

General Studies Democracy in Perspective Assessment Results (Fall 2017):

In accordance with the long-term assessment plan for General Studies Program, Democracy in Perspective courses were assessed in Fall 2017. A total of 182 responses were received.

Democracy in Perspective course assessment utilizes common assessment instruments and rubrics approved by the General Studies Council. The list of Democracy in Perspective courses selected for assessment were approved by the General Studies Council at the April 30, 2017 meeting; faculty responsible for the courses were then contacted and informed of the process to follow in conducting the assessment. Assessment results were collected using a Qualtrics survey during the last 3 weeks of the semester. The specific courses and the number of observations are presented in Table 1.

As reported in Table 1, the responses in the Democracy in Perspective area totaled 182 out of 584 students enrolled in all Democracy courses for a response rate of 31.16%.

The General Studies Council determined in October 2015 that students in general studies courses should meet the standard of at least 70% of students achieving Proficient and Advanced for each identified learning outcome (both category and program level), where “Proficient” describes the skills of the typical student near the end of the course and “Advanced” is anything above proficient.

The assessment results for Democracy in Perspective courses are reported in Table 2. As shown in the last column of Table 2, the goal of 70% Proficient and Advanced were met for two of the three Democracy Learning Outcomes (DP): DP 2 – analyze how citizens engage in democracy (73.48%); and DP 3 – evaluate democratic practices across different contexts (73.08%). Although the 70% goal was not met for DP 1 – explain roles that democratic concepts play in a just democracy (64.84%), over sixty percent of the responses were at the Proficient and Advanced level.

Comparing current assessment results to prior periods is also constructive. The comparison of Fall 2015 to Fall 2017 assessment results for Democracy in Perspective learning outcomes (DP) are reported in Table 3. As shown in Table 3, the 70% goal was met for all of the Democracy in Perspective learning outcomes in Fall 2015; thus, meeting the 70% goal for two of the three learning outcomes in the current period is a decline in achievement. One possible explanation for the observed decline is that faculty evaluators’ expectation for work meeting the “Proficient” and “Advanced” level was closer to the level where students are actually performing. Another possible explanation is the adjustments made in the assessment data collection process.

In addition to assessing the specific learning outcomes for Democracy in Perspective courses, the instruments used in the assessment process also measured the achievement on the GS Program Level Learning Outcomes; the assessment results for these Program Level Learning Outcomes are reported in Table 4.

As shown in the last column of Table 4, the 70% goal was met for the three Program Level Learning Outcomes (GS) measured. Slightly less than three-quarters of the responses for GS 1 – evaluate information appropriate to the task (72.15%) and GS 2 – apply principles of critical thinking to demonstrate integrative learning (73.08%) were rated Proficient and Advanced. The responses for GS 6 – evaluate in context significant concepts relating to democracy (70.46%) were slightly above the 70% goal.

The comparison of Fall 2015 to Fall 2017 assessment results for Program Level Learning Outcomes (GS) are reported in Table 5. As shown in Table 5, while the 70% goal was met for all of the Program Level learning outcomes in both Fall 2015 and Fall 2017, achievement levels were lower in Fall 2017. As mentioned above, possible explanations for the reduced performance include closer alignment between faculty evaluators’ expectations for work and the level where students are actually performing and adjustments made in the assessment data collection process.

Overall, the results reported above indicate that the 70% goal was met for two of the three learning outcomes at the course level and all of the learning outcomes at the program level. As mentioned earlier, there was a decline in

the results from the last assessment cycle (Fall 2015). Going forward, additional information and feedback from instructors carrying out the assessment will be sought prior to making any recommendations regarding strategies to further improve the results. It should also be recognized that the results reported above are from the second-time data collection in the assessment cycle. Thus, the results should be considered another step in determining the base-line for achievement of the learning outcomes. As more data become available, recommendations for any potential changes can be made.

Table 1. Democracy in Perspective Courses Included in GS Assessment in Fall 2017 and Responses.

Course	Responses	Percent assessed
GEOG 323	21	
HIST 176	22	
ITEC 225	0	
PSCI 170	30	
PHIL 105	9	
SOWK 170	100	
<i>Total</i>	<i>182</i>	
<i>Enrollment in all Democracy Courses (fall 2017)</i>	<i>584</i>	<i>31.16</i>

Table 2. Democracy in Perspective Assessment Results for Fall 2017 (Percent of Total Responses by Learning Outcomes).

Democracy Learning Outcome (DP):	Does not meet	Beginning	Developing	Proficient	Advanced	<i>Proficient and Advanced</i>
DP 1: <i>Explain the roles that democratic concepts, including individual rights, play in a just democracy.</i>	4.40	3.85	26.92	39.56	25.27	64.84
DP 2: <i>Analyze how citizens engage in democracy.</i>	2.21	3.87	20.44	48.07	25.41	73.48
DP 3: <i>Evaluate democratic practices across different contexts (such as settings, time, socioeconomic conditions, cultures, and political boundaries).</i>	1.65	3.85	21.43	47.25	25.82	73.08

Table 3. Democracy in Perspective Assessment Results Comparison of Fall 2015 to Fall 2017 (Percent of Total Responses by Learning Outcomes).

	DP 1: <i>Explain the roles that democratic concepts, including individual rights, play in a just democracy.</i>		DP 2: <i>Analyze how citizens engage in democracy.</i>		DP 3: <i>Evaluate democratic practices across different contexts (such as settings, time, socioeconomic conditions, cultures, and political boundaries).</i>	
	Fall 2015	Fall 2017	Fall 2015	Fall 2017	Fall 2015	Fall 2017
Does not meet	2.92	4.40	2.34	2.21	2.34	1.65
Beginning	0.00	3.85	0.58	3.87	2.34	3.85
Developing	12.28	26.92	14.04	20.44	11.70	21.43
Proficient	66.67	39.56	60.82	48.07	68.42	47.25
Advanced	18.13	25.27	22.22	25.41	15.20	25.82
Proficient and Advanced	84.80	64.84	83.04	73.48	83.63	73.08

Table 4. General Studies Program Level Assessment Results for Fall 2017 (Percent of Total Responses by Learning Outcomes).

Program Level Learning Outcome (GS):	Does not meet	Beginning	Developing	Proficient	Advanced	Proficient and Advanced
GS 1: Evaluate information appropriate to the task.	3.54	7.74	16.57	28.45	43.71	72.15
GS 2: Apply principles of critical thinking to demonstrate integrative learning.	1.65	3.85	21.43	47.25	25.82	73.08
GS 3: Communicate effectively in spoken form.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
GS 4: Communicate effectively in written form.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
GS 5: Analyze cultural issues within a global context.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
GS 6: Evaluate in context significant concepts relating to democracy.	2.75	3.85	22.94	44.95	25.50	70.46

Table 5. General Studies Program Level Assessment Results Comparison of Fall 2015 to Fall 2017 (Percent of Total Responses by Learning Outcomes).

	GS 1: Evaluate information appropriate to the task		GS 2: Apply principles of critical thinking to demonstrate integrative learning		GS 6: Evaluate in context significant concepts relating to democracy	
	Fall 2015	Fall 2017	Fall 2015	Fall 2017	Fall 2015	Fall 2017
Does not meet	2.53	3.54	2.34	1.65	2.53	2.75
Beginning	0.97	7.74	0.58	3.85	0.97	3.85
Developing	12.67	16.57	14.04	21.43	12.67	22.94
Proficient	65.30	28.45	60.82	47.25	65.30	44.95
Advanced	18.52	43.71	22.22	25.82	18.52	25.50
Proficient and Advanced	83.82	72.15	83.04	73.08	83.82	70.46