

APPENDIX C:

RUBRIC FOR STUDENT LEARNING STANDARDS 1.C.1 – 1. C.9

Purpose:

The purpose of this rubric is to support institutions and peer review teams in assuring student learning as detailed in Standard 1.C.1 – 1.C.9 in NWCCU's 2020 Standards for Accreditation.

CRITERION	Initial	Emerging	Developed	Highly Developed
1.C.1 Program content is consistent with recognized fields of study.	No recognized processes for reviewing and updating program content or aligning with recognized fields of study.	Review and update of program content in line with recognized fields of study on a regular schedule in some programs.	Systematic review of all programs includes alignment with fields of study.	All program content is systematically reviewed for relevance and applicability in line with currently recognized fields of study.
1.C.1 Appropriate rigor in student learning outcomes leads to college-level degrees, certificates, or credentials in programs of study. ¹	Course sequencing is based on traditional course numbering; some conversations about appropriate levels within disciplines or among faculty teaching the same course.	Regular processes exist for ensuring comparability in assessment standards appropriate to course level and sequencing; conversations about appropriate levels of rigor in student learning outcomes occurs in some programs.	Definitions of rigor exist and are used to determine appropriate levels of learning for courses, sequences, of courses, and program requirements; rigor builds across an academic program.	Intentionally crafted and sequenced learning activities supported by research provide students the opportunities to create and demonstrate their understanding; students articulate rigor in terms of learning.
1.C.2 Awards of credit, degree, certificates, or credentials for programs are based on student learning. ²	Statements of student learning are available, but evidence of assessment of learning relies on course grades as proxy for learning.	Statements of student learning outcomes are available for all courses and most degrees. There is a trend towards authentic assessment practices.	Courses, programs, certificates and degrees have clearly stated learning outcomes and consistent assessment practices; there is some level of institutional measurement of learning outcomes.	Transcripts include learning outcomes not just courses taken; students articulate learning outcomes.

¹ Schwegler, A. F. (2019). Academic rigor: A comprehensive definition. Quality Matters. Retrieved from <https://www.qualitymatters.org/qa-resources/resource-center/articles-resources/academic-rigor-white-paper-part-one>

² Jankowski, N. A., Timmer, J. D., Kinzie, J., & Kuh, G. D. (2018). Assessment that matters: trending toward practices that document authentic student learning. NILOA. Retrieved from <https://www.learningoutcomesassessment.org/documents/NILOA2018SurveyReport.pdf>

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1.C.2 Learning outcomes are of appropriate breadth, depth and sequencing. ³			Learning outcomes are used in creating course sequences and prerequisite requirements; learning outcomes are appropriate to courses and assessed based on student demonstration relative to expected performance targets.	Learning outcomes are mapped from the course to the program and institution levels, identifying increasing depth and level of student demonstration and multiple methods of assessment. ⁴
1.C.3 All program and degree learning outcomes are published.	Learning outcomes may exist for some programs and degrees, but are largely identified only to enrolled students.	Learning outcomes are identified for courses, programs, and services. They are made available to students and users of services.	Learning outcomes are available to students and the public via multiple methods: catalog, course outlines/ syllabi program websites, brochures, etc.	Learning outcomes are publicly available in language commonly understood at the entry level for the program/degree.
1.C.3 Enrolled students are provided expected learning outcomes for all courses.	All courses have learning outcomes; learning outcomes may be included in course materials, such as syllabi or outlines.	Student learning outcomes are published to all students enrolled in a course via course syllabi, outlines, or other means.	Learning outcomes form the framework of courses; course learning outcomes are available to students before they enroll via course catalogs or other means.	There is consistent commitment to teach to well-formulated learning outcomes, making them transparent to students and clearly linked to assessments.

³ Adelman, C., Ewell, P., Gaston, P., & Schneider, C. G. (2014). The degree qualifications profile 2.0. Lumina Foundation. Retrieved from <https://www.luminafoundation.org/files/resources/dqp.pdf>

⁴ Hutchings, P., Ewell, P., & Banta, T. (2012). Principles of good practice: Aging nicely. AAHE. Retrieved from <https://www.learningoutcomesassessment.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/Viewpoint-Hutchings-EwellBanta.pdf>

CRITERION	Initial	Emerging	Developed	Highly Developed
1.C.4 Admission requirements are easily accessible to students and the public.	General admission requirements are available through centralized functions at the institution; confusion may exist about admission elements for programs, colleges, etc.	Admission requirements are available via multiple methods: website, catalog, program websites, brochures, etc. Program admission requirements are available through program websites or other means.	Admission requirements across the various elements of the institution are mapped such that the public can identify requirements for the institution and the various programs or colleges; checklists and timelines are available to assist with understanding processes.	Admission requirements are developed for readability and accessibility such that they are easily understood by the public; means of tracking applications and progress towards admission are readily accessible to applicants.
1.C.4 Graduation requirements are easily accessible to student and the public.	General graduation requirements are available through centralized functions at the institution; confusion may exist about graduation requirements for programs, colleges, etc.	Graduation requirements are identified for all programs and compatible with general graduation requirements for the institution; graduation requirements are shared with students in programs and available via the college catalog .	Graduation requirements are clearly spelled out to students in programs via planning guides or other documents and progress towards graduation is available to students via degree audits or other means; the public can access graduation requirements via websites, the catalog, or other public means.	Students are regularly apprised of their progress towards meeting graduation requirements; there are means of identifying the impacts of changing majors or programs on graduation requirements; graduation requirements are systematically monitored and updated.

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1.C.5 An effective system of assessment of the quality of learning. ⁵	Assessment of learning is done at the course level with little or no interaction across departments to discuss learning overall.	Academic departments and programs assess student learning within the courses and sequences of courses under their purview. Some cross-disciplinary discussion of student learning occurs, particularly when courses are prerequisites or program requirements.	The institution monitors assessment plans and reports and documents the use of results to improve learning outcomes across academic departments; common assessment elements such as rubrics exist.	The institution has a well-defined system for evaluating the effectiveness of its learning assessment plans, including training, timelines for review, scoring rubrics, and accountability measures across academic departments.
1.C.5 Clearly identified faculty responsibility for curricula, student learning, and instructional improvement.	Departmental faculty are responsible for the curricula and assessment of student learning in the courses offered by their department.	Faculty-led committees, work groups, etc. approve curricula and student learning outcomes following a standardized process.	Faculty-led committees, work groups, etc. approve curricula and student learning outcomes on a cycle intended to improve instructional effectiveness; rationales for curricular changes are provided.	Faculty-led committees, work groups, etc. have established practices for reviewing curricula, analyzing student learning, and planning for instructional improvement across disciplines; impacts of curricular decisions on programs of study are carefully addressed.

⁵ Reneau, F. H., & Howse, M. (2019). Trekking towards sustainable excellence through systematic outcomes assessment. NILOA. Retrieved from <https://www.learningoutcomesassessment.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/AiP-ReneauHowse.pdf>

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1.C.6 Institutional learning outcomes (ILOs) and competencies are established and assessed for all programs or within General Education curriculum.	ILOs may exist; there is no standardized method of assessing ILOs.	ILOs are identified; there are common plans for the assessment of ILOs; some courses and programs identify the ILOs addressed; focus is more on identifying ILOs than on assessing them.	ILOs are identified and mapped across the institution; common methods of assessing ILOs are established and followed across the institution; there is evidence of assessment of ILOs from all programs or within General Education.	A process of establishing and reviewing ILOs is understood across the institution and within the units; ILOs are contributed to by multiple facets of the institution; student exposure to and competency in ILOs is monitored by program and the institution.
1.C.7 Results of student learning assessment are used to inform and improve academic programs. ⁶	Student learning assessment is isolated to courses or sequences of courses in the same discipline. Results may be used to inform course redesign.	Results of student learning assessment are shared within disciplines or related groups and used to improve courses and sequences of courses.	Results of student learning assessment are reviewed by program faculty and used to inform programs; may consult with faculty from other disciplines to inform course choices.	Cross-disciplinary faculty teams representative of the courses that comprise programs of study review student learning outcomes and co-plan for improvements.
1.C.7 Results of student learning assessment are used to inform and improve learning support practices.	Learning support services such as tutoring or access to computer labs is available when arranged by the program, college, or other unit; limited services are available.	Learning support services such as tutoring and access to computer labs are available to students; these services are generically planned and generally accessed based on student initiated contact; students are informed about support services at orientations.	Learning support practices exist for the campus overall and for specific groups to support academic learning outcomes; students are referred to services by faculty and advisors	Learning support practices are available both program-specific and institution-wide across the institution; learning outcomes are identified for learning support programs; students are regularly informed about services, referred by faculty and advisors.

⁶ Smith, K. L., Good, M. R., Sanchez, E. H., & Fulcher, K. H. (2015). Communication is key: Unpacking “Use of assessment results to improve student learning.” *Research & Practice in Assessment*. Retrieved from <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1137955>

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1.C.8 Transfer credit policies are clearly defined, easily accessible, and ensure comparable quality.	Transfer credits may be routinely accepted without comparison or rejected based on idiosyncratic decisions rather than reasoned policies; it is unclear how transfer credits are awarded.	Policies for accepting transfer credits are established; methods for evaluating comparability exist, but are largely based on individual assessments.	Commonly accepted transfer standards such as common course numbering or ACE credits are utilized to help address comparability standards; faculty are involved in analyzing comparable credits.	An established process of review for transfer credits engages faculty in determining comparable quality on an ongoing basis; this process is conducted in a timely, consistent manner.
1.C.8 Credit for prior learning policies are clearly defined, easily accessible, and ensure comparable quality. ⁷	Prior learning credit awards are addressed individually, one-on-one as requested by students.	Some disciplines, programs or colleges have identified procedures for granting prior learning credit; institutional policies exist but may be difficult to decipher.	Policies for applying for and granting prior learning credit are established to ensure comparable quality; procedures are made available to students and the public.	An established process of review for prior learning engages faculty in determining comparable quality on an ongoing basis; the process of applying for prior learning credits is clearly mapped out for students and publicly available.
1.C.9 Graduate programs are aligned with respective disciplines and professions.	Graduate programs are stand-alone, unrelated to standard academic disciplines.	Some graduate programs are aligned with respective disciplines or professions.	All graduate programs are aligned with respective disciplines and professions.	Graduate program requirements are systematically reviewed to keep current in respect to disciplines and professions.
1.C.9 Graduate programs require greater depth, demands, and engagement of students than undergraduate programs.	Graduate program courses strongly resemble undergraduate major courses; other than increased workload demands, it is not clear that the graduate programs are of increased depth or demand.	Graduate program courses are sequenced, with an expectation of increased depth, demand, and engagement as students progress through the program.	Admission requirements for graduate programs clearly identify foundational skills; program courses and experiential requirements are sequenced to build in depth, demand, and engagement.	Graduate programs identify the relationship between undergraduate expectations and graduate expectations, clearly outlining for students how learning will advance across the completion of degree requirements.

⁷ Council on Adult and Experiential Learning. Retrieved from <https://www.cael.org/pla/publications?hsCtaTracking=24a593b0-7dc8-42df-a47f-98b9b679f85c%7C8afe32cb-8009-45b3-9a54-8bed38b0be42>