

General Education Assessment Committee

2018-2019

**Timothy Paglione**

**Jacob Apkarian
Donald Auriemma
Laura Beaton
Edoardo Carta-Gerardino
Margarita Drago
Jonathan Hall
Thomas Marion
Panayiotis Meleties
Greet Van Belle
Xiaodan Zhang**

**8/27/2019**

1. **What patterns do you see across the programs and units with regard to outcomes in the following areas?**
	1. Please submit your Annual Assessment Status Progress Report table.

**Table 1. Annual Assessment Status Progress Report**

| Program/Unit | Mission | Goals | Outcomes | Curriculum Map | Five-Year Assessment Plan | Annual Assessment Plan | Annual Assessment Report |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Gen Ed | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

* 1. Please describe any patterns you see above in mission, goals, outcomes, curriculum maps, annual and five-year plans and report.

An overall five-year plan was developed, the Committee charge (related to mission and goals) written and recently revised, and an annual assessment cycle was established. It should be noted that the Gen Ed at York follows the CUNY Pathways framework, which established the outcomes, and the curriculum mapping is a requirement of the process for courses to be included in Pathways unless they are a STEM variant. The plans and reports are the responsibility of the GEAC. The GEAC is generally finding the Pathways Student Learning Outcomes (SLO) to be quite sweeping, and often overlapping or redundant, such that we usually break them down into smaller, more readily assessable components and ignore elements judged to be less accessible or central. We will be updating (compressing) the original five-year plan to match the expectations for mature assessment by Middles States.

* 1. Please submit your Use of Results table.

**Table 2. Use of Results**

| Program/Unit Assessed | When *(semester)* | Key Findings | Use of Results *(Change Implemented)* | Aligned ILOs |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Information Literacy | Fall 18 | Test scores were low, but pre- to post-test improvement was significant (scores rose from 56% to 67%). | A more relevant test and other assessments are being developed for implementa-tion in Fall 19. The Library established an annual assessment cycle. | Integrity,Intellectual Discovery & Creativity |
| Life & Physical Sciences | Fall 18 | Most reports (56%) showed proficiency for gathering and analyzing data, with room for improvement in connecting arguments and conclusions to those data. | Awaiting Outcomes Improvement Plan from the science depts. | Integrity,Intellectual Discovery & Creativity, Self-reflection & Accountability, Intentional Interactions |
| US Experience in its Diversity (pilot) | Fall 18 | Primarily a test for GEAC methodology, we are likely to use the domain SLOs rather than the overarching Flex Core SLOs for future assess-ments. Students’ proficiency at evaluating evidence was weaker than their explanation of issues (64% at or above proficiency compared with 47%). The SLOs of the course could be better aligned with those of the Flex Core. | Planning more in-class discussion of the essay and the SLOs specifically, with support on Blackboard and encouragement to better utilize the Writing Center. Course rubrics will be reevaluated and updated as needed. Fall 19 implementation. OIESP ran a Flex Core assessment workshop based on this experience. | Integrity,Intellectual Discovery & Creativity, Self-reflection & Accountability, Diversity |
| English Composition | Spring 19 | The majority of students (52%) were proficient at supporting a thesis, the writing scores were generally high (64% proficient or better). Thesis development improved from ENG 125 to 126 (mean score increase from 2.17 to 2.54 out of 4). The diversity of prompts is wide. The reinforce-ments to good writing employed in ENG 125/126 should be continued in WI and other courses for written assignments. | Outcomes Improvement Plan from dept. due in Fall 19 | Discovery & Creativity, Self-reflection & Accountability, Intentional Interactions |

* 1. Please describe any patterns you see above in findings, use of results and alignment.

The departments and faculty engaged in these exercises were eager to participate and extremely helpful with assessment design, implementation, and testing. They were also invested and anxious to learn the results. Most of these assessments were done very recently so use of results is only just being implemented in the coming year. However, the committee gained considerable experience.

* 1. Please describe the use of direct and indirect measures across programs and units, giving illustrative examples.

GEAC generally relied on direct measures for all its assessment projects. Information Literacy: multiple choice test taken before and after Library workshop, plus a control group. The Library also uses a brief student survey as an indirect measure after the workshops. L&PS: lab reports (Bio 140). US Experience in its Diversity pilot: essays (Soc 235). English Comp.: essays (ENG 125 and 126).

1. **What patterns do you see across the programs and units with regard to processes?**
	1. Please submit your Annual Assessment Process table.

**Table 3. Annual Assessment Process**

| Month | Task | Responsible Party |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Sep | Choose domain to assess this termChoose SLOs | GEAC |
| Sep | Work with dept(s). from previous term’s assessment to help set SLO improvement goalsWork with dept(s). with previous SLO improvement plans for follow-up implementation | GEAC and department(s) offering the course(s) |
| Oct | Decide on measure(s) and gather evidence | GEAC and department(s) offering the course(s) |
| Oct | Coordinate with the Office of Institutional Effectiveness to support workshops towards improvement of Gen Ed SLOs | GEAC and Off. of Inst. Effectiveness |
| Nov | Develop rubric(s) and hold norming session | GEAC |
| Dec | Perform assessment and compile results to report out | GEAC |
| Feb | Choose domain to assess this termChoose SLOs | GEAC |
| Feb | Work with dept(s). from previous term’s assessment to help set SLO improvement goalsWork with dept(s). with previous SLO improvement plans for follow-up implementation | GEAC and department(s) offering the course(s) |
| Mar | Decide on measure(s) and gather evidence | GEAC and department(s) offering the course(s) |
| Apr | Develop rubric(s) and hold norming session | GEAC |
| May | Perform assessment and compile results to report out | GEAC |
| May | Draft annual GEA reports for Strategic Planning, Inst. Effectiveness, and Depts. | GEAC chair |

* 1. Please describe any challenges or successes you have encountered with this process.

In our first year of the process, we began effectively a semester behind, but quickly established a routine of planning, data collection, rubric design, and norming a semester ahead of an assessment. As our minutes clearly illustrate, we debated vigorously about our role and the methods of assessment we would use. We learned the necessity of working closely with departments, having great success with English, and continued challenges with Math. The Math assessment has been a particular challenge since the Pathways SLOs are quite broad and applied, while the course assessments themselves (e.g., exams) are often difficult for the committee on its own to evaluate. For example, a typical exam response is simple right or wrong, but our judgement of the achievement of the learning outcomes is broader and has required careful selection of student artifacts and an extremely thoughtfully constructed rubric. The clear success has been promoting the culture of assessment across numerous disciplines and the broad engagement of faculty.

* 1. Please submit the tools (report templates, meta-assessment tools) you are using to facilitate and reflect upon assessment in your area.

All GEAC tools, templates, reports, minutes, and an operational handbook are available on the York College GEAC website, https://www.york.cuny.edu/president/institutional-effectiveness/institutional-assessment-1/general-education-assessment/committee

* 1. Please describe the involvement of program faculty and unit staff across the programs and units in the process of assessment.

As described above and in the reports, the relevant departments for each assessment, including ones upcoming in the 2019-2020 academic year, were engaged extensively at all stages of the assessment. GEAC members joined department meetings in Math & CS, and English, which had significant faculty participation. The GEAC chair also met with representatives from History & Philosophy. Faculty or coordinators for various courses shared their assignments, exams, grading rubrics, syllabi, etc., and in most cases worked closely with their dept. representative on GEAC. English did a parallel assessment of the composition courses, which was a helpful point of comparison to the committee’s work, and yielded insight into the differences between “expert” and “generalist” evaluations. An OIESP workshop on Gen Ed assessment (rubric development) had some 30 faculty in attendance from varied academic departments plus the Library and Advisement.

* 1. Please describe your committee’s role in ensuring assessment is happening across the programs/units.

The charge to the General Education Assessment committee gives it overall oversight, and the GEAC sets the agenda by turning its attention to student learning outcomes in targeted General Education domains on a rotating schedule. The committee does not assess individual faculty’s teaching, nor does it focus on course-level assessment; that is a departmental or program responsibility. Rather, we are interested in how the General Education aspects of courses are being approached, and how students are responding to them.

GEAC performs the domain assessment and reports to the department(s). The departments are responsible for implementing an SLO performance improvement plan, developed in partnership with GEAC. GEAC is responsible for follow-up of that implementation.

The GEAC continually compiles and analyze the essential ongoing assessment activities being completed by departments or cross-departmental faculty groups, in consultation with GEAC, during intervening semesters; conduct additional assessments itself during the semester or focus on a particular domain, in partnership with departments and/or cross-departmental faculty groups; report on the results of these activities.

The academic departments are a vital partner in the assessment process - they are the content providers. The Committee provides the assessment; GEAC creates the rubrics and performs the analysis using the artifacts from the faculty and departments.

Ongoing department responsibilities include:

In between targeted GEAC domain assessments: As part of their ongoing assessment efforts, departments have a responsibility to target selected SLOs in General Education courses every year. GEAC can consult with departments on these activities as they are designed and implemented, and will compile them when the particular domain is focused upon according to the schedule.

Targeted GEAC domain assessment (on rotating schedule): All General Education assessment projects require the mutual cooperation of the GEAC and departments offering the courses. Student artifacts must necessarily come from the departments and faculty. At least a semester before an assessment project begins, GEAC will begin discussions with all departments with courses in the particular target domain for the next semester. Key questions of these discussions will be:
SLOs: Which GE student learning outcome(s) will be targeted in the assessment activities in this cycle?
Context: How are these SLOs approached pedagogically in particular courses?Assessments: Which specific student artifacts from the course would provide the best window on the selected student learning outcome(s)?
Logistics: How will these artifacts be collected, processed, and evaluated?

Individual faculty teaching General Education courses may be contacted by their department or by the GEAC committee directly to supply artifacts for assessment as well as contextual materials (e.g., the prompts, assignment descriptions, reading lists, lab write-ups, instructor’s grading rubric, etc.). Student work (essays, problem sets, exams, reports, etc.) are provided in whole, unfiltered, and unsorted to the committee. GEAC anonymizes, sorts or otherwise samples the data from the whole.

Faculty will be relied upon in the planning process as well, at least one semester ahead of time, often many more semesters ahead.

Since the same student learning outcomes are specified for courses in multiple departments, assessment at the domain level may require mechanisms for dialogue between faculty in the same domain but different disciplines. How do they understand the SLOs and how do they approach them in their respective courses? The committee will explore future structures – such as domain-level subcommittees chaired by GEAC members but including faculty instructors within the domain – to conduct faculty-level discussions and shared assessments on an ongoing basis, not waiting until the domain comes up for discussion on the GEAC. Similar aims may be achieved through workshops run by GEAC members and offered through the OIESP and the Center for Teaching, Learning, and Educational Technologies.

* 1. Please submit your Status Milestones: Capacity Building table.

**Table 4. Status Milestones: Capacity Building**

| Activity | Expected Date of Completion | Status |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Develop and implement GEA website | 2018 Fall | Done |
| Draft York GE mission illustrating our distinct local implementation of Pathways, and disseminate to the college at large for input | 2018 Fall | Done  |
| Summarize the activities, results, and plans for the Monitoring Report | 2018 Dec | Done |
| Develop a five-year GEA Plan | 2018 Fall | Done |
| Organize a retreat for all of the assessment participants from Year 1 to share their experiences and update Year 2 of the GEA Plan, as well as Years 3-5 and the mission, as needed. | 2019 May | Postponed/superseded after the start of the new VP for Institutional Effectiveness. Many of the goals are now targeted for the Sep 2019 assessment workshop for the Flexible Core. Five-year plan requires update given new timing of MSCHE. Will coordinate with OIESP for retreat. |
| Assess our GEA from the last three years | 2021 Fall |  |
| Develop student learning outcomes for College Option | 2022 Spring |  |
| Draft a new Five-year GEA Plan for Fall 2023-Spring 2028, and distribute for college-wide input | 2022 Fall |  |
| Complete and publish Five-Year Plan on GEA 2023-2028 | 2023 May |  |

* 1. Please narrate the committee’s capacity building activities to sustain a culture of ongoing assessment.

GEAC took care to keep minutes that accurately capture our discussions as we crafted our role and procedures and reached consensus on how our work should proceed. We developed a handbook so that these lessons are retained as membership rotates. We began running and planning semester assessment workshops with OIESP both to engage the faculty at large directly in the work of the committee and to ensure that the critical stakeholders (departments, faculty) have the domain expertise to contribute significantly.

* 1. Please describe your committee’s communication with programs and units, and how that communication is disseminated within programs and units.

Communication is primarily through emails and personal meetings as well as the GEAC webpage. GEAC members have presented at college-wide events such as Convocation, and they have joined department meetings.

1. **Describe recommendations going forward to improve the outcomes and processes discussed above.**

The assessment workshop schedule from OIESP should have at least one event each semester focused on preparing for the upcoming Gen Ed domain assessment. Another should be dedicated to the assessment itself the following semester (i.e., two/term set aside for Gen Ed assessment action).