

The University of West Florida  
General Education Curriculum  
2017-2018 Summary Report

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**General Education Committee Members**

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Dr. Karen Barnes

Dr. Daniel Durkin

Ms. Pamela Meyers

Dr. Nicholas Mohlmann

Ms. Jasara Norton

Dr. Jacob Shively

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## Executive Summary

This assessment report details an analysis of the General Education curriculum, reporting cycle, and assessment data for the 2017-2018 academic year. Since multiple changes to General Education have taken place in the past year--including a divisional change from University College to the College of Arts, Social Sciences, and Humanities as well as the approval of new student learning outcomes--this report will provide details useful for comparison in next year's report and helpful for identifying strengths, weaknesses, and areas for improvement. This report has been reviewed by the General Education Committee who have made appropriate recommendations for change and improvement.

Summary of current strengths of the program: High assessment report response rate; high assessment scores in online courses; new student learning outcomes matrix ensures all skills are assessed

Summary of current weaknesses of the program: Qualtrics form not ideal method for reporting; lack of detailed guidelines for submitting assessment reports; assessment cycle calendar does not support faculty dialog (i.e. reporting often occurs during summer semester); assessment reporting is inconsistent across modalities; assessment reports often focus too heavily on process rather than use of results

Summary of recommendations and proposed action plans: Review and revise General Education mission, vision and values; clarify the roles and organizational structure of General Education; implement changes to the General Education Committee charter; implement new General Education SLOs with faculty input and support; implement and streamline assessment practice and reporting, including but not limited to the utilization of a new reporting method via Excel and an adjusted assessment cycle; clarify the process for course inclusion in General Education; implement or update professional development for faculty with a specific focus on General Education courses; increase involvement of full-time faculty in General Education instruction; maintain and further develop relationships with programs, services, and advisors associated with General Education; and explore ways to incorporate General Education courses with University-wide initiatives



## **Program Vision, Mission and Values**

(General Education Assessment and Reform Committee, February 24, 2011)

### **Vision**

The General Education Program at the University of West Florida will provide a coherent program of study that promotes the development of a broadly educated person.

### **Mission**

The University of West Florida General Education Program will provide students with a cohesive and broad knowledge and appreciation of the arts and sciences, an understanding of the connections between knowledge of different kinds and how such knowledge is attained, and the basic knowledge and skills they need to succeed in their university studies.

### **Values**

- Caring – A safe and dynamic learning environment that encourages the development of individual potential.
- Integrity – Doing the right thing for the right reason.
- Quality – Dedication to uncompromising excellence.
- Innovation – Dedication to exploring and expanding the boundaries of knowledge.
- Teamwork - Working together to achieve shared goals.
- Stewardship- Managing and protecting our resources.
- Courage – Different by design.
- Global perspective – Viewing events and issues across diverse political, ethnic, and geographic points of view.
- Inquiry – Seeking knowledge and understanding through an interdisciplinary perspective.

### **Alignment of College, University, and SUS Vision, Mission, and Values**

Due to the introduction of new Student Learning Outcomes and a revised domains matrix for the 2018-2019 academic year, the General Education Vision, Mission, and Values will need to be revisited. Although administratively housed in the College of Arts, Social Sciences, and Humanities, the General Education curriculum is a university-wide function containing courses from all five colleges. Therefore, the revision to vision, mission, and values must represent a joint effort across the colleges to ensure the curriculum maintains a strong connection with all stakeholders, including each College, the University, and the State University System (SUS).

### General Education Course Enrollments, 2015\*-2018

\*New General Education Curriculum began in 2015

(Tableau, 2018)

Table 1

#### *Headcount in All General Education Courses by Academic Year*

Academic Year	Total Headcount	Difference	% Difference
2015-2016	24,618	--	--
2016-2017	23,631	-987	-4.01%
2017-2018	23,034	-597	-2.53%

Table 2

#### *Total Headcount of FTIC Cohorts*

Cohort Year	Total FTIC Headcount	Difference	% Difference
2015	1,356	--	--
2016	1,301	-55	-4.05%
2017	1,094	-207	-15.9%

Table 3

#### *Total Section Offerings of Online General Education Courses by Academic Year*

Academic Year	Total Offerings	Difference	% Difference
2015-2016	139	--	--
2016-2017	144	5	+3.6%
2017-2018	147	3	+2.08%

#### **Areas of Note**

(K. Condon, personal communication, September 13, 2018)

The large enrollment dip between 2016 and 2017 is indicative of the increase in number of students entering with accelerated methods credit (i.e. AP, IB, and dual enrollment) as well as increased admission standards. These increased enrollment standards have had a positive effect on retention rates but may also affect the number of online courses that we should be offering.

**Dual enrollment.** An increased percentage of admitted students enter with some dual enrollment credits.

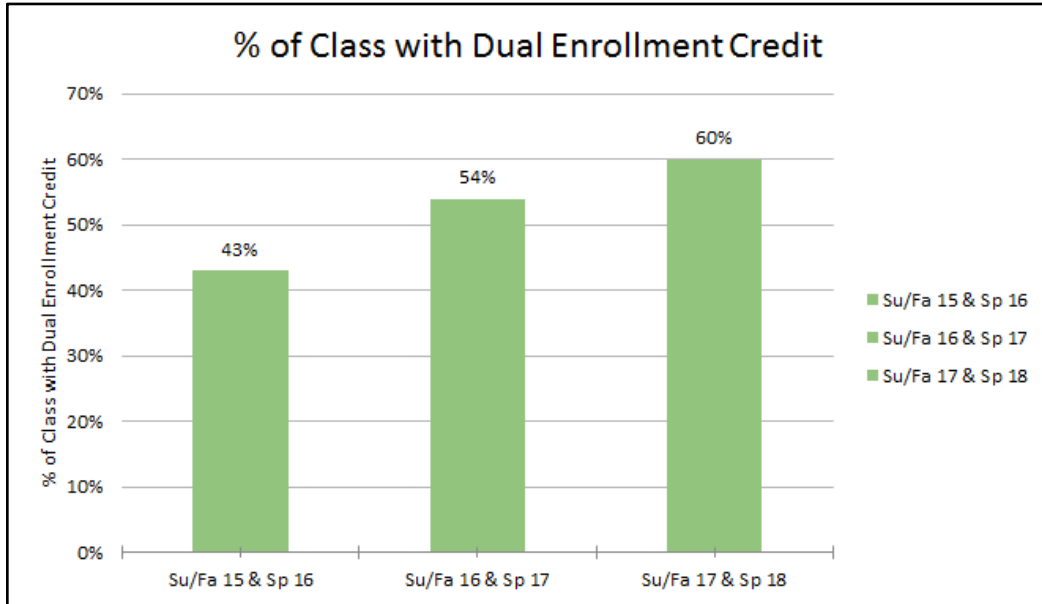


Figure 1. Percentage of Admitted Students With Dual Enrollment Credit

The percentage of First Time in College students who are entering with dual enrollment credits in the 30-59 hours and 60-89 hours range has overall increased over the past three years, while the percentage of students with fewer than 30 hours, who constitute the population for most of our General Education classes, has been steadily decreasing.

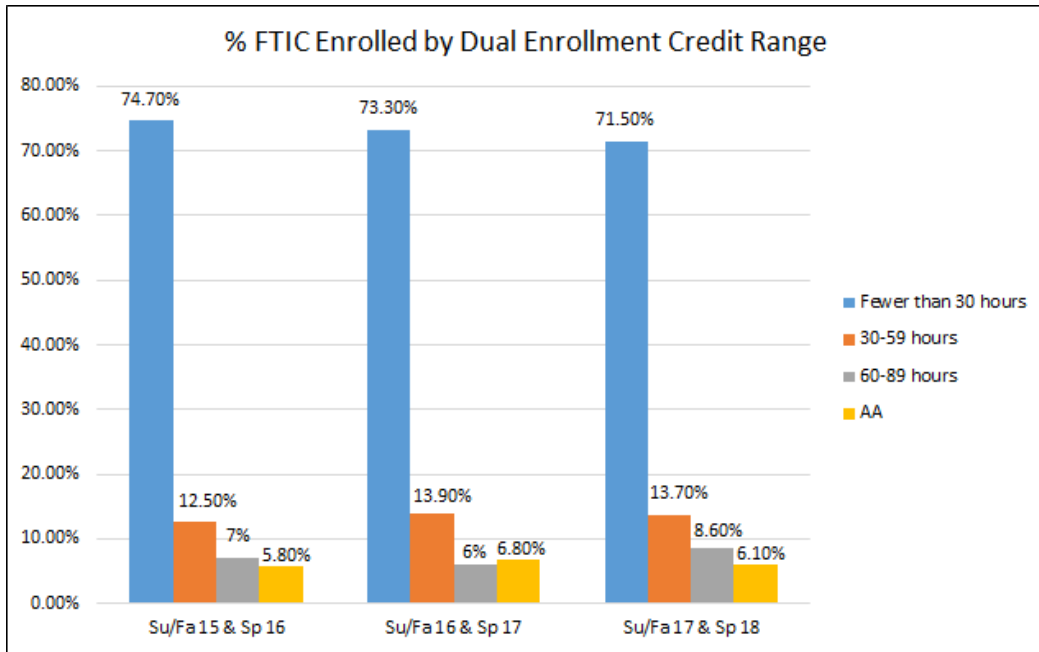


Figure 2. Percentage of FTIC Students Who Enter With Dual Enrollment Credit

**Increased admission standards.** In an effort to improve institutional retention rates, the UWF Office of Admissions examined first-year retention rates and found that the bottom 250 students had retention rates in the 60% range. Therefore, they used the GPAs and test scores (along with the dates of acceptance) for those with retention rates above 75% to develop minimums for fall acceptance.

- Admissions considers GPA and test scores on a sliding scale, students with a 2.5 to 2.9 GPA and a 21 ACT or below were not admitted for Fall 2017 and instead offered admission either to the GRIT Summer Bridge Program or for Spring 2018.
- Applicants with GPA below 2.5 were denied regardless of ACT/SAT scores.

For the Fall 2017 semester, UWF admitted 250 fewer freshmen students than it had in 2016, but these freshmen students had stronger academic profiles

- 2016 Fall Cohort
  - Average HS GPA = 3.54
  - Average ACT = 24
  - Average SAT = 1100
- 2017 Fall Cohort
  - Average HS GPA = 3.87
  - Average ACT = 25
  - Average SAT = 1180

**Improved retention rates.** This enrollment dip led to a decline in General Education headcount and FTIC cohorts. Although enrollments declined, UWF's retention rate improved (% of FTIC students who returned for fall semester of sophomore year with a 2.0 GPA or higher).

- 2016-2017 = 64.3%
- 2017-2018 = 70.1%
- 2018-2019 = 73.5%

**Online course offerings.** We have seen a slight increase in the number of online General Education course offerings and we may want to explore if this increase is due to student interest, faculty interest, other factors, or some combination of factors.

In addition, due to the increasing popularity of online learning, departments teaching General Education courses should consider offering even more sections online to meet the demand of students outside of our traditional recruiting area and recoup lost enrollments.

**General Education Course Section Counts by Faculty Type**  
**Regular versus Contingent Faculty**  
(FACS Faculty Nautical Roster, September 20, 2018)

Since General Education is a major component of each student's undergraduate degree program, it is important UWF monitors the proportion of regular and contingent faculty teaching General Education courses. The SACSCOC Principles of Accreditation (6.2.b) advise that all institutions employ a sufficient number of full-time faculty to ensure curriculum and program quality, integrity, and review.

During the 2017-2018 academic year, regular faculty--including full-time instructors and lecturers--taught the majority of General Education course sections in each of the three terms.

Table 4

*Breakdown of Regular Versus Adjunct Faculty for General Education Classes*

Faculty Type	Fall 2017	Spring 2018	Summer 2018
Regular	148 (58.5%)	135 (60%)	59 (65.5%)
Adjunct	105 (41.5%)	90 (40%)	31 (34.5%)
Total Sections	253	225	90

Still, the percentage of contingent faculty remains high and will be reviewed regularly by the General Education Committee. While adjunct faculty at UWF provide a high quality of teaching, regular full-time faculty are better positioned to be more engaged with both students and the department year-to-year, to participate more consistently in assessment discussions, and to be more involved in overseeing curricular components such as content, pedagogy, and discipline currency.

**2017-2018 Assessment Procedure**

At the beginning of the 2017-2018 academic year, the Division of Academic Engagement oversaw the General Education curriculum and provided support through a coordinator position. In January 2018, oversight moved to the Division of Academic Affairs' College of Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities under the leadership of a Director for General Education with further support from a Faculty Fellow for General Education. Since the transfer occurred mid-year, and new student learning outcomes will be effective for the 2018-2019 academic year, leadership decided not to make changes to assessment procedures and continued the established method as described below.

The 2017-2018 academic year was the final year faculty utilized the Domains Matrix as developed in 2007 (Appendix A) and revised in 2016 (Appendix B). Departmental assessment procedures began with course preparation, the selection of SLOs, and the creation of embedded assessments. Faculty included at least two SLOs: one from the domain assigned to their discipline group and one of the department's choosing.

Discipline Area	Assigned Domain
Communication	Communication
Humanities	Communication
Social Sciences	Values/Integrity
Mathematics	Critical Thinking
Natural Sciences	Critical Thinking

Outcomes reflected those skills deemed important for the discipline within the context of the Domains Matrix. Gordon Rule and Multicultural courses assessed assigned skills:

- Gordon Rule Mathematics courses assessed Quantitative Reasoning
- Gordon Rule Writing courses assessed Writing
- Multicultural courses assessed Diversity Skills

According to the "Progress to Degree Policy," faculty must include a statement in their syllabus identifying their course as General Education and indicating the SLOs. All sections of the same course were expected to include the same SLO and assessment method, regardless of presentation format (online or face-to-face).

Faculty assessed their students directly through an assignment (pre- or post-test, midterm, final, research paper, etc.) to gauge their attainment of a specific student learning outcome. Direct assessments were required while indirect assessments were optional. Indirect assessments often include surveys administered to single classes, graduates, or students completing a program.

In the past, faculty have been expected to set achievement targets and benchmarks to determine how many of their students were meeting General Education SLOs. In recent years, due to the absence of a Dean or Director of General Education, this practice was not enforced and therefore fell out of use for many faculty. While they always maintained the option to report on

achievement targets and benchmarks, during the last three years, faculty were not required to report on these items. In order to reinstate this practice and ensure we gather both qualitative and quantitative data, faculty were informed during the 2017-2018 assessment process that these benchmarks would again be required for the 2018-2019 General Education assessment reports.

Faculty who set achievement targets for each SLO in 2017-2018 usually expressed these targets in terms of “does not meet,” “meets,” or (optionally) “exceeds expectations.” Then, they set a course benchmark level (expressed as a percentage of meeting and exceeding) that reflected what percentage outcome their department considered acceptable for each SLO. The General Education Committee (GEC) has set a target benchmark that 70% of students should meet or exceed each SLO assessed for a course. Departments choosing an outcome level of less than 70% must submit justification to the GEC. Since General Education is under new leadership and new SLOs were introduced in 2018-2019, the GEC will revisit the benchmark policy and determine if it should be retained, modified, or removed.

Faculty then performed their assessment during the Fall 2017 and/or Spring 2018 semesters. Assessment data was disaggregated across modalities (e.g. face-to-face, online, both face-to-face and online, and study abroad) measuring the same learning outcomes with the same target benchmarks. Courses offered only during the summer semester were assessed and reported on during the following assessment cycle. Assessment was and will be optional for summer courses also offered during the fall or spring semester.

After the conclusion of the semester during which assessment took place, faculty shared their results in a departmental meeting. The focus of these meetings has been on continuous improvement of not only student learning but also assessment procedures. Department chairs and/or faculty then reported assessment results using the Summary Report on General Education Assessment in Qualtrics developed by Institutional Effectiveness. One report was required for each SLO assessed in each modality. However, there was some confusion regarding this requirement and multiple departments did not disaggregate face-to-face and online results. The deadline for these reports was July 31, 2018. Of the 79 General Education courses requiring reporting this year, 78 were submitted for a 98.7% compliance rate. The Director of General Education and Institutional Effectiveness monitored submissions and contacted departments as needed in an effort to reach 100% compliance.

### **2017-2018 General Education Assessment Report Results**

Twenty-four departments were required to submit a General Education Assessment Report. A total of 208 reports were submitted.

- How many departments submitted complete and separate reports for each SLO and modality?
  - 13 out of 24 (54%)

- How many departments submitted incomplete reports (some reports missing an SLO or modality)?
  - 10 out of 24 (42%)
- Who combined modalities (face-to-face, online, study abroad) in their reports?
  - 6 out of 24 (25%) departments combined some or all of their reports across SLOs and/or modalities
- How many departments submitted no reports?
  - 1 out of 24 (4%)
- How many reports included the number of students assessed?
  - 104 out of 208 (50%)
- How many reports included the number of students who met the benchmark?
  - 136 out of 208 (65%)
  - Note: Some reports included the number of students who met the benchmark without providing the total number assessed. General Education Assessment reports for the 2018-2019 cycle must include number of students assessed as well as achievement targets and benchmarks.
- Overall percentage of students who met expectations for each skill?
  - Only half of the departments reported benchmark data. This information was not required for the 2017-2018 assessment cycle and is not reflective of overall student performance. However, benchmark data will be required for the 2018-2019 cycle and forward.
  - Of those who submitted:
    - Academic Integrity  $383/461 = 83\%$
    - Analysis/Evaluation  $868/1091 = 80\%$
    - Creativity \*no data
    - Diversity Skills  $69/77 = 90\%$
    - Ethical Reasoning  $283/348 = 81\%$
    - Information Literacy  $431/543 = 79\%$
    - Personal/Cultural Values  $152/191 = 80\%$
    - Problem Solving  $2700/3740 = 72\%$
    - Quantitative Reasoning  $2162/3012 = 72\%$
    - Self-Regulation  $299/328 = 91\%$
    - Speaking \*no reports
    - Teamwork \*no data
    - Tech/Visual Literacy  $43/50 = 86\%$
    - Writing  $335/446 = 75\%$

### **Summary of Strengths, Weaknesses, and Goals From Current Assessment Process**

This analysis looked at the narrative provided on three required areas of the assessment report:

1. Summary of Assessment Findings



2. Use of Results to Improve Student Learning
3. Use of data to improve assessment practice

### Strengths of Current Assessment Reporting Practices

Summary of Assessment Findings	Use of Results to Improve Student Learning	Use of data to improve assessment practice
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Naming and defining the benchmark students should reach</li> <li>● Naming specific assessment (multiple choice test, exam, etc.)</li> <li>● Naming % who met/did not meet benchmark</li> <li>● Naming % who met/did not meet benchmark and why</li> <li>● Noting differences between unique populations (daytime versus evening classes)</li> <li>● Discussion of how results specifically compare to results from previous years and why</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Naming specific inconsistencies (students did well on X, but that does not display in other tests/papers)</li> <li>● Naming specific areas where students were particularly weak (or strong) and why that area was important</li> <li>● Explaining rationale for specific goals or changes (implement faculty training to address X; change this pedagogical technology to address Y).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Naming specific methods (test piloting new course/new method)</li> <li>● If changes were suggested, brief explanation as to why changes were made</li> <li>● Brief explanation as to relationship between assessment tool changes and measuring student learning</li> <li>● Specific details explaining how changes from last year affected this year's cycle</li> </ul>

### Overall

- All but one department submitted something, and most departments submitted for each SLO and each modality even if the results were in combined reports.
- Some areas--such as Mathematics and English--reported higher assessment scores for online students. If the data from next year's report shows similar results happening across other disciplines, it may be worthy to investigate this new trend.
- A few areas elected to assess an additional SLO (Writing or Self-Regulation) in order to better track student performance in these areas.
- A few departments show strong assessment practices and perhaps could be consulted to share their wisdom with others, e.g., English, Mathematics & Statistics, Administration & Law, and Psychology

- The possibility of “orphaned” skills--such as Speaking--will be eliminated in the new matrix as each of the three domains will be assessed at least twice as students progress through the General Education curriculum.

### Weaknesses of Current Assessment Reporting Practices

Summary of Assessment Findings	Use of Results to Improve Student Learning	Use of data to improve assessment practice
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Speaking in generalities - “This method worked well” without naming the method or “Assessment results were good,” but no figures were provided</li> <li>• Description of an assignment without explaining how it was assessed</li> <li>• % of students who met/did not meet benchmark was included, but total number of students assessed was not</li> <li>• Description of results, but no benchmarks provided (most students scored 30 points, but what was the goal?)</li> <li>• Method listed, but no results, or results listed, but no method</li> <li>• Unclear connection between SLO and assessment method</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of actionable Use of Results</li> <li>• Lack of explanation or vague explanation for why changes will be made</li> <li>• Lack of or vague explanation of the results (“Many students” or “Overall, students”)</li> <li>• Asking readers to contact outside agencies (the department) for more information</li> <li>• Not speaking to student learning specifically - talking about personnel or classroom management issues</li> <li>• Not reporting on any findings for various reasons (waiting until next year; course not being taught; faculty leaving / not available)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nothing stated</li> <li>• Lack of specific details regarding faculty meetings /discussions and decisions regarding assessment practice</li> <li>• Lack of focus on assessment results or assessment practice</li> <li>• Referencing other reports</li> <li>• Not following GEC recommendation s of defining meeting benchmark as 70% or higher</li> </ul>

### Overall

- The Qualtrics form does not lend itself well to requiring unique responses for each course and modality. For that reason, many departments are copying and pasting responses across courses. We would prefer to see departments disaggregating their results so we can determine how students are performing on individual SLOs and whether or not changes to the curriculum (program and/or GE) are necessary.

- Several departments reported (41 of 208 reports) they would reassess after the new GE SLOs were in place rather than discussing how to improve student learning.
- Guidelines on how to submit Qualtrics forms are needed. Based on the 2017-2018 submissions, there is confusion regarding how many forms are required per SLO and per modality as well as the definition of hybrid courses.
- Many departments are waiting until the fall semester to discuss results and implement changes. Oftentimes, this conversation occurs after the fall semester has begun and may not leave time to implement changes until the spring semester.
  - We will encourage departments to assess in the fall then discuss and report in the spring.
- Assessment is not always consistent with the department in study abroad offerings. We need to ensure study abroad faculty are consulting with the department owning the course prefix to align General Education assessment practices.

### **Student Learning Outcome and Assessment Procedure Updates for 2018-2019**

(ALC/ALP policy review group, 2016)

From 2007 to 2016, the University's Domains Matrix, or Academic Foundations Domains, included Critical Thinking, Communication, Values/Integrity, and Project Management. In October 2016, the ALC/ALP Policy Review Group voted to delete Project Management as a domain while giving departments the right to include it as an optional domain, if desired. While the group had concerns about how this change would alter the General Education SLOs, they ultimately decided that changes to the ALC/ALP policy need not constrain the structure of the General Education curriculum. However, with the elimination of Project Management, it was an appropriate time for faculty to review the General Education SLOs to determine if further changes were necessary.

Additional contributing factors to curriculum revision include a history of "orphaned" skills as well as uneven assessment reporting. As outlined in the "2011 General Education Curriculum Program Review Self-Study," not a single assessment report came in for Diversity Skills or Project Skills for the 2006-2007, 2007-2008, or 2008-2009 academic years (ALC/ALP Policy Review Group, 2016, p. 4). More recently, fewer than 10 courses assessed Personal/Cultural Values, Ethical Reasoning, Tech/Visual Literacy, and Creativity, and not a single course assessed Speaking during the 2017-2018 academic year. In order to ensure each student completing the General Education curriculum is exposed to and assessed on each competency, the matrix needed to be revised to eliminate the possibility of orphaned domains.

Inconsistent reporting and use of assessment data has remained a problem since the 2011 Self-Study. The Self-Study outlined the results of a 2010 study in which the Center for University Teaching, Learning, and Assessment (CUTLA) examined the reporting and use of assessment

data for the 2009-2010 academic year. The report indicated that while 17 of 18 departments reported data, only 14 of 17 admitted to using the data for course improvement. Although we do not have information regarding the use of data for the past three years, we do know that the majority of departments have reported at least partial assessment data for General Education courses: 23 of 23 departments in 2015-2016; 21 of 23 departments in 2016-2017; and 23 of 24 departments in 2017-2018.

University College and CUTLA 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. A total of 62 faculty members attended 11 focus group meetings between September 2016 and March 2017. Since some distribution areas met more than once, some faculty members attended more than one session. At the conclusion of the focus group meetings, Dr. Claudia Stanny posted the final learning outcomes on each distribution area's Google site and provided a brief comment period for faculty.

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 are included in Appendix C.

All faculty received invitations to participate in the focus groups, but attendance was low at multiple sessions. After learning outcome focus groups completed their work, a comment period of less than a week occurred before the SLOs were presented to the General Education Committee. In the case of Social Sciences, the proposed SLOs were posted on March 31, and feedback was required by April 5. Faculty have shared they felt left out of the conversation and inquired about revision even before implementation. For this reason, we plan to explore ways not only to encourage faculty participation in workshops and trainings but also to create a survey regarding faculty perceptions of teaching in General Education, including feedback on the new SLOs.

During the 2018-2019 year, the Director of General Education--in collaboration with the Faculty Fellow for General Education, CUTLA, and Institutional Effectiveness--will work with General Education departments and faculty to highlight the importance of departmental discussion of

assessment results and how to use those results to enact improvements to student learning. On September 14, 2018, CUTLA and Institutional Effectiveness will host a workshop entitled, “Making Assessment Work: How to Make Assessment Work for You Instead of You Working for Assessment.” The focus of the workshop will be on creating a culture of assessment and providing tools and best practices for assessment planning and reporting. Further, the Director of and Faculty Fellow for General Education will work with departmental representatives at the 2018 Peer Review to discuss their current assessment practices for General Education courses and make recommendations as appropriate. Other areas of opportunity include expanding guidelines for assessment practices and reporting on the General Education website; holding open drop-in hours to assist faculty in assessment procedures; and bringing assessment experts to campus to work with faculty on best practices.

**Guidelines and Procedures**  
**Implementing and Assessing General Education Student Learning Outcomes**  
 (Stanny, 2018)

**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 Institutional Effectiveness.
- 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 Institutional Effectiveness 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 Institutional Effectiveness 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	
Comp I and some Non-Composition Gordon Rule Writing*	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.)
Comp II and some Non-Composition Gordon Rule Writing*	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	
Mathematics	Apply mathematical principles to determine a strategy for solving a problem.
Mathematics	Execute appropriate mathematical techniques for solving a problem and interpret results of a solution.
Humanities	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.
Social Sciences	Solve problems using social science methods.
Natural Sciences	Evaluate scientific information using appropriate tools and strategies of the discipline.
Integrity / Values	
Humanities	Identify the intrinsic value of culture and cultural artifacts.
Social Sciences	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.

## **Goals and Objectives**

We see four areas to focus on in the upcoming years: Organization, Assessment, Faculty Development, and Outreach

### **Organization**

Goal 1 - Review mission, vision, and values

Actions:

1. Revise mission, vision, and values as necessary to ensure alignment with those of each College, the University, and the SUS

Goal 2 - Clarify the roles and organizational structure of General Education

Actions:

1. Clarify the roles and responsibilities for the Director of General Education, Faculty Fellow, and Graduate Assistant
2. Clarify the roles CUTLA, General Education Committee, and Institutional Effectiveness play in General Education (draft included in Appendix D)

Goal 3 - Implement Changes to General Education Committee charter

Actions:

1. Review specific responsibilities of General Education Committee and Committee Chair
2. Review methods for ensuring committee recommendations are implemented

### **Assessment**

Goal 1 - Implement new General Education SLOs with faculty input and support

Actions:

1. Ensure that the syllabi for all General Education courses include the new (implemented in Fall 2018) SLOs
2. Create a feedback form for faculty input and suggestions regarding new SLOs, including suggestions for rewording SLOs
3. Review faculty feedback and implement modified SLOs if needed following protocol noted in section "Student Learning Outcome and Assessment Procedure Updates for 2018-2019"

Goal 2 - Implement and streamline assessment practice and reporting

Actions:

1. Pilot new assessment method while allowing optional submission through Qualtrics
2. Clarify expectations for scope of assessment work
3. Clarify expectations for assessment review cycles
4. Create best practices procedures to follow for documentation
5. Review feedback from faculty regarding new assessment method and make modifications as necessary
6. Review process for including indirect assessment measures

7. Move to requiring all General Education assessment to be submitted using updated form

## **Faculty Development**

Goal 1 - Clarify the Process for Course Inclusion in General Education

Actions:

1. Review the CCR process to determine if syllabus should be required for courses requesting Gordon Rule, General Education, and/or Multicultural attribute
2. Improve communication with Chairs and advisors
  - a. Ensure Chairs know what information must be included for a course to meet attributes for Gordon Rule, General Education, and/or Multicultural attribute
  - b. Communicate to advisors requirements for General Education courses so they can better evaluate advisees' academic history and identify courses eligible to appeal for inclusion

Goal 2 - Implement or update professional development for faculty with a specific focus on General Education courses

Actions:

1. Create a survey regarding faculty perceptions of teaching in General Education, including observations of teaching online versus face-to-face
2. Assess current teaching practices in General Education to determine what type of additional training may be most beneficial
3. Explore ways to encourage faculty participation in workshops / training
4. Create dialog opportunities that explore the relationship between major courses and those in General Education
5. Create dialog opportunities among faculty in each distribution area and across distribution areas (e.g., making-sense meetings)

Goal 3 - Increase involvement of full-time faculty in General Education instruction

Actions:

1. Share 2017-2018 findings and initiate conversations with Chairs, Deans, and the Provost as appropriate
2. Review SACSCOC guidance (6.2.b) regarding the adequate number of full-time faculty members teaching in General Education
3. Determine the possibility of a threshold for percentage of full-time faculty teaching General Education courses

## **Outreach**

Goal 1 - Maintain and further develop relationships with programs, services, and advisors associated with General Education

Actions:

1. Reach out to programs and services associated with General Education to develop and maintain relationships that support the mission and goals of all involved parties
2. Ensure all advisors are aware of General Education requirements that should be

shared and conveyed to students

Goal 2 - Explore ways to incorporate General Education courses with University-wide initiatives

Actions:

1. Maintain an open dialog with departments and programs across campus to determine what role General Education can play with University initiatives (for example, HIPs).

## Appendix A

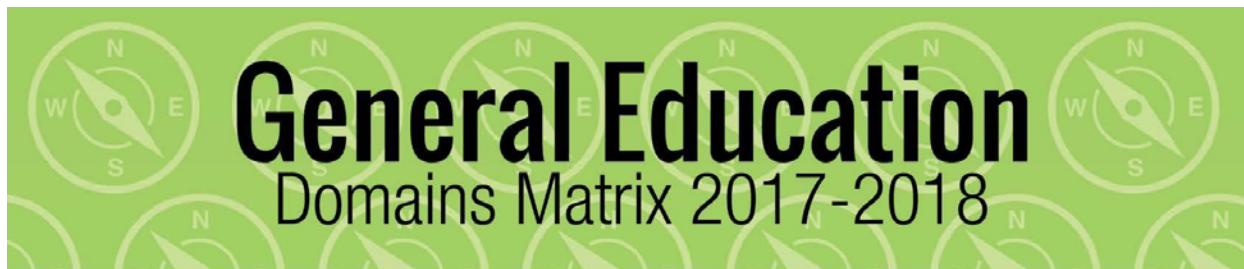
### Academic Foundations Domains

<b>CRITICAL THINKING</b>	<b>COMMUNICATION</b>	<b>VALUES/ INTEGRITY</b>	<b>PROJECT MANAGEMENT</b>
<b>Analysis/Evaluation</b>  <b>Exhibit discipline-based higher order thinking skills</b>	<b>Writing</b>  <b>Communicate effectively and persuasively in multiple writing modes</b>	<b>Academic Integrity</b>  <b>Practice appropriate standards related to respect for intellectual property</b>	<b>Project Skills</b>  <b>Apply discipline-based knowledge to design a problem solving strategy</b>
<b>Problem Solving</b>  <b>Solve discipline-based problems using conventional strategies</b>	<b>Speaking</b>  <b>Communicate effectively and persuasively in multiple speaking modes</b>	<b>Personal/Cultural Values</b>  <b>Articulate one's own values and describe how they influence personal decisions</b>	<b>Self-Regulation (deadline skills)</b>  <b>Exhibit disciplined work habits as an individual</b>
<b>Creativity</b>  <b>Produce novel approaches in disciplinary contexts</b>	<b>Quantitative Reasoning</b>  <b>Use mathematics to assist in solving problems</b>	<b>Ethical Reasoning</b>  <b>Develop and maintain defensible ethical positions in moral challenges</b>	<b>Team Work Skills</b>  <b>Exhibit effective collaboration skills</b>
<b>Info Literacy</b>  <b>Select credible evidence to support arguments</b>	<b>Tech/Visual Literacy</b>  <b>Use technology effectively for a variety of purposes</b>	<b>Diversity Skills</b>  <b>Interact effectively with individuals who do not share your heritage</b>	<b>Service Learning/ Civic Engagement</b>  <b>Make a difference in a concern related to the broader context</b>

Academic Foundations Domains - General Studies Curriculum, University of West Florida (Halonen, Westcott, & Stanny, 2007)

Appendix B

General Education Domains Matrix 2017-2018



# General Education

## Domains Matrix 2017-2018

Communication	Critical Thinking	Values/Integrity
<p><b>Writing</b></p> <p>Communicate effectively and persuasively in multiple writing modes</p>	<p><b>Analysis/Evaluation</b></p> <p>Exhibit discipline-based higher order thinking skills</p>	<p><b>Academic Integrity</b></p> <p>Practice appropriate standards related to respect for intellectual property</p>
<p><b>Speaking</b></p> <p>Communicate effectively and persuasively in multiple speaking modes</p>	<p><b>Problem Solving</b></p> <p>Solve discipline-based problems using conventional strategies</p>	<p><b>Personal/Cultural Values</b></p> <p>Articulate one's own values and describe how they influence personal decisions</p>
<p><b>Info Literacy</b></p> <p>Select credible evidence to support arguments</p>	<p><b>Creativity</b></p> <p>Produce novel approaches in disciplinary contexts</p>	<p><b>Ethical Reasoning</b></p> <p>Develop and maintain defensible ethical positions in moral challenges</p>
<p><b>Tech/Visual Literacy</b></p> <p>Use technology effectively for a variety of purposes</p>	<p><b>Quantitative Reasoning</b></p> <p>Use mathematics to assist in solving problems</p>	<p><b>Diversity Skills</b></p> <p>Interact effectively with individuals who do not share your heritage</p>



## Appendix C

### 2016-2017 Meetings for Facilitated Focus Groups

### 2016-2017 Meetings 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

Appendix D

General Education Division of Responsibilities

### General Education Division of Responsibilities

<p>Director of General Education</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Supervises the assessment of UWF's General Education program in consultation with the University stakeholders</li> <li>2. Liaises between the General Education Committee and the General Education departments and faculty at large</li> <li>3. Coordinates with UWF's Office of Institutional Effectiveness to ensure the General Education curriculum aligns with UWF's mission as well as SACSCOC principles</li> <li>4. Coordinates with UWF's Center for University Teaching, Learning, and Assessment (CUTLA) to support and promote professional development activities which contribute to the continuous improvement of the General Education</li> <li>5. Supervises and delegates responsibilities to faculty</li> <li>6. Primary point of contact for academic advisors regarding the General Education</li> </ol>
<p>Faculty Fellow for General Education</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Assists Director in analyzing and reporting on the completed General Education assessment data each year</li> <li>2. Maintains active involvement with making evidence-based decisions for continuous improvement of General Education courses and Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)</li> <li>3. Liaises between the General Education Committee and the General Education departments and faculty at large</li> <li>4. Assists Director with General Education compliance monitoring, e.g. assessment reporting and syllabi statements</li> </ol>
<p>Center for University Teaching, Learning, and Assessment</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Provides guidance on best practices for General Education assessment</li> </ol>

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Coordinates with Director of General Education to support and promote professional development activities which contribute to the continuous improvement of the General Education</li> </ol>
Institutional Effectiveness	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Provides guidance on annual planning for General Education</li> <li>2. Provides guidance on best practices for assessment reporting and use of data for continuous improvement to faculty, departments, Director of General Education, and the General Education Committee</li> <li>3. Coordinates with Director of General Education to ensure the General Education curriculum aligns with UWF's mission, BOG requirements, and SACSCOC principles for General Education</li> <li>4. Provides an assessment reporting system for collecting reports of general education assessment data and use of results and makes these reports available to constituent groups, the Director of General Education, the General Education Committee, and external reviewers such as SACSCOC</li> </ol>
General Education Committee	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Establishes and periodically reviews Student Learning Outcomes for General Education</li> <li>2. Reviews best pedagogic practices for General Education courses</li> <li>3. Coordinates and oversees General Education curricular design</li> <li>4. Annually reviews one third (1/3) of the General Education curriculum in a three-year cycle and makes appropriate recommendations for course changes and improvements</li> <li>5. Annually reviews General Education assessment plan and makes appropriate recommendations for change and improvement</li> <li>6. Annually reviews General Education</li> </ol>

	<p>assessment reports</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>7. Hears appeals to General Education requirements:<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. Gordon Rule writing</li><li>b. Gordon Rule math</li><li>c. Multicultural courses</li><li>d. SAR appeals in coordination with UWF Center for Academic Success</li><li>e. Other related General Education items</li></ol></li><li>8. Reviews all General Education CCRs</li><li>9. Presents a Summary Report of the General Education Committee to the Faculty Senate on an annual basis</li></ol>
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