

Essential Studies Meeting Minutes

December 13, 2021

1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.

ZOOM

Meeting attendees: Donovan Widmer, Tim Burrows, Jody Paulson, Kristen Borysewicz, Lori Robison, Kaelan Reedy, Chris Felege, Christina Fargo, Forrest Ames, Julie Robinson, Scott Correll, Dawson Dutchak, Thyra Knapp, Bradley Rundquist, Brooke Solberg, Michele Carroll, Taylor Hanson Wald

1. Approval of Meeting Minutes for December 2, 2021
 - a. Minutes approved as submitted
2. Student Petitions
 - a. # 4 – Student is requesting to waive Global Diversity requirement.
 - i. Motion to deny, second, petition denied
 - b. # 5 – Student is requesting a course meets the requirement of Advanced Communications.
 - i. Motion to approve, second, petition approved
 - c. Student Petitions Over Break - The exec committee will make final decisions when the full committee is not meeting. We do this over the break to help with petitions that are submitted during degree clearing processes. We will still post the petitions along with the decision in Blackboard.
3. ENGL 228/229 and the Humanities designation
 - a. Move to next meeting
4. Validations – choose the date to get reviews to Karyn
 - a. Get validations to Karyn by Monday, January 10.
5. Assessment proposal
 - a. Motion to approve proposal, second, update motion to approve with editing changes from Lori, approved (see updated proposal below)
6. Matters arising
 - a. Taylor Hanson Wald will be taking over administrative support of Essential Studies starting in the spring semester.

Spring Meeting Dates

January 14 - Friday

January 31 - Monday

February 11 - Friday

February 28 – Monday

March 11 - Friday

March 28 - Monday

April 8 - Friday

April 25 - Monday

May 9 – Friday (finals week)

Proposal: Change to UND Essential Studies Assessment Process

Date Initiated: April 2021

Date Approved by UND ES Committee: [Date] [12/13/2021](#)

Date Approved by UND Assessment Committee: [Date]

Submitted By: UND Essential Studies Committee [\[list members\]](#) [Brooke Solberg](#), [Forrest Ames](#), [Christopher Felege](#), [Donovan Widmer](#), [Julie Robinson](#), [Craig Carlson](#), [Jody Paulson](#), [Thyra Knapp](#), [Stephanie Homstad](#), [Lori Robison](#), [Karyn Plumm](#), [Kristen Borysewicz](#), [Scott Correll](#), [Christina Fargo](#), [Brad Rundquist](#), [Tim Burrows](#), [Danielle Korsmo](#), [Dawson Dutchak](#), [Kaelan Reedy](#)

I. BACKGROUND

A. Current Process

1. Two of the six ES learning goals are assessed every three years.
2. Student artifacts related to the ES goals being assessed that year are collected from participating ES Capstone Courses, and sent to the Value Institute for assessment.
3. The Value Institute analyzes artifacts and returns assessment data/findings to UND.
4. Findings from the Value Institute are posted on the ES website for review

B. Limitations of Current Process:

1. Lack of consistent, applicable, and comprehensive data of UND and ES as a whole
 - a. Not assessing individual ES courses
 - b. Not representative of all areas/programs
 - c. Time gaps of years between assessments
 - d. Not comprehensive (only 100 artifacts can be sent to the Value Institute for each goal)
 - e. Current Value Institute offerings are not fully compatible with UND ES goals
2. Current assessment is being conducted by an outside entity instead of by the UND faculty
3. Cost and time delays with the Value Institute process
4. Lack of student engagement with and/or understanding of the ES Learning Goals being assessed (i.e., not linked to their course)
5. Consistent assessment may not be occurring in courses outside of participating Capstone courses
6. Limitations of current data and processes lead to challenges with conducting meaningful campus-wide conversations related to ES assessment

II. PROPOSAL CONSIDERATIONS & DEVELOPMENT

A. Major Considerations in Development of Proposal:

1. Addressing limitations of current process (see I.B above)
 - a. Failing to try to address identified limitations likely could lead to issues from a HLC standpoint
2. Keeping the workload realistic for involved faculty
 - a. Including having clearly defined expectations and instructions related to the process
3. Ensuring that data is collected, stored, distributed, and considered in a meaningful way
4. Trying to develop a process that is flexible and adaptable as needs change over time, so that minor changes needed can be imbedded without significant revision to the entire process
5. Trying to develop a process that help bring more emphasis to the ES Learning Goals involved

6. Ensuring that the new process would be feasible within the ES program and ES Committee framework
- B. Proposal Development Process
1. ES Committee Members sought feedback from their representative colleges
 2. Considerable input from UND Director of Assessment and Accreditation and ES Committee member, Tim Burrows, as it relates to HLC and university-wide assessment processes and needs
 3. Ongoing discussions by the ES Committee
 4. Consideration of assessment processes from other institutions
 5. Collaborative work with the UND Assessment Committee
 6. Collaborative work with 4 of the HLC executive team members (Brooke Solberg, Deb Worley, Ryan Zerr, Scott Correll)

III. **PROPOSED ASSESSMENT PROCESS for ESSENTIAL STUDIES**

We propose a two-stage assessment process that allows for consideration of both formative and summative assessment of the Essential Studies program.

Stage I: Formative, course-based assessment.

We propose to collect assessment information, by learning goal, using student materials that faculty are already collecting in their classrooms. When requests for validation or revalidation are made to the ES program, faculty are asked to identify the assignments, exams, projects, etc. they will use to assess the learning goal they have chosen for ES.

However, to create coherence across sections and departments, we will provide instructions for using the VALUE rubrics for the learning goal. This means that each semester, we will contact instructors who are teaching ES courses that have named the goal under review and remind them to conduct assessment with student materials from that course; we will also hold norming sessions (live and online) for faculty who are teaching a course with that learning goal. We will then collect assessment data directly from instructors on two learning goals per year (one per semester) via a brief qualtrics survey.

This data will help us to understand both how students are doing broadly in various course levels across campus (e.g., 100/200- vs. 300/400-level courses) but also how they are performing in specific areas (an example is attached). This information will be shared with faculty teaching the courses to help them consider how they might improve student learning in this goal in their own courses. Additionally, in partnership with TTaDA, we will hold faculty debriefing and development sessions to better engage in closing-the-loop activities and to foster faculty development through the sharing of ideas about the ES learning goals and program.

Stage II: Summative, end-of-program assessment.

At the end of the first cycle of formative, course-based assessment (in year four after all six goals have been assessed), we commit to reviewing this process and determining how we might address any summative or end-of-program assessment needs. The Essential Studies Committee will continue to develop these plans, and we believe that feedback gathered from faculty during our ES debriefing and development sessions will be helpful in guiding this process.