

**Marist College**  
**Core/Liberal Studies Program**  
**Proposal for Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes**

**The Core/LS Program has four basic goals:**

- Writing proficiency – to develop in students the essential skills of written exposition
- Broad-based content exposure – to ensure that our students are conversant with the essential ideals and skills that comprise the disciplines of the Liberal Arts and Sciences
- Intellectual integration – to develop in students the capacity to synthesize and integrate methods and insights from a variety of intellectual disciplines
- Values clarification – to assist and challenge students to become more aware of their own values, discipline related value issues, and the value implications of their choices

These goals are addressed through the different requirements of the Core/LS Program. These requirements include the Foundation Courses, Distribution Courses, the Cultural Diversity Requirement, and the Capping Experience.

The Capping experience reflects the interdisciplinary and integrative intent of the Core/LS Program. This class, housed in students' major areas of study, prompts them to reflect upon the relationship between the fields' methods and content and broader humanistic concerns. In addition, the Capping experience provides students with an opportunity to produce and present a mature and carefully crafted research project.

The Capping experience, as the end phase of the Core/LS experience, provides the best opportunity for determining whether students are achieving the goals of the Core/LS curriculum as a whole. The Capping experience was originally intended to promote the intellectual integration of writing skills, liberal arts exposure, values reflection, and expertise in a major field of study. While it is not necessary that all assignments and exercises in the Capping classes will be designed to fulfill the integrative intent of the Core/LS curriculum, it is nevertheless reasonable to expect that one assignment in each Capping class can be utilized to measure the achievement of the Core/LS goals in terms of student learning.

With this in mind, the Core/LS Committee is looking to the Capping instructors to assist in gathering information about the student learning outcomes in the Core/LS Program by having each Capping instructor craft an assignment that reflects the Core/LS student learning outcome goals. After students complete the designated assignment, Capping instructors would then grade the assignment using a rubric created by the Core/LS Committee. This assessment project would also require an assignment approval process and some record keeping. However, all of the information and material we gather will not only assist Marist in assessing and reflecting on the Core/LS Program, hopefully it will

also assist academic departments as they to continue or begin to collect data regarding student learning outcomes in their areas.

The Core Committee recommends that when possible departments or all Capping instructors in a department collaborate on the construction of this Core/LS student learning assessment assignment. Working together on this assignment will reduce the work of the individual instructor and provide for more communication within the departments about the Capping experience. If it is not possible for an instructor or group of instructors to create an assignment, the Core/LS Committee, in consultation with the appropriate Chair and School Dean, will construct an assignment that Capping instructors can use. Needless to say, it may not be a neat fit and therefore Capping instructor created assignments are encouraged.

Assignment requests should be submitted to the Director of the Core/LS Program, Sally Dwyer-McNulty. Once the assessment assignment is approved by the Core/LS Committee, the Capping instructors should administer and grade the assignment giving the paper or assignment a grade value along with other assessments in the class. In determining the grade of this assignment, however, the Core Committee will require that a rubric is used, which will provide precise indication of what Core/LS goals were and were not met in the students' work. Capping instructors can add to the criteria of the rubric provided by the Core/LS Committee, but they cannot delete Core/LS Committee determined criteria.

At the completion of the semester, Capping instructors should submit:

- 1. A graded rubric for each student in the class**
  - 2. Four assignment samples- one that demonstrates Mastery Level, one that demonstrates Above Satisfactory Level, one that demonstrates Satisfactory Level, and one that demonstrates Unsatisfactory Level of accomplishment. (If you do not have a sample of each, please provide a sample of the levels you do have.)**
  - 3. A Grading Rubric Tally Sheet showing the overall performance of the whole class in the Core/LS competency areas**
- \* The privacy of the students and professors will be maintained.**

This evaluation is not an assessment of professors or of the Capping courses. Rather, it is an assessment of Marist's success at meeting the goals it has set out for itself regarding the Core/LS curriculum by measuring student learning.

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