

General Education Assessment Subcommittee Report
March 13, 2015

Modifications to General Education Student Learning Outcomes

Based on feedback from directors of the UF Core courses, the subcommittee recommends modifying the GE SLOs as follows to better reflect the interdisciplinary nature of some GE courses:

1. Replace “discipline” with “program area” in the Content category and Communication category.
2. Delete “using discipline specific methods” in the Critical Thinking category.

In an unrelated change to improve clarity, the subcommittee also recommends modifying the Institutional SLO in Communication to move “clearly and effectively” to follow “Student”.

Modifications to General Education SLO Rubrics

To improve the assessment of the General Education SLOs, the subcommittee recommends the following changes to the SLO rubrics:

1. Change from three-levels (Outstanding, Satisfactory, Unsatisfactory) to two levels (Mastery/Non-Mastery)
 - Combine Outstanding and Satisfactory categories to create Mastery category
 - For Content Knowledge and Communication rubrics, delete Outstanding level and rename Satisfactory level to Mastery.
 - For Critical Thinking rubric, merge Outstanding and Satisfactory levels and remove superlatives to create Mastery level.
2. Delete “Content” category from Communication rubric (overlaps with Content Knowledge rubric).
3. Revise Communication rubric to be applicable to all GE courses (including mathematics courses).
 - Delete “, aided by writer's attention to coherence and use of transitions” from “written communication” category.
4. Change “general education category” to “general education program area”, throughout.
5. Update website to ensure that rubrics on website and rubric pdfs are identical.

UF Core Course Assessment Plan

Each UF Core course will identify at least one assignment to be used for assessing the GE SLOs. If a single assignment is selected, it must allow all three SLO categories to be assessed. The course instructors will create appropriate rubrics to score the assignment(s). These rubrics should be coherent with the GE SLO rubrics, and can even be identical to them. If any rubric has more than two levels (i.e., more than mastery and non-mastery), the course director (or the instructors of the sections being assessed) will identify to the GEC the cutoff level (or score) that indicates mastery. For example, if a multiple choice test is used to assess content knowledge, and it is scored from 0-100, the director may indicate that a cutoff of 60 indicates mastery of content knowledge.

As of now, the directors of the People and Data course and the Climate Change course have both identified the final project as the assignment to be used for assessing the GE SLOs. The assignment(s) for the Good Life course is/are still being determined.

The Canvas LMS allows rubrics to be created and then for instructors to use these rubrics for scoring assignments using the Speed Grader tool. The resulting scores can be exported to an Excel file for use by the GEC. In the future, we expect that the scores can be accessed and downloaded directly by administrators, eliminating the need for further action by the instructor.

Assessment Schedule

In spring 2015, a trial assessment of SLO outcomes will be performed in each of the three UF Core courses:

1. **What is the Good Life?** One section is being taught in Canvas by Jennifer Smith. This section will be assessed. The remaining sections of the course are taught in Sakai.
2. **People and Data.** The course is taught in Canvas, with two sections being offered. These sections will be assessed.
3. **Climate Change Science and Solutions.** The course is taught in Canvas, and one section is being offered this semester. This section will be assessed.

In subsequent terms, we will assess all sections of the People and Data course, all sections of the Climate Change course, and all sections of the Good Life course that are offered in Canvas (the number of Canvas sections will increase in summer 2015 and fall 2015, potentially reaching 100% of sections by spring 2016).

Remaining Challenges

1. **Consistency between instructors and sections.** The UF Core courses will each have many sections. An important challenge will be creating rubrics that are clear, and training the instructors in using the rubrics to assess the GE SLOs for a given assignment. This is likely to be easier if the rubrics have fewer levels.
2. **Resistance from instructors.** This seems to be a concern only for the Good Life course, primarily because this will be new, additional work for the instructors. For courses that are being created with the assessments built-in, this is not a concern.
3. **Assessing collaborative work.** In at least some UF Core courses, the final project used to assess the GE SLOs is collaborative.
4. **Other GE courses.** The GEC has proposed that GE courses other than the UF Core be assessed. Should students in these courses directly assessed for achievement of the GE SLOs? The subcommittee discussed whether GE assessment schedule should be revised to indicate that, in addition to the UF Core and State Core, a random sample of GE courses will be assessed from 2017 forward.

GENERAL EDUCATION STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

| Category | Institutional Definition | Institutional SLO |
|--------------------------|---|--|
| CONTENT | Content is knowledge of the concepts, principles, terminology and methodologies used within the program area. | Students demonstrate competence in the terminology, concepts, methodologies and theories used within the program area. |
| COMMUNICATION | Communication is the development and expression of ideas in written and oral forms. | Students clearly and effectively communicate knowledge, ideas, and reasoning in written or oral forms appropriate to the program area. |
| CRITICAL THINKING | Critical thinking is characterized by the comprehensive analysis of issues, ideas, and evidence before accepting or formulating an opinion or conclusion. | Students analyze information carefully and logically from multiple perspectives and develop reasoned solutions to problems. |

GENERAL EDUCATION SLO RUBRICS

CONTENT KNOWLEDGE RUBRIC

| | MASTERY | NON-MASTERY |
|----------------------------|--|---|
| Concepts/Principles | Interprets and applies concepts and principles in the general education program area. | Fails to interpret and apply course concepts and principles in the general education program area. |
| Terminology | Demonstrates knowledge and use of terminology within the general education program area. | Fails to demonstrate knowledge and use of terminology used within the general education program area. |
| Methodologies | Demonstrates knowledge of methods used within the general education program area. | Fails to demonstrate knowledge of methods used within the general education program area. |

COMMUNICATION RUBRIC

| | MASTERY | NON-MASTERY |
|---|--|--|
| Syntax and Mechanics <i>Specific to written communication</i> | Organizational structure is understood. Uses language that clearly communicates meaning and is nearly error free. | Organizational structure is not recognizable. Uses language that impedes meaning because of errors in usage. |
| Delivery <i>Specific to oral communication</i> | The speaker (presenter) demonstrates appropriate performance through posture, gestures, eye contact, and vocal expression. | The speaker (presenter) fails to demonstrate appropriate performance through posture, gestures, eye contact, and vocal expression. |

CRITICAL THINKING RUBRIC

| | MASTERY | NON-MASTERY |
|------------------------------|--|--|
| Explanation of Issues | Identifies and summarizes the main issues, explaining why they constitute problems or create questions. Identifies embedded or implicit issues, addressing their relationship to each other. | Fails to identify, summarize, and explain the main problem or question. Represents the issues inaccurately or inadequately. |
| Evidence/Analysis | Uses credible, relevant sources to investigate the subject. Logically analyzes multiple alternate points of view, revealing differences or similarities within the topic. | Fails to demonstrate proper use of sources to support ideas. Shows little to no awareness of evidence and bases analysis on a single source or unclear evidence. |
| Conclusion | Discusses implications and conclusions, considering relevant data and evidence. A credible point of view and appropriate conclusion are formulated and presented. | Fails to formulate and clearly express a credible point of view. Does not consider the evidence and data when forming judgments. |