

Student Learning Outcomes UWF General Education Curriculum

University College and the Center for University Teaching, Learning, and Assessment facilitated a series of faculty focus groups during the 2016-2017 academic year. Faculty from each distribution area met to discuss learning goals for students in General Education courses they teach and reach consensus about common learning outcomes associated with these courses. Distribution areas that included many departments scheduled multiple meetings to ensure broad representation and inclusion of all points of view. Drafts of the SLOs were posted on a Google site (one for each distribution area). Throughout the process, faculty considered the perspectives of departments in the distribution area that might be absent from that session and discussed the alignment of the UWF SLOs with the language of the SLOs articulated by State task forces for the Common Core courses for General Education.

During the final meeting for each distribution area, faculty discussed the ideas and language for the draft SLOs and decided on the language for the proposed SLOs presented for review by the General Education Committee.

Details of the focus groups and attendance at these meetings appear below. The final page presents the SLOs in a matrix, organized by domain (communication, critical thinking, integrity/values).

Meeting Schedule for Facilitated Focus Groups

Focus groups from each distribution area met throughout the fall and spring terms (2016-2017); a total of 11 meetings occurred, involving 62 faculty attendees (some attended more than one session). Attendance numbers do not include the facilitators (Claudia Stanny, CUTLA, and Denise Kidd, University College).

Distribution Area	Date	Attendance
Composition / Gordon Rule Writing	20 September 2016	13
Composition / Gordon Rule Writing	20 October 2016	6
Mathematics	28 September 2016	4
Natural Sciences	6 October 2016	11
Natural Sciences	31 March 2017	6
Social Sciences	13 February 2017	3
Social Sciences	14 February 2017	5
Social Sciences	30 March 2017	5
Humanities	22 February 2017	4
Humanities	23 February 2017	2
Humanities	24 March 2017	3
	TOTAL	62

Guidelines and Procedures Implementing and Assessing General Education Student Learning Outcomes

Plan for Implementation

Once approved by Faculty Senate (timeline assumes approval in 2017), implementation will take the following steps:

2017-2018 Planning for implementation

- Consultants on campus to assist with the development of assignments (as needed) and associated rubrics and reporting formats.
- Convene faculty within distribution areas to discuss various plans for embedded assessment assignments and identify strategies for combining findings across courses and disciplines. [**Course redesign workshops**]

2018-2019 Implementation

- Course syllabi reflect the new SLOs and describe assignments used as embedded assessments.
- Instructors gather assessment evidence from embedded course assignments (or other graded student work) and report assessment data to ASPIRE.
- Convene faculty within distribution areas to discuss preliminary findings (pilot **“making sense” meetings**), review SLOs and assessment strategies, and make recommendations to improve assessment processes and/or improve student learning on the SLOs. Data discussed and decisions made will be documented in minutes, which will document the use of assessment evidence for improvement of the GE Curriculum.

2019-onward Continuous evaluation of the General Education curriculum

- Faculty in each distribution area will meet at least once a year to review aggregated findings on their SLOs and discuss effective teaching and learning strategies to promote student achievement on these outcomes. Faculty within a distribution area will discuss strengths and weaknesses observed in student performance reflected in assessment findings for each SLO.
- The annual review might entail revisiting and/or revising the language or intent of the SLOs currently articulated for a distribution area. A legitimate use of assessment evidence might produce a recommendation to refine the language of the SLO or to replace an SLO with a new learning outcome that better represents the goal and intention of the distribution area.
- Requests to revise or change an SLO for a distribution area must be approved by the General Education Committee and Faculty Senate.
- SLOs within a distribution area can be altered without modifying SLOs for other distribution areas. This process will enable the GE curriculum to evolve over time and maintain currency and consistency with the missions and goals of disciplines within a distribution area.

General Education Assessment and Curriculum Review: Embedded Assessment Assignments, Assessment Reporting Expectations, Assessment Plan, Processes and Procedures for Revising SLOs and Reviewing Courses in General Education

Expectations for Course Assignments

The assessment plan for General Education depends on embedded assessments. Course assignments that all students complete as part of course requirements provide data relevant to the learning outcomes for General Education.

Each instructor is expected to include at least one assignment that provides students with opportunities to demonstrate skills and provide assessment evidence for each of the SLO(s) identified for the distribution area the course serves. For example, separate measures for two or more learning outcomes may be generated through scores students earn on different elements of a rubric used to evaluate the assignment.

Assessment Reporting Expectations

Assessment reports for ASPIRE are now available at all times. Instructors can report data gathered from their students at the end of the term when the course was offered. Departments might want to gather data for courses offered in their discipline for their own internal assessment purposes. For example, if a course is offered online and in face-to-face formats, departments should compare student performance in the two modes of delivery to determine if the quality of learning is equivalent in both formats.

Data will be aggregated across disciplines to evaluate the quality of learning regardless of which courses students complete. The Director of General Education is responsible for gathering the assessment evidence reported to ASPIRE and aggregating findings across courses.

Assessment Plan for General Education

Coherence of the General Education Curriculum. The structure of learning outcomes proposed for GE ensures coherence in the GE curriculum. Each learning outcome is aligned with specific distribution areas in the curriculum. Every course within a distribution area is required to include learning activities and an embedded assessment (a course assignment, problem set(s), exam questions, or other direct measures of student performance) that aligns with the designated learning outcome(s). Regardless of which two courses a student selects to meet a distribution requirement for GE, the student will encounter learning activities and assessments related to the SLOs identified for that distribution area. Thus, the new GE SLO structure ensures that all UWF students will experience two courses in GE that support learning and assess student performance on every GE SLO. The SLOs also align with the skills domains (communication, critical thinking, and integrity/values) used for Academic Learning Compacts, illustrating how courses in General Education introduce skills students will develop further in coursework required for their academic major.

Assessment Procedures. The assessment model proposed for GE creates structures and processes that will allow the curriculum (including specific SLOs) to evolve over time, based on evidence from assessment data. The annual “making sense” meetings for faculty who teach courses within

a distribution area will entail the review of assessment findings from the current year and identify strengths and weaknesses observed in student learning reflected in the embedded assessments. The goal for these discussions is to engage faculty in a meaningful conversation about effective practices for promoting student learning on the shared learning outcomes of the distribution area. The discussions will be informed by aggregated assessment evidence but will focus on effective strategies for teaching and learning. Outcomes of the discussions may include any of the following:

- Suggestions for *learning activities* instructors might adopt that have been effective in promoting learning on a shared SLO.
- Suggestions for *common rubrics* or other *approaches for aggregating findings* across multiple courses (emphasizing the impact of the collection of courses in the distribution area on student learning instead of the impact of a single course).
- *Discussions of assignments, projects, and other student work* that provide meaningful evidence about student learning on a shared SLO.
- Suggestions to *revise language in the SLOs* or to *replace an existing SLO* with a new outcome that better reflects the shared values and goals of the courses that define the distribution area.

Revision of Courses Included in a Distribution Area

General Education Committees at many institutions have a review process to determine whether a given course should be included as an option in a distribution area of General Education. The General Education Committee at UWF will perform an initial review of all courses in the first year (2018-2019) followed by a staggered review of one-third of the GE courses every year ensuring all courses are reviewed throughout a three-year cycle.

Criteria include the following:

- The course identifies the SLO(s) for the distribution area as course SLO(s) and describes these on the syllabus.
- The course syllabus describes required, graded, student work that can function as an embedded assessment for the SLO(s).
- The course instructor provides a summary of assessment evidence for the SLO(s) to the assessment office.
- Course instructors participate in discussions of the assessment data within the distribution area (the “making sense” meetings).

General Education Learning Outcomes

Approved by the General Education Committee (14 April 2017)

Approved by Faculty Senate (13 October 2017)

Communication	
<i>Comp I and some Non-Composition Gordon Rule Writing*</i>	Compose and revise a researched academic paper that adheres to discipline-specific conventions. (Rubric Elements: Gather information from credible sources, use appropriate editorial style for an audience, formulate a coherent argument, and maintain academic integrity.)
<i>Comp II and some Non-Composition Gordon Rule Writing*</i>	Produce (through revision) effective written communications that support author intent and address a specific audience. Notes: Audience includes readers in a specific discipline as well as a specific community. Author intent might be to write about writing. Analyzing information critically is part of the revision process.
Critical Thinking	
<i>Mathematics</i>	Apply mathematical principles to determine a strategy for solving a problem.
<i>Mathematics</i>	Execute appropriate mathematical techniques for solving a problem and interpret results of a solution.
<i>Humanities</i>	Interpret and analyze tools and techniques of communication within cultural forms or cultural contexts. Explanatory note: <i>Forms</i> refers to media used for communication (art, music, theatre, dance, language, etc.). <i>Contexts</i> refers to time, place, or people involved in the cultural communication.
<i>Social Sciences</i>	Solve problems using social science methods.
<i>Natural Sciences</i>	Evaluate scientific information using appropriate tools and strategies of the discipline.
Integrity / Values	
<i>Humanities</i>	Identify the intrinsic value of culture and cultural artifacts.
<i>Social Sciences</i>	Reason ethically in an appropriate disciplinary context.

* Non-Composition Gordon Rule Writing courses must select one of the communication SLOs for their contribution to the assessment of writing.