

## Citizenship Assessment for the LA&S Review

### **Summary:**

Beginning in Spring 2009 Citizenship was assessed with a rubric that contained 4 criteria: Social Science Concepts, Social Science Research, Self and Society and Social Engagement. In Spring 2009 18 political science and 30 psychology papers were assessed with this rubric. No artifacts were assessed from Fall 2009 or Spring 2010. While there may have been no artifacts collected in Fall 2009, in Spring 2010 assessors tried to evaluate General Psychology papers, but determined they could not be assessed for Citizenship. Perhaps in response to this failure, the four rubric categories were revised for Fall 2010 in which 7 American Studies papers were assessed for theoretical concepts, research-based evidence, influences on behavior and institution's abilities.

Starting in the fall of 2011 Fitchburg State University revamped the Citizenship rubric. Artifacts of student work were now scored on criteria related to explanation of event, evidence, student's position, diversity of communities and cultures, and connections to civic engagement. We have data from Fall 2011, Spring 2012, Fall 2012, and Spring 2013. Three of these four assessments were all conducted on the same type of assignment, political science memos. No appropriate papers for citizenship were collected in Fall 2013, and Spring and Fall 2014 assessment has not been completed yet.

While there were substantial changes in the rubric from 2009-2013, it is still possible to draw some conclusions from the data. The analyses suggest a pattern of weakness in using evidence across a range of artifacts even when scored with different rubrics. In addition, in each case that a rubric called for evaluating engagement with social or civic issues, the scorers determined the artifacts could not be assessed in this category. Once the rubric was revised to include assessment of the student's position and of statements about diversity of cultures and communities additional patterns emerged. Student artifacts were consistently scored very negatively in the area of student's position and across two different types of artifacts scorers tended to judge that the work could not be evaluated for students' writing about the diversity of cultures and communities.

Overall, the data suggests that we can do more to foster critical student skills and dispositions in the area of citizenship, both by addressing areas of perceived skill weakness and by trying to structure opportunities for students to demonstrate their attitudes and engagement with civic and social issues. While every year of analysis involved small sample sizes, the patterns in data suggest that if we value the skills of forming and stating a position on issues related to citizenship and using evidence to support those positions, then we can do more to help our students build these skills. On the other hand, if we value our students demonstrating awareness of issues related to diversity and of ways to engage with social and civic issues, then we need to make sure we have assignments in our courses that address these outcomes.

## Analysis of Data:

In 2009 artifacts were collected from 18 students in a 2000-level political science course and 30 students in a 2000-level psychology course and rated for citizenship (Table 1). Although both the political science and the psychology courses were at the 2000 level, the distribution of students across the citizenship ratings was very different. A much higher percentage of students whose work was judged “deficient” were in the psychology course. Across both courses students were rated most poorly in the area of Social Science research. In addition, the artifacts could not be rated for social engagement, suggesting the assignments did not involve any engagement.

**Table 1**  
**Citizenship**  
**Spring 2009**

	<b>Social science concepts (N = 48)</b>	<b>Social science research (N = 48)</b>	<b>Self and society (N = 48)</b>	<b>Social engagement (N = 0)</b>
Proficient	27%	13%	21%	NA
Sufficient	63%	31%	52%	NA
Deficient	10%	56%	27%	NA

The data for Fall 2010 Fitchburg State LA&S were based on 7 analytical family history papers from an Intro to American Studies course, each assessed two times (Table 2). Like the Spring 2009 assessment, the use of evidence for research was rated most poorly with all students rated as deficient. All students were rated as deficient for the category influences on behavior as well, and most for the institution’s abilities category, but it is unclear how the analytical family history assignment would address those criteria.

**Table 2**  
**Citizenship**  
**Fall 2010**

	<b>Theoretical concepts (N = 7)</b>	<b>Research-based evidence (N = 7)</b>	<b>Influences on behavior (N = 7)</b>	<b>Institution’s abilities (N = 7)</b>
Proficient	0%	0%	0%	0%
Sufficient	57%	0%	0%	14%
Deficient	43%	100%	100%	86%

Data for Fall 2011 was based on 9 policy memos from a Political Science course, each assessed twice (Table 3). As in prior years of assessment, the use of evidence was rated lowest of the categories with 61% of artifacts rated as deficient in this regard. An equal number of the policy memos were rated as deficient in the student’s statement of position, a new category in the revised rubric. Two other new

categories in the revised rubric, diversity of cultures and communities and connections to civic engagement were unable to be assessed based on the policy memos. This is similar to the result in the fall 2009 assessment when social engagement could not be assessed in a political science course, suggesting these categories were not asked for in the original assignment.

**Table 3**  
**Citizenship**  
**Fall 2011 (n = 9)**

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Proficient</b>	<b>Sufficient</b>	<b>Deficient</b>	<b>NA/NO</b>
Explanation of Event	22%	67%	11%	0%
Evidence: Selecting and using information	11%	28%	61%	0%
Student's position (perspective, thesis/hypothesis)	11%	28%	61%	0%
Diversity of Cultures and Communities	0%	0%	0%	100%
Connections to Civic Engagement	0%	0%	0%	100%

Political Science Policy papers were used as an artifact once again in Spring 2012 (Table 4). The analysis of 6 papers, each scored twice revealed a lower rate of deficient artifacts in each category scored, but the overall pattern remained with the lowest scores in evidence and student's position. In addition, these papers were once again judged as impossible to assess for diversity of cultures and communities and connections to civic engagement.

**Table 4**  
**Citizenship**  
**Spring 2012 (n = 6)**

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Proficient</b>	<b>Sufficient</b>	<b>Deficient</b>	<b>NA/NO</b>
Explanation of Event	33%	33%	33%	0%
Evidence: Selecting and using information	8%	58%	33%	0%
Student's position (perspective, thesis/hypothesis)	0%	67%	33%	0%
Diversity of Cultures and Communities	0%	0%	0%	100%
Connections to Civic Engagement	0%	0%	0%	100%

In Fall 2012 the LA&S council assessed 16 Historical essays from a U.S. History course, with each essay evaluated by 2 scorers (Table 5). While this was a very different assignment from the political science memos, it showed a similar pattern.

The one exception was that slightly fewer artifacts were scored as deficient in the use of evidence than for the student's position. A troubling 58% of artifacts were scored as deficient for the student's position. Like the Political Science memos, the Historical essays could not be assessed for addressing diversity of cultures and communities or connections to civic engagement.

**Table 5**  
**Citizenship**  
**Fall 2012 (n = 16)**

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Proficient</b>	<b>Sufficient</b>	<b>Deficient</b>	<b>NA/NO</b>
Explanation of Event	28%	44%	28%	0%
Evidence: Selecting and using information	19%	35%	45%	3%
Student's position (perspective, thesis/hypothesis)	10%	32%	58%	3%
Diversity of Cultures and Communities	0%	0%	0%	100%
Connections to Civic Engagement	0%	0%	0%	100%

In the Spring of 2013 the LA&S council once again reviewed Political Science memos (Table 6). This time only 4 team-written memos were available for assessment. Once again the highest percentage of deficient scores were given in the area of student's position. One important change from prior assessments was that the scorers felt they could evaluate the memos for the way in which they addressed the diversity of communities and cultures, with half scored as deficient in this category.

**Table 6**  
**Citizenship**  
**Spring 2013 (n = 4)**

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Proficient</b>	<b>Sufficient</b>	<b>Deficient</b>	<b>NA/NO</b>
Explanation of Event	50%	38%	12%	0%
Evidence: Selecting and using information	0%	75%	25%	0%
Student's position (perspective, thesis/hypothesis)	0%	25%	75%	0%
Diversity of Cultures and Communities	0%	50%	50%	100%
Connections to Civic Engagement	0%	0%	0%	100%