

General Education Assessment Update
University Academic Assessment Committee
Submitted to the Faculty Senate on October 8th, 2013

Timeline for General Education Assessment

2011-12

- Command of Language: 2a Reading and 2b Writing
- Quantitative Literacy
- Breadth of Knowledge: 1f Mathematics

2012-13

- Command of Language: 2c Speaking and 2d Listening
- Interpersonal Communication
- Breadth of Knowledge: 1 h Biological and Physical Sciences

2013-14

- Critical Thinking
- Information Literacy: 4a Use of Libraries and 4b Use of Computer Applications and Emerging Technologies
- Breadth of Knowledge: 1e Second Language or Culture

2014-15

- Breadth of Knowledge: 1a Visual and Performing Arts, 1b Literature, 1c Civilization, 1d Global Issues, 1g Social and Behavioral Sciences

2015-16

- Interdependence among Disciplines
- Dispositions: 1 Social Responsibility, 2 Humane Values, 3 Intellectual Curiosity, 4 Aesthetic Values and 5 Wellness

Summary of Process to Date

As we enter our third year of general education assessment, we continue to evaluate the pilot agenda and design. There has been feedback generated to reinforce the need to close the loop and there has been other feedback that has not had the psychometric properties necessary to utilize with confidence.

Although there were issues with the data collection process, i.e. inter-rater reliability and evaluators not in the field, we were able to yield valuable data in regards to Command of Language. Deficiencies in the area of “counter argument development” were exposed. This data was triangulated with previously collected data and a plan is in place to improve outcomes.

The skill assessment of Quantitative Literacy resulted in less desirable data. At this time, data produced were not reliable or valid. The course-embedded assignments were not all constructed similarly and were not all submitted electronically for a grade. Instructors modified one or more assignments to collect multiple choice data using MyClasses for assessment purposes. Possibly because this assessment

placed an additional burden on the faculty involved for collecting and reporting the data, there were more issues with participation and questionable data was produced.

A different approach was taken for Biological and Physical Sciences. To truly have a course embedded assessment, instructors were given full autonomy. This autonomy allowed for better participation, but the inability to aggregate data across classes. Again, there will be limitations with the interpretation of individual course.

Considerations for Future Assessment

Overall concerns with the current course-embedded model include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Data accuracy issues
- Instructors having the sense that they are being evaluated, not the course (especially when aggregating data is not possible)
- Courses where outcomes are covered but an existing assessment is not included have to add a course embedded assessment assignment.
- A heavy burden is placed on general education faculty which can result in participation concerns
- Without baseline data, no indication that the courses are working (just that students are leaving with content)

With critical thinking and information literacy being collected this academic year, issues with the course embedded pilot are even more concerning. The University Academic Assessment Committee is aware of the limitations of course embedded assessment and is exploring different options for assessing future outcomes. With the assistance of the General Education Assessment Council, we will evaluate standardized assessments and possibly develop our own assessments, as well as look to incorporate the use of an assessment window for some outcome areas remaining in the pilot. It will be difficult to place the burden of generating assessment tools on general education faculty who teach courses that include future outcomes. This will be especially apparent as we begin to evaluate disposition outcomes.