WMU Essential Studies (WES) Assessment Plan Template
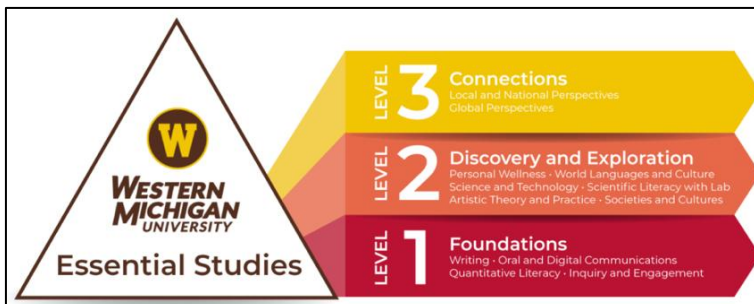
Use the appropriate template (attached) to create your WMU Essential Studies Assessment Plan.

For best use, only submit template specific to the level/area for your course. Delete all other levels.

Note that one assignment or learning activity may be used to address multiple outcomes.

The **Foundations Level (Level I)** includes four categories

- Each Level I category has two *specific required* Student Learning Outcomes. These are specified in each category and cannot be substituted.

The Exploration and Discovery Level (Level II) has six categories. Each course must include **two** Student Learning Outcomes

- Each Level II category has *one specific required* Student Learning Outcome.
- Each course includes *one additional* Student Learning Outcome to be *chosen* from the menu within the level. (*Exception: Level II Societies and Cultures has no required Student Learning Outcome. For courses in this category, choose two Student Learning Outcomes from the menu.*)
- **NOTE: The one additional Student Learning Outcome may *achieve Planetary Sustainability (PSL) or Diversity and Inclusion (*DIL) requirements.**

The Connections Level (Level III) has two categories. Each course must include three Student Learning Outcomes.

- Each Level III category has *one specific required* Student Learning Outcome.
- Each course includes *two additional* Student Learning Outcomes to be *chosen* from the specific menus within the level.
- **NOTE: One additional Student Learning Outcome may *achieve Planetary Sustainability (PSL) or Diversity and Inclusion (*DIL) requirements.**

WES Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) (with linked outcome rubrics)
  - ○ Demonstrate effective and appropriate written communication abilities. *(WCL)*
  - ○ Demonstrate and apply information literacy. *(ILL)*
  - ○ Demonstrate effective and appropriate oral and digital communication abilities. *(ORL)*
  - ○ Analyze and interpret quantitative information. *(QLL)*
  - ○ Develop creative and critical thinking. *(CCL)*
  - ○ Increase foundational knowledge of the social sciences, humanities, or the arts. *(IFKL)*
  - ○ Increase foundational knowledge of the sciences, social sciences, or the arts. *(IFKL)*
  - ○ Develop understanding and practices for personal wellness. *(PWL)*
  - ○ Demonstrate familiarity with a language other than English and/or the culture associated with it. *(LCL)*
  - ○ Demonstrate and apply scientific literacy. *(SLL)*
  - ○ Demonstrate and apply scientific literacy with a lab. *(SLL)*
  - ○ Apply ethical, critical, and informed thought within or across disciplines. *(ECL)*
  - ○ Apply different methods of intellectual inquiry, investigation, and discovery. *(IIL)*
  - ○ Develop global awareness and international perspectives. *(GAL)*
  - ○ Work both independently and in collaboration with others to achieve goals. *(WIL)*
  - ○ Develop sensitivity to diversity and inclusion. *(DIL)*
  - ○ Develop practices for planetary sustainability. *(PSL)*

WMU Essential Studies: Assessment Plan: Q/A

Why do we assess WES Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)?

WES assessment is an essential aspect of WMU's regular reports to the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) accreditation. WMU is tasked with collecting data on student and course performance and then using that data for program and course improvements.

What are the specified WMU requirements for WES Assessment?

WMU Faculty Senate MOA 18/02 (*WMU Essential Studies Course Approval Guidelines*) includes the following requirements for all WES courses:

- *Each course will assess the WMU Essential Studies required student learning outcomes (SLOs) for that level and category.*
- *Each course proposal must include a detailed assessment plan pertaining to required student learning outcome(s) (SLOs.*
- *Assessment data (for each course) … will be submitted by the end of each semester/session course is offered.*

What makes a good WES assessment plan?

A WES assessment plan should define the core means by which the department will ensure the integrity of the identified/required SLOs. Each SLO includes an associated WES Outcome Rubric that articulates the expected traits of student performance for that SLO (on a 1-4 scale: beginning-developing-proficient-exemplary). https://wmich.edu/facultysenate/wmuessentialstudies/wesrubrics. A good WES course assessment plan provides guidelines for all instructors, including common activities and projects that are articulated towards each SLO, including how the activity reflects not only the SLO, but the traits identified in the outcome rubric.

Don't I have to give specific assignments and activities that have to be followed by all instructors?

No. A WES assessment plan must provide guidelines for instructors, and overall procedures in relation to identified SLOs and outcome rubrics, but the specific implementation of an assessment plan is guided by the individual instructors and departments. The goal of a WES assessment plan is to ensure ongoing, valid, and reliable collection of student performance data in relation to each SLO. Each department has the ability to define the practices involved and the agency of individual instructors to refine the plan as needed as long as the core purpose is honored.

The instructor's responsibility is to use their assessment activites to responsibility complete the WES SLO Outcome rubric embedded in the course Elearning shell. This can be done at any point in the semester, but should be completed by the end of the semester. Consider this a final task before closing out the course.

Who is responsible for WES Assessment Plans once they are accepted?

> **Department Chairs.** Chairs are responsible for maintaining all WES course assessment plans and ensuring that faculty/instructors are aware of the plan for any specific department WES course. They should also ensure that instructors understand the identified SLOs and associated outcome rubrics for the course.

> **Course Coordinators** (If specified). In WES courses sponsored by non-affiliated units, a course coordinator assumes the role of the department chair. In large enrollment/multiple section courses, a department course coordinator may fulfill the chair responsibilities.

> **Instructors**. All instructors are responsible for knowing and implementing the approved WES assessment plan and completing the embedded course Elearning outcome rubric in each section.