ASSIGNMENTS:

Faculty members who are willing to participate in the Pilot Study will be asked to submit student artifacts to be assessed using the appropriate VALUE rubric. Recognizing not all assignments will be well-suited for assessment against all criteria of the appropriate VALUE rubric, faculty will be asked to indicate which criteria of the appropriate VALUE rubric their assignment was designed to address. Faculty members will be encouraged to submit assignments that address as many of the VALUE rubric dimensions for a specific student learning outcome as appropriate to allow for a more comprehensive measure of students’ competency levels for each learning outcome.

To assist faculty in assignment design,

- efforts will be made to provide sample assignments judged to be exemplars for each of the outcomes, and
- broad assignment parameters are provided below to ensure the appropriateness of assignments for assessment using the VALUE rubrics in general.

ASSIGNMENT PARAMETERS:

- **Artifact modality**: Submission of written student artifacts only; exclusion of multiple choice exams and other alternative modalities.

- **Artifact length**: Submission of student work for assessing written communication should be a minimum of 3 – 5 pages long; no upper-page limit.

- **Multiple Revisions**: Submission of student work that has gone through one or more revisions before the student submits the final paper is ACCEPTABLE. Please circle yes on the Assignment Cover sheet if the student was allowed one or more revisions before submitting the final paper.
- **Artifact creator:** Submission of student artifacts that are completed independently (including artifacts for which feedback had been provided on earlier drafts); exclusion of student work completed as a team.

- **Confidentiality/Anonymity:** Submission of student artifacts that breach the confidentiality or anonymity of the student, faculty member or institution providing the work should be excluded.

This decision will be rendered at the institution level. For example, students may reference their campus or instructor in their work. This would breach confidentiality. Institutions must decide the protocol for ensuring submitted student work, after it has been de-identified, cannot be traced back to the student, instructor, or course.

- **Exam Format:** Multiple choice exams are not suited for assessment with the VALUE rubrics even if there are calculations embedded in the questions.

- Peter Ewell, in Occasional Paper #16, *The Lumina Degree Qualifications Profile: Implications for Assessment*, National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment, January 2013, pp. 13-17. Ewell states that “Assignments that detail what task the student should undertake, how the task should be undertaken, how the results should be reported out, and how extensive should the documented evidence be will provide students the guidance and prompts necessary to construct an appropriate answer.”

**INSTITUTION LEADS NEED TO COMMUNICATE THE FOLLOWING WITH INSTRUCTORS:**

1. Institutions should be sure instructors who volunteer to participate in the Pilot Study are prepared to submit:

   - assignment instructions,
   - the corresponding completed student work,
   - a key briefly flagging the genre and disciplinary conventions that would be useful for scorers to be aware of when assessing the student work, and
   - the assignment coversheet provided below.

2. Submission instructions – TBD by each individual institution and in combination with recommendations from data management team — forthcoming

**INSTITUTION LEADS SHOULD COMMUNICATE THE FOLLOWING WITH INSTRUCTORS:**
Instructors may want to know the reasons why we’re requesting assignment instructions and why the completed assignment cover sheet must be submitted with the corresponding student work.

- Instructors are asked to submit their assignment instructions along with the student work as part of the evaluation of the Pilot Study and the validity of the VALUE rubrics. Evaluation of the validity of the assessment tools – the VALUE rubrics – in part depends upon assignment design. As such, a random sample of assignments will be selected and evaluated with respect to their conformity to the assignment parameters and their alignment with the dimensions of the VALUE rubric. The de-identification process will ensure a blind evaluation of assignment instructions; assignment evaluators will be unable to identify the course, faculty member, institution, segment or state from which the assignment originated.

- Assignment instructions will be returned with the student work to institutions. Institutions may wish to undertake a second-level analysis with willing faculty Pilot Study participants on their campuses. Examination of learning outcome dimensions where students performed at expected levels, or below expected levels, or received a score of zero or not applicable, may be helpful for identifying discernable patterns with respect to the corresponding assignment instructions. This second-level analysis is useful in continuing professional development activities around assignment design and the use of the VALUE rubrics for assessing student work.

- The requested rubric information in the assignment cover sheet will also allow for second-level analysis of student work assessment scores at the multi-state, state, and campus levels. If student work was given a score of zero or not applicable, follow-up analysis to determine if the score reflected lower than expected, or desired student performance in this area, or if the student work did not demonstrate that learning outcome dimension because the assignment instructions did not call for the student to address that learning outcome dimension and/or the faculty member did not intend for the student work to be assessed against that specific learning outcome dimension.

- If faculty ask what will be available for the faculty who will be scoring student work, the following is suggested language for explaining why faculty scorers will not have the assignment instructions or cover sheet available to reference when scoring the student work.

  - Faculty scorers will assess student work **without** the corresponding assignment instructions and without the corresponding cover sheet rubric information.
Faculty scorers will not evaluate assignment instructions.

In general, scoring with the assignment instructions often moves faculty toward grading the paper based upon whether the student “followed the assignment instructions and met the assignment requirements” as opposed to assessing whether a student demonstrated the learning outcome at what level. Faculty scorers often begin to evaluate the assignment instructions (informally) which will bias their scoring, and scorers often try to ascertain whether the faculty actually asked students to demonstrate a certain dimension in the assignment instructions or not—which also influences scoring.

The faculty member, not the faculty scorer, should be the one who determines if students should be expected to demonstrate dimensions of the learning outcome rubric. The cover sheet submitted by the faculty member will indicate which dimensions of the learning outcome the student work should be assessed against. The cover sheet will not be available to faculty scorers; faculty will assess the student work against all rubric dimensions. Students may demonstrate dimensions of the learning outcome that the instructor was not necessarily looking for or calling for in this specific assignment. The student may demonstrate this dimension because of learning in previous courses or experiences. We are trying to determine what students know and are able to do based upon their whole academic experience, not just on what was acquired from your course or the course the student work is drawn from. Second-level analysis would involve examining scores to see if the student did or did not demonstrate that dimension of the rubric, and if the student had not demonstrated the outcome is it because, a) the faculty member did not ask students to address that dimension and/or the course did not emphasize demonstration of the rubric dimension, or b) the faculty member expected students to demonstrate that dimension because the assignment and/or the course emphasized demonstration of that rubric dimension.

**Note:** The cover sheet which follows allows for faculty to indicate that the assignment addresses more than one outcome. The student work will only be assessed for one outcome, but if the faculty checks off two learning outcomes, say, written communication and critical thinking, the institution may build into its sampling methods the use of that student work to assess the outcome for which fewer samples of student work have been collected.