Core Capacity Subcommittee Worksheet

Task Force Liason: *Bonnie Holmes, holmesb2@sou.edu*

Anna Oliveri
Prakash Chenjeri
Melissa Anderson
Karen Mager
Diana Maltz
Charles Welden
Rachel Jochem
Amanda Casto

PLEASE SEE CAPACITY FEEDBACK FROM PROGRAMS:

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/10rUpRAvDF-3oo_LVtga3gFwD1jkZkNXj5pA049kSAzc/edit?usp=sharing

Subcommittee Charge

The purpose of this subcommittee is to refine and develop your assigned core capacity, including a recommended **capacity** description, 3-5 **measurable proficiencies**, and a **developmental rubric** to be used in assessing student learning (see **glossary** below). Your subcommittee will complete this work while considering feedback from academic programs and make recommendations to the Transforming General Education Task Force by February 26. Working from your recommendations, the Task Force will finalize a proposal to move forward to Faculty Senate.

Please note: *while students have not been assigned to the subcommittees, faculty are welcome and encouraged to invite student involvement.*

Your assigned capacity is:

INQUIRY & ANALYSIS

Original: The capacity for Inquiry & Analysis enables students to pose meaningful questions; gather, analyze, and evaluate relevant information; and articulate how

that information contributes to an understanding of the world and shapes decisions, actions, and conclusions.

Updated: The capacity for Inquiry & Analysis enables students to pose meaningful questions; gather, analyze, evaluate, and synthesize relevant information; and articulate how the information cycle contributes to an understanding of the world and shapes decisions, actions, and conclusions.

As you work on your capacity, its proficiencies, and its rubric for assessment, please keep the following in mind:

First, it is not expected that our general education program alone will give students sufficient opportunities to develop this capacity to their fullest potential. Indeed, our general education program will be designed to introduce students to the importance of this capacity and provide them with the tools necessary to continue to develop their capacity throughout their college education and their lives.

Second, as you develop the proficiencies that are necessary to your capacity, remember that all of those proficiencies will need to be addressed in each approved capacity course. Please try to be realistic about what can be achieved in general education courses.

Third, when setting rubric benchmarks, the "skillfully developed" and "exceptionally developed" capacity goals should describe our aspirations for students as they mature into lifelong learners beyond their undergraduate career at SOU, not necessarily the achievement we expect to see in general education assessment. Developmental rubrics should recognize that students will enter general education courses with varying levels of capacity development. Some may even enter with advanced skills.

Glossary

CAPACITY — ***a student's ability to learn, retain, apply, and continuously refine a framework of cross-disciplinary knowledge, skills, and/or dispositions***.

CROSS-DISCIPLINARY (Suggested term = MULTIDISCIPLINARY) — ***not unique to a specific discipline***.

DEVELOPMENTAL RUBRIC — ***a measurement tool utilizing clear level descriptions to convey proficiency development, with standards for each desired proficiency***.

DISPOSITIONS — ***the learned habits of mind that shape the way students receive, respond to, value, organize, internalize, and act upon information and ideas***.

MEASURABLE — ***able to be evaluated as "not developed," "developing," "developed," "skillfully developed," or "exceptionally developed" based on the collection of quantitative or qualitative data drawn from student work***.

PROFICIENCY — ***measurable knowledge, skills, and/or dispositions within a broader capacity ("students will be able to …")***.

Subcommittee Tasks

1. Refine the name, definition, and description of your assigned capacity, informed by feedback from programs across campus.

2. Identify and define 3-5 measurable proficiencies required to demonstrate the capacity as you have defined it. These proficiencies will need to be developed and assessed in all approved capacity courses.

3. Using the template provided, draft a developmental rubric that could be used to assess your 3-5 measurable proficiencies.

4. Consider additional questions assigned by the Transforming General Education Task Force, submitted by university faculty, or raised in subcommittee discussions.

5. Develop a glossary for any capacity-specific terms that should be defined for students and faculty alike.

6. Submit your recommendations to the Transforming General Education Task Force no later than February 26.

Additional Direction & Capacity-Specific Questions

The Transforming General Education Task Force asks this subcommittee to consider the following issues as you complete your work:

> **The Task Force drew from the AAC&U definitions of inquiry and analysis when proposing this capacity: "Inquiry is a systematic process of exploring issues, objects or works through the collection and analysis of evidence that results in informed conclusions or judgments. Analysis is the process of breaking complex topics or issues into parts to gain a better understanding of them." Our aim was to consider the various "ways of knowing" in the liberal arts and identify the cross-disciplinary skills in critical thinking and information literacy at their core.**
>
> **The Task Force believes students should develop their capacity in multiple modes of inquiry and methods of analysis. With that goal in mind, we have considered the**

possibility of teaching Inquiry & Analysis through various lenses, for instance, either broad disciplinary lenses (such as aesthetic inquiry, humanistic inquiry, social inquiry, scientific inquiry, etc.) or lenses focused on the object of inquiry and analysis (such as inquiry and analysis of human expression, of human society, of the natural world, etc.). We ask the subcommittee to consider whether such lenses should be applied, and if so, which lenses would best serve students as they develop their broader capacity for Inquiry & Analysis.

The Task Force has also considered the question of whether or not writing development is an essential component of a student's capacity for Inquiry & Analysis, and one version of the model we proposed included a writing-intensive requirement for Inquiry & Analysis courses. As you develop your proficiencies, we ask you to consider whether or not writing-intensive classes would be necessary to assess their development.

Early in Winter term, the Task Force will provide your subcommittee with additional feedback from academic programs to consider.

Please Complete This Sheet & Return by 02/26/2021

A. Recommended Capacity Name: Inquiry and Analysis

B. Please write a recommended definition/description of the capacity in no more than one paragraph: The capacity for Inquiry & Analysis enables students to pose meaningful questions; gather, analyze, evaluate, and synthesize relevant information; and articulate how the information cycle contributes to an understanding of the world and shapes decisions, actions, and conclusions.

C. In a clear manner, as if writing to a student advisee, explain why this subcommittee believes this capacity is important for students to develop and exhibit in life:
This capacity is vital for developing a critically literate society. It will help you develop your awareness of the information cycle and how information is valued, deepen your understanding of your role as a producer and consumer of knowledge across multiple disciplines, and prepare you for your responsibility as a contributing citizen living in a democratic and global community.

D. Please list no fewer than 3 and no more than 5 measurable proficiencies that should be developed in order to demonstrate this capacity.

Students will be able to:

1) ASK RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND PROPOSE HYPOTHESES OR THESES

a. Asks research questions that are focused, interesting, feasible, and appropriate to the area of study.
b. Presents sufficient relevant background information and context
c. Proposes hypotheses that are testable, or thesis statements that are arguable

2) DEVELOP AND UTILIZE A RELIABLE METHOD TO GATHER PERTINENT INFORMATION

a. Recognizes how a discipline's information should be gathered
b. Utilizes the method efficiently to gather information
c. Articulates the method and reliability of the method in a skillful manner

3) ANALYZE AND EVALUATE INFORMATION

a. Deconstructs information using multiple perspectives as warranted by the inquiry
b. Assesses information for credibility using criteria appropriate for the inquiry
c. Determines relevance of information for the purposes of the inquiry
d. Explains how the discipline's information is produced and consumed

4) DRAW AND ARTICULATE APPROPRIATE CONCLUSIONS FROM INFORMATION

a. Conclusion is logically tied to a range of information, including opposing viewpoints
b. Related outcomes (consequences and implications) are identified
c. Clearly communicates the related implications and consequences of the analysis
d. Objectively reflects upon own assertions

5) RELATE KNOWLEDGE GAINED TO A LARGER CONTEXT

a. Understands that the knowledge exists in a wider context
b. Draws connections between the knowledge and the wider context
c. Synthesizes their primary analysis with discoveries in previous scholarship
d. Acknowledges shifts in cultural understanding
e. Situates their findings in a nuanced way

E. Please complete fill-in this rubric template:

This rubric is not intended for assignment grading but for developing general education courses and assessing student portfolios.

	Not Developed - 0	Developing - 1	Developed - 2	Skillfully Developed - 3	Exceptionally Developed - 4
Prakash and Charles: **Students will be able to ask an appropriate, relevant research question and formulate a clear, testable hypothesis or arguable thesis statement (that advances the knowledge). Description:(formulate thesis, hypotheses, etc.)**	Question is unclear or irrelevant to the topic No hypothesis or thesis statement.	Question is simplistic or hypothesis/thesis statement is not clear and/or not testable/arguable	Question is clear and relevant and hypothesis/ thesis statement is testable/arguable. Insufficient context or background information	Question is better than adequate, hypothesis/thesis statement is testable/arguable, and context is sufficient.	Question is relevant and original. Hypothesis/thesis statement is testable/arguable. Sufficient context/background information provided.
Anna: **Students will be able to develop and utilize a reliable method to gather pertinent information Description:**	The student's method of information gathering is unreliable and lacks discipline perspective	The student recognizes how the discipline's information can be gathered, but fails to articulate the method and reliability	The student recognizes how the discipline's information should be gathered and begins to articulate the method and reliability in a rudimentary manner	The student recognizes how the discipline's information should be gathered and can articulate the method and reliability in a reasonable manner	The student fully recognizes how the discipline's information should be gathered and can clearly articulate the method and reliability in a skillful manner
Melissa: **Students will be able to analyze information from multiple perspectives as needed; evaluate information for credibility and relevance; and explain how a discipline's information is produced and consumed Description:**	Information is summarized uncritically without analysis, citation, and/or contextualization; information lacks credibility or is not appropriate for the discipline and/or project	Information is presented with superficial analysis, minimal contextualization, and inconsistent citation. Most information sources are lacking credibility, and are not appropriate for the discipline and/or project	Information is presented with some analysis and contextualization, but analysis relies on a single perspective. Most information is cited, but citations are not consistent. Some information sources lack credibility or are not appropriate to the discipline or project.	Information is analyzed, contextualized, and cited according to disciplinary conventions. Analysis considers multiple perspectives. Information sources are credible and appropriate for the discipline and project.	Information is presented with skillful analysis with contextualization and references other scholarly work with appropriate citations. Analysis considers multiple perspectives and selects the best lens for investigation. Information sources are credible and appropriate for the discipline and project.

Amanda and Bonnie: **Students will be able to draw appropriate conclusions from information & articulate them** **Description:**	Fails to draw any conclusions or draws conclusions which inaccurately or contradictorily reflect the information analyzed	Conclusion is inconsistently tied to some of the information discussed; related outcomes (consequences and implications) are oversimplified	Presents a conclusion which draws on most, but not all, of the information analyzed or evaluated Conclusion is logically tied to information (because information is chosen to fit the desired conclusion); some related outcomes (consequences and implications) are identified clearly	Conclusion is logically tied to a range of information, including opposing viewpoints; related outcomes (consequences and implications) are identified clearly	Draws evaluative conclusions that consider all information collected (are logical and reflect informed evaluation and students' ability to place evidence and perspectives discussed in priority order); clearly communicates the related implications and consequences of their analysis; objectively reflects upon their own assertions
Rachel and Diana: **Students will be able to relate the knowledge gained to the larger context** **Description:**	The student does not acknowledge there is a wider context surrounding the knowledge.	The student gestures to the wider context but has not really justified or elaborated on the connection. There may be a general statement somewhere in the student work, but it is not explained.	The student understands that the knowledge exists in a wider context, and has begun research and has presented only a summary. Furthermore, the student has only pursued limited contextual research and/or made limited connections between the knowledge and the wider context, so the student leans on outmoded thinking, irrelevant information, and/or overgeneralization.	The student has weighed the available documentation and understands the context beyond their own discoveries. Their work demonstrates a weighing of the evidence, but the synthesis is still emerging.	The student has thought through the implications of the knowledge in its contexts and has arrived at a complex analysis and original contribution. The student has synthesized their primary analysis with discoveries in previous scholarship, acknowledges shifts in cultural understanding, and situates their findings in a nuanced way.

F. Does the subcommittee recommend any specific professional development opportunities be made available for faculty charged with teaching this capacity? Professional development opportunities may include: facilitating and leading research projects within the field, epistemological understanding of one's field, workshops on issues related to teaching information literacy in specific fields, workshops on how to effectively teach writing within one's field.

G. Please share any additional recommendations, questions, or unresolved debates your subcommittee has for this capacity:

The issue of writing needs to be examined, and how students will develop writing skills. This should include a discussion about the use of the term "writing intensive" and what this term does or should convey. The definition of writing intensive should therefore be discussed - "intensive" can't be defined solely by numbers of pages, but rather it should be determined by quality. Revision and editing of multiple drafts should be considered as well. As it relates to quality, writing conventions among disciplines can be very different, and there should be flexibility for quality writing across different types.

The general opinion of the subcommittee is that writing should be incorporated into all courses, and not restricted to just one class. Departments should be responsible for developing writing skills as well - it cannot fall just to Gen Ed, but needs to be developed during students' entire time at SOU.

One concern shared by members of the subcommittee is that writing is not showing up (explicitly) in the proficiencies or descriptions of the capacities. Will there be a writing requirement that is part of Gen Ed? It seems the purpose seminar is meant to be writing intensive, but then those skills need to be bridged across to the majors - there needs to be some writing redundancy/reinforcement across classes.

It remains to be determined if this specific capacity can even be taught *without* a writing (or presentation) component (whether it is considered "intensive" or not).

On suggestion - perhaps there need to be fewer gen ed options, but the options have required writing element