

# STUDENT LEARNING AND GENERAL EDUCATION ASSESSMENT REPORT



## FOCUS ON ANALYTICAL THINKER, LIFELONG LEARNER, AND ADAPTABLE PROBLEM SOLVER

2016

The ILOs are approved, and a new general education assessment process is piloted within Canvas.

2017

The general education assessment pilot is rolled out to all general education courses.

2018

Key performance indicators are developed, and assessment occurs in all general education courses by the respective course instructor.

2019

A Community of Practice model was introduced to provide a focused approach and to improve the reliability of the assessment data. Focus from Fall 2019: Written Communication (ILO 3.1).

2020

The Community of Practice approach from Fall 2019 was replicated to assess Spoken Communication (ILO 3.2) in Spring 2020 and Diverse Perspectives (ILO 2.5) in Fall 2020.

2021

A Community of Practice model continued in 2021 with assessing Civic Responsibility (ILO 2.6) in Spring 2021 and Critical Thinking (ILO 2.3) in Fall 2021.

2022

A Community of Practice model continued with assessing Adaptive Thinking (ILO 2.2) in Spring 2022 and Effective Communicator (ILO 3.1 & 3.2) in Fall 2022 (The Year of the Effective Communicator).

2023

Implementation of Graduate Attributes; Community of Practice model continued with assessing the Effective Communicator and Global Advocate.

2024

Community of Practice assessed Responsible Citizen and Ethical Decision Maker, and assessed Analytical Thinker in the fall.

2025

Communities of Practice for Lifelong Learner and Adaptable Problem Solver

## General Education Assessment at Lindenwood

General education assessment is a key measure of institutional effectiveness because it helps an institution substantiate broad claims it makes about student learning through establishing high-quality outcomes across important domains of student educational experiences and carefully analyzing relevant student work. The General Education program aligns to the Graduate Attributes, Lindenwood University's Institutional Learning Outcomes. The Graduate Attributes align to key skills needed for students to be successful leaders in their careers, communities, and lives. For example, the Graduate Attribute of Analytical Thinker asserts that Lindenwood University students will use data and evidence to form judgments about complex situations. The Graduate Attribute of Lifelong Learner states that students will self-reflect and engage in activities for self-improvement and independently seek professional opportunities for career advancement. Further, the Graduate Attribute of Adaptable Problem Solver maintains that students will show preparation to address and solve the issues of today and tomorrow and adapt to a changing world through creative and innovative thinking.

Lindenwood University's Graduate Attributes were implemented in Spring 2023. During the Spring of 2023 the first Graduate Attribute of Effective Communicator was assessed, followed by Global Advocate in Fall 2023. The communities of practice model is used for assessment purposes and began in the Fall of 2019, therefore, comparative data is available for Graduate Attribute assessment.

After data is collected during the Community of Practice, data is analyzed, themes are developed, and a Focused Learning Improvement Projects (FLIPS) are established. The Community of Practice for Analytical Thinker met in Fall 2024 and the Communities of Practice for Lifelong Learner and Adaptable Problem Solver met in Spring 2025.



**ADAPTABLE  
PROBLEM SOLVER**



**LIFELONG  
LEARNER**



**ANALYTICAL  
THINKER**

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## Graduate Attribute: Analytical Thinker Fall 2024

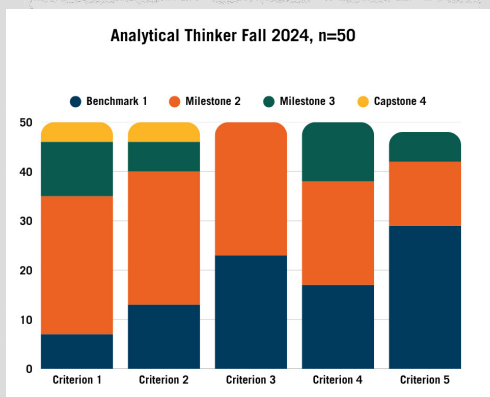
Lindenwood University students will:

- Use data and evidence to form judgments about complex situations

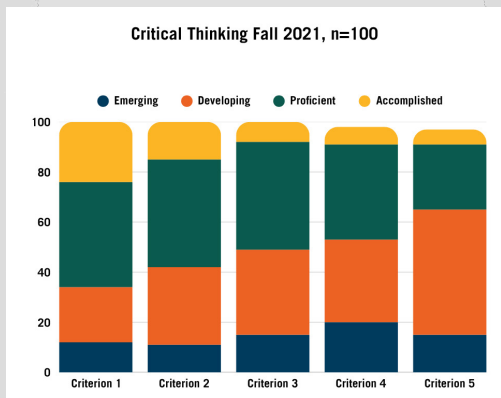
[Analytical Thinker Rubric](#)

[ILOS-Graduate Attributes-Signature Assignments](#)

### Fall 2024



### Compare Fall 2021 Results



#### Criterion 1-5:

1. Explanation of Issues
2. Evidence
3. Influence of Context and Assumptions
4. Student's Position
5. Conclusion and Related Outcomes



### Broad Themes: Community of Practice for Analytical Thinker

#### Fall 2021 Critical Thinking Performance Distribution

Total evaluations: 500 scores  
(100 students × 5 criteria)

Emerging: 73 scores (15%)  
Developing: 180 scores (36%)  
Proficient: 189 scores (38%)  
Accomplished: 58 scores (12%)

#### Fall 2024 Analytical Thinker Performance Distribution

Total evaluations: 250 scores  
(50 students × 5 criteria)

Benchmark 1: 89 scores (36%)  
Milestone 2: 116 scores (46%)  
Milestone 3: 37 scores (15%)  
Capstone 4: 8 scores (3%)

### Historical Comparison Analysis

#### Dramatic Performance Decline

The comparison reveals a **concerning deterioration** in analytical/critical thinking performance over the three-year period:

**Lower performance levels increased significantly:** Combined Benchmark/Milestone 2 rose from 51% (2021) to 82% (2024)

**Higher performance levels decreased substantially:** Combined Milestone 3/Capstone 4 dropped from 50% (2021) to 18% (2024)

**Advanced performance collapsed:** Top-tier performance fell from 12% (2021) to 3% (2024)

### Key Comparative Findings

**Proficiency Gap:** In 2021, 38% of scores reached proficient level, while in 2024, only 15% achieved Milestone 3. This represents a 23 percentage point decline in proficient performance.

**Struggling Student Population Growth:** The percentage of students performing at the lowest levels more than doubled, from 15% (Emerging) in 2021 to 36% (Benchmark) in 2024.

**Loss of Balanced Distribution:** The 2021 data showed a more balanced distribution with substantial representation across all performance levels, while 2024 data shows heavy concentration at lower performance levels.



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## Implications for Program Review

Much of the findings and community of practice feedback resonates with a rubric that did not align well with signature assignments; revision of the rubric is needed.

The smaller sample from 2021 to 2024 led to inconclusive results.

The FLIP from 2021 involved providing supportive materials on teaching Critical Thinking. This work should continue in alignment with Analytical Thinker.

## Analytical Thinker Fall 2024 (Continued)

### Methodology

#### Sample

In December of 2024, the Community of Practice convened to score artifacts from courses aligned to the Graduate Attribute of Analytical Thinker. A population of artifacts was sampled from ESCSOC 10200 - Basic Concepts of Sociology; ESC 11200 - Fundamentals of Environmental Science; and ESC 10000 - Physical Geology with Lab. A stratified sample of 53 artifacts was taken from this population; three artifacts were used for norming therefore 50 artifacts were scored for assessment purposes. The sample consisted of 16-week on-ground sections from Spring 2024.

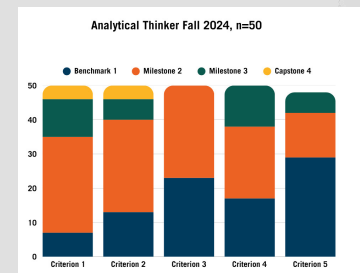
#### Inter-rater Reliability

For inter-rater reliability per criteria, the results showed a percentage of a gap greater than one: 14% for Criteria 1; 18% for Criteria 2; 22% for Criteria 3; 12% for Criteria 4; and 18% for Criteria 5. All artifacts scored with a gap greater than one were scored by a third rater.

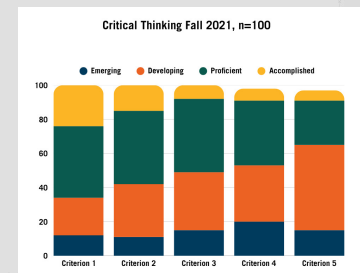
#### The Rubric

The Analytical Thinker rubric was adapted from AAC&U (Association of American Colleges and Universities) VALUE (Valid Assessment of Learning in Undergraduate Education) Rubric for Critical Thinking. The General Education Taskforce reviewed the rubric for alignment to Analytical Thinker in 2022.

Fall 2024\*



Compare Fall 2021 Results\*



\*Shown again from previous page

## What's Next?

The **Community of Practice for Analytical Thinkers** will gather again in the fall to discuss themes and a possible FLIP to implement in the 25-26 academic year.



### Members of the Community of Practice for Analytical Thinker

**David Brown**, Professor, Philosophy

**Jill Hutcheson**, Associate Dean, Professor, Curriculum & Instruction

**Bob Steffes**, Associate Professor, Educational Leadership

**Lindsey Johnston**, Coordinator, Budgeting and Compliance

**Robyne Elder**, Associate Provost, Academic Effectiveness

# STUDENT LEARNING AND GENERAL EDUCATION ASSESSMENT REPORT



## FOCUS ON ANALYTICAL THINKER, LIFELONG LEARNER, AND ADAPTABLE PROBLEM SOLVER

### Community of Practice Model of Assessment



A **community of practice** is a group who has a collective interest in and desire for improvement. This approach to assessment enhances the validity of assessment data, builds an advocacy network across campus, and aligns with national best practices for general education assessment. Ten communities have been formed since Fall 2019 focusing on the previous ILOs and now Graduate Attributes. Three communities met during the 2024-2025 academic year. **Analytical Thinker** was formed from the previous ILO, Critical Thinking. **Lifelong Learner** and **Adaptable Problem Solver** did not have comparative data from the previous ILOs.

- 1 ILO 3.1: Written Communication\*
- 2 ILO 3.2: Spoken Communication\*
- 3 ILO 2.5: Diverse Perspectives\*\*
- 4 ILO 2.6: Civic Responsibility
- 5 ILO 2.3: Critical Thinking
- 6 ILO 2.2: Adaptive Thinking
- 7 Graduate Attribute: Effective Communicator\*
- 8 Graduate Attribute: Global Advocate\*\*
- 9 Graduate Attribute: Responsible Citizen\*\*\*
- 10 Graduate Attribute: Ethical Decision Maker

\*ILO 3.1: Written Communication + ILO 3.2: Spoken Communication = Graduate Attribute of Effective Communicator

\*\*ILO 2.5: Diverse Perspectives = Graduate Attribute of Global Advocate

\*\*\*ILO 2.6 Civic Responsibility=Graduate Attribute of Responsible Citizen

### Adaptable Problem Solver Spring 2025

#### Criterion-by-Criterion Breakdown:

Total evaluations: 184 scores  
(46 students x 4 criteria)

Benchmark 1: 11 scores (6%)  
Milestone 2: 56 scores (30%)  
Milestone 3: 67 scores (36%)  
Capstone 4: 52 scores (28%)

#### Broad Themes: Community of Practice for Adaptable Problem Solver

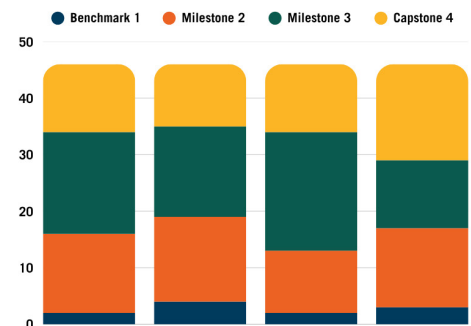
#### Key Findings

**Strong Overall Competency:** The distribution shows that across all four criteria (Define Problem, Identify Processes/Propose Solutions, Student's Position/Perspective, and Conclusions), students are performing well, with 64% of all scores at Milestone 3 or Capstone 4 levels.

**Consistent Performance Across Criteria:** The relatively even distribution suggests that students are not dramatically stronger in one criterion versus another. This indicates balanced skill development across the four components of adaptive problem-solving.

**Limited Struggling Performance:** Only 6% of all criterion scores fall at the Benchmark level, suggesting that very few students struggle significantly with any particular aspect of problem-solving.

Adaptable Problem Solver Spring 2025, n=46



#### Implications for Skill Development

**Milestone 3 as the Mode:** With **36%** of scores at this level, most student performances fall into the "solid competency" range where they can construct problem statements, acknowledge different perspectives, and tie conclusions to evidence.

**Strong Advanced Performance:** **28%** of scores reaching Capstone level indicates that students frequently demonstrate deep comprehension, comprehensive thinking, and sophisticated solution development across various aspects of problem-solving.

**Areas for Growth:** The **30%** of scores at Milestone 2 represent the primary opportunity for improvement, helping students move from basic competency to more nuanced, specifically-designed approaches to problem-solving.

Assessed courses are successfully developing well-rounded adaptive problem solvers with consistent competency across all measured dimensions.



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## Adaptable Problem Solver Spring 2025 (Continued)

### Methodology

#### Sample

In April of 2025, the Community of Practice convened to score artifacts from courses aligned to the Graduate Attribute of Adaptable Problem Solver. A population of artifacts was sampled from HIST 11700 and MTH 14800. A stratified sample of 53 artifacts was taken from this population; three artifacts were used for norming, therefore, 50 artifacts were scored for assessment purposes. The sample consisted of 16 and 8-week on-ground and online sections from Fall 2024.

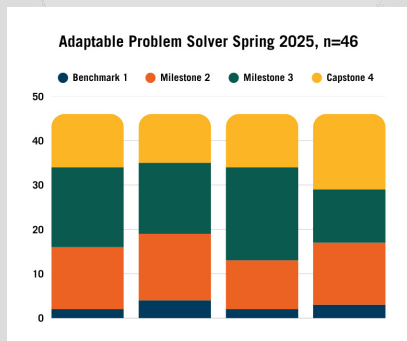
#### Inter-rater Reliability

For inter-rater reliability per criteria, the results showed a percentage of a gap greater than one: 4% for Criteria 1; 8% for Criteria 2; 2% for Criteria 3; and 8% for Criteria 4. All artifacts scored with a gap greater than one were scored by a third rater.

#### The Rubric

The Adaptable Problem Solver rubric was adapted from AAC&U (Association of American Colleges and Universities) VALUE (Valid Assessment of Learning in Undergraduate Education) Rubric for Adaptable Problem Solver. The General Education Taskforce reviewed the rubric for alignment to Analytical Thinker in 2022.

Spring 2025\*



\*Shown again from previous page

## What's Next?

The **Community of Practice for Adaptable Problem Solvers** will gather again in the fall to discuss themes and a possible FLIP to implement in the 25-26 academic year.

### Members of the Community of Practice for Adaptable Problem Solver

**Joseph Steineger**, Associate Professor, Philosophy

**Mitch Nasser**, Associate Professor, Educational Leadership

**Sherrie Wisdom**, Professor, Educational Leadership

**Melissa Qualls**, Associate Professor, English

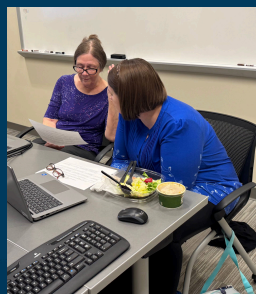
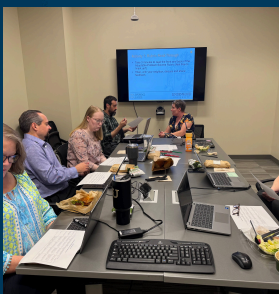
**Michelle Davis**, Assistant Dean, Program Assessment & Accreditation

**Graham Weir**, Professor, Educational Leadership

**Leah Rosenmiller**, Manager, Reference Services

**Rebecca Williams**, Instructor, Biology

**Robyne Elder**, Associate Provost, Academic Effectiveness



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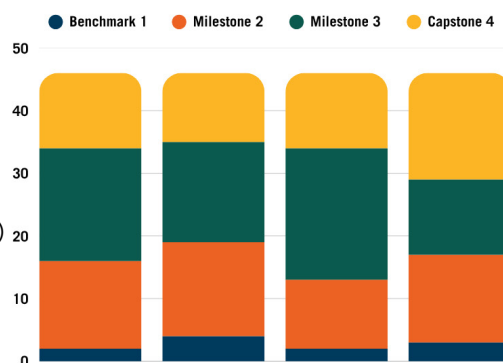
## Lifelong Learner Spring 2025

### Overall Performance Distribution

Total evaluations: 250 scores  
(50 students × 5 criteria)

Benchmark 1: 44 scores (18%)  
Milestone 2: 81 scores (32%)  
Milestone 3: 74 scores (30%)  
Capstone 4: 48 scores (19%)  
Note: 3 scores of zero were recorded for one criterion

Adaptable Problem Solver Spring 2025, n=46



### Program Implications

This analysis indicates while students may develop problem-solving competencies effectively, **fostering genuine lifelong learning behaviors requires more intensive intervention**. Courses, programs, and departments aligned with Lifelong Learner should consider enhanced emphasis on self-reflection, independent learning opportunities, and explicit instruction in knowledge transfer strategies.

The relatively high percentage of Benchmark and Milestone 2 scores suggests many students are still operating in a **compliance-based** rather than curiosity-driven learning mode.

Lifelong Learner is one of the least popular of the attributes but more intentional in signature assignments. Often, evidence does not align well with rubrics, but this was not the case. **The community of practice commented on the clear alignment between signature assignments and the rubric.**

This community showed impressive inter-rater reliability. This was the first time a third rater was not used for a specific criteria---3 and 5.

### Critical Areas for Development

The data suggests students particularly struggle with:

- Deep curiosity and exploration beyond surface requirements
- Independent initiative in pursuing learning opportunities
- Sophisticated transfer of knowledge to novel situations
- Reflective practice that leads to changed perspectives and growth

### Broad Themes: Community of Practice for Lifelong Learner

### Key Findings

**Concerning Performance Pattern:** Unlike the Adaptable Problem Solver attribute, Lifelong Learner shows a more challenging performance profile with 50% of all scores at Benchmark or Milestone 2 levels, indicating significant areas for improvement.

**Lower Advanced Achievement:** Only 19% of scores reach Capstone level, compared to 28% for Adaptable Problem Solver, suggesting students struggle more with demonstrating advanced lifelong learning behaviors.

**Substantial Struggling Population:** The 18% Benchmark performance indicates many students are showing only surface-level exploration, completing only required work, and making vague references to previous learning without meaningful application or reflection.

### Performance Analysis by Implication

**Milestone 2 as Dominant Mode (32%):** The largest group demonstrates basic competency - students explore topics with mild interest, complete required work while identifying opportunities, and make attempts at transfer and reflection but without depth.

**Balanced Middle Performance (30% at Milestone 3):** Students showing solid evidence of interest, pursuing additional knowledge beyond requirements, and demonstrating meaningful application of previous learning.

**Limited Excellence (19% at Capstone):** Relatively few students demonstrate the deep exploration, innovative knowledge application, and transformative reflection that characterizes true lifelong learners.



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## Lifelong Learner Spring 2025 (Continued)

### Methodology

#### Sample

In April of 2025, the Community of Practice convened to score artifacts from courses aligned to the Graduate Attribute of Lifelong Learner. A population of artifacts was sampled from Psychology 10000. A stratified sample of 53 artifacts was taken from this population; three artifacts were used for norming, therefore, 50 artifacts were scored for assessment purposes. The sample consisted of 16-week on-ground and online sections from Fall 2024.

#### Inter-rater Reliability

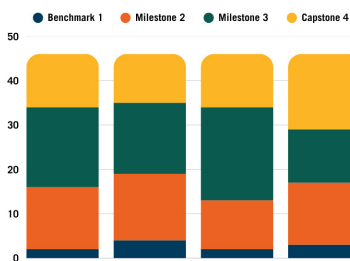
For inter-rater reliability per criteria, the results showed a percentage of a gap greater than one: 4% for Criteria 1; 2% for Criteria 2; 0% for Criteria 3; 4% for Criteria 4; and 0% for Criteria 5. All artifacts scored with a gap greater than one were scored by a third rater.

#### The Rubric

The Lifelong Learner rubric was adapted from AAC&U (Association of American Colleges and Universities) VALUE (Valid Assessment of Learning in Undergraduate Education) Rubric for Foundations and Skills for Lifelong Learning. The General Education Taskforce reviewed the rubric for alignment to Analytical Thinker in 2022.

Spring 2025\*

Adaptable Problem Solver Spring 2025, n=46



\*Shown again from previous page

## What's Next?

The **Community of Practice for Lifelong Learners** will gather again in the fall to discuss themes and a possible FLIP to implement in the 25-26 academic year.

### Members of the Community of Practice for Lifelong Learner

**Joseph Steineger**, Associate Professor, Philosophy

**Lynda Leavitt**, Professor, Educational Leadership

**Mitch Nasser**, Associate Professor, Educational Leadership

**Sherrie Wisdom**, Professor, Educational Leadership

**Melissa Qualls**, Associate Professor, English

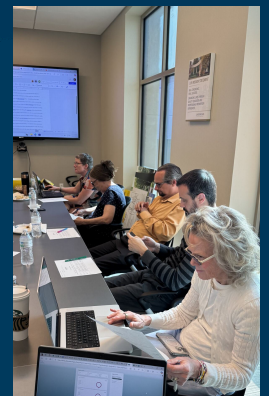
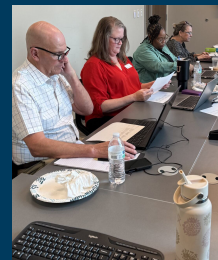
**Liz MacDonald**, Director, Library Services

**Michelle Davis**, Assistant Dean, Program Assessment & Accreditation

**Graham Weir**, Professor, Educational Leadership

**Wendi Price**, Manager, Service Learning & Responsible Citizenship

**Robyne Elder**, Associate Provost, Academic Effectiveness





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## Graduate Attributes & General Education

Thanks to the work of Melissa Qualls, Director of General Education, and the colleges, the Graduate Attributes are aligned with a variety of general education courses. The number next to each Graduate Attribute shows **the number of courses aligned** to it. Further, thanks to the work of Mary Stacy-Brewer and the Academic Services team, Graduate Attributes are now visibly aligned to courses in Anthology.



**82: Global Advocates**



**70: Analytical Thinkers**



**47: Effective Communicators**



**39: Adaptable Problem Solvers**



**24: Responsible Citizens**

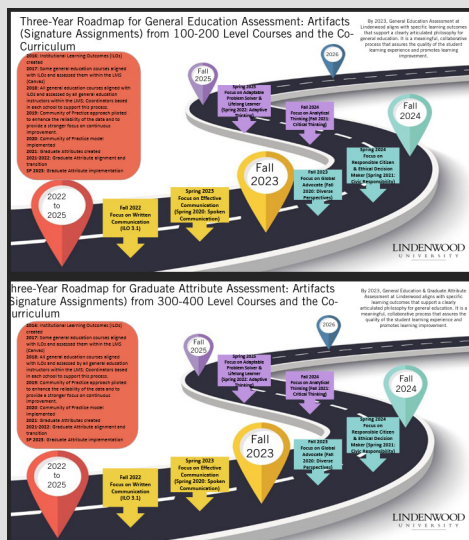


**20: Lifelong Learners**



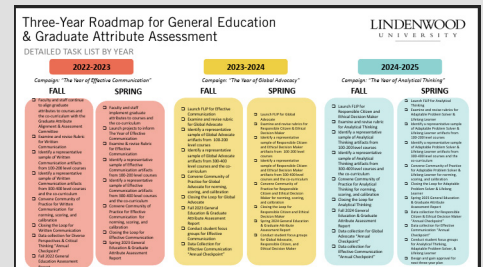
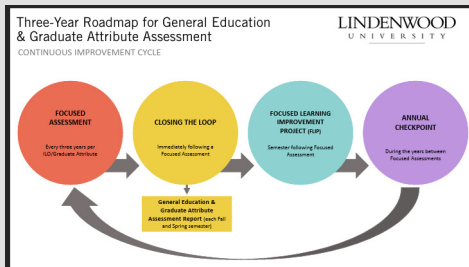
**17: Ethical Decision Makers**

## Three-Year Roadmap Conclusion!



As we have reached the end of the 2024-2025 Academic Year, this also concludes the Three-Year Roadmap for General Education.

We look forward to sharing a new journey to begin Fall 2025!



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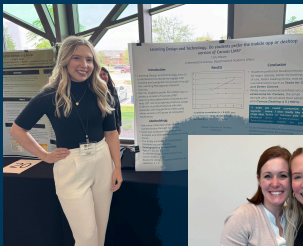


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## Student Assessment Scholars

The Student Assessment Scholars collaborated with stakeholders to research and present recommendations on many important topics this year. Further, many scholars presented their findings at the **Student Academic Showcase** in April.

**Congratulations** to Allyson Phillips for winning first place in the Original Research category and Kacie Lingle for winning first place in the Civic Engagement Project category.



Carly Means presents her project, Learning Design and Technology: Do Students Prefer the Mobile App or the Desktop Version of Canvas LMS, at the Academic Showcase



Carly Means works with stakeholder, Dr. Erin Morris, Director of Learning Design and Educational Technology on the Canvas LMS research project



### 2024-2025 Student Assessment Scholars

From left to right: Allyson Phillips, Mary Fitzgerald, Lauren Johnson, Kacie Lingle, Carly Means



Kacie Lingle shares her project, Campus Exploration, with Dr. Elizabeth Fleitz during the Academic Showcase



Allyson Phillips presents her research on Advising to the stakeholder team, Dr. Kevin Manley, Associate VP Advising and Retention and Julie Bergen, Manager of Advising Experience.

### EXPLORING THE IMPACT OF THE STUDENT EMPLOYEE REDUCTIONS AT LINDENWOOD UNIVERSITY

Allyson Phillips

COL49000: Student Assessment Scholars, Drs. Elder and Shilling



LINDENWOOD  
UNIVERSITY

Allyson Phillips completes an oral presentation of her work on student employee reductions at the Academic Showcase

## Assessment Summit Awards



Bob Steffes, Subcommittee for Assessment Awards, honored two of the 2025 Assessment Champions, Shenika Harris and Graham Weir.

Faculty and staff gathered on May 15, 2025 for the 8th annual Assessment Summit. This year's focus was on **Data-Informed Decision Making**. The main session centered on celebrating Lindenwood University [Assessment Champions](#), providing examples of data-informed decision making through the Engage in Eight program and using data to understand patterns, trends, and relationships.

The Student Assessment Scholars projects were shared as well. We thank faculty and staff for joining these important conversations!

[Learn more about the Assessment Summit here.](#)

[Learn more about the Student Assessment Scholars here.](#)