

# General Education Assessment Report 2017

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Images of SLCC student ePortfolios used with permission.

# Contents

| <b>Topic</b>                   | <b>Page</b> |
|--------------------------------|-------------|
| Assessment Methods             | 3           |
| Effective Communication        | 4           |
| Quantitative Literacy          | 12          |
| Critical Thinking              | 15          |
| Community and Civic Engagement | 19          |
| Working with Others            | 21          |
| Information Literacy           | 22          |
| Computer Literacy              | 26          |
| Lifelong Wellness              | 27          |
| Acknowledgements               | 28          |

# Assessment Methods

Electronic portfolios are increasingly being used in higher education to integrate and showcase student learning.<sup>1</sup> Portfolios also allow institutions to use student artifacts and reflection to directly assess the efficacy of academic programs. This assessment examines whether the General Education program offers students sufficient opportunities to progress toward Salt Lake Community College's (SLCC) General Education learning outcomes, and whether graduating students meet those learning outcomes.

Our Institutional Research Office pulled a sample of 160 students who graduated in May 2017 and who did not transfer in any external credits for their A.A. or A.S. degrees. This ensured that we were looking at students who completed all of their General Education coursework at SLCC instead of at other institutions. From that pool of 160 students, we selected the first 100 students (50 male, 50 female) who had ePortfolios accessible in our Banner system. This collection of 100 ePortfolios from graduating A.A. and A.S. students became the sample for the assessment study.

We assessed General Education outcomes using a holistic ePortfolio rubric that is an amalgamation of our own internal measures and modified components of the Valid Assessment of Learning in Undergraduate Education (VALUE) rubrics developed by the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U).

We assembled 2-person assessment teams (see page 28 for names of assessors) to examine all 100 ePortfolios. Each assessment team came to a consensus rating for every ePortfolio on all of the rubric criteria for which they were responsible, before moving on to the next ePortfolio. The Writing Across the College Coordinator organized reviewers from the English Department to assess written artifacts for the effective communication learning outcome.

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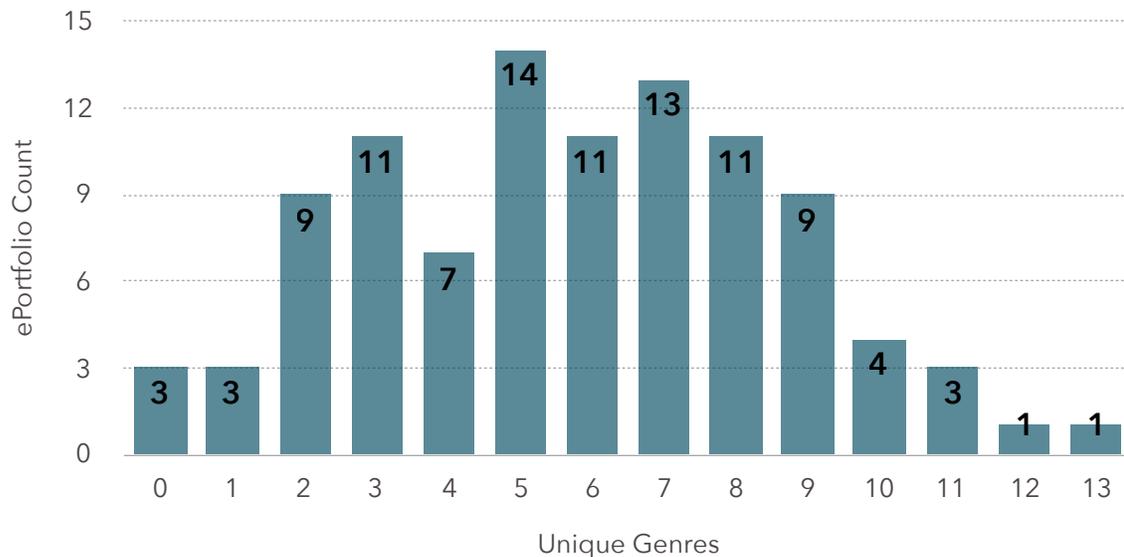
<sup>1</sup> John C. Ittelson, Helen L. Chen, and Tracy Penny. Light, *Documenting learning with ePortfolios: a guide for college instructors* (John Wiley & Sons, 2012). Bret Eynon and Laura M. Gambino, *High-impact ePortfolio practice: a catalyst for student, faculty, and institutional learning* (Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing, 2017). Candyce Reynolds, *Leveraging the ePortfolio for integrative learning: a faculty guide to classroom practices for transforming student learning* (Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing, 2014).

# Effective Communication

*Students communicate effectively. This includes developing critical literacies—reading, writing, speaking, listening, visual understanding—that they can apply in various contexts; organizing and presenting ideas and information visually, orally, and in writing according to standard usage; understanding and using the elements of effective communication in interpersonal, small group, and mass settings.*

We operationalized effective communication in a number of ways. The first thing that interested us is whether students are getting ample opportunities to write in multiple genres. The English Department teams examined the ePortfolios in the sample and counted the number of distinct genres of writing in each.<sup>2</sup> Collectively, the 100 ePortfolios averaged 5.1 different genres each. Figure 1 breaks down the sample of ePortfolios by the number of genres represented. It depicts a fairly normal distribution, with 67% of the sampled ePortfolios containing five or more distinct genres. We conclude that the majority of SLCC's graduates are getting sufficient experience writing in a variety of genres.

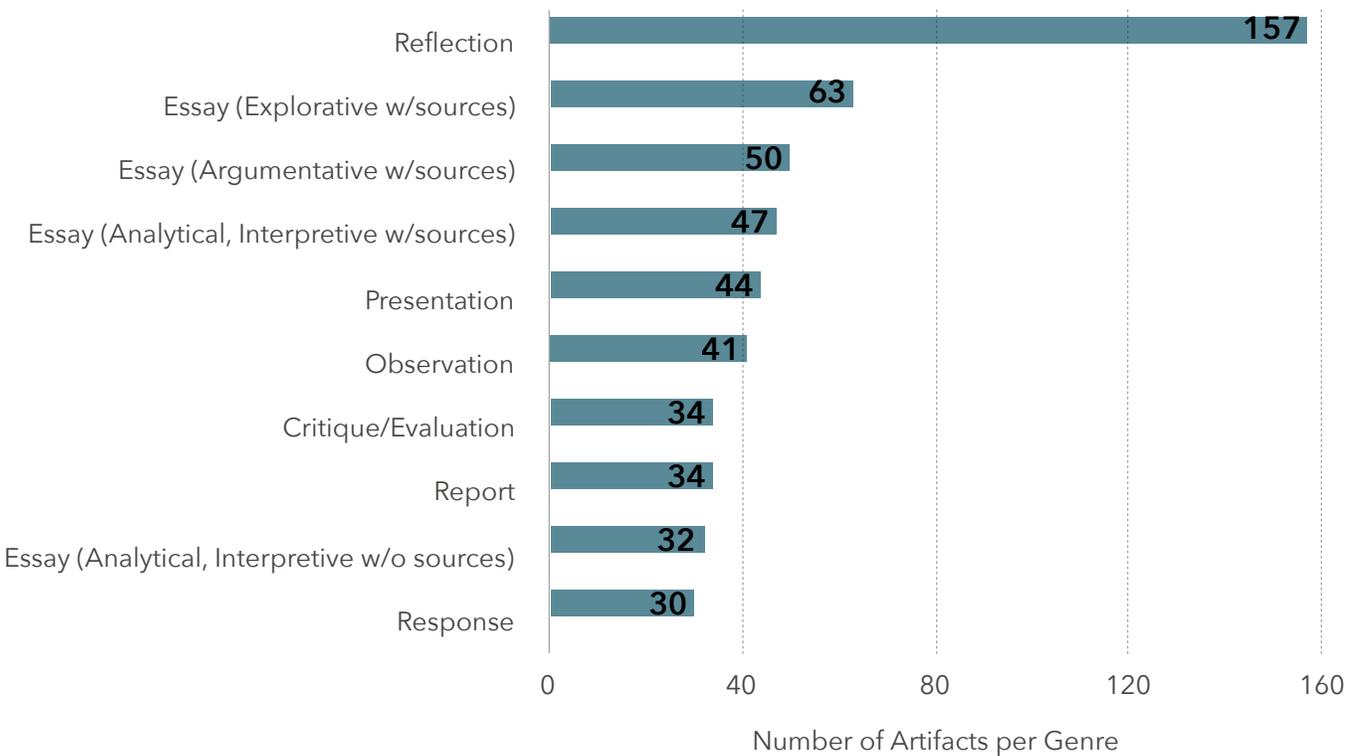
**Figure 1: Count of ePortfolios with Various Numbers of Unique Genres. (n=100)**



<sup>2</sup> The following 35 genres were identified: Abstract, Annotated Bibliography, Case Study, Civic, Code, Critique/Evaluation, Essay (Analytical, Interpretive w/o sources), Essay (Analytical, Interpretive with sources), Essay (Argumentative w/o sources), Essay (Argumentative with sources), Essay (Explorative w/o sources), Essay (Explorative with sources), Ethnography, Exam, Fiction/Creative Non-Fiction, Journalism, Lab Report, Legal, Log, Medical, Notes, Observation, Other, Plan, Presentation, Profile, Proposal, Reflection, Report, Research, Response, Speech, Summary, Technical, Web (e.g. site, page, blog), and Workplace.

Figure 2 depicts the ten most common genres in the sampled student portfolios. Reflection (n=157) is the genre with the highest number of artifacts. This is interesting because the reviewers were looking specifically for signature assignments. We suspect that a number of faculty are using reflection as a signature assignment. Our strong preference would be for faculty to have students showcase at least one signature assignment relevant to course learning outcomes (papers, presentations, projects, reports, experiments, art work) and include a reflection to accompany that assignment.

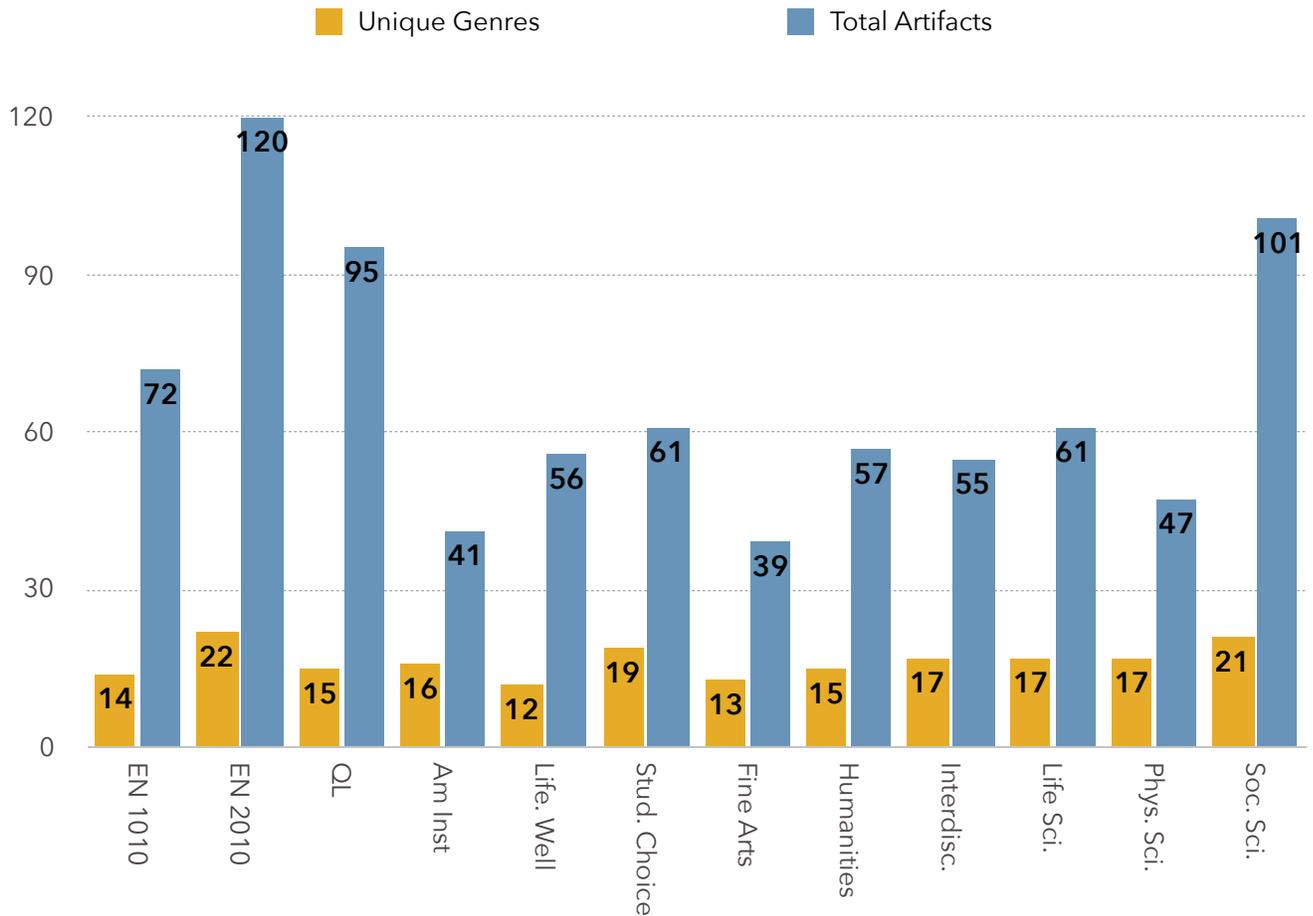
**Figure 2: Ten Most Common Genres of Writing in Student ePortfolios.**



The other most common genres represented in student ePortfolios are what we might expect from the range of General Education courses: essays of various kinds, presentations, observations, reports, etc. The “profiles” genre narrowly missed the top ten list. This ePortfolio assessment illustrates a strength of our General Education program—namely, that faculty across the disciplines are making considered judgments and assigning a variety of writing projects that best fit their specific courses. Students are well-served by that variety.

This year the reviewers also logged the course location—and therefore the location in our General Education program—where they found student writing. Figure 3 depicts those results. We can see that the English Composition, Math (QL) and Social Science courses are accounting for nearly half (48%) of the written artifacts in student ePortfolios. For courses in other areas of General Education, the data suggests that faculty may not be placing enough emphasis on students showcasing signature assignments in their ePortfolios. This is particularly the case for courses in American Institutions, Fine Arts, and Physical Sciences. The relatively small number of unique genres in Lifetime Wellness courses may be indicative of the over-reliance on reflection as a signature assignment in those courses.

**Figure 3: Unique Genres and Total Artifacts Per General Education Area**



We were also interested in the quality of student writing. In examining the AAC&U VALUE rubric for written communication, we determined that two elements of student writing are readily assessable via artifacts in student ePortfolios:

- whether students effectively employ genre conventions, and
- whether student writing is mechanically sound.

Once we had identified the range of genres in the student portfolios, we selected several genres for which we felt genre conventions were clear regardless of the class and assignment.

Our Writing Across the College Director modified the genre conventions portion of the written communication VALUE rubric to create a specific rubric for each genre. She also created a rubric to evaluate the organization and presentation of essays. The reviewing teams scored the artifacts of student writing according to their performance levels. As Table 1 (pages 8) indicates, students generally understand and use genre conventions in their writing. Between 50% and 74% of the artifacts in this sample were placed in the top two performance levels. The highest mean score was for critique/evaluation (mean=2.91), and the lowest was for summaries (mean=2.10). Among the (small sample of) summaries, 40% of the artifacts fell into the bottom performance level. Table 2 on page 9 centers on an analysis of 144 essays with sources. More than 8 out of 10 essays scored in levels 3 and 4 of the rubric for organization and presentation.

The reviewers then applied the syntax and mechanics portion of the VALUE rubric to three of the genres of student writing. Table 3 on page 10 presents the results, and they indicate that—regardless of genre—the majority of student writing uses language that “generally” or “skillfully” conveys meaning and is mostly or completely free of mechanical errors. Mean scores were highest for critiques/evaluations (mean=2.88) and lowest for summaries (mean=2.60).

**Table 1: Percentage of Assignments' Scores for Effectively Employing Genre Conventions.**

| <b>Performance Levels</b>                    |  |   |  |   |
|--|--|---|--|---|
|  | <b>1</b>   | <b>2</b>  | <b>3</b>   | <b>4</b>  |
|  | Presents an inadequate account of the subject. Does not connect the subject to a larger context or purpose. Confused use of observation, research, quotation, and summary strategies. Organization distracts from clarity. | Presents an account that does not connect the subject to a larger context or purpose. Inconsistently uses observation, research, quotation, and summary strategies to maintain interest. Organization occasionally detracts from clarity. | Presents an engaging account that includes minimal connection between the subject and a larger context or purpose. Uses observation, research, quotation, and summary strategies to maintain interest level. Organization does not detract from clarity.   | Presents a compelling and engaging account that includes meaningful connection between the subject and a larger context or purpose. Uses observation, research, quotation, and summary strategies to maintain high interest level. Organization contributes to clarity and engagement.                                  |
| <b>Profile (n=28, mean=2.75)</b>             | <b>4%</b>  | <b>29%</b>  | <b>57%</b>   | <b>11%</b>  |
|  | References a text or event but does not describe the overall point. Uses quotations or repeats necessary details. Includes own opinion.  | Describes a text's or event's overall point, but goes no more in-depth. Includes unnecessary detail or quotations. May refer to source material in a limited manner.  | Consistently conveys key points of a text or experience without much detail or quotations. Refers to source material in an observational or reporting manner without inserting own opinion.  | Uses fluid sentence and paragraph structures to convey the key points of a text or experience without unnecessary detail or quotations. Consistently refers to source material in an observational or reporting manner without inserting own opinion.   |
| <b>Summary (n=10, mean=2.10)</b>             | <b>40%</b>   | <b>10%</b>  | <b>50%</b>   | <b>0%</b>   |
|  | C/E summarizes source inadequately or inaccurately. Provides own opinion without rationale. No referrals to larger context, purpose, or discussion. Organization is confusing. Style/register is inconsistent.             | C/E summarizes source inadequately for critique of it. Provides own opinion with minimal rationale. No referrals to larger context, purpose, or discussion. Organization is inconsistent. Style/register is inconsistent.                 | C/E ethically summarizes source and follows most summary conventions. Provides own opinion/perspective on source that includes claims and rationale. Limited referrals to larger context, purpose, or discussion. Organization does not detract from clarity. Style/register is mostly appropriate for the writing task. | C/E ethically summarizes source and follows all summary conventions. Provides own opinion/perspective on source that logically builds from claims, reasoning (optional: evidence). Skillfully situates c/e within larger context, purpose, or discussion. Style/register consistently appropriate for the writing task. |
| <b>Critique/Evaluation (n=34, mean=2.91)</b> | <b>3%</b>  | <b>24%</b>  | <b>53%</b>   | <b>21%</b>  |

**Table 2: Percentage of Essay Assignments' Scores for Organization and Presentation.**

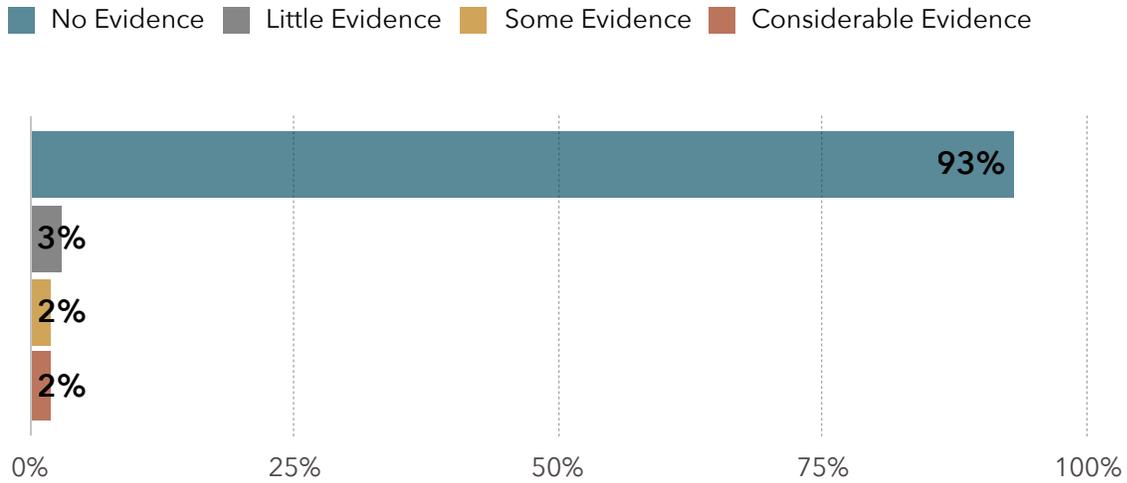
| <b>Performance Levels</b>                     |  |   |  |   |
|---|--|---|--|---|
|   | <b>1</b>   | <b>2</b>  | <b>3</b>   | <b>4</b>  |
| <b>Organization</b>                           | Organizational structure may not include one of the essay "chunks": introduction, body, conclusion; paragraphs within sections not divided logically (may be a single paragraph or a series of disconnected paragraphs); no transitions present. | Organizational structure includes all essay "chunks": introduction, body, conclusion; paragraphs within sections are inconsistently divided or ordered; none, or very few, transitions present. | Competently organized into introduction, body, and conclusion chunks; paragraphs are mostly well developed and logically divided (some paragraphs may need dividing); formulaic transitions are present though are not consistent. | Sophisticated organization within introduction, body, and conclusion chunks; paragraphs are consistently well developed and logically divided; meaningful transitions are consistently present. |
| <b>Essays with Sources (n=144, mean=3.04)</b> | <b>1%</b>  | <b>15%</b>  | <b>63%</b>   | <b>21%</b>  |
| <b>Presentation</b>                           | Presentation impedes comprehension; confusing layout; confusing font choices; images not connected to text and not logically placed; no attributions.  | Inconsistent presentation: (e.g. crowded or overly-spaced layout); distracting font choices; images either not logically connected or placed in text; attributions typically not present.       | Competent presentation: consistent layout; non-distracting font choices, images logically connected to text and placed, may be inconsistently attributed.  | Sophisticated presentation; clean and consistent layout; demonstrates specific format; compelling font choices; images contribute to the text, are strategically placed and attributed.         |
| <b>Essays with Sources (n=144, mean=3.01)</b> | <b>0%</b>  | <b>15%</b>  | <b>69%</b>   | <b>16%</b>  |

**Table 3: Percentage of Assignments' Scores for Syntax and Mechanics in the VALUE Rubric Performance Levels.**

|  | <u>Performance Levels</u>  |   |  |   |
|--|--|---|--|---|
|  | <b>1</b>   | <b>2</b>  | <b>3</b>   | <b>4</b>  |
|  | Uses language that sometimes impedes meaning because of errors in usage. | Uses language that generally conveys meaning to readers with clarity, although writing may include some errors. | Uses straightforward language that generally conveys meaning to readers. The language in the portfolio has few errors. | Uses graceful language that skillfully communicates meaning to readers with clarity and fluency, and is virtually error-free. |
| <b><u>Genres</u></b>                                 |  |   |  |   |
| <b>Profile</b><br>(n=28, mean=2.79)                  | <b>7%</b>  | <b>21%</b>  | <b>57%</b>   | <b>14%</b>  |
| <b>Summary</b><br>(n=10, mean=2.60)                  | <b>0%</b>  | <b>40%</b>  | <b>60%</b>   | <b>0%</b>   |
| <b>Critique/<br/>Evaluation</b><br>(n=34, mean=2.88) | <b>0%</b>  | <b>29%</b>  | <b>53%</b>   | <b>18%</b>  |

Finally, the reviewers examined the amount of evidence in this sample of ePortfolios pertaining to oral communication. Figure 4 on the next page shows that 93% of the ePortfolios had no evidence of oral communication, which is not a good showing. With so few ePortfolios containing evidence of oral communication, we did not spend time evaluating the quality of student oral presentations. If we want to do so in the future, we may create a separate sample of ePortfolios from students who took COMM 1020–Principles of Public Speaking—so we have an adequate sampling of student oral presentations.

**Figure 4: Percentage of ePortfolios with Various Levels of Evidence that Students Communicate Orally.**

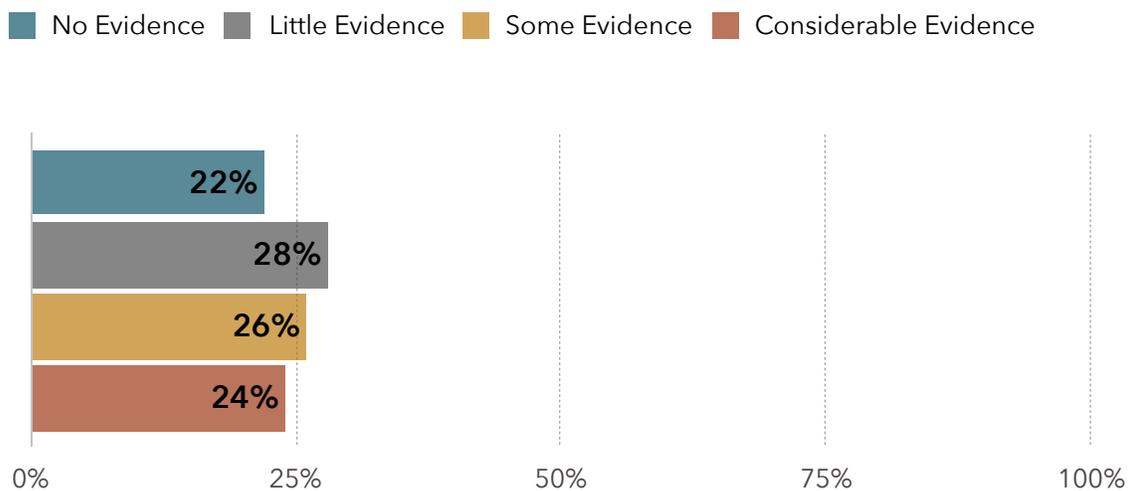


# Quantitative Literacy

*Students develop quantitative literacies necessary for their chosen field of study. This includes approaching practical problems by choosing and applying appropriate mathematical techniques; using information represented as data, graphs, tables, and schematics in a variety of disciplines; applying mathematical theory, concepts, and methods of inquiry appropriate to program-specific problems.*

As with Effective Communication, we started our analysis looking at the amount of evidence in student ePortfolios indicating that they have been given sufficient opportunities in their assignments to use or interpret information represented as data, graphs, tables, and schematics in a variety of disciplines. Figure 5 shows that 22% of the ePortfolios in the sample had no such evidence, which is down from 32% last year. Twenty-eight percent had little evidence—meaning that they contained only one artifact in which students used or interpreted quantitative information. Twenty-six percent of the ePortfolios had “some evidence,” or two artifacts, and 24% contained “considerable evidence,” indicating the reviewers counted three or more artifacts. This was an improvement over last year, when only 7% of the ePortfolios had considerable evidence.

**Figure 5: Percentage of ePortfolios with Various Levels of Evidence that Students Use or Interpreted Information Represented as Data, Graphs, Tables, and Schematics.**



The reviewers then looked at students' ability to interpret quantitative information presented to them in various forms. They found that the 100 ePortfolios in the sample collectively contained 81 artifacts in which students were attempting to interpret quantitative information. Table 4 shows that in 78% of the artifacts students provided

accurate explanations of the information. Twenty-one percent of the artifacts presented only a “somewhat accurate explanation” of the data, but had mistakes related to computation or units of measure. One percent of the artifacts indicated that the students were drawing incorrect conclusions about what the data meant.

**Table 4: Percentage of Artifacts (n=81) with Scores for the Interpretation of Quantitative Data in the VALUE Rubric Categories. (mean = 2.86)**

| 1  | 2  | 3  | 4  |
|--|--|--|--|
| Attempts to explain information presented in mathematical forms, but draws incorrect conclusions about what the information means. | Provides somewhat accurate explanation of information presented in mathematical forms, but occasionally makes minor errors related to computations or units. | Provides accurate explanations of information presented in mathematical forms. | Provides accurate explanations of information presented in mathematical forms. Makes appropriate inferences based on that information. |
| 1%   | 21%  | 68%  | 10%  |

Another dimension of quantitative literacy is the ability to manipulate quantitative information from one form to another, such as converting a table of data to a graph or chart. The reviewers identified 81 artifacts in the portfolio sample in which students were asked to manipulate quantitative data. Table 5 on the next page indicates that only 2% of the artifacts contained manipulations that were inaccurate or inappropriate. Seventeen percent of the artifacts represented manipulations that were partially inaccurate or inappropriate. Fully 80% of the artifacts indicated that students competently or skillfully converted the “relevant information into an appropriate and desired mathematical portrayal.”

The VALUE rubric for quantitative literacy also has a dimension assessing students’ ability to communicate quantitative evidence in support of an argument or the purpose of their work. The reviewers identified 84 artifacts where students were given this task. Table 6 on the following page shows that in 2% of the artifacts, students did not “provide adequate explicit numerical support” and in 35% of the artifacts students did “not effectively connect [quantitative evidence] to the argument or purpose of the work.” In 45% of the assignments students connected the quantitative evidence to the argument or purpose of their work, albeit with some elements that were ineffective or uneven. In 18% of the artifacts students very effectively communicated quantitative evidence in connection with their argument or the purpose of their work.

**Table 5: Percentage of Artifacts (n=81) with Scores for the Manipulation of Quantitative Data in VALUE Rubric Categories. (mean = 2.88)**

| <b>1</b>   | <b>2</b>  | <b>3</b>  | <b>4</b>   |
|--|---|---|--|
| Completes conversion of information but resulting mathematical portrayal is inappropriate or inaccurate. | Completes conversion of information but resulting mathematical portrayal is only partially appropriate or accurate. | Competently converts relevant information into an appropriate and desired mathematical portrayal. | Skillfully converts relevant information into an insightful mathematical portrayal in a way that contributes to a further or deeper understanding. |
| <b>2%</b>  | <b>17%</b>  | <b>70%</b>  | <b>10%</b>   |

**Table 6: Percentage of Artifacts (n=84) with Scores for the Communication of Quantitative Data in the VALUE Rubric Categories. (mean = 2.79)**

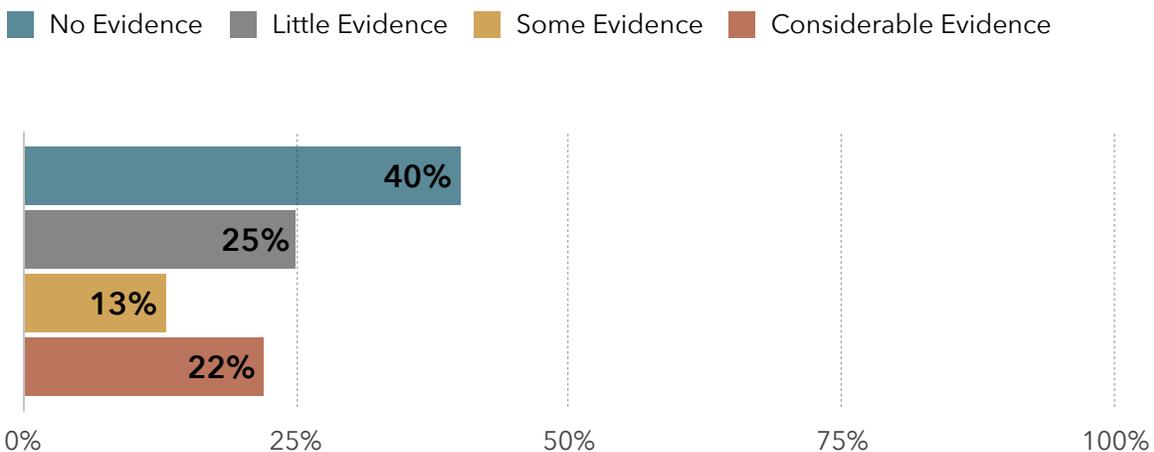
| <b>1</b>   | <b>2</b>   | <b>3</b>  | <b>4</b>   |
|--|--|---|--|
| Presents an argument for which quantitative evidence is pertinent, but does not provide adequate explicit numerical support. | Uses quantitative information, but does not effectively connect it to the argument or purpose of the work. | Uses quantitative information in connection with the argument or purpose of the work, though data may be presented in a less than completely effective format or some parts of the explication may be uneven. | Uses quantitative information in connection with the argument or purpose of the work, presets it in an effective format, and explicates it with consistently high quality. |
| <b>2%</b>  | <b>35%</b>   | <b>45%</b>  | <b>18%</b>   |

# Critical Thinking

*Students think critically. This includes reasoning effectively from available evidence; demonstrating effective problem solving; engaging in reflective thinking and expression; demonstrating higher-order skills such as analysis, synthesis, and evaluation; making connections across disciplines; applying scientific methods to the inquiry process.*

We started our examination of critical thinking among SLCC's AS/AA graduates by determining whether they are getting sufficient practice dealing with unstructured problems. One team of reviewers counted signature assignments that were problem-based, or that did not have a "right" answer. We can see from Figure 6 that 40% of the ePortfolios had no evidence of the students grappling with unstructured problems, and that is of concern. A quarter (25%) had "little evidence"—or one unstructured problem. An additional 13% of the ePortfolios contained two unstructured problems as assignments—or "some" evidence—and 22% had "considerable" evidence, or 3 or more such assignments.

**Figure 6: Percentage of ePortfolios with Various Levels of Evidence that Students Deal with Unstructured Problems.**

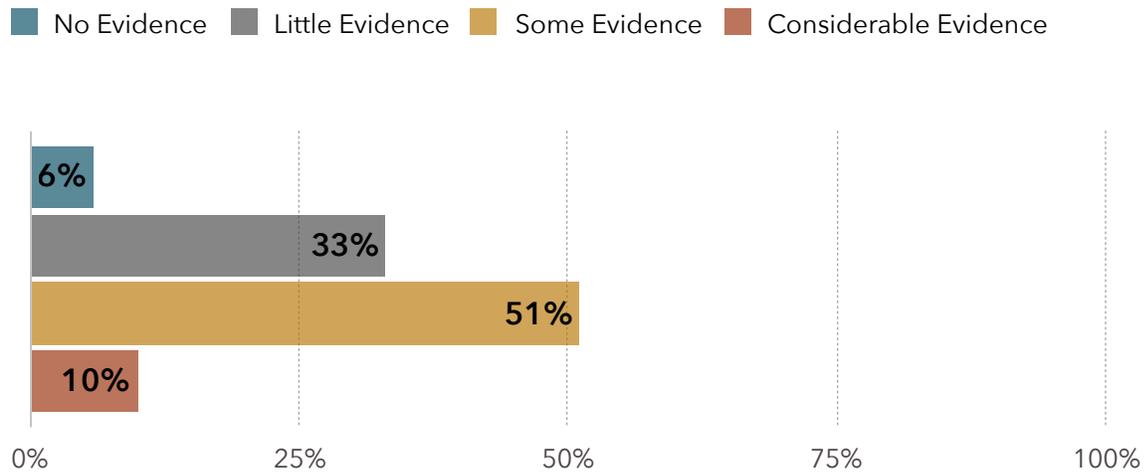


An additional aspect of critical thinking that we can capture in ePortfolios is student reflective thinking and expression. Each General Education course should ask students to reflect on their learning. This may take various forms, but should generally ask students to place their work and learning—or themselves as learners—in broader intellectual or life contexts.

Figure 7 on the next page shows that 6% of the ePortfolios in the sample had no reflection. Thirty-three percent of the ePortfolios had a little evidence—meaning one to five reflections—and 51% had some evidence, or 6-12 reflections. Ten percent of the

ePortfolios had 13 or more instances of reflection. It appears that reflective practice is beginning to be established as a cultural norm in General Education at SLCC, but we look forward to additional progress being made in this area.

**Figure 7: Percentage of ePortfolios with Various Levels of Evidence that Students Engage in Reflection.**

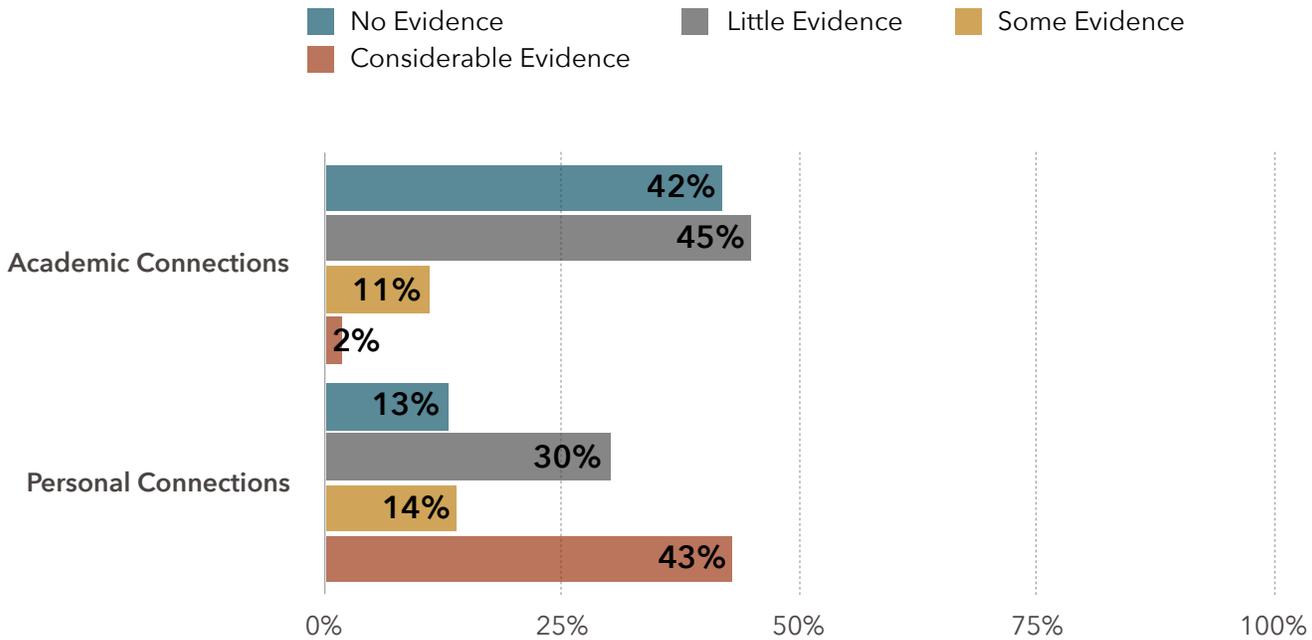


We then looked at the kinds of reflection that students do in their General Education courses. We know from this sample of ePortfolios that students are reflecting more on personal connections than on cross-disciplinary connections. Figure 8 on the next page indicates that 42% of the portfolios had no reflections in which the student made academic connections, while only 13% of the portfolios had no reflections in which the student made personal connections. While 43% of the portfolios contained “considerable” evidence (five or more reflections) of the student making personal connections, only 2% of the portfolios contained “considerable” evidence of the student making academic connections.

We know from experience that the quality of student reflection varies widely depending on how well reflection is integrated into course pedagogy and on the quality of the reflection prompts faculty give students. To assess the quality of student reflection in this report, the assessment team quickly picked what they impressionistically thought were the three strongest student reflections per ePortfolio, and then used the rubric to assess those reflections. Of course, some ePortfolios had less than three reflections total, so our sample size consisted of 280 reflections. The reviewers applied an in-house rubric to those reflections. Table 7 on the next page shows that the vast majority (90%) of the reflections scored in the top two categories–

which we might characterize as good or excellent reflections. Ten percent of the reflections only partially addressed the reflection prompt, were insufficiently elaborated, made few connections, and/or offered few insights and perspectives.

**Figure 8: Percentage of ePortfolios with Various Levels of Evidence that Students Engage in Reflection on Academic Connections and Personal Life.**



**Table 7: Percentage of Student Reflections (n=154) with Scores for Reflection Quality in the Rubric Categories. (mean= 3.40)**

| 1   | 2  | 3   | 4   |
|---|--|---|---|
| The writer fails to address the reflection prompt given by the instructor. The reflection piece contains no elaboration and is too short. | The writer partially addresses the reflection prompt, and fails to sufficiently elaborate his/her points, makes few connections, offers few insights and perspectives. | The writer addresses the reflection prompt, and does a fairly good job with elaboration, making connections, offering new insights and perspectives, and/or uses techniques such as questioning, comparing, interpreting and analyzing. | The writer directly addresses the reflection prompt, elaborates points, makes strong intellectual or personal connections, highlights new insights and perspectives, and/or uses techniques such as questioning, comparing, interpreting and analyzing. |
| 0%  | 10%  | 40%   | 50%   |

The final aspect of critical thinking we wanted to investigate was the extent to which students understood the fundamentals of scientific thinking. A student scoring highest on our home-grown rubric would understand all of the following: the appropriate use of a hypothesis, observation, collecting data, interpreting findings, and formulating conclusions consistent with data. Our reviewers looked only at pages in the student ePortfolios that represented work in the Physical and Life Sciences courses. The first thing to note is that 67% of the ePortfolios had no artifacts in which the student could reasonably demonstrate this understanding. Many of the artifacts in the science courses were tapping other learning outcomes.

Table 8 shows that of the 13% of ePortfolios that addressed scientific thinking, the reviewers identified 44 artifacts in which students were at least attempting to demonstrate understanding of scientific thinking. A little over a third (37%) of the assignments indicated that the student had a fairly strong understanding of scientific thinking. Sixty-one percent of the assignments indicated limited understanding of scientific thinking.

**Table 8: Percentage of Assignments (n=44) with Scores for Scientific Thinking in the Rubric Categories. (mean= 2.39)**

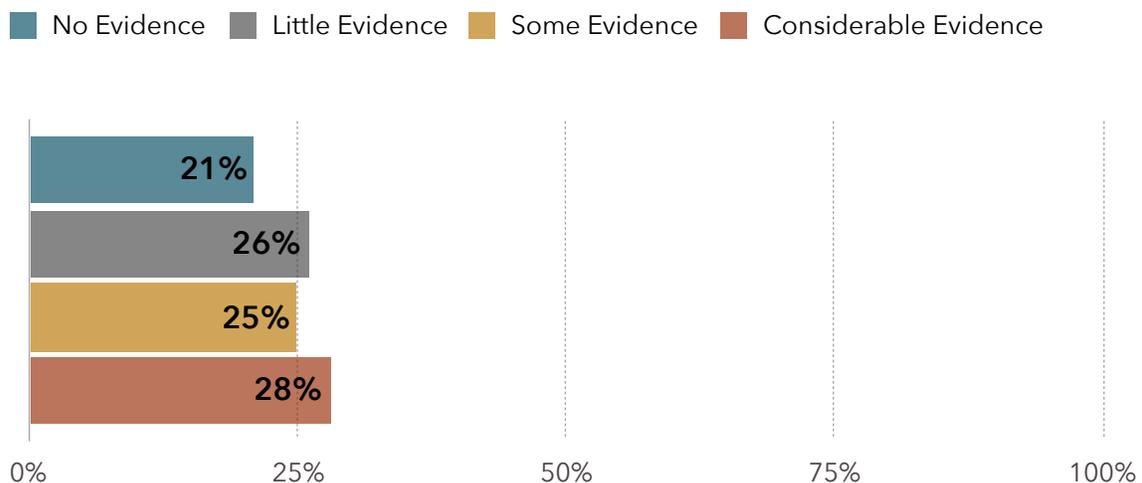
| 1   | 2   | 3  | 4   |
|---|---|--|---|
| Student clearly does not understand hypotheses, observation, collecting data, interpreting findings, or formulating conclusions consistent with data. | Student understands a few of the following: the appropriate use of hypotheses, observation, collecting data, interpreting findings, and formulating conclusions consistent with data. | Student understands most of the following: the appropriate use of hypotheses, observation, collecting data, interpreting findings, and formulating conclusions consistent with data. | Student understands all of the following: the appropriate use of hypotheses, observation, collecting data, interpreting findings, and formulating conclusions consistent with data. |
| <b>2%</b>   | <b>61%</b>  | <b>32%</b>   | <b>5%</b>   |

# Community and Civic Engagement

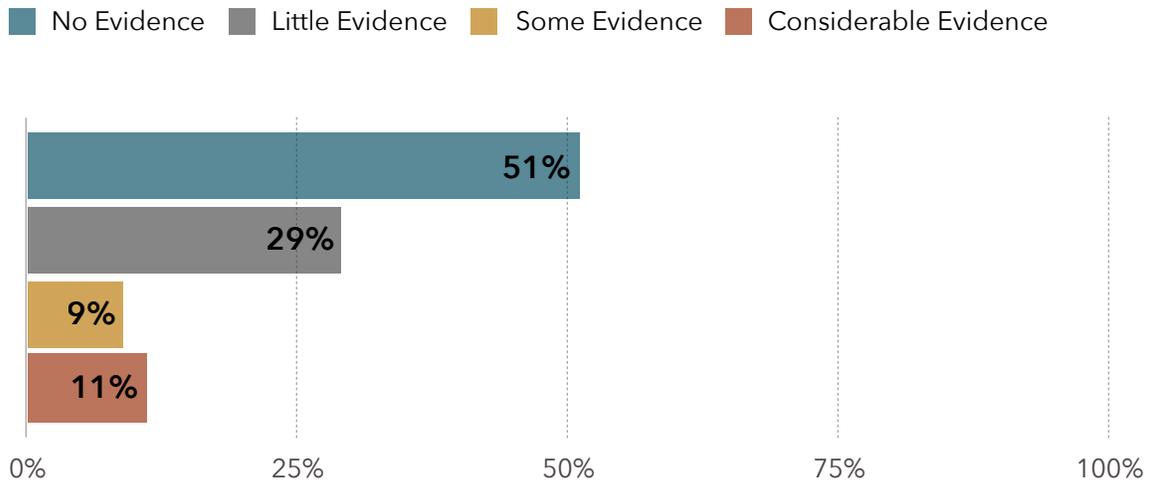
*Students develop the knowledge and skills to be community engaged learners and scholars. This includes understanding the natural, political, historical, social, and economic underpinnings of the local, national, and global communities to which they belong...*

Community and civic engagement is a rather large learning outcome that encompasses several different dimensions. We conducted a separate analysis of community and civic engagement that used a different methodology. That report will be published separately to the college community. This ePortfolio assessment is only able to shed light on basic civic literacy—namely, whether students are engaging with signature assignments that ask them to demonstrate understanding of either the U.S. or the world outside of the United States. Figure 9 indicates that 21% of sampled students had no evidence in their ePortfolios that they have knowledge of the politics, economics, historical development, or geography of the United States. Twenty-six percent had one artifact that fit these parameters, 25% had two artifacts, and 28% had three or more artifacts. With respect to global understanding, Figure 10 on the next page indicates that fully 51% of the ePortfolios had no artifacts indicating that students understand global politics, economics, historical development, or geography. Twenty-nine percent had one artifact, 9% had two artifacts, and only 11% had three or more artifacts.

**Figure 9. Percentage of ePortfolios with Various Levels of Evidence that Students Demonstrate Knowledge of the Politics, Economics, Historical Development, and/or Geography of the United States.**



**Figure 10. Percentage of ePortfolios with Various Levels of Evidence that Students Demonstrate Knowledge of Global Politics, Economics, Historical Development, and/or Geography.**

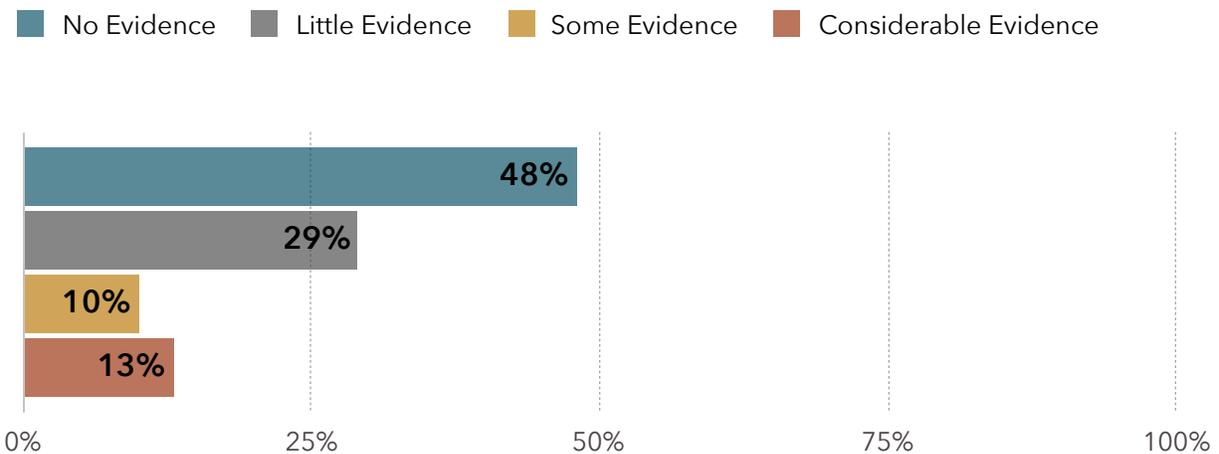


# Working With Others

*Students develop the knowledge and skills to work with others in a professional and constructive manner. This includes engaging with a diverse set of others to produce professional work; interacting competently across cultures; understanding and appreciating human differences; understanding and acting on standards of professionalism and civility, including the SLCC Student Code of Conduct.*

Our reviewers examined signature assignments to ascertain whether students worked with classmates to complete assignments. As Figure 11 illustrates, only 13% of the ePortfolios had three or more artifacts (“considerable” evidence) of collaborative work, and 10% had two artifacts that required collaboration. Twenty-nine percent had one artifact of collaborative work, and 48% had no evidence. The results indicate that faculty are either not assigning enough projects that require collaboration, or are reticent to ask students to put collaborative signature assignments in their ePortfolios.

**Figure 11. Percentage of ePortfolios with Various Levels of Evidence that Students Work with Others to Complete a Project or Assignment.**

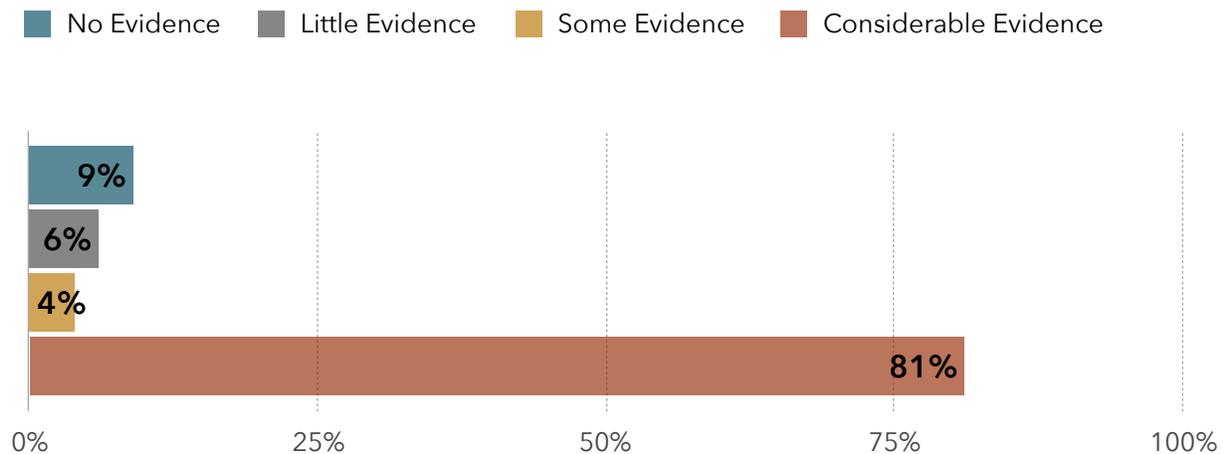


# Information Literacy

*Students develop information literacy. This includes gathering and analyzing information using technology, library resources, and other modalities; understanding and acting upon ethical and security principles with respect to information acquisition and distribution; distinguishing between credible and non-credible sources of information, and using the former in their work in an appropriately documented fashion.*

We started our assessment of information literacy by counting the number of assignments in each portfolio that asked students to gather information using technology, library resources, or other modalities. In other words, the reviewers looked for assignments that clearly indicated that students used outside-of-classroom information sources. As depicted in Figure 12, in the vast majority of cases (81%) it was clear that students had considerable evidence (4 or more assignments) of being asked to find outside-of-classroom information sources to complete their signature assignments. Only 9% of the ePortfolios had no such evidence.

**Figure 12. Percentage of ePortfolios with Various Levels of Evidence that Students Gather Information Using Technology, Library Resources and Other Modalities.**



This year we employed a different methodology for the qualitative assessment of information literacy in General Education. Working collaboratively with the ePortfolio Coordinator and the Assessment Director, SLCC's Instruction and Liaison Librarians built an assessment rubric using the six indicator criteria in the [Framework for](#)

Information Literacy that was adopted in 2016 by the Association for College and Research Libraries (ACRL). Our reviewers used this rubric in two separate assessments—a method that has given us an unparalleled look at student development of information literacies in our General Education program. In the first assessment, the reviewers holistically assessed each ePortfolio using the ACRL-inspired rubric by independently rating each portfolio and then coming together for a consensus score. In this process, the reviewers looked at all the artifacts in each ePortfolio’s “Coursework” section. Table 9 on page 24 presents these results. It appears that on all indices, SLCC’s graduating students score about where we would expect for rising Juniors in college—making progress, but still needing work in all areas of information literacy. Means for all indices were between 2 and 3 on the rubric. Students had the most trouble with being clear about their audience or the purpose of their work, and scored highest on developing appropriate topics and balancing source material with their original thoughts.

For the second assessment of information literacy, a separate pair of reviewers examined a subset of work that had previously been identified by the English faculty who were assessing written communication. Specifically, these reviewers were looking at the artifacts in written genres that used sources: essays primarily, but also presentations, reports, research, and annotated bibliographies. This sample contained 186 artifacts. Table 10 on page 25 illustrates that for most of the indices of information literacy, SLCC’s graduating students scored between 2 and 3 on the rubric. The only exception was the mean of only 1.77 for “students will state the intended audience/purpose of their research.” Still, it is readily apparent that additional work can and should be done with students. For instance, Table 10 shows that 38% of the written artifacts that should have credible sources either had no sources or had only minimally appropriate/credible/authoritative sources. In addition, a majority of our graduates could be more skilled at drawing syntheses (conclusions, judgements, evaluations, etc.) based on their source material.

**Table 9. Percentage of Portfolios (n=100) Whose Holistic Assessment Scores Fell into the ACRL-Inspired Information Literacy Rubric Performance Levels.**

| <b>Indicators</b>   | <b>1</b>  | <b>2</b>  | <b>3</b>  | <b>4</b>   |
|---|---|---|---|--|
| <i>Student will use appropriate/credible/authoritative sources to the scope of the project.</i>               | Work does not include sources.                  | Work includes minimally appropriate/credible/authoritative sources. | Work includes mostly appropriate/credible/authoritative sources.      | Work includes a variety of sources identifiable as appropriate/credible/authoritative. |
| <b>(Mean=2.21)</b>  | <b>28%</b>                                      | <b>34%</b>  | <b>27%</b>  | <b>11%</b>   |
| <i>Student will state the intended audience/purpose of their research.</i>                                    | No audience/purpose.                            | Audience/purpose is minimally identified.                           | Audience/purpose is clearly identified.                               | Audience/purpose is identified in an academic/professional manner.                     |
| <b>(Mean=2.07)</b>  | <b>19%</b>                                      | <b>58%</b>  | <b>20%</b>  | <b>3%</b>  |
| <i>Student will cite sources and use a consistent format.</i>   | No citations provided.                          | Citations are incorrectly done or format has major errors.          | Citations are mostly done correctly or format has few minor mistakes. | Citations are perfect and format is professionally done.                               |
| <b>(Mean=2.27)</b>  | <b>22%</b>                                      | <b>37%</b>  | <b>33%</b>  | <b>8%</b>  |
| <i>Student will draw syntheses based upon sources (conclusions, analysis, judgement, evaluation, etc.)</i>    | Synthesis not provided.                         | Synthesis is provided, but is not logical or related to sources.    | Synthesis is reasonable in relation to sources.                       | Synthesis is excellent and points toward new areas of research.                        |
| <b>(Mean=2.47)</b>  | <b>12%</b>                                      | <b>41%</b>  | <b>35%</b>  | <b>12%</b>   |
| <i>Student will contribute original thoughts/ideas (inference, connections, plans, recommendations, etc.)</i> | Original thoughts/ideas are not evident.        | Thoughts/ideas rely heavily on external sources.                    | Paper balances sources/research with student's own thoughts/ideas.    | Original thoughts/ideas expand upon conclusions of existing evidence.                  |
| <b>(Mean=2.55)</b>  | <b>7%</b>                                       | <b>40%</b>  | <b>44%</b>  | <b>9%</b>  |
| <i>Student will develop a topic/research question.</i>  | Topic/research question not clearly identified. | Topic/research question is not suitable to the project.             | Topic/research question is appropriate to the project.                | Topic/research question reflects advanced understanding.                               |
| <b>(Mean=2.55)</b>  | <b>13%</b>                                      | <b>32%</b>  | <b>42%</b>  | <b>13%</b>   |

**Table 10. Percentage of Writing Assignments (n=186) Whose Scores Fell into the ACRL-Inspired Information Literacy Rubric Performance Levels.**

| <b>Indicators</b>   | <b>1</b>  | <b>2</b>  | <b>3</b>  | <b>4</b>   |
|---|---|---|---|--|
| <i>Student will use appropriate/credible/authoritative sources to the scope of the project.</i>               | Work does not include sources.                  | Work includes minimally appropriate/credible/authoritative sources. | Work includes mostly appropriate/credible/authoritative sources.      | Work includes a variety of sources identifiable as appropriate/credible/authoritative. |
| <b>(Mean=2.61)</b>  | <b>5%</b>                                       | <b>33%</b>  | <b>57%</b>  | <b>5%</b>  |
| <i>Student will state the intended audience/purpose of their research.</i>                                    | No audience/purpose.                            | Audience/purpose is minimally identified.                           | Audience/purpose is clearly identified.                               | Audience/purpose is identified in an academic/professional manner.                     |
| <b>(Mean=1.77)</b>  | <b>43%</b>                                      | <b>38%</b>  | <b>18%</b>  | <b>1%</b>  |
| <i>Student will cite sources and use a consistent format.</i>   | No citations provided.                          | Citations are incorrectly done or format has major errors.          | Citations are mostly done correctly or format has few minor mistakes. | Citations are perfect and format is professionally done.                               |
| <b>(Mean=2.51)</b>  | <b>10%</b>                                      | <b>35%</b>  | <b>51%</b>  | <b>5%</b>  |
| <i>Student will draw syntheses based upon sources (conclusions, analysis, judgement, evaluation, etc.)</i>    | Synthesis not provided.                         | Synthesis is provided, but is not logical or related to sources.    | Synthesis is reasonable in relation to sources.                       | Synthesis is excellent and points toward new areas of research.                        |
| <b>(Mean=2.54)</b>  | <b>8%</b>                                       | <b>32%</b>  | <b>58%</b>  | <b>2%</b>  |
| <i>Student will contribute original thoughts/ideas (inference, connections, plans, recommendations, etc.)</i> | Original thoughts/ideas are not evident.        | Thoughts/ideas rely heavily on external sources.                    | Paper balances sources/research with student's own thoughts/ideas.    | Original thoughts/ideas expand upon conclusions of existing evidence.                  |
| <b>(Mean=2.62)</b>  | <b>4%</b>                                       | <b>37%</b>  | <b>53%</b>  | <b>6%</b>  |
| <i>Student will develop a topic/research question.</i>  | Topic/research question not clearly identified. | Topic/research question is not suitable to the project.             | Topic/research question is appropriate to the project.                | Topic/research question reflects advanced understanding.                               |
| <b>(Mean=2.23)</b>  | <b>20%</b>                                      | <b>40%</b>  | <b>38%</b>  | <b>2%</b>  |

# Computer Literacy

*Students develop computer literacy. This includes using contemporary computer hardware and software to effectively complete college-level assignments; understanding and acting upon ethical and security principles with respect to computer technology.*

For computer literacy, the ePortfolio gives us some insight into the kinds of computer hardware and software students use to complete their assignments. However, this assessment does not shed light on the quality of students' work with computer hardware and software programs. That is a deficit we hope to address in future assessments.

## **Hardware**

It is a given that all students used desktop or laptop computers to create their ePortfolios. Our reviewers noted that 66% of the students had used a digital camera and 47% used a scanner—most often to scan and upload written Math assignments. Additionally, 13% of the ePortfolios used audio recording equipment and 10% used a video camera or phone to record their work or experiences.

## **Software**

Students use a variety of software programs to complete their work, the most common of which is a word processor. Fully 98% of the ePortfolios clearly evidenced the use of word processing software. Forty-six percent of the ePortfolios indicated use of presentation software and 41% of them indicated use of a database. Thirty-nine percent of the ePortfolios evidenced use of spreadsheets.

# Lifelong Wellness

*Students develop the attitudes and skills for lifelong wellness. This includes understanding the importance of physical activity and its connection to lifelong wellness; learning how participation in a fitness, sport, or leisure activity results in daily benefits including stress reduction, endorphin release, and a sense of well-being.*

Each SLCC student is required to take a Lifelong Wellness (LW) course to receive an Associate's degree. Our reviewers examined a total of 59 artifacts from LW courses in the ePortfolio sample, and applied an SLCC-developed rubric for how well the student understood the importance and personal use of lifetime activity and wellness. As Table 11 indicates, the reviewers scored 58% of the artifacts as indicating that the student had "adequately" or "effectively" expressed an understanding of lifelong wellness.

We noted that LW courses primarily use reflection as a signature assignment. There are many opportunities for these courses to have substantive signature assignments that are then accompanied by reflection.

**Table 11: Percentage of Students Whose Mean Scores for Lifelong Wellness Fell into These Ranges.**

| 1  | 2   | 3  | 4   |
|--|---|--|---|
| The posted artifact or instance of reflection was completely unsatisfactory. | At least one artifact or instance of reflection in which the student minimally expresses an understanding of the importance of physical activity and its connection to lifelong wellness. | At least one artifact or instance of reflection in which the student adequately expresses an understanding of the importance of physical activity and its connection to lifelong wellness. | At least one artifact or instance of reflection in which the student effectively expresses an understanding of the importance of physical activity and its connection to lifelong wellness. |
| 1%   | 41%   | 19%  | 39%   |

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