Core Assessment Report

Office of Strategic Innovation and Research

Fall 2024

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INTRODUCTION

In 2014, Southwest Texas College (SWTX) submitted the Core Curriculum Implementation and Assessment Plan to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, as mandated by the Texas Administrative Code Title 19, Part 1, Chapter 4, Subchapter B, Rule 4.30. This mandate requires public institutions to assess core objectives continually, reporting results every ten years in alignment with accreditation reaffirmation. The rule reads as follows:

"*Each public institution of higher education shall evaluate its core curriculum through the assessment of the core objectives on an ongoing basis, reporting the results of the assessment to the Board every ten years on the schedule that accords with the institution's accreditation reaffirmation self-study report to the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools or its successor. The evaluation and report must include:*

(1) a description of the assessment process for each of the six core objectives;
(2) an explanation of measures, methodology, frequency and the timeline of assessment activities;
(3) the criteria and/or targets used to benchmark the attainment of the six core objectives,·
(4) the results of the assessment, including evidence of the level of attainment targeted and achieved for each of the six core objectives;
(5) an analysis of the results, including an interpretation of assessment information; and
(6) any actions planned, including how the results and analysis of the assessment process will be used to improve student learning and achievement."

As of 2024, SWTX is nearing the end of the reaffirmation cycle. This updated report reviews SWTX's ongoing assessment process, methods, and outcomes for general education core objectives. The assessment has included benchmarks set for core curriculum competencies, which are outlined below.

	Critical Thinking	Communication	Empirical & Quantitative Skills	Teamwork	Personal Responsiblity	Social Responsibility
Artifact Assessment Rubrics	70% scoring 2 or higher	70% scoring 2 or higher	70% scoring 2 or higher	70% scoring 2 or higher	70% scoring 2 or higher	70% scoring 2 or higher

Since the plan's inception, Southwest Texas College has been engaged in annual assessment processes that have measured how well students are achieving the core objectives of the general education. During Faculty Convocation, The Dean of Liberal Arts and Division Chairs review core objective assessment results with faculty and consider areas of improvement and plan intervention. Interventions are expected to be documented and tracked in annual Strategic Plan Initiatives (SPI's).

STRATEGIC ARTIFACT ASSESSMENT

In each core course, designated core assignments generate student "artifacts," documented on the course syllabus as evidence of authentic student work. A random sample of artifacts, submitted by students who have completed at least 80% of the core requirements, undergoes assessment twice a year by multidisciplinary faculty teams using rubrics designed by an Ad Hoc Committee.

Students upload these artifacts to Canvas for initial review and grading by course faculty. The Office of Institutional Effectiveness subsequently collects and distributes the artifacts for further assessment. Faculty raters, trained in artifact evaluation, rubric use, calibration, and the Watermark Outcomes Assessment Projects system (previously Agua), conduct the assessments. As outlined in the original assessment plan, a minimum of 100 artifacts are to be sampled annually, with an actual target of 200 artifacts per year. The results of these assessments are distributed annually to the Dean and faculty within the College of Liberal Arts.

A total of 3,354 student artifacts have been assessed. The table below shows the number of artifacts assessed each year. From 2015 to 2021, 2,144 student artifacts were assessed, and from 2022 to Spring 2024, an additional 1,210 artifacts were assessed.

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Academic year	Number of Artifacts
2015-2021	2,144
2022-2024	1,199
Total	3,343

Between Fall 2021 and Spring 2024, a total of 1,199 artifacts were assessed. From Fall 2021 to Spring 2023, 968 artifacts were evaluated based on seven Core Skills. Beginning in Fall 2023, the Core Skills were reduced to six, with Social Responsibility now encompassing both Civic Engagement and Intercultural Knowledge, which were previously assessed separately. This change followed a revision of the Core Skills rubric to emphasize the role of Social Responsibility in two-year colleges.

For historical comparison, the chart below displays two separate categories for Social Responsibility — Intercultural Knowledge and Civic Engagement — from Fall 2023 to Spring 2024. A total of 231 artifacts were assessed under the updated framework, which consolidates the two categories into a single Social Responsibility skill.

| Artifacts Assessed by Core Objective								
	21-22		22-23		23-24		TOTAL	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Critical Thinking	222	30	60	27	67	30	349	29
Personal Responsibility	116	16	40	18	28	12	184	15
Quantitative Literacy	82	11	28	13	21	9	131	11
Social Responsibility - InTercultural Knowledge	43	6	17	8	29	13	89	7
Social Responsibility - Civic Engagement	52	7	17	8	0	0	69	6
Teamwork	48	6	16	7	18	8	82	7
Written Communication	185	25	42	19	68	30	295	25
Total	748	100	220	100	231	100	1199	100

CORE SKILLS BY SCORES

Artifact assessment scores will be reported in two ways: by the percentage of students scoring 2 or higher and by the average rubric score for each core objective. The original implementation plan set a target of 70% of artifacts achieving a score of 2.0 or higher. This report also includes an analysis of average scores to further interpret student learning. In cases where significant discrepancies arise between the scores provided by the two initial raters, a third rater may be introduced to ensure consistency and objectivity in the scoring process. This additional step helps to maintain the integrity of the assessment and provides a more accurate reflection of student achievement.

Critical Thinking
The number of artifacts assessed for Critical Thinking each year, from Fall 2021 to Spring 2024, ranged from 60 to 221. Over the past three years, the target of 70% of artifacts scoring 2.0 or higher for this core competency has not been achieved. In total, 203 students (58%) scored 2.0 or higher, while 145 students (42%) scored below 2 during this period. In total, 349 student artifacts were assessed over the three academic years.

	2.0 or greater		Less than 2.0		Total	
Critical Thinking Artifacts Assessed by Score Fall 2021 to Spring 2024						
	Count	**%**	**Count**	**%**	**Count**	**%**
21-22	130	59	91	41	221	100
22-23	34	17	26	43	60	100
23-24	39	19	28	42	67	100
TOTAL	203	58	145	42	349	100

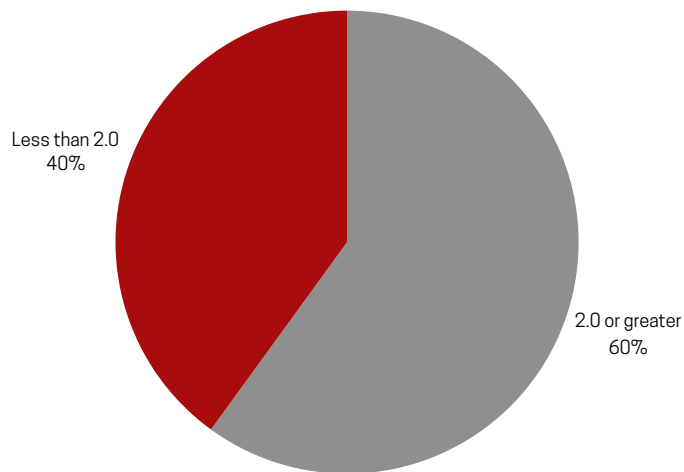Less than 2.0
42%

2.0 or greater
58%
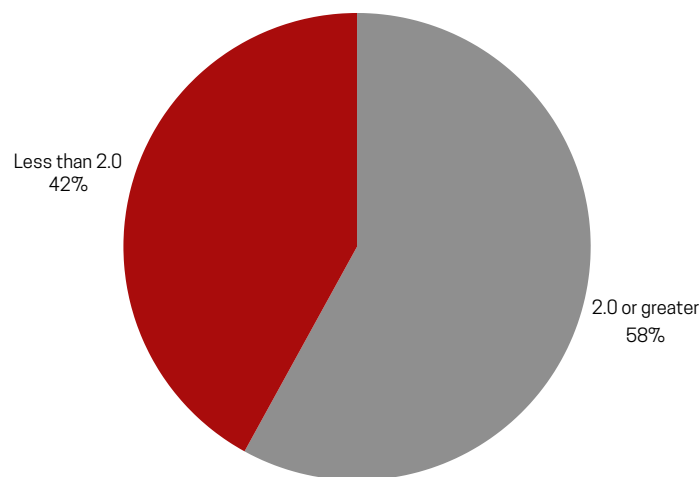
Personal Responsibility

The number of artifacts assessed for Personal Responsibility each year has ranged from 28 to 116. The percentage of artifacts scoring 2.0 or higher increased from 53% in 2022-2023 to 79% in 2023-2024. The target of 70% scoring 2.0 or higher for this competency was successfully achieved in 2023-2024, the most recent year.

In the 2021-2022 academic year, out of 116 students assessed, 68 students (59%) scored 2.0 or higher, while 48 students (41%) scored below 2. In 2022-2023, 21 students (53%) achieved scores of 2.0 or higher, while 19 students (48%) scored less than 2, with a total of 40 students assessed. By 2023-2024, 22 students (79%) scored 2.0 or higher, and 6 students (21%) scored below 2, with a total of 28 students assessed.

A total of 111 students (60%) scored 2.0 or higher across all years, while 74 students (40%) scored below 2.0. In total, 185 students were assessed over the three academic years.

	2.0 or greater		Less than 2.0		Total	
Personal Responsibility Artifacts Assessed by Score Fall 2021 to Spring 2024						
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
21-22	68	59	48	41	116	100
22-23	21	53	19	48	40	100
23-24	22	79	6	21	28	100
TOTAL	111	60	74	40	184	100

Less than 2.0 40%

2.0 or greater 60%

Quantitative Literacy (Empirical and Quantitative Skills)

The number of artifacts assessed for Quantitative Literacy each year ranged from 21 to 82. The percentage of artifacts scoring 2.0 or higher rose from 43% in 2021-2022 to 86% in 2022-2023, the highest achieved. Although there were fluctuations, the target of 70% scoring 2.0 or higher was met in 2022-2023.

In 2021-2022, 82 students were assessed, with 35 (43%) scoring 2.0 or higher and 47 (57%) below. By 2022-2023, 24 out of 28 students (86%) met the target, showing significant improvement. In 2023-2024, 13 out of 21 students (62%) scored 2.0 or higher, with a slight decline, but positive overall outcomes.

Across all years, 131 students were evaluated, with 72 (55%) scoring 2.0 or higher and 59 (45%) below.

	2.0 or greater		Less than 2.0		Total	
Quantitative Artifacts Assessed by Score Fall 2021 to Spring 2024						
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
21-22	35	43	47	57	82	100
22-23	24	86	4	14	28	100
23-24	13	62	8	38	21	100
TOTAL	72	55	59	45	131	100

Less than 2.0
45%

2.0 or greater
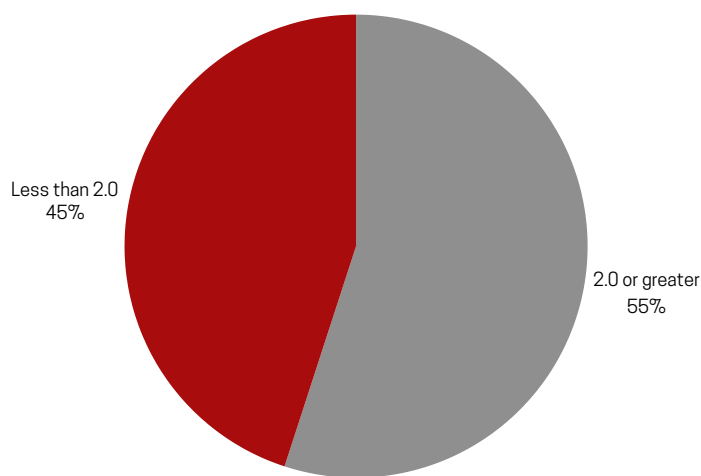55%
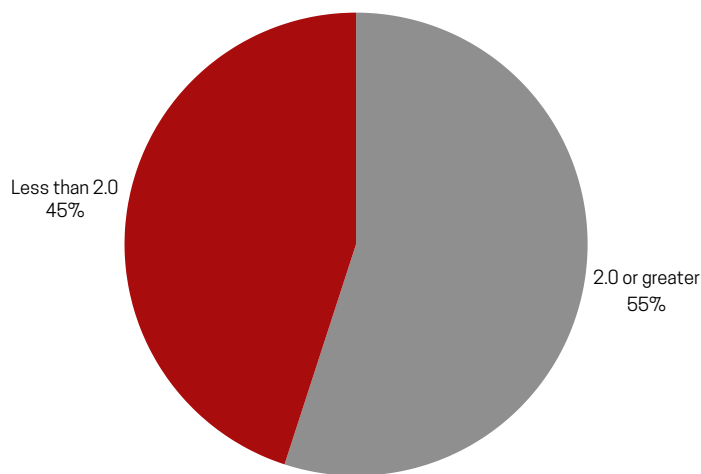
Social Responsibility

In Fall 2023, Social Responsibility skills were revised following a series of meetings where the Faculty and Evaluation Committee decided to merge Civic Engagement and Intercultural Knowledge into a single category under Social Responsibility. Consequently, Southwest Texas College will now assess 6 core skills instead of 7. The following charts display student artifacts from 2021 through 2023.

Social Responsibility - Civic Engagement
The number of Social Responsibility - Civic Engagement artifacts assessed ranged from 17 to 52 per year, with scores of 2.0 or higher increasing from 50% in 2021-2022 to 71% in 2022-2023. The target of 70% was met in 2022-2023.

Over two academic years, 69 students were evaluated, with 38 (55%) scoring 2.0 or higher and 59 (45%) scoring below 2.0.

Social Responsibility (Civic Engagement) Artifacts Assessed by Score Fall 2021 to Spring 2024						
	2.0 or greater		Less than 2.0		Total	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
21-22	26	50	26	50	52	100
22-23	12	71	5	29	17	100
TOTAL	38	55	59	45	69	100

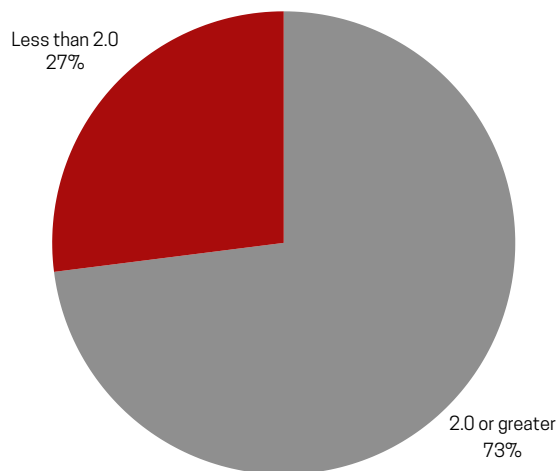Less than 2.0
45%

2.0 or greater
55%

Social Responsibility - Intercultural Knowledge

The number of artifacts assessed annually for Social Responsibility – Intercultural Knowledge ranged from 17 to 43. The percentage of these artifacts scoring 2.0 or higher decreased slightly from 74% in 2021-2022 to 71% in 2022-2023. The target of having 70% of artifacts scoring 2.0 or higher was met during both academic years .

A total of 60 students were evaluated, with 44 students (approximately 73%) achieving scores of 2.0 or higher, while 16 students (about 27%) did not meet the target score of 2.0.

Social Responsibility (Intercultural Knowledge) Artifacts Assessed by Score Fall 2021 to Spring 2024						
	2.0 or greater		Less than 2.0		Total	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
21-22	32	74	11	26	43	100
22-23	12	71	5	29	17	100
TOTAL	44	73	16	27	60	100

Less than 2.0
27%

2.0 or greater
73%

Social Responsibility

The next chart reflects a Fall 2023 change, with the college assessing 6 core skills instead of 7. From Fall 2023 through Spring 2024, 66% of students scored below 2.0, while 34% scored 2.0 or higher, possibly influenced by recent rubric changes.

|	2.0 or greater		Less than 2.0		Total	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
23-24	10	34	19	66	29	100

Teamwork

The number of artifacts assessed for Teamwork each year ranged from 16 to 48. The percentage of artifacts scoring 2.0 or higher fluctuated, with increases followed by decreases in subsequent years.

In 2022-2023, there was notable progress, as 69% of students scored 2.0 or higher, while 31% scored below. However, in 2023-2024, the scores were evenly split, with 50% of students in each category. The target of 70% scoring 2.0 or higher has not been met, with 2022-2023 coming closest at 69%.

Overall, over the three years, 82 students were assessed. Of these, 35 students (57%) scored 2.0 or higher, while 47 students (43%) scored below 2.0.

	2.0 or greater		Less than 2.0		Total	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
21-22	15	31	33	69	48	100
22-23	11	69	5	31	16	100
23-24	9	50	9	50	18	100
TOTAL	35	57	47	43	82	100

Less than 2.0
43%

2.0 or greater
57%
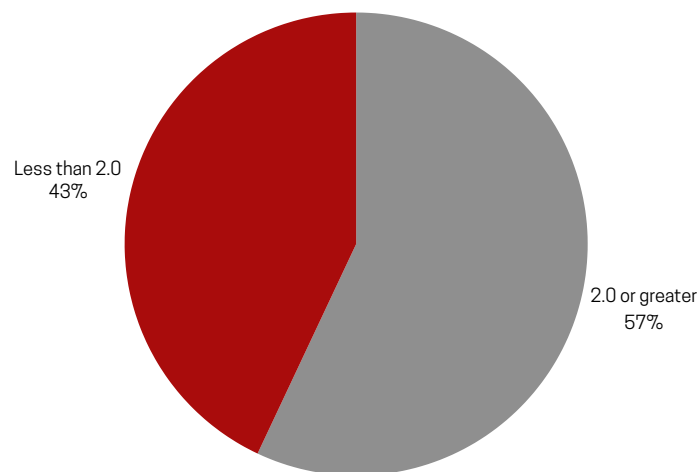
Written Communication - Communication Skills

The number of artifacts assessed for Communication Skills has fluctuated each year, ranging from 42 to 185. The percentage of artifacts scoring 2.0 or higher also varied, rising from 62% in 2021-2022 to 79% in 2022-2023, before dropping significantly to 34% in 2023-2024.

The target of 70% was only met in the 2022-2023 academic year, when 79% of students scored 2.0 or higher. It was not achieved in any other academic year.

Over the three years, a total of 295 students were assessed. Of these, 170 students (58%) scored 2.0 or higher, while 125 students (42%) scored below 2.0.

	2.0 or greater		Less than 2.0		Total	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
21-22	114	62	71	38	185	100
22-23	33	79	9	21	42	100
23-24	23	34	45	66	68	100
TOTAL	170	58	125	42	295	100

Less than 2.0
42%

2.0 or greater
58%
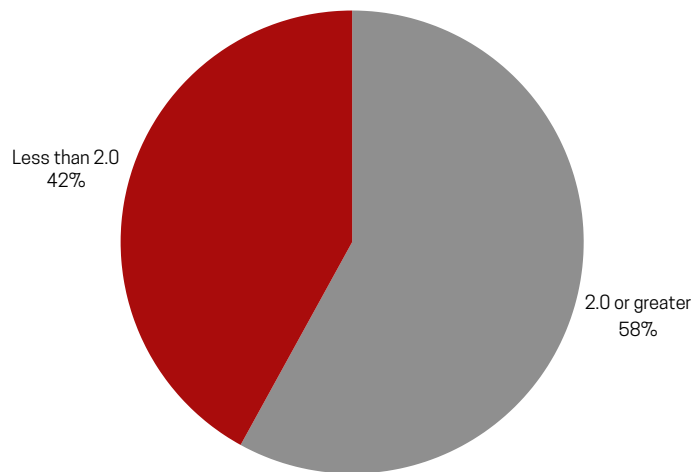
MEAN SCORES BY CORE OBJECTIVE CRITERIA

The following tables provide the mean scores for each core competency and its related core objectives over the past three years, from Fall 2022 to Spring 2024, as of the date of this report. Items highlighted in red indicate the lowest scoring objective within each core competency.

Critical Thinking
This skill represents a habit of mind that involves exploring issues, ideas, and events thoroughly before forming an opinion or conclusion. Evaluators are encouraged to assign a score of zero to any work sample or collection of work that does not meet the benchmark level of performance.

	Fall 2022	Spring 2023
Explanation of Issues	2.9	2.3
Evidence Selecting and Using Information to Investigate a Point of View of Conclusion	2.8	2.2
Influence of Context and Assumptions	2.7	2.1
Student's Position	2.8	2.1

The following chart shows the criteria for the new rubric applied in Spring 2024:

	Fall 2023	Spring 2024
Analytic Inquiry	2.3	2.6
Knowledge (Cultural Self-Awareness)	2.0	2.2
Ethical Reasoning	2.0	2.0
Use of Information Resources	2.3	2.0
Representation	1.7	1.7

Personal Responsibility

Lifelong learning is defined as "any purposeful learning activity undertaken continuously with the goal of enhancing knowledge, skills, and competence." One of the aims of higher education is to prepare students to become lifelong learners by fostering the dispositions and skills outlined in this rubric during their time in school.

	Fall 2022	Spring 2023
Curiosity	2.1	2.3
Initiative	2.0	2.1
Independence	2.0	2.1
Transfer	1.9	2.08
Reflection	2.1	2.06

The following chart shows the criteria for the new rubric applied in Spring 2024:

	Fall 2023	Spring 2024
Knowledge (Cultural Self-Awareness)	2.3	2.7
Ethical Reasoning	2.2	2.5

Quantitative Literacy

Also known as Numeracy or Quantitative Reasoning (QR), this skill represents a "habit of mind" that reflects competency and comfort in working with numerical data. Individuals with strong Quantitative Literacy (QL) skills can reason and solve quantitative problems across a wide range of real-world contexts and everyday situations. They are able to understand and construct sophisticated arguments supported by quantitative evidence and can effectively communicate those arguments in various formats, such as words, tables, graphs, and mathematical equations, as appropriate.

	Fall 2022	Spring 2023
Representation	2.5	2.4
Calculation	2.8	2.2
Application/Analysis	2.2	2.4
Communication	2.3	2.5

The following chart shows the criteria for the new rubric applied in Spring 2024:

	Fall 2023	Spring 2024
Application/Analysis	2.2	2.6
Representation	1.8	2.8

Social Responsibility - Civic Engagement

Civic engagement refers to the active participation of individuals in the political, social, and civic life of their communities. This skill aims to foster an understanding of one's role in the community and the importance of contributing to the public good. This involves actively participating in civic life, demonstrating an awareness of social and cultural issues, and making informed, ethical decisions that positively impact society.

	Fall 2022	Spring 2023
Diversity of Communities and Cultures	1.8	1.9
Analysis of Knowledge	1.5	2.1
Civic Identity and Commitment	1.6	2.1
Civic Action and Reflection	1.6	2.2

The next chart shows the criteria for the new rubric applied in Spring 2024:

	Fall 2023	Spring 2024
Oral Communication	2.0	2.0
Knowledge (Knowledge of Cultural Worldview Frameworks)	2.4	3.5
Knowledge (Cultural Self-Awareness)	2.3	3.0
Ethical Reasoning	2.1	2.5

Social Responsibility - Intercultural Knowledge

Intercultural Knowledge refers to a set of cognitive, affective, and behavioral skills and characteristics that enable individuals to interact effectively and appropriately in diverse cultural contexts. It involves understanding and respecting cultural differences, being open to new perspectives, and adapting one's behavior to communicate and collaborate successfully across cultural boundaries.

	Fall 2022	Spring 2023
Knowledge (Knowledge of Cultural Worldview Frameworks)	2.4	2.0
Knowledge (Cultural Self-Awareness)	2.2	2.0
Skills	2.3	2.2

Teamwork

This refers to the behaviors exhibited by individual team members, including the effort they contribute to team tasks, how they interact with others, and the quantity and quality of their contributions to team discussions. These behaviors are within each member's control and play a key role in the overall success and effectiveness of the team.

	Fall 2022	Spring 2023
Explanation of issues	2.2	2.2
Evidence Selecting and Using Information to Investigate a Point of View or Conclusion	1.8	2.1
Influence of Context and Assumptions	2.0	2.2
Student's Position (Perspective, Thesis/Hypothesis)	1.9	2.1
Conclusions and Related Outcomes (Implications and Consequences)	1.7	2.0

The next chart shows the criteria for the new rubric applied in Spring 2024:

	Fall 2023	Spring 2024
Teamwork	2.2	3.2

Written Communication

This is is the process of developing and expressing ideas through writing. It involves learning to work in various genres and styles, utilizing different writing technologies, and often integrating texts, data, and images. Written communication skills are honed through repeated practice and experience across different subjects and disciplines throughout the curriculum.

	Fall 2022	Spring 2023
Explanation of issues	2.8	2.3
Evidence Selecting and Using Information to Investigate a Point of View or Conclusion	2.8	2.2
Influence of Context and Assumptions	2.7	2.1
Student's Position (Perspective, Thesis/Hypothesis)	2.5	2.1
Conclusions and Related Outcomes (Implications and Consequences)	2.4	1.9

The next chart shows the criteria for the new rubric applied in Spring 2024:

	Fall 2023	Spring 2024
Writing	2.4	3.5
Oral Communication	1.6	2.0
Teamwork	1.4	2.0
Knowledge (Knowledge of Cultural Worldview Frameworks)	1.9	3.5
Knowledge (Cultural Self-Awareness)	2.0	3.5
Representation	1.6	4.0

MEAN SCORES BY CORE OBJECTIVE SUMMARY

Critical Thinking

	Fall 2022	Spring 2023
Explanation of Issues	2.9	2.3
Evidence Selecting and Using Information to Investigate a Point of View of Conclusion	2.8	2.2
Influence of Context and Assumptions	2.7	2.1
Student's Position	2.8	2.1

	Fall 2023	Spring 2024
Analytic Inquiry	2.3	2.6
Knowledge (Cultural Self-Awareness)	2.0	2.2
Ethical Reasoning	2.0	2.0
Use of Information Resources	2.3	2.0
Representation	1.7	1.7

Personal Responsibility

	Fall 2022	Spring 2023
Curiosity	2.1	2.3
Initiative	2.0	2.1
Independence	2.0	2.1
Transfer	1.9	2.08
Reflection	2.1	2.06

	Fall 2023	Spring 2024
Knowledge (Cultural Self-Awareness)	2.3	2.7
Ethical Reasoning	2.2	2.5

Quantitative Literacy

	Fall 2022	Spring 2023
Representation	2.5	2.4
Calculation	2.8	2.2
Application/Analysis	2.2	2.4
Communication	2.3	2.5

	Fall 2023	Spring 2024
Application/Analysis	2.2	2.6
Representation	1.8	2.8

Social Responsibility Civic Engagement

	Fall 2022	Spring 2023
Diversity of Communities and Cultures	1.8	1.9
Analysis of Knowledge	1.5	2.1
Civic Identity and Commitment	1.6	2.1
Civic Action and Reflection	1.6	2.2

	Fall 2023	Spring 2024
Oral Communication	2.0	2.0
Knowledge (Knowledge of Cultural Worldview Frameworks)	2.4	3.5
Knowledge (Cultural Self-Awareness)	2.3	3.0
Ethical Reasoning	2.1	2.5

Social Responsibility Intercultural Knowledge

	Fall 2022	Spring 2023
Knowledge (Knowledge of Cultural Worldview Frameworks)	2.4	2.0
Knowledge (Cultural Self-Awareness)	2.2	2.0
Skills	2.3	2.2

Teamwork

	Fall 2022	Spring 2023
Explanation of issues	2.2	2.2
Evidence Selecting and Using Information to Investigate a Point of View or Conclusion	1.8	2.1
Influence of Context and Assumptions	2.0	2.2
Student's Position (Perspective, Thesis/Hypothesis)	1.9	2.1
Conclusions and Related Outcomes (Implications and Consequences)	1.7	2.0

	Fall 2023	Spring 2024
Teamwork	2.2	3.2

Written Communication

	Fall 2022	Spring 2023
Explanation of issues	2.8	2.3
Evidence Selecting and Using Information to Investigate a Point of View or Conclusion	2.8	2.2
Influence of Context and Assumptions	2.7	2.1
Student's Position (Perspective, Thesis/Hypothesis)	2.5	2.1
Conclusions and Related Outcomes (Implications and Consequences)	2.4	1.9

	Fall 2023	Spring 2024
Writing	2.4	3.5
Oral Communication	1.6	2.0
Teamwork	1.4	2.0
Knowledge (Knowledge of Cultural Worldview Frameworks)	1.9	3.5
Knowledge (Cultural Self-Awareness)	2.0	3.5
Representation	1.6	4.0