

STUDENT TRANSFORMATIVE LEARNING RECORD (STLR): TWO YEARS OF SUCCESSFULLY MEASURING TL ACTIVITIES

AN INTERACTIVE PRESENTATION

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

The University of Central Oklahoma (UCO)'s Student Transformative Learning Record (STLR) tracks student learning in and out of the classroom. Students highlight their employability, communication, leadership, and citizenship skills in a printable record and dynamic e-portfolios. STLR shows skills employers seek in addition to a student's academic major (discipline specific skills). Employers are increasingly pointing out college graduates and new hires are lacking key job skills. They say college graduates are qualified with their degree or certifications, but are missing things that make them an effective employee such as coach-ability, emotional intelligence, motivation, taking initiative, critical thinking, problem solving skills, and having the right attitude/personality suited to the particular job/work environment (AAC&U, 2013; Hart Research, 2013).

STLR attempts to capture, document, and assess learning in both curricular and co-curricular contexts to help students gain such skills listed above. The STLR process consists of: (1) STLR-trained faculty and professional staff create engaging TL experiences; (2) students complete the STLR activity (assignment, co-curricular group or event, out-of-class project, or student employment); (3) students submit a reflective artifact to the Learning Management System (LMS) in a course shell/space; (4) faculty/staff assess the artifact using an evidence-based, robust tool, the STLR Rubric, which describes levels of embodiment of the Central Six skills/values and provides written (typed) feedback to the student; (5) students view the STLR rating and feedback and then can "push" the artifact to their STLR e-portfolio and curate examples of their achievement in their STLR printable record; (6) students create web page presentations in the LMS integrated e-portfolio tool; and (7) students can share out a link to a version of their e-portfolio and/or their STLR record to a future employer, graduate school, or scholarship committee. Co-curricular STLR experiences are recorded and assessed in the same way as curricular experiences in LMS course shells/spaces.

The STLR rubric has three levels: (1) exposure to one of the University's Central Six tenets that address these beyond-disciplinary skills; (2) integration of the tenet; or (3) transformation in the tenet. A faculty/staff person uses the rubric to decide if just exposure to the tenet concept occurred, if the student integrated the tenet into her reflection and work, or if the student demonstrated a transformation change in perspective or shift with evidence they would continue to embody the tenet value/skill. Achievement of the transformation level is not expected in the early college years for traditional students (Kilbourne, 2015; Verschelden et. al, 2017). However, UCO has a highly non-traditional population including adult students. If students come in with previous life experiences and demonstrate the level of Transformation even in lower level courses, faculty/staff can rate at Transformation if there is evidence to support the rating. Students do not have to achieve the lower levels to be rated at the higher levels. It is recommended that Transformation be reserved in few and far between cases, in order to maintain the integrity and value of STLR. A group of faculty and assessment staff at UCO worked to create the STLR rubric, based on the

American Association of Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) sixteen Valid Assessment of Learning in Undergraduate Education (V.A.L.U.E.) rubrics (AAC&U, 2013).

The two-year STLR results are strong. STLR piloted in 2014-2015 and soft-launched in fall 2015 targeting freshmen students, with a STLR assignment in every section of the freshmen success course (approximately 67% of all freshmen). STLR launched to the entire campus in fall 2016. The ultimate goal of STLR is to increase retention among all students, particularly among three sub-populations: low socio-economic status, first-generation, and under-represented minority students. From fall to fall, STLR was shown to raise retention and academic achievement both for the overall student population and the three sub-populations, to the tune of 13 percent in the three sub-populations and 19 percent in the non-target population. This data includes confidence intervals at 95 percent with statistical significance, conducted by the UCO Office of Institutional Research & Assessment (IR & IA) professional statisticians (Scheideler, Hwang, & Wimmer, 2016). UCO Provost John Barthell noted this is the first time he has seen this high of an impact on retention and achievement in decades.

SELECT REFERENCES

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