



STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT (SLOA)

BOARD OF TRUSTEES REPORT – OCTOBER 2024

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OVERVIEW

Hagerstown Community College (HCC) is a learner-centered, accessible, lifelong learning institution dedicated to student and community success. As a Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE) accredited institution, the College is committed to making learning its central focus and ensuring the quality and continuous improvement of learning.

Hagerstown Community College is committed to implementing a college-wide Student Learning Outcomes Assessment (SLOA) plan that will produce clear evidence of student learning. Student learning outcomes assessment (SLOA) takes place at three levels: institution, program, and course. The [Institutional Learning Outcomes](#), which align with the institution's current mission statement, have been formally adopted by Hagerstown Community College through a process that included endorsement by the Faculty Assembly and approval by the Board of Trustees ([Policy # 4001](#)). Program and course outcomes are developed and assessed with one or more of the ILOs as an overarching guide.

ACADEMIC YEAR 2023-2024 INSTITUTIONAL LEARNING OUTCOMES (ACADEMIC PROGRAMS)

Assessment of student learning at all three levels (institution, program, and course) is essential to identify strengths and challenges and ensure that the College remains true to its goal of providing a well-rounded and high-quality education. Higher education must continually adapt to the evolving world and the unique experiences of each new generation of students. Frequent, thorough, and accurate assessments enable the College to identify trends, anticipate changes, and ensure that it continues to meet the evolving needs of students. This proactive approach is essential for maintaining the College's accreditation and reputation.

INSTITUTIONAL LEARNING OUTCOMES

Two Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILO) are assessed per year, and each ILO is assessed once every three years according to a determined timeline. Courses and program outcomes are assessed on a cycle guided by the ILOs and curriculum maps.

for each program. During the 2023-2024 academic year, ILOs #1 (Responsibility) and #5 (Information Literacy and Technology) were assessed.

ILO#1. Responsibility. Exhibit personal and social responsibility by practicing self-direction, persistence, lifelong learning, and responsible citizenship.

- A. Work collaboratively and respectfully as members of diverse teams and communities;
- B. Utilize resources to sustain and improve personal well-being;
- C. Evaluate the impact of an individual's actions on the natural and human world;
- D. Pursue educational interests beyond the classroom;
- E. Engage in self-assessment and/or reflection strategies;
- F. Promote the quality of life in a community through political or non-political processes; and
- G. Set personal and professional goals and establish a plan of action to attain those goals.

ILO#5. Information Literacy and Technology. Apply the research process to access information and use technology to analyze, evaluate, synthesize, and use information resourcefully.

- A. Pursue a line of critical inquiry;
- B. Construct information searches strategically;
- C. Identify and evaluate sources suitable for a scholarly or professional conservation;
- D. Recognize that information has social and scholarly value;
- E. Critically evaluate the credibility of information and its sources;
- F. Integrate use of digital resources into learning experiences; and
- G. Use technology to solve problems and validate information.

PROGRAM-LEVEL OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT

Program-level learning outcomes assessment (POG) evaluates how well students are mastering the knowledge and skills expected of graduates from a specific program or area of study. The purpose of an academic program assessment plan is to foster continuous program enhancement through systematic evaluation and analysis. HCC offers a comprehensive suite of educational programs, ranging from associate degrees to certifications and letters of recognition. With 92 programs in total, students have ample opportunities to pursue their academic goals. As a component of the SLOA

process, each academic program has identified at least 3-5 program level outcomes, which are assessed annually according to a cycle established by area leadership and guided by the ILO assessment cycle.

The program-level student learning outcomes assessment (SLOA) process involves identifying program outcomes, selecting appropriate assessment tools, collecting data, reporting results, and using the information to inform program improvements. During the 2023-2024 academic year, a comprehensive review of the SLOA reporting process and documentation was initiated with the goal to identify opportunities for improvement and streamlining the process. As a result, only data was collected on program-level outcomes, eliminating the requirement to complete the POG documentation.

COURSE-LEVEL OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT

Course-level student learning outcome assessments (COG) are used to evaluate whether students have successfully acquired the knowledge, skills, and abilities outlined in the specific course's learning outcomes. All courses have a set number of course-specific outcomes, and general education courses also have additional outcomes. Every course has at least 3 to 5 identified learning outcomes, which are assessed annually according to a cycle determined by area leadership and guided by the ILO assessment cycle.

The course-level student learning outcome assessment (SLOA) process involves identifying course outcomes, selecting appropriate assessment tools, collecting data, reporting results, and using the information to inform course improvements. During the 2023-2024 academic year, a comprehensive review of the SLOA reporting process and documentation was initiated with the goal to identify opportunities for improvement and streamlining the process. As a result, faculty members were required to collect course-level outcomes assessment data only, eliminating the requirement to complete the COG documentation.

GENERAL EDUCATION OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT

In compliance with Middle States Commission on Higher Education standards, the College's general education program/courses provides students with a broad-based education that fosters intellectual growth, cultural awareness, and the ability to make informed judgments. Through a diverse range of courses, students are exposed to new

ideas and perspectives, preparing them for success in their academic pursuits and beyond. There are approximately 98 general education courses available, encompassing the areas of Arts & Humanities (AH), Behavioral & Social Science (BSS), Biological & Physical Science (SC), Diversity Studies (GD), English (EC), and Mathematics (MA). Each area has at least 3 to 5 identified learning outcomes and aligned them with specific general education courses as appropriate. The learning outcomes are assessed annually according to a cycle determined by area leadership and guided by the ILO assessment cycle.

The following General Education Outcomes are aligned with ILO #5 Information Literacy and Technology:

SC3. Develop an understanding of the historical, societal and ethical context of living systems and the physical universe in relation to emerging scientific issues and technologies.

EC3. Demonstrate the use of research strategies to gather information.

MA3. Interpret and analyze numerical data, mathematical concepts, and identify patterns to formulate and validate reasoning.

MA4. Utilize technological tools in order to solve mathematical problems.

Biological/Physical Sciences Outcomes

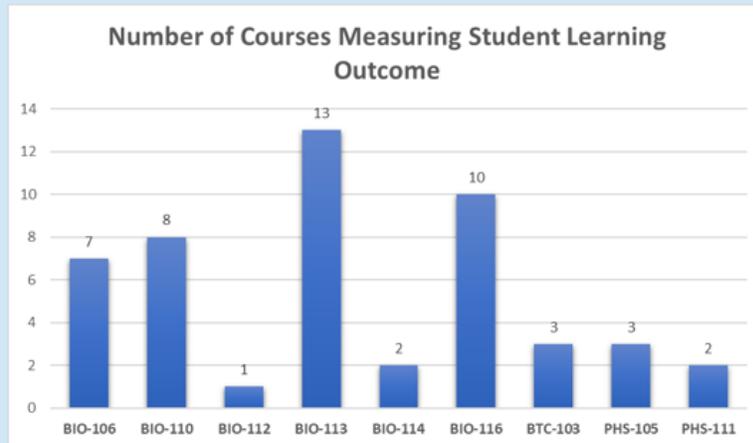
Biology and Physical Sciences courses explore living systems and the physical universe. These courses equip students with an understanding of the various methods for collecting, interpreting, and applying scientific data, as well as the connection between scientific theory and practical applications. The Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR) requires public institutions that award A.A. or A.S. degrees to include a minimum of two general education science courses, with at least one being a laboratory course.

During the 2023-2024 academic year, faculty were only required to gather course-level outcomes assessment data without any formal reporting. As a result, the data presented reflects the number of course sections where data was collected.

The accompanying bar graph shows the number of biological/physical sciences courses offered in the fall and spring semesters that align with the one (1) general education outcome measured during the 2023-2024 academic year. The x-axis indicates the number of sections, while the y-axis represents the courses. The data provided focuses

solely on courses available at the Hagerstown Community College (HCC) campus and excludes any courses offered at Washington County Public Schools (WCPS).

SC3. Develop an understanding of the historical, societal and ethical context of living systems and the physical universe in relation to emerging scientific issues and technologies.



** Data obtained from the Daily Enrollment Reports.*

Course offerings reveal several key scenarios. The courses with the highest number of sections are BIO-113 Principles of Biology I and BIO-116 Human Anatomy and Physiology for Allied Health. Approximately 75% of students enrolled in these courses are not majoring in Biology or Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) fields, but are pursuing General Studies, particularly for nursing and allied health programs. Other courses with multiple sections are BIO-106 Unity and Diversity of Living Things and BIO-110 Human Biology, both designed for non-science majors. It's common for students to take both BIO-110 and BIO-116 to fulfill the Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR) seven-credit general education science requirement for their degrees.

Each course can accommodate 22 to 24 students per section, enabling for a total enrollment potential of 1,078 to 1,176 students across all sections. Data gathered from this enrollment would provide valuable insights into the achievement of the targeted student learning outcomes.

English Outcomes

English Composition General Education courses equip students with the communication skills and knowledge essential for diverse writing contexts, such as academic research and intellectual inquiry. The Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR) requires public

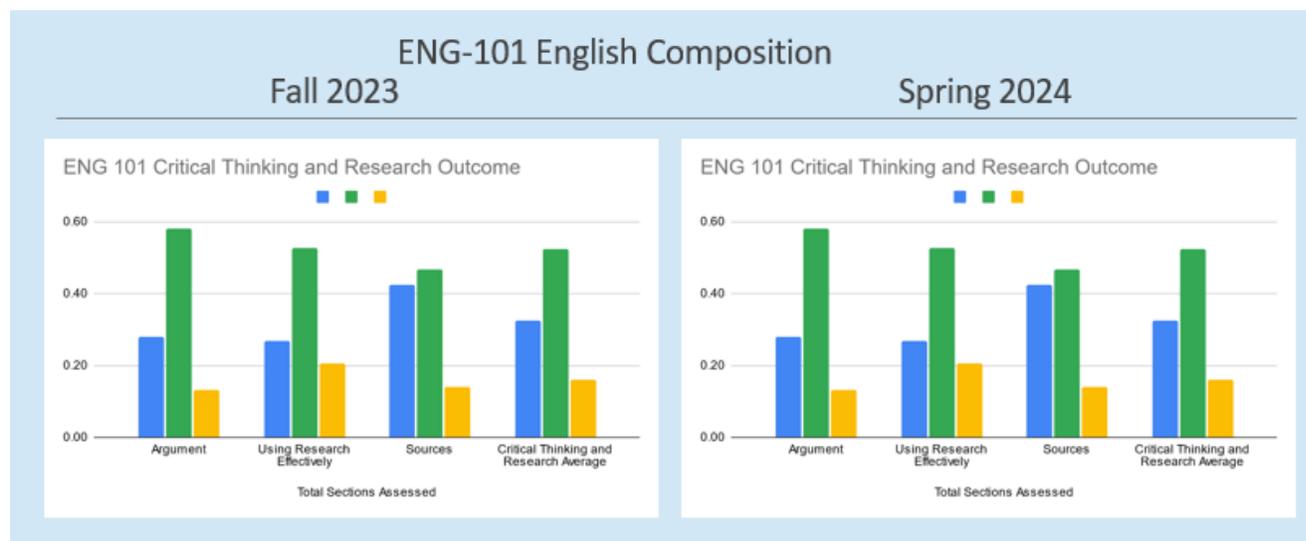
institutions that award A.A. or A.S. degrees to include a minimum of one (1) general education English composition course, completed with a grade of C or better. To assess student achievement of the general education learning outcome related to research strategies (EC3), three (3) courses were identified: ENG-101, ENG-102, and ENG-112.

English Composition (ENG-101) provides instruction that focuses on writing skills, evaluating and explaining ideas, conducting library and Internet research, developing a research composition, and documenting research. Emphasis is placed upon Rhetorical Knowledge, Critical Thinking and Reading, Processes, Conventions, and Confidence and Ownership.

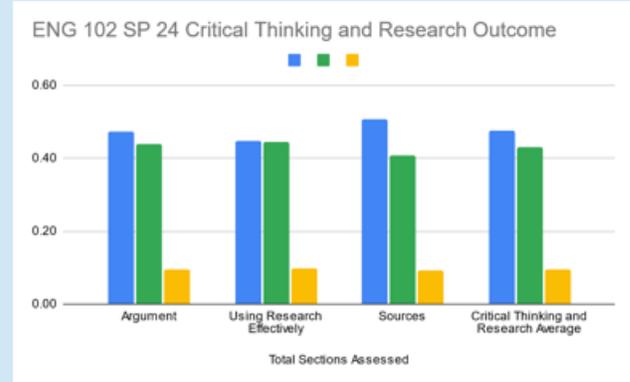
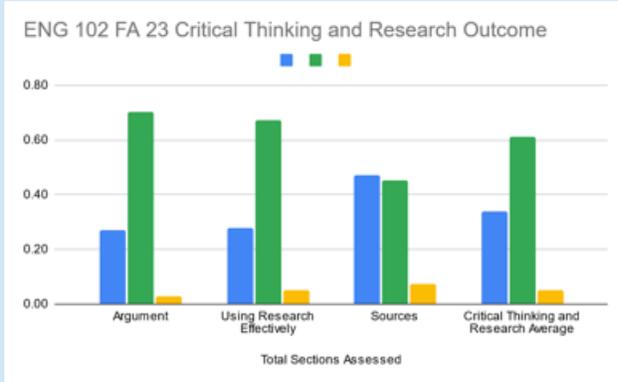
Advance English Composition (ENG-102) continues with the transferable writing skills gained in English Composition (ENG-101) where this pragmatic course refines the writing process after student confidence is established with emphasis placed upon Rhetorical Knowledge, Critical Thinking and Research, Processes, and Conventions.

Technical Writing (ENG-112) in the principles and mechanics of technical writing, enables both undergraduates and those already employed in business and industry to present technical information in an approved manner. This course also provides a general review of English composition.

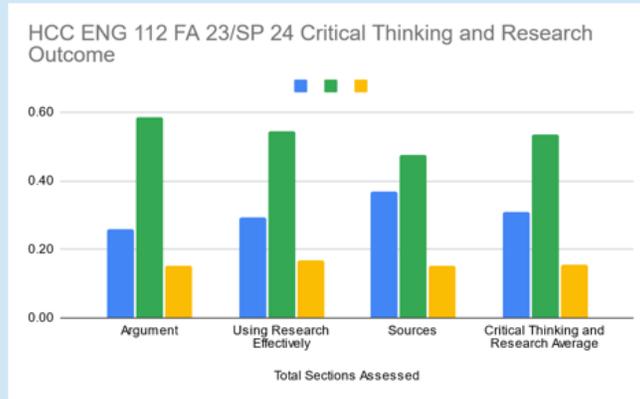
The accompanying bar graphs illustrate the performance of students on the general education learning outcome EC3 during the fall and spring semesters. The x-axis indicates the achievement level (blue: exceeds the outcome, green: meets the outcome, yellow: doesn't meet the outcome), while the y-axis represents the percentage of students achieving each level. The data presented pertains exclusively to HCC students and does not include any students from Washington County Public Schools (WCPS).



ENG-102 Advance English Composition Fall 2023 Spring 2024



ENG-112 Technical Writing Fall 2023 & Spring 2024



** Bar graphs provided by Sean G. Wynkoop, Assistant Professor, English & Speech.*

In the 2023-2024 academic year, there were a total of 79 sections of ENG-101, 28 sections of ENG-102, and 8 sections of ENG-112. The bar graphs present consistent grading practices across all sections of ENG-101, ENG-102, and ENG-112. The data shows that students excel in utilizing sources and exhibit strong skills in argumentation and critical thinking. However, there is a notable need for improvement in their research effectiveness. This suggests that, while students possess a solid foundation in key skills, targeted interventions or additional resources could further enhance their research abilities and overall academic performance.

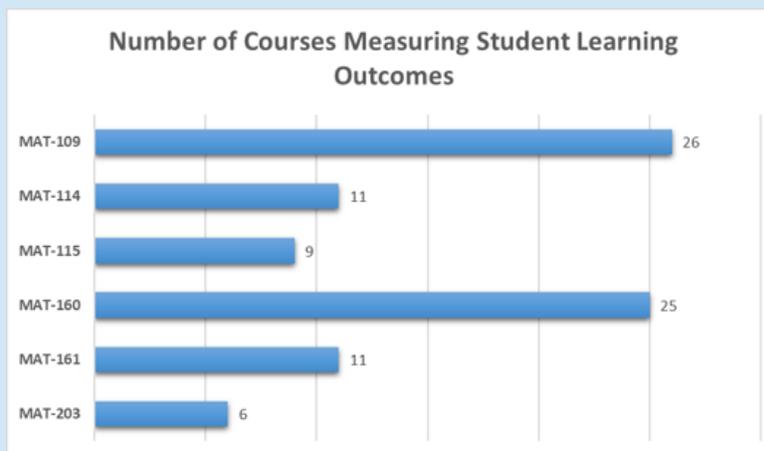
Mathematics Outcomes

Mathematics General Education courses equip students with essential skills in numerical analysis, statistics, and problem-solving. The Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR) requires public institutions that award A.A. or A.S. degrees to include a minimum of one (1) general education mathematics course, having performance expectations demonstrating a level of mathematical maturity beyond the Maryland College and Career Ready Standards in Mathematics. To assess student achievement of the general education learning outcome related to interpretation and analysis of numerical data, mathematical concepts and identification of patterns to formulate and validate reasoning, along with use of technology six (6) courses were identified: MAT-109 Statistics; MAT-114 Introduction to Applied Algebra; MAT-115 Quantitative Reasoning; MAT-160 Precalculus I; MAT-161 Precalculus II; and MAT-203 Calculus.

During the 2023-2024 academic year, faculty were only required to gather course-level outcomes assessment data without any formal reporting. As a result, the data presented reflects the number of course sections where data was collected.

The accompanying bar graph shows the number of mathematics courses offered in the fall and spring semesters that align with the two (2) general education outcomes measured during the 2023-2024 academic year. The x-axis represents the courses, while the y-axis indicates the number of sections available. The data provided focuses solely on courses available at the Hagerstown Community College (HCC) campus and excludes any courses offered at Washington County Public Schools (WCPS).

MA3. Interpret and analyze numerical data, mathematical concepts, and identify patterns to formulate and validate reasoning.
MA4. Utilize technological tools in order to solve mathematical problems.



** Data obtained from the Daily Enrollment Reports.*

During the 2023-2024 academic year, a total of 88 sections of mathematics courses were offered, revealing some noteworthy trends. The most commonly offered courses were MAT-109 Statistics and MAT-160 Precalculus I. Students in the nursing and business programs primarily take MAT-109 to satisfy their general education mathematics requirement. Those enrolled in MAT-160 usually fall into developmental placements or are fulfilling prerequisites for higher-level math courses.

Students enrolling in MAT-114 or MAT-115 often pursue degrees in the Humanities or have encountered challenges in mathematics during their secondary education. In contrast, students in STEM programs typically complete MAT-160, MAT-161, and MAT-203 to fulfill their degree requirements.

Each course can accommodate between 20 and 24 students per section. During the fall and spring semesters, around 1,175 students were enrolled across all sections. This enrollment has the potential to yield valuable data and insights into the achievement of the targeted student learning outcomes.

ACADEMIC YEAR 2023-2024 INSTITUTIONAL LEARNING OUTCOMES (CO-CURRICULAR ACADEMIC UNITS)

The overall goal of Student Learning Outcomes Assessment is to provide definitive proof of learning for each student's academic journey at the College, encompassing both curricular and co-curricular experiences.

William M. Brish Library SLOA

The William M. Brish Library fosters student success by connecting the campus community with essential resources, cultivating critical thinking and information literacy skills, and offering welcoming, accessible spaces both on campus and online. The library assessed ILO#5. Information Literacy and Technology: Apply the research process to access information and use technology to analyze, evaluate, synthesize, and use information resourcefully. The assessment tool utilized to evaluate the achievement with the outcomes of ILO #5 was the Niche Academy Tutorials. Niche Academy is a versatile video tutorial platform that offers interactive courses on information literacy and critical thinking. These courses can be easily integrated into the D2L platform. The library has developed some of these tutorials in-house, while others are shared by various institutions through the Niche Academy platform.

The Niche Academy Tutorials were incorporated into all sections of seven (7) courses (ENG-095, ENG-101, ENG-102, ENG112, PSY-240, RDG-095, SDV-102). Specific tutorials were chosen that directly corresponded to the intended outcome. (The data was provided by

Tutorial Module (Outcome)	Benchmark	# Students	Results
Research Essentials: Authoring Research Questions (<i>Pursue a line of critical inquiry.</i>)	70% will successfully score 100% on quiz.	508	60.8% N=309
Research Essentials: Effective Search Techniques (<i>Construct information searches strategically.</i>)	70% will successfully score 100% on quiz.	422	61.6% N=260
Research Essentials: Finding the Right Sources (<i>Identify and evaluate sources suitable for a scholarly or professional conservation.</i>)	70% will successfully score 100% on quiz.	506	58.6% N=297
Plagiarism (<i>Recognize that information has social and scholarly value.</i>)	70% will successfully score 100% on quiz.	541	82.6% N=480
Research Essentials: Paraphrasing & Summarizing (<i>Recognize that information has social and scholarly value.</i>)	70% will successfully score 100% on quiz.	605	85.7% N=519
Lateral Reading (<i>Critically evaluate the credibility of information and its sources.</i>)	70% will successfully score 100% on quiz.	419	78.5% N=329
Foundations of Digital Literacy (<i>Integrate use of digital resources into learning experiences.</i>)	70% will successfully score 100% on quiz.	767	82.2% N=631
Power of CMD/CTRL-F (<i>Use technology to solve problems and validate information.</i>)	70% will successfully score 100% on quiz.	291	80% N=233

* Data provided by Kendra Perry, Coordinator, Library Services & Learning Support Services.

The assessment exercises determined that a majority of students achieved the established benchmarks for five out of eight tutorial modules. While a more comprehensive analysis of the modules is necessary to pinpoint specific challenges, a preliminary examination suggests that tutorials with unmet benchmarks tend to be more extensive and complex. This might indicate a need to either revise the modules for a self-paced approach or supplement them with in-person instruction to enhance concept comprehension.

Student Support Services SLOA

Assessing student learning outcomes (SLOA) has been a key objective for HCC's student affairs offices since 2021. While evaluating student learning outside the classroom presents challenges, a robust framework has been developed. This framework ensures formal and consistent documentation of student learning, which is crucial for stakeholders committed to providing a richer, more meaningful student experience.

Career Development, Internships & Job Services*

Student internships provided a variety of hands-on opportunities in supportive settings, encouraging the exploration of new interests and knowledge. Participants gained practical skills, learned new technologies and programs relevant to their fields, collaborated with diverse teams, and successfully met their learning outcomes and goals. End-of-semester surveys were distributed to students in internship courses, achieving an 89% response rate. The survey included questions relating to ILO1 – Responsibility, and 100% of respondents agreed that their internship experience was connected to their academic discipline and career goals, as well as taught them valuable new skills.

Career Program Achievers*

Career Program Achievers (CPA) empowers adult learners to become academically successful through collaborative, individualized services and financially supportive programs. During the 2023-2024 academic year, 100 students benefited from the resources offered by this program. The office recently implemented a post-meeting survey for students who meet with its representative. However, the response rate for this initiative was low, with only 18 students participating. The survey included questions relating to ILO1 – Responsibility, and all respondents agreed their involvement with CPA helped them to clarify their goals and their understanding of next steps in their academic journey.

Disability Support Services*

The Disability Support Services (DSS) Office coordinates individualized reasonable accommodations for students. After meeting with a DSS representative, students complete a survey that includes questions related to ILO1 – Responsibility and ILO5 – Information Literacy and Technology. All respondents confirmed that the DSS helped them clarify their goals and next steps. Additionally, a majority indicated that they effectively used technology to inform their professors about their accommodations.

Retention & Registration*

Advising aims to support both new and currently enrolled credit students at HCC in maximizing their academic and personal success. Retention specialists work with students to clarify their personal and career goals, create academic plans, maintain consistent progress, connect with campus resources for various needs, and prepare for life after college. After meeting with a retention specialist, students have the opportunity to complete a survey that includes questions addressing ILO1 - Responsibility and ILO5 - Information Literacy and Technology. In the 2023-2024 academic year, 442 students responded to the survey. The results showed that 94% of students felt that Retention and Registration helped them clarify their goals and understand their next steps, while 91% reported receiving assistance in selecting courses and understanding degree requirements. Furthermore, 68% indicated a greater awareness of available support services. Notably, all three areas showed a positive increase compared to the previous academic year.

Veterans & Military Services*

Hagerstown Community College is dedicated to supporting veterans through educational benefits and strongly encourages prospective students to meet with HCC's Veterans and Military Specialists before enrolling. This ensures they have a clear understanding of the VA educational benefits process and other financial aid options available. In the 2023-2024 academic year, over 254 veteran and military students benefited from the resources and programs offered by HCC. Recently, the office introduced a post-meeting survey for students who consult with its representatives. However, the response rate has been low, making it difficult to accurately represent the broader student population. The survey included questions related to ILO1 – Responsibility, and those who participated indicated that their engagement with the Veterans & Military Office helped clarify their goals and next steps in their academic journey.

** Data obtained from the Office of Student Affairs FY24 SLOA Report.*

ACADEMIC YEAR 2023-2024 INSTITUTIONAL LEARNING OUTCOMES (2024 GRADUATE SURVEY)

Hagerstown Community College (HCC) conducts an annual online survey utilizing the course evaluation system of its recent graduates. The survey aims to gather insights into their college experiences, inform educational practices, and identify areas for improvement.

The 2024 HCC Graduate Survey was administered to Spring 2024 graduates over a period of five (5) weeks beginning on April 17, 2024. The survey covered a range of topics including area of study and degree, education and/or employment plans, use of employment-related services, Institutional Learning Outcomes, and the alumni association. Out of the 426 graduates invited to participate, 223 completed the survey for a response rate of 52%.

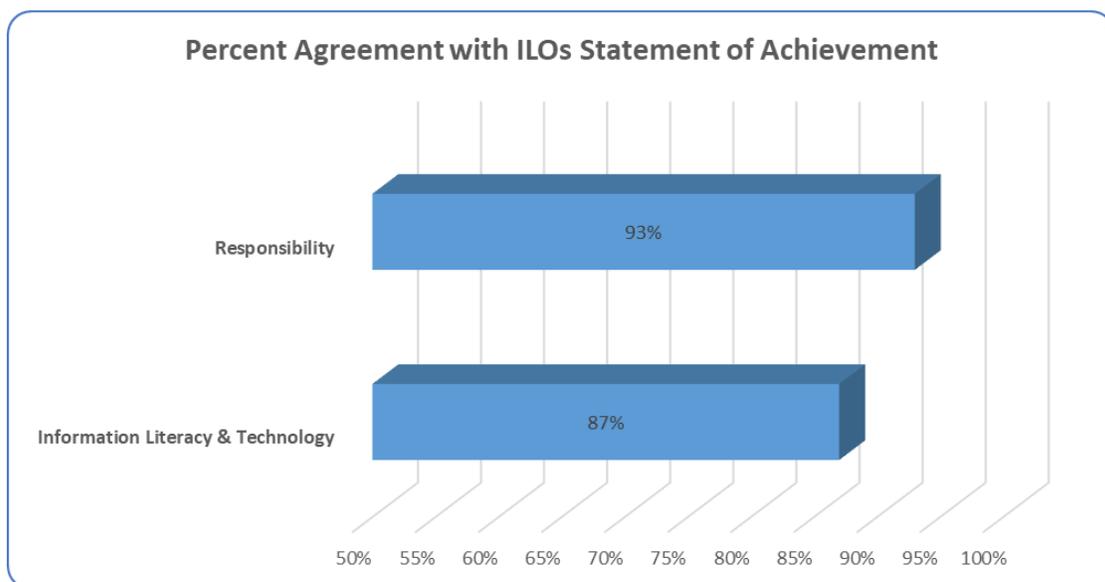
While the survey addresses all institutional learning outcomes, this report will focus on ILO #1 Personal Responsibility and ILO #5 Information Literacy and Technology. Graduates were asked to respond to the questions with either strongly agree, somewhat agree, neither agree or disagree, somewhat disagree, and strongly disagree.

ILO #1 – Responsibility

Survey Question: My experience at HCC improved my ability to practice personal and/or social responsibility through self-direction, persistence, lifelong learning, and responsible citizenship.

ILO #5 – Information Literacy and Technology

Survey Question: My experience at HCC enhanced my information literacy and technology skills so I can use technology to analyze, evaluate, and use information successfully.



* Data provided by the Office of Planning and Institutional Effectiveness

A significant majority of graduates (87% to 93%) agreed or strongly agreed with the statement of achievement with the Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILO #1 – Responsibility and ILO #5 – Information Literacy and Technology) measured this academic year. The data indicates that graduates feel capable of demonstrating personal and social responsibility through self-direction, persistence, lifelong learning, and responsible citizenship. They also express confidence in their ability to apply the research process to gather information and utilize technology for analysis, evaluation, synthesis, and resourceful application of information.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT MOVING FORWARD

Student Learning Outcomes Assessment (SLOA) is an integral part of the instructional process at Hagerstown Community College. All members of the institution, from faculty and staff to administrators and students, play a vital role in ensuring student success. Continuous improvement of learning is a collaborative effort that benefits everyone involved.

NEXT STEPS

1. Revise the Course Outcome Guide (COG) and Program Outcome Guide (POG) templates to ensure that they remain relevant, accurate, and aligned with current educational standards and best practices.
2. Develop an assessment plan for each academic program to coincide with the institutional learning outcome assessment timeline to ensure a comprehensive evaluation of all course outcomes and program outcomes.
3. Streamline file management processes on the Student Learning Outcomes Assessment (SLOA) Cloud site to improve accessibility and organization.
4. Research assessment software packages that can help gather and analyze assessment data, track progress, and inform continuous improvement initiatives.
5. Explore and promote professional development opportunities allowing faculty to gain a better understanding of the SLOA process and benefits.
6. Incorporate additional co-curricular academic units in the annual SLOA review for a more comprehensive assessment.