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This new draft of the *Degree Qualifications Profile, DQP 2.0,* represents many months of diligent effort on the part of its authors, Cliff Adelman, Peter Ewell, Paul Gaston and Carol Geary Schneider. It also reflects the thoughtful input of scores of individuals and organizations who have reviewed and used the *DQP* since publication of its "beta" version in 2011.

During the past three years, the *DQP* has been used in various ways by faculty members at more than 400 colleges and universities. These field trials have yielded significant feedback about the *DQP* — feedback that has done much to inform and improve this latest version.

With all of its improvements, however, the purpose and structure of the document are unchanged. The *DQP* remains what it always has been: a framework for defining the high-quality learning that college degrees should signify at the associate, bachelor's, and master's degree levels. Similarly, *DQP 2.0* is a work in progress — a tool whose utility Lumina Foundation seeks to enhance as we continue the effort to ensure the quality of postsecondary education by focusing on student learning.

To that end, we have created a website, www.luminafoundation.org/dqp, where interested parties are urged to share comments and suggestions about this version of the *DQP*. Written comments will be accepted at the website until March 15. Lumina will use this feedback to further enhance the *DQP* in preparation for the next iteration of the document, which we plan to publish in the fall of 2014. In conjunction with that publication — which will incorporate postsecondary certificates into the qualifications framework — Lumina also plans to unveil a variety of resources and activities that will help faculty members, accreditors and others as they use the *DQP.*

We're very pleased with the progress this document represents, and we're grateful to the authors who have worked so hard to bring it about. We also want to thank two advisers who have assisted in refining this version of the *DQP*: Tim Birtwistle, professor emeritus at Leeds Metropolitan University; and Keith Bird, senior fellow at the Corporation for a Skilled Workforce.

The efforts of these dedicated experts — and the innovative spirit of the growing numbers of faculty members and other practitioners who are using the DQP — are more than commendable. They demonstrate a genuine commitment to ensuring that college-level credentials reflect the rigor, relevance and clarity that students and society need.

Again, we urge you to be part of that ongoing effort by providing your feedback on this document. If you're participating in an event at which the *DQP* is being used or discussed, simply jot down your comments on the next page and submit them to us. Or visit www.luminafoundation.org/dqp before March 15 and share your thoughts.

Thank you,

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RESPONDING TO THE DRAFT OF THE DQP

Your name: _____

Your institution: _____

Your e-mail address: _____

Have you had any experience with the "first edition" of the *DQP*? If so, please briefly describe that experience.

_____

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In the light of your experience to date with the *DQP,* what advice do you have overall for *DQP 2.0*?

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In the light of your review of this draft, what advice do you have? Are there elements that should be added? Are there approaches that should be reconsidered? Are there elements you believe to be unnecessary?

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Do you have any advice concerning implementation of *DQP 2.0*? Who should be involved? Who should *not* be involved? What strategies do you recommend? What strategies do you recommend be avoided?

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Thank you for your suggestions!

DRAFT

The Degree Qualifications Profile 2.0

Defining U.S. Degrees through Demonstration and Documentation of College Learning

By Cliff Adelman, Peter Ewell, Paul Gaston and Carol Geary Schneider

January 2014

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Preface

Since its publication in January 2011, the *Degree Qualifications Profile* (*DQP*) has proved its usefulness to higher education institutions and associations from coast to coast. About 400 colleges and universities* have used the *DQP*, and its applications have been as diverse as the copious variety of missions in higher education. A few examples will indicate the range.

- Many institutions have used the *DQP* to review and strengthen their general education curricula and to enhance the connections between general education and the major.
- One institution has implemented a reorientation of its mission and curriculum in light of the *DQP*.
- Some institutions with existing statements of learning outcomes have used the *DQP* in a "gap analysis" to determine their statements' inclusiveness, sufficiency and distinctive strengths.
- Some institutions have used the *DQP* as a platform for discussions with employers and other stakeholders about their needs and expectations.
- Two and four-year institutions in nine states have worked together on ways to assess *DQP* proficiencies in the context of transfer.

While this second iteration of the *DQP* improves on the first in several ways, it represents less a revision than an enhancement. The fundamental strength of the *DQP* — succinct, active definitions of what degree recipients should know and be able to do at each degree level — remains essentially unchanged. ***Those engaged in implementation or adaptation of the DQP may be confident that its structure and contents have not been substantially altered.***

What has changed since January 2011? In addition to colleges and universities, four of the seven regional accrediting associations and constituency organizations such as the Council of Independent Colleges (CIC), the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU), and the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) have found the *DQP* a stimulus to creative and innovative projects. Some institutions are encouraging students' independent attainment of competencies documented by direct assessment. The range of higher education providers has expanded. And concrete efforts to enhance the preparedness of high school graduates, such as the Common Core State Standards, are gaining traction.

Informed by feedback, this iteration thus includes new proficiencies concerning ethical reasoning and global learning, strengthened statements on quantitative reasoning, and more explicit attention to research. It highlights analytical and cooperative approaches to learning that transcend specific fields of study. It provides guidance on integrating the development of students' intellectual skills with their broad, specialized, applied, and civic learning. And in response to requests, it points to resources that support the assessment of *DQP* proficiencies.

DQP 2.0 is meant to build on its successful predecessor so as to offer an even more useful, flexible, and practical "tool that can help transform U.S. higher education."

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* References to "colleges and universities" are meant to include community colleges, junior colleges, and non-traditional providers.

Executive summary

With the assistance of the original authors and many expert reviewers, Lumina Foundation offers the second iteration of its *Degree Qualifications Profile* for U.S. higher education: *DQP 2.0.* Reflecting nearly three years of wide and diverse application, the *DQP* continues to provide a baseline set of reference points for what students should know and be able to do to merit the award of associate, bachelor's and master's degrees, regardless of their field of study. †

Although the *DQP* stands on the shoulders of many in its effort to describe what postsecondary degrees should mean in terms of learning outcomes, it sets a new direction for U.S. higher education in the following ways:

- The student, not the institution, is the primary reference point. The *DQP* describes what students should know and be able to do as they progress through progressively higher levels of postsecondary study.
- The *DQP* presents outcomes for three levels of degrees by articulating increasing levels of challenge for student performance for each of the learning outcomes it frames.
- The degree, not the field of study, is its emphasis. The *DQP* is presented as a "profile," in the expectation that faculty responsible for fields of study and programs will provide the field-specific expectations for student accomplishment in their particular areas of specialized knowledge. Accrediting associations in many fields of study have established such expectations, and explicit field-level outcomes are being developed also through the allied "Tuning" process. (See Appendix B, Page 39.)
- The *DQP*'s learning outcomes are written using active verbs — e.g., "identifies," "categorizes," "prioritizes," "evaluates" — because such verbs describe what students actually do when they demonstrate proficiency through assignments (papers, performances, projects, examinations, exhibits, etc.). Nouns such as "ability," "awareness," and "appreciation" are avoided because they do not lead to assessments of proficiency.
- The *DQP* is transformational in that it provides a *qualitative* set of important learning outcomes — not *quantitative* measures such as number of credits and grade point averages —
- as the basis for awarding degrees.
- The process of developing this second iteration involved many stakeholders testing many potential applications over a three-year period — a non-governmental process undertaken voluntarily by nearly 400 institutions engaged in sponsored and independent projects.
- *DQP* proficiencies are intended not as statements of aspiration for some, but as descriptions of what ***every*** graduate at a given level ought to know and be able to do.

Compared to other approaches to accountability in U.S. higher education, the *DQP* differs in important ways.

† By Fall 2014, the DQP is also expected to incorporate postsecondary certificates (credentials recognizing knowledge and skill below the degree level). Academic doctorates (i.e., Ph.D.s) are not included at this time because of their emphasis on advanced research skills specific to individual disciplines. Qualifications profiles for professional doctorates in medicine, law, physical therapy, audiology and other fields may be proposed later.

- Current accountability markers are principally limited to degree-completion data based on numbers of courses or credit hours; these measures fail to describe what degrees mean in terms of demonstrated student performance.
- Many emerging state or system-level accountability strategies feature simplistic measurements based on a small set of standardized test scores or on retrospective opinions captured through surveys. In contrast, the *DQP* offers qualitative guidance both to students and to a society that asks, "So, you hold this degree; what did you really do to earn it?"
- Current assessment practice often rests on learning goals developed by each institution in isolation. Their attainment is then usually investigated ***on average***, by examining the performance of samples of students using various methods — summative examinations (standardized or developed by the institution's faculty), portfolios, capstone exercises, etc. These methods are ***added on to*** the teaching and learning process to verify its effectiveness. The *DQP* proposes a more integrated approach, one focused on the expected and performed accomplishments of individual students in the course of multiple teaching and learning experiences.

The *DQP* addresses specific current issues:

- In response to questions about higher education's effectiveness, academic administrators and faculty have few adequate answers. The *DQP* invites — and prepares pathways for — the documentation of student learning in broadly understood and easily appreciated terms.
- Facing the complexity of contemporary curricula in higher education and the many locations and technologies through which curricula are delivered, few students receive adequate guidance on the structure and cumulative force of their learning. The *DQP* invites them to make choices informed by a shared awareness of degree-level outcomes.
- Recognizing that faculty members are more likely to work within their departments or fields of study than to work collaboratively with peers in other fields, the *DQP* calls for meaningful collaboration among faculty that enables students to achieve expected proficiencies across the entirety of their studies.
- Acknowledging a proliferation of higher education providers and modes of delivery, the *DQP* offers a perspective on proficiencies that transcends providers and learning contexts. It is as applicable to learning that is assessed outside the framework of courses as it is to traditional course-based degree programs.

Proficiencies are organized in the *DQP* according to five broad categories:

1. **Specialized Knowledge.** Beyond the vocabularies, theories, and skills of fields of study, this category addresses what students in *any* specialization should demonstrate with respect to the specialization.
2. **Broad and Integrative Knowledge**. This category asks students at all degree levels covered in the *DQP* to consolidate learning from different broad fields of study — the humanities, arts, sciences, and social sciences — and to discover and explore concepts and questions that bridge these essential areas of learning.
3. **Intellectual Skills.** Both traditional and non-traditional cognitive operations are included in these skills: analytic inquiry, use of information resources, engaging diverse perspectives, ethical reasoning, quantitative fluency, and communicative fluency. There appears throughout an emphasis on the capacity to make, engage, and interpret ideas and arguments from different points of reference (cultural, technological, political, etc.).

4. **Applied and Collaborative Learning.** This element of the *DQP* emphasizes what students can *do* with what they know, demonstrated by innovation and fluency in addressing unscripted problems in scholarly inquiry, at work and in other settings outside the classroom. This category includes research and creative activities involving both individual and group effort.
5. **Civic and Global Learning.** Recognizing higher education's responsibilities both to democracy and to the global community, this fifth area of learning addresses the integration of knowledge and skills in applications that facilitate student engagement with and response to civic, social, environmental and economic challenges at local, national and global levels.

1. DQP 2.0: Value, uses and contexts

Through this document, Lumina Foundation offers a second iteration of the *Degree Qualifications Profile*, a tool meant to help transform U.S. higher education. The *DQP* illustrates clearly what students should know and be able to do once they earn their degrees — at any level, in any field of study. As a profile that invites institutions to fill in the details, the *DQP* thus proposes proficiencies that benchmark the associate, bachelor's, and master's degrees — which constitute the great majority of postsecondary degrees awarded by U.S. colleges and universities — regardless of a student's field of specialization.

The proficiencies specified in the *DQP* are not without precedent. In fact, the *DQP* draws on more than a decade of widespread debate and effort, across all levels of U.S. higher education and in countries throughout the world, to define expected learning outcomes that graduates should fulfill in preparation for work, citizenship, global participation and life. But the *DQP* represents a significant advance beyond such efforts by describing in concrete terms how students *demonstrate* expected proficiencies across different degree levels and across the different elements of any degree.

DQP 2.0 is offered as a draft. Just as the original version has been tested and refined by a variety of stakeholders over the past three years, so, too, further experience with *DQP 2.0* and reflection on its myriad applications will inform subsequent iterations and improvements.

The intermediate goal of the *DQP* process is consensus on a public definition of quality in U.S. higher education. The long-range goal is the development of capacity throughout postsecondary education to ensure that students achieve the levels of learning they require and deserve.

The need for a DQP

Higher learning has become especially critical in today's knowledge society. To succeed in the workplace, students must prepare for jobs that are rapidly changing, use technologies that are still emerging, and work with colleagues from (and often in) all parts of the globe. Moreover, many of the complex challenges that graduates must address as citizens are global.

Recognizing the economic and societal importance of higher levels of learning, national leaders, policymakers, analysts and major philanthropies have called for a dramatic increase in the number of degrees awarded in the U.S. But the press toward increased degree production has not been grounded in any consistent public understanding of what these degrees ought to demand and mean. Even as colleges and universities have defined their own expected student learning outcomes — typically to meet accreditation requirements — what they have done has been largely invisible to policy leaders, the public and many students. Similarly, while higher education institutions have been under increasing pressure to "be accountable" for the quality of their degrees, colleges and universities have frequently responded by assessing samples of students in ways that say too little about learning and even less about what *all* students should know and be able to do.

The *DQP* responds to these concerns by describing concretely what is meant by each of the degrees addressed. Focusing on broad areas of conceptual knowledge and essential proficiencies and their applications, the *DQP* illustrates how students should be expected to perform at progressively more challenging levels. Demonstrated performance at these ascending levels becomes the basis on which students are awarded degrees.

While clarity and consensus are certainly goals of the *DQP* process, the *DQP* does not attempt to "standardize" U.S. degrees. The *DQP* recognizes that it is the role and responsibility of faculty to determine both the content appropriate to different areas of study and the best ways to teach that content. Instead, the *DQP* describes generic forms of student performance appropriate for each degree level through clear reference points that indicate the incremental, integrative and cumulative nature of learning.

The *DQP* offers reference points in five broad areas of learning for all associate, bachelor's and master's degrees. But no outcomes framework can or should attempt to address every element of a college education. Acknowledging and seeking to protect the rich diversity of U.S. higher education, the *DQP* thus invites adaptation within the context of varied institutional missions — for example, those that emphasize religious exploration or proficiency in the performing arts. Every institution may expand the *DQP* by adding outcomes that are specific to its mission and by documenting student attainment of such outcomes.

In addition, the *DQP* embodies an appreciation for the commitment of many colleges and universities to foster students' personal growth and help them examine their values and commitments. Indeed, these principles are inherent in many of the proficiencies that the *DQP* defines. But because such elements of institutional mission rarely are specified as criteria for awarding degrees, they are not explicitly referenced in the *DQP* proficiencies.

Sustained use of the *DQP* over time should continue to yield several positive results, including:

- An emerging common vocabulary for sharing good practice.
- A foundation for better public understanding of what institutions of higher education actually do.
- Reference points for accountability far stronger than test scores or tallies of graduates, research dollars, student satisfaction ratings, or job placements and average salaries.

Further, because the *DQP* defines proficiencies in ways that emphasize both the cumulative *integration* of learning from many sources and the *application* of learning in a variety of settings, it offers benchmarks for improving the *quality* of learning.

Proficiency: A label for a set of demonstrations of knowledge and skill consistent with the higher levels of mastery that justify the award of an academic degree. The term "proficiency" is preferred because the *DQP* addresses the degree as a whole, and the continuum of learning across increasingly higher degree levels. In contrast, while the term "competence" is frequently used to address objectives within a specific course or learning experience, none of the proficiencies addressed in the DQP can be developed in a single learning experience. Rather, the DQP describes broad or crosscutting areas of college-level accomplishment and the interrelationships among them.

Moreover, because every learning outcome should lead to and support a provider's capacity to gather evidence that stated proficiencies are achieved, the *DQP* also is designed to encourage colleges and universities to enhance their assessment practices and resources. While some institutions have developed impressive approaches to documenting what students achieve, all should find in the *DQP* a helpful prompt to improve on those efforts.

Uses of the DQP

Beyond encouraging thoughtful discussion and evolution of reference points for students' progressive and cumulative education, the *DQP* can serve other purposes largely missing from U.S. higher education. While it is difficult to anticipate all the purposes that the *DQP* can serve, there are several obvious applications that deserve mention. The nearly 400 colleges and universities that have experimented with the *DQP* have already taken action on many of these applications.

Assignment: Any problem, task, or creative undertaking designed by faculty that students within a course or program of study must address in order to develop, advance, and document their proficiency. Assignments are the principal vehicle for certifying DQP proficiencies.

At the institutional level, the *DQP* provides reference points that allow faculty members to articulate and better align institutional student learning outcomes with departmental objectives. Instructors and students can then refer to the *DQP* as a common source of understanding and as a point of departure for agreement on more detailed and specific expectations about programs, courses, assignments and assessments. For those engaged in educational innovations and experimentations, the *DQP* provides a framework for describing the multiple kinds of learning that students need to accomplish and demonstrate.

In guiding students, advisers can use the *DQP* as a framework to explain the structure and coherence of the curriculum with a particular emphasis on the interdependence of general education and the major. In such a context, students will be able to make better informed choices as to courses to take and will better understand how the parts of their education add up to a whole.

Core fields: Students' required studies — both disciplinary and interdisciplinary — across the humanities, arts, sciences and social sciences. Students should connect their broad learning both across their core fields and to their majors.

Recognizing that many students attend a community college intending to transfer to a four-year institution and that others may attend several institutions before completing their degrees, the *DQP* provides a framework useful for aligning degree requirements across institutions. This gives prospective students a clear statement of the proficiencies they will be expected to achieve wherever they enroll while also providing a platform for both vertical (two-year to four-year institution) and horizontal (between similar institutions) transfer.

The *DQP* also provides resources for strengthening accreditation. Regional accreditors should find that the *DQP* prompts them to reach the consensus on learning outcomes that is being sought by many leaders and opinion makers. And specialized accreditors can use the *DQP* to relate disciplinary expectations to broad institutional goals for student learning outcomes.

In addition, the focus on student learning embodied in the *DQP* and its clear demarcation of increasing levels of challenge as a student progresses from one degree level to the next should enable:

- A continuing and sustainable emphasis on learning as the proper determinant for the quality and value of degrees. This will help correct the tendency to view the credential as an end in itself, independent of the learning it is meant to represent.

- Refinement and further elaboration of points of alignment between and among secondary schools and postsecondary institutions regarding achievement levels in specific knowledge, skill and application areas.

- Guidance (a) for students on the degree ladder in terms of what to expect at the next degree level, (b) for students who intend to transfer from one institution to another, and (c) for students returning to higher education after a period of absence.

- Expansion and elaboration of connections between school-based learning and out-of-school learning, including prior learning (e.g., from employment, military service, volunteer activity, etc.).

- Development of reference points to assess students' progress and levels of achievement in relation to specific proficiencies.

Contexts for the DQP

Although there are similar exercises in other countries, the *DQP* focuses on issues, strengths and potential distinctive to higher education in the U.S. These include a commitment to access, to diversity, to academic freedom and its responsibilities, to broad liberal education as well as specialized learning, to civic education for a democracy, and to innovative, integrative, inquiry-focused and collaborative pedagogies.

Field-based: Study pursued beyond traditional academic locations, whether on or off campus. Field-based study is characterized by work in "real time" (rather than that measured by the classroom clock), in "real space" (rather than in provided academic facilities), and in "real urgency" (arising from immersion in issues and an environment).

For instance, because U.S. higher education emphasizes the application of knowledge, the *DQP* draws attention to the importance of educational experience rich in field-based projects, performances, investigative research, demonstrations, collaborations, and other learning-intensive activities.

The *DQP* also points to the many ways in which students now demonstrate their proficiencies. While conventional testing may still be useful, the *DQP* holds that students provide more persuasive evidence of their learning through their completion of assigned tasks and major projects within and beyond the classroom. Its proficiency statements are written with such modes of demonstration as reference points.

Fortunately, the U.S. is not starting from scratch in crafting a transformational, proficiency-based *DQP*. Many institutions in every sector of American higher education are already actively engaged in defining and addressing their own intended learning outcomes. Faculty members, administrators and researchers are working to improve the understanding of student learning outcomes and of the experiences and practices that move students toward those outcomes. Several fields of study have shown leadership in clarifying objectives for learning and in engaging multiple stakeholders to establish benchmarks for these objectives. In "Tuning USA" projects, one can see these relationships in history, civil engineering, marketing, chemistry and graphic arts, for example. And national associations are undertaking bold projects to help craft the kind of credential that can be negotiable well into the 21st century. These laudable efforts are largely separate from one another and largely unknown to the public, however. One aim of the *DQP* is to create a platform where such undertakings can come together.

"Tuning": Faculty-led, discipline-by-discipline projects to determine what students should know and be able stage by stage through the curriculum in that discipline. Originally a European initiative associated with the Bologna Process, "Tuning" projects are moving forward in several states of the U.S. as well as in Latin America, Africa, and Central Asia.

Finally, while the *DQP* focuses solely on the work that is necessary in higher education and defers to others so far as pre-collegiate learning standards are concerned, it recognizes the importance of preparedness for college. Students who matriculate with inadequate preparation and must remedy shortcomings may face a greater challenge in attaining the proficiencies defined by the *DQP*. Hence the *DQP* acknowledges recent efforts within the K-12 community to reach a deeper understanding of educational outcomes. In particular, the development and emerging implementation of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) offer a promising opportunity for dialogue between the K-12 and higher education sectors. A separate publication by Lumina Foundation analyzes the potential for greater alignment between these initiatives. ‡

‡ Paul L. Gaston and David T. Conley, *A path to alignment: Connecting K-12 and higher education via the Common Core and the Degree Qualifications Profile, Indianapolis: Lumina Foundation, 2013. Available at http://www.luminafoundation.org/publications/DQP/A_path_to_alignment.pdf*

The value of the DQP for students

American college students choose from among hundreds of fields of study, often with scant information to guide them on the learning implications of their choice. Because the *DQP* clearly defines the learning that each degree should reflect, regardless of the major field of study, it can help students develop and pursue a thoughtful, coherent, and meaningful education plan. It can serve as a roadmap for navigating the often-fragmented landscape of higher education.

We know, of course, that students must become masters of the content and methods in the fields they study in depth. The *DQP* contributes to that goal by providing general reference points for acquiring field-specific knowledge and skills, i.e., essential dimensions of higher learning that specific fields will elaborate in greater detail.

Field of study: Sometimes used as a synonym for *discipline* but used also to describe applied programs such as culinary arts, graphic design, and medical records administration.

We also know that most students will change jobs many times during their lives. Therefore, the *DQP* strongly emphasizes the kinds of broad, integrative studies and crosscutting proficiencies that graduates need for continuous learning in complex and changing environments.

A fundamental assumption behind the *DQP* is that study in breadth, traditionally associated with general education, and study in depth, traditionally associated with the major, are equally vital for well-qualified graduates. But the *DQP* also assumes that general education and the major must work together. Degree recipients benefit from a curriculum in which general education and the major are clearly aligned in the pursuit of a shared commitment to assuring student accomplishment of clearly stated proficiencies.

There are pedagogical and practical benefits in such clarity. Students who understand the purposes of the courses they take and the congruence between course-level and degree-level objectives learn more effectively, and the *DQP* offers a resource to guide that understanding. In practical terms, working adults and returning students may find the *DQP* useful because it enables them to apply what they have learned elsewhere to their postsecondary degree programs. By emphasizing what students can do with their knowledge, the *DQP* reinforces the validation and documentation of learning acquired in the workplace, the military, or in other settings.

Use of the *DQP* also should help students commit themselves to prepare fully for citizenship, for contributing to the economy, and for the accomplishment of their own personal goals. As they make clear their resolve to support students pursuing such preparation, colleges and universities might invite students to formalize a shared resolve at the beginning of their college career, perhaps through a statement that says, "I have read and understand the proficiencies for the degree I seek and commit myself to investing the time, energy, and creativity to qualify for that degree." An over-arching student learning agreement for each degree should be an important outgrowth of the framework envisioned here.

The value of the DQP for faculty members

There are five principal values of the *DQP* for faculty. First, it draws them into active clarification of the reasons they teach in relation to what their students learn. Second, it encourages them to examine more fully the content and methods of their fields of study in relation to priorities that span departmental and school boundaries. That is, the *DQP* can prompt a shift of perspective from "my courses" to "our curriculum." Third, it can help foster purposeful and sustained interactions with colleagues concerning the very purpose of colleges and universities: that is, to generate, preserve, evaluate and disseminate knowledge. Fourth, the *DQP* compels faculty to closely examine the assignments they give to students to ensure that these assignments truly foster and properly assess the desired learning and proficiencies. Fifth, and most importantly, faculty members' collaborative engagement with the *DQP* reinforces the value of their intentionality for both teaching and learning.

The value of the DQP for the public

Although the public values higher education, many do not understand it — how it is organized, how it operates, and what it accomplishes. Higher education is in part responsible for this dilemma because colleges and universities have never expressed a clear and straightforward consensus as to what degrees should mean in terms of student proficiencies. The *DQP* offers an important step toward such a consensus by proposing in direct, simple language what a degree recipient should know and be able to do, regardless of the field of study. When such a consensus can be expressed "at scale," so that it speaks broadly for the great majority of colleges and universities, the public will be able to make better-informed decisions about higher education. To which colleges and universities should a prospective student apply? Does a community college bond issue deserve support? Should media reports on higher education be taken at face value? What, after all, do academic degrees *mean*?

2. Organization of the DQP

Early in the 20th century, educators decided that the college degree should be organized in terms of depth and breadth, or "concentration" and "distribution." Depth and breadth, which are terms applicable to the way students approach their studies in specific knowledge areas, became, over time, organizing principles for the college degree throughout the United States.

Yet, as educators and employers have worked on hundreds of campuses and in every part of the U.S., to articulate the learning outcomes students need to succeed in 21st century contexts, they have gone significantly beyond the twin pillars of breadth and depth. In particular, they have specified essential intellectual skills in seeking to ensure that students are well prepared to apply their learning beyond the classroom and to contribute to the life and vitality of the U.S. as a globally engaged democracy. Educators also have expanded the contexts for learning so that students now have many opportunities to develop and apply their learning in field-based settings.

DQP 2.0 builds from and further develops insights about higher learning articulated through these reconsiderations. While "depth" and "breadth" remain component elements of all postsecondary study, the *DQP* describes explicitly five basic areas of learning, each of which should be included in the associate degree, the bachelor's degree and the master's degree. They are as follows:

Specialized Knowledge

Independent of the vocabularies, theories and skills of particular fields of study, the *DQP* outlines what students in any specialization should demonstrate with respect to the specialization, often called a major field. The *DQP*'s "profile" description of specialized knowledge in any field of study will be — in practice — filled out in much greater detail than the *DQP* provides. Tuning (see Page 38) and other field-specific efforts describe the concepts, knowledge areas, methods and accomplishments basic to particular fields of study.

Broad and Integrative Knowledge

This category asks students at all degree levels covered in the *DQP* to develop and consolidate broad knowledge across multiple areas of learning, and to discover and explore concepts and questions that bridge multiple fields of study. The *DQP* recommends that broad and integrative learning should involve students across all degree levels in the inquiry practices of core fields ranging from the sciences and social sciences to the humanities and arts. By exploring global, intercultural, scientific and economic topics, students pursue questions that both prepare them for civic participation and create a larger context for their specialized interests.

Intellectual Skills

The *DQP* describes a set of proficiencies that are basic to evidence-based reasoning across fields of study, including: analytic inquiry and operations, use of information resources, engaging diverse perspectives, ethical reasoning, quantitative fluency, and communicative fluency. There is an emphasis throughout on the capacity to engage, make and interpret ideas and arguments from different points of reference (cultural, technological, political, etc.)

Applied and Collaborative Learning

This area focuses on what students can do with what they know, demonstrated by innovation and fluency in addressing both conventional and unscripted problems in the classroom, beyond the classroom, and at work. This category includes both undergraduate research and creative activities involving individual and group effort.

Civic and Global Learning

This area of learning fosters students' integration of knowledge and skills in applications that prepare them for citizenship through engagement with and response to political, social, environmental and economic challenges at local, national and global levels.

Guidelines for interpreting the DQP proficiencies

Proficiencies are organized in the *DQP* within the five broad areas of learning outlined above. For the sake of clarity, the *DQP* describes the proficiencies for each area independently. Yet, as will become clear, specific proficiencies typically integrate knowledge, one or more intellectual skills, and some form of demonstration. The same point applies to students' actual development of the expected proficiencies. Students will learn what they practice and they should frequently encounter assignments that charge them to integrate knowledge, specific skills and applications.

A few pointers may be helpful in understanding the proficiencies presented in the *DQP*:

- The proficiencies are intended to be summative for each degree level. Thus, the proficiencies identified "at the associate level," which are also descriptive of work assigned during the first two years of a four-year curriculum, are assumed for the baccalaureate level. In turn, outcomes stated specifically for the master's degree include those for the associate and bachelor's degrees. Each section of the *DQP* thus demonstrates the principle of incremental challenge and cumulative accomplishment from one degree level to the next.
- .
  Students can attain these proficiencies through many paths and at any point in the course of their academic journeys. Just as learning is cumulative but rarely follows a rigid sequence, evidence for learning is cumulative and reflects programmatic and individual differences.

- The ways of demonstrating the proficiencies that are frequently included in these statements are illustrations. When they indicate a range of performance, the implied forms of demonstration (e.g., an essay, oral presentation, or project) are suggestive rather than exhaustive.

- The proficiencies are presented through active verbs that declare what students should do to demonstrate proficiency. These active verbs are deliberately cast at different levels of sophistication as the *DQP* moves up the degree ladder. The *DQP* avoids terms such as "appreciation," "awareness," and "ability" because these cannot be demonstrated through specific assignments.

- The proficiency statements do not prescribe *how well* a student must demonstrate proficiency; they are intended to invite demonstration that learning outcomes have been achieved.

- Standards of quality are faculty judgments and should be based on criteria that faculty make explicit to students.

- Illustrations from specific disciplines, occupational fields, institutions or associations are emerging through use of the *DQP* by faculty in different fields of study and through work associated with the "Tuning USA" project described in the Appendix.

- The five broad areas of learning included in the *DQP* will be approached in different ways and with differing degrees of emphasis by the many providers of U.S. higher education. However, the inclusion and integration of these five component areas of learning should represent a widely shared curricular goal.

- The descriptions of proficiencies often include references to unknowns, inquiries, partial conclusions, and unresolved challenges. Such inquiries and contingencies are common to all fields of study, and they apply not only to research but also to creative works, technical designs, interpretations and projects.

3. The Degree Qualifications Profile 2.0

This section outlines the five component areas of learning for each degree level, the proficiencies basic to each area of learning, and their relationship to one another. These proficiencies appear also in a summary chart or grid on Pages 33-36.

KNOWLEDGE

The *DQP* offers a significant modification of the traditional distinction between the broad knowledge acquired through the entire course of one's education and that gleaned through pursuit of a specialized field of study. It emphasizes the *integration* of ideas, methods, practice, and theory across *both* broad and specialized realms.

Specialized knowledge

Most who receive degrees pursue specialized areas of study and are expected to meet knowledge and skill requirements of those areas. Specialized accrediting associations and licensure bodies have developed standards for many such fields of study and the "Tuning" process is doing so for some of these and others. (See Appendix B, Page 38.) But all fields call more or less explicitly for proficiencies involving terminology, theory, methods, tools, literature, complex problems or applications, and cognizance of limits. These reference points for student achievement of specialized knowledge are addressed in the proficiencies presented below.

At the associate level the student pursuing a specialized degree such as an Associate of Applied Science

- Describes the scope of the field of study, its core theories and practices, using field-related terminology, and offers a similar explication of at least one related field.
- Applies tools, technologies and methods common to the field of study to selected questions or problems.
- Generates substantially error-free products, reconstructions, data, juried exhibits or performances appropriate to the field of study.

At the bachelor's level, the student

- Defines and explains the structure, styles and practices of the field of study using its tools, technologies, methods and specialized terms.
- Addresses a familiar but complex problem in the field of study by assembling, arranging and reformulating ideas, concepts, designs and techniques.
- Frames, clarifies and evaluates a complex challenge in the field of study and one other field, using theories, tools, methods and scholarship from those fields to produce independently or collaboratively an investigative, creative or practical work illuminating that challenge.

- Constructs a summative project, paper, performance or application that draws on current research, scholarship and techniques in the field of study.

At the master's level, the student

- Elucidates the major theories, research methods and approaches to inquiry and schools of practice in the field of study, articulates their sources, and illustrates both their applications and their relationships to allied fields of study.

- Assesses the contributions of major figures and organizations in the field of study, describes its major methodologies and practices, and illustrates them through projects, papers, exhibits or performances.

- Articulates significant challenges involved in practicing the field of study, elucidates its leading edges, and explores the current limits of theory, knowledge and practice through a project that lies outside conventional boundaries.

Broad and integrative knowledge

U.S. higher education is distinctive in its emphasis on students' broad learning across the humanities, arts, sciences and social sciences, and the *DQP* builds on that commitment to liberal and general education in postsecondary learning. However, the *DQP* further invites students to *integrate* their broad learning by exploring, connecting and applying concepts and methods across *multiple fields of study* to complex questions — in the student's areas of specialization, in work or other field-based settings, and in the wider society. While many institutions of higher education and most state requirements relegate general knowledge to the first two years of undergraduate work and present it in isolated blocks, the *DQP* takes the position that broad and integrative knowledge, at all degree levels, should build larger, cumulative contexts for students' specialized and applied learning and for their engagement with civic, intercultural, global, and scientific issues as well.

At the associate level, the student

- Describes how existing knowledge or practice is advanced, tested and revised in each core field studied — e.g., disciplinary and interdisciplinary courses in the sciences, social sciences, humanities and arts.

- Describes a key debate or problem relevant to *each* core field studied, explains the significance of the debate or problem to the wider society, and shows how concepts from the core field can be used to address the selected debates or problems.

- Uses recognized methods of each core field studied, including the gathering and evaluation of evidence, in the execution of analytical, practical or creative tasks.

- Describes and evaluates the ways in which at least two fields of study define, address, and interpret the importance for society of a problem in science, the arts, society, human services, economic life or technology.

At the bachelor's level, the student

- Describes and evaluates the ways in which at least two fields of study define, address, and interpret the importance for society of a problem in science, the arts, society, human services, economic life or technology, explains how the methods of inquiry in these fields can address the challenge, and proposes an approach to the problem that draws on these fields.

- Produces an investigative, creative or practical work that draws on specific theories, tools and methods from at least two core fields of study.

- Defines and frames a problem important to the major field of study, justifies the significance of the challenge or problem in a wider societal context, explains how methods from the primary field of study and one or more core fields of study can be used to address the problem, and develops an approach that draws on both the major and core fields.

At the master's level, the student

- Articulates how the field of study has developed in relation to other major domains of inquiry and practice.

- Designs and executes an applied, investigative or creative work that draws on the perspectives and methods of other fields of study and assesses the resulting advantages and challenges of including these perspectives and methods.

- Articulates and defends the significance and implications of the work in the primary field of study in terms of challenges and trends in a social or global context.

INTELLECTUAL SKILLS

The six crosscutting Intellectual Skills presented below define proficiencies that transcend the boundaries of particular fields of study. They overlap, interact with, and enable the other major areas of learning described in the *DQP*.

Analytic inquiry

Because the synthesizing cognitive operations of assembling, combining, formulating, evaluating and reconstructing information are foundational to all learning, they are addressed throughout the *DQP*. But analytic inquiry, though it is involved in such synthesis, requires separate treatment as the core intellectual skill that enables a student to examine, probe and grasp the assumptions and conventions of different areas of study.

At the associate level, the student

- Identifies and frames a problem or question in selected areas of study and distinguishes among elements of ideas, concepts, theories or practical approaches to the problem or question.

At the bachelor's level, the student

- Differentiates and evaluates theories and approaches to selected complex problems within the chosen field of study and at least one other field.

At the master's level, the student

- Disaggregates, reformulates and adapts principal ideas, techniques or methods at the forefront of the field of study in carrying out an essay or project.

Use of information resources

There is no learning without information, and students must learn how to find, organize, and evaluate it. At each degree level, these tasks become more complicated — by language, by media, by ambiguity and contradictions — and the proficiencies offered below reflect that ladder of challenge.

At the associate level, the student

- Identifies, categorizes, evaluates and cites multiple information resources so as to create projects, papers or performances in either a specialized field of study or with respect to a general theme within the arts and sciences.

At the bachelor's level, the student

- Locates, evaluates, incorporates, and properly cites multiple information resources in different media or different languages in projects, papers or performances.

- Describes characteristics of essential information resources, including their limitations, and explains strategies for identifying and finding such resources.

- Generates information through independent or collaborative inquiry and uses that information in a project, paper or performance.

At the master's level, the student

- Provides evidence (through papers, projects, notebooks, computer files or catalogues) of contributing to, expanding, evaluating or refining the information base within the field of study.

Engaging diverse perspectives

Every student should develop the intellectual flexibility and broad knowledge that enables perception of the world through the eyes of others, i.e., from the perspectives of diverse cultures, personalities, places, times and technologies. This proficiency is essential to intellectual development and to both Applied and Collaborative Learning and Civic and Global Learning.

At the associate level, the student

- Describes how knowledge from different cultural perspectives might affect interpretations of prominent problems in politics, society, the arts and/or global relations.

- Describes, explains and evaluates the sources of his or her own perspective on selected issues in culture, society, politics, the arts or global relations and compares that perspective with other views.

At the bachelor's level, the student

- Constructs a written project, laboratory report, exhibit, performance or community service design expressing an alternate cultural, political or technological vision and explains how this vision differs from current realities.

- Frames a controversy or problem within the field of study in terms of at least two political, cultural, historical or technological forces, explores and evaluates competing perspectives on the controversy or problem, and presents a reasoned analysis of the issue, either orally or in writing, that demonstrates consideration of the competing views.

At the master's level, the student

- Addresses through a project, paper or performance a core issue in the field of study from the perspective of a different point in time or a different culture, language, political order or technological context and explains how this perspective yields results that depart from current norms, dominant cultural assumptions or technologies.

Ethical reasoning

Analytic reasoning, the use of information resources, communication, and diverse perspectives must inevitably be brought to bear on situations, both clear and indeterminate, where tensions and conflicts, disparities and harms emerge, and where a particular set of intellectual skills is necessary to identify, elaborate and resolve these cases. Ethical reasoning thus refers to the judicious and self-reflective application of ethical principles and codes of conduct resident in cultures, professions, occupations, economic behavior and social relationships to making decisions and taking action.

At the associate level, the student

- Describes the ethical issues present in prominent problems in politics, economics, health care, technology or the arts and shows how ethical principles or frameworks help to inform decision making with respect to such problems.

At the bachelor's level, the student

- Analyzes competing claims from a recent discovery, scientific contention, or technical practice with respect to benefits and harms to those affected, articulates the ethical dilemmas

inherent in the tension of benefits and harms, and arrives at a clearly expressed reconciliation of that tension that is informed by ethical principles.

- Identifies and elaborates key ethical issues present in at least one prominent social or cultural problem, articulates the ways in which at least two differing ethical perspectives influence decision-making concerning those problems, and develops and defends an approach most likely to address the ethical issue productively.

At the master's level, the student

- Articulates and challenges a tradition, assumption or prevailing practice within the field of study by raising and examining relevant ethical perspectives through a project, paper or performance.

- Distinguishes human activities and judgments subject to ethical reasoning from those not subject to ethical reasoning.

Quantitative fluency

Quantitative expressions and the issues they raise inform many tasks. In addition to essential arithmetic skills, the use of visualization, symbolic translation and algorithms has become critically important.

At the associate level, the student

- Presents accurate interpretations of quantitative information on political, economic, health-related or technological topics and explains how both calculations and symbolic operations are used in those offerings.

- Creates and explains graphs or other visual depictions of trends, relationships or changes in status.

At the bachelor's level, the student

- Translates verbal problems into mathematical algorithms so as to construct valid arguments using the accepted symbolic system of mathematical reasoning and presents the resulting calculations, estimates, risk analyses or quantitative evaluations of public information in papers, projects or multimedia presentations.

- Constructs mathematical expressions for complex issues most often described in non-quantitative terms.

At the master's level, the student

- Employs logical, mathematical or statistical methods appropriate to addressing a topic or issue in the primary field. (For students seeking a degree in a field of study not quantitatively based)

- Articulates and undertakes multiple appropriate applications of quantitative methods, concepts and theories in the field of study. (For students seeking a degree in a quantitatively based or quantitatively relevant field of study)

- Identifies, chooses and defends the choice of a mathematical model appropriate to a problem in the social sciences or applied sciences.

Communicative fluency

The use of messages to achieve shared understanding of meaning depends on effective use of language, intentional engagement of audience, cogent and coherent iteration and negotiation with others, and skillful translation across multiple expressive modes and formulations, including digital strategies and platforms.

At the associate level, the student

- Develops and presents cogent, coherent, and substantially error-free writing for communication to general and specialized audiences.

- Communicates effectively to general and specialized audiences through structured oral presentations.

- Negotiates with peers an action plan for a practical task, and communicates the results of the negotiation either orally or in writing.

At the bachelor's level, the student

- Constructs sustained, coherent arguments, narratives or explications of issues, problems or technical issues and processes, in writing and at least one other medium, to general and specific audiences.

- Conducts an inquiry relying on non-English-language sources concerning information, conditions, technologies or practices in the field of study.

- Works with one or more collaborators to advance an oral argument or articulate an approach to resolving a social, personal or ethical dilemma.

At the master's level, the student

- Creates sustained, coherent arguments or explanations summarizing his or her work or that of collaborators in two or more media or languages for both general and specialized audiences.

APPLIED AND COLLABORATIVE LEARNING

An emphasis on applied learning suggests that what graduates can *do* with what they know is the most critical outcome of higher education. The proficiencies described in this section focus on the interaction of academic and non-academic settings and the corresponding integration of theory and practice, along with the ideal of learning with others in the course of application projects. Research of different kinds and intensities, on and off campus, on and off the Internet, and formal field-based experiences (internships, practicums, community and other service-learning) all are cases of applied learning.

At the associate level, the student

- Describes in writing at least one case in which knowledge and skills acquired in academic settings may be applied to a field-based challenge, and evaluates the learning gained from the application using evidence and examples.

- Analyzes at least one significant concept or method in light of learning outside the classroom.

- Locates, gathers and organizes evidence regarding a question in a field-based venue beyond formal academic study and offers alternate approaches to answering it.

At the bachelor's level, the student

- Prepares and presents a project, paper, exhibit, performance or other appropriate demonstration linking knowledge or skills acquired in work, community or research activities with knowledge acquired in one or more fields of study, explains how those elements are structured, and employs appropriate citations to demonstrate the relationship of the product to literature in the field.

- Negotiates a strategy for group research or performance, documents the strategy so that others may understand it, implements the strategy, and communicates the results.

- Writes a design, review or illustrative application for an analysis or case study in a scientific, technical, economic, business, health, education or communications context.

- Completes a substantial project that evaluates a significant question in the student's field of study, including an analytic narrative of the effects of learning outside the classroom on the research or practical skills employed in executing the project.

At the master's level, the student

- Creates a project, paper, exhibit, performance or other appropriate demonstration reflecting the integration of knowledge acquired in practicum, work, community or research activities with knowledge and skills gleaned from at least two fields of study in different segments of the curriculum and articulates the ways the two sources of knowledge influenced the result.

- Designs and implements a project or performance in an out-of-class setting that requires the application of advanced knowledge gained in the field of study to a practical challenge, articulates in writing or another medium the insights gained from this experience, and assesses (with appropriate citations) approaches, scholarly debates or standards for professional performance applicable to the challenge.

CIVIC AND GLOBAL LEARNING

U.S. higher education acknowledges an explicit obligation to prepare graduates for knowledgeable and responsible participation in democratic society. The *DQP* reaffirms and updates that commitment. But the *DQP* further recognizes that graduates face a social, economic and information world that knows no borders, that is buffeted by environmental changes, and that requires both the knowledge and the experiences that will enable them to become genuinely interactive and productive. The *DQP* therefore envisions both global and local settings for civic engagement and outlines proficiencies needed for both civic and global inquiry and interaction.

Civic and Global Learning proficiencies rely principally on the types of cognitive activities (describing, examining, elucidating, justifying) that are within the direct purview of institutions of higher education, but they also include evidence of civic activities and learning beyond collegiate settings. These proficiencies also reflect the need for analytic inquiry and engagement with diverse perspectives. Together, they underscore the interplay of proficiencies from the major components of higher learning presented in the *DQP*.

At the associate level, the student

- Describes his or her own civic and cultural background, including its origins and development, assumptions and predispositions.

- Describes diverse positions, historical and contemporary, on selected democratic values or practices, and presents his or her own position on a specific problem where one or more of these values or practices are involved.

- Provides evidence of participation in a community project through either a spoken or written narrative that identifies the civic issues encountered and personal insights gained from this experience.

- Identifies an economic, environmental, or public health challenge affecting at least two continents, presents evidence for that challenge, and takes a position on the challenge.

At the bachelor's level, the student

- Explains diverse positions, including those of different cultural, economic and geographic interests, on a contested public issue, and evaluates the issue in light of both those interests and evidence drawn from journalism and scholarship.

- Develops and justifies a position on a public issue and relates this position to alternate views within the community/policy environment.

- Collaborates with others in developing and implementing an approach to a civic issue, evaluates the strengths and weaknesses of the process, and, where applicable, describes the result.

- Identifies a significant issue affecting at least two countries or continents, presents quantitative evidence of that challenge through tables and graphs, and evaluates the activities of either non-governmental organizations or cooperative inter-governmental initiatives in addressing that issue.

At the master's level, the student

- Assesses and develops a position on a public policy question with significance in the field of study, taking into account both scholarship and published or electronically posted positions and narratives of relevant interest groups.

- Develops a formal proposal, real or hypothetical, to a non-governmental organization addressing a global challenge in the field of study that the student believes has not been adequately addressed.

- Proposes a path to resolution of a problem in the field of study that is complicated by competing national interests or by rival interests within a nation other than the U.S.

4. Tools for using the DQP

The *DQP* is presented in four ways.

- The preceding narrative form (Pages 17-26) sets forth degree-qualifying proficiencies in detail.

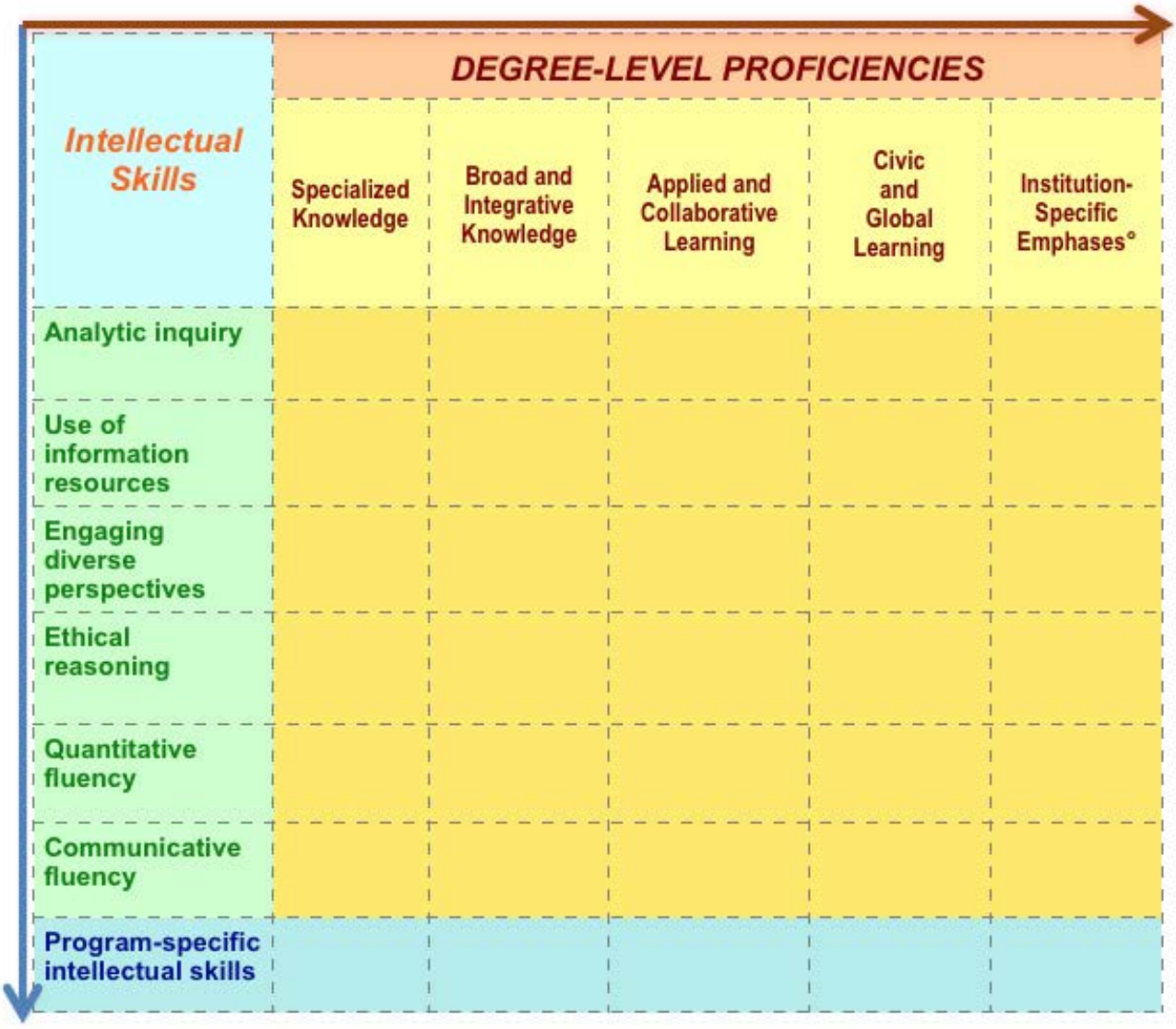
- The matrix that follows (Page 27) provides a perspective on ways in which the learning blocks of the *DQP* relate to one another and to the student's entire learning experience at any degree level. In so doing, the matrix also offers a platform for curricular evaluation, planning, assignment development, and assessment. The implications of this matrix for assignments are discussed here and both elaborated and illustrated in Appendix C (Page 39).

- A spider web diagram (Page 29) illustrates the flexibility of the *DQP* as used by different institutions in light of their distinctive areas of strength and mission. While all of the *DQP*'s overarching proficiencies should be represented in every spider web, the proficiencies may be weighted and shaped differently according to institutional missions and priorities.

- The proficiencies appear on a grid (Pages 33-36) that offers a convenient overview.

Putting it together: The matrix
The DQP as a prompt for integrative learning

Intellectual skills should be practiced *across* the educational experience and demonstrated in the context of both broad and specialized studies; in civic and global learning; and in applied and collaborative learning. This matrix suggests how the *DQP* can be used for assignment planning and for assessment of students' achievement of degree-level proficiencies. To complete the matrix, program faculty should decide where and how in their programs students will practice key intellectual skills and take part in applied learning tasks and assignments — an exercise that should also inform curriculum development and improvement.



° E.g., religious, artistic, technological, scientific, etc.

Using the DQP to develop assignments and assessments

Rather than ask faculty to relinquish the certification of student mastery to some external authority, the *DQP* invites evidence about student proficiency that keeps faculty judgment firmly in control. The *DQP* — as well as Tuning USA — affirm that assignments developed by faculty are the key both to students' development of expected proficiencies and to needed evidence regarding students' meeting the proficiency standards of the degree. Both Tuning USA, with its focus on cumulative learning within a field of study, and the *DQP*, with its emphasis on degree-level outcomes, enable a closer alignment between assessment strategies and overall academic priorities.

From the earliest discussions leading to the *DQP*, a clear standard has prevailed: Will these statements of proficiency invite and support faculty in crafting appropriate assignments, and will the *DQP* prompt and assist with assessment? Now that many campuses have used the *DQP* as a framework for assessing student learning, this second edition of the *DQP* provides guidance on both assignments and assessments. (See Appendix C, Page 39.)

The primary mechanism for determining whether or not students have mastered a given *DQP* proficiency at a given level is an assignment located within a course. Such assignments should unavoidably elicit student responses that allow faculty to judge proficiency. While constructing assignments and assessments is already a core part of what faculty members do at the course and program levels, the *DQP* affirms that its proficiencies, complemented with a range of examples, will support faculty in prompting students to demonstrate what they know and can do. Resources for assessing *DQP* proficiencies will continue to expand, and readers should consult (web address) as well as Appendix B in this document.

That *DQP* proficiencies are described at each degree level with "action verbs" that portray what a student at each level can actually do. Those descriptions should guide faculty in constructing assignments and laying the foundation for proficiency assessment. *DQP* proficiency statements also suggest concrete demonstrations intended to elicit student performance at each degree level — an examination question, research paper, class project or artistic performance. Hence faculty members building an assignment to address a given *DQP* proficiency might begin with the verb or verbs that describe the proficiency and the task that illustrates it. A second step should be to determine how particular proficiencies are expected, enhanced or tested across courses and field-based learning in a curriculum. This step will help faculty properly place the assignments that they want to use to determine student attainment.

The spider web

From its inception, the *DQP* has promoted the articulation and celebration of the distinctiveness of colleges and universities and the importance of their diversity within the American fabric of higher education. In addition to defining proficiencies in terms meant to be broadly applicable, the *DQP* explicitly invites the enunciation of institution-specific proficiencies in its blank "sixth column" in both the matrix (Page 27) and the grid (Pages 33-36). By adapting the *DQP* to their own ends, institutions will be singing in the same key, but not necessarily the same song.

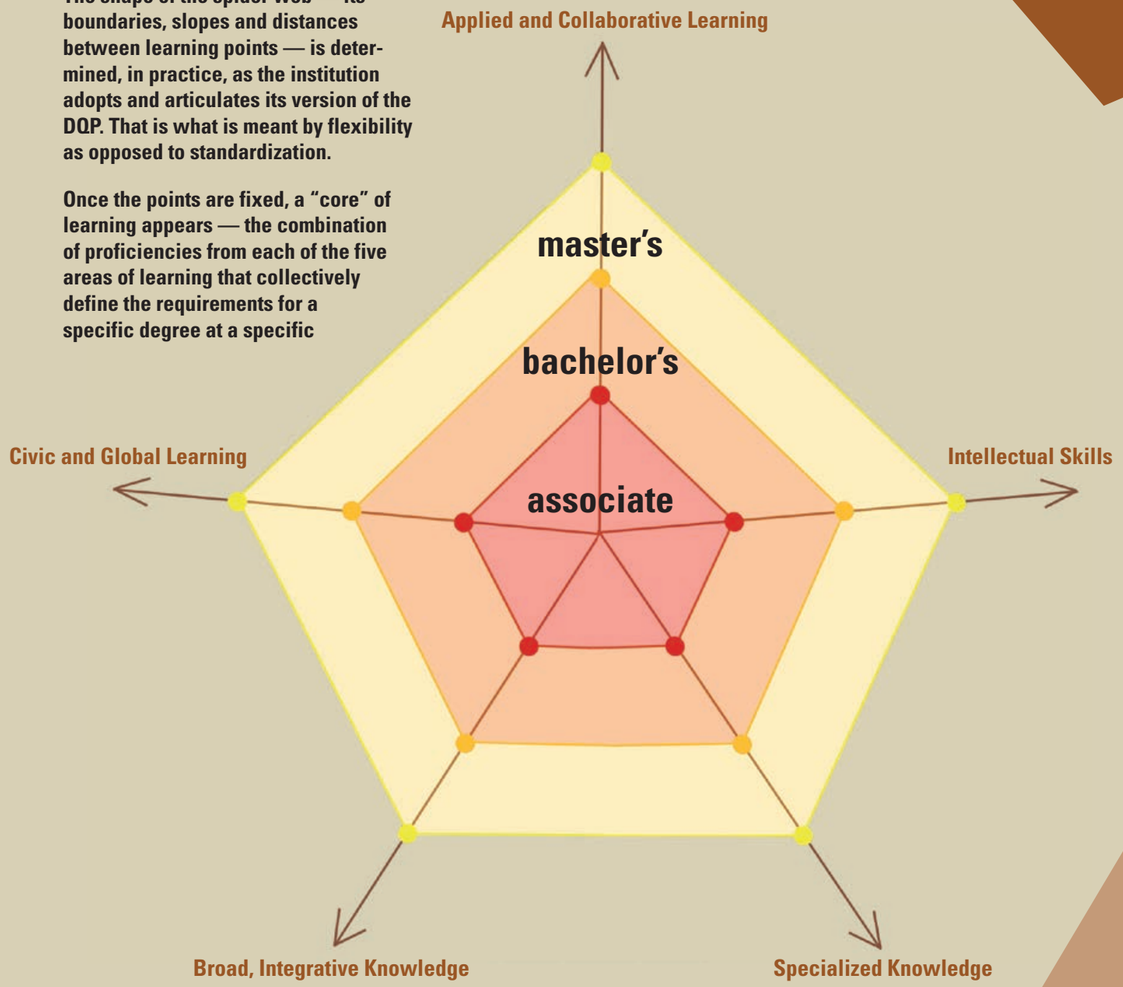
While committed to expressing a developing consensus regarding *standards*, the *DQP* opposes and in no way contributes to *standardization.* To the contrary, the *DQP* expresses the conviction that broad agreement on educational goals, areas of expected learning and standards may be the best defense against standardization. The diagram below shows how different educational institutions can sustain their distinct identity within the broad *DQP* framework.

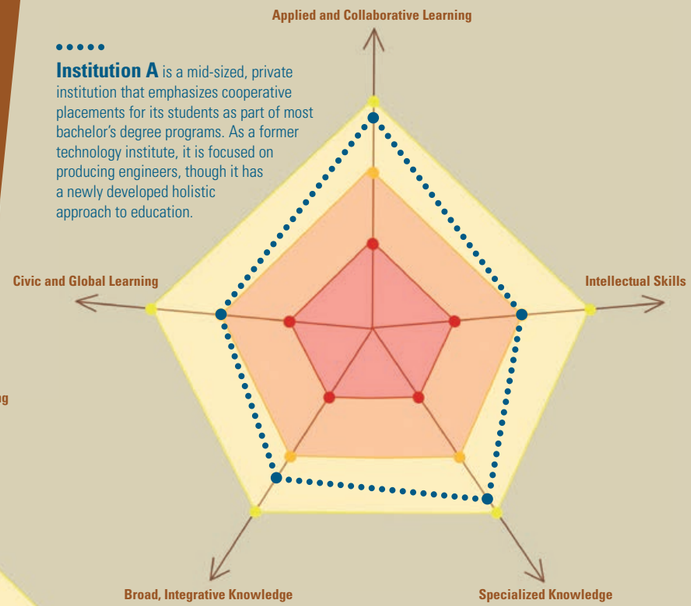
the DQP spider web

It can be helpful to visualize the DQP in terms of a spider web: a structured, interconnected series of levels (or capture spirals) that simultaneously build on and support one another. The web is strung among five anchor lines, each line representing one of the basic areas of learning. Along each line, three points are fixed to indicate the extent of learning required to reach each level: the associate degree, the bachelor's degree and the master's.

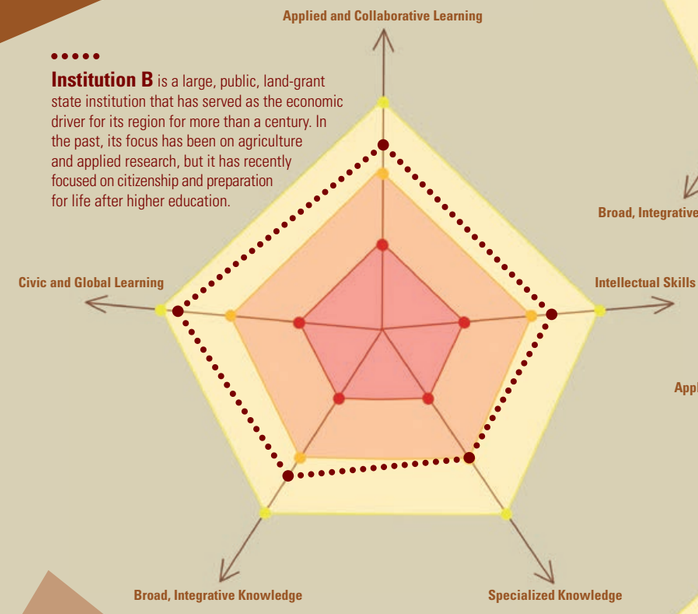
The shape of the spider web — its boundaries, slopes and distances between learning points — is determined, in practice, as the institution adopts and articulates its version of the DQP. That is what is meant by flexibility as opposed to standardization.

Once the points are fixed, a "core" of learning appears — the combination of proficiencies from each of the five areas of learning that collectively define the requirements for a specific degree at a specific institution. These cores of learning expand progressively outward as students extend their knowledge — a growth predictable and transparent to all concerned, the antithesis of standardization. In fact, though certain core proficiencies are expected in all programs, the range of course content can vary widely — by institution, by field of study, even by individual class section.

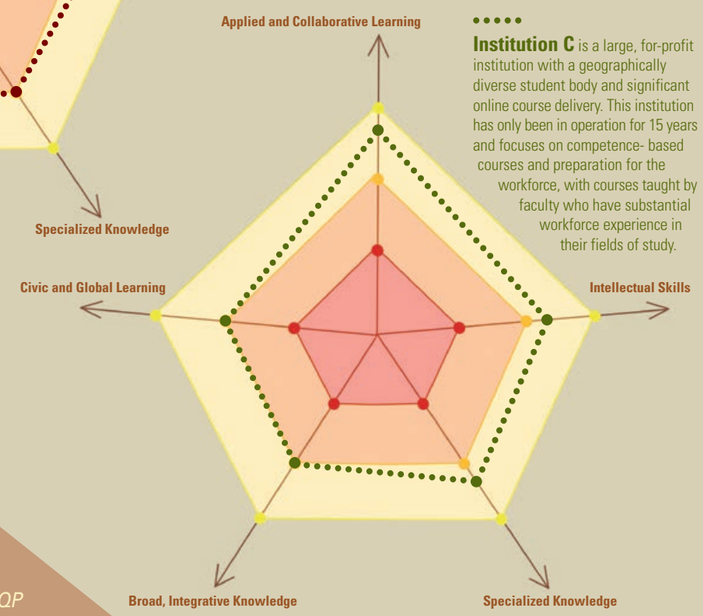




Institution A is a mid-sized, private institution that emphasizes cooperative placements for its students as part of most bachelor's degree programs. As a former technology institute, it is focused on producing engineers, though it has a newly developed holistic approach to education.



Institution B is a large, public, land-grant state institution that has served as the economic driver for its region for more than a century. In the past, its focus has been on agriculture and applied research, but it has recently focused on citizenship and preparation for life after higher education.



Institution C is a large, for-profit institution with a geographically diverse student body and significant online course delivery. This institution has only been in operation for 15 years and focuses on competence- based courses and preparation for the workforce, with courses taught by faculty who have substantial workforce experience in their fields of study.

3 degrees
5 areas of learning
3 types of institutions

To illustrate the *DQP's* ability to accommodate institutional and program flexibility, three types of institutions are plotted on the spider web. Though the bachelor's degree requirements for all three institutions fully encompass the five core areas of *DQP* learning, it is clear that each institution also has discrete areas of emphasis and focus for its students.

The grid

The grid on the following pages arrays an ascending sequence of credentials (e.g., associate, bachelor's, master's) on one axis, and specific areas of knowledge or performance (e.g., written communication, use of specialized tools, using data) on the other axis. Cells in the table thus contain specific descriptions of the proficiency expected at that level and in that area. When read on one axis, the framework describes ascending proficiencies in a given area at increasingly higher award levels. When read on the other axis, the framework describes all of the proficiencies across areas required for a given degree.

Please note:

- The proficiency statements contained in this grid are the full statements presented on Pages 17-26.
- Each degree level assumes expectations articulated for prior degrees. In other words, expectations at the bachelor's degree level *include* those listed for the associate degree.
- Specific tasks or assignments are cited in the proficiency statements only as illustrative examples.
- Within the column headed "Intellectual Skills," expectations are further categorized according to five broad categories as indicated in the italics.

Specialized Knowledge

At the Associate level, the student

Describes the scope of the field of study, its core theories and practices, using field-related terminology, and offers a similar explication of at least one related field.

Applies tools, technologies and methods common to the field of study to selected questions or problems.

Generates substantially error-free products, reconstructions, data, juried exhibits or performances appropriate to the field of study.

At the Bachelor's level, the student

Defines and explains the structure, styles and practices of the field of study using its tools, technologies, methods and specialized terms.

Addresses a familiar but complex problem in the field of study by assembling, arranging and reformulating ideas, concepts, designs and techniques.

Frames, clarifies and evaluates a complex challenge in the field of study and one other field, using theories, tools, methods and scholarship from those fields to produce independently or collaboratively an investigative, creative or practical work illuminating that challenge.

Constructs a summative project, paper, performance or application that draws on current research, scholarship and techniques in the field of study.

At the Master's level, the student

Elucidates the major theories, research methods and approaches to inquiry and schools of practice in the field of study, articulates their sources, and illustrates both their applications and their relationships to allied fields of study.

Assesses the contributions of major figures and organizations in the field of study, describes its major methodologies and practices, and illustrates them through projects, papers, exhibits or performances.

Articulates significant challenges involved in practicing the field of study, elucidates its leading edges, and explores the current limits of theory, knowledge and practice through a project that lies outside conventional boundaries.

Broad, Integrative Knowledge

At the Associate level, the student

Describes how existing knowledge or practice is advanced, tested and revised in each core field studied — e.g., disciplinary and interdisciplinary courses in the sciences, social sciences, humanities and arts.

Describes a key debate or problem relevant to each core field studied, explains the significance of the debate or problem to the wider society, and shows how concepts from the core field can be used to address the selected debates or problems.

Uses recognized methods of each core field studied, including the gathering and evaluation of evidence, in the execution of analytical, practical or creative tasks.

Describes and evaluates the ways in which at least two fields of study define, address, and interpret the importance for society of a problem in science, the arts, society, human services, economic life or technology.

At the Bachelor's level, the student

Describes and evaluates the ways in which at least two fields of study define, address, and interpret the importance for society of a problem in science, the arts, society, human services, economic life or technology, explains how the methods of inquiry in these fields can address the challenge, and proposes an approach to the problem that draws on these fields.

Produces an investigative, creative or practical work that draws on specific theories, tools and methods from at least two core fields of study.

Defines and frames a problem important to the major field of study, justifies the significance of the challenge or problem in a wider societal context, explains how methods from the primary field of study and one or more core fields of study can be used to address the problem, and develops an approach that draws on both the major and core fields.

At the Master's level, the student

Articulates how the field of study has developed in relation to other major domains of inquiry and practice.

Designs and executes an applied, investigative or creative work that draws on the perspectives and methods of other fields of study and assesses the resulting advantages and challenges of including these perspectives and methods.

Articulates and defends the significance and implications of the work in the primary field of study in terms of challenges and trends in a social or global context.

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Intellectual Skills

Analytic inquiry; Use of information resources; Engaging diverse perspectives; Ethical reasoning; Quantitative fluency; Communicative fluency

At the Associate level, the student

Identifies and frames a problem or question in selected areas of study and distinguishes among elements of ideas, concepts, theories or practical approaches to the problem or question. (Analytic inquiry)

Identifies, categorizes, evaluates and cites multiple information resources so as to create projects, papers or performances in either a specialized field of study or with respect to a general theme within the arts and sciences. (Use of information resources)

Describes how knowledge from different cultural perspectives might affect interpretations of prominent problems in politics, society, the arts and/or global relations. (Engaging diverse perspectives)

Describes, explains and evaluates the sources of his or her own perspective on selected issues in culture, society, politics, the arts or global relations and compares that perspective with other views. (Engaging diverse perspectives)

Describes the ethical issues present in prominent problems in politics, economics, health care, technology or the arts and shows how ethical principles or frameworks help to inform decision making with respect to such problems. (Ethical reasoning)

Presents accurate interpretations of quantitative information on political, economic, health-related or technological topics and explains how both calculations and symbolic operations are used in those offerings. (Quantitative fluency)

Creates and explains graphs or other visual depictions of trends, relationships or changes in status. (Quantitative fluency)

Develops and presents cogent, coherent, and substantially error-free writing for communication to general and specialized audiences. (Communicative fluency)

Communicates effectively to general and specialized audiences through structured oral presentations. (Communicative fluency)

Negotiates with peers an action plan for a practical task, and communicates the results of the negotiation either orally or in writing. (Communicative fluency)

At the Bachelor's level, the student

Differentiates and evaluates theories and approaches to selected complex problems within the chosen field of study and at least one other field. (Analytic inquiry)

Locates, evaluates, incorporates and properly cites multiple information resources in different media or different languages in projects, papers or performances. (Use of information resources)

Describes characteristics of essential information resources, including their limitations, and explains strategies for identifying and finding such resources. (Use of information resources)

Generates information through independent or collaborative inquiry and uses that information in a project, paper or performance. (Use of information resources)

Constructs a written project, laboratory report, exhibit, performance or community service design expressing an alternate cultural, political or technological vision and explains how this vision differs from current realities. (Engaging diverse perspectives)

Frames a controversy or problem within the field of study in terms of at least two political, cultural, historical or technological forces, explores and evaluates competing perspectives on the controversy or problem, and presents a reasoned analysis of the issue, either orally or in writing, that demonstrates consideration of the competing views. (Engaging diverse perspectives)

Analyzes competing claims from a recent discovery, scientific contention, or technical practice with respect to benefits and harms to those affected, articulates the ethical dilemmas inherent in the tension of benefits and harms, and arrives at a clearly expressed reconciliation of that tension that is informed by ethical principles. (Ethical reasoning)

Identifies and elaborates key ethical issues present in at least one prominent social or cultural problem, articulates the ways in which at least two differing ethical perspectives influence decision-making concerning those problems, and develops and defends an approach most likely to address the ethical issue productively. (Ethical reasoning)

Translates verbal problems into mathematical algorithms so as to construct valid arguments using the accepted symbolic system of mathematical reasoning and presents the resulting calculations, estimates, risk analyses or quantitative evaluations of public information in papers, projects or multimedia presentations. (Quantitative fluency)

Constructs mathematical expressions for complex issues most often described in non-quantitative terms. (Quantitative fluency)

Constructs sustained, coherent arguments, narratives or explications of issues, problems or technical issues and processes, in writing and at least one other medium, to general and specific audiences. (Communicative fluency)

Conducts an inquiry relying on non-English-language sources concerning information, conditions, technologies or practices in the field of study. (Communicative fluency)

Works with one or more collaborators to advance an oral argument or articulate an approach to resolving a social, personal or ethical dilemma. (Communicative fluency)

At the Master's level, the student

Disaggregates, reformulates and adapts principal ideas, techniques or methods at the forefront of the field of study in carrying out an essay or project. (Analytic inquiry)

Provides evidence (through papers, projects, notebooks, computer files or catalogues) of contributing to, expanding, evaluating or refining the information base within the field of study. (Use of information resources)

Addresses through a project, paper or performance a core issue in the field of study from the perspective of a different point in time or a different culture, language, political order or technological context and explains how this perspective yields results that depart from current norms, dominant cultural assumptions or technologies. (Engaging diverse perspectives)

Articulates and challenges a tradition, assumption or prevailing practice within the field of study by raising and examining relevant ethical perspectives through a project, paper or performance. (Ethical reasoning)

Distinguishes human activities and judgments subject to ethical reasoning from those not subject to ethical reasoning. (Ethical reasoning)

Employs logical, mathematical or statistical methods appropriate to addressing a topic or issue in the primary field. (For students seeking a degree in a field of study not quantitatively based) (Quantitative fluency)

Articulates and undertakes multiple appropriate applications of quantitative methods, concepts and theories in the field of study. (For students seeking a degree in a quantitatively based or quantitatively relevant field of study) (Quantitative fluency)

Identifies, chooses and defends the choice of a mathematical model appropriate to a problem in the social sciences or applied sciences. (Quantitative fluency)

Creates sustained, coherent arguments or explanations summarizing his or her work or that of collaborators in two or more media or languages for both general and specialized audiences. (Communicative fluency)

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Applied and Collaborative Learning

At the Associate level, the student

Describes in writing at least one case in which knowledge and skills acquired in academic settings may be applied to a field-based challenge, and evaluates the learning gained from the application using evidence and examples.

Analyzes at least one significant concept or method in light of learning outside the classroom.

Locates, gathers and organizes evidence regarding a question in a field-based venue beyond formal academic study and offers alternate approaches to answering it.

At the Bachelor's level, the student

Prepares and presents a project, paper, exhibit, performance or other appropriate demonstration linking knowledge or skills acquired in work, community or research activities with knowledge acquired in one or more fields of study, explains how those elements are structured, and employs appropriate citations to demonstrate the relationship of the product to literature in the field.

Negotiates a strategy for group research or performance, documents the strategy so that others may understand it, implements the strategy, and communicates the results.

Writes a design, review or illustrative application for an analysis or case study in a scientific, technical, economic, business, health, education or communications context.

Completes a substantial project that evaluates a significant question in the student's field of study, including an analytic narrative of the effects of learning outside the classroom on the research or practical skills employed in executing the project.

At the Master's level, the student

Creates a project, paper, exhibit, performance or other appropriate demonstration reflecting the integration of knowledge acquired in practicum, work, community or research activities with knowledge and skills gleaned from at least two fields of study in different segments of the curriculum and articulates the ways the two sources of knowledge influenced the result.

Designs and implements a project or performance in an out-of-class setting that requires the application of advanced knowledge gained in the field of study to a practical challenge, articulates in writing or another medium the insights gained from this experience, and assesses (with appropriate citations) approaches, scholarly debates or standards for professional performance applicable to the challenge.

Civic and Global Learning

At the Associate level, the student

Describes his or her own civic and cultural background, including its origins and development, assumptions and predispositions.

Describes diverse positions, historical and contemporary, on selected democratic values or practices, and presents his or her own position on a specific problem where one or more of these values or practices are involved.

Provides evidence of participation in a community project through either a spoken or written narrative that identifies the civic issues encountered and personal insights gained from this experience.

Identifies an economic, environmental, or public health challenge affecting at least two continents, presents evidence for that challenge, and takes a position on the challenge.

At the Bachelor's level, the student

Explains diverse positions, including those of different cultural, economic and geographic interests, on a contested public issue, and evaluates the issue in light of both those interests and evidence drawn from journalism and scholarship.

Develops and justifies a position on a public issue and relates this position to alternate views within the community/policy environment.

Collaborates with others in developing and implementing an approach to a civic issue, evaluates the strengths and weaknesses of the process, and, where applicable, describes the result.

Identifies a significant issue affecting at least two countries or continents, presents quantitative evidence of that challenge through tables and graphs, and evaluates the activities of either non-governmental organizations or cooperative inter-governmental initiatives in addressing that issue.

At the Master's level, the student

Assesses and develops a position on a public policy question with significance in the field of study, taking into account both scholarship and published or electronically posted positions and narratives of relevant interest groups.

Develops a formal proposal, real or hypothetical, to a non-governmental organization addressing a global challenge in the field of study that the student believes has not been adequately addressed.

Proposes a path to resolution of a problem in the field of study that is complicated by competing national interests or by rival interests within a nation other than the U.S.

Institution-specific areas

(Users of the Degree Profile grid should use this panel to list other areas of learning they wish to include.)

Appendices

Appendix A: Why "proficiency"?

The *DQP* cannot provide a comprehensive lexicon of higher education, though one could argue that such a glossary is sorely needed. Still, the *DQP* seeks to clarify its choice and use of several terms essential to its interpretation and use (See Appendix E, Page 48, for a lexicon defining other terms used in the *DQP.*)

Most critical to the *DQP* is an understanding of a continuum of knowledge and ability, leading from acquaintance with a field of study to mastery and expertise. Although "competence" has become a widely acknowledged descriptor for demonstrated educational attainment, this version of the *Degree Qualifications Profile* is organized in terms of student "proficiency." As noted in the box on Page 8, this term reflects the *DQP's* emphasis on the degree as a whole, while the term "competence" points to objectives within a specific course or learning experience. None of the proficiencies addressed in the *DQP* can be developed in a single learning experience. The *DQP* describes broad, crosscutting areas of college-level accomplishment and the interrelationships among them.

Moreover, while the *DQP* anticipates that students will generally demonstrate *proficiency* in the context of meeting course or other program requirements such as a practicum, the *DQP* also emphasizes the importance of students' frequent and progressively more challenging work on assignments and projects across many courses or learning experiences in order to develop the expected proficiencies. For example, a student who demonstrates a qualifying level of proficiency on a specific assignment related to "analytical inquiry" or "applied learning" is deploying knowledge and skills that have been practiced and developed across multiple learning experiences.

The choice of "proficiency" over the term "competency" also reflects concerns expressed in the higher education community that "competence" connotes only "adequacy" or "sufficiency" and thereby sets the wrong standard for degree recipients. While "competency" remains a useful term for defining course-level or course-equivalent learning outcomes, the *DQP* seeks to define a high bar of attainment appropriate to degree recipients who possess not only "a certain standard of skill" but also a demonstrated capacity for further learning, i.e., "progress or advancement." In short, *DQP* 2.0 affirms that degree recipients should be *proficient* in their fields of study and, more generally, as students, not simply *competent.*

Appendix B: The DQP and "Tuning"

The *DQP* provides an architectural profile for three levels of higher education degrees by spelling out five areas of learning and the proficiencies associated with them regardless of field of study. However, learning takes place most often through courses representing subjects or fields of study, and faculty members typically evaluate student learning outcomes and proficiencies according to the standards of specific fields. Hence, *DQP* proficiency statements assume a context of academic fields. Similarly, institutions making use of the *DQP* typically illustrate proficiency statements with field-based cases.

This comprehensive perspective finds support in the "first cousin" of the *DQP*, a field-based process called "Tuning USA." Inspired by the work of the "Tuning" Educational Structures in Europe Association, "Tuning USA" has supported faculty groups organized by state higher education systems and consortia in their development of field-specific reference points that describe a pathway to the student's credential in the field of study while meeting the markers of the *DQP*. "Tuning" reaches such consensus on field-based learning outcomes through consultations with employers, faculty outside the field, and students and former students. [§]

"Tuning" and the *DQP* have been part of the same effort to clarify and benchmark what students should know and do in order to qualify for both degrees in general and degrees in specific fields of study. Field-specific content thus provides an important context for the broader proficiencies set forth by the *DQP*. Through their clarification of intended learning outcomes and proficiencies, both within and beyond particular fields of study, and by their encouraging pedagogies that promote active learning, "Tuning" and the *DQP* invite the development by faculty members of appropriate assignments (exams, case studies, role play, research, etc.) that enable students to demonstrate attainment of proficiencies.

"Tuning" engenders the academic communities necessary for finer articulations and acceptance of the *DQP*. The *DQP*, in turn, provides orientation points for the fields of study. Just as it is hard to imagine a chemistry, music or nursing program without Applied Learning, we should not be willing to countenance a business or history or civil engineering program inattentive to Civic Learning. The emphases and weights of these connections may differ, but they should all be present.

There is no standardization in either enterprise.

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§ Tuning started in Europe in 2000, was taken up across Latin America in 2005, came to the U.S. in 2009, and expanded into Russia in 2010. The Australians ran a Tuning trial in 2010-2011, the Chinese tested the model in 2012-2013, and Tuning projects have now begun in Central Asia and Africa. To date, Tuning USA has involved projects in Indiana, Kentucky, Minnesota, Texas, Utah, the Midwest Higher Education Consortium, and the American Historical Association. It is a global phenomenon.

Appendix C: Additional information about assignments and assessment

This appendix elaborates the discussion of assignments presented on Page 28 and is based on a NILOA Occasional Paper on developing assignments within the context of the *DQP* written by Peter Ewell. (See http://www.learningoutcomeassessment.org/documents/PeterEwell_008.pdf.) Assignment prompts should give a student maximum information about what a good response ought to look like.

This means that faculty members need to think carefully about the specific properties of an appropriate answer and write the assignment prompts so the student has solid information about what is being asked. Consequently, a good assignment should identify a) the central task or tasks to be undertaken, b) how the student should broadly undertake the task(s) and communicate its results and, c) how extensive or evidential the response should be.

Combining all three elements yields something like the following: "Compare the substance of [argument X] with [argument Y] by means of a written essay [of Z length] that cites at least three examples of important ways in which the arguments differ." This basic approach can be used to construct assignments in virtually any field of study that combines one or more *DQP* proficiencies with explicit content knowledge. Examples of assignments consistent with these principles appear below.

Using assignments in this manner to document what a student has learned is an ongoing and decentralized process that occurs every time a faculty member examines a particular student response to an assignment against a *DQP* proficiency. So it is happening all the time. As a result, institutions need a reliable and accessible record keeping system for posting, housing and manipulating data about learning. An appropriate electronic record keeping system of this kind resembles a conventional student registration system but is structured so that *proficiencies* are the unit of analysis, not courses.

Creating assignments that are consistent with DQP proficiencies invites faculty to be much more systematic and intentional than is now the case at most colleges and universities. Considerable planning and attention are required to ensure that the appropriate proficiencies at the proper levels are developed or demanded across course sequences. Meanwhile, the construction of assignments should be carefully scripted to elicit the proper kinds of student responses and to judge their adequacy. Both activities thrive on collaboration. They also demand that faculty members take collective ownership of the teaching and learning process. Implementing these ideas at scale, therefore, will require institutions to invest in opportunities for faculty members that enable them to act on an important shift of perspective. Put simply, the DQP invites faculty members to examine the entire instructional process from the inside out — starting with a priority on students and what they learn.

Curricular mapping

To develop appropriate assignments to assess *DQP* proficiencies, faculty must determine where and how particular proficiencies are expected, enhanced or tested across courses in a curriculum — a process known as curricular mapping. At its most straightforward, a "curriculum map" is a two-dimensional matrix which arrays individual courses on one dimension and *DQP* proficiencies on the other. Entries within each cell can be constructed to communicate many things, including a) whether the proficiency is taught at the college level in the course, b) the level of proficiency that is required to effectively engage course material, b) whether or not the proficiency is directly tested or evaluated as part of the course (and by what means) and, c) the level of proficiency at which the student exits the course if it is passed.

The resulting map aids in identifying gaps in curricular coverage with respect to *DQP* proficiencies and points to where particular assignments might most profitably be located. Curricular mapping also enables a program to readily discern whether students have met program expectations through out-of-school learning experiences such as work-related training and accomplishment.

Mapping is usually done for all general education courses and selected courses in each major field of study, beginning with those most commonly taken. Curricular mapping is only a first step, however. Too many institutions stop short of the collaborative work of developing the assignments, examinations and projects that enable meaningful evidence of student mastery to be collected across a program of study.

Some examples of actual assignments consistent with these principles are presented below:

Suppose a new form of absolutely clean energy were developed that would have the side effect of slowing the rotation of the earth from 24 to 26 hours per day. Before the switch can be flipped, an environmental impact statement must be filed and widely reviewed. Outline the chapters and subchapters of such a statement.

Bachelor's level, Applied Learning; Global Learning

The student is provided with a diagram of a cell not at division stage with various structures labeled.
Describe the cell in terms of a) its current stage, b) its morphological signs of activity, and c) the structure that addresses the formation of its nuclear envelope.

Associate level, Specialized Knowledge

Prepare an exhibit of not more than five discrete 2-dimensional pieces illustrating the range of chaos in color, drawing on at least two of the major color theory sources, e.g. Goethe, Kandinsky, Chevruel, in a 3-5 page catalogue of your exhibit. You are not required to present in the same 2-dimensional medium across all five pieces. The class exhibits will be displayed from April 1–30. It is now January 15.

Associate level, Broad and Integrative Knowledge
At the bachelor's level, this assignment would ask also that the catalogue contain a section discussing the ways chemical and digital technologies have changed both the palette and range of color chaos.

Choose one of the following mature companies for both PEST and SWOT analyses: Starbucks, IBM, Toys-R-Us. In each case, a discrete challenge is presented as a prod for both types of analyses. Fill in the classic matrices for both analyses, and accompany those documents with a 10-15 page paper that defends your selection of the best corporate opportunity under each challenge scenario. Your products are due in 10 days.

Starbucks: Spreading business risk.
IBM: Rectifying thin supply chain.
Toys-R-Us: Overcoming niche demography

Master's level, Specialized Learning; Applied Learning

Lack of precision can also appear in faculty judgments about the quality of a student response. To address this many faculties have developed "rubrics," which are detailed scoring guides that provide detailed descriptions of specific attributes of a given piece of student work on several dimensions. A rubric represents a mirror image of the assignment design logic described above.

For example, if the latter prescribes a response with "at least three examples" the associated rubric will reflect this prescription by awarding a full score for a response that indeed has three and partial scores for responses that have fewer. An additional dimension of the rubric might simultaneously enable the scorer to evaluate the quality of any comparison of two arguments that the answer provides with respect to clarity and supporting evidence. A third might provide a metric to evaluate components of the written essay itself including whether or not it is of the required length, the sophistication and relevance of its analysis, and whether the language used is consistent with standards of academic discourse.

Appendix D: Selected DQP projects

A variety of institutions — now estimated at 400 — have used the *Degree Qualifications Profile* in some manner since its introduction in 2011, including large and small public and private colleges and universities in urban, suburban and rural locations. This appendix contains a sampling of illustrations of how schools are experimenting with the *DQP*.

Discussion and vetting of the DQP

North Dakota State University (NDSU) focused its *DQP* work at the department level, where each unit was charged with comparing its student learning outcomes and undergraduate capstone experiences in each major with *DQP* benchmarks for applied learning. Examining what "graduates can *do* with what they know" is both consistent with the land-grant culture of NDSU and had multiple other advantages for the campus. NDSU created an electronic survey asking departments to evaluate to what extent their required capstone experience met the elements of applied learning from the *DQP*. The survey questionnaire divided the applied learning benchmarks of the *DQP* into fourteen separate items. For example, departments were asked if their capstone met the *DQP*'s benchmark of "formulates a question on a topic that addresses more than one academic discipline or practical setting." If it did, then they were asked to describe what student activities in the capstone provide evidence for their conclusion. The intention was that evaluating the existing capstones would prompt departments to systematically reflect on how well the culminating experience induced their students to synthesize and apply the knowledge and skills they gain.

The **North Dakota State College of Science** is an associate-degree granting institution founded in 1903. Its primary mission is to support the workforce needs of the state and to provide liberal arts education. NDSCS awards the AA, AS, ASN, and thirty-seven AAS degrees, as well as certificates and diplomas. NDSCS was invited to join the HLC (Higher Learning Commission) Pathway *Degree Qualifications Profile* Demonstration Project as an AQIP (Academic Quality Improvement Program) institution and represent the two-year college perspective. The NDSCS project focused on the AAS degree and used the *DQP* to determine how well the AAS degree aligned with employer expectations, stated goals for student learning, and the results of student learning outcomes assessment. Alexandria Technical and Community College, an associate-degree granting AQIP institution in Minnesota, is also participating in the HLC Pathway *DQP* Demonstration Project and developed a similar project. Therefore, the first phase of this project, soliciting employer input, was conducted in collaboration with ATCC.

Major employers of students were invited to a one-day focus group to review the *Degree Qualifications Profile* and provide feedback regarding areas of alignment, areas of strength, and areas for improvement. Representatives from eighteen employers representing thousands of employees participated in the summit. The consensus of responses supports the distribution of learning outcomes identified by the *DQP*. Overall, employers felt the *DQP* was an instructive approach to developing consistent guidelines for degrees. The college's participation in this project has been a valuable experience that will strengthen student learning and the curriculum that is offered. It provided occasions for faculty and administrators to candidly discuss their expectations

for entry-level employees. In turn, employers expressed appreciation for being included in a process with the potential to improve valued student learning outcomes.

Clarification and review of learning outcomes

California State University, East Bay is a comprehensive public university enrolling more than 13,000 students in the San Francisco Bay Area. The two campuses of Cal State East Bay offer 52 baccalaureate degrees, 35 master's degrees, and a doctorate in educational leadership. Cal State East Bay has a nationally recognized freshman year experience involving multiple high-impact practices, award-winning curriculum, personalized instruction, and expert faculty. In 2011, the Academic Senate of Cal State East Bay embarked on an ambitious project to develop Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs) and, as a second phase, to develop a plan for assessing them as part of the academic review process. Through a series of extensive and inclusive activities including interviews with campus leaders, forums involving faculty, staff, students and administrators, and presentations to the Academic Senate, the university community reached general agreement as to the broad learning outcomes that graduates of Cal State East Bay should achieve as a result of their education. These Institutional Learning Outcomes frame the essential learning that forms the basis of a Cal State East Bay education.

The *Degree Qualifications Profile* was used to help frame discussions regarding the meaning, quality and integrity of a Cal State East Bay degree and to examine linkages between general education, academic majors, and ILOs. In addition, undergraduate and graduate academic program learning outcomes are being examined to be sure they are consistent with the ILOs. Faculty members are using a *DQP*-like spider web to inform program development and improvement efforts.

Curriculum mapping

Kansas City Kansas Community College is an urban community college located in Kansas City, Kansas, serving a diverse student body of approximately 7,000 students. In June 2011, Kansas City Kansas Community College (KCKCC) was invited by the Higher Learning Commission to participate in Cohort 3 of the Lumina Foundation's *Degree Qualifications Profile* (*DQP*) pilot project. KCKCC began by mapping existing 21st Century Learning Outcomes with *DQP* outcomes, combining both in one *institution-wide document.* Faculty then aligned their course competencies with the *DQP* proficiencies. Subsequently, the office of Institutional Services created an extensive curriculum mapping database that revealed how and where each of the course competencies aligned with *DQP* items. The mapping generated a series of reports that revealed strengths and weaknesses in the course and program level, as well as transcript analysis of graduates. Simultaneously, faculty reported assessment data on individual student learning outcomes which made it possible to produce reports documenting student performance:

(a) on a course-by-course basis,

(b) as a compilation of all the sections of the same course,

(c) on courses within the same field of study, in a program, and/or

(d) by academic division, and college-wide.

These reports are disseminated to faculty, academic deans, and the Vice President for Academic Affairs as they become available. Faculty close the loop on assessment by reviewing the reports on their courses, setting goals, devising action plans to improve student learning outcomes based on the data provided, and documenting the activity in a course assessment form.

KCKCC's participation in the *DQP* pilot has helped to establish a culture of assessment at the institution with increased faculty engagement; to identify where and to what degree the *DQP* proficiencies are being addressed in the curriculum; to simplify the assessment process; and provide valuable feedback to faculty for making informed decisions about course/program modifications based on the data. For more information, please see **KCKCC *DQP* PROJECT (**http://www.kckcc.edu/kckcc%20dqp%20project/)

Review of degree proficiencies

Brandman University (CA) serves adult learners at 26 campuses in California and Washington, offering undergraduate and graduate degree programs through blended and fully online delivery formats. In 2011, the University adopted five competencies for all baccalaureate students based on the *DQP* and informed by AAC&U's LEAP Essential Learning Outcomes: Applied Learning, Innovation and Creativity, Civic Engagement, Global Cultures, and Integrated Learning. The General Education Task Force, comprised of faculty across all schools, developed learning outcomes and built curriculum maps to measure mastery of each competency in each undergraduate degree program.

Brandman University also revised its Associate of Arts in General Education (AA) degree using the *DQP* framework. Three of the AA degree's seven competencies are consistent with the baccalaureate degrees: Applied Learning, Innovation and Creativity, and Global Cultures/Engaging Diverse Perspectives. The remaining four competencies fall in the *DQP* area of Intellectual Skills (Written Fluency, Oral Fluency, Quantitative Fluency, and Information Fluency). To meet these competencies, faculty revised written and oral communication courses and created three new courses in applied math, student success, and academic foundations.

Faculty created rubrics for the competencies based on AAC&U VALUE Rubrics and designed signature assignments within mastery level courses. Brandman has adopted a course embedded assessment approach for all program and institutional learning outcomes which greatly facilitates data capture. Competency data collection commenced in Fall 2012. For more information, see ***Brandman University Adopts the DQP*** (https://www.wascsenior.org/files/Brandman%20University%20Adopts%20the%20Degree%20Qualification%20Profile_January%2031%202012_final.pdf).

Transfer and articulation

IUPUI (Indiana University Purdue University Indianapolis) and the Indianapolis campus of **Ivy Tech Community College** (IVTC) are working together under the aegis of the AAC&U Quality Collaborative project (**www.aacu.org/qc/index.cfm)**. The Collaborative is investigating methods and forms of identifying the transfer of competencies between institutions—specifically, how can institutions partner to identify readiness for the movement from the first 60 hours of credit to the

second, including the move into specific academic programs. IUPUI and Ivy Tech are focused on a general education competency, written communication, and program-specific competencies related to readiness to for upper-level Engineering and Technology courses. The work began with a focus on written communication competence. In July 2012, an inter-institutional workshop was conducted during which a Dynamic Criteria Mapping (DCM) process was used with student writing artifacts to foster dialogue among writing instructors on the characteristics of student work that they most valued. The workshop provided an excellent introduction to the *Degree Qualifications Profile* for faculty, and it also provided a forum for faculty from across IUPUI and Ivy Tech Central Indiana to share their experiences in teaching beginning students. The DCM process revealed that the characteristics of writing competence extends across different outcomes explicated by the *DQP* as contrasted with being located only in the direct statements about writing competence. So while faculties understand their responsibility for teaching writing, they also insisted that through writing competence they are always addressing other qualifications outlined in the *DQP*. In the field of composition studies, that realization is not new. What did stand out was that the *DQP* placed writing competence more consequentially in the larger profile of what students are expected to accomplish in the first 60 hours of coursework. In addition, the Quality Collaborative team held across and within institution discussions with faculty engaged in curricular work. In this sense, the *DQP* served as to focus discussion of how curricula and learning outcomes specific to the associate's degree level were aligned with the statewide transferable general education core.

Interpreting the *DQP* as a set of descriptive outcomes, IUPUI and Ivy Tech are learning more about how and where their students demonstrate competence, how the institutions demonstrate it, and how those create points of investigation for curricular and course and assignment development. They are also addressing the challenge of the Quality Collaborative project to see the educational experience and outcomes as shared a shared responsibility (not "mine" but "ours") both within and across institutions.

Assessment of student learning

McKendree University (IL) is currently engaged in a seven-year assessment revision initiative entitled "Assessment 2.0." In the past, faculty engaged in a variety of assessment activities, but the general model lacked cohesiveness, transparency, and usefulness. McKendree now refers to those initial assessment activities as "Assessment 1.0." The purpose of "**Assessment 2.0**" is to build a new systematic, comprehensive, and sustainable undergraduate student learning outcomes assessment system and to link the system to faculty development activities.

The first step in the initiative was to adopt a revised set of seven student learning outcomes for undergraduate students (e.g., engagement, effective communication, inquiry and problem solving). The faculty derived the new outcomes directly from the university mission statement. Each year since then, one of the seven outcomes is targeted annually, with a volunteer committee of faculty and staff charged with determining performance indicators and identifying assessment tools to be used. This first year of work is called the "development year." During the following year, the "implementation year," the same committee educates the campus community about the outcome and the performance indicators, and implements the assessment tools for the first time. During

the implementation year, faculty engage in professional development programs, including workshops, Lunch and Learn sessions, a book study group, and a "Closing the Loop" presentation sharing the assessment data collected that year. In addition, University guest speakers and special events focus on that particular outcome throughout the entire year. For example, during 2011-12, the "year of engagement," teaching workshops emphasized engaging teaching activities, the book study group read "Student Engagement Techniques" (Barkley, 2010) and the "Closing the Loop" workshop focused on data from the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE).

In 2011-12, a committee created a cross-walk between the *DQP*, the McKendree University student learning outcomes, the Association of American Colleges and Universities LEAP Essential Learning Outcomes, and the NCAA key attributes. Completing this crosswalk with the *DQP* helped to provide construct validity for its student learning outcomes and to create a common language for some outcomes. For example, "appreciation of diversity" is a desired learning outcome, but it is a particularly difficult outcome to define and measure. The *DQP* provided some guidance. In addition, specific gaps in our academic programs were illustrated as we conducted the crosswalk, which had some of the characteristics of a curricular map. Notably, the *DQP* construct of "broad, integrative knowledge" informed our need to identify a capstone experience in all of our fields of study. We are now creating faculty professional development programs related to capstone experiences. As the seven-year Assessment 2.0 model proceeds, targeting one learning outcome per year, we anticipate that we will continue to identify gaps in student learning and use this information to guide our professional development efforts. The model is systematic (development year followed by implementation year), comprehensive (one outcome targeted each year), sustainable (supported by volunteer faculty/staff committees focused on a single outcome), and linked directly to specific professional development activities.

The **University of Charleston (WV)** is a private institution offering associate, baccalaureate and graduate programs. Rather than completing a traditional general education program, baccalaureate students at the University of Charleston are required to demonstrate achievement of six Liberal Learning Outcomes (LLOs): Citizenship, Communication, Creativity, Critical Thinking, Ethical Practice, and Science. Demonstration of achievement occurs through learning activities embedded in selected courses, within and outside of the student's chosen field of study. The *DQP* framework is being used as the model for developing specific descriptors for demonstration of LLOs at all degree levels. The framework has helped sharpen thinking about differentiation in levels of skills and knowledge, and more clearly articulate what graduates should know and be able to do with degrees. The participation in the *DQP* project has had broad reaching influences on curriculum and assessment at the University of Charleston.

Opportunities for demonstrating outcomes achievement at Foundational, Mid-level, or Advanced proficiencies vary in academic programs. This presents a challenge for transfer students who may have missed opportunities that occur early in a specific program, and for students moving into six-year graduate professional programs (e.g. pharmacy and physician assistant) who aspired to earn a bachelor's degree. Articulating expectations for achievement at levels above and below the baccalaureate through the framework of the *DQP* is expected to resolve many of these issues. Assessment is embedded into courses with student work being posted to ePortfolios and assessed using university-developed rubrics. While the *DQP* project has been invaluable in articulating proficiencies for outcomes at all degree levels, it has prompted a closer examination of whether

the existing rubrics were yielding actionable information about student performance. Conversations on this topic are ongoing in Liberal Learning Roundtables this year, and will likely result in revisions of most rubrics.

Accreditation and strategic planning

Point Loma Nazarene University (CA) has a liberal arts-focused mission combining traditional residential undergraduate student population (2,400 students) with professional graduate programs (1,000 students) located at three regional centers. PLNU began discussions about the *DQP* early in the fall 2011 semester when both WASC (PLNU's regional accreditation association) and the Council of Independent Colleges invited universities to participate in pilot projects. PLNU participated in both pilot projects. The discussions prompted by its *DQP* pilot have primarily focused on undergraduate programs. At the same time, graduate program deans and chairs have been asked to think about the challenges and benefits of implementing the *DQP* framework at the master's degree level.

Initial discussions centered on the fact that the *DQP* reflects skills and knowledge developed both in the student's major program of study and in general education courses. At that time the academic major programs were pursuing their well-crafted assessment activities and it was unclear how *DQP* could inform or add value to that work. However, the General Education Committee was reevaluating how to assess general education learning outcomes and how to use that data to assist with general education curricular redesign. In November of 2011 WASC announced the new requirement for more in-depth assessment of graduating seniors in five basic proficiencies: oral communication, information literacy, written communication, critical thinking and quantitative literacy. These skills explicitly connect with the *DQP* Intellectual Skills Outcomes. Rather than approach each important assessment of student learning as a separate activity, the *DQP* Task Force believed it important to think more strategically and move toward using the individual majors' culminating experience (e.g. capstone, senior exhibition, senior seminar, research project, recital, etc.) as a place to assess these five proficiencies, additional components from the *DQP*, and student learning in the major.

The *DQP* Task Force's first challenge was to identify the culminating experience for each academic major including both similarities and differences. The Task Force conducted a survey of the undergraduate majors and found significant structural variations (e.g. number of units, length, requirements, assessment activities, etc.) among the culminating experiences. The data from the survey also indicated variation in what skills and knowledge were being assessed in these culminating experiences. While there are many discreet activities occurring to build an assessment foundation for the *DQP*, the Task Force decided to invite academic units that already have significant capstone courses to pilot the *DQP* in spring semester 2013. The faculty and courses selected represent both colleges, the College of Arts and Sciences and the College of Social Sciences and Professional Studies as well as the School of Education.

In fall 2012 the Task Force identified the guidelines and essential learning outcomes to be assessed. The faculty are currently designing assessment assignments and reviewing and adapting the AAC&U Essential Learning Outcome Rubrics for the assessment activities.

Appendix E: A DQP lexicon

The meanings set forth here are not meant to replicate or challenge standard dictionary definitions. Rather, they seek to describe how words frequently used in academe are employed in the *DQP.* As an online resource, this lexicon will be reviewed and updated regularly.

Analytic inquiry: The ability to recognize, describe and solve problems through differentiation, categorization, and other relevant tools of inquiry and reasoning.

Applied and Collaborative Learning: The proficiency (one of five) that enables a student to demonstrate what they can do with what they know through addressing existing problems.

Assessment: A process for the collection and analysis of information concerning the achievement of student *learning outcomes* used to improve or to demonstrate the effectiveness of an educational program or institution.

Assignment: A problem, task or creative undertaking designed by faculty that students within a course or program of study must address in order to develop, advance and document their proficiency. Assignments are the principal vehicle for certifying *DQP* proficiencies.

Associate degree: The initial academic degree awarded for learning approximately equivalent to the first two years of college study. Two traditional categories — "transfer" degrees meant to offer the first half of a baccalaureate program and "terminal" degrees in occupationally-oriented fields — are sometimes less distinct than they once were.

Broad and Integrative Knowledge: The proficiency (one of five) that reflects student attainment in bringing together learning from different fields of study. Broad, integrative knowledge represents a priority for the entire curriculum.

Certificate: An educational credential that is not a degree, and, when offered at a level below that of an associate degree, is not counted as higher education in the standard international education accounting system. Some are offered by accredited postsecondary institutions, including for-profit career colleges. Others may be awarded by organizations such as corporations or product vendors.

Civic Learning: The proficiency (one of five) that reflects student attainment in articulating and responding to political, social, environmental and economic challenges at local, national and global levels.

Communicative fluency: Demonstrated skill in effectively creating and expressing a sustained argument, narrative or explication to multiple types of audiences and in more than one medium or language.

Competence/competency: A term most often used to describe the accomplishment of basic objectives within a specific course or learning experience.

Competency-based degree: An academic credential awarded for demonstrated competency rather than for the accumulation of credit hours through taking courses.

Credit: A unit of measurement for completion of a traditional college course traditionally based on time spent in its pursuit, it is also applied as a proxy for time in the demonstration of competencies through assessments and portfolios.

Degree: A particular type of credential conferred by an accredited academic institution in recognition of demonstrated academic proficiencies. The *DQP* addresses three degree levels — associate, bachelor's and master's.

Diploma: A document issued by an educational provider that purports to document a student's successful completion of a curriculum. Customary use speaks of high school *diplomas*, college *degrees.*

Discipline: A *field* of study, whether academic (e.g., history, accounting, geology) or professional (e.g., medicine, law, engineering). For undergraduates, *discipline* is often synonymous with *major* and *field of study.*

Ethical reasoning: The ability to approach an issue with an informed awareness of both prevailing ethical standards and of alternate standards that may be applicable.

Field of study: Sometimes used synonymously with *discipline* but also used to describe non-academic or applied, occupationally oriented programs such as culinary arts, automotive technology, graphic design and medical records administration.

Field-based study: Refers to learning pursued outside a traditional classroom setting (whether physical or online) that offers opportunity for independent work on projects.

Global literacy: Demonstrated understanding of both factual prerequisites for describing differences among nations and regions (demography, geography, economics, culture, migration, etc.), and the principles and dynamics of problems, tensions and interactions among nation states and peoples.

Institution: An accredited college, community college or university, whether public, private not-for-profit, or private for-profit.

Intellectual Skills: A set of proficiencies (one of five) that includes communicative fluency, quantitative fluency, analytic operations, information resources, ethical reasoning and the application of different points of reference to cognitive operations.

Learning outcome: A clear statement regarding the demonstrated learning expected of students at the completion of an assignment, a course, a major or a degree program. See also *proficiency.*

Major: A field of study chosen by a student as a principal area of focus, usually (but not exclusively) at the baccalaureate level. For undergraduates, *major* is often synonymous with *discipline* and *field of study.* However, some undergraduates may study more than one discipline (e.g., biology, philosophy) or draw on two or more fields in pursuit of another (e.g., coastal ecology).

Proficiency: A label for a set of demonstrations of knowledge, understanding and skill that satisfy the levels of mastery sufficient to justify the award of an academic *degree.*

Quantitative fluency: The pursuit of calculations and symbolic operations so as to demonstrate the interpretation and solution of problems within applicable assignments, courses and degree programs.

Specialized knowledge: The demonstration of command of the vocabularies, theories and skills of the *field of study* on which a student has focused.

Standards: Expectations of proficiencies shared broadly enough to constitute a collegial consensus.

Standardization: The process of seeking conformity with a declared set of expectations.

"Tuning:" A faculty-led, discipline-by-discipline attempt to determine what students should learn and be able to do at applicable stages of the disciplinary curriculum. Originally a European initiative associated with the Bologna Process, "Tuning" projects are moving forward in several states of the U.S. and in Latin America, Africa and Central Asia. They also have been explored in both China and Australia.

Appendix F: Questions and concerns

The following issues and concerns about the *DQP*, raised by faculty, academic administrators and commentators, are summarized with brief responses (in *italics*). Some items refer to issues that are addressed in the text of the *DQP* but may be imperfectly understood. Others are not covered in the text.

- Some skepticism has been expressed as to why the U.S. should follow what Europeans have done in their various qualification frameworks.

  Both "Tuning" and the DQP were informed by efforts of other nations, but did not copy them. In the absence of a ministry of education, too, our efforts—both in the initial construction and execution of the DQP—in the U.S. are entirely voluntary. What one finds in Europe are (a) European Union qualifications framework (EQF) from pre-school to doctoral levels in 8 steps, (b) national degree qualifications frameworks from pre-school to doctoral levels in 10-14 steps in countries such as Ireland, Scotland, England/Wales/Northern Ireland, and Denmark, c) a higher education qualifications framework (Qualifications Framework for the European Higher Education Area, or QFEHEA) endorsed by 47 Bologna Process participants, and (d) individual higher education qualifications frameworks in such countries as the Netherlands and Germany. This is obviously a far more complex—and fixed—map than the single continually evolving DQP with all its potential variations.

- Some skepticism has also been expressed as to the authorship and sponsorship of the *DQP*, namely questioning the authority of a small group of writers and the purposes of sponsorship by the Lumina Foundation.

  One has to initiate any project such as this with a manageable group of people who have studied and led in the world of U.S. higher education for a long time. The iterative process of DQP development was purposefully designed to include an ever-expanding universe of contributors—and has done just that. The Lumina Foundation has no hidden agenda. Both "Tuning USA" and the DQP are part of its sponsorship of efforts to clarify and improve the quality of U.S. higher education. Lumina did not provide any specific instructions to its core group of DQP writers.

- The *DQP*, we are told by some, is a document designed for legislators to impose standards on institutions of higher education.

  The design and development of the DQP has been led from within higher education, principally by faculty and their leaders. Neither state nor federal legislators have been consulted at all, and their principal concerns, e.g. with college costs and degree completion, are not those of the DQP.

- Institutions of higher education are increasingly being asked by their regional accreditors to include student learning outcome indicators. How does the *DQP* differ from this, and is not the *DQP* a duplication of effort?

  The iterative process of DQP development has already included four of the six regional accreditors (WASC Senior Commission, WASC Junior Commission, HLC of North Central, and SACS) in exploring ways in which DQP structure and language of proficiencies might be used by institutions within those regions. Nothing has been settled, but if institutions use the DQP as part of their submission of student learning outcomes in the accreditation process, there is no duplication of effort.

- Why is the *DQP* not just another name for General Education, and since we have Gen Ed at our school, with requirements that must be completed in the first two years, why do we need something else?

  First, the DQP has nothing to do with specific course requirements (course equivalents are not proxies for proficiency); second, it consists of summative—and not formative—judgments of proficiencies; and third, the proficiencies it articulates can be demonstrated at any time—on entry to college and at any time in a student's academic career at the degree level indicated. Those demonstrations are not confined to "the first two years." Nor do they exclude learning that occurs in the context of a student's major field.

- Would individual faculty members be responsible for addressing in their courses all (or even a majority) of the *DQP* proficiency statements selected and/or modified by their institutions?

  No. Many of the proficiency statements simply do not apply or would be nearly impossible to execute in some fields. Individual faculty members may feel comfortable addressing only 3 or 4 proficiencies. The reason for teams and collaboration in the design and implementation of a local version of the DQP, though, is to ensure that all the proficiencies will be covered by more than one faculty member and in more than one place in the curriculum at each degree level. [CA]

- The majority of students in our school concentrate in fields that require brain-hand competencies even more than the cognitive proficiencies articulated by the *DQP*, for example, culinary arts, studio art, music, physical therapy. Where does one find acknowledgment of brain-hand learning in the *DQP*?

  The DQP as written does not devote any particular section or sub-section to brain-hand proficiencies. However, that does not mean that individual institutions with programs that rely heavily on this mode of learning cannot add an appropriate section under Applied Learning—which is where the cited fields of study are located.

- How much time (person-hours) and how many faculty in a typical institution of, let us say, 8,000 students (at any of the degree levels indicated here) will it take to review, discuss, modify, and adapt the *DQP* in such a way that a critical mass of academic staff endorses it and comes to live with it? The question is asked because faculty and administrators are stressed out with other assignments, and it's unclear how many people can be spared to work on this project.

  There is no way to estimate labor in any one environment. The institution has to be clear about what it wants to happen, and the necessary reading, reflecting, and meeting cannot be left to a small cadre of enthusiasts. One can employ an entire faculty senate to take a first look at what will be required, and ask that senate to determine whether to move to a second phase. Assuming some form of adoption, the reworking of assignments that flow from a final set of proficiency statements affect all faculty in an activity in which they already engage, and, yes, that takes time. How much depends on the individual faculty member, but if tweaking or creating new assignments is the major "hoop," it is something that faculty do all the time anyway.

- The expectations of the *DQP*'s proficiency statements are too low [too high]. Our students already fulfill them easily [would require at least twice the time to degree in order to fulfill them].

  The DQP process enables institutions to shape the proficiency statements to match their student populations. They could even develop differential challenge level statements for each proficiency. Think a particular proficiency is set too low? Re-write it to ratchet up the level of challenge! Serve a student population of varying degrees of preparation and varying degrees of commitment to learning? Take targeted proficiency statements, and write three levels of challenge for each (e.g., threshold, exceed, master). Nothing in the DQP is set in stone.

- If our institution adopts some version of the *DQP*, are we endorsing a "wish list," a set of goals for student learning, or a set of required attainments without which the degree at issue would not be awarded?

  Any of these — or some intermediary construction — is possible. That is an institution's choice. The latter would be truly transformational.

- This is a "business model" of higher education, under which faculty would, in effect, be "teaching to the test."

  The DQP emphasizes assignments, not tests, and it is the faculty that creates these assignments, not some external, third party. Faculty do this every term anyway. But the DQP asks that assignments elicit student behaviors that allow faculty to judge whether degree-qualifying proficiencies have been attained—and that in addition to whatever else faculty seek to validate of student learning in the courses they teach.

- We're in an era of declining resources for higher education and increased student consumer behavior. We cannot take on a reconstructive *DQP* in the face of these trends.

The DQP has nothing to do with resources or student economic behavior or preferences for institutional social amenities: it is about student learning. And it is not about numbers of graduates or enrollees or scores on externally designed "assessments." The only resource [PE] *involved in DQP consideration, modification, and adoption (and construction of a proficiency-based record keeping system) is time.*

- Faculty enthusiasm varies by department, so there is no way an institution can achieve a broad consensus on the use of the *DQP*.

  Try the departments that demonstrate true and critical mass enthusiasm for the notion of degree qualifications and encourage them to engage in a discipline-based version following the "Tuning" methodology, and making sure to include all relevant DQP elements in the generic section of a "Tuning" report. Following this procedure would, in time, lead to more of a broad consensus on the use of the DQP than one initially imagined.

- The *DQP* comes off as a checklist for graduation, almost like a degree audit. A parallel record-keeping system would appear the same way. Faculty are not in the business of checking off proficiencies, registrars have not historically been in the business of building prose transcripts, and those who judge a student's eligibility for a degree award have been traditionally guided by the proxies of specific course work, grades, credits, residency requirements, etc. What the *DQP* asks for is a radical change of behavior by all these parties, and even if everyone endorses the collection of proficiencies as markers of qualifying for graduation, the behaviors will not change, so the whole proposal winds up as an unenforceable wish list.

  This is a perceptive critique that should give everyone pause. The DQP process was envisioned as something that would take at least a decade to implement, with much of that time spent in rendering a vision operational, piece by piece. Faculty, staff, administrators and students have to recognize that the set of degree-qualifying proficiency statements an institution adopts is the strongest and clearest statement of public accountability available. Having said that, a mechanical checklist is not an inevitable consequence. There are creative ways available to any institution to validate degree eligibility by means other than credits, grades, and course proxies. Degree audits can ask questions other than the traditional basics.

- If faculty are central to the design and execution of a *DQP*, with particular attention to the logical harmony between the assignments they give and the student proficiencies they seek to validate, then any move forward with *DQP* adoption must involve adjuncts, who teach a significant proportion of course offerings. So far, this has not happened, and there is nothing in *DQP* or discipline-based "Tuning" designs to involve this major portion of the academic workforce.

  Agreed. There is no easy answer, particularly for adjuncts who are not teaching every term, and who may have commitments to multiple institutions, let alone to non-academic work. But adjuncts are usually teaching in large multi-section courses and they have much to gain in contributing to and using common assignments to assess DQP proficiencies.

- Students come out of college or community college with debts, a degree, and no job or a job that is hardly congruent with what they studied. The *DQP* doesn't do anything for them on these counts.

  True, and the DQP has nothing to do with financing, labor market conditions, or job placement. These problematic phenomena would exist no matter how an institution of higher education determined that a student qualified to be awarded a degree.

- Institutions of higher education are very different from each other in mission and curricular emphases. You can't get them to adopt a "one-size fits all" statement of learning outcomes such as the *DQP*. And not *DQP* proficiencies are of equal value—or value at all—to one institution or another.

  The only common "size" of a DQP is in the language of its proficiency statements, i.e. beginning with active verbs describing concretely what students actually do so that matching assignments logically follow. In terms of which proficiencies an institution will select or modify, and which proficiencies an institution will add to fit its mission, and which to ignore completely, there are many potential versions of a DQP. In terms of particular curricular emphases or disciplinary dominances one observes across thousands of colleges, universities and community colleges, "Tuning" statement adjuncts to a DQP can provide due texture and tone to an overall statement that says, "This is what we do at X; and this is what the range of our students does to earn their degrees."

- The *DQP*, as written, explicitly avoids using dead-end nouns such as "ability," "capacity," "awareness," and "appreciation" in its proficiency statements on the grounds that these highly generalized concepts do not describe student behaviors and do not lead to the kind of assignments that faculty give to elicit those behaviors so that a student's proficiency can be judged. But it also includes its own collection of highly generalized nouns such as "integration" that are just as elusive and detached from cognitive action. What can be done about this?

  Granted, "integration" is a key concept throughout the DQP, and perhaps its best translation in the language of cognitive actions is the verb "synthesize." "Blend" and "combine" would also work provided that the statement also includes nouns indicating precisely what is to be blended or combined. "Integration" does not mean merely relying on two or more different fields of study or methods: it is an act of intertwining, and that's what "synthesizing" conveys.

- An increasing proportion of course work in higher education is being delivered on-line, in fragmented pieces, in massive open enrollment courses with thousands of students from many educational backgrounds and countries, and based in servers from single sources, with inconsistent opportunity for feedback, and with limited opportunity for some of the proficiency-qualifying demonstrations mentioned in the *DQP* (such as field work, exhibits, performances), let alone collaborative learning activity. How does the *DQP* apply in this digital world?

First---and the text indicates as much---any version of the DQP is institution-based. So the configuration and phrasing of proficiencies in one institution will not be those of another. Second---and the text also indicates as much---where a student learns X is secondary to the place that validates and/or recognizes the learning. Hence the delivery source, system, and environment are almost irrelevant. It is the institution at which the student is a degree candidate that determines whether proficiencies have been demonstrated All the more reason to have a DQP as a stable reference point, along with its guidelines for assignments. If an external digital delivery point does not produce acceptable assignments according to the particular DQP an institution has adopted, it can always add other assignments that do the job.

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