

# CSU Maritime Academy – Institution-Wide Assessment Council (IWAC)

AY 2020-21

Implementation of Recommendations



## Year 4 Report on ILO A: Written and Oral Communication

“Coherently and persuasively share information”

**2019 RECOMMENDATION:** The distribution of artifacts DOES NOT span all majors and academic classes and therefore does not provide an accurate representation of the demographic profile of the University. IWAC recommends acquiring a distribution of artifacts that *does* span all majors and academic classes.

- In Fall 2019 IWAC changed assessment protocol so that rubrics were “baked into” course Brightspace pages. This should ensure that in the next assessment cycle we acquire a sufficient number of artifacts.
- **YEAR 1 (2021) ACTION:** Additionally, because one of the issues involved lack of upper-division major artifacts, IWAC will work directly with departments of Marine Transportation and Engineering Technology to select appropriate courses at the beginning of the assessment cycle. IWAC will also work directly with the Oceanography program to identify appropriate artifacts for assessment; given that the Oceanography major includes an upper-division writing requirement we do not anticipate any difficulties in finding appropriate work to assess.

**2019 RECOMMENDATION:** In many cases, sample sizes were a problem, even when we seemed to have a large number of artifacts. We collected artifacts from several sections of EGL 110 representing 64% of students who took the course in 2018-2019. But, because sections were block-enrolled by major, this was not actually a random sample. Only 2 ME students happened to be enrolled across all of the sections from which samples were collected, so we have almost no information about an entire cohort of students and how they’re performing at the introductory level in Oral Communication. IWAC recommends that in the next cycle we gather data from *all* sections of EGL 110.

- **YEAR 2 (2022) ACTION:** To secure an adequate number of introduction-level artifacts from each major IWAC recommended that data be gathered from all sections of EGL

110. However, we also need to gather data from EGL 120, which Engineering students take for their A2 Oral Communication requirement. (Last summer IWAC mistakenly attributed a lack of engineering students to block-enrollment, but this is not necessarily the case; ME students take EGL 120 (Technical Communication) instead of EGL 110.)

**2019 RECOMMENDATION:** Over AY 2018-2019 the MT department chair and assessment coordinator were part of conversation about how to best work with IWAC, and those conversations revealed that oral and written communication were *not* really part of major courses; MTs were taught these in general education courses. MT is already taking steps to integrating communication instruction into major courses by creating a capstone project. IWAC supports the creation of this project.

- **YEAR 4 (2020) ACTION:** IWAC member Tamara Burback reports that the CCR for the MT Capstone is in the works. The MT Department is planning to submit the new curriculum proposal to Curriculum Committee in Fall 2020. IWAC will check in with the faculty members responsible for developing the MT Capstone course CCR to ensure that the class contains an appropriate set of artifacts for assessing oral and written communication using the IWAC rubrics.
- **YEAR 1 (2021) ACTION:** Burback notes that oral communication *is* taught and assessed in MT major courses, so the department may wish to identify a different course for oral communication assessment (in the event that class presentations are not part of the capstone).

**2019 RECOMMENDATION:** To bolster faculty participation, we recommend integrating rubrics into Brightspace to make the assessment process more streamlined.

- **YEAR 4 (2020) ACTION:** Khaoi Mady integrated the rubrics for ILOS B and I into Brightspace in Fall 2020. IWAC will include an account of how this process worked in our 2020 Executive Summary.

**2019 RECOMMENDATION:** We recommend creating a more detailed calendar for assessment at Cal Maritime, which will include specific directives for department chairs to issue to the instructors of record, and disseminating this calendar at the Fall 2019 faculty retreat.

- **YEAR 4 (2020) ACTION:** IWAC created a detailed calendar in Summer 2019 and Graham Benton alerted Department Chairs. IWAC committee members followed up with instructors during the semester. IWAC recommends that Senate Executive Committee include oversight of department assessment of ILOs as part of the Chairs' duties when they draft the Department Chair Policy this fall.

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**2019 RECOMMENDATION:** We recommend that C&C investigate why certain groups and majors are failing to meet the benchmarks in EGL 100 and EGL 110, and propose strategies for improving student performance by the end of this assessment cycle (May 2020).

- **YEAR 4 (2020) ACTION:** IWAC member Sarah Senk reports that the Department of Culture and Communication has proposed a department-wide assessment process in which a committee of three department members will assess *all* artifacts. Currently, since sections of EGL 100 and 110 are block-enrolled, they tend to be segregated by major, so the data could be skewed without standardization of methods. The department already holds norming sessions but believes the best way to create a robust assessment practice is to have multiple instructors assess the same work. The first of these assessment events was scheduled for April 23, 2020, but was cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Additionally, C&C faculty have agreed to standardize assignments across all sections of EGL 100 and to include a standardized exit exam that can be used as an additional assessment artifact. IWAC will follow up with the Department of C&C to confirm this plan is implemented in Fall 2020.
- **YEAR 4 (2020) ACTION:** IWAC recognizes that differences in performance may exist across impacted vs. nonimpacted majors. C&C may wish to consider assessing a preliminary assignment to gauge where students are when they start the class. Senk reports that most instructors are already doing "diagnostic" assignments in EGL 100 and EGL 110; assessing these assignments with the IWAC rubrics would allow the department to establish a benchmark and better understand the reasons for performance gaps between majors. If these efforts continue to reveal performance gaps between different majors, and those gaps are *not* attributable to different skill-levels at the start of the semester, IWAC recommends revisiting the issue.

**2019 RECOMMENDATION:** We recommend that departments that did not meet the benchmarks in any of the dimensions of the rubric propose strategies for improving student performance by the end of this assessment cycle (May 2020).

- **YEAR 4 (2020) ACTION:** IWAC will reach out to GSMA and ET departments to identify a suitable representative for AY 2020-2021. IWAC will reach out to all departments to identify strategies for improving student performance. (IBL and Engineering departments may want to consolidate responses to IACBE and ABET visits with responses to IWAC.)