

Integrative Learning Rubric

This Rubric is adapted from the Integrative Learning Rubric developed by the Association of American Colleges & Universities as a part of its Valid Assessment of Learning in Undergraduate Education (VALUE) project.¹ Consider the following definition and framing language used by AAC&U to introduce the rubric.

Integrative learning is an understanding and a disposition that a student builds across the curriculum and co-curriculum, from making simple connections among ideas and experiences to synthesizing and transferring learning to new, complex situations within and beyond the campus.

Fostering students' abilities to integrate learning—across courses, over time, and between campus and community life—is one of the most important goals and challenges for higher education. Initially, students connect previous learning to new classroom learning. Later, significant knowledge within individual disciplines serves as the foundation, but integrative learning goes beyond academic boundaries. Indeed, integrative experiences often occur as learners address real-world problems, unscripted and sufficiently broad, to require multiple areas of knowledge and multiple modes of inquiry, offering multiple solutions and benefiting from multiple perspectives. Integrative learning also involves internal changes in the learner. These internal changes, which indicate growth as a confident, lifelong learner, include the ability to adapt one's intellectual skills, to contribute in a wide variety of situations, and to understand and develop individual purpose, values and ethics. Developing students' capacities for integrative learning is central to personal success, social responsibility, and civic engagement in today's global society. Students face a rapidly changing and increasingly connected world where integrative learning becomes not just a benefit...but a necessity.

Because integrative learning is about making connections, this learning may not be as evident in traditional academic artifacts such as research papers and academic projects unless the student, for example, is prompted to draw implications for practice. These connections often surface, however, in reflective work, self assessment, or creative endeavors of all kinds. Integrative assignments foster learning between courses or by connecting courses to experientially-based work. Work samples or collections of work that include such artifacts give evidence of integrative learning. Faculty are encouraged to look for evidence that the student connects the learning gained in classroom study to learning gained in real life situations that are related to other learning experiences, extra-curricular activities, or work. Through integrative learning, students pull together their entire experience inside and outside of the formal classroom; thus, artificial barriers between formal study and informal or tacit learning become permeable. Integrative learning, whatever the context or source, builds upon connecting both theory and practice toward a deepened understanding.

Integrative Learning is central to the Academic Internship Program at TWC. It is the learning that takes place across all of the different activities students undertake as they embark on an academic semester built around an internship in Washington, D.C. In addition to the particular assignment-level learning objectives that might be in place, each assignment also builds toward a set of experiences and accomplishments that will set the stage for rich integrative learning as students make meaning of their overall experience at TWC. The AIP portfolio as a whole not only constitutes the best evidence of integrative learning, but is itself a framework for integrative learning.

We also hope that students will adopt Integrative Learning as a skill of professionalism, leadership and lifelong learning as they embark on the next steps of their life's journey.

¹ Rhodes, Terrel L. ed. 2010. *Assessing Outcomes and Improving Achievement: Tips and Tools for Using Rubrics*. Washington, D.C.: Association of American Colleges and Universities.

