

## Vocation SLO Assessment Rubric<sup>1</sup>

Vocation Gen Ed SLO: **Students will examine purpose, calling, leadership, and their relation to the common good.**

### *Framing Language*

“According to Dik and Duffy (2009), a vocation or calling is, ‘a transcendent summons, experienced as originating beyond the self, to approach a particular life role in a manner oriented toward demonstrating or deriving a sense of purpose or meaningfulness and that holds other-oriented values and goals as primary sources of motivation.’” This is from California Lutheran’s website – another institution which uses Vocation as a Gen Ed SLO. They reference a 2009 article published by these two psychology professors in *The Counseling Psychologist*, Vol 37, No 3, pg 427.

With this (or the many similar) starting definition for vocation, it’s necessary to frame this SLO very carefully. Measuring calling for another is impossible, and measuring student engagement in (or hospitality toward) calling is nearly so. Vocation names a life-long process of engagement with o/Other, rather than an outcome achieved in a single course or assignment. Likewise, an academic process of learning one’s way into this lifelong engagement is not achieved through any one academic discipline. We may hope that the accumulation of the whole curricular and co-curricular fabric of learning at Blackburn College may help a student move forward in vocational exploration and engagement. This limited rubric is meant to measure student progress in vocational thinking and exploration in a particular course. Perhaps the best fit for this rubric is a set of assignments which combine (1) trusted exercises which yield an increase in self-awareness and knowledge, (2) in-depth academic resources which articulate some facet of human purpose and flourishing, (3) relatively open-ended written assignments which allow students to integrate resources in the class to evaluate and reflect upon their own sense of purpose and calling. Each class will be different, of course, and any one class can only be a small part of this larger engagement in vocation across a lifetime.

### *Glossary:*

- **Purpose:** Each class included in this SLO takes as a starting point that human life is purposive and can be lived with effective intention toward the good and end particular to us. To put it another way, the phrase “human excellence” coheres with a flourishing human existence lived with intention.
- **Calling:** Life in the 21<sup>st</sup> century American Midwest is saturated with calling of a variety of kinds: advertisements, traffic laws, instinct, addictive substances or behaviors, conscience, mob mentality, organizational mission statements, and many others. But the “calling” of interest for these courses is **the way human life is drawn toward its highest excellence and flourishing, from *outside* the self**. This “gift” (i.e. unbidden, outside of systems of exchange) of calling is identified by most thinkers as definitively relational. For many, vocation attempts

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<sup>1</sup> Rubric created by faculty at Blackburn College

to name the mystery of God’s call toward humanity. Also, for many, vocation names the process of discernment about how one can make the world a better place.

- **Leadership:** Leadership itself needs little definition, here. But it should be noted that leadership in this particular SLO is a topic for reflection, rather than a skill to be honed.
- **Common Good:** Related to (but slightly different from) “good citizenship,” the phrase “common good” seeks to identify the devotion to the good internal to a community, small or large. This good may or may not be identical to the good identified by the community itself. But students will be asked to reflect on the good particular to small and large communities, and how they can best live into that good in a way specific to their personality, strengths, and gifts.

**Vocation Gen Ed Rubric<sup>2</sup>**

	<b>Completely Met (4)</b>	<b>Mostly Met (3)</b>	<b>Partially Met (2)</b>	<b>Minimum Benchmark (1)</b>
<b>Vocation: Examining calling and purpose</b>	(1), (2), (3), plus constructs and articulates a clear framework for better understanding their own sense of calling both now and in the future, and an effective incorporation of ideas from assigned content in articulating this sense of purpose or flourishing.	(1), (2), plus a synthesis of ideas from the assigned content in reflections on their own sense of purpose, relationships, flourishing, or calling.	(1), plus connects this knowledge to at least a modestly detailed reflection on how their own sense of purpose, the character of their relationships, or how their sense of calling can be informed by these ideas.	Student demonstrates accurate but limited knowledge of the major contours of assigned content theorizing about human nature, human purpose, human flourishing, or calling.
<b>Vocation: Reflection on Leadership and the Common Good</b>	(1), (2), (3), plus a high level of synthesis between one’s own strengths, the mission of leadership, and the good internal to a particular community.	(1), (2), plus an increased level of detail (gained from in-class assignments) in offering more complete application of one’s own strengths, biases, and leadership toward the common good.	(1), plus reflects on this learning with some depth, and exhibits some application of strengths and personality traits (as well as personal bias) to reflection on the role of leadership in connection to the common good.	Students can articulate the meaning of the term “common good” and can give some modest definition to goods internal to a community. Students will also demonstrate knowledge of their own strengths and biases (as gained from in-class assignments)

*An evaluation of “0” indicates that the given evaluation assignment did not meet minimum benchmark standards.*

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<sup>2</sup> The outline of the Vocation Rubric intends to follow the pattern set by the AAC&U VALUE Rubrics