



GS COURSE REVIEW SUMMARY

2016-17

Spring 2017 Course Submissions:

English 102; Music 130; Social Work 201; Geography 206; Art 140

Committee: Tifani Fletcher, Chair; Craig Crow; Aaron Harper; Chad Kuhns; Cathy Monteroso;
Ryan McCullough; Paula Tomasik

GENERAL STUDIES ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE NARRATIVE COMMENTS

OVERVIEW:

Recently, the General Studies Assessment Committee (GSAC) underwent substantial changes to the [process](#) and criteria for reviewing general studies courses. An explanation of those changes is detailed in the sections below, including links to the rubrics and other general studies assessment information. Courses are assessed based on their: rationale for the designated GS student learning outcomes, appropriateness of assessment methods, plan for consistency, implementation of program revision, and appropriate inclusion of GS information in syllabi. In spring 2017, four courses were submitted for GS review, ENG 102, MUS 130, SWK 201, and GEO 206.

GSAC is a recommending body only, and committee suggestions are provided to Faculty submitting the review, Chair/Program Director, College Dean, and Provost.

General Studies SLO

Communication: Upon completion of the General Studies Program at WLU, students will be able to communicate effectively with clarity, coherence, and persuasiveness.

1. [Oral Communication rubric](#)
2. [Written Communication rubric](#)

Analysis: Upon completion of the General Studies Program at WLU, students will be able to apply appropriate concepts and methods to analyze, evaluate, and interpret information or texts, implementing suitable strategies to solve problems or relate analyses as appropriate. [Analysis rubric](#)

Self and Cultural Awareness: Upon completion of the General Studies Program at WLU, students will reflect objectively on the human condition through investigation, appreciation, and evaluation of the products, perceptions, expressions, and interrelationships of various cultures. [Self and Cultural Awareness rubric](#)

[English 102](#)

General Studies SLO-Communication (Writing): Upon completion of the GS Program at WLU, students will communicate with clarity, coherence, and persuasiveness.

[Rubric](#) scores are based on a 3-point scale.

Rationale for Student Learning Outcome

1. SLO.1 Communication: Upon completion of the General Studies Program at WLU, students will communicate with clarity, coherence, and persuasiveness.
2. Based on the course description and narrative it is clear that communication using writing is the major focus of the course. It is suggested in future course assessments that the GSLO is included and it is made clear which specific course learning outcomes are aligned with them.

Appropriateness of Assessment Method

1. "A well-documented academic essay" is being used with the GS communication rubric as the assignment across all sections to measure the stated GSLO. Individual instructors are given the flexibility to determine the topics/subjects of that assignment. Five examples from five different instructors were given. Each example was supportive of slightly different ways of assessing the

same learning outcome. Combined with the “norming” sessions across sections, this is a good way of combining assessment with different instructors’ styles and teaching preferences.

2. On the assignment instructions (across the different examples) it is unclear how it is graded/assessed and aligned to the GSLO. For example, do the students know that they will be assessed using the rubric, and is the rubric used in conjunction with the assignment grade or separate (several general studies course instructors opt to keep the assessment and grading separated, either way is fine as long as the students are aware of how they are being graded and the purpose of the assessment)? This could be addressed in the syllabi or in class, but was not specifically included in the course review. Therefore it is suggested that the alignment to the rubric could be tightened.
3. General studies courses [are expected](#) to incorporate three of six rubric elements for Self and Cultural Awareness, four of eight rubric elements for Analysis, and all rubric elements are required for Communication rubrics. It was stated that the communication writing rubric was being used; it should be clear that all of the rubric elements are being assessed.

Plan for Consistency

1. It was clearly stated that the course is offered both in class and as a hybrid class and that the department chair has taken the responsibility of examining all of the syllabi to ensure consistency across sections. Future submissions should further describe how that is being accomplished in the event someone else takes over that responsibility. A suggestion for the future is a syllabus template for the required course components that could be used by all faculty teaching this course.
2. The GS Course review rubric specifically indicated a clear plan for consistent assessment implementation over the next three years which was not specifically addressed in this submission.
3. It was pointed out that a norming session will be used in which the instructors will meet to score the common assignment. It is encouraged in future course reviews to describe the process of these norming sessions, the outcomes, and if anything has changed due to the norming process. This in turn may lead to suggestions on rubric updates and assist with other course reviews.
4. Addressing diverse learning styles was explained and examples of how this is met was given, such as recorded lectures and one on one conferences.

Implementation of Program Revision

This is the first submission. Future submissions should clearly show how assessment findings and data have been used in recent course/program revisions and how that ties into the plan for further course improvement.

Syllabi

All syllabi were included. All of the syllabi should include both the LiveText requirement and the GS.SLO for communication. It is also suggested that it is made clear to students how the course objectives align with the GS.SLO and that the course learning objective are consistent across the different sections (noting that how those course objectives are met do not have to be the same across every section/instructor)

[Music 130](#)

General Studies SLO-Self and Cultural Awareness (Fine Art): Upon completion of the General Studies program at WLU, students will reflect objectively on the human condition through investigation, appreciation, and evaluation of the products, perceptions, expressions, and interrelationships of various cultures.

[Rubric](#) scores are based on a 3-point scale.

Rationale for Student Learning Outcome

1. Self and Cultural Awareness: Upon completion of the General Studies program at WLU, students will reflect objectively on the human condition through investigation, appreciation, and evaluation of the products, perceptions, expressions, and interrelationships of various cultures.
2. The specific outcomes of the course from the syllabus were given; however, there needs to be a description of how they align with the GSLO. Conceptually it seems to be there, but it should be made explicit so that students can understand how the course relates to the GSLO.

Appropriateness of Assessment Method

1. The 20th century composer documentary project is being used with the GS self and cultural rubric. On the assignment instructions it is not explained how the assignment will be scored. For example, do the students know that they will be assessed using the rubric, and is the rubric used in conjunction with the assignment grade or separate (several general studies course instructors opt to keep the assessment and grading separated, either way is fine as long as the students are aware of how they are being graded and the purpose of the assessment)?
2. General studies courses [are expected](#) to incorporate three of six rubric elements for Self and Cultural Awareness, four of eight rubric elements for Analysis, and all rubric elements are required for Communication rubrics. Based on the information in the assignment, it is not evident which of the elements in the rubric are being assessed.
3. In the course assessment description it was stated that the assignment is examining “different ways to analyze music ...” On the assignment document, &/or on the syllabus, it is suggested to clearly state the learning outcomes and how they relate to both the course objectives and the general studies objectives, thus tightly aligning the assessment to the learning outcomes.

Plan for Consistency

1. It was clearly stated that there is one instructor for this course, which is offered in class only, with the same assignments throughout. Only one section per semester is offered, and there is only one corresponding syllabus. This was given as evidence for consistency; however there needs to be a plan in the case where a different instructor would teach the course – for example, a syllabus template for the required course components could be used to make sure that it aligns with the course, program, and general studies goals.
2. The GS Course review rubric specifically indicated a clear plan for consistent assessment implementation over the next three years which was not specifically addressed in this submission.
3. Evident in the syllabus are examples of how different learning styles and accessibility issues are addressed.

Implementation of Program Revision

1. The GSAC strongly suggests that in future submissions to include a plan for consistency that does not rely on only having one instructor and one course.
2. This is the first submission, and future submissions should clearly show how assessment findings and data have been used in recent course/program revisions and how that ties into the plan for further course improvement.

Syllabi

All syllabi were included. The syllabi should contain the GSLO Self and Cultural Awareness: Upon completion of the General Studies program at WLU, students will reflect objectively on the human condition through investigation, appreciation, and evaluation of the products, perceptions, expressions, and interrelationships of various cultures. It is also suggested (as

stated in the rationale section) to create a tighter alignment of the GSLO and the course LO for future course assessments.

Social Work 201

General Studies SLO-Self and Cultural Awareness (Perceptions & Culture): Upon completion of the General Studies program at WLU, students will reflect objectively on the human condition through investigation, appreciation, and evaluation of the products, perceptions, expressions, and interrelationships of various cultures.

Rubric scores are based on a 3-point scale.

Rationale for Student Learning Outcome

1. Makes a connection to the course content and stated SLO and gives reference to specifics within the syllabus. WVWLUSLO.
2. Self and Cultural Awareness: Upon completion of the General Studies program at WLU, students will reflect objectively on the human condition through investigation, appreciation, and evaluation of the products, perceptions, expressions, and interrelationships of various cultures. Make sure to include "Self" as part of "Self and Cultural Awareness."
3. It was explained that the course is divided into four sections which address the GSLO above. A good example of how the course is aligned with the GSLO is evident in section 3 "interrelationships among culture..." which directly aligns with the GSLO of reflection on the interrelationship of various cultures. Even though the focus seems to be within America, there is broad interpretation of "culture" and various subcultures within America are specifically addressed in this course.

Appropriateness of Assessment Method

1. The group presentation assignment was identified as the main assessment measure of the alignment between the course learning outcomes and the GSLO. The same rubric with minor alterations to address the group aspect of the assignment is used and consistency across sections was stated. It was not clear what specific alterations were made to the rubric. The GS rubric, as is, should be used for the purposes of general studies assessment. If data from another rubric is plugged into the GS rubric, we are not collecting data with the established GS rubric and will not have consistency across the GS courses. The rubric can be altered, or added to, for the purposes of the assignment grading or assessment for the course.
2. General studies courses are expected to incorporate three of six rubric elements for Self and Cultural Awareness, four of eight rubric elements for Analysis, and all rubric elements are required for Communication rubrics. A group current event meme rubric was attached, and it is not evident how this relates to the Self and Cultural awareness rubric. A group current event meme presentation assignment instruction sheet was also included. On this document, and/or on the syllabus, it is suggested to clearly state the learning outcomes and how they relate to both the course objectives and the general studies objectives, thus tightly aligning the assessment to the learning outcomes. There seems to be prima facie alignment with the assignments and the SLO where the alignment is implied rather than explicit. It might be prudent to include the SLO in the objectives of the assignment that will be assessed. Moreover, there is a concern that if individual performance for the GS is being assessed in relation the SLO, perhaps a group assignment should be avoided unless somehow individuals could be assessed for the purpose of the GSLO.

Plan for Consistency

It was clearly stated that there is one instructor for this course, which is offered in class only, with the same assignments throughout. Therefore, consistency in instructors and coursework is evident, but not sufficient in case a different instructor or multiple sections are offered. Is there a plan in the case where a different instructor would teach the course, for example, a syllabus template for the required course components could be used. The GS Course review rubric specifically indicated a clear plan for consistent assessment implementation over the next three years which was not specifically addressed in this submission. Evident in the syllabus are examples of how different learning styles and accessibility issues are addressed.

Implementation of Program Revision

This is the first submission. Future submissions should clearly show how assessment findings and data have been used in recent course/program revisions and how that ties into the plan for further course improvement.

Syllabi

All syllabi were included and contain the GSLO Self and Cultural Awareness: Upon completion of the General Studies Program at WLU, students will reflect objectively on the human condition through investigation, appreciation, and evaluation of the products, perceptions, expressions, and interrelationships of various cultures. Make sure to include the "Self" in Self and Cultural awareness and have the live text requirement in all syllabi.

Geography 206

General Studies SLO-Self and Cultural Awareness (Perceptions and Culture): Upon completion of the General Studies program at WLU, students will reflect objectively on the human condition through investigation, appreciation, and evaluation of the products, perceptions, expressions, and interrelationships of various cultures.

Rubric scores are based on a 3-point scale.

Rationale for Student Learning Outcome

1. Self and Cultural Awareness: Upon completion of the General Studies program at WLU, students will reflect objectively on the human condition through investigation, appreciation, and evaluation of the products, perceptions, expressions, and interrelationships of various cultures. Submission makes a connection to the course content and stated SLO and gives reference to specifics within the syllabus. WVLUSLO.
2. Suggestion: In the description, make a stronger link to the stated SLO so that the course outcomes are shown to be in alignment with the GSLO. For example "In this course, various cultures across different geographical regions are investigated" thus being consistent with the GSLO terminology and the Course LO terminology. A good example of where this was completed on the syllabus is "-Develop your appreciation for the importance of location, place, spatial relationships, movement and regions in human interactions and the human-environment interface."

Appropriateness of Assessment Method

1. The cultural diffusion project was identified as the main assessment measure of the alignment between the course learning outcomes and the GSLO. The goals stated in the project were

"Goals of this project include encouraging development of research skills, familiarization with presentation of academic material, and practice in communicating research to an "audience"."

2. General studies courses [are expected](#) to incorporate three of six rubric elements for Self and Cultural Awareness, four of eight rubric elements for Analysis, and all rubric elements are required for Communication rubrics. It was clearly stated on the cultural diffusion project that elements 1, 3, and 5 (self and cultural awareness, cultural diversity, and understanding global systems) will be assessed using the general studies rubric.
3. It is suggested that a stronger alignment between the assessment rubric and the assignment be described. For example, in what part of the assignment is the student assessed on the self and cultural awareness.

Plan for Consistency

1. It was clearly stated that there is one instructor for this course, which is offered both in class and online, and that sometimes an additional instructor is used for an online portion of the class. Therefore consistency in instructors is evident. Both instructors have received HOLI training, however, it was not specified when that occurred and if it was required to teach the course, or plans to renew HOLI training in the future. Is there a plan in the case where a different instructor would teach the course – for example, a syllabus template for the required course components could be used.
2. The GS Course review rubric specifically indicated a clear plan for consistent assessment implementation over the next three years which was not specifically addressed in this submission. It is suggested that a plan for consistency in assessment between both instructors and courses online vs in class are addressed in future submissions.

Implementation of Program Revision

This was not specifically addressed in this submission, and this is the first submission for this course. It is suggested that a plan on how assessment findings would be used for future course improvement be developed.

Syllabi

While information regarding general studies is on the syllabus, the specific GSLO for the self and cultural awareness for all syllabi (in class and online) should be included. Consistency with online and in class syllabus should be evident.