Valid Assessment of Learning in Undergraduate Education (VALUE)

VALUE (Valid Assessment of Learning in Undergraduate Education) is a campus-based assessment initiative launched by AAC&U in 2007. VALUE provides needed tools to assess students’ own authentic work, produced across their diverse learning pathways and institutions, to determine whether and how well they are progressing toward graduation-level proficiencies—including those that both employers and educators consider essential.

Teams of faculty and other educational professionals from institutions across the country—two- and four-year, private and public, research and liberal arts—developed rubrics for sixteen of the LEAP Essential Learning Outcomes that all students need for success in our complex and global society. The VALUE rubrics are being used to help institutions demonstrate, share, and assess student accomplishment of progressively more advanced and integrative learning. The VALUE rubrics can be translated into the concepts, language, and contexts of specific disciplines, programs, and courses, thereby facilitating classroom, program, and institutional assessment for learning improvement and reporting.

Since their release in the fall of 2009, the VALUE rubrics have become a widely referenced and utilized form of assessment on campuses across the United States and internationally. The VALUE rubrics have helped guide a range of efforts aimed at improving student learning, from individual campus-level work, to statewide initiatives, to multi-state collaborations—including the Multi-State Collaborative to Advance Learning Outcomes Assessment, cosponsored by AAC&U and the State Higher Education Executive Officers Association.

VALUE builds on a philosophy of learning assessment that privileges multiple faculty members’ and other educators’ expert judgments and shared understanding of the quality of student work through the curriculum, cocurriculum, and beyond over reliance on standardized tests administered to samples of students disconnected from an intentional course of study.

VALUE GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- To achieve a high-quality education for all students, valid assessment data are needed to guide planning, teaching, and improvement.
- Colleges and universities are appropriately fostering and assessing numerous learning outcomes beyond those addressed by currently available standardized tests.
- Learning develops over time and should become more complex and sophisticated as students move through their curricular and cocurricular educational pathways toward a degree.
- Good practice in assessment focuses on actual student work, requiring multiple assessments, over time.
- Well-planned digital portfolios provide opportunities to collect data from multiple assessments across a broad range of learning outcomes; guide student learning; build self-assessment capabilities; and demonstrate learning within and across institutions.

SELECTED VALUE RESOURCES

- Using the VALUE Rubrics for Improvement of Learning and Authentic Assessment (2013)

To find additional VALUE publications and resources and to download the VALUE rubrics, see www.aacu.org/VALUE.

The VALUE initiative was launched with support from State Farm Companies Foundation and the Fund for the Improvement of Post-Secondary Education at the US Department of Education. It currently is supported with funds from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and the Sherman Fairchild Foundation.