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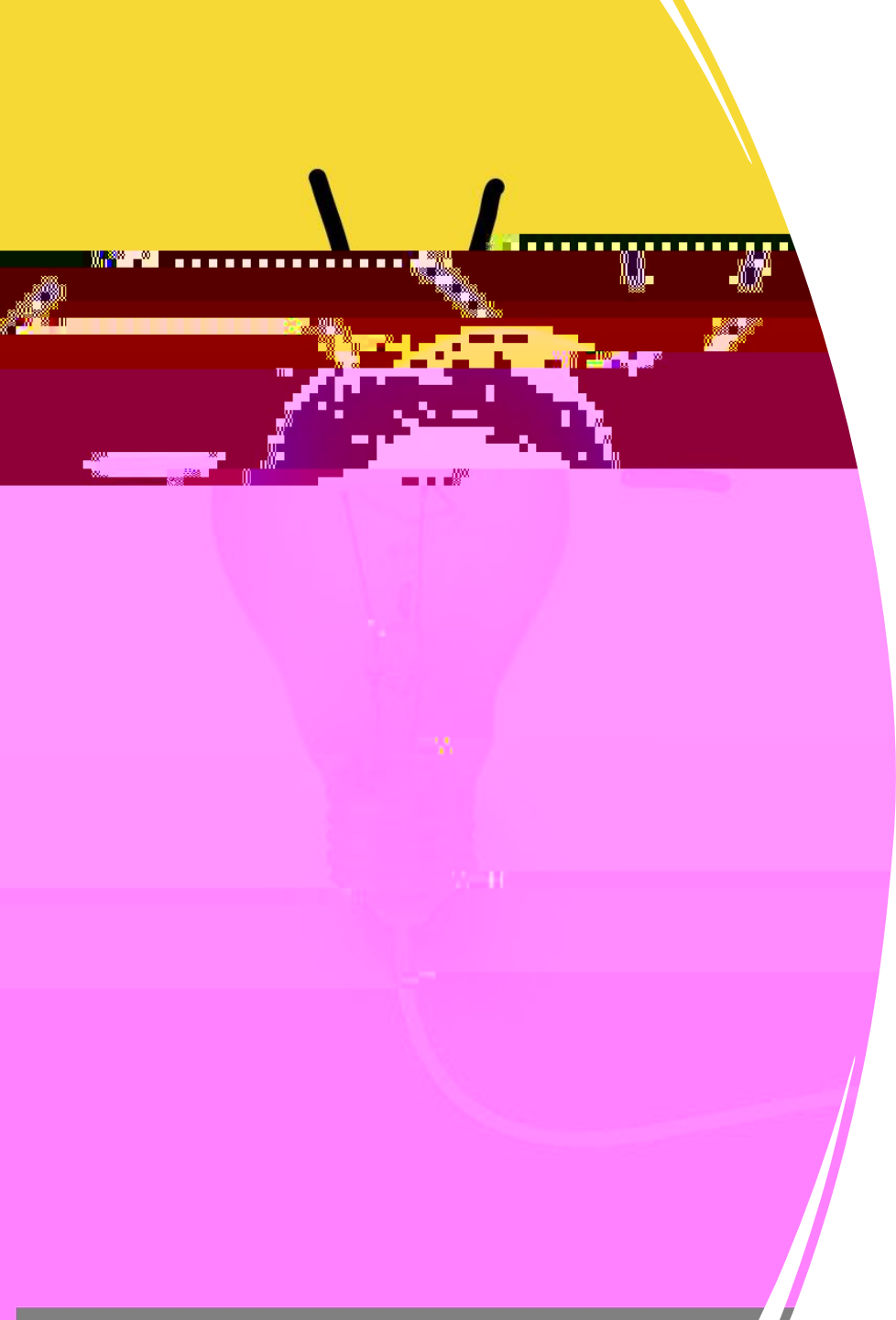
Workshop Objectives

Understand signature assignments

Examine examples

Evaluate signature assignments in existing courses

Why signature assignments?

General Education Assessment

    Assess student learning aligned to outcomes

    Communities of Practice

        Focused Learning Improvement Projects

        [General Education Assessment | Lindenwood University](#)

AAC&U Rubrics

    [AAC&U Value Report 2017](#)

What is a signature assignment?

Signature Assignments are projects that ask students to reflect on what they are learning, helping them to understand relationships between course material, broader learning outcomes, the community, and their own identity (McGrady, 2021)

Demonstrate and apply their proficiency in one or more key learning outcomes (AAC&U, n.d.).

Synthesizing, analyzing, and applying cumulative knowledge and skills through problem- or inquiry-based assignments or projects (AAC&U. n.d.).

Follows a theme across curricular and co-curricular experiences tied to the institutional mission or features of the surrounding community, allowing students to apply their growing knowledge and abilities to meaningful questions over time (AAC&U. n.d.).

Involves "real-

What is a signature assignment?

The most distinctive feature of signature assignments is the way programs integrate them across the educational

Aligning Signature Assignments

Per Egan et al. (2018), Nebraska Wesleyan re-examined their senior capstone courses for signature 'work'. This was their definition or list of outcomes:

- Synthesize and integrate cumulative knowledge
- Apply learning and create new knowledge
- Work independently, bringing their own ideas to their work
- Present the results of the capstone work to an audience
- Meet rigorous professional and disciplinary standards
- Reflect on their own development

Essays, response papers, lab reports or research papers all tap discipline-specific knowledge (Learning Outcome #1) and effective communication (LO #2), and possibly quantitative literacy (LO #3) if the subject requires students to perform data analysis.

Solution to a realistic Math problem that asks students to write about the process of solving the problem, the relevance of the problem, and/or the application of the problem-solving skill to other issues or areas of life. The problem addresses quantitative literacy (LO #3) and critical thinking (LO #4).

Photos, graphics, or three-dimensional artwork can all be represented in an ePortfolio and likely address discipline knowledge (LO #1) and the creative aspects of critical thinking (LO #4).

Service-learning or field study experiences clearly address discipline knowledge (LO #1). Service- learning addresses civic engagement, which is part of LO #5, and field studies might address any of the other learning outcomes.

PowerPoints, spreadsheets, databases, and webpages can all be represented in--or linked to--the Gen Ed ePortfolio, and may tap any of the college-wide learning outcomes.

Poetry, fiction, pamphlets, posters, and other forms of writing address discipline knowledge (LO #1) and the creative aspects of critical thinking (LO #4).

Products of group projects can be excellent signature assignments, allowing students to demonstrate the portion of LO #5 dealing with the ability to "work with others in a professional and constructive

Aligning Signature Assignments

At UM-Flint (McGrady, 2021) In ENG 155: Reading Comics, students with creating their own six-panel comic strip.

The assignment becomes "signature" when students write a reflection paper after completing the project, discussing what they learned to make the comic possible, what they were proud of in the finished product, and the process they used to create their work.

Aligning Curriculum

Connecticut College (n.d.) re-aligned curriculum to integrate their academic experience, including their general education and majors, into thematic pathways

Thematic Inquiry: Every student must take a designated course that presents the theme and provides an overview of the Pathway.

Pathway Courses: These three courses, taken in a variety of departments and disciplines

Global/Local Engagement: Each Pathway requires purposeful engagement in a local or international context (internship or community-based learning).

Senior Reflection: Each Pathway provides an opportunity during the fall of the senior year to reflect on the different elements the Pathway, in the context of the overall undergraduate experience.

ILOs, Graduate Attributes, & Signature Assignments

Adaptable Problem Solver.docx

Responsible Citizen.docx

Global Advocate.docx

Lifelong Learner.docx

Effective Communicator.docx

Ethical Decision Maker.docx

Analytical Thinker.docx

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