

# UW System Shared Learning Goals Assessment Report for UW-Milwaukee AY 2021–22 to AY 2023–24

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## The UW System Shared Learning Goals

The five UWS Shared Learning Goals are:

1. **Knowledge of Human Cultures and the Natural World** including breadth of knowledge and the ability to think beyond one's discipline, major, or area of concentration. This knowledge can be gained through the study of the arts, humanities, languages, sciences, and social sciences.
2. **Critical and Creative Thinking Skills** including inquiry, problem solving, and higher-order qualitative and quantitative reasoning.
3. **Effective Communication Skills** including listening, speaking, reading, writing, and information literacy.
4. **Intercultural Knowledge and Competence** including the ability to interact and work with people from diverse backgrounds and cultures; to lead or contribute support to those who lead; and to empathize with and understand those who are different than they are.
5. **Individual, Social, and Environmental Responsibility** including civic knowledge and engagement (both local and global), ethical reasoning, and action.

More information about the UW System Shared Learning Goals can be found in the relevant policy document at <https://www.wisconsin.edu/uw-policies/download/Shared-Learning-Goals.pdf>.

## Executive Summary

UW-Milwaukee has adopted the five [UW System Shared Learning Goals](#) as institutional learning goals for undergraduate education (See the [APCC Composite Document 2023](#)).

UWM assesses undergraduate student learning in relation to these five goals using AAC&U Value Rubrics (College of General Studies) and through both **program** and **GER assessments** (all colleges and schools) that are closely aligned with the five system goals.

- **Well above 80%** of all main campus undergraduate students assessed have met instructor and program-set benchmarks **for all five learning goals**.
- The College of General Studies tended to have a lower share of students reaching their benchmark (proficient or above as rated on modified AAC&U VALUE rubrics), ranging from 83% down to 63%, but only UWS Goal 5 (63%) was below their college-set target of 70% or more of students being Proficient or above.
- In Fall of 2021, we introduced a new learning assessment specifically for Service Learning courses, which based on the last report's recommendations, is now being included in our data for UWS Goals.
- The last report recommended an increased focus on assessing UWS Goals 4 and 5. Goal 4 **was assessed 1.5x more** in this three-year period than in the previous one. Goal 5 was **assessed 3x more**. This increase was largely due to the new Service Learning assessment.
- Learning assessment continues to be well-used to improve student outcomes in relation to the UWS Shared Learning Goals. More than **half of all GER assessments result in an instructor action plan** for course improvement. **More than 2/3<sup>rd</sup>s of all Service Learning assessments** result in an action plan. For UWS Goals 1-3, Program assessments result in an action plan roughly 1/4<sup>th</sup> to 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of the time. For Goals 4 and 5, Program Assessments result in action plans 45% and 56% of the time.
- The last report recommended asking programs to re-evaluate their Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) to better capture learning relating to UWS Goals 4 and 5. This was included in the directions for the [2024 Program Learning Outcomes Initiative](#), in which programs were asked to revise their PLOs for public display in the UWM Catalog. This is in progress.
- The final recommendation from the last report was that ongoing GER reform efforts take into consideration alignment with all of the UWS Shared Learning

Goals. The Faculty Senate voted to adopt the proposed GER reform in Spring of 2024, and the proposed changes explicitly maintain the alignment with UWS Shared Learning Goals. New proposed Areas of Inquiry expand opportunities for alignment with Goal 5 (see recommendations below).

- There is also an active proposal from the Center for Student Experience and Talent to implement an experiential learning graduation requirement, which would also contribute to the student experience in relation to Goals 4 and 5 and provide an additional source of data.
- Note that the Program Assessment data is based on **an incomplete dataset**. 25% of programs have not yet submitted data for AY2022-23, and data for 2023-24 is not due until Nov. 1, 2024.

## 2024 Recommendations

- **Continue the regular collection of Service Learning Assessment** data, led by Ben Trager and Melissa Schoeffel in the Center for Student Experience and Talent. This is the most substantial source of data for Goal 5, currently.
- When the new GER policy is implemented, learning assessment data from the new **“Exploring Global Impacts and Innovations”** should be integrated into the assessment for UWS Shared Goal 5. The APCC should be encouraged to articulate learning outcomes for this Area of Inquiry that explicitly align with Goal 5 (including consideration of ethical dimensions).
- For aggregate UWS Shared Goal reporting, it **remains difficult to determine an actual N** (number of students) assessed. While the N is included with each specific dataset, when datasets are reported with student data anonymized and then combined, it is often the case that *multiple assessments of the same student are included*. **Recommend exploring ways that new tools in Canvas**, such as Credentials and Student Pathways, could help us sort through the noise to produce cleaner data (grouping multiple assessments of the same goal for the same student together), so that in aggregate reporting we can identify the actual N.
- With the upcoming closure of the branch campuses comprising the College of General Studies, there are no recommendations related to the CGS datasets.

## Results 2021-2024 (Table)

		E	N	% Students Met Benchmark	% Programs Meeting Targets	% of Assessment Datasets Resulting in Action Plan
UWS Goals	1	CGS	5,256*	80%	N/A	100%‡
		Prog	14,642	82%	80%	24%
		GER	71,127*	85%	N/A	56%
		Service Learning	552	93%	N/A	80%
	2	CGS	2,216*	71%	N/A	100%‡
		Prog	21,760	83%	82%	35%
		GER	26,753*	83%	N/A	64%
		Service Learning	831	94%	N/A	68%
	3	CGS	3,285*	83%	N/A	100%‡
		Prog	10,568	85%	73%	26%
		GER	31,285*†	85%	N/A	55%
		Service Learning	2,704	98%	N/A	69%
	4	CGS	645*	70%	N/A	100%‡
		Prog	6,753	86%	87%	45%
		GER	12,553*	88%	N/A	77%
		Service Learning	979	97%	N/A	68%
	5	CGS	441*	63%	N/A	100%‡
		Prog	6,756	86%	85%	56%
		GER	6,759*	94%	N/A	59%
		Service Learning	2,420	91%	N/A	72%

E = Source of Evidence (CGS assessment, Program Assessment, GER assessments, Service Learning Assessment)

\* This figure includes instances of the same student being assessed across different courses, or on multiple criteria aligned with the same learning goal, and so is better interpreted as the number of individual assessments **and not as the number of students**.

† Includes assessment of Written/Oral Comm in GER courses as well as OWC-A and OWC-B assessments.

‡ The aggregate assessment process for the College of General Studies results in a college-wide action plan.

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## What is Assessed?

Evidence of student learning in relation to the UWS Shared Learning Goals comes from four distinct sources of assessment data and practice:

1. *Direct Assessment of UWS Shared Learning Goals:* The College of General Studies uses the AAC&U's VALUE Rubrics to assess learning for the UWS Shared Learning Goals; some additional direct assessment is done, often with the VALUE Rubrics, by instructors of GER courses. **With the branch campuses being closed and the College of General Studies being discontinued, this source of data will not be present in future reports.**
2. *Program Assessment:* Program Learning Outcomes for undergraduate degree programs at UWM are aligned with the UWS Shared Learning Goals. Because most program assessment data is collected from the terminal end of a student's course of study, **the program assessment data is the best representation of terminal student learning in relation to these goals.** Benchmarks and targets for program learning outcomes are set by the faculty of each program.
3. *Assessment of General Education Requirement (GER) Outcomes:* UWM requires the assessment of student learning in GER courses in relation to established learning outcomes for a range of GER competency and distribution requirements. Through AY2023-24, these include:
  - a) OWC-A (Oral and Written Communication, Part A)
  - b) OWC-B (Oral and Written Communication, Part B)
  - c) QL-A (Quantitative Literacy, Part A)
  - d) QL-B ((Quantitative Literacy, Part B)
  - e) Divisional Outcomes
    - i. Arts
    - ii. Humanities
    - iii. Natural Sciences
    - iv. Social Sciences
    - v. Cultural Diversity

In Fall 2024, as GER reform is implemented, the divisions will be replaced by Areas of Inquiry (which largely still align with the existing categories) with the addition of two other areas: Fostering Health and Well-Being and Exploring Global Impacts and Innovations.

See **Table 1** for a comparison of the sources of evidence in this report.

See **Table 2** for an alignment chart between the UWS Shared Learning Goals and GER outcomes.

See **Table 3** for the portion of undergraduate programs with program learning outcomes directly aligned with each UWS Shared Learning Goal.

**Table 1. Comparison of Sources of Evidence**

<b>Assessment Methods</b>	<b>Direct Assessment</b>	<b>General Education Assessment</b>			<b>Service Learning Assessment</b>	<b>Program Assessment</b>
<b><i>What is Assessed</i></b>	UWS Goals	GER divisional outcomes	OWCA & OWCB outcomes	QLA & QLB outcomes	UWS Goals	Program-specific learning outcomes
<b><i>Who Assesses</i></b>	College of General Studies	General Education course instructors	OWCA & OWCB instructors	QLA & QLB instructors	Instructors of Service Learning courses	Undergraduate programs
<b><i>Who is Assessed</i></b>	CGS students	General Education students	OWCA & OWCB students	QLA & QLB students	Students in Service Learning courses	Program graduates
<b><i>How Assessed</i></b>	AACU Value rubrics	Various methods: instructor decides	OWCA & OWCB rubric	Various methods: instructor decides	Various methods: Instructor decides	Various methods: program decides
<b><i>Reporting Requirement</i></b>	Annual	At least once every 5 years, with some assessment being done every year.	Annual for OWCA; at least once every 3 years for QLB	Annual for QLA; at least once every 3 years for QLB	Not required per se, but requested at least annually	Assessment of at least one outcome every year, with all outcomes covered every 5 years
<b><i>Pertains to Which Goals</i></b>	All	All (see Table 2)	Goal 3	Goal 2	All	Various
<b><i>Number of Assessments 2021-2024</i></b>	2 assessments	507 assessments	77 assessments	71 assessments	140 assessments	444 assessments





**Table 3.** Coverage of UWS Shared Learning Goals by Undergraduate Programs

		UG Projects in Weave	# of UG Projects with an aligned PLO*	%*
UWS Goals	1	99	69	70%
	2	99	85	86%
	3	99	74	75%
	4	99	47	47%
	5	99	43	43%

\*PLO = Program Learning Outcome

\*This data can be updated after the [2024 Program Learning Outcomes Initiative](#) is complete, which will impact the percentages listed above. The percentages above come from an evaluation of the existing PLOs conducted in late 2021.

## Sources of Data: Where to Find More Detailed Breakdowns

Specific Sources of Data:

- Program Assessment: [ProgramAssessment.xlsx](#)
- Service Learning Assessment: [Service Learning Assessment.xlsx](#)
- GER Assessment: [GER Assessment Overall Statistics.xlsx](#)
- CGS: [CGS\\_2021\\_2022\\_Assessment\\_Results.docx](#)  
[CGS 2022-2023 Assessment Results.docx](#)

For more detailed breakdowns of data from each source, including the distribution of scores, see the individual spreadsheets and/or reports.

To see sample rubrics used in the assessments discussed in this report, see: [Rubrics\\_UWSGoals.pdf](#)