Pathways to General Education Program Assessment FAQs

What are the steps in the assessment process for faculty teaching Pathways courses?
Each time a course is taught, faculty will be asked to collect and report assessment data on the learning indicators identified in the official course proposal.
1. Faculty teaching a Pathways course should first determine which core and integrated learning outcome areas and specific indicators are included in their course;
2. Faculty should then identify measures used to assess each of the indicators;
3. Faculty will apply the Draft Pathways Assessment Rubrics to interpret student work and determine the extent to which a student has gained the knowledge, skill, or ability articulated in each indicator;
4. After course completion, faculty will:
   a. Report the number of students who are below competent, competent, and above competent for each indicator to the Office of Assessment and Evaluation (OAE) through the electronic data submission form.
   b. Include an example of student work demonstrating each competency level for each indicator.

What types of student work should be used to determine student competency on the indicators?
Faculty should use direct measures of student learning. Direct measures allow for the assessment of students’ achievement of specific knowledge, skill, ability, or competency through samples of student work or performance. Direct measures of student learning include:

- Written exams or quizzes
- Oral exams or quizzes
- Multiple-choice questions
- Observations of performances
- Essays
- Capstone projects
- Oral presentations
- End-of-course papers or projects
- Research projects, papers, or case studies
- Art exhibits
- Poster sessions
- Case studies
- Team/group projects and presentations
- Online asynchronous discussions
- Portfolios
- Lab reports

Faculty are not required to collect or report indirect evidence of student learning, such as student surveys, exit interviews, course evaluations, employer satisfaction surveys, or focus groups.

How do I collect data for large classes?
For classes of more than twenty students, faculty may choose to complete the electronic submission form based on at least twenty randomly selected students. In such instances, faculty should first gain the approval of their department head/chair. All students should complete the same assignments, but the work of only these twenty students would be reviewed by the instructor using the Draft Pathways Assessment Rubrics and reported via the submission form.

When should assessment data be submitted?
Faculty should submit assessment data from their Pathways courses at the end of the semester; ideally within thirty days after exams.

How will course assessment data be used and shared?
Assessment data will be used to evaluate the Pathways curriculum, not individual faculty or courses. Submitted data will be aggregated at the level of the indicator, ensuring that it is not student, faculty, or course identifiable. At the end of each semester, the OAE will publish a summary of assessment data for all learning indicators in the Pathways learning outcome areas.

Support:
If you have questions regarding Pathways assessment, please contact André Foisy in the Office of Assessment and Evaluation at jafoisy@vt.edu or by calling 231-8773.

For assistance with course planning, please contact Kim Filer, Ph.D. in CIDER at kfiler@vt.edu or by calling 231-2685.

For any questions about course or minor proposals or any other inquiries regarding general education, please contact Stephen Biscotte in the Office of the Provost at biscotsm@vt.edu or by calling 231-4451.