Assessing Student Learning about the Catholic Social Tradition: A Validated Rubric

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Abstract

Catholic higher education aims to educate students about the Catholic Social Tradition, yet few resources exist to articulate specific learning goals and assess such learning. This article presents the process used by a multi-university team to validate a rubric intended to strengthen curricular and co-curricular student learning about the Catholic Social Tradition (CST). By analyzing validation data from Catholic universities through student surveys, oral history interviews with students, and focus groups with administrators and students, the research team refined the rubric to increase its usefulness as a course and program design tool, as well as an assessment framework. The authors present the findings, which are reflected in the final version of the rubric, and discuss the limitations and potential future uses of the rubric.

Most students enter Catholic colleges and universities with very little exposure to the Catholic Social Tradition (CST) through high school, parish life, or co-curricular experiences.[1] While many students

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[1] Susan Crawford Sullivan, "Catholic Social Teaching, Community-Based Learning, and the Sacramental Imagination," in *Becoming Beholders: Cultivating Sacramental Imagination and Actions in College Classrooms*, ed. Karen E. Eifler and Thomas M.

have engaged in community service and curricular service-learning in high school, few of these experiences are explicitly connected to or informed by CST.[2] Although Catholic higher education aspires to include CST as an essential dimension of the overall formation of students, significant challenges exist both to teaching students about CST and to assessing such learning.[3] For example, most standard texts on CST rightfully focus on examining the content of the tradition for students in undergraduate theology courses.[4] Less attention has been paid to how faculty members and staff can best *teach* the tradition, or to how students *learn* the tradition.

One exception to the trend of focusing on CST content over how it is learned is Roger Bergman's book *Catholic Social Learning,* which encourages leaders in Catholic higher education to consider Catholic social *learning* as well as teaching. He points out that CST's "default pedagogy is implicit: promulgate the documents, teach the principles, exhort the faithful to put these principles into practice."[5] Bergman provides a significant contribution to Catholic higher education by analyzing his experiences of teaching CST. Assessment of such learning, however, is beyond the scope of his text.

In response to the lack of resources for articulating the learning goals for students' formation in CST, as well as for assessing the effectiveness of CST programs and courses, the Catholic Social Teaching

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Landy (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2014), 145-159. We use the term *Catholic Social Tradition* (CST) to encompass not only Catholic magisterial teaching, but also Catholic social thought and practice.

[2] Susan Crawford Sullivan and Ron Pagnucco, eds., *A Vision of Justice: Engaging Catholic Social Teaching on the College Campus* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2014).

[3] For an analysis of three hypotheses regarding the resources within CST that may inform and transform students, see Jennifer Reed-Bouley, "Catholic Social Teaching: Transforming Students, Transforming Society," *Expositions: Ethics in Focus* 10, no.1 (2016): 8-16.

[4] For examples in chronological order of publication, see texts frequently used in university courses on CST, including Fred Kammer, *Doing Faithjustice: An Introduction to Catholic Social Thought* (New York and Mahwah, NJ: Paulist, 2004 revised edition), Alexia K. Kelley and Kathleen Maas Weigert, eds,. *Living the Catholic Social Tradition: Cases and Commentary* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2005), Marvin L. Krier Mich, *Catholic Social Teaching and Movements* (Mystic, CT: Twenty-Third Publications, 2008), Thomas Massaro, *Living Justice: Catholic Social Teaching in Action* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2012), Erin M. Brigham, *See, Judge, Act: Catholic Social Teaching and Service Learning* (Winona, MN: Anselm Academic, 2013), and others.

[5] Roger Bergman, *Catholic Social Learning: Educating the Faith that Does Justice* (New York: Fordham, 2011), 14.

Learning and Research Initiative[6] designed a rubric that curricular and co-curricular CST programs could use to conceptualize and assess student learning to help such programs make the greatest difference in students' lives. The rubric articulates how students build and apply knowledge of CST and identifies levels at which students, courses, and programs might situate themselves.[7]

The first version of the rubric (1.0) was conceptualized and designed by a CST Learning and Research Initiative subcommittee.[8] Influences on version 1.0 included feedback from the members of the committee and participants at a workshop at a University of Notre Dame CST conference in March 2015. This article describes the process the research team used to validate and modify rubric 1.0, outlines limitations of the process, offers suggestions for application of the revised rubric 2.0, and identifies future collaboration that would enhance the rubric.

Validation Process

In validating the rubric, the authors sought to identify various sources of evidence that would support the construct validity of the concepts measured by the rubric. As defined by Messick, "Construct validity is based on an integration of any evidence that bears on the interpretation or meaning of the test scores — including content- and

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[6] The Catholic Social Teaching Learning and Research Initiative is a national collaboration of faculty members and administrators at eleven Catholic colleges and universities. We seek to understand how the rich and complex elements of the Catholic Social Tradition (CST) may be learned by individuals and communities. Through national meetings we have (a) facilitated campus focus groups and collected oral histories of student understanding of CST, (b) examined relevant theory and collected resonant measures, and (c) developed a rubric for curricular and research purposes. For more information, see: http://sites.nd.edu/cstresearch.

[7] For more background on the creation of the CST Learning and Research Initiative and the early work of this subcommittee, see Heather Mack, "Framing Student Appropriation of Catholic Social Teachings and Tradition," *Expositions: Ethics in Focus* 10, no. 1 (2016): 40-51.

[8] Subcommittee members (in alphabetical order): Jay Brandenberger, University of Notre Dame; Erin Brigham, University of San Francisco; Tara Hudson, Kent State University; Heather Mack, Heather Mack Consulting, LLC; Bernard Prusak, King's College; Jennifer Reed-Bouley, College of St. Mary; Margarita Rose, King's College; Kathleen Maas Weigert, Loyola University Chicago.

criterion-related evidence."[9] We used three methods to validate the rubric, which provided both depth and breadth of data for the validation process.[10] The first two methods sought to assess the construct validity of the categories by applying the seven rubric categories to data collected as part of other research studies conducted by the CST Learning and Research Initiative: (1) responses to open-ended questions on a survey administered to students at one Catholic university, and (2) oral history data collected from students at five Catholic universities. The third validation method sought to gain deeper insight from stakeholders regarding the construct validity and utility of rubric 1.0 as a tool for assessing college students' learning of CST. To accomplish this, researchers conducted focus groups with students and administrators at multiple Catholic institutions.

Mining the Cross-Sectional Survey Data

One source of data for validating rubric 1.0 was a cross-sectional survey conducted at a CST Learning and Research Initiative member institution, the University of Notre Dame. Part of a broader research project, the survey was administered to three samples of students at different times during the study period. First, a sample of 2,000 juniors and seniors provided by the university's institutional research office received e-mail invitations to participate in the survey in fall 2015, and of these, 17.6 percent participated. Second, students in the university's business and psychology programs could choose to participate for class research credit via the university's online research coordination system in spring 2015 and fall 2015; a participation rate cannot be calculated for these students. Finally, all seniors completing the Poverty Studies and Catholic Social Tradition minors in spring 2015 and spring 2016 received e-mail invitations to participate in the survey; cohort participation rates ranged from 61 percent to 90 percent.

Altogether, 725 students responded to at least one of the nine open-ended CST questions. Of these respondents:

- 58% identified as female, 33% as male, and 0.1% identified as transgender

[9] Samuel Messick, "Validity of Psychological Assessment: Validation of Inferences from Persons' Responses and Performances as Scientific Inquiry into Score Meaning," *American Psychologist* 50, no. 9 (1995): 742.

[10] David L. Morgan, "Focus Groups," *Annual Review of Sociology* 22 (1996): 129-152.

- 70% identified as Catholic, 11% as Christian (not Catholic), 2% as a non-Christian religion, and 7% as atheist, agnostic, or spiritual
- 28% identified as students of color, and
- 9–10% did not respond to the demographic questions, which appeared at the end of the survey.

Because the purpose of this research was to validate a rubric rather than to make predictions or inferences about the population of study, we did not assess the statistical validity of the sample.

The survey, which was approved by the institution's human subjects review board, contained nine open-ended response questions addressing CST.[11] These questions appeared at the beginning of the survey to avoid the possibility that subsequent survey questions, which addressed students' beliefs about morality, justice, and related topics, might influence participants' responses about their understanding of CST. Six questions addressed respondents' understanding of major CST principles (i.e., Common Good, Dignity of the Human Person, Preferential Option for the Poor, Solidarity, Rights and Responsibilities, Dignity of Work) with the stem, "How do you understand the following Catholic Social Teaching principles? Give a one or two sentence description in your own words." The remaining three questions were:

1. "As you complete your undergraduate studies, what CST principles stand out to you? Which two or three seem the most salient to you, and why?"
2. "What, if anything, did you find challenging about incorporating CST principles into your life?"
3. "What have you learned about Catholic Social Teaching (CST) while at [this university]? In what ways have you been exposed to CST ideas and principles?"

The number of responses per question ranged from 620 to 677; across all nine questions there were a total of 5,827 responses.

To analyze data, the research team developed a codebook based upon rubric 1.0 (see Appendix 1). In developing this codebook we drew upon McCuir-Gunby and colleagues' guidance for team codebook development for analyzing qualitative data.[12] In qualitative research, codes

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[11] The term *CST* in this particular study referred to Catholic Social Teaching, not the entire Catholic Social Tradition.

[12] Jessica T. DeCuir-Gunby, Patricia L. Marshall, and Allison W. McCulloch, "Developing and Using a Codebook for the Analysis of Interview Data: An Example from a Professional Development Research Project*," Field Methods* 23, no. 2 (2011): 136-155.

are short signifiers meant to assign meaning or significance to a unit of data, and a codebook organizes the multiple codes used in a research project.[13] In our case, the units of data were drawn from students' responses to the open-ended survey questions and the codes mirrored the seven categories of CST learning included in rubric 1.0: Framework, Principles, History, Contexts, Judgment, Justice, and Vocational. Two undergraduate student research assistants, trained by author Hudson, then coded all 5,827 responses to the nine questions using the codebook. Each response received as many codes as were relevant; some responses did not receive any codes, as they did not reflect any of the seven rubric categories. The student research assistants consulted with Hudson on a weekly basis throughout the analysis process to share their progress and findings, work through disagreements and uncertainties, and revise the parameters for each code. Interrater reliability rates for the seven codes ranged from a low of 85.7 percent (for the codes History and Vocational) to a high of 99.5 percent (for the code Principles). The **Table** summarizes the frequency and provides a sample response for each code.

Oral History Interviews

Another source of data the team examined to validate the rubric included transcripts of interviews with twenty-six students at five Catholic universities. Participants were undergraduates at the University of Notre Dame, Loyola University Chicago, the University of Scranton, Fordham University, and Fairfield University. They were minors in either Catholic Studies, CST, or part of a campus community engaged with CST. Members of the CST Learning and Research Initiative and colleagues at their universities recruited students, only a handful of whom were known to the researchers prior to the interviews. These interviews formed the foundation for an oral history project of the Initiative. Different interviewers, each with his or her own style and order of questions, talked to students, some over the phone, some in person. Like the cross-sectional survey described above, these interviews did not ask students to examine the rubric, but responses were coded to identify ways in which students articulated their understanding of CST, specifically: justice, vocation/career, formative experiences, and courses. Some

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[13] DeCuir-Gunby et al., "Developing and Using a Codebook." See also Johnny Saldaña, *The Coding Manual for Qualitative Researchers*, Third Edition (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2016).

Table. Frequencies and Sample Responses for Each Code Assigned to Survey Responses

Category	N	%[14]	Sample Response
Principles	4647	79.7%	"I think the common good and solidarity are what stand out most to me because they cover a broad range of topics. I think that anything we do, we must stand together and back one another up or else it will be in vain, so solidarity is very important. Also, the common good seems to cover not only us as a people, but within a smaller community such as a town or a school or even just in one small classroom. It can be applied to any arena that we should do what is be[s]t for the group rather than ourselves."
Justice	2774	47.6%	"I haven't learned many new ideas about Catholic Social Teaching in my short time here, but my understanding of the values of service and generosity have definitely been strengthened. I suppose I've been exposed to CST ideas by reading about Notre Dame's mission and the many projects on campus and internationally that help others."
Framework	1135	19.5%	"'Catholic social teaching is the body of doctrine developed by the Catholic Church on matters of social justice, involving issues of poverty and wealth, economics, social organization and the role of the state.' It's a general message that comes with being Catholic. I was never really exposed to these ideas, they existed in my life always."
Contexts	1061	18.2%	"[This university] is full of very privileged people from a variety of backgrounds, but whom [*sic*] are largely taken care of in a number of manners. Living here, it is easy to forget just how great we have it and how much we have to give, materialistically and especially otherwise."
Judgment	494	8.5%	"Notre Dame has done a great job in presenting how to live a moral and ethical life. My Business Ethics class stressed the idea of being a servant to the world through business. We must choose the business ideals that help the world (such as being environmentally friendly and avoiding cheap labor) rather that choosing the economic decision. We must balance the economic, the social, and the environmental aspects of a business in order to be successful and ethical."

[14] Percent totals do not add to 100 as each response could receive multiple codes.

Table. *Continued*

Category	N	%[14]	Sample Response
Vocational	286	4.9%	"I've learned that [C]atholic social teaching is not mutually exclusive from my work life or my personal life. It must be incorporated into everything I do because without morals and principles to guide my decision making process, it is easy to become influence[d] by outside influencing factors that are against my morals. I have been exposed to CST ideas and principles in every one of my classes at [the business school], particularly in the case studies we participate in during class. There is always a portion where we are graded on the ethical dilemma of our decisions and actions. Thus, we are encouraged to think of that first."
History	14	0.2%	"As a [P]rotestant, I came to Notre Dame knowing almost nothing about Catholicism. Now that I have been here for some time, I realize that I still know almost nothing about the practices of Catholics, for example the specifics of how they conduct mass. What I have learned though, is how similar it is with my religion. I now know a great deal about the history of Catholicism and how it relates to the history of Protestantism, as well as the similarities and differences between ideas and beliefs between the two."

demographic information was also coded. This coding helped the rubric team assess how well the rubric aligned with students' understanding of CST and facility with the language of CST.

The interviews showed that some students possessed an explicit sense of CST, whereas others had a more diffuse or implicit sense of it. In certain interviews, students employed seemingly definitive language about CST experience and knowledge, but it was unclear that such a skill indicated a stronger commitment to and internalization of CST. In other cases, students who struggled to describe CST seemed to incorporate it into their lives at the same level or even more thoroughly than the students with more sophisticated articulations.[15]

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[15] This observation raises a larger issue beyond the scope of the present article, i.e., the possibility of being able to act in congruence with principles that a person cannot easily describe.

Congruence with the vocational implications category appeared when students seemed to see that CST informed the way they would pursue their careers (e.g., a physician who works with people who are economically poor or who works in health policy), while others envisioned a career teaching others directly about CST (e.g., as a campus minister) or advocating for social change (e.g., through community organizing). When asked to define the term *justice*, students offered a range of responses from basic fairness to fairness accompanied by accountability, described as using the economy to provide people with the resources they need to flourish. Students sometimes defined solidarity as physically being with suffering people rather than as advocating for justice to change structures that cause suffering. Such a range of definitions lent validation to the rubric's levels structure.

Focus Groups with Administrators and Students

Focus groups were conducted with administrators at two universities and with students at three universities in order to increase the rubric's accuracy, utility, and likelihood it would be used in its final form. In qualitative research, focus groups "provide trustworthy naturalistic data"[16] that enable researchers to hear the perspectives of stakeholders (in our case, administrators and students) relative to the topic of study (in our case, the rubric). The focus groups with administrators (n=11) included those overseeing academic and co-curricular programs, experiential learning, service-learning, multicultural and student affairs, institutional research, career services, and campus ministry. The aim of these focus groups was to gain "expert professional judgment … to assess the content aspect of construct validity"[17] of the rubric. Facilitators posed the following questions to administrators:

1. We need help in making sure this survey is helpful to universities and colleges. What are the ways this rubric could overlap or augment any of our current efforts?
2. How could the rubric be improved in order that it might be more effective in helping our university to articulate student learning goals and measure students' development?
3. Anything else you want to add?

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[16] Nancy Grudens-Schuck, Beverlyn Lundy Allen, and Kathlene Larson, "Focus Group Fundamentals," (Ames, IA: Iowa State University Extension, 2004), www.extension. iastate.edu/publications/PM1969B.pdf.

[17] Messick, 745.

Focus groups with students (n=30) were conducted at three universities and included first- and second-year students, who were relatively inexperienced with CST, as well as third- and fourth-year students with experience in various CST curricular and co-curricular programs. Facilitators posed the following questions to students:

1. Which categories and descriptions seem to match best the development you see in yourself and others?
2. What seems to be missing?
3. What could be improved?
4. Anything else you want to add?

Several suggestions for improving the rubric emerged from the focus groups. First, both administrators and students encouraged addition of a "0" column for students with no interest, no understanding, no familiarity, or outright disagreement with CST. Students were concerned that institutions, faculty members, and students might give up on teaching and learning CST because they would not recognize themselves on the rubric. Second, administrators had some specific concerns about language, particularly the use of the term *appropriation* of CST in the rubric's introduction, which raised red flags for the administrators regarding cultural appropriation. Third, some students suggested naming CST principles on the rubric, acknowledging their own uncertainty about which concepts would be classified as such.

How Well Did Rubric 1.0 Align with Students' Understanding?

In evaluating how well rubric 1.0 captured the ways in which students understand and integrate CST, we looked for an alignment between the rubric's categories and levels and the insights expressed in the survey data, oral history interviews, and focus groups with administrators and students. We also took into account the accuracy with which students described CST, as well as the significance of CST for life decisions (e.g., career choice) expressed by participants. Our goal in validating the rubric was to determine whether "the available evidence justifies the test interpretation and use."[18]

Beginning with the survey data, with a few exceptions, the students' responses accurately articulated the meaning of a specific principle, e.g., when asked about the common good, one student said it "asks us to conduct ourselves in ways that benefit everyone in our society."

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[18] Messick, 744.

There seemed to be a range of responses representing levels from "initiating" to "flourishing," suggesting that rubric 1.0 captured various depths of student understanding. While the previous response reflected a generally accepted and nuanced definition of the principle, another student's response was more simplistic: "The common good asks people to equally share the materials provided by God so everyone has what they need to live." However, unlike other aspects of student familiarity with the tradition, the survey questions explicitly asked students about CST principles, raising the concern that these results could overstate participants' awareness of principles.

In at least one focus group, students' inability to formally identify CST principles was discussed. The discussion centered on students who participate in community service, including alternative break programs, on a regular or occasional basis. A colleague asked us to consider that students may have assimilated the principles of CST without having the ability to name them. This suggestion caused us to reflect on the questions: How critical is it that students can name the principle? Is it more important that the principle informs the way they live? These remain open questions, best answered by the end-users of the rubric. A program or institution that decides it is important for students to have fluency in the vocabulary of CST will give greater weight to this dimension of the rubric than another program or institution that finds less value in such fluency.

Although the creators of the rubric thought it important that students demonstrate familiarity with the key historical figures and documents that constitute CST, the survey data suggested that students did not know, recall, or perhaps did not deem important, the particular figures and documents in the tradition. Mother Teresa and the founder of the sponsoring religious community were the only historical figures identified. Similarly, few students participating in the oral history interviews named a significant text that influenced them, even when they were prompted by the interview question. The low percentage of coded responses for History again led the rubric team to ask whether the category was essential: Is it critical that students know the history of CST in order to internalize the principles so that they influence students' judgments and vocational decisions? This question should be explored in the future by rubric developers and adopters.

The validation process showed rubric 1.0 inadequately captured students' *lack* of understanding of CST. Common misunderstandings about the nature of CST by students that rubric 1.0 could not meaningfully categorize included some students' tendencies to equate CST with

specific liturgical practices or theological views (e.g., attending Mass or praying together). These perspectives were not captured well by the Initiating level of rubric 1.0, the scope of which rendered the rubric unusable in scoring the many students with inaccurate understandings of CST.

Key Changes from Rubric 1.0 to Rubric 2.0

The findings from the survey, oral history interviews, and focus groups led the rubric team to make the following modifications to the rubric, reflected in version 2.0 (see Appendix 2). From the outset, the rubric was intended to encapsulate the knowledge, attitudes, behaviors, skills, and dispositions observable among students who had at least some exposure to CST. Therefore, the lowest level represented was the beginner level, at which a student might be discovering CST.

Just as uninformed community service can solidify students' stereotypes about people based on perceptions of color, class, gender, sexuality, and so forth, the survey analysis revealed that while minimal exposure to CST led to introductory-level understanding for some students, for others it resulted in inaccurate presumptions about CST. Examples of students' mistakes about the nature of CST include conflating CST with the five pillars of a sponsoring congregation or with active pressure to convert to Catholicism, describing CST as the relationship between the histories of Protestantism and Catholicism, or naming CST as the root of the Church's teachings on abortion and sexuality. Exposure to CST led other students to wholeheartedly dismiss or reject the CST framework for a variety of reasons, including concern about their own welfare and personal obligations, as well as a rejection of individual social responsibility. As a result, rubric 2.0 includes a "Not Applicable or Not Present" column to account for students who either (1) do not attempt to talk about CST, (2) harbor incorrect information about CST principles and foundations, or (3) reject CST as a personal framework.

Additionally, rubric 2.0 reflects several modifications to the terminology used. First, the rubric team replaced *appropriation* in the rubric's title with *learning*. We also clarified in the rubric's introduction that *across the institution* refers both to various offices and to an integrated experience across the university. Third, because focus group participants were confused by the column level names in rubric 1.0 that drew on CST principles and foundational language (i.e., Flourishing, Developing, Discovering), we changed the level names to Beginner, Intermediate, and Advanced.

Finally, we made a couple of changes to the architecture of the rubric. First, we eliminated the blank columns representing intermediate levels to improve consistency in assessment and to decrease subjectivity in applying the rubric. Second, we added a banner listing CST principles across the top of the rubric.

Potential Uses of the CST Rubric

The CST Learning and Research Initiative envisions the rubric as a way to assist Catholic colleges and universities as they articulate student learning goals and measure student development. *Learning* here encompasses knowledge of, appreciation for, and integration of CST, including an awareness of the importance of critiquing it. The following suggestions for potential applications of the CST rubric result from brainstorming among members of the Initiative and members of focus groups, as well as from informal feedback offered by approximately twenty colleagues involved with curricular and co-curricular CST initiatives at Catholic colleges and universities.

Course/Program Design

The rubric can assist faculty members in articulating learning outcomes for particular courses across the disciplines. Although theology courses most obviously can incorporate explicit analysis of CST, courses in other disciplines could incorporate specific learning objectives in the rubric. More broadly, directors and faculty members in particular programs and majors, including the core curriculum, could develop plans for scaffolding courses throughout their curricula in light of the learning goals articulated in the rubric, and then use the rubric as a tool for assessing students' development and improving their programs.

The rubric can also serve as a means of coordinating efforts across academic and co-curricular programs, student affairs, institutional research, career services, and campus ministry, among other offices. The rubric offers a common language and set of goals that both academic programs and various co-curricular offices and programs could use to assess the extent to which they are contributing to students' overall education in CST. Such assessment could yield more explicit attention to CST and improvements in individual programs, as well as extend collaboration among programs toward common goals. One group of

students in a focus group found the rubric to be valuable as an outline of expectations for student engagement with CST, and they thought it provided guidance for how a student might come to better understand CST. Students suggested that universities include an orientation to CST and the rubric at first-year orientations, first-year seminars, senior capstones, and university-wide days of service.

Assessment of Student Learning

In courses for which a key learning outcome is application of CST principles to the discipline, the rubric offers levels of differentiation to aid assessment of student learning. In a class titled Principles of Economics: Macro, students were asked to incorporate at least one CST principle into a short essay that argued a position on a macroeconomic question. The instructor used the rubric to score students' responses. Students who failed to make any reference to a CST principle were clearly at the "not present" level and received 0 points. Those at the beginning level were able to name a principle but could not apply it effectively. For example, a student made a weak link to interest rate policy when arguing that CST demanded attention to the "plight of the poor." A student who earned the maximum points spoke about measuring success in terms of how well the vulnerable members of a society are doing and that the country's goal should be to put the needs of the poor and vulnerable before everyone else's, which he tied to health care policy and the right to basic necessities like education and health care.

In an undergraduate history seminar, Dorothy Day's America: Catholicism in the 20th-Century United States, students wrote paragraph-long responses to the instructor's questions concerning their knowledge of CST principles, documents, and history, such as: "What would you name as the most important encyclicals, pastoral letters, or other documents of CST?" The instructor will evaluate those responses and compare students' knowledge at the beginning of the classes with that demonstrated in their final papers, using the rubric categories as a guide for comparison.

Additional suggestions for using the rubric for course-level assessment emerged at a conference of Jesuit colleges and universities focused on justice across the curriculum. For example, a learning outcome of a course on CST could be students' moving from level one to level two on the rubric, reflecting increased knowledge of CST. In a capstone

course, senior-level students could be asked to reflect on how the seven categories of the rubric, which could be grouped according to knowledge (categories 1 to 3), analysis (4 and 5), and action (6 and 7), shape their lives. Likewise, in experiential courses (service learning, study/immersion abroad, internships, etc.), faculty members might use the rubric as a springboard for student reflections about the experience and its impact on their personal development.

Uses with Groups Other than Students

Faculty members. The desire to tie hiring Catholic faculty members to the preservation of the Catholic identity and mission of colleges and universities has been widely noted,[19] and is a key tenet of the Apostolic Exhortation, *Ex corde Ecclesiae.* Regardless of their affinity with the Church, new faculty members may not be well versed in CST or see its applicability to their teaching and research. Yet faculty members who do not identify as Catholic may resonate with the key principles of CST, thus creating dialogues about the Church, its history, and its place in the world today. In both instances the CST rubric offers an opening to discussions that should engage faculty members at Catholic colleges.

Institutional assessment. Catholic colleges and universities have the potential to apply CST in areas beyond their core competencies of education and spiritual growth, specifically in regard to their environmental impact, licensing, and portfolio investment decisions. Though designed with student learning in mind, this rubric can also offer a model for structuring programs and policies in other functional areas of the institution, whose objectives are to support the core competencies. For example, the licensing of apparel for sale in college bookstores and online should be in alignment with key CST principles about the common good, care for creation, and the rights of workers. If the institution's administrators and professionals outside academic affairs and student affairs are drawn into discussions of the foundations, history, principles, and vocational implications of CST, they ought to have a deeply rooted context in which to make decisions about t-shirt factories, shareholder resolutions, and lawn care chemicals. The CST rubric offers a tool for regularly reviewing the alignment of institutional policies and practices with CST principles. Institutions might consider incorporating such reviews into their regular accreditation processes.

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[19] Richard Conklin, "How Catholic the Faculty?" *Notre Dame Magazine* (Winter 2006-2007).

Alumni. It has been argued that tending to student understanding of CST often bears fruit years after they leave campus,[20] but the chance of a high yield is increased by regular attention to the spiritual and ethical development of graduates. This attention can take the form of alumni events geared toward — or at least having a component focused on — applying the principles of CST to one's important life decisions. The CST rubric provides both an aspirational model for designing alumni programs and a metric by which alumni programs might measure their impact.

Limitations

The development team recognizes the relative homogeneity of its membership and therefore cautions that the rubric may be more relevant for some potential users than others. Input from a more diverse group of faculty members and administrators, as well as using the rubric with a more diverse pool of students, will strengthen its validity in a wider context. Moreover, because two of the three validation sources used non-rubric–specific data, they may have missed some important nuances of the rubric that only its application will reveal. Likewise, because the rubric has not yet been used widely, the extent of its limitations is not fully known. The authors welcome all feedback to improve the rubric. With an operational tool in place, but open to future revision, the CSTRLI encourages utilization of the rubric for the various purposes described previously.

Conclusion

As stated at the outset, the original purpose of the CST rubric was to create a tool that could be used to conceptualize and to communicate intended results of curricular and co-curricular CST programs and to assess student formation. Collaboratively researched and drafted with input from CST experts from more than ten higher education institutions, rubric 1.0 has been widely scrutinized and revised to create rubric 2.0, a new tool whose constructs have been validated by surveys, oral history analysis, and focus groups. Going forward, we look to our colleagues at Catholic higher education institutions to provide additional evidence to "generate a compelling argument"[21] for the validity of the

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[20] Margarita M. Rose, "Faculty as Moral Gardeners: Formation Rooted in the Catholic Social Tradition," *Expositions: Ethics in Focus* 10, no. 1 (2016): 32-39.

rubric's constructs and scoring by utilizing the rubric in their work inside and outside the classroom.

Questions for future consideration regarding the rubric include the following:

1. To what extent do universities teach the principles and values that CST champions through the particular lenses and languages of their founding missions, charisms, and identities (e.g., Ignatian, Mercy, Vincentian), rather than through the explicit lens and language of official Catholic Social Teaching and the Catholic Social Tradition?
2. What are the advantages and disadvantages of the various approaches identified above?
3. Do the various approaches have implications for student development, as measured by the rubric?
4. How does student development with regard to CST relate, if at all, to students' development in religious faith and spirituality?

This article has its origins in the authors' participation in the CST Learning and Research Initiative, a collaboration of faculty and administrators at eleven Catholic colleges and universities across the United States. Through national meetings over the last five years, the Initiative has facilitated campus focus groups and collected oral histories of student understanding of CST, developed a rubric for curricular and research purposes, and conducted conversations leading to the peer-reviewed articles in this issue of the Journal of Catholic Higher Education. *For more information, see both the introduction to this issue and http://sites.nd.edu/cstresearch.*

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[21] Messick, 744.

Appendix 1. June 2016 Draft of Rubric 1.0: Student Appropriation of Catholic Social Teachings and Tradition

This rubric regarding student appropriation of Catholic social teachings and tradition (CST) is intended to assist Catholic colleges and universities as they articulate student learning goals and measure students' development. The rubric is for use across the institution as a means of coordinating and developing academic and co-curricular programs, student affairs, institutional research, career services, and campus ministry, among other offices.

CST addresses many issues such as interpersonal and structural violence, peace and war, active nonviolence, poverty, economic relations, racism, immigration, the environment, workers' rights, gender relations, and the marginalization and oppression of some groups. This rubric does not name each of these issues in order to allow application to any and all of them. What we mean by "appropriation" encompasses knowledge of, appreciation for, and integration of CST, including an awareness of the importance of critiquing it.

This rubric (draft June 2016) is being developed by the Catholic Social Teaching Learning and Research Initiative: http://blogs.nd.edu/cstresearch/. To submit suggestions for improvement, contact Jennifer Reed-Bouley, jreed-bouley@csm.edu.

Appendix 1

Category	Flourishing 5	Advancing 4	Discovering 3	Developing 2	Initiating 1
1. Description of CST Framework	Articulates well the roots of CST within the theological, philosophical, and scriptural traditions	Between flourishing and discovering	Discusses in a preliminary way the roots of CST within the theological, philosophical, and scriptural traditions	Between discovering and initiating	Sees a connection between CST and the Catholic faith, church, values, or Bible
2. Recognition of CST Principles	Demonstrates close familiarity with the commonly defined principles of CST		Demonstrates some familiarity with the commonly defined principles of CST		Names some of the commonly defined principles of CST
3. Knowledge of History of CST	Explains in a rich way the history of the tradition; key documents, leaders, and movements; and openness to critique and development		Grasps some of the history of the tradition; key documents, leaders, and movements; and openness to critique and development		Recognizes at least one key document, leader, or movement in the tradition
4. Social Contexts/ Perspectives	Exhibits critical awareness of social privilege of some people and the marginalization of others on the basis of, for example, race, class, gender, religious traditions, and nationality		Exhibits initial awareness of social privilege of some people and the marginalization of others on the basis of, for example, race, class, gender, religious traditions, and nationality		Expresses concern for the plight of those who are afflicted or at the margins
5. Lens for Judgment	Consistently assesses and makes judgments about practices, policies, and social institutions in light of CST		Is beginning to assess and make judgments about practices, policies, and social institutions in light of CST		Is considering whether CST applies to some social issues

Appendix 1. *Continued*

Category	Flourishing 5	Advancing 4	Discovering 3	Developing 2	Initiating 1
6. Acting for Justice	Regularly acts in solidarity with and for others for the common good		Acts with care and compassion for the good of others		Participates in service activities
7. Vocational Implications	Fully integrates CST in vocational choices		Is becoming aware of implications of CST for vocational choices		Sees that CST may influence someone's career or vocational choices

Appendix 2. CST Rubric: Student Learning of Catholic Social Teaching and Tradition

Developed by the national CST Learning and Research Initiative for use by faculty, researchers, & program leaders in higher education and beyond

This rubric regarding learning of Catholic social teaching and tradition (CST) is intended to assist Catholic colleges and universities as they articulate student learning goals and measure student development. What we mean by "learning" encompasses knowledge of, appreciation for, and integration of CST, including an awareness of the importance of critiquing it.

The rubric is for use in various ways across an institution: for example, for course/program development and assessment, and as a means of coordinating efforts across academic and co-curricular programs, student affairs, institutional research, career services, and campus ministry, among other offices.

CST addresses many issues such as interpersonal and structural violence, peace and war, active nonviolence, poverty, economic relations, racism, immigration, the environment, workers' rights, gender relations, and the marginalization and oppression of some groups. This rubric does not name each of these issues in order to allow application to any and all of them. Some courses or programs may move students from one level to the next (e.g., from "not present" to "beginner") on a few of the seven elements. Competence across all principles likely will vary among individuals.

Limitations: The rubric was developed in the context of the United States. It reflects the worldviews of its contributors: faculty/scholars with experience researching and teaching CST in higher education. Understanding and appropriation of CST principles in other contexts/cultures might be different.

Development of the Rubric

This rubric was developed (via feedback from focus groups, data analyses, and more) from 2014-2017 by the Catholic Social Tradition Learning and Research Initiative: http://sites.nd.edu/cstresearch

Please suggest improvements or share how you are using the rubric by contacting any of the contributors (contact information is available on the website).

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Appendix 2. CST Rubric: Student Learning of Catholic Social Teaching and Tradition

Category	Applying knowledge		Building knowledge	Not Present or Not Applicable
	Advanced 5	Intermediate 3-4	Beginner 1-2	
1. CST Foundations	Articulates well the roots of CST within the theological, philosophical, or scriptural traditions	Discusses in a preliminary way the roots of CST within the theological, philosophical, or scriptural traditions	Sees a connection between CST and Catholicism or the Bible	Is unaware of CST roots or mischaracterizes the roots
2. CST Principles	Discusses and critiques the commonly defined principles of CST	Names and demonstrates familiarity with the commonly defined principles of CST	Recognizes some themes of commonly defined principles of CST	Is unaware of CST principles or misidentifies the principles
3. CST History	Explains in detail the history of the tradition; key documents, leaders, and movements; and openness to critique and development	Grasps some of the history of the tradition; key documents, leaders, and movements; and openness to critique and development	Recognizes at least one key document, leader, or movement in the tradition	Is unaware of the history or mistakes the history
4. Social Analysis	Exhibits critical awareness of social privilege of some people and the marginalization of others on the basis of, for example, race, class, gender, religious traditions, and nationality	Exhibits initial awareness of social privilege of some people and the marginalization of others on the basis of, for example, race, class, gender, religious traditions, and nationality	Recognizes the existence of social inequality	Does not recognize the existence of social inequality

Appendix 2. Continued

Category	Applying knowledge		Building knowledge	Not Present or Not Applicable
	Advanced 5	**Intermediate 3-4**	**Beginner 1-2**	
5. Lens for Judgment	Consistently assesses and makes judgments about practices, policies, and social institutions in light of CST	Is learning to assess and make judgments about practices, policies, and social institutions in light of CST	Is considering whether CST applies to some social issues	Does not consider CST to be relevant to social issues
6. Responses to Injustice	Engages in action against injustice in solidarity with others	Recognizes insufficiency of community service and sees need for action to address injustice	Participates in community service activities out of generosity	Does not recognize a responsibility to address injustice
7. Vocational Implications	Integrates CST into career, life, and daily decisions	Confronts implications of CST for career, life, and daily decisions	Sees that CST may have implications for career, life, and daily decisions	Does not consider CST when making career, life, and daily decisions