Annual Impact Report
Year 5: 2015-2016

Abilene Christian University

Pursuit: A Quality Enhancement Plan developed as part of the University's SACSCOC 2011 Reaffirmation

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Director of *Pursuit*

Through *Pursuit,* Abilene Christian University will equip undergraduates with the knowledge, skills, behaviors, and values to attain research literacy. These skills are developed and utilized in the creation of a research or creative product and then disseminated in a public environment, making a distinct awareness of and commitment to the body of knowledge in the discipline.

Research Literacy Initiative

The building of a community of research, scholarship, and creative expression is the overarching purpose of ACU's *Pursuit* QEP. The plan can be summarized by the three goals: Explore, Create, and Express.

- In the new Core Curriculum, students **Explore** and master information literacy as they think critically to write evaluative papers and articulate the nature and impact of significant global issues in research artifacts.
- Students **Create** a product while learning and practicing the skills needed to carry out a research or creative project. Opportunities are given to students to work with faculty mentors to carry out research or complete a creative activity.
- Students **Express** the results of their research or creative activity**.** Since the goal of research is to make public one's work for a context of critique, extension, and correction, students must learn to express their results in both written and oral communications (Boyer, 1998).

21st Century Vision

To best prepare our graduates for the 21st century, ACU plans to provide a distinctive, motivating educational experience. Our vision is to send, intelligent, inspired and involved Christian alumni into the world to make a positive impact by focusing on the following areas:

- Produce leaders who think critically, globally and missionally.
- Build distinctive and innovative programs.
- Deliver a unique, Christ-centered experience that draws students into community.
- Expand ACU's Christian influence and educational reach nationally and internationally.

Core Elements

Pursuit provides for

- focused curricular experiences through CORE classes, enhancing the research readiness of students;
- expanded opportunities for research and creative projects through an intentional focus on faculty mentoring and through the allocation of financial resources for students and faculty to collaborate on research, scholarship and creative work, and settings for dissemination of research, scholarly and creative work; and
- targeted professional development of faculty to assist in the creation and implementation of research-based courses.

Pursuit provides students an exciting way to engage in their discipline both inside and outside the classroom, leading to a deeper understanding of the academic area they have chosen, satisfying their thirst for discovery, and providing an outlet for their creativity. As we embark on the *Pursuit* on the *Journey of Research and Creative Expression*, we are committed to equipping students with tools to become life-long learners in an ever-changing society.

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OVERVIEW OF YEAR 5

Year 5 of Pursuit concludes with the following accomplishments:
- Fifth assessment for CORE 110 by Assessment Team I led by Dr. Laura Carroll;
- Fourth assessment for CORE 210 by Assessment Team II led by Dr. Brenda Bender;
- Third assessment for BCOR 310 by Assessment Team III led by Dr. Sarah Lee;
- Second assessment for Capstone led by Assessment Team IV led by Dr. David Hendricks;
- Conclusion of *Pursuit* Research Grants for 13 faculty and 18 student researchers, with funding awards of $78,440;
- *Pursuit* Travel Funds awarded to 31 faculty and more than 84 student researchers funding for travel to conferences for verbal and poster presentations of their research and creative projects, including entrance fees for juried shows, a funding total of $35,779; and
- *Pursuit* assisted in the funding for the Director of Undergraduate Research.

An overview of *Pursuit Goals and Learning Outcomes* can be found in Appendix A. Appendix B includes the report: *Actions to be Implemented*.

WORKING TEAMS

Pursuit Implementation Team (PIT): Members include the following:
- Phyllis Bolin (Director of *Pursuit*, Chair, CAS, Mathematics),
- Glenn Pemberton (CBS, Bible, Missions and Ministry),
- Alan Lipps (CEHS, School of Social Work),
- Mark McCallon (Library),
- Alfa Nyandoro (COBA, School of Information Technology and Computing),
- Rick Piersall (CAS, Music),
- Timothy Head (CAS, Physics),
- Hilary Simpson (Staff, Honors College), and
- Kaye Price-Hawkins (Alumnus).
- Ex Officio: Autumn Sutherlin (Office of Undergraduate Research) and Eric Gumm (General Education).

Assessment Team I—CORE 110--Cornerstone: The assessment team was formed during Year 1 to assess CORE 110 artifacts. The team remained intact and continued to work together during Year 5. Assessment Team I assessed CORE 110 annotated bibliographies and continued to assess CORE 110 artifacts for the duration of the QEP in order to have a consistency of assessment. Oversight of Assessment Team I and the assessment of Cornerstone artifacts moved to the Office of Institutional Effectiveness (OIE) at the beginning of fall 2016. Faculty members include the following:
- Laura Carroll (Chair, CAS, Language and Literature),

- Stephen Baldridge (CEHS, School of Social Work),
- Houston Heflin (CBS, Bible, Missions and Ministry, General Education),
- Susan Lewis (Vice Provost, CAS, Journalism and Mass Communications), and
- Dawne Swearingen Meeks (CAS, Theater).

Assessment Team II—CORE 210: Assessment Team II was formed during Year 2 to assess CORE 210 artifacts. In Year 5 the assessment team continued to work together as they assessed CORE 210 position papers. In fall 2015 faculty voted to move CORE 210 from the list of required courses into the menu for student selection. CORE 210 artifacts will no longer be collected and assessed. Faculty members include the following:
- Brenda Bender (Chair, CEHS, Communication Sciences and Disorders),
- Josh Brokaw (CAS, Biology),
- Scott Self (CORE, University Access Programs), and
- Jeanine Varner (CAS, Language and Literature),

Assessment Team III—BCOR 310: Assessment Team II was formed during Year 3 to assess BCOR 310 research artifacts. Assessment Team III assessed BCOR 310 research artifacts and but will no longer assess the research artifacts. BCOR 310 moved from the list of required courses in CORE curriculum to Bible, Missions and Ministry for oversight. Faculty members include the following:
- Sarah Lee (Chair, CAS, Chemistry and Biochemistry),
- Lynette Austin (CEHS, Communication Sciences and Disorders),
- Suanna Davis (CAS, Language and Literature),
- Monty Lynn (COBA, Management Sciences), and
- Curt Niccum (CBS, Bible, Missions and Ministry).

Assessment Team IV—Capstone: Assessment Team IV was formed during Year 4 to assess Capstone experience research artifacts. Assessment Team IV assessed research papers from Capstone experiences and will continue to assess those the artifacts. Administration of the assessments has moved into the Office of Institutional Effectiveness (OIE) for continued assessment and oversight. Faculty members include the following:
- David Hendricks (CAS, Chair, Mathematics),
- Rodney Ashlock (CBS, Bible, Missions and Ministry),
- Don Pope (COBA, Management Sciences),
- Shelly Sanders (CAS, Language and Literature),
- Tracy Shilcutt (CAS, History and Global Studies), and
- Dana Mayhall (CEHS, School of Teacher Education).

TASKS COMPLETED

PIT Tasks for 2015-2016: The *Pursuit* Implementation Team (PIT) group met periodically throughout the academic year and completed the following tasks:
- Examined *Pursuit* Travel Grant requests and awarded $35,779 funding for faculty and student travel to conferences. This was an unusual budget amount, higher than any other years. Funds that remained from previous years and funds not utilized in other areas were moved into the Travel Grants budget for this final year of the QEP. Thirty-one faculty and their 84 students traveled to conferences to

share their research and creative activities. In addition, funding was granted the Department of Art and Design for entry fees for students work submitted to juried shows.

- Though the academic year, PIT group met periodically but the team did not award research funds for 2016-2017. In fall 2016, the research funding moved to the oversight of Office of Research and Sponsored Programs (ORSP) and Office of Undergraduate Research (OUR). Research Grants awarded for funding in January 2014 were completed during the academic year 2015-2016 and appropriate reports were filed in May 2016.

2015-2016 Pursuit Research Grant Fellows: *Pursuit* Research Grants funded $96,000 for twelve grant projects:

- Stephen Baldridge (School of Social Work),
- Dale Bertram and Holly Morris (Marriage and Family Studies),
- Rob Byrd (School of Information Technology and Computing),
- Adam Hester (Theatre),
- J. Darby Hewitt (Physics and Engineering),
- Andrew Huddleston (Teacher Education),
- Jennifer Huddleston (Biology),
- Rebecca Hunter (Biology),
- Sarah Lee (Chemistry and Biochemistry),
- Gregory Powell (Chemistry and Biochemistry),
- Matt Steele (Physics and Engineering), and
- Qiang Xu (Biology).

Eighteen undergraduate students worked with the faculty on projects during the grant cycle for Year 5 Academic Year 2015-2016.

COURSE ASSESSMENTS

During the fifth year of implementation, *Pursuit* continued the focus on collecting data and assessments from CORE 110 (Cornerstone), CORE 210, BCOR 310, and Capstone courses, including artifacts from each course. *SAILS* data was collected in CORE 110 in the fall semester for benchmarking to utiilize as pre-test information for comparison to the post-test data collected in Capstone courses.

SAILS

(Standardized Assessment of Information Literacy Skills): All students enrolled in CORE 110 completed *SAILS* early in fall 2015. In the total enrollment of 1018 first-year students, 561 students (55%) took the assessment. Students enrolled in fall 2015 Capstone experiences took the *SAILS* assessment in early fall 2015; those enrolled in spring Capstone experiences took the assessment at the start of the spring semester. There were 881 total enrollment in capstone experiences in fall 2015 and spring 2016. Of those students 337 completed the assessment (38%).

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Resulting data from Capstone students was compared the data from students enrolled in CORE 110 in fall 2012 as a pre-test for benchmark comparison with *SAILS* results from Capstone students enrolled in fall 2015 and spring 2016. Capstone experiences generally occur during one of the final three semesters in which a student is enrolled.

Detailed results of the outcomes, including the *SAILS* Skill Sets are found in Appendix C.

SLO 1.1 Students will understand and appropriatelly use scholarly sources.

Objective 1.1.A. Students will determine the nature and extent of the information needed.

Measurement: *SAILS* sections ONE through FOUR.

Objective 1.1.B. Students will access needed information effectively and efficiently.

Measurement: *SAILS* sections FIVE and SIX.

Objective 1.1.C. Students will use information ethically and legally.

Measurement: *SAILS* sections SEVEN and EIGHT.

Note: the incoming students who take *SAILS* are not expected to have understanding and knowledge of information literacy skills. This assessment is used as a pre-test for comparison purposes with the post-test to be given during student's final undergraduate year at ACU in Capstone courses.

Results: Students at Abilene Christian University (enrolled in CORE110 in fall 2012) performed worse than the institution-type benchmark on all eight *SAILS* Skill Sets:

After 3 years, data from CORE 110 students compared to that of students enrolled in Capstone shows the following overall results:
- Overall scores increased significantly.
- Standard errors decreased, showing student scores with less variability and performing more consistently on the *SAILS* skills sets.
- Capstone students at Abilene Christian University performed *BETTER THAN* the institution-type benchmark on ALL *SAILS* Skills Sets, including the following:
  Developing a Research Strategy
  Selecting Finding Tools
  Searching
  Using Finding Tool Features
  Retrieving Sources
  Evaluating Sources
  Documenting Sources
  Understanding Economic, Legal, and Social Issues.

Information on the *SAILS* results is provided to CORE 110 faculty who teach information literacy skills for SLO 1.1. Comparative data was provided to specifically to Capstone faculty and to all faculty. Further details of the comparative results can be found in Appendix C.

CORE 110 (Cornerstone)

The Cornerstone research artifact, an annotated bibliography, was collected from a set of 1080 students; 1024 papers were collected (95%). This is a significant improvement from 93% from the previous year, and 77% the initial year. A simple random sample of 100 papers was selected for assessment; 95 papers were assessed; 5 papers were used for norming.

SLO 1.1 Students will understand and appropriatelly use scholarly sources.

> **Objective 1.1.A.** Students will determine the nature and extent of the information needed.
>
> > **Measurement:** *EXPLORE 110 Rubric* ITEM ONE "determine the extent of information needed." CORE 110 requires students research and compose an annotated bibliography meeting specific requirements. This annotated bibliography is scored using the Revised *EXPLORE 110 Rubric.*
> >
> > **Acceptable Target:** 70% of the samples scored by Assessment Team I using the Revised *EXPLORE 110 Rubric* ITEM ONE will average 2.5 or higher.
> >
> > **Ideal Target:** 80% of the samples scored by Assessment Team I using the Revised *EXPLORE 110 Rubric* ITEM ONE will average 2.5 or higher.
> >
> > **Results:** In 2015-2016, 74.4% of the samples scored 2.5 or higher; **the acceptable target for 1.1.A was met this year.** Scores did not meet the ideal target and showed a 12% decrease.

	Obj. 1.1.A	**CORE 110**	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
ONE	Determine Information Needed	Score > 2.5	61%	56%	61.1%	84.8%	74.4%
		Acceptable Target (70%)	Not met	Not met	Not met	MET	MET
		Ideal Target (80%)	Not met	Not met	Not met	MET	Not met
		Average of all samples	2.45	2.55	2.69	2.96	2.87

Objective 1.1.B. Students will access needed information effectively and efficiently.

> **Measurement:** Revised *EXPLORE 110 Rubric* ITEM TWO "Assess the needed information." CORE 110 requires each student write an annotated bibliography meeting specific requirements. This essay is scored using the Revised *EXPLORE 110 Rubric.*

> **Acceptable Target:** 70% of the samples scored by faculty Assessment Team I using the Revised *EXPLORE 110 Rubric* ITEM TWO will average 2.5 or higher.

> **Ideal Target:** 80% of the samples scored by faculty Assessment Team I using the Revised *EXPLORE 110 Rubric* ITEM TWO will average 2.5 or higher.

> **Results:** In 2015-2016, 81.1% of samples scored 2.5 or higher; **the ideal target for 1.1.B was met this year.** Data showed a slight decrease.

	Obj. 1.1.B	**CORE 110**	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
TWO	Access and and Use Information	Score > 2.5	No assessment	67%	70.5%	84.8%	81.1%
		Acceptable Target (70%)	No assessment	Minimally Met	MET	MET	MET
		Ideal Target (80%)	No assessment	Not met	Not met	MET	MET
		Average of all samples	No assessment	2.52	2.62	2.89	2.77

Objective 1.1.C. Students will use information ethically and legally.

> **Measurement:** Revised *EXPLORE 110 Rubric* ITEM THREE "Assess and use the information ethically and legally." CORE 110 requires each student write an annotated bibliography meeting specific requirements. This essay is scored using the Revised *EXPLORE 110 Rubric.*

> **Acceptable Target:** 70% of the samples scored by faculty Assessment Team I using the Revised *EXPLORE 110 Rubric* ITEM THREE will average 2.5 or higher.

Ideal Target: 80% of the samples scored by Assessment Team I using the Revised *EXPLORE 110 Rubric* ITEM THREE will average 2.5 or higher.

Results: In 2015-2016, 91.1% of samples scored 2.5 or higher meeting both **Acceptable and Ideal Targets**; the average score of all samples was 3.06 (up slightly from the previous year). Note the increase in scores each year.

	Obj. 1.1.C	CORE 110	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
THREE	Information Use Strategies	Score > 2.5	40%	55%	80%	90.9%	91.1%
		Acceptable Target (70%)	Not met	Not met	MET	MET	MET
		Ideal Target (80%)	Not met	Not met	MET	MET	MET
		Average of all samples	2.01	2.49	2.82	3.04	3.06

Composite Score

The composite score, while not prescribed in the original QEP, was calculated to provide an overview of the Cornerstone assessment. To be consistent with the language for individual outcomes, CORE 210, and BCOR 310, an **acceptable target** of 70% of samples scoring 7.5 or higher and an **ideal target** of 80% of samples. Year 5, 2015-2016, showed a slight but insignificant decrease. Both **Acceptable and Ideal Targets were met**.

	Obj. 1.1	CORE 110	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
COMPOSITE SLO 1.1		Score > 7.5	56% (5)	50.51%	66.32%	83.8%	80%
		Acceptable Target (70%)	Not met	Not met	Minimally met	MET	MET
		Ideal Target (80%)	Not met	Not met	Not met	MET	MET
		Average of all samples	3.76 (5)	7.72	8.121	8.89	8.7

Recommendations and Findings for CORE 110

The CORE 110 assignment, rubric, and assessment are working well to teach and assess students' understandings of information literacy. Over five years, faculty have worked to (1) revise the assignment, (2) refine the rubric, and (3) train teachers.

 As a result, we met the acceptable targets and ideal targets on 1.1.B and 1.1.C, as well as the Composite SLO 1.1

During 2015-2016, school year the professional development sessions were not held, and, in addition, there were numerous first-time CORE 110 teachers, possibly accounting for lower scores. A session is already scheduled during fall 2016, where the assessment team will focus on helping students:
  a. Address target audience in the introduction to the bibliography.
  b. Refine and revise their research question based on their findings.

In 2016, MLA published their 8th edition style guide, which considerably revises citation styles. The next few years of assessment may result in lower scores as students and faculty transition between the editions.

In the past, the assessment team has emphasized the following reminders to the faculty:
  a. Implement consistent formatting for the document across all sections
  b. Understand correct MLA citation.
  c. Address target audience in the introduction to the bibliography.
  d. Refine and revise their research question based on their findings
  e. Insure the students address questions rather than arguments.
  f. Distinguish between social sciences and humanities.
  g. Prohibit using the Bible as a source.

It is suggested by the assessment team to continue with the emphasis from previous years, but to focus on the following main ideas:
  1. Address the target audience in the introduction to the bibliography.
  2. Refine and revise the research question based on the findings.

Commendations

Faculty have done an excellent job in teaching the students the characteristics of an annotated bibliography. Scores each year have shown an increase; learning outcomes are being met. In addition, the embedded librarians have been a great help to faculty as the students develop the information literacy skills. It is believed that the embedded librarians give first-year students a connection to a librarian that may continue through the student's years at ACU.

The CORE 110 Assessment Report and *EXPLORE 110 Rubric* for 2015-2016 are included in Appendix D.

CORE 210

CORE 210 courses were developed to target specific skills and outcomes that linked to the fundamental understandings found in the foundation of the general education curriculum approved by faculty in 2007. These include but are not limited to the following:

- Strong analytical, communication, quantitative, and information skills;
- Deep understanding of and hands-on experience with inquiry practices that explore the natural, socio-cultural, aesthetic, and religious realms and habits of mind that foster integrative thinking; and
- Ability to transfer skills and knowledge from one setting to another.

Throughout the many changes and modifications to the CORE sequence and the CORE 210 course, the findings of the assessment team indicate CORE 210 is working toward the stated goals and outcomes in the QEP initiative. In fall 2015 faculty voted to move CORE 210 from the list of required courses into the cultural awareness menu for student selection. CORE 210 artifacts will no longer be collected and assessed.

The CORE 210 research artifact was collected from 733 enrolled students; 692 papers were collected (94.4%). A random sample of 60 papers was selected from CORE 210 sections collected in fall 2015 and spring 2016.

SLO 1.1 **Students will understand and appropriately use scholarly sources.**

> **Objective 1.1.A.** Students will determine the nature and extent of the information needed.

> > **Measurement:** Revised *EXPLORE II Rubric ITEM ONE* "determine the nature and extent of the information needed." CORE 210 requires each student to write a position paper guided by assigned components. This paper is evaluated by trained faculty on Assessment Team II utilizing the Revised *EXPLORE II Rubric.*

> > > **Acceptable Target:** 70% of the samples scored by faculty Assessment Team II using the Revised *EXPLORE II Rubric* ITEM ONE will average 2.5 or above AND 70% will have a composite score of 5.0 or higher.

> > > **Ideal Target:** 80% of the students will score 3.0 or above on each of the seven components AND 80% will have a composite score of 6.0 or higher.

> > **Results:** A comparison of Year 5 data from 2015-2016 indicates a significant 14% increase from Year 4 so that **acceptable and ideal targets were met.**

	Obj. 1.1.A	CORE 210	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
ONE	**Determine Information Needed**	Score > 2.5	63.6%	75.0%	74.67%	85%
		Acceptable Target (70%)	Approaching	Met	Met	Met
		Ideal Target (80%)	Not met	Approaching	Approaching	Met
		Average of all samples	2.67	2.63	2.71	2.85

Objective 1.1.B. Students will access needed information effectively and efficiently.

> **Measurement:** Revised *EXPLORE II Rubric* ITEM TWO "Assess the needed information." CORE 210 requires each student write a position paper meeting specific requirements. This essay is scored using the Revised *EXPLORE II Rubric*.*
>
> > **Acceptable Target:** 70% of the samples scored by faculty Assessment Team II using the Revised *EXPLORE II Rubric* ITEM TWO will average 2.5 or higher.
> >
> > **Ideal Target:** 80% of the samples scored by faculty Assessment Team II using the Revised *EXPLORE II Rubric* ITEM TWO will average 2.5 or higher.

Results: In Year 5 (2015-2016), over 78% of sampled papers received a rubric rating of 2.5 or higher; **meeting the acceptable target for this SLO and approaching the ideal target**. A comparison with Year 4 data indicates a slight increase for the year.

	Obj. 1.1.B	CORE 210	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
TWO	**Access and Use Information**	Score > 2.5	No assessment	61.7%	72%	78.33%
		Acceptable Target (70%)	No assessment	Approaching	Met	Met
		Ideal Target (80%)	No assessment	Not met	Not met	Approaching
		Average of all samples	No assessment	2.45	2.59	2.76

Objective 1.1.C. Students will use information ethically and legally.

Measurement: Revised *EXPLORE II Rubric* ITEM THREE "Assess and use the information ethically and legally." CORE 210 requires each student write a position paper guided by assigned components. This essay is scored using the Revised *EXPLORE II Rubric.*

Acceptable Target: 70% of the samples scored by faculty Assessment Team 2 using the Revised *EXPLORE II Rubric* ITEM THREE will average 2.5 or higher.

Ideal Target: 80% of the samples scored by faculty Assessment Team 2 using revised *EXPLORE II Rubric* ITEM THREE will average 2.5 or higher.

Results: In Year 5, 66.67% of sampled papers received a rubric rating of 2.5 or higher; the **acceptable target and ideal target for this SLO were not met.** A comparison with Year 4 data indicates no increase in this outcome.

	Obj. 1.1.C	CORE 210	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
THREE	**Information Use Strategies**	Score > 2.5	70.5%	61.7%	66.67%	66.67%
		Acceptable Target (70%)	MET	Approaching	Approaching	Approaching
		Ideal Target (80%)	Not met	Not met	Not met	Not met
		Average of all samples	2.63	2.5	2.66	2.65

SLO 1.1 Composite Results: The QEP report calls for a composite score of 7.5 for SLOs ONE, TWO and THREE. An acceptable target of 70% of samples scoring 7.5 or higher and an ideal target of 80% of samples scoring 7.5 or higher. In Year 5, 65% of sampled papers received a rubric rating of 7.5 or higher; the **acceptable target and the ideal target were not met for this SLO**. A comparison with Year 4 data indicates a slight but insignificant increase for this year, though the data seems to be approaching the acceptable target.

	Obj. 1.1	CORE 210	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
COMPOSITE SLO 1.1		Total > 7.5	63.6% (total >5.0)	60.0%	62.67%	65%
		Acceptable Target (70%)	Approaching	Not met	Approaching	Approaching
		Ideal Target (80%)	Not met	Not met	Not met	Not met
		Average of all samples	5.29 (total >5.0)	7.59	7.96	8.27

SLO 1.2 Students will integrate knowledge to frame researchable questions and to develop strategies to seek answers.

Objective 1.2.A. Students will be able to describe major theories in the field relevant to a particular case, problem, or solution.

Measurement: A research artifact is assigned and collected in CORE 210 and assessed using the Revised *EXPLORE II* Rubric ITEM FOUR.

Acceptable Target: 70% of the research artifacts (ITEM FOUR) will have an average score of 2.5 or higher and will have a Composite Score of 5.0 or higher on ITEMS FOUR and FIVE.

Ideal Target: 80% of the research articles will have an average score of 2.5 or higher and will have a Composite Score of 5.0 or higher on ITEMS FOUR and FIVE.

Results: In Year 5, 76.67% of sampled papers received a rubric rating of 2.5 or higher; the SLO **met the acceptable target score**; **approaching the ideal target score**. A comparison with Year 4 data indicates a substantive increase for this year.

	Obj. 1.2.A	CORE 210	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
FOUR	Describe Relevant Theories	Score > 2.5	63.6%	41.7%	62.67%	76.67%
		Acceptable Target (70%)	Approaching	Not met	Approaching	Met
		Ideal Target (80%)	Not met	Not met	Not met	Approaching
		Average of all samples	2.5	2.16	2.54	2.67

Objective 1.2.B. Students will be able to describe findings and interpretations in the field relevant to a particular case, problem, or solution.

Measurement: The course's assigned position paper is collected in CORE 210 and assessed using the Revised *EXPLORE II* Rubric on ITEM FIVE.

Acceptable Target: 70% of the research papers will have an average score of 2.5 or higher on ITEM FIVE.

Ideal Target: 80% of the research articles will have an average score of 2.5 or higher across these items.

Results: In Year 5, 58.33% of sampled papers received a rubric rating of 2.5 or higher; **target scores for this SLO were not met**. A comparison with Year 4 data indicates no significant increase for this year.

	Obj. 1.2.B	CORE 210	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
FIVE	**Analysis Applied to Situation**	Score > 2.5	63.6%	48.3%	57.33%	58.33%
		Acceptable Target (70%)	Approaching	Not met	Not met	Not met
		Ideal Target (80%)	Not met	Not met	Not met	Not met
		Average of all samples	2.53	2.27	2.41	2.39

Composite Results: The QEP report calls for a composite score for 7.5 for SLOs FOUR and FIVE. An acceptable target of 70% of samples scoring 5.0 or higher and an ideal target of 80% of samples scoring 5.0 or higher. In Year 5, 58.33% of sampled papers received a rubric rating of 5.0 or higher; **target scores for this SLO were not met**. A comparison with Year 4 data indicates no significant increase.

	Obj. 1.2	CORE 210	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
COMPOSITE SLO 1.2		Total > 5.0	59.1%	36.7%	56%	58.33%
		Acceptable Target (70%)	Not Met	Not met	Not met	Not Met
		Ideal Target (80%)	Not met	Not met	Not met	Not met
		Average of all samples	5.03	4.44	4.96	5.05

Objective 1.3.A. Students will evaluate information and its sources critically and incorporate selected information into their knowledge base and value system.

Measurement: A research paper will be collected in CORE 210 and assessed using the Revised *EXPLORE II* Rubric ITEM SIX.

Acceptable Target: 70% of the research artifacts (ITEM SIX) will have an average score of 3.0 or higher on ITEM SIX and a Composite Score of 5.0 or higher on ITEMS SIX and SEVEN.

Ideal Target: 80% of the research papers will have an average score of 3.0 or higher on ITEM SIX and a Composite Score of 5.0 or higher on ITEMS SIX and SEVEN.

Results: In Year 5, 65% of sampled papers received a rubric rating of 2.5 or higher; target scores for this SLO are not met but are **approaching the acceptable target**. A comparison with Year 4 data indicates a slightly significant 13.4% of increase for this year.

	Obj. 1.3.A	CORE 210	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
SIX	**Evaluate Information**	Score > 2.5	50%	40%	57.33%	65%
		Acceptable Target (70%)	Not met	Not met	Not met	Approaching
		Ideal Target (80%)	Not met	Not met	Not met	Not met
		Average of all samples	2.27	2.15	2.36	2.39

Objective 1.3.B. Students will use multiple sources effectively to accomplish a specific purpose/assignment.

Measurement: The assigned research paper is assessed using the Revised *EXPLORE II* Rubric for ITEM SEVEN.

Acceptable Target: 70% of the research papers will have an average score of 3.0 or higher on ITEM SEVEN.

Ideal Target: 80% of the research papers will have an average score of 3.0 or higher on ITEM SEVEN of the rubric.

Results: In Year 5, 66.67% of sampled papers received a rubric rating of 2.5 or higher; **approaching the acceptable target score** but not meeting the ideal target score. A comparison with Year 4 data indicates a slight drop in this SLO for this year.

	Obj. 1.3B	CORE 210	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
SEVEN	**Use Information for a Purpose**	Score > 2.5	65.9%	55.0%	70.67%	66.67%
		Acceptable Target (70%)	Minimally Met	Not met	Met	Approaching
		Ideal Target (80%)	Not met	Not met	Not met	Not met
		Average of all samples	2.67	2.4	2.54	2.52

Composite Results: The QEP report calls for a composite score for 5.0 for SLOs SIX and SEVEN. An acceptable target of 70% of samples scoring 5.0 or higher and an ideal target of 80% of samples scoring 5.0 or higher. In Year 5, 58.33% of sampled papers received a rubric rating of 5.0 or higher. **Neither the acceptable target score nor the ideal target score were met for this SLO**. A comparison with Year 4 data indicates no significant increase in this SLO for this year.

	Obj. 1.3	CORE 210	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
COMPOSITE SLO 1.3		Total > 5.0	50%	43%	57.33%	58.33%
		Acceptable Target (70%)	Not met	Not met	Not met	Not met
		Ideal Target (80%)	Not met	Not met	Not met	Not met
		Average of all samples	4.94	4.55	4.91	4.99

Observations:

The data indicate:
- Students are approaching the acceptable target criteria for SLO 1.1; determining the nature and extent of the information needed, accessing the needed information effectively and efficiently, and using information ethically and legally.

    o The data demonstrate significant growth in Obj. 1.1.A. student knowledge of determining the need for information and Obj. 1.1.B. accessing and citing

sources over the past year with absolute increases of 10% and 6% respectively.

- o The data also demonstrate continued difficulties with Obj. 1.1.C. using information ethically and legally. Papers exhibit lack of citations or missing information when citing sources in the text.

- Students are approaching the acceptable target criteria for SLO 1.2; describing theories or perspectives relevant to a particular case or problem and describing findings and interpretations relevant to a particular case or problem.

  - o The data demonstrate students are meeting criteria for Obj. 1.2.A. – describing theories or perspectives relevant to a particular case or problem. In addition, the data is approaching the ideal target of 80% of criteria.

  - o The data continues to demonstrate students' struggle with Obj. 1.2.B. describing findings and interpretations relevant to a particular case or problem – a minimal absolute (10.33%) but 13.8% of increase was noted in this objective.

  - o The availability of the writing prompts to the assessment team again this year provided context to the team to determine the expectations of the paper when applying the scoring rubric.

- Students are not meeting the acceptable target criteria for SLO 1.3; evaluating information and its sources critically and using information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose.

  - o The data demonstrate students are approaching the target criteria for Obj. 1.3.A. with an absolute increase of 8% from the previous year.

  - o The data demonstrate a small decrease in Obj. 1.3.B. indicating students are not fully achieving the purpose of the writing assignment.

The Assessment Team had access to the writing prompts from the sections of CORE 210 taught in the fall and spring, which was extremely helpful in determining how well the paper met the expectations for the assignment.

Commendations:

1. Thesis statements were readily identifiable in most papers. This is noted in the improvements for SLO 1.1; obj. A and B. CORE 210 faculty are clearly assisting students in shaping thesis statements to clearly define the scope of the topic.

2. In addition, several writing prompts were very detailed which assisted the team in understanding the expectations of the paper when applying the rubric.

3. The papers assessed this year made significant improvements in describing the theories or perspectives relevant to the thesis statement and interpreting the

findings to support the thesis statement [SLO 1.2, obj. A] with a 14% absolute increase over the previous year. This is another area for commendation to the CORE 210 faculty for using detailed writing prompts, breaking the writing process into steps and using peer review.

4. Continued growth was seen in SLO 1.3 – analyzing and interpreting information and effectively accomplishing a specific purpose. An 8% absolute increase was noted in Obj. 1.3.A. - analyzing and interpreting information. The CORE 210 faculty is to be commended for expanding the writing prompts to specify the student should present at least one counter-argument to their thesis. In many cases, this inclusion provided a richer written product which accomplished the purpose of the writing assignment.

Other comments:
Changes to the scoring rubric enabled the assessment team to better assess the number of sources and use of cited sources in the papers. This, coupled with the availability of the writing prompts, allowed the team to more reliably score the selected papers.

The CORE 210 Assessment Report and the slightly Revised *Explore II Rubric* for 2015-2016 are included in Appendix E.

BCOR 310

From a set of 604 students enrolled in BCOR 310, 571 papers were collected (94.5%) from the 12 sections of BCOR taught in the fall 2015 and spring 2016 semesters. A random sample of 60 papers from those 571 papers was assessed after the spring 2016 semester (10.5%).

SLO 1.1 **Students will understand and appropriately use scholarly sources.**

Objective 1.1.A. Students will determine the nature and extent of the information needed.

Measurement: *EXPLORE II Rubric ITEMS ONE*. BCOR 310 requires each student write a research artifact guided by assigned components. This paper was evaluated by trained faculty on Assessment Team III utilizing the *EXPLORE II Rubric.*

Acceptable Target: 73% of the samples scored by faculty Assessment Team III using the Revised *EXPLORE II Rubric* ITEM ONE will average 2.5 or above AND 70% will have a composite score of 5.0 or higher.

Ideal Target: 85% of the students will score 2.5 or above on each of the seven components AND 80% will have a composite score of 6.0 or higher.

Results: 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 Year 5, 61.7% of sampled papers received a rubric rating of 2.5 or higher; thus **falling short of the acceptable target** for this SLO objective.

	Obj. 1.1.A	BCOR 310	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
ONE	Determine Information Needed	Score ≥ 2.5	**36.7%**	**65.9%**	**61.7%**
		Acceptable Target (73%)	Not met	Approaching	Approaching
		Ideal Target (85%)	Not met	Not met	Not met
		Average of all samples	2.18	2.55	2.48

Objective 1.1.B. Students will access needed information effectively and efficiently.

Measurement: Revised *EXPLORE II Rubric* ITEM TWO: "Assess the needed information." BCOR 310 requires each student write a research artifact meeting specific requirements. This paper is scored using the Revised *EXPLORE II Rubric.*

> **Acceptable Target:** 73% of the samples scored by faculty Assessment Team III using the Revised *EXPLORE II Rubric* ITEM TWO will average 2.5 or higher.
>
> **Ideal Target:** 85% of the samples scored by faculty Assessment Team III using the Revised *EXPLORE II Rubric* ITEM TWO will average 2.5 or higher.

Results: 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 Year 5, 58.3% of sampled papers received a rubric rating of 2.5 or higher. Therefore, the sampled papers **fell short of the acceptable target** of 73% with a significant drop in the results.

	Obj. 1.1.B	BCOR 310	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
TWO	**Access and Use Information**	Score ≥ 2.5	**43.3%**	**68.2%**	**58.3%**
		Acceptable Target (73%)	Not met	Approaching	Not met
		Ideal Target (85%)	Not met	Not met	Not met
		Average of all samples	2.05	2.58	2.48

Objective 1.1.C. Students will use information ethically and legally.

Measurement: Revised *EXPLORE II Rubric* ITEM THREE "Assess and use the information ethically and legally." BCOR 310 requires each student write a research artifact guided by assigned components. This research paper is scored using the Revised *EXPLORE II Rubric.*

Acceptable Target: 73% of the samples scored by faculty Assessment Team III using the Revised *EXPLORE II Rubric* ITEM THREE will average 2.5 or higher.

Ideal Target: 85% of the samples scored by faculty Assessment Team III using revised *EXPLORE II Rubric* ITEM THREE will average 2.5 or higher.

Results: 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 Year 5 assessment, 87.5% of sampled papers received a rubric rating of 2.5 or higher; **exceeding both the acceptable and ideal targets**. Year 5 is the first year that scores exceeded the ideal target in any rubric item.

	Obj. 1.1.C	**BCOR 310**	**Year 3**	**Year 4**	**Year 5**
THREE	Information Use Strategies	Score ≥ 2.5	**55.0%**	**69.7%**	**87.5%**
		Acceptable Target (73%)	Not met	Approaching	MET
		Ideal Target (85%)	Not met	Not met	MET
		Average of all samples	2.42	2.51	2.76

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 Results: SLO 1.1 calls for students to understand and appropriately use scholarly sources. 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 Year 5, 58.3% of sampled papers received a composite score of 7.5 or higher, but never approached the acceptable target.

COMPOSITE SLO 1.1	BCOR 310	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
	Total ≥ 7.5	**37.0%**	**56.1%**	**58.3%**
	Acceptable Target (73%)	Not met	Not met	Not met
	Ideal Target (85%)	Not met	Not met	Not met
	Average of all samples	2.22	2.55	2.58

SLO 1.2 Students will integrate knowledge to frame researchable questions and to develop strategies to seek answers.

Objective 1.2.A. Students will be able to describe major theories in the field relevant to a particular case, problem, or solution.

Measurement: A research artifact is assigned and collected in BCOR 310 and assessed using the *EXPLORE II* Rubric ITEM FOUR.

Acceptable Target: 73% of the research artifacts (ITEM FOUR) will have an average score of 2.5 or higher and will have a Composite Score of 5.0 or higher on ITEMS FOUR and FIVE.

Ideal Target: 85% of the research articles will have an average score of 2.5 or higher and will have a Composite Score of 5.0 or higher on ITEMS FOUR and FIVE.

Results: 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 Year 5, 46.7% of sampled papers received a rubric score of 2.5 or higher, **not meeting the acceptable target** of 73% and showing a significant 11.9% of decrease.

FOUR	Obj. 1.2.A	BCOR 310	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
	Describe Relevant Theories	Score ≥ 2.5	**51.7%**	**53%**	**46.7%**
		Acceptable Target (73%)	Not met	Not met	Not met
		Ideal Target (85%)	Not met	Not met	Not met
		Average of all samples	2.28	2.30	2.23

Objective 1.2.B. Students will be able to describe findings and interpretations in the field relevant to a particular case, problem, or solution.

> **Measurement:** The course's assigned research artifact is collected in BCOR 310 and assessed using the *EXPLORE II* Rubric on ITEM FIVE.

> **Acceptable Target:** 73% of the research papers will have an average score of 2.5 or higher on ITEM FIVE.

> **Ideal Target:** 85% of the research articles will have an average score of 2.5 or higher across these items.

> **Results:** 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 Year 5 of assessment, 65% of sampled papers received a rubric score of 2.5 or higher, **not meeting** the acceptable target of 73%. While the target was not met, Assessment Team III did observe a substantial increase in papers scoring ≥ 2.5 from the previous years.

<table>
<tr><td></td><td>**Obj. 1.2.B**</td><td>**BCOR 310**</td><td>**Year 3**</td><td>**Year 4**</td><td>**Year 5**</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="4">**FIVE**</td><td rowspan="4">Analysis Applied to Situation</td><td>Score ≥ 2.5</td><td>**51.7%**</td><td>**51.5%**</td><td>**65%**</td></tr>
<tr><td>Acceptable Target (73%)</td><td>Not met</td><td>Not met</td><td>Not met</td></tr>
<tr><td>Ideal Target (85%)</td><td>Not met</td><td>Not met</td><td>Not met</td></tr>
<tr><td>Average of all samples</td><td>2.34</td><td>2.30</td><td>2.33</td></tr>
</table>

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 Results:** SLO 1.2 calls for students to integrate knowledge to frame researchable questions and to develop strategies to seek answers. The SLO is broken down into 2 objectives, 1.2.A and 1.2.B, as described above. In Year 5, 48.3% of sampled papers received a composite score of 5.0 or higher. While the **acceptable target was not met**, the percentages of samples scoring 5.0 or higher made no significant change over the three years assessed.

<table>
<tr><td></td><td>**BCOR 310**</td><td>**Year 3**</td><td>**Year 4**</td><td>**Year 5**</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="4">**COMPOSITE SLO 1.2**</td><td>Total ≥ 5.0</td><td>**45.0%**</td><td>**42.4%**</td><td>**48.3%**</td></tr>
<tr><td>Acceptable Target (73%)</td><td>Not met</td><td>Not met</td><td>Not met</td></tr>
<tr><td>Ideal Target (85%)</td><td>Not met</td><td>Not met</td><td>Not met</td></tr>
<tr><td>Average of all samples</td><td>2.31</td><td>2.30</td><td>2.28</td></tr>
</table>

1.3 Students will analyze, interpret, and/or evaluate information and make and implement research informed decisions.

Objective 1.3.A. Students will evaluate information and its sources critically and incorporate selected information into their knowledge base and value system.

Measurement: A research paper will be collected in BCOR 310 and assessed using the *EXPLORE II* Rubric ITEM SIX.

Acceptable Target: 73% of the research artifacts (ITEM SIX) will have an average score of 2.5 or higher on ITEM SIX and a Composite Score of 5.0 or higher on ITEMS SIX and SEVEN.

Ideal Target: 85% of the research papers will have an average score of 2.5 or higher on ITEM SIX and a Composite Score of 5.0 or higher on ITEMS SIX and SEVEN.

Results: 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 Year 5 assessment, 50.8% of sampled papers received a rubric score of 2.5 or higher, **not meeting the acceptable target**, showing a slight drop from previous years.

	Obj. 1.3.A	**BCOR 310**	**Year 3**	**Year 4**	**Year 5**
SIX	Evaluate Information	Score ≥ 2.5	**52.0%**	**56.1%**	**50.8%**
		Acceptable Target (73%)	Not met	Not met	Not met
		Ideal Target (85%)	Not met	Not met	Not met
		Average of all samples	2.25	2.33	2.23

Objective 1.3.B. Students will use multiple sources effectively to accomplish a specific purpose/assignment.

Measurement: The assigned research paper is assessed using the *EXPLORE II* Rubric on ITEMS SEVEN.

Acceptable Target: 70% of the research papers will have an average score of 3.0 or higher on ITEM SEVEN.

Ideal Target: 80% of the research papers will have an average score of 3.0 or higher on ITEM SEVEN of the rubric.

Results: 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 Year 5 of assessment, 61.7% of sampled papers received a rubric score of 2.5 or higher, **not meeting the acceptable target** of 73% and showing no real change in scores over the years of the assessment.

	Obj. 1.3.B	BCOR 310	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
SEVEN	Use Information for a Purpose	Score ≥ 2.5	**55.0%**	**62.1%**	**61.7%**
		Acceptable Target (73%)	Not met	Not met	Not met
		Ideal Target (85%)	Not met	Not met	Not met
		Average of all samples	2.70	2.49	2.40

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 Results SLO 1.3 calls for students to analyze, interpret, and/or evaluate information and make and implement research informed decisions. The SLO is broken down into 2 objectives, 1.3.A and 1.3.B, 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 Year 5 assessment, only 40% of sampled papers received a composite score of 5.0 or higher, **not meeting the acceptable target.**

	BCOR 310	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
COMPOSITE SLO 1.3	Total ≥ 5.0	**45.0%**	**51.5%**	**40%**
	Acceptable Target (73%)	Not met	Not met	Not met
	Ideal Target (85%)	Not met	Not met	Not met
	Average of all samples	2.47	2.41	2.31

Factors Impacting Year 5 (2015-2016) Assessment

Organization of Assessment
The assessment team met during the second week of summer to assess the BCOR research artifacts collected from the twelve fall 2015 and spring 2016 sections. Papers were assessed electronically, using the rubric that was updated in May 2016.

Prompts
The team was provided with the four prompts used in different sections of BCOR. The team was told which papers corresponded to a given prompt.

Each year of assessment the team has noticed improvement in the prompts. This year, the **prompts were clear, focused, and all of them addressed development of a research question/topic.** Additionally, the topics for the research papers in these four prompts were very similar. The team appreciated the **increased consistency**, and thanked the BCOR professors for working as a team in their development of the research paper assignment.

The team did notice **variability in the types of research required** and the materials used for research in the 4 prompts. For instance, the number of scholarly sources required for the paper varied depending on the section. While we did notice this variability, it was not as marked as it has been in years past.

Plagiarism
In the Year 4 assessment report, the team noticed different levels of plagiarism in several papers so the team suggested the BCOR professors use Turnitin to combat the varying levels of plagiarism we noticed. The assessment team found fewer papers with blatant plagiarism, and fewer papers with missing or partial citations.

Changes to BCOR and General Education at ACU
In the spring of 2015, the BCOR director stepped down and was not replaced. All of the papers collected for the Year 5 assessment were written after this change took place.

In October of 2015, the ACU faculty voted to remove BCOR from the general education curriculum as a requirement. Both professors and students knew the result of the vote during the fall and spring semesters when the research artifacts were collected. BCOR will be taught as it is for a few more semesters, until students under the 2015-2016 degree plans complete the course requirement or change to a later catalog.

Commendations for Faculty
The BCOR assessment team applauds the BCOR faculty for their dedication to this course and to the research paper assignment. Results from this assessment show students performed similarly in Year 5 as they performed in Year 4. Assessment Team III wants to specifically thank the faculty for working as a team to improve the quality and consistency of prompts, focusing on the research question, and for working on student use of scholarly sources.

The BCOR 310 Assessment Report and the slightly modified *Explore II Rubric* for 2015-2016 are included in Appendix F.

During summer 2013, a *Pursuit* Institute was conducted with 19 faculty participants in attendance. The focus of the institute was on the development of assignments and assessments for Capstone Experiences. A rubric was developed by participants to use in the assessment of Capstone papers. An informational meeting was held in the Adams Center to share the rubric developed by faculty and to collect suggestions for change. Wording on the rubric was adjusted in spring 2016 before the Year 5 assessment to clarify some of the ambiguous language. See Appendix G for the *CREATE* Rubric used for assessment of Capstone Papers.

Using the QEP document approved by SACSCOC in April 2011, the rubric assesses three Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs).

1. Objective 2.1.A: Students will demonstrate effective use of information literacy skills through writing.
2. Objective 2.1.B: Students will apply information to planning and creation of a product or performance.
3. Objective 2.1.C: Students will demonstrate critical thinking as they develop, produce, and evaluate a product or a performance.

The assessment team used the rubric for the three SLOs with six categories to assess these outcomes with two categories for each learning outcome:

- Use of Sources to Answer Question (2.1.A)
- Ethical and Appropriate Use of Sources (2.1.A)
- Organization or Structure (2.1.B)
- Mechanics (2.1.B)
- Purpose of Project (2.1.C)
- Integrative Learning (2.1.C)

During the fall and spring semesters, the university had 46 sections of courses that departments had designated as a capstone experience and 46 of these sections submitted capstone papers. There were a total of 787 students enrolled and 643 papers, or roughly 82%, were submitted to the Pursuit Office. A simple random sample of 60 papers was assessed from the 643 papers submitted.

SLO 2.1.A – Students will demonstrate effective use of information literacy skills through writing.

Use of Sources to Answer Question

The QEP report calls for an acceptable target of 73% of the sample papers be scored at or above 2.5 and an ideal target of 85% of sample papers be scored at or above 2.5 for this objective. In the Year 5 assessment, 78.3% of the sample papers scored at or above 2.5. The inter-rater reliability was good for this objective with 45.0% of the papers receiving the same score, 50.0% of the papers receiving scores within one point of each other, and 5% of the papers receiving scores that differ by two points.

Rubric	Capstone Experience	Year 4	Year 5
Use of Sources to Answer Question	Score ≥ 2.5	43.3%	78.3%
	Acceptable Target (73%)	Not met	Met
	Ideal Target (85%)	Not met	Approaching
	Average of Samples	2.1	2.9

Ethical and Appropriate Use of Sources

The QEP report calls for an acceptable target of 73% of the sample papers be scored at or above 2.5 and an ideal target of 85% of sample papers be scored at or above 2.5 for this objective. In the Year 5 assessment, 76.7% of the sample papers scored at or above 2.5. The inter-rater reliability was quite good for this objective with 60.0% of the papers receiving the same score, 36.7% of the papers receiving scores within one point of each other, and 3.3% of the papers receiving scores that differ by two points.

Rubric	Capstone Experience	Year 4	Year 5
Ethical and Appropriate Use of Sources	Score ≥ 2.5	50.0%	76.7%
	Acceptable Target (73%)	Not met	Met
	Ideal Target (85%)	Not met	Approaching
	Average of Samples	2.1	2.9

SLO Objective 2.1.B – Students will apply information to planning and creation of a product or performance.

Organization or Structure

The QEP report calls for an acceptable target of 73% of the sample papers be scored at or above 2.5 and an ideal target of 85% of sample papers be scored at or above 2.5 for this objective. In the Year 5 assessment, 88.3% of the sample papers scored at or above 2.5. The inter-rater reliability was good for this objective with 50.0% of the papers receiving the same score, 48.3% of the papers receiving scores within one point of each other, and 1.7% of the papers receiving scores that differ by two points.

Rubric	Capstone Experience	Year 4	Year 5
Organization or Structure	Score ≥ 2.5	83.3%	88.3%
	Acceptable Target (73%)	Met	Met
	Ideal Target (85%)	Approaching	Met
	Average of Samples	2.7	3.11

Mechanics

The QEP report calls for an acceptable target of 73% of the sample papers are scored at or above 2.5 and an ideal target of 85% of sample papers be scored at or above 2.5 for this objective. In the Year 5 assessment, 88.3% of the sample papers scored at or above 2.5. The inter-rater reliability was quite good for this objective with 60.0% of the papers receiving the same score, 38.3% of the papers receiving scores within one point of each other, and 1.7% of the papers receiving scores that differ by two points.

Rubric	Capstone Experience	Year 4	Year 5
Mechanics	Score ≥ 2.5	83.3%	88.3%
	Acceptable Target (73%)	Met	Met
	Ideal Target (85%)	Approaching	Met
	Average of Samples	2.7	2.96

SLO Objective 2.1.C – Students will demonstrate critical thinking as they develop, produce, and evaluate product or performance.

Purpose of Project

The QEP report calls for an acceptable target of 73% of the sample papers be scored at or above 2.5 and an ideal target of 85% of sample papers be scored at or above 2.5 for this objective. In the Year 5 assessment, 91.7% of the sample papers scored at or above 2.5. The inter-rater reliability was quite good for this objective with 63.3% of the papers receiving the same score, 33.3% of the papers receiving scores within one point of each other, and 3.3% of the papers receiving scores that differ by two points.

Rubric	Capstone Experience	Year 4	Year 5
Purpose of Project	Score ≥ 2.5	80%	91.7%
	Acceptable Target (73%)	Met	Met
	IdealTarget (85%)	Approaching	Met
	Average of Samples	2.7	3.12

Integrative Learning

The QEP report calls for an acceptable target of 73% of the sample papers be scored at or above 2.5 and an ideal target of 85% of sample papers be scored at or above 2.5 for this objective. In the Year 5 assessment, 71.7% of the sample papers scored at or above 2.5. The inter-rater reliability was fair for this objective with 38.3% of the papers receiving the same score, 51.7% of the papers receiving scores within one point of each other, and 10.0% of the papers receiving scores that differ by two points.

Rubric	Capstone Experience	Year 4	Year 5
Integrative Learning	Score ≥ 2.5	46.7%	71.7%
	Acceptable Target (73%)	Not met	Approaching
	IdealTarget (85%)	Not met	Not met
	Average of Samples	2.3	2.69

Commendations and Recommendations

- Departments and Capstone faculty are to be commended for their work with students.

- The capstone assessment results are significantly better this year than in our first year of assessment. All student learning outcomes of the assessment rubric showed significant improvements from the first year of assessment results.

- Dan Brannan, Stephen Baldridge, Suzie Macaluso, Sarah Lee, Nancy Jordan, Rodney Ashlock, Brenda Bender, and Denise Barnett are to be commended for developing a rubric that the committee could use to assess the first round of Capstone papers.

- Many of the faculty teaching the Capstone Experiences came in October

2015 to hear 2014–2015 assessment results and discuss ways to improve the Capstone papers.

- Based on comments of the 2014–2015 Assessment Team, the rubric was refined to improve consistency in the language.

- Capstone faculty need to emphasize to their students what is meant by Integrative Learning, one of the outcomes for the Capstone Experience. This outcome states that students should demonstrate habits of mind that foster integrative thinking between the liberal arts core curriculum and their major field of student.

- Capstone faculty need to emphasize that students are to include the proper citation of a minimum of five appropriate sources that support the research presented in the Capstone paper.

- Each college/division should have a minimum number of papers assessed.

FACULTY-GUIDED RESEARCH ASSESSMENTS

During ACU's 5-Year QEP, it was expected that the number of faculty-guided research or creative-activity projects would increase within academic departments. This was accomplished through an increased focus in introducing, practicing, and reinforcing information literacy skills in general education classes (CORE 110, CORE 210, BCOR 310, ENGL112, COMS 211, and Capstone Experiences), through student creation and production of new information in activities in which students wrote, presented, and performed, and through financial support from *Pursuit* Research Grants, travel grants for faculty and students, and the Undergraduate Research Festival.

Faculty-guided Research
Data was collected during each academic year for faculty-guided research and creative activity projects funded through *Pursuit* Research Grants and from data provided by departments and collected on the Annual Outcomes Report. In Year 5 (2015-2016) *Pursuit* Research Grants provided 13 faculty and 18 student researchers, with funding awards of over $78,000.

SLO 2.2 Students conduct faculty-guided original work relevant to the field of study.

Objective 2.2.A. Students engaged in faculty-guided work will be able to perform appropriate research steps in the development/creation of discipline-specific projects.

> **Measurement:** Students [working with faculty on *Pursuit* Research Grants] will keep a *Research Activity Journal* that is graded by a faculty mentor using the *CREATE Rubric* ITEMS ONE, TWO, AND THREE.

Acceptable Target: Each individual item will have 80% of the journals average 3.0 on each item. 80% of the journals will score 80% of the total rubric score.

Ideal Target: Each individual item will have 85% of the journals average 3.0 on each item. 85% of the journals will score 85% of the total rubric score.

Rationale for Revision: Collection and assessment of the students' Research Journal as the assessment for this project was revised early in the project for two reasons. First, due to the variety and type of projects from both STEM areas and arts and humanities, a comparison of research journals was not feasible for assessment. Second, it would be difficult for student researchers to write open and truthful responses and for faculty to assess the journals without bias.

Revised Measurement:: Five questions were given to students to assist in reflection about their research and creative projects. Journals were collected in May at the end of the project year. Student researchers were asked to respond to End-of-Project Questions. Questions will be examined in terms of a qualitative look at the responses.

Results of Student Journal Responses: In Year 5 (2015-2016) there were 13 faculty projects that included 18 student researchers. The following information contains the five questions and a brief summary of student reflections:

Question 1. Have I reached the goals that were prescribed in the beginning of the project? Was the pace of the project appropriate? What results did I find in my project?

Student responses stated that 100% of the initial goals were completed. While 42% did not reach all of the goals set up for the projects, statements from students showed that the pace was appropriate. One student commented that even though all of the goals were not reached, she "still gained valuable research" skills; another comment was that it was "good to work in a team." When describing the results for the projects, students seemed to be a little disappointed that their research team did not have concrete results.

Question 2. What did I learn? What are the benefits I received from the project? What results were surprising to me? What did I expect to find as a result of the project? What did I **not** expect to find?

Student responses were overwhelmingly positive. Students were surprised with their outcomes; felt that the experience was invaluable; stated that they learned what it is like to perform and document

scientific research; learned a lot about problem solving; and learned better time management, diligence, and knowledge. One student said, "I learned more about the actual profession and the steps to conduct a research project."

Question 3. What plans do I have for the future? Will I continue to work on this project or an extension of this project?

75% of students who responded said that they would continue to work on this project, continue to develop their research skills, or had plans to find outlets for research. About 17% of the students were planning to continue research in graduate school.

Question 4. Would you recommend this type of project to another intern? Why or why not? What recommendations for change would you suggest?

100% of the students would strongly recommend the type of project to another student researcher; the project was a valued experience; another gained numerous skills; and the research project was a "great way to see if research is something that one wants to pursue in the future." Student recommendations included the following: set specific goals for yourself; would suggest more teamwork between various sections of the project; you need to be passionate about the project; and no change at all is needed.

Question 5. What scholarly product(s) do you expect from the project? What presentations have you made or plan to make?

Of the students who responded, 100% of responses reported a presentation at the ACU Research Festival on campus; multiple students presented at local and national conferences external to ACU; one has a paper summarizing the results that is being published online. One researcher did not respond to this question.

Objective 2.2.B. Students engaged in faculty-guided work will be able to draw sound conclusions from the results of the project in order to identify future directions (use of evaluated results).

Measurement: Students will submit a *Student Self-Rating for Pursuit-Funded Project.* This report will be assessed using the *CREATE Rubric* ITEMS FOUR, FIVE, AND SIX.

Rationale for Revision: In anticipation of collection and assessment of the *Student Self-Rating for Pursuit-Funded Project*, the assessment was revised due to the variety and type of projects from both STEM areas and arts and humanities. Instead of using the *CREATE Rubric,* student reponses on the anonymous *Assessment of Project Report* were scored and used compariitvely.

Revised Measurement: Student researcher responses on the *Student Self-Rating for Pursuit-Funded Project* were submitted in May at the end of the project year and assessed. A Likert scale was used to rank the following competencies on a 0-4 scale (with 4 being the highest):

1. *Purpose of Project*—clarity and focus and degree of high level thinking skills;
2. *Organizing*—time frame, organization, plan, and appropriate time limits;
3. *Gathering or Seeking*—variety and selection of resources
4. *Appraising*—selection and information to answer question or focus of project;
5. *Synthesizing or Constructing Knowledge*—evaluation of complex information and ideas, theories, or perspectives; and
6. *Evaluating the Final Product*—product answers the question or focus with accuracy, detail, and understanding.

Revised Acceptable Target: Each individual item will have 80% of the reports average 3.0 or higher on each item. Overall 80% of the projects will score 19 or higher out of the 24 total rubric score.

Revised Ideal Target: Each individual item will have 85% of the reports average 3.25 or higher on each item. 85% of the projects will score 21 or higher out of the 24 total rubric score.

Results:

1. *Purpose of Project*: project scores averaged 3.66 for this item; 100% of the project scores were greater than 3.0 or higher, meeting the Acceptable Target and 75% were 3.25 or higher not meeting the Ideal Target.

2. *Organizing*: project scores averaged 3.47 for this item; 100% of the scores were 3.0 or higher, meeting the Acceptable Target; 75% of the scores were 3.25 or higher, not meeting the Ideal Target.

3. *Gathering or Seeking Information:* project averaged 3.72 for this item; 92% were 3.25 or higher, meeting both the Acceptable and Ideal Targets

4. *Appraising:* project scores averaged 3.52 for this item; 100% of scores were 3.0 or higher, meeting the Acceptable Target; 67% of the project scores were 3.25 or higher, not meeting the Ideal Target.

5. *Synthesizing or Constructing Knowledge:* project scores averaged 3.90 for this item;100% of project scores were 3.25 or higher, meeting both the Acceptable and Ideal Target goals.

6. *Evaluating the Final Project*: project scores averaged 3.47 for this item; 92% of project scores were 3.0 or higher; 67% were 3.25 or higher, falling short of the 85% Ideal Target.

7. *Overall Results:* 91% of the projects scored a total of 19 or higher out of the 24 possible, meeting the Acceptable Target. 83% of total scores for each project scored 21 or higher out of 24, approaching, but not meeting the Ideal Target.

Students assessed their projects anonymously on the *Student Self-Rating for Pursuit-Funded Project*. Overall, the average of all the project scores for all competencies was 3.62 on a 4-point scale. Student scores did not vary greatly with only two students rating the project with a 2 on an item. Acceptable Targets were met for each of the items on the rubric, with 2 items meeting both Accetable and Ideal Targets.

Student Self-Rating	Year 3 2013-14	Year 4 2014-15	Year 5 2015-16	Acceptable or Ideal
Purpose of Project	3.79	3.82	3.66	Acceptable
Organizing	3.42	3.2	3.47	Acceptable
Gathering or Seeking Information	3.73	3.69	3.72	Ideal
Appraising	3.29	3.47	3.52	Acceptable
Synthesizing or Constructing Knowledge	3.37	3.8	3.90	Ideal
Evaluating the Final Project	3.79	3.41	3.47	Acceptable
Overall Results	3.66	3.49	3.62	Acceptable

<mark>Operational Objective 2.2C</mark>: The number of faculty-guided research/creative activity projects will increase within academic departments.

Measurement: All academic departments report the number and type of faculty-guided research and creative activity projects conducted on an annual basis. These data are reported in the Annual Assessment Cycle.

Acceptable Target: The increase of faculty-guided research and creative activities will increase by 50% across the institution by Year 5.

Ideal Target: There will be a 75% increase in the number of faculty-guided research and creative activities across the institution by Year 5.

Obj 2.2.C	Year 1 2011-12	Year 2 2012-13	Year 3 2013-14	Year 4 2014-15	Year 5 2015-16	% of Inc or Dec over QEP
Indep Res Beyond Course Requirement	261	259	315	381	357	+36.8%
Research with Faculty Mentor	171	217	342	193	293	+71.3%
Presented or Co-Authored Paper/Project for Conference	79	124	128	128	186	+ 135.4%
Orig Work for Juried Show	76	208	232	258	131	+72.4%
Performed for Jury Outside Dept Requirement	28	83	67	73	48	+71.4%
Published Article Related to Discipline	13	12	18	16	52	+300%
Research Festival	77	88	156	116	157	+103.9%
Participated in Research Activity Not Listed Above	86	172	217	191	189	+119.8%
Number of individual students represented	See note below.	691	760	618	657	-4.9%

Key: Acceptable Target-50% Increase in projects in 5-Year QEP; **Ideal Target-**75% Increase

Notes about data table for Objective 2.2.C:
It was discovered that data collected in Year 1 utilized descriptions of student involvment in research projects ambiguously so that some of the same students were counted multiple times. Therefore, the number of individual students in Year 1 is omitted from this report.

Results: All categories, except for the *Independent Research beyond a Course Requirement* and *Number of Unique Students Represented* met **Acceptable** or **Ideal Targets**. The following categories of departmental outcomes met the **Acceptable Target**:

- Research with a Faculty Mentor and
- Participated in the ACU Research Festival.

The following categories met the **Ideal Target**:
- Presented or Co-Autthored a Paper or Project for a Conference,
- Submitted an Original Work for a Juried Show,
- Performed for a Jury Outside of a Departmental Requirement,
- Published an Article Related to the Discipline, and
- Participated in Research Activity not Listed Above.

SLO 3.1 Students will publicly disseminate independent scholarly, and creative work in a public setting.

Objective 3.1.A. Students will produce independent scholarly and/or creative products.

Measurement 1: Students producing scholarly or creative work for the **Undergraduate Research Festival** must submit abstracts describing the product. Faculty reviewers assess the abstracts using the *Review of Submitted Abstracts Rubric*.

Acceptable target: 80% of abstracts will have 3.0 or higher on each item. [Adapted to 7 or higher out of 12]

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Ideal target: 80% of abstracts will have a 3.3 or higher on each item. [Adapted to 8 or higher out of 12.]

Table: Abstracts Reaching or Exceeding Acceptable and Ideal Target.

Obj 3.1.A Meas. 1	Year 1* 2011-12	Year 2 2012-13	Year 3 2013-14	Year 4 2014-15	Year 5 2015-16
Percent $\geq$ 7 out of 12	-	9.5%	95.7%	98.1%	99.1%
Acceptable Target (80% of 7 or higher)	-	Met	Met	Met	Met
Percent $\geq$ 8 out of 12		90.2%	94.0%	91.6%	91.0%
Ideal Target (80% of 8 or higher)	-	Met	Met	Met	Met
Acceptance Rate	85.7%	98.9%	98.3%	97.2%	95.7%

*Rubric was not utilized in Year 1.

Results for Measurement 1: In 2016, 116 abstracts were submitted to the ACU Undergraduate Research Festival, a slight decrease from 126 in 2014. This is still a significant increase over the 98 abstracts submitted in 2013. One hundred and fourteen of the abstracts were submitted by ACU Students, down slightly from 124 in 2015 and up from 92 in 2013. Only three abstracts were rejected. Three abstracts were not reviewed by their departments. These abstracts went before the final review committee which reviews abstracts that receives 2's on the rubric to decide whether they should be accepted to the conference. This committee does not score the abstracts on the rubric, therefore, 3 ACU abstracts do not have scores. Before the conference, four presentations were withdrawn.

Of the 111 scored abstracts submitted by ACU students, 110 (99.1%) reached the Acceptable Target. One hundred and one abstracts (91.0%) reached the Ideal Target.

Measurement 2: Students who recived grants from the Office of Undergraduate Research or Pursuit Grants will submit a paper or creative work based on their project to their mentoring faculty member. Faculty members submit the report to the *Pursuit* Team. Faculty reviewers will assess the work using *Writing Assessment Rubric.*

Revision for Measurement 2: The Office of Undergraduate Research does not require students who receive summer stipends to submit a paper summarizing the results of their project. Students who work with a faculty member on Pursuit Research Grants submit two assessment reports at the completion of their projects. Results from those reports will be used for assessment of this objective. See Objective 2.2.A and 2.2.B results above.

Measurement 3: Students who received grants from the Office of Undergraduate Research or Pursuit Research Grants will submit a self-assessment entititled *Research Project: Student Self-Assessment of Project Report* to their faculty mentor. Faculty members submit the report to the *Pursuit* Team.

Revision for Measurement 3: The Office of Undergraduate Research does not require students to complete the *Student Self-Assessment of Project Report.* Year 5 student *Assessment of Project Reports* from Pursuit Research Grants were assessed using the Acceptable and Ideal Targets. Results can be found in 2.2.B.

Objective 3.1.B Students will demonstrate professionalism in the presentation of scholarly and creative products beyond the classroom.

Measurement: Student work accepted to the Undergraduate Research Festival will be assessed using *Papers/Verbal Presentations Rubric* or *Posters/Presentations Rubric.* Faculty score the papers/posters products.

Acceptable target: 70% of products/presentations will score 50 or higher out of a total score of 90 on the rubric. [Adapted to a total score of 38.9 points out of 70 points on the verbal presentations rubric and 36.1 points out of 65 points on the poster presentations rubric.]

Ideal target: 80% of products/presentations will score 65 or higher out of a total score of 90 on the rubric. [Adapted to 56 out of a total score of 70 points on the verbal presentations rubric and 46.9 points out of 65 points on the oral presentations rubric.]

Results:
At the 2016 ACU Undergraduate Research Festival, 166 ACU students gave 103 presentations. Fourteen students from another university also participated in the Research Festival. Their data is not included here.

Verbal Presentations Results: ACU students at the 2016 Undergraduate Research Festival made sixty-four verbal presentations. 55 presentations **(86%) scored above the Acceptable Target** with a total of 38.9 or higher. Twenty-seven verbal presentations **(42%) scored at or above the Ideal Target**.

Table: Verbal Presentations Reaching or Exceeding Acceptable or Ideal Targets.

Obj 3.1.B Verbal	Year 1 2011-12	Year 2 2012-13	Year 3 2013-14	Year 4 2014-15	Year 5 2015-16
Percent ≥ 38.9	61%	75%	78.9%	83%	86%
Acceptable Target (70% of 7 or higher)	Not Met	Met	Met	Met	Met
Ideal Target (80% of 8 or higher)	14% Not Met	45% Not Met	12.7% Not met	30% Not met	42% Not met

Poster Presentations Results: Thirty-nine poster presentations were made by ACU students. Of the 39 poster presentations, 29 presentations scored a total of 36.1 or higher or **74% of presentations scored within the Acceptable Target** on the Poster Presentations Rubric. Three poster presentations or **8% scored at or above the Ideal Target**.

Obj 3.1.B Poster	Year 1 2011-12	Year 2 2012-13	Year 3 2013-14	Year 4 2014-15	Year 5 2015-16
Percent $\geq$ 38.9	66%	60%	93%	80%	74%
Acceptable Target (70% of 7 or higher)	Not Met	Not Met	Met	Met	Met
Ideal Target (80% of 8 or higher)	6% Not met	10% Not met	33% Not met	10% Not met	8% Not met

Overall Total: At the 2016 ACU Undergraduate Research Festival, **82% of the presentations scored at or above the acceptable target. Twenty-nine percent of the presentations scored at or above the ideal target.**

Analysis: In 2016, the **Acceptable Target of having 70% of presentations reaching 38.9 or higher out of 70 for verbal presentations or 36.1 or higher out of 65 for poster presentations was well exceeded with 82% passing these scores**. Several factors may have contributed to reaching this goal.
1. The 8th ACU Undergraduate Research Festival and faculty mentors have learned how to better advise their students in preparation for the Research Festival.
2. Rubrics and helpful hints were provided on the Research Festival Blog and at poster preparation workshops to the students and faculty before the conference to aid the students in their preparation for the Research Festival.
3. All the students, except sixth year seniors had completed at least part of the Research Literacy material through the university core courses.

The **Ideal Target of 80% of oral presentations scoring 50 or higher out of a total score of 70 on the rubric or 46.9 out of 65 points for poster presentations rubric was not met.** However, this is the highest percentage to reach the ideal scores since 2013. The percentage of students reaching the Ideal Target is most likely due to better-trained judges. These rubrics are used for the competition portion of the Research Festival. Judges are instructed that a good all-around presentation should be given 3's in all categories. This would give the student a score of 42 for verbal presentations and 39 for poster presentations. To reach the score for the ideal target, that means that 80% of the students would score close to a 4 or above in every category. This would make it very difficult to distinguish among the very good presentations and the exceptional presentations. Because our students' presentations had become so good, the judging was readjusted to give more room at the top of the scores. This adjustment allows good presentations to score in the acceptable range, but makes it very difficult for many to score in the ideal range.

Appendix I contains the Undergraduate Research Report for 2015-2016.

Objective 3.1.C Students who present research projects and/or creative activities to audiences external to ACU will demonstrate professionalism in the presentation and contribute to the discipline.

Measurement: Evaluation forms from peer-reviewed conferences.

Acceptable Target: Using the baseline for these categories from 2010, each category will increase 25% from the baseline by the fourth year of the QEP and 35% by the fifth year.

Ideal Target: The percent of increase will be 30% by year four and 40% by year five.

Revision: It is unclear how this data could be collected to find a reasonable measure and avenue for the collection, thus this objective has been removed from our QEP.

Operational Objective 3.1.D An increase in the number of students submitting research projects and creative works to institutional, local, state, national, and international conferences and juried programs will occur.

Measurement: The number of submissions and acceptances is documented on an annual basis from departmental data found in TaskStream or the Student Research by Department Survey.

Acceptable Target: Using the baseline for these categories from 2011-2012 [year adjusted to the first year of QEP], each category will increase 35% from the baseline by the fourth year of the QEP and 50% by the fifth year.

Ideal Target: The percent of increase will be 40% by year four and 60% by year five.

Number of students submitting research projects and creative works to conferences and juried programs.

In AY 2015-2016, on the annual outcomes assessment report, faculty reported the following levels of student participation:
- 357 students were invovled in independent research submitted for review beyond a course requirement;
- 293 students performed research with a faculty member;
- 186 presented a research paper or project or poster at a conference or professional meeting, either state or national;
- 131 submitted an orginal work for a juried show;
- 48 performed for a jury outside a department requirement;
- 52 published an article, chapter, or book related to their discipline;
- 189 students were involved in research activity not classified in the categories above;

- 157 participated in the spring ACU Research Festival; and
- 657 students are represented in the numbers above.

Annual Outcomes Assessment Reports Results
By Year 4, all but three Acceptable and Ideal Targets were met in comparison to the basellilne of Year 1. Three of the targets exceeded 100% increase. Over the 5 years of the QEP, all but two of the Acceptable and Ideal Targets were met. Four of the targets exceeded a 100% increase.

Year 4--The following categories met **both Acceptable and Ideal Targets in comparison to the baseline:**
- Independent Research Beyond a Course Requirement
- Presented or Co-Authored a Peper or Project for a Conference
- Submitted an Original Work for a Juried Show
- Performed for a Jury Outside of a Departmental Requirement
- Participated in the Research Festival
- Participated in a Research Activity not Listed

Year 5—The following categores met **both Acceptable and Ideal Targets over the 5-Years of the QEP.**
- Research with a Faculty Mentor
- Presented or Co-Authored a Peper or Project for a Conference
- Submitted an Original Work for a Juried Show
- Performed for a Jury Outside of a Departmental Requirement
- Published an Article Related to the Discipline
- Presented at the ACU Research Festival
- Participated in a Research Activity not Listed

Obj 2.2.C	Year 1 2011-12	Year 4 2014-2015	% of Inc or Dec by Year 4	Year 5 2015-16	% of Inc or Dec over 5-yr QEP
Indep Res Beyond Course Requirement	261	381	+46.4%	357	+36.8%
Research with Faculty Mentor	171	193	+12.9%	293	+71.3%
Presented or Co-Authored Paper/Project for Conference	79	128	+62.0%	186	+135.4%
Orig Work for Juried Show	76	258	+239.6%	131	+72.4%
Performed for Jury Outside Dept Requirement	28	73	+160.7%	48	+71.4%

Published Article Related to Discipline	13	16	+23.1%	52	+300%
Research Festival	77	116	+50.6%	157	+103.9%
Participated in Research Activity Not Listed Above	86	191	+122.1%	189	+119.8%
Number of unique students represented	691 (Year 2)	618	-10.6%	657	-4.9%

Note: Data collected in Year 1 utilized descriptions of student involvment in research projects ambiguously so that some of the same students were counted multiple times and were, therefore, not mutually exclusive. Therefore, the number of individual students in Year 1 is omitted from this report. Percents compare information for the *Number of Individual Students Represented* utilizes Year 2 information for the comparisions.

Targets for Comparison: Ideal Target—All cells highlighted indicate items meeting **both the Acceptable and Ideal Targets**

Pursuit Travel Grants

Travel Grant Funds were established in Year 2 as a part of ACU's Quality Enhancement Plan. The purpose of the fund was to support conference expenses of students and their faculty mentors as the students and faculty present research or scholarship findings, or showcase creative activities. The intent is to encourage scholarship and provide more opportunities for scholarly activity.

Travel Funding to Conferences	Year 2 2012-13	Year 3 2013-14	Year 4 2014-15	Year 5 2015-16
# Faculty Funded	25	23	15	31
# Students Funded	32	79	47	84
Average Amount of Funding per Faculty	$798	$718	$1,072	$1,154
Total # Impacted	57	102	62	115
5-Year Percent of Increase or Decrease				+ 101.8%

Pursuit Travel Grant Funds were made available for faculty/student travel to conferences to present and showcase research conducted collaboratively between faculty and students. Funding had a maximum of $2,000 ($1,000 for the faculty mentor and $1,000 for the student researcher).

Other Research Programs: Student involvement in research and creative projects is an important part of the climate at ACU. Special programs and groups within the university provide important encouragement for student involvement in research and creative projects.

The Honors College involves students in research with faculty mentors to develop research skills and encourage students to present their research at conferences. During fall 2015 and spring 2016, 182 students worked with a faculty mentor on a research project. Please see Appendix H for a detailed list of the number of students in the Honors College and types of research the students performed.

McNair Scholars Program is designed to provide qualified college students with effective preparation for doctoral study. The program provides opportunities for student development of research skills. During 2015-2016, the ACU McNair Scholars Program assisted 17 research students through a summer research internship. The field of study for the projects included Communications Sciences and Disorders, Psychology, Political Science, Global Studies, Criminal Justice, Nutrition, Education, Journalism, and Social Work. These students will present their research during the 2016-17 academic year. Students from the 2015 research internship presented their research at various conferences, including national McNair Scholars Conferences hosted by the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, the University of New Mexico, and the University of North Texas, the National Conference of Undergraduate Research, and other conferences hosted by professional organizations.

Alpha Chi is a national college honor society that admits students from all academic disciplines. Membership is limited to the top 10% of an institutions juniors, seniors, and graduate students. Students are very active and present their undergraduate research at national and regional conferences across the United States.

The Undergraduate Research Festival is conducted each year during the spring semester. Students producing scholarly or creative work must submit abstracts describing the product. Faculty reviewers assess the abstracts and make a selection of students to present verbal and poster presentations. At the 2016 ACU Undergraduate Research Festival, 166 ACU students gave 103 presentations. Fourteen students from another university also participated in the Research Festival. Student presentations are assessed and evaluated by faculty and staff judges.

MAJOR CHANGES—YEAR 1 AND JUSTIFICATIONS

The Development Team provided a vision for *Pursuit* in the document found on the *Pursuit* Blog page (http://blogs.acu.edu/qep/). In the process of implementation, a few minor adjustments were made in the plan, but the need for two major changes emerged during analysis of first-year assessments.

Change 1: During Fall 2011 and Spring 2012, conversations across campus were held in discussion of revisions to the 2007 General Education Revision Steering Committee (GERSC) plan for the structure of a new core curriculum. Faculty approved a plan to modify General Education that included the following:

- Consolidation of CORE 120 and CORE 220 into a single 3-hour course entitled CORE 210, combining the curriculum from both courses.
- Combination of CORE 320 and BIBL 440 into a single 3-hour course entitled BCOR 310, including team-teaching the course with 2 or 3 professors, one from Bible, Missions, and Ministry.

   Justification for Change 1:
   o Review of student learning outcomes from CORE classes showed the program outcomes could be met with 9 hours of integrated courses instead of the original 12 hours and not undermine the fundamental understandings and objectives.
   o Budget reductions in FY11 and FY12, as well as those proposed for FY13 and beyond, significantly impacted the ambitious and comprehensive new curriculum. Implementation of the original 12-hour program was not feasible but a 9-hour integrated core was.

Change 2: The original QEP called for a research paper to be taught and assessed in CORE 110. During review of student learning outcomes and curriculum, the CORE 110 Advisory Committee discovered a gap in learning. In this first semester course for entering students, students were asked to write a research paper before they received instruction in writing from sources in required English classes. To fix the gap, students will work on an annotated bibliography in CORE 110, then write a research paper in English 112 (Composition and Literature). The next general education course-CORE 210-requires a research paper to be assessed for QEP student learning outcomes.

   Justification for Change 2: An advisory committee composed of CORE 110 faculty worked during the summer of 2012 to modify the focus and to adapt the final assessment document from an evaluative essay to a annotated bibliography. Because most students take ENGL 112 (Composition and Literature) during the second semester they are enrolled, providing instruction for writing an annotated bibliography in CORE 110, practicing those skills while writing a research paper in ENGL 112, and reinforcing the skills while working on a research paper in CORE 210 provides a more logical sequencing of instruction.

The tables below depict the changes effective for Fall 2013.

Original Plan:

Practice	Introduce	Reinforce
CORE 110—Research Paper	ENGL 112—Research Paper	CORE 210—Research Paper

Adjusted Plan:

Introduce	Practice	Reinforce
CORE 110—Annotated Bibliography	ENGL 112—Research Paper	CORE 210—Research Paper

Change 3: *Pursuit Research Grant* Applications—During Year 1 grants were awarded for funding for the next academic year, thus delaying the schedule for the grants one year. Year 2 research grants were originally intended for Year 1 but due to the timing of the awards, grants were conducted in Year 2.

> **Justification for Change 3:** The original QEP document called for 6 grants for funding during the first year, but the actuality of the situation is that the grants include research and scholarship during Year 2. This was an unavoidable change due to the submission of projects for selection and the implementation schedule for *Pursuit.*

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM YEAR 1

As a result of findings by Assessment Team I (CORE 110-Cornerstone), the Compliance Workgroup, and the *Pursuit* Implementation Team (PIT), recommendations were made for Year 2.

Pursuit **Grant Applications**—PIT recommended the *Pursuit* Director to work with faculty to improve the quality of grant applications and to include student-learning outcomes in the applications.

Marketing—Work with Online Marketing and Creative Services to find ways to showcase faculty and student research from *Pursuit* Grants. Add information about the funded grants to website. Reorganize research information on ACU website.

Pursuit **Institute**—Work with PIT and IL Teams to consider the best focus for next year's institute. Faculty Teams will decide what type of institute best provides assistance to faculty to improve and promote research within departments.

Assessments
- CORE 110—Work with Assistant Provost of General Education to ensure *Pursuit* objectives are a part of student learning outcomes and assignments are developmentally appropriate for entering students. During Summer 2012, faculty teaching CORE 110 wrote a new assignment to serve as the assessment artifact for *Pursuit.*
- *SAILS*—Increase the percentage of students taking *SAILS*. The syllabus needs to prescribe a portion of the student's grade for completion of the *SAILS* assessment. It

is recommended that students completing the assessment receive some sort of grade for their efforts.
- Undergraduate Research—Methods for reporting the number of faculty-guided research and creative projects are insufficient. Protocols for collection of data need refinement.

SUMMARY FOR YEAR 1

Year 1 started well but had a bit of a rocky start during this initial year of our *Pursuit* dreams. Year 2 starts with a new provost and a new Assistant Provost of General Education, stabilizing the structure for assessment and providing a more focused approach to implementation.

- Working teams (PIT, IL Team, and Assessment Team I) were formed and began their tasks for implementation.
- Goals and tasks for each team were discussed, delineated and begun with fervor and enthusiasm.
- Funding for six *Pursuit* Grants grant projects was awarded to 10 students and their 6 faculty mentors. Preliminary results and anecdotal responses indicate a successful and productive group of researchers. Because this is the first year of grant implementation, reports will not be available for assessment until the the end of Year 2.
- The *Pursuit Institute* was conducted in May. The institute was an overwhelming success with 19 faculty participants, many of whom made improvements in their teaching and classroom behaviors and signature assignments.
- Assessments for the first year were implemented.
  - *SAILS* was given to CORE 110 students in the early fall;
  - Evaluative essays were assigned, collected, and assessed from CORE 110 students.
- Recommendations were determined for alterations in data collection and implementation of the goals and assessments for *Pursuit*. Those are listed above and have been accepted and changes will be implemented in Fall 2012.

In summary, we have made an excellent start. Faculty and students are enthusiastic and excited about *Pursuit*. We began anew and refined and revised our strategies to meet the goals described for the *Pursuit* of Research Literacy.

CHANGES—YEAR 2

As of Fall 2012, Year 2 was implemented as planned in the *Pursuit* document with changes noted on Year 1. The following improvements and adjustments were made based on recommendations from Year 1:

Pursuit **Research Grant Fellows**—asked to revise the student learning outcomes for their grant projects in order for a more comprehensive assessment of the projects. A presentation was made in the Adams Center to provide examples of well-written purposes, goals, and objectives from previous research grants.

Marketing—Videos showcasing faculty and student research were crafted by the Learning Studio. As of the writing of this document, the videos are in limbo, having been lost due to a hardware crash. Those will be redone if the information is not retrieved.

***Pursuit* Institute**—was held during the summer break to work with Capstone faculty, department chairs, and other interested faculty on a rubric and assist in refining and writing signature assignments for departmental capstone experiences.

Assessments- In the process of implementation, a few minor adjustments were made in the plan to close the loop as a result of assessments.

- CORE 110—The new annotated bibliography was utilized for the assessment in Year 2, making a clearer vision of ways to provide assistance to faculty and students. Expectations for CORE 110 (Cornerstone) were revised, including changes in the rubric used to assess the annotated bibliography.
- CORE 210—This year was the first year for the assessment of the position paper from all CORE 210 classes.
- *SAILS*—Changes in implementation were made. The percentage of students taking *SAILS* at the beginning of Year 2 increased from 50% to 72.3% as a result of faculty encouragement of students.
- Undergraduate Research—Data collection continues to be a problem.

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM YEAR 2

As a result of findings by Assessment Team I (CORE 110-Cornerstone) and Assessment Team II (CORE 210), recommendations for implementation were made for Year 3.

CORE 110. The Director of Assessment Team I, Dr. Laura Carroll, met with Assistant Provost, Dr. Nancy Shankle Jordan, and Director of Cornerstone, Dr. Cliff Barbarick. In the meeting, Cornerstone recommendations were discussed and a revised rubric was shared. Subsequently, presentations were made in the Adams Center to share results of the assessment and recommendations with CORE 110, CORE 210, and other interested faculty. Dr. Cole Bennett, Chair of the Department of Language and Literature, worked with CORE 110 faculty to discuss characteristics of quality annotated bibliographies.

Results and Recommendations
1. Collection of papers. Based on recommendations from the Year 1: 2011-2012 report, continue to use the flash drive system to collect papers. Year 2 saw 100% of faculty members submitted papers from 93% of students enrolled (up from 77%). It is recommended that we continue the same procedure for collection.
2. Strategies for improvement. Based on recommendations from the Year 1: 2011-2012 report, the assignment was adapted to better reflect *EXPLORE* goals. The new assignment, an annotated bibliography, better taught the fundamentals of information literacy. Continue to help CORE 110 instructors teach information literacy more effectively by following strategies recommended in the Year 1

report. As a part of the strategies, the assessment team held professional development sessions for instructors in the Adams Center to discuss findings and recommendations for teaching the assignment and for the instructors to ask questions about the rubric and its assessment.

CORE 210. The Director of Assessment Team II, Dr. Brenda Bender, met with Assistant Provost, Dr. Nancy Shankle Jordan; Director of CORE 210, Dr. Lauren Lemley; and the CORE 210 Curriculum Committee. In the meeting, CORE 210 recommendations were discussed. Presentations were made in the Adams Center to share results of the assessment and recommendations with CORE 210 and other interested faculty.

Results and Recommendations
1. Rubric. Adjusted the rubric language to be more general to better fit the variety of topics selected in the writing assignment.
2. Writing Assignment. Worked to insure all sections follow the common writing assignment. Clarified the common writing assignment requirement and prompt, including citation style, across all sections of CORE 210.
3. Prerequisites. Ensure students meet the course prerequisites for CORE 210, specifically ENGL 112.

SUMMARY FOR YEAR 2

Year 2 started with a new Provost and a new Assistant Provost of General Education, stabilizing the structure for assessment and providing a more focused approach to implementation.

- Working teams (PIT, IL Team, and Assessment Team I) continued with their tasks for implementation. Each group worked to incorporate recommendations from Year 1. Assessment Team II was formed and assessed the position papers from CORE 210 for the first time.
- Funding for *Pursuit* Research Grant projects were awarded to 22 students and their 11 faculty mentors. Preliminary results and anecdotal responses indicate a successful and productive group of researchers. Summary reports will not be utilized for comparison of results until Year 3 for *Pursuit* Research Grants.
- The *Pursuit Institute* was conducted during the summer break. The institute was an overwhelming success with 19 faculty participants, many of which have made improvements within their own teaching and classroom behaviors and assignments.The focus of the Institute was Capstone assignments and assessments. A informational meeting was held on November 6 in the Adams Center to share the rubric developed and to collect suggestions for improvement.
- Assessments for the second year were implemented.
  - *SAILS* was given to CORE 110 students in the early fall; 695 students out of 961 freshmen completed the assessment.
  - Position papers were assigned, collected, and assessed from CORE 210 students for the first time.
- Recommendations were determined for alterations in data collection and implementation of the goals and assessments for *Pursuit*. Those are listed above

and have been accepted and changes will be implemented in Fall 2013. These recommendations were shared with the appropriate faculty and other interested faculty.

- Year 2, ended with the following improvements:
    - CORE 110 (Cornerstone) Annotated Bibliography prompt and assessment rubrics were revised; recommendations were shared with CORE 110 faculty on two different days; and faculty were provided with an informational workshop on how to assist students in writing an annotated bibliography. An informational session regarding annotated bibliographies was conducted in the Adams Center.
    - A director for CORE 210 was selected. The CORE 210 Curriculum Committee met with Assessment Team II to discuss recommendations for the position paper. The Director of *Pursuit*, the Assistant Provost of General Education, and the Director of CORE 210 met to further discuss recommendations and details for the assessment artifact. The Assessment Team II presented their findings and recommendations to CORE 210 faculty.
    - Percentages for students taking SAILS at the beginning of Year 2 have increased from 50% to 72.3%.

In summary, the results of our *Pursuit* are beginning to be more evident. While there are places that could see improvements, faculty and students are working together to enhance student learning. Scores are rising; percentages are approaching the Acceptable Target. The numbers of faculty and students working together on research and creative projects are increasing. We continue to refine and revise our strategies to meet the goals described for the *Pursuit* of Research Literacy.

CHANGES—YEAR 3

As of Fall 2013, Year 3 was implemented as planned in the *Pursuit* document with the changes previously noted. Improvements and adjustments were made based on recommendations from Year 2.

Assessments
- CORE 110
    1. Annotated Bibliography prompt and assessment rubrics were revised; recommendations were shared with CORE 110 faculty on two different days; and faculty were provided with an informational workshop on how to assist students in writing an annotated bibliography. An informational session regarding annotated bibliographies was conducted in the Adams Center.
    2. Assessment results showed improvements were being made so faculty were encouraged to continue to work and improve their delivery of information literacy concepts to students. Professional development sessions were held in the weeks leading up to the signature assignment, the annotated bibliography.
    3. The embedded librarians continue to provide a consistency in development of student information literacy skills.

4. SAILS—The percentage of students taking SAILS at the beginning of Year 3 dropped slightly from 72.3% to 71.3%. Faculty will to continue to work with students to encourage them to take the assessment.

- CORE 210—The assessment team revised the rubric significantly for the Year 3 assessment. Language utilized in the descriptions was adjusted to better fit the research papers collected. Previous recommendations commented on the variability among the papers. This variability continues to be a problem. Writing prompts will be collected from all sections this year for the assessment team prior to the assessment process.
- BCOR 310—Assessments are planned for the first time in Year 3, with a director in place and a signature assignment. No changes were made before the assessments were made.
- Undergraduate Research—Collection of data remains a problem. It appears that *Pursuit* Office will remain as the advocate in the collection of this data.

Financial. Due to financial difficulties within the university, the *Pursuit* budget remained the same for Year 3. The *Pursuit* Institute was put on hold, *Pursuit* Research Grants were increased slightly to fund $80,000 for 11 grant projects, and other non-essential funding for the QEP budget lines was temporarily discontinued. To follow on our commitment to SACS, we awarded funding for 12 research grants for Year 4 with the hope of increasing funding for projects in Year 5.

Pursuit **Research Grant projects** started this financial year with better student learning outcomes and revised assessment reports thanks to Dr. Tom Milholland of the Office of Institutional Research, who met with each faculty mentor individually to discuss student learning outcomes and assessments and sign contracts for the projects.

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM YEAR 3

Recommendations from the three assessment teams included the following:

CORE 110. The CORE 110 assignment, rubric and assessment are working well to teach and assess students' understandings of information literacy. Over three years, faculty have worked to (1) revise the assignment, (2) refine the rubric, (3) train teachers, and (4) work with embedded librarians to increase effectiveness of their assistance.

Results and Recommendations
1. *As a result, we are approaching the acceptable target for 1.1.A, have met the acceptable target for 1.1.B, and have met the ideal target for 1.1.C.*
2. After the 2012-2103 assessments, the assessment team met with the Course Director, Cliff Barbarick, and conducted professional development sessions for CORE 110 teachers in the Adam's Center.
The assessment team believes that these meetings were key in raising the scores and meeting two of the three targets. As we continue to help CORE 110 instructors teach information literacy more effectively, the assessment team will

continue to hold professional development sessions in the weeks leading up to the Informational Literacy assignment. These sessions will allow time for the assessment team to discuss findings and recommendations for teaching the assignment and for the instructors to ask questions.
3. Over the three years of the program, the concept of using embedded librarians for each section of Cornerstone has provided consistency in student development of information literacy skills.

CORE 210. The assessment team found three factors that may have impacted the Year 3 assessments. 1) Significant changes to the assessment rubric called for the assessment team to rate each rubric item more individually. 2) An 8-day delay between completion of the norming process and when sample papers were available for assessment. 3) Inconsistencies in the writing assignment across sections and variability among the papers may have made the assessment of the assignment problematic.

Recommendations for improvements in CORE 210 include the following:
1. Finalize adjustments to the assessment rubric in early 2015 and have a team meeting to discuss the rubric prior to norming process.
2. Collect writing prompts from all sections of CORE 210 and give them to the team prior to the assessment process.
3. Submit papers to the *Pursuit* office no later than the last day of classes OR on the first day of Finals Week to facilitate a timely assessment process.
4. Invite a faculty member from the Department of Language and Literature to make a presentation to CORE 210 faculty to discuss helpful strategies for writing position papers.
5. Focus on the big ideas of citing sources, evaluating and analyzing theories or perspectives, and of writing conclusions.
6. Compare specific signature assignments from each of the CORE 210 classes to make revisions and provide consistency in the descriptions of the assignment.
7. Conduct a mid-year assessment of fall papers to provide an analysis of improvements and determine if other adjustments are needed.

BCOR 310. The assessment team for BCOR 310 found similar issues in the signature assignment for the course, especially inconsistencies in the writing assignment across the sections. While prompts were made available to the assessment team, there was considerable variation in the prompts across the sections.

Recommendations for BCOR 310
1. It is strongly recommended for faculty to create a signature research assignment that aligns with the "big ideas" for the learning outcomes of the course. A common prompt crafted by the faculty for the signature assignment should then be utilized for all sections of BCOR 310.
2. Submit papers to the *Pursuit* office on or before the last day of classes but no later than Dead Day to facilitate a timely assessment process.
3. Content of papers needs to be addressed. Detailed suggestions can be found in Appendix F.

4. Formatting of the papers should be considered to assist the assessment in their assessment of the papers, including submitting the document as a PDF.
5. All students should use APA or MLA citation style for their papers.

SUMMARY FOR YEAR 3

Year 3 started with great hope and expectations. We believed we had worked through the difficulties and adjustments found during the first two years. However, we found there was a surprise awaiting our best-laid plans.

- Working Teams (PIT, Assessment Teams I, II, and III) continued with their tasks for assessing CORE classes. A flat budget this year saw the postponement of the *Pursuit* Institute. Since the primary purpose of the Information Literacy Team (ILT) was to plan and implement the *Pursuit* Institute, It was decided for the committee to disband until funding for the *Pursuit* Institute is restored.
- Interest in funding for *Pursuit* Research Grants was at an all time high. Faculty planned creative projects that included multiple students to mentor in the projects. Student learning outcomes continued to improve as faculty provided better measureable outcomes for the projects.
- Assessment data for CORE 110 continued to improve; data collected from CORE 210 and BCORE 310 showed that revision of prompts is a major need for a more consistent assignment across the sections. Consistency has become the mantra for the two courses.
- In order to make mid-year adjustments in CORE 210 and BCOR 310, it was decided to plan assessments at the end of the fall semester, looking ahead to make possible revisions for the spring offerings.
- The Assistant Provost for General Education accepted a position at another university at the end of the academic year for 2013-2014. It is anticipated that an interim director of General Education will take her place sometime in the fall of 2014.

In summary, *Pursuit* Travel Grants provided support for faculty and students to share their research all across the United States. *Pursuit* Research Grants supported and encouraged projects from STEM areas as well as from the Arts and Humanities. Faculty focused on ways to assist students in CORE courses to be more research literate. In the beginning of the QEP, there was reluctance from many of the faculty regarding the assessments, but Year 3 finds a vision of faculty working collegially to improve student learning for information literacy outcomes as they collect the signature assignments and discuss ways to close-the-loop and analyze and evaluate assessment data. It has been a productive year.

CHANGES—YEAR 4

As a result of the recommendations from Year 3, the following changes were implemented in Year 4:

CORE 110.
- All four Acceptable Targets were close to being met in Year 3. In meetings with the faculty teaching CORE 110, It was recommended by the assessment team for

faculty to continue to work with students to improve consistency in formatting across all sections, to address the target audience in the introduction, to refine and revise the research question, to insure students address questions rather than arguments, to distinguish between the social sciences and the humanities, and to prohibit the use of the Bible as a source.

- We continued to use the embedded librarians in each of the CORE 110 sections. Their work with students in all sections has provided a consistency in student development of information literacy skills.

CORE 210.

- Because of the drop in assessment scores in Year 3, several significant changes were made at the start of Year 4. Brenda Bender, Chair of Assessment Team II, met with CORE 210 faculty to discuss the rubric used by the assessment team, and possible revisions in the wording to clarify the intentions of the rubric and the goals of the position papers in order to coordinate both without altering the underlying purposes.
- Prompts from faculty were collected on the flash drives so that the assessment team would be able to understand the specifics of the assignment before beginning the assessment process.
- Faculty agreed on a Dead Day submission for flash drives to the *Pursuit* office.
- Faculty were provided with specific signature assignments from other CORE 210 classes in order to provide examples so they could make revisions and provide more consistency in the assignment prompts.
- The Assessment Team conducted assessments on fall papers in January so that any needed adjustments could be made between semesters.

BCOR 310.

- Sarah Lee, chair of Assessment Team III, met with BCOR 310 faculty to discuss recommendations from the Year 3 assessments. Recommendations included the following:
- Create a signature research assignment aligning with the "big ideas" for the learning outcomes of the course.
- Address the content of the papers.
- Require all students to use MLA or APA citation style.
- The Director of BCOR 310 resigned and was not replaced. Lack of a director did not allow focused efforts to implement any changes.
- Faculty were asked to include prompts on the flash drives so that the assessment team would be able to understand the specifics of the assignment before beginning the assessment process.
- A Dead Day submission was emphasized to all faculty.
- The Assessment Team scheduled assessments on fall papers in January so that any needed adjustments could be made between semesters.

Capstone.

- Year 4 was the first year of the assessment of papers from designated capstone courses. This was a year for learning and adjusting to close the loop to improve the assessment.

Recommendations from the four assessment teams include the following:

CORE 110.
1. Students in CORE 110 met all Acceptable Targets and Ideal Targets for all three outcomes as well as the composite score. Commendations to the faculty and students were well deserved. Faculty were admonished to continue with everything that have focused on. The results clearly indicated the building of a strong foundation of information literacy.
2. After the Year 3 assessments, the assessment team conducted professional development sessions for CORE 110 faculty in the Adam's Center. It was recommended that the assessment team continue with these sessions because the meetings were key in raising the scores and meeting and exceeding ALL targets.
3. Recommendations included the need to continue the concept of using embedded librarians for each section of Cornerstone to provide consistency in the development of student's information literacy skills as well as to give first-year students a connection to a librarian that could continue throughout the student's years at ACU.

CORE 210.
1. Commendations were made to faculty for the improvement in thesis statements. Student work showed that faculty was clearly helping students know the importance of thesis statements.
2. Continue to include the writing prompts for each class with the flash drives. The assessment team was better able to match the rating level on the rubric to the content of the paper through the lens of the writing prompt.
3. Continue the focus on refining the thesis statements in the position papers. Year 4's papers made significant improvements in describing theories of perspectives relevant to the thesis statement.
4. The ethical use of information continues to be problematic. It is recommended that faculty provide feedback to students on this specific skill on drafts for the final paper.
5. Continue to work to make revisions on the rubric, especially on Objective 1.2.B and 1.3.A.

BCOR 310.
1. While improvements have been indicated from Year 3 to Year 4, the assessment team continued to strongly recommend that faculty develop a more uniform research assignment, with less variability in the types of research required, the number of sources, and the materials used for research in the prompts. Note: this seemed to be a problem that has plagued the team for multiple years. It is critical that faculty address this problem if improvements are going to be made.
2. Work to provide the prompts from each section of the class. It is a necessity that prompts are provided to the assessment team.
3. Work with students to write good research questions, narrowing many of the topics that were too broad.

4. Many of the papers assessed were suspected of plagiarism. Faculty was urged to use Turnitin software for the submission of student work to assist in the identification of plagiarism. Faculty were urged to use class time to discuss plagiarism, particularly self-plagiarism.
5. Continue to emphasize proper in-text citation format.
6. Work with students to integrate and extend their ideas, especially as they write their conclusions.
7. Find a replacement for the former Director of BCOR. A leader who is invested in the team can make a big difference. While the Interim Director of General Education is working to pull the group together and plan for fall 2015 improvements, if the course is to remain as a General Education requirement, it must adapt to grow and thrive.

Capstone.
1. This is the first year for the Capstone course assessments. Faculty were commended for the high rate of participation and submission of Capstone papers during this first year.
2. Authors of the rubric used in the assessment were commended for their great efforts at the development of the rubric to assess the papers.
3. The committee recommends the rubric be tweaked to clarify various inconsistencies and ambiguous quantitative expectations.
4. Assessment Team IV recommends that a director be appointed for the Capstone courses to coordinate with Capstone faculty about the required assignments in the Capstone courses and oversee any adjustments.

SUMMARY FOR YEAR 4

This year was a great year for *Pursuit*. Faculty worked hard to teach their students the skills and integrative thinking needed for research. Faculty and staff across campus became accustomed to all the facets of *Pursuit* and how to work together to accomplish common tasks and goals. In particular,

- The *Pursuit* Implementation Team (PIT) continued awarding of *Pursuit* Travel Grants for faculty and students to travel to present their research or creative artifacts at conferences. PIT awarded 11 faculty research projects for Year 5.
- Assessment Teams for CORE 110, CORE 210, BCOR 310, and Capstone worked with faculty in each of the courses to disseminate the information from this year's assessments and to assist the faculty in understanding and brainstorming ways to improve student papers.
- CORE 110 showed great progress in meeting all of the Acceptable and Ideal Targets for the annotated bibliographies.
- CORE 210 and BCOR 310 worked to revise prompts and assist the assessment teams in revisions to the rubric.
- Capstone had its initial assessment. The results provided the assessment team and faculty opportunities to discuss changes, ways to improve student work, and discuss revisions to the rubric.
- *SAILS* results from Capstone students showed remarkable progress when comparing first-year data and data from students enrolled in Capstone experiences.

Comparisons were made between this year's capstone students and scores for incoming students from fall of 2011, their first year at ACU. Initially, those students entering in fall 2011 performed about the same as the Institution Type benchmark on 4 skills sets, and worse than the institution type on the remaining 4 skills sets. In comparison, after 3 years, data shows the following phenomenal results:

✓ Overall scores have increased significantly.
✓ Standard errors have decreased, showing student scores have less variability and are performing more consistently on the SAILS skills sets.
✓ Capstone students at Abilene Christian University performed BETTER THAN the institution-type benchmark on **ALL SAILS Skills Sets**.

- *Pursuit* Travel Grants were awarded to 15 faculty and 47 students for conference travel or assistance in juried shows for their creative works.
- *Pursuit* Research Grants were awarded to 12 faculty for research projects with students assistants. These projects provide students with direct involvement with a faculty mentor in quality research projects where they experience all the facets of research. This program prepares the students for graduate school or work in a field of study related to their major. It provides them a better understanding of what to expect in graduate school. Graduate schools have been very impressed with the entering student's experiences. Many of our graduates have been involved in research projects that most undergraduates do not experience until graduate school.
- The Undergraduate Research Festival provided students opportunities to share research in Verbal and Poster Presentations. This year there were 116 presentations.

General Education Review.
The most significant occurrence in 2014-2015 was the formation of a General Education Review Committee. In May 2007 faculty ratified to adopt our current general education program by full-faculty vote, shaped by the essential learning outcomes and high-impact practices articulated by *LEAP* (Liberal Education and America's Promise). This began with the first Cornerstone class (CORE 110) taught in Fall 2010.

The final objective in the *Liberal Arts Core Curriculum at ACU* document articulated the following systematic review of general education:

12. Implement an on-going review of the Liberal Arts Core Curriculum.
Because the world changes, professors' methods of teaching change, knowledge of disciplines changes, and the nature of the student body changes, students will be best served by an on-going review process that includes at the least the following considerations:
- The nature, experiences, knowledge, and skills of our incoming students.
- The best practices and current research on student learning.
- A straightforward and sustainable assessment system that supports a consistent focus on student learning outcomes, measurement of our success in achieving the outcomes, and thoughtful and continual response to assessment data.
- Annual review of assessment data.
- Comprehensive review of curriculum every three years.

(ACU University General Education Council (UGEC) Minutes, *General Education Review—Findings and Recommendations*, January 2015, Page 1). See Appendix J for a copy of the document.

The General Education Review Committee was formed in fall of 2014 and began its work to review and discuss several points in the charge from the Provost Office. The following meetings and discussions occurred in Fall 2014:

- Faculty were invited to meetings in October to discuss review of General Education and CORE courses. Faculty were encouraged to attend one of the meetings and provide their perspective about what was working and what needed to be improved.
- Students were invited to a Focus Group to provide input.
- A survey was sent out to a random selection of students who had taken at least two CORE courses at ACU (70 students responded).
- A draft of the proposal of changes was shared with faculty who were invited to sessions held in the Adams Center in mid-December to gather input.

The Provost Office approved the final report in late January. Following the Provost Office acceptance of the General Education Review-Findings and Recommendations Report, spring 2015 proved to be a busy semester filled with academic discussions regarding the recommendations. The following is a brief summary of the sequence of events:

- January 28, 2015 - University General Education Council (UGEC) received the report and began discussions.
- February 11, 2015 - UGEC met with chairs from the Department of Mathematics and Communications and Sociology to discuss the impact of recommendations on their departments including the following:
  - o Accept College Algebra from students who completed dual credit for such a dual credit course prior to matriculating at ACU;
  - o Accept all of the commonly accepted basic Communication courses at Texas public universities.
- February 25, 2015 - UGEC met with chairs from Language and Literature and History and Global Studies to discuss impact on their department of recommendations in the report, specifically:
  - o Make ENGL 111 an entrance requirement;
  - o Create a Historical Literacy requirement.
- March 25, 2015 – UGEC met with faculty to discuss the impact of hour reductions in CORE classes.
- April 8, 2015 – UGEC met to finalize the recommendations that moved forward for full faculty consideration. Council members approved final wording for a survey to gauge faculty's interest and acceptance of these recommendations (ACU UGEC Minutes, 2015).

The busy year came to a close amidst a flurry of discussions regarding the changes and recommendations for General Education classes. Change is difficult in an academic setting fraught with diverse opinions. Change is inevitable and can be a productive endeavor, filled with hope for a better future and better educational opportunities for our students.

As a result of the recommendations from Year 4, the following changes were made in the implementation in Year 5:

CORE 110.
- All four Student Learning Outcomes met the Acceptable and Ideal Targets in 2014-2015. As a result, no professional development sessions were held in Year 5. Faculty were told of the assessment results and told to "Continue doing what you have been doing and keep up the good work."
- The embedded librarians continued to work with the CORE 110 classes so that students made a connection to a librarian that may continue through the student's years at ACU.

CORE 210.
- The assessment team continued to encourage the CORE 210 faculty to refine the writing prompts to assist students in knowing specific expectations of this paper. CORE 210 faculty met regularly during Year 5 and discussed ways to improve the course, the curriculum, and the assignments. The course director planned the topics for these meetings.
- Each year, the assessment team has had difficulties with the rubric. The assessment team continued to work through the tension of the differing expectations across the rubric levels for each objective. Before the assessment in Year 5, the course director, the Director of Pursuit, and the chair of the assessment team examined the rubric and changed the wording to compensate for the difficulties of the assessment team, but did not alter the intent of the student learning outcomes.

BCOR 310.
- The chair of the assessment team for BCOR 310 met with the faculty of the course to discuss the assessment from Year 4 and to make the recommendations for improvement. It is not known if any suggested recommendations resulted in changes made in the teaching of the Year 5 BCOR 310 course. There is no director for this course. In Year 5, faculty had no formal meetings in which to discuss and implement changes.
- The assessment team suggested the BCOR professors integrate at least part of the BCOR assessment rubric into their own rubrics for assessment of the research paper. The team believed this integration would strengthen the assessment. Because of difficulties with the wording of the rubric in previous assessments, changes were made in the wording so that both faculty and assessment team members understand the language in the rubric and no ambiguity remains.

Capstone.
- The Assessment Team for Capstone Papers met with Capstone faculty in the fall to discuss assessment results and make recommendations for Year 5 of the assessment.
- The assessment team recommended that the rubric be tweaked to improve consistency in the levels of the rubric and to provide explicit quantitative expectations. The Director of Pursuit and the Chair of the Assessment Team worked to revise and adjust the wording in the rubric without altering the intent.
- The assessment team recommended a faculty member oversees the Senior-Year Integrative Capstone, so that this course director could coordinate the assessment

components and course outcomes with faculty. This director would also coordinate required assignments in the Capstone Experiences.

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RECOMMENDATIONS FROM YEAR 5

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CORE 110. A detailed look at the commendations and recommendations from Year 5 can be found in Appendix D.

1. All four Student Learning Outcomes met the Acceptable and Ideal Targets in 2014-2015. Results dropped significantly in Year 5 in Objective 1.1.A, only slightly in 1.1.B and in the Composite score, and rose slightly in 1.1.C. As the change in scores were analyzed, we realized that the professional development sessions that we held each year were not held in 2015-2016. There were numerous first-time teachers for CORE 110, possibly accounting for lower scores. While the results were excellent, it was decided that the professional development sessions would be scheduled again as a reminder to previous faculty and a learning process for first-time Cornerstone faculty. A session is already scheduled for Fall 2016.
2. The assessment team recommended the faculty focus on the following to help students:
   - Address the target audience in the introduction to the bibliography.
   - Refine and revise student's research question based on the findings in the annotated bibliography.
3. Continue to emphasize the following reminders to the faculty:
   - Implement consistent formatting for the document across all sections.
   - Understand correct MLA citation.
   - Address target audience in the introduction to the bibliography.
   - Refine and revise their research question based on their findings
   - Insure the students address questions rather than arguments.
   - Distinguish between social sciences and humanities.
   - Prohibit using the Bible as a source.
4. The assessment team recommended for the inclusion of embedded librarians in the classes continues. It is hoped that the students make a connection to a librarian that continues through the student's career at ACU.

CORE 210. A more detailed look at the commendations and recommendations from Year 5 can be found in Appendix E.

3. Thesis statements were readily identifiable in most papers. This was noted in the improvements for SLO 1.1; obj. A and B. CORE 210 faculty are clearly assisting students in shaping thesis statements to clearly define the scope of the topic.
2. In addition, several writing prompts were very detailed which assisted the team in understanding the expectations of the paper when applying the rubric.
3. The papers assessed this year made significant improvements in describing the theories or perspectives relevant to the thesis statement and interpreting the findings to support the thesis statement [SLO 1.2.A] with a 14% absolute increase over the previous year. This is another area for commendation to the

CORE 210 faculty for using detailed writing prompts, breaking the writing process into steps and using peer review.

4. Continued growth was seen in SLO 1.3 – analyzing and interpreting information and effectively accomplishing a specific purpose. An 8% absolute increase was noted in Obj. 1.3.A. - analyzing and interpreting information. The CORE 210 faculty is to be commended for expanding the writing prompts to specify the student should present at least one counter-argument to their thesis. In many cases, this inclusion provided a richer written product, which accomplished the purpose of the writing assignment.

5. CORE 210 will not be assessed in AY 2016-2017. Changes in General Education requirements will alter the course from the required course menu for all students. More of this information will be discussed later in the summary.

BCOR 310. A more detailed look at the commendations and recommendations from Year 5 can be found in Appendix F.

1. The assessment team applauds the teaching team for making great strides in their focus on a research question. The team noticed that all 4 prompts addressed developing a research question, some in more detail than others.

2. The assessment team notes that the rubric for 1.1.B (number of quality sources) exhibited changes to the rubric item. The wording now specifies the number of citations that should come from scholarly or academic sources. In previous years, this rubric item did not include these specifics, so the assessment team could have interpreted it more loosely. Overall, the number of papers scoring 2.5 or greater showed a 31% increase from Year 3 to Year 5.

3. All BCOR professors asked students to write their papers in MLA format. The assessment team noted and commends the professors of the 12 sections for requiring a consistent format. 1.1.C deals with how students utilize information from references. Compared to previous years, the assessment team noted fewer papers that relied too heavily on quotes, and very few papers included references that were not relevant to the topic. The assessment team noticed that some sections were required to submit a citation list before writing the research paper. This requirement likely contributed to the great increase seen in this objective and professors are commended for their work in this area.

4. The assessment team observed a small decrease from Year 4 to Year 5 in Objective 1.2.A. In Year 4, 53% of papers scored 2.5 or higher on this rubric item, but in Year 5, only 46.7% of papers reached this goal for a 12% decrease. In Year 5, the assessment team gave zero papers an exemplary rating. The assessment team recommends that professors strongly encourage their students to pursue critical analysis and recognize the strengths and weaknesses of all theories mentioned in the paper.

5. Objective 1.2.B showed a significant increase this year, showing a 26% of increase Year 4 to Year 5. To score well in this objective, students must make connections to the thesis throughout the paper, and must do this using formal academic writing. The assessment team noted that this rubric item would have been even higher if more students had a clear thesis statement.

6. Each year of assessment the team has noticed improvement in the prompts. This year, the prompts were clear, focused, and all of the students addressed

development of a research question/topic. Additionally, the topics for the research papers in the four prompts were very similar.

7. The team did notice variability in the types of research required and the materials used for research in the 4 prompts. While we did notice this variability, it was not as marked as it has been in years past.

8. The assessment team found fewer papers with blatant plagiarism, and fewer papers with missing or partial citations. While these issues were still present, we believe there was an improvement from Year 4 and commend faculty for the use of plagiarism-detecting software.

9. The BCOR assessment team applauds the BCOR faculty for their dedication to this course and to the research paper assignment, despite the imminent changes in 2016-2017. Results from this assessment show students performed similarly in Year 5 as they performed in Year 4. While we did not see very many gains, as we did from Year 3 to Year 4, the team noted there was also not a drop-off in the quality of the research paper. The team wants to specifically thank the faculty for working as a team to improve the quality and consistency of prompts, focusing on the research question, and for working on student use of scholarly sources.

10. BCOR 310 will not be assessed in AY 2016-2017. Changes in General Education requirements will move the course from the required course list for all students. BCOR 310 will change to an upper-level Bible course that can meet the elective Bible requirement. More of this information will be discussed later in the summary.

Capstone. A more detailed look at the commendations and recommendations from Year 5 can be found in Appendix G.

1. Department and Capstone faculty are commended for their work with students.

2. The capstone assessment results are significantly better this year than in our first year of assessment. All student learning outcomes of the assessment rubric showed significant improvements from the first year results.

3. Dan Brannan, Stephen Baldridge, Suzie Macaluso, Sarah Lee, Nancy Jordan, Rodney Ashlock, Brenda Bender, and Denise Barnett are to be commended for developing a rubric that the committee used to assess Capstone papers.

4. Many of the faculty teaching the Capstone Experiences came in October 2015 to hear 2014–2015 assessment results and discuss ways to improve the Capstone papers.

5. Based on comments of the 2014–2015 Assessment Team, the rubric was refined to improve consistency in the language.

6. Capstone faculty need to emphasize to their students what is meant by Integrative Learning, one of the outcomes for the Capstone Experience. This outcome states that students should demonstrate habits of mind that foster integrative thinking between the liberal arts core curriculum and their major field of student.

7. Capstone faculty need to emphasize that students are to include the proper citation of a minimum of five appropriate sources that support the research presented in the Capstone paper.

8. Each college/division should have a minimum number of papers assessed.

As *Pursuit* comes to the close of its 5-year program, faculty and staff across campus are accustomed to the multi-faceted parts of *Pursuit* and how the entire campus has been affected and benefitted as we work together to accomplish our common task and goal-to enhance student learning. Some of the parts of *Pursuit* will remain to support and encourage faculty and students in the task of learning and growing. Others will depart and move into roles that are changing.

- The *Pursuit* Implementation Team (PIT) awarded a significant amount of travel funding during Year 5 so that 31 faculty, 84 students, for a total of 115 persons, were able to travel to conferences to present their scholarly work or to compete in contests or juried shows. Over the 5-Year QEP of *Pursuit*, there was a +101.8% of increase in the number of students and faculty traveling to confrences and juried shows to showcase their research and creative activities.
- Core 110, CORE 210, BCOR 310, and Capstone faculty worked with their students to learn and write thoughtful, well-crafted work using information literacy skills. Annotated bibliographies, position papers, and research papers were written by students in the listed courses and assessed by four Assessment Teams.
- *SAILS* results from Capstone students exhibited even higher scores in comparison to those of entering students. After three years, data shows that
- Overall scores have continued to increase significantly.
  - Standard errors have continued to decrease, showing student scores have less variability and are performing more consistently on the *SAILS* skills sets.
  - Students enrolled in Capstone experiences at Abilene Christian University performed BETTER THAN the institution-type benchmark on *All SAILS Skills Sets.*
- *Pursuit* Research Grants concluded a successful year of research and mentoring of students. *Pursuit* Research Grants supported 12 faculty research projects. These projects provide students with direct involvement with a faculty mentor in quality research projects where they experience all the facets of research. This program prepares the students for graduate school and gives them a better understanding of what to expect in graduate school. In addition, Graduate schools have been very impressed with the experiences our graduates have as undergraduates.
- The Undergraduate Research Festival completed another successful year, providing students with opportunities to share their research in Verbal and Poster Presentations. At the 2016 ACU Undergraduate Research Festival, 166 ACU students gave 103 presentations. Fourteen students from another university also participated in the Research Festival. There is a 67% of increase in the number of students making presentations at the Undergraduate Research Festival in the five years of the QEP of *Pursuit.*

General Education Review.
Previous information was provided in the Impact Report for Year 4. The General Education Review Committee was formed in the fall of 2014 and began its work to review and discuss several points in the charge from the Provost. Faculty were invited to meetings to discuss the review of General Education requirements and the CORE

courses. After various meetings and discussions with faculty and student groups, a final report summarizing the findings of the General Education Review Committee was submitted to the Provost Office for approval. The Provost Office approved the final report in late January 2015. A series of meetings followed, beginning with College of Arts and Sciences (CAS) Pre-Sessions, University General Education Council (UGEC), All-University Faculty Meeting, and University Undergraduate Academic Council (UUAC). A Faculty vote was held in October 2015. Faculty results showed 90 in favor of the revisions, 32 opposed, with 9 abstentions.

The review and vote impact other general education areas, including the transfer policy, but this document concerns itself with the impact on the Quality Enhancement Plan. The general education review changed the role CORE 210 and BCOR 310 would have for students. Neither course would be required of all students, as previously was the case, but both remain as options for students to take: CORE 210 in the Cultural Awareness menu for General Education and BCOR 310 as an upper-level Bible requirement. It is likely that either or both will remain a part of the Study Abroad offerings, since they are particularly germane to those settings.

Future

As 2016-2017 sees the close of *Pursuit*, many of the programs remain a viable part of the university culture.
- Course assessments for CORE 110 and Capstone will remain the same, collected, and assessed by the assessment teams. The Office of Institutional Effectiveness will oversee the assessment.
- *SAILS* will become an every-other-year assessment. The Office of Institutional Effectiveness will oversee the assessment.
- Travel Grants remain a part of the university culture but are now funded and overseen by the Undergraduate Research Council.
- Research Grants have been modified and moved under the oversight of Research Council and Undergraduate Research Council.
- About 50% of the budget will remain as a budget line in the Provost Office in order to be ready for ACU's next QEP.

Progress in the encouragement of student learning was made with our ambitious QEP of *Pursuit*. In the beginning, change was met with diverse opinions, but later changed in light of the results of the initiative.

The QEP Research Literacy Initiative began with a broad-based, far-sighted, vision for transformative learning experiences for students. Implementation of *Pursuit* provided for
- focused curricular experiences through CORE classes, enhancing the research readiness of students;
- expansion of opportunities for research and creative projects through and intentional focus on faculty mentoring and through allocation of financial resources for students and faculty to collaborate on research, scholarship and creative work, and settings for dissemination of research, scholarly and creative work; and

- professional development of faculty to assist in the creation and implementation of research-based courses.

Pursuit has provided students an exciting way to engage in their discipline both inside and outside the classroom, leading to a deeper understanding of the academic area they have chosen, satisfying their thirst for discovery, and providing an outlet for their creativity. As we close *Pursuit*, the journey of Research and Creative Expression, is ongoing, equipping students with tools to become life-long learners in an every-changing society.

Appendix
of
Descriptive Documents

Pursuit Goals and Learning Outcomes

Goal 1 Student Learning--*Explore*--Students will acquire <u>information literacy competencies</u> and skills at both the basic and more advanced research levels through exploration and inquiry.

	Specific Learning Outcomes for All Students	Expected Outcome--The student will:	Courses or Components	Assessment	Evidence—Artifacts Collected Yearly Beginning
E X P L O R E	**Objective 1.1:** Students understand and appropriately use scholarly resources. *(Def 1)*	1.1.A. Determine the nature and extent of the information needed. 1.1.B. Access needed information effectively and efficiently. 1.1.C, Use information ethically and legally.	CORE 110—I	SAILS in CORE 110 (Pretest) *EXPLORE I Rubric*	AY '11-12 AY '11-12
			CORE 210—P	*EXPLORE II* Rubric—Items 1-3	AY '12-13
			BCOR 310 ENGL 112 - P	*EXPLORE II* Rubric Items 1-3	AY '13-'14
	Objective 1.2: Students integrate knowledge to frame researchable questions and to develop strategies to seek answers. *(Def 2)*	1.2.A. Describe major theories in the field relevant to a particular case/problem/situation. 1.2.B. Describe findings and interpretations in the field relevant to a particular case/problem/situation.	CORE 210—P	CORE 210–*EXPLORE II* rubric--Items 6 & 7	AY '12-'13
			BCOR 310-R ENGL 112 - P	*EXPLORE II* Rubric—Items 6 & 7	AY '13-'14
	Objective 1.3: Students analyze, interpret, and/or evaluate information and make and implement research-informed decisions. *(Def 3)*	1.3.A. Evaluate information and its sources critically and incorporate selected information into his or her knowledge base and value system. 1.3.B. Use multiple sources effectively to accomplish a specific purpose.	CORE 210—P	CORE 210—*EXPLORE II* rubric--Items 4 & 5	AY '12-'13
			BCOR 310-R	*EXPLORE II* Rubric----Items 4 & 5	AY '13-'14
			Capstone Experience-P ENGL 112 - P	SAILS --(Posttest)	AY '14-'15

Key for year assessment will **begin**:

Academic Year—2011-2012—QEP Year 1   Academic Year—2012-2013—QEP Year 2   Academic Years—2013-2014 or 2014-2015--QEP Year 3 or Year 4

    I= Introduce   P= Practice   R=Reinforce

Goal 2 Student Learning—*Create*—Students will create and produce new information as they write, present, and perform.

pursuit
A Journey of Research and Creative Expression.

C R E A T E

Specific Learning Outcomes for All Students	Expected Outcome--The student will:	Courses or Components	Assessment	Evidence—Artifacts Collected Yearly Beginning
Objective 2.1: Students prepare, present, and assess effectiveness of scholarly and creative products. *(Def 4)*	2.1.A. Demonstrate effective use of information literacy skills through written and oral communication 2.1.B. Apply new and prior information to the planning and creation of a particular product or performance. 2.1.C. Demonstrate effective critical thinking as student develops, produces and evaluates a product or performance.	COMS 211—I Writing Intensive or Capstone Experience-P	Artifact from Writing Intensive or Capstone Experience – *Create* Rubric	AY '13-'14 and AY '14-'15 in Capstone

Specific Learning Outcomes for *Select* Undergraduates	Expected Outcome--The student will:	Courses or Components	Assessment	Evidence—Artifacts Collected Yearly Beginning
Objective 2.2: Students conduct faculty-guided original work relevant to the field of study. *(Def 5)*	2.2.A. Perform steps of a discipline specific project.	Faculty-guided Research-I, P	Departmental Outcomes Assessment, Self-assessment Rubric, Assessment of Project Rubric	AY '13-14 and AY '14-15
	2.2.B. Draw sound conclusions from the results of the project in order to identify future direction.	Faculty-guided Research-I, P	Departmental Outcomes Assessment, Self-assessment Rubric, Assessment of Project Rubric	AY '13-14 and AY '14-15
	2.2.C. Operational Objective-The number of faculty-guided research or creative activity projects will increase within academic departments.	Faculty-guided-research-I, P	Departmental Outcomes Assessment	AY '13-'14 and AY '14-'15

Key for year assessment will **begin**:
Academic Year—2011-2012—QEP Year 1   Academic Year—2012-2013—QEP Year 2   Academic Years—2013-2014 or 2014-2015—QEP Year 3 or Year 4

I= Introduce   P= Practice   R=Reinforce

Goal 3 Student Learning—*Express*—Students will express their research through independent scholarly and creative work in a public setting.

EXPRESS

	Specific Learning Outcomes for *Select* Undergraduates	Expected Outcome--The student will:	Courses or Components	Assessment	Evidence—Artifacts Collected Yearly Beginning
	Objective 3.1: Students publicly disseminate independent scholarly and creative work. *(Def 6)*	3.1.A. Produce an independent scholarly and/or creative product.	Capstone Experience—P; OUR—I, P; Honors Coll.—P; McNair Scholars (3 courses)– I, P	Departmental Outcomes Assessment, Self-assessment Rubric, Assessment of Project Rubric	AY '13-14 and AY '14-15
		3.1.B. Demonstrate professionalism in the presentation of scholarly and creative product beyond the classroom	OUR—I, P; Honors Coll.—P; McNair Scholars (3 courses)– I, P	Departmental Outcomes Assessment, Self-assessment Rubric, Assessment of Project Rubric	AY '13-14 and AY'14-15
		3.1.C. Demonstrate professionalism in the presentation of original intellectual or creative contribution to the discipline (external to ACU)	OUR—I, P; Honors Coll.—P; McNair Scholars (3 courses)– I, P	Departmental Outcomes Assessment, Self-assessment Rubric, Assessment of Project Rubric	AY '13-14 and AY '14-15

Key for year assessment will **begin**:

Academic Year—2011-2012—QEP Year 1 Academic Year—2012-2013—QEP Year 2 Academic Years—2013-2014 or 2014-2015—QEP Year 3 or Year 4

I= Introduce   P= Practice   R=Reinforce

Actions to be Implemented

Student Learning Outcomes—*EXPLORE* Information Literacy

In fall 2010, ACU began a new core curriculum for entering first-year students. In response to the new beginnings encountered by the students and the vision of the concepts of the QEP, a plan for implementing the QEP student learning outcomes along with the new curriculum was prescribed. Faculty will weave the information literacy student learning outcomes from *EXPLORE* into CORE 110: Cornerstone; CORE 210: Human Identity; and BCOR 310: The Search for Meaning.

Student Learning Outcomes	Yr 1 (FY 12) AY 11-12	Yr 2 (FY 13) AY 12-13	Yr 3 (FY 14) AY 13-14	Yr 4 (FY 15) AY 14-15	Yr 5 (FY 16) AY 15-16
EXPLORE					
1.1 All students will understand and appropriately use scholarly sources.	CORE 110				
		CORE 210			
			BCOR 310		
1.2 All students will integrate knowledge to frame researchable questions and to develop strategies to seek answers.	CORE 120				
		CORE 210			
			BCOR 310		
1.3 All students will analyze, interpret, and/or evaluate information and make and implement research-informed decisions.	CORE 120				
		CORE 210			
			BCOR 310		

Student Learning Outcome 1.1: All students will understand and appropriately use scholarly sources. More specifically, students will:
*   Determine the nature and extent of the information needed,
*   Access needed information effectively and efficiently, and
*   Use information ethically and legally.

 The broad scope of the concept of information literacy provides for a structured and iterative understanding of the skills and concepts of information literacy. As students work to increase their knowledge, skills, and behaviors of information literacy, they will continue to learn and enhance the knowledge and skills in deeper ways.

 Student Learning Outcome 1.2: All students will integrate knowledge to frame researchable questions and to develop strategies to seek answers. More specifically, students will
*   Describe major theories in the field relevant to a particular case, problem, or situation, and
*   Describe findings and interpretations in the field relevant to a particular case, problem, or situation.

Student Learning Outcome 1.3, Students will analyze, interpret, and/or evaluate information and make and implement research informed decisions. More specifically, students will
*   Evaluate information and its sources critically and incorporate selected information into his or her knowledge base and value system; and
*   Use multiple sources effectively to accomplish a specific purpose.

 As the QEP Development Team defined the topic of Research Literacy, the student learning outcomes listed above described characteristics for the strategies within the core curriculum providing a foundation for research, scholarship, and creative work for the student's major field of study.

Assessment of *EXPLORE* student learning outcomes. While these skills are introduced in CORE 110, practiced in CORE 210, and reinforced in BCOR 310, students practice these skills throughout their program of study. Because most students take these courses, a consistent assessment of the QEP student learning outcomes will be possible. This will be accomplished through two means:
*   Standardized Assessment of Information Literacy Skills (SAILS) is given as a pre-test to all entering first-year students. [The post-test will be administered during CORE 320.]
*   A evaluative essay paper is collected and assessed from a cohort group of students in CORE 110 and CORE 220. These artifacts are assessed using the *EXPLORE 110 Rubric* and the *EXPLORE 220 Rubric.* [See Appendix IV for the rubrics.]

Student Learning Outcomes—*CREATE* new information
 After students complete their introduction to and practice of information literacy concepts in CORE 110 and CORE 210, they move into a level of learning where they create and produce new information as they write, present, and perform.

Student Learning Outcomes	Yr 1 (FY 12) AY 11-12	Yr 2 (FY 13) AY 12-13	Yr 3 (FY 14) AY 13-14	Yr 4 (FY 15) AY 14-15	Yr 5 (FY 16) AY 15-16
CREATE					
2.1 All students prepare, present, and assess effectiveness of scholarly and creative products.		COMS 211			
				Capstone Experiences	

Student Learning Outcome 2.1. Students create and produce new information through writing, presentation, and performance. More specifically, students will:

- Demonstrate effective use of information literacy skills through written and oral communication;
- Apply new and prior information to the planning and creation of a particular product or performance; and
- Demonstrate effective critical thinking as the student develops, produces and evaluates a product or performance.

COMS 211. A new course in the core curriculum, COMS 211: Foundations of Speech and Rhetoric introduces students to the development of public speaking knowledge, skills and attitudes through the integration of rhetorical theory, practice and analysis. The COMS 211 student-learning outcome states that all students will effectively conduct scholarly research for the rhetorical situation. This course in the beginning core curriculum lays the foundation for student research, scholarship, and creative work. This course is assessed within General Education and will not be a part of the assessment for Pursuit.

Capstone Experiences. ACU has a long history of Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC). All graduates of ACU successfully complete a course designated as a writing intensive course within their major. Following along the same tradition as WAC, the new general education curriculum and the QEP seek to develop capstone experiences in all majors. Many majors have a capstone course or experience as a part of graduation requirements already.
By the conclusion of the fall semester of 2013, all departments will have developed and submitted a capstone course or experience to the appropriate academic councils for approval. A student's capstone experience provides the final culminating experience for research literacy. [Guidelines for Capstone experiences may be found in Appendix VI.]

Assessment of *CREATE* Student Learning Outcome 2.1. All capstone experiences submit artifacts for assessment to a Team IV--Capstone Assessment Team. The Assessment Team works collaboratively to score all capstone artifacts by the *CREATE Rubric.* [Year 2 Pursuit Institute participants developed this rubric.]

Student Learning Outcomes—*CREATE* with faculty

Student learning outcomes spread throughout the core curriculum and into discipline-specific courses allow students to progress in their understanding of the importance of research, scholarship, and creative work within their chosen fields.

Student Learning Outcome 2.2 stresses the importance for students to partner with faculty to *CREATE* scholarly and creative products through faculty-guided projects. Not all students will have the interest or the time to work with a faculty member outside of the classroom to create or conduct original work, so in order to assist students in this time commitment, stipends and equipment and material funds are allocated through the *Pursuit* Grant. Grants from other areas of the campus are publicized on the ACU website and efforts are made to link all students who wish to conduct faculty mentored research, scholarship, or creative endeavor with a faculty member. More specifically, undergraduates who wish to work on a project with a faculty member will:

- Perform steps of a discipline specific project; and
- Draw sound conclusions from the results of the project in order to identify future directions.

Assessment of *CREATE* Student Learning Outcome 2.2. The Office of Undergraduate Research annually keeps records of student research on campus. All academic departments report the number and type of faculty-guided research and creative activity projects conducted on an annual basis. These data are reported in the Annual Assessment Cycle.

Student Learning Outcomes—*EXPRESS* research, scholarship, or creative work in a public setting

The primary goal of research is to add to the body of knowledge in a discipline. **Student Learning Outcome 3.1**, the apex of our student learning outcomes pyramid,

Student Learning Outcomes	Yr 1 (FY 12) AY 11-12	Yr 2 (FY 13) AY 12-13	Yr 3 (FY 14) AY 13-14	Yr 4 (FY 15) AY 14-15	Yr 5 (FY 16) AY 15-16
CREATE					
2.2 Students conduct faculty-guided original work relevant to the field of study.			***Pursuit* Research Grant, Undergraduate Research Summer Stipend, McNair Scholars, Alpha Chi**		

provides for the peer-reviewed, public dissemination of a student's research, scholarship, or creative work. [The pyramid can be found in Section 3-figure 3.1.] This can be accomplished on three levels: within the classroom, across the ACU campus, and external to ACU. Students will:
- Produce an independent scholarly and/or creative product;
- Demonstrate professionalism in the presentation of scholarly and creative

- product beyond the classroom; and
- Demonstrate professionalism in the presentation of original intellectual or creative contribution to the discipline (external to ACU).

Assessment of *EXPRESS* Student Learning Outcome 3.1. The same assessment will be used for Student Learning Outcome 2.2 and Student Learning Outcome 3.1. All academic departments report the number and type of faculty-guided research and creative activity projects conducted on an annual basis. These data are reported in the Annual Assessment Cycle

Professional Development for Faculty—QEP *Pursuit* Institute

Each May, after the spring semester has concluded, a *Pursuit Institute* will be conducted on campus in the Adams Center for Teaching and Learning. The Institute will consist of ten faculty members selected through an application process. During the institute, fellows will revise existing courses, design new courses, or work on as task as deemed necessary and vital to the implementation of Pursuit. Courses. New courses will be designated as **keystone courses** in an effort to provide support and encouragement for faculty and students. Keystone courses will add an additional information link between QEP learning outcomes in CORE 110 to the capstone experience in the junior or senior year.

Faculty participants in the Institute will work to include activities that develop QEP student learning outcomes and assessments of those outcomes in a course. Adams Center faculty development staff work with fellows to complete course application forms to send through the appropriate academic councils when the course is ready.

Support Services for Faculty—Director of Undergraduate Research

Each year the Director of Undergraduate Research works with a large group of faculty to provide an avenue for students to present their research and creative projects in a public venue. This annual event is entitled the Undergraduate Research Festival. It is anticipated that as more and more students are affected by the learning outcomes of Pursuit, that the numbers of students who make oral or poster presentations will increase. It is also anticipated that the quality for those presentations will increase. In order to assist in the increased number of participants, *Pursuit* will provide a .25 FTE reduction in load for the director.

Support Services for Students and Faculty—QEP *Pursuit* Research Grants

QEP *Pursuit Research Grants* provide incentives and funding for faculty and

Student Learning Outcomes	Yr 1 (FY 12) AY 11-12	Yr 2 (FY 13) AY 12-13	Yr 3 (FY 14) AY 13-14	Yr 4 (FY 15) AY 14-15	Yr 5 (FY 16) AY 15-16
EXPRESS					
3.1 Students publicly disseminate independent scholarly and creative work.			Undergraduate Research Festival		

students to work together on research projects beginning in Year 1 of *Pursuit*. Grant funding requires the projects to include students and faculty working together on research, scholarship, or creative projects. Information for the grants and applications will be found on the QEP Blog and on the ACU webpage under the Research tab.

Faculty. The competitive application process provides up to $5,000 funding for each faculty member. Funding may be used for stipends, for student stipends, for travel, or for expenses related to research or creative activities with students. These grants are awarded on a competitive application basis, much like ACU's Cullen and Math/Science Grants, beginning in Year 1. Final award payments to faculty are made when Student Research Journals, Student Assessment of Project Reports, Final Budget Reports, and Faculty Assessment of Project Reports are submitted.

Students. During the grant project year, students may earn $1,000/semester for research or creative work with a faculty mentor. This funding is in addition to the faculty funding described. Faculty members may apply to receive funding for student researchers up to $2000 for one academic year ($1000/semester). A maximum of four student researchers will receive funding from any one department. Final award payments to students are made when Research Activity Journals, Research Project and Student Self-Assessment Reports are submitted. Stipend amounts can vary depending upon how many students are working with the faculty mentor and are dependent upon decisions made by the faculty in charge of the project.

Project Expenses. $1,000 is allocated for research or project expenses for use by the faculty or student researchers.

Support Services for Students and Faculty—Travel

Beginning in Year 2, faculty and students traveling to conferences to make presentations regarding their scholarly or creative products may apply for funding to offset travel expenses. A total of $10,000 for faculty members and a total of $10,000 for students are allocated in the budget. The *Pursuit* Team will consider funding proportional to costs of travel and make recommendations to the Research Council for final approval. Priority is given for travel to international and national conferences.

SUMMARY

Actions for implementation of the selected learning outcomes have been carefully considered and analyzed in context of the mission and the strategic plan of the University. Each of the actions has been examined from multiple perspectives to insure the impact of the *Pursuit* QEP on students, faculty and staff is realistic and yet manageable and sustainable.

SAILS Summary Comparison—Year 5
CORE 110 (Fall 2012) vs
Capstone (2015-2016)

In 2011-2012, Abilene Christian University (ACU) began its implementation of *Pursuit,* the Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP). The plan envisioned three specific, well-defined curricular goals, each clearly articulated in student learning outcomes. The first student-learning outcome is "Students will understand and appropriately use scholarly sources." More specifically, students will:
1. Determine the nature and extent of the information needed,
2. Access needed information effectively and efficiently, and
3. Use information ethically and legally.

In order to assess student progress at achieving these outcomes, the Standardized Assessment of Information Literacy Skills (SAILS) was given to students enrolled in CORE 110 (Cornerstone) during the first three weeks of class and then repeated during the senior capstone course. Scores for students entering in fall 2012 were compared to the scores of students enrolled in Capstone experiences during the fall and spring of 2015-2016. Overall scores, standard error, and true group average scores for each year are compared on the next two pages. In addition to a comparison between the groups, scores for ACU, scores for institutions of the same type (Masters), and scores for all institutions are provided for comparisons.

Initially, students entering in fall 2012 performed *about the same as* the Institution Type benchmark on 4 skills sets, and *worse than* the institution type on the remaining 4 skills sets. After 3 years, comparison data shows the following results:
- Overall scores have increased significantly.
- Standard errors have decreased, showing student scores have less variability and are performing more consistently on the SAILS skills sets.
- Capstone students at Abilene Christian University performed *BETTER THAN* the institution-type benchmark on ALL SAILS Skills Sets, including the following:
  - Developing a Research Strategy
  - Selecting Finding Tools
  - Searching
  - Using Finding Tool Features
  - Retrieving Sources
  - Evaluating Sources
  - Documenting Sources
  - Understanding Economic, Legal, and Social Issues.
- This group of entering students in CORE 110 in fall 2012 did NOT perform better than the Institution-type benchmark on ANY skill set.

SAILS Summary Data— Cornerstone Fall 2012

Detailed results from Fall 2012 SAILS Skills Sets results and alignment with *Pursuit* objectives are found below:

Fall 2012		Abilene Christian University n=695**	Institution Type: Masters n=26,703	All Institutions n=66,882
Pursuit Objective	**SAILS Skill Sets***			
1.1.A	1. Developing a Research Strategy	494 ± 4 (490, 498)	503 + 1 (502, 504)	502 + 0
	2. Selecting Finding Tools	498 ± 5 (493, 503)	507 + 1 (506, 508)	504 + 1 503, 505)
	3. Searching	464 ± 4 (460, 468)	484 + 1 (483, 485)	484 + 0
	4. Using Finding Tool Features	506 ± 6 (500, 512)	530 + 1 (529, 531)	531 + 1 530, 532)
1.1.B	5. Retrieving Sources	488 ± 6 (482, 494)	518 + 1 (517, 519)	518 + 1 (517, 519)
	6. Evaluating Sources	473 ± 5 (468, 478)	481 + 1 (480, 482)	477 + 0
1.1.C	7. Documenting Sources	444 ± 6 (438, 450)	473 + 1 (472, 474)	474 + 1 (473, 475)
	8. Understanding Economic, Legal, and Social Issues	448 ± 5 (443, 453)	466 + 1 (465, 467)	464 + 0

*The Standardized Assessment of Information Literacy Skills (SAILS) is a knowledge test with multiple-choice questions targeting a variety of information literacy skills. Questions on the SAILS test are based directly on two documents authored by the Association of College and Research Libraries. Project SAILS is located at Kent State University in Ohio.
** 695 Students completed the test out of 961 students enrolled in CORE 110.

SAILS Summary Data— Capstone 2015-2016

Detailed results from students enrolled in Capstone during Fall 2014 and Spring 2015. SAILS Skills Sets results and alignment with *Pursuit* objectives are found below:

2015-2016	SAILS Skill Sets*	Abilene Christian University n=346**	Institution Type: Masters n=26,020	All Institutions n=62,246
Pursuit Objective	**Overall Scores, Standard Error, and True Group Average Score**			
1.1.A	1. Developing a Research Strategy	549 ± 6 (543, 555)	511 + 1 (510, 512)	510 + 0
	2. Selecting Finding Tools	560 ± 7 (553, 567)	515 + 1 (514, 516)	509 + 1 (508, 510)
	3. Searching	532 ± 6 (526, 538)	493 + 0	489 + 0
	4. Using Finding Tool Features	555 ± 8 (547, 563)	535 + 1 (534, 536)	528 + 1 (527, 529)
1.1.B	5. Retrieving Sources	566 ± 8 (558, 574)	523 + 1 (522, 524)	518 + 1 (517, 519)
	6. Evaluating Sources	518 ± 7 (511, 525)	477 + 1 (476, 478)	474 + 0
1.1.C	7. Documenting Sources	540 ± 8 (532, 548)	492 + 1 (491, 493)	480 + 1 (479, 481)
	8. Understanding Economic, Legal, and Social Issues	519 ± 7 (512, 526)	475 + 1 (474, 476)	471 + 1 (470, 472)

*The Standardized Assessment of Information Literacy Skills (SAILS) is a knowledge test with multiple-choice questions targeting a variety of information literacy skills. Questions on the SAILS test are based directly on two documents authored by the Association of College and Research Libraries. Project SAILS is located at Kent State University in Ohio.

** 346 students completed the test out of 880 students enrolled in Capstone courses.

CORE 110 Assessment
2015-16 Report

Dr. Phyllis Bolin
Dr. Laura Carroll

Background

In order to assess outcomes 1.1.A[1], 1.1.B[2], and 1.1.C[3] from the QEP document, the Cornerstone (CORE 110) research artifact – annotated bibliography -- was collected. From a set of 1082 students, 1046 papers were collected (97%). A simple random sample was used to select 90 papers for assessment.

The same assessment team met for the fifth year and consisted of 5 faculty members from across the university – Dr. Stephen Baldridge (Social Work), Dr. Laura Carroll, (Language and Literature), Dr. Houston Heflin (Bible, Missions, and Ministry), Dr. Susan Lewis (Vice Provost), Dawne Swearingen Meeks (Theatre) – who have agreed to serve for 5 years.

Results

Outcome 1.1.A

The QEP report calls for an **acceptable target** of 70% of samples scoring 2.5 or higher, and an **ideal target** of 80% of samples scoring 2.5 or higher. In 2015-16, 74.4% of samples scored 2.5 or higher; t**he acceptable target for 1.1.A was met this year.**

	Obj. 1.1.A	**CORE 110**	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
ONE	Determine Information Needed	Score > 2.5	61%	56%	61.1%	84.8%	74.4%
		Acceptable Target (70%)	Not met	Not met	Not met	MET	MET
		Ideal Target (80%)	Not met	Not met	Not met	MET	Not met
		Average of all samples	2.45	2.55	2.69	2.96	2.87

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[1] Students will determine the nature and extent of the information needed.
[2] Access the needed information effectively and efficiently
[3] Students will use information ethically and legally.

Outcome 1.1.B

The QEP report calls for an **acceptable target** of 70% of samples scoring 2.5 or higher, and an **ideal target** of 80% of samples scoring 2.5 or higher. In 2015-16 81.1% of samples scored 2.5 or higher; **the ideal target for 1.1.B was met this year.**

	Obj. 1.1.B	**CORE 110**	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
TWO	Access and and Use Information	Score > 2.5	No assessment	67%	70.5%	84.8%	81.1%
		Acceptable Target (70%)	No assessment	Minimally Met	MET	MET	MET
		Ideal Target (80%)	No assessment	Not met	Not met	MET	MET
		Average of all samples	No assessment	2.52	2.62	2.89	2.77

Outcome 1.1.C

The QEP report calls for an **acceptable target** of 70% of samples scoring 2.5 or higher, and an **ideal target** of 80% of samples scoring 2.5 or higher. In 2015-16, 91.1% of samples scored 2.5 or higher; **the ideal target for 1.1.C was met this year.**

	Obj. 1.1.C	**CORE 110**	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
THREE	Information Use Strategies	Score > 2.5	40%	55%	80%	90.9%	91.1%
		Acceptable Target (70%)	Not met	Not met	MET	MET	MET
		Ideal Target (80%)	Not met	Not met	MET	MET	MET
		Average of all samples	2.01	2.49	2.82	3.04	3.06

Composite

The composite score, while not prescribed in the original QEP, was calculated to provide an overview of the Cornerstone assessment. To be consistent with the language for individual outcomes, CORE 210, and BCOR 310, an **acceptable target** of 70% of samples scoring 7.5 or higher and an **ideal target** of 80% of samples.

	Obj. 1.1	CORE 110	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
COMPOSITE		Score > 7.5	56% (5)	50.51%	66.32%	83.8%	80%
		Acceptable Target (70%)	Not met	Not met	Minimally met	MET	MET
		Ideal Target (80%)	Not met	Not met	Not met	MET	MET
		Average of all samples	3.76 (5)	7.72	8.121	8.89	8.7

Recommendations and Findings

The CORE 110 assignment, rubric and assessment are working well to teach and assess students' understandings of information literacy. Over five years, we have worked to (1) revise the assignment, (2) refine the rubric, and (3) train teachers.

As a result, we have met the acceptable targets and ideal targets on 1.1.B and 1.1.

During 2015-2016, school year the professional development sessions were not held, and, in addition, there were numerous first-time CORE 110 teachers, possibly accounting for lower scores. A session is already scheduled during Fall 2016, where the assessment team will focus on helping students:

    a.   Address target audience in the introduction to the bibliography.
    b.   Refine and revise their research question based on their findings.

In 2016, MLA published their 8th edition style guide, which considerably revises citation styles. The next few years of assessment may result in lower scores as students and faculty transition between the editions.

In the past, the assessment team has emphasized the following reminders to the faculty:

a. Implement consistent formatting for the document across all sections
b. Understand correct MLA citation.
c. Address target audience in the introduction to the bibliography.
d. Refine and revise their research question based on their findings
e. Insure the students address questions rather than arguments.
f. Distinguish between social sciences and humanities.
g. Prohibit using the Bible as a source.

It is suggested by the assessment team to continue with the emphasis from previous years, but to focus on the following main ideas:

1. Address the target audience in the introduction to the bibliography.
2. Refine and revise the research question based on the findings.

Commendations

Faculty have done an excellent job in teaching the students the characteristics of an annotated bibliography. Scores each year have increased, showing learning outcomes are being met. In addition, the embedded librarians have been a great help to faculty as the students develop the information literacy skills. It is believed that the embedded librarians give first-year students a connection to a librarian that may continue through the student's years at ACU.

EXPLORE I Rubric—for use in CORE 110
Annotated Bibliography

Student Learning Outcome 1.1. Students will understand and appropriately use scholarly sources.

Rubric Items		Exemplary (4)	Competent (3)	Emerging (2)	Unacceptable (1)	Score
ONE	**Determine the nature and the extent of information needed** *Obj 1.1.A*	Effectively defines and narrows the scope of the research question/topic.	Defines the scope of the research question/topic completely.	Defines the scope of the research question/topic or incompletely (parts are missing, remains too broad or too narrow, etc.).	Has difficulty defining the scope of the research question/topic.	
		Types of information (sources) selected directly relate to concepts or answer research questions.	Types of information (sources) selected relate to concepts or answer research question.	Types of information (sources) selected partially relate to concepts or answer research questions.	Types of information (sources) selected do not relate to concepts or answer research questions.	
TWO	**Access the needed information effectively and efficiently** *Obj 1.1.B*	Citations represent various scholarly or academic sources All cited resources come from reliable sources All resources are appropriate for the target audience.	Most citations represent scholarly or academic sources Most cited resources come from reliable sources Most resources are appropriate for the target audience	Citations represent a limited range of scholarly or academic sources Some cited resources come from reliable sources Some resources are appropriate for the target audience	Citations are from only one scholarly or academic source Few cited resources come from reliable sources Few resources are appropriate for the target audience.	
THREE	**Access and use information ethically and legally (information use strategies)** *Obj 1.1.C*	Citations and references are correct MLA citation style.	Citations and references are MLA style with few errors.	Citations and references are consistent, but aren't MLA style.	Citations and references do not resemble a citation style.	
		Paraphrase, summary, or quotes in ways that are true to original context.	Paraphrase, summary, or quotes are close to the original context, but not rely too heavily on quoting or have too little summary.	Paraphrase, summary, or quotes are too broad to reflect the original content.	Annotations are absent or do not reflect content of the article.	

CORE 210 Assessment – 2015-16 Report

Dr. Phyllis Bolin
Dr. Brenda Bender

Background

In order to assess outcomes 1.1A[1], 1.1B[2], 1.1C[3], 1.2A[4], 1.2B[5], 1.3A[6], and 1.3B[7] from the QEP document, the CORE 210 research artifact was collected. From a set of 733 enrolled students, 692 papers were collected (94.4%). A random sample of 60 papers was selected from CORE 210 sections delivered in fall 2015 and spring 2016.

The assessment team consisted of 4 of the same faculty members from the previous year – Dr. Brenda Bender (Communication Disorders), Dr. Joshua Brokaw, (Biology), Mr. J. Scott Self (Alpha Academic Services), Dr. Jeanine Varner (Language and Literature). Dr. Jason Holland (Mathematics) left the university at the end of the 2015 academic year. No replacement was made for his place on the assessment team.

Each paper was rated by 2 members of the assessment team. The scores from rater 1 and rater 2 were averaged for each SLO for each paper in the sample. These averages scores were used to calculate the total average score for each SLO, the number of papers meeting the acceptable target and the composite scores. Composite scores were calculated by adding the rubric scores for each SLO (e.g., 1.1.A + 1.1.B + 1.1.C). Percentages of papers meeting acceptable target scores were calculated by dividing by the number of papers in the sample.

SLOs assessed in 2015-2016:
[1] Students will determine the nature and extent of the information needed.
[2] Students will access the needed information effectively and efficiently.
[3] Students will use information ethically and legally.
[4] Student will describe theories or perspectives relevant to a particular case or problem.
[5] Students will describe findings and interpretations relevant to a particular case or problem.
[6] Students will evaluate information and its sources critically.
[7] Students will use information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose.

Results

SLO 1.1.A
The QEP report calls for an **acceptable target** of 70% of samples scoring 2.5 or higher and an **ideal target** of 80% of samples scoring 2.5 or higher for this rubric item. In 2015-16, 85% of sampled papers received a rubric rating of 2.5 or higher; meeting both the acceptable target and the ideal target for this SLO. A comparison with 2014-15 data indicates a substantive increase in this SLO for this year.

	Obj. 1.1.A	CORE 210	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
ONE	Determine Information Needed	Score > 2.5	63.6%	75.0%	74.67%	85%
		Acceptable Target (70%)	Approaching	Met	Met	Met
		Ideal Target (80%)	Not met	Approaching	Approaching	Met
		Average of all samples	2.67	2.63	2.71	2.85

SLO 1.1.B
The QEP report calls for an **acceptable target** of 70% of samples scoring 2.5 or higher and an **ideal target** of 80% of samples scoring 2.5 or higher for this rubric item. In 2015-16, 78.33% of sampled papers received a rubric rating of 2.5 or higher; meeting the acceptable target score and approaching the ideal target score for this SLO. A comparison with 2014-15 data indicates a modest but significant increase for this year.

	Obj. 1.1.B	CORE 210	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
TWO	Access and Use Information	Score > 2.5	No assessment	61.7%	72%	78.33%
		Acceptable Target (70%)	No assessment	Approaching	Met	Met
		Ideal Target (80%)	No assessment	Not met	Not met	Approaching
		Average of all samples	No assessment	2.45	2.59	2.76

SLO 1.1.C
The QEP report calls for an **acceptable target** of 70% of samples scoring 2.5 or higher and an **ideal target** of 80% of samples scoring 2.5 or higher for this rubric item. In 2015-16, 66.67% of sampled papers received a rubric rating of 2.5 or higher; thus approaching the acceptable target score and not meeting the ideal target for this SLO. A comparison with 2014-15 data indicates no increase in this SLO score for this year.

	Obj. 1.1.C	CORE 210	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
THREE	Information Use Strategies	Score > 2.5	70.5%	61.7%	66.67%	66.67%
		Acceptable Target (70%)	MET	Approaching	Approaching	Approaching
		Ideal Target (80%)	Not met	Not met	Not met	Not met
		Average of all samples	2.63	2.5	2.66	2.65

SLO 1.1 Composite
The QEP report calls for a composite score for 7.5 for SLOs ONE, TWO and THREE. An **acceptable target** of 70% of samples scoring 7.5 or higher and an **ideal target** of 80% of samples scoring 7.5 or higher. In 2015-16, 65% of sampled papers received a rubric rating of 7.5 or higher approaching the acceptable target score for this SLO. A comparison with 2014-15 data indicates a slight increase for this year.

	Obj. 1.1	CORE 210	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
COMPOSITE		Total > 7.5	63.6% (total >5.0)	60.0%	62.67%	65%
		Acceptable Target (70%)	Approaching	Not met	Approaching	Approaching
		Ideal Target (80%)	Not met	Not met	Not met	Not met
		Average of all samples	5.29 (total >5.0)	7.59	7.96	8.27

SLO 1.2.A
The QEP report calls for an **acceptable target** of 70% of samples scoring 2.5 or higher and an **ideal target** of 80% of samples scoring 2.5 or higher. In 2015-16, 76.67% of sampled papers received a rubric rating of 2.5 or higher. The acceptable target score was met; approaching the ideal target score. A comparison with 2014-15 data indicates a substantive increase for this year.

	Obj. 1.2.A	CORE 210	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
FOUR	Describe Relevant Theories	Score > 2.5	63.6%	41.7%	62.67%	76.67%
		Acceptable Target (70%)	Approaching	Not met	Approaching	Met
		Ideal Target (80%)	Not met	Not met	Not met	Approaching
		Average of all samples	2.5	2.16	2.54	2.67

SLO 1.2.B
The QEP report calls for an **acceptable target** of 70% of samples scoring 2.5 or higher and an **ideal target** of 80% of samples scoring 2.5 or higher. In 2015-16, 58.33% of sampled papers received a rubric rating of 2.5 or higher. Neither the acceptable target score nor the ideal target score were met for this SLO. A comparison with 2014-15 data indicates no significant increase in this SLO for this year.

	Obj. 1.2.B	CORE 210	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
FIVE	Analysis Applied to Situation	Score > 2.5	63.6%	48.3%	57.33%	58.33%
		Acceptable Target (70%)	Approaching	Not met	Not met	Not met
		Ideal Target (80%)	Not met	Not met	Not met	Not met
		Average of all samples	2.53	2.27	2.41	2.39

SLO 1.2 Composite

The QEP report calls for a composite score for 5.0 for SLOs FOUR and FIVE. An **acceptable target** of 70% of samples scoring 5.0 or higher and an **ideal target** of 80% of samples scoring 5.0 or higher. In 2015-16, 58.33% of sampled papers received a rubric rating of 5.0 or higher. Neither the acceptable target score nor the ideal target score were met for this SLO. A comparison with 2014-15 data indicates no significant increase in this SLO for this year.

	Obj. 1.2	**CORE 210**	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
COMPOSITE		Total > 5.0	59.1%	36.7%	56%	58.33%
		Acceptable Target (70%)	Not Met	Not met	Not met	Not Met
		Ideal Target (80%)	Not met	Not met	Not met	Not met
		Average of all samples	5.03	4.44	4.96	5.05

SLO 1.3.A

The QEP report calls for an **acceptable target** of 70% of samples scoring 2.5 or higher and an **ideal target** of 80% of samples scoring 2.5 or higher. In 2015-16, 65% of sampled papers received a rubric rating of 2.5 or higher; approaching the acceptable target score for this SLO. The ideal target score was not met. A comparison with 2014-15 data indicates a substantive increase for this year.

	Obj. 1.3.A	**CORE 210**	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
SIX	Evaluate Information	Score > 2.5	50%	40%	57.33%	65%
		Acceptable Target (70%)	Not met	Not met	Not met	Approaching
		Ideal Target (80%)	Not met	Not met	Not met	Not met
		Average of all samples	2.27	2.15	2.36	2.39

SLO 1.3.B
The QEP report calls for an **acceptable target** of 70% of samples scoring 2.5 or higher and an **ideal target** of 80% of samples scoring 2.5 or higher. In 2015-16, 66.67% of sampled papers received a rubric rating of 2.5 or higher; approaching the acceptable target score and not meeting the ideal target score. A comparison with 2014-15 data indicates a slight drop in this SLO for this year.

	Obj. 1.3B	CORE 210	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
SEVEN	Use Information for a Purpose	Score > 2.5	65.9%	55.0%	70.67%	66.67%
		Acceptable Target (70%)	Minimally Met	Not met	Met	Approaching
		Ideal Target (80%)	Not met	Not met	Not met	Not Met
		Average of all samples	2.67	2.4	2.54	2.52

SLO 1.3 Composite
The QEP report calls for a composite score for 5.0 for SLOs SIX and SEVEN. An **acceptable target** of 70% of samples scoring 5.0 or higher and an **ideal target** of 80% of samples scoring 5.0 or higher. In 2015-16, 58.33% of sampled papers received a rubric rating of 5.0 or higher. Neither the acceptable target score nor the ideal target score were met for this SLO. A comparison with 2014-15 data indicates no significant increase in this SLO for this year.

	Obj. 1.3	CORE 210	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
COMPOSITE		Total > 5.0	50%	43%	57.33%	58.33%
		Acceptable Target (70%)	Not met	Not met	Not met	Not Met
		Ideal Target (80%)	Not met	Not met	Not met	Not met
		Average of all samples	4.94	4.55	4.91	4.99

Observations:

The data indicate:

- Students are approaching the acceptable target criteria for SLO 1.1; determining the nature and extent of the information needed, accessing the needed information effectively and efficiently, and using information ethically and legally.

  - The data demonstrate significant growth in Obj. 1.1.A. student knowledge of determining the need for information and Obj. 1.1.B. accessing and citing sources over the past year with absolute increases of 10% and 6% respectively.

  - The data also demonstrate continued difficulties with Obj. 1.1.C. using information ethically and legally. Papers exhibit lack of citations or missing information when citing sources in the text.

- Students are approaching the acceptable target criteria for SLO 1.2; describing theories or perspectives relevant to a particular case or problem and describing findings and interpretations relevant to a particular case or problem.

  - The data demonstrate students are meeting criteria for Obj. 1.2.A. – describing theories or perspectives relevant to a particular case or problem. In addition, the data is approaching the ideal target of 80% of criteria.

  - The data continues to demonstrate students' struggle with Obj. 1.2.B. describing findings and interpretations relevant to a particular case or problem – a minimal absolute but insignificant increase was noted in this objective.

  - The availability of the writing prompts to the assessment team again this year provided context to the team to determine the expectations of the paper when applying the scoring rubric.

- Students are not meeting the acceptable target criteria for SLO 1.3; evaluating information and its sources critically and using information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose.

  - The data demonstrate students are approaching the target criteria for Obj. 1.3.A. with an absolute increase of 8% from the previous year.

  - The data demonstrate a small decrease in Obj. 1.3.B. indicating students are not fully achieving the purpose of the writing assignment.

The Assessment Team had access to the writing prompts from the sections of CORE 210 taught in the fall and spring which was extremely helpful in determining how well the paper met the expectations for the assignment.

Commendations:

1. Thesis statements were readily identifiable in most papers. This is noted in the improvements for SLO 1.1; obj. A and B. CORE 210 faculty are clearly assisting students in shaping thesis statements to clearly define the scope of the topic.

2. In addition, several writing prompts were very detailed which assisted the team in understanding the expectations of the paper when applying the rubric.

3. The papers assessed this year made significant improvements in describing the theories or perspectives relevant to the thesis statement and interpreting the findings to support the thesis statement [SLO 1.2, obj. A] with a 14%absolute increase over the previous year. This is another area for commendation to the CORE 210 faculty for using detailed writing prompts, breaking the writing process into steps and using peer review.

4. Continued growth was seen in SLO 1.3 – analyzing and interpreting information and effectively accomplishing a specific purpose. An 8% absolute increase was noted in Obj. 1.3.A. - analyzing and interpreting information. The CORE 210 faculty is to be commended for expanding the writing prompts to specify the student should present at least one counter-argument to their thesis. In many cases, this inclusion provided a richer written product which accomplished the purpose of the writing assignment.

Other comments:
Changes to the scoring rubric enabled the assessment team to better assess the number of sources and use of cited sources in the papers. This, coupled with the availability of the writing prompts allowed the team to more reliably score the selected papers.

SLO 1.1. Students will understand and appropriately use scholarly sources.

Rubric Item		Exemplary (4)	Competent (3)	Emerging (2)	Unacceptable (1)	Score
ONE	**Determine the nature and the extent of information needed** *Obj 1.1.A*	Effectively defines and narrows the scope of the research question/topic.	Defines the scope of the research question/topic completely.	Defines the scope of the research question/topic or incompletely (parts are missing, remains too broad or too narrow, etc.).	Has difficulty defining the scope of the research question/topic. .	
		Types of information (sources) selected directly relate to concepts or answer research questions.	Types of information (sources) selected relate to concepts or answer research question.	Types of information (sources) selected partially relate to concepts or answer research questions.	Types of information (sources) selected do not relate to concepts or answer research questions	
TWO	**Access the needed information effectively and efficiently** *O1.1.B*	Citations represent various scholarly or academic sources. Cited resources are used appropriately. All resources are appropriate for the target audience.	Most (more than half) citations represent scholarly or academic sources. Most (more than half) cited resources come from reliable sources. Most (more than half) resources are appropriate for the target audience.	Citations represent a limited range of scholarly or academic sources. Some (three or more) cited resources come from reliable sources. Some (three or more) resources are appropriate for the target audience.	Citations are from only one scholarly or academic source. Few (two or fewer) cited resources come from reliable sources. Few (two or fewer) resources are appropriate for the target audience.	
THREE	**Access and use information ethically and legally (information use strategies)** *Obj 1.1.C*	Citations and references are correct APA or MLA citation style.	Citations and references are APA or MLA style with few errors.	Citations and references are consistent, but aren't APA or MLA style.	Citations and references do not resemble a citation style.	
		Paraphrases, summarizes, or quotes in ways that are true to original context.	Paraphrases, summarizes, or quotes are close to the original context, but does not rely too heavily on quoting or have too little summary.	Papers relied too heavily on quotes. Paraphrases, summaries, or quotes are too broad to reflect the original content.	Annotations are absent or do not reflect content of the article	

SLO 1.2. Students will integrate knowledge to frame researchable questions and to develop strategies to seek answers.

	Rubric Item	Exemplary (4)	Competent (3)	Emerging (2)	Unacceptable (1)	Score
FOUR	Describe theories or perspectives relevant to the thesis *Obj 1.2.A*	Theories and perspectives are thoroughly described and relevance to the thesis is discussed, recognizing the strengths and limitations of each theory.	Theories and perspectives are identified and adequate description of relevance to the thesis is provided.	Several theories and perspectives are identified with limited description of thesis provided.	Some theories and perspectives are described but are not all relevant to the thesis. Not all relevant theories and perspectives are identified and described.	
FIVE	Interpretations are applied relevant to a thesis. *Obj 1.2.B*	Analysis/interpretations are thoroughly described using formal academic writing. Interpretations are applied to the thesis and extensions are made to other relevant connections.*	Analysis/interpretations are presented and described using formal academic writing. Interpretations are clearly connected to the thesis. *	Analysis/interpretations using formal academic writing are presented and summarized. May lack some formal academic writing. Interpretation of how findings are relevant to the thesis. *	Analysis/interpretations are presented in limited terms. Lacks formal academic writing. Little to no interpretation of how findings are relevant to the thesis. *	

SLO 1.3. Students will analyze, interpret, and/or evaluate information and make and implement research-informed decisions.

	Rubric Item	Exemplary (4)	Competent (3)	Emerging (2)	Unacceptable (1)	Score
SIX	Evaluate information and its sources critically *Obj 1.3.A*	Carefully evaluates the relevance of contexts when presenting a position.	Identifies own and others' assumptions or biases and several relevant contexts when presenting a position.	Questions some assumptions or biases. Identifies several relevant contexts when presenting a position. May be more aware of others' assumptions or biases than one's own (or vice versa).	Shows a developing awareness of present assumptions or biases (sometimes labels assertions as assumptions or biases). Begins to identify some contexts when presenting a position.	
SEVEN	Use info effectively to accomplish a specific purpose *Obj 1.3.B*	Communicates, organizes, and synthesizes information from sources to fully achieve a specific purpose, with clarity and depth.	Communicates, organizes, and synthesizes information from sources. Intended purpose is achieved.	Communicates and organizes information from sources. The information is not yet synthesized, so the intended purpose is not fully achieved.	Communicates info from sources. The info is fragmented and /or used inappropriately (misquoted, taken out of context, or incorrectly paraphrased, etc.); purpose not achieved.	

*Formal academic writing or professional language varies with the profession. In some professions, use of a personal pronoun is unprofessional. The assessment teams will not consider the use of a personal pronoun unprofessional. Formal academic writing does not include contractions or colloquialisms and is clear and concise.

Assessment teams will use the prompts submittted by faculty to clarify the definition of formal academic writing for each class.

BCOR 310 Assessment Report 2015-2016

Dr. Phyllis Bolin
Dr. Sarah Lee

Background

This report describes the results from the third year of 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.

From a set of 604 students, 571 papers were collected (94.5%) from the 12 sections of BCOR taught in the fall 2015 and spring 2016 semesters. A random sample of 60 papers from those 571 papers was assessed after the spring 2016 semester (10.5%).

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), Dr. Lynette Austin (Communication Sciences and Disorders), and Dr. Monty Lynn (Management Sciences).

Two members of the assessment team rated each paper in the following categories: exemplary (which has a numerical score of 4), competent (numerical score of 3), emerging (numerical score of 2), or unacceptable (numerical score of 1). 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 (2015-2016):

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.

Obj. 1.1.A	BCOR310	Year 3: 2013-2014	Year 4: 2014-2015	Year 5: 2015-2016
ONE / Determine Information Needed	Score ≥ 2.5	**36.7%**	**65.9%**	**61.7%**
	Acceptable Target (73%)	Not met	Approaching	Not met
	Ideal Target (85%)	Not met	Not met	Not met
	Average of all samples	2.18	2.55	2.48

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 2015-2016 school year, 61.7% of sampled papers received a rubric rating of 2.5 or higher; thus **falling short of the acceptable target** for this SLO objective. However, there is a slight drop from the scores reported for Year 4 (2014-2015) assessment, during which 65.9% of papers scored at or above a 2.5 on this objective.

SLO Objective 1.1.B--Students will access the needed information effectively and efficiently.

Obj. 1.1.B	BCOR310	Year 3: 2013-2014	Year 4: 2014-2015	Year 5: 2015-2016
TWO / **Access and Use Information**	Score ≥ 2.5	**43.3%**	**68.2%**	**58.3%**
	Acceptable Target (73%)	Not met	Approaching	Not met
	Ideal Target (85%)	Not met	Not met	Not met
	Average of all samples	2.05	2.58	2.48

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 Year 5, 58.3% of sampled papers received a rubric rating of 2.5 or higher. Therefore, the sampled papers **fell short of the acceptable target** of 73%. Despite falling short of the acceptable target, there is an encouraging increase in the percentage of papers with a score of 2.5 or above in comparison to the Year 3 (2013-2014) data. Similar to Objective 1.1A, the Year 5 data fell short of the results for Year 4. This trend is more noticeable in Objective 1.1B than 1.1A.

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

	Obj. 1.1.C	BCOR310	Year 3: 2013-2014	Year 4: 2014-2015	Year 5: 2015-2016
THREE		Score ≥ 2.5	**55.0%**	**69.7%**	**87.5%**
	Information Use Strategies	Acceptable Target (73%)	Not met	Approaching	Exceeded
		Ideal Target (85%)	Not met	Not met	Exceeded
		Average of all samples	2.42	2.51	2.76

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 Year 5 assessment, 87.5% of sampled papers received a rubric rating of 2.5 or higher; **exceeding both the acceptable and ideal targets**. Year 5 is the first year that scores exceeded the ideal target in any rubric item.

SLO 1.1 Composite---Objective 1.1A + 1.1B + 1.1C

	BCOR310	Year 3: 2013-2014	Year 4: 2014-2015	Year 5: 2015-2016
COMPOSITE SLO 1.1	Total ≥ 7.5	**37.0%**	**56.1%**	**58.3%**
	Acceptable Target (73%)	Not met	Not met	Not met
	Ideal Target (85%)	Not met	Not met	Not met
	Average of all samples	2.22	2.55	2.58

SLO 1.1 calls for students to understand and appropriately use scholarly sources. The SLO is broken down into 3 objectives, 1.1A, 1.1B, and 1.1C, 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 Year 5, 58.3% of sampled papers received a composite score of 7.5 or higher. While this falls short of the acceptable target, this composite **score has increased each assessment year,** and shows a considerable increase from the first year of assessment (Year 3).

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

	Obj. 1.2.A	BCOR310	Year 3: 2013-2014	Year 4: 2014-2015	Year 5: 2015-2016
FOUR	Describe Relevant Theories	Score ≥ 2.5	**51.7%**	**53%**	**46.7%**
		Acceptable Target (73%)	Not met	Not met	Not met
		Ideal Target (85%)	Not met	Not met	Not met
		Average of all samples	2.28	2.30	2.23

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 2015-2016 school year, 46.7% of sampled papers received a rubric score of 2.5 or higher, **not meeting the acceptable target** of 73%.

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

	Obj. 1.2.B	BCOR310	Year 3: 2013-2014	Year 4: 2014-2015	Year 5: 2015-2016
FIVE	Analysis Applied to Situation	Score ≥ 2.5	**51.7%**	**51.5%**	**65%**
		Acceptable Target (73%)	Not met	Not met	Not met
		Ideal Target (85%)	Not met	Not met	Not met
		Average of all samples	2.34	2.30	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. In Year 5 of assessment, 65% of sampled papers received a rubric score of 2.5 or higher, **not meeting the acceptable target** of 73%. While the target was not met, we did observe a substantial increase in papers scoring ≥2.5 compared to Year 3 and Year 4.

SLO 1.2 Composite--Objective 1.2A + 1.2B

	BCOR310	Year 3: 2013-2014	Year 4: 2014-2015	Year 5: 2015-2016
COMPOSITE SLO 1.2	Total ≥ 5.0	**45.0%**	**42.4%**	**48.3%**
	Acceptable Target (73%)	Not met	Not met	Not met
	Ideal Target (85%)	Not met	Not met	Not met
	Average of all samples	2.31	2.30	2.28

SLO 1.2 calls for students to integrate knowledge to frame researchable questions and to develop strategies to seek answers. The SLO is broken down into 2 objectives, 1.2A and 1.2B, 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 Year 5, 48.3% of sampled papers received a composite score of 5.0 or higher. While the **acceptable target was not met**, we did observe a greater percentage of papers reaching a composite score of 5.0 or above this year compared to the last two years of assessment.

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

	Obj. 1.3.A	**BCOR310**	**Year 3:** 2013-2014	**Year 4:** 2014-2015	**Year 5:** 2015-2016
SIX	Evaluate Information	Score ≥ 2.5	**52.0%**	**56.1%**	**50.8%**
		Acceptable Target (73%)	Not met	Not met	Not met
		Ideal Target (85%)	Not met	Not met	Not met
		Average of all samples	2.25	2.33	2.23

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 2015-2016 assessment year, 50.8% of sampled papers received a rubric score of 2.5 or higher, **not meeting the acceptable target.**

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

	Obj. 1.3.B	**BCOR310**	**Year 3:** 2013-2014	**Year 4:** 2014-2015	**Year 5:** 2015-2016
SEVEN	Use Information for a Purpose	Score ≥ 2.5	**55.0%**	**62.1%**	**61.7%**
		Acceptable Target (73%)	Not met	Not met	Not met
		Ideal Target (85%)	Not met	Not met	Not met
		Average of all samples	2.70	2.49	2.40

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 Year 5 of assessment, 61.7% of sampled papers received a rubric score of 2.5 or higher, **not meeting the acceptable target** of 73%.

SLO 1.3 Composite-- Objective 1.3A + 1.3B

COMPOSITE SLO 1.3	BCOR310	Year 3: 2013-2014	Year 4: 2014-2015	Year 5: 2015-2016
	Total ≥ 5.0	**45.0%**	**51.5%**	**40%**
	Acceptable Target (73%)	Not met	Not met	Not met
	Ideal Target (85%)	Not met	Not met	Not met
	Average of all samples	2.47	2.41	2.31

SLO 1.3 calls for students to analyze, interpret, and/or evaluate information and make and implement research informed decisions. The 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 2015-2016 assessment, only 40% of sampled papers received a composite score of 5.0 or higher, **not meeting the acceptable target.**

Overall Findings

Overall, the assessment team noted the papers reviewed in the 2015-2016 assessment (Year 5) were similar in quality to the 2014-2015 papers (Year 4). Areas of increase or decrease are described below for each rubric item.

SLO 1.1 Students will understand and appropriately use scholarly sources
> 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

SLO 1.1 calls for students to understand and appropriately use scholarly sources. The SLO is broken down into 3 objectives, 1.1A, 1.1B, and 1.1C.

This year we noted small decreases in the scores for Objectives 1.1A and 1.1B compared to last year. Despite a dip, the Year 5 papers still scored well above the Year 3 papers in Objectives 1.1A and 1.1B.

In Year 5, 61.7% of papers scored 2.5 or greater on 1.1A, while only 36.7% of papers reached this goal in Year 3. **Objective 1.1A** addresses how well students develop a research question or topic. Since beginning assessment of the BCOR research paper in Year 3, the team has seen a **dramatic increase in the number of papers with developed research questions**. We applaud the teaching team for making great strides in their focus on a research question. We noticed that all 4 prompts addressed developing a research question, some in more detail than others.

Objective 1.1A
■ Score at or above 2.5
□ Scored below 2.5
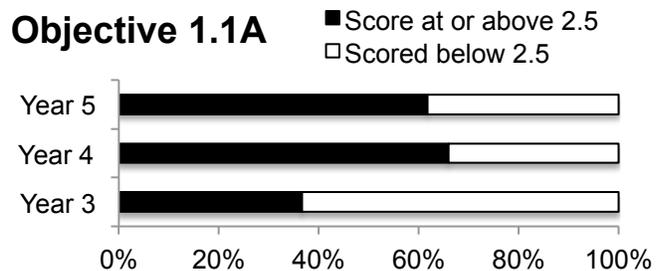
Scores in Objective 1.1B are also greatly improved from Year 3. **Objective 1.1B** addresses the number of quality sources. Compared to Year 4, the percentage of papers scoring a 2.5 or greater dropped by nearly 10 percent. It should be noted that this year some changes were made to this rubric item. The wording now specifies the number of citations that should come from scholarly or academic sources. In previous years, this rubric item did not include these specifics, so the assessment team could have interpreted it more loosely. Despite a drop in scores this year, since Year 3 there has been a large improvement in this rubric item. Overall, the number of papers scoring 2.5 or greater has increased from 43.3% to 58.3% from Year 3 to Year 5.

Objective 1.1B

■ Score at or above 2.5
□ Scored below 2.5
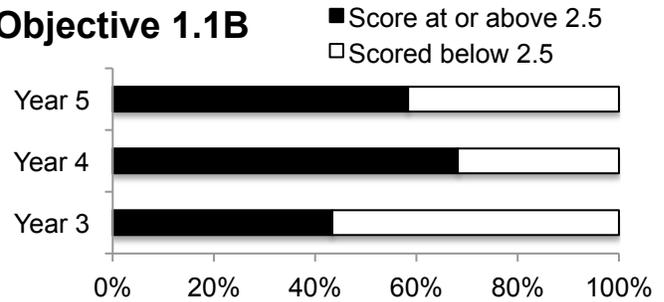
This year the rubric item with the **greatest improvement** was **Objective 1.1C**. This was the **only rubric item to exceed the ideal target**, with 87.5% of papers scoring a 2.5 or greater. This objective is comprised of two parts, 1.1C-1 and 1.1C-2. 1.1C-1 deals with proper format of in-text citations and the reference list. This year, all BCOR professors asked students to write their papers in MLA format. The assessment team noted and applauds the professors of the 12 sections for requiring a consistent format. 1.1C-2 deals with how students utilize information from references. Compared to previous years, the assessment noted fewer papers that relied too heavily on quotes, and very few papers included references that were not relevant to the topic. We noticed on the prompts that some sections are required to submit a citation list before writing the research paper. We believe this requirement likely contributed to the great increase we have seen in this objective and we applaud the BCOR professors for their work in this area.

Objective 1.1C

■ Score at or above 2.5
□ Scored below 2.5
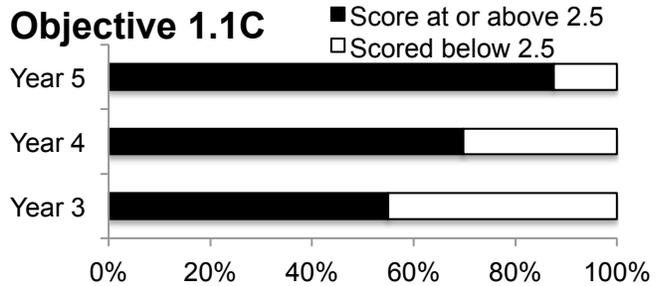
Scores on Objective 1.1C have steadily improved. In Year 3, only 55% of papers scored 2.5 or greater on this rubric item. In Year 4, this percentage increased to 69.7%, and in Year 5 an impressive 87.5% of papers scored at or above this level.

Together, SLO 1.1 calls for students to understand and appropriately use scholarly sources. The composite score for SLO 1.1 takes Objective 1.1A, 1.1B and 1.1C into account. The composite score for this SLO has increased steadily from Year 3 to Year 5. The assessment team has noted the most improvement in this SLO.

Composite Score, SLO 1.1
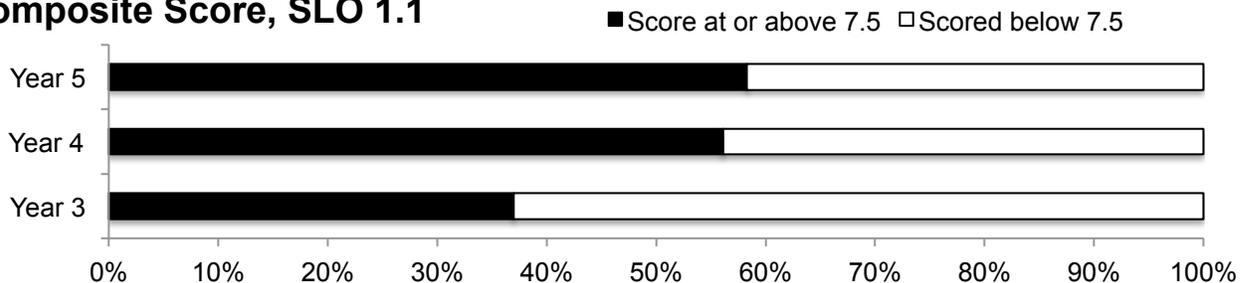
■ Score at or above 7.5   □ Scored below 7.5

SLO 1.2 Students will integrate knowledge to frame researchable questions and to develop strategies to seek answers

> 1.2.A Student 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.

Objective 1.2A

■ Score at or above 2.5
□ Scored below 2.5

(Bar chart showing Year 5, Year 4, Year 3 with axis 0% to 100%)
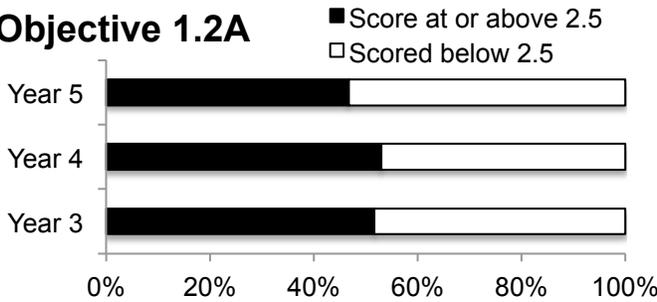
We observed a small decrease from Year 4 to Year 5 in **Objective 1.2A**. In Year 4, 53% of papers scored 2.5 or greater on this rubric item, but in Year 5, only 46.7% of papers reached this goal. To score competently on this rubric item (competent= 3), students must identify and describe theories or perspectives relevant to their thesis. For an exemplary score (exemplary= 4), students must recognize the strengths and weaknesses of each described theory. This year, the assessment team gave zero papers an exemplary rating. Only 2 came close, with a rubric score of 3.5 (this would happen if one rater gave the paper a 4, and the other rater gave the paper a 3). Therefore, only 3.33% of papers scored a 3.5 on this rubric item. Does this mean our students are incapable of recognizing strengths and weaknesses of various theories? Or, does it mean that our BCOR students are not pushed to pursue this type of critical analysis? I ascribe to the second theory, and think that many of our students are capable, but they were either not pushed in this direction, or they did not recognize that this type of analysis was required in their research paper.

Objective 1.2B

■ Score at or above 2.5
□ Scored below 2.5

(Bar chart showing Year 5, Year 4, Year 3 with axis 0% to 100%)
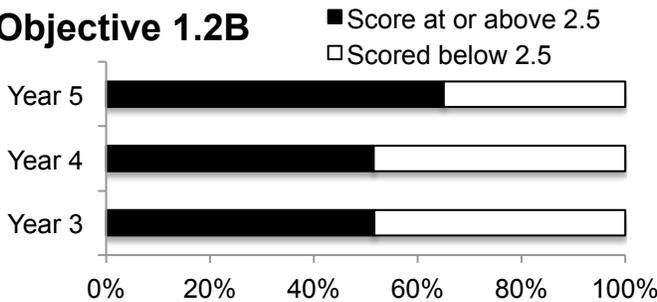
Objective 1.2B showed a great increase this year, going up 13.5 percentage points from Year 4 to Year 5. This increase is interesting in that it was not noted from Year 3 to Year 4. To score well in this objective, students must make connections to the thesis throughout the paper, and must do this using formal academic writing. 65% of the assessed papers scored 2.5 or greater on this rubric item. The assessment team noted that this rubric item would have been even higher if more students had a clear thesis statement.

SLO 1.2 calls for students to frame questions and develop strategies to seek answers. The composite score for SLO 1.2 takes Objective 1.2A and 1.2B into account. The composite score for this SLO has increased very slightly from Year 3 to Year 5, going from 45% to 48.3% of papers scoring above a 5 when scores from 1.2A and 1.2B are added together.

Composite Score, SLO 1.2
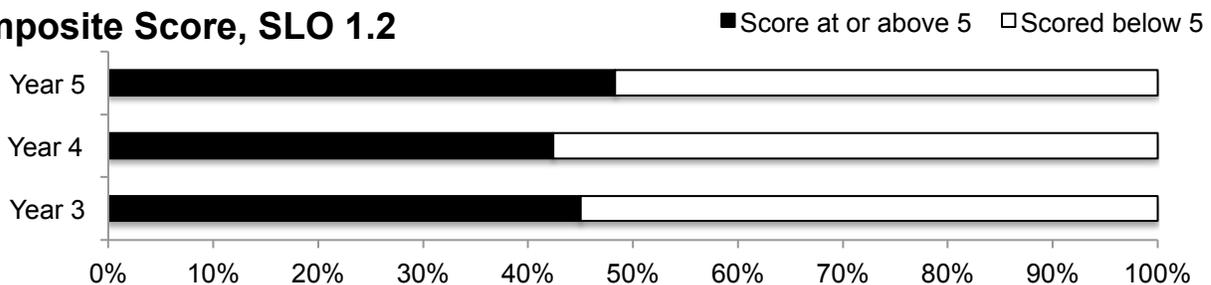
■ Score at or above 5   □ Scored below 5

(Bar chart showing Year 5, Year 4, Year 3 with axis 0% to 100%)

SLO 1.3 Students will analyze, interpret, and/or evaluate information and make and implement research-informed decisions

   1.3.A Students will evaluate information and its sources critically

      1.3.B Students will use information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose

The percentage of papers scoring 2.5 or greater on **Objective 1.3A** decreased by 5.3 percentage points over the past year. This rubric item, which requires students to evaluate contexts when presenting a position, and recognize their own assumptions and biases, has traditionally been one of the most difficult rubric items for students. The percentage of papers scoring 2.5 or greater on this rubric item has consistently stayed around 50% since Year 3.

Objective 1.3A

■ Score at or above 2.5
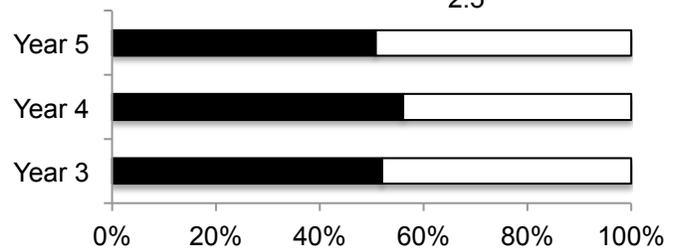
Scores on **Objective 1.3B** remained quite stable, with a decrease of 0.4 percentage points from Year 4. This objective deals with how students synthesize information from sources. We have seen an improvement in this rubric item when compared to Year 3, but the improvement has been relatively small (an increase in 6.7 percentage points).

Objective 1.3B

■ Score at or above 2.5
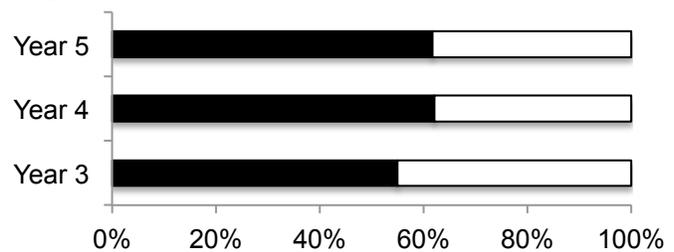
SLO 1.3 deals with how students analyze and evaluate information to make decisions. Traditionally, this SLO has been difficult for our students. We have noticed that students struggle with using new information to inform decisions, and typically do not identify their own and others' assumptions when making a decision. The composite score for SLO 1.3 takes Objective 1.3A and 1.3B into account. The composite score for this SLO has decreased from Year 3 to Year 5, going from 45% to 40% of papers scoring above a 5 when scores from 1.3A and 1.3B are added together.

Composite Score, SLO 1.3

■ Score at or above 5   □ Scored below 5
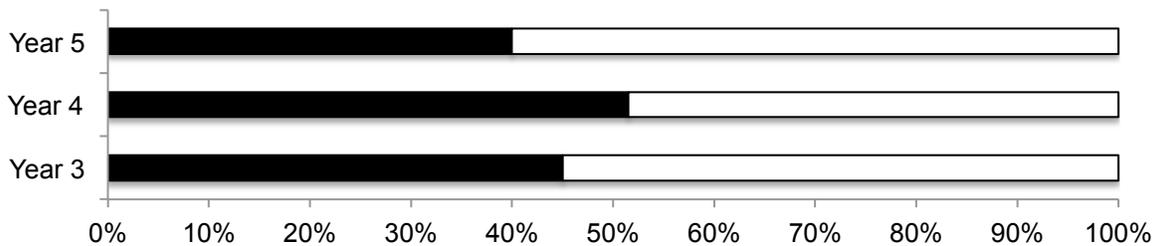
Factors Impacting Year 5 (2015-2016) Assessment

Organization of Assessment

The assessment team met during the second week of summer (May 16th) to assess the BCOR research artifacts collected from the twelve fall 2015 and spring 2016 sections. Each member of the team was asked to assess 24 papers (120 readings divided between 5 members). Papers were assessed electronically, using the rubric that was updated in May 2016.

Prompts

The team was provided with the four prompts used in different sections of BCOR. The Director of Pursuit/QEP randomly selected the 60 papers from both semesters of BCOR and distributed them to the assessment team electronically. The team was told which papers corresponded to a given prompt. The team appreciated having the prompts for each paper.

Each year of assessment the team has noticed improvement in the prompts. This year, the **prompts were clear, focused, and all of them addressed development of a research question/topic.** Additionally, the topics for the research papers in these four prompts were very similar. The team appreciated the **increased consistency**, and thanks the BCOR professors for working as a team in their development of the research paper assignment.

The team did notice **variability in the types of research required** and the materials used for research in the 4 prompts. For instance, the number of scholarly sources required for the paper varied depending on the section. While we did notice this variability, it was not as marked as it has been in years past. The prompts were better matched this year compared to Year 4 and Year 3.

Plagiarism

During the Year 4 assessment, the team noticed different levels of plagiarism in several papers. In the assessment report, we suggested the BCOR professors use Turnitin to combat the varying levels of plagiarism we noticed. This year, we noticed one of the prompts specifically indicates that students will submit their papers via Turnitin. We found fewer papers with blatant plagiarism, and fewer 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). While these issues were still present, we believe there was an improvement from Year 4.

Rubric Interpretation

Before we started assessment, the team did a normalization process with 5 sample papers. We used the same normalization papers from the Year 4 assessment. Therefore, these papers were randomly chosen from the 2014-2015 BCOR sections. During the normalization process, the team discussed several items on the rubric.

Our interpretation of the **rubric item 1.1Cii** could impact the assessment:
1. Wording of the **exemplary** category: "Paraphrases, summarizes, or quotes in ways that are true to the original context." The team rated papers in this category very few times. We discussed the fact that as outside reviewers, we are not familiar with the original context of the vast majority of citations. We were therefore uncomfortable rating papers in the exemplary category, and tended to rate them as competent or below.
2. Wording for the **competent** category: "Paraphrase, summary, or quotes are close to the original context, but not rely too heavily on quoting or have too little summary." The team was unsure of the meaning of the phrase "but not rely". We agreed to interpret this as "*do* not rely too heavily…".
3. When papers did rely too heavily on quotes, we rated them in the **emerging** category. We decided during the normalization process that papers with >20% direct quotes should be rated as relying too heavily on quotes.
4. Wording of the **unacceptable** category: "Annotations are absent." We interpreted this to mean *all* in text citations are missing. We did not rate a paper as unacceptable if a small number of mistakes were made regarding missing in text citations.

Our interpretation of the **rubric items 1.1B and 1.3B** could impact the assessment:
Rubric item 1.1B addresses the number of *quality* sources. The rubric states in the **exemplary** category: "Citations represent various scholarly or academic sources. Cited resources are used appropriately. All resources are appropriate to the target audience." Prior to assessment, the team

discussed our interpretation of this item. It was agreed that this rubric item focused more on quality and variety of sources, and less on application and analysis of sources. We only counted sources that were actually used in the paper (many papers included a reference in the list but did not cite the reference in the body of the paper). The analysis/application of the chosen source is addressed in rubric item **1.3B**. If a paper chose and cited 10 quality scholarly sources, but did not synthesize information from those sources well, they could score well on item 1.1B, but poorly in 1.3B.

Changes to BCOR and General Education at ACU
In the spring of 2015, the BCOR director stepped down and was not replaced. All of the papers collected for the Year 5 assessment were written after this change took place.

In October of 2015, the ACU faculty voted to remove BCOR from the general education curriculum. Both professors and students knew the result of the vote during the fall and spring semesters the research artifacts were collected. BCOR will be taught as it is for a few more semesters, until students under the 2015-2016 catalog complete the course.

Commendations for Faculty
The BCOR assessment team applauds the BCOR faculty for their dedication to this course and to the research paper assignment. Results from this assessment show students performed similarly in Year 5 as they performed in Year 4. While we did not see very many gains, as we did from Year 3 to Year 4, the team noted there was also not a drop-off in the quality of the research paper. We want to specifically thank the faculty for working as a team to improve the quality and consistency of prompts, focusing on the research question, and for working on student use of scholarly sources.

EXPLORE II Rubric—for CORE 210 and BCOR 310

SLO 1.1. Students will understand and appropriately use scholarly sources.

Rubric Item		Exemplary (4)	Competent (3)	Emerging (2)	Unacceptable (1)	Score
ONE	**Determine the nature and the extent of information needed** *Obj 1.1.A*	Effectively defines and narrows the scope of the research question/topic.	Defines the scope of the research question/topic completely.	Defines the scope of the research question/topic or incompletely (parts are missing, remains too broad or too narrow, etc.).	Has difficulty defining the scope of the research question/topic. .	
		Types of information (sources) selected directly relate to concepts or answer research questions.	Types of information (sources) selected relate to concepts or answer research question.	Types of information (sources) selected partially relate to concepts or answer research questions.	Types of information (sources) selected do not relate to concepts or answer research questions	
TWO	**Access the needed information effectively and efficiently** *O1.1.B*	Citations represent various scholarly or academic sources. Cited resources are used appropriately. All resources are appropriate for the target audience.	Most (more than half) citations represent scholarly or academic sources. Most (more than half) cited resources come from reliable sources. Most (more than half) resources are appropriate for the target audience.	Citations represent a limited range of scholarly or academic sources. Some (three or more) cited resources come from reliable sources. Some (three or more) resources are appropriate for the target audience.	Citations are from only one scholarly or academic source. Few (two or fewer) cited resources come from reliable sources. Few (two or fewer) resources are appropriate for the target audience.	
THREE	**Access and use information ethically and legally (information use strategies)** *Obj 1.1.C*	Citations and references are correct APA or MLA citation style.	Citations and references are APA or MLA style with few errors.	Citations and references are consistent, but aren't APA or MLA style.	Citations and references do not resemble a citation style.	
		Paraphrases, summarizes, or quotes in ways that are true to original context.	Paraphrases, summarizes, or quotes are close to the original context, but does not rely too heavily on quoting or have too little summary.	Papers relied too heavily on quotes. Paraphrases, summaries, or quotes are too broad to reflect the original content.	Annotations are absent or do not reflect content of the article	

SLO 1.2. Students will integrate knowledge to frame researchable questions and to develop strategies to seek answers.

	Rubric Item	Exemplary (4)	Competent (3)	Emerging (2)	Unacceptable (1)	Score
FOUR	**Describe theories or perspectives relevant to the thesis** *Obj 1.2.A*	Theories and perspectives are thoroughly described and relevance to the thesis is discussed, recognizing the strengths and limitations of each theory.	Theories and perspectives are identified and adequate description of relevance to the thesis is provided.	Several theories and perspectives are identified with limited description of thesis provided.	Some theories and perspectives are described but are not all relevant to the thesis. Not all relevant theories and perspectives are identified and described.	
FIVE	**Interpretations are applied relevant to a thesis.** *Obj 1.2.B*	Analysis/interpretations are thoroughly described using formal academic writing. Interpretations are applied to the thesis and extensions are made to other relevant connections.*	Analysis/interpretations are presented and described using formal academic writing. Interpretations are clearly connected to the thesis. *	Analysis/interpretations using formal academic writing are presented and summarized. May lack some formal academic writing. Interpretation of how findings are relevant to the thesis. *	Analysis/interpretations are presented in limited terms. Lacks formal academic writing. Little to no interpretation of how findings are relevant to the thesis. *	

SLO 1.3. Students will analyze, interpret, and/or evaluate information and make and implement research-informed decisions.

	Rubric Item	Exemplary (4)	Competent (3)	Emerging (2)	Unacceptable (1)	Score
SIX	**Evaluate information and its sources critically** *Obj 1.3.A*	Carefully evaluates the relevance of contexts when presenting a position.	Identifies own and others' assumptions or biases and several relevant contexts when presenting a position.	Questions some assumptions or biases. Identifies several relevant contexts when presenting a position. May be more aware of others' assumptions or biases than one's own (or vice versa).	Shows a developing awareness of present assumptions or biases (sometimes labels assertions as assumptions or biases). Begins to identify some contexts when presenting a position.	
SEVEN	**Use info effectively to accomplish a specific purpose** *Obj 1.3.B*	Communicates, organizes, and synthesizes information from sources to fully achieve a specific purpose, with clarity and depth.	Communicates, organizes, and synthesizes information from sources. Intended purpose is achieved.	Communicates and organizes information from sources. The information is not yet synthesized, so the intended purpose is not fully achieved.	Communicates info from sources. The info is fragmented and /or used inappropriately (misquoted, taken out of context, or incorrectly paraphrased, etc.); purpose not achieved.	

*Formal academic writing or professional language varies with the profession. In some professions, use of a personal pronoun is unprofessional. The assessment teams will not consider the use of a personal pronoun unprofessional. Formal academic writing does not include contractions or colloquialisms and is clear and concise.

Assessment teams will use the prompts submittted by faculty to clarify the definition of formal academic writing for each class.

Capstone Assessment 2015–2016 Report

Dr. Phyllis Bolin
Dr. David Hendricks

Background

This report communicates the results from the second assessment of capstone papers. The assessment outcomes are those from the academic year 2015–2016.

The assessment team consisted of six faculty members. Dr. David Hendricks (Mathematics), Rodney Ashlock (Bible, Missions and Ministry), Dana Mayhall (Teacher Education), Don Pope (Management Sciences), Shelly Sanders (Language and Literature), and Tracy Shilcutt (History and Global Studies) assessed the capstone papers.

During summer 2013, a *Pursuit* Institute was conducted with 19 faculty participants in attendance. The focus of the institute was on the development of assignments and assessments for Capstone Experiences. A rubric was developed by participants to use in the assessment of Capstone papers by Assessment Team IV. An informational meeting was held in the Adams Center to share the rubric developed by faculty and to collect suggestions for change. Wording on the rubric was adjusted in spring 2016 before the Year 5 assessment to clarify some of the ambiguous language.

During the summer, fall, and spring semesters, the university had 46 sections of courses that departments had designated as a capstone experience and 46 of these sections submitted capstone papers. There were a total of 787 students enrolled and 643 papers, or roughly 82%, were submitted to the Pursuit Office. A simple random sample of 60 papers was assessed from the 643 papers submitted.

Two members of the assessment team rated each paper. The scores from the first and second raters were averaged for each paper in the sample. These scores were used to calculate the average score for each Student Learn Outcome (SLO) objective, the number of papers meeting the acceptable and ideal targets for each SLO objective, and the composite score for each SLO.

Student Learning Outcomes Assessed

2.1.A   Students will demonstrate effective use of information literacy skills through writing.
2.1.B   Students will apply information to planning and creation of a product or performance.
2.1.C   Students will demonstrate critical thinking as they develop, produce, and evaluate product or performance.

The assessment team used a rubric with six categories to assess these learning outcomes with two categories for each learning outcome:

- Use of Sources to Answer Question (2.1.A)
- Ethical and Appropriate Use of Sources (2.1.A)
- Organization or Structure (2.1.B)
- Mechanics (2.1.B)
- Purpose of Project (2.1.C)
- Integrative Learning (2.1.C)

Results

SLO Objective 2.1.A – Students will demonstrate effective use of information literacy skills through writing.

Use of Sources to Answer Question

The QEP report calls for an acceptable target of 73% of the sample papers be scored at or above 2.5 and an ideal target of 85% of sample papers be scored at or above 2.5 for this objective. In the 2015–2016 assessment, 78.3% of the sample papers scored at or above 2.5. The inter-rater reliability was good for this objective with 45.0% of the papers receiving the same score, 50.0% of the papers receiving scores within one point of each other, and 5% of the papers receiving scores that differ by two points.

Rubric	Capstone Experience	QEP Year 4 2014–2015	QEP Year 5 2015–2016
Use of Sources to Answer Question	Score ≥ 2.5	43.3%	78.3%
	Acceptable Target (73%)	Not met	Met
	Ideal Target (85%)	Not met	Approaching
	Average of Samples	2.1	2.9

Ethical and Appropriate Use of Sources

The QEP report calls for an acceptable target of 73% of the sample papers be scored at or above 2.5 and an ideal target of 85% of sample papers be scored at or above 2.5 for this objective. In the 2015–2016 assessment, 76.7% of the sample papers scored at or above 2.5. The inter-rater reliability was quite good for this objective with 60.0% of the papers receiving the same score, 36.7% of the papers receiving scores within one point of each other, and 3.3% of the papers receiving scores that differ by two points.

Rubric	Capstone Experience	QEP Year 4 2014–2015	QEP Year 5 2015–2016
Ethical and Appropriate Use of Sources	Score ≥ 2.5	50.0%	76.7%
	Acceptable Target (73%)	Not met	Met
	Ideal Target (85%)	Not met	Approaching
	Average of Samples	2.1	2.9

SLO Objective 2.1.B – Students will apply information to planning and creation of a product or performance.

Organization or Structure

The QEP report calls for an acceptable target of 73% of the sample papers be scored at or above 2.5 and an ideal target of 85% of sample papers be scored at or above 2.5 for this objective. In the 2015–2016 assessment, 88.3% of the sample papers scored at or above 2.5. The inter-rater reliability was good for this objective with 50.0% of the papers receiving the same score, 48.3% of the papers receiving scores within one point of each other, and 1.7% of the papers receiving scores that differ by two points.

Rubric	Capstone Experience	QEP Year 4 2014–2015	QEP Year 5 2015–2016
Organization or Structure	Score ≥ 2.5	83.3%	88.3%
	Acceptable Target (73%)	Met	Met
	Ideal Target (85%)	Approaching	Met
	Average of Samples	2.7	3.11

Mechanics

The QEP report calls for an acceptable target of 73% of the sample papers be scored at or above 2.5 and an ideal target of 85% of sample papers be scored at or above 2.5 for this objective. In the 2015–2016 assessment, 88.3% of the sample papers scored at or above 2.5. The inter-rater reliability was quite good for this objective with 60.0% of the papers receiving the same score, 38.3% of the papers receiving scores within one point of each other, and 1.7% of the papers receiving scores that differ by two points.

Rubric	Capstone Experience	QEP Year 4 2014–2015	QEP Year 5 2015–2016
Mechanics	Score ≥ 2.5	83.3%	88.3%
	Acceptable Target (73%)	Met	Met
	Ideal Target (85%)	Approaching	Met
	Average of Samples	2.7	2.96

SLO Objective 2.1.C – Students will demonstrate critical thinking as they develop, produce, and evaluate product or performance.

Purpose of Project

The QEP report calls for an acceptable target of 73% of the sample papers be scored at or above 2.5 and an ideal target of 85% of sample papers be scored at or above 2.5 for this objective. In the 2015–2016 assessment, 91.7% of the sample papers scored at or above 2.5. The inter-rater reliability was quite good for this objective with 63.3% of the papers receiving the same score, 33.3% of the papers receiving scores within one point of each other, and 3.3% of the papers receiving scores that differ by two points.

Rubric	Capstone Experience	QEP Year 4 2014–2015	QEP Year 5 2015–2016
Purpose of Project	Score ≥ 2.5	80%	91.7%
	Acceptable Target (73%)	Met	Met
	Ideal Target (85%)	Approaching	Met
	Average of Samples	2.7	3.12

Integrative Learning

The QEP report calls for an acceptable target of 73% of the sample papers be scored at or above 2.5 and an ideal target of 85% of sample papers be scored at or above 2.5 for this objective. In the 2015–2016 assessment, 71.7% of the sample papers scored at or above 2.5. The inter-rater reliability was fair for this objective with 38.3% of the papers receiving the same score, 51.7% of the papers receiving scores within one point of each other, and 10.0% of the papers receiving scores that differ by two points.

Rubric	Capstone Experience	QEP Year 4 2014–2015	QEP Year 5 2015–2016
Integrative Learning	Score ≥ 2.5	46.7%	71.7%
	Acceptable Target (73%)	Not met	Approaching
	Ideal Target (85%)	Not met	Not met
	Average of Samples	2.3	2.69

Commendations and Recommendations

- Departments and Capstone faculty are to be commended for their work with students.

- The capstone assessment results are significantly better this year than in our first year of assessment. All student learning outcomes of the assessment rubric showed significant improvements from the first year results.

- Dan Brannan, Stephen Baldridge, Suzie Macaluso, Sarah Lee, Nancy Jordan, Rodney Ashlock, Brenda Bender, and Denise Barnett are to be commended for developing a rubric that the committee could use to assess the first round of Capstone papers.

- Many of the faculty teaching the Capstone Experiences came in October 2015 to hear 2014–2015 assessment results and discuss ways to improve the Capstone papers.

- Based on comments of the 2014–2015 Assessment Team, the rubric was refined to improve consistency in the language.

- Capstone faculty need to emphasize to their students what is meant by Integrative Learning, one of the outcomes for the Capstone Experience. This outcome states that students should demonstrate habits of mind that foster integrative thinking between the liberal arts core curriculum and their major field of study.

- Capstone faculty need to emphasize that students are to include the proper citation of a minimum of five appropriate sources that support the research presented in the Capstone paper.

- Each college/division should have a minimum number of papers assessed.

Category / Dimension	Exemplary (4)	Effective (3)	Emergent (2)	Elementary (1)	Score
CREATE Rubric—for use with Capstone Projects revised 5/2016					
Purpose of Project Obj. 2.1.C – Demonstrate critical thinking as they develop, produce, evaluate product or performance.	Clearly and concisely directs the project development; scope is suitable for assigned task and focuses all elements of work; firmly establishes significance of project	Effectively directs the project development; generally focused and specific; reasonably addresses assigned task; demonstrates significance of project	Purpose of project is present but vague and offers limited significance of the project	Purpose of project is not clear or appropriate and offers little to no explanation of the significance of the project	
Organization or Structure Obj. 2.1.B – Apply information to planning & creation of a product or performance	Superior and carefully organized response to the topic. Each paragraph has a focused idea and excellent supporting detail. Sources are critically synthesized to address chosen topic. Appropriate, logical conclusions are made and connected to the project purpose.	Effective response to topic. Synthesis of information is coherent. Conclusions are appropriate and connected to the project purpose.	Weak response to topic: moderately sustained and developed ideas and acceptable analysis of topic ideas. Conclusions are made, but not entirely supported by presented information or do not attempt to fully address the purpose of the project.	Inadequate response to the topic: ideas are undeveloped, confused or disconnected. Conclusions are not present or are not connected to presented information or project purpose.	
Integrative Learning Obj. 2.1.C – Demonstrate critical thinking as they develop, produce, evaluate product or performance	Relevant and critical connections exhibited from a variety of diverse learning and experiences. Demonstrates deep understanding of connections with past experiences and future trends.	Makes generally effective connections from a variety of diverse learning and experiences. Shows an understanding of connections with past experiences and future trends.	Makes weak connections from a variety of diverse learning and experiences and little understanding of past experiences and future trends.	Underdeveloped or missing connections to a variety of diverse learning experiences; shows no understanding of past experiences and future trends.	

Category / Dimension	Exemplary (4)	Effective (3)	Emergent (2)	Elementary (1)	Score
Use of Sources to Answer Question Obj. 2.1.A – Demonstrate effective use of information literacy skills through writing.	Information appropriately and fully answers the proposed question. Sources are appropriately synthesized in a way that addresses chosen topic. Appropriate, logical conclusions are made and connected to the research question.	Information is mostly linked to the proposed question. Synthesis of information is coherent. Conclusions are appropriate and mostly connected to the research question.	Attempts are made to relate information to proposed question. Information is connected, but weakly synthesized. Conclusions are made, but not entirely supported by presented information or do not attempt to fully answer question.	No link between information presented and original proposed question. Sources are not connected with little to no synthesis. Conclusions are not present or are not connected to presented information or research question.	
Ethical and Appropriate Use of Sources Obj. 2.1.A – Demonstrate effective use of information literacy skills through writing.	Student correctly implements all four of the following strategies: 1) selects critical sources; 2) adheres to proper citation and reference style; 3) paraphrases, summarizes, or quotes in ways that are true to original context; 4) distinguishes between common knowledge and ideas requiring attribution. Practices ethical and legal restrictions on the use of published, confidential, and/or proprietary information.	Student correctly uses three of the information use strategies and practices ethical and legal restrictions on the use of published, confidential, and/or proprietary information.	Student correctly uses two of the information use strategies and practices ethical and legal restrictions on the use of published, confidential, and/or proprietary information.	Student correctly use one or none of the information use strategies and practices ethical and legal restrictions on the use of published, confidential, and/or proprietary information.	
Mechanics Obj. 2.1.B – Apply information to planning & creation of a product or performance	Excellent command of standard English that skillfully communicates meaning to readers with clarity and fluency, and is virtually error-free.	Sufficient command of standard English that adequately communicates meaning to readers with infrequent errors in grammar, punctuation or usage. Paper flows well.	Weak command of standard English. Errors in grammar, punctuation, or usage are present but do not compromise meaning.	Inadequate command of standard English. Major errors or repeated minor errors in grammar, punctuation, or usage obscure meaning.	

Authors: Dan Brannan, Stephen Baldridge, Suzie Macaluso, Sarah Lee, Nancy Jordan, Rodney Ashlock, Brenda Bender, and Denise Barnett.

Honors College

FOR EACH ACADEMIC YEAR, HOW MANY STUDENTS IN YOUR COLLEGE…

	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016
1. Completed an independent research project	90	140	164	204	198
Submitted for selection/review beyond a course requirement					
2. Conducted research with a department faculty mentor	3	6	11	10	11
3. Presented (or were included as an author) a research paper/project / poster at a conference, professional meeting, either state or national	6	14	8	17	14
4. Submitted an original work for a juried show…e.g., art, design, poetry, drama	11	10	4	2	4
5. Performed for a jury outside a department requirement	2	-	-	-	-
6. Published an article, chapter, or book related to the discipline	-	-	3	2	2
7. Participated in the 2016 ACU Research Festival	-	3	5	-	5
8. Conducted or participated in a research activity not mentioned above	75	115	142	163	160
9. Number of theses and/or D.Min projects	X	X	X	X	X
10. How many unique students in your college are represented in the numbers reported above (not duplicated)?	86	129	151	176	182

Undergraduate Research – 2015-2016 Report

Dr. Autumn Sutherlin

3.1: Students will publicly disseminate independent scholarly, and creative work in a public setting.

Objective 3.1.A. Students will produce independent scholarly and/or creative products.

·   **Measurement: Students producing scholarly or creative work for the Undergraduate Research Festival must submit abstracts describing the product. Faculty reviewers assess the abstracts using the Review of Submitted Abstracts Rubric.**

Acceptable target: 80% of abstracts will have 3.0 or higher on each item. [Adapted to 7 or higher out of 12]

Ideal target: 80% of abstracts will have a 3.3 or higher on each item. [Adapted to 8 or higher out of 12.]

Results: In 2016, 116 abstracts were submitted to the ACU Undergraduate Research Festival, a slight decrease from 126 in 2014. This is still a significant increase over the 98 abstracts submitted in 2013. One hundred and fourteen of the abstracts were submitted by ACU Students, down slightly from 124 in 2015 and up from 92 in 2013. Only three abstracts were rejected. Three abstracts were not reviewed by their departments. These abstracts went before the final review committee which reviews abstracts that receives 2's on the rubric to decide whether they should be accepted to the conference. This committee does not score the abstracts on the rubric, therefore, 3 ACU abstracts do not have scores. Before the conference, four presentations were withdrawn.

Of the 111 scored abstracts submitted by ACU students, 110 (99.1%) reached the Acceptable Target. One hundred and one abstracts (91.0%) reached the Ideal Target.

Table: Abstracts Reaching or Exceeding Acceptable and Ideal Target.

	2013	2014	2015	2016
Abstracts Reviewed	92	116	107	111
Abstracts with an acceptable score	86 (93.5%)	111 (95.7%)	105 (98.1%)	110 (99.1%)
Abstracts with an ideal score	83(90.2%)	109 (94.0%)	98 (91.6%)	101 (91.0%)

Analysis: These are the four years that rubric data for abstract for the ACU Undergraduate Research Festival exists. The percentage of abstracts receiving both acceptable and ideal scores is very high every year and has probably reached as high as they can possibly be. This could be due to a few factors. The first is that as faculty have gained experience coaching their students on the proper writing of an abstracts. The second is that as more students have completed the Research Literacy portion of their Core Classes, students will have the tools they need to write a better abstract. The third is that the rubrics are posted online so that students know what is expected of them. The fourth and most likely cause is that rubrics are evaluated by the departments that the students come from as they are most familiar with the fields and therefore know whether a presentation is appropriate for their field. This may however lead to inflation of abstract scores.

· **Measurement: Students who received grants from the Office of Undergraduate Research, Honors College, or Pursuit Grants will submit a paper or creative work based on their project to their mentoring faculty member. Faculty members submit the report to the Pursuit Team. Faculty reviewers will assess the work using Writing Assessment Rubric.**

Acceptable Target: 80% of papers or creative work will receive a total score of 15 out of 25 points or higher on the rubric.

Ideal Target: 80% of papers will receive 20 out of 25 points or higher.

Results: The office of Undergraduate Research does not collect this data.

· **Measurement: Students who received grants from the Office of Undergraduate Research, Honors College, or Pursuit Grants will submit a self-assessment entititled Research Project: Student Self-Assessment with their final report to their faculty mentor. Faculty members submit the report to the Pursuit Team.**

Acceptable Target: 80% of papers or creative work will receive a total score of 15 out of 25 points or higher on the rubric.

Ideal Target: 80% of papers will receive 20 out of 25 points or higher.

Results: The office of Undergraduate Research does not collect this data as this is not a requirement of the Office of Undergraduate Research grants.

Objective 3.1.B Students will demonstrate professionalism in the presentation of scholarly and creative products beyond the classroom.

Measurement: Student work accepted to the Undergraduate Research Festival will be assessed using Papers/Verbal Presentations Rubric or Posters/Presentations Rubric. Faculty score the papers/posters products.

Acceptable target: 70% of products/presentations will score 50 or higher out of a total score of 90 on the rubric. [Adapted to a total score of 38.9 points out of 70 points on the verbal presentations rubric and 36.1 points out of 65 points on the poster presentations rubric.]

Ideal target: 80% of products/presentations will score 65 or higher out of a total score of 90 on the rubric. [Adapted to 50 out of a total score of 70 points on the verbal presentations rubric and 46.9 points out of 65 points on the poster presentations rubric.]

Results:

At the 2016 ACU Undergraduate Research Festival, 103 presentations were given by 166 ACU students. Fourteen students from another university also participated in the Research Festival. Their data is not included here.

Verbal Presentations: Sixty-four verbal presentations were made by ACU students at the 2016 Undergraduate Research Festival. Of the verbal presentations, **55 presentations (86%) scored above the Acceptable Target** with a total of 38.9 or higher. **Twenty-seven verbal presentations (42%) scored at or above the Ideal Target**. In 2015, 64 presentations (83%) scored above the Acceptable Target with a total of 38.9 or higher. Twenty-three verbal presentations (30%) scored at or above the Ideal Target. In 2014, 79% of the verbal presentations scored above the Acceptable Target and 13% scored above the Ideal Target. In 2013, 75% of the verbal presentations scored above the Acceptable Target and 45% scored above the Ideal Target In 2012, 61% of the verbal presentations scored above the Acceptable Target and 14% scored above the Ideal Target.

Poster Presentations: Thirty-nine poster presentations were made by ACU students. Of the 39 poster presentations, **29 presentations scored a total of 36.1 or higher or 74% of presentations scored within the Acceptable Target** on the Poster Presentations Rubric. **Three poster presentations or 8% scored at or above the Ideal Target**. This compares to 80% at or about the Acceptable target and 10% at or above the Ideal target in 2014. In 2014, 93% scored at or above the Acceptable target and 33% at or above the Ideal target. In 2013, 60% scored above the Acceptable Target

and 10% above the Ideal Target. In 2012, 66% scored above the Acceptable Target and 6% above the Ideal Target.

Total: At the 2016 ACU Undergraduate Research Festival, **82% of the presentations scored at or above the acceptable target. Twenty-nine percent of the presentations scored at or above the ideal target.** In 2015, 82% of the presentations scored at or above the acceptable target. Twenty-three percent of the presentations scored at or above the ideal target. In 2014, 93% scored at or above the Acceptable target and 23% at or above the Ideal target. Seventy percent scored at the Acceptable Target at the 2013 ACU Undergraduate Research Festival and 33% scored at or above the Ideal Target. At the 2012 ACU Undergraduate Research Festival, 63% scored at or above the Acceptable Target and 11% scored at or above the Ideal Target.

Table: Presentations Reaching or Exceeding the Acceptable Target.

	2012 Number of Presentations (%)	2013 Number of Presentations (%)	2014 Number of Presentations (%)	2015 Number of Presentations (%)	2016 Number of Presentations (%)
Verbal	34 (61%)	45 (75%)	56 (79%)	64 (83%)	55 (86%)
Poster	23 (66%)	18 (60%)	40 (93%)	31 (80%)	29 (74%)
Total	57 (63%)	63 (70%)	106 (93%)	95 (82%)	84 (82%)

Table: Presentations Reaching or Exceeding the Ideal Target.

	2012 Number of Presentations (%)	2013 Number of Presentations (%)	2014 Number of Presentations (%)	2015 Number of Presentations (%)	2016 Number of Presentations (%)
Verbal	8 (14%)	27 (45%)	9 (13%)*	23 (30%)	27 (42%)
Poster	2 (6%)	3 (10%)	14 (33%)	4 (10%)	3 (8%)
Total	10 (11%)	30 (33%)	23 (20%)	13 (23%)	30 (29%)

*2014 Ideal Verbal presentations may have been calculated with the wrong score for the ideal target.

Analysis: In 2016, the Acceptable Target of having 70% of presentations reach 38.9 or higher out of 70 for verbal presentations or 36.1 or higher out of 65 for poster presentations was well exceeded with 82% passing these scores. Several factors may have contributed to reaching this goal. The first is that it was the 8th ACU Undergraduate Research Festival and faculty mentors have learned how to better advise their students in preparation for the Research Festival. Second, rubrics and helpful hints were provided on the Research Festival Blog and at poster preparation workshops to the students and faculty before the conference to aid the students in their preparation for the Research Festival. Third, all the students, except sixth year seniors had completed at least part of the Research Literacy material through the university core courses.

The ideal target of 80% of oral presentations scoring 50 or higher out of a total score of 70 on the rubric or 46.9 out of 65 points for poster presentations rubric, was not met. However, this is the highest percentage to reach the ideal scores since 2013. The percentage of students reaching the Ideal Target is most likely due to better trained judges. These rubrics are used for the competition portion of the Research Festival. Judges are instructed that a good all-around presentation should be given 3's in all categories. This would give the student a score of 42 for verbal presentations and 39 for poster presentations. To reach the score for the ideal target, that means that 80% of the students would score close to a 4 or above in every category. This would make it very difficult to distinguish among the very good presentations and the exceptional presentations. Because our students' presentations had become so good, the judging was readjusted to give more room at the top of the scores. This adjustment allows good presentations to score in the acceptable range, but makes it very difficult for many to score in the ideal range.

General Education Review – Findings and Recommendations
January 2015

Committee Members:
Stephen Baldridge, Orneita Burton, Neal Coates,
Lauren Lemley, Greg Straughn, Trevor Thompson
ex officio – Phyllis Bolin, Eric Gumm, Chris Riley

CHARGE
In March 2007, the General Education Review Steering Committee produced its final report to the faculty, entitled *Liberal Arts Core Curriculum at ACU: Building a 21*st* Century Education*. This document was ratified by a full faculty vote on May 17, 2007. Faculty worked for the next three years to construct a sequence of courses that would actualize the ideals set forth in the document, specifically the learning outcomes that form our current general education. The first Cornerstone class, taught in Fall 2010, ushered in a new era of general education at ACU – one shaped by the essential learning outcomes and high-impact practices articulated by *LEAP* (Liberal Education and America's Promise), sponsored by the American Association of Colleges and Universities.

The final objective in the *Liberal Arts Core Curriculum at ACU* document articulated the following systematic review of general education:

> 12. *Implement an on-going review of the Liberal Arts Core Curriculum.*
> Because the world changes, professors' methods of teaching change, knowledge of disciplines changes, and the nature of the student body changes, students will be best served by an on-going review process that includes at least the following considerations:
> * The nature, experiences, knowledge, and skills of our incoming students.
> * The best practices and current research on student learning.
> * A straightforward and sustainable assessment system that supports a consistent focus on student learning outcomes, measurement of our success in achieving the outcomes, and thoughtful and continual response to assessment data.
> * Annual review of assessment data.
> * Comprehensive review of curriculum every three years.

These five points formed the basis of the current General Education Review Committee's charge, specifically: to review ACU's general education and CORE courses with a specific reference to the above criteria and also with respect to:
* cost of delivery – both human resources and financial resources, with attention to potential cost-saving strategies
* transferability of credit – with attention to pressures faced by students transferring more and more hours to ACU, with a goal offer more "transfer friendly" options

- reduction of hours – with a goal to provide strategies by which General Education might aid in a plan to reduce the hours of an ACU degree from 128 to as low as 120
    - NOTE: this committee will work with in tandem with staff in the Provost's Office
- how data from various outcomes and artifacts (annual analyses, Pursuit, Board End Statements) and <u>student satisfaction</u> point to trends and evidence for overall effectiveness

PROCESS

The Review Committee hosted a number of conversations with faculty – both at large and in key groups – as well as administrators and students. General faculty meetings were held in the Adams Center on October 21 and 27; additionally, faculty in the College of Arts and Sciences engaged in a SWOT analysis of ACU's General Education on October 7. A focus group of ten students was engaged on October 28, followed by a survey of 512 students taking CORE 210 or BCOR classes in the Fall 2014 semester; 70 students responded (13.7%)[1]. Finally, the Provost's Cabinet included a lengthy discussion of general education on their October 1 meeting.

All of these meetings were framed in a similar fashion: the current five general education outcomes were outlined, followed by a discussion of their propriety for students, the strengths and weaknesses of the current system/distribution of courses, and suggestions for changes.

COMMENDATIONS

The committee notes several key commendations that mark both the maturity of the current general education system and its embodiment of LEAP practices.

<u>CORE Classes</u>: The perception, delivery, reception, and assessment of Cornerstone is significantly improved. This is important as it reflects a major shift away from the early concerns that noted inconsistent sections, lack of coherent focus, and seeming irrelevance to the work done in majors. While there is always room for improvement, the focus on the steps and process of critical thinking form a respected and relevant foundation to support the work in majors. Faculty are to be commended for their commitment to supporting a well-crafted curriculum and for providing assessment artifacts that support the Pursuit initiative. Subsequent CORE classes were praised for their engagement in reflective critical thinking, especially in ways that relate to identifying and posing solutions to social issues.

<u>Faculty Relationships</u>: The ability for faculty to get to know students, especially in first-year classes, was noted on several occasions. Additionally, the use of peer-leaders in Cornerstone was highlighted as a good way to create community among students. Cultivating faculty/ student relationships is central to the Cornerstone experience, though it should be noted that fewer full-time faculty are teaching the course than originally planned.[2] Because of the large

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[1] See Appendix A for survey results.

[2] In Fall 2010, 35 full-time faculty taught 37 Cornerstone sections. In Fall 2014, 15 full-time faculty taught 36 sections. This represents a decrease in the percentage of full-time faculty teaching from 94.5% to 41.7%.

student:faculty ratio of Bible courses, the committee notes that it is exceptionally difficult to nourish such relationships with most students. This will be addressed in the recommendation section.

Owning our 128 hours: Several times throughout the discussions, faculty recommended that we do a better job of making the "extra" courses in our 128-hour degrees a marketable, value add. In essence, we should better recognize that our general education curriculum includes 15 hours of Bible, and we should "sell" this to parents and students as a significant feature of an education at ACU.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Timing of Changes: The Review Committee recognizes that the implementation of any change to General Education represents a significant alteration of degree plans throughout the university. Therefore, the first recommendation is to set a deadline of the last day of school in the Fall Semester to be date by which general education changes should be voted on for inclusion in the catalog. This means that they will have undergone previous discussion and approval by the UGEC, UUAC, and (when appropriate) the full faculty. This provides ample time for discussion as well as the entire Spring semester for departments to implement necessary changes to degree plans.

Assessment: There is not a clear and consistent assessment plan for courses populating the various menus within general education (i.e. Sciences; Social Sciences; Fine Arts/Humanities; Cultural Competency). The committee recommends broadening the existing assessment plan so that, for each course used to fulfill a general education requirement, there is an articulation of the specific artifacts that will be collected, the parties responsible for assembling and analyzing the artifacts, and the mechanism by which those results will be communicated to the General Education Office. Both the Pursuit initiative and the University's reporting to SACS of its general education outcomes rely on data from courses in these menus; therefore, a penalty for non-compliance should be implemented (e.g. reducing the Academic Enrichment and Technology [AET] funds for departments that do not provide the expected assessment data).

Transfer Credit: The need to be "transfer friendly" has been raised many times over the last several years – from the strategic planning task force conversations to the ad hoc group led by the Provost and Executive Vice President to consider and implement transfer strategies. In terms of general education, the committee recognizes the need for ACU to align with common expectations of courses throughout Texas.
- The university should resist the temptation of removing the "general education elective" in order to reduce hours. Instead, that elective could be specified for a particular use, especially among the social sciences or humanities.
- Greater flexibility is needed among awarding credit for communication courses by accepting all of the Texas common core courses. Additionally, developing some specializations within our COMS 211 that would broadly serve different disciplines would be helpful.

Historical Literacy: Throughout the committee's conversations, the lack of a consistent approach to the study of history was noted as a significant concern. It is important to recognize that history was not the only area to see its "protected menu" of offerings altered in the adoption of our current general education model; the Fine Arts requirement was dropped, and the Kinesiology requirement has been reduced by half (what was 4 hours is now 2). The committee recommends converting the general education elective to a three-hour historical literacy requirement that could be satisfied by a menu of courses that require engagement with appropriate historical outcomes to be determined in conjunction with the Department of History and Global Studies (e.g. engagement with primary sources, assessment of influence and change over time or space). Including courses such as Church History, Art History, Music History, History and Philosophy of the Sciences, or History of the English Language as well as HIST-prefix courses menu will facilitate the incorporation of this requirement in degree plans.

CORE Reductions: Currently, there are nine hours of CORE classes: CORE 110-Cornerstone; CORE 210-Human Identity and Community; BCOR 310-The Search for Meaning (the last of which serves also as part of the 15 hours of Bible courses required of each student). CORE can be reduced by three hours in one of two ways: 1) Make each of the three courses 2-credits each; 2) Remove one of the classes from the curriculum. The former preserves the sequential nature of the classes; one of the best practices outlined in the LEAP standards. It also minimizes the reduction of Bible courses and the difficulties inherent in such a decision. The latter preserves the three-hour heft of courses. If BCOR is eliminated, a significant reduction in Bible happens as well. Reducing each course by one hour allows Spotlight sessions in Cornerstone to continue, though perhaps with somewhat reduced frequency; it also facilitates the teaching of classes in non-traditional times – such as the January inter-semester, or summer semesters.

Immediate Budgetary Reductions: The Core has never been funded at the level originally approved by faculty; additional cuts were made in the first years that necessitated further changes away from approved plan. Currently, almost all the departments that hired faculty to support their participation in CORE classes are not receiving the transfer of funds expected to cover the new faculty's salary. While faculty *are* being paid, this means constant budget over-runs in almost every department that teaches CORE classes. Curricular reductions need time to be discussed, voted on, and incorporated into degree plans, but several immediate changes can be made that will realize budgetary savings.
- Reduce the number of CORE 210 offerings. There are unfilled seats in each semester the course is offered.
- Reimagine the Assistant Provost for General Education position away from a full-time administrator to a stipend position.
- Reduce the number of team-taught sections.

The last recommendation was borne out of conversations that recognized the opportunity to streamline teaching, especially if faculty had participated in team teaching the course previously. While not doing away with team-teaching completely, it would be possible to make significant reductions across many sections. This would have ramifications with the BCOR class,

since one of those teachers is required to be a Bible professor. However, those could be solved by:

- Acknowledging that only Bible professors (or professors appropriately credentialed) will teach BCOR, effectively making it a Bible class;
- Or reducing the number of required Bible hours, thereby allowing any faculty to teach BCOR. (A course prefix change such as CORE 310 might help avoid confusion if this is implemented).