STUDENT LEARNING AND GENERAL EDUCATION ASSESSMENT REPORT

SPRING 2023

LINDENWOOD UNIVERSITY

FOCUS ON EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATOR

2016 The ILOs are approved, and a new general education assessment process is piloted within Canvas.

2017 The general education assessment pilot is rolled out to all general education courses.

2018 Key performance indicators are developed, and assessment occurs in all general education courses by the respective course instructor.

2019 A Community of Practice model was introduced to provide a focused approach and to improve the reliability of the assessment data. Focus from Fall 2019: Written Communication (ILO 3.1).

2020 The Community of Practice approach from Fall 2019 was replicated to assess Spoken Communication (ILO 3.2) in Spring 2020 and Diverse Perspectives (ILO 2.5) in Fall 2020.

2021 A Community of Practice model continued with assessing Civic Responsibility (ILO 2.6) in Spring 2021 and Critical Thinking (ILO 2.3) in Fall 2021.

2022 A Community of Practice model continued with assessing Adaptive Thinking (ILO 2.2) in Spring 2022 and continued in Fall 2022 with The Year of the Effective Communicator.

2023 Implementation of Graduate Attributes; CoP model continued with assessing Effective Communicator.

2023-2024 CoP will assess Global Advocate, Responsible Citizen, & Ethical Decision Maker.

General Education Assessment at Lindenwood

General education assessment is a key measure of institutional effectiveness. It helps an institution substantiate broad claims it makes about student learning through establishing high-quality outcomes across important domains of student educational experiences and carefully analyzing relevant student work. For example, Lindenwood's Graduate Attribute of Effective Communicator asserts that Lindenwood University students will engage in meaningful discourse in order to persuade audiences, foster understanding and respect, and communicate fluently in multiple media.

Lindenwood University recently adopted Graduate Attributes to replace previous Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs) and began implementing them in Spring 2023. Many of the attributes were discussed in the Communities of Practice from Fall 2021 through Fall 2022. During Spring 2023 the first graduate attribute of Effective Communicator was assessed. The attribute of Effective Communicator was discussed in many communities prior, specifically the Community of Practice for Written Communication. This community first met as a pilot in Fall 2019 and has scored artifacts each year for annual data collections. This gathering three years after the pilot focused on the Graduate Attribute of Effective Communicator as well as artifacts from courses with embedded Writing Center and librarian services specialists. These embedded courses were the Focused Learning Improvement Project (FLIP) created in the Spring of 2020. One other FLIP that was established in the Community of Practice for Diverse Perspectives in Fall 2020, was the development of signature assignments. These assignments align specifically to graduate attribute rubrics and can also encourage student voice and reflection; during Spring 2023 instructors began aligning signature assignments to graduate attributes in courses and they were used for artifacts during this community. As artifacts were identified for this community it was noted that many courses were both 8-week and 16-week courses. Thus the community decided to also look for themes in the data when comparing course length as well as alignment with current rubric, insights on the attribute of Effective Communicator, and overall feedback from student work and signature assignments.

STUDENT LEARNING AND GENERAL EDUCATION
ASSESSMENT REPORT

SPRING 2023

LINDENWOOD UNIVERSITY

FOCUS ON EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATOR

Community of Practice Model of Assessment

A community of practice is a group that has a collective interest in and desire for improvement. This approach to assessment enhances the validity of assessment data, builds an advocacy network across campus, and aligns with national best practices for general education assessment. Six communities of practice have been formed since Fall 2019 focusing on the previous ILOs with two communities joining forces to form the first community for the Graduate Attribute of Effective Communicator.

1. ILO 3.1: Written Communication*

2. ILO 3.2: Spoken Communication*

3. ILO 2.5: Diverse Perspectives

4. ILO 2.6: Civic Responsibility

5. ILO 2.3: Critical Thinking

6. ILO 2.2: Adaptive Thinking

*ILO 3.1: Written Communication + ILO 3.2: Spoken Communication = Graduate Attribute of Effective Communicator

Community of Practice for the Effective Communicator

Robyne Elder, Head of Academic Effectiveness
Liz MacDonald, Director, Library Services
Lauren McCoy, Assistant Professor, English
Aaron Shilling, Analyst, Institutional Research

Lynda Leavitt, Professor, Educational Leadership
Laura Wehmer-Callahan, Senior Instructor, English
Leah Rosenmiller, Manager, Reference Services, Library Services

Scoring Session

Barbara Hosto-Marti, Associate Professor, Political Science
Mitch Nasser, Associate Professor, Educational Leadership
Bob Steffes, Associate Professor, Educational Leadership
Graham Weir, Professor, Educational Leadership
Sherrie Wisdom, Professor, Educational Leadership

Sue Edele, Associate Professor, English
Elizabeth Fleitz, Professor, English
Pete Smith, Instructor, Nursing

STUDENT LEARNING AND GENERAL EDUCATION ASSESSMENT REPORT

SPRING 2023

LINDENWOOD UNIVERSITY

FOCUS ON EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATOR

Methodology

Lower Division Courses: Sample
In April, the Community of Practice convened to score lower and upper-division courses with 8- and 16-week durations. A population of 185 artifacts was sampled from COM 11000 and ENGL 17000. A stratified sample of 40 from COM 11000 and 80 from ENGL 17000 were scored by the community. Half of each sample was pulled from 8-week courses and 16-week courses. Three artifacts were used for norming purposes and 14 of the samples were not accessible, therefore the final sample used was 100.

Upper Division Courses: Sample
A population of 74 artifacts were sampled from EDU 34310, MUS 35600, COM 32700, and EDU 34100. A stratified sample of 45 artifacts was scored by the community. Half of each sample was pulled from 8-week courses and 16-week courses.

Inter-rater Reliability
For inter-rater reliability per criteria, the results showed a percentage of a gap greater than one: 8% for Criteria 1; 7% for Criteria 2; 5% for Criteria 3; 7% for Criteria 4; and 4% for Criteria 5. All artifacts scored with a gap greater than one were scored by a third rater.

The Rubric
The Written Communication Rubric was used previously in four Community of Practice scoring sessions. With the transition to Graduate Attributes, the General Education Taskforce, specifically Sue Edele and John Troy, revised the Written Communication Rubric to align to Effective Communicator.
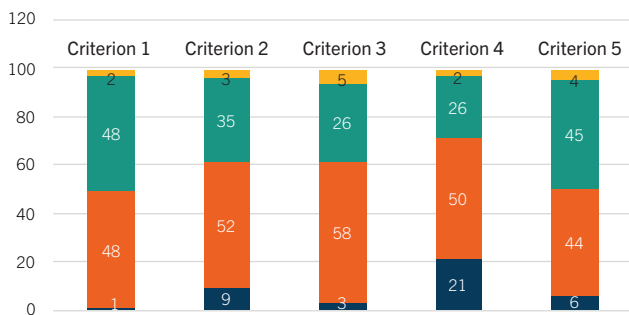
Graduate Attribute Alignment and Assessment Committee Chairs: Robyne Elder, Graham Weir, Renee Porter, Liz MacDonald, Susan Gustafson, Gabriela Romero, Sue Edele

This scoring session was the first use of the rubric. The use of this rubric was more aligned to best practices in that:
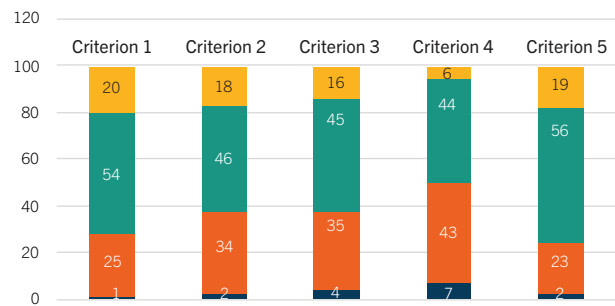
- Use of signature assignments.

- Rubric has been available before community of practice scoring sessions.

- General education courses have rubrics and assignments on syllabi.

- Some upper-level courses have been able to designate attributes and aligning assignments through our mapping process. This is thanks to the hard work of faculty and our Graduate Attribute Alignment and Assessment Committee!
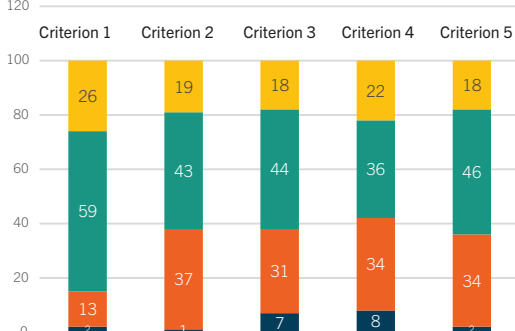

General Education Assessment
Written Communication [ILO 3.1] **Fall 2019**, n=99

	Criterion 1	Criterion 2	Criterion 3	Criterion 4	Criterion 5
Accomplished	2	3	5	2	4
Proficient	48	35	26	26	45
Developing	48	52	58	50	44
Emerging	1	9	3	21	6

General Education Assessment
Written Communication [ILO 3.1] **Fall 2020**, n=100

	Criterion 1	Criterion 2	Criterion 3	Criterion 4	Criterion 5
Accomplished	20	18	16	6	19
Proficient	54	46	45	44	56
Developing	25	34	35	43	23
Emerging	1	2	4	7	2

Written Communication, [ILO 3.1] Annual Data Collection, **Fall 2021**, n=100

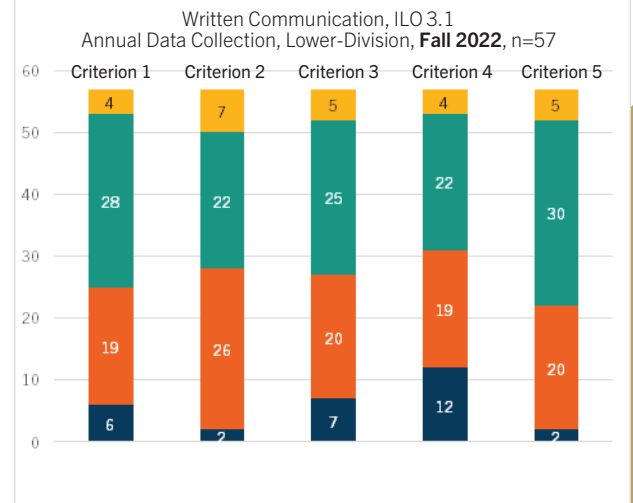|	Criterion 1	Criterion 2	Criterion 3	Criterion 4	Criterion 5
Accomplished	26	19	18	22	18
Proficient	59	43	44	36	46
Developing	13	37	31	34	34
Emerging	2	1	7	8	1

Lower-Division Data: All Courses

Criterion 1-5:
1. Context & Purpose
2. Content Development
3. Genre and Disciplinary Conventions
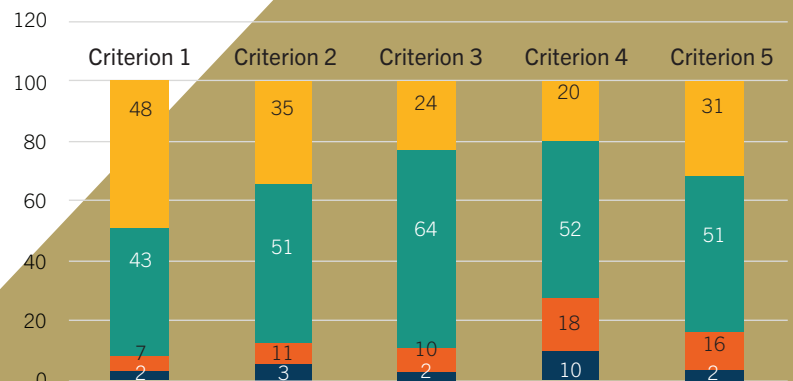4. Sources & Evidence
5. Control of Syntax and Mechanics

Results:
- ■ Emerging
- ■ Developing
- ■ Proficient
- ■ Accomplished

Compare Prior Year Results

Written Communication, ILO 3.1
Annual Data Collection, Lower-Division, **Fall 2022**, n=57

	Criterion 1	Criterion 2	Criterion 3	Criterion 4	Criterion 5
Accomplished	4	7	5	4	5
Proficient	28	22	25	22	30
Developing	19	26	20	19	20
Emerging	6	2	7	12	2

Spring 2023 Results

Lower-Division Data: All Courses (8 & 16 wk)
Effective Communicator **Spring 2023**, n=100

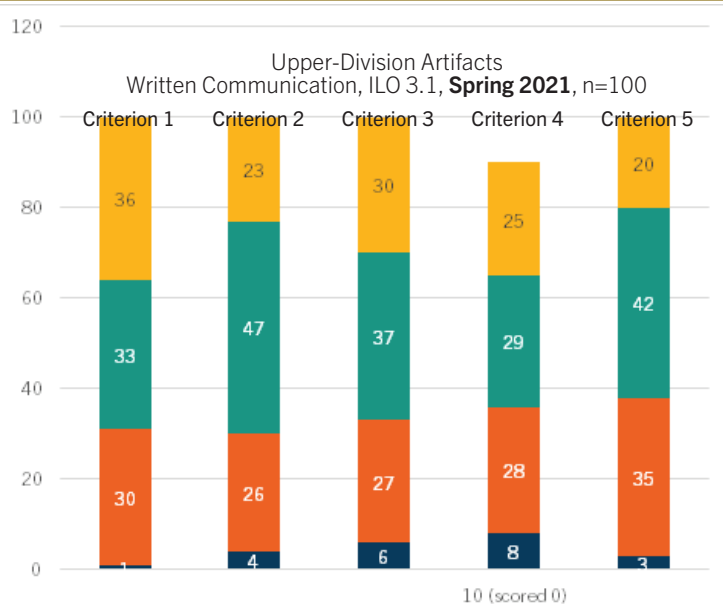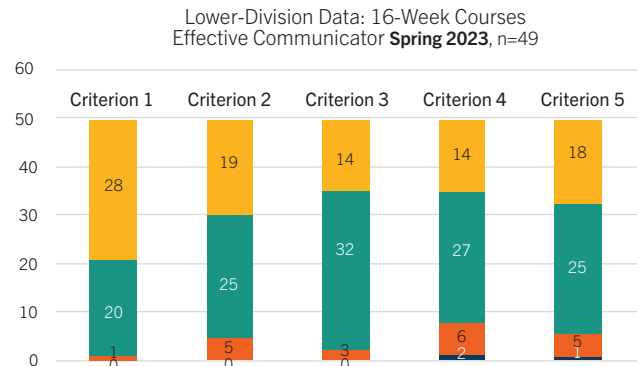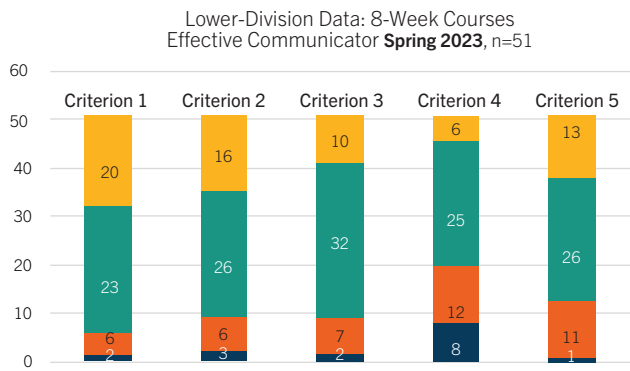|	Criterion 1	Criterion 2	Criterion 3	Criterion 4	Criterion 5
Accomplished	48	35	24	20	31
Proficient	43	51	64	52	51
Developing	7	11	10	18	16
Emerging	2	3	2	10	2

STUDENT LEARNING AND GENERAL EDUCATION
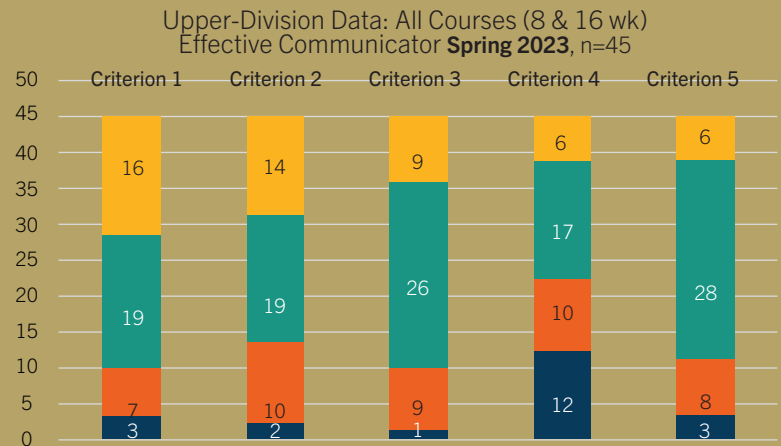## ASSESSMENT REPORT

SPRING 2023

LINDENWOOD
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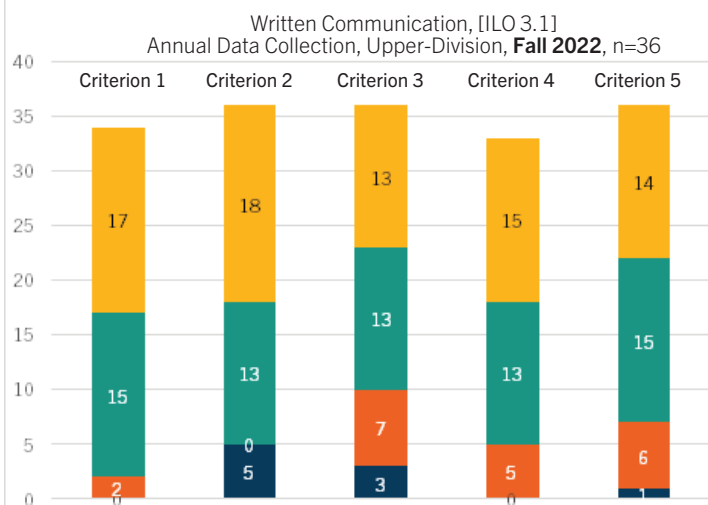## FOCUS ON EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATOR (CONTINUED)

8-week vs. 16-week breakdown of Effective Communication Data in Lower-Division Courses

Lower-Division Data: 8-Week Courses
Effective Communicator **Spring 2023**, n=51

Lower-Division Data: 16-Week Courses
Effective Communicator **Spring 2023**, n=49

Upper-Division Artifacts
Written Communication, ILO 3.1, **Spring 2021**, n=100

Spring 2023 Upper-Division Results

Upper-Division Data: All Courses (8 & 16 wk)
Effective Communicator **Spring 2023**, n=45

Compare Prior Year Upper-Division Results

Written Communication, [ILO 3.1]
Annual Data Collection, Upper-Division, **Fall 2022**, n=36

Upper-Division Data: All Courses

Criterion 1-5:

1. Context & Purpose
2. Content Development
3. Genre and Disciplinary Conventions
4. Sources & Evidence
5. Control of Syntax and Mechanics

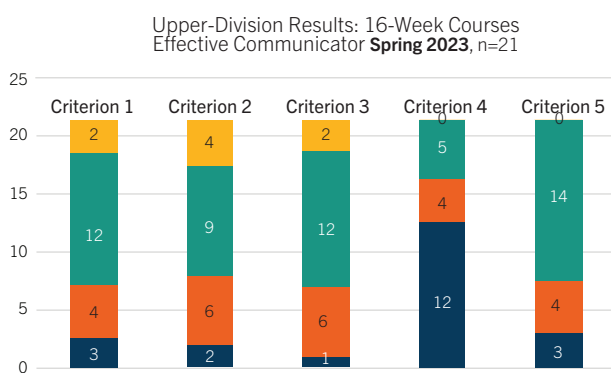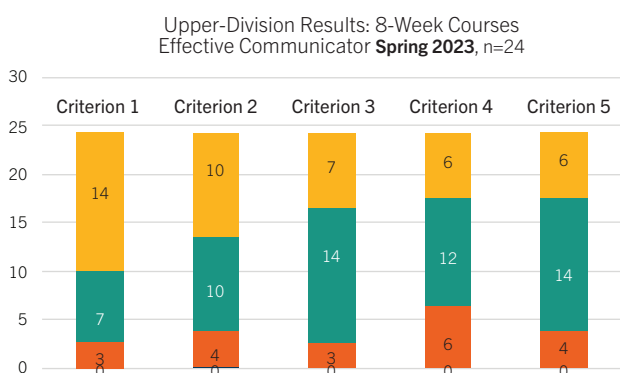**Results:**

- Emerging
- Developing
- Proficient
- Accomplished

STUDENT LEARNING AND GENERAL EDUCATION
ASSESSMENT REPORT
SPRING 2023

LINDENWOOD
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FOCUS ON EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATOR (CONTINUED)

8-week vs. 16-week breakdown of Effective Communication Data in Upper-Division Courses

Upper-Division Results: 8-Week Courses
Effective Communicator **Spring 2023**, n=24

Upper-Division Results: 16-Week Courses
Effective Communicator **Spring 2023**, n=21

Upper Division Data: 8 and 16 Week Courses

Criterion 1-5:
1. Context & Purpose
2. Content Development
3. Genre and Disciplinary Conventions
4. Sources & Evidence
5. Control of Syntax and Mechanics

Results:
- Emerging
- Developing
- Proficient
- Accomplished

CLOSING THE LOOP Broad Themes from Data Workshops

- There seemed to be connections between criteria, 1 and 2 for example.

- For signature assignments that were in the form of presentations, videos seemed to be much more effective; some students may have presented in person, but would be useful to have those filmed or more active presentations from students. Students may also enjoy using the medium of video due to technology use in their everyday lives.

- Students chose topics they were passionate about learning over the semester which made a difference in terms of scoring; alignment of signature assignments to the newly established Effective Communicator rubric also improved scores as well.

- The community enjoyed watching student speeches and reading student essays.

- Not all signature assignments included citations—important to include in signature assignment aligning to Effective Communication.

- Some essays included visuals, such as infographics, which were effective.

- It is important to continue to revise rubric to reflect Effective Communication.

- The community's inter-rater reliability continues to improve; the alignment of signature assignments to the rubric also helped keep scores aligned between raters.

- It is interesting to see the differences of 8-week vs 16-week courses when comparing upper division (8-week yielded higher scores) and lower division (16-week yielded higher scores).

- it is great to see the predominate "proficient" in lower-division courses.

- At the lower level, Criteria 4 & 5 seem to be areas for improvement, especially for 8-week courses. And, at the upper level, Criterion 4 appears to be an area of improvement, especially for 16-week courses.

- Students in lower-level courses may struggle with control of syntax and mechanics a bit more than students in upper-level courses; appears that 8-week students are particularly at risk here.

- Sources and evidence seems to be an issue across the board, for upper and lower.
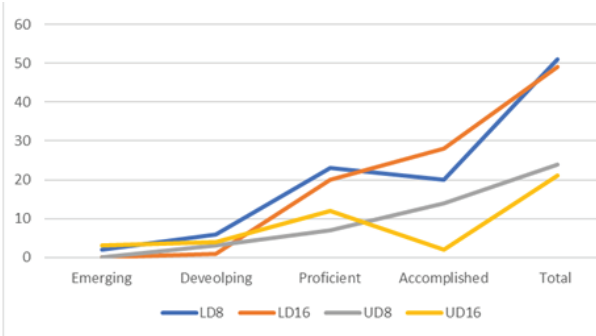
CLOSING THE LOOP (CONTINUED)

Across all criteria there seems to be a trend with fewer artifacts scoring proficient/accomplished in the upper-division courses than the lower-division courses. As students progress toward graduation, they should develop greater mastery in Graduate Attributes. This is particularly noticeable in UD16 courses.

Except criterion 4, there seems to be minor variation between Graduate Attribute development between 16-week and 8-week courses in lower-division courses. Eight-week courses produce slightly more accomplished artifacts. There is major variation in upper-division courses, with 16-week upper-division courses consistently producing accomplished artifacts. This is based on a sample of artifacts but something to continue to monitor or to become a possible FLIP.
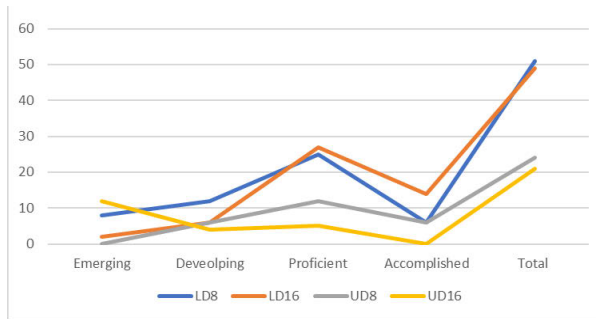
Criterion 1

For criterion 1 lower-division courses show minor variation in attribute development except that LD16 have 22% more artifacts scoring at accomplished.

Criterion 2

Criterion 2 shows even less variation within lower- and upper-division courses, but still shows lower assessments of proficiency and mastery in upper division courses.
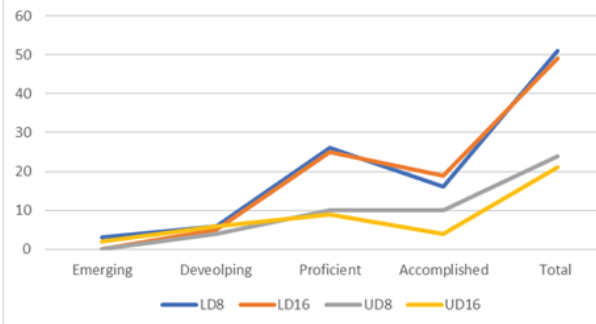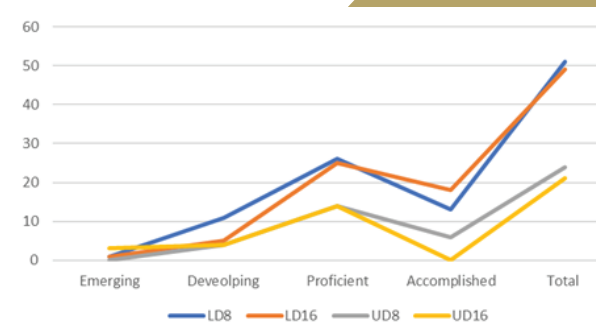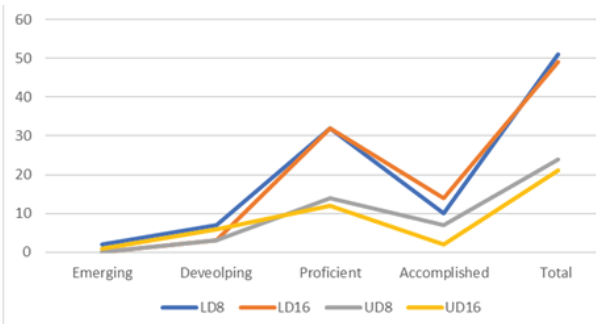

Criterion 3

Similar to Criterion 2

Criterion 4

Criterion 4 shows significant variation especially in upper-division courses. This criterion also had higher inter-rater variation (7%). This may be due to the scholarly purpose of assignments or the required use of citations.

Criterion 5

Similar to 2 and 3

What's Next?

1 The Community of Practice for the Effective Communicator will continue to review the results from the Spring 2023 report as well as the Fall 2022 findings to inform ways to improve Effective Communication.

2 Working with campus partners, a FLIP (Focused Learning Improvement Project) will launch in the fall based on the findings.

3 Assessment of graduate attributes will continue in the fall with the Community of Practice for the Global Advocate.

STUDENT LEARNING AND GENERAL EDUCATION ASSESSMENT REPORT

SPRING 2023

LINDENWOOD UNIVERSITY

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATOR

Student Learning and General Education Assessment Report Sampling Statement

For the assessment of Effective Communicator, a random stratified sample of students was drawn from relevant course rosters for each of the following course types: lower-level 8-week, upper-level 8-week, and lower-level 16-week. This technique allowed the proportions of sample characteristics, including ethnicity, gender, and high school grade point average, to be adjusted to approximate undergraduate census distributions in advance of artifact scoring.

Variable	Sample or Population				
	Lower 8 wk	Lower 16 wk	Upper 8 wk	Upper 16 wk	Census
% Black or African American	16%	10%	13%	4%	14%
% White	58%	68%	61%	74%	63%
% Male	36%	36%	48%	43%	43%
% Female	62%	60%	52%	57%	56%
Mean HSGPA	3.35	3.36	3.20	3.41	3.28

For the upper-level 16-week course type, nearly all students from relevant course rosters were sampled, given a relatively small count of students. Later, the distributions of students across categories for gender, ethnicity, and high school grade point average variables were compared to their respective Fall 2022 undergraduate census distributions to ascertain representativeness. The upper-level 16-week sample had a higher percentage of White students and a lower percentage of African American students than the census population. Also, the sample had a slightly higher grade point average than the census population. There were no meaningful differences for the gender variable.

STUDENT ASSESSMENT SCHOLARS

The Student Assessment Scholars worked on a variety of stakeholder projects and research activities during the Spring 2023 semester. They presented the findings from their feedback gathered from the proposed General Education program, a stakeholder project from Melissa Qualls, at a faculty meeting in April; presented their stakeholder project research findings at the Student Academic Showcase; and discussed these projects and the purpose of their work at Elevate Leadership in February. Further, their work on Aaron Shilling's stakeholder project, sharing and promoting NSSE findings, will be presented at the Assessment Institute in October. The scholars hope to join Robyne Elder and Aaron Shilling for the presentation.

> **Thank you,** Madi Waters, Diego DeGregorio, Carissa Schultz, and Mandy Galli for all of your wonderful work!
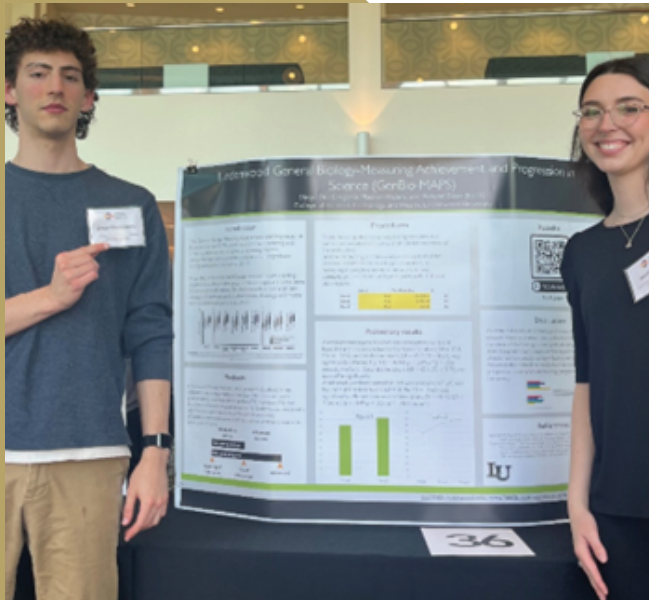

The scholars present at Elevate Leadership

STUDENT LEARNING AND GENERAL EDUCATION
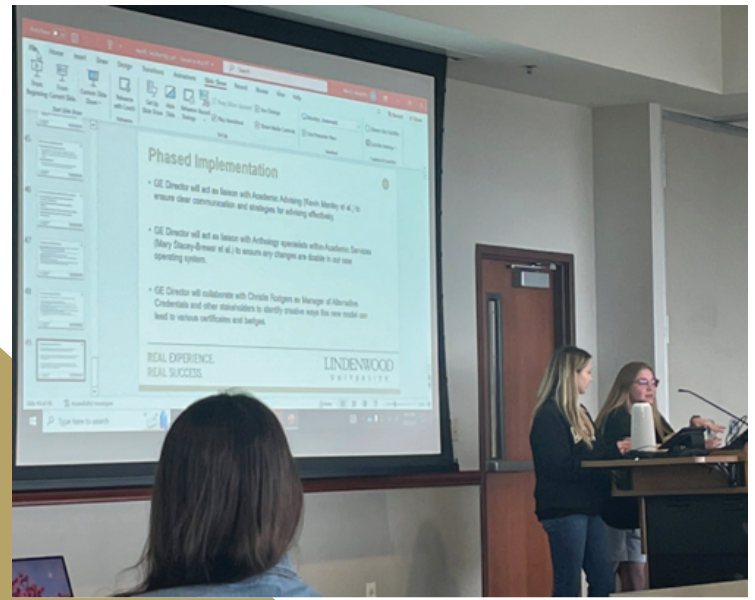## ASSESSMENT REPORT

LINDENWOOD UNIVERSITY

SPRING 2023

Diego DeGregorio and Madi Waters present General Biology Measuring Achievement and Progression in Science (Gen Bio-MAPS), a stakeholder proposal from Dr. Alison Albee, at the Student Academic Showcase

Mandy Galli and Carissa Schultz present student feedback on the proposed General Education program at a faculty meeting in April

Mandy Galli and Carissa Schultz present Feedback for General Education Revision, a stakeholder proposal from Melissa Qualls, at the Student Academic Showcase

✉ **Contact**

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Dr. Robyne Elder, Head of Academic Effectiveness, Academic Affairs