

**University of Houston-Clear Lake**  
**Office of Planning and Assessment**  
**Report from the Personal Responsibility Core Objective Summer Workgroup**

**Goal:** To approve a rubric for Personal Responsibility and find two assignments that could be adapted by faculty members for use at UHCL.

**Workgroup Members:** Comeka Anderson-Diaz, Kim Case, Anne Gessler, Amy Lucas, and Joyce Taylor.  
**Group Leader:** Katie Reno

**Summer Work Activities**

The Personal Responsibility Workgroup first reviewed the student learning outcomes and rubric drafted by the Core Curriculum Assessment Committee. The student learning outcomes and rubric for personal responsibility have posed difficulties because of confusion between the term “personal responsibility” and the definition provide by the state of Texas. The group reviewed the Texas Administrative Code to better understand the requirements and definitions established by the state. Reviewing these statutes led the group to conclude that the state intended Personal Responsibility to mean ethical decision-making.

The workgroup moved forward with this definition and began researching potential example assignments to be used in classes with the personal responsibility core objective requirement. The group researched websites focused on general education, contacted faculty members from across the country, and reached out to UHCL faculty members. The group was able to find several assignments on ethical decision making that could be easily adapted to classes across many disciplines.

In addition to researching example assignments, group members contacted other universities for personal responsibility and ethical decision-making rubrics. The group was able to gather rubrics from the AAC&U and several Texas universities that defined personal responsibility as ethical decision making. The group reviewed the draft version of the personal responsibility rubric (“PR”) and discovered several ambiguous areas. After comparing the draft version of the PR rubric with the other PR rubrics collected, the group revised the original PR rubric. After thoroughly discussing the various PR rubrics, the group of faculty members agreed on a draft version for a reading session.

The group gathered several sample papers to use for a test of the draft PR rubric, deciding on two sample papers covering the topic of ethics. The group evaluated the two sample papers using the draft PR rubric. Following the reading session, the group leader led a debriefing session to determine problematic areas in the PR rubric. The group suggested several minor revisions to clarify the rubric. In addition the group suggested an interpretation guide to go along with the PR rubric. The finalized version of the draft PR rubric is attached.

**Conclusion and Recommendations**

Overall the workgroup was able to accomplish substantial progress during the summer months. The group had a few suggestions based on the challenges they faced. First, it was difficult to find sample assignments from faculty members at UHCL and other universities. This may be attributed to faculty member’s unavailability during the summer months. Furthermore, confusion from faculty around the definition of personal responsibility may result in few assignments that perfectly align with the established definition and learning outcomes from the rubric. Group members noted that when

contacting other universities, several mentioned initial confusion when the state's definition and objective was introduced in 2014.

### **Future Work**

The group suggests a few actions to address this issue. First, the group recommends a training session in which faculty members would learn about the definition, learning outcomes, and the rubric. Second, the group suggests working closely with faculty members who must assess personal responsibility to develop assignments that align with the definition and would be acceptable for assessment of the core objective. This close relationship would promote more communication between faculty and OIE, which is charged with the assessment process. The workgroup would also like to suggest the development of an interpretation guide to complement the PR rubric. This would clarify the meaning of certain words and provide additional understanding, resulting in the development of assignments that better align with the definition and rubric.