


**Academy for Assessment of Student Learning
Student Learning Portfolio**
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Team Leader: blakefield, Indiana University East

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Project Section
Describe this Student Learning Project

Indiana University East has 5 learning objectives for general education, summarized as communication, quantitative skills, critical thinking, ethics, and diversity. This student learning project will help faculty establish an assessment process for these objectives which will ultimately lead to the improvement in the student attainment of them. The assessment of general education will connect directly to program assessment as each academic school determines how their degrees reinforce the aspects of general education for their students. At the completion of this project, we will have developed a process for the assessment of general education, and we will be using the data collected to make improvements in student learning. Our hope is that we will be able to strengthen the attainment of the general education objectives in the students and to determine the impact that general education has on the academic progress of students.

Focus of the Student Learning Project

General Education

Degree Level

Baccalaureate Degree

Assessment Activities

 Writing Outcomes; Creating data collection instrument(s) ; Collecting data;
 Analyzing data ; Using data to implement change

Organizational Areas Involved

There are two academic schools that provide general education at Indiana University East--Natural Science and Mathematics, and Humanities and Social Sciences. The faculty in these schools are most directly involved in assessing student progress in this area. However, since faculty in all areas of campus have an interest in student progress in general education, eventually, faculty from across campus will be invited to take part in conversations about the assessment results and changes that might be implemented for student improvement. For example, faculty in the School of Business have begun to assess technological communication as part of general education.

Desired results from the project

The desired result from this project in the short-term is to generate evidence of student learning through the creation of SMART student learning outcomes. These are linked to our campus learning objectives and included in our general education curriculum. The long-term goal is to compare student attainment of the outcomes over time in order to demonstrate the improvement of student learning.

Planning and Managing the Student Learning Project

STEPS COMPLETED: Fall 2007--Wrote student learning outcomes for general education; created the General Education Committee; distributed student learning outcomes to academic divisions for comment; developed rubrics to assess learning outcomes; determined mechanism for data collection. Spring 2008--Data was collected and reviewed in spring; results were summarized; prepare poster for Learning Exchange at HLC annual meeting, first edition of assessment newsletter, "The EMU"; Assessment Academy Retreat; April 4, 2008. Fall 2008--Modifications were made to assessment instruments and data collection processes; second round of data collection. Spring 2009--Poster presented at the Learning Exchange at HLC annual meeting; analysis of the general education data that was collected in Fall 2008; a report was created with recommendations about improvements to assessment instruments and process. Fall 2009--Rubrics for all of the general education objectives were distributed to faculty teaching 100/200 level general education classes. (Composition and Speech have a separate assessment process.) Spring 2010--Second edition of "The EMU" was distributed across campus; IUE held Assessment Day focusing on assessment of general education, programs and co-curricular areas; General Education Committee analyzed data collected in Fall 2009 and generated recommendations for improvement. In Fall 2010 we implemented some of the recommendations for improving the assessment processes. (Other recommendations will require coordination with other offices as well as with the IU East Faculty Senate.) Now that we have the basic assessment structure in place, we will ask the General Education Committee to integrate the NSSE information into their analyses of the assessment data which will take place in Spring 2011.

Monitoring Plan

TJ Rivard, a member of the Academy Team and Professor of English in the School of Humanities and Social Sciences, is leading the Assessment of General Education project. He meets regularly with the General Education Assessment Committee to keep the project on track.

Evidence of Success

The success of the assessment of general education project is highly dependent upon faculty. A successful project will be evident initially through voluntary faculty participation in assessment activities. The first step in determining progress will be a clear understanding (and ultimately acceptance) among all constituents of how general education assessment fits in with the program and overall campus assessment plans. Ultimately however, success will be indicated through measurable evidence of student progress in attaining the general education goals set for all students. We have developed the first two full reports on general education and have created and implemented the first steps toward improvement. Initially, recommendations centered on improving the assessment instrument and the process. However, the results also indicated difficulty in assessing our embedded objectives, particularly computer literacy and ethics. Diversity, also an embedded elective, is so infused within the coursework of the campus that this was less of an issue.

Products Resulting from the Student Learning Project

Our two newsletters (The EMU) are available on the assessment website (www.iue.edu/academics/assessment). Various assessment resources are also available at that site.

Project Links

[Assessment Website](#)

Update Section

Accomplishments

This Student Learning Project is proceeding at the expected pace and in accordance with the projected timeline. STEPS COMPLETED: Fall 2007--Write student learning outcomes for general education; Create General Education Committee; Distribute student learning outcomes to academic

divisions for comment; Develop rubrics to assess learning outcomes; Determine mechanism for data collection. Spring 2008-- Data collection for general education; Review of data collected; Summarize results; Poster presented during Learning Exchange at HLC annual meeting; First edition of assessment newsletter, "The EMU"; First All-Campus Assessment Retreat. Fall 2008-- Modifications made to assessment instruments and data collection processes; Second round of data collection. Spring 2009-- Poster presented during Learning Exchange at HLC annual meeting; Analysis of the general education data that was collected in Fall 2008; Report created with recommendations about improvements to assessment instruments and process. Fall 2009-- Rubrics were further modified and distributed for use in greater number of classes; Based upon mentor feedback, we have decided to focus less on data collection and increase the priority of analysis leading to meaningful results. Spring 2010—Second Assessment Retreat; Second edition of assessment newsletter, "The EMU"; General Education Committee analyzes assessment data and makes recommendations for improvement—these will be incorporated into classes in Fall 2010. We have altered our data collection to a Fall-only basis to allow discussion and analysis of the data in every Spring semester. The first data collection cycle (Fall 2007) was a pilot study and few meaningful results could be determined. In Fall 2008 we initiated the first full-round of data collection, and in Spring 2009 these data were analyzed. The data collection process was modified for Fall 2009. A report was generated which identifies baseline student outcomes. Collection of data continued in fall of 2009 and a report was generated in 2010 with recommendations for next steps (see below).

Through the assessment of general education, English and Psychology have determined that ethics was not embedded in their programs. Each of them changed their curricula to incorporate an ethics course.

July 2011--The General Education Committee is functioning well and have become an established committee on the campus. In Fall 2010, faculty in more than 100 general education sections were asked to participate in assessing particular learning outcomes, and over 80% of the sections participates. The Spring 2011 analysis and report from the committee revealed several opportunities for improvement. Most importantly, some of the outcomes being assessed, while connected to the campus learning objectives, do not match the outcomes specified in our General Education Framework.

The NSSE data that corresponds to the general education outcomes was shared with the Student Government Association. This was a first, crucial step in helping students understand the overall purpose of assessment and the importance of this activity to the campus. Additional conversations are tentatively planned to continue in Fall 2011.

Next Steps

The next step was to review and analyze the general education data that was collected in Fall 2009. We have completed this analysis of the data from fall 2009 and came to the following conclusions:

Recommendations for Assessment Process

- 1) With this second data collection, we are in a position to begin comparative analysis. This will improve if we continue to use the same rubrics in ensuing years.
- 2) One minor suggestion is to remove the comment line because it is not yielding useful information.
- 3) Increase faculty participation in the assessment process by initiating the process earlier in the semester (implemented) and following a schedule that will maximize participation, as follows:
 - a. First Tuesday after Labor Day--Identify instructors to participate in General Education Assessment.
 - b. Mid September: Notify instructors that their courses have been chosen to participate in assessment of a specified learning objective.
 - c. September 30: Distribute assessment packets (paper rubrics plus instructions) to instructors. Provide a colored envelope for return of completed rubric).
 - d. November 1: Send a reminder to faculty that the assessment rubrics are due at the same time as final grades are due to the Registrar's Office
 - e. End of semester: Chair of General Education Assessment Committee collects completed rubrics for review by committee.
 - f. First week of February, Spring semester: General Education Assessment Committee analyzes data and drafts recommendations.
 - g. First week in March—General Education committee will disseminate results to the Associate Vice Chancellor and request that the EVCAA share a short summary with Faculty Senate.

h. First week in March--Provide each participant with a short summary of the assessment results and a short letter of appreciation to all participants, which will raise awareness of our campus learning objectives, the assessment results, and the importance of taking part in the process.

4) The Committee will continue to refine and clarify instructions to instructors. (implemented)

5) The committee will continue to explore the collection of direct and indirect (self-reported) data. (Committee decided to postpone the collection of indirect data for the time being. Pertinent information from NSSE will be explored.)

6) The committee will continue to explore how IUE can use this data to improve the ability of the general education requirements to meet the IUE Learning Objectives. (in progress)

Continued Discussion:

1) The General Education Assessment committee is currently considering the use of a rubric for computer literacy, which also is a General Education requirement. (under development)

2) Continued discussion of the best way to meet and assess the ethics objective. (in progress)

3) Students should be given an assessment of General Education instruments when they apply for graduation. This should be implemented in Fall 2010 for graduates applying for graduation in 2011. (stalled)

4) Make concrete plans for using the data. With only two years of data, it is still too early to make recommendations for changes to General Education, but that is the ultimate goal of this assessment. This will occur at the end of the Spring 2011 semester.

July 2011--In Fall 2011, the General Education Committee will need to align its assessments with the General Education Framework. Efforts to continue to promote participation in assessment will continue. The Deans in the arts and sciences have been leaders of this committee, but both resigned at the end of this past academic year. The new Dean of Humanities and Social Sciences and the interim Dean of Natural Science and Math will now need to assume leadership roles of this group.

Effective Practices

Engagement

Impact of the Project

Faculty have gained greater awareness of the importance of assessing general education.

July 2011--The increasing participation of faculty in the assessment of general education has been a very positive outcome of our Academy participation.

Challenges

The general education committee is an ad hoc taskforce, created to get this project up and running. Now that the foundation for general education assessment has been laid, it's time to integrate this work into the governance structure of the university. This need has been expressed to the Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs. Most recently, there has been a discussion of transferring responsibility for General Education Assessment to the Curriculum Committee of the Faculty Senate. This will institutionalize the process despite turnover in personnel. This remains a challenge. Our second challenge relates to our need for an efficient, cost-effective method of record-keeping. This project depends on data from many classes across several schools. Once general education assessment expands to full capacity, the need for some type of database will become very important.

These challenges were present at our last posting. They still remain challenges.

One potential challenge may occur if Indiana becomes a LEAP state with regard to general education. While no decision has yet been made, the

implement of LEAP will cause us to revise our gen ed outcomes and the method by which they are assessed.

July 2011--The General Education Committee remains an ad hoc group. Efforts continue to incorporate this as a standing committee of the Faculty Senate, but it is a slow process. However, the future of the committee and the reporting lines need to be defined more clearly so that the results can be utilized more efficiently and effectively. Because faculty control curriculum, the committee needs to be integrated more clearly in the faculty governance process. At present, recommendations from this committee are only 'suggestions' and don't have the backing that they need.

An internal review of the School of Humanities and Social Sciences revealed that some faculty do not feel 'in the loop' with regard to the results of the Fall assessment activities. A process to encourage open dialogue about general education assessment must be developed.

Assistance needed

We would really like to receive feedback that indicates flaws in the process that we are using.

What has changed from your last update (Jan/Feb 2011)

By accident our posting was drafted in July but was not posted until September. Most of the text above is an update to the prior Sept. posting.

We are pleased with our progress in this project. Now at the end of Year Three, we are in the "Maturation Phase" of this project where the improved data collection process resulted in an improved analysis of the data. The General Education Committee has made 6 recommendations for improvement. These will be implemented into classes in Fall 2010. IU East hosted our Second Assessment Retreat. An assessment mentor (Jennifer Fager) visited campus and met with various groups related to program assessment, general education and co-curricular assessment activities. She provided us with feedback about our progress in each area. The second edition of the Assessment Newsletter (The EMU) was published in Spring 2010. We presented our third poster at the Academy Learning Exchange and Showcase at the HLC meeting in April 2010.

In Fall 2010, much general education data was collected. More is still coming in from faculty. Once faculty have completed their submissions, the General Education Committee will begin reviewing the data and will make recommendations to be implemented Fall 2011. This year, we will add the NSSE data to gain a more holistic view of the student experience. We will also share the NSSE general education data with the Student Government Association for their input.

July 2011--Since the last update in February 2011, IU East has completed the assessment cycle for general education. Data collected in Fall 2010 was analyzed and a report was prepared for the Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs. Assessment information has begun to be shared with students through conversations with the Student Government Association.