

Council on General Education Minutes
November 12, 2024
10:00-11:00 a.m., STV 140

Presiding: Gregory Ferrence

Present: Brian Aitken, Allison Antink Meyer, Gregory Braswell, Linda Clemmons, Gregory Ferrence, Amy Hurd, Julie Murphy, Brian Rejack, Rocio Rivadeneyra, and Haiyan Xie

Guests: Dr. Ryan Smith, Director, University Assessment Services

Ferrence called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m.

Discussion Items:

1. General Education Assessment Plan – Dr. Ryan Smith

Smith informed Council members of the history of assessment with respect to General Education over the past 15 years. He explained that the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) has charged the University with improving its assessment processes as part of the accreditation review process. University Assessment has been piloting the use of Canvas to collect course artifacts, but Smith noted there were challenges with this process, especially as it relates to Fine Arts courses. Based on conversations with HLC accreditors, faculty from across campus, and assessment best practices, Smith drafted a proposal for an assessment plan to potentially be piloted in spring 2025 (please see Exhibit A) Smith and Council members discussed the proposal. Smith told Council members he would take their suggestions and do further research. He plans to discuss any changes to the proposal with the Council sometime during the spring. In the meantime, he asked if the Council would endorse the direction, he is currently taking with the assessment plan.

Aitken made a motion to endorse the current plan. Seconded by Braswell.

All in favor, none opposed, none abstained.

The motion carried.

Action Items:

2. Approval of October 29, 2024 Minutes

Ferrence asked if there were any correction to the minutes as presented. There were no corrections. The minutes were accepted as presented.

3. HIS 110 Race and African American Life (new course proposed for UST designation)

The course was proposed by Ron Gifford, Director of Academic Programs, Department of History.

Ferrence informed Council members the proposal was for a new course for the UST designation. Antink Meyer noted there was no description of what the assessment piece was for the course and the proposal was missing the General Education rationale documentation and how the course aligned to the UST designation. Aitken added the assignment percentages on the syllabus only added up to 90% and agreed it would be nice to see an alignment of the description with the goals. Clemmons noted an expert in the subject matter is expected to teach the course and Rivadeneyra questioned if the Council had reviewed individual assessment information before.

Antink Meyer responded she was not as concerned about the assessment piece but noted the Council had set the precedent of requiring all proposals to include the General Education rationale. Ferrence agreed that the assessment question was in flux and suggested asking the department for additional information. Rivadeneyra felt the General Education supporting documentation may be present in the proposal and syllabus, just not in the correct place. Antink Meyer responded the syllabus information was copied from the generic UST definition and was not specific to HIS 110 or how the course aligned to the designation. Rivadeneyra agreed and to be fair, the Council should ask the department to provide the information. Ferrence also wondered if the course would be proposed for the IDEAS designation.

The proposal was tabled for additional information. Hurd will contact the department for additional information regarding the course's assessments, the IDEAS question, and the General Education rationale/alignment.

4. THE 154 Introduction to Black Drama and Theatre (existing course proposed for FA designation)

The course was proposed by Dr. Kee-Yoon Nahm, Associate Professor, School of Theatre and Dance.

Ferrence noted the course was an already existing course. Aitken responded it was a good course that students liked as it helped them to find connections to the arts. He added that advisors had been using the course to count toward the FA designation as there was a blanket substitution waiver in place to allow it.

A motion was made by Aitken to approve THE 154 for the FA designation. Seconded by Rivadeneyra.

All in favor, none opposed, none abstained.

The motion passed.

Information Items:

5. Curriculum Software Update

Hurd informed the Council Course Dog had been selected as the new curriculum software. The Registrar's Office will work with the vendor and the Office of Technology Solutions to begin the implementation process.

Meeting adjourned: 10:56 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Soemer Simmons

Proposal for Spring 2025 - Pilot

Ask faculty three questions about what students learn in general education

Sample questions

1. What are the most important things that students learn in your general education course?
2. In what ways do you see students connecting the fine arts/humanities to their personal lives or cultural perspectives?
3. How do you think studying fine arts/humanities as part of a Gen Ed curriculum benefits students in ways that are distinct from other subjects?
4. Can you share an innovative teaching or assessment strategy you use in your course that helps students engage more deeply with the material?

English and Communications have their own assessment processes (Communications and Composition as Critical Inquiry)

Process

1. Update assessment plan - R. Smith.
2. Notify department chairs -?
3. Send survey to faculty in late spring - R. Smith.
4. Compile results in summer 2025 - R. Smith.
5. By May 1, 2025 create a plan for using the results - CGE / AVPUE.
 - a. Report - R. Smith.
 - b. Potential curriculum changes or changes to gen ed process - CGE / AVPUE.
6. Comm and English assessment results due to CGE & R. Smith on May 1, 2025.
7. Share at gen ed fall summit - Four people: R. Smith, CGE chair or rep, 2 faculty.
8. Share results at January 2026 CIPD symposium - Four people: R. Smith, CGE chair or rep, 2 faculty.

Spring 2025 Categories, Outcomes, Departments, & Courses

Categories	Outcomes	Departments	Courses
Fine arts	1b, 1e, 2a, 2e, 2d ¹¹ , 2e ¹¹ , 3b, 3e, 3d, 4a, 4b, 4e ¹¹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Art • Dance • Theater 	ART 155, ART 156, ART 176, ART 275*, ART 282, DAN 152, MUS 152, MUS 153*, MUS 154*, MUS 157, MUS 275*, MUS 275A01*, THE 152, THE 176A01, THE 176A02, THE 213, THE 275A01*, THE 275A02* Some music courses can be counted towards the Fine Arts category. A student must enroll in a sufficient number of ensemble courses for a total 3 hours to meet the 3-hour Fine Arts requirement. *Also satisfy AMALI graduation requirement
Humanities	1b, 1e, 2a, 2e, 2d ¹¹ , 2e ¹¹ , 3b, 3e, 3d, 4a, 4b, 4e ¹¹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English • History • IDS • Languages • Philosophy 	ENG 110, ENG 130, ENG 150, ENG 160, ENG 165, ENG 170, ENG 206*, ENG 229, ENG 250, ENG 251, ENG 261, HIS 101, HIS 102, HIS 104A01*, HIS 104A02*, HIS 104A03*, HIS 104A04*, HIS 104A05*, HIS 104A06*, HIS 105, HIS 107, HIS 285, IDS 133A05, IDS 133A08, IDS 133A21, IDS 133A22, IDS 133A27, IDS 203*, IDS 203A05*, IDS 203A10*, IDS 203A15*, IDS 213, LAN 206*, PHI 101, PHI 150, PHI202, PHI 224, PHI238, PHI 251 *Also satisfy AMALI graduation requirement
Composition as critical inquiry	2a, 2b, 2e, 2d, 3e ¹¹ , 3d, 4a, 4e	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English 	
Communication as critical inquiry	2a, 2e, 2e, 3all, 3e, 4a, 4b, 4e	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communications 	

Learning Outcomes: <https://gened.illinoisstate.edu/faculty-info/>

Changes to Assessment Plan

Plan element	What we do in spring 2025	Long term vision
Purpose of General Education Assessment ¹	Same	Same
Responsibility for General Education Assessment	Associate Vice President for Undergraduate Education (AVPUE)	Associate Vice President for Undergraduate Education & CGE
Rationale for a General Education Assessment Plan ²	Same	Same
Principles of General Education Assessment ³	Same	Same
Framework and Schedule	Same	Same
Assessment Methods	<p>Direct: Faculty report what students have learned in gen ed courses using their own direct assessment methods.</p> <p>Indirect: None.</p> <p>Process reflection: None.</p>	<p>Direct: None. Faculty report what students have learned in gen ed courses using their own direct assessment methods.</p> <p>Indirect: Student Perception of Learning (SPL)</p> <p>Process reflection: Evaluation of process by CGE.</p>
Use of Results	Synthesis of results and sharing with CGE and AVPUE	<p><i>Gen ed summit:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Showcase of courses and assessments - Indirect faculty evaluation of learning in gen ed <p><i>Report:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Synthesis of results - Changes to the curriculum - Use of SPL results

¹ Purposes: 1. Students attain learning outcomes established for the general education curriculum. 2. Faculty receive appropriate feedback to improve the curriculum and instruction. 3. General education administration receives feedback about the general education process.

² • Articulates processes for demonstrating what students learn, analysis strategies for showing the strengths and weaknesses of the general education curriculum and informing decisions about general education. • Clearly articulates responsibilities and leadership for general education assessment. • Demonstrates internal accountability to students and faculty and external accountability to ISU's institutional accreditation agency.

³ • Assessment will produce actionable improvement ideas. • Assessment will rely on faculty expertise and the CGE in decision-making processes. • Assessment will rely on multiple measures and assessment approaches. • Assessment will focus on curriculum-level assessment. Results for individual courses will not be shared. • Assessment measures will focus on learning outcomes and processes. The assessment of teaching, grades or individual students is not part of the assessment plan. • The assessment plan will articulate a continuous process that can be sustained over time. • The assessment plan will include opportunities for reflection and evaluation of the assessment process itself. • The assessment plan is flexible and accommodates plan changes (see Updating the General Education Assessment Plan).

Changes to Assessment Plan

Questions should be 1) explicitly aligned with general education outcomes and 2) actionable. Curiosity is not a good reason to ask a survey question in this context.

What' - Examples only

I better understand processes an artist might use to create art.
I have a better knowledge of how art is interpreted and evaluated.
I can see how art is related to the artist's context, culture, and identity.
I have developed a greater curiosity and openness toward exploring different artistic styles and media.
I have a better understanding of the cultural significance of different art forms around the world.
I am more comfortable discussing and critiquing various forms of art.
I have learned to use basic rhetorical concepts to help me communicate more effectively.
I have improved my skills in analysis and persuasion.
I have developed more competence in research and inquiry.
I have improved my ability to analyze and interpret written texts.
I feel more confident in organizing my ideas effectively for written assignments.
I have developed a better understanding of how to craft arguments that are logical and persuasive.
I understand how to evaluate media messages and identify bias or persuasion techniques.

Where - Examples only

Which activities in your Fine Arts course(s) contributed the most to your understanding of the subject?

Art creation or performance projects
Art analysis and critique
Group discussions or critiques
Lectures or presentations on art history or theory
Museum or gallery visits (in person or virtual)
Research or written assignments on art topics

Where did you feel you learned the most in your Fine Arts course(s)? (*Select one*)

In classroom discussions and critiques
Through hands-on creation or performance activities
During independent research or projects
Through assigned readings or multimedia resources
At events or locations outside the classroom (e.g., museums, galleries) Co-curricular activities - Marching band, RSOs, etc.
Other (please specify)

⁴ Some questions from University of Iowa, [General Education Assessment](#)