

Co-Curricular Student Learning Outcomes and Assessment

Purpose

This guide is to help develop and implement meaningful co-curricular assessment plans. The handbook details the five co-curricular learning outcomes for the institution, which also complement the institution's general education outcomes. This resource explains the basic concepts and processes of assessment, provides examples and strategies for meeting specific requirements, and offers approaches for making assessment a useful tool in co-curricular programming.

What Is Co-Curricular?

The Higher Learning Commission (HLC) defines **co-curricular** as:

Learning activities, programs and experiences that reinforce the institution's mission and values and complement the formal curriculum. Examples: Study abroad, student-faculty research experiences, service learning, professional clubs or organization, athletics, honor societies, career services, etc. (Core Component 4.B, <https://www.hlcommission.org/Policies/core-component-4-b-what-does-hlc-mean-by-cocurricular.html>)

Co-curricular differs from "extra-curricular" in that the activities designed as co-curricular support the learning and professional development of the academic programs, while "extra" curricular activities are not held to that expectation and provide opportunities for students to interact and enjoy activities that are intended for entertainment and socialization. Such extra-curricular activities are optional, while co-curricular activities are encouraged by the classroom faculty as enrichment and a means to improve the student's professional growth.

Pierpont Community & Technical College considers college-sponsored activities (i.e., student government, student clubs or organizations, and campus events) that contribute to students' educational experiences as co-curricular. These co-curricular activities aim to enhance the learning experience by providing practical applications of theoretical knowledge or by reinforcing classroom learning through activities aligned with curricular learning.

Pierpont examples of each:

Co-curricular:

- APPD students' trip to Greenbrier Resort to study interior design through Dorothy Draper Institute;
- APPD "Re-Fashion Show" in partnership with Salvation Army;

- Field trips to employer sites
- VETT students' overnight trip to Cincinnati Zoo to learn from zoo veterinarians;
- VETT semi-annual pet washes to gain experience handling animals and to provide a community service;
- MLT annual capstone student learning showcase
- MLT-sponsored blood drives
- Student Government and SGA-sponsored events
- Honor Societies (Phi Theta Kappa)
- Student Organizations (APPD*, EC*, FOSM, MLT, PTA, RESP, VETT)
- Career Fairs (Spring 2024, ATC; annual, RCB Center; to include School of BAT for 2024-25)
- Financial Literacy workshops (Fall 2023)
- Dr. Seuss Day: volunteer readers for Early Childhood lab pre-school students
- Health Sciences annual Diversity Summits (2020-2024)
- Field trip to African American History Museum, February 2024
- Field trip to Women's History Museum, March 2024
- FOSM "Culinary Tour" of Boston, MA, Summer 2024

These activities and organizations contribute to the students' educational experiences as co-curricular, enhancing classroom learning and or providing other leadership development opportunities.

Extra-curricular:

- Sponsored trip to Kennywood Park for Festival Lights (December 2023)
- Day trip to Simmons Farm (Fall 2019)
- Welcome Week events and end-of-year picnics
- Take & Make Craft Days
- "Dog Days" Stress Relief Days during finals weeks
- Grocery Bingo
- Virtual yoga

Pierpont Community & Technical College co-curricular activities are college activities, programs, and learning experiences, that have not been identified as strictly "academic" or "operational," but are aligned with the college's mission, vision, strategic goals, and learning outcomes. Co-curricular activities can incorporate the institution's general education outcomes, especially those that are considered more "abstract," such as critical thinking; global awareness/diversity; and professionalism; however, co-curricular experiences can enhance even the more "concrete" general education outcomes.

For example, to improve students' written communication, optional workshops led by professional or peer tutors would be considered "co-curricular." Math clinics promoting the improvement of "quantitative literacy" in program-specific competencies would count as "co-curricular." There are many opportunities to create programming outside the traditional class hours that can enhance student learning and sharpen the profile of Pierpont graduates.

Research shows that students who participate in co-curricular programming are more inclined to persist in college longer and earn higher grade point averages, as well as report greater satisfaction with their educational experience.

In addition to supporting the college mission and vision, each co-curricular activity is encouraged to meet at least two (2) of the following learning outcomes areas.

I. PROBLEM-SOLVING & CRITICAL THINKING

Co-curricular description from Involve platform: This competency will help students master the process of designing, evaluating, and implementing a strategy to answer an open-ended question or achieve a desired goal.

Develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills by participating in any of the following:

- academic competitions or student research projects;
- leadership role and or participation in SGA or student organization;
- Participating in time management, financial literacy, or other life skill workshops, beneficial for emerging professionals
- Identifying a campus or program need and generating practical solutions

II. TEAMWORK/COLLABORATION

Co-curricular description from Involve platform: This competency will help students become better team members by cultivating effective skills and behaviors necessary to operate as a team.

Demonstrate the ability to offer alternative solutions or courses of action that build upon the ideas of others.

Examples:

- Work as an organization to complete a group project by deadline
- Contribute to group meetings; brings thoughtful ideas to the project
- Participate in planning and execution of event outside traditional meeting time
- Working alongside a community organization to accomplish a goal

III. COMMUNICATIONS

Co-curricular description from Involve platform: This competency will help students create a prepared, purposeful presentation or intentional dialog designed to increase knowledge, foster understanding, or to promote change in a listener's attitudes, values, beliefs, and behaviors.

Practice written and verbal communication to enhance teamwork and or provide effective messaging.

- Participate in events that require clear, concise delivery of thoughts and ideas, such as escape room events, workshops, mock trials, and teambuilding exercises.
- Prepare and present oral presentations for student research or student organization projects.
- Prepare flyers, advertisements, and or social media posts to promote events and activities
- Participate in mock interviews for career preparation

IV. DIVERSITY; INCLUSION; GLOBAL AWARENESS

Co-curricular description from Involve platform: Mastery of this competency will give students a set of cognitive, affective, and behavioral skills and characteristics that support affective and appropriate interaction in various cultural contexts.

Ability to form cognitive, affective, and behavioral skills and characteristics that support productive interactions in various cultural contexts.

- Participate in college-sponsored DEI trainings, Diversity Summits, or other events, such as study abroad or other outreach and indicate, through reflection and assessments a degree of personal or professional growth
- Participate in a language learning opportunity, possibly through an institutional license for a language learning app
- Serve as "conversation partner" with ESL community member
- Attend cultural events and participate in cultural learning activities or community service initiatives that promote cultural competency

V. LEADERSHIP & CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

Co-curricular description from Involve platform: This competency help you make a difference in the civic life of your communities and develop the combination of knowledge, skills, values, and motivation to make that difference and promote the

quality of life in the community through both political and non-political purposes.

Participation in activities of personal and public concern that are individually enriching and socially beneficial to the community through both political and non-political processes.

- Membership and participation in Student Government Association
- Membership and participation in academic honor societies, including but not limited to Phi Theta Kappa, and program-specific student organizations
- Working alongside community organizations and advocacy groups to achieve a common goal (eg. Voter registration drive)
- Spearheading a civic project that serves the wider community and demonstrates social responsibility (eg. food and clothing collections, blood drives, etc.)

All co-curricular activities, including the examples above, will encourage and contribute to personal and professional growth and development of our learners, enhancing their employability and academic prospects post-Pierpont.

How are the Co-Curricular Outcomes Different from the General Education Outcomes?

Three (3) of Pierpont’s general education outcomes resemble a few of the co-curricular learning outcomes. In addition to the general education outcomes for written and oral communication, technical/digital literacy, and quantitative literacy, Pierpont’s general education outcomes include professionalism, global awareness/diversity, and critical thinking, all of which relate to the co-curricular outcomes, as referenced in Table 2.

Table 2. Alignment of Co-Curricular Outcomes with Current General Education Outcomes

General Education Outcome		Co-Curricular Domain & Outcomes
Professionalism	Practice ethical behavior, including professional standards of behavior and time management.	Leadership,
		Communication &
		Teamwork
		Develop professionalism or leadership skills through participation in student government or student organization leadership positions.
		Cultivate teamwork or collaboration abilities through involvement in

		group projects or community service initiatives.
Global Awareness/Diversity	Demonstrate how issues of diversity both in our state and around the world affect us and our profession/service.	Civic Engagement and Diversity and Inclusion Acquire cultural competency by participating in cultural learning activities or community service initiatives.
Critical Thinking	Analyze information from various sources to propose and justify solutions to problems.	Problem Solving and Critical Thinking Develop critical thinking skills and problem-solving skills by participating in academic competitions or student research projects.

When academic programs integrate learning activities required to fulfill a course requirement or contribute to the grade the student earns in a class, that activity is the purview of curricular, general education. In contrast, when programs or the college promote involvement and engagement in activities intended for personal, academic, or professional growth that are NOT required to fulfill a course requirement, Pierpont considers these student learning activities as **co-curricular** if NOT a required course component. Co-curricular activities are typically *ungraded*; however, they are still valuable components of student learning and faculty are encouraged to *assess* these co-curricular activities to determine how the activities can be revised to include more students in even more meaningful ways.

All student engagement or involvement activities deemed co-curricular must be aligned with a co-curricular learning outcome to qualify as one.

What Is Assessment?

Assessment helps answer some simple questions:

- What is it that we do?
- Why do we do it?
- How well do we do it?

- How do we use what we learn to change and improve?
- Did the changes and improvements create the outcome we desired and—if not—what can we do to revise the learning activity to ensure the intended goal?

Co-curricular assessment is about developing clear goals and student learning outcomes of the activity and measuring student learning towards those goals. Once assessed, the information gained can help drive improvements for the next iteration of the activity.

Just as faculty develop student learning outcomes for courses, every co-curricular activity will have at least two student learning outcomes that incorporate the co-curricular outcomes areas.

Co-Curricular Assessment Plan

All programs engaging students with co-curricular learning activities shall submit a Co-Curricular Assessment Plan to their respective dean and the interim Associate Vice President of Student Services, who will engage the Admissions/Advising staff whose area of specialty entails co-curricular learning.

Each co-curricular learning activity proposed should be completed in the fill-able form in the co-curricular app, INVOLVE. Programs or activities that engage or involve students may use one of the supplied AACU VALUE rubrics for assessment or use a measurement of their own design, such as a pre- and post-survey.

Programs and departments should be proactive in the design and delivery of their co-curricular learning activities to plan for an effective experience and to ensure that any budget requests of Student Government can be considered and allocated appropriately.

A plan template is provided that includes the assessment activities, outcomes, cycles, methods, and measures. Co-curricular learning plans should be received no later than **October 1** for the Fall semester and **February 1** for the Spring semester.

Ideally, programs would consider the entire academic year when planning and are strongly encouraged to submit their plan for the year in October.

Note: These deadlines apply to overall planning purposes: stating which outcomes areas the individual program wishes to focus and their proposed activities. These deadlines are NOT intended to discourage activities throughout the semester not included in the original plan.

DEGREE PROGRAM CO-CURRICULAR PLANNING TEMPLATE: SOON TO BE A FILLABLE FORM!

Draft Plan due by October 1 of current year for planning purposes; a final report will be due by September 30th of the following academic year.

Additional forms may be submitted with individual requests throughout the year.

Plan for Academic Year:	Submitted by:	Submission Date:

1. **Name of Co-Curricular Activity / Program**
2. **Rationale/Justification:** (What evidence of student learning or other reason do you have for providing this experience for students)
3. **Co-curricular Outcomes** (With which co-curricular outcomes does the activity align? How does this fit into the bigger picture?)

_____ Problem Solving & Critical Thinking

_____ Teamwork

_____ Communication

_____ Diversity/Global Awareness

_____ Leadership & Civic Engagement

4. **Student Learning Outcomes:** As a result of having participated in _____, students will be able to know or do the following:

- Students will be able to _____.
- Students will be able to _____.
- Students will be able to _____.

5. **Activities designed to reach those intended learning outcomes:**

6. **Data Collection Plan** (What are your criteria? What level of performance is acceptable? Are there internal targets or external benchmarks you hope to achieve? Refer to your rubric as a reference.)

7. **Data Analysis Plan** (How will you review the data you collected? Who is responsible?)

Assessment Results Review

(What will you do with assessment results?)

8. **Discussion and Sharing Plan** (For example: with your supervisor, a certain office, director, etc.)
9. **Person who will complete the final report and make recommendations for future assessment questions** (Who is responsible for completing this cycle?)

DEGREE PROGRAM CO-CURRICULAR REPORTING TEMPLATE: Soon to be a Fillable Form!

Academic Year Assessed:	Submitted by:	Submission Date:

1. **Name of Co-Curricular Activity / Program**
2. **Rationale:**
3. **Co-curricular Outcomes** (Choose a minimum of two)

☐ Problem Solving & Critical Thinking
☐ Teamwork
☐ Communication
☐ Diversity/Global Awareness
☐ Leadership & Civic Engagement

4. **Student Learning Outcomes Assessed:**

- X
- X
- x

Assessment Method

5. **Activities or Measures Assessed** (What did you measure?)
6. **Data Collection Method** (How did you measure it?)
7. **Data Analysis** (What were the results of the measurement?)

Assessment Results Review

8. **Discussion and Sharing** (What did you learn? Who discussed the results? Who were results shared with?)
9. **Changes or Improvements** (What will you do differently or change based on what you learned?)

Co-Curricular Assessment Reporting Calendar

All co-curricular programs will report the assessment activities their program completed for the previous academic year (July 1 to June 30) by September 30th of each year. For example, a report due September 30, 2025, will encompass activities completed during the 2024-2025 Academic Year.

Appendix A

Profile of a Pierpont Graduate

A Pierpont graduate is prepared for the growing demands of the workforce and continuing academic studies. A Pierpont graduate has demonstrated the ability to analyze and problem solve, make informed decisions, communicate ideas, and exemplify professionalism in a larger community.

General Education Outcomes

Pierpont faculty, administration, the business community, and our graduates have worked together to identify the following qualities and outcomes that are essential for each Pierpont graduate to possess.

Communication

Write effectively at college level expectations. Speak effectively at college level expectations.

Professionalism

Practice ethical behavior, including professional standards of behavior and time management.

Critical Thinking

Analyze information from various sources to propose and justify solutions to problems.

Technical Literacy

Demonstrate the ability to use and adapt to current and new technologies in the context of academic and workplace application.

Quantitative Literacy

Demonstrate proficiency in using and applying mathematical concepts and skills in personal or workplace situations.

Global Awareness/Diversity

Demonstrate how issues of diversity both in our state and around the world affect us and our profession/service.

Co-Curricular Student Learning Outcomes**1. Problem Solving and Critical Thinking**

This competency will help students master the process of designing, evaluating, and implementing a strategy to answer an open-ended question or achieve a desired goal.

2. Teamwork

This competency will help students become better team members by cultivating effective skills and behaviors necessary to operate as a team.

3. Communication

This competency will help students create a prepared, purposeful presentation or intentional dialog designed to increase knowledge, foster understanding, or to promote change in a listener's attitudes, values, beliefs, and behaviors.

4. Diversity/ Inclusion/ Global Awareness

Mastery of this competency will give students a set of cognitive, affective, and behavioral skills and characteristics that support affective and appropriate interaction in various cultural contexts.

5. Leadership and Civic Engagement

This competency help you make a difference in the civic life of your communities and develop the combination of knowledge, skills, values, and motivation to make that difference and promote the quality of life in the community through both political and non-political purposes.

CO-CURRICULAR PLANNING TEMPLATE: EXAMPLE

General Plan Due October 1, 2024 for Fall 2024

Academic Year	Program Submitting Plan	Submission Date
2024-25	Any Program, AAS	Sept. 20, 2024

1. Co-Curricular Activity/Program:

Volunteer to assist on a Habitat for Humanity worksite.

2. Rationale/Justification: (What evidence of student learning or other reason do you have for providing this experience for students?)

Many students have limited work experience for a resume, and this group volunteer experience can help fill gaps AND it will meet a community need that would be beneficial for our students to participate in.

3. Co-curricular Outcomes (Most activities can encompass at least two co-curricular outcomes.)

☐ Problem Solving & Critical Thinking

☒ Teamwork

☐ Communication

☐ Diversity/Global Awareness

☒ Leadership/Civic Engagement

4. Student Learning Outcomes: As a result of having participated in _____, students will be able to know or do the following:

Demonstrate the ability to work cooperatively with diverse team members, sharing responsibilities and contributing to the overall project goals.

Demonstrate effective leadership skills by organizing tasks, motivating team members, and making decisions that contribute to the project's success at the Habitat for Humanity site.

Appreciate community needs: Students will identify and explain specific housing challenges in their community and how Habitat for Humanity addresses these issues.

5. Activities designed to reach those intended learning outcomes:

- *Student-initiated contact with the organization*
- *Schedule the actual work day; communicate among team members the details; work together productively on-site*
- *Participate in pre-volunteer orientation to learn about the mission of the organization*

6. How to Assess: One or any

- *Peer Assessment checklist*
- *Site supervisor commentary*
- *Perceived value of activity; pre/post*

7. Data Collection Plan (What are your criteria? What level of performance is acceptable? If using a rubric, is there a threshold you wish to meet or exceed?)

First time activity is sponsored; will use initial data to set benchmarks for future. At minimum, intend for students to find at least minimal value in the activity and for group to be rated "average" or above in teamwork.

8. Data Analysis Plan (How will you review the data collected? Who is responsible?)

Program advisors will review and consult with Student Services Co-Curricular task group (Nancy Parks, primary contact)

9. Discussion and Sharing Plan (For example, with your supervisor, a certain office, director, etc.)

Sponsoring faculty will share results of co-curricular learning activity and results and plans for revisions (if any) at program and School meetings, as well as in final Co-Curricular Assessment report due by Sept. 30 of next year.

SIMPLIFIED VERSION

1. Co-Curricular Activity/Program: Volunteer at Habitat for Humanity worksite.
2. Rationale/Justification: Provides work experience for resumes and meets community needs.
3. Co-curricular Outcomes:
 - Teamwork
 - Leadership/Civic Engagement
4. Student Learning Outcomes:
 - Work cooperatively in diverse teams
 - Demonstrate leadership skills
 - Understand community housing challenges
5. Activities:
 - Contact organization
 - Schedule and participate in work day
 - Attend pre-volunteer orientation
6. How to Assess:
 - Peer assessment checklist
 - Site supervisor commentary
 - Pre/post perceived value survey
7. Data Collection Plan: Initial data to set future benchmarks. Aim for minimal value to students and "average" or above teamwork rating.
8. Data Analysis Plan: Program advisors review with Student Services Co-Curricular task group.
9. Discussion and Sharing Plan: Share results and revision plans at program and School meetings, and in Co-Curricular Assessment report.

PIERPONT COMMUNITY & TECHNICAL COLLEGE

CO-CURRICULAR ASSESSMENT PLAN

PREFACE: UNDERSTANDING CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

What Is Co-Curricular?

The Higher Learning Commission (HLC) defines **co-curricular** as:

Learning activities, programs and experiences that reinforce the institution's mission and values and complement the formal curriculum. Examples: Study abroad, student-faculty research experiences, service learning, professional clubs or organization, athletics, honor societies, career services, etc.

Co-Curricular vs. Extra-Curricular

Co-curricular differs from "extra-curricular" in that:

- **Co-curricular activities** support the learning and professional development of academic programs
- **Extra-curricular activities** provide opportunities for entertainment and socialization but are not held to educational expectations
- Co-curricular activities are encouraged by classroom faculty as enrichment and a means to improve students' professional growth
- Extra-curricular activities are optional social experiences

Pierpont's Definition

Pierpont Community & Technical College considers college-sponsored activities (student government, student clubs or organizations, and campus events) that contribute to students' educational experiences as **co-curricular**. These activities:

- Enhance the learning experience by providing practical applications of theoretical knowledge
- Reinforce classroom learning through activities aligned with curricular learning
- Support personal and professional growth and development
- Enhance employability and academic prospects post-Pierpont

Examples at Pierpont

Co-curricular activities include:

- Field trips to employer sites
- Professional development workshops
- Student organization leadership roles
- Career fairs and networking events
- Service learning projects
- Academic competitions
- Industry-specific showcases and presentations

Extra-curricular activities include:

- Entertainment trips (Kennywood Park)
- Craft days and stress relief activities
- Social events and picnics
- Recreational activities without learning objectives

Plan for Academic Year: 2024-2025

Submitted by: [Program Name/Faculty Name]

Submission Date: [Date]

1. Name of Co-Curricular Activity/Program

[Enter specific activity name - e.g., "Professional Development Workshop Series" or "Student Leadership Conference"]

2. Rationale/Justification

What evidence of student learning or other reason do you have for providing this experience for students?

[Example: Students in our program need enhanced professional communication skills and leadership experience to be competitive in the job market. This activity addresses gaps identified in graduate exit surveys and employer feedback regarding soft skills development.]

3. Co-Curricular Outcomes

Which co-curricular outcomes does the activity align with? How does this fit into the bigger picture?

- ☐ **Problem Solving & Critical Thinking**
- ☐ **Teamwork/Collaboration**
- ☐ **Communication**
- ☐ **Diversity/Global Awareness**
- ☐ **Leadership & Civic Engagement**

Select at least two (2) outcomes that align with your planned activities.

4. Student Learning Outcomes

As a result of having participated in [activity name], students will be able to know or do the following:

- Students will be able to _____
- Students will be able to _____
- Students will be able to _____

5. Activities Designed to Reach Those Intended Learning Outcomes

Specific activities and experiences planned:

- [Activity 1: Description and timeline]
- [Activity 2: Description and timeline]
- [Activity 3: Description and timeline]

6. Data Collection Plan

What are your criteria? What level of performance is acceptable? Are there internal targets or external benchmarks you hope to achieve?

Assessment Methods:

- ☐ Pre/Post Survey
- ☐ Peer Assessment Checklist
- ☐ Self-Reflection Rubric
- ☐ Supervisor/Mentor Evaluation
- ☐ Portfolio Assessment
- ☐ Other: _____

Performance Criteria:

- [Specific measurable outcomes]
- [Benchmark targets - e.g., "80% of participants will rate experience as valuable or higher"]

- [Reference to rubric if applicable]

7. Data Analysis Plan

How will you review the data you collected? Who is responsible?

Review Process:

- Data collection responsibility: [Name/Title]
- Analysis method: [Quantitative/Qualitative approach]
- Review timeline: [When analysis will be completed]
- Responsible parties: [Names and roles]

8. Assessment Results Review

What will you do with assessment results?

- Compile and analyze data by [date]
- Compare results to established benchmarks
- Identify areas for improvement
- Document lessons learned
- Develop recommendations for future iterations

9. Discussion and Sharing Plan

For example: with your supervisor, a certain office, director, etc.

Results will be shared with:

- [Immediate supervisor/dean]
- [Student Services Co-Curricular team]
- [Program faculty at department meetings]
- [Other relevant stakeholders]

10. Person Responsible for Final Report

Who is responsible for completing this cycle and making recommendations for future assessment questions?

Primary Contact: [Name, Title, Email]

Secondary Contact: [Name, Title, Email]

IMPORTANT DEADLINES

- **Planning Deadline:** October 1 for Fall semester activities
 - **Planning Deadline:** February 1 for Spring semester activities
 - **Final Report Due:** September 30 following completion of academic year
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ASSESSMENT RUBRIC REFERENCE

Activities may use:

- AACU VALUE Rubrics for standardized assessment
 - Pre/Post surveys measuring student satisfaction and applicability provided by service provider
 - Custom rubrics designed by individual program faculty for specific learning outcomes per respective academic courses, including but not limited to pre/post surveys, faculty checklists, external observer commentary, etc.
 - Pre/post surveys measuring student growth and satisfaction
 - Applicable standardized assessment tools, including the use of *AACU VALUE* Rubrics and *CCSSE*-like co-curricular items on institution-wide surveys
-

Note: This plan template aligns with Pierpont Community & Technical College's five co-curricular learning outcomes and complements the institution's general education outcomes. Each activity should support students' personal and professional growth while enhancing their employability and academic prospects.