

SUCCESSMENT

CONCORD UNIVERSITY'S
ASSESSMENT NEWSLETTER

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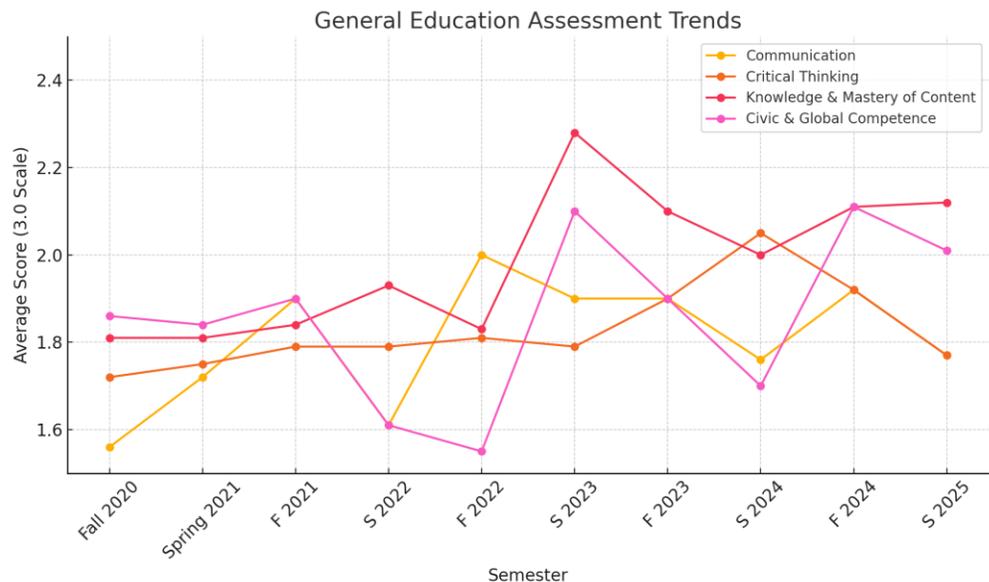
*Closing the Loop:
Strategies for
Meaningful Data Use*

The goal of this newsletter is to promote better awareness and understanding of assessment, and to keep Concord faculty, staff, and students informed on important and relevant information related to assessment and accountability.

What's Happening in Assessment

Trends in General Education Learning Outcomes

As part of our commitment to continuous improvement, we've analyzed General Education assessment data across the last several semesters. This comparison highlights progress and opportunities in the four key learning outcomes: Communication, Critical Thinking, Knowledge/Mastery of Content, and Civic & Global Competence.



Notable Highlights

- Knowledge/Mastery of Content has steadily increased, peaking at 2.12 in Spring 2025, up from 1.84 in Fall 2021. This reflects stronger alignment between assignments and program goals.
- Critical Thinking performance has remained relatively consistent, suggesting a need to re-examine instructional strategies and rubric application for growth.
- Civic & Global Competence reached a high of 2.11 in Fall 2024 but dipped slightly in Spring 2025, indicating an area to monitor.
- Communication scores have rebounded after earlier dips, reaching 1.92 in Fall 2024 before a small drop.

These insights are essential for departments as they prepare for Fall 2025 course assessments. For tools to help align assignments, apply rubrics, and use results, refer to Chapters 3 and 4 of the updated **Assessment Handbook**. Need support analyzing your course-level assessment data? Contact Dr. Amanda Sauchuck at asauchuck@concord.edu to schedule a consultation

Faculty-Tested Tips for Efficient Assessment

Assessment doesn't have to be overwhelming to be meaningful. These faculty-approved strategies are designed to provide valuable insight into student learning *without* adding hours to your workload. Based on national best practices, these tips support efficient and effective classroom- and program-level assessment.

QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS?

Contact

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Double-Duty Assignments. Design assignments that align with both course objectives and program learning outcomes. A single well-structured project or reflection can be used to assess multiple goals across different levels (course, program, and institutional).

Refer to Chapter 2 of the updated Assessment Handbook for guidance on alignment.

Signature Assignments. Use a common assignment across course sections or programs to consistently measure learning outcomes. This helps streamline both assessment and reporting while allowing for cross-course comparison.

Embedded Rubrics in Blackboard. Build rubrics into your LMS to improve grading consistency, reduce subjectivity, and collect data in real-time. This also supports transparency for students and simplifies data export. *See Chapter 3 of the handbook for rubric examples.*

Peer & Self-Assessment. Incorporate student peer review or self-assessment activities. These build reflective thinking and relieve some of the instructor burden while reinforcing learning outcomes.

Focus on One Big Question. Instead of assessing everything at once, select one key learning question per semester (e.g., "Are students applying theoretical knowledge to real-world problems?") and collect focused evidence. *This approach helps faculty reflect meaningfully on what matters most in student learning.*

References

NILOA. (2023). *Using Signature Assignments for Assessment*.

www.learningoutcomesassessment.org

Suskie, L. (2018). *Assessing Student Learning: A Common Sense Guide* (3rd ed.). Jossey-Bass.

Integrating AI Ethically to Enhance Learning

Instead of resisting AI tools, many institutions are exploring ways to ethically incorporate them into the student learning process. When used with intention and transparency, AI can support, rather than undermine, student development and authentic assessment.

Why Ethical AI Use Matters

- AI tools like ChatGPT, Grammarly, and Perplexity are already being used by students. Faculty can either guide that use or risk students using them without understanding academic expectations.
- Integrating AI promotes digital literacy, a critical 21st-century skill included in frameworks such as AAC&U's *Essential Learning Outcomes* and NACE's *Career Readiness Competencies*.

Ethical AI Integration Strategies

1. Assign AI-Enhanced Projects: Ask students to generate ideas or outlines using AI, then reflect critically on the tool's output and limitations.
2. Teach Prompt Engineering: Help students learn how to structure thoughtful, accurate prompts to engage with AI responsibly.
3. Create Comparison Tasks: Have students compare AI-generated content with their own or scholarly sources to build evaluative thinking.
4. Clarify Expectations: Include a syllabus statement on acceptable use of AI in assignments to ensure transparency and fairness.

According to The Chronicle of Higher Education, institutions that promote *ethical, guided use* of AI foster academic integrity and help students gain valuable workplace skills (EDUCAUSE, 2024; CHE, 2023).

References

EDUCAUSE. (2024). *AI and Higher Education: Balancing Innovation and Integrity*.

The Chronicle of Higher Education. (2023). *AI in the Classroom: Teaching with (and Around) ChatGPT*.
