

**GENERAL STUDIES COUNCIL**

**Meeting of May 6, 2003**

**Minutes**

**PRESENT:**

**Faculty: Valerie Cisler, Sandy Cook-Fong, Randall Heckman, Sonja Kropp, John Lillis, Marta Moorman, Chuck Peek, Janet Steele, Kenya Taylor, Ed Walker**

**Ex officio members: Mary Daake, Kristi Milks, Kim Schipporeit, and Bill Wozniak**

**ABSENT: Peg Camp, Doug Carroll, Jeanne Cutler, Allan Jenkins, Larry Kuskie, Ken Nikels**

**Wozniak called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m. in the Sisler Room of the Memorial Student Union.**

**A. DISTRIBUTION OF THE MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

**(Already approved)**

**B. CD/WI COURSE SUBMISSIONS**

**1. Writing Intensive:**

- a. **SOC 490, Directed Research (Daryl Kelley)**
- b. **TE 316, Primary Grades Literacy (Charlene Hildebrand, Glen Powell, Julie Agard, Tom Hansen, Elaine Batenhorst)**
- c. **TE 317, Field Experience: Literacy (Charlene Hildebrand, Glen Powell, Julie Agard, Tom Hansen, Elaine Batenhorst)**
- d. **TE 320, Field Experience in K-12/Secondary Classrooms (Neal Schnoor, Ken Mumm, Tom Hansen, Donna Montgomery, Glen Powell, Carol Hudson, Bob Walden, Elaine Batenhorst, Joan Lewis)**
- e. **TE 321, Reading & Inclusion in Secondary Classrooms (Tom Hansen, Donna Montgomery, Glen Powell, Carol Hudson, Bob Walden, Elaine Batenhorst, Joan Lewis)**
- f. **TE 322, Reading & Inclusion in K-12 Classrooms (Tom Hansen, Donna Montgomery, Glen Powell, Carol Hudson, Bob Walden, Elaine Batenhorst, Joan Lewis)**
- g. **TE 323, Partnerships with Families (Bard Flaherty, Carol Mollard, Charlene Hildebrand)**
- h. **TE 341, Foundations in Early Childhood Education (Bard Flaherty, Carol Mollard, Charlene Hildebrand)**
- i. **TE 352, Elementary Social Studies Methods (Ed Walker, Glenn Tracy)**
- j. **TE 431, Medical Aspects in Special Education (Donna Montgomery, Joan Lewis, Carol Hudson, Bob Walden, Wendy McCarty, Carol Mollard)**

- k. TE 462, Academic and Behavior Assessment in Special Education (Donna Montgomery, Carol Hudson, Bob Walden, Wendy McCarty, Carol Mollard)
- l. TE 464, Field Experience in Special Education (Donna Montgomery, Carol Hudson, Bob Walden, Wendy McCarty, Carol Mollard)
- m. TE 472, Management and Assessment in Middle Level Classrooms (Ken Mumm)
- n. TE 473, Field Experience in Middle Level Classrooms (Ken Mumm)

2. Cultural Diversity:

*Walker (Lillis) moved for the approval of WI proposals a through n. Motion passed.*

C.

D. OLD BUSINESS

1. WI Cleanup:

- a. none

2. CD Cleanup:

- a. none

3. Notification of new WI course-instructor assignments:

- a. ART 440, Special Problems in Art History (Jim May)
- b. FSID 395, Individual Studies in Family and Consumer Sciences (Markussen)
- c. ITEC 498, Seminar in Construction Management (Daniel Castro, Nadene Deiterman Greni)

4. General Studies Course Proposals (final approval):

- a. SOWK 170, Social Welfare-new course in Personal Development
- b. MUS 159, Fundamentals of Piano-new course in Personal Development

*Peek (Taylor) moved for approval of SOWK 170 and MUS 159 as General Studies courses in the Personal Development category. Motion passed.* There was some discussion concerning the next step of the process. Wozniak's understanding is that the course approvals are reported to the Faculty Senate, but the only remaining step is the formal approval of SVCAA Hadley.

5. General Studies Assessment:

Wozniak reviewed the main points of the [Assessment plan for General Studies](#). He asked the Council to approve the document in concept because many of the details of the plan have yet to be worked out. He hoped to use the plan to lobby for support from the SVCAA's office. He also assumed the Assessment Committee will have a number of suggestions that will lead to changes in the plan. *Peek (Kropp) moved for approval of the plan in principle. Motion passed.*

6. Liberal Studies at UNK-A proposal for restructuring the program:

Peek reviewed the three main discussion points of his proposal; Accessing the program, Academic excellence or academic politics, and addressing the last APR. He suggested that the points be discussed, in turn, at the August, September, and October meetings of the Council. Wozniak agreed to place the items on those agendas. Peek also offered his backyard as a venue for discussion of the article, "The Radicalism of the Liberal Arts Tradition" by Jackson Lears. He also offered appropriate beverages for our imbibition.

E. NEW BUSINESS

1. Wozniak mentioned some other items for the fall agendas:

- a. The status of the Bachelor of General Studies degree (Has it outlived its purpose?)
- b. The status of WI and CD course management by the General Studies Council (Perhaps the Colleges should manage those courses.)

F.

G. MISCELLANEOUS

H. NEXT MEETING

The next General Studies Council meeting is scheduled for the week before classes begin-on Thursday, August 21, at 3:30 pm. Location to be announced.

Other meeting dates for the 2003-2004 academic year.

General Studies Council:

- Sept 4, Oct 2, Nov 6, Dec 4, 2003;
- Feb 5, Mar 4, Apr 2, May 6, 2004.

Subcommittees will meet approximately two weeks before the GSC meeting. Wozniak will try to avoid overlapping the meeting schedules of the Graduate Council and the Faculty Senate Academic Affairs Committee.

**Attachment: [Assessment plan for General Studies](#)**

Attachment, May 6, 2003

**University of Nebraska at Kearney  
General Studies Program  
Assessment  
5/6/2003**

Mission Statement. Since the primary purpose of education is intellectual development, the General Studies Program at the University of Nebraska at Kearney is designed to provide broad intellectual knowledge of the diverse academic disciplines. The liberally educated person, free to explore knowledge and wisdom from a broad perspective of human culture and experience, is able to think independently, to question, to analyze, to interpret, and to judge. To achieve these goals, the General Studies Program encourages students to be accurate in the use of language, not only in self-expression, but also in communication with others. The program further encourages students to inquire into the disciplines of the humanities, fine arts, mathematics, and the natural, social, and behavioral sciences. Finally, the program encourages students to become aware of the relationships which exist among the disciplines and to understand how to apply the knowledge gained to personal development as well as contemporary problems in the students' natural, social, economic and political environment. (UNK Catalog, page 44)

Objectives. The objectives of the entire General Studies (GS) program, which are written in terms of student outcomes, have been composed and approved. (See [Appendix A](#)) There is a set of overarching objectives, which apply to all courses in the program. More specific objectives have been written for each perspective (category) within the program and thus only apply to the courses within that perspective. Thus far, the objectives have been used to determine whether a new course qualifies as a General Studies course and as a qualifying course in a perspective. Assessment of student outcomes will be based on these objectives.

The North Central Association is conducting an accreditation review of UNK in 2004. An essential pattern of evidence for this accreditation is the institution's commitment to and implementation of a student outcomes assessment plan. Every department is engaged in the process of developing and implementing an assessment plan and General Studies is no different.

Statement of Problem. The GS program, however, presents some unusual problems for student outcome assessment. For any two students who have completed the GS requirements, it is possible (and relatively likely) that they will have only three courses in common (ENG 101, ENG 102, and SPEECH 100). The design of the remainder of the program permits a wide variety of course choices within each perspective. Additionally, there is no rigid sequencing of courses within GS. So it is not possible to mark clearly when a student is finished with the entire program. Indeed, some students are still completing their GS requirements in the senior year.

While the Writing Intensive (WI) and Cultural Diversity (CD) requirements (12 and 6 hours, respectively) are associated with the GS program, they are overall requirements for graduation and are not specific course requirements within the GS program. Therefore a student could meet those requirements by

taking courses in their major and minor and not in the General Studies program. The general objectives of the program, however, do connect to the WI and CD requirements. Thus, assessment of those objectives would need to consider what students learn in those courses.

The student outcome assessment of the WI and CD requirements need to be based on clearly written student outcomes, which are currently in development.

Since all students are required to take the GS program, the number of students to be assessed presents a daunting problem. It is neither possible nor desirable to collect data from every student who finishes the program. However, any sample of students who are assessed would need to be stratified with regard to relevant demographics, such as major, possibly minor, and other variables of interest. For example, UNK has a significant number of students who spend two years completing mostly GS courses but then transfer to other programs in Allied Health fields. Their assessment poses some interesting and difficult questions.

#### A Student Outcome Assessment Plan for General Studies

Current Activities. In the context of the 2001 General Studies Academic Program Review, Dr. John Anderson and his students polled a sample of students and faculty concerning their views of the General Studies program. The Registrar's Office also does exit polling of UNK graduates. In the departmental assessment programs, while chairs have reported that the benefits of the GS program may be evident in their students' performance as majors, there is no attempt to assess those benefits in their departmental assessment of student outcomes.

Outside of the Academic Program Review, assessment of the General Studies program has not been an organized habitual event. Indeed, the attention of the GS Council has primarily focused on the structure and assessment of the course offerings within the program, and only sporadically focuses on student outcomes. This is not to say that assessment activities relevant to GS student outcomes are not occurring. The present plan is an attempt to "piggy back" some assessment activities on existing assessment programs and to develop new assessment activities concerning direct measures of student outcomes.

#### The Proposed Plan

Departmentally-Administered Assessment. Each UNK department must complete a comprehensive self study and formal academic program review (APR) every 5 years. It would be beneficial for a portion of the self study to address General Studies. If the Department has GS courses, then evidence should be offered that those courses are meeting the student learning objectives specified in the GS program. In addition, and especially if a department has no GS courses, then the department could address the question, "Are students who have just begun our academic major in possession of the skills necessary for success?" In other words, is the General Studies program preparing the students for success in the major? A frequent complaint of faculty is that students don't know how to write when they get to a writing course in the major. The validity of such a conclusion would require some data and this section of the self study would provide departments the opportunity to provide such data.

The departmental self-study should include an assessment of the Writing Intensive and Cultural Diversity courses. Since WI and CD courses aren't necessarily GS courses, departments may wish to assess their own offerings in these categories. Indeed, when the WI and CD course requirement was

implemented, it was hoped that most departments would offer the bulk of these courses within their programs. It will be valuable to see if that goal has been realized.

In some cases, a member of the General Studies Council may be appointed to the Academic Program Review team. This provides an essential conduit to the General Studies Council so that review data can be communicated to the Council. Minimally, the APR self-study should include a separate section concerning General Studies, which is forwarded to the Council.

The first proposal operates on the assumption that the departments should assume responsibility for the assessment of their General Studies courses within the context of GS learning objectives. By placing the GS course assessment in the context of the 5-year APR, then the department has flexibility with regard how best to accomplish the task. Ideally, student outcome assessment data would be collected annually, and summarized in the APR self-study.

A major problem with this aspect of the plan is that faculty, especially department chairs, are already burdened with heavy loads. Some form of assistance will be needed, especially for departments with a large GS course commitment, such as English, Communications, and Economics. Perhaps as assessment becomes part of "standard operating procedure," the burden will seem less daunting.

The assessment that occurs in the APRs could extend beyond student outcome assessment. It may be important for a department to include assessment of GS course content, techniques for delivering those courses, faculty performance, and GS program assessment from the perspective of the department's academic programs.

Centrally-Administered Assessment. The General Studies Program will also need to be assessed in some centrally coordinated fashion in order to ensure that there is some uniformity in the assessment of student outcomes. Certainly there is value in utilizing a "divide-and-conquer" strategy by having departments assess their offerings. But the techniques used by the departments will vary and thus, will produce a variety of measures of the effectiveness of each GS component course. In order to measure overall effectiveness some assessment will need to be conducted by the Office of General Studies, under the supervision of the Director of General Studies.

Direct Measures. The learning outcomes of the GS program will be assessed using the following plan.

- Two random samples of 100 students will be formed, one selected from the UNK first year class during the first month of Fall semester and one selected from the UNK junior class during the last month of fall semester. (It may be advisable to stratify the sample with regard to certain demographic characteristics of the students, e.g., the size of their high school. However, until those demographics are determined, a random sample should allow some broad conclusions regarding GS effectiveness to be drawn.)
- The samples should be substantially different with regard to their experiences with General Studies classes. These differences can be verified by accessing their transcripts and compiling a list of General Studies courses taken along with their GS course grades. The junior group should have completed most of their General Studies requirements. In this regard, it is advisable to exclude transfer students from the samples, since a substantial portion of their GS coursework may have been from different institutions.

- Each of the students in the sample will be contacted, invited to a one-hour testing session, wherein they will write an essay in response to a general question concerning topics covered in major category of the GS Program. Samples of possible questions are presented in [Appendix B](#).
- Written responses to these questions will provide 2 measures of student learning: (1) quality of their arguments, which would include an assessment of the number of references to people, ideas and their texts, and (2) the quality of writing.
- The essays would be evaluated twice by different readers using appropriate rubrics for content and writing. The readers/evaluators can be recruited from the appropriate disciplines at UNK. Their assessment procedures would be modeled after the AP Exam Assessment program run by the Educational Testing Service. This assessment will provide a score for quality of content and quality of writing.
- The data can then be summarized and analyzed in a variety of ways. The critical comparison is between the first years and the juniors. Other possible analyses would include correlating their performance with GS course grades, with declared major, and with other relevant demographic variables, such as size of high school. These data can be compiled from existing data bases or collected at the time of the essay.
- It may also be possible to conduct a preliminary assessment of the Cultural Diversity requirements. There are existing questionnaires, such as the Ethnocentrism Scale from the discipline of Social Psychology, designed to assess appreciation and understanding of other cultures. Following the essay, students certainly can provide data by taking questionnaires of this type.
- It may also be possible to conduct an assessment of retained knowledge by administering some available standardized tests that address knowledge by content area. These formal tests have national norms that would provide benchmarks for GS outcomes and perhaps for each category.

Other Direct Measures. Other direct measures are being devised. The capstone course category in the GS program has been undeveloped. If courses are developed within this category, a course requirement could be participation in assessment activities relevant to the Capstone and Overall GS learning objectives.

One proposal for one-hour of capstone course credit for participating in and meeting a performance criterion on a test is also under consideration. In this proposal, a customized test would be developed for each participating student that addresses the learning objectives for the GS courses that he or she has taken and passed. Students would take a test in some form, possibly on-line. If a level of mastery of the material is demonstrated in the test, the student would receive an hour of capstone course credit. If not, the student could be offered means to review the material in order to try again. Data from all students would be analyzed for GS assessment—perhaps deficiencies could be noted by GS course taken. The technical details of this proposal are enormous.

Indirect Measures. It is also important to develop and implement indirect measures of student outcomes concerning GS. The Office of the Director of General Studies should regularly poll both samples of faculty and students concerning their opinions of the program. The ball is already rolling with

regard to these forms of assessment but the instruments need to be refined (possibly altered annually) to ask pertinent questions concerning the program.

Review of Assessment Data. It is the responsibility of the Director of General Studies to present a summary of the assessment data to the General Studies Council during the Spring Semester of every year. Then the Council reviews the data and formulates initiatives. The initiatives then can be incorporated into the long-range and short-range plans for the improvement of the UNK General Studies program.

## APPENDIX A UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA AT KEARNEY GENERAL STUDIES PHILOSOPHY

Since the primary purpose of education is intellectual development, the General Studies Program at the University of Nebraska at Kearney is designed to provide broad intellectual knowledge of the diverse academic disciplines. The liberally educated person, free to explore knowledge and wisdom from a broad perspective of human culture and experience, is able to think independently, to question, to analyze, to interpret, and to judge. To achieve these goals, the General Studies Program encourages students to be accurate in the use of language, not only in self-expression, but also in communication with others. The program further encourages students to inquire into the disciplines of the humanities, fine arts, mathematics, and the natural, social, and behavioral sciences. Finally, the program encourages students to become aware of the relationships which exist among the disciplines and to understand how to apply the knowledge gained to personal development as well as contemporary problems in the students' natural, social, economic and political environment.

### GENERAL OBJECTIVES

Across the range of disciplines and courses offered, the General Studies Program is designed to develop and demonstrate the following abilities:

1. the ability to locate and gather information,
2. the capability for critical thinking, reasoning and analyzing,
3. effective communication skills including the ability to read, speak and write effectively, using the materials, ideas, and discourse modes of specific academic areas,
4. an understanding of the experiences and values of groups and cultures which have been historically under-represented.

### STUDENT OUTCOMES

Therefore upon completion of the General Studies Program, students will be able to demonstrate:

1. the ability to locate and gather information,
2. the capability for critical thinking, reasoning and analyzing,

3. effective communication skills including the ability to read, speak and write effectively, using the materials, ideas, and discourse modes of specific academic areas,
4. an understanding of the experiences and values of groups and cultures which have been historically under-represented.

In addition to the four general objectives noted above, there are specific objectives relevant to each of the major categories within the General Studies Program.

#### I. ENGLISH LANGUAGE

In addition to those objectives required of all General Studies courses, students will:

1. demonstrate the ability to form and support a coherent position on an issue,
2. demonstrate the ability to write and speak in a formal manner appropriate to the audience,
3. demonstrate the ability to read, speak, and write "expressive" as well as "transactional" language i.e., to develop and understand the role of voice in communication as well as the message itself.

#### III. HUMANITIES

In addition to those objectives required of all General Studies courses, students will:

1. demonstrate the ability to comprehend primary texts, i.e., the work of literary figures, historical figures, philosophers, and critics; film and theatrical performance; works of art; music in performance and/or notation,
2. demonstrate the ability to form and support , in writing, coherent positions on issues relevant to primary texts,
3. demonstrate the ability to use, in speaking and writing, the forms of reference and the manners of discourse appropriate to the particular discipline,
4. demonstrate the ability to see primary texts as cultural descriptions as well as individual creation. *While not all courses in the Humanities focus exclusively on primary texts, students in every course will experience, through reading, seeing, or hearing, significant cultural works and documents.*

#### ADDITIONAL CRITERIA FOR HUMANITIES COURSES

##### LITERARY PERSPECTIVES

Students will demonstrate an understanding of:

- imaginative literature in its cultural or historical context.

Students will demonstrate an ability to:

- identify the major generic distinctions and conventions of poetry, narrative, and/or drama,

- use the literary vocabularies and strategies necessary to discuss texts--orally and in writing--fluently and accurately,
- apply strategies for close readings of texts, with an emphasis on how texts mean rather than what they mean.

#### AESTHETIC PERSPECTIVES

Students will demonstrate an ability to:

- identify elements, styles, and idioms of a given art form using discipline-specific terminology and a basic working knowledge of the creative process and problem solving methods of the discipline,
- place aesthetic works and/or performance events in the historical, political, social and philosophical context which gave rise to their creation,
- interpret exemplary aesthetic works and/or performance events, taking into account their cultural dimension
- respond to exemplary aesthetic works and/or performance events expressively and critically in forms appropriate to the discipline within the framework of established or emerging schools of criticism, method and technique.

#### HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES

Students will demonstrate an ability to:

- evaluate a broad range and variety of primary texts as the products of specific cultures, at particular times and places,
- interpret the meaning of texts in their social, political, scientific/technological, economic, and cultural contexts,
- analyze the past and its people on their own terms, through the perceptions and experiences of those who lived it,
- create historical narratives that integrate change and continuity over time based on an understanding of current historiography and historical methods.

#### PHILOSOPHIC PERSPECTIVES

Students will demonstrate an ability to:

- explain the following areas of study and their concepts: metaphysics (those things that transcend nature), epistemology (theories of knowledge), ethics (the difference between right and wrong, and good and evil) and ontology (the basic properties of existence),
- discuss and analyze in oral or written form primary texts for their metaphysical, epistemological, ethical and ontological significance, not merely for their historical value or empirical claims.

#### IV. MATHEMATICS, STATISTICS & COMPUTER SCIENCE

In addition to those objectives required of all General Studies courses, students will:

1. demonstrate the ability to manage and interpret numerical data using the appropriate mathematical tools,
2. demonstrate the ability to express formal, mathematical relationships using logical analyses and differing forms of mathematical reasoning,
3. demonstrate the ability to utilize mathematical techniques in order to define problems and to search for strategies for testing solutions.

#### MATHEMATICS/STATISTICS COURSES

Students will demonstrate an ability to:

- apply functions and other mathematical relationships to the analysis of a wide variety of applied problems,
- use one or more of a variety of mathematical methodologies, including but not limited to algebraically based deduction, statistical processes, the limit, the derivative, or the integral, to define, analyze, and solve a diverse selection of applied problems,
- use the "language" of mathematics and/or statistics to effectively communicate problem analysis and solutions,
- think critically and use reasoning in solving applied problems.

#### COMPUTER SCIENCE COURSES

Students will demonstrate an ability to:

- apply algorithms, data structures and formal languages as implemented within technological systems in order to demonstrate critical thinking, analysis and problem solving.

#### V. NATURAL SCIENCES

In addition to those objectives of all General Studies courses, students will:

1. demonstrate the ability to apply the logical structure of scientific methodology in the laboratory setting,
2. demonstrate the ability to comprehend how scientific concepts originate, are validated and refined,
3. demonstrate the ability to use the specialized vocabulary needed to understand matter and energy.

#### VI. SOCIAL AND BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES

In addition to those objectives required of all General Studies courses, students will:

1. demonstrate an understanding of human experiences and be able to relate them to the present,

2. demonstrate the ability to understand the application of the empirical research methods used in the social sciences to understand individual behavior as well as the interrelationships among people,
3. demonstrate the ability to comprehend how social scientific concepts originate, are validated and refined within a variety of social science disciplines,
4. demonstrate the ability to evaluate the strengths and limitations of the social sciences and the explanations they offer for contemporary life.

#### ECONOMIC PERSPECTIVES

Students will demonstrate an understanding of:

- the basic human condition of scarcity: the fact that human wants are greater than the limited resources available.

Students will demonstrate an ability to:

- explain the principles and research methods used to understand individual economic behavior as well as the economic interrelationships among people.
- apply economic analysis to real-world issue and events.
- view, interpret, and analyze economic behavior in the context of other academic disciplines.

#### SOCIAL PERSPECTIVES

Students will demonstrate an understanding of:

- the contribution of scientific research for explaining social behavior.

Students will demonstrate an ability to:

- evaluate appropriate scientific research methods and findings,
- write clear explanations in answer to sociological questions,
- apply sociological frameworks to explain and predict future behavior,
- analyze human behavior in their social groups and within the societal context,
- ask appropriate questions about sociological factors that influence human behavior as well as locate, understand and critically evaluate sociological journal articles and those of the other social sciences perspectives,
- read, comprehend sociological concepts and critically evaluate information about society and social interaction from a wide variety of sources, e.g., current events, mass media, and personal experience.

#### POLITICAL PERSPECTIVES

Students will demonstrate an understanding of:

- what comprises "the good" political life, including the normative foundations of politics and governing,
- great political questions such as those about justice, freedom, equality and war,
- significant empirical political phenomena based on extensive study of the research conducted within political science proper, including electoral behavior, decision-making, attitudinal studies, international behaviors and work that reaches beyond standard behavioral explanations.

Students will demonstrate an ability to:

- make reasoned judgments about political and policy issues, based upon the empirical and normative studies described above, including a critical assessment of the political setting that addresses the question of: Who gets what, when and how?

#### GEOGRAPHIC PERSPECTIVES

Students will demonstrate:

- a knowledge of spatial distribution and spatial relationships,
- an understanding of geographic methodology including the synthesis of information from diverse sources to create a holistic view, and map interpretation as the basic tool of geographic expression,
- an appreciation of the world's national, regional, ethnic, religious, social, and linguistic diversity.

Students will be able to use basic geographical concepts and methodologies to understand:

- the interrelationship between human activity and natural environments,
- the division of earth into cultural regions, what these are like and how they are interrelated,
- the complex problems of the contemporary world, such as food supply, political relations, and economic development.

#### BEHAVIORAL PERSPECTIVES

Students will demonstrate an understanding of:

- how scientific research helps explain behavior in its psychological context.

Students will demonstrate an ability to:

- analyze the behavior of humans (and where relevant animals) in its psychological context and be able to apply both the theoretical and empirical perspectives to describe on-going events and predict future events which involve psychological processes.
- evaluate and utilize appropriate scientific methods and findings to investigate topics of interest.
- formulate relevant questions about psychological effects on behavior and use appropriate library and empirical research techniques to gather answers to these questions.

- read, comprehend and critically evaluate information about behavior provided in the ordinary media as well as in specialized sources of psychological information.

## VII. PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

In addition to those objectives required of all General Studies courses, students will:

1. demonstrate the ability to confront the complexities--physical, emotional, economic, and/or technological--of the contemporary world.
2. demonstrate the development of skills, behaviors and problem solving strategies necessary to prevail in the contemporary world.

## VIII. CAPSTONE COURSE

In addition to those objectives required of all General Studies courses, students will:

1. demonstrate the ability to use the breadth and diversity of knowledge and experience from a variety of disciplines in order to solve real world problems.
2. demonstrate an understanding of cultures other than their own.
3. demonstrate the understanding and knowledge needed to function responsibly in one's natural, social, and political environment.

### Writing Intensive Courses

Writing intensive courses are courses outside of the Communications area, i.e., ENG 101, 102, which are designed to further develop the student's writing skills. In general, writing intensive courses (1) provide students with the opportunity to revise their written work in order to develop their writing skills and (2) use a grading system in which a significant portion of the student's grade is based on written work. Students are required to complete twelve hours of writing intensive courses. Courses which meet this requirement are designated WI in the class schedule. A current list of approved WI courses is available.

Upon completion of the WI requirements, students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate writing fluency by carrying basic principles from one writing assignment to another;
2. Produce a credible essay with a clear thesis, sound development pattern, logical support, and proper mechanisms;
3. Edit, proofread, and revise work for themselves, using academic writing standards and resources;
4. Show, through a variety of their assignments, their understanding that what constitutes good writing varies with the occasion and the audience;
5. Demonstrate a working knowledge of and expertise in the writing style of their discipline-as indicated by their major and minor.

### Cultural Diversity Courses

Students are required to complete six hours of coursework which are designed to enhance an understanding of cultural diversity. In general, cultural diversity courses provide students with an understanding of the experiences and values of groups and cultures outside the mainstream of American life. These courses may be outside the General Studies area. Courses which meet this requirement are designated CD in the class schedule. A current list of approved CD courses is available.

Upon completion of the CD requirements, students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate an understanding that the human condition includes a wide variety of experiences, cultures, customs, ideals, values, social structures, institutions, beliefs, and lifeways.
2. Demonstrate an increased self-awareness of what it means in their culture to be a person of the students' own gender, race, class, ethnicity, and religion as well as an understanding of how these categories affect those who are different from themselves.
3. Demonstrate the ability to identify elements of their own culture and the ability to compare and contrast the values and traditions of their own culture to cultures other than their own.
4. Demonstrate knowledge of the individual, family, and community values of cultures other than one's own.
5. Demonstrate an understanding of one's own culture from the perspective of other cultures.
6. Demonstrate an understanding of themselves and others in ways other than stereotyped groups or categories;
7. Demonstrate an understanding of some of the causes and effects of structured inequalities and prejudicial exclusion;

## Appendix B

### Sample Essay Questions for General Studies Assessment

#### For Fine Arts and Humanities:

Provide each student with a listing of their courses taken so far from high school and College (when appropriate). Using what you have learned in your schooling so far, answer the following question:

How have the Fine Arts and Humanities (e.g., Music, Theater, Art, Literature, Philosophy, and History) enlarged your own vision of the human condition?

#### For Social Sciences:

Provide each student with a listing of their courses taken so far from high school and College (when appropriate).

Using what you have learned in your schooling so far, answer the following question:

Can human behavior ever be understood by social scientists? Defend your answer with examples from Economics, Political Science, Human Geography, Psychology, and/or Sociology.

For WI Assessment:

Describe how communication within your discipline is accomplished?