

# STUDENT TRANSFORMATIVE LEARNING RECORD (STLR): CAPTURING TL IN AND OUT-OF-CLASS

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## *AN INTERACTIVE PRESENTATION*

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## *EXTENDED ABSTRACT*

The University of Central Oklahoma's (UCO) Student Transformative Learning Record (STLR) process and program is an award-winning, non-proprietary model with a proven track record for increasing retention, student academic achievement, and workforce readiness. STLR is a campus-wide initiative to capture, measure, and assess transformative learning in five employability areas beyond a particular academic major. Faculty and staff both assess curricular and co-curricular learning using the same rubric based on the Association of American Colleges & University's (AAC&U) VALUE rubrics (Valid Assessment of Learning in Undergraduate Education) to prepare students with an "education for a world of unscripted problems (AAC&U, 2017)." STLR draws upon evidence-based and authentic assessment High-Impact Practices (Kuh, 2008) and Transformative Learning (Mezirow & Taylor, 2009) tools. UCO began implementing STLR in 2014, however, now other institutions have adopted and adapted STLR to their missions, cultures, and specific needs and are finding success, too, whether they call the process "STLR" on their campuses or name the process something more suited to their branding.

Focusing on "whole-student" development (Keeling, 2006), students are challenged to grow "soft-skills" in the following five core "tenets:" Global and Cultural Competencies; Health and Wellness; Leadership; Research, Creative, and Scholarly Activities; and Service Learning and Civic Engagement. Employers locally, nationally, and internationally have said among qualified candidates, these skills make the difference if an employee is hired, retained, and successful (Hart Research Associates for AAC&U, 2015). Students earn STLR "credits" through class assignments, out-of-class student groups, campus events, out-of-class independent/group projects (e.g., research or service learning), and interacting with eleven location areas (e.g., Volunteer and Service Learning Center). Students critically reflect (Brookfield, 2017) using integrative learning processes (Peet, 2016) and are assessed on the STLR rubric mentioned above. While some schools have created co-curricular transcripts that only list out-of-class activities, STLR-trained faculty/staff measure students' perspective expansions. Learning experiences by themselves, even those using High-Impact Practices (Kuh, 2008), without reflections, do not consistently produce long-term, deep meaning for future life settings (Peet, 2016). A STLR student experience and reflection video can be viewed on YouTube at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ot1kqnbuPAs&t=34s>. The STLR rubric, developed by about twenty faculty and assessment professionals, assesses the STLR activity through one or more of the tenets for Exposure, Integration, or Transformation. The rubric assesses the STLR activity in light of evidence of the student simply being exposed to the tenet concept, integrating the tenet with other situations/contexts in life, or intrinsically embodying the tenet with evidence of transformation in behavior, speech, ability, or identity. Students reaching "Transformation" in one or more tenets receive graduation cords in the associated tenet color(s). STLR shows employers expressly and concisely what they want to see. A copy of the STLR rubric, tenet definitions, and complete STLR Snapshot was provided to session attendees (available at <http://sites.uco.edu/central/tl/stlr/stlr-snapshot.asp>).

The STLR program, process, rubric, and Snapshot are respected concepts and tools, developed as first-of-their-kind by UCO. STLR has been funded in part by UCO internal funding and grants from several areas: U.S. Department of Education; Educause and Gates Foundation; and the Lumina Foundation. STLR

has been recognized nationally and internationally by multiple organizations such as the Instructional Management System (IMS) Global Learning Consortium and received the 2018 American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AACSU) Excellence and Innovation National Award. STLR has been adapted or adopted by La Cité College--Ottawa, CA; Western Carolina University--Cullowhee, NC; Technology University Dublin--Blanchardstown, IR; Tarleton State University--Stephenville, TX; and Massey University--Manawatu, NZ. Fourteen other institutions sent campus visitors and twelve (and counting) have conducted interviews or webinars to learn more. STLR has become the topic of multiple published book chapters and articles.

### SELECT REFERENCES

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