

## A Liberal Education Approach for Student Learning

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*Equip students to become global citizens with the broad knowledge and transferable skills characterizing a liberal education approach*

*Expand application of the liberal education approach throughout the college's programs and services*



## Overview

Our world is increasingly interdependent and complex, with rapidly changing demographics, institutions and workplaces. The explosive growth of information and knowledge requires intellectual tools and dispositions that are dynamic, responsive and transferable. The liberal education approach can empower our students to become global citizens, capable of communicating across borders and critically analyzing the evolving issues and problems they face. Such an approach supports respect for individuals, cultural differences and alternative views.

Through a liberal education, students are encouraged to address ethics and values, cultivating civic and personal responsibility and engaging critical themes across languages and cultures. A liberal education is inherently adaptable and broadly applicable across all learners and social environments; it provides students with a vital set of critical thinking tools to challenge the disempowerment often produced in contemporary economic, political and social institutions. Liberal education aligns with Lane’s transformational vision and comprehensive mission. Source: [Lane Community College Strategic Plan](#).

To achieve the goals and objectives of a liberal education approach for student learning, work has been focused and organized around four strategic initiatives: *learning outcomes and assessment, civic and information literacy, integrative learning* and *professional development*.

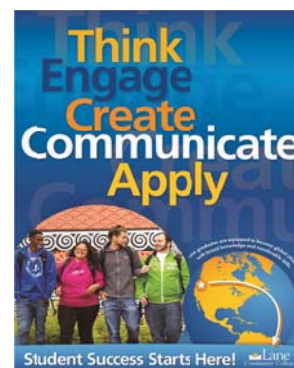


Figure 3:  
Core Learning Outcomes

In addition to reviewing and assessing project level outcomes and results, leads of liberal education projects use institutional data and evidence to assess progress toward strategic goals. For example, evidence that the college is making progress on the objectives of the Liberal Education Approach for Student Learning Strategic Direction includes the ongoing integration of Core Learning Outcomes (represented in Figure 3), information literacy utilization rates, and student perception data such as the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE). Table 1 presents data on one of the five CCSSE benchmarks, specifically related to liberal education and learning outcomes.

Table 1: Active and Collaborative Learning

<b>CCSSE Active and Collaborative Learning Benchmark Scores: All Students</b>			
Students learn more when they are actively involved in their education and have opportunities to think about and apply what they are learning in different settings. Through collaboration with others to solve problems or master challenging content, students develop valuable skills that prepare them to deal with the kinds of situations and problems they will encounter in the workplace, the community and their personal lives.			
Lane has consistently scored above the CCSSE cohort mean and the Oregon community college consortium in this benchmark, measured every three years.			
Year	Lane	CCSSE Cohort	Oregon Schools
2005	50.7	50.0	
2008	53.5	50.0	51.6
2011	53.5	50.0	52.2
2014	52.4	50.0	51.2

Source: Institutional Research, Assessment and Planning. <http://www.lanec.edu/research/ir/studies>

Additional evidence of progress toward liberal education strategic goals and objectives has been collected as part of Lane’s comprehensive self-study accreditation<sup>1</sup> process. For example in the Academic Transfer Core Theme, indicator 1.7 measures student proficiency in meeting Core Learning Outcomes (CLOs) for general education. Across a most recent student sample, 93% of students rated Lane coursework/training as “effective” or “very effective” in developing four core abilities.

## **Completed Projects**

The college has successfully completed several institutional projects in support of the liberal education strategic direction, achieving objectives, shifting focus toward scale and practice and successfully integrating the work into ongoing college programs and services. The following section provides updates on projects completed in the 2013 and 2014 academic years.

### **Assessment of Learning**

Leads: Christina Howard, Kate Sullivan, Sarah Ulerick, Molloy Wilson, Christine Andrews, Siskanna Naynaha

Lane is committed to creating, supporting and sustaining a culture of assessment and continuous improvement to advance and support student success. In the fifth year of General Education Assessment, the Assessment Team (A-Team) moved forward with its efforts to re-envision learning and learning assessment through Lane’s new Core Learning Outcomes (CLO). Team members surveyed faculty on current methods and outcomes of CLO assessment at the classroom, discipline and institutional level. The anonymous data submitted by 75 faculty from 23 disciplines included qualitative feedback on methods and challenges to systematic core learning outcome assessment. Faculty reported a broad range of methods to communicate and assess core learning outcomes, with discussion cited as the most widely utilized CLO assessment method. Qualitative data led to intentional assessment project design where 26 faculty (full and part-time) from eight discipline teams developed rubrics to assess at least one core learning outcome. The final rubric projects provide evidence of a cultural, faculty-led shift toward increasing visibility and active assessment of our new core learning outcomes.

Assessment Team work in the 2012-2013 academic year culminated in acceptance to the AAC&U Institute on General Education and Assessment where a core team of faculty and management drafted the [Core Learning Outcomes Assessment Action Plan](#) for mapping and assessing core learning outcomes across general education disciplines. This plan provides a solid framework for strengthening and deepening learning outcome assessment and program improvement as an ongoing and recursive process at the college.

During 2013-2014, significant and measurable progress was made toward the first two goals of the Action Plan. The A-Team facilitated discussions with multiple college stakeholders, including leadership, managers, program coordinators, K-12 liaisons, marketing and publications, counseling and advising, curriculum, and the University of Oregon. Activities included meetings, focus groups, professional development, faculty assessment project RFP review and monitoring, mentoring, and reporting back. Outcomes of these efforts include:

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.lanec.edu/accreditation>

- Evidence of increased CLO visibility in courses, academic advising materials, co-curricular activities, and marketing and communications (e.g. Honors program, College Now, Career Pathways, campus publications, campus publicity materials, including banners and webpages)
- Evidence of increased faculty engagement in CLO assessment within academic disciplines
- Broad faculty participation in A-Team sponsored professional development workshops in learning outcomes assessment (“Engaging With CLOs”)
- Website enhancements to disseminate learning assessment efforts and outcomes to the college and the public.

Lane’s efforts have also resulted in progress linking our general education curriculum to CLOs. Implementation of a designated CLO coordinator and RFP resources has resulted in:

- Increased faculty engagement in CLO assessment process and project development
- Increased high-enrollment course and program coherence as discipline teams refined shared documents to visibly relate to the CLOs
- Linked general education curriculum to CLOs, courses and program outcomes
- Deepened understanding within discipline teams of the steps necessary to develop meaningful rubrics for authentic assessment.

As we move into years two and three of Action Plan implementation, we are positioned to persist in developing new discipline teams while sustaining established discipline teams for systematic assessment, including direct assessment of artifacts. The website is designed to easily promote and disseminate assessment project outcomes to help inform our collective teaching and learning practices. [www.lanec.edu/assessment/about-team](http://www.lanec.edu/assessment/about-team)

### **Core Learning Outcomes**

Leads: Christina Howard, Kate Sullivan

Lane’s Assessment Team (A-Team) created the Core Learning Outcomes to help students understand the abilities needed to become global citizens, capable of communicating across borders and critically analyzing the evolving issues and problems they face. A final version of the Core Learning Outcomes was presented during Fall 2012 Inservice, followed by an October 2012 Strategic Directions Conference, “Core Learning at Lane.” During the conference, faculty reviewed best practices and shared examples of infusing quality student engagement in learning through core learning outcomes. Additionally, the A-Team presented CLOs to Faculty Council, Learning Council, College Now staff and in faculty meetings within departments. A-Team members presented workshops at Fall Inservice and Spring Conference to persist in the college’s commitment to faculty professional development in integrated learning through visible CLOs in courses and through CLO rubrics generated by Lane faculty discipline-project teams.

The shared CLO framework is evidence of faculty and staff-led efforts to develop transferable skills for Lane students through curricular and co-curricular learning at Lane. CLOs are posted on the Assessment Team web page and more than 200 posters featuring the five CLOs have been distributed across campus. College leadership is providing opportunities for infusing core learning outcomes in outreach, marketing and publicity activities to further inform our stakeholders of the value of a “liberal education approach for learning.”



The CLO work plan for 2013-2014 was established through conversations begun at the June 2013 AAC&U Institution on General Education Assessment in Burlington, VT, which led to an assessment strategy that shifted focus from individual courses and individual or dyads of instructors crafting small projects for their own use, to a greater concentration on projects tied to program review and/or development of rubrics with disciplinary specificity, connected to signature assignments. Specifically, CLO work in 2013-2014 focused on the following goals from the A-Team's 3-year assessment plan: 1) increase visibility and understanding of the strategic direction, “a liberal education approach to student learning”; 2) increase visibility, understanding and ownership of Lane CLOs.

Increased visibility and increased ownership of CLOs were manifest through eight department/program projects—Art, Biology, Communications, Dental Hygiene, English/Composition, French, Physical Therapist Assistant, and Spanish—where faculty worked on plans for assessment in high enrollment courses, mapped CLOs to course outcomes or course materials, created rubrics or supplemental materials for students and faculty to ensure course consistency, and created or revised signature assignments. This work, supervised by CLO Faculty Coordinator Kate Sullivan, is not completed and will continue over the next few years, until a faculty majority have facility with the integration of CLOs into the curriculum and their assessment within a disciplinary context. [www.lanecollege.edu/assessment/core-learning-outcomes](http://www.lanecollege.edu/assessment/core-learning-outcomes)

### **Degree Qualifications Profile (DQP)**

Leads: Maurice Hamington, Sarah Ulerick, Siskanna Naynaha, Kate Sullivan, Christina Howard, Phil Martinez

The Oregon DQP was a three-year project supported by the Lumina Foundation. The primary purpose of the project was to employ the DQP framework to engage Oregon’s seventeen public two-year and seven four-year institutions in purposeful discussions and reflections on the meaning and alignment of their degrees through three primary initiatives: 1) Engage institutions in substantive conversations about expected learning outcomes for their degrees; 2) Compare and align (where possible) learning expectations horizontally for peer degrees across Oregon institutions; and 3) Enhance the inter-institutional vertical integration of Oregon’s two-year and four-year degrees to enhance student transition, progression and completion in moving between community colleges and universities.

The project substantially achieved the objectives for institutional engagement and to a lesser extent, the objectives for horizontal alignment and vertical integration. During the first year, twelve community colleges (including Lane) and six universities reported activities and progress on institutional engagement. During the second year, seven community colleges and five universities identified goals for institutional engagement on their year two work plans.

The Oregon DQP project fulfilled its underlying intention of raising the conscientiousness of institutional colleagues on the importance and role of learning outcomes as the foundation for institutional practice. It stimulated thought, encouraged reflection and engaged faculty, administrators and students in meaningful conversations on the essential learning outcomes for associate and baccalaureate degrees offered by Oregon community colleges and universities. The most fertile ground for these discussions and for continued alignment of learning outcomes resides in the general education component of associate and baccalaureate degrees. While the “meta” level of the DQP outcomes may have appeared too abstract at the beginning of the project when some faculty

were more focused on program and course level outcomes, the DQP served as an effective framework and catalyst to engage faculty in articulating and aligning expected student learning outcomes at the course, program and degree levels. Once started, those conversations will continue.

Lane's DQP team was comprised of faculty from general education and career technical areas, managers and information technology staff. Collectively, team members linked with multiple academic divisions and disciplines, executive leadership of the college, Faculty Council, Learning Council, Institutional Research and Planning, statewide organizations and colleagues at the University of Oregon to identify synergies among Lane's ongoing efforts to use learning outcomes to guide teaching and assessment of learning. Work completed included mapping Lane's new Core Learning Outcomes to the DQP framework and exploring opportunities to also map program and course outcomes to DQP. The team hosted a campus Mapping Summit to share its work in progress and its findings. Mapping work was presented statewide and with members of the National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment at the Spring DQP Teleconference. Work was initiated to link student affairs co-curricular activities to core learning outcomes; this work presents exciting opportunities to apply the Core Learning Outcomes and DQP frameworks to high impact co-curricular activities.

During 2013-2014, it was determined that continuing work on the Oregon DQP project under the prevailing circumstances would, at best, produce marginally diminishing returns on the investments of time, effort and resources. To leverage, extend and amplify the outcomes from the project, a modification was proposed for the third year of the grant to anticipate the attendant issues associated with assessing and documenting student learning outcomes within the DQP or DQP-like curricular framework. Specifically, the proposal submitted to the Lumina Foundation was to investigate the feasibility of credentialing and reporting student achievement at the learning outcome level, rather than at the course grade level. Following a series of discussions with the Lumina Foundation, it was determined that the timing was not right for this project. Reluctantly, therefore, the decision was made to terminate the project one year prior to the expected completion date of August 31, 2015. <http://lanecommunitycollege.github.io/oregondqp.org/>

### **First Year Matters (Foundations of Excellence)**

Leads: Mary Parthemer and Lida Herburger

In 2011-2012, Lane participated in the Foundations of Excellence (FOE) year-long, comprehensive, guided self-assessment and improvement process centered on improving the first year of college for Lane students. One team examined the extent to which Lane delivers curricular and co-curricular learning experiences that promote critical thinking, ethical decision-making, and the lifelong pursuit of knowledge. The team determined it would be beneficial for the college to improve its intentional practices, policies or culture with respect to new students, and to develop a clear path for helping first-year students see and understand the diverse roles education can play in their lives.

In 2013-14, a number of intentional practices were aimed at improving a liberal education approach for Lane's first-year students. A first-year philosophy had been developed during 2012-13 and was adopted for the 2013-14 year. All new students to Lane received a copy of the first-year philosophy that describes the value of education and details how Lane faculty and staff commit to supporting each student to develop and learn in meaningful and lasting ways. Some departments customized the first-year philosophy to their own discipline and/or service. This past year saw many efforts to integrate Lane's newly developed Core Learning Outcomes (CLOs) into first-year classes and co-

curricular activities. First-year College Success classes delivered directed lessons about the CLOs and first-year philosophy.

Although the FOE process is complete, the comprehensive action plan that came out of the two-year self-assessment and planning process is informing directions and actions that will continue to improve the experiences for first-year students at Lane Community College.

### **Lane Honors Program**

Leads: Ce Rosenow, Katie Morrison-Graham, Susan Carkin, Lida Herburger, Elizabeth Pratt

Lane's Honors Program provides students with a transformative learning experience centered on scholarly inquiry, academic rigor and intellectual growth. Through challenging coursework, experiential learning, a capstone project and co-curricular activities, honors students develop their critical thinking skills, creativity and intellectual curiosity.

The Honors Program offers fifteen different honors courses and options. These offerings include classes in art, cooperative education, science, social science and writing. Additional classes are scheduled for 2014-2015.

More than 60 students were active in the program in 2013-2014, and several recruitment efforts went into effect to increase this number in the coming year. These efforts included post-it notes that Lane faculty and high school teachers can put on students' work (shown in Figure 4), recommending that students look into the Honors Program, and the development of an honors brochure. Presentations to Lane's advisors and counselors, high school advisors and counselors, high school students touring Lane's campus, and the ECHO students increased awareness of the program. Additionally, targeted email messages went out to students requesting information about honors when applying to Lane as well as to students whose GPA makes them eligible for the program.

Figure 4: Honors Post-It Note



The program continued to provide exceptional off-campus and co-curricular learning opportunities for students. Events included attending the University of Oregon's Undergraduate Research Fair, Oregon State University's Honors Thesis Fair, and a guided tour of the University of Oregon's Natural History Museum.

Because of the academic rigor of honors course offerings and the range of co-curricular opportunities offered to honors students, several schools formed articulation agreements with the Lane Honors Program: Portland State University Honors College, Southern Oregon University Honors College, and Washington State University Vancouver Honors Program. Current conversations are underway with the University of Oregon exploring honors opportunities for our students when they transfer.

The make-up of the Honors Core Team continues to evolve to efficiently serve the needs of the program. With the energetic leadership of the Core Team and the ongoing engagement of the Leadership Team, the Lane Honors Program continues to grow. [www.lanecc.edu/honors](http://www.lanecc.edu/honors)

## **Information Literacy**

Lead: Marika Pineda

The Information Literacy Program is designed to enhance the pursuit of knowledge by preparing students to think critically and use information effectively and by helping faculty infuse information literacy into their courses. Led by library faculty and staff, the program consists of face-to-face instruction sessions, reference services and an Information Literacy Toolkit.

Students on campus have ready access to librarians at the reference desk, a traditional point of one-on-one instruction. Through the Information Literacy Program, virtual reference services are available 24/7 through an [online chat system](#). A chat widget is available for embedding in Moodle so that students have access to live research help at the point of need. To further support information literacy efforts, librarians create online research guides for subjects and courses.

Librarians have developed an Information Literacy Toolkit to support faculty in embedding information literacy instruction into their courses. Instructors can incorporate toolkit content – short video tutorials, quizzes, widgets, and handouts – into Moodle. In 2012-13, the quizzes in the Information Literacy Toolkit were accessed 2,378 times. Another infusion resource is “one-shot” sessions where library faculty are invited to teach information literacy to any class at the request of the instructor. Librarians have taught approximately 475 sessions serving 9,000 students in this modality over the past two years.

Information Literacy development and outreach efforts will continue and be scaled up as part of collaborative planning efforts within Academic and Student Affairs programs and services.

## **Movie Munch Film Series**

Leads: Phil Martinez, Micah Cordova

The Movie Munch Film Series was started during the 2012-2013 academic year to support liberal education objectives of civic and information literacy and integrative learning. Social Science faculty select movies that touch on academic and social science issues and then host a monthly film screening over the lunch hour. Faculty provide a brief synopsis of the film’s academic importance and facilitate a discussion and question and answer session after the showing. Based on positive student and faculty feedback, the series was continued into the 2013-2014 academic year, with nine movies presented to date.

## **Work College**

Leads: Dawn DeWolf, Dennis Carr

The Work College project is designed to enhance student success by increasing paid student employment opportunities on campus. The project vision is to create a cohesive, visible and robust system for student employment that also offers development of skills, abilities, habits and attitudes that prepare Lane students for the successful transition to life, work and career after college while also helping them pay for their college education. In fall 2011, the project team completed an inventory of current student employment practices. In winter 2012, survey results and a study of national best practices were used to identify and explore options for improving part-time work opportunities for Lane students, especially on main campus. The Work College

*There are 107 student workers currently employed at Lane.*



team concluded its 2012-13 work with the completion of two documents: a comprehensive student worker inventory and a draft proposal for increasing and improving student employment at Lane. In 2013-2014 the structure and framework were completed to support student employment opportunities and implement recommendations from the work group.

## **Continuing Projects**

The following institutional projects will continue into the 2014-2015 academic year:

### **Center for Learning and Student Success Redesign**

Leads: Michael Levick, Jen Klaudinyi, Audrey Mills, Ian Coronado

The 2013-2014 academic year saw the last details being scrutinized in the planning for the college's redesigned learning commons, or the "Center for Learning and Student Success." From an academic technology perspective, the goal is to create a center that integrates learning services with a flexible design that contributes to information and digital literacy for students, as well as the campus community at-large.

The redesign presents an opportunity to further integrate academic technology into the everyday learning experiences of students and into the faculty's instructional design. Current priorities include:

- Moving the Academic Technology Center into the Learning Commons
- Centralizing student technology help (SHED)
- Building a media-rich creation studio accessible to all students
- Housing an expanded academic Testing Center to support the growth of online courses and serve additional instructional departments
- Designing flexible and technologically-rich learning spaces to facilitate student success for years to come
- Planning integration of student support services from library and AT staff using the Kayako online helpdesk system.

### **Connected Lane County/Rites of Passage Bridge**

Leads: Dawn DeWolf, Craig Taylor, Deron Fort, Lida Herburger, Sue Norton, Greg Evans

ConnectED Lane County is a local coalition of school districts, institutions of public higher education and early childhood partners. The aim is to increase the number of local high school graduates who are successful in higher education and life by creating a seamless and streamlined transition between early childhood, K-12 and higher education through partnerships and relationships with educational, community and business partner organizations.

Lane Community College has partnered with Springfield School District to develop a grant-funded Rites of Passage (ROP) "Wrap Around" Program that extends the summer program experience into the classrooms at the high school level throughout the academic year, thus providing a seamless transition to post-secondary education at Lane. The coursework is an extension of the history, literature and life skills courses Lane teaches each summer.

The coalition has received grant funding from the OEIB for Connected Lane Pathways, a project focused on supporting the formation of college and career aspirations in the middle and early high school years for all students in Lane County schools. <http://connectedlanecounty.org>

### **Democracy Commitment**

Lead: Brett Rowlett

The Democracy Commitment (TDC) is a national initiative providing a platform for the development and expansion of community college programs, projects and curricula aiming at engaging students in civic learning and democratic practice across the country. The goal of TDC is that every graduate of an American community college shall have had an education in democracy. This goal includes all students, whether they plan to transfer to university, achieve an associate degree or obtain a certificate. After becoming one of the original TDC signatories in 2011, Lane has increased civic involvement awareness and opportunity in partnership with student government, cooperative education, service learning and the Honors and Work College programs.

During the 2013-2014 academic year, Lane's TDC initiative worked with student organizations to promote on- and off-campus voter engagement activities (voter registration, get-out-the-vote efforts, voter education, etc.). The issue of income inequality was added as a national initiative for TDC, and in February, a campus screening of former US Labor Secretary Robert Reich's documentary *Inequality for All* drew more than 125 students and staff. A webcast that followed allowed attendees to submit questions to Secretary Reich. In March, a Lane delegation of students and staff presented at the League for Innovation in the Community College's conference about Lane's voter engagement efforts and Political Science Cooperative Education Program. Lane was also invited to attend at the TDC annual conference in June. [www.lanecce.edu/studentsuccess/DemocracyCommitment](http://www.lanecce.edu/studentsuccess/DemocracyCommitment)

### **Roadmap Project**

Leads: Maurice Hamington, Lida Herburger, Mary Parthemer, Sarah Ulerick

In recognition of work supporting community college student success, Lane was selected as one of only 12 community colleges to participate in the Roadmap Project by the American Association of Colleges and Universities (AAC&U). Lane was invited to apply for a continuation award and will participate in the project for another two years. The centerpiece of Lane's project is a student Guide to Personal Success (GPS) that ties together the following procedures and structures that optimally support student progression and completion: core learning outcomes (CLOs), high impact practices (HIPs) and degree progression and completion policies.

The GPS will integrate three components in a systemic and cultural change for teaching and learning at Lane: 1) Learning: Using CLOs as guiding principles for liberal education and guideposts for a student's academic journey, 2) Engagement: Empowering students with HIPs to advance their learning and success, and 3) Navigation: Developing transparent processes and tools that support integrated practices for student progression and completion.

For the coming year, the project team will focus creating a visual representation of the GPS. [www.lanecce.edu/aacuroadmapproject](http://www.lanecce.edu/aacuroadmapproject)

## **New Projects**

While faculty, staff and managers involved in Lane's liberal education strategic direction will focus primarily on developing continuing projects and bringing them to scale, they have embarked upon an additional project to support liberal education goals as described below.

### **Transfer Area Identity and Branding**

Lead: Maurice Hamington

Increased emphasis on completion and regional identity concerns have led Lane's transfer deans and the Executive Dean of Academic Transfer to propose a rebranding of the transfer curriculum and structure to a more common academic construct such as School of Arts, Business, and Sciences or School of Arts and Sciences. The purpose of this branding is to create a stronger sense of pride and identity around the transfer curriculum, which generates a majority of the school's FTE. The hope is that students will find this identification more attractive and therefore spur greater interest in academic progress and graduation. The team plans to complete a proposal in the 2014-2015 year for implementation in either fall 2015 or 2016.