

In its original assessment plan, SSU identified five baccalaureate level skills at the campus level:

- Writing
- Reading
- Quantitative skills
- Critical thinking
- Library skills

The Assessment Task Force reaffirms the assessment of baccalaureate level skills, but would now expand the list above to include:

- Technological literacy
- Oral communication skills
- Cooperative interpersonal skills

In its initial conception, the assessment of baccalaureate skills involved testing each student at entrance and exit in sessions scheduled specifically for that purpose. Times change and we learn. We now believe that embedded assessment will be necessary to provide the type of student engagement required for meaningful results. We see capstone courses as the logical vehicle and are encouraged that such courses are becoming increasingly prevalent among our majors. We anticipate that portfolios, rather than testing, would become the primary focus of baccalaureate skills assessment. The structure of assignments across different disciplines and the development of appropriate rubrics for evaluation are the central challenge. Focus groups provided useful information about student perceptions of the institution and its curriculum. This is the lone "external" assessment activity that merits continuation. We also recognize that the list of eight "core" baccalaureate skills provides many opportunities for creative and effective streamlining. The original notion that the work of each individual student be evaluated for purposes of assessment was an unnecessary extravagance. Appropriate sampling can still provide the information desired and should be done.

While exit remains the focus of our baccalaureate assessment, attention to student skills at significant transition points is also appropriate, especially as we begin the lower division. At the moment, those transition points appear to be transfer or achievement of junior standing (mid career) and entrance into the lower division. Effective measures will assist in the placement of individual students. They should also provide the information required for longitudinal studies that inform retention and other activities.