

# General Education Assessment Committee: Annual Report

2020-2021 Academic Year

Submitted by: Amanda Nichols Hess and Lori Ostergaard, co-chairs

June 2021

Established by the University Senate in May 2020, the General Education Assessment Committee (GEAC) oversees the assessment of the General Education program and General Education courses. It is a group that works in concert with the General Education Committee (GEC), and it is charged with:

- functioning as the assessment committee for a university-wide program of general education,
- coordinating and advising on the planning and implementation of general education assessment by academic units;
- advising and cooperating with the General Education Committee in planning and carrying out assessment of the University's general education program and communicate through the regular exchange of minutes with the General Education Committee;
- advising the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost, the University Committee on Undergraduate Instruction, the University Assessment Committee, and the General Education Committee on the findings of their program assessment and on their implications for specific program reviews and for maintaining and improving the quality of general education curricula and instruction;
- reporting to the University Senate and the Assemblies of the organized faculties on the findings of the general education assessment program and their implications for maintaining and improving the quality of undergraduate general education curricula and instruction at the University; and
- coordinating with the General Education Committee to establish priorities for each academic year; meeting jointly, as needed but at least once each semester, with the General Education Committee; and providing information on General Education assessment for preparation of the General Education Committee's annual report.

2020-2021 Committee Members:

- Kathy Battles (CAS)
- Cynthia Carver (SEHS)
- Melanie Chang (CAS)
- Susanne Condrón (OIRA, ex officio)
- Randy Gu (SECS)
- Kellie Hay (CAS) (On leave Winter 2021)
- Amanda Hess (KL) – Co-Chair
- Tim Hodge (SBA)
- Jeremy Johnson (OUSC)
- Andrea Kozak (CAS) (Replacement for Lori Ostergaard Winter 2021)
- Serena Kuang (SOM)

- Kristen Munyan (SON)
- Lori Ostergaard (CAS) – Co-Chair (On sabbatical Winter 2021)
- Kimmie Parker (CAS)
- Sam Srauy (CAS) (Replacement for Kellie Hay Winter 2021)
- Emily VanWasshenova (SHS)
- Tricia Westergaard (Registrar, ex officio)
- Song Yan (OIRA, ex officio)

### **Committee Meetings**

The GEAC met regularly throughout the 2020-2021 academic year:

- November 5, 2020
- November 24, 2020
- December 8, 2020 (GEC-GEAC joint meeting)
- January 28, 2021
- February 18, 2021
- April 15, 2021
- April 21, 2021 (GEC-GEAC joint meeting)

The meetings during the fall semester focused on onboarding and training all committee members, which we accomplished by defining the university's General Education program and General Education Assessment initiatives available to departments. The winter semester meetings provided opportunities to discuss our reviews of General Education course assessment reports and other assessment-related issues (i.e., writing-intensive course review procedures). All meetings were held virtually.

### **Major Projects & Initiatives**

The major projects and initiatives that the GEAC accomplished during the 2020-2021 academic year were to:

- Compile assessment report feedback for a number of outstanding General Education course assessments from 2019-2020
- Develop documentation, procedures, and processes for the committee's work
- Complete General Education course assessment report reviews in Art, Capstone Formal Reasoning, Global Perspective, and Natural Science and Technology areas (GESLO course reviews)
- Develop workable and meaningful guidelines to review all writing-intensive courses in both General Education and the majors

### **General Education Assessment Reports Backlog**

Prior to the establishment of the GEAC, the GEC was responsible for reviewing and providing feedback on all General Education course assessment reports. However, in the transfer of these responsibilities in the spring of 2020, there were several outstanding report reviews that had been completed by

2019-2020 GEC members but needed to be communicated to departments. Amanda Nichols Hess completed report letters for the following courses in December 2020, thereby closing the assessment loop:

- AH 4998/4999 (Capstone)
- AN 1111 (Global Perspectives, Social Sciences)
- DAN 3500 (Capstone)
- DES 4999 (Capstone)
- ECE / ME 4999 and ISE 4991 (Capstone)
- EGR 2400 (Natural Science and Technology)
- EGR 250/2500 (Natural Science and Technology)
- ENV 308/3080 (Natural Science and Technology)
- HS 2000 (Natural Science and Technology)
- MTH 4114 (Capstone)
- NRS 4215, 4325, and 4585 (Capstone)
- PHL 1070 (Formal Reasoning)
- PHY 4970 (Capstone)
- PHY 4995 (Capstone)

### **General Education Assessment Documentation, Procedures, and Processes**

In its first year, the GEAC established a number of procedures and processes for their work, and we established resources designed to document and facilitate these workflows. The GEAC co-chairs and Susanne Condron established file organization systems in a shared Google Drive to ensure that various documents, reports, and other resources can be easily accessed and transferred across committee membership. These tools include an assessment review rubric developed by Susanne Condron, report review letter templates, process documentation, and work timeline guides. Since the committee was working completely remotely, we also developed systems to ensure that all committee members could identify where assessment reports were in the review cycles; provide consistent and structured feedback on assessment reports; and engage in assessment-centric discussions, even from a distance. We also established a shared folder of our meeting minutes to ensure that the GEC was apprised of all relevant committee business.

### **General Education Course Assessment Reviews**

During the winter 2021 semester, GEAC members completed reviews of the following course assessments and communicated reviews to the departments:

- ART 1000 (Arts)
- CHM 3000 (Natural Science & Technology)
- COM 3607 (Western Civilization)
- DAN 1373 (Arts)
- DAN 1377 (Arts)
- DAN 4630 (Global Perspectives)

- IS 2000 (Global Perspectives)
- IS 2005 (Global Perspectives)
- IS 2060 (Global Perspectives)
- IS 2100 (Global Perspectives)
- IS 2200 (Global Perspectives)
- IS 2300 (Global Perspectives)
- IS 2400 (Global Perspectives)
- IS 2500 (Global Perspectives)
- IS 2600 (Global Perspectives)
- IS 2700 (Global Perspectives)
- LIN 4470 (Capstone)
- STA 4428 (Capstone)
- EHS 2550 (Formal Reasoning)
- PS 3050 (Western Civilization)
- SOC 4000 (Capstone)

Additional detail about these reviews, including scoring information, is provided in Appendix A.

### **General Education Course Assessment Reviews**

In addition to the course-level assessment reports, the GEAC reviewed assessment plans connected with courses up for review by the GEC. The assessment plans are crucial components of the General Education course approval process, and committee members provided feedback on:

- FRH 1600 (Western Civilization)
- PHL 1320 (Western Civilization)
- RDG 2200 (Literature)

However, the turnaround time on this feedback delayed the GEC's workflows. Therefore, the GEAC co-chairs and Susanne Condron will provide feedback on future General Education course proposal assessment plans to expedite these processes.

### **Writing-Intensive Course Review Sub-Committee**

In the fall 2020, the GEC identified an ongoing concern: there is no verification that writing-intensive courses, in either the majors or General Education, address the eight required components for all such courses. The GEAC discussed this issue in the winter 2021 semester; at that time, Kathy Battles, Kristen Munyan, and Sam Srauy agreed to form a task force to identify the most feasible and useful approach to address this concern. They reported back to the GEAC in April 2021 with suggested next steps:

- The GEAC will prepare a Google Docs checklist to prompt a department (either the Chair or its assessment committee) to collect and review syllabi and assignments (if not fully explained on the syllabus) for all sections of the writing intensive courses to ensure they meet the relevant criteria.

- Timing-wise, departments would be asked to provide confirmation of writing-intensive courses at the same time as any other scheduled assessment report for those courses under a different rubric (i.e., Capstone).
- Writing intensive courses without an additional assessment component would be integrated into departments' assessment cycles that align with the majority of their General Education courses, whenever possible
  - For instance, Sociology, Anthropology, Social Work, and Criminal Justice would be asked to complete the checklist for any WI courses without additional designations when they submit Social Sciences-related assessment reports.
- Departments would be asked to verify that their writing-intensive course address the eight requirements via Google Form, and send syllabi (and assignments) as verification purposes to [geac@oakland.edu](mailto:geac@oakland.edu).
- Throughout the process, it is important to emphasize that this process is a check-in, not an assessment of the content of courses or assignments.

The GEAC agreed to try this approach in the 2021-2022 academic year, and Amanda Nichols Hess developed the corresponding resources/documentation.

### **Future Directions & Initiatives**

In addition to the work that the GEAC completed this academic year, the committee has several future / ongoing initiatives for 2021-2022 (and beyond).

#### **Ongoing General Education Course Assessment Reviews**

The GEAC agreed to maintain the existing four-year assessment cycle, with additional flexibility for departments as needed due to COVID-19. The committee also agreed to review assessment reports during the fall and winter semesters, and so assessment reports received during the summer term will be reviewed beginning in September 2021. Additional information about assessment reports that are coming due, those that are overdue, and those that have been granted extensions is available in Appendix A.

#### **University Learning Outcomes Assessment**

In the fall 2021 semester, the GEAC will undertake its first review of courses engaged in the University Learning Outcomes pilot; the committee has received assessment reports from the Library and English department, respectively. Susanne Condron modified the committee's assessment rubric to more accurately reflect evaluating students' attainment of University Learning Outcomes. The committee will undertake these reviews as a group in fall 2021 to determine the most effective and meaningful ways to engage with this kind of assessment going forward.

### **Implementing Writing-Intensive Course Review Processes**

Beginning in the fall 2021 semester, the GEAC will begin to implement the writing-intensive course review process. This new reporting component will be communicated to department chairs, and we will provide the support needed to facilitate these new processes.

### **Continuous Committee Improvements**

As the GEAC continues its work in the coming year, we will intentionally look for opportunities to improve our internal workflows, provide additional support for departments in their assessment efforts, and offer learning opportunities for the campus more widely. We look forward to the new ideas and perspectives that our new committee members will bring to our group. Moreover, we will continue to find ways to streamline the administrative work that has been required of Susanne Condrón so that her invaluable assessment expertise can be shared with faculty across campus.

## **Appendix A: General Education Assessment Activities AY 2020-2021 report, from Susanne Condron, OIRA**

Susanne Condron, the Assessment Coordinator in the university's Office of Institutional Research and Assessment, prepared this invaluable and data-rich report about the state of General Education Assessment.

**Date:** May 25, 2021

**To:** Amanda Nichols Hess and Lori Ostergaard – Co-Chairs, General Education Assessment Committee (GEAC)

**From:** Susanne Condron, Assessment Coordinator

**RE:** General Education Assessment Activities AY 2020–2021

In response to increased demands on the General Education Committee, the GEC leaders proposed a separate committee that would focus exclusively on assessing the general education program and considering improvements to the program for OU's undergraduate students. With support from the University Senate, the General Education Assessment committee was approved in May 2020. During Fall 2020, the primary focus of general education assessment was on staffing, launching, and training the General Education Assessment Committee (GEAC), and in Winter 2021 on reviewing general education assessment reports. The GEAC met jointly with the General Education Committee (GEC) during Fall (November 24, 2020) and Winter semesters (April 21, 2021) to share knowledge and ideas about improving the program.

The GEAC continued to support departments involved in pilot assessment initiatives such as assessment of the University Learning Outcomes (ULOs) and the accreditation memo procedure for GE Capstone courses in accredited programs. Two departments submitted assessments of the University Learning Outcomes (English, Library) representing 13 distinct general education courses. While no additional departments have taken advantage of the accreditation memo process, there are multiple departments who are exploring this as an alternative to General Education Student Learning Outcome (GESLO) assessment.

The GEAC also took on the role of reviewing assessment plans for proposed General Education courses in conjunction with the GEC. This work culminated in the review of 4 course assessment plans. A GEAC subcommittee explored options for reviewing Writing Intensive courses and made recommendations for a systematic process that will begin in 2021-2022.

The opportunities for professional development on general education assessment were limited this year due to the COVID-19 pandemic, but the GEAC continues to gather suggestions and looks forward to offering faculty these opportunities in the coming year.

The GEAC reviewed GESLO assessment reports using a standardized rubric for submitting ratings and comments and two reviewers per report. Table 1 presents the 37 assessment reports received or

reviewed by GEAC during 2020-2021 and their associated ratings on a three-point scale (“Minimal”, “Developing/Progressing”, “Mature, without significant issues”).

**Table 1. Assessment reports received or reviewed by GEAC during 2020–2021 (37 Courses)**

Department	Course	Decision
<b>ART (3)</b>		
Dance	DAN 1373	Mature
Dance	DAN 1377	Developing/Progressing
Dance	DAN 1375	Received 4-15-2021 (Pending Review)
<b>CAPSTONE (4)</b>		
Linguistics	LIN 4470	Developing/Progressing
Soc/Anthro/Soc Work/Crim Just	SOC 4000	Developing/Progressing
Mathematics and Statistics	STA 4228	Developing/Progressing
Comp Science & Engineering	CSI 4999	Received 5-18-2021 (Pending Review)
<b>FORMAL REASONING (1)</b>		
Public & Environmental Wellness	EHS 2550	Developing/Progressing
<b>GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE (12)</b>		
Dance	DAN 4630	Developing/Progressing
International Studies	AN 2130/ GEO 2000/ IS 2000, IS 2005 IS 2060, IS 2100 IS 2200, IS 2300 IS 2400, IS 2500 IS 2600, IS 2700	Developing/Progressing
Religious Studies	REL 1200	Received 5-3-2021 (Pending Review)
<b>NATURAL SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (1)</b>		
Chemistry	CHM 3000	Developing/Progressing
<b>LITERATURE (12)</b>		
English	CIN 2100, ENG 1300 ENG 1500, ENG 1700 ENG 1800, ENG 2300 ENG 2500, ENG 3600 ENG 3610, ENG 3620 ENG 3650, ENG 3660	ULO Assessment Received 4-1-2021 (Pending Review)
<b>WESTERN CIVILIZATION (4)</b>		
Communication and Journalism	COM 3607	Developing/Progressing
Philosophy	PHL 1100, PHL 1310	Received 4-30-2021 (Pending Review)
Political Science	PS 3050	Mature

Several departments opted to submit integrated assessments combining program assessment with general education capstone assessment, and Table 2 includes the reports for the 42 courses that were reviewed by the University Assessment Committee (UAC).

**Table 2. Integrated Program and General Education Capstone Assessment Reports received or reviewed by UAC during 2018–2021 (42 Courses)**



Department	Program	Course
Art/Art History	Studio Art	ART 4999
Biology	Biomedical Science	BIO 4972
Chemistry	Environmental Science	ENV 4950
Communication & Journalism	Communication	COM 4901, COM 4930, COM 4950
English	Cinema Studies	CIN 4900, CIN 4901, CIN 4999
	Creative Writing	CW 4200, CW 4300, CW 4400, CW 4500
	English	ENG 4900, ENG 4970, ENG 4980
History	History	HST 4975
Modern Language & Literature	French	FRH 4170, FRH 4970
	German	GRM 4130, GRM 4190
	Japanese	JPN 4200
	Spanish	SPN 4200, SPN 4800
Management & Marketing		MGT 4350
Philosophy		PHL 4970
Political Science	Political Science	PS 4955, PS 4970, PS 4975, PS 4980
	Public Administration	PS 4950
Psychology		PSY 4921, PSY 4930, PSY 4971, PSY 4977, PSY 4980, PSY 4989, PSY 4998
Soc/Anthro/SW/CJ	Criminal Justice	CRJ 4970
	Social Work	SW 4971
Women & Gender Studies		WGS 4020
Public & Environmental Wellness		WHP 4950

Table 3 lists the status of assessment reports that were due for review this year. Many departments continued to have challenges with adhering to established timelines and planned assessment approaches while navigating remote learning as a result of COVID-19.

**Table 3. Status of assessment reports due to GEC during 2020–2021 (Language and Culture, Global Perspective, Literature)**

Department	Courses	Status
<b>LANGUAGE AND CULTURE</b>		
Linguistics	LIN 1101	
Modern Languages and Literatures	ARB 1140, CHE 1140, FRH 1140, FRH 1190, GRM 1140, HBR 1140, IT 1140, JPN 1140, LTN 1140, SPN 1140, SPN 1190	Requested extension due to COVID 19 disruption
<b>GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE</b>		
Art/Art History	AH 3080	Requested extension due to COVID 19 disruption
Economics	ECN 1600, ECN 2020 (also SS) ECN 3260	Unresponsive
English (Film Studies)	FLM 2320	
History	HST 2010, HST 2500	

Management	MGT 1100	
Music	MUS 1010, MUS 4326	
Political Science	PS 1400, PS 1600	
Religion	REL 1150, REL 1250, REL 1850	
Soc/Anthro/SW/CJ	AN 1111	Requested extension until Oct 2022
Women & Gender Studies	WGS 3810 (also SS)	Submitting with SS report in 2021-22
<b>LITERATURE</b>		
Modern Languages & Literatures	LIT 1000, LIT 1810, LIT 1820	Requested extension due to COVID 19 disruption

The assessment of student learning is an expectation of the university's accreditor, the Higher Learning Commission (HLC). During our last assurance argument (self-study), OU reported that 85% of required courses submitted an assessment report. As of the end of AY 2020-2021, 62% of courses were assessed within the past four years. While this leaves 38% of courses out of compliance, many are overdue by no more than a year and departments were offered significant flexibility while managing the challenges related to COVID-19 disruptions to instruction and assessment. Most departments with overdue course reviews communicated intent to complete their assessment responsibilities, leaving only a few departments that are unresponsive to requests for reports (see Table 4 for details).

**Table 4. Status of assessment reports due to GEC in prior years and not yet received (59 Courses)**

Department	Course	Notes
<b>SOCIAL SCIENCE/GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE (due 2017-2018)</b>		
Economics	ECN1600 (GP); ECN 2020 (GP/SS); ECN 1500, ECN 2010, ECN 2100 (SS);  <u>Capstones (due 2018-19)</u> ECN4090, ECN4210	Unresponsive
<b>CAPSTONES (due 2018-2019)</b>		
Biology	BIO 4970	Recently unresponsive
Chemistry	BCM 4257/ CHM 4257 CHM 4996	Planning to submit integrated program and GE Capstone Assessment for next cycle (2022-23)
Exercise Science	EXS 3020, EXS 4960	Requested extension for EXS 3020 due to COVID 19 disruption and for EXS 4960 as capstone transitions to EXS 4715; plan to collect data in Fall 2020 & submit report in WI21, nothing rec'd as of 5-2021
Integrative Studies	BIS 4930	Unresponsive
Communication and Journalism	JRN 4120, JRN 4950	Reporting is in progress
Liberal Studies	LBS 4999	Unresponsive
Human Resource Development	HRD 4950	Unresponsive
Soc/Anthro/SW/CJ	AN 4391	Requested extension until Oct 2022

Teacher Devel. & Ed Studies	EED 4950, SED 4952	Inquired about accreditation memo process, recently unresponsive
Theatre	THA 4007, THA 4020 THA 4025, THA 4081 THA 4095, THA 4950	Recently appointed a coordinator of assessment in SMTD (Liz Kattner) to assist with completing these requirements
Writing	WRT 4998	Requested extension to 2020-21, plan to submit in Summer 2021
<b>ARTS (due 2019-2020)</b>		
Art/Art History	AH 1001, AH 1002, AH 1003, ART 1000, ART 2100, ART 2200, ART 2500	Requested extension until in-person courses resume
Cinema	FLM 1150	Participating in ULO pilot; collecting data WI21/FA21
Modern Languages & Literatures	LIT 2900, LIT 2910	Requested extension due to COVID 19 disruption
Music	MUS 1000, MUS 1001, MUS 1002, MUS 1005, MUS 1006, MUS 1007, MUS 1010, MUS 1011, MUS 1012, MUS 1331	Participating in ULO assessment; requested extension for music (pilot for ULOs) to Fall 2021/Winter 2022.
Theatre	THA 1000, THA 3001, THA 3002, THA 3006	Recently appointed a coordinator of assessment in SMTD (Liz Kattner) to assist with completing these requirements
<b>WESTERN CIVILIZATION (due 2019-2020)</b>		
Soc/Anthro/SW/CJ	AN 3110	Requested extension until Oct 2022
History	HST 1100, HST 1200, HST 1300, HST 1400, HST 2280, HST 2380	
Liberal Studies	LBS 1000	
Music	MUS 1003	Participating in ULO Pilot – extended due to COVID 19 disruption
Philosophy	PHL 1300, PHL 3500	

\*Department chairs received bi-annual reminders about the data collection and reporting schedule.

The assessment schedule with data collection and reporting timelines for courses in each knowledge area is included in Table 5.

**Table 5. General Education Assessment Schedule**

Collect data	Review Year	Knowledge Area
2018–19	2019–20	Arts, Western Civilization
2019–20	2020–21	Foreign Language & Culture, Global Perspective, Literature
2020–21	2021–22	Formal Reasoning, Natural Science & Technology, Social Science, Writing Foundations
2021–22	2022–23	Capstone

2022-23	2023-24	Arts, Western Civilization
2023-24	2024-25	Foreign Language & Culture, Global Perspective, Literature
2024-25	2025-26	Formal Reasoning, Natural Science & Technology, Social Science, Writing Foundations