

**Report on the Assessment of Student Learning across the University  
from AY2013/2014 through AY2015/2016**

**Submitted on behalf of the Assessment Committee to the Academic Council, the Office of  
the Provost, and the Provost's Deans Team**

**by**

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**October 3, 2016**

As per Dominican University's Academic Council bylaws, the Assessment Committee is charged with submitting every three years a formal written report on the assessment of student learning across the University to the Academic Council, the Office of the Provost, and the Provost's Deans Team. This report chronicles the assessment of student learning over the time period beginning fall of 2013 and ending spring of 2016 and includes the pertinent activities of the Assessment Committee, the college, graduate and professional schools, and various co-curricular programs.

A key aspect of re-affirmation of accreditation is the importance an institution places on the assessment of student learning. In the 2015 Higher Learning Commission report, the on-site peer reviewers described Dominican University as demonstrating "a strong commitment to improvement through ongoing assessment of student learning." Improvement occurs not through merely collecting assessment data, but also taking action based on the data collected, analyzed, and discussed. This process of "closing the loop" is a key indicator of the maturity of the climate of assessment on campus.

The following are actions reported by the Assessment Committee, the college, and the schools from the previous report (2010-2013) demonstrating how student-learning assessment information has been used for continuous improvement:

- Assessment Committee – implemented formal systematic assessment of the university-wide student learning goals.
- Brennan School of Business – generated annual assurance of learning reports in which comparisons are made to the previous year’s results and used assessment data to make targeted adjustments in learning goals, course content, and the curricula for the next academic year.
- Graduate School of Library and Information Sciences – re-wrote its program learning goals and outcomes and mapped the outcomes to specific courses. The resulting course-outcome matrix allowed the program to identify learning gaps in its curriculum.
- Graduate School of Social Work – re-designed its entire curriculum, developing a new set of student learning goals and outcomes based on Dee Fink’s model of Integrative Course Design.
- Rosary College of Arts and Sciences – the LAS seminars revised its student learning goals based on analysis of the data gathered from the Common Text Assignment Assessment.
- School of Education – developed an Assessment System Logic Model that illustrates how information is gathered and the data used systematically to improve student learning. The model identifies information sources from which assessment data can be gathered, activities of both students and faculty that relate to student learning, outputs that emerge from the activities, and intended outcomes of the systematic assessment process.
- School of Professional and Continuing Studies – developed a set of student learning goals and outcomes.

The remainder of this report chronicles the Dominican Assessment Committee’s and the curricular and co-curricular programs’ 2013-2016 efforts to improve student learning through assessment initiatives.

## **Assessment Committee**

As part of its regular duties, the Assessment Committee (see Appendix A for a list of committee members) evaluates program assessment reports and works with individual programs to further develop the assessment of student learning. The Assessment Committee also engages in limited-term assessment projects. For the period of this report, the committee undertook two projects: developing sample student learning outcomes for the university-wide student learning goals and developing an assessment plan to systematically assess the university-wide goals.

### *Sample Student Learning Outcomes*

The Assessment Committee developed a set of sample outcomes for each of the eight student learning goals. The purpose of these outcomes was to assist programs in developing their own set of outcomes by providing the correct format for articulating the outcome, the correct use of action verbs to describe the assessed behavior, and different levels of learning that can be associated with each learning goal (see Appendix B for the university-wide student learning goals and corresponding sample learning outcomes).

### *Assessment Plan for University-wide Student Learning Goals*

In 2014, the Assessment Committee developed an assessment plan for the formal systematic assessment of Dominican's University-wide Student Learning Goals (these are addressed in more detail in a separate section). This plan included identifying in which academic year particular goals would be assessed, setting deadlines for submission of individual program assessment plans, and assigning members of the Assessment Committee to serve as liaisons to programs (see Appendix C for the current iteration of the assessment plan).

## **University-wide Student Learning Goals**

### *2014-2015 Assessment: Global Citizenship and Critical Thinking*

#### Global Citizenship

Formal systematic university-wide assessment of global citizenship was conducted in Fall 2014. This involved administration of the Global Citizenship Survey to all students and faculty (full- and part-time). The Global Citizenship Survey was first administered to Dominican students and faculty in Fall 2011. This re-administration is unique in that the students who completed the

survey in 2011 as freshmen completed the survey as seniors in 2014 (see Appendix D for complete survey results). Table 1 shows both positive and negative student gains of 5% or greater for this particular group.

In addition, Table 1 provides the percentages of students who responded ‘Yes,’ ‘No,’ or ‘No, but plan to’ for participation in experiential learning activities associated with Global Citizenship. Based on the results provided, the following conclusions were drawn:

- **Service learning:** The majority of seniors report taking courses with a service learning component. However, the percent of freshmen and seniors stating ‘No’ remains fairly constant.
- **Study Abroad:** Less than 1/5 of seniors report participating in study abroad, although the majority of the corresponding freshmen reported that they planned to. This does not appear to be an awareness issue, but rather students who had planned to participate in study abroad deciding not to. It would be interesting to find out what factors prevented students who planned to study abroad from doing so.
- **Global Issues:** The results for global issues are similar to those for service learning, except only about half of the seniors reported participating. As with service learning, the percent stating ‘No’ remains fairly constant from freshmen to senior year. The similarity between the two could mean that the only place students are being exposed to global issues outside of the class are through service learning components – this is something that would have to be examined in more detail.

**Table 1: Global citizenship survey results greatest gains (+/-).**

	2011 n=171	2014 n=62	Gain
<b>Knowledge and Skills</b>			
Compared to other students in your classes, how would you describe your abilities in the following areas? Scale: 1 = a major weakness    3 = neutral    5 = a major strength			
Ability to think critically	3.89	4.34	11.6%
Communication skills	3.67	4.08	11.2%
Ability to discuss global issues	3.33	3.69	10.8%
Ability to take into account cultural perspectives other than my own	3.91	4.20	7.4%
Knowledge of other cultures	3.37	3.61	7.1%

Math ability	3.63	3.37	-7.2%
Communication skills in a language other than English	3.09	2.66	-13.9%

**Concerns about Global Issues**

How concerned are you with the following global issues?  
Scale: 1 = not at all 3 = moderately 5 = extremely

Democratic transformation around the world	2.80	3.10	10.7%
Interdependence of world economies	2.89	3.16	9.3%

**Attitudes**

Rate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements  
Scale: 1 = strongly disagree 3 = neutral 5 = strongly agree

When I learn about something that has happened in another part of the world I see how it might relate to me	3.61	3.97	10.0%
I am curious about global issues	3.68	4.03	9.5%

**Actions**

How often do you do the following?  
Scale: 1 = never 3 = sometimes 5 = very often

Vote in national elections	2.07	3.42	65.2%
Vote in local/state elections	2.11	3.11	47.4%
Make consumer decisions based on a product's global impact (e.g., environmental, economic, social)	2.68	3.16	17.9%
Work to promote interfaith understanding	2.31	2.68	16.0%
Make a conscious effort to stay informed about current global issues	3.07	3.52	14.7%
Work to reduce economic disparities	2.23	2.48	11.2%

**Global Citizenship at Dominican University**

Scale: 1 = Not sure 2 = Ineffective 4 = Effective 5 = Very Effective  
Based on your definition above how effective do you feel Dominican has been in helping you become a global citizen?

	3.30	3.58	8.5%
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Scale: 1 = Yes 2 = No 3 = No, but plan to	<u>%:Yes/No/Plan</u>	<u>%:Yes/No/Plan</u>
I am taking/have taken courses with a service-learning component	28/31/41	63/29/8
I have participated in study abroad programs	2/37/61	16/74/10
I participate in activities outside of the classroom that address global issues	16.5/48.5/35	48/50/2

Critical Thinking

Since 2008, Dominican University has been using external measures to assess student critical-thinking skills. From 2008 through 2012 the instrument of choice was the Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA). In 2013, the university switched to the Critical-thinking Assessment Test

(CAT). Each fall semester since then, the CAT has been administered to a sample of freshmen and seniors enrolled in LAS seminar courses with occasional inclusion of students enrolled in upper-level Biology and Psychology courses. Table 2 provides a comparison of mean test scores for lower-division and upper-division Dominican students with their respective national norms.

Table 2 Overall means scores.

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	<u>Lower Divison</u>	<u>Nat. Comp.</u>	<u>Upper Divsion</u>	<u>Nat. Comp.</u>
Fall 2013	14.73	13.66	18.03	19.04
Fall 2014	15.59	13.66	17.79	19.04
Fall 2015	14.76	13.66	15.24	19.04

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Consistently, the lower-division students' mean scores are higher than the national norm and the upper-division students' mean scores are lower than the national norm. However, the upper-division students for each assessment period outscored the lower-division students, but the gap between the mean scores has been decreasing for each successive assessment.

Weighted averages of the three assessments for the lower- and upper-division students are 15.04 and 17.02 respectively. This corresponds to a difference of 13%. Interestingly, this difference is nearly the same as the percent difference for the critical thinking prompt reported in the global citizenship survey between the freshmen of 2011 and the seniors of 2014 (12%) – see Table 1.

*2015-2016 Assessment: Knowledge: Breadth & Depth and Communication Skills*

Formal systematic assessment of both Knowledge: Breadth & Depth and Communication Skills occurred during the 2015-2016 academic year. In the prior academic year, participating programs submitted their assessment plans to the Assessment Committee (see Appendix E for the assessment plan template). The plan included the specific outcomes to be assessed, the

courses/events in which the assessment would take place, and the instrument used to collect the assessment data.

Generally, programs developed their own measurable student learning outcomes corresponding to the university-wide learning goal. Those programs that are under the auspices of a specialized accreditor assessed learning outcomes that also aligned with accreditor expectations. Assessment measures for both goals were also developed in-house.

Programs that assessed the communication goal also assessed the knowledge goal. The following is a list of programs that participated in both assessments:

Communication Arts & Sciences	Nutrition
Graduate School of Social Work	School of Education
Modern Foreign Languages	School of Professional and Continuing Studies

Below is a list of programs that only assessed the knowledge goal:

Chemistry	Mission & Ministry – Sienna Center
Mission & Ministry – Liturgical Choir	Wellness Center Counseling Services
Mission & Ministry – McGreal Center	

Because the different programs assessed different learning outcomes, aggregating the results for each learning goal would be inappropriate. Instead, this section addresses the use of good practices when assessing student learning. Overall, the programs followed good assessment practices as illustrated by the following:

- All of the programs articulated clear, measurable learning outcomes.
- All of the programs used assessment measures appropriate for the outcomes assessed.
- Unless relying on survey measures, virtually all of the programs used rubric-based assessments.
- Two-thirds (67%) of the assessment projects resulted in the programs identifying areas of needed improvement and developing appropriate changes.

One weakness identified in the overall assessment of the two learning goals was that 60% of the assessment projects used only a single type of instrument to collect data. The use of multiple assessment measures (e.g., self-reports coupled with a standardized test) strengthens the validity of the assessment data and is consequently a preferable assessment strategy.

## **Curricular Assessments of Student Learning**

### *Brennan School of Business*

The Brennan School of Business (BSB) is accredited by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB), which conducts rigorous evaluation of the school's teaching, research, curricula, and student learning. Through its Assurance of Learning (AOL) assessment process, BSB aligns its student learning outcomes with the standards set by AACSB. Each semester, BSB assesses student performance against a set of measurable learning outcomes.

These outcomes are aligned with different courses at both the graduate and undergraduate levels. Scoring of each outcome is conducted using a rubric developed in-house by the BSB faculty, and student performance is categorized as either "exemplary," "acceptable," "marginally acceptable," or "not acceptable." The course instructor is responsible for assessing the student learning outcome, compiling the results, and submitting the results electronically to the BSB Assurance of Learning Committee. Student performance is assessed along six dimensions: ethics, global citizenship, quantitative ability, technology, verbal communication, and written communication.

Analysis of student performance data has shown that across the undergraduate majors, performance in quantitative ability has decreased significantly with the percentage of students assessed at acceptable or exemplary decreasing from 76% to 68%. This decrease in performance has been noted by the school's AOL Committee, which has encouraged faculty to explicitly address strategies for improving student performance along this dimension.

The AOL Committee has also solicited feedback about the assessment process from the Brennan faculty. Faculty identified two main issues that they believe need to be addressed in order to improve the assessment of student learning: 1.) the AOL rubrics in their current holistic format are not user-friendly and should be replaced with analytical rubrics and 2.) the overall process for measuring student performance along the abovementioned dimensions does not provide the



necessary specific information to identify where improvements can be made, thus making it difficult to make changes to the curriculum or pedagogy.

*Library and Information Science (formerly Graduate School of Library and Information Sciences)*

The Graduate School of Library and Information Sciences (GSLIS) implemented a new set of student learning goals and outcomes (SLGOs) in spring 2012:

1. Develop a professional identity, including a commitment to the core value of LIS
2. Understand the essential nature of information and its relevance to society
3. Navigate, curate, and create information across the spectrum of human records from local to global contexts
4. Synthesize theory and practice within a dynamic and evolving information environment
5. Effectively communicate and collaborate to deliver, market, and advocate for library and information services

These goals align with the school's accrediting body – the American Library Association (ALA).

GSLIS uses a continuous improvement assessment logic model as the basis of its assessment of student learning. The model consists of three elements: program assessment inputs, data analysis activities, and assessment outputs. The program assessment inputs relate to the different methods and instruments employed to collect data. This includes both direct and indirect measures. The data analysis activities include analysis of, reflection on, and discussion of collected assessment data. The assessment outputs include providing feedback to students and making changes to foster continuous improvement.

GSLIS has used both student experience surveys and employer surveys to assess respectively students' perception of progress towards meeting the five abovementioned learning goals and employer evaluation of graduated students' competencies with regard to the school's goals.

Table 3 Percentage of students reporting moderate or a lot of progress toward goal attainment.

Goal 1	Moderate Progress	A lot of Progress
1	28%	65%
2	27%	69%
3	43%	38%
4	38%	48%
5	36%	54%

Table 4 Percentage of graduated students being evaluated by employer as good or excellent.

Goal 1	Good	Excellent
1	40%	34%
2	43%	30%
3	43%	21%
4	40%	21%
5	45%	27%

### *Graduate School of Social Work*

The Graduate School of Social Work (GSSW) transitioned in 2012 to a new competency-based approach and team-based learning model. This instructional model focuses on student accomplishment of specific learning outcomes and aligns well with the competencies advocated by the school's accreditor: Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). Over the time-frame of this report, 2013-2016, the quality assurance process within GSSW was redesigned and implemented.

Currently, GSSW focuses on four different assessment areas: curricular, pedagogy, courses, and field. Assessment instruments used to collect data include course assignments, surveys, instructor and course evaluations, exit surveys, and LSW & LCSW exams.

GSSW holds “data days” on which constituent groups of the different assessment areas receive the results of the collected data and propose changes.

### *Rosary College of Arts and Sciences*

#### Annual Assessment Reports

Each fall, departments in Rosary College of Arts and Sciences (RCAS) submit to the Assessment Committee reports that address the assessment of student learning within the respective programs. These reports are reviewed and evaluated by the Assessment Committee, and feedback is provided to both the college dean and the program chair. Typically, each year, the Assessment Committee reviews and evaluates 20 reports from RCAS.

In a similar fashion to those programs participating in the assessment of the university-wide student learning goals, programs within RCAS are also demonstrating continuously maturing cultures of assessment. All of the programs in their reports described how analysis of the assessment data led to changes in curriculum or teaching approaches. Of the 58 reports submitted over the three-year period, 22 (38%) indicated the use of multiple measures. Of the 47 assessments that could have used a rubric to guide the scoring, 38 (81%) did so. The most recent assessment showed a rubric use of 88%.

However, over the three-year period, only a single assessment used a pre-test/post-test assessment to measure the impact of a course on student knowledge gains.

#### Common Assignment Assessment

Each year, faculty teaching in the Liberal Arts & Sciences (LAS) seminars use a Common Assignment (CA) to evaluate the extent to which students have achieved a specific learning outcome set by the LAS instructors for that academic year. Essays from students across all class levels are collected and a subset from each class is selected and scored by the faculty using a rubric developed in-house. The rubric is composed of a four-point scale: beginning (1), emerging (2), mastering (3), and accomplished (4).

The purpose of the CA assessment is not to establish longitudinal trends in student learning, but rather to provide course instructors with student learning information pertaining to a specific learning outcome so that they might use this feedback to improve their teaching and student learning in the seminars.

In the 2013-2014 and 2014-2015 academic years, the LAS assessed the same learning goal through its corresponding outcomes:

In connecting ideas and experiences across contexts, students will . . .

- draw on relevant examples of personal experience to explore the guiding questions under consideration at each seminar level;
- demonstrate an awareness of diverse responses to the guiding questions for each seminar level; and
- make connections across disciplines in ways that illuminate the guiding questions at each seminar level.

From the analysis of the 2013-2014 data, the faculty made a number of observations. The observations that most directly address student learning suggested that student work assessed at a level of 3 or 4 demonstrated an ability to connect the text to the guiding questions and personal experiences in coherent and deliberate ways. Lower scores indicated an inability on the part of the student to make connections or provide context for her or his use of evidence and/or personal experience. The faculty also noted that students whose work received lower scores would have benefitted from tutoring and revision.

Based on these observations, the faculty recommended that students be provided with more scaffolding with respect to completing the common assignment by 1) having instructors explain and model to students what is meant by specific terms used in the assignment such as “diverse” and “interdisciplinary” and 2) explicitly convey to students that an expectation of the assignment is that they will connect their experiences to both the guiding questions and the course’s texts.

Analysis of the 2014-2015 assessment data with respect to student learning resulted in similar observations as those drawn from the 2013-2014 analysis. That is, student artifacts that were scored low would have benefitted from tutoring and revision. Also, student submissions judged to be better responses to the prompt tended also to be the better written assignments. The faculty recommends that seminar instructors should devote more time to teaching good reading and writing skills.

### Nursing

The Bachelor of Science in Nursing program is in the process of becoming accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE) and aligns its instructional objectives and student learning outcomes with the commission's standards. The program uses both formative and summative assessment methodologies through which curriculum and teaching-learning practices are evaluated to facilitate program improvement. The types of assessment instruments used by the program include standardized exams, student surveys, course evaluations, administrative evaluations, clinical facility evaluations of nursing faculty, and exit surveys.

Analysis of the results of the ATI Fundamental proctored assessment (a standardized exam taken by junior students enrolled in NURS 314) showed that the adjusted group score of the participating juniors was 59.4%. This translated to a Level 1 ATI proficiency. Students scoring at a Level 1 proficiency are generally considered to be at the absolute minimum level of proficiency for performance in the content area. Based on this result, nursing faculty made curricular revisions which included greater coverage of such topics as nasogastric intubation and enteral feedings, safe medication administration, urinary elimination, and assessing a patient who is choking.

### Nutrition and Dietetics

Nutrition and Dietetics assessment of student learning is based on the "On-going Assessment of Core Knowledge & Competencies for the RD" set by its accrediting body, the Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND). The program uses a Learning Assessment Summary Matrix to provide an overarching representation of the specific learning

objectives and assignments corresponding to each course, as well as specific target measures and scoring systems used.

Analysis of the assessment data shows that more than 80% of the Nutrition and Dietetic students are meeting expected learning objectives. However, based on the data, the program has identified two areas of weakness: outcomes that involve students working as a team and outcomes associated with students developing written communication skills. In response to these identified weaknesses, the program has incorporated team-building exercises into its curriculum and has created a new course – NUTR 420 – “Introduction to Writing about Nutrition and Health” – to improve students’ written communication skills.

### *School of Education*

The School of Education's assessment system gathers data on all intended candidate content and pedagogical knowledge, proficiencies and dispositions as aligned to and defined by four sources: the 1) Dominican University School of Education (SOE) conceptual framework; 2) Illinois Professional Teaching Standards; 3) specialized accreditation association standards; and 4) NCATE/CAEP accreditation standards. To ensure the review of data is consistent across the entire School of Education, all content area and grade level programs follow this data review and assessment process.

The SOE assessment system includes a variety of qualitative and quantitative candidate assessment measures, which are analyzed to inform candidate progress throughout the program and continuous program improvement. Assessment measure inputs include: 1) course-embedded key assessments linked to course learning outcomes; 2) course-embedded disposition observations; 3) state test scores required across program entry and mid-program; 4) performance evaluations in field and clinical experiences; 5) the edTPA and APT tests at program conclusion; and 6) employer and alumni follow-up surveys about candidates’ professional experiences. Data analysis activities occur throughout the program at the course, program, and SOE-wide levels.

Based on analysis and discussion of the comprehensive data sets collected, SOE has implemented the following five changes to its curriculum, program, or policies:

- **Additional support workshops:** Based on the identified correlation between support sessions and higher scores, SOE has created additional working sessions staffed with more faculty and staff. It has also adjusted the components of the clinical practice seminars (or residency, in the case of TFA) to include more edTPA components.
  
- **Enhanced curriculum mapping:** All SOE faculty are including edTPA-aligned assignments in all coursework in order to specifically scaffold experiences related to edTPA components early and often in candidate experiences. Specifically, SOE has identified 7 experiences essential to edTPA success that it intends to thread throughout all of its coursework: a) critiquing observations of themselves and others, with a specific focus on how the teacher engages students to promote learning; b) analytic writing on observations of teaching and schooling that require citing theory/research; c) focused, reflective writing; writing elaborate justification; focus on the “why”; d) developing elaborate lesson plans with a clear connection to a learning goal; e) analyzing assessment data from student work samples and drawing actionable conclusions from it; f) teaching small and whole group lessons; and g) delivering specific and data-based feedback to learners.
  
- **Faculty professional development:** Given candidate struggles with identifying the academic language demands of the edTPA portfolio, SOE has scheduled additional faculty development opportunities related to supporting and embedding elements of academic language across the curriculum.
  
- **Revised application policy/Gateway appraisal:** Launched a sub-committee charged with the revision of the student teaching application process to better align this critical program gateway with the edTPA. This new process will be finalized and approved by the faculty in Fall 2016 and will result in better candidate demonstration of edTPA-like skills in the semester prior to completing the consequential edTPA.

- **Enhanced support materials:** Finalized completion of edTPA Task 2 check-lists (piloted in the spring semester with excellent candidate feedback), which are designed to assist candidates in clearly identifying engaged learning environments.

In 2016, SOE transitioned from specialized accreditation from the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) to the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP). This transition is a major shift in rigor and expectations for accreditation, and, as a result, will require a complete overhaul and re-design of the SOE assessment design and continuous improvement plan. CAEP standards include greater emphasis on program impact (e.g. the extent to which our program completers impact the achievement of the students they teach), increased candidate qualifications (must be in the top 33% on nationally normed tests like the ACT), and heightened expectations for the quality of evidence and measures used in the accreditation process. These new demands have implications for all SOE programs, including the re-design of key assessment measures used by the school as part of its continuous improvement plan.

#### *School of Professional and Continuing Studies (SPCS)*

As part of its continuous improvement process, SPCS identified three areas within its curriculum in need of revision: 1) changing a required course for the MA in Conflict Resolution, 2) changing the requirements for a concentration in Paralegal Studies for students within the BA in Legal Studies program, and 3) changing the mathematics proficiency requirement for the BA in Legal Studies and the BA in Human Services. These changes were unanimously approved by SPCS faculty in February 2015.

Changing required course for MA in Conflict Resolution – “Online Dispute Resolution” (MCR 619) was originally included as a degree requirement for the MA in conflict resolution. However, analysis of student course evaluation data indicated that the course was not appropriate for a significant number of students who were using the program to advance in fields such as human resources, nonprofit management, or higher education. The decision was made to make MCR



619 an elective and promote “Conflict Resolution in the Workplace” (MCR 623) to a required course.

Changing requirements for a concentration in Paralegal Studies – changes in American Bar Association program approval for Legal Studies precipitated the need for SPCS to re-design its Paralegal Studies concentration. The school restructured the concentration so that the concentration would receive Accredited Legal Professional (ALP) designation. This is attractive to the school because while there are a number of certifications that a paralegal can earn, the ALP is the only one that can be earned without paralegal experience. This is ideal for many SPCS students, who tend to be career changers.

Changing the mathematics proficiency requirement – Students in the BA in Legal Studies or BA in Human Services were required to complete MT 150 “Contemporary Math” or a higher level MT course. However, analysis of student matriculation data showed that a significant number of students entering these programs possess Associate of Arts degrees in which they met their community college’s math requirement by completing a statistics course offered by the college’s economics or sociology department. Because the BLS and BHS are social science degrees, it was deemed by the school that these courses provide a suitable foundation for upper-level research. Thus, completion of a 100-level or higher statistics course was included as satisfying the mathematics proficiency requirement.

### **Co-curricular Programs**

Since the previous university-wide assessment report, the number of co-curricular programs participating in formal assessments of student learning has increased significantly. The 2010-2013 report included the actions of the inter-faith committee as its only example of co-curricular assessment. This report includes assessment efforts conducted by not only Mission & Ministry and the Wellness Center, which were presented earlier as part of the University Student Learning Goals assessment, but also by the Office of Student Involvement and the Academic Enrichment Center.

*Office of Student Involvement*

The Office of Student Involvement has developed and will soon be implementing a survey designed to assess the impact of its workshops and retreats on developing students as leaders. Various assessed outcomes include self-identity, communication skills, inter-personal skills, and learning more about campus research opportunities.

#### *Academic Enrichment Center*

The Academic Enrichment Center (AEC) is assessing the impact of experiential learning on student growth and development. Through the ExcEL Scholar Awards, the AEC assesses a student's ability to explain meaningful connections between an experience a student proposes to pursue and the future paths the student envisions for her- or himself as a professional, scholar, or citizen. ExcEL award candidates are also evaluated with respect to the goals they expect to achieve from the experience. Finally, candidates are assessed with respect to financial literacy: part of the proposal includes presenting a realistic budget that includes an evaluation of the types of funds available to the student and an explanation of how the ExcEL award will bridge financial gaps.

#### **Conclusion**

Since the last university-wide assessment report, significant strides have been made, especially with the inclusion of co-curricular programs in the assessment of student learning. In addition, programs are demonstrating good practice with respect to assessing student learning. All participating programs based their assessments on measurable student learning outcomes. Programs are also reporting that student-learning assessment data is being used to make both curricular and pedagogical improvements – a sure sign of a maturing culture of assessment. Another high point is the widespread use of rubrics as part of the assessment process. Nearly 90% of the programs indicated that rubrics were used when scoring student assessment activities – another sign indicative of a mature culture of assessment.

There are, however, areas in which student assessment can be improved. Two areas in particular are the use of multiple measures and pre-test/post-test assessments. Programs would benefit both from incorporating multiple measures into their assessments and from employing pre-test/post-

test assessment. Multiple measures would increase the validity of the student-learning data collected, and pre-test/post-test assessment would provide information on student development within courses. This type of “high resolution” assessment would assist faculty in developing specific interventions capable of overcoming student deficiencies with respect to specific learning outcomes.

As programs continue in their trajectory towards a more mature culture of assessment, continued emphasis should be placed on using direct assessment measures. There are instances of programs relying too heavily on student and employer perception surveys to assess student learning, when the emphasis should be on using faculty-implemented direct measures to collect student learning information. Finally, not all programs provided explicit examples of how assessment data was used to improve student learning. Program should place greater emphasis on ensuring that proper procedures are in place to document how assessment data are being used to improve student learning.

## **Recommendations**

The Assessment Committee offers these recommendations:

- Greater attention needs to be directed towards getting more students involved in curricular and co-curricular activities that promote global citizenship (i.e., community-based learning, study abroad, student organization-sponsored service activities, and service-immersion trips).
- As the process of assessing the university-wide student learning goals matures, more programs, both curricular and co-curricular, should participate in the assessment of these goals.
- Programs should consider using multiple assessment measures as a means of increasing assessment validity.
- Programs should promote among their faculty the use of pre-/post-tests to identify developmental changes within a cohort of students. This information can then be used to develop course-embedded interventions.
- Programs should review their procedures for formal student-learning assessment to

ensure that all parts of the assessment process are adequately employed and documented. For example, programs must be sure to pay due attention to how its assessment data is used to improve student learning.

## **Appendix A**

### **Assessment Committee Members**

#### **2013-2014**

Jodi Cressman

Andrew Meissen (student)

Elizabeth Silk

Daniel Domin

Claire Noonan

Aliza Steurer

Trudi Goggin	Kathleen Odell	Nick Winter
Therese Hogan	Jeanette Olli	Ning Zou
Felice Maciejewski		

2014-2015

Jodi Cressman	Felice Maciejewski	Becky Pliske
Daniel Domin	Jeanette Mokry	Aliza Steurer
Trudi Goggin	Claire Noonan	Nick Winter
Therese Hogan	Kathleen Odell	

2015-2016

Molly Burke	Ellen McManus	Kathleen Odell
Daniel Domin	Jeanette Mokry	Daniel Phipps (student)
Trudi Goggin	Claire Noonan	John Snakenborg
Felice Maciejewski	Kathleen O'Connor	Aliza Steurer

**Appendix B**

**University Student Learning Goals and Sample Learning Outcomes**

*The following are sample learning outcome statements for each of the eight university-wide student learning goals. These outcome statements are intended to serve as examples as to how the university-wide goals could be assessed at different levels of student performance. The Assessment Committee recommends that programs involved in assessing the university-wide goals develop their own outcome*

*statements and corresponding assessment measures. However, if you are unsure about how to assess these goals, the sample outcomes are a good place to start.*

*As you think about assessing the university-wide goals, keep in mind that the expectation is that all Dominican students are developing to some extent with respect to these goals. Every student should, therefore, be assessed, but this does not mean that every student will be assessed along every possible associated outcome or that every course within a school or program will assess every outcome. Rather, over the course of a student's career at Dominican, a representative set of outcomes will be assessed in enough courses where enough information is collected so that one can make a value judgement regarding student development with respect to these goals.*

### **1. Knowledge: Depth and Breadth**

Students will develop a significant level of mastery within a major field of study and will develop an appropriate degree of literacy in other disciplines.

#### *Level 1:*

- Students will define key terms within a discipline.
- Students will use disciplinary terms in the proper context.
- Students will demonstrate information literacy skills.
- Students will demonstrate computer literacy skills.

#### *Level 2:*

- Students will describe key methods of research, scholarship, or inquiry associated with a particular field.
- Students will explain key areas of contention within a particular field.
- Students will identify the appropriate strategy to solve a problem.

#### *Level 3:*

- Students will use the knowledge of a discipline to solve a problem.
- Students will evaluate knowledge claims within a discipline.

### **2. Critical Thinking**

Students will develop the necessary skills to think critically.

#### *Level 1:*

- Students will summarize a pattern within presented information.
- Students will identify additional information needed to make a decision.

#### *Level 2:*

- Students will separate given information as either relevant or irrelevant to a presented issue.
- Students will identify assumptions inherent in an argument or position.

*Level 3:*

- Students will identify suitable solutions for real-world problems.
- Students will evaluate if presented information supports an assertion.
- Students will provide alternative explanations for a given claim.

### **3. Communication**

Students will be able to communicate effectively.

*Level 1:*

- Students will apply appropriate communication skills for a given setting and audience.
- Students will use technology appropriately to communicate effectively.

*Level 2:*

- Students will develop a written or oral communication designed to inform an audience.
- Students will develop a written or oral communication designed to persuade an audience.
- Students will analyze communication variables in personal, professional, or community settings.

*Level 3:*

- Students will evaluate their own communication behavior.
- Students will explain the roles their own values, beliefs, and attitudes play in their own personal communication.

### **4. Global Citizenship**

Students will develop as global citizens.

*Level 1:*

- Students will describe what it means to be a global citizen.
- Students will articulate the benefits of interacting with someone from a different culture.

*Level 2:*

- Students will describe how aspects of their discipline are practiced worldwide.
- Students will explain the advantages of participating in cross-cultural events.

*Level 3:*

- Students will apply knowledge, theories or principles from their discipline to explain global issues or events.

- Students will critically engage with others of differing views on matters involving a global perspective.

## **5. Civic Engagement/Social Responsibility**

Students will demonstrate socially responsible behavior and civic engagement.

### *Level 1:*

- Students will describe different types of civic engagement.
- Students will explain different strategies that can be employed to further social justice.

### *Level 2:*

- After participating in a service-learning project, students will articulate how the experience was personally transformative.
- Students will advocate for social justice for a vulnerable or oppressed group of people.

### *Level 3:*

- Students will propose novel strategies to address entrenched problems in society.
- Students will describe the ways different social systems promote or deter people in maintaining or achieving well-being.

## **6. Integrative/Interdisciplinary Inquiry**

Students will have the knowledge of and ability to conduct integrative/interdisciplinary inquiry.

### *Level 1:*

- Students will identify differing views on a topic from at least two different disciplines.
- Students will identify relationships between at least two different disciplines.

### *Level 2:*

- Students will synthesize knowledge from multiple disciplines in order to produce something greater than would be possible from any one disciplinary perspective.
- Students will apply knowledge, methods, or principles from one discipline to another.

### *Level 3:*

- Students will evaluate knowledge from a broad range of disciplines.
- Students will evaluate the importance of a specific disciplinary perspective to a given issue.

## **7. Research and Scholarship**



Students will have the knowledge base and skill set necessary for conducting research and/or scholarship in a particular area of study.

*Level 1:*

- Students will prepare an annotated bibliography.
- Students will collect data.
- Students will organize data into useful arrangements.

*Level 2:*

- Students will conduct a literature review.
- Students will design/propose a research/scholarship project.
- Students will summarize a research/scholarship article
- Students will prepare a research/scholarship proposal.

*Level 3:*

- Students will evaluate a research/scholarship article.
- Students will defend a research/scholarship thesis.
- Students will draw conclusions from data analysis.

**8. Catholic-Dominican *ethos***

Students will have an understanding of the Catholic-Dominican *ethos*.

*Level 1:*

- Students will state the Dominican University mission.
- Students will identify prominent figures in the Catholic intellectual tradition.
- Students will identify key texts associated with the Catholic intellectual tradition.

*Level 2:*

- Students will describe the Dominican approach to pursuing truth.
- Students will explain how critical reflection figures in the Catholic-Dominican tradition.
- Students will describe Dominican habits of inquiry.
- Students will describe the benefits of participating in activities designed to uphold the dignity of the person.

*Level 3:*

- Students will analyze the influence of the Catholic-Dominican tradition on the human condition.
- Students will explain how the dignity of the person relates to the solidarity of the community.
- Students will explain the relationship between dignity of the person and the realization of the common good.

- Students will explain how their discipline contributes to or upholds the dignity of the person.
- Students will explain how their discipline contributes to the common good.

## Appendix C

### University-wide Student Learning Goals Assessment Plan (2014-2018)

<u>Goal</u>	<u>Develop SLOs</u>	<u>Formally Assess SLOs</u>
Global Citizenship	-	2014 - 2015
Critical Thinking	-	2014 - 2015
Knowledge: Depth and Breadth	Spring 2015	2015 - 2016
Communication	Spring 2015	2015 - 2016
Integrative/ Interdisciplinary Inquiry	Spring 2016	2016 - 2017
Research and Scholarship	Spring 2016	2016 - 2017
Civic Engagement	Spring 2017	2017 - 2018
Catholic-Dominican ethos	Spring 2017	2017 - 2018

## Appendix D

### Global Citizenship Survey Results

Global citizenship survey results comparison between 2011 freshmen and 2014 seniors

2011	2014	Gain
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	n=171	n=62	
<b>Knowledge and Skills</b>			
Compared to other students in your classes, how would you describe your abilities in the following areas?			
Scale: 1 = a major weakness 3 = neutral 5 = a major strength			
Ability to think critically	3.89	4.34	11.6%
Communication skills	3.67	4.08	11.2%
Ability to discuss global issues	3.33	3.69	10.8%
Ability to take into account cultural perspectives other than my own	3.91	4.20	7.4%
Knowledge of other cultures	3.37	3.61	7.1%
Math ability	3.63	3.37	-7.2%
Communication skills in a language other than English	3.09	2.66	-13.9%

<b>Concerns about Global Issues</b>			
How concerned are you with the following global issues?			
Scale: 1 = not at all 3 = moderately 5 = extremely			
Democratic transformation around the world	2.80	3.10	10.7%
Interdependence of world economies	2.89	3.16	9.3%

<b>Attitudes</b>			
Rate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements			
Scale: 1 = strongly disagree 3 = neutral 5 = strongly agree			
When I learn about something that has happened in another part of the world I see how it might relate to me	3.61	3.97	10.0%
I am curious about global issues	3.68	4.03	9.5%

<b>Actions</b>			
How often do you do the following?			
Scale: 1 = never 3 = sometimes 5 = very often			
Vote in national elections	2.07	3.42	65.2%
Vote in local/state elections	2.11	3.11	47.4%
Make consumer decisions based on a product's global impact (e.g., environmental, economic, social)	2.68	3.16	17.9%
Work to promote interfaith understanding	2.31	2.68	16.0%
Make a conscious effort to stay informed about current global issues	3.07	3.52	14.7%
Work to reduce economic disparities	2.23	2.48	11.2%

<b>Global Citizenship at Dominican University</b>			
Scale: 1 = Not sure 2 = Ineffective 4 = Effective 5 = Very Effective			
Based on your definition above how effective do you feel Dominican has been in helping you become a global citizen?	3.30	3.58	

Scale: 1 = Yes 2 = No 3 = No, but plan to	<u>%:Yes/No/Plan</u>	<u>%:Yes/No/Plan</u>
I am taking/have taken courses with a service-learning component	28/31/41	63/29/8

I have participated in study abroad programs  
 I participate in activities outside of the classroom that address global issues

2/37/61      16/74/10  
 16.5/48.5/35      48/50/2

**Appendix E**

**Assessment Plan Template**

College/School/Program:		Academic Year: 2015-2016	
<b>Goals</b>	<b>Student Learning Outcomes</b>	<b>What process/tool/measure will be used?</b>	<b>Participating Courses</b>
Knowledge: Breadth and Depth			
Communication Skills			