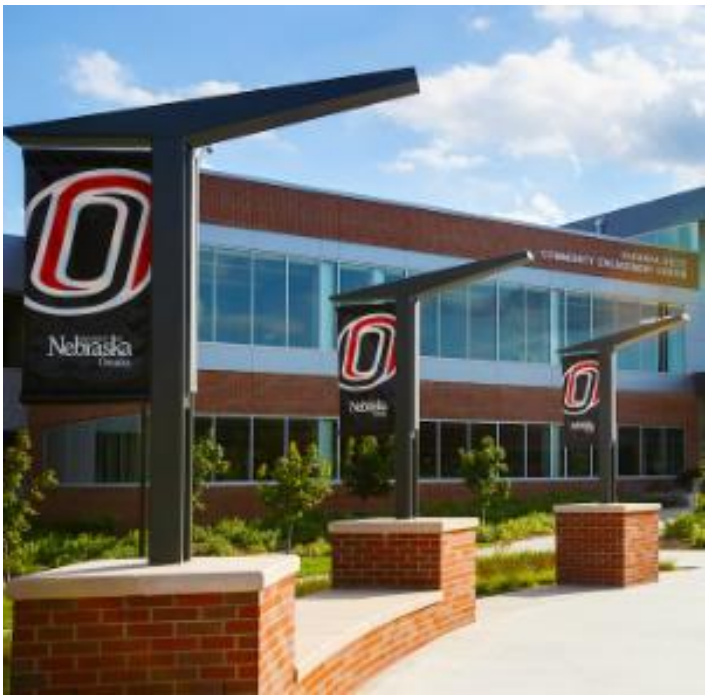


UNO Guide for the

Assessment of General Education

Student Learning Outcomes

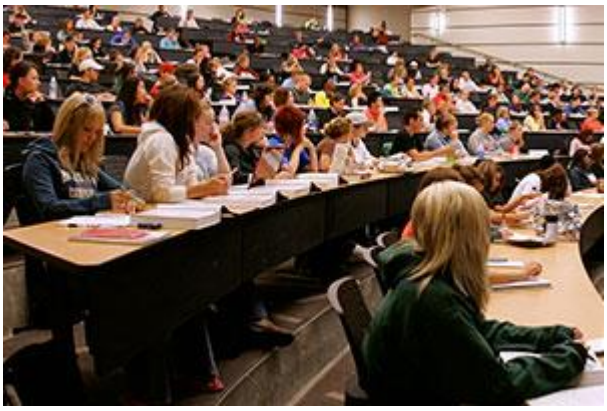
2016-17

University of Nebraska Omaha

ASSESSMENT OF GENERAL EDUCATION
STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES[1]

The UNO General Education Committee is responsible for assessing the student learning outcomes of courses it endorses as providing general education credit. It conducts regular reviews of student learning outcomes (SLO's) assessment in each of these courses. Assessments of student learning occur at different levels (e.g., task level, course level, program level). The focus here is on course level assessment with an emphasis on end-of-course student learning outcomes and objectives pertinent to general education. This guide is intended to help reporting units develop an assessment plan for each of their general education courses and organize the relevant information in an assessment report.

Course level SLO assessment requires consideration of the broad question, "How are students different as a result of completing this particular course?" Examples of common assessment questions at this level can include:



1. How well is the class collectively achieving learning outcomes and objectives?
2. How well are students prepared for subsequent courses in a particular sequence?
3. With what degree of consistency do different sections of a course achieve similar outcomes?
4. Is the course level appropriately targeted for the abilities of the students when they begin?

High quality assessment plans and reports offer detailed information on the assessment process for general education SLOs, how and when data are collected, an explanation of what counts as a successful outcome, evidence of whether proficiency levels were achieved, and information on how the unit responded to the findings. The following questions are central to the process of general education assessment at UNO:

I. Which SLO's should be measured and assessed in each General Education Area?

The SLO's for each general education area have been determined by the UNO General Education Committee and all are examined as part of the regular assessment cycle. A particular course should attempt to measure all general education SLOs for the general education area (eg. Fundamental Academic Skills, Distribution, or Diverstiy) it is associated with (eg. all four applicable SLOs for the social science distribution requirement).

[1] Last updated September 2016, Matt Tracy, Director of General Education

II. How is student performance on the SLOs measured?

Measures should be aligned with the General Education SLOs, and at least some direct measures should be used. Examples of *direct* measures include samples of student work (e.g., exam, essay, portfolio, paper) and observations of skills or creative activity (e.g., speech, presentation, theatre performance). Examples of *indirect* measures include student self-assessments (e.g., student surveys about what or how much they have learned, course evaluations) or feedback from community partners on the preparedness of graduates for the work force. Both types of measures can provide useful data. Academic units have flexibility in determining assessment mechanisms that best capture the content of the SLOs. In many cases, it may be possible to employ an assessment mechanism that is already in use.

For direct measures, units are also asked to indicate whether their general education SLO assessment practice falls into the domain of Examination, Product, or Performance. In addition to any indirect measures, each unit should identify an assessment activity in *at least one of the three domains*, and may opt to report results of assessment activity in more than one domain.

- ***Examination****: includes standardized tests or qualifying exams, content exams, pre- and post-test comparisons, oral defenses, comprehensive exams, exit exams, etc.*
- ***Product****: includes refereed student portfolios, theses, publications, capstone projects, original creative works, software, apps or programs, etc.*
- ***Performance****: includes presentations, recitals, exhibits, speeches, demonstrations, field experiences, internships, etc.*

III. Can academic departments use holistic assessment tools?

Academic departments can use holistic assessment methods (eg. final paper) as appropriate for their discplines and courses. However, for purposes of general education assessment, results should be disaggregated by specific general education student learning outcomes.

IV. What/how much data should be collected and reported?

Results (data) should be sufficient for meaningful analysis and collected for each course. While not every section of each course will necessarily be involved in the sampling, the data gathered should be a reasonable representation of all sections, students and faculty. The frequency of data collection and analysis is determined by the faculty, but at a minimum, annual data collection is highly recommended regardless of the timing of the assessment cycle. Data do not need to be collected on every student, but should be collected on enough students that analyses yield useful results.

V. How should the unit/program use the results to inform decisions and actions?

The unit/program should review the results and develop action steps as needed based on the review. Data-informed decisions and actions taken should be documented. Consider

exploring differences in the abilities of students to meet the various general education student learning outcomes (eg. 90% of students sampled met/exceeded proficieny score for SLO #1, but only 25% of students met/exceeded proficiency score for SLO #4). Consider evaluating student performance relative to SLOs across different delivery methods (eg. in-class, online, day/night, etc.). Include information on the process within the unit for reviewing and sharing assessment results with faculty (e.g., results initially reviewed by assessment committee, and then shared with full faculty along with recommendations at last faculty meeting of the spring semester). Also include a summary of any decisions or actions taken (e.g., curriculum revision, no changes recommended, explore new assignments within courses to better align with learning outcomes). The data you provide relative to general education courses can also be used later to aid in the completion of academic program reviews for academic units.

VI. What will the General Education program do with the data?

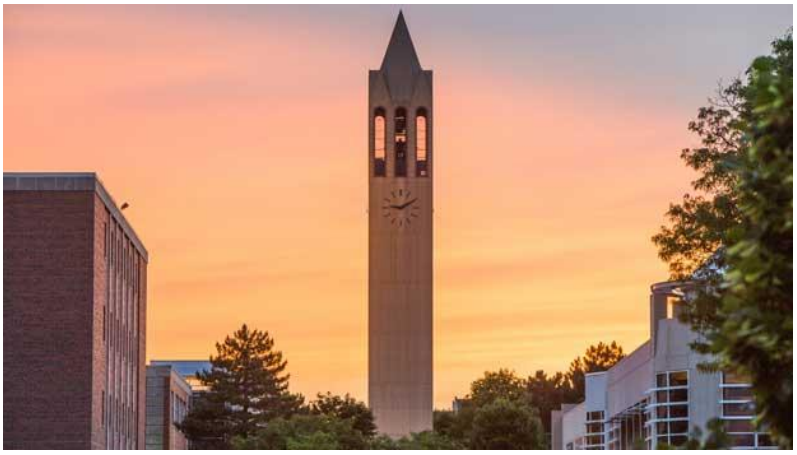
1) The General Education Assessment Committee will provide feedback to individual units on the strengths and weaknesses of their assessment of general education courses.

2) The General Education Assessment Committee will aggregate information from individual academic units to produce summary reports for UNO's General Education Committee that address specific general education outcomes (eg. Social Science distribution requirements) from a university-wide perspective.

3) The General Education Committee will review this data to ensure that courses are appropriately aligned with the General Education Curriculum.

4) The General Education Assessment Committee will provide comprehensive assessment summaries covering the entirety of general education learning outcomes to the General Education Committee and the University Assessment Committee in accordance with established timelines.

5) The General Education Assessment Committee and/or General Education Committee will provide program level feedback to academic units as necessary based on input from the University.



EXAMPLE ASSESSMENT REPORT BELOW (EACH UNIT SHOULD COMPLETE THEIR OWN REPORT USING THE FILLABLE PDF TEMPLATE)

Academic year in which report completed: (e.g. 2016-17)

Areas: (Social Science Distribution Requirements)

Unit: (Geography)

Course: (Geography 1000 XXXX)

I. Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) to be assessed

Define the general education student learning outcomes evaluated as part of your course.

II. Measures Used

For each SLO identified in Section I, please explain the associated measurement or method of assessment employed. It is highly recommended the table below be used as a template for compiling information. Note that each general education course must assess all four SLOs

SLO #1	**Successful students shall be able to demonstrate an understanding of the diversity of interactions between human motivations, institutional forces, and/or social behavior.**
What course concept(s) are being assessed that are related to general education SLO #1	Ability to identify differences in political, economic, and population geography among world regions
Assessment method	A subset of questions on a regular class examination will be scored by the faculty member teaching the course
Assessment domain *Examination, Product, or Performance?*	Examination (Final Examination questions 1-15)
Students assessed	Four sections of Geog 1000; 116 students total.
When and by whom administered	Fall 2016 and Spring 2017, Professors Nye and Cruz
Proficiency definition and target	70% or above is considered proficient for the 15 questions assessed. Target is that 95% of all students are considered proficient

SLO #2	**Use critical thinking and reasoning skills to analyze theories, perspectives, and/or concepts relative to the discipline(s) studied**
What course concept(s) are being assessed that are related to general education SLO #2	Ability to analyze how well selected theories from human geography explain spatial differences in population growth rates around the world.
Assessment method	Students were evaluated using a five-page paper. A faculty committee reviewed and scored a sampling of papers using a faculty approved rubric, prepared feedback, and discussed improvements with students.
Assessment domain *Examination, Product, or Performance?*	Product
Students assessed	Four sections of Geog 1000, 40 students total.
When and by whom administered	Spring 2017, reviewed by faculty committee.
Proficiency definition and target	Target is that 90% of students complete a paper judged as proficient according to the faculty approved rubric (eg. grades A, B or C).

SLO #3	**Communicate ideas and explain concepts and analyses using the language of the discipline**
What course concept(s) are being assessed that are related to general education SLO #3	Ability of students to effectively use 5-10 core concepts from human geography to explain and illuminate a current event of their choosing.
Assessment method	Students gave a 10 minute oral presentation. These presentations were graded by course faculty using a faculty approved scoring rubric.
Assessment domain *Examination, Product, or Performance?*	Performance
Students assessed	Four sections of Geog 1000, 116 students total.
When and by whom administered	Fall 2016 and Spring 2017, course faculty.
Proficiency definition and target	Proficiency required a score of 7/10 or better on rubric; target is that 80% of all students in the course deliver a presentation rated proficient (Grades of A,B,C).

SLO #4	**Identify multiple methods and modes of inquiry and their appropriate application**
What course concept(s) are being assessed that are related to general education SLO #4	Ability of students to describe, explain, and evaluate the 5 core themes of geographic inquiry that distinguish the discipline from others.
Assessment method	50 point essay on exam #1. Graded using a common faculty developed rubric
Assessment domain *Examination, Product, or Performance?*	Examination
Students assessed	Four sections of Geog 1000; 116 students total.
When and by whom administered	Fall 2016 and Spring 2017, course faculty.
Proficiency definition and target	Proficiency required a score of A,B,or C on this specific essay question. Target was that 80% of students meet proficiency definition.

III. Results

For each SLO identified (in Section I), please include a summary of the data the unit has obtained by measuring the elements or artifacts specified (in Section II). At a minimum, complete the following table:

	The following table refers to the total number of students who participated in the assessment (i.e., examination, product, performance) for each SLO measured by this course. If multiple SLOs are being measured by a single assessment tool, responses can be reported together.			
	Total # Students Who Participated in General Education Assessment	# Participants Met or Exceeded Proficiency Score	% Participants Met or Exceeded Proficiency Score	Does % Met or Exceeded Meet Your General Education Area's Proficiency Target? (Y/N)
SLO 1	116	112	96.5%	Y
SLO 2	40 (sampling of student papers)	30	75%	N
SLO 3	116	100	86.2%	Y
SLO 4	116	90	77.6%	N

IV. Decisions and Actions

Analyze the results presented in Section III, noting any relevant context, prevailing trends, or concerns the unit may have. How were the proficiency targets identified, and what are the unit's expectations for the performance of its students? In what way does the unit regularly review its assessment results? Additionally, explain how the results data have informed the unit's decisions and actions. Please document the decisions made, actions taken, or future plans that resulted from this review.

Please send the completed softcopy assessment report to Matt Tracy at mtracy@unomaha.edu and Denise Devney at ddevney@unomaha.edu

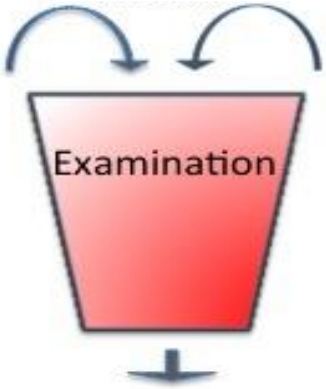
Sample of worksheet used by Gen Ed Assessment Committee members to provide feedback.

Category		Red (Does Not Meet / Did Not Include)	Yellow (Meets with Concerns)	Green (Meets)
I. Student Learning Outcomes				
General education SLOs are clearly articulated and integrated as part of the course.				
II. Measures Used				
At least some *direct* measure is employed				
Measures are directly *aligned* with student learning outcomes				
III. Results Reported				
Data are *regularly collected* against the measures				
Results are *sufficient* for analysis				
IV. Decisions and Actions based on Results				
Evidence of *data-informed decisions* is provided				
Action is taken as result of decision				
General Comments				

Illustration of UNO's Domain Categories

Gen Ed Student Learning Outcome Domains – End of Course

- *Standardized test*
- *Essay on Exam*
- *Final Exam*
- *Quiz*

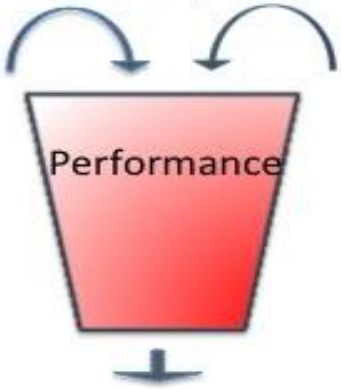


Completion Rate

- *Research Paper*
- *Poster*
- *Painting*

Completion Rate

- *Presentation*
- *Lab Exercise*
- *Recital*



Completion Rate