

## 2013-14 Summary Report of the Assessment of the General Education Program

UNCG's General Education Program provides undergraduates "foundational knowledge, skills, and values necessary to be critical and creative thinkers, ethical decision-makers, effective communicators, and collaborative and engaged global citizens." (UNCG General Education Mission and Goals, approved by the Faculty Senate and General Faculty in April 2009). Currently, this breadth of knowledge is offered to undergraduates through General Education courses distributed across five learning goals (LGs):

- LG1. Foundational Skills (critical thinking, effective communication, quantitative and information literacies)
- LG2. The Physical and Natural World (math and science)
- LG3. Knowledge of Human Histories, Cultures, and the Self
- LG4. Knowledge of Social and Human Behavior
- LG5. Personal, Civic, and Professional Development

One of the responsibilities of the General Education Council (Council) is the assessment of student achievement of these learning goals. This is accomplished by the Council's Assessment Subcommittee working closely with the Office of Assessment and Accreditation.

For the 2013-14 academic year, three General Education categories—Historical Perspectives (GHP), Literature (GLT), and Social and Behavioral Sciences (GSB)—were selected for assessment. This report presents a summary of these assessment efforts.

### *General Education Program Assessment Process*

The process used to assess the General Education Program was developed by faculty in May 2011, approved by the Council in October 2011, and used beginning in 2011 to assess student learning in the Program. Briefly, the process consists of course faculty assessment, peer faculty validation, and data summary/presentation.

In the course faculty assessment:

1. Faculty choose existing course assignments aligned to category-specific student learning outcomes (SLOs).
2. Faculty send unmarked student work products for six students, along with the assignment, to the Office of Assessment and Accreditation (OAA). The students are selected by OAA through a random-selection process, and their student identification numbers are provided to the instructors.
3. Faculty apply a three-point rating scale (Highly Proficient, Proficient, Not Proficient) to all students' work for each SLO.
4. Faculty complete an online survey, recording aggregate (class) results for each SLO.

In the peer faculty validation:

1. The General Education Council invites faculty to participate in a workshop. A monetary incentive is provided to eligible participants.
2. Workshop reviewers are grouped by General Education category and paired within each group. Each pair receives the same set of student work.

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3. Using the same scale as course faculty, reviewer pairs rate student work products provided by the course faculty. Each member scores the work independently. Two scores are gathered for each student work.
4. Workshop concludes with large-group discussion.

In the data summary and presentation:

1. OAA summarizes data from the course faculty assessment and from the peer faculty validation.
2. The General Education Council presents these summarized data to the University in open forums.
3. Forum participants make observations, suggestions, recommendations, etc., to the Council.
4. A summary report is prepared and posted on the Council's website.

The fall 2013 sample consisted of 13 GHP sections (taught by 11 faculty), 13 GLT sections (taught by 12 faculty), and 27 GSB sections (taught by 24 faculty). In spring 2013, the Council Chair, Jonathan Zarecki, initially contacted the faculty scheduled to teach these courses in fall 2013 to inform them of their selection of the 2013-14 General Education Program Assessment.

On August 1, 2013, the Council Chair contacted the selected course faculty, reminding them of their selection for the fall 2013 General Education Program assessment and requesting they register for one of the four training workshops offered in mid-August. Of these faculty, 8 GHP faculty, 2 GLT, and 7 GSB faculty attended the training workshops. At the end of August, the General Education Assessment Coordinator emailed training and other necessary documents to the selected course faculty.

By the end of the fall semester, participation included:

- 9 (of 13) GHP sections, all of which submitted sample student work products;
- 11 (of 13) GLT sections, 10 of which submitted sample student work products and one of which used multiple choice questions to assess the GLT student learning outcomes; and
- 20 (of 27) GSB sections, 15 of which submitted student work products and 5 of which used multiple choice questions to assess the GSB student learning outcomes.

Course faculty used the three point scale (Highly Proficient, Proficient, Not Proficient) to rate all student work products in each of their respective sections. All course faculty were able to rate their students' work products, that is, none were considered unratable.

The peer validation workshop took place in January 2014. Of those faculty invited to participate, ten faculty attended the one-day workshop which took place prior to the start of spring classes. Faculty were divided into three rating groups: GHP (4 faculty), GLT (3 faculty), and GSB (4 faculty) with one faculty participating in both GLT and GSB groups. The faculty used the same three-point scale (Highly Proficient, Proficient, Not Proficient) as course faculty to evaluate work products from only those students who had been randomly selected in the participating sections. Two of the groups—GHP and GSB—defined criteria for each of the student learning outcomes, prior to beginning the rating process.

Three of the General Education Program's five Learning Goals were represented by the three GE categories (GHP, GLT, GSB). Table 1 presents the aggregate ratings of student work products by course

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faculty and by workshop peer reviewers. Table 2 presents the detailed ratings by General Education student learning outcome.

Table 1. Aggregate ratings of student work products by course faculty and workshop peer reviewers

<b>General Education Learning Goal</b>	<b>Course faculty:</b>	<b>Workshop peer reviewers:</b>
<b>LG 1 (Foundational Skills):</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GHP slo-2</li> <li>• GLT slo-3</li> <li>• GSB slo-2</li> </ul>	found approximately 78 – 84 % of student work to be proficient or highly proficient	found 56 - 62% of student work to be proficient or highly proficient and approximately 11% to be unratable
<b>LG 3 (Knowledge of Human Histories, Cultures, and the Self):</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GHP slo-1</li> <li>• GLT slos 1, 2, 3, 4</li> </ul>	found approximately 84 – 88% of student work to be proficient or highly proficient	found 35 – 79% of student work to be proficient or highly proficient and 2 – 10% to be unratable
<b>LG4 (Knowledge of Social and Human Behaviors):</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GSB slos 1, 2</li> </ul>	found approximately 77 – 78% student work to be proficient or highly proficient	found 57 – 80% of student work to be proficient or highly proficient and 7 – 11% to be unratable

Table 2. Comparison, by student learning outcome, of course faculty and Workshop faculty ratings

Gen Ed LG(s)	SLOs	<b>Fa2013: Course Instructors</b>					<b>Feb 2014: Workshop Faculty</b>				
		Number of Stdts Assd	NP	P	HP	U/R	Total Number of Ratings	NP	P	HP	U/R*
LG3	GHP slo-1	352	16%	53%	32%	0%	94	34%	43%	14%	10%
LG1	GHP slo-2	353	16%	52%	32%	0%	94	30%	45%	17%	9%
LG3	GLT slo-1	419	13%	42%	45%	0%	113	21%	70%	9%	0%
LG3	GLT slo-2	419	11%	44%	44%	0%	113	40%	57%	4%	0%
LG1, LG3	GLT slo-3	417	16%	40%	44%	0%	113	43%	50%	6%	0%
LG3	GLT slo-4	415	15%	53%	31%	0%	113	63%	27%	8%	2%
LG4	GSB slo-1	1179	24%	55%	22%	0%	171	12%	50%	30%	7%
LG1, LG4	GSB slo-2	1106	22%	58%	20%	0%	171	32%	35%	22%	11%

\*U/R = unable to rate, or unratable

Reasons given by workshop reviewers for choosing “Unable to Rate” for a particular student work product included student did not submit the assignment or the assignment did not meet the student learning outcome.

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Actions suggested by course faculty included:

1. Provide guidelines for the proficiency levels.
2. Provide professional development regarding the General Education student learning outcomes and address the overlap of GE student learning outcomes across categories and/or markers.

Action suggested by Workshop participants included:

1. Regarding the General Education Program assessment process trainings:
  - a. Have former participants in the assessment process be present to discuss what they learned from participating in the process as well as to provide insight on the selection of assignments.
  - b. Hold trainings one week before semester begins and another session during the second week of the semester; offer trainings in the morning and afternoon on alternate days.
  - c. Request that registrants bring a copy of their syllabus to help with selecting assignments for the GE program assessment process.
  - d. Specifically address the selection of assignments for this process:
    - i. Assignments must clearly and explicitly reference the GE student learning outcomes being assessed.
    - ii. Remind course faculty to use assignments from middle to end of semester.
2. Continue the course faculty evaluation of student work as well as the peer validation in January before semester begins.
3. Provide peer review feedback to course faculty (presently, this is not done to prevent course faculty from concluding we are evaluating *them*).
4. Have faculty who have participated in the GE Program assessment process be a resource within their departments.
5. Have meetings with departments to present results from this assessment process.

### *General Education Forum*

Results from the fall 2013 course faculty assessment and the January 2014 Workshop faculty were included in the April 2014 *General Education Program Assessment Forum*. Based on faculty feedback in previous workshops and forums, a narrated Powerpoint was posted on the Office of Assessment and Accreditation's website at: <http://assessment.uncg.edu/academic/GenEd/>. Announcements were made in the Campus Weekly of August 20, August 27, and November 5, 2014, as well as during the fall 2014 General Education Council meetings.

To solicit viewer feedback from the posted results, a live link to an online survey was included in the Powerpoint. Due to the low response rate to the survey, comments are not included in this report because they may or may not be representative of the University as a whole.