

To: Dr. Joanna Mott, Provost

From: Dr. Franny Howes, Chair, Ethical Reasoning ESLO Committee

Subject: Ethical Reasoning ESLO Committee Annual Report for 2017-2018
Academic Year

Date: June 29, 2020

This report summarizes the activities and accomplishments of the Ethical Reasoning ESLO Committee in 2019-2020. This was our “Analyze” year according to the six-year assessment cycle model.

Committee Members: Franny Howes (chair), Communication; Yasha Rohwer, Humanities and Social Sciences; Travis Lund, Natural Sciences; Rachelle Barrett, Medical Laboratory Science. Ken Davis from Mathematics was an acting member of the committee this year, having expressed interest during our Convocation event but was not on the official roster.

Committee Activities:

The committee’s major charge this year was to analyze the results of last year’s assessment of the Ethical Reasoning outcome. However, this was complicated by our struggle to get enough reviewers to assess artifacts last year, and so we actually began Fall 2019 by catching up with one last round of assessment.

Accomplishments:

We completed our assessment of the ER outcome with the assistance of Seth Anthony as he wrapped up his administrative role as Director of the Office of Academic Excellence. After he left that role we have worked with Janette Isaacson to stay connected to university-wide accreditation and assessment conversations.

We found that “Some Proficiency” was the modal rating of our assessment in each category of our rubric overall. Students in HAS scored higher on our assessment than students in ETM. Students were slightly better at recognizing ethical situations and making ethical decisions than they were at demonstrating knowledge of ethical theories and showing the logic behind their ethical reasoning.

Many of the findings of the assessment matched our committee’s perceptions and expectations since it was founded. Some qualitative observations follow:

- Oregon Tech faculty have an inconsistent understanding of Ethical Reasoning and would benefit from professional development on ethical theories and how to apply them. The book chosen for our Convocation common read by CCT is a great start in supporting all of our learning in this area.
- In addition, we observed confusion over the difference between a grading rubric and a curricular assessment rubric. The assessment rubric was being used for student evaluations in some inappropriate ways.
- Some assignments assessed “low” on the rubric because they didn’t actually ask students to perform all of the tasks that our rubric assesses. It’s possible

that students might have assessed higher if the assignments had been designed differently.

- Finally, faculty would also benefit from assignment design training and support related to this outcome. However, given the difficulty getting faculty to attend non-mandatory assessment events, the delivery mode of this training should be considered carefully.

Additional:

Due to the move to the three year assessment cycle replacing the six year cycle at the request of NWCCU, instead of “Engage” happening next year, we will be both doing engagement work and having a “Plan” year for the ER outcome to be re-assessed in 2021-22.