

**Report Diversity & Inclusion (tentative)
Professional Learning Community
Assessment Report 2018–19**

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Members of the PLC

Educator	Department	Role on PLC
Tandy Tillinghast	Writing and English	Co-Chair
Garima Thakur	Art and Design	Co-Chair
Gudrun Hoobler	Modern Languages	Member
Carmen R. Cáceda	Education and Leadership	Member
Katrina Hovey	Education and Leadership	Member
Annie Ittner	Education and Leadership	Member
Leanne Merrill	Mathematics	Member
Kathryn Plummer	Experiential Learning	Member
Robert A. Troyer	English studies	Member
Bev West	Center for Academic Innovation	Contributing Supporter
Erin Baumgartner	Provost's Office	Contributing Supporter

1. Summary: Diversity and intercultural learning (this title changed, based on the conversations conducted during our monthly PLC meeting)

- The diversity and intercultural learning PLC brought up broader questions about what is diversity? What is inclusion? Does our curriculum reflect diversity, that is intersectional and inclusive, as one of the main missions of the Western Oregon University at large? How can we decolonize our curriculum?
- Before the rubric was provided to faculty and the PLC, the diversity rubric was formed as a Frankenstein combination of the two V.A.L.U.E. rubrics “Global Learning” and “Intercultural Knowledge and Competence”
- It was a convoluted process to discuss D courses as with the new Gen ed in place the D courses are being removed as WOU transitions to the General Education requirement of citizenship.
- As a group, the members worked on changing and creating a new rubric
- Looked at 104 submissions from an array of departments
- We met once a month as a group and look at TK 20 submissions based on the changing rubric

2. Goals

Primary goals Of Diversity and Intercultural Learning PLC:

- Assess curriculum (not students) alignment with Diversity and Intercultural learning
 - What opportunities do we provide WOU students to demonstrate each of the elements of Diversity and Intercultural learning?
 - Are we giving students access to perform these opportunities?
 - Are students performing aspects of the rubric in their projects?
 - Define Diversity and Intercultural Learning
- Continue Campus Conversation around assessment and how this process works
- How to encourage faculty to assess their own courses based on assessment at large

3. Process and Methodology

a. Rubric?

For this particular Diversity rubric, the two V.A.L.U.E. rubrics “Global Learning” and “Intercultural Knowledge and Competence” were combined before the rubric was provided to faculty and the PLC.

In merging the rubrics, the key definitions provided on the initial V.A.L.U.E. rubrics disappeared. Therefore, it became apparent to the group the need to include a definition for intercultural learning, which we felt encompassed global learning. In addition, the PLC decided the term “diversity” emphasized difference and not the learning and progress we wanted to be central to students, so we added the term “Inclusion” to make the recommended title for the rubric and future work of the group: Intercultural Learning & Inclusion. The title and aspects of the rubric kept changing throughout the PLC as we never came to a complete definition for the rubric and realise that we needed more resources and trainings to work on this rubric.

The group discussed how much of the language at the “Benchmark” level of the merged rubric had negative / problematic connotations. Some edits and adjustments, including addressing disenfranchisement, within the DRAFT Intercultural Learning rubric will help generate the future Citizenship Rubric.

The current draft Includes eight main key elements:

- 1. Knowledge**
 - a. Knowledge and context of Cultural Self-awareness
- 2. Awareness of diversity in context**
 - a. Understanding of the complexity of contexts including history, values, politics, communication styles, economies
- 3. Skills**
 - a. Empathy, applying more than one worldview and demonstrating the ability to act in a supportive manner
- 4. Verbal and nonverbal communication**
 - a. Understanding and communicating through the lens of inclusivity
- 5. Attitudes**
 - a. Demonstrate Curiosity
- 6. Practices Openness**
 - a. Openness within interactions and assessing one’s own biases
- 7. Applications**
 - a. Personal and social responsibility
- 8. Understanding global systems**
 - a. Knowledge and skills to implement sophisticated, appropriate, and workable solutions to address complex global problems using interdisciplinary perspectives independently or with others.

b. What does diversity mean for our campus?

To define diversity at a curriculum level, it is impossible to look at it through a narrow framework. The discussions went beyond the curriculum and thinking through diversity at a university level and what it means to study at WOU.

While the Professional Learning Community had a variety of faculty and staff offering perspectives on curriculum and assessment, there wasn't significant institutional knowledge as a group on the creation of courses labelled "Diversity" (D courses). Eventually, we observed that many of these courses may have grown out of former "survey" courses. We also observed a range of interpretations by instructors of what "diversity" meant. Therefore, the range of interpretations extended to work samples and assignments submitted. Some questions that arose were:

- Is a single unit or assignment enough to warrant this designation?
- Who in each department was responsible for designing these courses?
- Could such courses better support student learning of intercultural learning, inclusion and citizenship?

Due to the range of faculty interpretations for "diversity" the PLC especially felt the priority of defining the group and future focus moving forward. This confusion mandated defining "intercultural learning," with an emphasis on the skills and traits we want students to possess in matriculating from Western Oregon University. Some findings that were derived from the discussions were also alarming and challenging. The group was able to recognise that at university level we were not decolonizing the curriculum and provide opportunities to students to ask hard questions. Some of the D courses were furthering the idea of stereotypes and teaching basic ideas rather than nuanced subjectivities.

4. Assessing Data

The data and assignments reviewed focused the work and recommendations of the Inclusion & Intercultural Learning Professional Learning Community.

a. Tk20

As an assessment management system, Tk20 allowed collection of assignments and student work from faculty. There was some confusing in how these tasks were designated within Tk20, so in evaluating the work, there were occasional assignments that couldn't be scored.

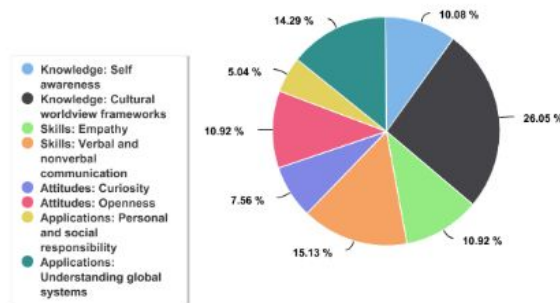
The group did wonder if allowing faculty to submit anonymously might offer more opportunities for authentic assessment. In contrast, collecting more data on how assignments are utilized within the curriculum of each course would enrich the assessment process.

Data collected during submission

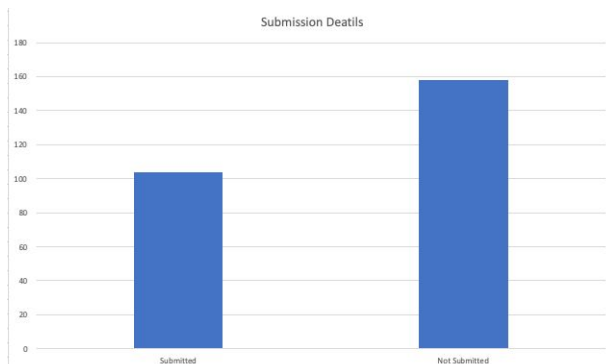
In submitting work to Tk20, faculty were requested to provide the following: email; name; course prefix, number and course title; how the submission fit within the general education requirements and the instructor’s role in teaching (only instructor, coordinated curriculum, etc.) said course. In the submission itself, faculty were asked to provide the assignment itself, a “typical” example of student work and indicate up to three features from the rubric students had opportunity to demonstrate. In addition, faculty could indicate the level of achievement they expected on the assignment alongside the level demonstrated. If faculty were teaching courses outside the General Education requirements with a “D” designation, they were also invited to submit, using these same questions.

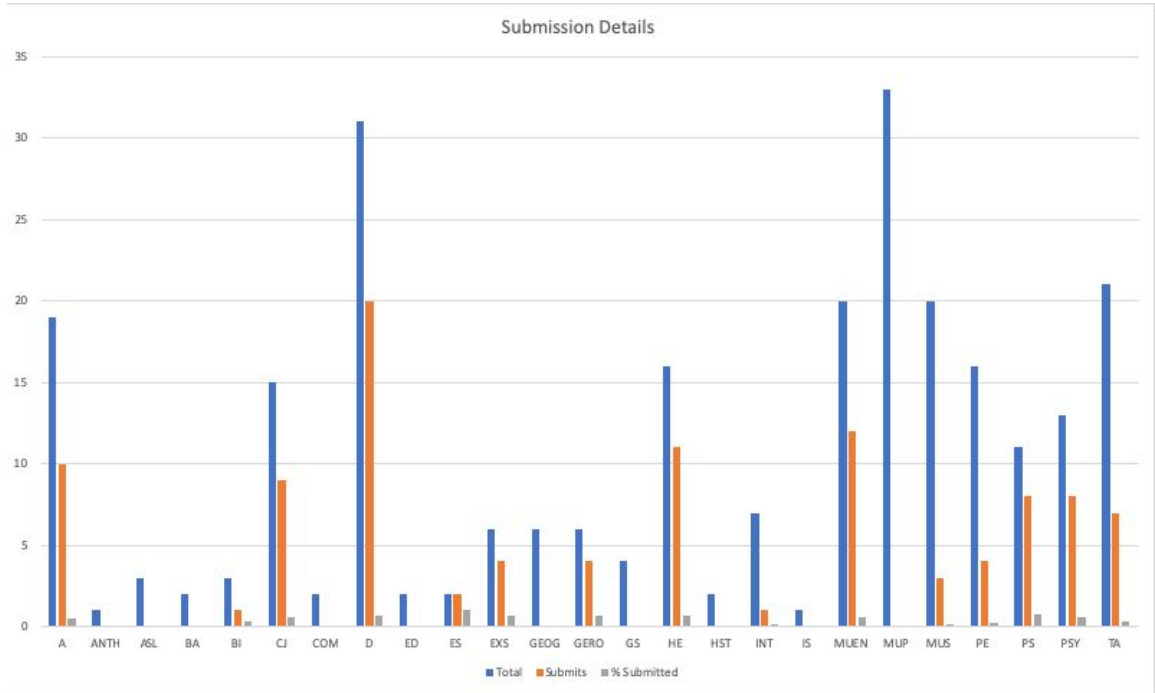
Finally, faculty were offered the option to make comments about the submission and asked if they wouldn’t mind the work being used as an exemplar for future PLC work.

b. Data

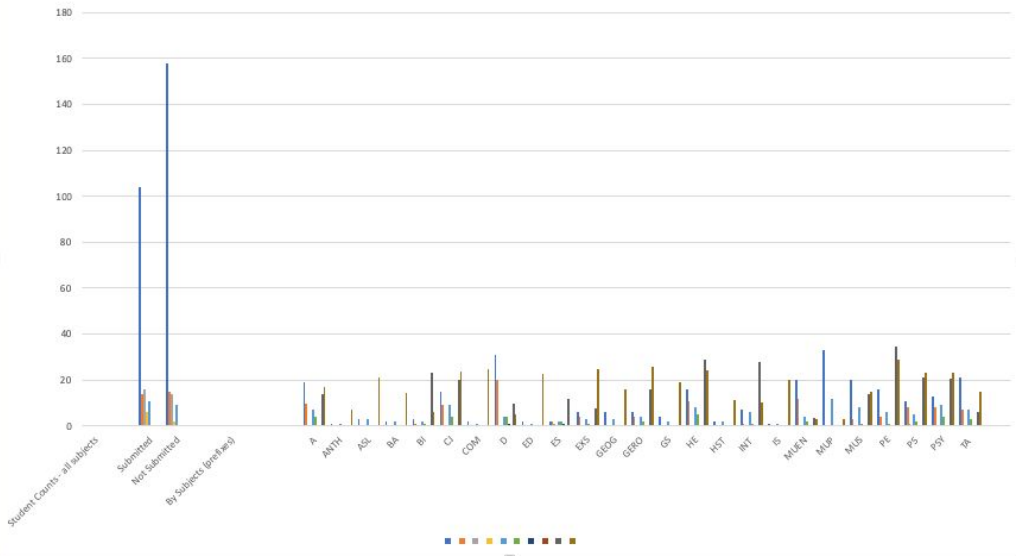


Based on the review of assignment instructions, faculty were asked to check the features that apply to their submissions





Number of submissions based on departments.



Number of submissions based on key features specified in the rubric per department

c. Collective observations, concerns

In collecting submissions many assignments involving languages needed translations. Likewise, we need better methods to assess aural assignments like class discussions, presentations and performances.

Consistently, it was difficult for the PLC to understand classroom scaffolding and instructors' intentions. This made it challenging to discern, evaluate and assess many of the assignments. As a whole, assignments that felt weak or less appropriate were difficult to discuss. The group asked: How can we offer guidance to instructors for assignments that perpetuate stereotypes and reinforce colonized ideas or practices?

In nearly every meeting, we saw the need for additional training in diversity and inclusion across the curriculum, with a few notable exceptions.

The brevity of some assignments, including multiple choice questions prompted the recommendation for instructors to emphasize the importance of student reflection. Offering additional opportunities for reflection assures instructors that students have processed and are aware of key learning features and outcomes. Practicing metacognition deepens transfer and aids retention of key concepts.

On many occasions, the PLC called for an assignment template developed with the new general education outcomes included, so that faculty could communicate the learning goals for student understanding and future assessment. For instance, the template could include an invitation to indicate to students: the purpose of this assignment within intercultural learning or inclusion. Likewise, it will be vital to collect that information from faculty within assessment submissions.

Overall, the professional learning community has ongoing concerns that the curriculum doesn't reflect the diversity and needs for inclusion among the student population. Some key concerns to address moving forward:

- We need to create a space where faculty themselves reflect and describe what we learned about the curriculum from the assignments.
- Many assignments submitted failed to offer opportunities for students to question and inquire about intercultural learning, especially through reflection.

- Due to the gaps noted in assignments, PLC members questioned: What is the culture we are promoting in the University? How can the curriculum better represent on of the missions of the university at large of
 - **“Diversity and Respect:** Equity and inclusion; a fundamental basis in human diversity; appreciation for the complexity of the world; strength drawn from our variety of backgrounds, abilities, cultural experiences, identities, knowledge domains and means of expression.
 - Adapting to the changing world through continuous institutional improvement, evolving pedagogies and expertise, sustained scholarly and creative activities, and delivery of critical and innovative programs, aspiring to standards of excellence in all programs, and especially, supporting the inclusion of, respect for, and appreciation of all communities of students, faculty and staff (“Mission, Values and Purpose”).

In considering the curriculum as a whole, PLC members noted there are courses that focus on diversity, but where instructors didn't submit anything as it's not their primary undergraduate learning outcome. If the rubric was easier and submission process continues to be streamlined, anybody teaching subject matter that addresses intercultural learning or inclusion could submit. Additional efforts to solicit assignments should be made in considering the citizenship general education outcome.

Importantly, if the “D” course designation is being phased out, along with the rubric—What is impetus for future momentum in this vital work toward the general education goal of “Citizenship: Articulate the challenges, responsibilities, and privileges of belonging in a complex, diverse, interconnected world” along with the goals of the University Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Council? How can we offer students ongoing opportunities to demonstrate these outcomes and to assess their progress as the general education curriculum progresses? Above all, there are vital issues related to inclusion that impact education and student success, such as gaps in the retention of diverse student populations. For instance, the 2017–18 Higher Education Coordinating Commission, shows only 35% of African American students at WOU completed a degree (see resources). Additional faculty of color have been hired for the 2019–20 academic year, but further change is mandated. Evidence shows that students are more successful when they see themselves reflected in the leadership of an institution. Likewise, if 53% of Western Oregon University students struggle to meet financial needs, income inequality

and class are key issues of inclusion that need to be addressed in the curriculum and on the campus as a whole.

5. Recommendations & Moving Forward

One of the goals of the university is to produce students with global perspectives and cultural competence; therefore assessing Intercultural Learning and Inclusion in future coursework with the citizenship outcome remains a priority. The mandate to develop and revise the curriculum, prompts the need for a revised and streamlined rubric that allows for additional student progress, additional curriculum development and ongoing assessment.

Because assessment should parallel the goals of the university, this necessitates attention to key assessment tools and additional faculty engagement. Even though the PLC work will be ending, as a group we recognized that much work is beyond the capacity of a PLC that needs funding and resources to continue working

Key recommendations include:

1. Solicit additional funding for the Campus University Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Council with the new membership structure (Fuller). The PLC recommended using a member from the PLC to be nominated for the Diversity Council.
2. Schedule additional town halls to solicit student input on curriculum changes. Plan additional ways to strategically engage students in conversation about intercultural learning and inclusion.
3. In addition to town halls, plan workshops to familiarize faculty at large with the outcome and assessment tools such as the to-be-developed Citizenship rubric. Acknowledging the future PLC may never find the ideal rubric is important; there is not an easy definition for concept of culture. Simplifying the rubric and making sure to address disenfranchisement will help.
4. Engage especially faculty and students of color in the ongoing development of intercultural learning! Additional professional development, including conferences, related to intercultural learning and inclusion are needed.
5. **Decolonize the curriculum, utilizing future Citizenship PLC** and perhaps the Inclusion Advisory Council to examine, dissect and revise the curriculum, engaging additional faculty in this process.
6. As part of student centered learning: both curriculum and assessment need additional emphasis and articulation on developing students' skills in intercultural learning, inclusion and citizenship.
7. Syllabus and assignment templates [in progress] including course outcomes and placing to indicate how outcomes are taught. We recommend faculty explicitly include the intercultural outcomes in assignment instructions and a template will help.
8. Offer additional best practice exchanges and workshops on equity and assessment [see attached resources] and generating purposeful assignment directions that include students' prior special cultural and background knowledge,

a variety of pronouns, etc. Make certain assignments, objectives and expectations utilize transparent teaching protocol (See Resources) and avoid biases.

9. Faculty teaching or (re)designing courses with a citizenship undergraduate learning outcome need diversity training such as that provided at other universities and even community colleges—this is vital!
10. The Intercultural Learning and Inclusion Professional Learning Community writes this report as a call to action and mandate for additional progress in diversity, intercultural learning and inclusion on the Western Oregon University Campus(es).

Guidance for future PLC

Hopefully the Intercultural Learning and Inclusion Professional Learning Community will have an opportunity to report to the Campus University Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Council and perhaps a brief version to the Faculty Senate and General Education Committee to spread an awareness of the needs for future development and assessment in this key outcome toward Citizenship. We will also exchange these ideas during the fall Assessment day.

[MORE?]

a. Protocols for PLCs/meetings

Agendas were set by co-chairs and sent to committee members. One member, Dr. Anne Ittner, often took notes. It remains helpful to have a notetaker that is not a chair to collect information and observations. We designated the majority of the work for meetings and honoring members commitment to teach and service is important. Future PLCs should continue to prioritize work and evaluating assessment during meetings.

b. Structural Strategies

Although this professional learning community was effective, offering time for collecting thoughts and reflection for brief periods within each learning community meeting should increase the effectiveness of assessment and communication.

Can opportunities to report on the progress of the PLC be offered across the curriculum within each department and program?

C. What worked well? What could be better next time?

This PLC involved faculty from many key departments, especially the understanding and analytical skills of faculty in the Department of Education and Learning. It will be useful to spread the knowledge of this department by including them in assessment. More importantly, soliciting involvement from a variety of campus departments, staff and programs means the curriculum is transformed to meet the needs of students, also exchanging best practices with the campus.

Conclusion

Overall the PLC was an extremely enriching and generative process. Though the PLC was unable to finalise the rubric it brought up an array of questions for the faculty that helped us look at the bigger picture of what diversity looks like in the now. On many occasions there were a lot of difficult discussions that made clear the need for training and reevaluating what diversity means to the university.

Resources

[“Decolonising Research Methodology Must Include Undoing Its Dirty History.”](#) The Conversation. Politics and Society. 26 September 2017. Web. 14 June 2019.

diAngelo, Robin. [“White People Assume Niceness Is the Answer to Racial Inequality. It’s Not.”](#) The Guardian. 16 January 2019. Web. 4 June 2019.

[“Forward Together: 2017–2023. WOU’s Strategic Framework.”](#) February 2017. PDF.

Hewes, Amy. [“Radical Hospitality.”](#) New Times. 5 September 2019. Web. 23 September 2019.

Inoue, Asao. [“Anti-racist Writing Assessment.”](#) <http://tinyurl.com/y778ocan> Faculty Workshop. 29 October 2018.

Oluo, Ijeoma. [“Confronting Racism Is Not about the Needs and Feelings of White People.”](#) The Guardian. 28 March 2019. Web. 4 June 2019. “Strategic Planning: Mission, Vision, Values and Purpose.” Western Oregon University. 2018. Web. 10 June 2019.