



## **Rutgers – New Brunswick Core Curriculum Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Report, 2021–22**

### **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.

The Core operates at a large scale: for 2021–22, 105,194 assessments were conducted with 67,140 students in 563 Core-certified courses. In the aggregate, Core assessment results this year were comparable to pre-pandemic results in 2018–19, the last year that this group of departments reported assessment results.

But it is at the local level, not in the aggregate, that instructors make pedagogical improvements and students learn. Nowhere is this local engagement more apparent than in the 549 distinct, substantive “plans for modification” comments submitted with course-level Core assessment results. Some representative comments are excerpted in the “Measured Changes in Student Performance” section below.

Every department with Core-certified courses is required to report their Core assessment results on a three-year cycle. This year, the Core Requirements Committee (CRC) built on the Core’s existing culture of assessment and improvement with a revised departmental narrative process for the reporting departments. The 10 departmental narratives submitted this year demonstrate strong engagement with Core assessment—and, ultimately, with teaching, learning, and student success.

Notable patterns emerging from this year’s Core assessment include:

- Several departments noticed variation in assessment practices and standards across sections and courses within an individual department. These departments plan to work to ensure more regularity and consistency across sections and courses; this effort will improve the reliability and usefulness of Core assessment results while also ensuring a consistent student experience.
- Departments and instructors continue to note the variable and difficult-to-interpret impacts of the pandemic, including declining results in some disciplines, courses, or sections, but increases elsewhere.
- At the course level, many instructors plan to provide more scaffolding and earlier feedback on student work.

The overwhelming sense one gets from reading course-level plans for modification and departmental narratives is pride in students’ achievement, accompanied by a commitment to continuous improvement. Departments are optimistic and committed to undergraduate education, even in the face of enormous challenges over the past few years, and instructors are happy with the overall level of student mastery of Core goals. This is justified by a high level of aggregate achievement across all Core goals (observable in Figure 1, below). And yet instructors and departments across the Core do not rest on their laurels; they are continuously responding to student needs, innovating, and refining their pedagogy.



## Core Curriculum Overview, Structure, and Assessment Strategy

The Core Curriculum forms the core of a liberal arts and sciences education at a leading 21<sup>st</sup> century public research university. 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 B**<sup>1</sup>, these Core goals are aligned with the University learning goals, and they *are* 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. 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.<sup>2</sup> All of these Schools offer courses certified for the Core, as do the SAS departments.<sup>3</sup>

The Core Requirements Committee (CRC) oversees the Core.<sup>4</sup> 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 otherwise make Core Curriculum policy.

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 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

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<sup>1</sup> See original document online at [http://sas.rutgers.edu/component/docman/doc\\_download/549-core-sas-a-university-learning-goals-aligned](http://sas.rutgers.edu/component/docman/doc_download/549-core-sas-a-university-learning-goals-aligned)

<sup>2</sup> School of Environmental and Biological Sciences Core Curriculum, adopted 2013-14: <https://sebs.rutgers.edu/core/>

<sup>3</sup> 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 Expository Writing; specified mathematics courses; and specified natural science courses. 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.

<sup>4</sup> See page 11 for Core Requirements Committee (CRC) members, AY 2021–22.



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.<sup>5</sup>

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 the 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.

## **2021–22 Results**

### **Changes to Plans, Leadership, or Processes**

*Describe any changes made in the past year to school-wide learning outcome assessment plans or its leadership and articulate any changes in program- or department-wide learning outcome assessment processes. Please explain why any changes were made.*

The Core Requirements Committee oversees 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. This year, representatives from Rutgers Business School, the Edward J Bloustein School of Public Policy, the School of Environmental and Biological

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<sup>5</sup> E.g., Richman, W. A., & Ariovich, L. (2013). All-in-One: Combining Grading, Course, Program, and General Education Outcomes Assessment. National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment Occasional Paper #19.



Sciences, and the School of Communication and Information served on the committee.

This was the first year that the CRC received and reviewed department narratives using the revised department narrative process (template attached as Appendix C) that was introduced in 2020–21. Under this new process, departments reporting Core assessment results in 2020–21 received a spreadsheet summary of their assessment results in summer 2021, and were asked to submit brief narratives analyzing and reflecting on their results by 12/1/2021. The CRC reviewed these reports in early Spring 2022 and sent each department a brief narrative feedback letter providing encouragement, suggestions, and referrals to further resources when needed. Because the narrative reports from 2020-21 were received in late 2021 and reviewed in early 2022, we include a discussion of those analyses when describing the narrative reports. The quantitative data we present here, however, are for the 2021-22 Core assessment results, which departments will write about in their narrative reports due to the CRC in December of 2022.

The CRC’s goal in revising the Core narrative process was to encourage departments to reflect upon, discuss, and use their Core assessment results in a purposeful and productive way. We describe some notable findings about student learning that departments reported in these narratives in the section titled “Measured Changes in Student Performance” below. In general, the narratives described strong engagement with Core assessment—and, ultimately, with teaching and learning.

Many departments shared concrete takeaways about ways they can improve their assessment processes moving forward. A small humanities department, for example, reported plans to encourage more reflection about assessment and teaching practices in future semesters, based on what they observed in their results:

The majority of those who actually completed the core reporting were PTLs and TAs. In addition, I noted that the same instructors were likely to provide core reports for their classes. However, even among these instructors, there seemed at times to be a lack of specific reflections, even any, in their reporting. Going forward, I would encourage all instructors to fill out core reporting form at the end of each semester in detail, regardless of when the larger Core Assessment Report is due to SAS. I would encourage all instructors to take time to write about improvements, unique teaching methods, etc., in regard to their courses.

Several departments mentioned using Core assessment to help them work toward greater consistency. A large social science department, for instance, noted variation in assessment tools and standards:

...we note that some assessment prompts for some classes are comparatively easy assignments while other are more challenging. For example, discussion by the instructors for two large courses, 201 and 111, revealed that the 111 assignment is likely more challenging which would account for better performance in 201. ... We also note that, in some cases (111, for example), different TAs are responsible for assessing different Core goals and TAs impose different standards (despite the use of rubrics)... We will work to impose greater standardization in 111 across TAs doing assessments.



A humanities department also reported:

A point of concern is that there does seem to be some noticeable disparities amongst success rates in meeting core goals, which we suspect has to do with inconsistent application of assessment tools, and perhaps, confusion on the part of some of our instructors about precise methods of assessment.

In its feedback to departments noting this phenomenon, the CRC acknowledged the challenge of working to standardize assessment practices and encouraged departments to continue this effort, both because doing so makes Core assessment findings more reliable, and because doing so can be beneficial to instructors and can ensure a consistent student experience.

Departments also expressed optimism and commitment to undergraduate education, even in the face of enormous challenges over the past few years. A Math & Physical Sciences department notes:

It is very difficult to learn how to improve our teaching while looking at the results from a very abnormal time. Additionally, our department suffered the loss of 5 faculty members during this time while also maintaining the same teaching load. This translated into more work and less time for all our faculty. Despite these hardships, our faculty continue to see only a small number of students out of the total enrolled earning “unsatisfactory” results.

On the whole, even when noting challenges, these narratives reflect thoughtful engagement with assessment, the Core curriculum, and undergraduate education more generally.

### **Changes to Learning Goals**

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

No changes were made to the Core learning goals this year. However, the first class of students subject to the revised core curriculum approved in 2018 and introduced in 2019–20 is now nearing graduation. While there may be a few students completing their degrees under the pre-2018 Core curriculum requirements, the CRC is shifting assessment to focus exclusively on the revised Core.

### **Measured Changes in Student Performance**

*Describe any measured changes in student performance in achieving desired learning outcomes during the past year. Describe which assessment results were used to motivate the changes, especially results from direct assessment of student learning. If applicable to your unit, please include licensing examination results. Please describe how these measured changes will be addressed, either through efforts to improve any declines that have been detected, or to build upon any improvements noticed.*

For AY 2021–22, the CRC requested Core reports from 205 of the 472 Core courses offered Fall 2021, all 46 Core courses offered Winter 2022, and 197 of the 466 Core courses offered Spring



2022. (Summer 2021 reporting was made optional due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.) We received results for 323 courses required to report (72% response rate). Reflecting the CRC’s encouragement of best practices in implementing Core goal assessments, results were voluntarily filed for another 240 courses. The combined enrollment of all courses reporting Core goals assessments was over 67,000 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 105,194 individual student assessment scores ranging across the 19 Core goals in AY 2021–22. The volume of Core reports submitted this year reflects a mature and widespread culture of assessment within the Core curriculum.

**Table 1: Departments and Programs Submitting Core Assessment Reports AY 2021–22**

School	Departments and Programs
<b>SAS</b>	Art History Asian Languages & Cultures Biological Science Cell Biology & Neuroscience Cognitive Science Computer Science English–Literature English Writing Program French Genetics Geography Mathematics Middle Eastern Studies Molecular Biology & Biochemistry Philosophy Physics & Astronomy Political Science Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies SAS Signature Courses
<b>SC&amp;I</b>	Information Technology & Informatics
<b>MGSA</b>	All courses
<b>SEBS</b>	All courses

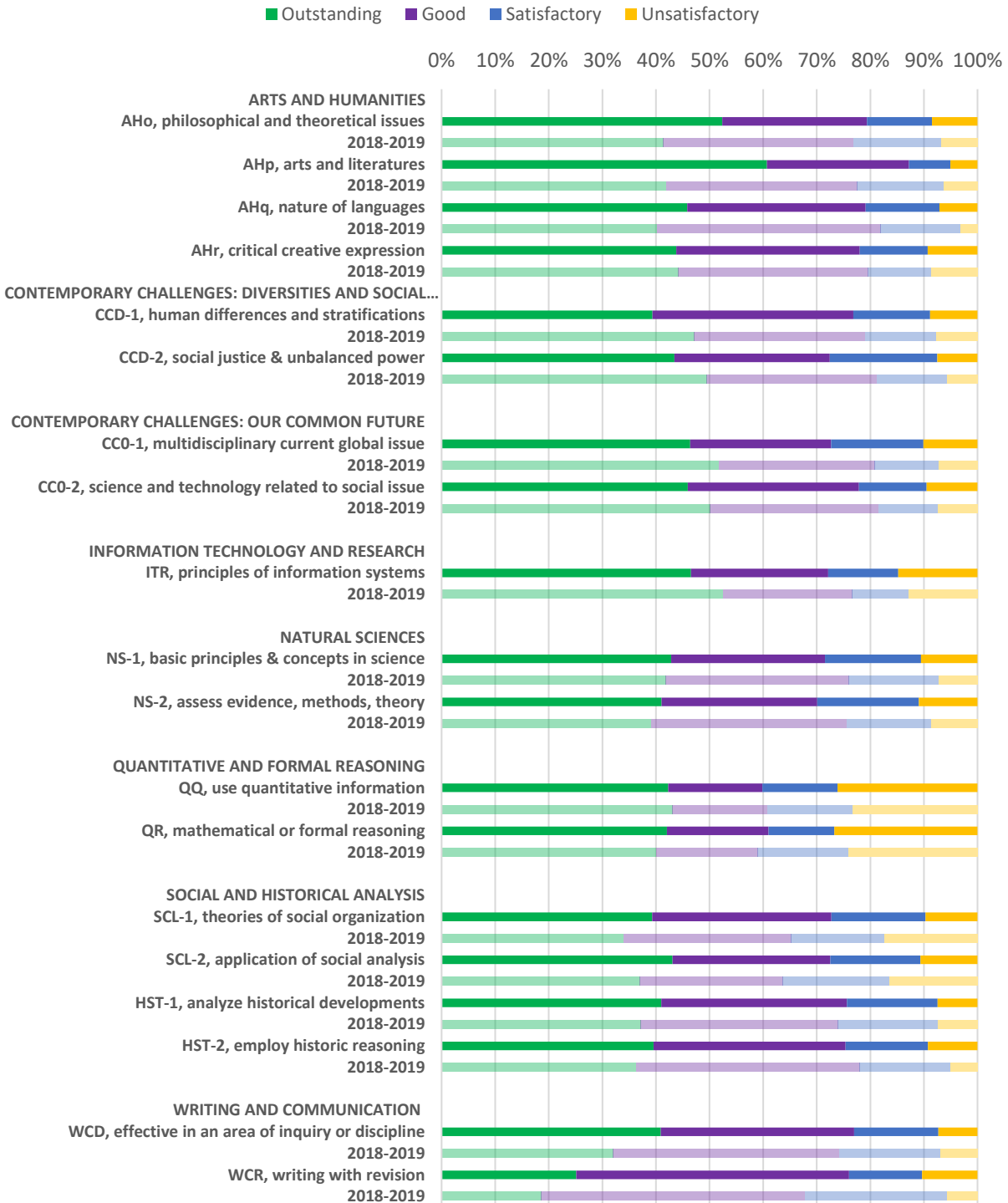
Figure 1 summarizes this year’s assessment results. Because Core assessment results are reported on a three-year rolling cycle, we also include the results from 2018–19, when the same group of departments last reported, for comparison. While there is some variation, there are no major divergences from the 2018–19 results. This year, satisfactory level (or better) achievement ranged from 73 percent in the QR (Mathematical or Formal Reasoning) goal to 95 percent in the AHp (Arts & Literatures) goal. These results are largely similar to those we saw in 2018-2019, but student achievement of the QR (and QQ) goals seems to be lower in this group of departments than in the group of departments reporting in 2020-2021. In the 2020-2021 report, for example, we found that 88 percent of students achieved a satisfactory level or better in QR. We plan to examine these results in more detail over the coming year to try to better understand the reason(s) for these differences.





**Figure 1: Assessment of Core Curriculum, 2021-2022\***  
**With comparison to 2018-19**

\*2021-2022 data are based on 67,140 students enrolled in 563 courses, resulting in 105,194 assessments (some courses assessed students on multiple goals)





Department-level assessment narratives submitted in 2021–22 analyzed results from the 2020-2021 cycle. These narratives noted two major patterns in Core assessment results:

- Overall satisfaction with the level of student mastery of Core learning goals. As one department puts it:

A vast majority of our students have achieved the learning goals specified in the Core Curriculum at levels that are overwhelmingly above satisfactory, with a majority of students being able to complete core assessment assignments at the level Good and Outstanding. These are reasons for celebration.

- Varied and difficult-to-interpret impacts of the pandemic, including declining results in some disciplines, courses, or sections, but increases elsewhere. These results may be impacted by academic integrity issues, adjustments to standards or assessment tools, the impact of the pandemic on students' lives and study habits, innovative pedagogical or assessment strategies—or, most likely, a combination of all of these factors.

In addition to these department-level reflections, each instructor submitting a Core assessment result is asked to articulate any “plans for modification” they may have in light of assessment results in their individual course. In practice, many instructors also reflect on the success of modifications or innovations adopted during the semester. These comments are a treasure trove of on-the-ground insights about teaching and learning across New Brunswick. Some samples from the 2021-22 results:

The peer review enabled students to have an additional opportunity to interact with each other by reading the essays of at least two other students and provided feedback and suggestions for revision. This assignment was, by the results (i.e., the assessments of each student of their peers' essays), successful, as many members of the class provided very thoughtful comments that showed they had carefully read their peers' work and were eager to advise others about improving their work. Students were on the whole receptive of their peers' suggestions. In the future, I wish to continue to use the same format for both assignments and, if possible, to integrate further opportunities for meaningful peer assessment as students seem both enthusiastic about providing such and receiving comments from their peers.

In general, most students performed good or excellent in this final capstone assignment. The area that students seems to struggle most with was knowing how to cite properly. Moving forward, more explicit instructions will be given to students on how to cite their work.

The only issue that I encountered that I plan on improving upon is moderating group work so that the organizing of this project doesn't just fall on one student. I had one group this semester who missed the mark on what was required of the project, but it was clear that they did not take the assignment seriously and use the course project timeline and instead left the work to the last week. In other cases, there are always groups that have lead students who want to be the coordinator of the project; however, I need to work





on making sure the burden of “herding” the other students in the group to do their part in the project.

The assessment results for both Core Learning goals were similar to Spring 2019 (pre-pandemic). The instructor provides more scientific writing exemplars in the early writing lessons to help break down the process of writing a scientific manuscript.... The instructor plans to continue to include additional writing exemplars to the course and provide more frequent instructor feedback on the writing process during the draft stages. The Student Peer Reviews of each manuscript draft will continue as this has been shown to be quite helpful to students.

In the future, I will require students to complete a unit response early in the semester so that I can give them sufficient feedback. Too many students waited to submit the last two unit responses, and it meant they were not absorbing feedback in the same way and did not have enough time to improve. Others only submitted two early in the semester and would have benefited from some perspective.

Addition of more iclicker/in-class problems. Include these in the evaluation of the final grade to improve class participation.... Improve integration of the course material with demonstrations available from the Physics Lecture Hall.

In place of assigning three papers, I will be assigning two papers that will each undergo multiple drafts. This will enable me to guide students through the process of strengthening their arguments.

Many of the students wrote fine, highly readable essays that directly addressed their chosen essay prompt. However, in their current form, the essay prompts allow for too much rote recitation of material from the lectures and accompanying handouts. While I want to encourage the students to consult these materials, I also want to encourage more independent thinking, by asking them to identify their own examples from their everyday language use, or to investigate some supplementary resources. One thought is to ask them to identify at least one new resource while writing their essay, which could serve as a future addition to our course materials.

Compared to the last semester, we intended to add more scaffolding for each assignment, especially for the final project. This allowed students to prioritize and organize their course assignments and as a result students were able to perform better. We intend to continue working on this and add more careful scaffolding to other assignments such as in-class presentations and essays. In addition, reduction of traditional paper and pencil test focusing on grammar and accuracy turned out very well. The decision allowed students to show diverse aspects of their language competence - four skills of listening, reading, writing, and speaking, interactional competence, intercultural competence, sociolinguistic knowledge, etc.

The last time I completed the assessment I found that students were struggling to meet the CCO goal. So, I have been working on scaffolding this learning throughout the



semester as well as in the assignment I used to assess their learning. I am seeing an improvement and plan to continue this work. The achievement of the NS goal looks okay, but I would like to see greater application of the knowledge rather than just learning the definitions/concepts. So, although I certainly saw significant improvement in terms of the biology the students knew, a more careful analysis of their answers suggests that they are very comfortable reciting information back to me but less comfortable applying it. So, I will work on modifying the daily “concept checks” to hopefully help to develop and reinforce this skill.

In both sections of this class we have started a system of assessing students progress at three intervals along the semester (a "pre-test", midterm and final). That way we have been able to examine growth or the lack thereof along the way. The "pre-test" assessment is given at the start of the semester to see what the student is bringing into the the course. The midterm assessment is used to understand where the students are at that point — what may need to be highlighted, reiterated as well as to give a measure going into the final.

Most students were able to show outstanding results on the final project, as it relates to the QQ goal. Two students had an unsatisfactory result. The course will continue to scaffold the final project, by having an intermediate deadline near the midterm, to minimize the amount of students who are not able to satisfactorily complete the project during finals time.

### **Availability of Syllabi and Learning Goals**

*Has the availability of syllabi and learning goals on school, program, and/or departmental web sites been maintained over the past year? If not, please provide an explanation.*

Links to the Core goals are prominent on the main [SAS Office of Undergraduate Education](#) web page, and the Core goals, and the courses that satisfy each of these requirements, are on the [Advising and Academic Services web page](#). 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 the CRC asks that each Core-certified course include the standard wording of the approved Core goals on the syllabus, as well as the [Core Graphic](#).

### **Closing**

The Core Curriculum continues to evolve. In 2018, curricular revisions were implemented, including structural revisions to streamline requirements and new Diversities and Social Inequalities goals. This year, the Core’s assessment processes were revised with the implementation of a new departmental narrative process. The thoughtful narratives submitted this year suggest that this process is achieving its goal of encouraging deep department-level engagement with Core assessment.

The Core Curriculum is structured around the learning goals that are the core of a liberal arts education at a world-class 21<sup>st</sup> century public research university. Through the many disruptions



of the past few years, this structure has supported assessment of student learning, continued engagement in pedagogical and curricular improvement, and, ultimately, a deep commitment to student success.

Submitted on behalf of the Core Requirements Committee by

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**Core Requirements Committee, 2021-22**

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Michael Beals, Mathematics (SAS)

Sharon Bzostek, Senior Associate Dean, SAS Office of Undergraduate Education

Barbara Cooper, History (SAS)

Jerome Flynn, Rutgers Business School (RBS)

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Joseph Williams, Religion (SAS)

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**Student Members**

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## 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. A Hr. 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 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](mailto: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.

### 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](mailto: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](mailto: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.