

# ILO Project for Victor Valley College:

Communication (Opening the Loop)

## ILO Testing Information

During the fall 2021 semester, the College piloted the Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILO) project and officially assessed Victor Valley College's Communication ILO. Students from the English, Philosophy, Biology, Political Science and History general educational required courses, both online and face-to-face, were invited to participate.

The assessment was a voluntary task and not an official part of a class or a graded assignment for a class. Testing occurred from 11/15/21 to 11/19/21 in Building 21, Room 143. A total of 195 students were invited to participate in the 2021 ILO Project. The ILO test was proctored by a voluntary group of faculty members.

## ILO Testing Format

The ILO assessment consists of an online test. We used a writing sample proficiency profile that focuses on and measures Communication through a writing sample. By using the same testing instrument, the College has a quantitative and qualitative means of comparison. Furthermore, the test has a common rubric that furnishes the same measurement. In year 2021, the assessment “closed the loop” for Critical Reading and Analytical Thinking. The assessment also opened the ILO assessment for Communication using the online writing sample.

Victor Valley College's ILOs are: 1) Communication, 2) Computation, 3) Creative, Critical and Analytical Thinking 4) Social and Personal Responsibility, 5) Information Competency, and 6) Health and Human Flourishing. SLOAC added a sixth ILO—Health and Human Flourishing. All six ILOs support the mission of the College; achievement demonstrates the success of the College in serving students. The 2021 ILO assessment quantifies and qualifies success in Communication. Students that achieve high scores on this assessment demonstrate skill in Academic Senate-approved competency required to be successful in communication, particularly written communication. Thus far SLOAC has “closed the loop” on one of VVC's six ILOs and has begun assessment on a second of VVC's ILOs.

SLOAC sent the following invitation to disciplines with courses in English, Philosophy, Biology, Political Science and History for the 2021 testing:

For those of you who are willing to participate, please use the following guidelines:

An invitation will be sent to instructors and students of the listed classes. You will be asked to send your students to a designated computer classroom or online to participate in the assessment.

## The ILO Test Data Instrument

The Communication ILO Assessment test consisted of an online written test, the proficiency profile that focused on the assessment of the Communication ILO. The testing instrument that was used for the 2013, 2017, and 2021 ILO projects—ETS Proficiency Profile measured Critical and Analytical Thinking; the same test could also be used for the 2021 Communication ILO, which measured written communication. By using the same testing instrument, the College has quantitative and qualitative means of comparison. The tests have a common rubric that furnishes the same measurement.

Students that achieve high scores on this assessment demonstrate skill in an Academic State-approved competency required to be successful in four-year institutions for communicative skills.

### 2021 TEST

The results of the 2017 ILO study revealed that of the 115 participants, 105 students completed the ILO test, Essay Form 5. Ten essays were not counted in the final score because they were blank or too brief to evaluate, not relevant to the topic, or not written in English. The mean (average) score was 3.8 and the standard deviation was 1.2. The percent at each score level was: out of 105 participants, 30.5% scored in the highest percentile, 56.1% in the median percentile, and 13.4% in the lowest percentile for communication. The percentage of students who earned a passing score of A, B, or C (6, 5, 4 respectively) was 67.6%. The highest percentile was 30.5% of students, nearly one-third of the students who tested.

### **ETS® Proficiency Profile**

#### **Group Student Essay Score Report**

**Victor Valley Community College Cohort Name:** 2021FA Online ILO Test

**Close Date:** 11/29/2021 Essay

**Test Description:** Essay Form 5

**Number of students tested:** 115

**Number of students included in these statistics:** 105

**Number of students excluded (see roster):** 10

#### Percent at each score level

6 2.9%

5 27.6%

4 37.1%

3 19.0%

2 4.8%

1 8.6%

#### Percent with a score of at least

6 2.9%

5 30.5%

4 67.6%

3 86.7%  
2 91.4%  
1 100.0%

**Mean (average) score 3.8**  
**Standard deviation 1.2**

The students' scores were assigned by a computer program that analyzes written language. Before the computer program can begin scoring essays, it must be "calibrated." This process consists of having the computer program analyze the language in a large group of essays, written by students and scored by experts in the evaluation of student writing. Once it is calibrated, the computer program can begin scoring new essays. It analyzes the language of each new essay and assigns it the score that the experts assigned to essays in which the language was similar. **To analyze the “calibrated” computer score, SLOAC volunteers participated in a norming session and interpreted the “calibrated” computer score. Writing samples were furnished for the volunteers.**

There are many qualities of good writing that an instructor can take into account in grading or scoring an essay, including

- organized ideas
- clearly expressed ideas;
- logical connections between the ideas;
- examples that illustrate and support the ideas;
- correct use of words;
- sentences that follow accepted rules of grammar, punctuation, and spelling.

Grammar errors were “calibrated” as follows (Percentage of Essays):

Proofread this	22%
Wrong or missing word	3%
Possessive	20%
Pronoun	5%
Ill-formed verbs	28%
Subject-verb agreement	22%
Garbled Sentences	4%
Run-on sentences	15%
Fragments	23%
Wrong Article	7%
Wrong Part of Speech	0%
Negation error	0%
Nonstandard word form	3%
Preposition error	26%
Faulty comparisons	1%
Wrong form of word	2%
Confused words	53%
Missing or extra article	73%
Determiner noun agreement	21%

Extra Comma	26%
Duplicates	8%
Compound words	10%
Fused words	7%
Hyphen Error	59%
Missing comma	79%
Missing apostrophe	17%
Missing final punctuation	17%
Missing question mark	5%
Missing initial capital letter	26%
Capitalize proper nouns	22%
Spelling	97%

One can review the essay scoring guide and examples of student essays used in the calibration process - and the scores that the writing experts assigned to them - by visiting the ETS® Proficiency Profile website at <http://www.ets.org/proficiencyprofile>.

The volunteers scored essays based on the ETS calibrated scores and concluded that the computer generated scores matched the scores they would have given the essays. None varied. Examples of essays that represented scores of 6 to 0 are given in the Appendix.

Based on the percentages of students in the 6, 5, and 4, categories, the passing scores represent 67.6% of the students passed with respective letter grades of A, B, C, with 6 representing an A, 5, representing a B, and 4 representing a C. Students who received scores of 3, 2, and 1 did not pass, equaling 32.4%. Sixty-eight of the students passed and 32 percent of the students did not pass. The students who passed, organized and clearly expressed their ideas, drew logical connections between the ideas, illustrated and supported the ideas with examples. Even the passing students had some problems with grammar and punctuation, as reported in the calibrated grammar errors on the previous page. However, relevance was given to the development of ideas, the organizational skills, and the ability to expand ideas with suitable examples.

## Conclusion

The 2021 test shows that 67.6% of students who tested were capable of organizing a coherent essay and could demonstrate communicative skills when given a problem/solution essay compared to 32.4 students who could not form organized ideas and were not capable of successfully writing down their ideas in cohesive paragraphs. Two-thirds of the students who took the test from multiple disciplines were capable of written communication by organizing their thoughts in a cohesive construct, drawing connections between ideas, and supporting ideas with examples; one third were not able to communicate their ideas clearly and cohesively. SLOAC plans to reassess in the fall 2023 semester using the same ETS proficiency testing instrument that was used in the 2021 ILO assessment.



APPENDIX: Examples of Essays with Calibrated Raw Scores from 6 to 0, with 6 being the highest. Passing scores are 6, 5, 4. Non-passing scores are 3, 2, 1, 0.

0

no i dont think it should be a regrent

1

I think all of us at some point should do community service it should be required as human beings we have the obligation to help out at some point. The reason why i think we should do it's because we owe it to our country we have so many oportunities in this land . the least we can do is one simmple service. we should be grateful of what we can accomplish in life if everyone could do a community service .most of us come from poor countries that we should appreciate what we have in this country. We as parents should take the anichative and show our kids so they will want to do a community service. I think the ones that should appricate the most are the people that come from other countries. I really1

2

People performing community or government service could benefit the age groups in a way. At the ages 18 to 21 most indiviauls are clueless on what to do after highschool, of course some already have a plam. Other indiviuals have plans that do mot include continuing school. If they do not attend school then they could also start working instead, some are able to choose what they please after high school. There are others that are just not able to attend school as well, for personal reason and working is their best opinin out there. People have various opportunities out in the world a huge amount of indiviuals may not know they do as well. Doing community or government service can give the young indiviuals an idea of what they could do if they are stuck in what to do, Performing these services can also giving them an understanding of other opinins they have for a career choice. Being able to help in community or government services

3

Government or community service is significant to us and our community because it affects how we work as a collective. If we were to not care for our community and not help it to improve and grow then our community would become difficult to live in and might even fail the people who are a part of it. That is why Government and Community Service should be required for 18-21 year olds. It would teach young adults how their community works. It would plant in them a desire to continue this even after the age of 21. As someone who graduated from highschool two years ago, I can confirm that for most highschool students community service doesn't cross their minds. The times I would see teens engage with community service was when they needed it for University applications. When the young teens would be done with all the community service that they needed, they came back more aware on how it is important it is to help your community. They would learn a skill and they would learn about what aspects their community needed more help in. But that just applied for the few kids who actually did community service for thei University application. There would still be hundreds of kids in highschool that would never learn the significance of community service. Then they would go on to graduate and move on to college. Even in college young adults still have the oportunity to engage with their community. In fact you can help out your community at any age. But making it required for 18-21 year olds which is the ages in which a young adult in college is, it would bring in more helpers faster. A desire could be planted in them and they can start at an early age and they can influence others.

4

Community service should be required for young adults from ages of 18 through 21. Despite the United States's heavy idealism on freedom, Americans as a whole lack compassion and real life experience that they would receive through community service programs. By participating in food drives, young adults can experience kitchen aid while providing those that struggle with food insecurity another day without starvation. Students that participate in college learning communities can get an understanding of empathy for their teachers, other students, and other college faculty while instantaneously improving their shared space. Aspiring nurses would benefit from serving a hospital as they can get direct patient care while grasping the new world of the medical field. Those that volunteer under a charity contracting company would not only develop manual labor, wood working skills, but also provide possible housing for impoverished families. Adults that volunteer under hospice can provide the elderly with company and gain new knowledge from past generations. A current dilemma Americans face is too much individualism. Americans are "sue-happy", tend to villainize the other political party, and have a strong sense of "It's either them, or me." However, by encouraging active engagement in their community, it can help develop a stronger sense of collectivism; changing the way they view each other. Witnessing other people become united has been the most fulfilling aspect of all the 200 hours I've volunteered in. Therefore, community service as a whole is beneficial to all participating parties by providing direct aid while gaining new perspectives the volunteer might've not seen otherwise.

5

Performing one year of community or government service between the ages of 18 and 21 should be required for all individuals. Allowing individuals to participate in services such as the Peace Corps, the Environmental Conservancy Corps, the military, hospital, a rural or inner-city school, along with other community outreach projects, can build one's character, self-esteem, and offer real-world experience. Because many adults feel challenged once they enter the realm of adulthood, gaining experience in any of these outreach programs is beneficial for stepping into the world. Each one of these community and government services can prepare a young adult for their future careers or even help young adults find a passion they never knew they had. Along with discovering more about who one is, these services would contribute towards learning. Knowledge is essential for building logic, enhancing critical thinking skills, and solving real-world problems. For all these reasons, young adults should be required to perform in at least one of these services to gain confidence, experience, and knowledge. One of the ways participating in community or government services is beneficial revolves around the notion that adults will be able to acquire a confident self-image. When entering the adult world, it can be difficult for one to figure out what one wants to do in life. The pressures and expectations society and families put on adults can negatively impact how a person views themselves. Being able to join in a community where one is needed can greatly boost one's self-esteem since these programs tend to offer a sense of purpose. Likewise, performing in a government service can allow an individual to step outside their comfort zone. Though this may seem like a negative, it is imperative for young adults to learn how to feel comfortable being uncomfortable. Often times, life throws curve balls at people, and young adults should be offered the necessary resources towards learning how to overcome those adversities pitched their way in life by conquering the feeling of uncomfortability. Another way individuals can benefit from community or government services is through gaining experience. Stepping into a volunteer role to help people in need not only contributes to society, but to the individual's sense of pride as well. Experience allows individuals to build a sense of optimism about the world they live in and restores faith in humanity. Experience also gives young adults readiness to succeed in the workforce. Experiences are important since they offer insight about how to learn from one's mistakes. This is vital for pursuing a career that is hard to achieve, because eventually the experiences one gains performing community or a government service aids an individual in growing resilience. Resilience is the ability to bounce back after being knocked down. Since life is full of uncertainties, gaining the ability of resilience is powerful for young adults stepping into the world. The last reason everyone should perform a year of community or a government service is to learn more about the world. Knowledge is powerful, and the more people who equip it in their worldview, the more society can benefit immensely for it. Through community and government service, one is able to learn more about the communities they live in. This opens the gateway for learning more about a community's culture or economic hardships. Awareness like this is achieved by learning. Harnessing a sense of awareness about one's community ultimately benefits everyone in the long run.

It can be argued that within a democracy (like the United States) or any modern state, for that matter, one should preform community/government service out of the patriotism and nationalism one feels for one's own nation. However, this simple voluntary service that any citizen would theoretically be glad to preform is not always undertaken. For example, a military is something that is often maintained by the state and is free to enroll in and often comes with benefits. Although this is the case, we do not see the frequent flocking towards joining the military. Why is this? In any state, if one thing is clear, most people are born into the social contract involuntarily (seeing as you do not decide to be born) which means they did not really choose to be apart of said government, good or bad. If we take a look at the U.S. which has birthright citizenship, we see many being born into a social contract that one may not entirely agree with in whole. It can be said, then, that because people, particularly 18-21 year olds, do not choose to be apart of a government (and a social contract), they should not be required to preform government or community service. Further, if a state were to enact compulsory government/community service, this may take away for the patriotism one feels for one's nation, and thus deminish the nation's goals in orignally enacting the compulsory community service — community service must be volunarty, and the only way a state can get its citizenry, particularly 18-21 year olds, to do this, is through the implanting of nationalist and patriotic fervor in its citizens when they are young (before they turn 18). There are many kinds of governments and established states in this world, each with their own social contract. Take for example, North Korea. North Korea is a ruthless state that exerts almost full control over its citizenry — who I might add did not choose to be born there. Can it be said, then, that the citizens of North Korea be expected to preform government and community service? Well, no. Although you may be thinking of the compulsory military service required in North Korea, it must be said that this "service" is exactly that: compulsory. A state cannot "force" its citizenry of any age to do government/community service because then it would cease to be "community service." If we were to disregard the North Korea example and look towards the beaming light of democracy in the west (the U.S.) we see a similar story. Although the U.S. stands as a beacon of light for other states because of its flexible and lenient social contract, one can still argue that because you did not choose to be born in the U.S., you cannot be forced to do community service because it is a violation philosophical ethics. Say, for example, the U.S. decided to make every citizen preform community/government service the moment they turn 18. How would this affect the citizenry and their attitude toward the government? Well, if one thing can be said on this it is that this is often how revolutions start. It is already undoubtdly clear that the forced community service on 18-21 year olds would be a violation of philosophical ethics because of the fact that no one chose to be born into a certian social contract — North Korea, or not. If a government were to ignore this and go straight through with it's community service plans, it could spark uprisings that could threaten the well-being of an entire state. People love liberty; in a state like North Korea, the government may be able to enact mandatory community service because all the people have ever known is state control. In the U.S., however, because the people are so accustomed to liberty, the government telling 18-21 year olds what to do would be a violation of the said social contract people already didn't choose to be born into and thus may cause a revolution. Just take a look at the French Revolution. In a way, the people were required to preform mandatory service for the nobility and clergy because they were the only ones paying the taxes. Just imagine what 18-21 year olds would do if they found out they were being FORCED to preform community service. If one thing is clear, governments forcing 18-21 year olds is not the route to take when it comes to getting a more patriotic citizenry (which is the purpose of community service). If a nation wants its citizens to preform civic virtues, it must enact a different method: the implementation of nationalistic ideals in the education system from a young age. Governments must take it upon themselves to reform the educational systems they have already enacted to ensure that citizens are well educated on the matters of being a good citizen. This includes lessons about the nation's history and the glorification of taking part in one's government. This isn't to say that a state should turn the educational system into a radical nationalistic institution, instead, it is a sugestion which, if enacted, will lead to increased participory behavior among young people (18-21 year olds seeing as they just got out of K-12) because these virtues have already been enstiled in them from a young age. Promote voting, promote serving in one's military, promote the values of the state. When governments take this upon themselves not only will they get a more active citizenry (particarlly among 18-21 year olds) but they will also recieve a more secure and stable nation all together.



