

# CULTURES AND IDEAS 3 CORE ASSESSMENT REPORT

OFFICE OF ASSESSMENT

SEPTEMBER 14, 2017

## Introduction

The Core student learning objectives identify the educational priorities for all undergraduates in Santa Clara University's Core Curriculum. Assessment of student learning is ongoing in the Core—we seek to understand in what areas of the learning objectives students are challenged or excel, and how the Core can offer better support for faculty teaching in these areas.

This assessment report summarizes the process and findings from an assessment of the two learning objectives for the Cultures and Ideas 3 (C & I 3) Core requirement. When the 2009 Core was approved, Cultures and Ideas 3 was described in the following way: [C & I 3 should build upon the] “foundational exposure to cultural analysis in Cultures & Ideas 1 and 2. As in the previous courses, cultures and societies are studied relationally. Focusing on thematic or theoretical approaches to global topics and issues, the third course considers examples and case studies drawn primarily from outside the United States and Western Europe. Although this course should primarily train its vision on and across Latin America, Asia, Africa, the Middle East, or Eastern Europe, studies of diasporic cultures, including those with a presence in the United States and Western Europe, and/or political or historical approaches that involve some comparison with the west, are possible as well.”

The Core Learning goals identified for C & I 3 include:

- **Global Cultures:** The intertwined development of global ideas, institutions, religions, and cultures, including Western cultures.
- **Diversity:** Diverse human experiences, identities, and cultures within local and global societies, especially as formed by relations of power and privilege.
- **Critical Thinking:** The ability to identify, reflect upon, evaluate, integrate, and apply different types of information and knowledge to form independent judgments.
- **Perspective:** Seeking out the experience of different cultures and people, striving to view the world through their eyes.

## The Assessment Process

In Winter quarter 2016-17, the Office of Assessment asked faculty teaching C & I 3 classes in the core curriculum to participate in the assessment of the two C & I 3 learning objectives.

3.1

*Students will demonstrate an understanding of Asian, African, Middle Eastern, Eastern European, and/or Latin American cultures in their global and/or diasporic contexts.*

3.2

*Students will identify, analyze and evaluate the challenges and complexities as cultures interact with and influence one another.*

Student work was collected from a random sample of students representing 15% of the 495 enrolled students in the C & I 3 classes. Faculty teaching the courses identified the assignments or exam questions providing the clearest evidence for student learning with respect to the two learning objectives. The Office of Assessment obtained student work representing a total of 68 students from 16 of the 22 classes offered and redacted student and faculty identifiers from this material.

The following quarter, seven faculty and one staff member participated in the assessment of the work. Each attended one of two norming sessions to become familiar with the rubric (see Appendix) used to score student work. Student learning for each objective was scored on a four-point proficiency scale. After the norming sessions were completed, the remaining student work was distributed among the raters to be scored. About 39% of the work was scored by two raters in order to examine whether the rubric was applied consistently across raters. Inter-rater reliability (IRR) was calculated using the software program AgreeStat® for the two learning objectives. The agreement coefficient Gwet’s AC2 was interpreted, using simple ordinal weights and Landis-Koch benchmarks (see Table 1).

Table 1. Agreement Coefficients

Learning Objective	Gwet’s AC2	Benchmark
LO 3.1	0.78	Moderate
LO 3.2	0.71	Moderate

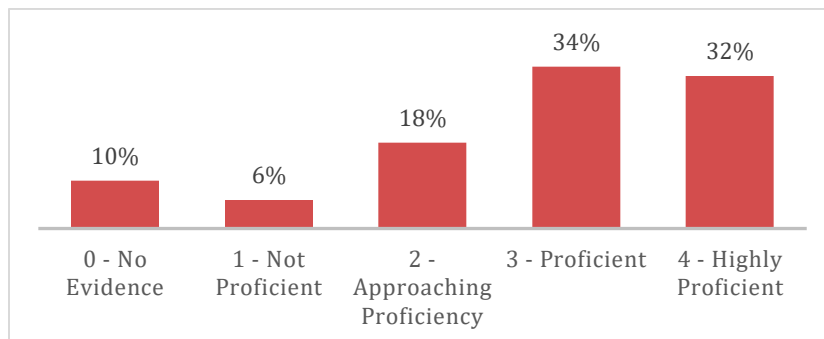
### What We Learned

The scores given for each learning objective were tabulated and converted into percentages.

***LO 3.1 Students will demonstrate an understanding of Asian, African, Middle Eastern, Eastern European, and/or Latin American cultures in their global and/or diasporic contexts.***

A majority of the student work was judged as proficient or highly proficient for learning objective 3.1 (combined 66 percent, see Figure 1). Another 18% of student work was judged as approaching proficiency and 6% was rated as not proficient. However, 10% was scored as “no evidence,” meaning the scorers did not see evidence that the student work addressed the learning objective at all.

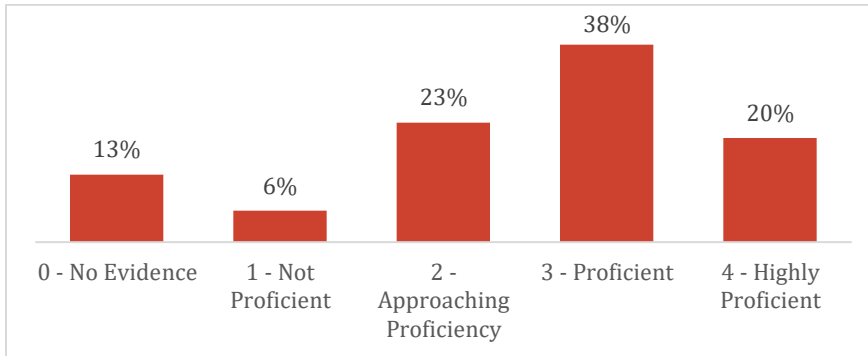
Figure 1. Percent of Rubric Scores for Learning Objective 3.1



**LO 3.2 Students will identify, analyze and evaluate the challenges and complexities as cultures interact with and influence one another.**

Proficiency was fairly high for LO 3.2 with 58% of the student work receiving a score of 3 or 4 (See Figure 2). An additional 23% of the work was scored as approaching proficiency. Compared to LO 3.1, the same percent of the work was scored as not proficient (6%) and a higher percent as showing no evidence of learning pertaining to LO 3.2 (13%).

Figure 2. Percent of Rubric Scores for Learning Objective 3.2



Differences across students

Scores were also examined by selected student characteristics to see if there were statistically significant differences by student gender or race and ethnicity. No statistically significant differences were found for scores by gender or race/ethnicity.

**Conclusions**

Overall, 66 percent of the sampled students are meeting the C & I 3 LO 3.1 objective: *Students will demonstrate an understanding of Asian, African, Middle Eastern, Eastern European, and/or Latin American cultures in their global and/or diasporic contexts.* It is particularly striking to see the high number of students (32%) whose work reaches the highest level of proficiency defined by the scoring rubric.

A smaller percentage of students (58%) are scored as meeting or exceeding LO 3.2: *Students will identify, analyze and evaluate the challenges and complexities as cultures interact with and influence one another.* This learning objective is more complex than LO 3.1, asking the students to engage in more analytic thinking and examine mutual cultural influences.

In the assessment of the student work, faculty scorers observed that some student work did not examine cultures from outside the United States and Western Europe when, in fact, the C & I 3 requirement specifies attention to Asian, African, Middle Eastern, Eastern European, and/or Latin American cultures. It appeared that the assignments had not asked the students to address these cultures in particular. This helps explain why 10% and 13% of the work for LO 3.1 and LO 3.2, respectively, showed no evidence that the student work addressed the learning objectives. For LO 3.2, the faculty also observed that student work might have addressed a more singular

line of cultural influence (how culture A affects culture B without considering the mutual nature of the interaction and influence) or students lacked critical reflection of the challenges or issues and how they relate to cultural practices or worldviews. Either of these approaches would have led to a lower rubric score.

It is important that faculty review their assignments and make sure they are asking students to address the learning objectives and in particular, they are asking students to address cultures outside of the U.S. and Western Europe. Second, it will be helpful to invite discussion among faculty teaching in the C & I 3 Core areas about ways in which their instruction and assignments address the second learning objective dealing with identifying, analyzing and evaluating the challenges and complexities as cultures interact with and influence one another.

**Acknowledgments:** The Office of Assessment thanks the C&I 3 FCC, the faculty teaching Core courses who participated in the assessment, the faculty members who participated as scorers for the student work, and our student assistants who contribute to the many stages of the assessment process.

Appendix: Scoring Rubric for C & I 3 Assessment of Student Learning (2016-17)

Objective	Highly proficient-- 4	Proficient-- 3	Approaching proficiency--2	Not proficient --1
<p><b>C&amp;I 3.1</b> Demonstrate an understanding of Asian, African, Middle Eastern, Eastern European, and/or Latin American cultures in their global and/or diasporic contexts.</p>	<p>Provides a specific description and well-developed analysis of cultural experiences of one of the listed cultures that is contextualized by elements such as its history, migration patterns, values, politics, communication styles, economy, or beliefs and practices.</p>	<p>Provides a basic and reasonable analysis of cultural experiences of one of the listed cultures that is contextualized by elements such as its history, migration patterns, values, politics, communication styles, economy, or beliefs and practices.</p>	<p>Provides a limited description or analysis of the elements important to members of another culture in relation to elements such as its history, values, politics, communication styles, economy, or beliefs and practices. May rely too heavily on unsupported generalizations.</p>	<p>Identifies some elements important to members of another culture in relation to elements such as its history, values, politics, communication styles, economy, or beliefs and practice, but the description is superficial and does not communicate an understanding of the cultural context.</p>
<p><b>C&amp;I 3.2</b> Identify, analyze and evaluate the challenges and complexities as cultures interact with and influence one another. (As in C&amp;I 3.1, students should draw upon Asian, African, Middle Eastern, Eastern European, and/or Latin American cultures.)</p>	<p>Presents a comprehensive analysis and evaluation of the challenges and complexities as cultures interact and influence one another. Articulates knowledge of multiple worldviews with nuanced understanding and draws insightful conclusions based on evidence provided.</p>	<p>Presents a coherent analysis and evaluation of the challenges and complexities as cultures interact and influence one another. Shows an understanding that worldviews are dynamic and have multiple expressions, and draws reasonable conclusions based on evidence provided.</p>	<p>Describes some of the challenges and issues involved as cultures interact and/or influence one another, but there is little critical reflection of these challenges or issues and how they relate to cultural practices or worldviews.</p>	<p>Limited information is provided of how cultures interact and how they may influence each other or the development of their worldviews. Information is presented without any interpretation/evaluation. Information may relate mostly to one culture and not other(s).</p>