Graduate Assessment Working Group: Analytic Inquiry

December 5, 2016

The DQP's five learning categories

The DQP organizes the learning outcomes (proficiencies) of degrees according to five broad interrelated categories:

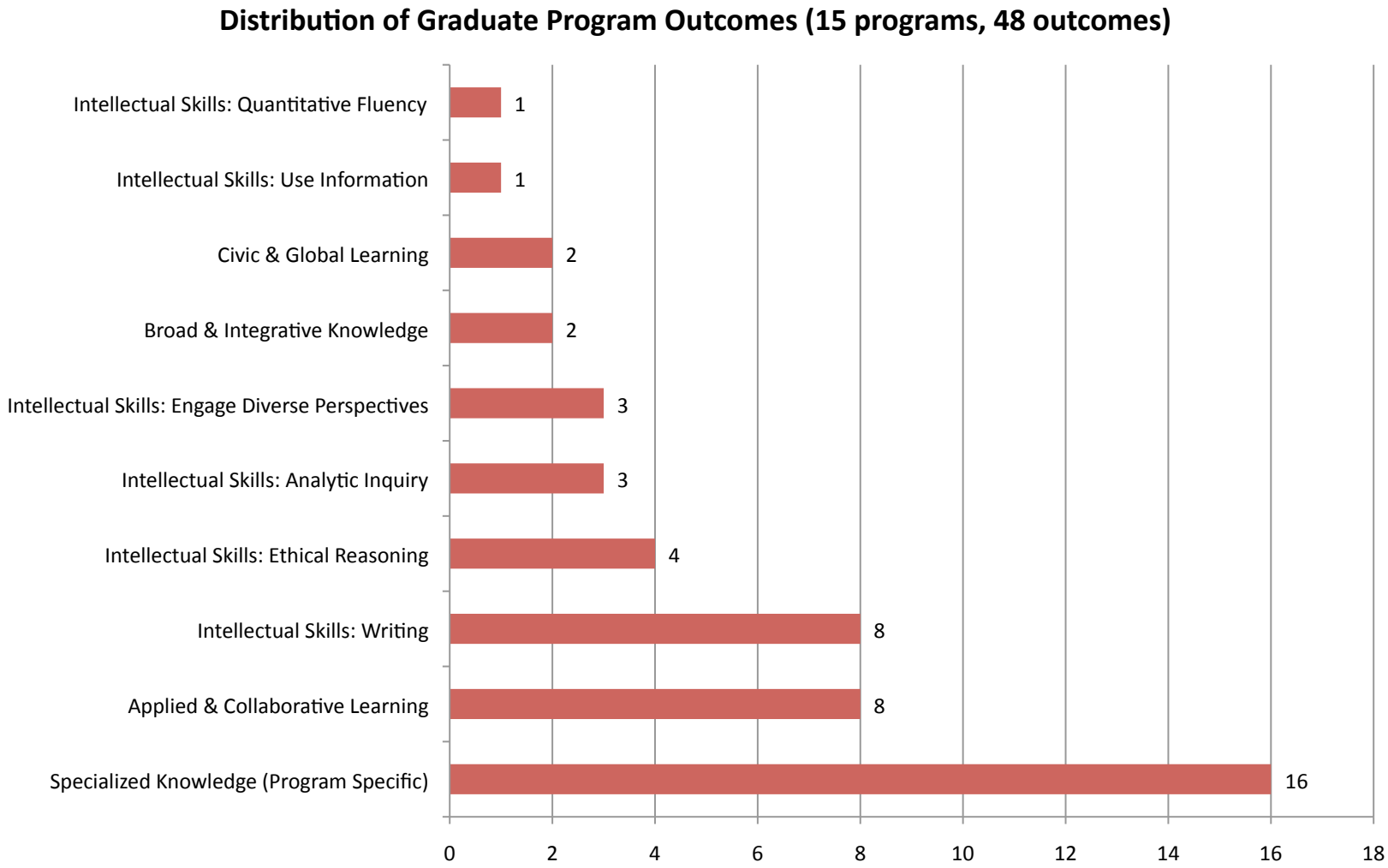
1. **Specialized Knowledge.** This category addresses what students in *any* specialization should demonstrate with respect to the specialization beyond the vocabularies, theories and skills of particular fields of study. (Tuning, on the other hand, focuses on what students in a *particular* specialization should know and be able to do to earn the degree. See Appendix B, Page 33.)

2. **Broad and Integrative Knowledge.** This category asks students at all three degree levels to consolidate learning from different broad fields of study (e.g., the humanities, arts, sciences and social sciences) and to discover and explore concepts and questions that bridge these essential areas of learning.

3. **Intellectual Skills.** This category includes both traditional and nontraditional cognitive skills: analytic inquiry, use of information resources, engagement with diverse perspectives, ethical reasoning, quantitative fluency and communicative fluency. Throughout, the DQP emphasizes the importance of students making, confronting and interpreting ideas and arguments from different points of reference (e.g., cultural, technological, political).

4. **Applied and Collaborative Learning.** This category emphasizes what students can do with what they know. Students are asked to demonstrate their learning by addressing unscripted problems in scholarly inquiry, at work and in other settings outside the classroom. This category includes research and creative activities involving both individual and group effort and may include practical skills crucial to the application of expertise.

5. **Civic and Global Learning.** This category recognizes higher education's responsibilities both to democracy and the global community. Students must demonstrate integration of their knowledge and skills by engaging with and responding to civic, social, environmental and economic challenges at local, national and global levels.


Distribution of Graduate Program Outcomes (15 programs, 48 outcomes)
Intellectual Skills: Quantitative Fluency
1
Intellectual Skills: Use Information
1
Civic & Global Learning
2
Broad & Integrative Knowledge
2
Intellectual Skills: Engage Diverse Perspectives
3
Intellectual Skills: Analytic Inquiry
3
Intellectual Skills: Ethical Reasoning
4
Intellectual Skills: Writing
8
Applied & Collaborative Learning
8
Specialized Knowledge (Program Specific)
16
0
2
4
6
8
10
12
14
16
18

Analytic inquiry

The synthesizing cognitive operations of assembling, combining, formulating, evaluating and reconstructing information, foundational to all learning, are addressed throughout the DQP. But analytic inquiry, though it is involved in such synthesis, requires separate treatment as the core intellectual skill that enables a student to examine, probe and grasp the assumptions and conventions of different areas of study, as well as to address complex questions, problems, materials and texts of all types.

At the associate level, the student

- Identifies and frames a problem or question in selected areas of study and distinguishes among elements of ideas, concepts, theories or practical approaches to the problem or question.

At the bachelor's level, the student

- Differentiates and evaluates theories and approaches to selected complex problems within the chosen field of study and at least one other field.

At the master's level, the student

- Disaggregates, reformulates and adapts principal ideas, techniques or methods at the forefront of the field of study in carrying out an essay or project.

DRAFT

"**Analytic Inquiry** is… the core intellectual skill that enables a student to examine, probe and grasp the assumptions and conventions of different areas of study, as well as to address complex questions, problems, materials and texts of all types." -- DQP, p. 16

Competencies in analytical inquiry are cumulative. Graduates demonstrate skills expected at their current level, but also those expected at previous levels. Student work should be designed to allow students to demonstrate the appropriate level of competency. It is up to each field to determine what these competencies look like in practice in their field.

Level/Feature	Competency	Rating	*To think about: Is this skill important? Why or why not? Do we expect proficiency? More?*
Skills developed prior to entering graduate program			
Question/problem generation and framing	Identifies & frames a problem or question in the field	○ Exemplary ○ Proficient ○ Needs improvement ○ No evidence	
Use of field's tools	Distinguishes among elements of ideas, concepts, theories or practical approaches suggested by that field.	○ Exemplary ○ Proficient ○ Needs improvement ○ No evidence	
Comparison with another field	Compares and contrasts theories/approaches to the problem/question from that field and at least one other field.	○ Exemplary ○ Proficient ○ Needs improvement ○ No evidence	
Evaluation	Evaluates theories and approaches to the problem/question – strengths, weaknesses, applicability, gaps, assumptions	○ Exemplary ○ Proficient ○ Needs improvement ○ No evidence	
Skills expected in Master's level work			
Analysis*	**Disaggregates ideas/techniques/methods at the forefront of the field**	○ Exemplary ○ Proficient ○ Needs improvement ○ No evidence	
Creative synthesis	**Reformulate and adapt principal ideas/techniques/methods at the forefront of the field**	○ Exemplary ○ Proficient ○ Needs improvement ○ No evidence	

**Analysis is the process of breaking complex topics or issues into parts to gain a better understanding of them* (I&A, LEAP)

What does "analysis" look like in your field?

What does creative synthesis look like in your field?