Learning That Counts: The VALUE Proposition
(Valid Assessment of Learning in Undergraduate Education)

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Why Are We Doing This Work?
The Key Elements for a Compelling Quality Assurance Framework Already Are in Hand

- Consensus Aims and Outcomes
- Practices that Foster Achievement AND Completion
- Evidence on “What Works” for Underserved Students
- Assessments That Raise – and Reveal – the Level of Learning
The Recent VALUE Initiative Work

Purpose:
- Sea Change in Assessment
- Reliability
- Validity
- Local value

Policy debate = learning
VALUE Project map: The Multi-State, Minnesota, and Great Lakes Colleges Association Collaboratives
VALUE Initiative to Date:

92 institutions submitted 29,000 student work products for assessment by 400 faculty scorers using VALUE rubrics.
The Heart of the Work
Work that students…

integrate, apply, demonstrate, reflect on, and communicate their cumulative learning in a project or activity lasting at least one semester, in which they grapple with complex questions that matter, and which require input from multiple disciplines and perspectives.
Learners as Agents of their Learning and Identities

EXPERIENCE

- Discover
- Student Success
- Sustainability
- Intercultural Understanding
- Entrepreneurial Capacity
- Research Capacity

BECOME

CONNECT

ENGAGE
Knowing, Connecting, Doing

Work connects students’ pressing questions with action-oriented research and practice, turning nouns (learning outcomes) into verbs (what students can do with what they’ve learned).
Elements of...High Impact Practices

- First Year Seminars
- Research projects
- Creative endeavors
- Practica, internships, service learning--with reflection
  - Assignments connected across a thematic range of courses, co-curricular experiences, and/or community engagement opportunities
- Capstone inquiry experiences
- ePortfolios
Work and Assignments Matter Because . . .

Integrative, applied, and reflective learning are positively associated with student growth in
Critical thinking skills
Moral reasoning ability
Inclination toward lifelong learning

Pascarella and Blaich, “Lessons from the Wabash National Study of Liberal Arts Education,” 2013
Why Work Matters . . .

We need graduates with the capacity and commitment to address complex problems in their personal and civic lives, and in their workplaces.

Students accomplish this work through guided learning curricula and co-curricular experiences, in which they can develop and connect their knowledge and skills across broad and specialized study, and
VALUE Rubric Approach - Assumptions

- Learning is a process that occurs over time
- Student work is representation of student motivated learning
- Focus on what student does in terms of key dimensions of learning outcomes
  - Faculty and educator expert judgment (employer)
  - Results are useful and actionable for improvement of learning
VALUE embraces the variables that other assessment approaches control or eliminate in their consideration of student learning, including:

• Individual, faculty-designed assignments taken off the syllabus and out of the classroom. There are no required common prompts.

• An approach to sampling that is designed to raise up, not wash out, the inherent diversity—from race, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status to the diversity of courses, credit-levels, and disciplinary backgrounds—found on campuses.

• Scorer training sessions that are equal parts calibration to reach a consensus score and a rich faculty development opportunity, and that are open to all faculty whether they are contingent or tenure-track, two-year or four-year, curricular or co-curricular.
VALUE Approach to Assessment

- ASSIGNMENTS
  - faculty designed
- SCORES
  - rubrics
- SCORERS
  - faculty judgment
The Anatomy of a VALUE Rubric

Criteria

Levels

Performance Descriptors
Potential to disaggregate by demographic characteristics
Critical Thinking scores by race

These results are not generalizable across participating states or the nation in any way. Please use appropriately.
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### Assignment Purpose

**INTRODUCE**
Assignment designed to introduce the outcome

**PRACTICE**
Assignment designed to afford student practice with the outcome

**REINFORCE**
Assignment designed to reinforce previously practiced outcome

**MASTERY**
Assignment designed for students to demonstrate level of mastery of the outcome

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**Critically Important to Collect**
Faculty & staff saw the VALUE rubrics as valid.

Percent of scorers who reported Strongly Agree or Agree with each aspect of rubric use

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<th>Aspect</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tr>
<td>Useful for evaluating student work</td>
<td>89%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Scoring levels provided sufficient range</td>
<td>86%</td>
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<td>Descriptors were understandable</td>
<td>83%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Descriptors were relevant</td>
<td>80%</td>
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<td>Encompassed meaning of outcome</td>
<td>75%</td>
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Interrater reliability was moderate to strong.
VALUE Initiative Results for the Refinement Year 75% Completion
Lessons Learned from VALUE

- Context or landscape is important
  - Local data are critical
- Data need deconstruction/disaggregation at local level
- Interdisciplinary/integrative experience is required to attain high quality levels associated with graduation
- What faculty/educators do is foundational to achieve quality student learning
In short, VALUE is inviting the higher education community writ large to engage in a nuanced, robust examination of the quality of student learning and to explore measures of success for all students, regardless of what type of institution they attend.
VALUE Embraces Imperfection as Part of the Learning Process in its three Collaboratives and now – The VALUE Institute