Faculty Handbook:
Creating the Passport Learning Outcomes
and
Transfer-Level Proficiency Criteria

February 2016
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Introduction to the Interstate Passport

The Interstate Passport, based at the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE), is a new learning-outcomes-based framework for transfer with the goal of improving graduation rates, shortening time to degree, and saving students’ money. The new framework focuses on lower-division general education, the common denominator among institutions—concentrating on it as a whole, not on individual courses—and allows for a cross-border “match” of outcomes-integrated general education for block transfer. Students who earn a Passport at one participating institution and transfer to another one will have their learning achievement recognized; they will not be required to repeat courses at the receiving institution to meet lower-division general education requirements. Chief academic officers in the WICHE region conceived of the Passport as a solution for transfer students, who too often lose credits, have to repeat courses, and spend additional money to complete their degrees. With approximately 33 percent of today’s students transferring—and nearly 27 percent of them crossing state lines according to a study by the National Student Clearinghouse—the Passport promises a new way to streamline transfer students’ pathways to graduation.

The Passport is both a process and structure that is overtly student centered: accomplishing the initiative’s goal will decrease the time and expense spent by transfer students to earn their degrees. Reducing time to degree is also the goal of the “completion agenda” that has become the focus over the last few years of any number of educational, political and economic leaders and organizations. But the Passport has been constructed with consistent attention to several additional constituencies and concerns towards achievement of its goal. Chief among these are the faculty and institutions that are engaged in educating the student.

Each postsecondary education institution has its own unique history and culture that defines the programs and curriculum it offers its students. The nature and constitution of its faculty must be consistent with the institutional offerings and simultaneously able to evolve so that the faculty is able to effectively and continuously deliver quality offerings to a student population that is itself dynamic. Holding these considerations in mind, a foundational premise of the Passport design process has been that teaching faculty must be asked to construct the Passport, and to do so in a way that respects and does not violate the individuality of the institutions among which transfer students migrate.

Another design feature of the Passport is that it addresses only lower-division general education (LDGE), both because this is the most consistent offering across all institutions and it is the base upon which any academic program is built. The reasonable prediction is that all institutions will have very similar expectations of the intellectual growth achieved by students who have completed LDGE, and that transfer students will be able to apply their completed LDGE from any institution to their continuing academic work at any other institution to which they transfer. But the Passport, though it addresses only LDGE expectations, does so with a structure and process that places no constraints on the unique methods different institutions
and faculties use to deliver LDGE.

The Passport takes advantage of the accomplishments of the American Association of Colleges and Universities that produced and vetted the Essential Learning Outcomes (ELOs) of the Liberal Education and America’s Promise (LEAP) initiative – broad statements of the knowledge and skills that students should gain as they prepare for the challenges of the 21st century. The Passport determined what combination of the LEAP ELOs are the knowledge of concept/skill areas that best describe LDGE at a large number of institutions.

Creating the Passport Framework

Work on developing the Passport framework of learning outcomes and proficiency criteria was conducted over a five-year period, beginning in fall 2011 through spring 2016. Grants from the Carnegie Corporation of New York, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and Lumina Foundation supported the activities of the states and institutions that volunteered to participate in the project. Each state has appointed a Passport State Facilitator (PSF) (Figure 1) who coordinates the work of his/her state’s faculty, registrars, institutional researchers, student academic advisors and marketing representatives in Passport activities, both intrastate and interstate.

Figure 1: Passport States and Passport State Facilitators
To begin developing the framework, the PSFs reviewed the lower-division general education content/skill areas already in place in the participating institutions in their states. They mapped these campuses’ learning outcomes to the LEAP Essential Learning Outcomes (ELOs), and then compared their results to find commonalities across the seven states to arrive at the Knowledge of Concepts and Crosscutting Skills (Figure 2). Once the PSFs agreed on these Phase II areas, they developed descriptions of each content and skill area (see pages 5-7). These descriptions provide a foundation and guideline to be used in producing Passport Learning Outcomes (PLOs) and Transfer-Level Proficiency Criteria (PC) for each area. Consistent with the principles that guide construction of the Passport, it is the faculty who own the curriculum, who are provided the opportunity and who have the responsibility for creating the Passport Phase II PLOs and PC using these descriptions as the starting point.
## Association of American Colleges and Universities

*Liberal Education and America’s Promise*

**General Education Essential Learning Outcomes**

Beginning in school, and continuing at successively higher levels across their college studies, students should prepare for twenty-first century challenges by gaining:

### Passport Learning Outcomes

**GENERAL EDUCATION**

#### Upper Division Requirements

- Knowledge of Human Cultures & the Physical & Natural World
  - Through study in the sciences and mathematics, social sciences, humanities, histories, languages, and the arts;
  - Focused by engagement with big questions, both contemporary and enduring.

- Intellectual and Practical Skills, including
  - Inquiry and analysis
  - Critical and creative thinking
  - Written and oral communication
  - Quantitative literacy
  - Information literacy
  - Teamwork and problem solving
  - Practiced extensively, across the curriculum, in the context of progressively more challenging problems, projects, and standards for performance.

- Personal and Social Responsibility
  - Civic knowledge and engagement – local and global
  - Intercultural knowledge and competence
  - Ethical reasoning and action
  - Foundations and skills for lifelong learning
  - Anchored through active involvement with diverse communities and real-world challenges.

- Integrative and Applied Learning
  - Synthesis and advanced accomplishment across general and specialized studies
  - Demonstrated through the application of knowledge, skills, and responsibilities to new settings and complex problems.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Foundational Skills in:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Oral Communication</td>
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<td>• Written Communication</td>
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<td>• Quantitative Literacy</td>
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<th>Knowledge of Concepts in:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Natural Sciences</td>
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<td>• Human Cultures</td>
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<td>• Human Society and the Individual</td>
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<td>• Creative Expression</td>
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<th>Crosscutting Skills in:</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Critical Thinking (information literacy; inquiry and analysis and problem solving)</td>
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<td>• Teamwork and Value Systems</td>
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*Figure 2: LEAP Essential Learning Outcomes and Passport Phase II Knowledge of Concepts and Crosscutting Skill Areas*
The Passport is a new framework for block transfer of lower-division general education based on learning outcomes and transfer-level proficiency criteria. The framework contains nine knowledge and skill areas that map to the LEAP Essential Learning Outcomes developed by the Association of American Colleges and Universities. The Passport, with its focus on the quality and coherence of the learning experience in lower-division general education across institutions, provides students with an early milestone on their path to a credential. As such, the Passport Learning Outcomes nest within the Degree Qualifications Profile (DQP), which provides a set of reference points for what a student should know and be able to do upon completion of associate, bachelor’s, and master’s degrees in any field of study. The Passport, like the other initiative, uses a tuning-like process from the Tuning USA project to reach consensus among faculty from institutions in multiple states on the Passport Learning Outcomes and Transfer-Level Proficiency Criteria. This work is being conducted in two phases.

### FOUNDATIONAL SKILLS IN...

- **Oral Communication**

  Proficiency in oral communication requires the development not just of the ability to prepare a well-organized argument that is grounded in credible information and effectively delivered, but development of the ability to hear, accurately summarize and evaluate oral presentations by others.

  **Relationship to Institutions’ Passport Block:** An introductory speech course or equivalent demonstration of speech proficiency is required.

- **Written Communication**

  Proficiency at writing is imparted by at least one formal writing course that includes the use of sources, writing process knowledge, convention and mechanics, self-assessment and reflection. This area further includes at least an introduction to analysis of the content of others’ writings, critical thinking about that content, and logical reasoning in addressing that content in an appropriate context.

  **Relationship to Institutions’ Passport Block:** An introductory writing course or equivalent demonstration of writing proficiency is required, with an expectation that students have opportunities to write as part of other lower-division courses.

- **Quantitative Literacy**

  Quantitative literacy requires comfort and capability with fundamental quantitative methods, and incorporation of quantitative concepts into the student’s worldview so the student does not hesitate to apply quantitative skills in any appropriate context. Specific quantitative skills that must be addressed are mathematical process, computational skills, formulation of quantitative arguments, analysis of quantitative arguments, communication of quantitative arguments, and quantitative models.

  **Relationship to Institutions’ Passport Block:** A course in mathematics or equivalent demonstration of quantitative literacy is required.
INTERSTATE PASSPORT
Lower-Division General Education
KNOWLEDGE AND SKILL AREAS

KNOWLEDGE OF CONCEPTS IN...

- **Natural Sciences**

Proficiency in the natural sciences entails exploration and comprehension of the universe that requires an informed understanding of the scientific method and its scope, and its application in conducting research to gather and subject empirical evidence to quantitative analysis. Proficiency also demands understanding and appreciation of the requirement that all applicable evidence must be integrated into scientific models of the universe, and that scientific models must evolve.

*Relationship to Institutions’ Passport Block:* This area includes disciplines such as astronomy, biology, chemistry, geology, physics, and others.

- **Human Cultures**

Proficiency in evolving human cultures increases student knowledge and appreciation of the human condition in different cultures in relation to each other and of cultural diversity and/or cultural evolution over time. Subject matter may include study of the similarities and differences among cultures including cultural values, traditions, beliefs, and customs, as well as the range of cultural achievements and human conditions through time.

*Relationship to institutions’ Passport Block:* This area includes disciplines such as history, anthropology, archaeology, political science, geography, ethnic studies, gender studies, languages, and others.

- **Creative Expression**

Interpretive and creative expression of the potential and limits of the human condition relies on critical analysis of specific texts or works to support its claims.

*Relationship to institutions’ Passport Block:* This area includes disciplines such as music, visual arts, design, theater, film, media, literature, architecture, and others.

- **Human Society and the Individual**

Human society and the individual explores human behavior in social settings through scientific inquiry within the context of value systems, institutions, economic structures, social groups and/or environments.

*Relationship to institutions’ Passport Block:* This area includes social science disciplines such as sociology, geography, history, criminology, psychology, economics, and others.
CROSSCUTTING SKILLS IN...

• Critical Thinking

Critical thinking is a cross-disciplinary process based on information literacy that uses inquiry and analysis and leads to problem solving. Critical thinking is also a habit of mind characterized by the comprehensive exploration of issues, ideas, artifacts, and events before accepting or formulating a judgment or conclusion. Critical thinkers deeply reflect on the process and each of the steps below and return to each step as necessary.

_Relationship to institutions’ Passport Block:_ This area may be addressed by a single course or in multiple courses across the lower-division general education curriculum. Options may include science, quantitative literacy, economics, computer science, sociology, philosophy, history, literature and others.

• Teamwork and Value Systems

_Teamwork_ is collaborating towards a common purpose through shared responsibility and mutual accountability, while maintaining positive relationships. _Value Systems_ are a coherent set of ethical standards adopted and/or evolved by a team as a standard to guide its behavior. Teamwork and Value Systems may be embedded in any of the content areas or across multiple courses in the institution’s Passport Block.

References:
The Interstate Passport: [www.wiche.edu/passport](http://www.wiche.edu/passport)
LEAP Essential Learning Outcomes: [https://www.aacu.org/leap/essential-learning-outcomes](https://www.aacu.org/leap/essential-learning-outcomes)
Degree Qualifications Profile: [http://degreeprofile.org/](http://degreeprofile.org/)
Tuning USA: [http://tuningusa.org/](http://tuningusa.org/)
Creating the Passport: The Role of Faculty

The role of faculty is central to the development of the Passport. Faculty at each institution own the curriculum in their respective areas, so only faculty members from Passport institutions produce the PLOs and Transfer-Level Proficiency Criteria for their respective areas. In the first phase of the project (October 2011-April 2014), faculty from institutions across five states collaborated on the development of the PLOs and transfer-level proficiency criteria in three Foundational Skill areas: written communication, oral communication, and quantitative literacy. In the next phase (October 2014-April 2016), faculty at institutions in the original five states plus two more developed the PLOs and PC for six knowledge of concepts and crosscutting skill areas to complete the lower-division general education Passport. The project relies heavily on the knowledge, expertise and experience of faculty to identify each state’s learning outcomes, and to then negotiate with faculty from other Passport institutions to develop the Passport Learning Outcomes. The process for producing both PLOs and PC is diagrammed in Figure 3 below.

The process is initiated by the PSF in each state, who selects faculty members at the state’s participating two- and four-year institutions with expertise in the knowledge of concepts, foundational or crosscutting skill areas. Ultimately faculty participants from all of the Passport institutions collaborate to produce the Passport Learning Outcomes for each area and, using the PLOs as a foundation, develop the transfer-level proficiency criteria for each PLO. The faculty teams responsible for each knowledge or skill area work independent of the faculty responsible for the other areas.
Developing the Passport Learning Outcomes

Figure 3 above illustrates the step-by-step development process. First, each participating institution’s faculty identifies or develops, independent of the other institutions in the state, learning outcomes for their concept/skill area. Faculty from all participating institutions within a single state then convene and negotiate a single set of learning outcomes for their concept/skill area that is acceptable to all participating institutions in the state. The result is the state set or intrastate learning outcomes for the specific concept or skill area.

For each concept/skill area, one faculty representative of each state’s participating two-year institutions and one faculty representative from the state’s participating four-year institutions
bring their intrastate learning outcomes to the Interstate Passport Negotiation meeting held at WICHE. These representatives from all states form the interstate PLO team. Their task is to compare the state sets of learning outcomes, look for commonalities, discuss differences, and draft a common set of Passport Learning outcomes. Figure 4 below illustrates this process during the negotiation of the oral communication PLOs in Passport Phase I.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NORTH DAKOTA</th>
<th>UTAH</th>
<th>OREGON</th>
<th>HAWAII</th>
<th>CALIFORNIA</th>
<th>NEGOTIATED PASSPORT OUTCOMES DRAFT</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Demonstrate written, oral, and visual communication skills, information literacy, and technological skills.</td>
<td>1. Demonstrate critical and analytical thinking in oral presentation.</td>
<td>1. Engage in written communication processes that accomplish goals.</td>
<td>1. Gather information appropriately and communicate clearly both orally and in writing.</td>
<td>1. Develop a central message and supporting details by applying critical thinking and information literacy skills.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Think, speak, and write effectively.</td>
<td>2. Analyze a target audience and occasion and apply that analysis to his/her presentation.</td>
<td>2. Respond to the needs of diverse audiences and contexts.</td>
<td>2. Identify &amp; analyze the audience and purpose of any intended communication.</td>
<td>2. Demonstrate performance skills that include organizing and delivering content for a particular audience, occasion and purpose.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Speak effectively in a variety of contexts and modes, using a variety of communication skills.</td>
<td>3. Effectively marshal evidence providing support and insight as part of the oral communication.</td>
<td>3. Skill Area (Content):</td>
<td>3. Gather, evaluate, select, and organize information for the communication.</td>
<td>3. Monitor and adjust for audience feedback.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Speak in civic, academic, and professional settings with a sense of purpose and audience.</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Determine purpose</td>
<td>4. Use language, techniques, &amp; strategies appropriate to the audience &amp; occasion.</td>
<td>4. Listen and critically evaluate the speaker’s central message and use of supporting materials.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Communicate skilfully involving learning the conventions associated with speaking and learning.</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Organize content</td>
<td>5. Summarize, analyze, &amp; evaluate oral communications &amp; ask coherent questions as needed.</td>
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Figure 4: Multi-state Negotiation of Phase I Oral Communication Learning Outcomes

At the conclusion of the initial interstate negotiation meeting, a chair is appointed for each concept/skill area team. All team members then return to their states to solicit feedback on the draft PLOs from institution colleagues. Each team reconvenes via a series of conference calls to share feedback on the draft PLOs, makes modifications, further revises and fine-tunes in an iterative fashion until a final set of PLOs is written that is acceptable to participating institutions in all states. This final set becomes the Passport Learning Outcomes for the specific concept/skill area (Figure 3, row 5).

By participating in this process, each institution agrees that the final Passport Learning Outcomes in each concept/skill area is consistent with the institution’s expectations for students who have completed LDGE. No institution is asked to adopt the PLOs; rather, they are asked only to ensure that their own institutional or programmatic LDGE learning outcomes for each knowledge of concepts, foundational and crosscutting skill area are consistent with and not in conflict with the Passport Learning Outcomes.
Developing the Transfer-Level Proficiency Criteria

The Passport Learning Outcomes communicate what a student should know and be able to do, but they do not provide indicators of the ways students can demonstrate the level of proficiency necessary for transfer. The Passport Transfer-Level Proficiency Criteria provide a list of these demonstrations. Developed by faculty, they are intended to serve as a guide to faculty whose responsibility is to determine the best ways for students to demonstrate proficiency for transfer. Teams of subject matter experts in each concept and skill area use the PLOs as the basis to develop institution-level proficiency criteria, which are not to be used for student grading, but rather in evaluating and discussing student learning among Passport member institutions.

The role of these criteria is to clarify understandings among faculty what it means for a student to have completed the lower-division general education requirements in each Passport concept and skill area, and thus be prepared to transfer to and be successful at any Passport institution to which he or she is admitted. Because the Passport addresses only lower-division general education, the criteria do not supersede expectations of student readiness for particular majors, and a Passport should not be viewed as readiness to enter any particular degree program. For example, the level of preparation in quantitative literacy required for admission to an engineering program differs from that required for admission to a music program. Instead, the Passport Proficiency Criteria specify a general readiness level in each Passport concept/skill area that faculty from institutions in participating states have agreed should be expected of all students regardless of their chosen field of study. In addition, no student is expected to demonstrate all of the criteria in a particular area, nor is the list totally inclusive.

Guiding Principles for Developing Transfer-Level Proficiency Criteria

- Proficiency criteria answer the question: How do your students show they are proficient with a specific learning outcome?
- Proficiency criteria are what students do.
- Proficiency criteria are observable.
- Proficiency criteria are assessable.
- Proficiency criteria communicate among faculty at different institutions ways that students are demonstrating achievement of Passport Learning Outcomes.

In the Passport, the proficiency criteria (PC) are statements by faculty at Passport institutions of the demonstrations of proficiency with the Passport Learning Outcomes (PLOs) that are used NOW, demonstrations by students that show their proficiency with each PLO. The PC, therefore, serve as a communication tool among faculty at all Passport institutions and establish an understanding of the academic experiences of Passport students who transfer into their institution.
The sole purpose of writing PC is to communicate clearly and truthfully with faculty peers. It is not to persuade or mandate or reform or coerce or serve as a precursor to evaluation. The list of proficiency criteria contains at least one example for each PLO, and the items in the list are drawn from faculty members’ own teaching experiences, not from an external source (e.g., not from the VALUE rubrics or DQP). If faculty do not use a proficiency criterion – an assignment, activity, task or learning experience – it should not be submitted.

To develop the PC, faculty repeat the same process used to develop the PLOs: an intrastate team—which may include the same PLO faculty members or others—in each concept/skill area assembles a list of proficiency criteria that becomes the state set. Two- and four-year faculty representatives from each state, with appropriate knowledge and expertise in the concept/skill areas, participate in the multi-state negotiation meeting. The PC teams compare the state sets of proficiency criteria and look for commonalities, discuss differences, and draft a common interstate set of proficiency criteria. Faculty representatives return to their states to vet the draft PC with colleagues, and then share feedback via a series of conference calls. This process ultimately produces the transfer-level proficiency criteria for each Passport Learning Outcome in each Phase II concept/skill area. No student is expected to demonstrate all of the criteria in a particular area, nor is the list totally inclusive.

The Passport transfer template shown below has been designed to indicate the relationship between the Passport Learning Outcomes and Transfer-Level Proficiency Criteria developed from the PLOs. The Passport proficiency criteria state the level of student proficiency with the PLOs, which supports a judgment of “competent at the transfer level.” The key to awarding a Passport rests in the quality of the assurance that a particular student can actually perform at the level described by the proficiency criteria.

Statement preceding proficiency criteria for each of the nine Passport knowledge and skill areas:

Students demonstrate proficiency through successful completion of course assignments and exercises such as the ones below. These are examples of proficiency criteria only, not requirements. Sample activities come from different disciplines, may span multiple learning outcomes, and cover a range of formats (written, oral, visual, performative, individual, group). Proficiency may also be demonstrated in a language other than English.
Presented below are useful suggestions\(^1\) for how to go about writing proficiency.

**Trust the Process**
- Trust faculty
- Good Teaching is local
- Good assessment is local
- Quality learning is transferable
- Assurance comes through tracking

**Seven Blind Alleys**
- Looking elsewhere
- Begging the question
- Decontextualizing the PC
- Bending the Passport template
- All that glitters is not gold
- Just like me

---

• Holding back

Looking Elsewhere
• DQP
• VALUE Rubrics
• → Lived Professional Experience

Begging the Question
• Saving more or less the same thing in the PC that you said in the PLO
• PLO: Express quantitative information symbolically, graphically, and in writing
• PC: Create graphs which express quantitative information visually
• Actual PC (from a set): States the conclusion to a significance test and writes and explanation of the rationale for the conclusion.

Bending the Passport Template
• Rewriting the PLOs
• Adding another variable or two
• Searching for a better way
• Going back to the beginning

All that Glitters is Not Gold
• Assignments that wow and sizzle
• Assignments that nobody gives
• Assignments that would work in a perfect world

Just Like Me
• My faculty would never do that...
• My school requires two courses for this...
• We fought long and hard for this requirement, I need to see it in the PC...
• My school is famous for this or that; I have to get it into this document everywhere I can...

Holding Back
• Everybody is going to know I use multiple-choice tests...
• I don’t understand how that assignment reaches the learning outcome, but I don’t want to look stupid...
• I’m going to keep quiet until I see what the other faculty are going to bring to the table....

Good Proficiency Criteria Are...
• Assessable
• Appropriate for lower-division GE
• Legitimate
• Representative
• Clearly connected to the learning outcome
• Currently being used.
Defining and Constructing the Passport Block

Once the PLOs and PC have been agreed upon for a particular concept/skill area, faculty members at each Passport institution independently determine the courses and learning experiences used at their institution for students to attain proficiency with the all of the PLOs. These learning experiences constitute the institution’s Passport Block. These experiences may be courses as well as other learning opportunities. In some cases, the relevant educational experience may be restricted to only one particular course; in others, to more than one course, or several alternative courses or combinations of courses.

The Passport Block is constructed by faculty compiling learning experiences that align with the PLOs just as they would compile the learning experiences that constitute the institution’s General Education program, academic minor, academic major or any other program at the institution. The essential consideration is that the total of the learning experiences in the Passport Block must address all of the PLOs in the nine knowledge/skills areas. Passport institutions do not unpack other institutions’ Passport Blocks, and Passport transfer students are not required to repeat any learning experiences in a receiving institution’s Passport Block in order to complete the LDGE requirements at the receiving institution. Figure 6 below illustrates the Passport Block-Phase I for one institution.

PASSPORT BLOCK – Foundational Skills

Uniquely Defined by Faculty at Each Passport Institution

EXAMPLE: North Dakota State University

☐ ORAL COMMUNICATION
  ▪ COMM 110 Fundamentals of Public Speaking

☐ WRITTEN COMMUNICATION
  Two courses from the following:
  ▪ ENGL 110 College Composition I OR
  ▪ ENGL 111 Honors Composition I OR
  ▪ ENGL 112 ESL College Composition AND ENGL 120 College Comp II OR
  ▪ ENGL 121 Honors Composition II OR
  ▪ ENGL 122 ESL College Composition II

☐ QUANTITATIVE LITERACY
  One course from the following:
  ▪ Math 103 College Algebra OR
  ▪ Math 104 Finite Mathematics OR
  ▪ Math 146 Applied Calculus I OR
  ▪ Math 165 Calculus I OR
  ▪ STAT 330 Introductory Statistics

Figure 6: Example of One Institution’s Passport Block
The steps for constructing a Passport Block that addresses each of the PLOs are presented below:

1. Identify faculty with experience and expertise at the LDGE level for each of the Passport Knowledge/Skills areas.

2. Provide these faculty with the PLOs for their Passport area and opportunities to consider the PLOs.

3. Faculty members identify learning experiences that provide the opportunities for students to become proficient at the transfer level with all of the PLOs in their area. These experiences may include:
   a. A single course or one of several courses that cover all PLOs in the area
   b. A combination of courses, or combinations of courses, that are needed to cover all the area’s PLOs
   c. Prior learning experiences, life experiences, an exam or certification that demonstrates transfer level proficiency with all of the PLOs in the area.
   d. Any other combination of learning experiences that, taken together, cover all the PLOs in the area.

4. Compile the results of step 3 into a list of learning experiences for the particular knowledge/skill area. A sample of a worksheet that might be used for steps 3 and 4 is provided for Critical Thinking skill area on pages 16-18. Faculty would complete the last column, “Courses/Learning Experiences that Address the PLO and/or Have Assignments Analogous to the PC.”

4. Compare the learning experience lists for all of the knowledge/skills areas to eliminate repeated listing of any learning experiences that appear in more than one area.

5. The completed Passport Block is to be posted on the Passport institution's profile page on the Passport web site. Posting the Block and making changes to it will be accessible through the online Passport application, available in April 2016 from the main Passport website (www.wiche.edu/Passport).

Because the Passport is based on a consensus set of Passport Learning Outcomes, there is no need for Passport institutions to be directly advised of changes to the Passport Block by other Passport institutions. All Passport institutions’ current Passport Blocks will always be posted on the Passport website.

Once a student completes the courses/learning opportunities in the institution’s Passport Block (earning a grade of C or equivalent in each course), he earns a Passport. If he transfers to another Passport institution, his learning will be recognized: he will not be required to take any courses in the receiving institution’s Passport Block to meet lower-division general education requirements, even if the list of courses and the number of credits differ from his sending
Receiving institutions may require Passport students to complete courses in addition to the Passport Block in cases where those courses are prerequisites for graduation, or entry into or continuation in a particular major.

Since learning outcomes become the currency for transfer and articulation (rather than course-by-course articulation), faculty have the freedom to make lower-division general education curricular modifications that change their Passport Block without triggering an articulation review, as long as they continue to address the PLOs at transfer-level proficiency. This block transfer system based on learning outcomes is also more user-friendly for students: they know in advance of transfer that their learning will be recognized regardless of differences in course titles and credits.
## SAMPLE PASSPORT BLOCK
### WRITTEN COMMUNICATION AT SEVERAL INSTITUTIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>Passport Learning Outcomes (PLOs) (WHAT the student is expected to learn or be able to do)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rhetorical Knowledge</td>
<td>Demonstrate rhetorical knowledge: address issues of audience, purpose, genre, syntax, and structure appropriate to the task.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of Sources</td>
<td>Evaluate, apply, and ethically synthesize sources in support of a claim, following an appropriate documentation system.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing Process Knowledge</td>
<td>Develop flexible strategies for generating, revising, editing, and proofreading, while making use of written and oral feedback.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conventions and Mechanics:</td>
<td>Demonstrate mastery of conventions, including spelling, punctuation, grammar, mechanics, format, and documentation style appropriate to the writing task.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Assessment and Reflection</td>
<td>Reflect on one’s inquiry and composing processes to critique and improve one’s own and others’ writing.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Institution or State System

#### Written Communication Part of the Institution or State System Passport Block

Proficiency with the PLOs at the lower-division general education level is achieved by earning a “C” or equivalent in these courses.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution or State System</th>
<th>Written Communication Part of the Institution or State System Passport Block</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HAWAII</td>
<td>Leeward Community College ENG 100 OR ENG 100E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NORTH DAKOTA</td>
<td>North Dakota State University Two courses from the following: ENGL 110 College Composition I OR ENGL 111 Honors Composition I And ENGL 120 College Composition II OR ENGL 121 Honors Composition II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lake Region State College Two courses from the following: ENGL 110 College Composition I OR ENGL 111 Honors Composition I And ENGL 120 College Composition II OR ENGL 121 Honors Composition II OR ENGL125 Intro to Professional Writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ND State College of Science and Valley City State University Two courses from the following: ENGL 110 College Composition I ENGL 120 College Composition II ENGL 125 Intro To Professional Writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OREGON</td>
<td>Blue Mountain Community College WR 122 English Composition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UTAH</td>
<td>All institutions Writing 1010</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SAMPLE WORKSHEET
Passport Block Construction
Crosscutting Skill in Critical Thinking

Critical thinking is a cross-disciplinary process based on information literacy that uses inquiry and analysis and leads to problem solving. Critical thinking is also a habit of mind characterized by the comprehensive exploration of issues, ideas, artifacts, and events before accepting or formulating a judgment or conclusion. Critical thinkers deeply reflect on the process and each of the steps below and return to each step as necessary.

*Relationship to institutions’ Passport Block:* This area may be addressed by a single course or in multiple courses across the lower-division general education curriculum.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CRITICAL THINKING</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Features</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problem Setting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recognize Assumptions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Context</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reasoning/Conclusion</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*NOTE:* Worksheets and a summary worksheet for all Passport knowledge and skill areas can be downloaded from the Passport website at [http://www.wiche.edu/files/info/Passport%20Block%20WORKSHEETS_0.pdf](http://www.wiche.edu/files/info/Passport%20Block%20WORKSHEETS_0.pdf)
Tracking Student Academic Progress

When the faculty members at Passport institutions agree on the PLOs, they trust the faculty at every other Passport institution to impart transfer-level proficiency with the PLOs to their Passport students. With this acknowledgement of trust it can be assumed that any Passport student should be able to use the academic achievement of his/her Passport Block to continue academic work at a performance level that meets that of non-Passport transfer students, and those students who started postsecondary education at the receiving Passport institution. The Passport structure monitors this assumption by tracking the academic progress of Passport transfer students relative to non-Passport transfer students and “native” students for the two terms immediately after the Passport student transfers.

Institutions participating in the Passport have agreed to send aggregate data annually to the Passport’s Central Data Repository (CDR), currently managed by Utah State University. The data represent the academic progress of transfer students with and without a Passport compared to the institution’s native students. The CDR sorts the data and delivers reports to each sending institution about the performance of its former students across the participating institutions for use in continuous improvement efforts. The CDR also provides a composite report to the Passport Review Board so that it can evaluate the overall effectiveness of the Passport.

Beginning in 2016 the Passport data collection and academic tracking process will transition from the CDR to the National Student Clearinghouse (NSC). Data reporting will be simplified for Passport institutions by leveraging the data infrastructure, system management and controls of the NSC – the nation’s leading provider of educational reporting, data exchange, verification, and research services. More than 3,600 colleges and universities participate in the Clearinghouse, reporting enrollment and degree information regularly throughout the year. NSC is conducting a pilot project with 17 Passport institutions to develop the specifications to fully automate Passport data collection and academic tracking. Passport institutions will upload Passport student data via secure FTP accounts three times per year. The pilot project will also create the Passport Verify service – similar to the Degree Verify service currently offered to all NSC participating institutions – in which Passport institutions can query the Clearinghouse to find out if an incoming transfer student has earned the Passport. The fully automated reporting structure offered by NSC will simplify the process for Passport registrars and institutional researchers. And like the CDR, the Clearinghouse will produce and deliver reports to the sending institutions about the performance of their former students, and deliver a composite report to the Passport Review Board.
Application for Passport Status and Memorandum of Agreement

Once institutions have taken the steps to define their Passport Block, they work with their PSF to apply for Passport Status. The application requires that institutions agree to all of the terms of the Passport Memorandum of Agreement, which has a five-year renewable term. The MOA requires faculty mapping to the PLOs, defining the Passport Block, noting student achievement of the Passport on the student record, and participating in the tracking process.

The Role of the Passport Review Board

The Passport Review Board (PRB) is the policy making body of the initiative. Its members include the PSFs, who serve ongoing terms, and other higher education experts who serve two-year renewable terms. The Board is responsible for defining all policies and procedures related to awarding Passport status, reviewing and approving all applications, and monitoring performance of the Passport program based on the composite reports provided by the CDR/NSC. At its annual meeting, the PSFs relate any concerns from faculty in the respective states and the PRB determines appropriate action including reconvening faculty teams to revise and/or expand PLOs and transfer-level proficiency criteria in one or more concept/skill areas. To see a list of those currently serving on the PRB, see www.wiche.edu/passport/about/PRB.

Expanding the Geographic Reach of the Passport

In the 1950s the U.S. Congress established four regional compacts to facilitate resource sharing among the higher education institutions and entities. These include the New England Board of Higher Education (NEBHE), the Midwestern Higher Education Compact (MHEC), the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB), and the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (see Fig. 8). Although the Passport originated in the WICHE region, students transfer to institutions in states outside the region. Thus, the Passport is designed to expand to a nationwide system. More than 25 new institutions in six states – in both the WICHE region and in the other compacts – will come aboard during 2015-2016 to begin the work of mapping institution LDGE learning outcomes to the PLOs, and constructing Passport Blocks. Participation in the Passport will be open to all regionally accredited institutions nationwide that meet its requirements.
Figure 7: Higher Education Regional Compacts in the United States
First in the World

Expansion and refinement of the Passport will continue through 2018 with the award of a First in the World (FITW) grant from the U. S. Department of Education Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education. The FITW funds will support four key components:

1. A more robust and automated national data collection and student tracking infrastructure for the Passport, in partnership with the National Student Clearinghouse;
2. A robust marketing campaign that builds awareness of the benefits of participating in the Passport program including webinars for key stakeholders in the higher education community, targeting faculty, registrars and institutional researchers, advisors and marketing specialists;
3. An examination by faculty at partner institutions of how and what types of evidence are being used to determine the lower-division general education competencies, which will expand faculty understanding and choices of critical assignments in designated courses; and
4. An evaluation by The School of Management and Labor Relations' Education and Employment Research Center at Rutgers University of the commonalities and unique challenges of:
   a. Integrating the Passport into institutions’ transfer policies and procedures,
   b. The processes of ensuring quality and external validity for the new learning outcomes,
   c. The impact of the Passport on transfer student retention and completion, especially for low-income students.
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www.wiche.edu/Passport