

# BCOR 310 Assessment Report 2014-2015



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*Dr. Phyllis Bolin*

*Dr. Sarah Lee*

## **Background**

This report describes the results from the second assessment of the research artifact from BCOR 310. The assessment outcomes are those prescribed for BCOR 310 (Outcomes 1.1 (A, B, and C), 1.2 (A and B) and 1.3 (A and B)), which are found in the QEP document approved by SACSCOC in 2011.

From a set of 606 students, 562 papers were collected (92.7%) from the 11 sections of BCOR taught in the fall and spring semesters of 2014-2015. A random sample of 66 papers was assessed from those 606 papers. The assessment took place at the close of the fall semester (30 papers assessed from 211 collected) and the close of the spring semester (36 papers assessed from 351 collected).

The assessment team consisted of 5 faculty members. Dr. Sarah Lee (Chemistry and Biochemistry), Dr. Suanna Davis (Language and Literature), Dr. Curt Niccum (Bible, Missions and Ministry) and Dr. Lynette Austin (Communication Sciences and Disorders) assessed papers in both the fall and spring semesters. Dr. Monty Lynn (Management Sciences) was involved in the assessment of fall papers, but did not assess papers in the spring.

Two members of the assessment team rated each paper. The scores from rater 1 and rater 2 were averaged for each paper in the sample. These scores were used to calculate the average score for each SLO objective, the number of papers meeting the acceptable and ideal targets for each SLO objective, and the composite score for each SLO. Composite scores were calculated by adding the rubric scores for each SLO (e.g., 1.1.A + 1.1.B + 1.1.C = 1.1 composite). Percentages of papers rated at or above a certain target (for example, at or above an average of 2.5) were calculated by dividing the appropriate score by the number of papers in the sample.

## **SLOs assessed (2014-2015):**

- 1.1.A Students will determine the nature and extent of the information needed.
- 1.1.B Students will access the needed information effectively and efficiently.
- 1.1.C Students will use information ethically and legally.
- 1.2.A Students will describe theories or perspectives relevant to a particular case, problem or situation.
- 1.2.B Students will apply interpretations relevant to a particular case or problem.
- 1.3.A Students will evaluate information and its sources critically.
- 1.3.B Students will use information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose.

## Results

### **SLO Objective 1.1.A—Students will determine the nature and extent of the information needed.**

ONE	Obj. 1.1.A	BCOR310	Year 3: 2013-2014	Year 4: 2014-2015		
				Fall 2014	Spring 2015	Overall Year 4
Determine Information Needed	Score $\geq$ 2.5	36.7%	75.0%	58.3%	65.9%	
	Acceptable Target (73%)	Not met	Met	Not met	Approaching	
	Ideal Target (85%)	Not met	Not met	Not met	Not met	
	Average of all samples	2.18	2.68	2.45	2.55	

The QEP report calls for an acceptable target of 73% of samples scoring 2.5 or higher and an ideal target of 85% of samples scoring 2.5 or higher for this rubric item. In the 2014-2015 assessment, 65.9% of sampled papers received a rubric rating of 2.5 or higher; thus **falling short of the acceptable target** for this SLO objective.

### Comparisons.

- Despite falling short of the ideal target, there was significant improvement in the percentage of papers scoring 2.5 or higher on this SLO objective for Year 4 when compared to the assessment for Year 3 (2013-2014). The percent of increase is almost 80%.
- The Year 4 fall and spring data show significant differences in the percentage of sampled papers scoring above a 2.5 on this SLO. There was a 22% of decrease in scores from fall 2014 to spring 2015. This pattern is observed throughout the assessment data. See the “Factors Affecting Year 4 Assessment” below for discussion of this observation.

### **SLO Objective 1.1.B—Students will access the needed information effectively and efficiently.**

TWO	Obj. 1.1.B	BCOR310	Year 3: 2013-2014	Year 4: 2014-2015		
				Fall 2014	Spring 2015	Overall Year 4
Access and Use Information	Score $\geq$ 2.5	43.3%	66.7%	69.4%	68.2%	
	Acceptable Target (73%)	Not met	Approaching	Approaching	Approaching	
	Ideal Target (85%)	Not met	Not met	Not met	Not met	
	Average of all samples	2.05	2.58	2.57	2.58	

The QEP report calls for an acceptable target of 73% of samples scoring 2.5 or higher and an ideal target of 85% of samples scoring 2.5 or higher for this rubric item. In the 2014-2015 assessment, 68.2% of sampled papers received a rubric rating of 2.5 or higher; thus **falling short, but approaching the acceptable target** for this SLO objective.

**Comparisons.**

- Despite falling short of the target, we did observe an encouraging percent increase of 57.5% in the papers with a score of 2.5 or above from the Year 3 to Year 4 data.
- The fall 2014 and spring 2015 scores were very close for this SLO objective. The percent of increase between these numbers was just 4%.

**SLO Objective 1.1.C—Students will use information ethically and legally.**

THREE	Obj. 1.1.C	BCOR310	Year 3: 2013-2014	Year 4: 2014-2015		
				Fall 2014	Spring 2015	Overall Year 4
		Score ≥ 2.5	<b>55.0%</b>	78.3%	62.5%	<b>69.7%</b>
	Information Use Strategies	Acceptable Target (73%)	Not met	Met	Not met	Approaching
		Ideal Target (85%)	Not met	Approaching	Not met	Not met
		Average of all samples	2.42	2.61	2.42	2.51

The QEP report calls for an acceptable target of 73% of samples scoring 2.5 or higher and an ideal target of 85% of samples scoring 2.5 or higher for this rubric item. In the 2014-2015 assessment, 69.7% of sampled papers received a rubric rating of 2.5 or higher; thus **falling short, but approaching the acceptable target** for this SLO objective.

**Comparisons.**

- There is a notable 26.7% of increase in the papers with a rating of 2.5 or higher when comparing the Year 3 and Year 4 data.
- While both the fall and spring assessment data show increases compared to the Year 3 data, the absolute increase is more pronounced in the fall 2014 assessment. Note that there was 20% of decrease from the fall to spring scores in fall 2014 and spring 2015. Discussion of the possible reasons for these decreases will be discussed later in the report.

**SLO 1.1 Composite—Objective 1.1.A + 1.1B + 1.1.C**

**SLO 1.1 calls for students to understand and appropriately use scholarly sources.**

COMPOSITE SLO 1.1	BCOR310	Year 3: 2013-2014	Year 4: 2014-2015		
			Fall 2014	Spring 2015	Overall Year 4
	Total ≥ 7.5	<b>37.0%</b>	60.0%	52.8%	<b>56.1%</b>
	Acceptable Target (73%)	Not met	Not met	Not met	Not met
	Ideal Target (85%)	Not met	Not met	Not met	Not met
	Average of all samples	2.22	2.62	2.48	2.55

The SLO is broken down into 3 objectives, 1.1.A, 1.1.B, and 1.1.C, as described above. The QEP report calls for a composite score of 7.5 for SLO 1.1. The acceptable target is 73% of samples scoring

7.5 or higher, while the ideal target is 85% of samples meeting this score. In the 2014-2015 assessment, 56.1% of sampled papers received a composite score of 7.5 or higher; thus **falling short of the acceptable target** for this SLO objective.

**Comparisons.**

- Despite falling short of the goal, there is a significant 51.6% of increase in the number of papers with a composite score of 7.5 or higher comparing the Year 3 and Year 4 data.
- Fall and spring data again shows a decline in the spring semester scores for this academic year. Results from the spring data show a percentage decrease of 12% from fall 2014.

**SLO Objective 1.2.A—Students will describe theories or perspectives relevant to a particular case, problem or situation.**

FOUR	Obj. 1.2.A	BCOR310	Year 3: 2013-2014	Year 4: 2014-2015		
				Fall 2014	Spring 2015	Overall Year 4
Describe Relevant Theories	Score ≥ 2.5	51.7%	66.7%	41.7%	53.0%	
	Acceptable Target (73%)	Not met	Approaching	Not met	Not met	
	Ideal Target (85%)	Not met	Not met	Not met	Not met	
	Average of all samples	2.28	2.47	2.15	2.30	

The QEP report calls for an acceptable target of 73% of samples scoring 2.5 or higher and an ideal target of 85% of samples scoring 2.5 or higher. In the 2014-2015 assessment, 53.0% of sampled papers received a rubric rating of 2.5 or higher; thus **falling short of the acceptable target** for this SLO objective.

**Comparisons.**

- Gains from Year 3 to Year 4 were insignificant and showed only a 2.5% of increase in scores.
- Comparison of scores in fall and spring of 2014-2015 show a 37.5% of decrease from fall to spring. This drop in scores will be discussed below.

**SLO Objective 1.2.B—Students will apply interpretations relevant to a particular case or problem.**

FIVE	Obj. 1.2.B	BCOR310	Year 3: 2013-2014	Year 4: 2014-2015		
				Fall 2014	Spring 2015	Overall Year 4
Analysis Applied to Situation	Score ≥ 2.5	51.7%	70.0%	31.6%	51.5%	
	Acceptable Target (73%)	Not met	Approaching	Not met	Not met	
	Ideal Target (85%)	Not met	Not met	Not met	Not met	
	Average of all samples	2.34	2.52	2.11	2.30	

The QEP report calls for an acceptable target of 73% of samples scoring 2.5 or higher and an ideal target of 85% of samples scoring 2.5 or higher. In the 2014-2015 assessment, 51.5% of sampled papers received a rubric rating of 2.5 or higher; thus **falling short of the acceptable target** for this SLO objective.

**Comparisons.**

- Overall, the 2014-2015 results showed a small, insignificant drop of 0.3% of decrease in the scores in comparison to the assessment data for Year 3 (2013-2014).
- A large difference between the fall and spring assessment data was observed for this particular SLO objective. The data from spring showed a significant 48.4% of decrease from the papers assessed in the fall of 2014-2015. This is a matter of concern that needs to be further studied.

**SLO 1.2 Composite—Objective 1.2.A + 1.2.B**

**SLO 1.2 calls for students to integrate knowledge to frame researchable questions and to develop strategies to seek answers.**

COMPOSITE SLO 1.2	BCOR310	Year 3: 2013-2014	Year 4: 2014-2015		
			Fall 2014	Spring 2015	Overall Year 4
	Total ≥ 5.0	45.0%	56.7%	30.6%	42.4%
	Acceptable Target (73%)	Not met	Not met	Not met	Not met
	Ideal Target (85%)	Not met	Not met	Not met	Not met
	Average of all samples	2.31	2.49	2.13	2.30

The SLO is broken down into 2 objectives, 1.2.A and 1.2.B, as described above. The QEP report calls for a composite score for 5.0 for SLO 1.2. The acceptable target is 73% of samples scoring 5.0 or higher, while the ideal target is 85% of samples scoring 5.0 or higher.

In the 2014-2015 assessment, 42.4% of sampled papers received a composite score of 5.0 or higher; thus **not meeting or approaching the acceptable target** for this SLO objective. The Year 4 assessment data shows a slight but insignificant drop from the assessment from Year 3.

**Comparisons.**

- Scores from Year 3 to Year 4 showed a 5.8% of decrease.
- Scores from fall 2014 to spring 2015 showed a 31.4% of decrease. This is cause for concern and will be addressed below.

**SLO Objective 1.3.A—Students will evaluate information and its sources critically.**

SIX	Obj. 1.3.A	BCOR310	Year 3: 2013-2014	Year 4: 2014-2015		
				Fall 2014	Spring 2015	Overall Year 4
SIX	Evaluate Information	Score $\geq$ 2.5	<b>52.0%</b>	80.0%	36.1%	<b>56.1%</b>
		Acceptable Target (73%)	Not met	Met	Not met	Not met
		Ideal Target (85%)	Not met	Approaching	Not met	Not met
		Average of all samples	2.25	2.55	2.14	2.33

The QEP report calls for an acceptable target of 73% of samples scoring 2.5 or higher and an ideal target of 85% of samples scoring 2.5 or higher for this objective. In the 2014-2015 assessment, 56.1% of sampled papers received a rubric rating of 2.5 or higher; thus **not meeting the acceptable target** for this SLO objective.

**Comparisons.**

- Comparison of results from Year 3 and Year 4 shows a percentage of increase of 7.9%.
- Comparison of results from fall 2014 to spring 2015 shows a significant 54.9% of decrease. This follows the observed trend in decreased scores from fall 2014 to spring 2015.

**SLO Objective 1.3.B—Students will use information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose.**

SEVEN	Obj. 1.3.B	BCOR310	Year 3: 2013-2014	Year 4: 2014-2015		
				Fall 2014	Spring 2015	Overall Year 4
SEVEN	Use Information for a Purpose	Score $\geq$ 2.5	<b>55.0%</b>	70.0%	55.6%	<b>62.1%</b>
		Acceptable Target (73%)	Not met	Approaching	Not met	Not met
		Ideal Target (85%)	Not met	Not met	Not met	Not met
		Average of all samples	2.70	2.67	2.35	2.49

The QEP report calls for an acceptable target of 73% of samples scoring 2.5 or higher and an ideal target of 85% of samples scoring 2.5 or higher for this objective. In the 2014-2015 assessment, 62.1% of sampled papers received a rubric rating of 2.5 or higher. This **does not meet the acceptable target** for this SLO objective.

**Comparisons.**

- Comparison results from Year 3 and Year 4 show a small but significant 12.9% of increase.
- From the fall of 2014 to spring of 2015 there was a significant 20.6% percent of decrease.

**SLO 1.3 Composite—Objective 1.3.A + 1.3.B**

**SLO 1.3 calls for students to analyze, interpret, and/or evaluate information and make and implement research informed decisions.**

COMPOSITE SLO 1.3	BCOR310	Year 3: 2013-2014	Year 4: 2014-2015		
			Fall 2014	Spring 2015	Overall Year 4
	Total ≥ 5.0	45.0%	66.7%	38.9%	51.5%
	Acceptable Target (73%)	Not met	Approaching	Not met	Not met
	Ideal Target (85%)	Not met	Not met	Not met	Not met
Average of all samples	2.47	2.61	2.24	2.41	

This SLO is broken down into 2 objectives, 1.3A and 1.3B, as described above. The QEP report calls for a composite score for 5.0 for SLO 1.3. The acceptable target is 73% of samples scoring 5.0 or higher, while the ideal target is 85% of samples scoring 5.0 or higher. In the 2014-2015 assessment, 51.5% of sampled papers received a composite score of 5.0 or higher, **not meeting the acceptable target** of 73%.

**Comparisons.**

- Comparative examination of Year 3 and Year 4 shows a slight but significant percent of increase of 14.4%.
- The fall to spring data continue the downward trend as the year progresses. There is a percent decrease of 41.7% in the scores from fall 2014 to spring 2015.

**Overall Findings**

The assessment team noted an overall increase in quality of the BCOR research papers this year. This anecdotal observation was reflected in our numerical analysis, which showed promising **increases in most SLOs**. We recognize the work of the BCOR faculty and hope our previous recommendations helped guide areas of improvement for the course.

The area with the **greatest improvement** is in SLO objectives 1.1.A, 1.1.B and 1.1.C. We applaud the BCOR faculty for making great strides in each of these SLO objectives. The most improved area was 1.1.A, which deals with writing a research question and choosing sources that relate to the research question. We also noticed improvement in development of introductory and concluding paragraphs.

The data also show **improvement** with SLO objectives 1.3.A and 1.3.B, although the difference between the Year 3 and Year 4 data is not as pronounced as the difference in 1.1.A, 1.1.B and 1.1.C. We found large gains in this area at the fall 2014 assessment, but assessment of the spring sections of BCOR showed similar, or worse, results than the Year 3 data. The difference between semesters is discussed further below.



We found basically **no change** in the assessment for SLO objectives 1.2.A and 1.2.B from Year 3 to Year 4. It is worth noting that the fall BCOR sections performed much better on these objectives than the spring BCOR sections.

**Summary Table Showing the Percent of Increase or Decrease from Year 3 to Year 4**

SLO	Description of SLO	Percent Change
1.1.A	Determine the nature and extent of information needed	+ 80.0%
1.1.B	Access needed information effectively and efficiently	+ 57.5%
1.1.C	Use information ethically and legally	+ 26.7%
<b>1.1 Composite</b>	<b>Understand and appropriately use scholarly sources</b>	<b>+ 51.6%</b>
1.2.A	Describe relevant theories or perspectives	+ 2.5%
1.3.B	Apply interpretations relevant to a case or problem	- 0.3%
1.2 Composite	Integrate knowledge to frame questions and develop strategies to seek answers	- 5.8%
1.3.A	Evaluate information and use sources critically	+ 7.9%
1.3.B	Use information to accomplish a purpose	+ 12.9%
<b>1.3 Composite</b>	<b>Analyze, interpret or evaluate information and make decisions</b>	<b>+ 14.4%</b>

### **Factors Impacting Year 4 (2014-2015) Assessment**

#### **Prompts**

Fall 2014. The assessment team met the week after the fall semester ended to assess the BCOR research artifacts collected from the fall 2014 sections. On the day of the assessment, the team was provided with the prompts from each section of BCOR. Additionally, the team was told which papers corresponded to a given prompt. We did not have this information during the Year 3 (2013-2014) assessment. We believe **having the prompt for each paper was an improvement** over the organization of the 2013-2014 assessments.

Spring 2015. The team was provided with the three prompts used in different sections of BCOR.

During the spring 2015 assessment, the team used two of the prompts from the previous fall, and received one updated prompt for the spring sections. It is unclear whether the two reused prompts matched what was given to spring 2015 BCOR students.

**Having the prompt for each paper is a necessity and an improvement** over the organization of the 2013-2014 assessment. **Better communication** in 2015-2016 will ensure the prompts the assessment team uses match the prompts given to students and provide for a more accurate assessment.



The team recognizes that the prompts for Year 4 were improved compared to the 2013-2014 assessment. **Prompts were clearer, more focused, and addressed several of the recommendations the assessment team suggested last year.** For instance, the findings from the 2013-2014 assessments found many students were writing film reviews. Year 4 prompts very clearly stated that a film review would not satisfy the assignment. Correspondingly, there was a significant drop in the number of papers regarded as “reviews” this year. Additionally, the team noticed an improvement in research question development in Year 4 papers compared to the Year 3 assessment. Wording in two of the three prompts encouraged and helped students to write good research questions. The assessment team recognizes the professors for their focus on the research question and encourage continued focus on this aspect of the research paper.

### ***Amount of Research Required***

The team noticed significant **variability in the types of research required, the number of scholarly sources,** and the materials used for research in the prompts.

### ***Rubric Interpretation***

During the normalization process conducted before assessment, team members discussed the incongruence in some of the categories on the rubric. The normalization process exists to assist reviewers in coming to a consistent understanding of rubric categories. The observed inconsistencies may be a possible factor impacting the assessment data. It is recommended faculty and assessment team members work together to discuss possible revisions in the language found in the rubric.

### ***Plagiarism***

The team noticed different levels of plagiarism in several papers. This issue was more pronounced during the spring 2015 assessment. The team members noticed cases of suspected plagiarism (for example, a paper written in two very different styles and a phrase in different color font). We also noticed several papers with missing or partial citations (for example, a quote followed by no citation; or, a phrase that was clearly taken from a source, but no citation was given).

### ***Commendations for Faculty***

The assessment team recognizes the BCOR faculty for their focus on the research question and encourages continued focus on this aspect of the research paper. The assessment team anecdotally recognized that students given examples of thesis statements were able to develop their own thesis statements better than others. When comparing assessments from Year 3 to Year 4, the assessment team noticed an improvement in the quality of introductions and conclusions in student writing. The assessment team also appreciated the consistency in the required citation style this year.

The team recognizes the hard work of the BCOR faculty to improve student research papers from Year 3 to Year 4. While room for improvement exists, it is obvious that the faculty have made great strides in focusing the prompts and working on the student use of scholarly sources.

## **Recommendations for the BCOR Teaching Team**

Based on the 2014-2015 assessment, the BCOR assessment team has several recommendations for the BCOR faculty for next year.

### **1) *Inconsistencies in the Assignment across Sections***

Moving forward, the assessment team suggests the instructors develop a more uniform research assignment. We believe that this will lessen the variability observed across sections, and equalize the type of research students need to perform for this assignment. We feel a uniform prompt encompassing the key component of the BCOR curriculum would be ideal. If the BCOR professors see value in topic variability across sections, at the least we recommend that the papers for each section should have the **same research component**. Specifically, they should require the same number (and type) of scholarly sources, papers of equal length, and similar depth (analysis of same number of metanarratives).

### **2) *Research Question Development***

Continue to encourage students to write good research questions. We noticed more papers attempted a clear research question this year compared to the Year 3 assessment, but there remains need for improvement. We specifically noticed a large number of papers included research topics that were **too broad**.

### **3) *Use of Sources and Plagiarism***

During the spring 2015 assessment, the assessment team noticed a common mistake related to appropriate use of sources. We found students using very general quotes from otherwise great sources. Some students exhibited a lack of engagement with the source.

With the number of papers assessed with suspected plagiarism, the assessment team recommends that **all BCOR faculty use Turnitin**. Faculty should use some time in class to discuss plagiarism and provide resources that define plagiarism, particularly self-plagiarism.

### **4) *Citations***

Consistency in the required citation style (MLA) across BCOR sections improved. It is recommended that faculty continue to emphasize proper in-text citation format, including use of page numbers in their in-text citations.

### **5) *Integration/extension of ideas***

The assessment team noticed that students tended to struggle most with SLO 1.2-*students will integrate knowledge to frame researchable questions and to develop strategies to seek answers*. Quantitatively, the composite score for this SLO was the lowest of the three SLOs. The team suggests that BCOR professors intentionally encourage students to describe theories/perspectives AND encourage students to make connections to other situations. **Encourage students to make connections to other cases. This integration is often found in the last paragraph of research papers, and may help students write better conclusions.**

In addition, the assessment team saw a disappointing decrease in scores from the fall to spring semesters on this particular SLO 1.2. On SLO objective 1.2A, we found many students failed to discuss all relevant theories and perspectives. Many papers discussed only one perspective. This objective also has a component of connection back to the thesis statement. Discussing topics and

how they relate back to the thesis was an area in which many students struggled. Objective 1.2.B includes a component of using professional language. Many students scored low in this category because of blatant use of non-professional language. **Encourage students to use professional language (no contractions), correct spelling mistakes, and proof read their work.**

**6) Integration of the assessment rubric**

Finally, we suggest the BCOR professors integrate part or the entire BCOR assessment rubric into their own rubrics for assessment of the research paper. We believe this integration would strengthen the assessment. **(There was some concern among the team that the “Exemplary” category on the assessment rubric is above and beyond what the students are asked to do for class.)**

**Comparison of Fall and Spring Assessment Data**

In almost all categories, the scores from the spring 2015 assessment were lower than the scores from the fall 2015 assessment. The assessment team members felt that the spring papers were not as strong as the papers collected the previous fall. The numerical data supports this observation made on the assessment day. There were clear and significant drops in the scores from the fall to the spring. Unfortunately, without more information, it is impossible to discover why this drop was observed. We suggest several possible reasons here:

- The fall and spring semesters are not matched for academic ability, grade level, or major. Were the enrolled fall students higher-achieving students? Is there a quantifiable difference in academic indicators between the fall and spring populations?
- Did the BCOR professors approach the research paper differently in their fall and spring sections? Many, but not all of the professors teach both fall and spring sections of BCOR. Did the spring BCOR professors receive information about the fall 2014 assessment? Did they receive the Year 3 assessment report?
- Did the BCOR assessment team approach each semester with different expectations, leading to inconsistencies in scoring the two semesters?

**Summary Table of Percent of Increase or Decrease from Fall to Spring in Year 4**

SLO	Description of SLO	Percent Change
1.1.A	Determine the nature and extent of info needed	- 22.3%
1.1.B	Access needed information effectively and efficiently	+ 4.0%
1.1.C	Use information ethically and legally	- 20.2%
<b>1.1 Composite</b>	<b>Understand and appropriately use scholarly sources</b>	<b>- 12.0%</b>
1.2.A	Describe relevant theories or perspectives	- 37.5%
1.3.B	Apply interpretations relevant to a case or problem	- 48.8%

<b>1.2 Composite</b>	<b>Integrate knowledge to frame questions and develop strategies to seek answers</b>	<b>- 31.4%</b>
1.3.A	Evaluate information and use sources critically	- 54.9%
1.3.B	Use information to accomplish a purpose	- 20.6%
<b>1.3 Composite</b>	<b>Analyze, interpret or evaluate information and make decisions</b>	<b>- 41.7%</b>

### Concluding Remarks from the Director of Pursuit

#### Limitations of the assessment rubric

- The assessment team continues to work through the tension of the differing expectations across the rubric levels for each objective. In particular, the team struggled to differentiate between the competent and emerging levels of Objective 1.2.B – the difference between these two levels is the use of professional language. Each semester the team has to identify a working definition of professional language during the norming process. Often, it is defined by what professional language is not – colloquial terms, poor grammar – as opposed to what it is.
- In objective 1.3.A there is a significant amount of ambiguity between the levels of competent, emerging and unacceptable. Interpreting and evaluating information is targeted. These three levels on the rubric refer to identifying assumptions and relevant contexts when presenting a position. If the writing prompt does not define the position or positions the paper is to address the team is left to assess this very broadly. The differences between rubric levels is indicated by non-specific referents such as “...several relevant contexts...” and “...some assumptions...” and “emerging awareness of present assumptions”.
- The same rubric is utilized for CORE 210 and BCOR 310. It is recommended that faculty from BCOR 310 and CORE 210 meet with assessment team members to refine the common assessment rubric so that it meets the needs of the courses and to adjust the language to be more consistent.

**Room for Improvement.** Considering adaptations in the rubric and pedagogical and curriculum improvements, it is hoped that the assessment data will exhibit improvements in the near future. As faculty work to “close the loop,” it is anticipated that discussions will include successful learning strategies, refinement and improvement of the wording in the prompts for the assessment paper, and adaptations in clarity in the rubric. CORE 110—Cornerstone took 3 years of assessment changes to “close the loop”. Results from courses that are BCOR prerequisites have also shown improvement, so it is expected that similar gains in assessment will occur for BCOR in 2015-2016.

#### Suggestions for Further Research

2014-2015 was a year of change. In the midst of this change, several possibilities exist that may account for the drop in scores from fall 2014 to spring 2015.

Appendix F

- The former Director of General Education left the university in the summer of 2014, leaving a period of time of transition. Before the departure, the Director of BCOR met regularly with the Director of General Education to discuss curriculum and plan meetings with faculty.
- An Interim Director of General Education was selected in the fall of 2014 and was in place by April of 2015.
- The Director of BCOR was not engaged with the BCOR faculty in the spring of 2015. Because of workload issues, the Director of BCOR has chosen to step down.
- While there is currently no Director of BCOR, the Interim Director of General Education has scheduled a faculty meeting in early fall 2015 to consult with current faculty for the course.
- It is the recommendation of the Director of Pursuit that a new Director of BCOR be selected as soon as possible to continue and increase the gains begun in 2014-2015.