behavior of people and employ the principles of science to explain both group and individual behavior.   | Rubric Developed by Social Science Faculty.  | Assess sample work to determine if the set benchmarks are met and to assess course/assessment changes in the future.   | Spring 2018<br>Spring 2022                        |
| <b>Diversity</b>   | Students will solve problems through an analysis of quantitative relationships.  | *NSSE Results<br><br>Rubric Developed by Diversity Faculty.  | Results of NSSE dealing with Diversity<br><br>Assess sample work to determine if the set benchmarks are met and to assess course/assessment changes in the future.       | Spring 2018<br>Spring 2022                        |

|   |   |   |   |                            |
|---|---|---|---|----------------------------|
| <b>Historical Perspective</b>   | Students will think historically, meaning that they will understand both how the present is shaped by the past and how the past informs our understanding of the present. | Rubric developed by History Faculty                 | Assess sample work to determine if the set benchmarks are met and to assess course/assessment changes in the future                                 | Spring 2018<br>Spring 2022 |
| <b>Creative Expression: Students develop the ability to express ideas and concepts, both logically and creatively, through written, oral, reflective, and aesthetic practices utilizing various media forms</b> |   |   |   |                            |
| <b>Communication (writing)</b>  | Students will transmit information effectively in written or spoken form.   | Communication Rubric revised by COM and ENG         | CLA Writing: Value Added scores<br><br>Assess sample work determine if set benchmarks are met and to assess course/assessment changes in the future | Spring 2019<br>Spring 2023 |
| <b>(Oral)</b>   |   | Communication Rubric revised by COM and ENG faculty | Assess sample work to determine if benchmarks are met and to assess course/assessment changes in the future.  | Spring 2019<br>Spring 2023 |
| <b>Fine Arts: Creative and Aesthetic Sensibility</b>  | Students will examine the products of human creativity in such endeavors as painting, sculpture, theatre, and music.  | Rubric developed by Art Faculty                     | Assess sample work from to determine if the set benchmarks are met and to assess course/assessment changes in the future.                           | Spring 2019<br>Spring2023  |
| <b>Quantitative Inquiry: Students will develop and practice quantitative problem-solving skills in order to analyze and critically evaluate information in a larger context.</b>                                |   |   |   |                            |
| <b>Natural Science</b>  | Students will understand the natural world through systematic observation, by analyzing data, and by forming, testing and revising hypotheses.                            | Rubric Developed by Science Faculty.                | Assess sample work to determine if the set benchmarks are met and to assess course/assessment changes in the future.                                | Spring 2020<br>Spring 2024 |
| <b>Mathematics</b>  | Students will solve problems through an analysis of quantitative relationships.   | Rubric developed by Math faculty                    | Assess sample work determine if the set benchmarks are met and to assess course/assessment changes in the future.                                   | Spring 2020<br>Spring 2024 |

## Demographic Data of Assessed Content

(Data represent the past 6 semesters of collected data)

| GE Area                  | Criterion   | Students Registered    | Student uploads | Assessed in Via |
|--------------------------|---|------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
|                          |   | On Ground/OLC<br>Total | On Ground/OLC   | On Ground/OLC   |
| <b>Critical Thinking</b> | Identifies the rhetorical features of an argument, including its logical principles (inference, argumentation, reasoning) and common fallacies. | 335/249<br>584         | 228/234<br>462  | 200/178<br>378  |
|                          | Evaluates the quality of an argument on the basis of its application of logic and evidence.   |                        |                 |                 |
|                          | Develops an argument that uses both logical principles and appropriate evidence.  |                        |                 |                 |
|                          | Exhibit proficiency in using technology in solving mathematical problems.   |                        |                 |                 |
| <b>Ethics</b>            | Identify interested parties and their claims  | 444/215<br>658         | 326/168<br>494  | 238/115<br>353  |
|                          | Locate cultural and/or historical bases of conflict.  |                        |                 |                 |
|                          | Apply varied models and theories to approach moral dilemmas.  |                        |                 |                 |
| <b>Meaning</b>           | Identify basic communication components of the text.  | 535/152<br>687         | 268/141<br>409  | 209/123<br>352  |
|                          | Interpret the central meaning or theme of the text.   |                        |                 |                 |
|                          | Support textual interpretation.   |                        |                 |                 |



Limitations on the data:

- Not all data uploaded to the Via program was assessed by the Program faculty, so there are data pulled for Juried assessment not assessed by a faculty member in Via.

- Some content area data is concentrated by specific courses due to the limitation of variation within offerings online.
- Online classes are set up by administration and built into the course so there is not an option at this point for the data to be incomplete.

## Demographic Data per Content Area:

\*Representative Sample –Data pulled from Jenzabar “General Education Enrollment Report 2018-2021”

| General Education Area                   | Total Enrollment | % Withdrawn | % Fail | Different Courses offered | Total Classes offered |
|--|------------------|-------------|--------|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>Ethics (Campus) Total</b>             | 444              | 1.58%       | .86%   | 10                        | 32                    |
| <b>Ethics (On Line) Total</b>            | 215              | 2.59%       | 2.45%  | 4                         | 22                    |
| <b>Critical Thinking (Campus) Total</b>  | 335              | 1.97%       | .49%   | 7                         | 24                    |
| <b>Critical Thinking (On Line) Total</b> | 249              | 2.79%       | 2.79%  | 5                         | 18                    |
| <b>Meaning (Campus) Total</b>            | 535              | 4.29%       | 4%     | 12                        | 24                    |
| <b>Meaning (On Line) Total</b>           | 152              | 2.71%       | 2.14%  | 3                         | 10                    |

There are assignments loaded in VIA that were used in the sample that had were reviewed by a faculty member. Some assignments were pulled from classes where none of the student work had been assessed by the faculty. Some GE assignments were not linked to the GE rubric, but implemented a GE assignment. The “All” data report chart is only reflective of the data that was assessed by the faculty in Via using the GE rubric.

## Ethics

**Student Population N= 659**

**Student OLC N=50**

**Student on Campus N=50**

|           | Not Collected/assigned | Left at Awaiting Assessment | Assessed by Faculty | Total Artifacts used for GE assessment |
|-----------|------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------|--|
| ON Ground | 104                    | 88                          | 238                 | <b>326</b>                             |
| Online    | 57                     | 53                          | 115                 | <b>168</b>                             |

Classes Used:

**On Ground:** BUS 214 (F18, S19, S20, F20); COM 250 (F18, F19, F20); PHL 116 (F18, S19, F19, S20, F20, S21); SCA 245 (F18, F19, F20); COM 221 (S19, S20, S21); HUM 117 (S19, S20, S21); PLS 210 (S19)

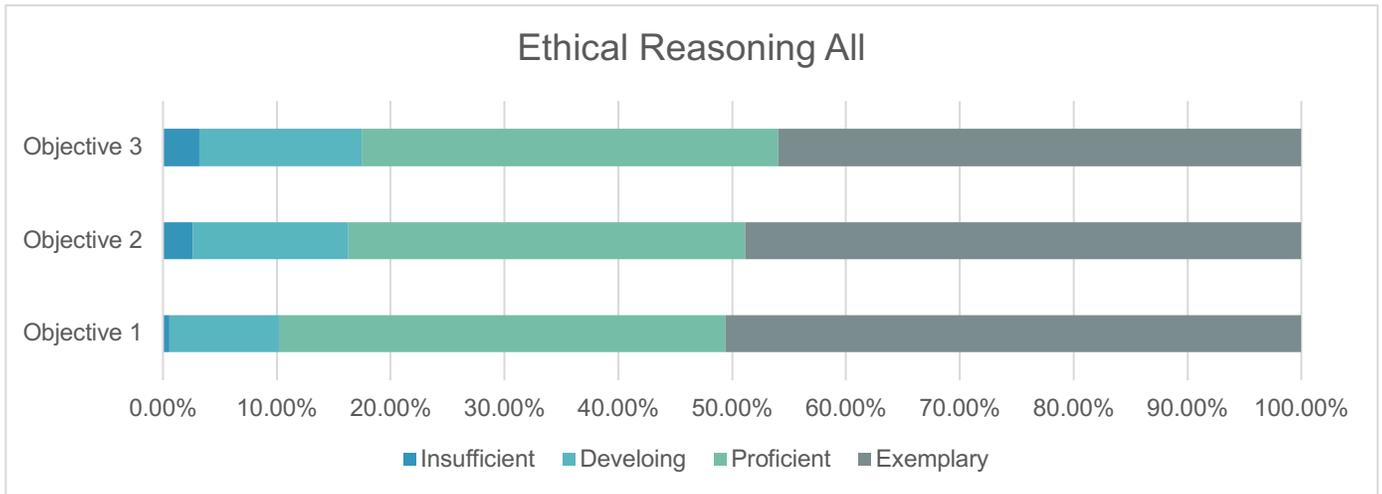
**OLC:** ASL 220 (SU18, F18); BMT 224 (SU18), HUM 117 (SU18, SU19, SU20); PLS 210 (S19, F19, F20, S21); BUS 329 (SU19, F19, SU20, F20); SCA 245 (S19, SU19, SU20, S21);

**Classes Missing Assignments:**

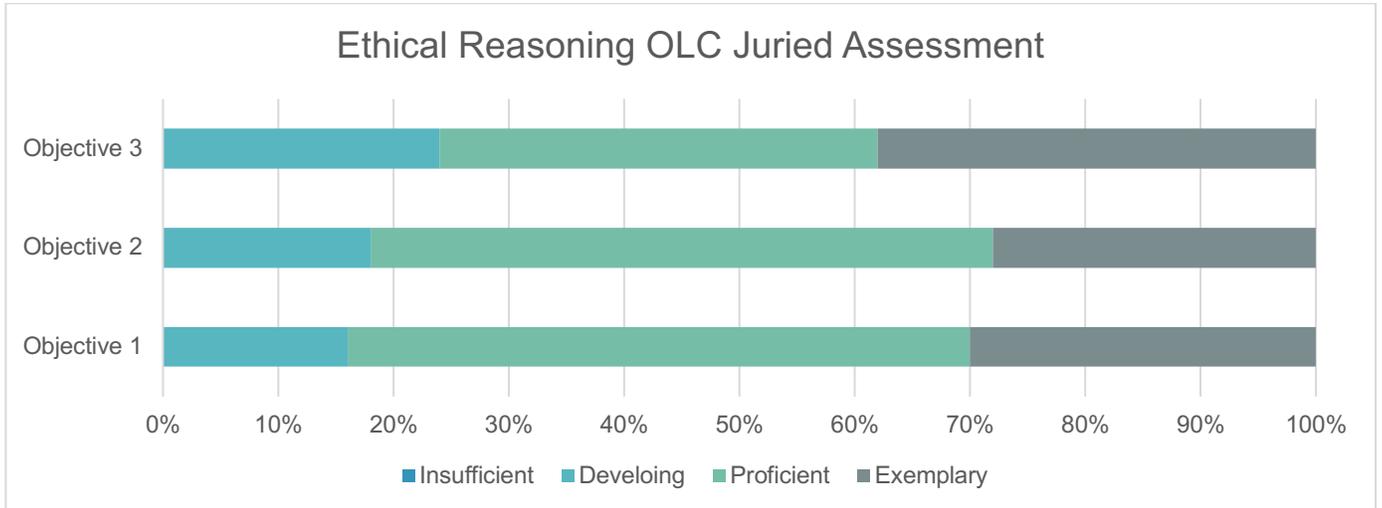
**On Ground:** BUS 214 (F 19), CMJ 290 (F19)

**OLC:** BMT (SU18), HUM 117 (SU18), ASL 220 (F19), SCA 245 (S19)

Assessment Results:

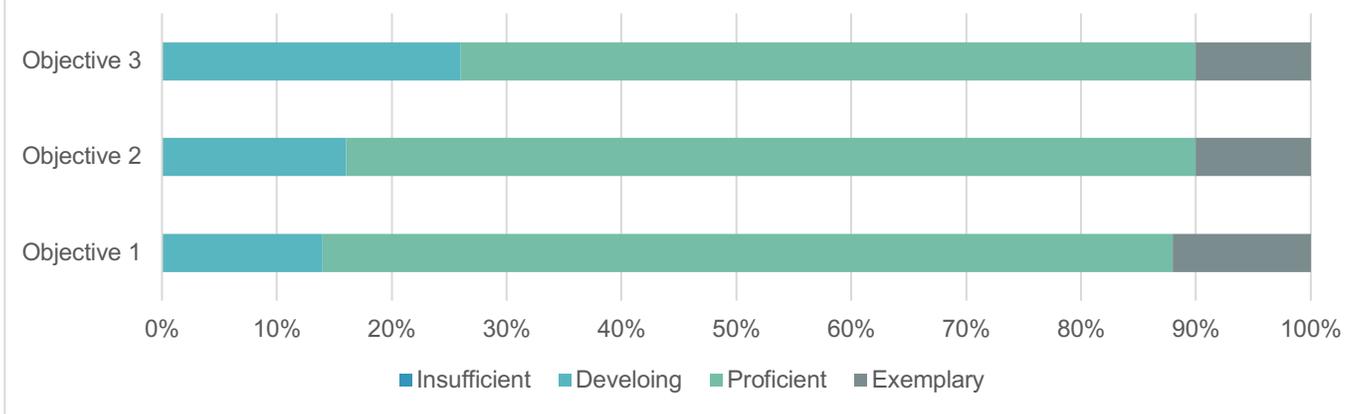


| Ethical Reasoning | Insufficient | Developing | Proficient | Exemplary |
|-------------------|--------------|------------|------------|-----------|
| Objective 1       | 0.58%        | 9.59%      | 39.24%     | 50.58%    |
| Objective 2       | 2.62%        | 13.66%     | 34.88%     | 48.84%    |
| Objective 3       | 3.20%        | 14.24%     | 36.63%     | 45.93%    |



| Ethical Reasoning | Insufficient | Developing | Proficient | Exemplary |
|-------------------|--------------|------------|------------|-----------|
| Objective 1       | 0.00%        | 16.00%     | 54.00%     | 30.00%    |
| Objective 2       | 0.00%        | 18.00%     | 54.00%     | 28.00%    |
| Objective 3       | 0.00%        | 24.00%     | 38.00%     | 38.00%    |

### Ethics On Ground Juried 2018-2021



| Ethical Reasoning | Insufficient | Developing | Proficient | Exemplary |
|-------------------|--------------|------------|------------|-----------|
| Objective 1       | 0.00%        | 14.00%     | 74.00%     | 12.00%    |
| Objective 2       | 0.00%        | 16.00%     | 74.00%     | 10.00%    |
| Objective 3       | 0.00%        | 26.00%     | 64.00%     | 10.00%    |

#### Feedback from Juried Assessors:

The online Ethics artifacts seemed consistently strong in this Spring 21 batch. By and large, they were well developed, nicely detailed and synthesized, and solidly organized and structured. These online artifacts appeared to be designed specifically for the Gen Ed assessment process, as they followed the rubric focus areas closely and thoroughly—this helped significantly with the assessment process, as these kinds of case studies (mostly ASL, if I remember correctly) are well outside my academic area.

The on-ground Ethics artifacts were more diverse in their presentation, but also more difficult to assess in terms of their overall quality and focus relative to the Ethics rubric. This was especially true for the artifacts which were Power Point presentations, as these came across as possible distillations or overviews of more in-depth studies / assignments, and this made their connections to the rubric often more problematic to discern and measure. Overall, the on-ground case study artifacts were more truncated than the online case studies, and this made them a bit more challenging to assess, as I wasn't sure whether these were subject area variations (mostly Legal Studies, I think) on the same assignment that was given to online students, or whether they were responses to a different assignment altogether. The Philosophy-based artifacts were more in line with the longer, in-depth online artifacts, and easier to connect with the rubric in that regard.

Generally, I thought the Ethics artifacts--both online and on-ground--were astute and accomplished, but I also think the assessment process might be improved if assessors were provided with assignment sheets, examples of exceptional artifacts, or both, as this would establish a useful frame of reference in terms of expectations, content, etc., particularly for assessors like me who are somewhat out of their depth with the various academic areas represented.

In general, this was a pretty easy and successful process, much more so than when I graded critical thinking a couple years ago (which also draws from several disciplines and can sometimes be hard to score). I thought most of the assignments were relatively easy to assess with the rubric, and the rubric itself set clear, if sometimes maybe too restrictive, standards.

So, assignments across different assignments, for example, there were repeated references to utilitarianism and deontology, which were assessable on the third criteria. It was such an obvious thing that I missed it when I didn't see it in other assignments (for example, some ethics and sexuality assignments, or maybe the insanity defense essays). It felt a little bit like the criteria influencing/ leading the assignment more than the reverse, but I'm not sure how big a problem that is.

In the case of criteria two, identifying the historical/ cultural bases of the ethical problem, I think most assignments struggled to engage this in more than a very superficial way. Even an assignment on abortion didn't seem able to explain this, though it feels like students should be able to talk about a subject as large and common as that. In other words, I think this criteria might be a little out of place on the rubric, at least as its currently articulated. The ideas it represents can probably be productively folded into criteria one, about the interested parties, which students did in a rote way, but which clearly pushed them to embrace the ethical challenges of the questions—it might have been mechanical, but it made the essays stronger. Most of the prompts worked pretty well. I thought the Hondo, TX smokestack dilemma was kind of frustrating because it felt too phony and overdetermined. But I did read decent responses to that prompt, even if I wanted to rewrite it. The same, mostly, goes for “Only Coach in Town.”

Some of the ethics and sexuality prompts maybe didn't work that well—so, male circumcision didn't really seem to trigger the same kind of wrestling as some of the other assignments. They just felt very surface level?

The biomed ethics papers, about prenatal testing or organ donation or medical testing, also seemed a little distant and didn't really engage the ethical problem much. They were sometimes able to articulate the dilemma without really engaging it. But this, like ethics and sexuality, might be a product of the relative youth of the students, where both classes are kind of stand-alone, instead of something in a sequence of classes where students have dealt with this material before.

The “legal insanity” responses, which I think I only had two of, really failed at meeting the rubric. They were mostly a report on what it is, without exploring any of the criteria—interested parties, why we care or need an insanity defense, and how to resolve it. They just didn't do what the other assignments did in that way. These felt to me, like a mismatch from what the assignments were asking for.

We weren't grading on the quality of writing here, which is good, because the writing was often terrible.

.....

### Faculty Response:

We're excited that the online artifacts were good and were strongly connected to the assessment process. The GE Faculty also agree with the assessor that assignment sheets should be included to help better analyze these.

The GE Faculty who met all teach on-ground, so we are looking to better connect our assignment prompts with the posted assessment rubric for future assessors to have better context that they have with the online assignments.

The Ethics GE faculty will reach out to Matt Dube to see if an example or two of the online assignment prompts can be provided to see if the on-ground faculty make improvements to their prompts or make them clearer within the assessment rubric.

At this point, the Ethics GE faculty are leaving the rubric as is, with a little more focus in courses on the theory/model content to try and ensure that the assignments are not “restrictive” within the standards. This follows a discussion about whether to restrict particular ethics models for students to use in their assignments or allow them to search for their own.

One juror commented on page 11: “The ideas [Criteria Two] represents can probably be productively folded into criteria one, about the interested parties, which students did in a rote way, but which clearly pushed them to embrace the ethical challenges of the questions.”

There was some discussion about the value of combining Criteria One and Two because some faculty emphasize, and some faculty deemphasize Criteria Two. But faculty decided to keep the rubric as it is.

**One note on class pre-fix changes:** HUM 117 has been changed to EXS 117 Sport Ethics as far back as 2019-2020 academic year. This should be reflected in this and future reports.

## Critical Thinking

**Student Population All N= 584**

**Student OLC N=50**

**Student On Campus N=50**

Classes involved:

**On Ground:** CMJ180 (F18); COM 209 (F18, F19, F20); COM 220 (F18, S20); PHL 101 (F18, S19); PHL 105 (F18, S19, F19, S20, F20, S21); PHL 107 (F18, S19, F19, F20, S21); COM 270 (S21).

**OLC:** PHL 101 (SU18, F19, SU19, F19), SU20, F20); PLS 213 (SU18, SU19, F19, SU20); COM 220 (F18, S19, F19, S20, F20, S21); IFL 115 (F18, F19, F20).

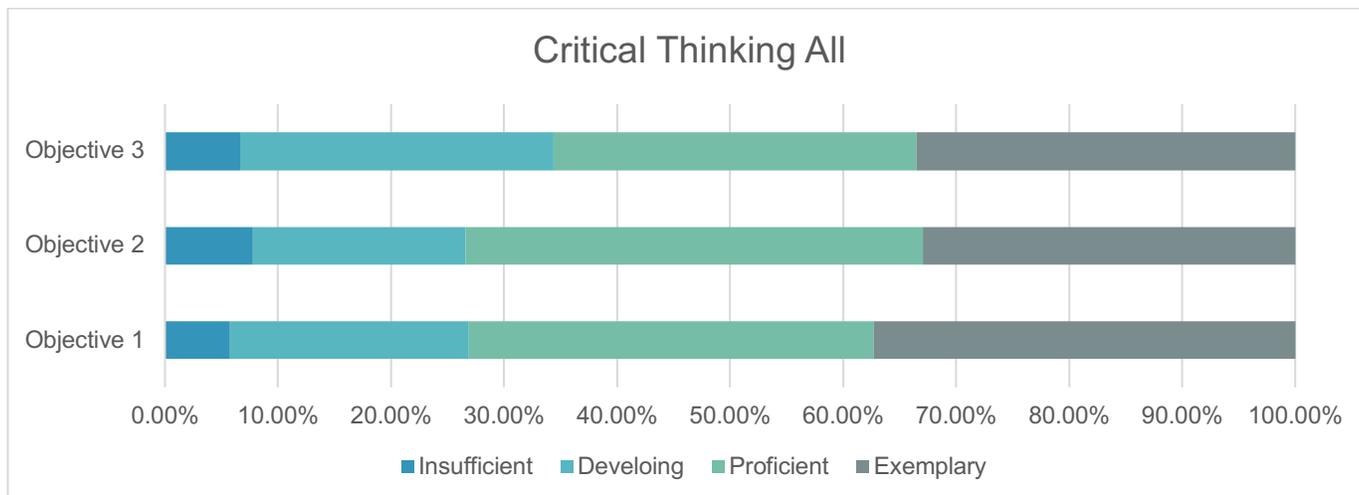
Classes Missing Assignments

On Ground: PHL 101 (F19, S20, F20)

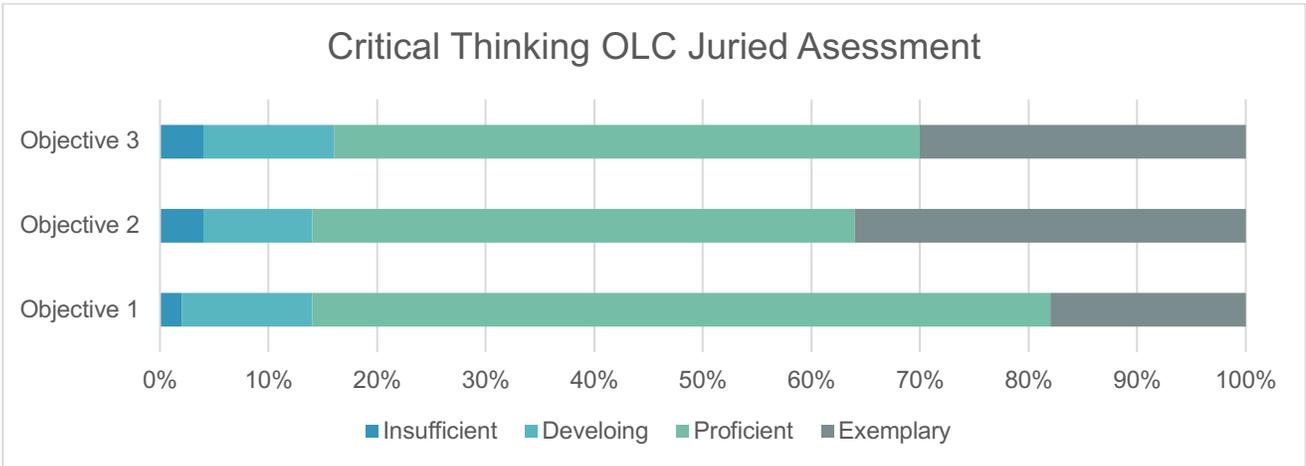
Online: NA

|           | Not Collected/assigned | Left at Awaiting Assessment | Assessed by Faculty | Total Artifacts used for GE assessment |
|-----------|------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------|--|
| On Ground | 57                     | 28                          | 200                 | <b>285</b>                             |
| Online    | 77                     | 56                          | 178                 | <b>234</b>                             |

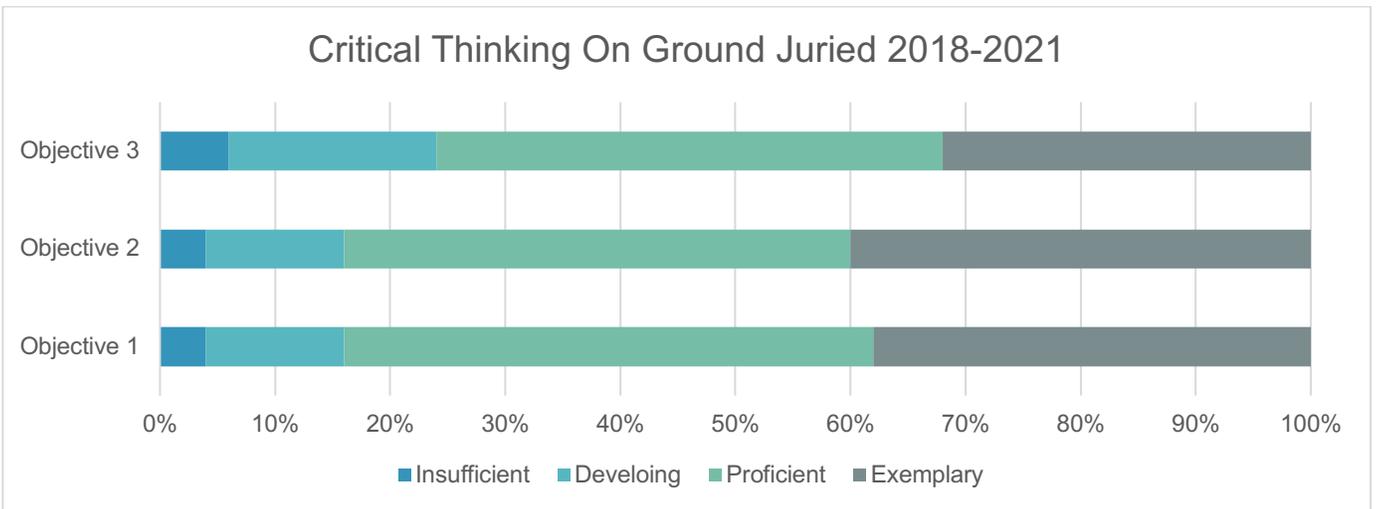
### Assessment Data:



| Critical Thinking | Insufficient | Developing | Proficient | Exemplary |
|-------------------|--------------|------------|------------|-----------|
| Objective 1       | 5.78%        | 21.10%     | 35.84%     | 37.28%    |
| Objective 2       | 7.80%        | 18.79%     | 40.46%     | 32.95%    |
| Objective 3       | 6.65%        | 27.75%     | 32.08%     | 33.53%    |
|                   |              |            |            |           |



| Critical Thinking | Insufficient | Developing | Proficient | Exemplary |
|-------------------|--------------|------------|------------|-----------|
| Objective 1       | 2.00%        | 12.00%     | 68.00%     | 18.00%    |
| Objective 2       | 4.00%        | 10.00%     | 50.00%     | 36.00%    |
| Objective 3       | 4.00%        | 12.00%     | 54.00%     | 30.00%    |



| Critical Thinking | Insufficient | Developing | Proficient | Exemplary |
|-------------------|--------------|------------|------------|-----------|
| Objective 1       | 4.00%        | 12.00%     | 46.00%     | 38.00%    |
| Objective 2       | 4.00%        | 12.00%     | 44.00%     | 40.00%    |
| Objective 3       | 6.00%        | 18.00%     | 44.00%     | 32.00%    |

## Juried Assessor Response:

There was a lot more variation in the online assignments, some of which seemed pretty basic compared to others. I'm not sure if that was due to the difference in courses or student performance.

Some of the problems I had a hard time figuring out what the assignment was. For example, there were a couple assignments on Marijuana & Psychosis that were very brief. The Pilot, Navigator, Bombardier Problem also took me seeing a couple problems before I realized what they were doing because my first student example didn't explain the premises of the problem. Their explanation only made sense after I figured out what they were given.

The On Ground classes' assignments seemed easier to match with the rubric.

The videos were great for the most part students seemed to explain things more thoroughly.

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### Graphic Organizer Assignment (1-5)

- Problem assignments – Given the nature of the content (reflecting on Hobbes; Marx, Social Contract Theory, Utilitarianism, etc.) using a graphic organizer may not allow for a deep analysis of the complex philosophies.
- Strengths – Broad survey of theories; offers a general understanding of the history of ideas.
- Weaknesses – Graphic organizer forces students to think about these in-depth theories at surface-level.
- General comments – Depending on the learning objectives, using a graphic organizer to learn about philosophical concepts may be challenging.

### Persuasive Papers/Campaigns Assignment (6-11)

- Problem assignments – Not applicable
- Strengths – Variety of topics; develops critical thinking skills; students need to research politics/current events when writing about political campaigns.
- Weaknesses – No weaknesses
- General Comments – Continue with this assignment. It is an interesting assessment.

### Outline of a Debate Assignment (12-16)

- Problem assignments – Not applicable
- Strengths – Offers a step by step look at the developing arguments.
- Weaknesses – No weaknesses
- General Comments – Continue with this assignment as it bolsters critical thinking skills. Another way to look at opposing viewpoints is assigning the *dissoi logoi*.

### Persuasive Paper Template (17-18)

- Problem assignments – Not applicable
- Strengths – Gives students a helpful guide when writing about a persuasive campaign.
- Weaknesses – No weaknesses
- General Comments – Continue with this assignment.

### Persuasive Paper (Song of Solomon/Bible topic) (19-25)

- Problem assignments – Not a problem
- Strengths – Explores biblical/theological themes and ideas.
- Weaknesses – May be a daunting assignment for students unfamiliar with the Bible or Biblical exegesis unless they write about the Song of Solomon and other stories without having to cite references.
- General Comments – Continue with this assignment. The story of Job is another assignment a diverse body of students could explore.

### On Line Critical Thinking Assignments

#### Persuasive Paper (Song of Solomon/Biblical/theological topics connected to current events topic) (1-11)

- Problem assignments – Not applicable
- Strengths – Explores Biblical/theological themes through current events.
- Weaknesses – May be a challenge for students to apply Biblical/theological ideas to current events if they are new to the Bible and theological themes.
- General Comments – Continue with this assignment. Encourages students to use their reasoning skills.

#### Critical Analysis Paper Comparing/Contrasting President Obama's and Dr. Martin Luther King's speeches. (12-17).

- Problem assignments – Not applicable
- Strengths – Offers insights on rhetoric and argumentation by analyzing both speeches.
- Weaknesses – No weaknesses
- General Comments – Continue with this assignment. Encourages students to use their reasoning skills, learn about the power of rhetoric, and communication skills.

#### Reflective Papers on Various Topics. (18-19).

- Problem assignments – Not applicable
- Strengths – Encourages students to use reasoning and research skills.
- Weaknesses – No weaknesses
- General Comments – Continue with this assignment. The assignment asked students to analyze current topics.

#### Papers on Deductive logic, Fallacies, and Quality of arguments. (20-25).

- Problem assignments – Not applicable
- Strengths – Asks students to analyze arguments through traditional logic and argumentation.
- Weaknesses – No weaknesses
- General Comments – Continue with this assignment. The assignment has students specifically look at premises, conclusions, etc., to analyze the quality and logic of an argument. This is a useful skill for students to possess.

## Faculty Response:

- About The overall results of the data
  - Assessment results / juried data
- **Our comments:** We thought the data looked sound. We were pleased with the fact that over 70% of students (often higher) scored Proficient or Exemplary across all 3 objectives for the juried assessments. Based on the data, we do not believe any major changes need to be made. We also would like access to the data from each outside juried assessor and how they compared to the faculty member who evaluated the student. This data would help us better align our assignments to the rubric and potentially craft some more targeted assignments in our courses. The graphic organizer assignment was created by an instructor who no longer works at WWU. So, we don't need to follow up about that one.
- About Feedback from the juried assessors
- Any changes they would like to make in the future
  - Rubric changes if necessary
  - Assessment artifacts/tools
- **Our Comments:** All 3 of us think the CT rubric needs to be modified. We discussed how Obj. 1 includes a lot of concepts related to critical thinking (logical reasoning, rhetorical features, inference, assumptions, etc). We started brainstorming different ways to write Obj. 1 and will have something finalized before end of Spring 2022 semester. We all agreed that the rubric should include identifying arguments, evaluating them, and crafting a compelling argument. We discussed how we could better capture those ideas in the objectives and started a rough draft for the new rubric.
- About Anything they really like or wish to maintain
- **Our Comments:** We enjoyed the opportunity to talk with each other about the assignments and rubric. We look forward to generating a rubric that works for all faculty who teach CT courses, as this is something we discussed in our meeting.
- Any other general comments they may have.
- **Our Comments:** We would like to point out how the CT area had the highest participation rate among all 3 areas assessed this past year.

## Meaning

**Student Population All N= 687**

**Student OLC N=50**

**Student On Campus N=50**

Classes involved:

**On Ground:** ENG 238 (F18, F20); ENG 215 (F18, F19, F20); ENG 280 (F18, F19, F20); ENG 210 (S19, S20, S21); ENG 218 (S19, S21); ENG 222 (S19, S20); ENG 202 (F19); ENG 205 (F19); ENG 226 (F19);

**OLC:** ENG 215 (SU18, SU19, SU20); ENG 239 (F18, S19, F19, S20, F20: S21);

Classes Missing Assignments

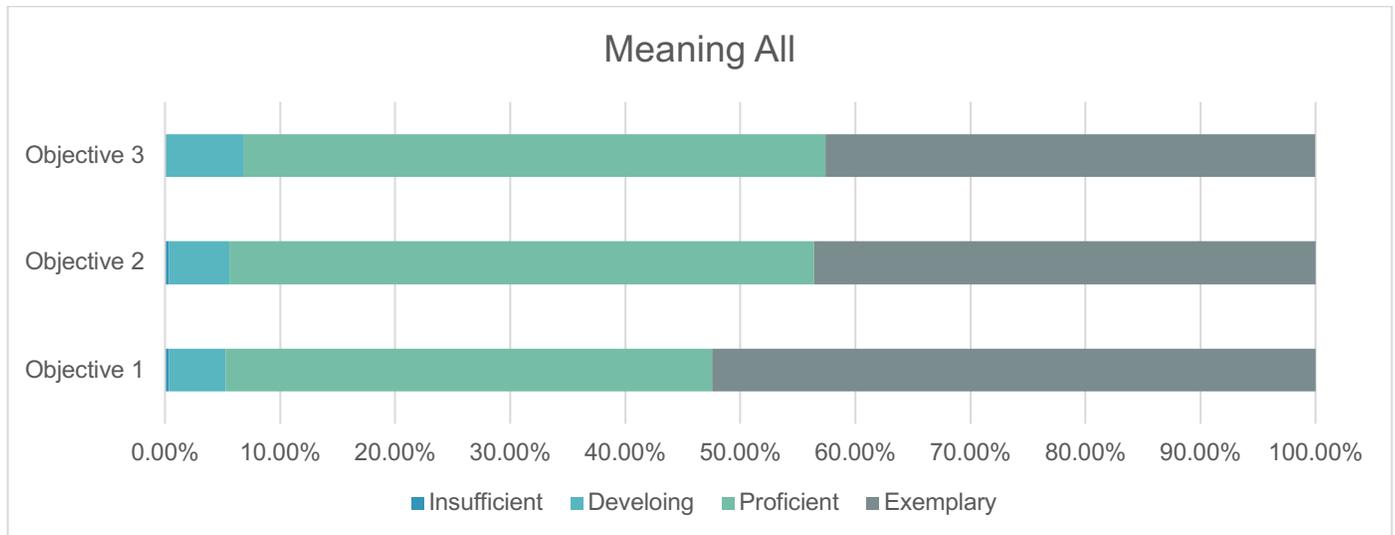
On campus: ENG 234 (S19, S20, S21), ENG 206 (S21); HUM 213 (SU20)

Online: HUM 213 (F18)

|           | Not Collected/assigned | Left at Awaiting Assessment | Assessed by Faculty | Total Artifacts used for GE assessment |
|-----------|------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------|--|
| ON Ground | 35                     | 59                          | 209                 | <b>268</b>                             |
| Online    | 48                     | 18                          | 102                 | <b>120</b>                             |

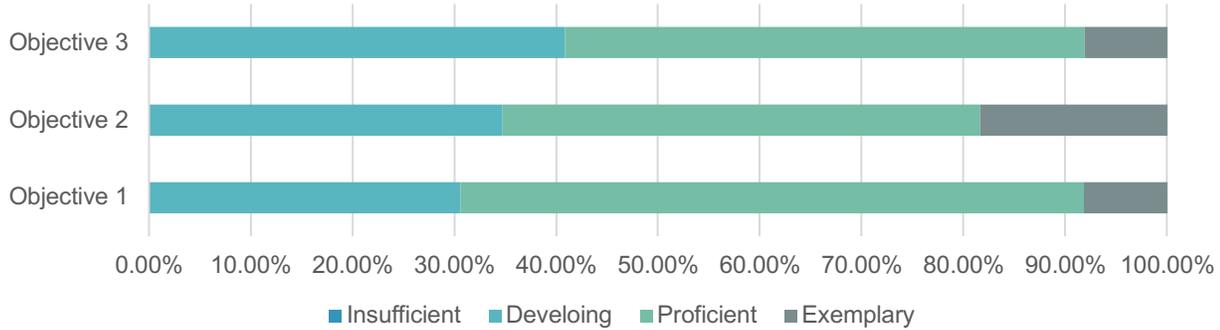
### Assessment Data:

N=49 \*one artifact was assigned the wrong rubric, so the assessment is limited to a sample of 49 samples each for online and on ground.



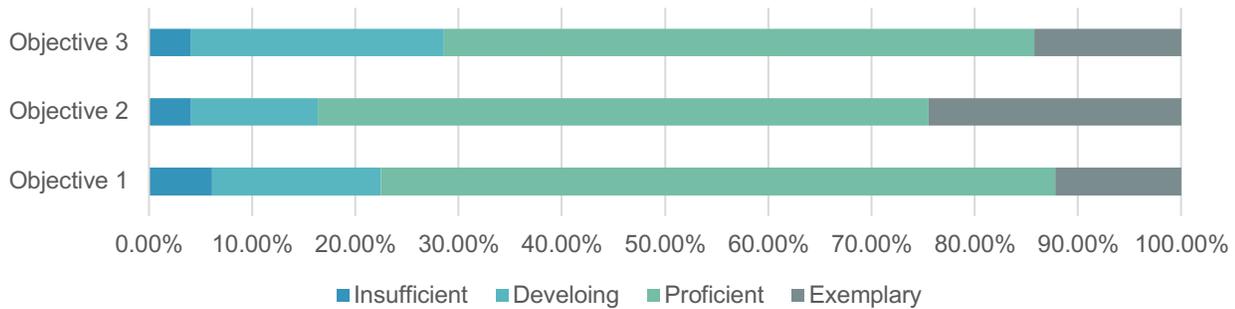
| Meaning     | Insufficient | Developing | Proficient | Exemplary |
|-------------|--------------|------------|------------|-----------|
| Objective 1 | 0.33%        | 4.92%      | 42.30%     | 52.46%    |
| Objective 2 | 0.33%        | 5.25%      | 50.82%     | 43.61%    |
| Objective 3 | 0.00%        | 6.89%      | 50.49%     | 42.62%    |

### Meaning OLC Juried Assessment



| Meaning     | Insufficient | Developing | Proficient | Exemplary |
|-------------|--------------|------------|------------|-----------|
| Objective 1 | 0.00%        | 30.61%     | 61.22%     | 8.16%     |
| Objective 2 | 0.00%        | 34.69%     | 46.94%     | 18.37%    |
| Objective 3 | 0.00%        | 40.82%     | 51.02%     | 8.16%     |

### Meaning On Ground Juried 2018-2021



| Meaning     | Insufficient | Developing | Proficient | Exemplary |
|-------------|--------------|------------|------------|-----------|
| Objective 1 | 6.12%        | 16.33%     | 65.31%     | 12.24%    |
| Objective 2 | 4.08%        | 12.24%     | 59.18%     | 24.49%    |
| Objective 3 | 4%           | 24.49%     | 57.14%     | 14.29%    |

#### Juried Assessor Response:

1. The faculty for the Meaning courses might want to consider modifying the language of the rubric to remove references to “the text”, as the Film courses were evaluating films, not books (although there were many references to books if a film was based from one).
2. It might be helpful to have a copy of the actual assignments given to the students to know exactly what the intents of the assignments were. This was less an issue for the Film Study artifacts than the

other courses. I don't think this would need to be attached to each artifact, just given to the assessors before beginning the process. Having assessed several different categories, I felt it was a bigger issue here than in others I have done.

3. There were numerous artifacts with the student names left in the assignment. Along with this, I noticed some assignments were submitted by multiple students. Is this in the spirit of the assessment? I have always had the understanding these should be individual assignments. Again, just a comment, as I should not have seen these student names at all.
4. In both the in-ground and online artifacts, Assessment Rubric 23 did not have the Meaning rubric attached, I believe it was the Art that was present. I assume it was some kind of glitch, as this occurred on the same number in both sets.
5. Overall, I feel the assessments were well done. I found very few instances where I needed to give a 1 score and even the weaker submissions still had at least one category I could rate Proficient.
6. I might need to catch up on some movies, as some of these sounded quite interesting!

Problem assignments

- I think the assignments for the most part were adequate in addressing the rubric. The Film class doesn't fit neatly into the rubric, such as when it asks about "key **literary** and rhetorical features of a text." But to me, that is more an issue of the rubric needing to be more broad than an issue with the class not relating to the Meaning Gen Ed requirement.
- Strengths
  - I think the students did a really good job of using textual evidence to support their points, throughout all of the assignments.
- Weaknesses
  - Across all assignments, the weakest area was definitely thesis statements. Some had no thesis at all, or a poorly developed thesis.

## Faculty Response:

Faculty in this area are mostly happy with the results here. We will look at what happened with the wrong rubric being attached to artifacts from ENG 239. Embarrassing!

The faculty will rewrite Meaning objective 1 to revise “text” as “text or film,” and to revise “literary or rhetorical components” as “literary, cinematic, or rhetorical components.”

To address the weakness in thesis statements, faculty will re-evaluate our assignment descriptions to ensure that we are prompting our students to posit more advanced, assertive opinions, and tying those opinions to the central meaning or theme of a text or film.

In relation to the comments about films potentially not fitting the rubric description in terms of "texts" and "literary and rhetorical features."

When ENG faculty originally devised the rubric language, we used the term "text" as an inclusive category, one which collects entities such as novels, speeches, poems, advertisements, op-ed articles, movies, etc. under a convenient and flexible category, employing "text" as a word which refers to the use of language to convey meaning and content. So, cinema, which uses both written language (screenplays) as well as visual and auditory language (*mise en scene* and sound design elements), constitutes a form of textual communication.

Additionally, cinema commonly traffics in both "literary and rhetorical features," such as symbolism, characterization, motifs, themes, irony, metaphor, allegory, Aristotelian appeals (logos, pathos, ethos), etc. to establish its narrative focus, surface content, subtextual implications, and audience impact, which is why we've linked the art of moviemaking to these attributes in the rubric descriptors.

## Curriculum Committee Summary

The general education assessment held in the summer of 2021 covered the areas of Critical Thinking, Ethics, and Meaning. The university implemented Via assessment software in the fall of 2016 and now we have a full 4-years' worth of data in the system, which is considered a full cycle based on assessment rotations.

Faculty were asked to contact the Curriculum Committee if they were interested in serving as a juried assessor. The classes were audited for assessment and assignment upload before random selection was determined. The assignments chosen were determined through a random number process and truly represent a diverse section of assignments that make up each individual content area.

After discussion the Curriculum Committee has decided that it would prefer to forego the assessment retreat format. Discussion in this format was not as robust as the committee would prefer. In the future, the curriculum committee prefers to invite faculty from the assessed general education areas to a committee meeting during the regular semester to discuss the report in detail.

The committee also noted that the juried assessors sometimes struggle to understand assignments and how they should be completed. The committee proposed providing juried assessors with assignment descriptions and guidelines, along with some examples of exemplary work. With some examples and detailed descriptions assessors may find it easier to understand the goals behind an assignment, and better judge student performance. In addition to descriptions and examples, the committee suggests that assignments are tagged with the level of coursework and understanding required. For example – are juried assessors looking at artifacts from primarily freshman? Or is the expectation that the assignment is upper-level coursework with additional expectations?

The next round of General Education assessment will occur May 2022, with a review of Social Science, Diversity, and History.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Curriculum Committee

Faculty Vote to Accept Report: January 2023