



Dearborn Discovery Core Evaluation: Methods & Summary
Fall 2018

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Course/Section Summary Reports:

For the first three years in the five-year assessment cycle, data were collected in all nine Dearborn Discovery Core (DDC) categories. The collection schedule for each category was as follows:

AY 2015-2016: Critical and Creative Thinking, Written and Oral Communication, and Quantitative Thinking and Problem Solving

AY 2016-2017: Humanities and the Arts, Natural Sciences, and Social and Behavioral Analysis

AY 2017-2018: Intersections, Upper-Level Writing, and Intersections

Approved DDC courses were assessed using a Qualtrics survey during their respective reporting years. The survey asked instructors to describe and reflect on data collected for each outcome, as well as the category and assessment process overall. Areas such as about how the outcome was assessed (assessment tool and criteria used to measure levels of proficiency), the data (number of students in the course who met or did not meet outcomes), and asking instructors to relate these data to their teaching strategies and curriculum in order to explore revisions with a focus on continuous improvement were covered within the survey.

Individual section reports can be found in Mbox in their corresponding course folder. In the case of course with multiple sections taught by different instructors (2-3+), the course coordinator (often the faculty member who submitted the course for DDC approval) was asked to synthesize the information from section surveys into an overall course summary report. Where applicable, these course summary reports are also included within the Mbox.

While all approved courses and instructors were given notices about completing the assessment survey, not all approved DDC courses are represented in the Mbox due to incomplete surveys or lack of submission. For the course data available, the surveys provide a detailed look into the course's interaction with the intended general education outcomes. This micro-level analysis allows for instructors to think through and provide evidence of how their particular course addresses the DDC category's learning outcomes and can help either reaffirm that the course is teaching what it promises, or reveal gaps or weak areas in the course.

Category Summary Reports

Pulling together the quantitative and qualitative data collected from the individual section surveys, the category summary reports give a high level overview of the data for each DDC category. Each report begins with a brief background on the overall DDC assessment cycle and process and then provides summary data for the individual DDC category. Assessment results are presented through graphs displaying averages for "Met" and "Did Not Meet" student learning outcomes. A summary statistics table including ranges of data points, standard deviation, and averages within each student learning outcome is also provided. The qualitative data like reflections and intended closing the loop actions from the individual course and section reports are summarized as the final sections.

Aggregated Outcomes Data

These tables display the quantitative assessment data submitted in each course and section.

Table columns include the percentage of students who exceeded, met, approached, and did not meet each student learning outcome. The table also shows the Threshold of Success which is defined as achieving exceeding and/or meeting the outcome. The table below shows the percentage of students that Met and Did Not Meet student learning outcomes in each Dearborn Discovery Core category. These data can be explored further and in greater detail throughout the evidence provided. At the beginning of the current DDC cycle, the Assessment Subcommittee set a proficiency benchmark of 75% for learning outcomes, meaning that learning outcomes averaging 75% or higher is thought to be proficient in the respective outcome. As shown above, most categories consistently hit this benchmark. This suggests that students are demonstrating proficient learning of outcomes at or above our desired goal.

DDC Category	Level of Proficiency	Student Learning Outcomes				Averages (Rounded)
		1	2	3	4	
Written & Oral Communication	Average Met	83%	83%	82%	82%	83%
	Average Not Met	17%	17%	18%	18%	18%
Critical & Creative Thinking	Average Met	79%	75%	77%	74%	76%
	Average Not Met	21%	25%	23%	26%	24%
Quantitative Thinking & Problem Solving	Average Met	66%	52%	62%	68%	62%
	Average Not Met	34%	48%	38%	32%	38%
Humanities and the Arts	Average Met	83%	86%	82%	82%	83%
	Average Not Met	17%	14%	18%	18%	17%
Natural Sciences	Average Met	77%	73%	62%	66%	70%
	Average Not Met	23%	27%	38%	34%	30%
Social & Behavioral Analysis	Average Met	76%	79%	75%	--	77%
	Average Not Met	24%	21%	25%	--	23%

Intersections	Average Met	79%	82%	83%	78%	80%
	Average Not Met	21%	18%	17%	22%	20%
Upper-Level Writing	Average Met	80%	83%	78%	--	80%
	Average Not Met	20%	17%	22%	--	20%
Capstone	Average Met	82%	85%	85%	--	84%
	Average Not Met	18%	15%	15%	--	16%

For Upper-Level Writing and Capstone: examples of student work exemplifying benchmarks

Instructors who taught courses in Upper-Level Writing and Capstone during the academic year 2017-2018 were asked to submit examples of their students' work that was used to measure the level of proficiency in the student learning outcomes for either Upper-Level Writing, Capstone, or both. The examples of work range from did not meet to exceeds expectations, and should be reviewed to contextualize outcomes within actual courses. Students' work has been de-identified to protect individual student information. Instructors were asked to submit the example, assignment guidelines, and any other helpful documentation.

The courses with available examples include:

Upper-Level Writing	Capstone	Both
COMP/ENGL 323 HIST 309 HIST 356 IMSE 4951-52 JASS 467 POL/ENST 487	BPS 451 ECON 4015 ECON 4065 ENST 485 HPS 402 IMSE 4951-52 MATH 4000	ME/BENG 4671

Relevant infographics

These infographics developed for each category visualizes the quantitative data collected. Each student learning outcome is represented as well as a summary statistics table. Graphics were

created by the Assessment Manager using Venngage.

DDC Student Survey

During Winter 2018 semester, a survey developed by Institutional Research and the Provost Office that focused on opinions and perspectives of general education and the Dearborn Discovery Core (DDC) was administered to students through Qualtrics. The survey consisted of multiple choice, scale, and open-ended questions. 2,197 students were invited to participate in the survey, with a 7% response rate. Data were collected and processed by the Assessment Manager, who then compiled analysis and data visualizations.

High-level takeaways:

- Students learn of DDC requirements primarily through their academic advisor
- Students report clearly or somewhat clearly understanding DDC requirements, while only moderate to no familiarity with the learning outcomes within each DDC category
- When asked if instructors discuss DDC learning outcomes in class, students disagree. They do agree however, to outcomes being present on course syllabi
- In terms of fulfilling credits, most students have or plan to complete their DDC coursework at U-M Dearborn. Out of the survey respondents, College of Arts, Letters, and Sciences and College of Engineering and Computing Science students report completed or in progress in DDC categories more so than College of Education and College of Business students
- Of the students surveyed the majority of respondents agree with the current DDC categories and knowledge covered within the program, aside from Intersections which students neither agree nor disagree including in DDC
- Over half of respondents agree that DDC has contributed to their overall range of knowledge

DDC Faculty Survey

During Winter 2018 semester, a survey developed by Institutional Research and the Provost Office that focused on opinions and perspectives of general education and the Dearborn Discovery Core (DDC) was administered to faculty through Qualtrics. Approximately 500 faculty were invited to participate in the survey, with a 12% response rate. Data were collected and processed by the Assessment Manager, who then compiled analysis and data visualizations in the attached report.

High-level takeaways:

- Faculty agree with the current set of DDC categories but would like to see more global learning and quantitative or computing incorporated into the program
- Faculty who have taught Social and Behavioral Analysis and Natural Sciences and that responded to the survey suggested revising the learning outcomes more than other categories. Faculty in the rest of the categories supported keeping the outcomes the same, though some suggestions for edits were recommended in each category as well
- Comments shared by faculty suggest that the policies regarding the number of categories that a single course can be approved for and how many courses can count towards both DDC and major requirements should be reviewed
- More streamlined course approval and assessment processes, including an alternative data collection plan, would be less time-consuming and difficult for faculty resulting in a more meaningful and authentic assessment data

DDC Alumni Survey

During the summer, a survey regarding general education was developed by the Office of Institutional Research and the Office of Alumni Relations as a part of the evaluation process for the Dearborn Discovery Core. The survey was targeted towards alumni and distributed through an open invitation on Alumni Relations social media and communications. 63 alumni with undergraduate degrees from UM-Dearborn responded to the call for responses.

Takeaways:

Based on the alumni who responded:

- Alumni describe using skills like communication, management, writing, and critical thinking in their fields
- They also suggest general education courses helped to increase skills in writing, science, math, and critical thinking
- Nearly 60% of respondents believe their general education has been useful in their current job
- 93-96% of responses indicate categories like Critical and Creative Thinking and Written and Oral Communication as *very* or *moderately* important to include in general education curriculum

General Education Across Michigan- Benchmarking Matrix

The matrix aims to provide a look at the general education programs at universities across Michigan and a few additional institutions. Components like curricular areas, high-impact and first year experiences, and assessment cycles were among the aspects compared in the matrix. In total, 16 public universities and their general education were researched for these data.

- Many schools in university have explicit global learning general education requirements
- Many schools have first year experiences in some format, though not all are required of students
- All schools have some form of written and oral Communication, natural sciences, and requirements relating to diversity
- 3 schools have Upper-Level Writing and 2 have Capstone requirements a part of general education
- Many schools have a 3-year assessment process involving AACU rubrics and student artifacts

In conclusion, based on the evidence,

- Faculty support revision of student learning outcomes in Natural Sciences, Social Behavioral Analysis, and Intersections
- Assessment data shows students meeting the goal of 75% to show proficiency with the exception of Quantitative Thinking and Problem Solving
- Assessment processes and reporting should be streamlined and less repetitive for faculty
- Faculty agree with the current set of DDC categories, although there is a desire to incorporate more global learning and quantitative or computing skills in the curriculum. Instructors also report they have thought more deeply and intentionally about integrating outcomes with course objectives and working to make them more explicit to students. Some faculty also feel the DDC structure is confusing for students trying to determine what is needed and how to fulfill requirements, and streamlining everything from structure, administration, and assessment would be beneficial for faculty and students
- Students agree with the current set of DDC categories, with feeling neutral about Intersections. This could be due to students reporting little understanding of the learning outcomes in the category