LEARNING TO ASSESS

Cultivating Democracy

Civic Engagement in an Election Year

With an election year upon us, what better time than now to use ALT's Civic Engagement Rubric to connect Democracy, learning, and assessment. Results from a recent national survey by the Institute for Citizens and Scholars suggest that more civic knowledge drives more civic engagement and that higher levels of civic engagement are associated with greater commitment to democracy. But there's a serious problem: *How do we educate our young people on how our democracy works and how to be effective community members?* This year ALT is challenging faculty and staff to use the Civic Engagement Rubric to educate and assess learning this year. The rubric has five dimensions: Civic Identity, Ethical Issues & Dilemmas, Sustainability, Civic Knowledge, and Integrated Learning. This is not a partisan issue, but rather a simple matter of understanding the political system that is core to ensuring rights and representation for all people. So, please consider implementing the rubric within your classes this academic year. Additionally, Free Speech Week from Oct. 21-27th and is an annual, nonpartisan celebration of our country's freedom to express our views. We can devote a little a class time through small projects, lectures, guest speakers or just by asking students to explore freedom of speech in the context of the discipline or field.

Scan me!

GEA Online Tool

Fall Assessment Labs
Wed. Sep. 4, 1:00-3:00 pm, E134
Wed. Dec. 4, 1:00-3:00 pm, E134

PAR Assessment Sessions
**Follow Up Sessions TBD**

ALT Meetings
8/28, 9/25, 10/14-15 (HLC) 10/23, 11/20, 2/26, 3/26, 4/23 (3-4 pm, M 197)

Program Review: 8/14, 9/20, 10/25, 11/22, S/LW, 2/21, 3/21

Have ?'s
Email: Leonard.macias@paradisevalley.edu or felicia.ramirez@paradisevalley.edu

Graduates Demonstrate Gains in General Education

The college is committed to providing state of the art general education learning opportunities that help students develop authentic abilities and dispositions for 21st century tasks, that are highly marketable, and that employers demand. To what extent does the college fulfill that promise? Is there evidence? What does it tell us?
To help answer these questions, ALT collaborated with Michael Tyler (IE) and Marc Varner (IT) to complete an analysis of learning outcomes results for PVCC graduates, the first report of its kind at PVCC. We discovered that more than half of 2021 & 2022 graduates had a record of being assessed with GEA Rubrics, that Graduates tend to score higher on average than non-graduates on all nine Rubrics, and distribution of level of achievement was same across student demographics for nearly all areas.
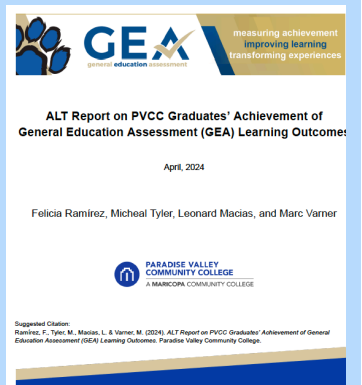
Assessment Results

Percentage of Residential Faculty Participation in GEA per Academic Year
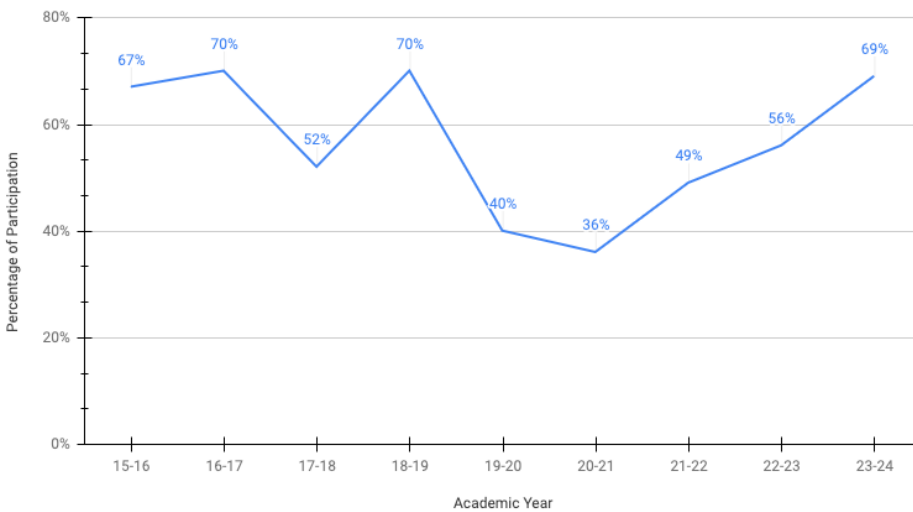
69% (n 83) Residential Faculty measured PVCC Institutional Student Learning Outcomes using the GEA Rubrics during 2023-2024. Our highest total number on record!

Divisions with most Forms: ENG, BS, P.SCI, BUS/IT

Divisions most improved from 22/23: MATH, BS, COM, COUN

Percentage of Students that Meet or Exceed Minimum Standards on GEA Rubrics 2023-2024
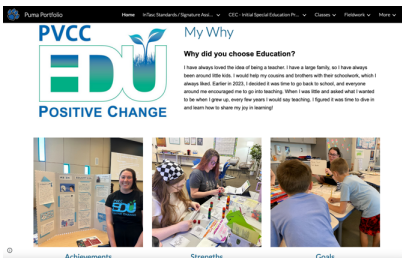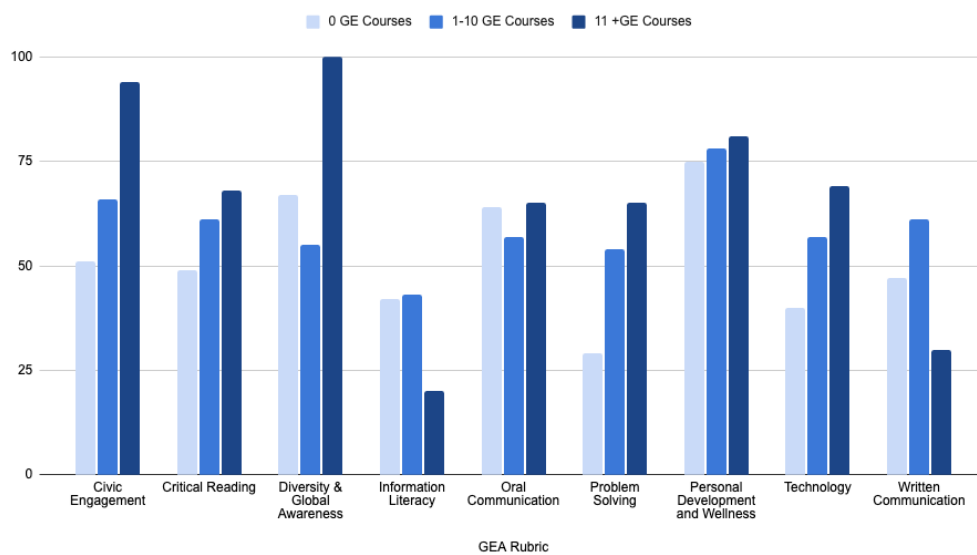
ePortfolio Competition Winners

Congratulations to Sydeny Bacome, who is the winner of the ePortfolio Puma Program Prowess Award. Sydney completed her Associate's Degree during the Covid pandemic, and has maintained being a Honor student while attending PV, motivating her to excel in all her academic work. Sydney's shares that,"character strengths are psychological ingredients" that compose our personalities and our identities, and make us who we are."

Congratulations to Will Zhou, winner of the ePortfolio Puma Tracks Award. Will has accomplished a lot here at PV. Will's joy is definitely a strength, and will serve him well in his goal to become a Social Worker. His love of helping others is constantly seen here on campus as he often volunteers for Student Life events like the Welcome Tent, Community Food Drive and other Student Life events.

# Congrats to the 23-24 President's Assessment Award (PAAW) Recipients

Top Project: Sean Petty (BUS/IT) The course was CIS270-Essentials of Network and Information Security. The course and general education assessment project was aimed at measuring learning outcomes of key course competencies aligned with industry standards, particularly the CompTIA Certification. The focus of Sean's project was getting students prepared for challenging and complex threats of cybersecurity. As Petty remarks, "As cyber threats become more sophisticated, there is a pressing need for well-trained professionals who can effectively secure network infrastructures." So, Sean's project specifically identified gaps in knowledge and skills where students needed more practice to ensure they were ready to meet industry standards by semester's end. The Post-test results revealed that student learned did occur, from a post-test score of .50 to post-test scores of 1.50. What an important assessment that supports student learning while preparing them for real world problems in their future industry. Bravo!

2nd Place: Cheryl McKell Price (ENG) In ENG102, Cheryl got to work focusing on measuring both course and general education outcomes. Cheryl used the Written Communication Rubric and measured Introduction & Purpose. The course competency Cheryl assessed was writing for specific rhetorical contexts, including audience, purpose, topic and circumstance. The reason behind assessing these two areas was that Cheryl believed students alter their language and communication style to fit certain audiences, but that, "However, many students do not apply those same skills of audience and situation analysis they have honed through their social interactions to the more formal or unfamiliar writing situations they encounter in class or in life." So, to help her students recognize the social nature of writing and understanding rhetorical situations, Cheryl asked students to evaluate a situation and their intended audience, and write accordingly to accomplish their purpose. The post-test results highlighted student gains in both the course and general education outcomes. Moving forward, Cheryl remarked, "Going forward, I'm going to work on being more aware of how to incorporate such language and real-world examples and my own classroom language and practices." Awesome job!

3rd Place: Lisa Tolentino (FPA) To better prepare her students for work in the gaming industry, Professor Tolentino's General Education Assessment project used the Personal Development & Wellness Rubric. Dr. Tolentino remarks that successful designers and leaders in competitive design-based fields need to have strong project management skills. So, her assessment project helped students strengthen those skills by having students write, meet and reflect on their own goals over a long project. To accomplish this Dr. Tolentino had her students complete three steps for their project, first creating an Excel Spreadsheet so students can plan out all the tasks they need to complete for their story. The 2nd step has students capture initial tasks they had started, with the last step having students write a reflection on their completed project. Overall, the results shared by Dr. Tolentino highlighted that students' learning improved. Students appreciated having a process that helped them complete a large project by breaking it down into smaller pieces and listing specific due dates. Fabulous work to better prepare students for the field and helping them make informed career choices!

Top Cocurricular Assessment: Paula Crossman (LIB) Paula teamed up with Dual Enrollment instructor, Joe Kovesdy (CSHS). The assessment project measured students' ability to differentiate between scholarly and popular sources for a research paper on fast food. Paula used the Information Literacy Rubric to measuring the follow outcomes: Determine the nature and extent of the information needed to define the scope of research for a specific topic and to evaluate sources in a critical manner. Paula started out with simple questions about sources, databases and search methods. She asked students if they were familiar with the acronyms of CRAAP or SIFT. The acronyms represent methods on how to evaluate credible and non-credible sources. A few students heard of CRAAP, but none had heard of SIFT. However, before the session, Paula had hung up poster boards around the room with headings that read: What are the impacts of fast food on children's health or what are the impacts of fast food on the meat industry? These were just a few headings Paula had posted for students. The students were then instructed to use the Opposing Viewpoints database for research. Students who did use the questions written on the boards as their research questions did significantly better on using databases and finding material relevant to their topic. At the end of the research sessions, student did demonstrate an much improved understanding of defining what type of information they need for their topic, and how to discern credible from non-credible sources. Kudos to Paula for making the most out of her time helping student understand the basics of good research!
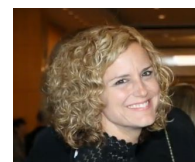
4th Place: Tom Schmidt (PSY) Dr. Schmidt's assessment project focused on critical reading, specifically students' ability to read and comprehend the statistical analysis found in the statistical results section of a scholarly article. When developing his assessment, Dr. Schmidt reflected on the changing trend in teaching statistics, "as technology and statistic software become more available, there has been a shift in statistics away from teaching hand held calculations and towards teaching statistical literacy." This shift allows students to become better consumers of statistical information. Tom's pre-test required students to read the results section from a peer-reviewed article and answer questions about the information within the article. The intervention was implemented after the completion of each unit (four total) but before an exam. Tom had students repeat the activity of reading the results section from a scholarly article and answer questions about the information within the article. Students demonstrated an increased understanding of complex concepts and were able to more accurately describe the statistical analysis results from each article. Outstanding!

Top Adjunct Project: Bea Melody Boyd (CHM) Bea's project was a course assessment that measured a concept students' often struggle with. With chemistry, a fundamental concept is the precision of measurements and data, how math is often required to figure out solutions. Bea noticed that students they were having difficulties in keeping track of significant figures during mathematical operations, especially if it is a multistep problem. Bea's pretest revealed her fear, students struggling with the math to determine how many significant figures an answer should have. So, her intervention method was to conduct a mini-lesson specifically on the math portion, using significant figures while introducing a new technique to the students; however, for multi-step calculations, after every individual part Bea would underline the digit, then round off. This was to help students keep better track of significant figures during multi-step problems. Afterwards Bea gave new practice problems to the students to try and went over answers as a class. The results did show a huge improvement of test scores, from a pretest score of 10/15 to 14/15. Going forward Bea plans to require students to specifically turn in practice problems with the work shown to encourage working during class. Excellent work!

Top Dual Enrollment Project: Amanda Seaman (MAT) Amanda is a Dual Enrollment Math Instructor at Cactus Shadows High School. Amanda decided to measure a course outcome from her calculus class, MAT211- Analyze the behavior and continuity of functions using limits. Amanda's pretest was to give students different graphs, piecewise functions and questions relating to matching the graph with the algebraic interpretation, and answer. Students then needed to determine limits at a specific point domain value and as x approaches infinity. Amanda's intervention was to provide a quick interactive Nearpod lesson where students would watch Amanda give an example. Students would duplicate a problem on the next slide to try to arrive at the correct answer. She then picked problems based on the one-sided limits and definition of continuity, which is where the students were struggling. Afterwards, Amanda's results did show an improvement in homework scores that averaged 76% and test scores rose, averaging 88%. This improvement highlights Amanda's focused intervention method designed to help students understand a key course outcome, preparing students for the next sequence of classes. Awesome!

Distinguished Projects:

Raquel Lopez (MATH)

Dr. Lopez designed an assessment with colleague Jo Boalar using the Self-Direction dimension of the Personal Development & Wellness Rubric in MAT 142.

Linda Stearns (CHM)

Dr. Stearns taught the students the SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant & Time-bound) concept of setting goals as the intervention method.

Kishore Dash (BUS/IT)

Dr. Dash helped students improve their understanding and awareness of the opportunities and challenges of the political and cultural variables

Darra Browning (BIO)

Dr. Browning's project was a general education assessment for an online course that used the Critical Reading Rubric, specifically measuring the 'Reflection' on critical reading skills dimension.

Walt Thielen (COM)

Dr. Thielen provided to students a detailed critique of their speech, thus allowing them to make any changes needed to sound quality.

Thank you to all Faculty who submitted projects! We can't wait to see how you improve learning this year!