



2022 Assessment Report

May 30, 2022

Overview

During the 2021-22 academic year, the Odyssey Office continued the scheduled assessment of [The Odyssey Program Learning Goals](#), as outlined in the [Student Assessment Plan](#). In particular, we assessed Learning Goal 4:

Increased awareness of one's responsibility for linking action and understanding in the effort to respond effectively to the social, spiritual, and ecological needs of our time by:

- *discovering one's capacity to explore the world and act as an effective agent within it,*
- *becoming reflective and articulate about how one's values and beliefs influence one's actions and actions shape and reveal one's values and beliefs.*
- *gaining exposure to, and critically reflecting upon, previously unfamiliar avenues of response to intellectual queries and social problems,*
- *making conscious decisions in the selection or design of hands on projects responsive to local and/or global communities.*

Four instruments were used for assessment purposes:

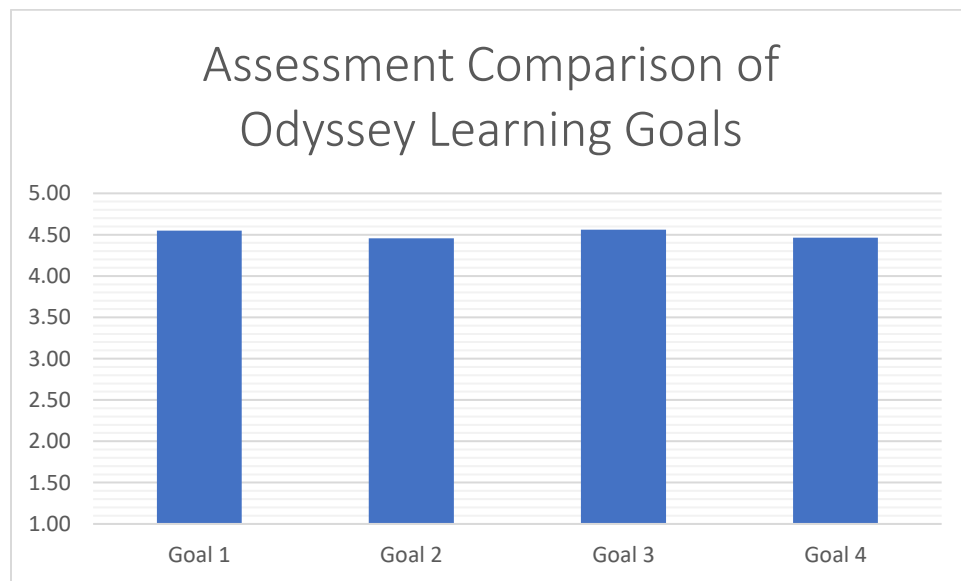
- Completion Form Survey (indirect assessment): This is a two-question survey that was added to the standard Odyssey Project Completion Form. See Appendix A for the instrument.
- Odyssey distinction application (indirect assessment): This assessment tool asks graduating seniors eligible for distinction to elaborate on their experience with the program. In particular, we analyzed responses to Question 6 and Question 7 in Appendix B.
- Course Feedback Form Additional Questions (indirect assessment): This year, we added one standard question per Odyssey category for every pre-coded course that was offered. See the full list of additional questions for each category in Appendix C.
- Odyssey Learning Goal 4 Supervisor Survey (direct assessment): We specifically designed a survey that was sent to faculty and staff that supervised Service to the World projects that were completed during the 2021-22 academic year. We received feedback on 20 out of 45 completions in the category for the specified time period. The survey instrument is pasted in Appendix D.

In addition to our regular assessment activities, we also embarked on an effort to present an evidence-based proposal for Program reform to the college faculty. While this proposal did not pass, the reporting helped the Odyssey Program and the Committee on Engaged Learning collaborate on discussing some of the more pressing issues of the program and engage in a thorough and systematic evaluation Odyssey. This report briefly recaps the key assessment insights of these efforts

in the “Long-Term Assessment and Planning” section that appears after the overview of the regular assessment that we undertook.

Summary of Results: Completion Form Survey

For the second year in a row, we collected indirect assessment information from students that submitted completion forms for ongoing Odyssey projects. Between September 1, 2021, and May 11, 2022, we received 477 completions with responses to the two questions that appear in Appendix A.



The aggregate data reveals that respondents thought their projects met all four learning goals very well with an average or about 4.5 on a 1-5 scale. Because of the high number of responses and the overwhelmingly positive ratings, we analyzed the short answer responses to Question 10 only selectively by focusing on the respondents who rated Goal 4 with a “1” or “2”. Thirteen of the sixteen respondents who fall under that category did projects in the PL or SP category. All of them had no service component to their projects by design. Not meeting Goal 4 was, in this sense, not surprising. Two of the sixteen projects were in the SW category. In their qualitative feedback, the respondents shared the following statements:

- *“I learned that I enjoy helping young kids get better at something, especially something that I enjoy. I also learned that each kid needs different ways of learning something and you just have to keep trying and fail a few times to find out.”*
- *“I think that the learning goal that I got to dive into with this Odyssey was an increased awareness of one’s responsibility for linking action and understanding in the effort to respond effectively to the social, spiritual, and ecological needs of our time. I was thanked and put to work at every place I went to volunteer at. My presence was needed at every place, no matter how long I stayed. I hope for the future that more people can infiltrate the needs of their neighborhoods!”*

Both statements reveal that the students were perhaps overly critical in their quantitative assessments. The second one, in particular, demonstrates a sophisticated awareness addressing the needs of the broader community, so it could be that this was an input error by the responder.

Variable	Mean	Std. dev.	Min	Max
Goal 1	4.32	0.94	1	5
Goal 2	4.29	0.95	1	5
Goal 3	4.49	0.85	1	5
Goal 4	4.73	0.62	2	5

Perhaps a more instructive way to look at the data is by focusing on the quantitative assessments of the four learning goal by the 101 completions in the SW category. Not only do the score Goal 4 as especially relevant (as revealed by the mean), but also with the lowest degree of uncertainty (as revealed by the standard deviation).

Summary of Results: Odyssey Distinction Application

In 2021-22, we awarded Distinction in Odyssey to 26 graduating seniors. They all had to submit an application (Appendix B) that specifically asked them about the learning goals they found most relevant, prior to elaborating on them. The former question is perhaps less instructive with high-performing students. By definition, they all have completed at least five of the six Odyssey categories at the time of applying in April of their senior year, and have clear plans to meeting the sixth, if they haven't already done so. Therefore, most respondents checked all four learning goals in their responses.

In their short answers to Question 7, students most frequently talked about Odyssey projects enhancing their learning (Goal 1) or helping them with vocational self-discovery (Goal 2). Some responders nonetheless provided some valuable qualitative information about how their Odyssey journey helped them meet Goal 4, and this was often achieved through projects across the categories. Service, research, travel, and professional development experiences all seem to contribute to students making progress towards addressing pressing contemporary needs:

- In the Nature Appreciation and Conservation special project that I completed my freshman year, I learned about how ***service, literature, and nature (three avenues that I am passionate about) intersect***, and I learned about how my academic interests can connect with the world around me and more specifically, my local community. In the service to the world project that I am currently completing with VAC, I have deepened that connection. ***Each Service Saturday is different, but each has helped me interact with the people around me in a meaningful way.***
- Additionally, I know that my project on Buen Vivir emphasizes the individual's responsibility to respond to social, spiritual, and ecological needs. ***The Buen Vivir movement by its very nature is about the intrinsic value of nature and the necessity to respect and protect her undeniable dignity is an essential virtue within indigenous culture.*** It also emphasizes the importance of respecting indigenous culture's relevance within modern society. Throughout the course of the project, I gained exposure to previously unobserved avenues of response to intellectual queries and social problems. ***I had researched and analyzed the movement from an American perspective, however, the actual immersion of it was unlike anything else.***

- With the changing climate in our environment and global warming, our mission is to respond. In my UR project, I was able to grasp an exceedingly small portion of what is needed to better protect our Earth. Then for my GA project, it all started because of the marginalized groups that were discriminated against greatly during the year 2020. I felt a call to action, so together, my advisor and I pursued this project.
- In my role as a Resident Assistant at Hendrix College, I have become more confident in my ability to act as a leader in my community. I have developed professional skills such as time management and the ability to work with people from diverse backgrounds. Because I live and work in the same place, ***I have become acutely aware of the needs of others. I have learned how to effectively problem-solve both with coworkers present and while alone.*** I have also strengthened my conflict resolution skills and become adept at navigating the social and personal needs of my residents.

In follow-up discussions within the Odyssey Office, it is clear that the distinction instrument and/or criteria might need some revisions in the future. While they certainly reaffirm that students applying for distinction have had good breadth of experiential learning opportunities, their responses often tend to be general and shallow. We have decided to rethink how we can prompt students to respond with more direct examples about what the various learning objectives meant to them and how they met them in future years.

Summary of Results: Course Feedback Forms

For the first time in the Odyssey Program history, we started systematically assessing courses that are pre-coded for Odyssey credit, after the Committee on Engaged Learning developed – and the faculty approved – category-specific questions to be added to the student feedback forms (See Appendix C for the full set of questions). Only the Fall 2021 semester data was available as of the writing of this report. When the Spring 2022 responses are received, the Odyssey Office and CEL will engage in a more thorough analysis of what trends appear. Below, we are including some preliminary analysis for the three categories that had pre-coded classes offered and assessed in the Fall of 2022.

Course	Response %	Category	Question Avg.	No EL component (%)
POLI 283	70.6	SP	4.56	N/A
POLI 383	81.8	SP	4.5	N/A
HIST 201	70.6	SP	4.92	N/A
MATH 497	60	UR	4.5	33.3
ANTH 497	66.7	UR	4.5	0
SOCI 497	40	UR	5	0
ANTH 360	27.3	UR	5	0
ARTS 160	56.2	AC	4.6	44.4
ARTS 180	50	AC	4	28.6
ARTS 200	30	AC	4	66.7
ARTS 201	44.4	AC	4	44.4
ARTS 250	45	AC	4.75	20
DANA A30	71.4	AC	4.8	0

DANC 215	41.7	AC	4.6	0
ENG 303	83.3	AC	4.5	40
ENG 307	91.7	AC	4.22	18.2
ENG 390	54.5	AC	4.5	50
ENG 403	62.5	AC	4	20
TART 100	55	AC	4.63	27.3
TART 140	46.1	AC	4.8	16.7
TART 260	75	AC	5	44.4
TART 450	60	AC	4.33	0
MUSA 2CH	50	AC	4.94	0
MUSA 2OR	37.5	AC	4.67	0
MUSA 2WE	92.3	AC	3.87	4.2

Generally, students felt that the courses met the engaged learning objectives that we asked about: the question averages ranged from 3.87 to 5 on a 1-5 scale. At the same time, Column 5 above reveals that the public performance expectations for the AC category might have not been clear to some of the respondents. 22.1% of students in TART classes, 32% of students in ENG classes, and 40.8% of students in ARTS classes stated that they did not have a public performance component in their Odyssey-coded class. This does not appear to have been an issue for DANA/DANC and MUSA courses, however.

Summary of Results: Learning Goal 4 Supervisor Survey

To assess Learning Goal 4 directly, we reached 31 supervisors to who oversaw the 45 SW projects that were completed between September 13, 2021 and April 3, 2022. The supervisors received the name of the students and their projects, along with the transcript completion paragraph they submitted to summarize their projects at the time of finishing the project. We then asked them to rate the student progress towards Learning Goal 4 as “basic”, “intermediate” and “advanced”. The quantitative assessment was then followed by an opportunity to share additional information in the form of a short answer.

We received responses for 20 of the 45 projects. The student progress was rated as “basic” in 2 cases (10% of total), “intermediate” in 8 cases (40%) and “advanced” in 10 cases (50%). We also received the following short answer responses (redacted to omit student names or project specifics):

Rating	Short answer response
Advanced	[X] was able to bring a service to a part of the state where golf is not very popular. He was able to be that agent connecting two worlds.
Advanced	During his SW Odyssey project, [X] was exposed to many patients with different values and beliefs and his reflection on the experience showed that he did think deeply about what it means for him to help others.
Advanced	[X] made the most of this Odyssey, keeping up with hours and logging her activities. This was productive in all the right ways.

Advanced	As [X] said, this experience made her hold the animals and people in her life just a little bit closer, and it sparked a rejuvenated love for volunteering within her. I think it was a good experience that helped her grow more.
Basic	[X] "got there" in terms of meeting the requirements, and actually did some excellent reflection during our in person meetings. I would have liked for her to be more self-sufficient and pro-active in the process. There were times when I felt I was doing too much of the "driving" in terms of her completing the assignments. I really did appreciate the help I received from the Odyssey Office when I had questions/concerns, etc.
Intermediate	[X] brought a deep enthusiasm for this experience as evidenced by her paper. I appreciated her contribution and hope to work with her again.
Intermediate	[X] was quietly persistent in fulfilling this project. We met regularly to discuss the impact on him as an individual student, as well as the impact for the student(s) he was supporting. I appreciated his commitment to the project.
Advanced	[X] was new to theatre when she applied and was accepted to the program. She was very prepared for engaging the material and the idea of what we were doing, but she was completely new to the idea of interviewing with the purpose of constructing a play. She was fully engaged if somewhat daunted by the project. I found that she was moved by the experience and certainly gained tremendous insight into the lives of the women we interviewed. I was very impressed with her willingness to take on the work.
Basic	[X] intellectually understood the project and what was involved and the idea that the work could affect the world at large. I am not sure that Sam found the connection with being affected by the stories and the desire to act.
Intermediate	[X] was connected to the idea of the project from a class taken a few years earlier. They were certainly engaged in the interviews and the transcribing as skills that could be developed. It was difficult for [X] to work with the group to create something for the greater good.

Long-Term Assessment and Planning

In the summer and fall of 2021, the Odyssey Office and Committee for Engaged Learning (CEL) met regularly to review previous assessment efforts and envision a series of reforms. In addition to the regular annual assessment materials, the Odyssey Office and CEL took into consideration the external review of the Odyssey program, conducted by the Swearer Center at Brown University, in April 2018.

To facilitate the reform efforts, Peter Gess and Kiril Kolev from the Odyssey Office met throughout the summer to come up with an [initial proposal](#) for the August 2021 Fall Faculty Conference (FFC), along with a [Q&A Document](#) that was based on preliminary questions we have received or anticipated receiving. In addition to presenting a proposal for reform, we held focus groups and gathered faculty feedback on the proposal that we then reviewed and provided responses to. In September, October, and November, the Committee on Engaged Learning reviewed the initial proposal and subsequent feedback and put forward an [amended proposal](#) that was then discussed and voted on during the December 2021 faculty meeting. This was accompanied by a [second Q&A Document](#) that addressed questions we had received at the November 2021 faculty meeting.

While the intricacies of the proposals are perhaps best understood upon reviewing the proposal materials presented in the previous paragraph, our proposals were guided by the overarching goals of increasing intentionality, providing a simpler structure to the program, and making sure that pre-coded courses consistently deliver engaged learning opportunities. The final proposal sought to

achieve these objectives by reducing the number of required Odyssey credits to two (down from three) and reserving pre-coding only for courses above the 200 level (with a few exceptions). We also used feedback we received from students in our assessment work in 2020-21 and proposed the introduction of Odyssey Peer Learning – a structure that would allow students to be mentored by their peers who have an established record in the Odyssey Program.

Finally, we proposed that new learning goals be introduced that are category-specific. This was motivated by previous assessment reports that identified an inherent discrepancy between the rather general program goals and the lack of specific goals for the categories. This makes it difficult to relate assessment efforts at the category level (which is where most of our evidence comes from) to the broader programmatic learning goals.

		Number of Students who have, at the time of audit, completed:											No. of Graduates
		0 Categories			1 Category			2 Categories			Overall		
Year	Date of Audit	Path	No Path	Total	Path	No Path	Total	Path	No Path	Total	Path	No Path	Total
2014-15	March 11, 2015	11	9	20	48	14	62	91	22	113	150	45	195
2015-16	March 7, 2016	4	13	17	61	25	86	70	9	79	135	47	182
2016-17	February 21, 2017	3	8	11	41	17	58	102	14	116	146	39	185
2017-18	February 2, 2018	2	5	7	41	18	59	57	14	71	100	37	137
2018-19	February 15, 2019	4	12	16	32	52	84	77	26	103	113	90	203
2019-20	January 21, 2020	0	3	3	27	32	59	56	14	70	83	49	132
2020-21	February 4, 2021	2	4	6	10	23	33	61	19	80	73	46	119

*Data for 2018-19 is incomplete and was reconstructed from audit documents sent directly to seniors; it is likely these numbers include students who did not graduate until the following year.

The proposal did not receive sufficient support at the December 2021 faculty meeting and did not pass. In 2022-23, the Program will be considering how we address some of the issues that the background materials identified within the existing structure. One long-term issue has to do with completion trends, as revealed by the table above (which was also presented to the faculty). In particular, we demonstrated that between a quarter and a third of graduating seniors have a considerable difficulty making timely progress towards fulfilling the Odyssey graduation requirement. For example, as of February 4, 2021 (approximately three months prior to graduation), 46 out of 237 seniors had no path to finishing Odyssey. This means that they had not even begun enough Odyssey experiences to gain credit in three separate categories. While most “no-path” seniors end up finishing by May, this is associated with a lot of last-minute projects of tremendously low quality. Assessing – and assisting – these cases, should be a priority going forward.

Appendix A: Completion Form Indirect Goal Assessment

10. On a scale from 1 (not at all) to 5 (to a very high degree), to what extent did you accomplish each of these Odyssey learning goals through this experience? *

Please choose "N/A" if the goal is not applicable to your experience.

If you would like more information on the goals, please see:

<https://www.hendrix.edu/odyssey/odyssey.aspx?id=72348>

	N/A	1	2	3	4	5
1. Enhancement of learning	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. Vocational/career self-discovery	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. Sense of ownership of educational pursuits and life-long learning	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. Linking action to the social, spiritual, and ecological needs of our time	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

11. Please use the space below to elaborate on the learning goals that were especially relevant to your experience. *

Enter your answer

Appendix B: Odyssey Senior Distinction Application

Distinction Questionnaire

This form asks you to share with us your experience with the Odyssey Program. We will review it, along with your completed Odyssey projects, to determine whether you graduate with distinction in Odyssey.

The deadline to submit this form is 5 pm on Monday, April 4, 2022.

Questions

1.First Name

2.Last name

3.Hendrix ID

4.Which Odyssey categories have you completed?

Please mark all that apply.

- ☐ Artistic Creativity
- ☐ Global Awareness
- ☐ Professional and Leadership Development
- ☐ Service to the World
- ☐ Undergraduate Research
- ☐ Special Projects

5.If you have a pending Odyssey credit(s), please describe your plans for completing them.

6.Please check the learning goal(s) that were best met through your Odyssey experiences.

You can find out more about the learning goals of the Odyssey Program here:

<https://www.hendrix.edu/odyssey/odyssey.aspx?id=72348>

- ☐ Enhancement of learning
- ☐ Vocational Self-Discovery and Professional Development
- ☐ Development of a sense of ownership over one's educational pursuits and of the habits conducive to life-long learning
- ☐ Increased awareness of one's responsibility for linking action and understanding in the effort to respond effectively to the social, spiritual, and ecological needs of our time

7.Please elaborate on why you selected the goal(s) above.

Please limit your response to 500 words.

You can find out more about the learning goals of the Odyssey Program here:

<https://www.hendrix.edu/odyssey/odyssey.aspx?id=72348>

8.How have your Odyssey experiences impacted your undergraduate career?

Please limit your response to 500 words.

9. How do you anticipate your Odyssey experiences to guide your professional and personal life beyond Hendrix?

Please limit your response to 500 words.

10. Is there anything else you would like to share with us?

This could include recommendations for the Odyssey Program or information that you'd like to share beyond the questions above.

Please limit your response to 500 words.

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Appendix C: Course Feedback Form Additional Questions

Undergraduate Research

My Odyssey *Undergraduate Research* public presentation enhanced my learning experience.

- There was no public presentation associated with this class
- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

Artistic Creativity

My Odyssey *Artistic Creativity* performance or public presentation enhanced my learning experience.

- There was no performance or public presentation associated with this class
- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

Service to the World

My involvement with the Odyssey *Service to the World* project enhanced my learning experience.

- There was no service project associated with this class
- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

Global Awareness

The course allowed me to become familiar with a culture or environment other than my own.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

Professional and Leadership Development

The course allowed me to explore leadership or develop professional skills.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

Special Projects

This course allowed me to approach its topic from different disciplinary perspectives or ways of knowing.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

Appendix D: Learning Goal 4 Supervisor Survey

Odyssey Learning Goal 4 Direct Assessment Survey

We are reaching out to gather your assessment of the extent to which the student(s) you supervised a SW project for in 2021-22 made progress towards achieving the following learning goal:

Increased awareness of one's responsibility for linking action and understanding in the effort to respond effectively to the social, spiritual, and ecological needs of our time by:

- discovering one's capacity to explore the world and act as an effective agent within it,
- becoming reflective and articulate about how one's values and beliefs influence one's actions and actions shape and reveal one's values and beliefs.
- gaining exposure to, and critically reflecting upon, previously unfamiliar avenues of response to intellectual queries and social problems,
- making conscious decisions in the selection or design of hands on projects responsive to local and/or global communities.

1.Name of student

2.The student (s) progress towards achieving the learning goal above can best summarized as:

- ☐ Basic
- ☐ Intermediate
- ☐ Advanced

3.Please feel free to share any additional information below