

General Studies Assessment Results (Spring 2015):

In accordance with the long-term assessment plan for General Studies Program, distribution courses in the Aesthetics, Humanities, and Social Sciences categories were assessed in Spring 2015.

The goal was to collect assessment data from 25% of the courses in each of the distribution areas; courses to be assessed were selected using the following criteria: **diversity** (variety of course pre-fixes chosen), **representativeness** (number of Departments contributing courses and level of their participation), **multiple-sections** (courses selected had multiple sections offered), and **enrollments** (selected courses had enrollments of less than 30 students). Honors courses are excluded from the selection process.

The specific courses selected for assessment were approved by the General Studies Council at the December 2014 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 in each distribution category and the number of observations are presented in Table 1.

As reported in Table 1, the responses in the Aesthetics area totaled 159 out of 552 students enrolled in all Aesthetics courses for a response rate of 28.80%. The response rate in the Humanities courses was 22.01% (237 responses out of a total of 1,077) and 17.06% for Social Sciences courses (270 responses out of total enrollment of 1,583). Overall, the response rate for spring 2015 was 20.7% for the three categories Aesthetics, Humanities, and Social Sciences (666 responses out of a total enrollment of 3,212).

The General Studies Council has determined 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 Aesthetics distribution 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 the following Aesthetic Learning Outcomes (AO): AO 2 – explain significance of a work of art within its context (84.67%); AO 3 – identify the structure of a work of art by describing its elements (78.00%); AO 4 – interpret a work of art using concepts appropriate to its medium (77.33%); and AO 5 – distinguish between works of art from various time periods (84.67%). The only outcome that did not achieve the goal was AO 1 – articulate the relevance of the Aesthetics course to their general education (65.31%); however, the results show that over one-half (51.02%) of the responses were at the Proficient level.

The assessment results for Humanities distribution courses are reported in Table 3. As shown in the last column of Table 3, the results show that the goal of 70% Proficient and Advanced were met for all five Humanities Learning Outcomes (HO): HO 1 - articulate the relevance of the Humanities course to their general education (71.43%); HO 2 – analyze primary sources using methodologies appropriate to disciplines in the Humanities (73.66%); HO 3 – create coherent positions based on the interpretation of primary sources (79.02%); HO 4 – communicate effectively using the modes of discourse appropriate to the discipline (73.66%); and HO 5 – evaluate primary sources in cultural, literary, or philosophical contexts (73.66%). Additionally, the results show that over one-half of the responses were at the Proficient level for learning outcomes HO 2 (50.89%), HO 3 (56.70%), HO 4 (50.89%) and HO 5 (50.89%). Although the responses for HO 1 achieved the 70% goal, less than one-half of the responses were at the Proficient (44.6%) level.

The assessment results for Social Sciences distribution courses are reported in Table 4. As shown in the last column of Table 4, the goal of 70% Proficient and Advanced were met for the following Social Science Learning Outcomes (SS): SS 1 – articulate the relevance of the Social Science course to their general education (78.06%); SS 2 – describe the basic concepts and methods used in social science discipline (81.05%); and SS 3 – demonstrate how basic concepts and methods from a social science discipline explain individual or group behavior (75.47%). The two outcomes that did not achieve the goal were SS 4 – evaluate the connection between social science research and

social or political policy (47.21%) and SS 5 – apply concepts and methods from a social science discipline to social science research (50.19%). It should be noted that one explanation for not meeting the 70% goal for SS 4 is that 19.7% of the responses were in the Not Assessed category.

In addition to assessing the specific learning outcomes for the courses in the Aesthetics, Humanities, and Social Sciences distribution categories, 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 5.

As shown in the last column of Table 5, the goal of 70% Proficient and Advanced were met for the following Program Level Learning Outcomes (GS): GS 1 – evaluate information appropriate to the task (75.65%); GS 3 – communicate effectively in spoken form (79.02%); GS 4 – communicate effectively in written form (76.36%); GS 5 – analyze cultural issues within a global context (78.08%); and GS 6 – evaluate in context significant concepts relating to democracy (73.66%). The only outcome that did not achieve the goal was GS 2 – apply principles of critical thinking to demonstrate integrative learning (62.32%).

Overall, the results reported above indicate that the 70% goal was met for the majority of the learning outcomes in each of the distribution categories and program level. Additional information and feedback from instructors carrying out the assessment will be sought prior to making any recommendations regarding strategies to improve the results. In addition, it should be recognized that the results reported above are from the first-time data collection in the assessment cycle. Thus, the results should be considered as the first step in determining the baseline for achievement of the learning outcomes. As more data become available, recommendations for any potential changes can be made.

Table 1. Courses Included in GS Assessment in Spring 2015 and Responses.

Category	Course	Responses	Percent assessed
Aesthetics:	ART 120	63	
	MUS 100	56	
	THEA 120	40	
	<i>Total</i>	<i>159</i>	
	<i>Enrollment in all Aesthetics Courses (spring 2015)</i>	<i>552</i>	<i>28.80</i>
Humanities:	ENG 251	38	
	ENG 254	20	
	HIST 211	34	
	HIST 251	57	
	PHIL 100	43	
	PHIL 120	45	
	<i>Total</i>	<i>237</i>	
	<i>Enrollment in all Humanities Courses (spring 2015)</i>	<i>1,077</i>	<i>22.01</i>
Social Sciences:	CJUS 101	14	
	ECON 271	52	
	FSID 351	42	
	GEOG 104	40	
	PSCI 110	50	
	SOC 100	72	
	<i>Total</i>	<i>270</i>	
	<i>Enrollment in all Humanities Courses (spring 2015)</i>	<i>1,583</i>	<i>17.06</i>

Table 2. Aesthetics Assessment Results for Spring 2015 (Percent of Total Responses by Learning Outcomes).

Aesthetics Learning Outcome (AO):	Not Assessed	Does not meet	Beginning	Developing	Proficient	Advanced	Proficient and Advanced
AO 1: <i>Articulate the relevance of the Aesthetics course to their general education.</i>	0.00	2.72	8.16	23.81	51.02	14.29	65.31
AO 2: <i>Explain the significance of a work of art within its context (i.e., cultural, historical).</i>	2.00	0.67	2.67	10.00	58.00	26.67	84.67
AO 3: <i>Identify the structure of a work of art (visual/music/theater/dance) by describing its elements.</i>	2.67	0.67	4.00	14.67	62.67	15.33	78.00
AO 4: <i>Interpret a work of art using concepts appropriate to its medium.</i>	2.67	0.00	4.00	16.00	56.00	21.33	77.33
AO 5: <i>Distinguish between works of art from various time periods and cultures.</i>	2.00	0.67	2.67	10.00	58.00	26.67	84.67

Table 3. Humanities Assessment Results for Spring 2015 (Percent of Total Responses by Learning Outcomes).

Humanities Learning Outcome (HO):	Not Assessed	Does not meet	Beginning	Developing	Proficient	Advanced	Proficient and Advanced
HO 1: <i>Articulate the relevance of the Humanities course to their general education.</i>	0.00	1.79	2.68	24.11	44.64	26.79	71.43
HO 2: <i>Analyze primary sources using methodologies appropriate to disciplines in the Humanities.</i>	0.00	1.56	3.57	21.21	50.89	22.77	73.66
HO 3: <i>Create coherent positions based on the interpretation of primary sources.</i>	0.00	1.34	2.68	16.96	56.70	22.32	79.02
HO 4: <i>Communicate effectively using the modes of discourse appropriate to the discipline.</i>	0.00	1.56	3.57	21.21	50.89	22.77	73.66
HO 5: <i>Evaluate primary sources in cultural, historical, literary, or philosophical contexts.</i>	0.00	1.56	3.57	21.21	50.89	22.77	73.66

Table 4. Social Sciences Assessment Results for Spring 2015 (Percent of Total Responses by Learning Outcomes).

Social Sciences Learning Outcome (SS):	Not Assessed	Does not meet	Beginning	Developing	Proficient	Advanced	Proficient and Advanced
SS 1: <i>Articulate the relevance of the Social Science course to their general education.</i>	0.00	0.37	3.35	18.22	43.12	34.94	78.06
SS 2: <i>Describe basic concepts and methods used in a social science discipline.</i>	0.00	1.49	1.49	15.99	47.96	33.09	81.05
SS 3: <i>Demonstrate how basic concepts and methods from a social science discipline explain individual or group behavior.</i>	0.00	1.86	3.72	18.96	46.10	29.37	75.47
SS 4: <i>Evaluate the connection between social science research and social or political policy.</i>	19.70	8.55	3.72	20.82	32.34	14.87	47.21
SS 5: <i>Apply concepts and methods from a social science discipline to social science research.</i>	0.00	11.15	7.06	31.60	34.20	15.99	50.19

Table 5. General Studies Program Level Assessment Results for Spring 2015 (Percent of Total Responses by Learning Outcomes).

Program Level Learning Outcome (GS):	Not Assessed	Does not meet	Beginning	Developing	Proficient	Advanced	Proficient and Advanced
GS 1: <i>Evaluate information appropriate to the task.</i>	0.26	1.42	3.67	19.01	49.36	26.29	75.65
GS 2: <i>Apply principles of critical thinking to demonstrate integrative learning.</i>	5.02	5.28	4.49	22.89	43.22	19.10	62.32
GS 3: <i>Communicate effectively in spoken form.</i>	0.00	1.34	2.68	16.96	56.70	22.32	79.02
GS 4: <i>Communicate effectively in written form.</i>	1.05	1.24	4.11	17.22	55.69	20.67	76.36
GS 5: <i>Analyze cultural issues within a global context.</i>	0.80	1.07	2.94	17.11	53.48	24.60	78.08
GS 6: <i>Evaluate in context significant concepts relating to democracy.</i>	0.00	1.34	3.13	21.88	50.45	23.21	73.66