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Assessing General Education

Deborah Moeckel, SUNY Assistant Provost
SUNY Council on Assessment
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deborah.moeckel@suny.edu

**So we have a new
Gen Ed Framework...**

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**What are the
minimum
requirements?**

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Flexibility

Institutions have the flexibility to add to the minimum requirements according to their mission.

For example, the Diversity: Equity, Inclusion, and Social Justice category can be included as a competency as well as a knowledge area, allowing this to be addressed across the curriculum, as well as in specific courses.

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The Framework

For AA/ AS/ Baccalaureate degrees:

- 30 credits
- 7/10 Knowledge and Skill Areas: Required
 - Communication – Oral and Written
 - Mathematics (and Quantitative Reasoning)
 - Natural Science (and Scientific Reasoning)
 - Diversity: Equity Inclusion and Social Justice
- 2 required competencies
 - Critical Thinking and Reasoning
 - Information Literacy

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For AAS degrees:

- 20 credits
- 4/10 Knowledge and Skill Areas: Required
 - Communication – Oral and Written
 - Mathematics (and Quantitative Reasoning)
 - Natural Science (and Scientific Reasoning)
 - Diversity: Equity Inclusion and Social Justice
- 2 required competencies
 - Critical Thinking and Reasoning
 - Information Literacy

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For AOS degrees:

- No credit requirement
- 4/10 Required Knowledge and Skill Areas, Freestanding or Embedded
 - Communication – Oral and Written
 - Mathematics (and Quantitative Reasoning)
 - Natural Science (and Scientific Reasoning)
 - Diversity: Equity Inclusion and Social Justice
- 2 required competencies
 - Critical Thinking and Reasoning
 - Information Literacy



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The Framework

- Technological Competency is a Middle States requirement.
- It must be included in degree programs according to the technology appropriate to the discipline. It should be mapped along with other requirements, so that it is evident where and when this is taught and assessed.

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What's new?

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A Program of General Education

The new requirements reflect the need for a coherent program of general education. These have been developed with a view to preparing students to be 21st century global citizens. Vision and Guiding Principles are provided in the framework.

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Consistency with Middle States

Categories and requirements align more closely with Middle States requirements.

Requirements also apply to AAS and AOS degrees as is consistent with Middle States.

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New/Revised Knowledge and Skill Areas

New Category

- Diversity: Equity, Inclusion and Social Justice
- Revised Categories:
- US History and Civic Engagement
- World History and Global Awareness

New/Revised Student Learning Outcomes

Category Titles and SLOs for categories have been updated to reflect current norms and expectations; e.g. Foreign Languages has been changed to World Languages and ASL has been included in the category.

Assessment Challenges

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Assessing the General Education Program

- Because the framework is conceptualized as a program, the SLOs need to be assessed as such. This presents many challenges at the institutional level in order to determine how well students are acquiring and demonstrating Gen Ed SLOs, and then to determine how improvements may be made if needed.

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Definitions

- Program Learning Outcomes: after completing the academic program, students should be able to demonstrate these outcomes and competencies.
- Program Outcomes: Typically include completion data such as graduation rates and placement rates. The government includes such factors as loan default rates as well.

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Assessing the General Education Program

Some challenges include:

- Assessment artifacts may vary among course sections and programs.
- In order to determine how students are learning at the institutional level, disparate types of assessment results may need to be aggregated.
- In order to determine where in the curricula changes may need to be made to improve outcomes, assessment results may then need to be disaggregated.

Assessing the General Education Program

One possible means of combining disparate artifact types would be to adopt a measure describing the percentage of students

- not meeting the SLO
- approaching the SLO
- meeting the SLO
- exceeding the SLO

This process was used by SUNY when setting assessment reporting for the original SUNY GER framework.

In order to adopt this process, benchmarks need to be established.



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This Means

- Institutions need to be clear about which GER requirements are applicable to which degrees, where in the degree program the requirements may be found, and where they are assessed.
- Infused competencies should be mapped to demonstrate where in each degree program these SLOs are introduced, reinforced, mastered, and assessed.





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Challenges

1. Connecting the dots among all SLOs at the course, program, general education and institutional levels.
2. Showing how students acquire and demonstrate these outcomes.
3. Documenting this.





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Questions

- With outcomes which have multiple objectives or parts, must a student meet all of the objectives to have met the outcome?
- How will this be tracked if the objectives cannot all be addressed in the same course?
- How will this affect transfer students?

**So what is a curriculum
map anyway?**

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Curriculum Maps

- A visual manner of diagramming curricular requirements.
- May take many different forms and styles, depending on the complexity of the purpose and the intended use.
- Serve as a means of documenting where and when in a program SLOs are addressed and assessed.

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Layering Curriculum Maps

How do you use maps to give the whole picture of a degree program, with ISLOs, GESLOs, PSLOs, and where each is assessed?

(Example Business Administration AS)

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Course Designation	Course Title	Credits	ISLO	SUNY GER	PSLO	
ENG 101	Freshman English I	3				
BUS 101	Principles of Accounting I	4				
BUS 103	Principles of Business	3				
	Math Elective	3				
	Science Elective	4				
ENGL 102	Freshman English II	3				
BUS 102	Principles of Accounting II	4				
BUS 225	Microcomputer Application Software	3				
	Math Elective	3				
	Physical Education	1				
	Health	1				
ENG 221	Effective Speech: Public Address	3				
	OR					
ENG 270	Technical Writing	3				
BUS 200	Principles of Management	3				
BUS 205	Business Law I	3				
ECON 201	Intro to Economics I	3				
	Other World Civilizatiions Elective	3				
	OR					
	The Arts Elective	3				
	Physical Education	1				
BUS 204	Marketing	3				
ECON 202	Intro to Economics II	3				
Math 214	Statistics	3				
HIST 101	Western Civilization I	3				
	OR					
HIST 102	Western Civilization II	3				
	OR					
HIST 103	Pre-History and Early American History	3				
	OR					
HIST 104	19th Century American History	3				
	OR					
HIST 105	Americas in the 20th and 21st Centuries	3				

The **Institutional Learning Outcomes** are a promise to the community that graduates and those transferring to a four-year college or university will be able to demonstrate the knowledge, skills, and abilities contained within all of the ILOs based on general education and discipline-specific courses.

ILO 1: Communication Competency

Students will be able to communicate effectively to different audiences, through various modes of communication.

ILO 2: Information Literacy

Students will identify, evaluate and integrate information effectively in various contexts.

ILO 3: Critical Thinking

Students will analyze situations, evaluate options, and synthesize findings to make well-justified decisions.

ILO 4: Cultural Competency

Students will interact effectively with others, taking into account their diverse backgrounds, to work competently in cross-cultural situations.

ILO 5: Academic and Personal Responsibility

Students will set goals, use college resources, and have the knowledge and skills necessary to achieve their goals in a timely manner.

SUNY GENERAL EDUCATION STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

I. KNOWLEDGE AND SKILL AREAS

1. MATHEMATICS
2. NATURAL SCIENCES
3. SOCIAL SCIENCES
4. AMERICAN HISTORY
5. WESTERN CIVILIZATION
6. OTHER WORLD CIVILIZATIONS
7. HUMANITIES
8. THE ARTS
9. FOREIGN LANGUAGE
10. BASIC COMMUNICATION

II. COMPETENCIES

The following two competencies should be infused throughout the General Education program:

1. CRITICAL THINKING (REASONING)
2. INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

Business Administration AS

PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. Apply knowledge of the activities of business and government and of the environments in which they operate
2. Utilize basic principles of accounting
3. Apply basic knowledge of Macro and Micro Economics Theory
4. Demonstrate an understanding of applied and/or theoretical mathematics and their applications in a business environment
5. Display an understanding of one or more other specific business subjects
6. Effectively compose written and oral business communications
7. Possess an awareness of career options
8. Continue your education at a 4-year institution

Course Designation	Course Title	Credits	ISLO	Assessed	SUNY GER	Assessed	PSLO	Assessed
ENG 101	Freshman English I×	3	1,2	✓	10	✓	6	✓
BUS 101	Principles of Accounting I	4					2	
BUS 103	Principles of Business	3					1	✓
	Math Elective	3			1		4	
	Science Elective	4			2	✓		
ENGL 102	Freshman English II	3			7	✓		
BUS 102	Principles of Accounting II	4					2	✓
BUS 225	Microcomputer Application Software	3						
	Math Elective	3			1		4	
	Physical Education	1						
	Health	1						
ENG 221	Effective Speech: Public Address	3	1		10-O		6	
	OR							
ENG 270	Technical Writing	3	1		10-W		6	
BUS 200	Principles of Management	3					5	✓
BUS 205	Business Law I	3	3	✓			1	
ECON 201	Intro to Economics I	3			3		3	
	Other World Civilizations Elective	3	4	✓	6	✓		
	OR							
	The Arts Elective	3			8	✓		
	Physical Education	1						
BUS 204	Marketing	3					5	✓
ECON 202	Intro to Economics II	3			3	✓	3	✓
Math 214	Statistics	3			1	✓	4	✓
HIST 101	Western Civilization I	3			5	✓		
	OR							
HIST 102	Western Civilization II	3			5	✓		



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Curriculum Maps – Infused competencies

Another type of map is a table with one column for each learning outcome and one row for each course or required event/experience (or vice versa: each row contains a course and each column lists a learning outcome). The following is an excerpt from hypothetical biology program curriculum map.

Key: "I"=Introduced; "R"=reinforced and opportunity to practice; "M"=mastery at the senior or exit level; "A"=assessment evidence collected

Courses and Experiences	Program Learning Outcomes			
	Apply the scientific method	Develop laboratory techniques	Diagram and explain major cellular processes	Awareness of careers and job opportunities in biological sciences
BIOL 101	I	I		I
BIOL 202	R	R	I	
BIOL 303	R	M, A	R	
BIOL 404	M, A		M, A	R
Other: Exit interview				A

Curriculum Maps – Infused competencies

I. Label

- Critical Thinking and Reasoning

II. Student Learning Outcomes

Students will

1. clearly articulate an issue or problem;
2. identify, analyze, and evaluate ideas, data, and arguments as they occur in their own or others' work;
3. acknowledge limitations such as perspective and bias; and
4. develop well-reasoned (logical) arguments to form judgments and/or draw conclusions.

Critical Thinking and Reasoning						
Course Designation	Course Title	Credits	SLO 1	SLO 2	SLO 3	SLO 4
ENG 101	Freshman English I	3	I	I	I	I
BUS 101	Principles of Accounting I	4		I		
BUS 103	Principles of Business	3	I	I		I
	Math Elective	3				
	Science Elective	4				
ENGL 102	Freshman English II	3	R		R	R
BUS 102	Principles of Accounting II	4				
BUS 225	Microcomputer Application Software	3				
	Math Elective	3				
	Physical Education	1				
	Health	1				
ENG 221	Effective Speech: Public Address	3	R	R	R	R
	OR					
ENG 270	Technical Writing	3	R	R	R	R
BUS 200	Principles of Management	3				
BUS 205	Business Law I	3	R	R	M/A	M/A
ECON 201	Intro to Economics I	3	R	R		
	Other World Civilizations Elective	3			R	
	OR					
	The Arts Elective	3			R	
	Physical Education	1				
BUS 204	Marketing	3				
ECON 202	Intro to Economics II	3	M/A	M/A		
Math 214	Statistics	3		R		
HIST 101	Western Civilization I	3				
	OR					
HIST 102	Western Civilization II	3				



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Observations

- Some programs may require re-designation or restriction of electives to specify particular courses which meet the needed outcomes.
- Many courses may meet only one of the objectives under a particular GE SLO. This would need to be specified so that the full range of SLOs may be addressed and assessed.
- Some courses may need to add specific SLOs in order to demonstrate that the courses do address the topic in question. You can't just assume.
- You do not need a course for each outcome, especially for general education. It is possible to integrate outcomes even if there is no Liberal Arts course designated in which it would be addressed. Indeed, in some programs, e.g. AOS degrees, regulations prohibit inclusion of Liberal Arts courses.



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Observations

- In some cases where a choice of courses is indicated, you should check to ensure that any SLO met by one course is met by the other(s) as well if this is the only place that the SLO is addressed in the program.
- Some indication in the map should be made to determine in which courses or in which alternative manner the SLOs will be assessed.
- You may want to conduct your assessments in courses which fall later in the curriculum or which have a higher designation so as to assess student learning at a time when they would have had a chance to acquire and demonstrate more advanced skills (e.g. 200 rather than 100 level courses).

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Discussion

