

**GENERAL EDUCATION: ASSESSMENT CHRONOLOGY**  
California State University, Stanislaus

The General Education Program has taken the following steps toward assessment of the quality of general education.

1997/1998

1. The provost established a General Education Task Force for the purpose of making recommendations for a general education curriculum plan and a structure for implementation and evaluation.
2. The General Education Task Force gathered information from the campus community regarding what students should know and be able to do as a result of their college experience at CSU, Stanislaus.
3. The General Education Task Force hosted a university-wide workshop and gathered information that the General Education program should provide for interdisciplinary work, team teaching, and practical applications for student learning, specifically at the upper division level.

1998/99

1. The General Education Task Force researched possible models, narrowed the list to four models, and led university-wide discussions of these models for general education.
2. The General Education Task Force recommended to the University Educational Policies Committee an alternative upper division General Education Summit program built around a cluster model.
3. The General Education Task Force recommended the continuance of the traditional general education program that is comprised of 51 semester units, including nine upper division units.

1999/00

1. The Summit Program was approved as a 3-year pilot program, effective Fall 2001 through Spring 2004, with continuance subject to assessment and approval.
2. Revised General Education goals were approved effective Fall 2000. (See Appendix A)

2000/01

1. Provost allocated to the College of Arts, Letters, and Sciences a .5 Associate Dean position to provide leadership for the assessment of the general education program.
2. Campus team, as part of the American Association for Higher Education Summer Academy, developed a process for design and approval of cluster general education courses.
3. The General Education Subcommittee commenced a review of upper division general education courses for recertification in accordance with the academic program review cycle. Courses are evaluated on alignment with the general education goals by review of current syllabi and a response to the general education goals supplied by faculty members.
4. A retreat was held for college faculty, resulting in the development of a general education assessment plan, followed by submission to governance for action.
5. The Chancellor's Office funded a grant to CSU Stanislaus to develop a website as a resource for general education programs in the CSU system.
6. Assessment workshops with faculty were conducted for the purpose of enhancing understanding of general education learning goals and their assessment.

7. The Summit Program coordinator reported the goal to University Educational Policies Committee to secure approval of three General Education clusters for implementation in Fall 2001, with two additional clusters to be developed for academic year 2002/2003.

#### 2001/02

1. Questions about self-report progress on general education goals were included in a senior exit survey and were analyzed in the aggregate.
2. The General Education Subcommittee began asking all faculty who teach general education courses to place the General Education Goals on their syllabi beginning Fall 2002.
3. During new student and faculty orientations, General Education Goals are presented by Student Affairs and the College of Arts, Letters, and Sciences.
4. The Summit program coordinator administered, surveys to students and faculty in nine traditional upper-division General Education classes and to Summit students and faculty at the end of the semester. Summit students were also asked to provide comments about the program on each survey. Student work was collected to be assessed using a rubric developed from the seven General Education learning goals.
5. Summit faculty met for a two-day workshop with Dr. Marie Eaton of Western Washington University to work on development of theme-based courses.

#### 2002/03

1. Questions about general education goals were embedded in academic program reviews.
2. A pilot of assessment of Summit General Education was begun by collecting samples of student work; using a rubric developed from the seven goals of General Education.
3. The Summit coordinator administered a brief survey of traditional General Education students regarding enrollment in the Summit Program.
4. The First-Year Experience program was established with learning communities enrolled in 2-3 lower division general education classes. The First Year Experience seminar in each community also meets General Education Area E (Individual Resources for Modern Living). One of the learning goals in the seminar requires students to demonstrate their understanding of the relationship between the linked classes and the general education goals. To measure this student outcome, students complete a portfolio in which they address what they have learned about the way their classes are linked to the general education goals.

#### 2003/04

1. Students and faculty completed a survey that asked them to rate how well the class had accomplished the goals of general education.
2. For comparative purposes, the survey was also administered to students and faculty in nine traditional upper division general education classes from Mathematics/Sciences, the Humanities, and the Social Sciences.
3. Summit Program was approved for continuance, with a program assessment report to be provided in 2008.
4. Results of a survey administered to students and faculty from both traditional and Summit program were reported to the Academic Senate. Survey results displayed great success in student/student interaction as well as student/faculty interaction as well as a 77% rate of completion. Faculty stated that they expected more from summit students and students indicated that they worked harder. Students and faculty felt that more scheduling flexibility was needed in the program, so the program has been changed from a linked set of three courses to linked pairs.
5. Questions about General Education on the senior exit survey were revised for clarity.

6. Orientation for new faculty included a brief session on General Education learning goals.
7. The General Education Subcommittee conducted a survey of 100 general education courses and the ways in which the courses met the learning goals of general education.
8. A university-wide team of faculty, students, and administrators attended the Western Association of Schools and Colleges/American Association for Higher Education conference, "Building Learner-Centered Institutions," and identified the general education communication goal as a university-wide vehicle to foster the strategic goal for developing a community of learners. A plan was developed and brought back to campus for consideration by the General Education Subcommittee and other groups.

#### 2004/05

1. An Executive Summary of the assessment of the First Year Experience program was presented to the Deans Council. Students completed portfolios (pre and post writing samples) in which they addressed what they have learned about the way their classes are linked to the general education goals. Results from the First-Year Initiative Survey were presented.
2. The General Education and Assessment of Student Learning Subcommittees coordinated a summer workshop for development of a working long-range assessment plan for general education.
3. Qualitative and quantitative data from students were collected for the Summit program.
4. Questions about general education goals were included on alumni surveys.
5. Institutional Research worked with the University Writing Committee and generated data about the Writing Proficiency Screening Test and writing proficiency courses.

#### 2005/06

1. General Education Subcommittee considered recommending action on the American Council on Education Global Learning proposal.
2. General Education Subcommittee discussed the results of a survey instrument of faculty reporting emphasis they place on general education goals in courses (100 courses). Due to low response rate, the group decided to re-evaluate questions and then send survey to Institutional Research to further develop and administer.
3. The University Writing Committee reviewed data on the Writing Proficiency Screening Test and Writing Proficiency courses.
4. A Summit assessment team reviewed samples of student work to assess how each cluster met the seven goals of General Education.
5. Students in First Year Experience completed essays based on writing prompts during the first and final week of the semester. The results of the writing samples from the first and final weeks were compared.

#### 2006/2007

1. General Education Subcommittee discussed the creation of a position for Faculty Director of General Education
2. General Education Subcommittee continued discussion on the administration of the General Education Program Assessment Survey. Discussed the possibility of administering two surveys – one for faculty and a separate survey to students. General Education Survey to be administered to 250 faculty members. Graduate student to assist in the administration.
3. American Council on Education Initiative on Global Learning discussed by General Education Subcommittee and University Education Policies Committee.

4. Presentation on the CSU Stanislaus Summit Program was made at "Campus Practices for Student Success Conference," October 20, 2007 in Los Angeles.
5. General Education Subcommittee to develop the initial plan for conducting General Education Academic Program Review. General Education Subcommittee to develop initial plan for conducting the review. Review to be carried out by the Faculty Director of General Education when hired.
6. Academic Senate requested clarification of the Graduation Writing Assessment Requirement policy regarding Writing Proficiency Screening Test being a prerequisite for Writing Proficiency courses. University Educational Policies Committee decided (1) the University Writing Committee is proposing that the Writing Proficiency Screening Test is considered a prerequisite for Writing Proficiency courses, and that the University Writing Committee will consider (2) that Writing Proficiency courses can be taken without the Writing Proficiency Screening Test at the instructor's discretion.
7. Academic Senate passed as resolution stating that is the responsibility of Writing Proficiency instructors to withdraw students who have not passed the Writing Proficiency Screening Test.
8. General Education Subcommittee made its final recommendations for the Faculty Director of General Education to University Educational Policies Committee. University Educational Policies Committee forwarded recommendations to Senate Executive Committee.
9. General Education Academic Program Review timeline was adopted.
10. General Education Subcommittee continued its on-going assessment of the degree to which the university addresses the Western Association of Schools and Colleges requirements.
11. General Education Interim group formed to develop draft assessment plans for 4 General Education areas: A1, A2, B3, and C1. These plans will be approved by the departments involved and then forwarded to the campus. In addition, a timeline was drafted which included the development of an assessment plan for each lower division General Education Area.
12. Writing Proficiency Screening Test writing prompts revised to include diversity topics. Diversity data to be reviewed by General Education Subcommittee.

#### 2007/2008

1. General Education ad hoc group, consisting of Program Assessment Coordinators, drafted assessment plans for areas A1, A2, B2, and C1 and recommended to UEPC a plan for development of other areas. They also proposed implementation strategies.
2. The position of Faculty Director of General Education was established and the director selected.
3. General Education Subcommittee administered a General Education Survey of primary GE student program goals by GE area to 250 faculty members.
4. A writing prompt for evaluating diversity using the Writing Proficiency Screening Test was administered beginning spring 2008.
5. University Educational Policies Committee to continue to explore methods in which electronic technology might be employed to add efficiency and reduce workload in general education assessment.
6. Transforming Course Design grant awarded to incorporate electronic technology in Summit cluster courses.
7. Began academic program review of traditional general education and the Summit program.
8. Extracted General Education data from National Survey of Student Engagement, Faculty Survey of Student Engagement, Individual Development and Educational Assessment, and Graduating Senior surveys, and data from two direct measures, Collegiate Learning Assessment and Writing Proficiency Screening Test for consideration by the Faculty Director of General Education and the General Education Subcommittee.

2008/2009

1. Complete the academic program review of traditional general education and the Summit program.
2. As part of the Transforming Course Design grant, continue revisions in existing clusters courses and add 3 new Summit clusters.
3. Continue refining a holistic assessment process of the general education program.
4. The General Education Subcommittee will review the spring 2008 General Education Survey findings report and recommend/take appropriate actions.
5. University to consider the development of systematic protocols for assessing entering student preparation, needs, and attitudes and linking these to general education requirements and other managed learning experiences. (Possible examples: include First Year Experience, Summit General Education program, Title V grant on mathematics and English).
6. Institutional Research to analyze the data and prepare a report to be considered by campus committees including the General Education Subcommittee and Faculty Director of General Education.

## APPENDIX A

### GENERAL EDUCATION GOALS

The following are goals for the general education program approved by the Academic Senate in winter, 2000.

Each general education course must demonstrate how it will meet goals 1-5 and either goal 6, goal 7, or both goals 6 and 7.

1. Subject Knowledge. To provide an educational experience that will enhance students' understanding of the disciplines' basic principles, methodologies, and perspectives.
2. Communication. To provide an educational experience that will enhance the ability to communicate.
3. Inquiry and Critical Thinking. To provide an educational experience that will enhance critical thinking skills and will contribute to continuous inquiry and life-long learning.
4. Information Retrieval and Evaluation. To provide an educational experience that will enhance the ability to find, understand, examine critically, and use information from various sources.
5. Interdisciplinary Relationships. To provide an educational experience that will enhance students' understanding of a discipline's interrelationships with other disciplines.
6. Global or Multicultural Perspectives. To provide an educational experience that will enhance the ability to look at issues from multiple perspectives and/or that will describe the discipline's impact on or connection to global issues, **AND/OR**
7. Social Responsibility. To provide an educational experience that will help students understand the complexity of ethical judgment and social responsibility and/or that will describe the discipline's impact on or connection to social and ethical issues.

The following are goals for multicultural general education courses, approved by the Academic Senate in spring, 1994.

In addition, courses that meet the requirements for General Education Area G, Multicultural requirement, are those classes of 3 or more units that address multicultural issues, ethnic studies, gender issues, or non-western cultures as follows:

- ❖ Multicultural courses should discuss more than one culture but include the study of one culture in some depth.
- ❖ Multicultural courses should show that there are differences between cultures, show ways to study such differences, and stimulate students to do additional studies.