Texas A&M University

Core Curriculum Assessment Report

AY23-24 (Cohort A)

Office of Institutional Effectiveness & Evaluation

Abbreviations & Definitions

AAC&U	American Association of Colleges and Universities
AH	American History (Foundational Component Area)
C	Communication (Foundational Component Area)
CA	Creative Arts (Foundational Component Area)
CARS	Curricular Approval Request System
CCC	Texas A&M University Faculty Senate–Core Curriculum Council
FCA	Foundational Component Area
GPS	Government/Political Sciences
LPC	Language, Philosophy, & Culture (Foundational Component Area)
LPS	Life & Physical Sciences (Foundational Component Area)
M	Mathematics (Foundational Component Area)
OIEE	Office of Institutional Effectiveness & Evaluation
SACSCOC	Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges
SBS	Social & Behavioral Sciences (Foundational Component Area)
THECB	Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board

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Executive Summary

As a public institution of higher education, Texas A&M University's general education program (Core Curriculum) is required to meet specific standards laid out by the Texas state legislature and its institutional accreditor, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC).

All Core Curriculum courses are certified by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB). At Texas A&M, Core Curriculum courses are approved and recertified by the Faculty Senate—Core Curriculum Council (CCC) and the Faculty Senate as a whole on a scheduled recertification and assessment rotation.

The Core Curriculum courses are organized into **Foundational Component Areas** (FCAs) in which a student should acquire and advance defined student learning outcomes. These Foundational Component Areas are: American History; Communication; Creative Arts; Government/Political Sciences; Language, Philosophy, & Culture; Life & Physical Sciences; Mathematics; and Social & Behavioral Sciences.

The Texas Core Curriculum refers to the expected learning outcomes as **core objectives** set by the THECB. These objectives are Communication Skills, Critical Thinking Skills, Empirical & Quantitative Skills, Personal Responsibility, Social Responsibility, and Teamwork.

During academic year 2023-24, Critical Thinking was assessed for all FCAs, and Social Responsibility was assessed in the following FCAs: American History; Creative Arts; Government/Political Science; Language, Philosophy, & Culture; and Social & Behavioral Sciences (per state requirements for these specific FCAs). On average, students demonstrated the expected knowledge and skills at the benchmark level for Critical Thinking and Social Responsibility. This report provides results at the institutional, FCA, and location levels. Course-level reports may be available on request. Email assessment@tamu.edu for more information.

Texas Core Curriculum

Description and Outcomes

As a public institution of higher education, Texas A&M University's general education program, known as Core Curriculum, is required to meet specific standards laid out by the Texas state legislature and its institutional accreditor, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC). The faculty and administrators of Texas A&M University are invested in and focused on assessing the overall effectiveness of the general education program.

Core Objectives

The Texas A&M University Core Curriculum and related core objectives are required by statute. This code stipulates that through the mandated Core Curriculum, "students will gain a foundation of knowledge of human cultures and the physical and natural world, develop principles of personal and social responsibility for living in a diverse world, and advance intellectual and practical skills that are essential for all living."[1] The state code further stipulates that through the Core Curriculum, students will be prepared for contemporary challenges by developing and demonstrating the following **core objectives**.

- **Communication Skills**: to include effective development, interpretation, and expression of ideas through written, oral, and visual communication.
- **Critical Thinking Skills**: to include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation, and synthesis of information.
- **Empirical & Quantitative Skills**: to include the manipulation and analysis of numerical data or observable facts resulting in informed conclusions.
- **Personal Responsibility**: to include the ability to connect choices, actions, and consequences to ethical decision-making.
- **Social Responsibility**: to include intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities.
- **Teamwork**: to include the ability to consider different points of view and to work effectively with others to support a shared purpose or goal.

As a state institution governed by requirements set forth in Texas Administrative Code, Texas A&M University has adopted these core objectives as its collegiate-level general education competencies to be achieved through students' successful completion of the Core Curriculum.

Foundational Component Areas

The Core Curriculum courses are organized into the following **Foundational Component Areas (FCA)** in which a student should acquire and advance defined student learning outcomes the Texas Core Curriculum refers to as core objectives. Texas Administrative Code states, "every Texas higher education institution's Core Curriculum must include the following Foundational Component Areas"[2]:

- **American History (AH)**: Courses in this category focus on the consideration of past events and ideas relative to the United States, with the option of including Texas History for a portion of this component area. Courses involve the interaction among individuals, communities, states, the

[1] See Texas Administrative Code Title 19 § 4.28.

[2] See Texas Administrative Code Title 19 § 4.28.

nation, and the world, considering how these interactions have contributed to the development of the United States and its global role.

- **Communication (C)**: Courses in this category focus on developing ideas and expressing them clearly, considering the effect of the message, fostering understanding, and building the skills needed to communicate persuasively. Courses involve the command of oral, aural, written, and visual literacy skills that enable people to exchange messages appropriate to the subject, occasion, and audience.
- **Creative Arts (CA)**: Courses in this category focus on the appreciation and analysis of creative artifacts and works of the human imagination. Courses involve the synthesis and interpretation of artistic expression and enable critical, creative, and innovative communication about works of art.
- **Government/Political Sciences (GPS)**: Courses in this category focus on consideration of the Constitution of the United States and the constitutions of the states, with special emphasis on that of Texas. Courses involve the analysis of governmental institutions, political behavior, civic engagement, and their political and philosophical foundations.
- **Language, Philosophy, & Culture (LPC)**: Courses in this category focus on how ideas, values, beliefs, and other aspects of culture express and affect human experience. Courses involve the exploration of ideas that foster aesthetic and intellectual creation to understand the human condition across cultures.
- **Life & Physical Sciences (LPS)**: Courses in this category focus on describing, explaining, and predicting natural phenomena using the scientific method. Courses involve the understanding of interactions among natural phenomena and the implications of scientific principles on the physical world and on human experiences.
- **Mathematics (M)**: Courses in this category focus on quantitative literacy in logic, patterns, and relationships. Courses involve the understanding of key mathematical concepts and the application of appropriate quantitative tools to everyday experience.
- **Social & Behavioral Sciences (SBS)**: Courses in this category focus on the application of empirical and scientific methods that contribute to the understanding of what makes us human. Courses involve the exploration of behavior and interactions among individuals, groups, institutions, and events, examining their impact on the individual, society, and culture.

State policy requires colleges and universities to approve Core Curriculum courses in these FCAs, gather evidence of student learning, and demonstrate effort of continuous improvement. The institutional accreditor for Texas A&M, SACSCOC, also requires documentation of continuous improvement efforts for collegiate-level general education for its undergraduate degree programs.[3]

[3] See SACSCOC Standard 8.2.b.

Assessment Methodology

Course Selection

All current THECB-certified Core Curriculum courses are recertified by the Texas A&M University Faculty Senate–Core Curriculum Council (CCC) and the Faculty Senate as a whole through a two-part process which occurs over a four-year cycle, resulting in four separate cohorts.[4]

Recertification is a two academic year process: In Year 1, student-produced work (artifacts) is collected by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness & Evaluation (OIEE) for centralized assessment. Assessment results are shared with the CCC and instructors. In Year 2, proposers submit course materials that describe how they are addressing all the core objectives required for a course's FCA. As part of this process, they are asked to reflect on the assessment results as they relate to the course and ways they can contribute to improving the results within the course.

Instructors for each core course are responsible for addressing the FCA requirements and applicable core objectives every time the course is taught. For recertification and assessment purposes, courses are assigned to one of four cohorts (A, B, C, and D) continuously rotating through recertification over a four-year period. Cohort assignments are based on student enrollment and the year in which a course is initially approved for the core, ensuring each course goes through a curricular review every four years. The student learning outcome data collected by OIEE for the centralized assessment of core learning objectives is based on a three-year scheduled assessment rotation. The standard cycle of assessment of learning objectives for centralized assessment includes a three-year rotation of the core learning objectives among cohorts detailed in the table below.

Centralized Assessment Schedule

Academic Year	Cohort	Core Objectives Assessed
23-24	A	Critical Thinking and Social Responsibility
24-25	B	Empirical & Quantitative Skills, Personal Responsibility, and Written Communication
25-26	C	Oral Communication, Visual Communication, and Teamwork
26-27	D	Critical Thinking and Social Responsibility

These two rotating cycles (centralized assessment and core objective rotation) occur concurrently to ensure each course in the Core Curriculum provides evidence of student learning of the core learning objectives aligned with the mandatory core learning objectives at least four times across a 12-year period. See Appendix E for the list of courses assessed in AY23-24.

The list of courses up for recertification in a given academic year is published on the OIEE website, and instructors of record are contacted directly via Texas A&M email. During the first year of the process, all sections of the identified course taught during the long semesters (fall and spring) submit artifacts aligned to the assigned core objective(s) to OIEE. OIEE facilitates the scoring of artifacts on the designated rubric and

[4] See us.tamu.edu/core for more information.

reports assessment results. During the second year of the process, an appointed representative from the department offering the course will complete recertification documentation using the Curricular Approval Request System (CARS) for the CCC to review for the final recertification decision. This process intentionally separates the centralized assessment of the core objectives and the curricular review process recertification in order to focus attention on improvement of student learning.

The CCC evaluates the CARS forms and confirms with OIEE to ensure assessment requirements were met before recertifying a course for another four years. Centralized assessment results are shared with the CCC, academic departments, and university administration to demonstrate the intentional assessment for continuous improvement of the required core objectives as well as compliance with state and institutional accreditation mandates.

Artifacts

Artifacts, or student-produced work, vary in assessment design. Prominent designs include essays, research papers, lab reports, written assignments, objective-specific exam questions, recorded audio/video presentations, portfolios, presentations, or demonstrations to which a rubric—or other detailed criteria—are applied.

Artifacts are collected from each section of a course for fall and spring semesters. Artifacts are compiled across sections at the course level and reviewed for validity.[5] For valid artifacts, a random but proportional sample is pulled for centralized assessment using the appropriate rubric for the core learning objective.

Rubrics

Analytic scoring rubrics are implemented to assess artifacts' demonstrated proficiency in each learning objective using a 9-point criterion scale (see Appendices A and B). The rubrics were collaboratively constructed and approved by the CCC based on research conducted by OIEE, rubrics previously developed by Texas A&M faculty, and the VALUE Rubrics developed by the American Association of Colleges and Universities (AAC&U).

During AY23-24, two rubrics were used to assess the core learning objectives of Critical Thinking and Social Responsibility.

The Critical Thinking Rubric (See Appendix A) has five criteria:

- Explanation of Issue/Problem
- Evidence
- Analysis
- Conclusion
- Innovative Thinking (This category is only applied when present.)

The Social Responsibility Rubric (See Appendix B) has three criteria:

- Awareness of Cultural Worldview Frameworks
- Civic Contexts/ Structures
- Social Challenges/Issues

[5] OIEE staff ensures alignment between the artifact and the applicable rubric.

Achievement Levels

Achievement level definitions describe the general expectations for evidence of student learning at each of the primary levels. Mid-points between the primary achievement levels are indicated by the prefix "pre." The score range of 4.00-4.99, or *developing*, is the standard achievement level affirmed by the CCC.

Achievement Level and Description by Score Range

Score Range	Achievement Level	Description
8.00	Advanced	Evidence of student learning met all or most of the criteria for the advanced category, exceeding expectations.
7.00-7.99	Pre-advanced	Evidence of student learning met some of the criteria for both advanced and competent categories, exceeding expectations.
6.00-6.99	Competent	Evidence of student learning met all or most of the criteria for the competent category, exceeding expectations.
5.00-5.99	Pre-competent	Evidence of student learning met some of the criteria for both competent and developing categories, exceeding expectations.
4.00-4.99	**Developing**	**Evidence of student learning met all or most of the criteria for the developing category, meeting standard expectations.**
3.00-3.99	Pre-developing	Evidence of student learning met some of the criteria for both developing and beginner categories, nearly meeting expectations.
2.00-2.99	Beginner	Evidence of student learning met all or most of the criteria for the beginner category, not meeting expectations.
1.00-1.99	Pre-beginner	Evidence of student learning met some of the criteria for both beginner and not present categories, not meeting expectations.
0.00-0.99	Not present	Evidence of student learning met all or most of the criteria for the not present category, not meeting expectations.

Scoring

The scoring team applies the rubrics to randomly selected artifacts. OIEE hires faculty and scoring staff with expertise in the core learning objectives and a majority of the FCA disciplines to serve as Core Curriculum assessment scorers.[6] A scoring supervisor leads the scoring team through calibration exercises using the rubric, benchmark artifacts, and scoring anchor sets. Once a scorer qualifies to score by demonstrating the standard expected level of agreement for each criterion, the scorer is certified to score for the core learning objective.

Each artifact receives a score from two scorers. During scoring, interrater reliability is consistently monitored by OIEE to ensure standard agreement rates. Where scorer agreement exceeds adjacent achievement levels, the artifact is escalated to the scoring supervisor for review and rating confirmation. If a

[6] "Expert" is defined as having a master's level degree or higher from a discipline within the FCA.

scorer's rating consistently exceeds the bounds of standard agreement rates, the scorer undergoes recalibration and recertification as a scorer. If recertification is not achieved during recalibration, the scorer is dismissed from the scoring team.

During summer 2024, OIEE piloted a program to include faculty who teach Core Curriculum courses in the assessment scoring process. Three faculty were recruited and compensated for participation in the program. OIEE provided an in-depth overview of Core Curriculum from state to university level, including the process of assessment facilitated by OIEE. The faculty members participated in calibration sessions with the other expert scorers on the rubrics along with weekly check-ins to ensure interrater reliability.

Reporting

Results are reported in aggregate in the Findings section of this report. Beginning January 2025, OIEE will generate and send course-level assessment reports to core contacts within departments; these reports will only be sent automatically when the results cannot be tied to a single instructor. Instructors of record can contact assessment@tamu.edu for assessment results.

Findings

Evidence of student learning was collected in Fall 2023 and Spring 2024 across four locations (College Station, Galveston, McAllen, and Qatar) for the state-mandated learning objectives of Critical Thinking and Social Responsibility. The following sections provide the assessment results of AY23-24 (Cohort A). A list of courses assessed is included in Appendix C.

The score range of 4.00-4.99, or the *developing* achievement level, is the standard achievement level affirmed by the CCC. For Critical Thinking, overall student achievement met or exceeded the benchmark of *developing*. Overall, student achievement in Social Responsibility met the benchmark of *developing*.

Critical Thinking

Overall, student achievement in Critical Thinking met or exceeded *developing* levels except the conditional rubric category of Innovative Thinking. 6,799 total artifacts—collected from the College Station, Galveston, McAllen, and Qatar—were assessed. Results are reported by the rubric applied (see Appendix A).

The criterion of Innovative Thinking was only assessed when present in the artifact. Since each artifact received a score from two assessors, the percentage of scores collected that assessed Innovative Thinking are provided in footnotes.

Critical Thinking: Institutional Results (*n*=6,799)

Criterion	Mean	SD	Achievement Level
Explanation of Issue/Problem	4.70	1.37	Developing
Evidence	5.02	1.12	Pre-competent
Analysis	4.96	1.13	Developing
Conclusion	4.66	1.39	Developing
Innovative Thinking[7]	2.14	0.91	Beginner

At College Station, Galveston, and McAllen, student achievement for all rubric criteria met or exceeded the benchmark of *developing* with the exception of Innovative Thinking.[8] Student achievement for all locations was highest in the Evidence category with College Station and McAllen student achievement reaching *pre-competent* levels; student achievement was lowest for all locations in Innovative Thinking.

[7] Of the combined total scores collected at the institutional level, 73% assessed Innovative Thinking.

[8] Results from Qatar are not disaggregated due to the small sample size (*n*=50).

Critical Thinking: College Station Results (*n*=6,098)

Criterion	Mean	SD	Achievement Level
Explanation of Issue/Problem	4.71	1.36	Developing
Evidence	5.03	1.12	Pre-competent
Analysis	4.97	1.13	Developing
Conclusion	4.69	1.38	Developing
Innovative Thinking[9]	2.13	0.89	Beginner

Critical Thinking: Galveston Results (*n*=553)

Criterion	Mean	SD	Achievement Level
Explanation of Issue/Problem	4.51	1.43	Developing
Evidence	4.83	1.09	Developing
Analysis	4.79	1.09	Developing
Conclusion	4.30	1.43	Developing
Innovative Thinking[10]	2.31	1.13	Beginner

Critical Thinking: McAllen Results (*n*=98)

Criterion	Mean	SD	Achievement Level
Explanation of Issue/Problem	5.00	1.12	Pre-competent
Evidence	5.12	1.16	Pre-competent
Analysis	5.08	1.14	Pre-competent
Conclusion	4.83	1.34	Developing
Innovative Thinking[11]	2.05	0.88	Beginner

Overall, student achievement in all FCAs at College Station and Galveston met or exceed the benchmark of *developing* with the exception of Innovative Thinking.[12]

[9] Of the combined total scores collected at College Station, 74% assessed Innovative Thinking.

[10] Of the combined total scores collected at Galveston, 68% assessed Innovative Thinking.

[11] Of the combined total scores collected at McAllen, 89% assessed Innovative Thinking.

[12] McAllen FCA-level results are not provided due to the small sample size (*n*=98).

Overall, student achievement in all FCAs at College Station met or exceeded the benchmark of *developing* with the exception of Innovative Thinking. Student achievement in all categories was highest for the Communication FCA. Student achievement was highest in Evidence for all FCAs except the Government/Political Sciences FCA where student achievement in Analysis was the highest.

Critical Thinking: College Station FCA Results

Criterion	AH	C	CA	GPS	LPC	LPS	M	SBS
Explanation of Issue/Problem	5.15	5.44	5.00	4.08	4.53	4.45	4.48	4.40
Evidence	5.26	5.48	5.27	4.08	4.70	5.06	5.03	4.62
Analysis	5.18	5.46	5.14	4.11	4.63	5.02	4.92	4.57
Conclusion	4.96	5.18	5.04	3.87	4.17	4.77	4.86	4.05
Innovative Thinking[13]	2.16	2.64	2.09	2.05	2.03	1.96	1.84	2.08

Overall, student achievement in all FCAs at Galveston met or exceeded the benchmark of *developing* with the exception of Innovative Thinking. Student achievement in all categories was highest for the Creative Arts FCA. Student achievement was highest in Evidence for all FCAs except for the Government/Political Sciences and Language, Philosophy, & Cultures FCAs where student achievement in Analysis was the highest.

Critical Thinking: Galveston FCA Results

Criterion	AH	C	CA	GPS	LPC	LPS	M	SBS
Explanation of Issue/Problem	4.68	5.02	5.08	4.35	4.24	4.61	3.16	3.20
Evidence	5.06	5.15	5.33	4.40	4.46	4.88	4.22	3.70
Analysis	5.00	5.10	5.30	4.42	4.50	4.83	4.13	3.55
Conclusion	4.45	4.70	4.93	3.83	4.15	4.35	3.63	2.20
Innovative Thinking[14]	1.95	2.69	2.84	1.75	2.04	2.29	1.83	1.33

Social Responsibility

Overall, student achievement in Social Responsibility met or approached the benchmark of *developing*. 3,071 total artifacts—collected from College Station, Galveston, McAllen, and Qatar—were assessed. Results are reported by the rubric applied (see Appendix B).

[13] Of the combined total scores collected at College Station, Innovative Thinking was assessed in 78% of AH, 92% of C, 90% of CA, 81% of GPS, 68% of LPC, 71% of LPS, 58% of M, and 77% of SBS.

[14] Of the combined total scores collected at Galveston, Innovative Thinking was assessed in 85% of AH, 94% of C, 80% of CA, 85% of GPS, 64% of LPC, 56% of LPS, 33% of M, and 15% of SBS.

Social Responsibility: Institutional Results (*n*=3,071)

Criterion	Mean	SD	Achievement Level
Awareness of Cultural Worldview Frameworks	4.45	1.35	Developing
Civic Contexts/ Structures	3.97	1.44	Pre-developing
Social Challenges/Issues	4.16	1.48	Developing

At College Station, Galveston, and McAllen, student achievement for all rubric criteria met or approached the benchmark of *developing*.[15] At all locations, student achievement was highest in Awareness of Cultural Worldview Frameworks.

Social Responsibility Rubric: College Station Results (*n*=2,754)

Criterion	Mean	SD	Achievement Level
Awareness of Cultural Worldview Frameworks	4.44	1.35	Developing
Civic Contexts/ Structures	3.98	1.43	Pre-developing
Social Challenges/Issues	4.16	1.50	Developing

Social Responsibility Rubric: Galveston Results (*n*=240)

Criterion	Mean	SD	Achievement Level
Awareness of Cultural Worldview Frameworks	4.52	1.34	Developing
Civic Contexts/ Structures	3.77	1.48	Pre-developing
Social Challenges/Issues	4.25	1.32	Developing

Social Responsibility Rubric: McAllen Results (*n*=57)

Criterion	Mean	SD	Achievement Level
Awareness of Cultural Worldview Frameworks	4.51	1.33	Developing
Civic Contexts/ Structures	4.45	1.38	Developing
Social Challenges/Issues	4.19	1.47	Developing

Overall, student achievement in all FCAs met or approached the benchmark of *developing*.[16] Student achievement in all categories was highest for the American History FCA at College Station. At College Station, student achievement was highest in Awareness of Cultural Worldview Frameworks and lowest in Civic Contexts/Structures for all FCAs except for Creative Arts which scored lowest in Social Challenges/Issues.

[15] Results from Qatar are not disaggregated due to the small sample size (*n*=20).

[16] McAllen FCA-level results are not provided due to the small sample size (*n*=57).

Social Responsibility Rubric: College Station FCA Results

Criterion	AH	CA	GPS	LPC	SBS
Awareness of Cultural Worldview Frameworks	4.95	4.96	4.18	4.22	4.14
Civic Contexts/ Structures	4.39	4.25	3.45	3.79	3.90
Social Challenges/Issues	4.81	4.07	3.83	4.02	4.04

Student achievement in all categories was highest for the American History FCA at Galveston. Student achievement was highest in Awareness of Cultural Worldview Frameworks for the American History, Creative Arts, and Government/Political Sciences FCAs. Student achievement was highest in Social Challenges/Issues for the Language, Philosophy, & Culture and Social & Behavioral Sciences FCAs. At Galveston, student achievement was lowest in Civic Contexts/Structures for all FCAs.

Social Responsibility Rubric: Galveston FCA Results

Criterion	AH	CA	GPS	LPC	SBS
Awareness of Cultural Worldview Frameworks	5.31	4.71	4.63	3.28	3.30
Civic Contexts/ Structures	4.58	3.70	3.94	2.79	3.15
Social Challenges/Issues	5.09	4.16	4.30	3.48	3.65

How to Use Results for Continuous Improvement

The purpose of Core Curriculum Assessment is to collect data to understand student achievement on identified outcomes and determine opportunities for curricular and pedagogical interventions for improving student learning in the future.

Consider the following when reviewing the results.

- Review results for each component of the rubric and identify where students are excelling and where there are areas for curricular intervention.
- Strengthen continuity of student learning outcomes for courses across sections, semesters, modalities, and locations.
- Refer to support resources, including assignment checklists and rubrics, available at assessment.tamu.edu/core.
- At the course level,
    - use objective-specific assignments to assess student learning of the core objective using the associated scoring rubric and
    - use formative assessment strategies to collect and analyze data annually to evaluate student learning of the core objectives and to pilot initiatives for improvement.
- Contact OIEE for assistance in selecting artifacts or designing an assignment for assessment at assessment@tamu.edu.

Appendix A: Critical Thinking Rubric

Definition

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board states that the Texas Core Curriculum objective of Critical Thinking Skills is "to include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information."[17] Further, the Association of American Colleges & Universities' Critical Thinking VALUE Rubric defines critical thinking as "a habit of the mind characterized by the comprehensive exploration of issues, ideas, artifacts, and events before accepting or formulating an opinion or conclusion."

Framing Language

This rubric is designed to be transdisciplinary, reflecting the recognition that success in all disciplines requires habits of inquiry and analysis that share common attributes. Further, research suggests that successful critical thinkers from all disciplines increasingly need to be able to apply those habits in various and changing situations encountered in all walks of life.

This rubric is designed to be applied to student-produced work (artifacts), from a range of disciplines and a variety of genres. The suggestions here are not an exhaustive list of possibilities. Critical thinking can be demonstrated in assignments that require students to complete analyses of text, data, or issues. If insight into the process components of critical thinking (e.g., how information sources were evaluated regardless of whether they were included in the product) is desired, assignments focused on student reflection might be especially illuminating. Ideally, the artifact assessed with this rubric will be produced by an individual student; however, this rubric may also be applied to group projects.

Glossary

The following definitions clarify terms and concepts used in this rubric only.

Analysis: Detailed and careful examination in order to understand, explain, or critique. This process often involves breaking the subject matter into parts to better understand the whole. This rubric assesses the products of analysis rather than the process itself.

Issue/Problem: The issue or problem can take a variety of forms including social problems, mathematical calculations, textual analyses, laboratory experiments, personal experiences, historic events or figures, political issues, observations, philosophic debates, piece or body of art, current events, etc.

Conclusion: A synthesis of key findings drawn from research, evidence, and/or analysis.

Evidence: Source material that is used to extend, in purposeful ways, the student's ideas. Examples of evidence present in artifacts are mathematical calculations, assignment details provided by the instructor, independent research, primary or secondary texts, laboratory experiments, etc.

Information: Pre-existing knowledge, viewpoints, research, lecture material, problem provided by instructor, laboratory experiments, interviews, etc.

Innovative Thinking: Novelty of idea, claim, question, form, etc. Scorers only apply this rubric category when it is demonstrated in the artifact; otherwise, no score (as opposed to zero) is recorded.

Outside Sources: Any information beyond what the instructor provides within the assignment prompt or description.

Sources: Information (written, oral, behavioral, visual, observational, experimental, or other) that students draw on as they work for a variety of purposes—to extend, argue with, develop, define, or shape their ideas, for example.

Synthesis: The combination of separate things (information, ideas, formulas, sources, evidence, etc.) to produce a new, coherent whole.

[17] 19 Tex. Admin. Code §4.28 (2021)

Critical Thinking Rubric

	Advanced 8	7	Competent 6	5	Developing[18] 4	3	Beginner 2	1	Not Present 0
Explanation of Issue/Problem	*Issue/problem* to be considered critically is stated clearly and described comprehensively, delivering all relevant *information* necessary for full understanding.		*Issue/problem* to be considered critically is stated, described, and clarified, so understanding is not seriously impeded by omissions.		*Issue/problem* to be considered critically is stated, but description/setup leaves some terms undefined, ambiguities unexplored, boundaries undetermined, and/or backgrounds unknown.		*Issue/problem* to be considered critically is stated without description, or setup is unclear.		No explanation or setup of *issue/problem*.
Evidence	*Information* is taken from *source(s)* with enough interpretation or evaluation to develop a comprehensive *analysis* or *synthesis*. If used, *outside sources*' connections to and appropriateness for the topic are thoroughly explained.		*Information* is taken from *source(s)* with enough interpretation or evaluation to develop a coherent *analysis* or *synthesis*. If used, *outside sources* clearly relate to and are appropriate for the topic.		*Information* is taken from *source(s)* with some interpretation or evaluation but not enough to develop a coherent *analysis* or *synthesis*. If used, *outside sources* may not appear clearly related to or appropriate for the topic.		*Information* is taken from *source(s)* without any interpretation or evaluation. If used, *outside sources* may be unrelated to or inappropriate for the topic.		No *evidence* provided.
Analysis	Organizes and synthesizes *evidence* to reveal insightful patterns, differences, similarities, and/or solutions related to the *issue/problem*.		Organizes *evidence* to reveal important patterns, differences, similarities, and/or solutions related to the *issue/problem*.		Organizes *evidence*, but the organization is not effective in revealing important patterns, differences, similarities, and/or solutions.		Lists *evidence*, but it is not organized and/or is unrelated to the *issue/problem*.		No *analysis* provided.
Conclusion	States a *conclusion* that is a logical extrapolation and reflects an informed evaluation and ability to place *evidence* and perspectives discussed in priority order.		States a *conclusion* focused solely on the issue/problem. The *conclusion* arises specifically from and responds specifically to the *issue/problem*.		States a simplistic or obvious *conclusion* and/or a *conclusion* that, because it is so general, also applies beyond the scope of the *issue/problem*.		States an ambiguous, illogical, inconsistent, or unsupportable *conclusion*.		No *conclusion* provided.
Innovative Thinking (This category is only applied when present.)	Extends a novel idea, question, format, or product to create new knowledge or knowledge that crosses boundaries.		Creates a novel idea, question, format, or product.		Experiments with creating a novel idea, question, format, or product.		Reformulates a collection of available ideas.		If no *innovative thinking* is present, no score is recorded.

Italicized words appear in the glossary.

[18] The score range of 4.00-4.99, or *developing*, is the standard achievement level affirmed by the CCC.

Appendix B: Social Responsibility Rubric

Definition

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board states that the Texas Core Curriculum objective of Social Responsibility is "to include intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities."[19] Further, the American Association of Colleges & Universities (AAC&U) Intercultural Knowledge & Competence VALUE Rubric defines these objectives as "a set of cognitive, affective, and behavioral skills and characteristics that support effective and appropriate interaction in a variety of cultural contexts."[20] AAC&U's Civic Engagement VALUE Rubric defines this objective as "working to make a difference in the civic life of our communities and developing the combination of knowledge, skills, values and motivation to make that difference. It means promoting the quality of life in a community, through both political and non-political processes."[21]

Framing Language

This rubric is designed to be applied to student-produced work (artifacts), from a range of disciplines and a variety of genres. Ideally, the artifact assessed with this rubric will be produced by an individual student; however, this rubric may also be applied to group projects. The application of this rubric recognizes that Social Responsibility can be demonstrated cognitively and does not require physical labor as evidence of this objective. This is particularly salient when students are unable to participate physically in the social challenges/issues as is the case when time or distance inhibits involvement.

Glossary

The following definitions clarify terms and concepts used in this rubric only.

Culture: All knowledge and values shared by a group.

Civic Contexts/Structures: Organizations, movements, campaigns, a place or locus where people and/or living creatures inhabit, which may be defined by a locality (school, national park, non-profit organization, town, state, nation) or defined by shared identity (i.e., African Americans, North Carolinians, Americans, a political party, refugees, etc.). In addition, contexts for civic engagement may be defined by a variety of approaches intended to benefit a person, group, or community, including community service, volunteering, or academic work.

Politics: A process by which a group of people, whose opinions or interests might be divergent, reach collective decisions that are generally regarded as binding on the group and enforced as common policy. Political life enables people to accomplish goals they could not realize as individuals. Politics necessarily arises whenever groups of people live together, since they must always reach collective decisions of one kind or another.

Social Challenges/Issues: Broadly defined as any problem or situation affecting a group of people (regardless of scale, from local to global).

Worldview: The cognitive and affective lens through which people construe their experiences and make sense of the world around them.

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[19] 19 Tex. Admin. Code §4.28 (2021).

[20] Bennett, J. M. (2008). Transformative training: Designing programs for culture learning. In M. A. Moodian (Ed.), *Contemporary leadership and intercultural competence: Understanding and utilizing cultural diversity to build successful organizations* (pp. 95-110). Sage.

[21] Ehrlich, T. (2000). Introduction. In Ehrlich, T. (Ed.). *Civic responsibility and higher education* (p. vi). Oryx Press.

Social Responsibility Rubric

	Advanced 8	7	Competent 6	5	Developing[22] 4	3	Beginner 2	1	Not Present 0
Awareness of Cultural Worldview Frameworks	Demonstrates a sophisticated understanding of the complexity of elements important to members of a *culture* in relation to its history, values, *politics*, communication styles, economy, or beliefs and practices.		Demonstrates adequate understanding of the complexity of elements important to members of a *culture* in relation to its history, values, *politics*, communication styles, economy, or beliefs and practices.		Demonstrates surface-level understanding of elements important to members of a *culture* in relation to its history, values, *politics*, communication styles, economy, or beliefs and practices.		Demonstrates limited understanding of elements important to members of a *culture* in relation to its history, values, *politics*, communication styles, economy, or beliefs and practices.		No understanding of the elements important to members of a *culture*.
Civic Contexts/ Structures	Demonstrates knowledge of/ commitment to the role of collaboration and working across and within community contexts and structures plays in achieving a civic aim and identifies ways to actively engage in *civic contexts/ structures*.		Demonstrates knowledge of/ commitment to the roles of working actively within community contexts and structures play in achieving a civic aim and identifies intentional ways to be involved in *civic contexts/ structures*.		Identifies intentional ways to participate in *civic contexts/ structures*.		Identifies surface-level ways to engage with *civic contexts / structures*.		Did not identify any *civic contexts/ structures*.
Social Challenges/ Issues	Addresses *social challenges/issues* in an informed way and evaluates the local and/or broader consequences of individual and/or collective (i.e., regional, national, or global) interventions or responses.		Addresses *social challenges/issues* in an informed way and identifies the local and/or broader consequences of individual and/or collective (i.e., regional, national, or global) interventions or responses.		Explains the *social challenges/issues* with minimal discussion of the local and/or broader consequences of individual and/or collective (i.e., regional, national, or global) interventions or responses.		Identifies basic *social challenges/issues* with no discussion of the local and/or broader consequences of individual and/or collective (i.e., regional, national, or global) interventions or responses.		Did not identify any *social challenges/ issues*.

Italicized words appear in the glossary.

[22] The score range of 4.00-4.99, or *developing*, is the standard achievement level affirmed by the CCC.

Appendix C: Courses Due for Assessment in AY23-24

Course	Foundational Component Area	Critical Thinking	Social Responsibility
AGEC 105	Social & Behavioral Sciences	Yes	Yes
ANTH 204	Language, Philosophy, &Culture	Yes	Yes
ANTH 205	Language, Philosophy, & Culture	Yes	Yes
ARCH 212	Social & Behavioral Sciences	Yes	Yes
ARCH 249	Creative Arts	Yes	Yes
ASTR 109/PHYS 109	Life & Physical Sciences	Yes	No
ASTR 111	Life & Physical Sciences	Yes	No
ASTR 119/PHYS 119	Life & Physical Sciences	Yes	No
ATMO 201	Life & Physical Sciences	Yes	No
BIOL 111	Life & Physical Sciences	Yes	No
CLAS 221	Language, Philosophy, & Culture	Yes	Yes
COMM 243	Communication	Yes	No
COMM 257/RELS 257	Creative Arts	Yes	Yes
COSC 222	Language, Philosophy, & Culture	Yes	Yes
DCED 201	Creative Arts	Yes	Yes
ECON 202	Social & Behavioral Sciences	Yes	Yes
ENGL 202	Language, Philosophy, & Culture	Yes	Yes
ENGL 203	Communication	Yes	No
ENGL 204/AFST 204	Language, Philosophy, & Culture	Yes	Yes
ENGL 206	Language, Philosophy, & Culture	Yes	Yes
ENGL 207	Language, Philosophy, & Culture	Yes	Yes
ENGL 210	Communication	Yes	No
ENGL 227	Language, Philosophy, & Culture	Yes	Yes
ENGL 251/FILM 251	Creative Arts	Yes	Yes
ENGL 253	Language, Philosophy, & Culture	Yes	Yes
ENGL 262/HISP 262	Language, Philosophy, & Culture	Yes	Yes
ENGL 333/WGST 333	Language, Philosophy, & Culture	Yes	Yes
ENGL 360	Language, Philosophy, & Culture	Yes	Yes
FREN 201	Language, Philosophy, & Culture	Yes	Yes
FREN 202	Language, Philosophy, & Culture	Yes	Yes
GEOG 213	Life & Physical Sciences	Yes	No
GEOG 301	Language, Philosophy, & Culture	Yes	Yes
HISP 204	Creative Arts	Yes	Yes
HIST 104	Language, Philosophy, & Culture	Yes	Yes

Course	Foundational Component Area	Critical Thinking	Social Responsibility
HIST 106	American History	Yes	Yes
HIST 225	American History	Yes	Yes
HIST 226	American History	Yes	Yes
HIST 242	Language, Philosophy, & Culture	Yes	Yes
HORT 202	Life & Physical Sciences	Yes	No
KINE 210	Creative Arts	Yes	Yes
MATH 140	Mathematics	Yes	No
MATH 150	Mathematics	Yes	No
MATH 171	Mathematics	Yes	No
MODL 222/ENGL 222	Language, Philosophy, & Culture	Yes	Yes
PERF 200	Creative Arts	Yes	Yes
PERF 201	Creative Arts	Yes	Yes
PERF 324/ANTH 324	Creative Arts	Yes	Yes
PHIL 111	Language, Philosophy, & Culture	Yes	Yes
PHYS 206	Life & Physical Sciences	Yes	No
PHYS 226	Life & Physical Sciences	Yes	No
POLS 206	Government/ Political Sciences	Yes	Yes
SOCI 206	Social & Behavioral Sciences	Yes	Yes
SOCI 207/WGST 207	Social & Behavioral Sciences	Yes	Yes
SPMT 304	Social & Behavioral Sciences	Yes	Yes
URPN 202	Social & Behavioral Sciences	Yes	Yes
URPN 361	Social & Behavioral Sciences	Yes	Yes

Office of Institutional Effectiveness & Evaluation

Purpose

The goal of assessment is to use data to make informed decisions about teaching, learning, program delivery, equity, and overall institutional effectiveness. Engaging in systematic, integrated, and thoughtful assessment of student learning, the student learning experience, and administrative and support functions helps our campus to ensure a high-quality, equitable experience for all students. OIEE is committed to this endeavor and to assisting our faculty and staff in the continuous improvement of their programs and processes.

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