

# ACE 10 Faculty Inquiry Program

## Year One 2013-2014

This project aims to engage faculty in intentional and focused conversations about how they are implementing and assessing student learning in ACE 10 courses and encourage shared best practices across departments and disciplines. Often described as the “capstone” or “integrative” ACE course, ACE 10 asks student to “Generate a creative or scholarly product that requires broad knowledge, appropriate technical proficiency, information collection, synthesis, interpretation, presentation, and reflection.” This program is designed to help faculty:

- Explore methods and tools for assessing work produced in ACE 10 courses
- Develop a collegial community who can share ideas about ACE 10 curriculum and assessment
- Sponsor conversation on connecting ACE 10 assessment to department’s major curriculum
- Develop a useful process for creating your unit’s ACE 10 assessment report

Since ACE 10 courses count for both a general education requirement and the culminating capstone experience within a student’s degree program, student work produced in ACE 10 courses can serve as a broad indicator of how students are achieving learning outcomes within the major. Because ACE 10 courses offer a window into student learning within both general education and major programs, academic deans and senior administration have proposed the topic “Enacting and Assessing ACE 10 courses” for UNL’s institutional HLC accreditation Quality Initiative Project.

The current ACE assessment process requires faculty and departments to collect and assess samples of ACE student work to inform programmatic discussions on how students are achieving particular outcomes. In the fall of 2014, ACE 10 outcome assessments are due to be reported on the five-year cycle to the University Curriculum Committee and University-Wide Assessment Committee. Since all undergraduate degree programs offer an ACE 10 course, over 60 departments or units will be reporting on student learning within ACE 10 courses. This project is designed to support faculty in preparation for this reporting cycle. Through this year’s project, faculty will have the opportunity to identify and share best practices for assessing ACE 10 courses and explore what undergraduate integrative learning looks like across the UNL campus.

### Materials

You will receive two books: Barbara Walvoord’s *Assessment Clear and Simple* and the AACU guide *Assessing Outcomes and Improving Achievement* edited by Terrel Rhodes. You also have been enrolled into a Blackboard Organization titled ACE 10 Impact Project. This syllabus and readings for this program are housed on this site. If you find materials or readings that you feel would be of interest to others, feel free to post them. Later in the year, you will upload a few samples of student work to share.

### Survey

You will be asked to take a brief survey about your experiences with and attitudes toward assessment via your Blackboard account. This survey will take approximately 20 minutes to complete.

## Meeting Calendar

All meetings on Fridays from 2-3:30 pm (Rooms will change--see daily schedule)

### September 13<sup>th</sup> Room 212, Gaughan Multicultural Center Introduction to ACE 10 Project and One Another

#### Guiding Themes

- What are we asking students to do for their scholarly and/or creative projects in ACE 10 courses?
- What can we learn from one another and as an institution from sharing our experiences with developing and teaching ACE 10 courses?

#### Introduction to Goals of the Project

#### Introductions to One Another

- Name, department, ACE 10 course you teach

#### Small groups

- By the end of the semester, I want students to be able to show or do \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_ in my ACE 10 course.
- Sharing of goals in small groups

#### Discussion on ACE 10 Outcome and Integrative Learning

ACE 10: Generate a creative or scholarly product that requires broad knowledge, appropriate technical proficiency, information collection, synthesis, interpretation, presentation, and reflection.

- What does integrated learning look like in your discipline? Across the disciplines in your group?
- How can disciplinary/program assessments inform institutional assessment and vice versa?

#### Wrap Up

#### Readings for October 11th meeting

- Chapter one from *Assessment Clear and Simple* (pages 1-26)
- "A Statement on Integrative Learning" (1 page)
- "AAHE Principles of Good Practice for Assessing Student Learning" (2 pages)

Optional: Bring an example of a tool or instrument (if you have one) that your program/department is currently using to facilitate assessment of students' scholarly and/or creative work in ACE 10 courses.

### October 11<sup>th</sup>, Room 202, Gaughan Multicultural Center Integrative Learning and ACE 10 Courses

#### Guiding Themes

- What does integrative learning look like in ACE 10 courses? How do we know it when we see it?

- What challenges do you face as an instructor in sponsoring integrative learning?
- How do we assess integrative learning? Are there tensions between assessing at a disciplinary or departmental level vs. an institutional level?

#### Discussion Questions on Readings

- What questions or issues did Walvoord’s chapter or the AAHE “Principles of Good Practice for Assessing Student Learning” raise for you in thinking about ACE 10 assessment processes?

#### Small Groups

- What do you collect or observe that helps you to know whether your students are engaging in integrative learning within your ACE 10 course(s)?
- What method, tools, or instruments do you use to help measure student performance in ACE 10 courses? (Share examples if you’ve brought them)

#### Group Discussion

- How can we know as an institution how students across the campus are performing on scholarly/creative projects in ACE courses?
- What can we say as a campus about our students’ integrative learning?

#### Readings for November 8<sup>th</sup> meeting:

- “Developing a Process for Assessing General Education Learning Outcomes across a Multicollge University” (on Blackboard site)
- Pages 1-3 and 9-13 from *Assessing Outcomes and Improving Student Achievement*
- Skim through the sample VALUE Rubrics in *Assessing Outcomes*

### **November 8, Georgian Room, City Union** **Developing Rubrics to Sponsor Institutional Discussions about Learning**

#### Guiding Themes

- Why are institutions turning to rubrics to assess student learning outcomes?
- What are different types of rubrics (analytic vs. holistic).
- What are the AACU Leap Value Rubrics and how might they be useful for thinking about how to assess ACE 10 courses?

#### Guest Speaker

Dr. Shari Stenberg (Department of English) will describe her experiences and answer questions about facilitating cross-college conversations through co-developing a shared rubric for ACE 1 courses.

#### Brief Introduction to rubrics

#### Small Group discussion of draft rubric

- What categories do you value most in assessing your students’ creative and/or scholarly projects? Why?
- What do you think about the framing or definitional language within the particular categories? What are the strengths? Limitations?

- Which categories do you find most useful in sponsoring conversation about discussing and evaluating student learning across ACE 10 courses?

#### Group Discussion

##### Readings for January meeting:

- Chapter three (pages 59-79) from *Assessment Clear and Simple*
- Bring two copies of an assignment focused on scholarly and/or creative work from your ACE 10 course and copies of three students' work produced for the assignment that you feel represents a range of performance levels.

### **January 10<sup>th</sup>, Heritage Room, City Union** **Learning from Our Students' Performance**

#### Guiding Themes

- What can we learn from sharing and discussing students' scholarly and/or creative work produced in ACE 10 courses
- What performance levels can we identify for student learning in ACE 10 courses?
- How can we share and use what we learn from assessment discussions with colleagues in our programs/departments?

#### Small Groups

Each member should share the assignment prompt and copies of student work (20 minutes for each person). After all of the student work has been reviewed, discuss the following questions:

- With regard to the categories listed on the rubric, what observations can you make about student performance on the ACE 10 work? Does the student work reflect some categories of the rubric more than others (e.g. broad knowledge, technical proficiency, synthesis, etc.)?
- Is the rubric useful in guiding your reading of students' work? Why or why not?
- Are there areas that the rubric fails to capture about the students' work that you feel are important to note? What are they?

#### Group Discussion (30 minutes):

- Sharing out discussions from small groups
- Was there value in using a common rubric to sponsor discussion across the student work?

#### Individual Questions to Reflect Upon

- Are you satisfied as an instructor with your students' learning in your ACE 10 course? Why or why not?
- Are there questions or issues that this student work raises about your major curriculum that you think would be valuable to share with your department colleagues?
- What kinds of recommendations (either for the ACE 10 courses or other courses in the curriculum) could you imagine exploring with colleagues based on your analysis?

**February 14th, Room 212, Gaughan Multicultural Center  
Continue Review of Student Work**

Guiding Themes

- Continued discussion of what we can learn from reviewing and sharing examples of students' scholarly and/or creative work from ACE 10 courses.

Template for posters (distribute)

The following questions from the ACE Assessment Reporting Template seek to identify key conclusions from the assessment process and what recommendations were formulated as a result of these conclusions:

- What was the question of interest that the department/program investigated related to assessment of the ACE 10 learning outcome?
- What student work was collected and analyzed to address the question? (Provide details about the assignments used.)
- How did the department/program analyze the student work?
- What did the department/program analysis reveal?
- How will the department/program use the findings to improve student learning of the ACE learning outcome?

To do for March 7<sup>th</sup> meeting: Draft of poster

**March 7, Georgian Room, City Union  
Themes and Observations across ACE 10 courses**

Guiding Themes

- Sharing of themes/observations from analysis of ACE 10 work in individual departments
- How can results of ACE assessment be made public and used (by departments, students, etc.)
- What are the implications of the results for curriculum, pedagogy, or student support services?

Peer Review of Draft Posters

**April 16, Nebraska Union from 3-5 pm  
Sharing Our Work**

Share your poster showing examples of how students achieve ACE 10 outcomes. Undergraduate Research fair starts at 3 pm in the Nebraska City Union.

**May 12, Room tba from 11:30 am-1:00 pm  
Celebration Luncheon**

We will have a luncheon to reflect upon the year's accomplishments and to celebrate our collective work.

**Completion of Survey and Assessment**

due Friday, May 16

- How did the project support your learning about assessment for ACE 10 courses?
- What have we learned about ACE 10 and/or assessment that might be shared with others?
- How else can we support you for ACE 10 assessment reporting in fall 2014?