

Pathways to General Education: Data Use Statement

In April 2015, the University Council approved the Pathways to General Education curriculum. This revised program included new concepts and student learning outcomes for all students at Virginia Tech. As a central component of the undergraduate experience at Virginia Tech, the Pathways to General Education curriculum will guide students to examine the world from multiple perspectives and integrate their knowledge across disciplines and domains of learning through a hands-on, minds-on approach.

The implementation plan for the Pathways program included an assessment process. [Detailed information about the Pathways assessment process is available at www.pathways.prov.vt.edu/assessment.html.] Robust assessment of the Pathways curriculum is necessary to determine program effectiveness and to identify areas for attention and improvement. The data collected as part of this process will be used for the purpose of program improvement and not for evaluation of instructor performance.

The assessment process requires that each instructor teaching a Pathways course collect and report data for each Pathways student learning outcome addressed in the course. While individual course instructors can use their own Pathways assessment data to make improvements to their course(s), data will be submitted to the Institutional Effectiveness unit in the Office of Analytics and Institutional Effectiveness to inform improvements related to the general education program as a whole. The data submitted to Institutional Effectiveness will be aggregated across all Pathways courses and instructors for each student learning outcome. This information will be used to determine overall student achievement, the extent to which Virginia Tech is achieving its mission for general education, and if improvements need to be made to the outcomes, the program, or both.

Acceptable Use of Pathways Assessment Data at the Institutional Level:

- To determine if students are meeting student learning outcomes at the expected level.
- To inform decision-making at the program level.
- To enhance the quality of the student experience.
- To fulfill regional, disciplinary, state, and other mandatory compliance requirements.

Acceptable Dissemination of Pathways Assessment Data at the Institutional Level:

- Released at the aggregate level and **never** by student, section, course, program, or instructor.
- Presented in relation to the identified Core and Integrative Concepts and the corresponding learning outcomes.
- Shared at the aggregate level with the institution, faculty, and accreditors.

Assurance of Appropriate Use of Pathways Assessment Data at the Institutional Level:

- Data will **not** be used to evaluate faculty performance in Pathways instruction.
- Data will **not** be used to prevent students from graduating.
- Data will **not** be used to compare faculty or courses.
- Data will **not** be shared in its original form; data will always be aggregated prior to dissemination.
- Faculty are only held accountable for collecting and submitting assessment data for the Pathways courses they teach.

Institutional Effectiveness follows strict guidelines to ensure that individually-identifiable information associated with instructors will remain confidential and will not be released to any unauthorized individual. Data pertaining to a specific course, section, or individual will **not** be shared with individuals working outside of the Office of Analytics and Institutional Effectiveness.

For more information about the Pathways to General Education curriculum, visit www.pathways.prov.vt.edu.