

April 23, 2013

Dear Faculty,

On behalf of the Core Curriculum Committee, we are pleased to submit the final report on the assessment of the Core's Social, Historical, and Cultural Understanding (SHCU) learning goal. In the past year SOLA department chairs and affiliated faculty who teach SHCU designated courses have collaborated with the Working Group to evaluate student learning in these courses.

The overall level of student performance found in the assessment was "sufficiency," with clear areas of strength as well as those in need of improvement. The enclosed report details the timeline, methodology, and findings from the study. A summary of the findings and recommendations begin on page nine of the report.

During the course of this project, it became clear to those involved that assessment can be a platform for discussions about our teaching and pedagogy in useful ways. In fact, assessment without a clear connection to improvement of student learning would lose much of its meaning within our context at SMC. The Working Group's intention is to continue the conversation on student learning with the SHCU learning goal next academic year.

It is clear we have dedicated and passionate faculty who are committed to student learning and we are proud to be part of such a dynamic and vibrant teaching community. As we continue to dialogue about how assessment should be carried out on our campus, as well as the larger questions about our motivations and use of assessment results, we look forward to continuing these important discussions with faculty.

Respectfully Submitted,

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# Assessing Social, Historical, & Cultural Understanding

A Pilot Study

**SAINT MARY'S COLLEGE OF CALIFORNIA**

2013

Authored by: Core Curriculum Committee, in collaboration with the Office of Institutional Research

# Assessing Social, Historical, & Cultural Understanding

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## A Pilot Study

### Introduction and Background

In Spring 2005, the Academic Senate's Educational Policies Board resolved to review the College's general education program. Prompted by that review, the College collectively defined our undergraduate core proficiencies and developed student learning outcomes for each of these proficiencies, and in Fall 2012 implemented the resulting Core Curriculum. Part of the fabric of the new Core is the intent to regularly collect and study student work in order to assess the Core's learning goals, with the expectation that this will lead to better student learning. And to conduct these assessments in a manner consistent with shared governance and community involvement. In Spring 2012, members of the Core Curriculum Committee (CCC), the Chair of the Core Curriculum Committee, and the Office of Institutional Research decided to begin assessment of the Core with the Social, Historical, and Cultural Understanding (SHCU) learning goal as our starting point.

That spring, the Director of Educational Effectiveness, the Chair of the CCC, and the chair of the SHCU Working Group hosted a meeting with department chairs with courses designated as meeting the Core's SHCU learning goal to discuss a student learning assessment project.<sup>1</sup> The group began by discussing the general purposes of assessment (external accountability and internal improvement), agreeing that our primary purpose is the improvement of student learning, that we would emphasize engagement as opposed to compliance, and that we would take a formative evaluation approach in the vein of continuous improvement. The group also agreed that the assessment would be a pilot, which would allow the CCC to explore issues of decision-making in assessing the Core, as well as practical considerations such as feasibility, time, effort and cost.<sup>2</sup> Thus, the pilot had a dual purpose: to assess part of the SHCU Learning Goal and to understand how best to conduct Core-level assessment at Saint Mary's College.

To enact this, the group agreed on the following timeline:

- Spring 2012: Meeting with SHCU department chairs to kick off assessment; discussion of roles and responsibilities; preparation for Fall 2012 data collection.
- Summer 2012: Rubric development via the SHCU Working Group; completion of planning, including identification of courses from which student work would be drawn.

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<sup>1</sup> Department represented included Anthropology, Economics, History, Politics, Psychology, Sociology, and Women's and Gender Studies.

<sup>2</sup> The group noted there must be a proper balance between the desire for methodologically-rigorous assessment and these practical considerations, and that the pilot would begin our understanding of how to find this balance.

- Fall 2012: Completion of scoring rubric; collection of student work; creating assessment sample.
- Spring 2013: Assessment of student work; circulation and review of report drafts; completion and distribution of final report.
- Summer 2013: Prepare for use of findings.

The process was driven by the faculty throughout, with the members of the SCHU Working Group and the CCC acting as collaborators in creating and executing the pilot; in assignment and rubric development; in the assessment of student work; and in considering how findings can be used for improvement.<sup>3</sup>

This report presents the findings of this assessment, and offers conclusions and recommendations based on the findings. It has two primary audiences. First, the department chairs and faculty involved in the SHCU learning goal for whom it outlines our conclusions and recommendations about the teaching of SHCU courses. And second, the campus in general (including the Core Curriculum Committee and the Core's SHCU Working Group, the Faculty Senate, and campus administrators involved in the direction of the Core Curriculum) for whom it provides conclusions and recommendations about the process of doing Core-level assessment at the college.

## Assessment Design and Methods

The scope of this assessment were the courses that were being taught during the Fall 2012 semester which had been designated as meeting the Core's SHCU learning goal.<sup>4</sup> Evidence for the assessment was drawn from the 13 courses taught Fall 2012 that met these requirements. Department Chairs choose one section from each of these courses and informed its instructor of their expectation that instructors provide student work by the conclusion of the course. The courses (and instructors) that submitted student work during the Fall 2012 semester were:

- Anthropology 1 (Janice Stockard); 43 artifacts submitted.
- Anthropology 5 (Mio Owens); 17 artifacts submitted.
- Economics 3 (Steve Balassi); 26 artifacts submitted.
- Economics 4 (Jerry Bodily); 45 artifacts submitted.
- History 1 (Myrna Santiago); 12 artifacts submitted.
- History 2 (Aeleah Soine); 25 artifacts submitted.
- History 4 (Brother Charles Hilken); 24 artifacts submitted.

<sup>3</sup> We are grateful for the considerable assistance and guidance provided by the Director of Educational Effectiveness.

<sup>4</sup> For a full list of courses designated as meeting the Core's Social, Historical, and Cultural Understanding learning goal during the time of the assessment, see Appendix A.

- History 17 (Carl Guarneri); 35 artifacts submitted.
- Politics 1 (Ron Ahnen); 18 artifacts submitted.
- Psychology 1 (Elena Escalera); 23 artifacts submitted.
- Sociology 2 (Phylis Martinelli); 28 artifacts submitted.
- Sociology 4 (John Ely); 29 artifacts submitted.
- Women's & Gender Studies 1 (Denise Witzig); 21 artifacts submitted.

During their Spring 2012 meeting the SHCU department chairs decided that the focus of the assessment would be the third outcome of the SHCU goal: "Employ social science or historical methodology to collect and interpret evidence about the social world." This outcome was to be operationalized through the creation of a scoring rubric. To begin development of the rubric, during Summer 2012 these department chairs submitted examples of assignments they previously used or planned to use that address this outcome. These assignments were used by the Office of Institutional Research to draft a preliminary rubric, which was sent to the chair of the SHCU Working Group. The SHCU Working Group then took ownership of the rubric and by the end of Fall 2012 identified the following dimensions and associated criteria for the assessment:

#### Methodology:

- "Necessary elements of the methodology are present."
- "Disciplinary focus throughout. (Remains within the boundaries of the discipline.)"
- "Appropriate use of concepts and terms related to the methodology."

#### Interpretation:

- "Approach to interpretation acknowledges the complexities, limitations, and/or challenges of evidence collection and interpretation within the discipline."
- "Use of appropriate evidence throughout."
- "Use of evidence in developing primary claims and/or positions."
- "Interpretation consistent with disciplinary frameworks. (This is doing the process.)"
- "Interpretation grounded in the language and concepts of the discipline. (This is naming the process.)"

These eight criteria were scored using a three-point scale: "Achieves high level of performance," "Sufficient performance," and "Insufficient performance." See Appendix B for the scoring rubric.

Data collection and sampling took place during Fall 2012. Student artifacts (N=346) from the courses indicated above were delivered to the Office of Institutional Research, where sampling took place. Sampling consisted of two stages. In the first stage, 10 artifacts were selected from each of the 13 courses. Papers were randomly selected using an internet-based random number generator. For the second stage, 40 artifacts were selected from this pool of 130; again, papers were selected randomly using a random number generator. This

set of 40 was then anonymized and otherwise prepared for our reviewers during our day-long assessment.

During February 2013, eight faculty met to read and score the student papers. See Appendix C for the day's schedule. These faculty included Ron Ahnen (politics), Jim Sauerberg (Chair, Core Curriculum Committee), Myrna Santiago (History), Elena Escalera (Psychology), Bill Lee (Economics), Robert Bulman (Sociology), Jennifer Heung (Anthropology and chair SHCU Working Group), and Anh Nguyen (Business Administration). Five of these 8 were members of the SHCU Working Group. These faculty engaged in a "secondary reading" of the set 40 student artifacts.<sup>5</sup> Assessment-based secondary readings entail examining student work "secondarily" for qualities beyond command of course material; that is, to read them with the scoring rubric, not the original assignment, in hand. Prior to reading the 40 papers, these faculty engaged in a "norming session" where three papers not a part of the sample were read and discussed.<sup>6</sup> The Director of Educational Effectiveness led the discussion so that it focused on issues of inter-rater reliability and construct validity. As a result of the discussion, minor revisions to the rubric were made that day before the 40 papers were read.

## Findings

A total of 40 papers were read by 8 readers, who evaluated each according to 8 criteria as being "Achieves high level of performance", "Sufficient performance" or "Insufficient performance". There where thus a possibility of 2560 total scores. A total of 2,528 scores were collected.<sup>7</sup> Of these scores, 213 (8%) were scored as "Achieves high level of performance," 1647 (65%) were scored as "Sufficient performance," and 668 (26%) were scored as "Insufficient performance." 16 scores (.5%) were missing. (From here on the scoring will be abbreviated as "High", "Sufficient" and "Insufficient".) These scores were entered into SPSS with "1" being "High," "2" being "Sufficient" and "3" being "Insufficient." (Notice that a better student performance was indicate by a lower numerical score.)

With an overall mean of 2.18, and a mode of 2, all scores reflect "Sufficient" as the overall level of performance exhibited. When the overall percent of "High" and "Sufficient" are combined, approximately 75% of scores reached sufficiency or better.

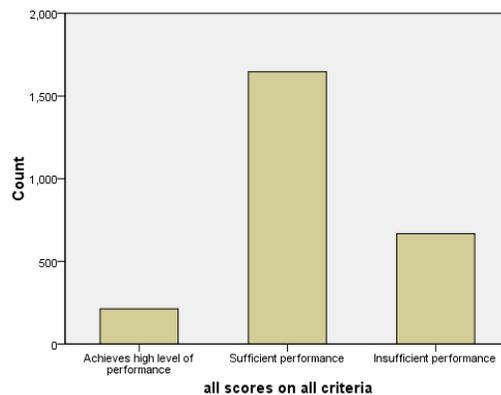
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<sup>5</sup> Secondary readings are a form of course-embedded assessment in that they rely on work produced by students as a normal part of their course work. Course-embedded assessment solves the potential problem of quality of student effort, is efficient and low cost, has face validity, and has the potential to provide maximally-useful assessment findings.

<sup>6</sup> The packet of materials distributed on the day of assessment included: day's schedule and project timeline; the 40 student papers; 40 copies of the rubric for each papers; the assignments for the student work; 3 student papers and rubrics for the norming session; extra scoring rubrics.

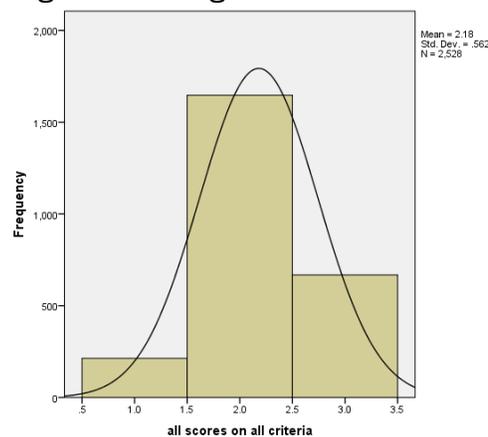
<sup>7</sup> This figure is arrived at by multiplying the number of raters (8) by the number of papers (40) by the number of scoring rubric criteria (8).

Figure 1: All scores by level of performance exhibited



On a scale from 1 to 3, the overall mean for all scores was 2.18, with a standard deviation of .56. (Again, a lower mean corresponds to better performance.) The distribution of scores was positively skewed, albeit minimally (skewness = .02), and the distribution was less peaked than the normal distribution (kurtosis = -.16):

Figure 2: Histogram of all scores



Two dimensions organized the eight rubric criteria—“methodology” and “interpretation”—with the first three criteria being the SHCU Working group disaggregation of “methodology” and the remaining five being the measured aspects of “interpretation”. A total of 943 scores were collected for methodology. Of these scores, 101 (11%) were scored as “High,” 665 (70%) were scored as “Sufficient,” and 177 (19%) were scored as “Insufficient.” Over 80% of scores for methodology then were at sufficient or better. The overall mean for this dimension was 2.08, with a standard deviation of .54.

A total of 1,585 scores were collected for interpretation. Of these scores, 112 (7%) were scored as “High,” 982 (62%) were scored as “Sufficient,” and 491 (31%) were scored as “Insufficient;” nearly 70% of scores for interpretation were at sufficient or better. The overall mean for this dimension was 2.24, with a standard deviation of .57.

Figure 3: Scores for methodology

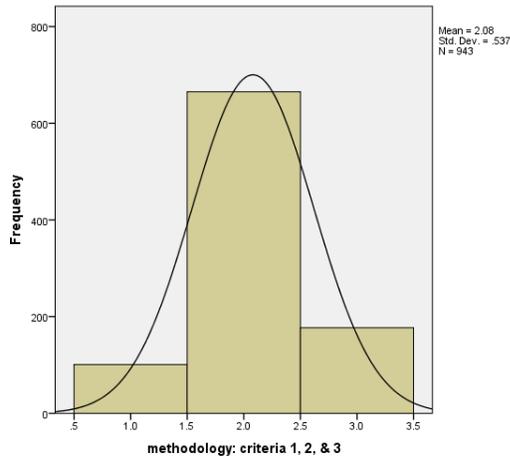
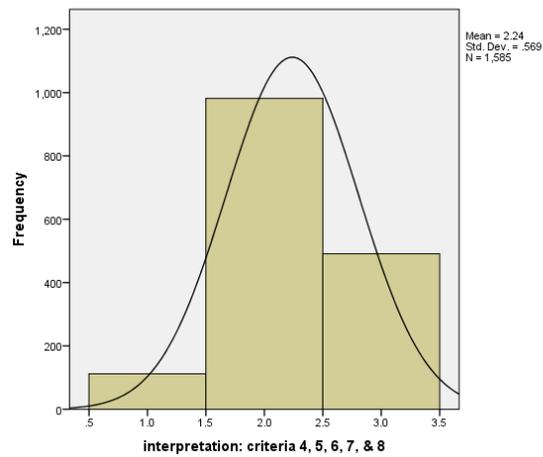


Figure 4: Scores for interpretation



Following are means, standard deviations, and percent change compared to the overall mean for each of the eight criteria:

Table 1: Descriptive statistics for SHCU rubric criteria

Criteria	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Percent change compared to overall mean (2.18)
Necessary elements of the methodology are present.	310	2.15	.55	1.4%
Disciplinary focus throughout. (Remains within the boundaries of the discipline.)	317	1.94	.44	11%
Appropriate use of concepts and terms related to the methodology.	316	2.16	.58	0.9%
Approach to interpretation acknowledges the complexities, limitations, and/or challenges of evidence collection and interpretation within the discipline.	318	2.55	.60	-17%
Use of appropriate evidence throughout.	318	2.18	.51	0%
Use of evidence in developing primary claims and/or positions.	314	2.22	.63	-1.8%
Interpretation consistent with disciplinary frameworks. (This is doing the process.)	317	2.10	.48	3.7%
Interpretation grounded in the language and concepts of the discipline. (This is naming the process.)	318	2.15	.51	1.4%

Note that there are two criteria—“Approach to interpretation acknowledges the complexities, limitations, and/or challenges of evidence collection and interpretation within the discipline” and “Use of evidence in developing primary claims and/or positions”—where the means are above the overall mean (2.18) and standard deviations are larger. Also note that “Disciplinary focus throughout” is over ten percentage points above the mean. Table 2 rank orders these eight criteria from closest to furthest from the overall mean.

Table 2: Rank order of SHCU rubric criteria

Criteria	Dimension	Mean	Rank
Disciplinary focus throughout. (Remains within the boundaries of the discipline.)	Methodology	1.94	1
Interpretation consistent with disciplinary frameworks. (This is doing the process.)	Interpretation	2.10	2
Necessary elements of the methodology are present.	Methodology	2.15	3
Interpretation grounded in the language and concepts of the discipline. (This is naming the process.)	Interpretation	2.15	3
Appropriate use of concepts and terms related to the methodology.	Methodology	2.16	4
Use of appropriate evidence throughout.	Interpretation	2.18	5
Use of evidence in developing primary claims and/or positions.	Interpretation	2.22	6
Approach to interpretation acknowledges the complexities, limitations, and/or challenges of evidence collection and interpretation within the discipline.	Interpretation	2.55	7

The methodology dimension is found towards the top of the order, closer to the ideal. The three methodology criteria can be found among the top five ranks. The interpretation dimension is clustered towards the bottom of the table, further from the ideal. The bottom three ranks are all interpretation criteria. “Disciplinary focus throughout” sits at the top of the table with the highest ranking while the “Approach to interpretation acknowledges...” criterion sits at the bottom, the lowest ranking.

A one-sample t-test was used to examine whether the criteria means differed from the overall mean, finding three cases of significant differences:

Table 3: T-test results for SHCU rubric criteria

Criteria	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>P</i>	Mean Difference
Necessary elements of the methodology are present.	-1.11	309	.27	-0.03
Disciplinary focus throughout. (Remains within the boundaries of the discipline.)	-9.60	316	<b>≤.00</b>	<b>-0.24</b>
Appropriate use of concepts and terms related to the methodology.	-0.76	315	.45	-0.02
Approach to interpretation acknowledges the complexities, limitations, and/or challenges of evidence collection and interpretation within the discipline.	10.98	317	<b>≤.00</b>	<b>0.37</b>
Use of appropriate evidence throughout.	-0.14	317	.89	0.00
Use of evidence in developing primary claims and/or positions.	1.22	313	.22	0.04
Interpretation consistent with disciplinary frameworks. (This is doing the process.)	-3.07	316	<b>≤.00</b>	<b>-0.08</b>
Interpretation grounded in the language and concepts of the discipline. (This is naming the process.)	-1.01	317	.31	-0.03

Three criteria (above, in bold) are significantly different than the overall mean. “Disciplinary focus throughout” and “Interpretation consistent with disciplinary frameworks” are significantly different *towards* the ideal while “Approach to interpretation acknowledges...” is significantly different *away* from the ideal.

Finally, a qualitative analysis was conducted on all comments on all scoring rubrics. First, all comments were typed and then entered into Wordle, an online program for counting words and creating word clouds. See Appendix D for a word cloud of all comments. The most frequently-occurring relevant words were “not” (73 times) and “no” (53 times). Along with “didn’t,” “don’t,” and “doesn’t” (15 occurrences total), these two words reflected the amount of statements of negation found in the comments; observations about what was missing abounded. Such comments clustered around *evidence and evaluating evidence* (“no evidence,” “not based on evidence,” “no critique of data,” “no evidence used; all guesswork,” “some evidence is not much”), *methodology* (“no methodology,” “no methods discussion or reflection,” “not methodologically conscious,” “discussion of topic, but not methodology”), *argumentation and interpretation* (“no interpretation,” “no original claims made,” “evidence doesn’t relate to claims,” “no positions taken,” “not sure about some of student’s conclusions”), and *citation and documentation* (“no citations,” “no citation of sources,” “not well documented,” “insufficient research, not well documented”).

Second, the comments emphasized evidence, with “evidence” occurring 41 times and “data” occurring 26 times, and methodology, with “method,” “methods,” “methodological,” “methodologically,” and “methodology” occurring a total of 54 times. Nearly all of the statements on evidence and data are critical and in the spirit of the statements of negation (“no documentation of evidence,” “no evidence; generic evidence,” “not clear how evidence gathered,” “insufficient evidence,” “unclear evidence,” “causal claims without evidence,” “no critique of data,” and “there does not seem to be any methods or data described, used, or evaluated!”). The same can be said for the comments on methodology: “no sense of methodology in the paper,” “never discusses methods,” “where is the method discussion?,” “no reflection on the method, its strengths or limits,” “still want some reflection on method,” “the critique needs to be of the methods used,” “not clear understands the methodology,” and “I’d like to see some methodological discussion/reflection.” It should be noted that the norming conversation concentrated on the numerical scoring, rather than on providing comments. Subsequent conversations suggest that readers considered “Sufficient” to be the default, and thus didn’t provide comments on this score, whereas they often felt it necessary to indicate in some brief way why an “Insufficient” score was given.

## Summary of Findings

1. Overall, nearly three-quarters of scores fell into the “Satisfactory” range, with 65% in the “Sufficient performance” category and 8% in the “Achieves high level of performance” category.
2. Of the criteria on the SHCU rubric, the mean of the scores for those in *methodology* was 2.08, while the mean for those in *interpretation* was 2.24. In other words the student’s methodological work was judged to be more satisfactory than was their ability to

interpret evidence. Indeed, while less than one-fifth of the methodology scores were for “Inadequate performance”, nearly one-third of the interpretation scores were.

3. All three of the *methodology* criteria can be found among the best performing five ranks. The criteria “Disciplinary focus throughout” and “Interpretation consistent with disciplinary frameworks” in particular showed the highest levels of performance exhibited by the students.
4. Three of the five *interpretation* criteria were judged to be weakest areas: “Use of appropriate evidence throughout” (2.18), “Use of evidence in developing primary claims and/or positions” (2.22), and “Approach to interpretation acknowledges...” (2.55) ranked the lowest, with “Approach” clearly the weakest.

## Conclusions and Recommendations: SCHU Courses

**Conclusion #1:** Student learning of methodology is currently sufficient. Student learning of interpretation is not sufficient.

### **Corresponding Recommendations:**

1. While student learning of methodology is viewed as sufficient, we must maintain departmental attention to the methodology dimension found in the scoring rubric and to issues of disciplinary focus and frameworks.
2. The SHCU departments and faculty, with the leadership and support of the SHCU Working Group, should focus their attention on how courses teach the interpretation of evidence, with particular attention to the criteria identified below:
  - a. “Approach to interpretation acknowledges the complexities, limitations, and/or challenges of evidence collection and interpretation within the discipline.” This was the lowest ranking criterion of those on the scoring rubric.
  - b. “Use of appropriate evidence throughout” and “Use of evidence in developing primary claims and/or positions.” The use of evidence was also an identified “weaknesses”.

**Conclusion #2:** Raters found the three-point scale too coarse. It was not able to capture the range of their evaluations.

**Corresponding Recommendation:** Continued development and evaluation of the scoring rubric should be maintained, with careful attention to clarifying the meanings of “high” and “sufficient”. Future assessment projects should consider using a four-point rating scale, perhaps “High”, “Sufficient”, “Marginally Sufficient” and “Insufficient”.

**Conclusion #3:** There was a wide range of assignments submitted in terms of length, level of analysis or summary, etc., which made the assessment results less clear.<sup>8</sup>

**Corresponding Recommendation:**

1. Those guiding future Core assessment projects should more carefully delineate the types of assignments they wish to gather, having predefined the parameters for student work.

**Conclusion #4:** Assignments were collected without close attention to the learning outcome.

**Corresponding Recommendation:**

1. The SHCU Working Group should guide SHCU departments and instructors in creating assignments that better align with the learning outcomes that belong to the Core.

## Conclusions and Recommendations: Core-level Assessment

**Conclusion #1:** Faculty-driven Core-level assessment can be successful at SMC, and can produce results that are meaningful to our pedagogy, impacting teaching and learning. The guidance of the Director of Educational Effectiveness was essential to the process, and to making the workload manageable.

**Corresponding Recommendation:** Future Core-level assessment projects should be faculty-driven, with faculty determining parameters and processes, and should be supported by the Office of Institutional Research.

**Conclusion #2:** Faculty participants in the norming and scoring process found it to be an exercise in good pedagogy and interdisciplinary collaboration, leading toward valuable conversations about effective and useful pedagogical skills and strategies in both designing assignments and teaching in the classroom. Participants discovered that assessment could be a helpful tool in developing teaching effectiveness, improved mentoring of junior faculty around issues of teaching at SMC, and promoting the growth of faculty as teacher-scholars.

**Corresponding Recommendations:**

1. We recommend that this explicit connection between assessment and teaching and pedagogy be maintained and, more importantly, structurally supported so that faculty are provided space to reflect on this connection and resulting improvements.
2. Since the complete process from rubric creation to actual assessment of student assignments was beneficial, the CCC should support active faculty participation in this form of pedagogical development. Over time, a broad group of faculty should be encouraged to engage in Core-level assessment projects,

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<sup>8</sup> Some assignments expected that students draw their own claims and conclusions, while others expected only a summary of others' claims and conclusions, and others operated with vague expectations somewhere in between. Some of the assignments were diagnostic given very early in the semester, while others required full research papers due at the end. Further, the submitted assignments expected a variety of skills including, for example, issues of writing and critical thinking, which were outside of the scope of this assessment study.

- including those not directly related to their disciplines to cultivate interdisciplinary understanding and collaboration.
3. The CCC should explore integrating its assessment process with other institutional bodies, such as Faculty Development, Program Review Committee, and Rank and Tenure to better support faculty and their efforts to improve pedagogy and student learning.

**Conclusion #3:** The study as a pilot was successful in that we learned how to implement Core-level assessment at SMC. The CCC has a clearer understanding of how the different constituencies and bodies (including the SHCU instructors, the SHCU chairs, the SHCU Working Group, the CCC, and the Director of Educational Effectiveness) should interact and take responsibility for various aspects of the process. The CCC successfully acted upon its Senate-mandated role to address “policy issues regarding the Core Curriculum and its Learning Goals and outcomes.”<sup>9</sup> The SHCU Working Group and its Chair, with the support of the Director of Educational Effectiveness, provided excellent leadership and guidance throughout this assessment cycle. Having the Working Group focus more directly on the assessment project and the learning goal while the CCC was responsible for broader issues and oversight proved a useful division of duties.

**Corresponding Recommendations:**

1. The individual Core Working Groups (and their Chair) should be identified as the body most appropriately tasked with leading and designing Core-level assessment projects.<sup>10</sup> Future assessments of the Core goals should be collaborative efforts between the Working Groups, the CCC, and the Office of Institutional Research.
2. Therefore, the Core Working Groups are the institutional bodies most appropriately tasked with overseeing the coherence and development of their learning goals and related assessment under the guidance of the CCC.
3. Given the identification of the Working Group and its Chair as central to Core-level assessment and oversight of learning goals, we recommend that a set of guiding protocols and decision-making processes be identified by Working Groups and the CCC to ensure clear communication and effective shared governance.
4. The CCC should continue its efforts to better clarify roles and responsibilities in relation to assessing the Core, and to determine how to link this work and its results to other areas and bodies on campus, including the individual departments, the Undergraduate Policies Committee, the Program Review Committee, and the Academic Senate.

<sup>9</sup> Source: Academic Senate, December 10<sup>th</sup>, 2010.

<sup>10</sup> See Appendix E for the Core Curriculum Working Groups and Continuous Improvement Plan.

## Appendices

Appendix A: 2012-13 Core Curriculum Flyer

Appendix B: SHCU Scoring Rubric

Appendix C: SHCU Assessment Day Schedule

Appendix D: Word Cloud of Rubric Comments

Appendix E: Core Curriculum Working Groups and Continuous Improvement Plan

## Appendix A: 2012-13 Core Curriculum Flyer

### Habits of Mind

Considered fundamental to a liberal education, habits of mind foster each person's development as one who seeks to know the truth and is preparing for a lifelong pursuit of knowledge.

**Critical Thinking:** Recognizing, formulating and pursuing meaningful questions about one's own and others' ideas.

**Shared Inquiry:** Reasoning together about common texts, questions and problems.

**Written and Oral Communication:** Developing strong written and oral communication skills.

**Information Evaluation and Research Practices:** Understanding how information is gathered & evaluated in society.

Collegiate Seminar 1: Critical Strategies and Great Questions

Collegiate Seminar 2: Western Tradition, part 1

Collegiate Seminar 103: Western Tradition, part 2

Collegiate Seminar 104: The Global Conversation of the 20th and 21st c.  
English 4: Composition

English 5: Argument & Research

Upper Division Writing (Taken in Major)

### Pathways to Knowledge

Knowledge takes many forms and arises from a variety of methods. Training in diverse pathways to knowledge provides a cross-disciplinary approach to learning.

**Artistic Understanding:** Analyzing, interpreting and critiquing the products resulting from human creative expression. Two courses in Artistic Analysis, one in Creative Practice.

For Both Artistic Analysis & Creative Practice

Art 55: Digital Foundations 1

Art 80: Art Theory

English 25: Creative Writing: Multi-Genre Studies

Performing Arts 14: World Music and Dance

Performing Arts 33: Acting I

Performing Arts 60: Interactive Theatre

For Creative Practice

Art 1: Studio Foundations 1

Performing Arts 12: Applied Music

Performing Arts 19: Performing Ensembles

Performing Arts 70, 72, 75, 76, 77, 90: Dance Elective

Performing Arts 37: Theatre Lab – Performance

For Artistic Analysis

Art History 1: Survey of World Art I

Communication 2: Communication and Social Understanding

English 19: Introduction to Literary Analysis

English 23: American Voices

French 11: Introduction to Literature

Performing Arts 1: Perceiving the Performing Arts

Performing Arts 10: Rock to Bach

Spanish 11: Introduction to Literature

**Social, Historical, Cultural Understanding:** Placing today's world in a meaningful context and arriving at sufficiently complex explanations for current social arrangements. Two courses.

Anthropology 1: Introduction to Social and Cultural Anthropology

Anthropology 5: Introduction to Archaeology

Economics 3: Principles of Micro-Economics

Economics 4: Principles of Macro-Economics

History 1: World History I

History 2: World History II

History 4: History of Western Civilization I

History 5: History of Western Civilization II

History 17: History of the United States I

History 18: History of the United States II

Politics 1: Introduction to Comparative Politics

Psychology 1: Introduction to Personality-Social Psychology

Sociology 2: Introduction to Sociology

Sociology 4: Social Problems

Women's and Gender Studies 1: Introduction to Women's Studies

**Scientific Understanding:** Learning about the natural and physical world from an empirical perspective and engaging in scientific inquiry. One course and associated laboratory.

Biology 10/11: Introduction to Biology

Biology 50/51: General Biology

Chemistry 8/9: General Chemistry I

Environmental and Earth Science 40/41: Geology and the Earth

Environmental and Earth Science 50/51: Earth and Life through Time

Environmental and Earth Science 75/76: Wetlands

Environmental and Earth Science 92/93: Introduction to Environmental Science

Physics 1/2: Introduction to Physics

Physics 40/41: Revolutions in Science

Physics 90/91: Introduction to Astronomy

**Mathematical Understanding:** Applying abstract and logical reasoning to solve mathematical problems and communicating mathematical ideas. One course.

Mathematics 3: Finite Mathematics

Mathematics 4: Introduction to Probability and Statistics

Mathematics 10: The Art and Practice of Mathematics

Mathematics 14: Calculus with Elementary Functions II

Mathematics 27: Calculus I

Mathematics 101: Fundamental Concepts II

**Theological Understanding:** Studying religious texts and traditions, and exploration of God, humankind, and the world as expressed in Catholic and other religious traditions. Two courses.

For Christian Foundations

Theology & Religious Studies 97: The Bible and its Interpretation

For Theological Explorations

A wide variety of courses to be offered in future years

### Engaging the World

Students explore justice, civic responsibility, and social, economic and cultural differences, examining and reflecting on what it means to be a citizen in local and global communities.

**American Diversity:** Intellectually engage with the social, cultural, economic or political diversity in the United States. One course or qualifying experience.

English 23: American Voices

Ethnic Studies 1: Introduction to Ethnic Studies

History 17: History of the United States I

History 18: History of the United States II

Psychology 8: African American Psychology

Studies for Multilingual Students 15: American Culture and Civilization

Sociology 2: Introduction to Sociology

Sociology 4: Social Problems

Certain January Term courses

**Common Good:** Exploring the common good and how it might be pursued. One course or qualifying experience.

Environmental and Earth Science 92/93: Introduction to Environmental Science

Ethnic Studies 1: Introduction to Ethnic Studies

Performing Arts 60: Interactive Theatre

Philosophy 10: Plato and Philosophical Inquiry

Philosophy 11: Aristotle and Philosophical Method

Philosophy 130: Ethics I

Politics 1: Introduction to Comparative Politics

Sociology 4: Social Problems

Women's and Gender Studies 1: Intro to Women's Studies

Certain January Term courses

**January Term:** An opportunity to explore courses and experiences outside of traditional disciplinary constraint, frequently related to a central theme. *One course for each year in residence.*

**Community Engagement:** Applying intellectual experiences to the community beyond the academy. One course or qualifying experience.

Italian 4: Continuing Intermediate Italian

Performing Arts 60: Interactive Theatre

Environmental and Earth Science 75/76: Wetlands

Certain January Term courses

**Global Perspectives:** Studying social, economic, religious or political structures in different global communities and cultures. One course or qualifying experience.

Anthropology 1: Introduction to Social and Cultural Anthropology

Anthropology 5: Introduction to Archaeology

Business Administration 10: Global Perspectives in Business and Society

French 10: Conversation-Composition

History 1: World History I

History 2: World History II

Spanish 10: Conversation-Composition

Spanish 11: Introduction to Literature

Certain January Term courses

*Goals will have expanded course offerings in future years.*

**Foreign Language:** An intensive study of a second language, its people and its cultures, leading to intermediate level proficiency. Languages include: French, German, Greek, Japanese, Italian, Latin, Mandarin, & Spanish. *0-3 courses depending upon prior study.*

## Appendix B: SHCU Scoring Rubric

Student artifact number:

**Scoring guide rubric for assessing "Employ social science or historical methodology to collect and interpret evidence about the social world"**

		Description of highest level of performance	Level of performance exhibited	Comments
D i m e n s i o n s	M e t h o d o l o g y	Necessary elements of the methodology are present.	<input type="checkbox"/> Achieves high level of performance <input type="checkbox"/> Sufficient performance <input type="checkbox"/> Insufficient performance	
		Disciplinary focus throughout. (Remains within the boundaries of the discipline.)	<input type="checkbox"/> Achieves high level of performance <input type="checkbox"/> Sufficient performance <input type="checkbox"/> Insufficient performance	
		Appropriate use of concepts and terms related to the methodology.	<input type="checkbox"/> Achieves high level of performance <input type="checkbox"/> Sufficient performance <input type="checkbox"/> Insufficient performance	
	I n t e r p r e t a t i o n	Approach to interpretation acknowledges the complexities, limitations, and/or challenges of evidence collection and interpretation within the discipline.	<input type="checkbox"/> Achieves high level of performance <input type="checkbox"/> Sufficient performance <input type="checkbox"/> Insufficient performance	
		Use of appropriate evidence throughout.	<input type="checkbox"/> Achieves high level of performance <input type="checkbox"/> Sufficient performance <input type="checkbox"/> Insufficient performance	
		Use of evidence in developing primary claims and/or positions.	<input type="checkbox"/> Achieves high level of performance <input type="checkbox"/> Sufficient performance <input type="checkbox"/> Insufficient performance	
		Interpretation consistent with disciplinary frameworks. (This is doing the process.)	<input type="checkbox"/> Achieves high level of performance <input type="checkbox"/> Sufficient performance <input type="checkbox"/> Insufficient performance	
		Interpretation grounded in the language and concepts of the discipline. (This is naming the process.)	<input type="checkbox"/> Achieves high level of performance <input type="checkbox"/> Sufficient performance <input type="checkbox"/> Insufficient performance	

## Appendix C: SHCU Assessment Day Schedule

## Social, Historical, Cultural Assessment

### 2/4/13 Meeting Schedule

- 8:30 – 8:45: Welcome and brief overview (Jim, Chris)
- 8:45 – 11:30: Overview of the rubric, reading anchor papers, norming (Jen, Chris)
- 11:30 – 12: Initial reading (All)
- 12 – 1: Lunch
- 1 – 4:30: Reading (All)
- 4:30 – 5: Debriefing and next steps (Jim, Jen, Chris)

## Appendix D: Word Cloud of Rubric Comments



## Appendix E: Core Curriculum Working Groups and Continuous Improvement Plan

## **Core Curriculum Working Groups and Continuous Improvement**

The CCC is moving toward each Working Group being the unit primarily responsible for overseeing their learning goal, including campus-wide promotion and coherence, pedagogical development, assurance of learning and assessment, review of syllabi, and the evaluation of designation proposals; the CCC is positioning the Working Groups to be responsible for general oversight of their goals. Aspects of this role and these responsibilities are already familiar to CCC faculty (e.g., the review of syllabi and evaluation of proposals), while other aspects have yet to be practiced. For those unpracticed roles and responsibilities, support and guidance will be provided.

The overall purpose of this general oversight is to continuously improve the quality of student learning. We are not interested in simply measuring student learning for the sake of doing so or for external audiences, but for improving it for the sake of our campus, our students and faculty. Toward this end, we would like each Working Group to submit a yearly report on continuous improvement of learning within their area. Working Groups will determine the length and format of their report; generally though, the CCC's expectation is that they be brief. These reports should locate the Working Group's improvement activities in one of the four quadrants below and explain future steps that will move the group into the next quadrant(s). Of the quadrants below, ultimately, "reporting and use of findings" is most important, and our intention is that Working Groups will "close the (continuous improvement) loop" periodically.

Given the diversity of Working Groups, the broad range of learning within the Core, and differing expectations implied in each of the quadrants below, these reports will vary a great deal. For example, some will report on the completion of a full-fledged assessment project; some will report on analysis of data from an external survey of students and faculty; some will report on a multi-pronged plan for investigation/research; some will report on the development and validation of a rubric; and some will report on the group conducting pedagogy-and assignment-building exercises. The questions within the boxes below are not meant to be exhaustive, but to spur initial conversation within the group; these and other considerations should be discussed with the Chair of the CCC and the Office of Institutional Research. For now, please see the attached list of examples of direct and indirect evidence and a review of "direct" assessment methods that can be the basis for discussion about the range of approaches to data collection, analysis, and interpretation.

## Core Curriculum Working Groups and Continuous Improvement

