

# Summary of Institutional Research Data Elaborations on the 29 Core Undergraduate Learning Experiences (CULE) Items

Results were taken from the following assessments for this summary:

(CULE): Core Undergraduate Learning Experiences, 2011.

(FSSE): Faculty Survey of Student Engagement, 2011.

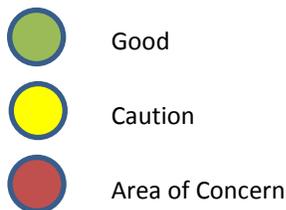
(NSSE): National Survey of Student Engagement, 2011.

(ESS): Noel-Levitz Employer Satisfaction Survey, 2008, 2010.

(CLA): Collegiate Learning Assessment, 2007-2011.

(SSI): Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory, 2006, 2008, 2010.

(AOS): ACT Alumni Outcomes Survey, 1999-2001, 2004-2005, 2006-2007.



## CULE Sampled:

- Faculty
- Staff
- Employers
- Alumni
- Students

*Note: Color coding is a comprehensive rating of all the data reported for each item.*

## 1. Writing clearly and effectively in a variety of contexts (Avg. Gap Rank = 1)

The CULE shows writing clearly to have the number one largest average gap between performance now and future importance of the 29 items. It is the largest gap for faculty, staff, and alumni and second largest for employers and students. It is ranked as a top, or *the* top, skill for all rating groups in terms of future importance. The NSSE indicates NDSU students completing a similar number to or fewer papers than peers while completing roughly the same number of drafts per paper. Freshmen feel they are learning as much or more than their peers, while seniors feel they are learning less. The FSSE shows that faculty estimates students learn less of this skill than students think they do. The NSSE Writing Consortium data suggest NDSU students, especially seniors, do less brainstorming, talking with instructors, and editing final drafts compared to peers. NDSU seniors report writing in a lab context or describing quantitative material about as often as peers with freshmen doing less. Peers rate their instructors higher than NDSU on giving clear instructions, explaining the learning objective for the writing, and explaining grading criteria. NDSU freshmen are given a writing sample to use as an example by their instructors more often than peers and work in a group format more often. The ESS shows a negative gap in satisfaction/expectation among employers for “written communication”; this gap improved from 2008 to 2010 and was small compared to other performance gaps. The 2011 CLA shows NDSU students scoring lower than peers on two subscale measures of writing effectiveness and writing mechanics in five (5) of six (6) instances. Longitudinally, NDSU’s overall amount of improvement in writing and reasoning between freshmen and senior year was comparable to but slightly less than peers; NDSU’s level of improvement was larger than peers on making an argument, less than peers on critiquing an argument, and comparable to peers on a performance task. On the AOS, 2006/2007 alumni say NDSU has an impact on their ability to recognize and use effective written communication skills in proportion with how important they feel this skill is but consistently rate NDSU as having a “major” impact (the highest rating) on this skill less frequently than national norms.

Conclusion: Institutional Research data is generally in sync with CULE results. Writing ability is rated as one of the most important skills, and assessment results were unanimous in showing room for improvement when compared with peers and when evaluated by faculty, staff, employers, and alumni.

## 2. Speaking clearly and effectively in a variety of contexts (Avg. Gap Rank = 2)

The CULE shows speaking clearly to have the 2<sup>nd</sup> largest average gap between performance now and future importance of the 29 items. It is in the top five largest gaps for faculty, alumni, staff, students, and employers and rated as the 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> most important future skill by all rating groups. The NSSE shows NDSU freshmen perceive they make more class presentations than peers and seniors perceive making fewer. The trend is the same for speaking clearly and effectively; freshmen report learning as much or more than peers and seniors report that they generally learn less. The FSSE shows both freshmen and seniors perceiving they learn more of this skill than faculty thinks. On the ESS, verbal communication is the number one gap between performance satisfaction and expectation; this gap got smaller between 2008 and 2010. On the other hand, employers said organizing information for presentation is a strength with satisfaction exceeding expectation. On the AOS, recognizing and using effective verbal communication skills is consistently ranked high on importance but lower on NDSU's impact on preparing students with this skill. Alumni feel less prepared in this skill than national norms.

Conclusion: The data are consistent. Speaking clearly is universally viewed as one of the most important skills, and with the exception of freshmen, NDSU students and alumni feel less prepared than peers and are rated as underprepared by faculty, staff, and employers.

## 3. Using visual media (charts, graphs) to communicate effectively in a variety of contexts (Avg. Gap Rank = 21)

The CULE shows using visual media to have the 21<sup>st</sup> largest average gap between performance now and future importance of the 29 items. Using visual media has the 11<sup>th</sup> highest performance now average, and employers, faculty, and staff rate this skill in their top 10 for performance now. Freshmen and Seniors report including drawings, tables, or other visual content in written work as well as using multimedia (web page, poster, PowerPoint) about as often as peers according to the NSSE Writing Consortium.

Conclusion: For the limited data we have, students appear to be doing adequately in this area.

## 4. Using electronic communication effectively (email, social media) in a variety of contexts (Avg. Gap Rank = 20)

Using electronic communication is a top 10 future importance skill for alumni and students on the CULE. It has the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest gap in performance now and future importance for Alumni but has relatively small gaps for all other rating groups. Using electronic communication has the 2<sup>nd</sup> highest performance now average rating of the 29 CULE items. On the NSSE, NDSU students, especially seniors, report using an electronic medium (e.g., listserv, chat group, etc.) to complete an assignment less often than peers and use email to communicate with instructors less often than peers as well. On the FSSE, faculty perceive students using email to communicate with them less often than students think they do.

Conclusion: This skill is considered generally important for the future across all rating groups. Although NDSU students may do less communicating via email and social media than their peers, the data suggest good performance (with the exception of Alumni's perspective).



## 5. Reading and understanding complex documents (Avg. Gap Rank = 6)

Reading and understanding complex documents has the 6<sup>th</sup> largest average gap between performance now and future importance of the 29 CULE items. Its performance now average score is 23<sup>rd</sup> of 29 items, and faculty, staff, and students rank this item in their bottom 10 for performance now. On the NSSE, both freshmen and senior students report being assigned fewer textbooks, books, or course readings than peers; however, students think they are assigned more reading than faculty do as indicated on the FSSE. Employers' satisfaction exceeded their expectation of graduates' ability to read job related materials in 2008 and 2010 on the ESS.

Conclusion: Results are mixed on this skill. The CULE indicates less favorable performance while the ESS is positive; the difference may be due to the CULE asking about reading and understanding *complex* documents while the ESS simply asks about "reading". Whatever the case, students perceive doing less reading for class than every group of comparison peers.



## 6. Reading and speaking a second language (Avg. Gap Rank = 18)

This skill has the 18<sup>th</sup> largest average gap of the 29 CULE items and is a top ten gap between performance now and future importance for employers, staff, and students. Every group rates this skill the lowest in performance now and the lowest or second lowest in terms of future importance on the CULE. On the NSSE, both freshmen and seniors report doing significantly less foreign language coursework than all peer comparison groups. Faculty rate the importance of students doing foreign language coursework as somewhat important (vs. important or very important) the majority of the time on the FSSE.

Conclusion: Performance of this skill is universally rated the lowest of the 29 CULE skills, which is not surprising considering that little class time is spent on this skill compared to the other 29 skills (and few people read or speak a second language well even after doing college foreign language coursework). However, it seems alarming that NDSU students complete or plan to complete significantly less work in this area than peers, and foreign language coursework/speaking ability is not viewed as particularly important by any of the groups questioned (i.e., students, alumni, employers, faculty, and staff).



## 7. Understanding scientific methods and how they are used to increase our knowledge of the natural and physical world (Avg. Gap Rank = 28)

Understanding scientific methods has the 2<sup>nd</sup> smallest average gap between performance now and future importance of the 29 CULE items. It has the 10<sup>th</sup> highest performance now average, and faculty and staff rank understanding scientific methods in their top ten of performance now items. This item is ranked in the bottom ten for all rating groups in terms of future importance, and has the 3<sup>rd</sup> lowest future importance average overall. On the NSSE and FSSE, both freshmen and seniors work on research projects with faculty outside course programs less often than peers and less often than faculty thinks is important.

Conclusion: Faculty and staff consider students to be performing well in this area. NDSU students report doing less research with faculty than peers and less than faculty would like. Perhaps alarming, understanding scientific methods is universally rated low in future importance relative to the other CULE items.



## 8. Understanding technology and its implications for society (Avg. Gap Rank = 27)

Understanding technology has the 4<sup>th</sup> highest average performance now rating of the 29 CULE items and is a top ten performance now item for employers, faculty, and staff. This item has the 3<sup>rd</sup> smallest average gap between performance now and future importance. Understanding technology ranks as the 16<sup>th</sup> most important future skill of 29 skills. On the

NSSE, both freshmen and seniors rate use of computers in academic work as less emphasized at NDSU than at comparison schools. Freshmen report actually using computing and information technology about the same amount as peers while seniors report less use. On the FSSE, students and faculty are in agreement about how much students are encouraged to use computers for academic work, but students report using computers and information technology more often than faculty thinks they do. On the ESS, employers rate satisfaction above expectation on basic computing (e.g., word-processing) and use of equipment or technology specific to the job (other than computers). The ESS also shows satisfaction exceeding expectation with NDSU graduates' specific technical knowledge required for the job (other than computers applications) and knowledge of specific computer applications required for the job.

Conclusion: Students report less emphasis on using computers for academic work than peers and use computers and information technology the same or slightly less than peers report. Employers indicate high satisfaction with students in this area, and it appears as if performance is commensurate with future expectations of importance.

### 9. Understanding and working with numbers and statistics (Avg. Gap Rank = 22)

On the CULE, this item has the 22<sup>nd</sup> largest average gap between performance now and future importance of the 29 items. This is a top ten performance now skill for employers and a bottom ten skill for faculty. It is rated in the bottom ten most important skills for the future by alumni, faculty, staff, and students (not employers). The NSSE shows NDSU students completing about the same number of problem sets as peers with seniors doing slightly more than peers in some cases. Both freshmen and seniors report spending slightly less time analyzing quantitative problems than peers. On the FSSE, students report being assigned more problem sets and spending more time analyzing quantitative problems than faculty perceives. Employers are satisfied beyond their expectation of students' computation (math) ability on the ESS, and their satisfaction increased from 2008 to 2010. The AOS consistently shows alumni are pleased with NDSU's impact on their ability to analyze and draw conclusions from various types of data.

Conclusion: All of the assessments generally show students performing adequately in this area. Employers and alumni are pleased with what students learn, and students report spending about the same amount of time working with quantitative data as peers.

### 10. Understanding how human experiences are shaped by economic, geographical, historical, political, and psychological forces (Avg. Gap Rank = 24)

Understanding human experiences has the 19<sup>th</sup> highest performance now average of the 29 CULE items and has the 6<sup>th</sup> smallest gap between performance now and future importance. This item ranked in the bottom 10 important future skills for alumni, faculty, staff, students, and employers. Perhaps peripherally related, freshmen and seniors report acquiring a broad general education to a lesser extent than peers (especially seniors) on the NSSE, but they feel they make more gains in this area than faculty perceives (FSSE).

Conclusion: This area is ranked lower in importance relative to the other CULE items by all concerned, and students are generally meeting expectations with their performance. To the extent that acquiring a broad general education pertains to understanding factors that influence the human experience, NDSU students report gaining less than peers.

### 11. Understanding literature and the fine arts of music, theatre, dance, and art (Avg. Gap Rank = 29)

Understanding literature and the fine arts has the smallest average gap between performance now and future importance on the CULE. It is universally ranked low in performance now and last or second to last in future importance by faculty, staff, students, employers, and alumni. The NSSE shows both freshmen and seniors attending art exhibits, plays, music events, theater, etc. less frequently than peers. Alumni consistently rank understanding and appreciating art, music, and

literature last in importance of 19 skills and consistently indicate their education as meeting their needs in this area on the AOS. Alumni also consistently perceive a higher number of cultural/fine arts speaker programs on campus than national norms.

Conclusion: Understanding literature and the fine arts rates low in both performance and importance, and NDSU students report attending fewer art-related events than peers. However, alumni appear satisfied with what NDSU has to offer in this area.

**12. Understanding the international economic, historical, political, and social forces that have shaped the past and will shape the future** (Avg. Gap Rank = 17)

Understanding international forces has the 17<sup>th</sup> largest average gap between performance now and future importance on the CULE. It has the 3<sup>rd</sup> lowest average performance now score and ranks 23<sup>rd</sup> of 29 items in future importance. Employers indicate a high degree of satisfaction above expectation with graduates' understanding of the international business environment (ESS). On the AOS, alumni have consistently ranked understanding international issues (political, economic, etc.) as the 18<sup>th</sup> most important skill of 19 skills and report that their education is generally meeting their needs in this area.

Conclusion: This skill is consistently rated lower in importance relative to other skills. When framed in a more general way, performance is rated lower (CULE), but when specifically framed as the international business environment, there is high satisfaction with performance (ESS). Alumni seem satisfied with their education in this area.

**13. Understanding the viewpoints of societies other than the United States and Western Europe** (Avg. Gap Rank = 4)

**14. Understanding cultural and ethnic diversity within the United States** (Avg. Gap Rank = 12)

*(These items were combined due to content overlap and a lack of data specifically tailored to each question)*

These items have the 4<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> largest average gaps, respectively, between performance now and future importance of the 29 CULE items. Understanding the viewpoints of other societies is a top ten gap for alumni, faculty, staff, and students. Both items are in the bottom ten of performance now rankings for alumni, employers, faculty, staff, and students. Both items are near the bottom ten in terms of average future importance. On the NSSE, NDSU freshmen and senior students rate themselves lower/doing less of the following than peers: 1) Had serious conversations with students of a different race/ethnicity or very different from you in terms of religious beliefs, political opinions, or personal values; 2) Included diverse perspectives (different races, religions, genders, political beliefs, etc.) in class discussions or writing assignments; 3) Tried to better understand someone else's views by imagining how an issue looks from his/her perspective; 4) Understanding people of other racial and ethnic backgrounds; 5) Experience the campus environment as encouraging contact among students from different economic, social, and racial/ethnic backgrounds; and 6) Studying abroad. On the FSSE, faculty generally perceives students doing even less of these items than students think they are. On the ESS, employers indicate significant satisfaction with graduates' knowledge of peoples and cultures from other countries. 2006/2007 alumni rank understanding/appreciating cultural/ethnic differences between people as the 15<sup>th</sup> most important of 19 skills and have generally said NDSU is meeting their educational needs with this skill (AOS). Alumni have increasingly viewed the student body as culturally/ethnically diverse, a view that exceeds national norms for 2006/2007 alumni. Satisfaction with multicultural content in courses has trended upwards but is behind national norms (AOS). Alumni view the campus atmosphere as understanding of ethnic, political, and religious differences as much or more than national norms (AOS). Alumni have consistently rated their level of cultural involvement as significantly less than national norms (AOS). On the SSI, students have consistently indicated higher satisfaction with the institution's commitment to under-represented populations than national peers. In addition, NDSU students have a smaller gap between importance and satisfaction for the university's commitment to racial harmony on campus compared to peers (although they rate this as less important than peers).

(CULE) Core Undergraduate Learning Experiences  
(NSSE) National Survey of Student Engagement  
(CLA) Collegiate Learning Assessment  
(AOS) ACT Alumni Outcomes Survey

(ESS) Noel-Levitz Employer Satisfaction Survey  
(FSSE) Faculty Survey of Student Engagement  
(SSI) Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory

Conclusion: Aside from faculty/staff, these skills are rated as lower in importance relative to other skills. Every group on the CULE rates performance now as low. Students report doing fewer diversity-related activities than peers on every diversity-related item, and faculty views them as doing even less than they think they do. That being said, students and alumni indicate satisfaction with diversity on campus and multicultural offerings, even more so than national peers in some cases. There is some disagreement between the CULE and ESS; performance is rated as low on the CULE, but employers indicate satisfaction above expectation in this area on the ESS.



### 15. Understanding democracy and its institutions (Avg. Gap Rank = 14)

Understanding democracy has the 14<sup>th</sup> largest average gap between performance now and future importance of the 29 CULE items and is a top ten gap for alumni and students. Understanding democracy is in the bottom ten performance now rankings for alumni, employers, staff, and students and ranks in the low-mid range in terms of future importance relative to the 28 other CULE skills. Both freshmen and seniors indicate doing less voting in local, state, or national elections than peers (NSSE). On the AOS, alumni have ranked appreciating/exercising my rights/responsibilities/privileges as a citizen as the 15<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup>, and most recently, the 17<sup>th</sup> most important skill of 19 skills, and generally say their education is close to meeting their needs in this area.

Conclusion: In general, performance and participation are low, and the importance of this item is rated as less than the majority of other items. Alumni report general satisfaction with their education's impact on this area.



### 16. Engaging in community service (Avg. Gap Rank = 23)

Engaging in community service has the 7<sup>th</sup> smallest gap between performance now and future importance of the 29 CULE items. It has the 8<sup>th</sup> lowest performance now average across all rating groups. Engaging in community service is ranked in the bottom ten of future importance by all rating groups. Compared to peers, NDSU students report doing about the same amount of community service or volunteer work but do less community-based projects (e.g., service learning) as a part of a regular course than peers (NSSE). Students report doing more community/volunteer work than faculty perceives (FSSE). Alumni report similar to or less service and community involvement than national norms while they are students at NDSU (AOS).

Conclusion: Performance is proportional to the level of importance placed on this item, and students and alumni report doing similar to or slightly less community service work than peers.



### 17. Understanding the ethical basis for and implications of personal and professional decisions (Avg. Gap Rank = 9)

### 28. Examining one's own values and conclusions (Avg. Gap Rank = 10)

*(These items were combined due to overlapping content)*

Understanding ethical basis has the 9<sup>th</sup> largest gap between performance now and future importance of the 29 CULE items and ranks 18<sup>th</sup> of 29 in average performance now. This item ranks 12<sup>th</sup> in terms of average future importance. Examining one's own values and conclusions has the 10<sup>th</sup> largest average gap between performance now and future importance and ranks in the top ten in terms of future importance by alumni, faculty, and students. Examining one's own values ranks 9<sup>th</sup> of 29 skills on average performance now (CULE). On the NSSE, NDSU students, seniors more so than freshmen, report their education contributing to self-understanding and developing a personal code of values and ethics to a lesser extent than peers. However, they report making more progress with this than faculty perceives/emphasizes (NSSE). On the ESS, employers rate graduates lower in satisfaction than expectation on integrity (understands and applies ethical principles to decisions). Alumni consistently rate living my personal/professional life according to my own

standard/ethics as one of the most important skills but do not rate their education as having a proportional impact on their development of this skill (AOS).

Conclusion: Performance is generally proportional to future expectations of importance as measured by the CULE, and this is generally considered an important area by all rating groups. However, employers and alumni indicate a desire for further development in this area, and students report doing less in this area than peers.

### **18. Understanding healthy lifestyles to make informed choices** (Avg. Gap Rank = 25)

Understanding healthy lifestyles has the 5<sup>th</sup> smallest average gap between performance now and future importance and the 6<sup>th</sup> highest average performance now of the 29 CULE items. It ranks in the bottom ten in terms of future importance by faculty and employers and ranks 18<sup>th</sup> in average future importance across all rating groups on the CULE. Freshmen report having exercised or participated in physical fitness activities about as often as peers, and seniors report doing somewhat less than peers (NSSE). Freshmen report participating in activities to enhance their spirituality (worship, meditation, prayer, etc.) about as often as peers, and seniors report participating slightly more often than peers (NSSE). NDSU students consistently report feeling more satisfied with the extent to which counseling staff care about students as individuals than national peers, and they report higher satisfaction than peers with the variety of intramural activities offered on campus as well.

Conclusion: Students appear to be satisfied and doing well in this area.

### **19. Thinking creatively and innovatively about problems** (Avg. Gap Rank = 5)

Thinking creatively has the 5<sup>th</sup> largest average gap between performance now and future importance of the 29 CULE items. It has the 8<sup>th</sup> highest average performance now and is in the top ten in terms of future importance for alumni, employers, faculty, staff, and students. On the ESS, employers' rate satisfaction as not meeting/exceeding expectation on creativity (identifies new approaches to problems). On the AOS, developing original ideas and/or products ranks in the middle in terms of importance compared to other skills, and the impact of alumni's education is generally proportional to their value of this skill.

Conclusion: Thinking creatively is viewed as an important skill, and employers would like to see more development in this area.

### **20. Thinking critically about information, ideas, and beliefs** (Avg. Gap Rank = 3)

Thinking critically has the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest average gap between performance now and future importance and is rated as the 5<sup>th</sup> most important future skill of the 29 CULE items. Alumni and students rate their performance now in the top ten while faculty and staff rate performance now in the bottom ten. On the NSSE, both freshmen and seniors report thinking critically and analytically less often than peers, and faculty emphasize critical thinking more than students report learning (NSSE). Freshmen and seniors also report their coursework as emphasizing making judgments about the value of information, arguments, or methods less than peers (NSSE); faculty and students are in general agreement about the extent to which class focuses on this skill (FSSE). On the ESS, employers rate graduates lower in satisfaction than expectation, but the gap got smaller from 2008 to 2010. Alumni report a trend of increasing satisfaction with the impact of their education on their ability to think objectively about beliefs, attitudes, and values, and they rank this as the 11<sup>th</sup> most important skill of 19 (AOS).

Conclusion: All are agreed that thinking critically is an important skill for the future. Students feel they are doing a better job of this than faculty and staff do. Compared to peers, NDSU students report doing less of this, and employers would like further development of this skill.

### 21. Locating, organizing, and evaluating information from a variety of sources (Avg. Gap Rank = 15)

Locating, organizing, and evaluating information has the 15<sup>th</sup> largest average gap between performance now and future importance on the CULE. This skill ranks in the top ten for performance now for alumni, employers, and students and is in the top ten in terms of future importance for employers and faculty. Freshmen report working on a paper or project that required integrating ideas or information from various sources more often than peers, and seniors report doing this less often (NSSE). Faculty underestimates how much freshmen and overestimates how much seniors think they develop this skill (FSSE). Alumni consistently report their education as having a significantly positive impact on their ability to access and use a variety of information sources and rank this skill 10<sup>th</sup> in importance of 19 skills (AOS).

Conclusion: Although seniors report doing less of this skill than peers, it is generally agreed that students do well at locating, organizing, and evaluating information and that NDSU is meeting students' educational needs in this area.

### 22. Analyzing and drawing conclusions from a variety of sources to solve complex problems (Avg. Gap Rank = 7)

Analyzing and drawing conclusions has the 7<sup>th</sup> largest average gap between performance now and future importance of the 29 CULE items and has the 16<sup>th</sup> highest average performance now. This skill has the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> largest gaps for faculty and employers and is in the top ten in terms of future importance for every rating group but students. Alumni and students rank this in the top ten for performance now while faculty and staff rank it in the bottom ten. On the NSSE, freshmen and seniors report doing less analyzing the basic elements of an idea, experience, or theory, less applying theories or concepts to practical problems or new situations, and less solving complex real-world problems than peers. Faculty perceive emphasizing each of these skills more than students perceive (FSSE). Alumni consistently report their education as having a significant impact on their ability to analyze and draw conclusions from various types of data and rank this skill as the 13<sup>th</sup> most important of 19 skills. They also report satisfaction with their education's impact on their ability to define and solve problems (AOS).

Conclusion: Faculty and students see this skill differently; students feel they are doing it better than faculty does and rate it as less important than faculty do. NDSU students report doing less of this skill than peers. Alumni indicate satisfaction with their education in this area.

### 23. Integrating and synthesizing information from a variety of sources (Avg. Gap Rank = 11)

On the CULE, integrating and synthesizing has the 11<sup>th</sup> largest average gap between performance now and future importance of the 29 items. This skill ranks as a top ten gap for employers, faculty, and staff and is in the top ten in terms of future importance for faculty. This skill has the 15<sup>th</sup> highest average performance now of 29 items. Alumni and students rate their performance now in the top ten while faculty and staff rate their performance now in the bottom ten. Freshmen and seniors report less coursework emphasis than peers on synthesizing and organizing ideas, information, or experiences and report doing less putting together ideas/concepts from different courses when completing assignments or during class discussions (NSSE). Faculty perceive emphasizing synthesizing and organizing more than students perceive; they are in general agreement about the extent to which students put together ideas from different courses for discussions and assignments (FSSE).

Conclusion: Faculty, staff, and employers view this skill as more important than alumni and students and view students' performance less favorably than students do. NDSU students report doing less of this skill than peers.



#### 24. Using spreadsheets and database tools to organize and analyze information (Avg. Gap Rank = 26)

Using spreadsheets and databases has the 4<sup>th</sup> smallest average gap between performance now and future importance on the CULE and is ranked 17<sup>th</sup> on average performance now of the 29 items. Using spreadsheets and databases was ranked in the bottom ten in terms of future importance by faculty, staff, and students. Employers rate satisfaction as exceeding expectation on graduates' advanced computer skills (e.g., spreadsheets and databases) on the ESS.

Conclusion: Students appear to be performing proportionally to the perceived importance of the skill and performing well in the eyes of employers.



#### 25. Working effectively as a team member (Avg. Gap Rank = 13)

On the CULE, working effectively as a team member has the 13<sup>th</sup> largest average gap of the 29 items and has the highest average performance now rating of all items. This skill is in the top five performance now scores by all rating groups. Working as a team member is the most important future skill for employers and in the top ten for all rating groups but faculty. Freshmen report working with other students during and outside class about as often as peers, and seniors report doing this more often than peers (NSSE). Both freshmen and seniors report learning to work effectively with others to about the same extent to a little less than peers (NSSE). Students report learning more about working effectively with others than faculty perceives (FSSE). Employers rate satisfaction below expectation on graduates' ability to listen to others and do teamwork; the ratings improved from 2008 to 2010 (ESS). Alumni rank working as a team member as the 3<sup>rd</sup> most important skill of 19 skills and having consistently reported their education as having met their needs in this area.

Conclusion: Although employers rate graduates' a bit negatively on this skill, the data overall show students doing well and alumni being happy with the impact of their education on their ability to work as a member of a team.



#### 26. Working effectively with people from different backgrounds and cultures (Avg. Gap Rank = 8)

Working with people from different backgrounds has the 8<sup>th</sup> largest average gap between performance now and future importance of the 29 CULE items and the 14<sup>th</sup> highest average performance now score. This skill is rated as a top ten gap for alumni, faculty, staff, and students and is in the top ten in terms of future importance for all rating groups but employers. On the AOS, alumni rate getting along with people with different attitudes/opinions and different cultures/backgrounds as the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> most important skills of 19 skills and generally indicate their education as having met their needs in this area; getting along with people from various cultures/races/backgrounds, etc., tends to be rated lower than getting along with different attitudes/opinions.

Conclusion: It appears students are performing adequately at present, but every rating group other than employers rates this skill high in importance and would like to see even better performance. Alumni are generally satisfied with the impact of their education in this area, but there is room for improvement on this skill relative to the other skills.


**27. Valuing lifelong learning and intellectual curiosity** (Avg. Gap Rank = 16)

Valuing lifelong learning has the 16<sup>th</sup> largest average gap between performance now and future importance of the 29 CULE items and has the 5<sup>th</sup> highest average performance now rating. This is a top ten skill in terms of future importance for employers, faculty, and students. Alumni rank making and exercising a lifelong commitment to learning between the 6<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> most important skill of 19, and they see their education as meeting their needs.

Conclusion: Faculty and students are in agreement about the importance of this skill, and students are doing well in this area.


**29. Completing an integrative experience** (Avg. Gap Rank = 19)

Completing an integrative experience has the 19<sup>th</sup> largest average gap between performance now and future importance of the 29 CULE items and has the 3<sup>rd</sup> highest average performance now rating. Alumni, employers, staff and students view this skill in the top ten in terms of future importance; faculty does not. Students rank this skill in their top ten gaps between performance now and future importance. Seniors report planning to or having completed a culminating senior experience (capstone course, senior project/thesis, comprehensive exam, etc.) more often than peers (NSSE). Seniors rate completing a culminating experience as important or very important as often as faculty; freshmen do not (FSSE).

Conclusion: Although students indicate a gap in performance and future importance on the CULE, they appear to value this skill and, according to other rating groups, are doing well in this area compared to peers (especially seniors).