

General Studies Assessment Results: Oral Communication and Written Communication (Fall 2016)

In accordance with the long-term assessment plan for General Studies Program, Foundational Core courses in the Written Communication and Oral Communication categories were assessed in Fall 2016.

The specific courses selected for assessment were approved by the General Studies Council at the April 28, 2016 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 Foundational Core category and the number of observations are presented in Table 1.

As reported in Table 1, the responses in the Written Communication area totaled 77 out of 249 students enrolled in all Written Communication courses for a response rate of 30.92%. The response rate in the Oral Communication courses was 28.82% (147 responses out of a total of 510). Overall, the response rate for fall 2016 was 29.5% for the Written and Oral Communication categories (224 responses out of a total enrollment of 759).

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 Written Communication learning outcomes (WC) are reported in Table 2. As shown in the last column of Table 2, the 70% goal was met for all of the Written Communication learning outcomes (WC 1 – WC 5). Over eighty percent of the responses were rated Proficient and Advanced for WC 3 – use context-appropriate conventions of written English. More than three-quarters of the responses for WC 1 – discern a writer’s argument or purpose (76.26%); WC 2 – use appropriate sources responsibly (77.63%); and WC 5 – write in a manner appropriate to the audience and context (77.81%) were rated Proficient and Advanced. Although the 70% goal was met, the responses for WC 4 – form and support coherent position on an issue (71.23%) were the lowest of the five learning outcomes.

The assessment results for Oral Communication courses are reported in Table 3. As shown in the last column of Table 3, the goal of 70% Proficient and Advanced were met for all four of Oral Communication learning outcomes (OC) assessed: OC 1 – evaluate appropriate sources (89.73%); OC 2 – utilize effective verbal and non-verbal expressions (85.62%); OC 3 – deliver effective speeches appropriate to the context (91.78%); and OC 4 – orally present a coherent position on an issue (87.67%). Upon evaluation of the assessment results, it was discovered that the current assessment process does not measure OC 5 – assess oral argumentation as a critical consumer. Going forward, the instrument used in collecting assessment data will need to be revised so that this learning outcome is measured.

In addition to assessing the specific learning outcomes for Written and Oral Communication 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 four Program Level learning outcomes (GS) measured. Over ninety percent of the responses were rated Proficient and Advanced for GS 3 – communicate effectively in spoken form (91.78%); over eighty percent of the responses were rated Proficient and Advanced for GS 1 – evaluate information appropriate to the task (80.59%). More than three-quarters of the responses were rated Proficient and Advanced for GS 2 – apply principles of critical thinking to demonstrate integrative learning (76.26%) and GS 4 – communicate effectively in written form (77.81%).

Overall, the results reported above indicate that the 70% goal was met for all of the learning outcomes at the course level and program level. As mentioned earlier, although the initial 70% goal was reached, 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 the first 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. Courses Included in GS Assessment in Fall 2016 and Responses.

Category	Course	Responses	Percent assessed
Written Communication:	ENG 102 Section 1	21	
	ENG 102 Section 3	17	
	ENG 102 Section 5	17	
	ENG 102 Section 7	22	
	<i>Total</i>	<i>77</i>	
	<i>Enrollment in all ENG 102 courses (fall 2016)</i>	<i>249</i>	<i>30.92</i>
Oral Communication:	SPCH 100 Section 1	16	
	SPCH 100 Section 4	22	
	SPCH 100 Section 6	24	
	SPCH 100 Section 15	23	
	SPCH 100 Section 17	13	
	ITEC 290 Section 1	15	
	ITEC 290 Section 3	17	
	ITEC 290 Section 6	17	
	<i>Total</i>	<i>147</i>	
	<i>Enrollment in all Humanities Courses (spring 2015)</i>	<i>510</i>	<i>28.82</i>

Table 2. Written Communication Assessment Results for Fall 2016 (Percent of Total Responses by Learning Outcomes).

Written Communication Learning Outcome (WC):	Does not meet	Beginning	Developing	Proficient	Advanced	<i>Proficient and Advanced</i>
WC 1: <i>Discern a writer's argument or purpose.</i>	0.91	2.28	20.55	50.23	26.03	76.26
WC 2: <i>Use appropriate sources responsibly.</i>	0.91	2.28	19.18	53.88	23.74	77.63
WC 3: <i>Use context-appropriate conventions in written English.</i>	0.68	0.68	18.49	60.96	19.18	80.14
WC 4: <i>Form and support coherent position on an issue.</i>	0.68	3.42	24.66	46.58	24.66	71.23
WC 5: <i>Write in a manner appropriate to the audience and context.</i>	0.82	1.64	19.73	54.52	23.29	77.81

