Icebreaker

Colorado Technical University

MIND THE GAP: TAKING AN ASSESSMENT "GAP YEAR" TO RETHINK, REWRITE, AND REINVEST IN OUR GENERAL EDUCATION LEARNING OUTCOMES.

Our Panel

Dr. Jennifer Palmer
Dean, College of General Education & Psychology

Dr. Jennifer Daines
Executive Program Director and Project Manager of our ULO Revision Project

Dr. Maggy Carmack
Executive Program Director and Chair of our General Education Assessment Committee

Max Fassnacht
Lead Faculty, History and Facilitator of our General Education Assessment Committee

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LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. Recognize how General Education outcomes should align to your institution's mission.
2. Identify ways in which typical General Education outcomes can be updated for today's student populations.
3. Explain a process you could use at your own institution to rewrite your General Education outcomes.
4. Explain the importance of including perspectives outside of General Education and outside of Academics when you revise or create your General Education outcomes.

OVERVIEW

- Setting the Stage: Leadership Involvement (Dr. Palmer)
- Institutional Background: How we *do* assessment (Dr. Carmack)
- Our ULO Revision Project (Max Fassnacht)
- Using Grounded Theory as Process and Results (Dr. Daines)
- The Way Ahead (Dr. Palmer)
- Closing Exercise - Back to the Drawing Board: Rethinking Your General Education outcomes for 2024 and Beyond (Dr. Daines)

BRIDGING VISION AND PRACTICE: INVESTING IN FACULTY LEADERS TO REVOLUTIONIZE ASSESSMENT

Setting the Vision

- Communicate need for reassessment, tie to University mission, industry and academic standards

Investing in the Team

- Delegate responsibilities, mentor, and develop leaders

Fostering Innovation

- Encourage creative thinking and new approaches

Aligning with the Mission

- Ensure outcomes align with institutional goals

Guiding the Process

- Establish a timeline, provide feedback, remove obstacles

Building Consensus

- Facilitate discussions, navigate conflicts

OUR MISSION

Colorado Technical University's mission is to provide industry relevant higher education to a diverse student population through innovative technology and experienced faculty, enabling the pursuit of personal and professional goals.

Intro and Background of Project

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ASSESSMENT AT CTU: DEFINITIONS

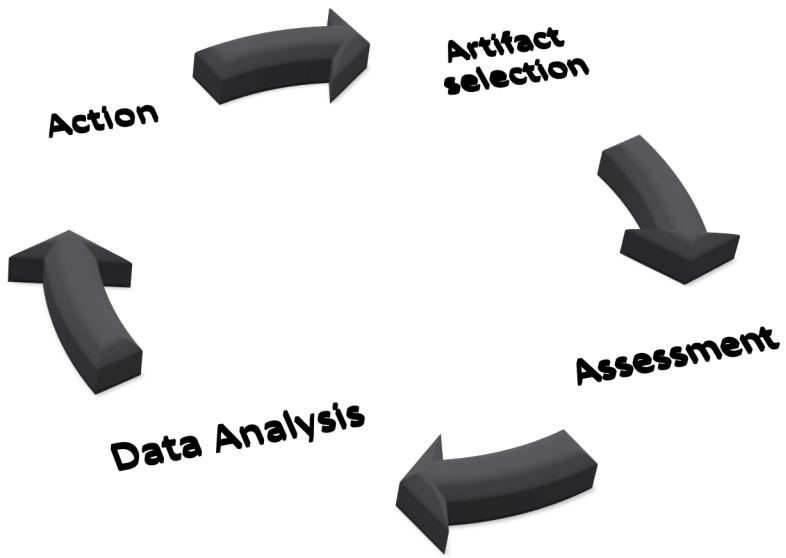
HLC Criterion 4. Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement
"The institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs, learning environments, and support services, and it evaluates their effectiveness for student learning through processes designed to promote continuous improvement."
https://www.hlcommission.org/Policies/criteria-and-core-components.html

CTU Definition: "*The process of understanding the educational effectiveness of our programs and courses toward ensuring student learning*."

Undergraduate Learning Outcomes (ULOs) = General Education Outcomes

ASSESSMENT AT CTU: PROCESS

- Repeat for 2 ULOs each year



ULO Assessment Points:

Start Point

- Usually a 100/200 level course taken at the start of General Education program.

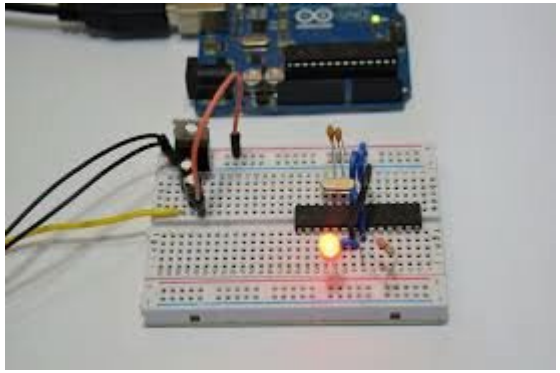
ULO End Point

- Course at the end of the General Education program
- Usually falls midway through the programmatic courses

LESSONS LEARNED: OUTCOME STRUCTURE

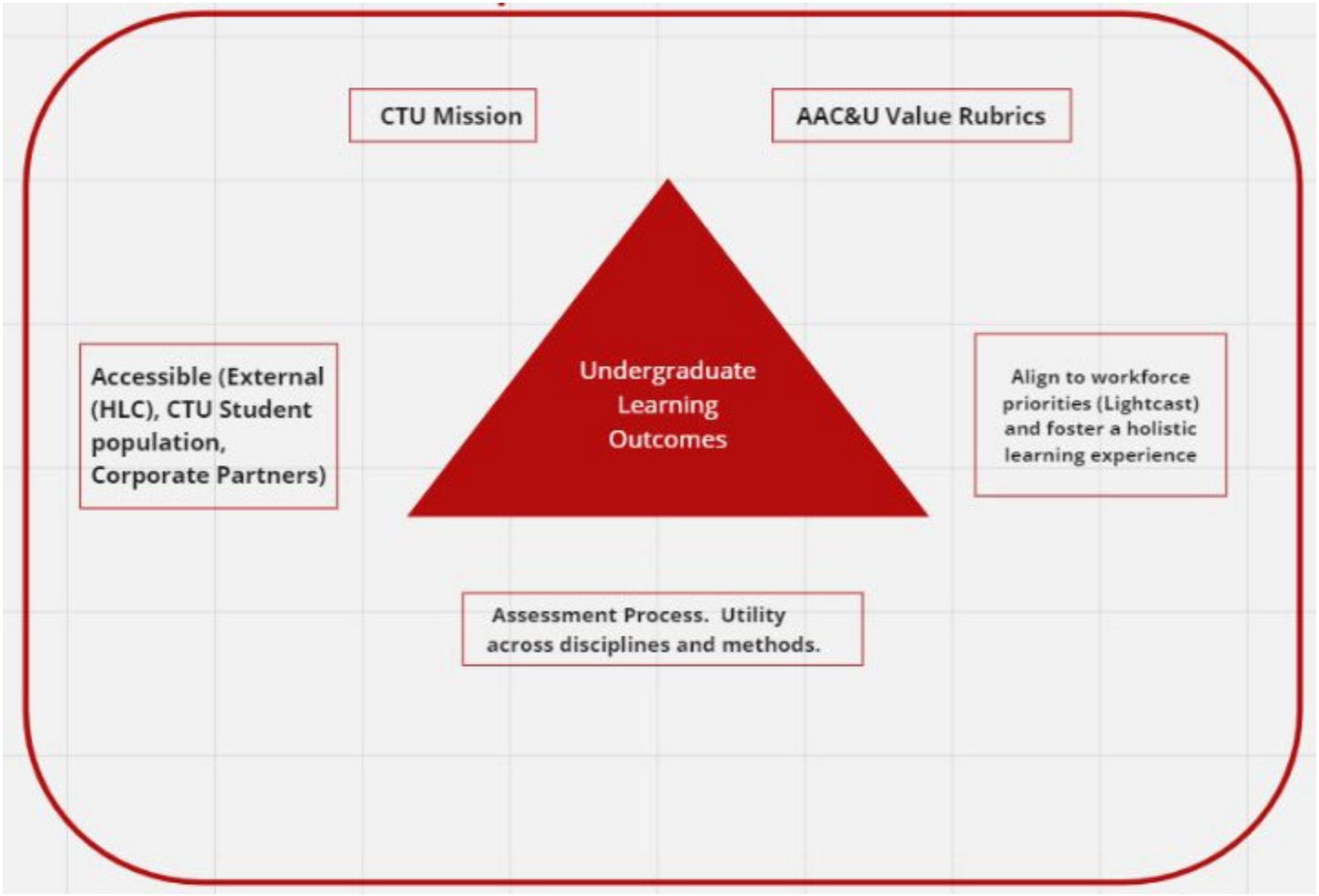
Examples: Outcome / Performance Indicator

- Communicate effectively by developing and articulating ideas in a variety of formats for various audiences.
- Demonstrate information literacy by gathering and critically evaluating information from various data sources to form conclusions, make decisions, or solve problems.
- Demonstrate effective interactions with those who differ in beliefs, behaviors, values or views by exploring diverse perspectives.
- Employ skills, habits, and practices that support professional development.



VS.

REQUIREMENTS FOR ULOS



GOALS OF ULO REVISION PROJECT

Our team had three main primary goals for this project:

1

Take a “Gap Year”

Time to reflect on what worked last assessment cycle and what didn’t

2

Review/Revise ULOs

Evaluate objectives needed for CTU students in 2024 and beyond

3

Obtain Stakeholder Input

Time to reflect on what worked last assessment cycle and what didn’t

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Bringing our ULOs into 2024 and Beyond

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PROJECT TIMELINE

CTU MISSION STATEMENT

Colorado Technical University's mission is to provide industry-relevant higher education to a diverse student population through innovative technology and experienced faculty, enabling the pursuit of personal and professional goals.

What does it mean to fulfill this mission in 2024 and beyond?

STAGE 1 – SOLICIT FEEDBACK FROM STAKEHOLDERS

We met with several groups to solicit high level feedback on the core competencies embedded in the current ULOs:

- General Education Program and Assessment Committees
- Deans and Executive Program Director Councils
- Institutional Effectiveness, Assessment and the Teaching and Learning Center
- College Leadership
  - College of Science Engineering and Technology
  - College of Business Management
  - College of Justice Health and Social Work
  - College of Nursing
  - College of General Education and Psychology
- Adjuncts from English and Science, Engineering and Technology
- CTU Library
- Student Success
- Operations

WE SHOWED EACH GROUP THIS TABLE…

Current ("old") ULOs	What core competency did the ULO include?
Employ skills, habits, and practices that support professional development.	Professional Development/Lifelong Learning
Communicate effectively by developing and articulating ideas in a variety of formats for various audiences.	Communication (covers writing, but not explicitly called out)
Demonstrate analytical reasoning by using quantitative or qualitative information to identify, evaluate and address problems in real world contexts.	Analytical Reasoning (Qual and Quant)
Demonstrate information literacy by gathering and critically evaluating information from various data sources to form conclusions, make decisions, or solve problems.	Information Literacy
Demonstrate effective interactions with those who differ in beliefs, behaviors, values or views by exploring diverse perspectives.	Human Interaction / DEI
Demonstrate ethical decision-making as a student and a professional.	Ethical Decision-making

And then asked, "What are we missing?"

STAGE 2 – RESEARCH

We also looked at internal documents and comparative institution outcomes to determine *needs* and *gaps:*

- AAC&U Value Rubrics
- CTU Mission Statement
- Various Institutions' Gen Ed outcomes
- CTU Alumni and Employment Survey Presentation
- NACE Career Readiness Competencies

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Using a Grounded Theory Approach to Analyzing our Data

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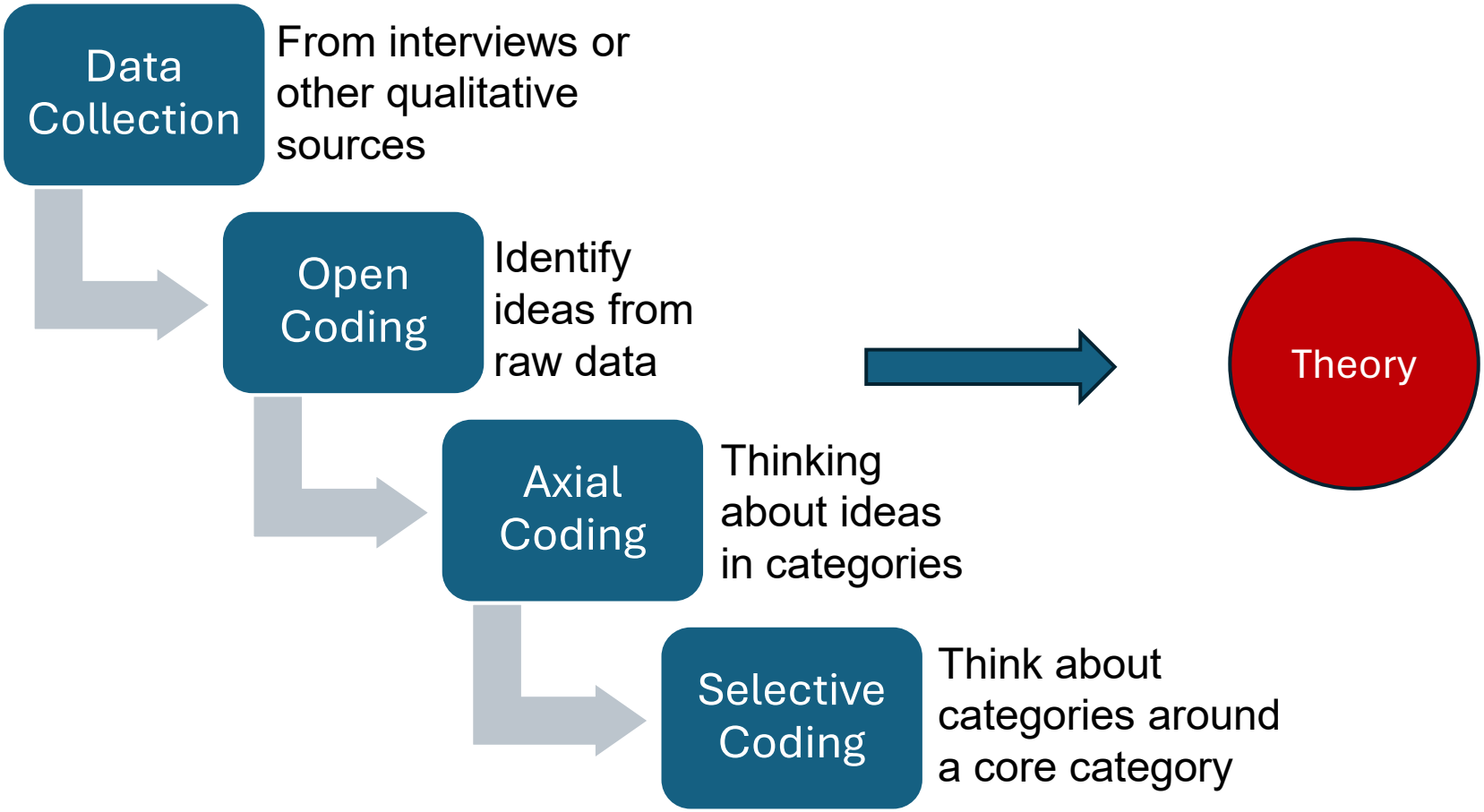
OUR PROCESS – MODIFIED GROUNDED THEORY

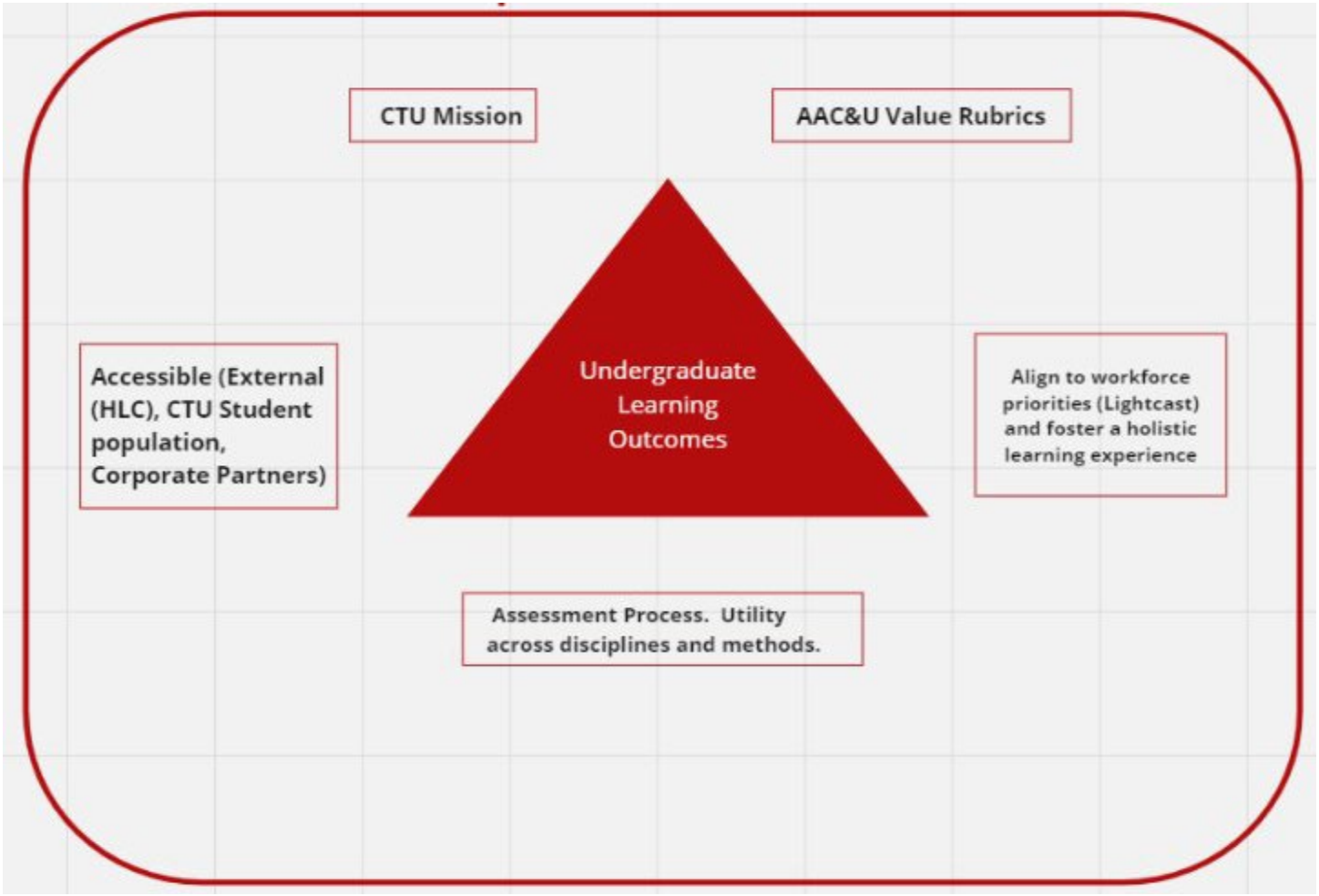
- Grounded Theory
  - Developed by Glaser and Strauss in their "Awareness of Dying" study in 1967.
  - “A systematic, qualitative procedure used to generate theory that explains, at a broad conceptual level, a process, an action, or an interaction about a substantive topic” (Creswell, 2012).
  - “A general methodology for developing theory that is grounded in data which is systematically gathered and analyzed” (Noble & Mitchell, 2016).
  - Inductive in nature

- Modified because we used our qualitative data to develop a *product* instead of a *theory.* Our goal was practical application rather than research.

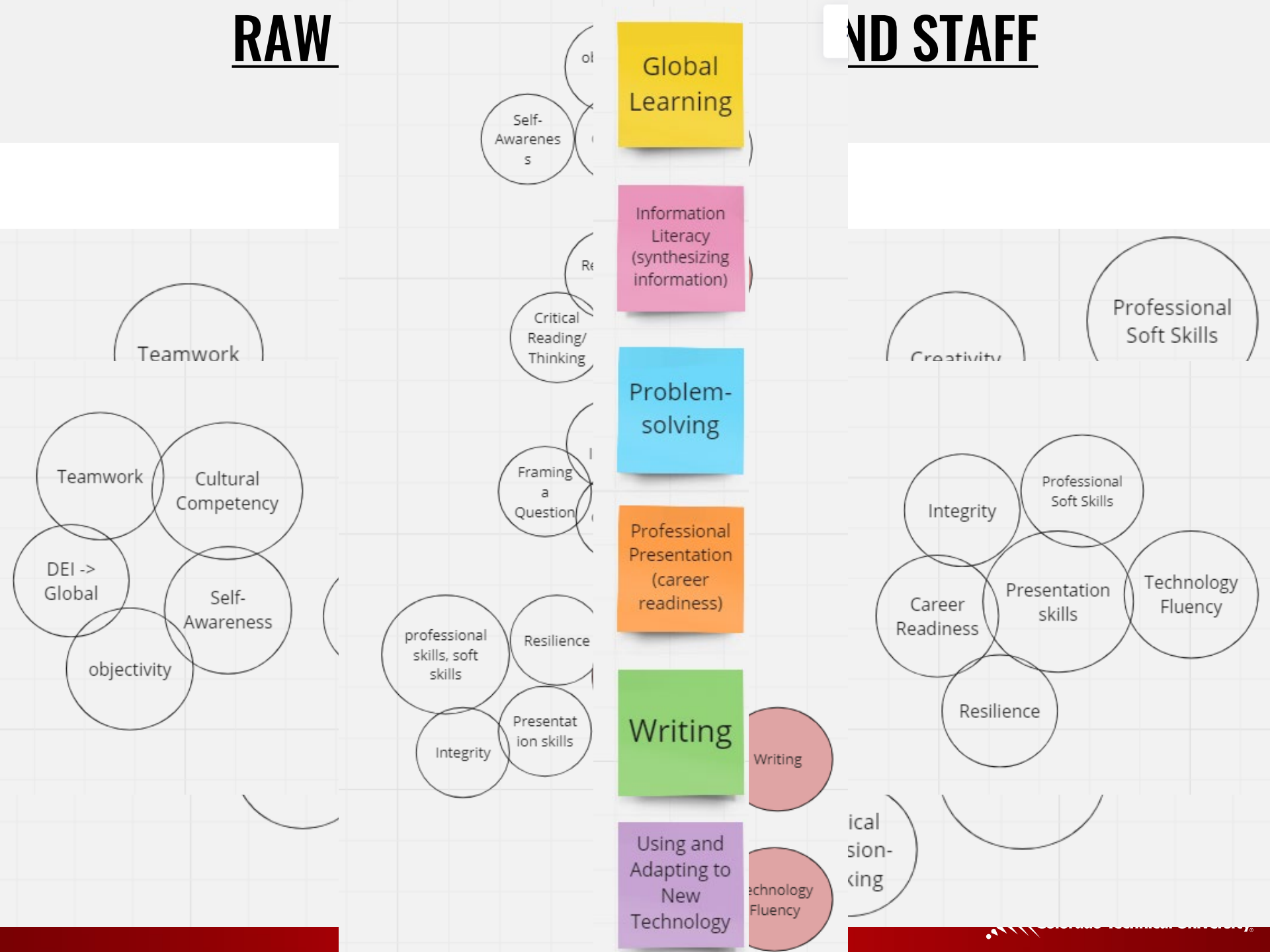
STEPS IN GROUNDED THEORY



REQUIREMENTS FOR ULOS



RAW ND STAFF


Global Learning
Information Literacy (synthesizing information)
Problem-solving
Professional Presentation (career readiness)
Writing
Using and Adapting to New Technology
Self-Awareness
Critical Reading/ Thinking
Framing a Question
professional skills, soft skills
Resilience
Presentation skills
Integrity
Writing
Technology Fluency
Teamwork
Cultural Competency
DEI -> Global
Self-Awareness
objectivity
Professional Soft Skills
Integrity
Career Readiness
Presentation skills
Technology Fluency
Resilience

Representative language from value rubrics that help to define core competency.

Global Learning → Intercultural Competence

"Demonstrates the ability to act in a supportive manner that recognizes the feelings of another cultural group."

Information Literacy (synthesizing information) → Information Literacy

"Communicates, organizes, and synthesizes information from [credible] sources to fully achieve a specific purpose with depth and clarity." (assumes ethical decision-making)

Problem-solving → Problem-solving

"Identifies multiple approaches to solving the problem that apply within a specific context. (Also in the context of ethical decision-making)

Professional Presentation (career readiness) → Professional Presence

Delivery techniques (posture, gesture, eye contact, and vocal expressiveness) make the presentation compelling, and speaker appears polished and confident.

Completes required work, generates and pursues opportunities to expand knowledge, skills, and abilities.

Professional Presence is the skillset needed to present oneself in a competent and confident manner in the modern workplace. It could include skills such as oral communication, personal branding, lifelong learning, openness to feedback, demonstrating integrity, and emotional regulation in stressful situations.

Writing → Written Communication

"Uses graceful language that skillfully communicates meaning to readers with clarity and fluency, and is virtually error-free"

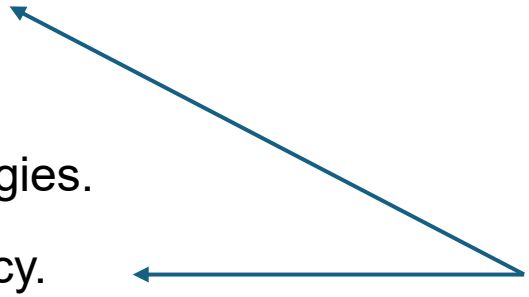
Using and Adapting to New Technology → *Technology Fluency

"Tech fluency is the ability to understand and use technology."

***Not directly tied to value rubric, but broadly related to lifelong learning and very specifically tied to CTU's mission.**

NEW UNDERGRADUATE LEARNING OUTCOMES (ULOS)

1. Develop technology fluency.
2. Build professional presence.
3. Employ problem-solving strategies.
4. Demonstrate information literacy.
5. Write effectively for audience and purpose.
6. Model intercultural competence.



Ethics embedded in definitions and performance indicators

- True <u>Outcomes</u>
- Broad in nature
- Interdisciplinary

DEVELOP TECHNOLOGY FLUENCY

Definition

Technology fluency is the set of knowledge and skills needed to understand and use technology effectively. It includes using a technology for its intended purpose, understanding its functionality, and being proficient at operating the technology. In addition, technology fluency implies ethical usage as well as the ability to adapt to new technologies.

Performance Indicators

1. Identify the purpose of a common technology.
2. Demonstrate understanding of how a technology functions.
3. Use a technology appropriately for a given situation.
4. Understand the difference between ethical and unethical usage of a technology.
5. Adapt to a new or emerging technology.

BUILD PROFESSIONAL PRESENCE

Definition

Professional presence means presenting oneself competently and confidently in the modern workplace. It involves modeling skills such as effective and appropriate oral communication, positive professional branding, lifelong learning, openness to feedback, adaptability to change, integrity, and emotional regulation in stressful situations.

Performance Indicators

1. Demonstrate awareness of one's own professional strengths and areas for development.
2. Apply feedback to improve understanding and performance.
3. Act with integrity and accountability to self, others, and the organization.
4. Deliver prepared and purposefully designed communication.
5. Demonstrate understanding of common workplace expectations.

EMPLOY PROBLEM-SOLVING STRATEGIES

Definition

Problem-solving is the set of knowledge and skills needed to identify and develop creative, logical, and reasonable solutions to questions. This is achieved through recognition of relevant information and analysis of data.

Performance Indicators

1. Define a problem.
2. Recognize relevant information required to understand the problem.
3. Analyze relevant information and data.
4. Identify an appropriate strategy to solve the problem.
5. Develop a creative, logical, and reasonable solution.

DEMONSTRATE INFORMATION LITERACY

Definition

Information literacy is the set of knowledge and skills required for information seeking and analysis. It includes using effective methods in the search for information, data, and answers, with the goal of accurate and ethical interpretation and reporting.

Performance Indicators

1. Read a text critically to understand meaning.
2. Conduct an effective search for information using a variety of academic sources.
3. Think critically about sources to discern between credible and unreliable information.
4. Analyze information found in sources to identify conclusions.
5. Understand ethical guidelines for information use, including paraphrasing, proper citation, and avoidance of plagiarism.
6. Demonstrate objectivity throughout the research process.

WRITE EFFECTIVELY FOR AUDIENCE AND PURPOSE

Definition

Effective written communication is the set of knowledge and skills required to communicate with a clear purpose, appropriate for the intended audience. Effective writing demonstrates clarity, fluency, and a command of contemporary standards for mechanics, syntax, grammar, and format.

Performance Indicators

1. Write clear, concise sentences and paragraphs that convey intended meaning.
2. Demonstrate consideration for audience in written communication.
3. Model professional language that meets contemporary standards for mechanics, syntax, and grammar.
4. Compose arguments with adequate and effective support.
5. Apply appropriate formatting for a given situation and medium.

MODEL INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE

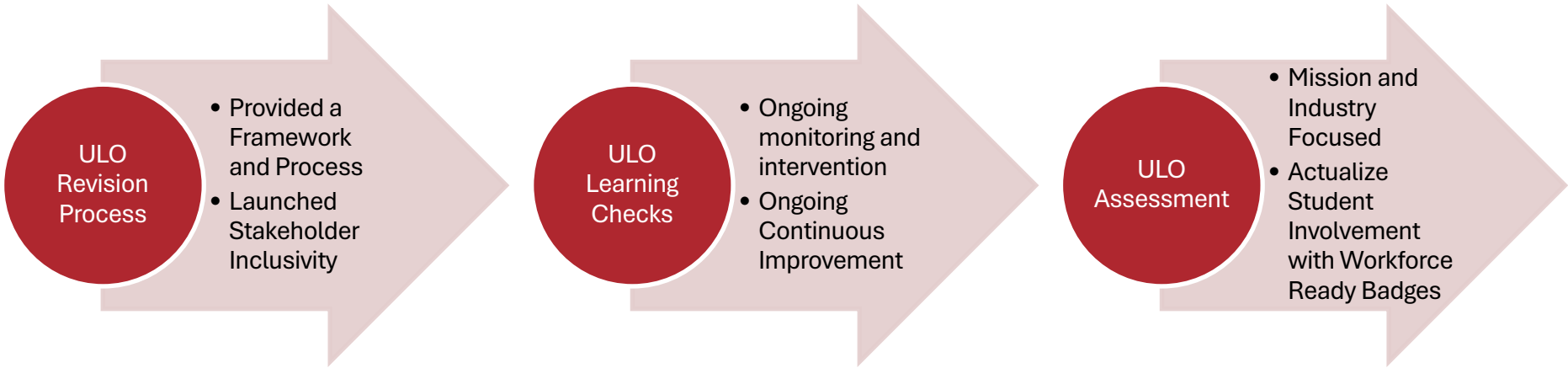
Definition

Intercultural competence is the set of knowledge and skills needed to effectively interact with and learn from diverse communities, cultures, and perspectives. Intercultural Competence also includes an awareness of one's own cultural biases.

Performance Indicators

1. Identify one's own cultural biases, perspectives, or worldviews.
2. Express openness to interact with and learn from diverse communities and cultures.
3. Demonstrate effective interaction with individuals with varied worldviews.
4. Indicate strategies for participating in civic and political life.
5. Identify strategies for conflict resolution.

CHARTING OUR ASSESSMENT ODYSSEY: FROM VISION TO ASSESSMENT INCLUSIVITY AND EXCELLENCE



Back to the Drawing Board Exercise

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EXERCISE – BACK TO THE DRAWING BOARD

- What are the unique, identifying elements of your mission statement?
  - What is the PROMISE you make to your students?
- What industry standards, accreditor requirements, or other benchmarks do you need to consider?
- What other voices do you need to consider at your institution: faculty (which faculty?), staff, admin, students?
  - What do those voices say?
- What process ideas do you have? What would work? What wouldn't work because of the nuances of your institution?
  - How can you collect and analyze data?
  - What is the approval process at your institution, and how does shared governance factor in to your process?
- How do you socialize your outcomes with all stakeholders?

RESOURCES USED DURING STAGE 2 - RESEARCH

- AAC&U Value Rubrics
- CTU's Cultural Competence Model
- ETHICAL REASONING VALUE RUBRIC. (n.d.). OIRA - OIRA. https://oira.unc.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/297/2017/07/AACU_ER_ValueRubric.pdf
- *Framework for information literacy for higher education*. (2023, July 17). Association of College & Research Libraries (ACRL). https://www.ala.org/acrl/standards/ilframework
- Henning, Gavin & Lundquist, A. (2023, October 29-31) *Applying Indigenous Knowledge Systems for Equity-Centered Assessment*. IUPUI 2023 Assessment Institute, Indianapolis, IN, United States.
- Jackson-Weaver, K. (2023, October 29-31). *The Way Forward: Reimagining Assessment, Innovation, and Equity-Centric Approaches in Global Higher Education*. IUPUI 2023 Assessment Institute, Indianapolis, IN, United States.
- Ministry of Education- TKI https://elearning.tki.org.nz/Teaching/Digital-fluency
- National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) Career Readiness Competencies - https://www.naceweb.org/career-readiness/competencies/career-readiness-defined/
- (2022, June). ScholarWorks@UMass Amherst. https://scholarworks.umass.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1476&context=pare
- Study.com https://study.com/academy/lesson/what-is-digital-fluency-definition-example.html#:~:text=An%20example%20of%20this%20would,time%20interpreting%20information%20for%20others.

RESOURCES – LEARNING OUTCOMES FROM BENCHMARK INSTITUTIONS

- Bowling Green State University - https://www.bgsu.edu/catalog/general-information/the-univeristy/university-learning-outcomes.html
- *Ethical reasoning*. (2018, July 23). Student Learning Outcomes Assessment. https://www.rit.edu/academicaffairs/outcomes/ethical-reasoning
- Howard University General Education Essential Learning Outcomes - https://ira.howard.edu/assessment/student-outcomes-assessment/howard-university-general-education-essential-learning
- Michigan Technological University - https://www.mtu.edu/assessment/documents/university-goals/goal-5-rubric-for-written.pdf
- Portland Community College - https://www.pcc.edu/core-outcomes/co-criticalthinking-problemsolving/
- Quinsigamond Community College https://www.qcc.edu/quinsigamond-outcomes-research-excellence-qore
- University of Maryland
- Ursinus College (https://www.ursinus.edu/library/teaching-learning/digital-fluency/digital-fluency-learning-outcomes/)
- Webteam@pcc.edu. (n.d.). *Core outcomes: Critical thinking and problem solving*. Portland Community College. https://www.pcc.edu/core-outcomes/co-criticalthinking-problemsolving/
- Western Oregon University - https://wou.edu/academic-effectiveness/undergraduate-programs/

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- Noble H, Mitchell G. (2016). What is grounded theory? *Evidence-Based Nursing*;19:34-35.

Thank you!

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