Award Information and Application: Co-Curricular General Education Learning

National and international education officials, accreditors, and faculty leaders increasingly associate “quality” education with student learning outcomes and continuous quality improvement processes. Moving away from the view of education as a simple act of passing a static body of knowledge from faculty to students, they value education practiced as a commitment to a set of collectively-practiced, ongoing activities: making institutional choices about the most important goals for student learning and defining the learning in terms of desired outcomes; developing a shared faculty commitment to actions such as high impact, active learning strategies and faculty development designed to increase student achievement; making informed judgments about student achievement and the impact of various general education program support processes; and ensuring continuous improvements in the educational program. Despite the commitment of academic leaders and accreditors to these processes, too few institutions have documented their success in applying systematic improvement processes to the general education program. As a result, discussions about higher education accountability and improvement conclude that higher education can benefit from models of innovative, effective, and systematic general education program improvements and assessments.

The Association for General and Liberal Studies is the national organization whose mission is singularly committed to quality general education programs and their central role in the liberal education of students. The organization invites institutions to apply for the 2014 AGLS Award for Improving General Education: Exemplary Program Processes. The Award promotes institutional commitment to continuous quality improvement processes, recognizes faculty and institutions that practice these quality behaviors, and provides much needed examples of effective program improvements. One option for the 2014 Award will recognize institutions committed to systematic, verifiable general education learning achieved through co-curricular activities. AGLS will recognize up to three institutions that employ effective and innovative co-curricular experiences to help achieve an institution’s general education goals. The Awards presentation will be made during the 2014 Annual AGLS Conference, September 25-27, in Atlanta, GA. Representatives from recognized institutions will be asked to present their co-curricular processes in an identified special session and, if possible, provide a poster presentation for display throughout the conference; they will also have the opportunity to share their process in AGLS e-publications. Recognized institutions will receive a plaque; acknowledgment on the AGLS website; two half-priced registrations for the 2014 conference, which include AGLS membership for 2014-15; and a half-priced institutional membership for the 2014-15 year.

Award Selection and Criteria

Applications will be reviewed by an Awards Committee comprised of AGLS Executive Council members, members of accrediting associations, and recognized leaders in general education. The application narrative questions are based on the Systems Analysis questions found in the AGLS publication, Improving Learning in General Education: An AGLS Guide to Assessment and Program Review (see www.agls.org). Evaluation will focus on the innovative and systematic qualities of the institution’s efforts to use co-curricular activities to accomplish the goals of general education (Guide question A7) and on how well the institution’s process can serve as a practical model for other institutions. The Committee will consider the evidence offered that the co-curricular activities improve the general education program, help it achieve its goals, and improve student learning outcomes. Previously recognized applications can be found on the AGLS website: http://www.agls.org/exemplaryprogram.htm. The application must describe the full “loop” of co-curricular processes: institutional commitment to improving general education learning through co-curricular activities, implementation of clearly defined co-curricular learning processes, the verifiable impact of the processes on
student learning, and the co-curricular improvements that follow from the data review, showing continuing commitment to the processes.

Application Format

To be considered for the award, an applicant on behalf of an institution should complete:

- Section #1: Contact information for individual submitting the application
- Section #2: Institutional endorsement by either the chief executive or academic officer
- Section #3: Application summary (150 words or less)
- Section #4: Responses to four award criteria, limited to two pages per criterion

Examples of Evidence for Award Criteria

Evidence of merit requires answering the questions under each of the criterion listed in the application below. Evidence should focus on specific activities and processes that employ the continuous quality improvement principles discussed in the AGLS publication Improving Learning in General Education: An AGLS Guide to Assessment and Program Review. The application should clearly present the creative solutions and leadership methods used to address the issues, concerns, and goals relevant to co-curricular general education learning and learning improvement processes. Supporting material can be summarized as part of the application and narrative, but limit your explanations to two pages per criterion. Please do not use links to data and analysis reports; narrative summary of your key results and processes, within the application, is preferable to links that eventually become inoperable. AGLS offers model narratives as examples of successful processes and assumes that recognized institutions will share with interested parties additional data or program information.

Award Timeline

March—Application materials available on AGLS website
June 15th—Materials must be received by AGLS
June 20th—Materials distributed to review panel
August 1st—Recipients notified
September 26th—Recipients’ presentations and awards during 2013 AGLS Annual Conference in Indianapolis, IN

Suggested Reference Material

Improving Learning in General Education: An AGLS Guide to Assessment and Learning can be found at: www.agls.org. Supporting literature (from regional and specialized accreditors and from AAC&U) is listed in the Guide.

Application Submission

Applications may be submitted as e-mail attachments in Microsoft Word or Adobe Acrobat format, sent to Joyce Lucke at execdir@agls.org. Applications can also be mailed to:

Joyce Lucke, Executive Director
Association for General and Liberal Studies
445 Fifth Street, Suite A
Columbus, IN 47201
Section #1: Contact Information of Person Submitting Application

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Helen Doerpinghaus</th>
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<tr>
<td>Title</td>
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<td>University of South Carolina</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Street Address</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Columbia, SC 29208</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fax</td>
<td>803-777-9502</td>
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Section #2: Institutional Endorsement

Chief Executive Officer or Chief Academic Officer

<table>
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Section #3: Application Summary

Include a summary of the award application. Please begin the narrative with a brief description of your institution and the time frame for the process. Briefly explain your process and why you think it equates with quality. The summary should not exceed 150 words. The text box may be increased in size as necessary.

This application shares an initiative that builds on the general education curriculum by integrating within and beyond the classroom learning at the University of South Carolina. The initiative, USC Connect, includes the main campus and four regional campuses with a total student population of approximately 40,000 students. The process began with the development of the proposal from 2009-2011 with final approval in December 2011. Implementation began in January 2012 and assessment data were collected in 2012-13 and again in 2013-14. The initiative demonstrates high quality in many ways: building a broad consensus across faculty, staff, and students; collaboration across offices and programs to provide services; development of resources to encourage engagement and reflection; and providing a concrete example of using the assessment process for continuous improvement.
The University of South Carolina’s (USC) revised general education requirements, the Carolina Core, were approved by the faculty December 2010 and fully implemented in Fall 2012 with a focus on student learning. The Carolina Core includes an integrative course taken near the end of the undergraduate experience addressing multiple Carolina Core learning outcomes through discipline-specific study. The inclusion of the integrative course was a first step toward an integrated learning approach at USC. The next step was developed through a proposal to build on the nine learning outcomes of the Carolina Core with a “tenth dimension”: the integration of co-curricular experiences. The initiative, originally titled, The Tenth Dimension became USC Connect: Integrating Learning Within and Beyond the Classroom (developed 2009-2011).

Both the Carolina Core and USC Connect are grounded in USC’s overall mission to equip students with the “knowledge, skills, and values necessary for success and responsible citizenship in a complex and changing world through engagement in nationally and internationally ranked research, scholarship, service, and artistic creation”. USC’s commitment to engagement has been recognized through its Carnegie Foundation designation as a community engaged university. In combination with strong academic programs, USC’s history of undergraduate engagement in service learning, research, peer leadership, internships, and study abroad provided a sound base for launching USC Connect which clearly addresses the link between within and beyond the classroom learning.

Expectations for student learning through integration of within and beyond the classroom experiences are articulated in four USC Connect learning outcomes. These outcomes were developed to foster student skills in connecting their co-curricular experiences to the outcomes of the Carolina Core. The USC Connect outcomes include describing how beyond the classroom experiences contribute to learning; linking learning across within and beyond the classroom experiences; analyzing learning as informed by multiple experiences, perspectives, and/or disciplines; and applying learning to solve problems (See complete learning outcomes in Appendix A).

The learning outcomes and plan for USC Connect were developed by a 16-member committee of faculty, staff, and students supported by another 22 subcommittee members. Review and input from a wide range of faculty, administrator, and student groups occurred through specific meetings and open forums. The final proposal was submitted and approved as USC’s Quality Enhancement Plan through the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools: Commission on Colleges (December 2011). The Office of the Provost oversees both the Carolina Core...
and USC Connect. Strong collaboration and support for USC Connect are provided through the Division of Student Affairs, University Technology Services, the Office of Research, and all academic units. USC Connect supports students’ integration of beyond the classroom experiences with academic programs from the first year. Promotion at orientation is followed by emphasis in the first-year seminar (UNIV 101) through an introductory integrative learning experience and extensive information on experience options. First-year students (and beyond) receive support from advisors, and, increasingly, an introduction to e-portfolios to track and reflect on experiences. Multiple support programs promote the integration of within and beyond the classroom learning:

- **Living and Learning Communities/Common Courses:** In the Common Courses initiative, groups of first-year students concurrently enroll in matched sections of UNIV 101 and a Carolina Core course and live together in a living and learning community which supports course learning and related beyond the classroom experiences (600 students to date). Students in other living and learning communities are supported in integration of within and beyond the classroom experiences through a building or hall focus (e.g., Preston Residential College focus on leadership; Green Quad focus on sustainability; professionally themed communities). Residential life’s learning outcomes for all residents align with the Carolina Core including effective, engaged and persuasive communication; values, ethics and social responsibility; global citizenship and multicultural understanding; analytical reasons; and problem solving.

- **Faculty Grants:** Grants support development of integrative learning in course work including Carolina Core courses. Grants are funded by USC Connect, the Office of Student Engagement, and the Carolina Leadership Initiative and administered collaboratively with the Center for Teaching Excellence. From 2011-2014, 72 faculty received over $167,000.

- **USC Connect by Major:** Faculty recommendations for specific engagements in community service, internships, peer leadership, global learning (e.g., study abroad), and research are displayed on-line.

- **USC Connect Searchable Experiences Database:** Students can search for beyond the classroom and integrative learning opportunities through this tool on the USC Connect website.

- **Carolina Core Integrative Course Development:** Programs increasingly integrate reflection on beyond the classroom experiences while addressing multiple learning outcomes of the Carolina Core.

Finally, students focus on the integration of the within and beyond the classroom experiences as they consider graduating with Leadership Distinction in one of four pathways (Community Service, Global Learning, Professional and Civic Engagement, and/or Research). Graduation with Leadership Distinction (GLD) is built on five requirements that support integrative learning: Required hours of beyond the classroom engagement, enhancement activities contributing to understanding of experiences, related course work (including Carolina Core options), a public presentation, and an e-portfolio (which can be completed as part of a Carolina Core Integrative Course). Graduation with Leadership Distinction has proven invaluable in clarifying the components of integrative learning and motivating students and faculty. While the recognition occurs upon graduation (cords, transcript, and diploma), the process of earning the distinction occurs throughout a student’s collegiate career.

Co-curricular experiences are provided by faculty and staff, often in cooperation with one another. USC Connect facilitates collaboration by providing information and connecting parties with similar interests. USC Connect partners integral to coordinating experiences include the Offices of Student Engagement; Undergraduate Research; Study Abroad; Career Services; and Residential Life. University Technology Services is instrumental in making opportunity information accessible. The Division of Student Affairs supports USC Connect in promoting opportunities and advancing the tracking/record-keeping of student participation.

USC Connect is guided by two advisory bodies: The USC Connect Council (faculty and staff with some student representation) and the USC Connect Student Advisory Council (SAC). Collaboration with Colleges and Schools
occurs through the Council of Academic Deans, the Associate and Assistant Deans Council, and through individual and small group faculty meetings focused on promotion of integrative learning in their areas.

USC Connect communicates to students, faculty, and staff through a variety of venues including articles in university publications, posts throughout the university’s website, and targeted e-mails. Special events include regular open forums, an annual Get CONNECTed Fair for students, and an annual faculty conference. While USC Connect has two staff members dedicated to communication with students (speaking to groups, walk-ins, calls, website development, Facebook, Twitter), the greater university community is key to reaching students (i.e., related university offices, faculty, advisors). Graduation with Leadership Distinction (GLD) has led to a tremendous increase in interest and thus increased opportunities for communication (e.g., regular student orientations on GLD; invitations to department meetings and student groups). The demand for orientations has led to plans for on-line orientation beginning fall 2014. Information on Graduation with Leadership Distinction is also being added to the degree planning software used by advisors and students.

The value USC places on integrated co-curricular experiences is communicated through recognition at the highest levels, such as the President awarding student cords at the GLD ceremony and deans encouraging attendance at the USC Connect Faculty Conference. However, the true value of co-curricular activities and their integration into learning is communicated through specific examples and testimonies of student learning across within and beyond the classroom experiences shared through publications, events, small group meetings, one-on-one encounters, and support materials. See Appendix B for examples of student comments and exemplars of integrative learning that help communicate the meaning and value of USC Connect.

**Award Criteria**

**Criterion 2: Engaging Students in Co-Curricular Learning Experiences**

Describe how your institution engages students in co-curricular general education learning activities. Address the following issues:

- What co-curricular general education learning activities or programs your institution offers to students
- Who defines and structures these learning experiences, including the role faculty, administration, and students play in developing the expectations
- How these student activities or experiences are integrated with general education learning
- Who leads these activities and in what situations and venues, including collaborative activities with faculty inside or outside the classroom
- What resources (financial, human, space, etc.) your institution offers for co-curricular learning activities

*Please limit your response to two pages.* The following text box may be increased in size as necessary.

Beyond the classroom experiences are encouraged in five “pathways”: community service, global learning (including, but not limited to, study abroad), internships (and other work-based experiences), peer leadership, and research. USC Connect works collaboratively with university partners in each pathway. “Pathways” offices engage faculty and staff in the development and implementation of high impact practices in a variety of ways. While USC Connect’s learning outcomes provide the overall framework for expectations, each area develops specific criteria and guidance appropriate to their particular context. For example:

- The Office of Undergraduate Research (OUR) is guided by an Advisory board of 10 faculty members and two ex-officio administrators (Vice President for Research and Dean of Undergraduate Studies). As stated in the by-laws, the Advisory Board provides “assistance and advice in: 1) developing, initiating, and sustaining programmatic initiatives; 2) marketing and public relations of OUR initiatives;
3) budgetary planning; and 4) College, School, and departmental outreach”.

OUR matches students with faculty sponsors to support student engagement in research and offers six grant programs awarding approximately $350,000 annually. Student grant applications are reviewed by a faculty committee using a faculty developed rubric. OUR sponsors an annual Discovery Day in which students can present what they have learned through any USC Connect pathway. Each student has a faculty or staff sponsor supporting his/her work. This year Discovery Day included 383 student presentations, 126 faculty/staff judges, and over 900 attendees.

- The Office of Student Engagement leads a Peer Leadership Advisors’ Network (PLAN) which provides a forum for regular meetings and communication across more than 50 peer leadership programs on campus. PLAN members share strategies and develop common goals. Their shared criteria for peer leadership experiences are that students must be selected and trained to deliver an educational service to their peers. In 2013-14, a PLAN sub-committee identified common outcomes including interaction with peers, oral communication, team work, and problem solving.

- Study Abroad works with students, faculty and staff to enhance learning through overseas experience. Student participation has grown from 775 (2009) to 1,250 (2013). Study Abroad learning outcomes, developed in 2010, align with the Carolina Core outcomes on communication; global citizenship and multicultural understanding; and values, ethics, and social responsibility. Faculty work collaboratively with Study Abroad in developing faculty-led programs (39 in 2013), coordinating appropriate timing of study abroad, and serving on committees (e.g., Overseas Program Committee, Student International Travel Oversight Committee). An award-winning program provides an opportunity for faculty and staff to experience study abroad while considering criteria for experiences and relationships to their own programs. International engagement for students on-campus include a residential college, International House at Maxcy College, and programs such as Buddies Beyond Borders.

- Over 23,000 USC students, faculty, and staff participated in community service in 2012-2013. Community Service Programs provides students with direct connections to service opportunities and regular programming. The Office of Student Engagement (OSE) works directly with faculty to develop service learning courses. OSE worked with faculty to develop six hallmarks of excellence in service learning: Integrated Learning, High Quality Service, Collaboration, Civic Responsibility, Reflection, and Evaluation/Assessment with definitions, expanded information, and examples in the service-learning faculty manual. Faculty offered 67 service learning course sections in 2012-13, a 45% increase over 2011-2012, with an enrollment of 1,822 students.

- Internships and work-related opportunities are coordinated through multiple venues including academic programs and offices sponsoring specific programs (e.g., Washington and South Carolina semesters; Leadership in the Workplace, a Student Life initiative to support students in learning from work-based experiences). Credit-bearing internships include learning outcomes as established by their sponsoring departments. Experiential Education works with faculty to support engagement in supervised work experiences with clear learning outcomes and support for reflection. Internship and work-related learning outcomes address outcomes of the Carolina Core in the context of the discipline.

As reflected in its learning outcomes and the rubric to evaluate student work (Appendix C), USC Connect emphasizes the general education outcomes of analysis, communication, problem solving, and application by supporting and assessing students in making cognitive connections between their beyond the classroom experiences and disciplinary content. Opportunities to reflect are provided through public presentations, e-portfolios, and course work (e.g., UNIV 101; courses connected to particular experiences such as service learning and study abroad, Carolina Core courses including the integrative course, and major specific course work).
The importance of structures to support the connection of co-curricular experiences to learning and general education outcomes (e.g., communication, analysis, problem solving) cannot be overstated. As noted above, support for integrative learning must occur on the ground level such as a faculty member working with a student to sharpen her presentation for Discovery Day or a service-learning course in which assignments are designed to challenge students to think through the connections between their co-curricular experiences and course concepts.

The USC Connect model includes support for both the engagement and reflection aspects of integrative learning:

- **A plan grounded in a broad consensus** on the types of experiences that add educational value
- **Collaboration** with existing offices and programs that provide services, have a commitment to providing the best possible educational experience for students, and influence student choices (including faculty and staff)
- **Resources** that promote student engagement in experiences (e.g., searchable database, USC Connect by Major) and reflection (e.g., e-portfolio system including orientation, support, and user-friendly technology)
- **Support for faculty** efforts to provide meaningful learning experiences for students (e.g., Integrative Learning Grants, USC Connect Faculty Conference, meetings to design clear guidance for students to select purposeful experiences and graduate with distinction)
- **Communication of a clear message and official recognition** that beyond the classroom experiences and thoughtful connections between experiences and courses are important (e.g., a graduation distinction requiring engagement and reflection; materials and messages highlighting benefits and student testimonies)

The Office of USC Connect has an annual budget of $500,000 including five full-time staff (Director with faculty rank, Assistant Director, Student Services Coordinator, Student Advisor, and Administrative Coordinator). Key offices supporting USC Connect (i.e., Student Engagement, Experiential Education [Career Services], Undergraduate Research, Study Abroad, Leadership and Service Center [Student Life]) have a combined 30 full-time staff and a budget of over $2,000,000 annually. Offices are spread throughout the campus from the historic horseshoe to newly constructed residence halls to the main academic library to the student union. Other offices also integrate the work of USC Connect into their positions, such as:

- A Technology Project Manager (part-time) assigned to USC Connect and portion of two additional staff from University Technology Services to support e-portfolios and assessment technologies
- Leadership of an Associate Vice President in Student Affairs to develop an experiential tracking system
- Registrar’s Office programmers to incorporate graduation with distinction into student services software
- A Communications Director in the Provost’s Office to develop the USC Connect website and provide assistance for special projects (e.g., weekly e-mail formatting and distribution to faculty).
- A new position, Director of Internships in Arts and Sciences, to coordinate internships and work with faculty to integrate internships to academic coursework.

Investment throughout the university clearly reflects USC’s commitment to integrative learning.

**Award Criteria**

**Criterion 3: Evaluating Student Co-Curricular General Education Learning**

Describe how your institution assesses student general education learning gained through co-curricular activities. Address the following issues:

- How your institution evaluates its student general education learning goals achieved through co-curricular activities, including the tools used and activities assessed
- What processes are used to gather and analyze the results
- Who evaluates the results
- What the results reveal about the impact of co-curricular activities on general education learning
- How the institution communicates the results of its evaluation processes
Assessment of student learning across curricular and co-curricular experiences and the effectiveness of the USC Connect initiative is led by USC Connect with support from the Office of Institutional Research. Assessments include reviews of student work and surveys of faculty, staff and students. Assessments in the Carolina Core courses are conducted through Institutional Research using similar processes (i.e., trained reviewers using assessment software that randomly distributes student work samples for on-line review). USC Connect results emphasize the integration of learning across within and beyond the classroom experiences and are focused on here.

Assessment results are shared with appropriate constituencies including the USC Connect Council and Student Advisory Council, Council of Academic Deans, Carolina Core Committee (who have a direct link to faculty teaching Carolina Core courses), Regional Campus Leaders, and others depending on the specific assessment. For example, results of the UNIV 101 assessments are shared with UNIV 101 leadership for use in informing the continued development of UNIV 101 and instructor training. Similarly, results from e-portfolios are shared with faculty and staff supporting students in e-portfolio development.

**Student Assessments 2012-2013:** UNIV 101 students posted their reflections on beyond the classroom experiences to their class Blackboard sites in fall 2012. A random sample of 208 pieces of student work from 20 course sections was electronically distributed to 22 trained reviewers. Each work sample was rated by two reviewers on the first two learning outcomes of USC Connect (i.e., identifying what was learned and connecting learning to classroom concepts). The rubric was developed by a USC Connect Assessment Committee which began with the broad USC Connect rubric (originally developed from the AAC&U/Carnegie Foundation Rubric on Integrative Learning). The committee developed criteria similar to the rubric in Appendix C (items 7-13). Results showed that students could describe learning from experiences with some detail (mean of 2.8 on a 4-point scale), and relate experiences to course concepts in limited ways (mean of 2.0 on a 4-point scale).

In addition, to the formal evaluation of student work, survey data were collected from 161 students participating in UNIV 101 sections piloting e-portfolios. Results included 49% reporting that e-portfolios helped them make learning connections and 59% recommending a more user-friendly platform.

Investigation through e-portfolios continued spring 2013 with a junior/senior e-portfolio project which began with 20 student volunteers (9 completed the project); a Resident Mentor e-portfolio pilot (78 students); and a Public Health senior seminar (9 students). Junior/senior students completed their e-portfolios independently while all others developed e-portfolios during a class. E-portfolios from the junior/senior project and Public Health were reviewed by USC Connect staff. Junior/senior project students also participated in a formal focus group. The Public Health instructor forwarded written feedback from students to USC Connect. Residential Life conducted the assessment of Resident Mentors using a rubric based on criteria specific to their training.

A review of results across these groups showed these students were more positive about e-portfolios than the first-year students. They generally agreed that creating an e-portfolio was valuable, reported learning from the project, and appreciated the opportunity to reflect on their experiences. However, these students concurred with first-year students that the technology platform was not user-friendly and limited their ability to effectively share their learning and accomplishments. Results on the content-review of their e-portfolios showed:

- Junior/senior pilot students identified significant experiences and described their involvement in reasonable detail, but rarely described clear connections between experiences and academics.
- Students in the Public Health seminar clearly related their experiences to broad issues, public health concepts, and specific courses. They demonstrated the ability to communicate, analyze, and apply learning.
Sixty-two percent Resident Mentors met expectations in all or most categories including elements related to reflection and application of learning. Finally, feedback on student performance was collected from faculty receiving Integrative Learning Grants. Grantees consistently reported students were able to apply course content to specific beyond the classroom experiences. Grantees had developed experiences and assignments to support student connections.

We drew two major conclusions from our 2012-2013 data:  

1. **Students need very specific support to analyze their learning in deep ways.** The clearest evidence of student learning related to the outcomes of USC Connect and the Carolina Core were those in the Public Health Senior Seminar. Faculty engaged with that group reported students’ first attempts at connections were weak, but that specific feedback moved students beyond general statements to connect elements of experiences with broader concepts and apply learning to problem solving. Direct review of student e-portfolios supported this description. Faculty reports from Integrative Learning Grantees also indicated success with student connections within course frameworks. However, while students in other groups demonstrated some ability to reflect, they did not reach the same level of analysis and application.

2. **E-portfolios have potential as a vehicle for student learning, but complex technology negatively impacts student participation and ability to focus on learning.** Students consistently noted the limitations of the e-portfolio technology. For example, 56% of UNIV 101 students said they would not maintain their e-portfolio and emphasized that the technology was confusing and/or frustrating. Only 9 of 20 students completed the junior/senior project. Even those that completed the project noted the technology was problematic. This view was reinforced by students in every project.

**Faculty and Staff Assessments:** Given the critical role of faculty and staff in supporting integrative learning, USC Connect conducted surveys and focus groups to gather their perspectives. An on-line survey was distributed to faculty in spring 2012 and 2013 and to staff in Student Affairs in spring 2013. As can be seen in the table, the only significant differences in faculty results from 2012-2013 were a decrease in those who had “never heard of” USC Connect and a corresponding increase in those being “somewhat familiar” with it. Most faculty lacked confidence in their ability to describe USC Connect or “integrative learning”. Student Affairs staff expressed much more confidence than faculty in describing USC Connect and integrative learning. This is consistent with their roles which are more directly related to providing co-curricular experiences.

**Percentage of Faculty and Staff Responses to Selected Survey Items**

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*significant change from 2012 to 2013 at <.05  **significant difference from faculty 2013 at <.01

Four focus groups of 6-8 faculty each were also conducted in spring 2012 (Regional Campus faculty, non-tenured faculty, tenured faculty, instructors and part-time faculty). There were no significant differences between the groups with results indicating that faculty see value in connecting classroom learning to applied situations. Faculty described their role as integrating USC Connect into course content and serving as facilitators/advisors. Their main concern was the need for a more concrete plan for implementing the initiative.

All assessment results informed our next steps in the implementation of USC Connect leading to significant steps forward as explained in the next section.
Criterion 4: Improving Co-Curricular Learning Processes

Describe your institution’s plans to use its data to mature its co-curricular learning processes. Address the following issues:
• What new goals (if any) for co-curricular learning have been identified as a result of the evaluation process
• What data-driven co-curricular improvement projects your institution selected in order to improve learning or assessment of the learning
• Who collaborated to identify and plan the improvements
• What level of institutional support exists for the improvement projects
• What plans exist to follow up on targeted improvement projects to check for continuing or improved ownership
• What results have been collected following improvement efforts (if they have been collected during a second or later cycle of review)
• What lessons were learned from the improvement process

Please limit your response to two pages. The following text box may be increased in size as necessary.

While our goals for co-curricular learning have not changed, our initial assessments guided our work in 2013-2014. A description of major changes including planning, implementation, and assessment results follow.

Based on our findings that students needed greater support to make connections across within and beyond the classroom experiences, we worked to provide more specific guidance at all levels. For example, the first-year seminar (UNIV 101) already required students to participate in and reflect on a beyond the classroom experience and included training for instructors on student reflection. Still results showed that students’ had limited ability to articulate what they learned and relate that experience to course learning outcomes or other general education concepts. In collaboration with a committee of UNIV 101 leadership and instructors, we created and distributed an 18-page integrative learning guide for UNIV 101 instructors in June 2013 in preparation for the fall semester. The guide included sample assignment descriptions, a reflection guide, a description of the assessment process, and the rubric for scoring assignments for integrative learning. Staff were also available to consult with UNIV 101 faculty on assignments. Student work was again collected and reviewed in 2013-2014. Results are currently being compiled and will inform planning for next year. Preliminary results show small gains in students’ ability to describe their experiences and make connections with coursework.

Faculty Senate approved Graduation with Leadership Distinction (GLD) in June 2013 with a goal of graduating the first distinction students in 2014. The development of the plan during 2012-13 was consistent with faculty concern (also expressed by the Student Advisory Council) that we needed a more concrete plan of implementation.

Assessment results from 2012-2013 were critical in informing the development of an effective system to support students in completing GLD e-portfolios. Student feedback from e-portfolio pilots was presented to key administrators, University Technology Services, pathway leaders, a faculty e-portfolio task force, and the Student Advisory Council. All agreed we needed to investigate alternative platforms including insights from experienced users (e.g., faculty, other institutions). Following review and continued discussion, a platform (i.e., Google Sites) was selected based on accessibility, user-friendly interface, stability, and portability following graduation.

Initial assessments also indicated that we needed to more clearly guide and support students in making connections across courses and experiences. We acted on this finding in several ways. Pathway leaders met and recommended redesigning the e-portfolio so that the major sections were clearly focused on learning and analysis rather than...
descriptions of experiences. We created a 12-page document with guiding questions and examples of how “key insights” might be informed by course and beyond the classroom experiences. A checklist was developed for students to review one another’s work or self-evaluate their own e-portfolios. Results had also shown that providing materials was not enough. The students who had most successfully connected within and beyond the classroom experiences had developed their e-portfolios with content-related guidance and feedback. We created two options for students to develop e-portfolios to ensure adequate support: (1) courses that incorporate e-portfolio development or (2) workshops and feedback sessions provided by the USC Connect.

Ninety-two GLD e-portfolios were submitted from 88 students in Spring 2013 (four students submitted in two categories). Of these, 35 were submitted by students in a related course, and 57 from students utilizing USC Connect’s workshops and tutoring sessions. E-portfolios were rated by trained reviewers. The rubric included 20 elements rated on a scale of 1-4 (from not meeting to exceeding expectations) (See Appendix C). A score of 57/80 was required to “pass”. Seventy e-portfolios (76%) passed on the first review, 20 passed on the second review (following revision utilizing feedback from the first review), and two were not resubmitted. Thus, 98% were rated as demonstrating students’ ability to integrate learning at a level high enough to earn a graduation distinction.

At the time of this report, reviews by a second team of raters to determine reliability are in progress with further analysis to follow. Preliminary results include a mean rating of 67/80 for all e-portfolios with means on individual elements ranging from 3.0-3.75. The highest rated elements were “clearly describing how beyond the classroom experiences impact learning” and “analyzing a concept based on multiple experiences, perspectives, or disciplines”. The weakest element was “supporting recommendations based on learning”. It is already clear that students demonstrated the ability to integrate learning to a much greater extent than had been shown previously.

Student perspectives on the experience of completing GLD requirements were gathered through a survey. Seventeen students responded with 94% reporting that the process helped them to better understand the significance of their experiences. See comments in Appendix B.

Steps to increase the engagement of faculty in curricular changes were also taken based on faculty surveys, focus groups, and on-going discussions with leadership groups (e.g., the USC Connect Council). Following the spring 2012 results that faculty were not clear about USC Connect, an e-mail campaign and electronic resources for faculty were added to on-going efforts (e.g., faculty grants on integrative learning). For example, video clips of the Provost and highly engaged faculty described key components of USC Connect and student stories on the impact of integrative learning. Resources included articles, sample assignments and syllabi, and web links. Faculty were also engaged in providing recommendations on beyond the classroom opportunities that would enrich their educational experience (an effort coordinated through the Associate/Assistant Deans).

Following only a small improvement in survey results in Spring 2013, plans began for a faculty conference to occur spring 2014. The conference was developed throughout the year with input from the USC Connect Council, pathway leaders, and key administrators. The one-day conference included 120 faculty and 15 staff participants. Sessions provided information on integrative learning and engaged faculty in planning to relate coursework in their area to beyond the classroom experiences. The conference format included a keynote, student presentations, and work sessions. Breakout sessions on resources and integrative learning were presented by teams of faculty and staff. In response to a survey following the conference (n=44), 98% of faculty said they had a better understanding of USC Connect and Graduation with Leadership Distinction and 93% rated the conference as valuable.

All of the steps taken would not have been possible without strong institutional support including time devoted to reaching consensus on solutions (e.g., changing e-portfolio platform, developing materials), consistent support for implementation at the highest levels, and the commitment to expanding resources as needed (USC Connect has grown from 2 to 5 staff in 3 years).
Our experience is a clear example of the value of gathering data throughout the change process to inform continued improvement. Significant improvement in the efficiency of our electronic assessment processes has occurred throughout this assessment process and will enable us to expand the systematic collection and review of student work as we move forward.

Given the evidence generated thus far on the value of integrative learning (e.g., completing GLD), faculty and staff are planning for greater engagement of their students for 2014-2015. USC’s new Service and Leadership Center is working with USC Connect to provide guidance on reflection as they facilitate students’ engagement in co-curricular experiences. Following the faculty conference, departments have already requested presentations for opening meetings in 2014. A project is in progress to create an electronic system to catalogue/track student participation in beyond the classroom experiences more efficiently. The process includes articulating the value of specific experiences in ways aligned with general education (e.g., defining how a peer leadership role engages students in applying how to “communicate ideas clearly for a variety of audiences and purposes”). Assessment of students’ ability to integrate their learning across different types of experiences will continue to guide on-going development.
Appendix A

USC Connect Learning Outcomes and Their Relationship to the Carolina Core

Learning Outcomes for USC Connect: Integrating Learning Within and Beyond the Classroom

Students will:

1. Provide examples of beyond the classroom experiences in which they have engaged and describe how one or more beyond the classroom experiences has contributed to their learning.

2. Articulate examples of beyond the classroom experiences that illuminate concepts/theories/frameworks presented in their coursework including a clear description of elements of the beyond the classroom experience that are consistent with or contradictory to the identified concept.

3. Thoughtfully connect examples, facts, and/or theories from more than one experience, field of study, and/or perspective such as describing the similarities and differences across experiences, fields of study, or perspectives.

4. Pose solutions to problems (i.e., make recommendations) that incorporate learning from both beyond the classroom and within the classroom experiences, articulate how their decisions are supported by what they have learned through their experiences and content preparation, and implement those solutions (if appropriate).

Relationship to Carolina Core Learning Outcomes (CC LO)

CC LO #1 on effective, engaged and persuasive communication is a component of all four USC Connect Learning Outcomes. Wording of this outcome includes that students will “identify and analyze issues”, “develop logical arguments”, and “clearly communicate ideas”. Clear communication of ideas is part of all four USC Connect Learning Outcomes. Identifying experiences and concepts is particularly part of LO 1 and 2. Analyzing is a component of LO 2-4 and developing a rationale (i.e., logical argument) is also part of LO 4.

CC LO #2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 9: These learning outcomes are more discipline specific, but all refer specifically to the ability to apply, analyze, interpret, evaluate, apply, and/or problem solve in relation to their particular domain (e.g., analytical reasoning and problem solving; global citizenship and multicultural understanding; aesthetic and interpretive understanding; values, ethics, and social responsibility). Students must demonstrate analytical skills in USC Connect LO 2 and 3 and problem solving skills in LO 4. The particular Carolina Core Learning Outcome students focus on typically depends on the selected USC Connect pathway. For example, student focusing on Community Service are typically demonstrating knowledge and skills aligned with CC LO 6 (using the principles of the social sciences to explore diverse cultural identities and to analyze political and environmental issues).

CC LO #8 is on information literacy. The emphasis on the e-portfolio in USC Connect/Graduation with Leadership Distinction is supportive of this outcome. E-portfolios include student integration of a variety of electronic documents, links, blog, etc.

CC LO #4 is on effective communication in more than one language. This is aligned with the USC Connect focus on global learning although this specific skill is not specifically assessed through USC Connect.
Appendix B: Student Comments on and Examples of Integrative Learning

Representative comments from students enrolled in UNIV 401: Graduation with Leadership Distinction when asked, “What would you tell other students about this course and the GLD process”? Responses were optional and anonymous with 17 respondents from the class of 22:

- GLD is a process in which you are forced to think about who you are. It teaches you not what to do or think, but how to think and push yourself. It was one of the most meaningful classes I ever took.
- If there is any course offered at USC that led me to truly understand my purpose, it would be “USC Connect”. This course should be offered at every university; integrative learning is a vital skill needed in college and in the working world. It helped me understand how to apply my meaningful experiences as USC to my overall path and purpose-driven life.
- This class provides tools to help you figure out the things you have learned inside the classroom and outside and how to collect those experiences to showcase yourself as a well-rounded college graduate from USC.
- Unexpected discovery and re-discovery of who I am, what I’ve done, who I’ve become. What I first believed to be a course to just help with the application process became invaluable periods of self-reflection and networking.
- Wondering what these four years of college did for you? GLD will help you make those connections!

Representative comments from the survey of students graduating with Leadership Distinction who were asked what they gained through Graduation with Leadership Distinction (n = 17, responses were optional and anonymous).

- [GLD] has required me to think critically on my experiences at the University and to make connections between my classroom and out-of-classroom experiences that may have gone unnoticed without GLD.
- [I gained] an in-depth understanding of the significance of my Carolina Experience and the ability to effectively articulate it. Preparation for GLD helped me to reflect and discuss these highlights in my career and use it to gain a scholarship.
- I gained a deeper understanding of my collegiate leadership activities and am now able to articulate the connections between them all. It was a great way to integrate different theories and experiences throughout my college career.

Statement from Caroline Hendricks, 2014 Graduate, USC Connect Student Advisory Council member, and winner of the University’s Swanger Leadership Award, the university’s second-highest undergraduate honor:

I believe USC Connect and Graduation with Leadership Distinction can have a huge impact on encouraging students to engage in their collegiate experience and better prepare them for future careers and goals. I have personally benefited from my involvement in USC Connect through learning to reflect on and articulate my own collegiate experiences, and this personal knowledge has led me to be a passionate ambassador for the program’s emphasis on student reflection. I am excited to see where USC Connect will go in the years to come, knowing that I had a hand in shaping its future.
### A Math Major Interning with the South Carolina Office of the Governor

**Hilde Oliver**

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**Why?**

The Honors College offers the South Carolina Semester Program every spring to give students the chance to intern with a SC Government office. I pursued the internship for the following reasons:

1. To get real-world work experience
2. To understand the functions of executive state government
3. To get a glimpse into the interactions between legislators and the Governor
4. To diversify my experiences and skills
5. To see how the quantitative skills I’ve gained from the classroom can fit into a professional setting

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#### Skill | In the classroom | In the office
--- | --- | ---
**Problem Solving** | Manipulating abstract ideas in clever ways to write proofs | Researching unfamiliar ideas from committee hearings to report to the Governor’s policy analysts
**Efficiency** | Solving long and complex math problems within a very limited time frame | Processing constituent correspondence backlogged several months as quickly as possible
**Teamwork** | Collaborating to understand difficult concepts and working together to navigate the solutions to problems | Working together to see that every letter sent to the Governor is replied to and signed
**Critical Thinking** | Applying theorems and definitions presented in class to write proofs | Completing unfamiliar odd jobs and tasks and learning to properly deal with angry constituents

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**Questions:**

- How applicable are the skills gained during a college liberal arts education to real world careers?
- How do quantitative skills translate into success in non-technical fields?
- What parallels can be drawn between the mathematics classroom experience and beyond-the-classroom political internships?

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**Conclusions:**

A liberal arts education builds research skills, creative thinking, and skills to better learn and synthesize new ideas, all of which are necessary for any career.

Even outside the realm of numbers, the skills gained as a math major are particularly useful for problem solving, efficiency, teamwork, and critical thinking. These skills are a necessity in all professional settings.

Despite a lot of classroom experiences and tasks being somewhat removed from the daily practices of many jobs, the skills gained from a liberal arts education are invaluable to opening opportunities to a huge variety of careers, allowing a student to have breadth to their education without limiting their future success.
E-portfolio excerpts as examples of integrative learning:

**Student description on “openness” as a key insight developed through within and beyond the classroom experiences:** The willingness to engage in new activities and consider different perspectives is a fundamental principle behind global learning. This state is often described as open-mindedness, and its value should not be underestimated. The function of global learning at its core is to gather and spread knowledge from all parts of the world, and the value in this idea is that no one place on earth contains all that there is to be learned and that every place has something to contribute to the general body of human knowledge and experience. The only way to broaden your perspective is to incorporate that which is new and different, and for this purpose each learner must remain open to the possibilities in any situation, and to the value of leaving what has come to be known as the "comfort zone".

Inside a classroom, learning cannot truly be global; learning in a classroom is two-dimensional and indirect. The student can experience only second-hand the cultures described in a textbook, the places shown in photos, the lessons described by a professor. This type of education is most valuable when used in conjunction with and as preparation for first-hand global experience. I like to think of classroom learning as exercise for your brain, stretching the limits of that notorious comfort zone such that it can thrive when truly confronted with novel circumstance instead of locking down on familiarity. The best example of how classroom learning made me more open to global learning is the influence of the Spanish Civilization course I took as part of my Spanish minor. It was invaluable in preparing me for my semester of study abroad in Spain. I was educated on the cultural background of Spaniards, including the importance of machismo, the differences in living situations between young people in Spain versus America, and the less strict perception of punctuality and the social and economic impacts of siesta time. Every aspect of society about which I learned in that classroom contributed to the depth with which I viewed and understood my own daily experiences in Spain. This dual learning approach both in and out of the classroom continued throughout my semester abroad, as I participated in culturally relevant coursework taught in Spanish by professors from my host institution. It contributed significantly to the level of openness with which I explored Europe.

**Student description of contributions of within and beyond the classroom experiences to “the importance of giving others a voice”:** In my class on women in society, I was asked to question women's low status and power. The idea of gender roles hinders the status and power levels of women. Women are generally given gender roles and norms that involve staying at home and taking care of the children, which is often not considered a real job, hindering women’s status level. Gender stereotypes perceive women to be needy and helpless; how can someone who is viewed as helpless and dependent on a male counterpart to survive have any sort of power? When faced with these stereotypes on a daily basis for years of their lives, women often lose their voices.

With my sorority I was part of a collaborative effort to put on a leadership conference by women, for women, to encourage and inspire college-aged females to become leaders in campus organizations, as well as in the community, and in the business world (see press release and flyer in Artifacts). The event was called South Carolina Women in Leadership. Through my class on women in society, I have learned that events like these are extremely important to making a difference in the lives of women, and giving women a voice. In order to fight a stereotype instilled in all people, male and female alike, from an early age, we have to start when children are young. Programs like South Carolina Women in Leadership serve to inspire women, by showcasing women who have achieved high success as leaders, and who offer strong voices to society.
### Appendix C: Rubric

**University of South Carolina Connect Graduation with Leadership Distinction E-Portfolio Grading Rubric**

**February 2014 USC Connect**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Element</th>
<th>Below Expectations 1</th>
<th>Approaching Expectations 2</th>
<th>Meets Expectations 3</th>
<th>Exceeds Expectations 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Professionalism</strong></td>
<td>1. Comprehensiveness, organization, and formatting</td>
<td>Does not include required sections of e-portfolio.</td>
<td>Includes all sections but sections are not clearly labeled or organized.</td>
<td>Includes all sections which are clearly labeled and organized.</td>
<td>Includes all required sections, clearly labeled and organized creative/ clear organization, exceptional design, OR significant additional sections</td>
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<td>3. Introduction &amp; attached application</td>
<td>Lacks application form, basic information, or clear introductory statement.</td>
<td>Attaches application. Introduction is vague.</td>
<td>Attaches application. Reasonable introduction (e.g., pathway, major, goals and/or summary of what e-portfolio will demonstrate).</td>
<td>Attaches application and provides clear, creative introduction conveying the overall “message” of the portfolio.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Artifacts</strong></td>
<td>4. Appropriate number of artifacts, related to pathway, functional links</td>
<td>Includes no (or few) artifacts (e.g., photos; papers, projects, hyperlinks).</td>
<td>Includes appropriate artifacts in a few sections. Some links may not work or some pictures don’t appear.</td>
<td>Includes appropriate artifacts in each section (at least two, but more as needed to support the text). All links work and pictures are visible.</td>
<td>Meets expectations AND artifacts reflect careful selection which support text to fully illustrate accomplishments</td>
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<td>5. Inclusion of within and beyond the classroom artifacts</td>
<td>There are no artifacts.</td>
<td>Artifacts largely WTC or BTC with no/few examples of the other category (WTC/BTC)</td>
<td>Artifacts include evidence of student engagement and accomplishments within and beyond the classroom.</td>
<td>Artifacts from WTC and BTC complement one another in telling the student’s story.</td>
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<td>6. Significance of artifacts clearly described</td>
<td>No artifacts or those presented do not clearly relate to category. Artifacts more consistent with a “scrapbook” than academic exercise.</td>
<td>Artifacts relate to the category, but significance is not described for many items.</td>
<td>Artifacts appropriate to the categories where they appear with significance described. Artifacts help tell the story of student’s experiences and provide supportive documentation of learning &amp; skills.</td>
<td>Artifacts provide exceptionally strong examples of the knowledge and skills highlighted in the e-portfolio.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CATEGORY</td>
<td>ELEMENT</td>
<td>BELOW EXPECTATIONS</td>
<td>APPROACHING EXPECTATIONS</td>
<td>MEETS EXPECTATIONS</td>
<td>EXCEEDS EXPECTATIONS</td>
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<tr>
<td>Beyond the Classroom Learning</td>
<td>7. Identifies appropriate experiences</td>
<td>No specific BTC experiences or opportunities appropriate to the pathway are included</td>
<td>Only one or two experiences are addressed (e.g., no enhancement activities included)</td>
<td>Appropriate experiences are addressed (drawn from or aligned with core and enhancement experiences)</td>
<td>A rich array of experiences are addressed</td>
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<td></td>
<td>8. Clearly describes experiences (what was done)</td>
<td>Experiences may be vaguely referenced but little to no detail is provided</td>
<td>Experiences explained with some detail</td>
<td>Experiences explained in clear detail</td>
<td>Experiences are explained in detailed and complex ways.</td>
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<td>9. Clearly describes what was learned</td>
<td>Few or no examples of what was learned from BTC experience(s)</td>
<td>Unclear or minimal examples of what was learned from BTC experience(s)</td>
<td>At least one clear and specific example of what was learned from BTC experience(s) in relation to each key insight</td>
<td>Multiple clear and specific examples of what was learned from BTC experience(s)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10. Clearly describes how BTC experiences impacted learning</td>
<td>Connections between experience and learning are unclear or illogical</td>
<td>Connections between experience and learning are minimal or simple</td>
<td>Connections between experience and learning are logical and meaningful</td>
<td>Connections between experience(s) and learning are clearly articulated and insightful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linking WTC and BTC learning</td>
<td>11. Identifies concepts, theories, frameworks (e.g., from course, program, discipline)</td>
<td>No concepts/theories/frameworks identified</td>
<td>Concepts/theories/frameworks identified are vague or unrelated to the pathway</td>
<td>Concepts/theories/frameworks appropriate to the pathway are clearly identified</td>
<td>Clear evidence of understanding in relation to concepts/theories/frameworks appropriate to pathway in each key insight</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12. Identifies elements of BTC experiences related to concepts, theories, frameworks</td>
<td>Elements of BTC experiences related to concepts are not identified or are vaguely described</td>
<td>Minimal elements of BTC experiences related to concepts are described</td>
<td>Elements of BTC experiences related to concepts are clearly described.</td>
<td>Elements of BTC experiences are described clearly and are well-organized in thoughtful, specific detail</td>
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<td>13. Compares theory (e.g., concepts, frameworks) and BTC experience</td>
<td>How BTC experiences are similar to or different from identified concepts/theories/frameworks is not addressed</td>
<td>How BTC experiences support or contradict identified concepts/theories/frameworks minimally described or not addressed in all key insights</td>
<td>How BTC experiences support or contradict identified concepts/theories/frameworks in at least one way are clearly explained and addressed in all key insights</td>
<td>How BTC experiences support or contradict specific identified sections or an entire concept/theory/framework are explained in meaningful and relevant ways with significant insight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CATEGORY</td>
<td>ELEMENT</td>
<td>BELOW EXPECTATIONS 1</td>
<td>APPROACHING EXPECTATIONS 2</td>
<td>MEETS EXPECTATIONS 3</td>
<td>EXCEEDS EXPECTATIONS 4</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Analysis</strong></td>
<td>14. Identifies complex connections (more than one experience, field of study, perspective)</td>
<td>No connections are identified between experiences</td>
<td>A one-on-one connection is identified, but no connections are made across multiple experiences, fields of study, and/or perspectives</td>
<td>Connections across multiple experiences, fields of study, and/or perspectives in relation to at least one topic are identified</td>
<td>Connections across multiple experiences, fields of study, and/or perspectives in multiple topics are identified</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>15. Explains complex connections</td>
<td>No connections are explained</td>
<td>Connections are drawn from only one experience, field of study, or perspective; provide little detail; or conclusions about connections are not logically supported.</td>
<td>Connections draw from more than one experience, field of study, or perspective and clearly explain how the elements relate to one another (e.g., similarities, differences, contexts) in ways that are logical and well thought out.</td>
<td>Connections are complex and insightful (e.g., similarities and differences are explored in-depth including potential contributing factors to various perspectives or findings).</td>
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<td>16. Describes significance of topic or elements</td>
<td>No significance in understanding connections is described</td>
<td>Little significance is addressed.</td>
<td>Importance of understanding at least one topic and/or knowledge gained from more than one experience, field of study, or perspective is addressed.</td>
<td>Importance of understanding one or more topics and/or knowledge gained from more than one experience, field of study, or perspective in relation to each topic is explained in detail.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Leadership</strong></td>
<td>17. Identifies problem/issue/goal</td>
<td>No problem, issue, or goal to be addressed identified.</td>
<td>Problem, issue or goal vaguely described or simplistic.</td>
<td>Realistic problem, issue, or goal clearly described.</td>
<td>Relevant problem, issue, goal described including multiple perspectives/facets of issue.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>18. Recommends solutions</td>
<td>No solutions or recommendations are described.</td>
<td>Limited, simplistic solutions or recommendations are listed with little detail.</td>
<td>Reasonable solutions or recommendations are clearly described.</td>
<td>Insightful, unique, and/or multi-layered solutions or recommendations are clearly described.</td>
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<td>19. Supports recommendation with learning from within and beyond the classroom</td>
<td>No explanations or rationale for the recommended solutions are provided.</td>
<td>Some rationale is provided for the solution/plan/recommendation based on either within or beyond the classroom experiences, but not both.</td>
<td>A clear and logical rationale is provided including insights from both within and beyond the classroom experiences.</td>
<td>An exceptionally well thought-out rationale is described in consideration of lessons learned from multiple within and beyond the classroom experiences.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CATEGORY</td>
<td>ELEMENT</td>
<td>BELOW EXPECTATIONS</td>
<td>APPROACHING EXPECTATIONS</td>
<td>MEETS EXPECTATIONS</td>
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<td>20. Implements solution or presents detailed plan</td>
<td>No report of implementation or plan for future implementation.</td>
<td>Limited implementation (or plan for implementation); lacks detail, does not clearly address identified issue, or inconsistent with other elements.</td>
<td>Reasonable, clear implementation (or plan). Addresses issue, consistent with other elements.</td>
<td>Carefully thought out implementation (or plan) including analysis from multiple perspectives and evaluation of implementation (or a plan for assessing success).</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Highest Score Possible: 80
Score indicating an average ranking of “meets expectations”: 60
Score required to pass GLD e-portfolio requirement for the first year pilot: 57