Rutgers – New Brunswick Core Curriculum
Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Report, 2022–2023

Executive Summary

The Rutgers–New Brunswick Core Curriculum serves as the general education program for students matriculating in the School of Arts and Sciences (SAS), the School of Environmental and Biological Sciences (SEBS), and the Rutgers Business School–New Brunswick.

Every department or program with Core-certified courses is required to report Core assessment results on a three-year cycle. In the 2022–2023 academic year, 82,857 Core assessments were conducted with more than 47,000 students in 474 Core-certified courses. Nearly 330 of the assessment reports included substantive plans to make changes to improve student learning or to improve the measurement of student learning.

In addition to reporting quantitative assessment results and plans for course-level modifications, 2022–2023 was the second year that reporting departments were asked to participate in a revised narrative process. In these reflective narratives, departments discuss their assessment results as a whole (rather than at the course level) and consider how those results can inform their curricular and pedagogical decision-making. The CRC received 23 departmental narratives this year. As discussed in detail below, these narratives describe deep engagement and reflection in many departments.

Several themes emerged from this year’s Core assessment and broader Core-related discussions. We discuss each of these themes in more detail in the sections that follow.

- Many departments and instructors are working to improve student writing. Examples include placing a greater emphasis on scaffolded assignments and providing more opportunities for students to receive feedback about their writing.
- The Rutgers Writing Program redesigned the curriculum for first-year writing courses. Prompted by an external review, the new curriculum engages students in a wider range of authentic writing tasks relevant to the rest of students’ academic careers. The new curriculum was piloted in 2022–2023 and a revised version will be used in all sections in Fall 2023.
- Instructors are engaging with ChatGPT and other generative AI tools. There are many ongoing discussions and programmatic efforts focused on the challenges and opportunities that AI tools present in the classroom setting.
- The pandemic is still having an impact in the classroom. Although fewer reports discussed the immediate effects of the pandemic on student (and instructor) well-being and engagement than in prior years, this is still a critically important issue and challenge for our instructors and students. Many instructors report in a variety of settings that our students are dealing with an unprecedented level of mental health challenges; this must be a key area of focus in supporting student success and instructor well-being.
- Often informed by their experiences during and after the pandemic, instructors have
widely varying perspectives about the advantages and disadvantages of in-person, hybrid, and online course modalities. This diversity of perspectives reflects the tremendous variation in disciplinary norms and needs across the many departments and programs with courses represented in the Core curriculum.

Outside of—but directly linked to—the process of Core assessment, the Core Requirements Committee is revising and streamlining its processes in response to department and instructor feedback. These revisions include a revised approach to re-reviewing longstanding Core-certified courses; they are intended to support broad participation in the Core, while ensuring that the Core Curriculum continues to serve its vital educational mission.

Core Curriculum Overview, Structure, and Assessment Strategy

The Core Curriculum forms the core of a liberal arts and sciences education at Rutgers University–New Brunswick. Under the revised Core Curriculum approved by the faculty May 2017 and in effect for all students entering AY 2018–19 and later, students meet 14 requirements based in 20 learning goals clustered in 3 areas. A description of the Core Curriculum can be found in Appendix A. As illustrated in Appendix B¹, these Core goals are aligned with the University learning goals, and they serve as the general education learning goals for the undergraduate programs in each School participating in the Core.

Undergraduate students matriculating in the School of Arts and Sciences and the New Brunswick Business School, including those planning to complete majors offered by the Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy, the School of Communication and Information, the School of Management and Labor Relations, the School of Social Work, and the Mason Gross School of the Arts BA programs, complete the Core curriculum. These Schools are represented (in rotation) on the Core Requirements Committee (CRC), as is the School of Environmental and Biological Sciences, which as of AY 2015-16 requires a modified Core Curriculum for its majors.² All of these Schools offer courses certified for the Core, as do the SAS departments.³

The Core Requirements Committee (CRC) oversees the Core.⁴ The CRC is made up of faculty and staff representatives from the various Schools that participate in the Core and the SAS Senior Associate Dean for Undergraduate Education. The CRC generally meets every three to four weeks to review proposals to add courses to the list of those certified for the Core, and

¹ See original document online at http://sas.rutgers.edu/component/docman/doc_download/549-core-sas-a-university-learning-goals-aligned
² School of Environmental and Biological Sciences Core Curriculum, adopted 2013-14: https://sebs.rutgers.edu/core/
³ Students entering as Engineering, Pharmacy, or Mason Gross BFA students have not been required to complete the Core Curriculum, but the mandatory curriculums at each of these Schools include some courses certified for the Core Curriculum. Hence, every New Brunswick undergraduate takes courses that have been certified for the Core: 01:355:101 College Writing; specified mathematics courses; and specified natural science or humanities courses along with humanities and social science electives. Transfer students are required to take Contemporary Challenges courses [CC] and a Writing and Communication with revision course [WCR] at Rutgers NB. UMDNJ legacy schools have not been integrated into the New Brunswick undergraduate program at this time.
⁴ See pp. 19–20 for Core Requirements Committee (CRC) members, AY 2022–23.
Assessment is an integral part of the Core Curriculum. The Core Requirements Committee requires that all courses certified for the Core include a clear statement of the Core goal(s) on the syllabus, assess student achievement of the specified Core learning goal(s), and regularly submit assessment results to the CRC. Plans for assessment are carefully reviewed by the CRC before a course is recommended to the full SAS and affiliates faculty for certification as meeting any Core Curriculum goal(s).

The preferred, “best practice,” and most common method of assessment employed in Core courses involves scoring an embedded assignment or exam question(s) using Core goal rubrics developed by the CRC. The full process is described on the SAS Office of Undergraduate Education (OUE) website at http://sasoue.rutgers.edu/core/core-assessment. Faculty are also free to adopt other methods of assessing student achievement of Core learning goals. For example, some faculty use pre- and post-tests and report the number of students who have achieved the goals at an outstanding, good, satisfactory, and unsatisfactory level.

This model of assessment of student learning through authentic, embedded, direct assessments implemented in courses across the Core Curriculum reflects a strong consensus nationally about best practices in effective general education programs.5

The CRC asks departments for complete assessment reports on all Core certified courses at three-year intervals, such that each year the CRC reviews assessment reports from a third of the departments. Although departments are only required to submit their assessment results to the CRC every three years, since assessment is built into the structure of Core courses—generally rubric-based scoring of embedded assignments, as noted—the CRC expects that these assessments will be conducted every time that the Core course is offered.

The assessment reports that departments are required to submit to the CRC every three years are intended to:

- compile systematic evidence that students are achieving the Core Curriculum goals;
- identify gaps between the aspirations of the courses and actual student achievement; and
- provide a prompt for modification or department review of the certified courses and their appropriateness for the Core.

After surveying the literature on assessment and best practices at peer institutions, we have benchmarked Core goal outcomes with an expectation that at least two-thirds of students will meet the assessed goal at a satisfactory or better level. In fact, our faculty members have responded to scores well above this benchmark with reforms designed to improve student learning in Core courses. The CRC retains an annually updated catalog of these reforms.

Starting in 2021–2022, the Core Requirements Committee has asked reporting departments to participate in a revised narrative review process aimed at encouraging departments to reflect

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upon, discuss, and use their Core assessment results in a purposeful and productive way. After
the course-level quantitative results and plans for modification are submitted in the Spring, the
SAS Office of Undergraduate Education sends each department a summary spreadsheet with
their results. The goal is for the department to then spend the Fall semester engaging in
department-wide discussions with faculty about their Core assessment results and how they can
be used to inform departmental decision-making about pedagogy and curriculum. The CRC asks
departments to then submit brief narratives summarizing their analyses and reflections at the end
of the Fall semester. The template for these narrative reports is included as Appendix D. Early in
the spring semester, the CRC reviews the narrative reports and sends individualized feedback to
each department.

Changes to Plans, Leadership, or Processes

Describe any changes made in the past year to the school-wide learning outcome assessment plan or its
leadership, and any changes in the program or department-wide learning outcome assessment processes. Explain why these changes were made.

The Core Requirements Committee oversees the assessment of Core learning goals. This
committee’s membership includes representatives from the School of Arts and Sciences, three
student members, and a rotation of other Rutgers-New Brunswick schools whose courses and
students participate in the Core. The 2022–2023 committee included representatives from
Rutgers Business School, the Edward J. Bloustein School of Public Policy, the School of
Environmental and Biological Sciences, and the School of Communication and Information. The
2022–2023 Core Requirements Committee’s full membership list is included at the end of this
document.

Core Narrative Review Process

As mentioned above, this was the second full year of the new Core narrative process.
Departments reporting Core assessment results in 2021–2022 received a spreadsheet summary of
their assessment results in summer 2022 and were asked to submit brief narratives analyzing and
reflecting on their results by 12/1/2022 (template included as Appendix D). The CRC reviewed
these reports in early Spring 2023 and sent each department brief feedback letters providing
encouragement, suggestions, and referrals to further resources when needed. We share results
from some of the narrative assessment reports received this year in the section entitled “How
Assessment Results Will Be Used” below.

Revising Core Requirements Committee Processes & Procedures

In late Fall 2022 and early/mid Spring 2023, many departmental Undergraduate Program
Directors (UPDs) used SAS UPD meetings, direct communications with the SAS Office of
Undergraduate Education, and focus groups that were conducted as part of the Discovery

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6 Note that the narrative reports submitted in 2022–23 were received from departments reflecting on 2021–22
assessment results. Hence the discussion below covers both quantitative results for 2022–23 and narratives reflecting
on 2021–22 results. In December of 2023, departments will submit narrative reports reflecting on 2022–23
assessment results.
Advantage initiative to provide feedback about the CRC proposal review and revision processes. Since April 2023, the CRC has devoted time during each of its meetings to discuss potential improvements to the proposal review and revision processes, with the goal of making these processes as transparent, efficient, and fair as possible. Although these discussions are ongoing, the CRC has already approved several changes in response to the UPDs’ feedback. The committee has also created and shared an updated checklist to assist departments as they prepare proposals for Core certification (included as Appendix E and available online here).

Some of the changes the CRC has approved so far include:

- Eliminating the requirement (created before the pandemic) that all Core-certified online courses must report assessment results each time they are offered;
- Providing guidelines in the CRC-provided Assessment Plan Template (Appendix C) for using specifications or mastery-based grading systems to assess Core goals;
- Being more flexible about when during the semester Core assessments are conducted, including allowing instructors to use assignments/exams that occur before the end of the semester as long as the instructor effectively makes the case in the proposal that students will have had sufficient exposure to the Core goal at that point in the semester to warrant assessment at that time (and remembering that the goal needs to be front and center in the course design); and
- Permitting instructors to conduct Core assessments using individual components of group work, as long as that work enables them to assess each student's individual achievement of the Core goal. Instructors are asked to include a note in the proposal explaining this to the CRC.

These policy changes are intended to ensure that Core-certified courses accurately assesses each student’s mastery of Core goals, without unnecessarily constraining individual instructor’s course design. In addition to these policy changes, the SAS Office of Undergraduate Education has also instituted several new processes over the past year to streamline proposal reviews and minimize the number of rounds of revision as much as possible. The CRC will continue to discuss and implement additional changes throughout this academic year.

### Changes to Learning Goals

*Describe any changes made in school-wide learning goals in the past year, and why these changes were made. Please give examples if any program or department wide learning goals were changed, and the reasons for doing so.*

Although no changes were made to the Core learning goals this year, the New Brunswick-wide Discovery Advantage initiative’s work in the 2022–2023 academic year included discussions about developing a set of New Brunswick-wide learning goals. A cross-school subcommittee within the Discovery Advantage Curriculum Workstream developed a set of recommendations for additions and modifications to the Rutgers University Learning Goals in Spring 2023, and the
Discovery Advantage leadership team will be collecting feedback about these and other recommendations coming out of the Discovery Advantage process throughout Fall 2023.

Once the Rutgers–New Brunswick Learning Goals are adopted, the next step in the process will be to determine how these goals will be met and assessed within each New Brunswick school. These discussions will almost certainly touch upon the Core Curriculum and may result in future modifications of some of the goals and/or Core-related processes and administration.

**Curricular Redesign of Writing Program’s Introductory Course Sequence**

The Rutgers Writing Program’s introductory courses, which most Rutgers–New Brunswick students are required to take during their first year, recently underwent a curricular redesign in response to an external review process. The redesigned curriculum was piloted in 2022–2023 and after some additional revising is being fully rolled out to all sections in Fall 2023. College Writing (01:355:101, formerly “Expository Writing”) and College Writing Extended (01:355:104) now focus on a greater variety of writing genres and texts and incorporate a series of scaffolded assignments designed to invite students to engage with texts and writing assignments in a more authentic, individualized way. The new curriculum also aims to prepare students to transfer their writing skills to other academic and nonacademic writing contexts.

The curricular revisions will be accompanied by a revised assessment process for these introductory writing courses. The new processes will provide more fine-grained assessment results and involve more discussion about and use of the results within the Writing Program. The Writing Program is working closely with the SAS Office of Undergraduate Education (and the Director of Teaching, Learning, and Assessment, in particular) to design and implement these assessment plans.

**Direct Assessment of Student Learning**

*How do you directly assess student learning at the school level and the program level? Please give at least two examples with evidence from the assessments.*

Assessment is an integral part of the Core Curriculum. The Core Requirements Committee requires all courses certified for the Core to include a clear statement of the Core goal(s) on the syllabus and a plan for assessing student achievement of the specified Core learning goal(s). These assessment plans are reviewed by the CRC before a course is recommended to the full faculty for certification as meeting any Core Curriculum goal(s).

The primary method of assessment employed in Core courses involves scoring an embedded assignment or exam question(s) using Core goal rubrics the CRC has developed as the preferred “best practice” assessment option. The full process and rubrics are available on the SAS Office of Undergraduate Education (OUE) website at [http://sasoue.rutgers.edu/core/core-assessment](http://sasoue.rutgers.edu/core/core-assessment). All the Core rubrics are available on the OUE webpage. Faculty are also free to adopt other methods of assessing student achievement of Core learning goals. For example, some faculty use pre- and post-tests and report the number of students who have achieved the goals at an outstanding, good, satisfactory, and unsatisfactory level.
This model of assessment of student learning through authentic, embedded, direct assessments implemented in courses across the Core Curriculum reflects a strong consensus nationally about best practices in effective general education programs.

**Indirect Assessment of Student Learning**

*How do you indirectly assess student learning at the school level and the program level? Please give at least two examples with evidence from the assessments.*

In addition to submitting direct, quantitative assessment results for Core-certified courses, instructors are asked to respond to a prompt asking about their plans for modification in light of the assessment results. Many of the responses we receive to this prompt refer to (often informal) indirect measures of assessment of student learning in Core-certified courses. Some of the departmental narrative reports also refer to some indirect assessment of student learning. We provide summaries and examples of these responses below in the section about how assessment results will be used to inform future teaching and curricular revisions.

**Student Performance in Reaching Desired Learning Outcomes**

*Please describe student performance in reaching desired learning outcomes during the past year. If applicable to your unit, please include licensing examination results. Please describe how any deficits will be addressed.*

Departments are required to submit assessment results for their Core-certified courses on a three-year rotating cycle. For AY 2022–23, the CRC requested Core reports from 56 of the 70 Core-certified courses offered Summer 2022, 120 of the 270 Core courses offered Fall 2022, all 43 Core courses offered Winter 2023, and 136 of the 307 Core courses offered Spring 2023. We received results for 268 courses required to report (75% response rate). Reflecting the CRC’s encouragement of best practices in implementing Core goal assessments, results were voluntarily filed for another 206 courses. The combined enrollment of all courses reporting Core goals assessments was over 47,000 students. Table 1 lists the departments from which assessment reports were received this year. Many courses are certified for more than one Core goal, giving us a database of 82,857 individual student assessment scores ranging across the 19 Core goals in AY 2022–23.

The overall Core assessment response rate was 89% in 2018–19, the last full year before the COVID-19 pandemic hit; in the three reporting years since the pandemic, response rates have consistently been within a few percentage points of 75%. While we are confident that the Core assessment narratives and the overall volume of Core reports submitted this year reflect a mature and widespread culture of assessment within the Core curriculum, we are making efforts to bring response rates back up to pre-pandemic levels by providing departments with earlier and more frequent reminders about courses that may be missing Core reports.
Table 1: Departments and Programs Submitting Core Assessment Reports AY 2022–23

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<td>American Studies</td>
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<td>Asian Languages and Cultures</td>
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<td>Jewish Studies</td>
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<td>Kinesiology and Health</td>
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<td>Latin American Studies</td>
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<td>Latino and Caribbean Studies</td>
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<td>Linguistics</td>
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<td>Middle Eastern Studies</td>
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<td>Modern Greek Studies</td>
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<td>Molecular Biology and Biochemistry</td>
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<td>Organizational Leadership</td>
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<td>Physics and Astronomy</td>
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<td>Religion</td>
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<td>Russian and East European Languages and Literatures</td>
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<td>Spanish and Portuguese</td>
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<td>Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies</td>
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<td>Writing Program</td>
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<td>SAS Honors Program</td>
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<td>SAS Signature Courses</td>
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<td>Communication &amp; Media Studies</td>
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<td>Journalism &amp; Media Studies</td>
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<td>MGSA</td>
<td>Music</td>
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<td>Theater</td>
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<td>GSE</td>
<td>All courses</td>
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<td>EJBSPP</td>
<td>Planning and Public Policy</td>
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<td>Policy, Health, and Administration</td>
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<td>Public Health</td>
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<td>Public Policy</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Public Administration and Management</td>
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<tr>
<td>SMLR</td>
<td>All courses (representing Labor Studies and Management and Work)</td>
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<td>SEBS</td>
<td>Biotechnology</td>
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<td>Environmental and Business Economics</td>
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Figure 1 summarizes this year’s assessment results. This year, the percentage of students with at least a satisfactory level of achievement ranged from 85 percent in the QR (Mathematical or Formal Reasoning) goal to 95 percent in the AHq (Nature of Languages) and CCO-2 (Science and Technology Related to Social Issues) goals. The percentages of students achieving at the outstanding level were highest in the Natural Sciences category (59.6% for NS-1 and 66.8% for NS-2), followed closely by the Contemporary Challenges: Our Common Future (CCO) goals.

As we noted in last year’s report, levels of student achievement in the quantitative QQ (Using Quantitative Information) and QR goals were lower in 2021–2022 than they were in 2020–2021.
Fortunately, the achievement we observed in 2022–2023 returned to levels that are more comparable with previous years’ results. For example, 88 percent of students achieved a satisfactory level or better in the QR goal in 2020–2021, 74 percent achieved this level or higher in 2021–2022, and 85 percent achieved a satisfactory level or better this year.\(^7\)

A few instructors discussed plans for modification to address ongoing concerns about student achievement of the quantitative goals in their courses. For example, one instructor teaching a social science research methods course certified for QQ stated:

> In light of the results of the assessment tool, we have initiated a series of meetings to address the apparent skill gap that we observe among the incoming students in terms of basic math and computer skills. We are considering alternatives such as initiating a 2-semester sequence of Research Methods courses or modifying one of the 400-level courses to reinforce research methods knowledge.

Another instructor in a QR-certified Humanities course reported:

> I thought the assessment achieved its goal of determining a student's ability to apply effective and efficient formal processes to reason and solve problems. I do believe the assessment was slightly more challenging than intended, and I would work to mix in more accessible problems to better assess the understanding of the students who found too much of the original assignment outside of their grasp of the content of the course. Overall, however, I believe it was a fair assessment and that it met its goal very satisfactorily.

Some departmental Undergraduate Program Directors or course coordinators also reported plans for modifications based on the direct assessment results for their courses. A UPD in a Humanities department, for example, noted the following:

> I would…suggest in future semesters that the course should begin with an essay topic that is not comparative, so that students who are less familiar with the subject and discipline have the chance to start the course off with a more focused, less overwhelming assignment. I will share these results with the course's usual instructor and we will be closely monitoring these issues in upcoming iterations of this challenging interdisciplinary course, to ensure that it is adequately meeting the Core Curriculum’s needs.

We include other examples of plans to use assessment results to inform future teaching and curricular revisions in the following section.

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\(^7\) Courses from across the curriculum are certified for quantitative goals, including many social science methods courses. The mathematics department was not part of this year’s reporting cycle.
How Assessment Results Will Be Used

How will the results from your assessment be used to inform future teaching and curricular revisions?

Course-Specific Modification Plans (submitted with assessment results)

Instructors’ responses to the prompt about their plans for modification in light of their Core assessment results varied widely in 2022–2023, and often focused more on general course innovations and modifications they are considering and implementing than on modifications related specifically to the Core goals. Despite this variation, a few themes emerged in this year’s responses.

Evolving Role of ChatGPT and Other Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) Tools

The release of ChatGPT in late 2022 and the proliferation of generative AI programs since that time have been the topic of a considerable amount of discussion and work among instructors, departments, and teaching and learning staff across the University (and in higher education more broadly). Several instructors referred to generative AI tools like ChatGPT in their qualitative descriptions of their plans for modification. The wide range of instructor perspectives on and approaches toward AI reflects the considerable range of perspectives we have heard discussed more generally within Rutgers and beyond, in forums like Inside Higher Ed and the Chronicle of Higher Education, professional association meetings, conferences, and newspapers and popular media sources. We include the following quotes from instructors’ plans for modification from Spring 2023 as an illustration of the tremendous range of responses to the emerging role of AI.

Some instructors seem to embrace the opportunities offered by generative AI, and discuss strategies they are adopting to incorporate these tools into their courses and assignments. As one instructor notes:

I have already modified the course by changing the final exam exercise…which asked students to use their lecture notes and the lecture slides to annotate a (predictably superficial and inaccurate yet highly polished) ChatGPT essay on the history of data in the US. The results of the assignment were outstanding and demonstrated students' ability to synthesize the main themes of the course and use them to critique and correct a celebratory narrative about the history of data that centered technological artifacts, especially electronic digital computing, and erased any evidence of inequities and what scholars now recognize as algorithmic bias. It was important for students to use their own knowledge to critique this all-too-familiar narrative of progress in our age of Big Data, as well as to experience first-hand the capabilities and the limitations of ChatGPT. We had an excellent class discussion after the completion of this assignment in which students voiced their own concerns about the use of ChatGPT in academia and beyond. I will likely use a similar assignment in my other courses in future semesters.

Another instructor writes that they will:
Incorporate the advances in GPT into the active textbook which I have created and used over the past two semesters (very successfully). Active textbook allows live coding in class as well as teaches students how to code by enabling them to change the live code and see the results. In addition, the active textbook allows students to test themselves on randomly generated questions and coding tasks. GPT is a major revolutionary force which has to be incorporated into teaching of this class. Work in progress.

Other instructors are less sanguine about the implications of generative AI tools for student learning and the integrity of assessments. As one instructor notes:

The biggest modification I will need to make to this and similar assignments is to remove the section calling on students to summarize, in their own words, the main arguments of the article they selected. AI has rendered that part of the assignment very problematic. This is a real loss. As I tell my students, summarizing text in their own words is the one very effective way to demonstrate their understanding of the material. Now, that component of the assignment is essentially compromised. I will find a way to reconfigure the assignment, but I am concerned about encroaching AI programs more generally, and would like to know how other [department/program] faculty members and administrators are thinking about this issue. I have prided myself on creating original assignments that are extremely difficult to plagiarize, but I am sensitive to the ways AI may undermine those efforts moving forward.

Relatedly, an instructor in an intermediate-level language course expressed concerns about the influence of online tools on students’ language acquisition and translation skills:

There has been a growing need to emphasize the problem of literal translation, especially with the growing use of online translators and chat bots. I will incorporate direct instruction of the pitfalls of these tools for students at this stage.

The role of generative AI will, without a doubt, be the focus of continued discussions about pedagogical design and assessment in courses (both Core-certified and not) for the foreseeable future. A number of Rutgers offices, including the SAS Office of Undergraduate Education and OTEAR, are supporting these ongoing discussions with resources, workshops, learning communities, roundtables, and other programming.

Focus on Student Writing

Many of the most thoughtful plans for modification we received this year focused on student writing, both in the context of courses certified for the WCR and WCD (writing) goals and in courses that are certified for other goals. These plans demonstrate that instructors are thinking carefully about providing students with instruction in writing, effectively scaffolded writing assignments, and thoughtful feedback on their writing—all with the goal of promoting student engagement and growth. The considerable attention being paid to developing students’ writing skills is exemplified by the course modification plans quoted below.

From an instructor in an Interdisciplinary Honors Seminar, certified for WCD:
In this strong and motivated honors group, I was surprised by how many students were still summarizing and paraphrasing (rather than quoting and analyzing) our primary literary texts in their final papers, written at the end of the semester. We spent time on class close reading exercises in almost all our weekly sessions, and students also wrote weekly reading responses in which most of them successfully analyzed passages and specific details from the texts. In the future, however, I may try to help students bridge these skills to their final papers by adding a targeted in-class exercise where we look at anonymous (or instructor-written) samples of student writing to identify summary and paraphrase vs. close analysis and talk about where each kind of engagement with the text is appropriate/useful and how much of each belongs in a paper. This kind of exercise could help students more successfully draft and edit their own papers according to the expectations of the discipline.

From an instructor in a WCR-certified course in a Humanities department:

The peer editing workshop day alone did not allow enough time to discuss essay structure, format, style guides, and talk about how to write a thesis. Although I provided students with a detailed Essay Guidelines document where I outline and explain the different parts of the essay (intro, thesis, body, analysis, etc.) with examples, students would benefit from discussing these details in the more interactive environment of the classroom setting where they can ask me, the instructor, questions. This would then result in a more productive draft which would be looked over by their peer reviewer at a separate peer-review workshop. I also personally had many science majors in my course who could’ve benefitted from this structure. I nonetheless provided one-on-one feedback in my office, via email, and Zoom.

From a UPD in a department offering many sections of a WCR-certified course:

We plan to have more individual meetings with the students to work more closely on improving their writing skills and enabling them to better learn the various genres presented in the course. The majority of [course name] instructors have found this to be extremely helpful in the development of an understanding of the process. We will also ask students to meet in small groups in an effort to increase peer evaluation. This is something we plan to implement across all of the course sections.

From an instructor teaching an AHo- and AHp-certified course:

I hope to introduce more scaffolding for the analytic essay assignment. Most students were in STEM or business fields with minimal experience doing critical writing. I have tried to break down the writing assignment task, but need to go further in a step-by-step approach.

From an instructor teaching a CCO- and AHp-certified course:

The first short paper assignment (used for CCO-2 assessment) asked for an interpretation of a scholarly digital archive in terms of its use of the digital medium. The assignment
would be improved with some more "scaffolding." Students needed more guidance as to what an interpretation (as opposed to a summary or surface-level description) would be. The next iteration of the course will require some preliminary interpretive writing as a lead-in to the short paper. Some of the activities focused on textual editing will be reduced to make room for a more concerted focus on this assignment.

And, as a final example, an instructor teaching an AHq-certified course noted the following:

I am teaching this course again this semester, and in light of last semester's results, I have made a few changes. Most importantly, I made substantial changes to the course Final Project. While many students completed this project successfully, I determined that it was not well-scaffolded enough to ensure steady success. For this reason, I divided the project into parts, based on the content of the units of the class… This will result in 3 short reports that have the equivalent length and require the same skills as the final project, but will be more manageable for students and can be better scaffolded in class.

Student Disengagement and the Ongoing Impact of COVID

Although it was a less prevalent theme than last year, student disengagement was still mentioned by some instructors as a factor impacting the assessment results (and student participation and performance, in general).

Two instructors teaching Fall 2022 courses, for example, noted:

Compared to last [spring] semester, many students needed help following the class materials due to not attending class. Despite continuous encouragement, many students simply do not show up in class and report various reasons such as getting Covid, having mental depression, family loss, distress, etc. I am thinking of informing students about their participation and attendance in the middle of the semester to give feedback about their progress in class. Students liked the interactive components of the class activities, so I am planning to add more interactive activities next semester.

The final essay, used for the assessment of AHp, was disappointing. Coming late in the semester and based on a longer novel, I feel that students simply did not complete the reading. The issue was not time, but rather a disengagement on the part of the students. Those that were doing the reading were very engaged; but, as I've heard reported by many, I lost students at the end of the semester due, perhaps, to the post-Covid haze and lack of stamina. The essay used for the writing assessment, coming earlier in the semester and developed over several weeks of back-and-forth exchanges, was much more successful--and perhaps a better reflection of AHp as well. I don't see a way around a final essay, but in the future, I may try to structure the last four weeks of class differently, with more frequent, shorter assignments.

Another instructor raised concerns about the continuing impact of the pandemic on students’ ability to interact with each other during classroom discussions.
This [CCD-1] assessment depends in part on interactive class discussions conducted prior to the final. I find that this cohort of students (predominantly first-year students) continues to struggle with interacting with their peers in classroom discussions. As such, I think I have to provide more prompts and content checks for class discussions. This is something that has been evident since the return to in-person classes since COVID-19.

The diverse impacts of the pandemic are being discussed within departments as well. For example, an undergraduate director wrote in a departmental narrative that:

…some common themes I have heard are that, compared to the pre-pandemic era: (i) students are less willing to actually read in advance and to contribute to class discussion, (ii) students themselves say that they feel they were not prepared in high school for what they are facing now and (iii) performance on earlier exams and classwork this year is just not at the level we are used to. We noted that the questions on which performance was worst were in topics that are relatively complex … so it seems possible that performance can be improved by zeroing in on some of these more complex topics and spending more time. This is what is planned for the spring semester.

**Online & Hybrid Instruction**

Not surprisingly, a final theme this year related to the role of online instruction, with a number of instructors comparing results from offering their courses in in-person versus online modalities. Responses here ranged dramatically, representing the wide variation in disciplinary standards and norms and the types of courses that are included in the Core Curriculum.

Some instructors described pedagogical changes they implemented out of necessity while teaching online during the pandemic that they will continue to employ in their in-person courses.

One of the simplest changes in the course -- a change I made because of Corona in Fall 2020, before my sabbatical -- has also been one of the most beneficial, I think: that Fall (and again this past Fall) I decided to drop the lowest of the three take-home exam grades….I always had a sizeable number of students, each semester, who misunderstood the nature of the take-homes, did badly on the first one, and then lost their enthusiasm for the course because they felt it was too late for them to recover from that low grade. Now, a number of the students who do badly on the first take-home come in for (sometimes intensive) advising, and they regularly perform better on subsequent exams and remain engaged throughout the course. I no longer "lose" that group of smart, capable, and motivated students who used to feel defeated after this first experience.

Another instructor notes:

This was my first semester teaching [course title] "face to face" since the pandemic forced us to migrate to online classes. While planning the transition of the course from an online format back to an in-person format, I made significant modifications based on the online teaching experience. The most significant change was to the weighting of different types of assessments, with exams being lowered, and attendance/in-class exercises and
larger [substantive topic] assignments being counted more. Increasing the assessment emphasis (and time spent working in class) on [substantive skill] exercises to apply the [substantive] topics being explored seemed to work well. It provided students with hands-on engagement with the weekly topic and the opportunity to get immediate feedback and help.

One instructor praised the hybrid format:

The students performed surprisingly well in this class. I think the weekly reflection essay was an effective pedagogical tool which I will continue to use. The hybrid format combines the flexibility and convenience of online teaching and the element of personal interactions of an in-person course and the students were explicit about the desirability of such a format. I will experiment with additional forms of in-person engagements to encourage more student participation.

As the following quote illustrates, creating a high-quality online course is an iterative process:

If I were to teach this course again in an asynchronous online format, I would develop more ways to assist students with processing the readings, especially the academic articles, and incorporating them into their assignments. Usually, we do this in class discussions. I made study guides available and posted short video lectures, but several students did not reference the readings in their assignments. I can offer low-stakes quizzes for students to submit as they complete the readings and use Hypothesis for us to annotate select readings together as a class.

Department-level Modification Plans (submitted as narrative reports)

In reviewing departments’ narrative reports this year, the CRC members were pleased to find that many departments are very engaged with the process and have a good understanding of the types of reflection and conversations the CRC hopes the narrative review process will spark. As one CRC member noted when reflecting on the narrative reports she reviewed, “In general, a fair number of the reports indicated that departments were quite engaged in the process, which was exciting to see. We’re starting to see a [positive] shift in using the process of assessment and looking across courses as a way to think about course development in programs.”

One department, for example, noted the following comparison of results in face-to-face and online sections of the same course:

The comparison of face-to-face and online delivery modes of the same course suggests broad similarity in outcomes despite the need for somewhat different operationalization tools. We are pleased at the high level of student success documented here, but also note there are a few trouble spots, specifically in a small number of sections taught by instructors who are not fully versed in the logic of the Core Curriculum and how to adapt the learning goals to their specific approaches to the material.

Another department’s analysis of their overall assessment results draws distinctions among student achievement of different Core goals and offers some potential explanations for the
differences they observe, as well as thoughts about how they might address the areas in which students are performing less well:

Provided data indicate the two courses are successful in fulfilling the NS-1 goal (Understand and apply basic principles and concepts in the physical or biological sciences). This goal appears easier to address within the subject matter. The [course title] course data indicates that students have a harder time grasping NS-2 (Explain and be able to assess the relationship among assumptions, method, evidence, arguments, and theory in scientific analysis) and could attest to the fact that these concepts are not taught in lab-based settings. This goal is taught through explanation of scientific experiments related to [substantive focus of course]. We are not concerned for student difficulty in grasping the concepts, because instructors are cognizant of the issue and continue to adjust and implement new ideas for better learning, including adding small class demonstrations and more examples in the learning component of the course.

The course [course title] which satisfies CCO…was recently approved by CRC core committee. Using data from Fall 2021, the majority of students in this course are achieving the goals for CCO-1. Each time the course was assessed, 94% of the students achieved the level of “outstanding” or “good”. For assessment of the CCO-2 goal, however, only 50% of the students achieved “outstanding” or “good”, while 40% achieved “satisfactory”. Assessment results for CCO-2 indicate that many changes are needed to improve student learning of applying science and technology. The abstract and conceptual nature of the subject matter makes it difficult to address the science and technology (CCO-2) aspect, making it a main reason for this learning difficulty. Application of the course content is challenging using conventional assignments. Lack of a lab component has made it difficult to develop assignments to achieve applied goals.

The narrative assessment form also asks departments to describe how the assessment results have or will inform departmental practices and decision-making. The following excerpt comes from a language department’s report:

Core assessment results inform our teaching practices by allowing us to identify key areas of inquiry as they relate to core goals. Core reporting allows for assessing the effectiveness of pedagogical methods. Narrative reports allow a feedback loop, where individual instructors contribute to pedagogical innovation….Core reporting offers valuable insights into the methods and practices that promote students learning.…

Core assessment has helped the department identify skill-based learning goals, independent of course content or language of instruction. Program and core assessment led to a skill-based redesign of program learning goals in Spring 22. Central to this process are numeric results and instructor feedback, which allow the ACT [Assessment, Curriculum, and Teaching] committee to determine the alignment of courses, methods, and practices with departmental learning goals.

The assessment process has prompted instructors to center both Core and departmental goals in course descriptions, syllabi, and assignment design, allowing for increased communication with students regarding learning goals and methods.
Another department discussed improvements in communication between instructors and changes to the course assignment structure to ensure consistency and promote student learning across different sections of the same course.

There has been improved communication between the instructors who teach the different sections of this core-certified course. They meet regularly in a real time manner to discuss the basic elements of the course, with discussions that include how best to present material in lecture, how to structure the special diet diary and exercise assignments, and how to improve student engagement. This communication between the instructors helps coordinate the content and assessment strategies between the sections, which helps ensure the course is taught at a roughly equivalent level and with similar grading rubrics.

Both instructors have instituted more quizzes in their sections. One instructor has instituted two sets: 12 Lecture quizzes that the students must take at home on Canvas, and 14 Attendance mini-quizzes on material covered that day near the end of class. There is no doubt that these mini-attendance quizzes stimulate classroom attendance and have improved overall grades. The other instructor uses weekly, take-at-home quizzes through Canvas to reinforce the previous week’s lectures, which helps the students keep up with the course content, get a sense of where they are in understanding the course content, and prepare them for the format of the in-class exams.

These (and other) narrative reports clearly indicate that departments are actively engaging with the narrative review process and benefiting from reflecting on and discussing their assessment results. In many cases, the narrative review process seems to be achieving the critically important goal of increasing communication among instructors about strategies for promoting student learning and achievement of the Core goals.

The narrative reports from some departments, however, were less detailed and suggested that some departments may still be somewhat confused about what the CRC hopes to see in the narrative reports. CRC members suggested that it would be helpful to provide departments with some “best practice” examples of departmental narrative reports. The instructions distributed in August 2023 for departments that will be submitting narrative reports in December 2023 included some exemplary narrative responses (shared with the relevant departments’ permission). We hope that these examples will be helpful as departments complete their narrative reviews this Fall.

Interestingly, reviewing the narrative reports submitted this year also prompted some fruitful discussions within the Core Requirements Committee. For example, the committee had a productive discussion about assessment for the Quantitative and Formal Reasoning (QQ & QR) and Natural Science (NS-1 & NS-2) goals in STEM major courses, since students likely enter many of those courses with a baseline knowledge of these Core areas that students taking a more general course meeting the same Core goals may not have. Conversations like this, while not part of the stated goal of the new narrative process, are another positive outcome of having instituted this new review and feedback process.
Availability of Syllabi and Learning Goals

Has the availability of syllabi, and learning goals on school and program or departmental web sites been maintained over the past year? If not, provide some explanation. Please provide a link to your syllabi and learning goals.

As in previous years, links to the Core goals are prominent on the main SAS Office of Undergraduate Education web page, and the Core goals are listed on the Advising and Academic Services web page, along with the courses satisfying each goal. The Core goals are also part of the text students see in the Schedule of Classes and Degree Navigator as they chart their progress toward completing their degrees, and each Core-certified course includes the standard wording of the approved Core goals and the Core Graphic on its syllabus.

Closing

Two themes emerge from the course-level assessment reports, departmental assessment narratives, and experiences of the Core Requirements Committee over the past year. First, across the many disciplines, departments, and schools participating in the Core, there is a culture of evidence-based engagement with student learning. We are enormously grateful for the passionate commitment to students and sustained effort demonstrated in the reports summarized above.

Second, the Core continues to evolve. In 2018, curricular changes introduced Diversities and Social Inequalities goals; in 2021, a revised assessment narrative requirement was introduced; and this year, the CRC revised and streamlined processes to make Core certification and assessment more streamlined and flexible. We expect changes to continue as the Discovery Advantage initiative issues its final report, including its recommendations for the adoption of New Brunswick-wide learning goals.

Submitted on behalf of the Core Requirements Committee by

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School of Arts and Sciences

David Goldman
Director of Teaching, Learning, and Assessment
School of Arts and Sciences

Core Requirements Committee, 2022–2023

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Michael Beals, Mathematics (SAS)
Sharon Bzostek, SAS Office of Undergraduate Education
Vanessa Coleman, Office of Academic Services (SAS)—Spring only
Tatiana Flores, Art History and Latino & Caribbean Studies (SAS)
Jerome Flynn, Rutgers Business School (RBS)
Anita Franzione, Bloustein School of Planning & Public Policy (EJBSPP)
David Goldman, SAS Office of Undergrad Education
Martha Haviland, Division of Life Sciences, Genetics (SAS)
Nicole Houser, English Writing Program (SAS)
Xenia Morin, School of Environmental & Biological Sciences (SEBS)
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Michelle Neumyer, Office of Academic Services (SAS)
Carmela Scala, Italian (SAS)
Camilla Stevens, Latino Caribbean Studies & Spanish/Portuguese (SAS)
Sharon Stoeger, School of Communication & Information (SC&I)
Kate Waldie, Chemistry & Chemical Biology (SAS)
David Wilder, Psychology (SAS)
Joseph Williams, Religion (SAS)
Lei Yu, Division of Life Sciences, Genetics (SAS)

Student Members
Anitej Thamma
Lauren Johnson
Appendix A: Core Curriculum

THE CORE CURRICULUM (as revised 5/2018)

For full text of proposal submitted to faculty, see: https://sasoue.rutgers.edu/docman-docs/curriculum/core-curriculum/850-crc-proposal-to-revise-the-core-curriculum-4-3-2018-1/file

Upon completion of the Core Curriculum STUDENTS WILL BE ABLE TO:

CONTEMPORARY CHALLENGES [CCD; CCO]

Students must take two degree credit-bearing courses and meet at least one goal in both CCD and CCO as follows:

**Diversities and Social Inequalities [CCD] (3 credits)**

Students must take one degree credit-bearing course that meets one or both of these goals.

CCD-1. Analyze the degree to which forms of human differences and stratifications among social groups shape individual and group experiences of, and perspectives on, contemporary issues. Such differences and stratifications may include race, language, religion, ethnicity, country of origin, gender identity, sexual orientation, economic status, abilities, or other social distinctions and their intersections.

CCD-2. Analyze contemporary social justice issues and unbalanced social power systems.

**Our Common Future [CCO] (3 credits)**

Students must take one degree credit-bearing course that meets one or both of these goals.

CCO-1. Analyze a contemporary global issue from a multidisciplinary perspective.

CCO-2. Analyze the relationship that science and technology have to a contemporary social issue.

AREAS OF INQUIRY

**Natural Sciences [NS] (6 credits)**

Students must take two degree credit-bearing courses that meet one or both of these goals.

NS-1. Understand and apply basic principles and concepts in the physical or biological sciences.

NS-2. Explain and be able to assess the relationship among assumptions, method, evidence, arguments, and theory in scientific analysis.

**Historical and Social Analysis [HST; SCL] (6 credits)**

Students must take two degree credit-bearing courses and meet both HST and SCL, as follows:
• **Historical Analysis [HST] (3 credits)**

_Students must take one degree credit-bearing course that meets one or both of these goals._

HST-1. Explain the development of some aspect of a society or culture over time.

HST-2. Employ historical reasoning to study human endeavors, using appropriate assumptions, methods, evidence, and arguments.

• **Social Analysis [SCL] (3 credits)**

_Students must take one additional degree credit-bearing course that meets one or both of these goals._

SCL-1. Understand different theories about human culture, social identity, economic entities, political systems, and other forms of social organization.

SCL-2. Employ tools of social scientific reasoning to study particular questions or situations, using appropriate assumptions, methods, evidence, and arguments.

**Arts and the Humanities [AH] (6 credits)**

_Students must take two degree credit-bearing courses and meet at least two of these goals._

AHo. Examine critically philosophical and other theoretical issues concerning the nature of reality, human experience, knowledge, value, and/or cultural production.

AHp. Analyze arts and/or literatures in themselves and in relation to specific histories, values, languages, cultures, and technologies.

AHq. Understand the nature of human languages and their speakers. AHr. Engage critically in the process of creative expression.

**COGNITIVE SKILLS AND PROCESSES**

**Writing and Communication [WCR; WCD] (9 credits)**

_Students must take three degree credit-bearing courses, and meet both WCR and WCD as follows:_

• All students must take 01:355:101 or its equivalent.

• _Students must take one additional credit-bearing course focused on revision that meets this goal:_

WCR. Communicate complex ideas effectively, in standard written English, to a general audience, and respond effectively to editorial feedback from peers, instructors, &/or supervisors through successive drafts & revision.
• **Students must also take one additional credit-bearing course focused on writing in a specific discipline that meets this goal:**

WCD. Communicate effectively in modes appropriate to a discipline or area of inquiry; evaluate and critically assess sources and use the conventions of attribution and citation correctly; and analyze and synthesize information and ideas from multiple sources to generate new insights.

**Quantitative and Formal Reasoning [QQ; Q] (6 credits)**

*Students must take two degree credit-bearing courses and meet both of these goals.*

QQ. Formulate, evaluate, and communicate conclusions and inferences from quantitative information. *(includes various quantitative methods courses as well as 640 courses)*

QR. Apply effective and efficient mathematical or other formal processes to reason and to solve problems. *(includes 640 courses and formal reasoning courses)*
### Appendix B: Alignment of Core Curriculum Learning Goals with Rutgers University Learning Goals

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<td>b. multi-disciplinary current global issues</td>
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<td>c. science and technology related to social issues</td>
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<td>Social and Historical Analysis: shared goals</td>
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<td>b. application of social analysis</td>
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<td>c. nature of languages</td>
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<td>d. critical creative expression</td>
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<td>Writing and Communication</td>
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<td>b. communicate effectively in area of inquiry or discipline</td>
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<td>Quantitative and Formal Reasoning</td>
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<td>b. mathematical or formal reasoning</td>
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<td>Information Technology and Research</td>
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<td>b. principles of information systems</td>
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Appendix C: Core Assessment Plan Template

Core Assessment Plan

[Course number and title]

The CRC requests that departments submit a plan for assessing whether students are achieving each learning goal for any course requesting a core learning goal certification. You can provide a plan by completing this template following the guidelines below. If you have any questions, please contact David Goldman at dgoldman@sas.rutgers.edu.

This plan should be sustainable: it should be realistic for this assessment to be carried out each time the course is offered. It should also be useful: it should provide information about student achievement that can inform teaching by helping to guide course revisions, identifying successful teaching strategies, and so on.

1. Goal

In this space, identify the Core goal you expect students to achieve during the course. (Please submit one plan per course per goal assessed.)

2. Assignment/Prompt Used to Assess Student Achievement

In this space, briefly identify the assignment or other student work you will use to assess student achievement of the Core learning goal.

- If you will use an embedded assignment like an exam question or paper topic, identify when the assignment occurs during the semester (typically this will be at or near the end of the semester, when students have had the chance to benefit fully from the course) and how much weight it has in the course grade.
- If you will use another method of assessment (e.g., pre–post tests or portfolios of student work), briefly explain the structure and timing of the assessment.
- Indicate who will be assessing student work. If more than one person will be doing so, indicate how many raters will review each student’s work.
- Indicate whether you will assess all students’ achievement of the learning goal or a random sampling of students. In general, the CRC recommends sampling only in courses of more than 100 students.

Please provide an example of the prompt, exam question, or other assignment you will use.

A note on specifications and mastery-based grading systems:

The CRC encourages faculty to explore innovative grading systems. At the same time, instructors should exercise care when proposing Core certification for a course that uses such systems, to ensure that (a) the Core goal(s) remain front and center in the course, and (b) student mastery of the Core goal can be assessed effectively.
Many specifications or mastery-based grading systems give students a high degree of agency in determining what assignments they complete (for instance, outlining one "bundle" of activities that students must complete to earn a D, a more extensive bundle to earn a C, and so on). Providing this level of choice can have a positive impact on student motivation.

However, it is important to ensure that all paths, bundles, or options provided to students include work on the Core goal. The Core Requirements Committee will look for this sort of constrained choice when reviewing courses using specifications, mastery-based, or other innovative grading systems.

3. Evaluation Criteria

In this space, include the benchmarks, rubrics, or other standards you will use to evaluate student achievement of the learning goal.

- If you will use the CRC-prepared rubrics, simply indicate that fact here.
- If you will customize the CRC rubrics to be more specific to your discipline, course, or assignment, include the customized rubrics here.
- If you will use your own benchmarks or rubrics, include those here.

4. Plans to Use Assessment Results

In this space, use a few sentences to explain how your department anticipates using the information about student accomplishment that this assessment will provide. E.g., will individual instructors review these results to inform their future teaching? Will the department review these results when planning curricular revisions? Does the department use positive assessment results to identify and share pedagogical best practices, or as a component in program reviews?
Appendix D: Core Narrative Template

Core Curriculum Learning Goal Assessment

Department Summative Report

Submit by e-mail to core-requirements@sas.rutgers.edu by December 1, 2022

Department/Program: ________________________________________________________________

Date Range: _______________________________________________________________________

Prepared by: _______________________________________________________________________

The Core Requirements Committee wants to:

- Encourage the discussion and use of assessment results
- Cultivate a culture of reflection on teaching in Core courses
- Encourage departments to think strategically about their participation in the Core
- Learn about and disseminate best practices in Core instruction

To that end, the CRC asks departments filing three-year assessment reports to provide a summative report to supplement the assessment results reported through the Core Reporting System. The CRC is particularly interested in:

- How your department reviews Core assessment results and how you use them, when appropriate, to help inform decisions about courses and curricula.
- How you use Core assessment results to facilitate collaboration and discussion among faculty about teaching and fostering student learning.

If you have any questions about this form or the Core assessment process, please don’t hesitate to contact the SAS Office of Undergraduate Education at core-requirements@sas.rutgers.edu.

Analysis of results

The CRC has provided an Excel spreadsheet with data from the Core reports your department submitted since your last Core assessment cycle. In this space, please identify and discuss any notable patterns in your department’s assessment results.

- What do you learn from these data?
- What are you most pleased about?
- Are there patterns or results that are cause for concern?
- Are there any external conditions that may have affected the results?

The CRC welcomes any additional information or input from faculty that sheds light on the reported assessment data.
Use of results

In this space, please summarize how your department’s Core assessment results have informed departmental practices and decision-making:

- How do faculty in your department communicate about Core teaching and assessment results?
- How have Core assessment results informed teaching practices, in Core courses or elsewhere?
- Have these results informed your department’s approach to offering Core courses, or other decisions about your department’s general-interest (or major/minor) curriculum?
- Was the assessment process useful in articulating pedagogical goals? If so, how?
- Has your department made any plans to adjust course syllabi, assignments used for Core assessment, or other aspects of Core-certified courses as a result of the assessment process? Please highlight any major changes.

Feedback on assessment process

The CRC wants to encourage and support useful assessment practices. If you have any suggestions for making the assessment process more useful, please provide them here.
Appendix E: Checklist for Submitting Proposals to the Core

CHECKLIST FOR SUBMITTING PROPOSALS TO THE CORE

As you’re preparing to propose a course for first-time Core certification or to change an existing Core-certified course, please use the following checklist as a guide as to what the Core Requirements Committee will look for when reviewing your proposal. Please note that these guidelines are in addition to those provided by the Curriculum Committee.

CORE CATEGORY and GOALS
☐ The proposal is requesting certification in no more than two total Core categories.
☐ The proposal is requesting certification for only one Core goal within a single category when students only need to meet one goal in that category.
☐ If the proposal requests certification for the NS-2 goal, it must also be certified for NS-1.
☐ The Core goal is “front and center” in the course description and throughout the course content.
☐ Core logo is on first page and is not stretched out or distorted.

For WCr and WCd certification only
☐ Syllabus demonstrates that writing or communication instruction is provided during class time.
☐ Evidence is provided of multiple writing or communication assignments.
☐ For WCr, course requires multiple revisions, either of a long-term project or in separate assignments.

COURSE-LEVEL INFORMATION
Course accessibility & availability
☐ The course is accessible to a wide range of students.
☐ The Core goals have not already been met by prerequisite courses.
☐ The department commits to offering the course on a regular basis (at least once every two years).
☐ The course will address the Core goal(s) every time it is offered.

Not a Topics course
☐ The course is not a Topics course. (Because Topics courses are designed to change across semesters, they cannot be certified for Core goals. Core-certified courses may also not be cross-listed with Topics courses.)

For cross-listed courses only (same as Curriculum Committee Proposal checklist)
☐ Cross-listing is clearly indicated.
☐ ALL cross-listed courses have a proposal submitted, each referencing the same course numbers to be cross-listed and containing the same content.
A statement is included in proposal about checking with other departments/instructors about related or overlapping courses.

**ASSESSMENT PLAN**

*We recommend using the CRC-prepared [Assessment Plan Template](#). Departments can view their previous assessment reports and assignments [here](#).*

- Assessment is clearly designed to assess student achievement of Core goal.
- Assessment for goal is clearly distinguished from grading scheme.
- Assessment based on a single assignment.
- Assessment evaluates individual students’ achievement of Core goal. Note: If an instructor wishes to use group work for Core assessment, it should be based on a meaningful individual component of group work, and the instructor should include a note in the proposal explaining this to the CRC.
- Assessment occurs once students have had the opportunity to benefit fully from instruction on the Core goal. Typically, this will be near the end of the semester. Note: If an instructor wishes to conduct the Core assessment at an earlier point in the semester, they should include a note in the proposal explaining their rationale and demonstrating that students will have had sufficient exposure to the Core-related material to warrant assessment at that time.
- Assessment is based on an assignment with enough weight in course grade to ensure that students will take it seriously.
- If a single course assignment/exam question is to be used for assessing more than one Core goal, there must be a clearly articulated plan for how each goal will be separately assessed.
- Assessment plan includes rubric (can be based on [CRC-developed rubrics](#)).