



Collaboration, Teamwork, and Leadership Closing the Loop University Summary Report Spring, 2024

Report of discussions, recommendations, and actions taken as a result of the assessment of Collaboration, Teamwork, and Leadership (CTL) of student learning in 2022-23 and academic and co-academic discussions in 2023-2024 to improve student learning and experiences at Cal State East Bay.

INTRODUCTION

Purpose

This *Closing the Loop University Summary Report* summarizes the discussions, recommendations, and continuous improvement actions being taken by academic colleges, co-academic, and administrative units to improve student learning and student experiences at Cal State East Bay for collaboration, teamwork, and leadership.

Background

[Institutional Learning Outcomes](#) (ILOs) are those learning outcomes that are expected of every graduate of the institution, both undergraduate and graduate, and are closely aligned with [General Education](#) and breadth requirements. ILO Assessment follows the [ILO Long Term Assessment Plan](#) which aligns the schedule of assessment for undergraduate, graduate, and general education assessment.

Following the schedule for the ILO Long Term Assessment plan, Cal State East Bay gathered student learning data in a report titled, [University Summary Report: Assessment of Collaboration, Teamwork, & Leadership Student Learning, September, 2023](#).

COLLEGE & UNIT SUMMARIES

College of Business and Economics (CBE)

Summary of discussion

CBE faculty met to discuss the CTL ILO on December 1, 2023. The summary report which also included results from an exploratory study using open-ended questions administered to all students was shared with all CBE faculty. The meeting was held virtually via Zoom and all CBE faculty were invited to attend. Many new and young faculty participated in the meeting and that was an encouraging sign. In total about 25 faculty attended the meeting.

Feedback from faculty on survey questions

- The survey could be administered in a more controlled manner to glean more insights. For example, the survey could be administered before and after some key courses related to teamwork and leadership they take at CBE. The survey could also be done specifically for students who are closer to graduation.
- Some CBE faculty would like to be involved in designing the survey and there were many thoughtful suggestions on eliciting better responses from students.
- Surveys are a self-reflection measure and hence has some limitations and advantages
- Some faculty questioned the usefulness of the results given the above factors and how we can draw meaningful conclusions.

Actions CBE faculty are already taking

- There are many courses at CBE that specifically target CTL skills for our students.
- Employing technology such as GoReact which can video capture interactions. Both faculty and peers can provide feedback analyzing these videos. Feedback can be provided for specific instances/frames in the video and can range from dialogue to body language. Such feedback can also promote development of CTL skills
- Student contracts at the beginning of the course help students set expectations within their team.
- Workshops are conducted by industry experts to help students be better communicators in a virtual world.
- Capstone simulation with peer evaluation tool build teamwork skills.

Summary of actions proposed/implemented

- Given the nature of this ILO, assessments that can help observe student behavior may be more appropriate and helpful. If we can observe/measure behavior objectively, then we can take the next step towards modeling such behavior. How do we tune the assessment mechanism to suit such an approach?
- How do we trickle down from ILO to PLO to CLO and ultimately address individual needs? The Dean is happy to provide funding for assessment strategies that track such a mapping that can help each student improve their individual skills (customizing our offering).
- Peer-evaluation can be used to improve CTL skills. To guide peer evaluation clear rubrics can be designed. These rubrics can help students give meaningful feedback to their peers. The AACU rubric or the university CTL ILO rubric can be starting points.
- The peer evaluation tool in the capstone simulation can be tuned and can be administered throughout the program to see how the skills change.
- How can we set a knowledge transfer mechanism at the college level to share experiences of managing virtual teams?
- Include a specific CLO related to CTL for some courses.
- Given that CTL is a practice-based skill, incorporate these in part of the courses.
- Differentiate CTL expectations between the graduate and undergraduate students. For example, graduate students *master* these skills vs. *introducing* the concept for undergraduates.
- Planning specific workshops that can address CTL skills in a virtual environment.

College of Education and Allied Studies (CEAS)

Summary of approach

The CEAS Assessment Committee met to discuss how to get input from faculty on the closing the loop report as well as getting the committee member's analysis of the CTL data. The committee met several times to discuss the data and to develop the survey. The report was circulated to faculty and each department had the report as an agenda item at their regularly scheduled department meetings. The outcome of those discussions was then provided to the assessment committee. In addition, a faculty survey was developed and sent to all faculty. Lastly, reference was made to the ongoing assessment reporting required for external accreditation that aligns with the CTL ILO.

Discussion themes

- The low return rate on the survey limits the generalizability of survey findings.
- Work done for accreditation duplicates but cannot be seamlessly used.
- Embedded CTL in courses not assessed – there is extensive work undertaken both in current courses as well as in co-curricular activities that hasn't been considered to address the CTL ILO.
- Challenges in directly assessing CTL behaviors.
- Disconnect between rubrics and assessment practices.
- This ILO is more ambiguous and nebulous than others.

Summary of actions proposed/implemented

- Integration of CTL activities that are extensively delivered into course and program assessment to then inform the ILO assessment.
- Explore how the extensive co-curricular activities programs undertake can be assessed and integrated into the assessment process.
- More education around ILOs, PLOs, SLOs and assessment.
- Improve the alignment of the ILO rubric with the assessments undertaken.
- Use of and integration of existing external accreditation assessment practices and assessment data.
- Exploration of technologies such as GoReact for assessing in real-time CTL engagement.

College of Letters, Arts, and Social Sciences (CLASS)

Summary of discussion(s)

The conversation with CLASS faculty solidified some relevant themes regarding the Collaboration, Teamwork and Leadership ILO and how the efforts to support the intentions of this outcome could be made more specific in syllabi and assignments, making their value more defined and explicit to students. Perhaps the most telling statement came at the top of the conversation – “Students hate group work!” This is a truism, at least as many assessments of teamwork and collaboration currently exist. This sentiment likely comes up due student difficulties navigating teamwork and conflict resolution and the vagueness as to why teamwork and collaboration were important. Faculty felt that if the “why” behind these assignments was made more explicit, perhaps they would make more sense to students as a vital part of their educational experience. We agreed

that the value of these particular skills outside of the university must be emphasized to students, that these requirements are not just hoops to jump through but essential skills to develop for success beyond the university. This was expressed by faculty across disciplines and was not specific to any one major. Further, we discussed the difference between requiring students to collaborate, and teaching them *how* to collaborate. It is a skill that does not necessarily come easy. Seeing that it is not only an ILO, but embedded in the requirements of many GE courses, directly addressing the “how-to” will be essential in allowing students to understand and benefit from these requirements. Finally, this ILO needs to be carefully approached in different modalities of teaching, e.g., what can this look like in a completely asynchronous course and what styles of assessment should be used for teamwork and collaboration in these types of modalities.

Summary of actions proposed:

- Develop language to emphasize the value of these skills beyond the university, and integrate into syllabi and assignments.
- Identify some assignments throughout CLASS courses that can be modified to directly address and emphasize the skill of listening and developing openness to different ideas and different people; for example, the potential to develop assignments that explicitly require the synthesis of contradictory approaches to a problem.
- Develop approaches to teaching students how to collaborate, perhaps using specifically assigned roles or specific modes of communication (eg., Microsoft Teams, Slack).
- Encourage or incentivize faculty to integrate student collaboration into their own research projects – RSCA grants would seemingly support this – as a way to emphasize application beyond the classroom.
- Develop opportunities for students to build these skills within departmental clubs or organizations; the feedback shows that experiences in clubs is where students feel they have developed these skills most notably, and when clubs are tied to the major and intellectual proactive or interest, the impact seems more memorable.

College of Science (CSCI)

The College of Science held a virtual 1.5 hour meeting for discussion of the results of the Collaboration, Teamwork, and Leadership assessment results. Additionally, comments were collected via shared Google docs. The entire faculty was invited with efforts made such that each department be represented by at least one faculty member. The discussions were a way of educating faculty about the ILO’s and the processes behind the assessments.

The conversation mostly revolved around faculty asking questions of the process and each other. The assessment process was quite different from previous ILO cycles and did not have a baseline expectation or what exactly we would be looking to improve. Faculty in Mathematics and Physics wondered if their programs could or should be more explicit about these ILO’s, i.e. having PLO’s and SLO’s that align with it. Currently, both programs encourage group homework sessions, but assigned group projects are not really part of their majors.

Externally accredited programs in the Department of Nursing and in the School of Engineering both include Collaboration, Teamwork, and Leadership in their requirements. In Engineering, these skills are mostly developed through group projects. Some faculty use peer-assessment and monitor groups working together

to gauge student success in these areas. For accreditation purposes, Engineering programs also collect information on these skills for graduates of their programs using employer and alumni surveys. The Nursing program focuses on teamwork because of its importance to the profession. They also have a course explicitly titled “Leadership.”

Ana Almeida shared that she is using an activity to allow students to reflect on group work and norms before starting group projects. Mia Livaudais offered that Public Health may have too much group work. It often requires faculty revisiting the guidelines set at the beginning of the semester and restructuring group dynamics and norms. She was willing to share tools. Negin Toosi also has a toolkit that PSYC faculty use when group work isn't working and how to handle issues like lack of communication and absences.

University Libraries and the Student Center for Academic Achievement

Discussions regarding the 2022-2023 Collaboration, Teamwork, and Leadership assessment results were held with the Library Management Team and the faculty librarians during the fall 2023 semester. The conversations with the Library Management Team focused on developing leadership, collaboration, and teamwork skills of student employees who work in the University Libraries, as it is the largest employer of students on the Hayward campus. The managers of the library units in attendance described the ways that students in their areas develop leadership and teamwork skills, including the employment of shift leaders or lead library student ambassadors who take on leadership responsibilities. These lead library student assistants have the responsibility to train and prepare newer student assistants to successfully complete their job duties in the library. The Library Management Team discussed expanding the assessment of leadership, teamwork, and collaboration skills that library student employees gain from their employment with the library.

The Student Center for Academic Achievement (SCAA) implements an end of semester survey for SCAA employees. It asks students to reflect on their professional growth and development of leadership skills, within the context of their Peer Leadership positions in the SCAA. Aligned with institutional learning outcomes, students indicate a gain and/or improvement in the categories of *professional standards*, *interpersonal communication*, *partnering with others*, *problem-solving*, and *resourcefulness*. These overarching categories inform the SCAA's Peer Leader training curriculum each AY. The Library Management Team is currently considering the expansion of this existing survey to all library student employees to better understand how employment in the library currently supports and could strengthen its support for the development of leadership skills.

The library faculty also discussed the results of the Collaboration, Teamwork, and Leadership assessment results, and how the faculty currently supports East Bay students in these areas, and ideas for expanding this support in the future. Librarians serve as mentors to students who participate in various programs (both curricular and co-curricular), and also partner with student organizations on developing library exhibits and programming hosted in the library. In addition to direct student-librarian interaction, the library faculty purchase library materials that support student development of leadership and collaboration skills as part of the books in the “DIY Success” collection, as well as in the management literature in the general library collection. The library faculty will continue to support student-led engagement with the display and event spaces in the CORE, as well as continue to collect materials to help support student development in these areas.

Graduate Studies

Traditionally, the ILO assessment results from the previous year are discussed at the Spring Graduate Advisory Council (GAC) meeting. This year, instead, assessment results of the Collaboration, Teamwork, and Leadership (CTL) ILO and questions regarding those results were presented at the GAC meeting, and then a survey was conducted afterwards. Due to the large number of attendees at the meeting, the survey provided more time and space for the graduate program coordinators to comment on their own assessment processes and results. Assessment results for the CTL ILO consisted of those submitted by the graduate programs aligned to the CTL ILO, collected in the [Graduate CTL Summary Report](#), plus results from the CTL ILO assessment survey conducted to assess undergraduate skill levels. This survey included both undergraduate and graduate student respondents, and so the results were relevant to graduate programs. It was particularly fortuitous that graduate students were included in the survey as few graduate programs aligned to the CTL ILO, providing little data to analyze.

Graduate Coordinators were asked how CTL skills were addressed in their programs. Answers ranged from “not at all” to very formal plans in which CTL skills were addressed in all classes in the curriculum. The latter was more typical of individually accredited programs. Group or team projects were listed as a common setting where CTL skills could be taught/learned.

The assessment process itself was also discussed with one graduate coordinator pointing out that it was difficult to measure CTL skill proficiency. Programs whose accreditation entity required assessment of CTL gave a contrasting opinion, that assessment went according to plan, and showed positive results. It may be that the university should review the CTL assessment processes of individually accredited programs and adopt them across the university.

In terms of closing the loop strategies, several graduate coordinators suggested increasing the number of required group projects, and thinking in terms of developing skills over time in a program as opposed to all in one class. Others proposed encouraging students to get involved in disciplinary professional organizations, including attendance at conferences, participation in disciplinary student competitions, and interaction with students at other universities. In particular, one graduate coordinator stressed the advantages of working in interdisciplinary domains.

Finally, several graduate coordinators suggested that help was needed to find effective and realistic methods for assessing CTL skills. Perhaps the university ILO committee may wish to review the CTL rubric and suggested assessment process for the next assessment cycle.

Institutional Effectiveness and Research (IER) & Co-Curricular

Summary of discussion

IER has been active in discussing the findings from these ILO findings with student affairs areas who have also had an interest in assessing leadership and development. One of the main findings that informed conversations that emerged from this analysis was the relatively low percentage of respondents who identified co-curricular activities as a place where students learned leadership and teamwork skills. The ILO outcomes of collaborative, communication, and conflict management also aligned with the program outcomes identified by student affairs departments. Discussions and further assessment of co-curricular activities led to findings that indicated decreased levels of on-campus engagement in multiple areas (wellness, clubs and organizations,

etc.) compared to engagement levels from past years. Assessment findings for co-curricular areas have indicated that there is a positive impact on leadership and teamwork skills when students do engage in campus activities and the current challenge is to increase the reach of these programs and activities to the undergraduate population.

Summary of actions proposed/implemented

IER shared both ILO dashboards with student affairs leadership and encouraged individual departments to use the results to inform leadership development opportunities and programming initiatives. Student Life and Leadership Programs used the results of this survey to develop curriculum content areas and multiple tracks for their spring 2024 student leadership program. Housing and Residence Life have also reviewed the dashboard findings and have used the results to inform content areas for their RA training and inform their assessment of the RA leadership role. Departments such as Recreation and Wellness have also started to explore how to increase the reach of their engagement activities so that these positive teamwork and leadership outcomes impact a broader audience.

General Education

Summary of discussion and actions being taken

All students must take 9 units of upper division GE, and these areas (UD-B, UD-C, and UD-D) require that students have assignments that include teamwork and collaboration. Some of our lower division GE areas also require teamwork/collaboration: A1 (Oral Communication) and A3 (Critical Thinking). The GE Director will be updating the General Education learning outcomes over the next year which will include strengthening teamwork/collaboration where appropriate.

Educational Effectiveness

Summary of discussion and actions being taken

CSUEB students report teamwork and leadership to be a significant part of their curricular experiences at CSUEB, both in their course instruction and group work. CTL skills are highly valued by employers, and have CTL outcomes in almost 50% of undergraduate and graduate programs as well as many co-curricular program outcomes. Development of CTL skills continues to be an ILO for every student to develop during their time at CSUEB.

While more easily directly assessable in courses within programs, at the ILO level, student surveys were a good tool to understand a broad view of the student experience. As closing the loop actions by colleges and co-curricular were fairly easy to implement, Educational Effectiveness will continue to work with the ILO Subcommittee to provide and communicate straight-forward tools supporting student learning for this ILO.

Educational Effectiveness will also continue discussions with Academic Affairs including the CAPR chair to strengthen CAPR's use of ILO and GE assessment results in program review which has more built in accountability structures for continuous improvement of student learning.

ILO Subcommittee*Summary of discussion and actions*

As part of their responsibilities, the ILO Subcommittee will use the results of this cycle of assessment to update the CTL rubric and assignment guide. The committee will also expand approaches to connect faculty to tools and resources for building CTL and other ILOs.