

General Education

GE-GE-GE

2017-2018

ACM:

Faculty:

Student Learning Outcomes

SLO Count: 9

Name	Content
Civic Engagement	Function as an engaged citizen in a diverse and globalized world: Within GenEd, students open to civic engagement view themselves as connected to local and global communities where they participate in activities that address issues of public concern. Critically engaged students define issues, pose, probe, and solve problems with an awareness of and an inclusion of the diverse values and interests.
Communication Skills	Communicate effectively orally and in writing: Within GenEd, students who communicate effectively use spoken and written language to construct a message that demonstrates the communicator has established clear goals and has considered her or his audience. Effective messages are organized and presented in a style appropriate to the context.
Contextualized Learning	Understand historical and contemporary issues in context: Within GenEd, students who contextualize learning understand and integrate historical, contemporary, and cultural phenomena and their underlying principles in two broad applications. First, contextual learners recognize the interaction of complex forces that give rise to specific phenomena. Second, contextual learners understand and analyze related events, artifacts, practices and concepts across geographic, chronological and cultural boundaries.

Critical Thinking	Think critically: Within GenEd, students who think critically recognize an object of investigation, frame questions about it, and interrogate assumptions—explicit or implicit. Critical thinking includes the evaluation of evidence, analysis and synthesis of multiple sources, and reflection on varied perspectives. Critical thinking generates a well-developed investigation that incorporates supporting and countering claims. A student engaged in critical thinking produces an informed account, a hypothesis for further study, or the solution to a problem.
Ethical Reasoning	This Student Learning Outcome was developed for use in the context of Intellectual Heritage I and II. It addresses how students describe, analyze and evaluate the following: their own perspective in relation to that of others; values and value systems in historical, social and cultural contexts; differing ideas of social responsibility; specific positions and agency in relation to relations of power; ethical arguments for which there is no clear answer; and conceptions of the common good.
Information Literacy	Identify, access and evaluate sources of information: Within GenEd, information literacy encompasses a broad spectrum of abilities, including the ability to recognize and articulate information needs; to locate, critically evaluate, and organize information for a specific purpose; and to recognize and reflect on the ethical use of information.
Interdisciplinary Thinking	Understand and apply knowledge in and across disciplines: Within GenEd, students who use interdisciplinary thinking recognize the world presents problems, topics, or issues too complex to be satisfactorily addressed though a single lens. Thus, interdisciplinary thinkers apply multiple perspectives, paradigms, and frameworks to problems, topics, or issue.
Lifelong Learning	Promote lasting curiosity: GenEd cultivates these skills and abilities throughout the required undergraduate curriculum, and students will experience these ways of being though readings, discussions, activities, and classes throughout GenEd.

Scientific and Quantitative Reasoning	Use and apply quantitative and scientific reasoning to explain phenomena in the context of everyday life: Within GenEd, students who exercise quantitative and scientific reasoning use and apply these reasoning processes to explain phenomena in the context of everyday life. Quantitative reasoning includes statistical and/or logical problem-solving, the relationships between quantities, and the use and misuse of quantitative data. Scientific reasoning introduces students to the evolution and interdependence of science and technology and includes problem identification, hypothesis evaluation, experimentation, interpretation of results and the use and misuse of scientific data.
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Does this program have specialized accreditation?

No

Assessment Activities and Results

Assessment Activity Count: 4

Assessment Activity: Recertification Score Analysis 2011-2016

Please provide a brief name for this assessment activity.	Recertification Score Analysis 2011-2016
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Describe the assessment method used to assess the learning outcome(s). Provide enough detail so that we understand the nature of the project.

Background: After a GenEd course has been taught for four years, in the fifth year the course is recertified. Departments submit a package of materials that includes syllabi, information about the course, sample assignments and student work at the above average, average and below average levels. Packages are read by members of the GenEd Executive Committee (GEEC), GenEd Area Coordinators and GenEd staff, with each package being read by the area coordinator, director, associate director and at least two GEEC members. Courses have historically been assessed according to criteria which include how closely the course adheres to the original course proposal, consistency between sections, and whether the course continues to meet program-wide and area learning goals. Information literacy, oral and written communication and critical thinking are required learning goals for all courses. If courses are found to be deficient in any of the above regards, they may be put on probation and asked to submit additional materials to demonstrate issues have been addressed or may be removed from the inventory. Methodology: For this analysis, the results of 402 recertification rubrics spanning a period of six years (2011 to present) were collated by GenEd student worker Dalton Becker. Each rubric corresponded to one faculty reader's review of a recertification package for a given course and included evaluations of "Yes", "No" or "Both" (indicating that the course partially fulfilled the requirements for a "Yes" designation) for each of the eight program-wide competencies. These competencies are: information literacy, critical thinking, oral and written communication, contextualized learning, interdisciplinary thinking, lifelong learning, scientific and quantitative literacy and civic engagement. (Note: Not all recertification reviews included reader assessments for all eight competencies; only information literacy, communication and critical thinking were assessed for in all cases.) Each rubric was converted into a numerical value and the information was entered into a spreadsheet table, which constituted the raw data. Preparation of the data for analysis included: (1) recoding "Yes"/"No" to 1 and 0, respectively with "Both" also converted to a score of 1; (2) combining any duplicate entries (as the result of non-standardized names as well as courses offered in multiple departments); and (3) adding a GenEd area code to identify to which area the course belonged. Once the data was in prepared form, it was exported to SPSS where a cross-tabulation was done (by area and by competency) to determine the "Yes"/"No" count for each course. An average for each course was then calculated along with an overall average for all courses in that area on each of the competencies.

<p>What were the findings from this assessment?</p>	<p>Please see attached document titled "Findings for Completed Assessments" for detailed data. Discussion: Readers confirmed that, in general, GenEd courses address program-wide competencies very consistently, with the exception of Scientific and Quantitative Reasoning, which is addressed in only 31% of cases. Given that all courses are intended to be somewhat interdisciplinary, that only 84% of cases were found to demonstrate this quality is notable. Also notable is that only 79% of cases demonstrated information literacy, particularly given that it is a required competency for all GenEd courses. Where the readings are broken out by area, some trends are apparent. Quantitative Literacy courses are the least likely, by a significant margin in each case, to show evidence that critical thinking, communication skills, contextualized learning, interdisciplinary thinking, civic engagement and lifelong learning are being systematically addressed. This raises the question of whether courses should be redesigned to address these competencies, or whether it is not reasonable to ask that these competencies are developed in the context of Quantitative Literacy courses. A surprising finding is that Race and Diversity courses are the least likely to show evidence of addressing information literacy. This is possibly because these courses are designed to address the impact of exclusions and to connect histories and patterns of discrimination to students' own experiences, which may not be conducive to addressing information literacy. It is notoriously difficult to define information literacy, which undoubtedly plays a role in how it is assessed. However, Human Behavior, World Society, Science and Technology and U.S. Society courses also do not reliably address information literacy. This is worrying, given that, again, it is required of all courses and can be very readily taught in the context of courses in these areas.</p>
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<p>How are you using or planning to use the findings from this assessment for program improvement? Where applicable, give specific examples of changes you are making to the program as a result of your findings.</p>	<p>Courses that did not demonstrate critical thinking, information literacy or oral and written communication in their recertification packages were required to submit a plan to address those competencies, and follow-up evidence that changes had been made. The GenEd Executive Committee has begun considering whether information literacy is a suitable requirement for Quantitative Literacy and Science and Technology. While these discussions have not generated specific actions yet, the most likely outcome will be a reconsideration of the information literacy requirement to clarify what it means and to provide examples, with the goal of facilitating higher rates of success in meeting this learning outcome. Finally, we have already revised our recertification submission process to clarify course learning goals and map both these and assignments onto the program-wide competencies. The next step planned is to revise the recertification review process away from a simple yes/no and towards using a rubric to assess student work.</p>
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Assessment Activity: Ethical Reasoning in IH: Direct Assessment of Stud

<p>Please provide a brief name for this assessment activity.</p>	<p>Ethical Reasoning in IH: Direct Assessment of Student Work</p>
<p>Describe the assessment method used to assess the learning outcome(s). Provide enough detail so that we understand the nature of the project.</p>	<p>In order to both address the external review recommendations and support IH's curricular revision, GenEd and IH partnered to develop a rubric to assess ethical reasoning in IH. Beginning in the summer of 2016, IH instructors gathered and, over a series of meetings, developed learning goals and benchmarks resulting in the Ethical Reasoning rubric used for this assessment. In early summer 2017, GenEd tested the rubric for reliability resulting in a second round of edits ahead of the current assessment.</p>

<p>What were the findings from this assessment?</p>	<p>On average, between both courses, students appear to demonstrate competency between a benchmark of 1 and 2 on all six standards. There is an increase in competency on five of the six standards with a minor/negligible decrease on one standard indicating that progress is being made between IH 851 and IH 852. It appears that as we relaxed the requirement to admit any two adjacent scores as valid data, the overall averages increased, which suggests that the nine raters were very consistent in identifying low benchmarks, but diverged widely on what they believed to be a high benchmark. Please see attached document titled "Findings for Completed Assessments" for detailed data.</p>
<p>How are you using or planning to use the findings from this assessment for program improvement? Where applicable, give specific examples of changes you are making to the program as a result of your findings.</p>	<p>The Intellectual Heritage Program has already begun the process of integrating the rubric standards into a new learning goal for the program that will explicitly address ethical reasoning. This information will be presented to Intellectual Heritage staff and faculty in the spring of 2018. Because this analysis was just completed, no changes have yet been made as a result of it (other than those made on the basis of the development of the rubric itself.)</p>

Assessment Activity: Course Recertification 2016-2017

<p>Please provide a brief name for this assessment activity.</p>	<p>Course Recertification 2016-2017</p>
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<p>Describe the assessment method used to assess the learning outcome(s). Provide enough detail so that we understand the nature of the project.</p>	<p>For AY 2016-2017, courses in the inventory that have been taught for four years were required to submit a course portfolio which includes: a collaborative narrative describing how the course has changed and how it meets the overarching program goals of critical thinking, communication and information literacy, as well as goals for the Gen Ed breadth area in which the course is situated; syllabi for all sections taught in the current academic year; and student work at the above-, below and average levels that demonstrate overarching program goals. Evaluation of courses includes a rubric designed for each General Education Area. The following courses were assessed -- Arts: Sacred Space, Dramatic Imagination, The Creative Spirit, Arts of the Western World; Human Behavior: Youth Cultures, Creativity and Innovation, Eating Cultures, Human Ecology ; Race and Diversity: African Americans- Equality and the Law, Race in the Ancient Mediterranean, Race, Identity and Experience in American Art; World Society: World Regions and Cultures, The Detective Novel ; U.S. Society: Dissent in America, Doing Justice, Law and American Society, Sport and Leisure in American Society, Founding Philadelphia; Quantitative Literacy: Critical Reasoning and Problem Solving; Science and Technology Cyberspace and Society: Technological Transformations, Bionic Human, Digital World 2020, Geology of the National Parks</p>
<p>What were the findings from this assessment?</p>	<p>Eight of the twenty-four courses reviewed did not meet the basic requirements of GenEd courses and were put on probation. Two courses were found to not consistently meet the area goals for their areas. Six courses did not meet the program-wide information literacy requirement and one did not meet the oral and written communication requirement. Courses were additional put on probation for significant inconsistencies between sections, noting pre-requisites (GenEds may not have pre-requisites), significant divergence from the original intent of the course, and insufficient evidence that the course had been successfully adapted to significantly larger class sizes.</p>

<p>How are you using or planning to use the findings from this assessment for program improvement? Where applicable, give specific examples of changes you are making to the program as a result of your findings.</p>	<p>All eight courses were put on "probation" and were required to submit a plan by December 15th to address the issues identified with their course. The plans were received. In spring, follow-up materials will be submitted to demonstrate that the issues with the courses have been addressed. If issues have not been addressed, the courses may be removed from the GenEd inventory.</p>
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Assessment Activity: SFF Pedagogical Delivery Analysis, 2011-2016

<p>Please provide a brief name for this assessment activity.</p>	<p>SFF Pedagogical Delivery Analysis, 2011-2016</p>
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<p>Describe the assessment method used to assess the learning outcome(s). Provide enough detail so that we understand the nature of the project.</p>	<p>Background: Until Fall 2016, instructors were provided by Institutional Research and Assessment with an Instructor Form (see appendix), which asked instructors to provide information related to classroom practice in three domains: educational technology, modes of pedagogical delivery and skills used in course. Responses were either in the form of a simple "Yes/No" or on a Likert Scale of 1-3 (None, Some Required, Much Required). Method: The data used in this analysis was reported by Institutional Research and Assessment as SFF Reports and spans from Fall 2011 to Spring 2016, covering 9,676 sections of GenEd courses offered in that time period including all campuses, and both Honors and non-Honors courses (with the exception of online courses). Additionally, any crosslisted courses (identified by a crosslisted code) were removed to avoid duplicates in the dataset. In order to standardize scales, all Likert Scale responses were converted to a binary "Yes/No" scale (i.e. "None"=1, "Some Required" and "Much Required"=2). The data was then exported to SPSS where crosstabulations were done by section type and then by Honors/Non-Honors, part-time/full-time and GenEd area to determine the average, or percent of instructors reporting that they used the skill in their course. Additionally, a Percent Reporting category was created to measure the percentage of instructors who actually reported responses for each of the variables in the three domains outlined above. Finally given that the averages were between 1 and 2, all results were subtracted by 1 to obtain an average between 0 and 1, representing a ratio/percentage.</p>
<p>What were the findings from this assessment?</p>	<p>Please see attached document titled "Findings for Completed Assessments" for detailed data.</p>
<p>How are you using or planning to use the findings from this assessment for program improvement? Where applicable, give specific examples of changes you are making to the program as a result of your findings.</p>	<p>This, along with findings from the recertification review study, will be used to reassess the success of the GenEd Quantitative Literacy courses. While they are succeeding in addressing quantitative literacy, they do not consistently address other required competencies such as oral and written communication and critical thinking. An additional next step is to use this information to see whether these choices are impacted by class size, and whether these choices mitigate the effects of class size on student learning.</p>

Lifelong Learning		X															
Scientific and Quantitative Reasoning		X					X	X									

Indirect Assessment Activities

SLO	None	Current Student Survey	Graduating Student Survey	Alumni Survey	Employer Survey	Focus Groups	SFFs	Other
Civic Engagement	X							
Communication Skills	X							
Contextualized Learning	X							
Critical Thinking	X							

Ethical Reasoning	X							
Information Literacy	X							
Interdisciplinary Thinking	X							
Lifelong Learning						X		
Scientific and Quantitative Reasoning	X							