

GENERAL EDUCATION COURSE ASSESSMENT Guidelines for GE Managing Data in TracDat

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OVERVIEW: This document contains detailed guidelines for:

- A. Creating learning objectives for General Education courses
 - B. Entering GE learning objectives, and assessment methods into TracDat (*updated version*)
 - C. Creating GE assessment data reports & use of data (How to summarize GE data)
 - D. Entering GE assessment data into TracDat (*updated version*).
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This Guide is for GE courses in BLOCK Va: HISTORY

A. CREATING LEARNING OBJECTIVES FOR GENERAL EDUCATION COURSES

Each department with general education courses should create learning objectives for the GE course(s). I recommend two student learning objectives--one objective to focus on critical thinking, and one objective to focus on the other criteria on which students are evaluated.

The GE course rubric has criteria on which student learning is assessed. These criteria can be roughly categorized as “critical thinking” and “other.” The criteria on the course rubric provide the language for the learning objectives.

Example: Criteria on History/Social Science Scoring Rubric

Criteria
Comprehension
Application and Analysis
Interpretation and Evaluation
Methods
Integration

“Application and Analysis,” and “Integration” are considered *critical thinking* tasks. “Comprehension,” “Interpretation/Evaluation,” and “Methods” are considered *non critical-thinking* tasks. (Obviously, this categorization is not perfect, as critical thinking may be required for any thinking task. However, for assessment purposes these categories will suffice.)

Recommended Learning Objectives for Block Va:

(1) *Students in general education courses will comprehend the important concepts, establish a conclusive position, identify implications and consequences, and demonstrate an understanding of the methods used in the discipline.* (Note: This language is from the course rubric for “Comprehension,” “Interpretation/Evaluation,” and “Methods.”) This is the *non critical thinking* objective.

(2) *Students in general education courses will use relevant concepts/theories in different contexts, and integrate relevant information, perspectives and principles.* (Note: This language is from the course rubric for “Application/Analysis” and “Integration.”) This is the *critical thinking* objective.

Note: Regardless of the number of GE courses, each department needs only TWO objectives for GE--one objective for “critical thinking,” and one objective for “non critical thinking.” In the TracDat guidelines below I illustrate how data for multiple courses (e.g., HIS 202, HIS 247, etc.) can be entered under a single learning objective.

Why two objectives? Departments are required to have student-learning objectives related to critical thinking. Creating a critical-thinking objective for GE courses will help departments meet this requirement, and will help the University gather data on critical thinking for QEP and other assessment purposes.

B. ENTERING GE LEARNING OBJECTIVES AND ASSESSMENT METHODS INTO TracDat

Login to TracDat →

(Top Menu Tab): Choose: **Plan**

(Bottom Middle) Choose: **Add New Objective**

Objective Name: Type: *GE Comp/Methods*

Objective: Type: *Students in general education courses will comprehend the important concepts, establish a conclusive position, identify implications and consequences, and demonstrate an understanding of the methods used in the discipline.*

Objective Types: Select appropriate types

Objective Status: Choose: **Active**

Start Date: Enter date (or choose date by opening the calendar icon) (note: backdate entries as appropriate. For example, if GE course began fall 2007, enter a date around the start of the fall 2007 semester.)

End Date: Leave Blank

SAVE CHANGES

(Top Menu Tab): Choose: **Means of Assessment**

(Bottom Middle) Choose: **Add New Assessment Method**

Assessment Method: Enter assessment method. Include assessment process.

For departments with multiple GE courses, enter a separate assessment method for each course.

Important: Begin with course number. This allows departments with multiple GE courses to quickly find the assessment method that applies to a specific course.

Example assessment method: *PSY 300: 22 multiple-choice items on final exam. All students all sections. Research paper. 20% Random sample of papers from each section. Scored by committee.*

Criterion: Type: *Students will be dispersed across levels 1—3. At this time, no criteria are set for levels 1—3. Less than 5% of students will be in level 4.**

*note: some departments may have a good reason to expect more students in level 4, but for most courses we expect very few students to “exceed the expectations” of the course.

Schedule: Enter when you expect to assess. note: Every two years is the minimum requirement. Departments are encouraged to assess more often.

Who will use data: Example: *Faculty will use data in two ways: (1) to evaluate the assessment instrument, and (2) to determine how to modify courses to improve student learning.*

SAVE CHANGES

(Top Menu Tab): Choose: **Related Courses:** Check which courses are the GE courses (note. some departments have not entered their list of courses. In this case, skip this step.)

SAVE CHANGES

(Top Menu Tab): Choose: **Related Goals:**

Link to "EKU" 06-10 S.D. 3.2 Enhance Student Learning

Link to "College of A & S" 06-10 S.D. 3.1 Enhance student learning

Link to "General Education Revised" Goals 3, & 7

Link to SACS goals: PS-Undergraduate Education #15

Link to your department's goals as appropriate

SAVE CHANGES

REPEAT PROCESS FOR NEXT GE OBJECTIVE --> (This will be the objective related to critical thinking.)

(Top Menu Tab): Choose: **Plan**

(Bottom Middle) Choose: **Add New Objective**

Objective Name: Type: *GE Critical Thinking*

Objective: Type: *Students in general education courses will use relevant concepts/theories in different contexts, and integrate relevant information, perspectives and principles.*

Objective Types: Select appropriate types

Objective Status: Choose: **Active**

Start Date: Enter date (or choose date by opening the calendar icon) (note: backdate entries as appropriate. For example, if GE course began fall 2007, enter a date around the start of the fall 2007 semester.)

End Date: Leave Blank

SAVE CHANGES

(Top Menu Tab): Choose: **Means of Assessment**

(Bottom Middle) Choose: **Add New Assessment Method**

Assessment Method: Enter assessment method. Include assessment process.

Important: Begin with course number. This will allow departments with multiple GE courses to quickly find the assessment method that applies to any one course.

Example assessment method: PSY 300: Final exam. All students all sections. Research paper. Random sample of papers from each section.

Criterion: Type: *Students will be dispersed across levels 1—3. At this time, no criteria are set for levels 1—3. Less than 5% of students will be in level 4.**

*note: some departments may have a good reason to expect more students in level 4, but for most courses we expect very few students to “exceed the expectations” of the course.

Schedule: Enter when you expect to assess. note: Every two years is the minimum requirement. Departments are encouraged to assess more often.

Who will use data: Example: *Faculty will use data in two ways: (1) to evaluate the assessment instrument, and (2) to determine how to modify courses to improve student learning.*

SAVE CHANGES

(Top Menu Tab): Choose: **Related Courses:** Check which courses are the GE courses

SAVE CHANGES

(Top Menu Tab): Choose: **Related Goals:**

Link to “EKU” 06-10 S.D. 3.2 Enhance Student Learning

Link to “College of A & S” 06-10 S.D. 3.1 Enhance student learning

Link to “General Education Revised” Goals 2, 3, & 8

Link to SACS goals: PS-Undergraduate Education #15

Link to your department’s goals as appropriate

SAVE CHANGES

C. CREATING GE ASSESSMENT DATA REPORTS & USE OF DATA

Although there are only two learning objectives, data must be reported for each criterion. Do not combine data from multiple criteria.

Each student must be assessed on each criterion and the percent of students in each level of accomplishment should be reported. Also, *report sample sizes*, and whether all students, or a sample of students, were assessed. An example data summary follows. (**Time saving note.** To create reports more easily, download the course rubric from the GE website (in Word). Enter data in the cells and save.)

Example of Data Summary

HIS 247: Spring 2008

Criteria	Sample Size	4- Accomp	3- Compet	2- Develop	1- Begin
Comprehension	100 (all students in 4 sections)	N/A <i>(note. this level is not possible with multiple choice items)</i>	40	30	30
Application Analysis	20 (random sample of 5 students from each of 4 sections)	0	7	10	3
Interpretation Evaluation	20 (random sample of 5 students from each of 4 sections)	1	6	10	3
Methods	100 (all students in 4 sections)	N/A	90	5	0
Integration	20 (random sample of 5 students from each of 4 sections)	8	10	2	0

Time saving note. If you type the department's "use of data" in this Word document, then you will not need to retype this information into TracDat. Instead this "data summary & use of data" document *can be LINKED in TracDat*.

Use of Data: An extremely important part of GE assessment is *Use of Data*. The GE Committee expects that data will be used in reasonable ways to improve the assessment instrument, assessment processes, and, ultimately, the GE courses. This part of the data summary should be considered essential.

EXAMPLE. Use of Data

Comprehension and Methods were assessed via 60 multiple-choice items. The distribution of scores for comprehension appears reasonable. However, there were 5 comprehension items that no students answered correctly. The faculty judged all 5 items to be important, and have discussed how those concepts could be emphasized and illustrated more in future classes.

The distribution for methods does not appear reasonable because 90% of the students were assessed as “competent.” This does not reflect the students’ performance on other assignments in the course. The faculty discussed the assessment items for methods and determined that they are not challenging enough. The instrument will be revised before the next assessment.

Application/Analysis, Interpretation/Evaluation and Integration were assessed via a research paper. Because they are more difficult concepts, we expected the students to perform less well on these criteria than on the comprehension items. This was the case with application/analysis and interpretation/evaluation, and the distribution of scores for these two criteria appears reasonable.

The distribution of scores for integration does not appear reasonable. 40% of students “exceeded the expectations” for the course. Faculty re-visited the integration part of the paper and realized that the assignment did not require students to integrate material on their own. Rather, in class, faculty tended to integrate the material for the students, and in the papers, all students had to do was recall what the instructors had previously integrated. Faculty have agreed to modify their teaching strategies to demonstrate integration of material in class, but not use the same material that students are later required to integrate in the papers.

D. ENTERING GE ASSESSMENT DATA INTO TracDat.

Logon to TracDat

(Top Menu Tab): Choose: **Result/Observations**

(Bottom Middle): Choose: **Add Result/Observation**

(Right side of Screen): Select the Objective → Select the Assessment Method

Result/Observation Box: Type "See Link"

Result/Observation Date: Choose date of assessment (not date you entered data)

Result/Observation Type: Choose either "Strength" or "Limitation" as appropriate

Result Status: Choose appropriate status (click on "?" beside box for more information)

(Bottom Right Tab): Choose: **Add Use of Results**

SAVE CHANGES

TO LINK DATA SUMMARY/USE OF DATA DOCUMENT:

(Top Menu Tab): Choose: **Documents**

(Bottom Middle): Choose **Add New Document**

Browse for document and upload it to TracDat.

YOU ARE DONE! Congratulations.