Addressing the ‘100% Engagement Initiative’ in SBS

SBS Undergraduate Council, 2015-2016:

Amy Fountain, Linguistics (chair)
Kieron Bailey, Geography
Jerry Hogle, English (Spring 2016)
Jesse McCain, SBS
Paul Milliman, History
Daniel Olson, Undergraduate Representative, English/Linguistics (Spring 2016)
Cristina Ramírez, English (Fall 2015)
Rachael Ronald, SBS
Ricky Salazar, SBS (Fall 2015)
Nancy Sharkey, Journalism
Sofia Zepeda, Graduate Student Representative, History (Spring 2016)

Our charge:

In Fall 2015, the SBS Undergraduate Council was asked to address the UA's 100% Student Engagement Initiative in several ways: “1) to craft guidelines for credit-bearing student engagement courses, 2) to offer guidance on how best to integrate credit-bearing student engagement activities into SBS's course offerings, 3) to identify where faculty and staff need support to design and deliver 100% Student Engagement activities that align with faculty and departmental goals for student learning and 4) to develop metrics/assessments for engagement activities."
Introduction and Guiding Principles

SBS is extraordinarily diverse in terms of the scholarly traditions it represents, and we expect it to be equally diverse in the approaches taken by SBS Units to the 100% Engagement initiative.

In our work to meet the Charge, we have found reason to believe that the College is already well-positioned to meet the 100% Engagement initiative, by virtue of the large and diverse set of engagement activities that are part of units’ regular activity – and have been for some time.

We have also found reason to believe that supporting and maintaining the types of activities promoted under the ‘100% Engagement’ initiative is of more than simply promotional value to our students and our community. There is a broad and lively national and international discourse about Engaged Learning, which includes large-scale public and scholarly research programs, in which the College may want to participate.

The following Guiding Principles have emerged from our work on our initial Charge.

- **We view ‘Engaged Learning’ (hereafter ‘EL’) as an essential component of curricula. Curricular decisions are best made within units, by faculty.**

- **We believe that EL is already pervasive within the curricula of units within SBS. We encourage the College to discover and support existing efforts and to help connect those EL experiences with relevant internal and external constituencies.**
  - We note that EL activities are often extraordinarily resource-intensive. We encourage the College to work to connect existing EL programs within the college with support that is commensurate with what has been offered to newly proposed EL programs.

- **We note the existence of a variety of public and scholarly research efforts on various aspects of EL and their connection to educational outcomes. We encourage the College to support the connection of UA EL efforts to these larger national and international conversations and to use this scholarship to guide the development of resources and policies relating to EL.**
1. Crafting Guidelines for credit-bearing student engagement courses

Recommendations:

- We suggest that the College integrate a review of proposed EL attributes into the existing curricular processes, asking that the syllabus review undertaken by the Associate Dean or her designee include evaluation of proposed EL attributes to ensure that they are aligned with University policy.
- We recommend that proposers be asked to clearly identify an Activity and Competency from the menu provided by the Office of Engaged Learning and to designate the level of assignment of the attribute (catalog level or section level) in their proposals.
  - We also recommend that proposers tie the engagement activity or activities to one or more course outcomes and describe how the activity will enhance learning and engagement.
- We recommend that the College develop an expedited or ‘fast track’ process for approvals of the addition of the EL attribute to existing courses. Tying this process to an application for any available funding to support EL activities would also be beneficial.

2. Offering guidance on how best to integrate credit-bearing student engagement activities into SBS's course offerings

The University’s guidelines for credit-bearing EL experiences (as outlined in policy available at: [http://catalog.arizona.edu/2015-16/policies/engagement_plcy.htm](http://catalog.arizona.edu/2015-16/policies/engagement_plcy.htm) and attached as Appendix A) require that engagement courses for credit be upper-division and that they include:

- an Engagement Activity,
- an Engagement Competency, and
- a set of aligned Student Learning Outcomes

The College is already working to ensure that these policies and procedures are available to SBS students and faculty, and we commend those efforts. We recognize that a successful 100% engagement course will look different in different units. Therefore, offering advice that will be appropriate for all of SBS is not a “one size fits all” enterprise. We recommend the College continue to be open to a diverse array of EL options already within our courses.
The main theme across the engagement activities in SBS is that connection to community, which is identified as a core value of the College. Engagement should be engagement in a discipline, in a field, in a community. EL experiences may be accomplished in a variety of modalities, including online and hybrid forms, where the reach of effective EL courses might be expanded.

We support and encourage the College to continue its financial support of the development and maintenance of high quality engagement experiences in SBS courses, while noting that current available funding (i.e. grants for development of new EL experiences) is insufficient to sustain high quality EL experiences in the long run.

We have identified the following desiderata for EL initiatives within the College:

- In the spirit of social justice for our students, EL offerings should not be associated with new fees or other additional costs to students if this can be avoided. EL experiences should also not rely on volunteer hours that are uncompensated by credit or wages (see, for example, two opinion pieces from the Wildcat expressing concerns about ‘engaged learning’ as a costly proposition for students: Pickens 2015 and Forstrom 2015). EL experiences requiring fees or uncompensated volunteer hours will be inaccessible to students who are economically at risk and will discriminate against those whose available hours are committed to wage-earning, family care, and the like.

In relation to the need to be sensitive to demands on students’ time and finances, we note the findings of the Center for Studies in Higher Education (Brint et al 2010: 20) on time devoted to studying by students’ socioeconomic status:
Students identifying as 'low-income or poor' report devoting significantly more time to study than those in other economic groups; EL activities requiring fees and/or volunteer hours, then, will likely be inaccessible to these students.

- In the formulae adopted by the College for allocating RCM funds, the College should consider *differentially valuing* student credit hours (SCH) generated by EL courses, as compared to non-EL courses. Since EL generally requires a smaller faculty-to-student ratio than other kinds of courses, units offering high quality EL courses could otherwise – and should *not* – be seen as underperforming in terms of the SCH generated in a given term.

- The College could serve a useful role by providing units with *evidence-based best practices* for development, implementation and assessment of EL experiences. In light of the many varying approaches to EL, and the different patterns of findings related to different approaches, we think that connecting this effort to the scholarship of learning is especially appropriate.

For example, the literature tells us that generating and sustaining an emotional connection between the student and their educational experience is likely to improve students’ success and persistence (Reyes et al 2012). Therefore, EL experiences likely to facilitate those connections should be valued and supported.

Carini et al (2006) have found that linkages between EL and outcomes such as improved grades and measures of critical thinking. But they have also found those linkages to be relatively weak. The efficacy of EL was found to be sensitive to students’ academic preparation (with poorly-prepared students benefitting more than well-prepared students) and to vary by institution (suggesting that institutional factors can render EL more or less effective). While it’s unclear what factors distinguished institutions that ‘successfully convert’ EL to other educational outcomes such as improved GPA and/or GRE scores, it is important to note that EL requires institutional support to be effective.

The National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) is conducted annually (NSSE 2014: 28). We note that the definition of ‘Engagement’ used in NSSE is significantly broader than ours, and includes a wide variety of factors that are not directly relevant to EL as the UA now defines it. It does, however, address several aspects of EL that we find to be relevant. In particular, NSSE documents the following set of ‘high impact practices’ in EL. Proposals that relate to these practices may be well-positioned to generate positive outcomes from their EL experiences.
We consequently recommend that, in implementing EL experiences, units cultivate opportunities for students to make connections across the curriculum and between their educational experiences and professional and other University-external institutions and communities. Zepke and Leach (2010:169) identify the following 10 ‘proposals for action’, which together reflect the evidence about effectiveness of such efforts culled from 93 peer-reviewed articles discussing ‘engaged learning’. Based on this meta-analysis, the authors propose and we agree that successful EL programs:

1. Enhance students’ self-belief.
2. Enable students to work autonomously, enjoy learning relationships with others and feel they are competent to achieve their own objectives.
3. Recognize that teaching and teachers are central to engagement.
4. Create learning that is active, collaborative, and fosters learning relationships.
5. Create educational experiences for students that are challenging, enriching and extend their academic abilities.
6. Ensure institutional cultures are welcoming to students from diverse backgrounds.
7. Invest in a variety of support services.
8. Adapt to changing student expectations.
9. Enable students to become active citizens.
10. Enable students to develop their social and cultural capital.

We see proposals 1, 2, 4, 5, 8, 9 and 10 as principles that can help units develop effective EL experiences. Proposals 3, 6 and 7 represent institutional imperatives that the College and the University must support if EL efforts are to be effective.
3. Developing metrics/assessments for engagement activities

This is a large and complex undertaking because there are various concepts (domains) of student engagement within a multidimensional construct (Axelson and Flick 2011; Christensen et al. 2012:v). Hence there are a wide range of understandings of what EL means, how it may be measured, and how best these goals may ultimately be achieved.

The SBS Undergraduate Council proceeds from the assumptions that:

- The University’s overall Student Engagement framework is intended to improve student outcomes, across a range of indicators.
- The benefits of this engagement should be measurable by, and evident to, the following stakeholders: Regents, administration, academic units, instructors, students, parents, employers of graduates, and graduate programs to which our students apply.

Key concerns include:

- Aligning engagement goals with current larger educational enterprise goals (e.g. student retention, graduation rate, time to degree completion, and others)
- The degree to which engagement goals support closing the skills gap in higher education (i.e. aligning engagement outcomes with employer and professional expectations).
- Although specific learning approaches have been shown to strengthen engagement indicator performance (e.g. Ahlfeldt et al. 2005), there is still a question as to whether this stronger engagement means more to the stakeholders.

Because neither the University nor the College currently use a systematic engagement definition or measurement system, there is no locally-available framework or data for such metrics. Therefore, the Council recommends as a starting point that the College survey existing and well-established instruments and methods and develop guidelines from this literature.

During Fall 2015 and Spring 2016, SBS Undergraduate Council members examined the literature on metrics for student engagement. Our findings are included as Appendix B. We began by performing searches of the scholarly literature using key terms such as “student engagement”, “measurement”, “metrics”. Materials were retrieved and analyzed based on several proxies for impact, including citation count and bibliographic cross-referencing. Additional resources evaluated by the Council include other University and College documentation on student engagement. These resources were located using similar search techniques.
Though we have not conducted a rigorous scientific review, the Council’s goal has been to assimilate a useful cross-section of scholarship and to organize and distill these works for first-stage consideration in developing guidelines for measuring and assessing engagement. Because ‘engagement’ is often defined in curriculum- and campus-specific ways, a full and complete integration of the research would require the collection and analysis of additional resources. This would be a useful project in the longer term.

In light of the diversity of academic programs under the aegis of the College and the wide range of metrics and assessments that are available, we are encouraged to suggest the following principles for evaluating engagement content in syllabi.

1. Metrics/assessments should be identified by academic units individually, subject to connection with one or more established methods for evaluating engagement. Classes that contain any elements of the typologies above can be deemed to meet requirements for engagement.

2. We endorse and urge a diversity of approaches among academic units. It would be beneficial for different units to take a different approach, rather than all criteria being defined at the College level. Reliable research indicates that a diversity of engagement strategies is a more promising overall framework than classes that respond to a small selection of specific indicators.

3. We recommend that the College work with the Office of Student Engagement to ensure that any centrally developed metrics and assessments can be successfully implemented within SBS with minimal workload passed on to existing unit faculty and staff, and that any centrally available tools and resources be made available to stakeholders within the College. To the extent possible, metrics and assessments developed within SBS units should be shared with OSE for adoption University-wide.

4. **Identifying where faculty and staff need support to design and deliver 100% Student Engagement activities that align with faculty and departmental goals for student learning**

We believe that the faculty at UA are well positioned to integrate engagement activities in their courses, with some caveats.
Resources are key, first of all. We acknowledge a tension between the demands of offering and sustaining high-quality engagement experiences while simultaneously addressing the requirements of a budget model such as RCM, as well as the new ABOR metrics on recruitment, retention and other efficiencies.

In addition, we believe that faculty may need resources to research and develop new engagement activities that align with their course goals. And we believe that some students may need resource support to pursue engagement activities that involve travel, fees, expenses, meal costs — or even the lost opportunity of a paid job vs. an unpaid engagement activity.

Finally, we find that student support is a key component in the effectiveness of EL activities. Students need timely access to EL opportunities relevant to their own educational, occupational, and personal goals — which vary. While many SBS students expect to go directly into a career after earning their baccalaureate, a significant percentage anticipate graduate education at the level of a professional or other terminal Master’s program, or a Ph.D. or other doctoral degree (i.e. Medicine, Law, Pharmacy and the like). We believe that, for such students, undergraduate research assistantships and/or preceptorships should be encouraged and provided as EL options, right alongside internships and practica that are already used for EL experiences.

The best venue for students to learn about EL opportunities relevant to them is likely to be the classroom, by means of communication from faculty.¹ Information about EL opportunities provided by faculty in classes required for students’ majors or minors would be most likely to generate student involvement in those activities. We note that students, like all UA constituents, are overloaded with email blasts and website notifications — and for that reason, these types of communication strategies are less likely to work well. Certainly other sources of communication and support (i.e. professional advisors, mentors, Directors of Undergraduate Studies, Internship Coordinators) may prove effective. We note a tremendous diversity within SBS units in these configurations, however, and we do not believe that a blanket recommendation can be made for distribution of these duties among those groups.

¹ ‘Faculty’ here includes Graduate Student Instructors, many of whom are better connected with student needs and interests, and with current demands of post-graduate marketplaces, than other faculty may be.
Based on the above, our recommendations to our College include:

(1) Pool Resources for Faculty and Students
- Identify “core internal instructional activities” that are characteristic of EL experiences and list those in a resource bank. Catalog campus-wide definitions and provide them on an easy-to-access EL site within the Dean’s office.
- Develop a resource bank of existing engagement activities at UA and peer institutions, demonstrating linkage to course goals and outcomes.
- Develop resources that can be used by units to develop and assess the effectiveness of EL activities in a holistic way.
- Catalog key research describing the range of engagement activities and their relationship to institutional and student goals and outcomes.
- Create a system for (1) collecting successful engagement activities and (2) providing a brief listing of some for students.\(^2\)
- Develop a resource bank of scholarships, grants, and other resources for students who may need additional support to pursue engagement activities.

(2) Promote and Support Ongoing Relationships and New Achievements
- Sustain ongoing relationships with community partners. Build an inventory of existing programs and partnerships that faculty could use to identify existing relationships would be of use. Above all, acknowledge the fragility of these relationships, and the need to ensure that community experiences with UA students are beneficial and effective to all parties. All of these steps would help to support and sustain these crucial existing resources.
- Support the coordination of intern programs. Current practice in units which have large numbers of interns reveals that these activities require significant investments of time and resources, often in the form of part or full-time internship coordinators.
- Tell the story of successful engagement activities through UA News or other outlets to help ensure that the work of community partners is recognized and that student achievements and discoveries are acknowledged.
- Collaborations with employers interested in recruitment of UA undergraduates could generate guidance for the development of EL activities that are responsive to industry and community needs.

\(^2\) These would be useful ways in which the College could facilitate the sharing of information and experience among units and stakeholders.
(3) **Expand Access**

- Development and/or expansion of paid or credit bearing Research Assistantships (similar to GRAs) for undergraduates would expand access to EL for SBS students.
- Development and/or expansion of paid or credit-bearing Preceptorships (similar to GTAs) for undergraduates would expand access to EL for SBS students.

(4) **Make Sure it Works**

- College-developed and administered exit surveys and follow-up on undergraduate placement (occupational and educational) could prove invaluable.
- Reliable metrics should be developed on students’ participation rates in various types of EL as those relate to student retention, academic achievement, and time-to-degree. If successful, this approach could be a model for other institutions and could also provide a meaningful contribution to the scholarly literature on the effects of EL in the contemporary higher education landscape.

**Conclusions and remaining questions**

Our recommendations reflect the diversity of our experiences and of the College landscape. We find that units are best positioned to understand the types of EL experiences that work for their students and to identify and report metrics for assessing the effectiveness of these experiences.

**We are concerned about resources:**

(1) From the student perspective, it is important that EL courses are accessible to all of our students, without adding to financial or other burdens for the most vulnerable among them.

(2) From the perspective of units, EL, when done well, is expensive. Making enough high quality EL offerings available to reach the ‘100% Engagement’ benchmark may require that units generate less in terms of SCH. It is incumbent on the College to provide a coherent set of guidelines, incentives, and priorities so that the efforts its units make to support EL activities do not result in negative consequences under RCM.

**We see an important role for the College in addressing these concerns by:**

(1) Granting access to evidence-based *best practices*
(2) Linking units and students with appropriate resources to support EL efforts
(3) Providing a coherent administrative structure that allows units to do their work in ways that best serve their students.

We also see an opportunity for the UA as one of the nation's premier Research Universities to contribute meaningfully to our understanding of Engaged Learning and its relationships with undergraduate educational outcomes, with the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences leading the way.
References

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Other materials

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Appendices

Appendix A: UA Guidelines for Credit bearing EL Experiences (pdf)

Appendix B: Review of the Literature: Measuring and Assessing EL

Appendix C: The NSSE Instrument (front page)

Appendix D: List of SBS Courses currently approved with ELE attribute (excel file)

Appendix E: List of SBS Community partners

Appendix F: Various funded proposals to ‘100% Student Engagement’ Strategic Investment Grant competition (2015)
Academic Policies

Policies on Student Engagement

5/12/15 Note: Effective in Summer/Fall 2015 for all undergraduates, regardless of Catalog year.

Engagement occurs when students translate and apply their classroom learning into practices and experiences beyond the classroom that impact their professional and personal growth. The University recognizes that student engagement occurs in a variety of learning experiences:

- Original and collaborative advanced laboratory and field research;
- Creative performances, artistic endeavors, and productions;
- Internships and externships;
- Practicums and preceptorships;
- Study abroad experiences;
- Service learning projects--community-based activities to address critical needs; and,
- Student-centered co-curricular activities that build on classroom learning.

Students may complete more than one engagement experience by registering for a course or non-credit experience that has a different Engagement Activity and Competency. There is no limit on the number of student engagement courses or non-credit experiences that a student may take.

Core Outcomes of an Engaged Learning Experience

Student engagement courses or non-credit experiences are distinguished from other learning experiences by the fact that they focus on the following:

1. Engagement Activities--develop professional and personal skills. Each engagement experience must focus on one of the following: community partnership, creative expression, discovery, entrepreneurship, intercultural exploration, leadership, or professional development.

2. Engagement Competencies--are the lenses through which students focus their Activity to develop an appreciation for and an understanding of that area. Each engagement experience must focus on one of the following: civic and community responsibility, diversity and identity, global and intercultural comprehension, innovation and creativity, inter-
disciplinarity, professionalism, or sustainability.

3. **Engagement Professional and Personal Skills**—are outcomes that can be assessed in relation to any engaged learning experience. Examples include reflection and application (required of all engagement experiences), communication, collaboration/teamwork, problem solving, critical thinking, project management, academic and non-academic career preparedness. Other skills may be identified by the student's department or college.

A credit-based or non-credit curricular engaged learning experience must focus on one Activity and one Competency. In addition, it is recommended that each experience contributes to the development of specific professional and personal skills.

**Graduating with an Engaged Learning Experience**

To graduate with an "Engaged Learning Experience" notation on the academic transcript, students must successfully complete (1) at least one credit-based engagement course at the 300 or 400-level, or (2) a non-credit engagement experience that has been approved by the University Office of Student Engagement.

**Note:** If the upper division course is assigned a regular grade, the student must achieve a C grade or higher to graduate with this notation.

**Related Topics:**

- [Credit/Non-Credit Engagement Guidelines](#)
- [Engagement Activities/Competencies](#)
Credit and Non-Credit Engagement Guidelines

5/12/15 Note: Effective in Summer/Fall 2015 for undergraduate courses and non-credit experiences.

Guidelines for Engagement Courses:

1. Credit-based engagement courses may be offered by an academic college or department.
2. The "engaged learning experience" attribute may be assigned at the course or section level. In addition, for house numbered courses, the engagement attribute may be assigned at the student level.
3. All student engagement courses must have a syllabus detailing: (1) an Engagement Activity, (2) an Engagement Competency, (3) student learning outcomes, (4) grading policy, (5) expected work products and reflection activities, and (6) all other components in compliance with the Undergraduate Course Syllabus Policy.
4. The home department and college must approve the engagement course syllabus. No course will be identified in the Course Catalog or Schedule of Classes as meeting the University's criteria for an "engaged learning experience" without college approval.
5. Grading System: Per the course category (e.g., Individual Studies, Small Group Courses) engagement courses may be offered for the S,P,F,I alternative grading system, Pass/Fail system, or Regular Grades, as long as the system is identified in the syllabus. The grading system is determined by the offering instructor and applied consistently at the section level of that course. Note: For upper division courses with regular grades, students must earn a C grade or higher to graduate with the notation, "Engaged Learning Experience" on their transcript. Colleges may require a grade higher than C-level for their students to earn this notation.
6. Courses may be offered online, in person, or in hybrid format.

Guidelines for Non-Credit Engagement Experiences:

Students may also meet the criteria for graduating with an "Engaged Learning Experience" by registering for one of the University's approved non-credit experiences. The Office of Student Engagement maintains a list of approved non-credit learning experiences. Proposals for engagement experiences...
must:

1. Be submitted to the Office of Student Engagement and approved by the Student Engagement Committee;
2. Identify the Engagement Activity and Engagement Competency related to the experience; and
3. Include information on (1) supervision by faculty or staff, (2) required hours of engagement, (3) a reflection component that helps students find meaning in the experience, and (4) the way in which the supervisor will verify that the required minimum 45 hours of work and the reflection piece will be completed by the student.

Related Topics:

- Policies on Student Engagement
- Engagement Activities/ Competencies

The official UA Seal is present at the top of each Catalog page; the arrow identifies links that leave the official site.
Academic Policies

Engagement Activities and Competencies

5/12/15 Note: Effective in Summer/Fall 2015 for undergraduate courses and non-credit experiences.

Engagement Activities

Engagement Activities are curricular and co-curricular experiences in which students participate to develop professional and personal skills.

1. Community Partnership. Students serve as part of a formal arrangement that mobilizes both the University and community resources to raise the visibility of community issues; increase individual and organizational commitment to resolving those issues; develop new solutions to old problems; gain new resources or make better use of existing resources to improve outcomes for members of the community.

2. Creative Expression. Students develop original works, or interpret existing ones, in independent or collaborative projects that engage communities in thinking about abstract concepts related to such things as everyday experiences, human conditions, environmental change, and affective and emotional relationships.

3. Discovery. Students engage in independent or collaborative inquiry that contributes to a wider sense of understanding, the development of solutions to challenging problems, or the creation of new knowledge.

4. Entrepreneurship. Students initiate, develop, and/or manage an organization systematically, with their work characterized by innovation and calculated risk-taking. Student entrepreneurship produces an understanding of strategies and skills for innovative organizational development, as well as the tangible implementation of projects that respond to evolving societal and marketplace challenges and deliver services that meet those challenges.

5. Intercultural Exploration. Students participate in global and international programs that challenge them to think about and investigate the world, explore different cultures, and place their classroom learning into a global context.

6. Leadership. Students utilize various theories, models, and styles of leadership through some role within or through an organization. Through practice, they create collaborative relationships and networks and learn to empower, mentor,
and influence others. These experiences enable students to develop a self-understanding and social intelligence that helps them translate a shared vision into ethical practice.

7. **Professional Development.** Students participate in activities that further their understanding, commitment, skill and contribution to a body of work, field, or industry. Students develop appropriate acumen to thrive in a given organizational culture and contribute to problem solving and efficient/effective processes involving products, customers, programs, and/or services.

**Engagement Competencies**

Engagement Competencies are the lenses through which students focus their Engagement Activity to develop an appreciation for and a comprehensive understanding of that area or lens.

1. **Civic and Community Responsibility.** Students develop an understanding of government and community systems in order to contribute to the social cohesion, capacity, and governance of a community. In so doing, students will become motivated to be active community members who model inclusive decision-making, foster relationships of reciprocity in their service/volunteer activities, critically reflect on issues, and educate and facilitate the civic engagement of others.

2. **Diversity and Identity.** Students develop explicit understandings of the sociocultural, linguistic, economic, and political experiences of diverse groups representing varying identities and societies, both their own and others, and apply those understandings in work related to a wide range of communities. Diversity and identity as a Competency is based on developing an appreciation for differences and a sense of an inclusive community.

3. **Global and Intercultural Comprehension.** Students develop an understanding of global issues and the worldwide impact of individual and systemic actions while respecting diverse viewpoints. Students will be able to reflect on their own and other cultural biases and think critically about the world through interaction and collaboration with cultures and societies that are different from their own.

4. **Innovation and Creativity.** Students gain an understanding of how to deliberately apply information, imagination, creative thinking, and initiative to generate new ideas for the purpose of addressing needs. This process helps students become accustomed to the discomfort of questioning the status quo and the excitement of idea generation and exploration at the leading edge of thought.

5. **Interdisciplinarity.** Students gain an understanding of how to bring together novel and original thinking across
disciplines to build on knowledge, practices, theories, or methodologies. Students network and establish relationships that cut across disciplines in the pursuit of common tasks.

6. **Professionalism.** Students develop a heightened understanding of themselves and others as they participate in various experiences to build their knowledge of professional etiquette and expertise. Based on these experiences, students learn to communicate in an articulate and positive manner, act with integrity, and expand the boundaries of expectation toward a standard of excellence in their work and life.

7. **Sustainability.** Students gain an understanding of the social, environmental, and economic dimensions of conditions or practices that make society vulnerable and unsustainable over multi-generational time scales. Through the exploration of issues from a sustainability perspective, students develop potential solutions to these challenges through the use of systems thinking to improve the quality of life for all--environmentally, socially, and economically--both now and for future generations.

**Engagement Professional and Personal Skills**

The following are some professional and personal skills--learning outcomes--that can be assessed in relation to any Engagement Activity and Competency.

1. **Reflection and Application.** Students will be able to critically analyze personal strengths and challenges and translate experiences into new professional goals or personal life plans; articulate self-insight in the context of a new learning environment; describe how competencies gained in one experience can be applied to a new context and apply new ideas and insights to improve a process, product or outcome.

2. **Communication.** Students will be able to verbally communicate in an articulate manner, write effectively with use of traditional and new media tools, conduct engaging group presentations or artistic expression, advocate for a point of view, and interact effectively through listening and empathy with diverse individuals and cultural contexts.

3. **Collaboration/ Teamwork.** Students will be able to work effectively as part of a diverse team, generate new ideas that incorporate the contributions of others, behave in an ethical way, volunteer to lead activities, and demonstrate follow-through and collaboration in traditional and virtual spaces.

4. **Problem Solving/ Critical Thinking.** Students will be able to leverage curiosity to construct problem-posing and engage in inquiry-based discovery; articulate problem-solving strategies and solutions; synthesize information to develop
new perspectives, apply knowledge to current situations, both independently and interdependently, and reflect on critical thinking and problem solving through metacognition.

5. **Project Management.** Students will be able to manage many people and moving parts, such as information, resources, and materials, into systems and structures that will result in effective and efficient project outcomes. Students will be able to manage their time to address demanding needs and navigate structural processes with ease.

6. **Academic and Non-Academic Career Preparedness.** Students will be able to articulate a career plan and goals, demonstrate effective self-presentation skills by identifying competencies developed through education and experience, and demonstrate knowledge of the organizations they seek. Students will produce enticing self-branding tools using traditional and new media applications, effectively introduce themselves in a networking environment and demonstrate productivity in changing organizations and cultures.

**Related Topics:**

- [Policies on Student Engagement](http://catalog.arizona.edu/2015-16/policies/engagement_def.htm)
- [Credit/Non-Credit Engagement Guidelines](http://catalog.arizona.edu/2015-16/policies/engagement_def.htm)
Appendix B – Review of the Literature: Measuring and Assessing EL

Since 2003, a large quantity of research has been published using the National Survey on Student Engagement or NSSE (Kuh 2003). No Arizona public higher education institution participates in the NSSE consortium, but the institutional partners include a range of larger and smaller public and private universities (e.g. Indiana University Bloomington, University of Nebraska Lincoln, University of North Carolina – Charlotte and Carnegie Mellon University). The NSSE employs a range of indicators such as: students’ self-report of time spent studying; time spent in co-curricular activities; frequency and type of student-faculty interaction; and 19 others. Kuh (2003:26) clusters these indicators into five domains or “benchmarks”

The connection between engagement measures and other outcomes measures is a matter of concern, with “reflective and integrative learning” used as a bridging concept by NSSE (2013:13). Kahu (2013) posits four key themes for engagement (behavioral; psychological; socio-cultural; and holistic), based on a survey of research, and proposes a new engagement framework intended improve student outcomes.

These frameworks do not directly generate actionable recommendations for engagement criteria and measurement for the Council charge, although a consideration of the philosophies of engagement could help in developing a more holistic and, ideally, effective approach in verifying engagement practices in syllabi and class content.

The NSSE (2013:17) also finds that “differences in approaches to teaching were also evident by institution type” and that the survey data demonstrates “students attending baccalaureate liberal arts colleges were on average more likely to experience effective teaching practices than their peers enrolled at research universities.”

Inside the classroom, student self-reporting regarding engagement activity frequency and/or intensity criteria is the most usual assessment method (e.g. Fredricks and McColskey 2011:765); other methods include interview; observation; experience sampling; and instructor ratings.

One advantage of using NSSE-style metrics is comparison capability with a systematic picture of engagement. For example, Hopper (2016) has used a 14-question survey with first- and final-year physiology classes and has compared engagement results with the NSSE data for her institution. Teaching towards engagement indicators has been documented to achieve some measure of success (e.g. Northey et al. 2015); however, it is not clear whether these indicators are
effective mechanisms to capture predictors of student success across other dimensions. In spite of its adoption by the Australian universities, the Australasian Survey of Student Engagement (AUSSE) that was developed from the NSSE in the United States has been criticized for failing to drive relevant outcomes improvements (Hagel et al. 2013).

Alternative measures based on concepts that differ significantly from NSSE have been proposed and investigated, and there is supporting evidence for the thesis that directed pedagogical strategies can drive productive engagement. For example, Warburton and Volet (2013) have tested an assessment designed to strengthen self-directed learning strategies using narrative and open-ended responses to learning strategy questions as indicators.

Non-pedagogical strategies can also deliver strong dividends especially for at-risk and minority populations. Ream and Rumberger (2008:109) have examined the influence of school-oriented peer networks on Mexican-American and Non-Latino White students’ drop-out rates. They have found that “engagement behaviors and school-oriented friendship networks have the potential to reduce dropout rates” – an encouraging finding. A significant barrier for Mexican American students in Ream and Rumberger’s study, though, is that those students were less likely to participate in unstructured or extra-curricular engagement activities than their White counterparts – so the potential benefit of engagement activities for these populations has not been necessarily realized.

There are differences between online and in-person educational environments, with online students finding significantly higher levels of learning challenge than in-person students (NSSE 2013:9). Studies investigating efforts to improve engagement using asynchronous learning environments have shown some success (Northey at al. 2015), even suggesting that these can produce outcomes that compare well to certain in-person groups. But these effects can also be cohort- and motivation-specific (Zepke and Leach 2010). In these studies, it is not clear how investigators have parsed intrinsic (i.e. personal) from extrinsic (i.e. actionable, strategy-dependent) engagement qualities.

This evidence points towards a set of complementary measurements for online engagement that focus on addressing these challenges directly. Coates (2007) has examined the degree to which in-person engagement analysis can help online pedagogy and found some direct utility, but also areas where online instruction require different measures. More work is needed in order to understand how metrics might translate between and among instructional modalities (synchronous and asynchronous, online, in-person and hybrid).
Studies of machine-measurable aspects of student engagement using data collected via Learning-Management Systems (henceforth LMS) also show some promise. Such systems often track students’ activities within an LMS, such as students’ posting, voting and viewing counts, and simple content analysis using rough set methods. Some have been found useful in, for example, increasing retention rates for MOOCs, which are a very challenging instructional environment (Ramesh et. al. 2013). The role of engagement indicators is focused on high-yield outcomes such as reducing high initial drop-out rates. These systems are not yet robustly proven even for those indicators, however. In terms of measuring depth and quality of learning, and of connecting these to broader outcome measures, this area requires more research.

There are differences between individual institution engagement indicators and the NSSE set. For example, the University of Cincinnati (2014) has investigated these differences and published a table comparing its EI results with the NSSE. Their report is refreshing in its candor. Looking towards other institutional efforts at assessing EL, not merely NSSE or a relevant subset of it, seems to us to be a promising direction for additional exploration.

International models also exist. In the U.K., there is a national body called the Quality Assurance Authority (QAA) that publishes Guidelines on Student Engagement. These are required for accreditation. UK QAA Guidelines on Student Engagement offer seven “Indicators of Sound Practice.” These focus on co-production of value via the educational process. There is emphasis on what UK assessment entities term “the co-production of knowledge”, which includes the participation of students and faculty in “evidence based discussions based on the mutual sharing of information.” It is not yet clear to us how these indicators are measured.

In sum, the scholarship of EL is relatively new, but it is a growing and diverse universe of inquiry. We recommend developing expertise in this scholarship and using it to develop tools and metrics for assessment that will result in valid and reliable evaluations of EL experiences and outcomes.
Appendix C: NSSE Survey Instrument (front page)

1. During the current school year, about how often have you done the following?
   Response options: Very often, Often, Sometimes, Never
   a. Asked questions or contributed to course discussions in other ways
   b. Prepared two or more drafts of a paper or assignment before turning it in
   c. Came to class without completing readings or assignments
   d. Attended an art exhibit, play, or other arts performance (dance, music, etc.)
   e. Asked another student to help you understand course material
   f. Explained course material to one or more students
   g. Prepared for exams by discussing or working through course material with other students
   h. Worked with other students on course projects or assignments
   i. Given a course presentation

2. During the current school year, about how often have you done the following?
   Response options: Very often, Often, Sometimes, Never
   a. Combined ideas from different courses when completing assignments
   b. Connected your learning to societal problems or issues
   c. Included diverse perspectives (political, religious, racial/ethnic, gender, etc.) in course discussions or assignments
   d. Examined the strengths and weaknesses of your own views on a topic or issue
   e. Tried to better understand someone else’s views by imagining how an issue looks from his or her perspective
   f. Learned something that changed the way you understand an issue or concept
   g. Connected ideas from your courses to your prior experiences and knowledge

3. During the current school year, about how often have you done the following?
   Response options: Very often, Often, Sometimes, Never
   a.Talked about career plans with a faculty member
   b. Worked with a faculty member on activities other than course work (committees, student groups, etc.)
   c. Discussed course topics, ideas, or concepts with a faculty member outside of class
   d. Discussed your academic performance with a faculty member

4. During the current school year, how much has your coursework emphasized the following?
   Response options: Very much, Quite a bit, Some, Very little
   a. Memorizing course material
   b. Applying facts, theories, or methods to practical problems or new situations
   c. Analyzing an idea, experience, or line of reasoning in depth by examining its parts
   d. Evaluating a point of view, decision, or information source
   e. Forming a new idea or understanding from various pieces of information

5. During the current school year, to what extent have your instructors done the following?
   Response options: Very much, Quite a bit, Some, Very little
   a. Clearly explained course goals and requirements
   b. Taught course sessions in an organized way
   c. Used examples or illustrations to explain difficult points
   d. Provided feedback on a draft or work in progress
   e. Provided prompt and detailed feedback on tests or completed assignments

6. During the current school year, about how often have you done the following?
   Response options: Very often, Often, Sometimes, Never
   a. Reached conclusions based on your own analysis of numerical information (numbers, graphs, statistics, etc.)
   b. Used numerical information to develop a real-world problem or issue (unemployment, climate change, public health, etc.)
   c. Evaluated what others have concluded from numerical information

Appendix D: List of SBS Courses currently approved with EL attributes
### SBS Proposal Courses and Internships 2015-16

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*(current as of March 2016)*
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Appendix E: List of SBS Community Partners

(current as of March 2016)

2. Partnering to Address Food Insecurity. BARA – Community Food Bank of S. AZ.
3. Understanding the Border through Journalism. Journalism/Anthropology-Nogales Community Development.
4. STEM Outreach and Student Engagement. GWS-Pima County School Superintendent.
5. Collaborating with Birthing Centers and Training Future Health Care Workers. BARA-Birth and Women’s Health Center.
Appendix F: Various funded proposals to ‘100% Student Engagement’ Strategic Investment Grant competition

- Understanding the Border through Journalism, Anthropology and Student Engagement (Total Cost: $18,952; Funding Request: $13,953)
- Linguistics in Childrens’ Museum Tucson (Funding Request $14,968)
- Poverty in Tucson Field Workshop (Total Cost $30,000; Funding Request $14,355)