

## **YEAR 2: General Education Program Assessment Report**

### **General Education Committee**

#### INTRODUCTION

The report that follows not only summarizes the assessment that was done of Investigation Level ePortfolios for courses taught in the fall of 2015, it also documents all of the follow-up actions that were taken related to GEP assessment during the 2015-16 academic year. Generally, an assessment report is to be submitted on December 1<sup>st</sup> for the GEP assessment process completed in the previous academic year, but in this case, because of the number of Investigation Level courses assessed, the degree of follow-up needed, and the speed with which some actions needed to be taken, the Investigation Level assessment process and follow-up was broken into smaller steps and each step was passed through faculty governance individually. This report seeks to provide a summary of the Investigation Level assessment findings and all of the follow-up actions that were taken in response to those findings.

The General Education Program Assessment process for Year 2 (Investigation Level) followed the procedures described in Step 6 of the University Handbook by asking all Investigation Level instructors teaching courses with Arts, Historical Perspectives, Humanities, Social Sciences and Natural Sciences designations to submit course portfolios explaining the alignment of their courses to the General Education category learning outcomes, providing assessment results of student learning related to at least one of these learning outcomes, reflecting on the results, and describing a plan for addressing the results to impact and improve student learning. In addition, five Faculty Learning Communities were formed, comprised of 4 – 6 members, for each Investigation Level category, to review all of the course portfolios in their category, furnish rubric feedback to each instructor, and provide summary comments and recommendations to be used by the Assessment Coordinator for the Year 2 Assessment Report for the General Education Committee.

To prepare Investigation Level instructors to successfully submit course portfolios, the Assessment Coordinator conducted a three-hour course portfolio workshop on fifteen different occasions throughout the summer, fall and Winterim. The workshops provided Investigation Level instructors with descriptions of the required course portfolio components, examples of course portfolios, and tips for successfully preparing and submitting course portfolio materials. In addition, training in the use of ePortfolio, an electronic portfolio submission feature within Desire2Learn, was provided in separate workshops by the chair of the department of Paper Science and Engineering, a resident expert in the use of ePortfolio. To prepare the Investigation Level Faculty Learning Community members to fulfill their responsibilities, the Assessment Coordinator provided a series of four professional development sessions to teach them how to review the course portfolios, complete the course portfolio rubric with feedback to the instructor, and, in the final session, reflect on their experiences serving on an FLC by sharing the “Faculty Learning Community Summary Report Template” with their comments about the assessment process and recommendations for improvements. All materials and PowerPoint slides shared at the informational meetings and workshops were made available on a campus GEP Assessment webpage for everybody’s easy access and consultation.

The report that follows details the assessment process that was implemented as well as a discussion of the results.

## OVERVIEW OF ONGOING ASSESSMENT EFFORTS

Effectively implementing Year 2 of the General Education Program Assessment Process required the same multi-faceted approach carried out in Year 1, with a heavy emphasis on professional development, but also included revising and refining the assessment process based on the results and feedback from Year 1. The Investigation Level included 150 course instructors who needed to understand the essential components of the course portfolio and how to submit the course portfolio materials with ePortfolio in the Desire2Learn platform. Efforts to prepare all Investigation Level instructors to successfully complete the General Education Program Assessment process and to revise/refine the Assessment Process based on results and feedback from Year 1 included the following:

- Revising and clarifying the electronic course portfolio rubric for use in Desire2Learn based on recommendations from Foundation Level (Year 1) instructors and Faculty Learning Community members. (see Appendix A for revised course portfolio rubric)
- Holding a series of summer and fall workshops on aligning course learning outcomes to GEP Learning Outcomes, developing and applying assessment rubrics/criteria, and reporting assessment data. Because of the number of Investigation Level Instructors involved, the GEP Investigation Level Course Portfolio workshop was offered on 15 separate occasions at various times of the day and on various days of the week.
- Holding a series of January workshops to train Investigation Level instructors in how to use the ePortfolio function in Desire2Learn
- Monitoring the submission process to make sure course portfolios were submitted by all Investigation Level instructors, responding to questions when instructors experienced difficulties, and following up when course portfolios were not submitted by the February 1<sup>st</sup> deadline
- Revising the “Faculty Learning Community Summary Report Template” for capturing feedback from the five Faculty Learning Communities on the strengths, challenges and suggestions for improvement to the GEP assessment process (see Appendix B for the FACULTY LEARNING COMMUNITY Summary Report Template)
- Holding four professional development workshops/meetings for all Investigation Level Faculty Learning Community members to explain their responsibilities, provide them with practice in applying the Course Portfolio Assessment Rubric, invite their input for revising the rubric, support them through the process of reviewing and assessing the course portfolios, and finally, to get their feedback on the entire assessment process
- Forming a summer working group with representatives from the General Education Committee and Investigation Level FLCs to determine follow-up procedures for course portfolio submissions that did not meet expectations for addressing the GEP Investigation Level Category Learning Outcomes (see Appendix C for the Procedure in the event that, as a result of reviewing course portfolios, a course or program prompts concerns about alignment with the learning outcomes in its current GEP category.)
- Conducting an ongoing process with representative Faculty Learning Community members and instructors from each of the five Investigation Level Categories to discuss revisions to the Category Learning Outcomes; revising the Category Learning Outcomes based on the feedback given, sending the draft revisions to all FLC members and instructors in each category, and finally, passing the revised Category Learning Outcomes through the GEC and faculty governance (see

Appendix D for the revisions of the Investigation Level Learning Outcomes which were approved by GEC and Faculty Senate.)

The table below summarizes the number of portfolios submitted in each Investigation Level category and the total number of students enrolled in the courses, which means the number of students impacted by General Education Program instruction and included in the assessment of student learning.

Table 1: Summary of Course Portfolio Submission Data

	Arts	Historical Perspectives	Humanities	Natural Sciences	Social Sciences
ePortfolios submitted:	16	13	35	21	36
Students enrolled:	932	982	1,715	2,779	3,079

**SUMMARY OF FINDINGS FROM THE REVIEW OF COURSE PORTFOLIOS**

During the 2014-2015 academic year, 121 portfolios were assessed with 9,487 students enrolled in the courses assessed. The section that follows will summarize the findings for each General Education Investigation Level Category (Arts, Historical Perspectives, Humanities, Natural Sciences, and Social Sciences) including analysis of the actual course portfolios and assessment findings of the instructors, rubric data from the Faculty Learning Communities, individual feedback from the Faculty Learning Community to each instructor, and summary findings and recommendations from each of the five Faculty Learning Communities.

**ARTS**

Sixteen course portfolios were submitted for the Arts category including the assessment of student work from Art 103 and 181; Communication 160, 190, and 253; English 253; Interior Architecture 210 and 309; Music 142, 144, 146, 147, 246, 341/541, 343/543, and 345; and Theatre 105. All Investigation Level Arts courses that are taken primarily by second- and third-year students. While all the instructors were expected to address all of the GEP Arts learning outcomes in their courses, each instructor could choose which GEP learning outcome or outcomes to use for guiding the assessment of student work included in the portfolio. The table below presents a breakdown of the number of instructors that assessed each of the GEP Arts Category Learning Outcomes (some instructors assessed more than one learning outcome):

LO#	Upon completing this requirement, students will be able to:	#
LO 1	Identify aesthetic, cultural, and historical dimensions of artistic traditions and techniques.	5
LO 2	Demonstrate an understanding of creative expression by critiquing, creating, or collaborating on a specific work of art.	13
LO 3	Express their own understanding and interpretations of works of art critically and imaginatively.	4

## Feedback from the Arts Faculty Learning Community

The same Faculty Learning Community reviewed all course portfolios for the Arts Category, completed a Course Portfolio Rubric for each instructor, and uploaded completed rubrics into D2L for the instructor's viewing. The table below presents the summary data from across Course Portfolio Rubrics, and the comments that follow are drawn from feedback given to individual instructors as well as comments from the Faculty Learning Community Summary Report.

Table 2: Summary of Course Portfolio Rubric Data from the Arts Faculty Learning Community

Investigation Level: Arts Category (16 Course Portfolios Reviewed)				
	Meets (%)	Developing (%)	Does Not Meet (%)	Optional Element-Not Included (%)
Syllabus	100	0	0	0
Alignment	63	38	0	0
Learning Experiences	50	50	0	0
Activity Assessed	81	19	0	0
Rubric	75	0	0	25
Description of Criteria	56	25	19	0
Assessment Results	50	25	6	0
Charts/Graphs/Tables	56	0	0	44
Results from Other Mechanisms	31	0	0	69
Samples of Student Work	94	6	0	0
Future Plans	88	6	6	0

As the chart above illustrates, many Arts instructors successfully met expectations for all required components of the course portfolio and received positive feedback from the Faculty Learning community. In five of the categories, however, there were 20% or more of the instructors who fell into "Developing Toward Expectations," including "Explanation of Alignment," "Learning Experiences," "Activity Assessed," "Description of Criteria," and "Assessment Results."

Regarding alignment, while Arts instructors generally had identified "course" learning outcomes, FLC feedback noted that these course learning outcomes were not always closely aligned with Arts category learning outcomes, which is the expectation for GEP designated courses. The Arts FLC also found that the lack of alignment to GEP learning outcomes carried through to learning experiences where course activities described by instructors supported course learning outcomes, but were not closely matched with Arts category learning outcomes. Issues identified by the Arts FLC related to the actual assessment completed by instructors were lack of connection of the activity assessed to Arts category learning outcomes, lack of clarity on assessment criteria utilized (especially when assessment was limited to a letter grade or summary comment like "Exemplary" with little to no explanation of how the mark was determined), and lack of specific data to demonstrate whether or not students in the course met Arts

category learning outcomes. In some cases, no assessment results were provided by Arts instructors, in others, the results were difficult to interpret because the grading categories were not clearly defined and/or little to no connection was made to the Arts category learning outcomes.

**Assessment Results and Future Plans for Arts Instructors**

Assessment results for the Arts category were impossible to aggregate because of the fact that common criteria were not required to be used for the assessment of student work nor a common format used for reporting assessment results. Aggregating data for the Arts category was further complicated with the use of “whole class” assessments where a single score for a group performance was utilized to determine whether or not individual students were meeting expectations for achieving the Arts category learning outcomes.

As a result of completing the GEP assessment process, Arts instructors had numerous ideas for how to improve their future instruction to better meet GEP learning outcomes. Some of the ideas shared were clarifying assessment criteria and categories, using GEP learning outcome language on assessment rubrics to help students see the connection between course activities and Arts category learning outcomes, completing pre- and post- assessments to show student growth in achievement of learning outcomes, providing more information on targeted Arts learning outcomes on the course syllabus and during class discussions, and incorporating peer and self-assessment that provides students with more practice in assessing their and their peers’ performance utilizing rubrics with learning outcome criteria.

**HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES**

Thirteen course portfolios were submitted for the Historical Perspectives category including the assessment of student work from Art 282; and History 101, 102, 176, 177, 233, 256, and 284. All Investigation Level Historical Perspectives courses primarily taken by second- and third-year students. While all the instructors were expected to address all of the GEP Historical Perspectives learning outcomes in their courses, each instructor could choose which GEP learning outcome or outcomes to use for guiding the assessment of student work included in the portfolio. The table below presents a breakdown of the number of instructors that assessed each of the GEP Historical Perspectives Category Learning Outcomes (some instructors assessed more than one learning outcome):

LO#	Upon completing this requirement, students will be able to:	#
LO 1	Describe events from past cultures, societies, or civilizations.	5
LO 2	Recognize the varieties of evidence that historians use to offer diverse perspectives on the meaning of the past.	6
LO 3	Identify the role of human agency in shaping events and historical change.	3
LO 4	Explain historical causality.	1
LO 5	Evaluate competing historical claims that frequently inform the present.	3

### Feedback from the Historical Perspectives Faculty Learning Community

The same Faculty Learning Community reviewed all course portfolios for the Historical Perspectives Category, completed a Course Portfolio Rubric for each instructor, and uploaded completed rubrics into D2L for the instructor’s viewing. The table below presents the summary data from across Course Portfolio Rubrics, and the comments that follow are drawn from feedback given to individual instructors as well as comments from the Faculty Learning Community Summary Report.

Table 3: Summary of Course Portfolio Rubric Data from the Historical Perspectives Faculty Learning Community

Investigation Level: Historical Perspectives Category (13 Course Portfolios Reviewed)				
	Meets (%)	Developing (%)	Does Not Meet (%)	Optional Element-Not Included (%)
Syllabus	100	0	0	0
Alignment	69	31	0	0
Learning Experiences	62	38	0	0
Activity Assessed	100	0	0	0
Rubric	69	0	0	31
Description of Criteria	69	31	0	0
Assessment Results	77	23	0	0
Charts/Graphs/Tables	69	0	0	31
Results from Other Mechanisms	23	0	0	77
Samples of Student Work	92	0	8	0
Future Plans	69	23	8	0

As the chart above illustrates, some Historical Perspectives instructors successfully met expectations for all required components of the course portfolio and received positive feedback from the Faculty Learning community. In five of the categories, however, there were 20% or more of the instructors who fell into “Developing Toward Expectations,” including “Explanation of Alignment,” “Learning Experiences,” “Description of Criteria,” “Assessment Results,” and “Future Plans.”

Comments about alignment from the Historical Perspectives FLC were similar to other GEP categories in that there wasn’t always a clear connection to the GEP learning outcomes, as reflected in this comment, “...even in cases where the logic for a given course was very tight, addressing specific Historical Perspectives Outcomes was not always so clear.” While lack of alignment of course learning outcomes with GEP learning outcomes was a concern in some portfolios, in others the FLC noted that “Instructors clearly spent a lot of time and reflective energy on discussing how each outcome was addressed.” To address the discrepancy between course portfolios that included a strong explanation of alignment between the course and GEP learning outcomes and those that did not, the Historical Perspectives FLC

suggested that there should be explicit guidelines for the course portfolio submission, like “please provide at least a paragraph or 5 sentences” to clearly define what is meant by “explain alignment.”

When there was lack of clear alignment in the “Explanation of Alignment” portion of an instructor’s portfolio, that generally carried through to other sections of their Historical Perspectives portfolio, as the following FLC comment illustrates, “Little attempt to align the learning experiences with the Historical Perspectives outcomes, instead the learning experiences serve the needs of the course.” In addition to a problem with alignment in these portfolios, multiple FLC comments were made regarding the “Assessment Results,” component, questioning the validity of using a single letter grade to indicate achievement of the Historical Perspectives category learning outcomes. Two specific comments that highlight this concern were, “Need to see more breakdown in specific skills, not only the grade,” and “Wonder if the grades correspond directly with assessing the skills included in the specific Historical Perspectives LO.”

### **Assessment Results and Future Plans for Historical Perspectives Instructors**

Assessment results for the Historical Perspectives category were difficult to aggregate because of the fact that common criteria were not required to be used for the assessment of student work. Although common criteria were not required, some conclusions about student performance can be drawn because the majority of Historical Perspectives instructors did use a letter grading system in their assessment. Based on these results, the majority of students seem to be meeting Historical Perspectives learning outcomes as defined by instructors, as most students scored C or above on the activities assessed. Although, as highlighted in the previous section, a clear connection between the letter grades and the Historical Perspectives category learning outcomes was questioned by FLC members.

As a result of completing the GEP assessment process, Historical Perspectives instructors shared a number of ideas for how to improve their future instruction to better meet GEP learning outcomes including: develop more activities where students must apply broader historical and theoretical concepts to evaluating a given event, movement, or primary source; improve reading guides for the course; include more activities on how to evaluate competing historical claims; clarify explanation of document analysis, which is what gave students the most trouble; and provide more detail on the grading rubric.

### **HUMANITIES**

Thirty-five course portfolios were submitted for the Humanities category including the assessment of student work from Art 270; English 200, 211, 212, 213, 214, 280, 310, 313/513, and 314/514; French 340; German 340; Interior Architecture 150 and 160; Music 103, 105, 220, 221, 305/505, 320/520, and 329/529. All Investigation Level Humanities courses taken primarily by second- and third-year students. While all the instructors were expected to address all of the GEP Humanities learning outcomes in their courses, each instructor could choose which Humanities learning outcome or outcomes to use for guiding the assessment of student work included in the portfolio. The table below presents a breakdown of the number of instructors that assessed each of the GEP Humanities Category Learning Outcomes:

LO#	Upon completing this requirement, students will be able to:	#
LO 1	Demonstrate an ability to read carefully, speak clearly, think critically, or write persuasively about cultures and cultural works/artifacts (including texts, images, performances, and technologies, as well as other expressions of the human condition).	28
LO 2	Identify and analyze how beliefs, values, languages, theories, or laws shape cultures and cultural works/artifacts.	6
LO 3	Engage a variety of ideas and worldviews critically by formulating reflective and informed moral, ethical, or aesthetic evaluations of cultures and cultural works/artifacts.	7

Note: 1 portfolio did not include clear indications of the outcomes measured.

### Feedback from the Humanities Faculty Learning Community

The same Faculty Learning Community reviewed all course portfolios for the Humanities category, completed a Course Portfolio Rubric for each instructor, and uploaded completed rubrics into D2L for each instructor's viewing. The table below combines the summary data from Course Portfolio Rubrics, and the comments that follow are drawn from feedback given to individual instructors as well as comments from the Faculty Learning Community Summary Report.

Table 4: Summary of Course Portfolio Rubric Data from the Humanities Faculty Learning Community

Investigation Level: Humanities Category (35 Course Portfolios Reviewed)				
	Meets (%)	Developing (%)	Does Not Meet (%)	Optional Element-Not Included (%)
Syllabus	100	0	0	0
Alignment	66	29	6	0
Learning Experiences	77	23	0	0
Activity Assessed	80	20	0	0
Rubric	83	0	17	17
Description of Criteria	57	31	11	0
Assessment Results	43	51	6	0
Charts/Graphs/Tables	69	0	31	31
Results from Other Mechanisms	17	0	83	83
Samples of Student Work	94	6	0	0
Future Plans	46	49	6	

As the chart above illustrates, some Humanities instructors successfully met expectations for all required components of the course portfolio and received positive feedback from the Faculty Learning community. In six of the categories, however, there were 20% or more of the instructors who fell into "Developing Toward Expectations," including "Explanation of Alignment," "Learning Experiences," "Activity Assessed," "Description of Criteria," "Assessment Results," and "Future Plans."



Regarding alignment, the Humanities FLC members noted that the lack of inclusion of GEP Humanities learning outcomes in course syllabi should be addressed in the future, yet a mere listing of GEP learning outcomes might not be the only solution because the alignment may not be clear to students, if it is not explained explicitly. A similar trend was noticed for “Future Plans for Improvement”: the lack of clear alignment between the GEP learning outcomes and future instructional changes did not show “how to improve student achievement for Humanities Learning outcomes.” For the “Activities Assessed,” the FLC noted that the link between assessed learning activities and the targeted learning outcome was not always clear therefore making the assessment results of student learning of the targeted GEP learning outcome less reliable.

### **Assessment Results and Future Plans for Humanities Instructors**

Assessment results for the Humanities Perspectives category were impossible to aggregate because of the fact that common criteria were not required to be used for the assessment of student work nor a common format used for reporting assessment results.

As a result of completing the GEP assessment process, Humanities instructors shared a number of ideas for how to improve their future instruction to better meet GEP learning outcomes including: “spending more class time practicing the skills that are needed to successfully complete the [targeted] assessment,” “establishing a writers workshop approach where students bring their final papers to class and exchange with classmates to receive peer feedback,” “requiring all students who receive below a C on the midterm to meet... to talk about their grade and to develop strategies for improving their reading comprehension and performance on the final,” “conducting the assessment earlier in the semester to ensure students are moving in the right direction,” “giving students a copy of grading rubric before they have completed their papers,” and “continuing to use project in the future” (because instructor “found the project was a better assessment for student learning than exam”).

The Humanities FLC members made several suggestions with regard to how to strengthen the explanation of course alignment with the GEP targeted category: “Require separate document that explains LO alignment—not just listed on syllabus. [...] Also, syllabi should include a weekly schedule or other explanation of student workload expectation.” The FLC also proposed revisions to the submission process and portfolio requirements to ensure that each course portfolio includes specific assessment results of students meeting or not meeting the targeted learning outcomes. Their overall comment on how this process can help Humanities instructors to enhance student learning stated, “Instructors need to be encouraged to analyze data with respect to Humanities Learning Outcomes.” They also proposed a revision of the Humanities Learning Outcomes based on their calculations of how many learning outcomes were assessed, “Humanities LO #1 was the most common LO assessed, perhaps because it is the most assessable in the current form.”

## **NATURAL SCIENCES**

Twenty-one course portfolios were submitted for the Natural Sciences category including the assessment of student work from Astronomy 100 and 205; Biology 100, 101, 130, and 160; Chemistry 100, 105, 106, and 117; Geography 100, 101, and 105; Geology 104; Physics 101, 150, 203, 204, and 250. All Investigation Level Natural Sciences courses taken by second- and third-year students. While all the instructors were expected to address all of the GEP Natural Sciences learning outcomes in their courses, each instructor could choose which Natural Sciences learning outcome or outcomes to use for guiding the assessment of student work included in the portfolio. The table below presents a breakdown of the number of instructors that assessed each of the GEP Natural Sciences Category Learning Outcomes:

LO#	Upon completing this requirement, students will be able to:	#
LO 1	Identify the basic taxonomy and principles of the scientific method as it pertains to the natural, physical world.	3
LO 2	Infer relationships, make predictions and solve problems based on an analysis of evidence or scientific information.	7
LO 3	Apply scientific concepts, quantitative techniques and methods to solving problems and making decisions.	13
LO 4	Describe the relevance of some aspect of the natural sciences to their lives and society.	7

### **Feedback from the Natural Sciences Faculty Learning Community**

The same Faculty Learning Community reviewed all course portfolios for the Natural Sciences category, completed a Course Portfolio Rubric for each instructor, and uploaded completed rubrics into D2L for each instructor's viewing. The table below combines the summary data from Course Portfolio Rubrics, and the comments that follow are drawn from feedback given to individual instructors as well as comments from the Faculty Learning Community Summary Report.

**Table 5: Summary of Course Portfolio Rubric Data from Natural Sciences Faculty Learning Community**

Investigation Level: Natural Sciences Category (21 Course Portfolios Reviewed)				
	Meets (%)	Developing (%)	Does Not Meet (%)	Optional Element-Not Included (%)
Syllabus	100	0	0	0
Alignment	76	24	0	0
Learning Experiences	86	10	5	0
Activity Assessed	95	5	0	0
Rubric	57	0	0	43
Description of Criteria	57	29	14	0
Assessment Results	57	43	0	0
Charts/Graphs/Tables	71	0	0	29
Results from Other Mechanisms	5	0	0	95

Samples of Student Work	90	0	10	0
Future Plans	57	33	10	0

As the chart above illustrates, many Natural Sciences instructors successfully met expectations for all required components of the course portfolio and received positive feedback from the Faculty Learning community. In four of the categories, however, there were 20% or more of the instructors who fell into “Developing Toward Expectations,” including “Explanation of Alignment,” “Description of Criteria,” “Assessment Results,” and “Future Plans.”

Regarding alignment, the Natural Sciences FLC echoed what other FLCs noted for Arts and Humanities, namely to include the GEP learning outcomes on the course syllabus but also make the link between the course learning outcomes and GEP learning outcomes explicit for students: “The FLC would strongly suggest telling instructors to indicate how their Investigation Level courses align with the learning outcomes from the GEP. While we truly believe all instructors are doing their jobs, we think giving this information to students (and anyone reading a syllabus, which is a matter of public record) is critical.” Their comments about “Future Plans for Improvement,” also reiterate what has been previously said, i.e. making the link between the GEP learning outcomes and course learning outcomes as well as the course activities more explicit: “Make sure to tell instructors they need to tie their assignments to learning outcomes, and reflect on how to get their students to achieve those goals. This needs to go beyond simply changing a question that more students get correct. There needs to be an emphasis on student learning and understanding, not just getting a question correct.”

### **Assessment Results and Future Plans for Natural Sciences Instructors**

Assessment results for the Natural Sciences category were impossible to aggregate because of the fact that common criteria were not required to be used for the assessment of student work nor a common format used for reporting assessment results. While results could not be aggregated, it was clear from looking across Natural Science instructors’ assessments that students performed proficiently in some areas addressed in the GEP category learning outcomes and did not meet expectations in others, results being primarily reflected in exam scores.

As a result of completing the GEP assessment process, Natural Sciences instructors shared a number of ideas for how to improve their future instruction to better meet GEP learning outcomes including: “moving the unit that was assessed to the end of the semester because it is heavy in problem-solving and more challenging,” “have more lab activities where students use [...] 3D objects to help them visualize their answers,” “revising lecture and lab learning experiences to emphasize general scientific principles, while providing discipline area content, to meet the GEP LO,” “writing clearer, more specific course learning outcomes on the syllabus,” “providing students with more directed practice before the assessment is given,” and “including more directed instruction on reading and finding scientific literature to support a hypotheses.”

In the future, “The Natural Science FLC believes there is no one-way to probe achievement of LOs. We do, however, advocate explicitly directing all instructors to reflect on student learning as it relates to the LOs,

not just how well students did on questions.” Such reflective process would encourage instructors to think beyond grading versus assessment. They also suggested reviewing the GEP Natural Science Learning Outcomes as well as the portfolio evaluation rubric itself in order to insure a deeper reflection on how courses address GEP learning outcomes.

### **SOCIAL SCIENCES**

Thirty-six course portfolios were submitted for the Social Sciences category including the assessment of student work from Anthropology 101 and 110; Communication 240 and 280; Economics 110 and 111; Geography 113, 120, and 373/573; Human Development 166 and 367; Interior Architecture 120; Natural Resources 150; Political Science 101, 160, 180, and 202; Psychology 110, 260, and 320; Sociology 101, 102, 230, 240, 270, 308, 366, 368, and 370. All Investigation Level Social Sciences courses taken primarily by second- and third-year students. While all the instructors were expected to address all of the GEP Social Sciences learning outcomes in their courses, each instructor could choose which GEP learning outcome or outcomes to use for guiding the assessment of student work included in the portfolio. The table below presents a breakdown of the number of instructors that assessed each of the GEP Social Sciences Category Learning Outcomes (some instructors assessed more than one learning outcome):

LO#	Upon completing this requirement, students will be able to:	#
LO 1	Define the major concepts and methods used by social scientists to investigate, to analyze, or to predict human or group behavior.	15
LO 2	Explain the major principles, models, and issues under investigation by the social sciences.	12
LO 3	Examine how the individual or groups of individuals are influenced by social, cultural, or political institutions both in their own culture and in other cultures.	17

### **Feedback from the Social Sciences Faculty Learning Community**

The same Faculty Learning Community reviewed all course portfolios for the Social Sciences category, completed a Course Portfolio Rubric for each instructor, and uploaded completed rubrics into D2L for each instructor’s viewing. The table below combines the summary data from Course Portfolio Rubrics, and the comments that follow are drawn from feedback given to individual instructors as well as comments from the Faculty Learning Community Summary Report.

**Table 6: Summary of Course Portfolio Rubric Data from the Social Sciences Faculty Learning Community**

Investigation Level: Social Sciences Category (36 Course Portfolios Reviewed)				
	Meets (%)	Developing (%)	Does Not Meet (%)	Optional Element-Not Included (%)
Syllabus	100	0	0	0
Alignment	71	21	8	0
Learning Experiences	68	29	3	0

Activity Assessed	79	16	5	0
Rubric	84	0	0	16
Description of Criteria	53	32	16	0
Assessment Results	45	32	24	0
Charts/Graphs/Tables	79	0	0	21
Results from Other Mechanisms	8	0	0	92
Samples of Student Work	89	3	8	0
Future Plans	55	45	0	0

As the chart above illustrates, many Social Sciences instructors successfully met expectations for all required components of the course portfolio and received positive feedback from the Faculty Learning community. In five of the categories, however, there were 20% or more of the instructors who fell into “Developing Toward Expectations,” including “Explanation of Alignment,” “Learning Experiences,” “Description of Criteria,” “Assessment Results,” and “Future Plans.”

Regarding alignment, most comments from the Social Sciences FLC to instructors pointed to the lack of connection between course learning outcomes and GEP category learning outcomes, as in the following, “Course learning outcomes are listed, but not connected to the GEP category learning outcomes.” Since Social Sciences was an Investigation Level category that had many courses grandfathered in when the General Education Program was reorganized, it may help to explain why, even though instructors had clearly defined course learning outcomes, these may not have been written to align with GEP Social Science learning outcomes. In the portfolios where clear alignment was not expressed at the very beginning in the Explanation of Alignment, the lack of alignment seemed to carry through to Learning Experiences, Description of Criteria, Assessment Results, and Future Plans, with the FLC asking repeatedly for a connection between what was shared and the GEP category learning outcomes. An example FLC comment regarding alignment in Future Plans was “It is still unclear how the changes suggested will support student improvement and what changes would increase successful attainment of the [targeted] learning outcome.”

### **Assessment Results and Future Plans for Social Sciences Instructors**

Assessment results for the Social Sciences category were impossible to aggregate because of the fact that common criteria were not required to be used for the assessment of student work nor a common format used for reporting assessment results. Any kind of generalization about student performance was difficult to draw because of the diversity of assessment methods, criteria, and analysis utilized, and as already mentioned, the results shared weren’t always aligned to the GEP category learning outcomes making it impossible to draw conclusions about their achievement.

As a result of completing the GEP assessment process, Social Sciences instructors did have a number of ideas for how to improve their future instruction to better meet GEP learning outcomes including: “moving the assessment to later in the semester so that more subtle aspects of the learning outcome can be assessed (which are addressed later in the semester),” “including more in-class illustrations of core

concepts using data, charts, video, and other multimedia methods,” “including more reading on important core concepts, and then having students write about the concept in the form of an essay,” “asking each group of students to provide a research outline before commencing on the research project and doing an interim review of the ongoing project,” and “being more explicit in the instructions for the assignment.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Overall, the implementation of the GEP Assessment process for the Investigation Level (Year 2 Assessment Cycle) went satisfactorily. The submission rate for course portfolios from instructors teaching in the five Investigation Level categories was high. Filling out the membership of each Faculty Learning Community with 4 – 6 faculty members also went very well, with several members who served on a Foundation Level FLC volunteering to serve again. The Summary Report feedback from faculty who served on the Investigation Faculty Learning Communities provided meaningful insights into the strengths and challenges of our assessment process as well as valuable recommendations for changes and improvements, affirming and building on what was ascertained during the assessment of the Foundation Level (Year 1 Assessment Cycle).

As stated in the introduction of this report, due to the number of Investigation Level courses assessed, the degree of follow-up needed, and the speed with which some actions needed to be taken, the Investigation Level assessment process and follow-up was broken into smaller steps and each step was passed through faculty governance individually.

After careful consideration of the course portfolios submitted from the five Investigation Level categories, including the Arts, Humanities, Historical Perspectives, Social Sciences, and Natural Sciences, reported assessment results, Faculty Learning Community feedback to instructors, and summary comments and recommendations from the five Faculty Learning Communities, the following steps were taken to revise and improve the GEP assessment process.

- 1) Changes already made to General Education Program Assessment procedures, policies, and/or professional development for Year 3 of the GEP Assessment cycle, which focuses on Cultural and Environmental Awareness Level:
  - a. An increased number of informational sessions were offered for Cultural and Environmental Awareness Level instructors and department chairs, and they have been offered earlier in the assessment cycle than for Investigation Level Instructors.
  - b. The professional development workshops, D2L tutorials, and supporting templates and materials were revised based on feedback from Investigation Level instructors and FLC members.
  - c. Based on the feedback from Investigation Level Faculty Learning Communities, Cultural and Environmental Awareness Level instructors were asked to translate the results from their discipline-appropriate evaluation to determine how many students in their course met expectations and how many did not for each of the GEP category learning outcomes that were actually assessed. Instructors were asked to provide raw numbers rather than percentages

for reporting how many students met and did not meet expectations in order to facilitate aggregation of data. See below,

Learning Outcome	Met	Did not meet
U.S. Diversity LO 1		
U.S. Diversity LO 2		

Reporting data with raw numbers of students meeting and not meeting the GEP expectations addresses shortcomings identified during Year 1 and Year 2 assessment.

- d. While the UWSP Handbook language only specifies that a “discipline-appropriate evaluation of student attainment of at least one learning outcome” be used, copies of the AAC&U VALUE Rubrics have been shared in all Cultural and Environmental Awareness Level assessment workshops and instructors have been encouraged to choose entire rubrics or criteria from the rubrics to assess student work in their courses.
  - e. Based on feedback from Investigation Level course instructors and Faculty Learning Communities, the Course Portfolio Rubric was revised to more clearly communicate what is needed for each component of the course portfolio.
  - f. Collaborated with the University Assessment Subcommittee to provide a workshop for disciplines/programs developing plans for integrating GEP assessment data into their Five-Year Program Assessment Reports to facilitate the assessment of the General Education Program. The workshop took place on October 30, 2015 and was well attended, all its materials are now available on the Assessment of Learning website: <https://www.uwsp.edu/acadaff/Pages/assessmentLearning.aspx/instrres/Assess/assess.htm>.
  - g. Reconvened all five Investigation Level Faculty Learning Communities in Fall 2015, along with representative instructors and General Education Committee members, to follow up on the assessment results and recommendations for changes/improvement, including reviewing and suggesting any needed revisions for learning outcomes in each category based on the results of Investigation Level assessment.
- 2) Recommendations for General Education Program/Committee Policies
- a. Require that GEP Category Learning Outcomes and an explanation of alignment between these learning outcomes and the course/course activities be included in the course syllabus portion of the GEP course proposal form before a course is approved for the GEP
  - b. As recommended by Faculty Learning Community members, require that GEP Category Learning Outcomes and an explanation of alignment between the course/course activities and the GEP learning outcomes be included in every syllabus submitted as part of the course portfolio process beginning with the Cultural and Environmental Awareness Level. Making this stipulation would create a smoother review process for the Faculty Learning Communities and streamline the course portfolio process for instructors.
  - c. As will be discussed again in the concluding remarks, in order to aggregate GEP assessment data and draw conclusions about student achievement of category learning outcomes, there must be some agreed upon means of assessment that is used by all instructors in each GEP category.
- 3) Recommendations for General Education Program Professional Development
- a. Continue professional development efforts in the use of assessment rubrics and the reporting of data from the rubrics; the current set of course portfolios demonstrate that our campus has made great strides in this area, but feedback from the Faculty Learning Communities also

- suggest that further development in aligning assessment criteria and assessment methods with the GEP Category Learning Outcomes is needed.
- b. Consider offering professional development opportunities related to helping struggling students in Investigation Level courses. Some of the assessment results reported by instructors indicate that a small to sometimes significant portion of students do not meet expectations for the GEP learning outcomes and may indicate these students are at risk for failure and/or leaving the university.

## CONCLUDING REMARKS

The GEP Assessment Process for the Investigation Level went well and demonstrates an ongoing commitment on the UW-Stevens Point campus to the assessment and improvement of student learning. The process of completing the Investigation Level assessment revealed a strong need to revise the Investigation level learning outcomes in all categories. This was especially true with Arts and Humanities where there was not a clear enough distinction between the categories and the FLC members reported that some courses seemed better suited to the other category, i.e. what was designated as an Art course seemed more appropriated for the Humanities designation and vice versa.

At the time the GEP Assessment Plan was drafted, it was determined that instructors should apply a “discipline-appropriate evaluation,” and the decision was left to them to determine what this assessment should be. While latitude in determining a discipline-appropriate evaluation of student achievement of the GEP learning outcomes was intentionally maintained during Year 1 and Year 2 of the GEP assessment cycle, it is clear from examining the Year 2 assessment results that in order to aggregate data and draw meaningful conclusions about student learning and achievement of the GEP learning outcomes, the campus needs to move towards more uniform assessment tools, such as common rubrics. This would increase consistency of assessment across students and courses. After two years of engaging in the assessment process and reflecting on feedback from nine separate faculty-learning communities (over 60 instructors), it seems feasible to maintain academic freedom with regard to instructional practices and content delivery while also applying standard assessment criteria for evaluating student achievement of the GEP learning outcomes.

As in Year 1, the Year 2 assessment cycle reaffirmed that the process currently in place at UWSP, as described in this report, supports scholarly and collaborative inquiry into teaching and learning and promotes thoughtful reflection on instructional practices. FLC members and instructors frequently commented that participating in their respective assessment activities helped them better understand the focus of the GEP learning outcomes, the importance of alignment of course activities and assessments with these learning outcomes, and the use of the results to inform their teaching and university assessment policies.



## **Appendix A**

### **Revised Course Portfolio Rubric**

GEP Category:

## GEP Assessment: Course Portfolio Rubric

### *Feedback for Instructors*

Instructor:	Course Number & Title:	Date:
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		Meets Expectations	Developing Toward Expectations	Does Not Meet Expectations
<b>Course Syllabus</b>  <input type="checkbox"/> Syllabus included	<i>Explain alignment of course with <a href="#">GEP category outcomes</a> *</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Clear explanation of how course is aligned with ALL of the GEP category learning outcomes	<input type="checkbox"/> Limited explanation of how the course is aligned with ALL of the GEP category learning outcomes	<input type="checkbox"/> No explanation of alignment included
Comments:				
<b>Learning Experiences</b> <i>(designing course experiences, assignments, and/or activities to support student achievement of GEP learning outcomes)</i>	<i>Explain how course learning experiences, assignments, and/or activities are designed to support student achievement of <b>targeted</b> GEP learning outcomes (must address at least one)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Clear explanation of the course learning experiences that are designed to support student achievement of the <b>targeted</b> GEP learning outcomes (must address at least one)	<input type="checkbox"/> Limited explanation of the course learning experiences that are designed to support student achievement of the <b>targeted</b> GEP learning outcomes (must address at least one)	<input type="checkbox"/> No explanation of course learning experiences provided
Comments:				

<b>Activities Assessed</b>	<i>Describe the activity being assessed and the criteria used to evaluate student learning</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Clear description is provided of the activity being assessed	<input type="checkbox"/> Limited description is provided of the activity being assessed	<input type="checkbox"/> No activity described
	<input type="checkbox"/> Rubric included	<input type="checkbox"/> Clear description of the criteria used to assess at least one learning outcome	<input type="checkbox"/> Limited description of the criteria used to assess at least one learning outcome	<input type="checkbox"/> No criteria described
Comments:				
<b>Assessment Results</b>	<i>Summarize assessment results</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> A complete summary of assessment results is provided	<input type="checkbox"/> A partial summary of assessment results is provided, but lacks detail and/or clarity	<input type="checkbox"/> No summary included
	<input type="checkbox"/> Charts, graphs, and/or tables are included	Comments:		
<i>Optional: provide results of any other feedback mechanisms used to gauge students' perceptions of course alignment with GEP outcomes</i>		Comments:		
<b>Samples of Student Work</b>	<i>Include examples of student work **</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Student work provided represents at least two levels of achievement	<input type="checkbox"/> Student work provided represents one level of achievement	<input type="checkbox"/> No samples of student work included
		Comments:		

<b>Future Plans</b>	<i>Explain how assessment results will be used to support and improve student learning in the course ***</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Clear explanation connecting assessment results with future plans to support and improve student learning in the course	<input type="checkbox"/> Limited explanation connecting assessment results with future plans to support and improve student learning in the course	<input type="checkbox"/> No explanation included
		Comments:		
<i>Additional (open-ended) feedback for course instructor</i>				

\* While all GEP category outcomes do not have to be assessed or addressed in depth, the course syllabus and learning outcomes should explain how all the GEP category outcomes are being addressed in the course.

\*\* A minimum expectation is one student sample for at least two levels of achievement.

\*\*\* Note: if the course and assignments were successful and no change is planned, it is still advised to provide a brief statement explaining how the assessment results obtained led to the decision to keep the course and assignments the same

*Last Updated: August 5, 2014*

## Appendix B

### Faculty Learning Community “Summary Report” Template GEP Assessment: 2014-2015

#### Part I: Summary Data for Foundation Level GEP Assessment

*The data for Number of ePortfolios and Number of Students will be provided by the Assessment Coordinator and Director of General Education:*

GEP Category:	
Number of ePortfolios:	#
Number of Students:	#

#### Part II: Feedback from FLCs

##### Instructions:

Each FLC group will receive a separate “Summary Report” template (this document). Those supporting you in these efforts will do our best to fill in the aggregated data that may not be available to you (i.e., “Number of Students” and the % of portfolios that fall under each category).

Key idea: FLC participants should reflect on the strengths, challenges, trends/patterns, and suggestions for each criteria (row) found on the ePortfolio rubric (shaded in GREEN below). Focus on the most significant points to make; the expectation is not to provide extensive details for every category.

Also: Please do not include specific information about courses, instructors, or students. Your comments in the GREEN boxes below will be shared with the General Education Committee and will enter faculty governance as part of the official (open) record.

**Thank you! We truly appreciate your efforts on behalf of the General Education Program and the university as a whole!**

**A. Course Syllabus (alignment with GEP learning outcomes)**

	Meets Expectations	Developing Toward	Did Not Meet				
Course Syllabus	%	%	%				
<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Syllabi Submitted:</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	Syllabi Submitted:						
Syllabi Submitted:							
Strengths:							
Challenges:							
Trends/Patterns:							
Suggestions:							

**B. Learning Experiences**

	Meets Expectations	Developing Toward	Did Not Meet
Outcomes Measured:	%	%	%
Strengths:			
Challenges:			
Trends/Patterns:			
Suggestions:			

**C. Activities Assessed**

	Meets Expectations	Developing Toward	Did Not Meet				
Description of the Activity	%	%	%				
Assessment Criteria	%	%	%				
<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Rubrics Included:</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>#</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	Rubrics Included:		#				
Rubrics Included:							
#							
Strengths:							

Challenges:	
Trends/Patterns:	
Suggestions:	

Please indicate how many courses/instructors assessed each of the GEP Category learning outcomes:

Category Learning Outcome	# of Courses/Instructors that Assessed this LO
LO # 1	
LO #2	
LO #3	
LO #4	
LO #5	

#### D. Assessment Results

	Meets Expectations	Developing Toward	Did Not Meet		
Summarize assessment results\	%	%	%		
<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Charts, graphs, and/or tables included:</td> </tr> <tr> <td>#</td> </tr> </table>	Charts, graphs, and/or tables included:	#			
Charts, graphs, and/or tables included:					
#					
Strengths:					
Challenges:					
Trends/Patterns:					
Suggestions:					
Optional: results from other (indirect) feedback mechanisms:					
Strengths:					
Challenges:					
Trends/Patterns:					
Suggestions:					

**E. Samples of Student Work**

	Meets Expectations	Developing Toward	Did Not Meet
Samples of Student Work:	%	%	%
Strengths:			
Challenges:			
Trends/Patterns:			
Suggestions:			

**F. Future Plans/Plans for Improvement**

	Meets Expectations	Developing Toward	Did Not Meet
Plans for Improvement:	%	%	%
Strengths:			
Challenges:			
Trends/Patterns:			
Suggestions:			

**Part III: Global Feedback for the GEC: Summary of Significant Findings from FLCs**

**A. Course ePortfolios & Faculty Learning Communities**

- Did the ePortfolios include useful information? Was there anything that was extraneous? Was there anything that should (or should not) be included in ePortfolios in the future?
- As a process, what feedback do you have about the use of ePortfolios and Faculty Learning Communities? How could the process be improved?

Please explain:



## B. Course/Assignment Design, Instructional Strategies, and/or Assessment Methods

- What course/assignment design worked particularly well for these learning outcomes?
- What instructional Strategies worked particularly well for these learning outcomes?
- What assessment methods worked particularly well for these learning outcomes?
- Did instructors make it clear in their assessment results how many students were exceeding, meeting and/or not meeting the GEP Category learning outcomes?

Please explain:

## C. New insights related to student learning:

- Are instructors (and/or FLC participants) reflecting on student learning and developing responses to help support student achievement of these learning outcomes?
- Are instructors (and/or FLC participants) identifying any learning outcomes that students are not achieving? (i.e., identifying “blockages” to learning in a constructive, developmental way)
- Are instructors (and/or FLC participants) identifying ways to support students who are failing or at risk for failing in their courses?

Please explain:

## D. Overall feedback:

- Were there any learning outcomes in this GEP category that need to be addressed? (e.g., too many learning outcomes; learning outcomes not written in measurable/observable way; some learning outcomes weren’t addressed in any of the ePortfolios submitted; reports that some learning outcomes were difficult to assess)
- Do you have suggestions for rewording any of the GEP learning outcomes in your category?
- Are there any other GEP issues (curriculum itself, assessment process, administrative, or governance) that should be considered?

Please explain:

**Please indicate the names of instructors who have course portfolios that would serve as strong models for others in this GEP Category:**

## Appendix C

### Procedures for Course Portfolio Follow-up

Each course portfolio receives a score based on the sum of individual portfolio component scores on the rubric (Meets expectations = 2, Developing towards expectations = 1, Does not meet expectations = 0)

Based on the total score, the portfolios will be placed into one of three categories:

**Category 1 (13 – 16 points)** – Instructor has received feedback on how to improve individual components of the portfolio, and does not need to submit any additional information.

**Category 2 (11 – 12 points)** – Instructor has received feedback on how to improve individual components of the portfolio, and, if their **Explanation of Alignment** and/or **Learning Experiences** components that receive “Does not meet expectations” or “Developing towards expectations,” they must submit a revised version of these components to the Assessment Coordinator. In addition, the instructor will be asked to submit an explanation of revision for any portfolio component, other than Explanation of Alignment and/or Learning Experiences that receives “Does not meet expectations” on the rubric.

**Category 3 (10 and below)** – Instructor has received feedback on how to improve individual components of the portfolio, and, they must submit a revised version to the Assessment Coordinator of all components in the portfolio that received a “Does not meet expectations” or “Developing towards expectations.”

Notice of any required follow-up will be sent by the Assessment Coordinator to instructors by October 1<sup>st</sup>, and a response with required follow-up must be submitted by the instructor to the Assessment Coordinator by November 15<sup>th</sup>. If the revisions are not submitted to the Assessment Coordinator by November 15<sup>th</sup>, a reminder will be sent to the instructor and copied to the Department Chair. If the follow-up requirement is not submitted by the end of the fall semester, or if the follow-up response does not meet expectations for the GEP assessment process, the issue will be brought to the General Education Committee at the first meeting of the spring semester for further action.

## Appendix D

### Revisions of Investigation Level Learning Outcomes

#### Proposed and Final Revisions to the GEP Investigation Level Learning Outcomes

##### Arts Category

##### Current Learning Outcomes (used for assessment in Fall 2014)

Upon completing this requirement, you will be able to:

- Identify aesthetic, cultural, and historical dimensions of artistic traditions and techniques.
- Demonstrate an understanding of creative expression by critiquing, creating, or collaborating on a specific work of art.
- Express their own understanding and interpretation of works of art critically and imaginatively.

##### Proposed Revised Learning Outcomes from Arts FLC

Upon completing this requirement, you will be able to:

- Explain the aesthetic dimensions (in addition, may include cultural and/or historical dimensions) of particular artistic traditions and techniques
- Demonstrate an understanding of creative expressions (and imagination) by critiquing, creating, performing, or collaborating on a specific work of art

##### Additional Suggestions from Arts Instructors and FLC Members

Upon completing this requirement, you will be able to:

- Explain the aesthetic dimensions of particular artistic traditions and techniques (LO 1)
- Make significant connections between a body of artistic work and the social, cultural and historical contexts within which it was produced (LO 1)
- Engage in creative expression by critiquing, creating, performing, or collaborating on a specific work of art (LO 2)
- Express a critical understanding and interpretation of works of art or cultural artifacts (LO 2)

##### Proposed Revisions by the Arts and Humanities LO Working Group (1/28/16)

Upon completing this requirement, you will be able to:

- \* Describe, analyze and/or critique a body of creative work utilizing knowledge of relevant aesthetic criteria and/or stylistic forms.
- \* Do at least ONE of the following
  - Identify and explain the social, historical and cultural contexts for particular traditions or genres of creative expression

~~Produce or perform a creative work utilizing (the knowledge, cultural context or techniques learned in class) knowledge of aesthetic criteria and/or stylistic forms.~~

Produce or perform a creative work utilizing the concepts or skills learned in class

### **Proposed Revisions by the Arts and Humanities LO Working Group (2/5/16)**

Students who take arts courses will be able to

1. Describe, analyze or critique creative works or cultural artifacts that reflect the human desire for beauty, order, or meaning.
2. Do at least ONE of the following
  - a. Identify and explain the relationship between particular traditions or genres of creative expression and their social, historical or cultural contexts.
  - b. Demonstrate an understanding of creative expression by producing or performing a creative work

### **Final Arts Learning Outcomes (GEC approved on 2/19/16)**

Upon completing this requirement, you will be able to:

- Describe, analyze or critique creative works utilizing knowledge of relevant aesthetic criteria or stylistic forms

Do at least ONE of the following

- Identify and explain the relationship between particular traditions or genres of creative expression and their social, historical or cultural contexts.
- Demonstrate an understanding of creative expression by producing or performing a creative work

### **Humanities Category**

#### **Current Learning Outcomes (used for assessment in Fall 2014)**

Upon completing this requirement, you will be able to:

- Demonstrate an ability to read carefully, speak clearly, think critically, or write persuasively about cultures and cultural works/artifacts (including texts, images, performances, and technologies, as well as other expressions of the human condition).
- Identify and analyze how beliefs, values, languages, theories, or laws shape cultures and cultural works/artifacts.
- Engage a variety of ideas and worldviews critically by formulating reflective and informed moral, ethical, or aesthetic evaluations of cultures and cultural works/artifacts.

#### **Proposed Revised Learning Outcomes from Humanities FLC**

Upon completing this requirement, you will be able to:

- Demonstrate an ability to read closely as well as to think critically and write effectively about texts (including cultural artifacts) that reflect on perennial questions concerning the human condition (such as the search for truth and meaning, the confrontation with suffering and mortality, or the struggle for justice, equality and human dignity)
- Engage a variety of ideas and worldviews critically through active investigation of the lives, ideas, beliefs and values of persons in times, places and situations other than one's own
- Demonstrate an ability to critically evaluate and explain the complex interrelationships between texts and the social, historical and intellectual contexts in which those texts were produced

### **Additional Suggestions from Humanities Instructors and FLC Members**

Upon completing this requirement, you will be able to:

- Demonstrate an ability to read closely as well as to think critically and write effectively about cultural works/artifacts (including texts) that reflect on perennial questions concerning the human condition (such as the search for truth and meaning, the confrontation with suffering and mortality, or the struggle for justice, equality and human dignity) (LO 1)
- Demonstrate an ability to read closely as well as to think critically and write effectively about cultural works/artifacts (including texts, images, performances, and technologies) that reflect on perennial questions concerning the human condition (such as the search for truth and meaning, the confrontation with suffering and mortality, or the struggle for justice, equality and human dignity) (LO 1)
- Identify moral, ethical, or aesthetic components of cultural works/artifacts from times, places and/or situations other than one's own. (LO 2)
- Identify moral, ethical, or aesthetic components of cultural works/artifacts from times, places and/or situations similar to and/or different from one's own. (LO 2)
- Engage a variety of ideas and worldviews critically through active investigation of the lives, ideas, beliefs and values of persons in times, places and situations in comparison to one's own
- (Demonstrate an ability to) Critically evaluate and explain complex interrelationships between cultural works/artifacts (including texts) and the social, historical and intellectual contexts in which those cultural works/artifacts were produced (LO 3)
- Concern expressed about suggested revised LO 3 in that it is limited to "texts" and it doesn't really clarify the intent of the LO, it seems more complex than the current version.

### **Proposed Revisions by the Arts and Humanities LO Working Group (2/5/16)**

Students who take **humanities courses** will be able to

1. Demonstrate an ability to read closely, think critically, and write effectively about texts or cultural artifacts that reflect on perennial questions concerning the human condition (such as the search for truth and meaning, the confrontation with suffering and mortality, or the struggle for justice, equality, and human dignity)
2. Explore and thoughtfully respond to a variety of ideas or worldviews through active investigation of the lives, ideas, beliefs or values of persons in situations other than one's own.

## **Final Humanities Learning Outcomes (GEC approved on 2/19/16)**

Upon completing this requirement, you will be able to:

- Read closely, think critically, and write effectively about texts or cultural artifacts that reflect on perennial questions concerning the human condition (such as the search for truth and meaning, the confrontation with suffering and mortality, or the struggle for justice, equality, and human dignity)
- Investigate and thoughtfully respond to a variety of ideas, beliefs or values held by persons in situations other than one's own

## **Historical Perspectives Category**

### **Current Learning Outcomes (used for assessment in Fall 2014)**

- Describe events from past cultures, societies, or civilizations.
- Recognize the varieties of evidence that historians use to offer diverse perspectives on the meaning of the past.
- Identify the role of human agency in shaping events and historical change.
- Explain historical causality.
- Evaluate competing historical claims that frequently inform the present.

### **Proposed Revised Learning Outcomes**

Faculty members in the History department along with faculty from Art History developed the following proposed revised draft of Historical Perspectives Learning Outcomes:

After completing the Historical Perspectives requirement, students will be able to:

- \* Use different kinds of evidence to answer questions about historical change
- \* Describe differences among interpretations of the past
- \* Analyze institutional and cultural changes in one or more human societies over time

### **Final Revised Historical Perspectives Learning Outcomes (approved by GEC 3/4/16)**

Upon completing this requirement, students will be able to:

- Use primary sources as evidence to answer questions about historical change
- Describe differences among interpretations of the past
- Analyze institutional and cultural changes in one or more human societies over time

## **Social Sciences Category**

### **Current Learning Outcomes (used for assessment in Fall 2014)**

- Define the major concepts and methods used by social scientists to investigate, to analyze, or to predict human or group behavior.
- Explain the major principles, models, and issues under investigation by the social sciences.
- Examine how the individual or groups of individuals are influenced by social, cultural, or political institutions both in their own culture and in other cultures.

### **Proposed Revised Learning Outcomes from Social Sciences FLC**

- Explain the major concepts and methods used by social scientists to investigate, analyze, and/or predict human or group behavior
- Apply the major disciplinary principles and/or models to address social science issues/problems
- Examine and explain how the individual or groups are influenced by social, cultural, and/or political institutions in both their own culture and others'

### **Additional Suggestions from Social Sciences Instructors and FLC Members**

- Explain some of the major concepts and methods used by social scientists to investigate, analyze, and/or predict human or group behavior (LO 1)
- Apply the major disciplinary principles and/or models to address social science issues/problems (LO 2)
- Examine and explain how the individual or groups are influenced by social, cultural, and/or political institutions in both their own culture and others', and in turn how societies, cultures, and political institutions undergo change (LO 3)
- "Examine and explain how the individual or groups are influenced by social, cultural, and/or political institutions in both their own national culture and others' " (LO 3)

### **Suggested Revisions as a result of GEC Listening Session**

- Explain and/or apply major concepts, methods, and theories used in the social sciences to investigate and address social science issues/problems, and explain how the methods used in the social sciences differ from those of other disciplines
- Examine and explain how the individual or groups are influenced by social, cultural, and/or political institutions.

### **Suggested Social Science Learning Outcomes after 12/4/15 GEC Meeting**

- Explain and/or apply major concepts, methods, and theories used in the social sciences to investigate and address social science issues/problems
- Examine and explain how the individual or groups are influenced by social, cultural, and/or political institutions.

## **Final Social Science Learning Outcomes (GEC approved on 2/05/16)**

Upon completing this requirement, you will be able to:

- Explain or apply major concepts, methods, or theories used in the social sciences to investigate, analyze, or predict human behavior
- Examine and explain how social, cultural, or political institutions influence individuals or groups

## **Natural Sciences Category**

### **Current Learning Outcomes (used for assessment in Fall 2014)**

- Identify the basic taxonomy and principles of the scientific method as it pertains to the natural, physical world.
- Infer relationships, make predictions and solve problems based on an analysis of evidence or scientific information.
- Apply scientific concepts, quantitative techniques and methods to solving problems and making decisions.
- Describe the relevance of some aspect of the natural science to their lives and society.

### **Proposed Revised Learning Outcomes from Natural Sciences FLC**

- Explain how the sciences test hypotheses, make predictions, and solve problems based on analysis of data.
- Apply concepts, techniques, and/or methods from scientific disciplines to infer relationships, make predictions, solve problems, and make decisions based on analysis of evidence
- Describe the relevance of some aspect of the natural science to their lives and society

### **Additional Suggestions from Natural Sciences Instructors and FLC Members**

- Explain how application of the Scientific Method (i.e., hypothesis testing through the collection and analysis of data) distinguishes the sciences from other branches of knowledge. (LO 1)
- Apply scientific concepts, methods, and quantitative techniques to solve problems and make decisions. (LO 2)
- Describe the relevance of some aspects of the natural sciences to their lives and society (LO 3)

### **Suggested Natural Sciences Learning Outcomes after GEC Listening Session**

- Explain (may include identifying, illustrating and/or demonstrating) major concepts, methods, and theories used in the natural sciences to investigate the natural world and address



natural science issues/problems, and explain how the methods used in the natural sciences differ from those of other disciplines

- Solve problems, interpret information, and make decisions by applying natural science concepts, methods, and quantitative techniques
- Describe the relevance of aspects of the natural sciences to their lives and society

### **Suggested Natural Sciences Learning Outcomes after 12/4/15 GEC Meeting**

- Explain (may include identifying, illustrating and/or demonstrating) major concepts, methods, and theories used in the natural sciences to investigate the natural world and address natural science issues/problems
- Solve problems, interpret information, and make decisions by applying natural science concepts, methods, and quantitative techniques
- Describe the relevance of aspects of the natural sciences to their lives and society

### **Final Natural Science Learning Outcomes (GEC approved on 2/05/16)**

Upon completing this requirement, you will be able to:

- Explain major concepts, methods, or theories used in the natural sciences to investigate the physical world
- Interpret information, solve problems, and make decisions by applying natural science concepts, methods, and quantitative techniques
- Describe the relevance of aspects of the natural sciences to their lives and society

(Document revised 4/05/16)