Getting Faculty Involved in Assessing General Education

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Participants will be able to…

- Outline an assessment plan for General Education (GE)
- Identify obstacles / challenges to assessment of GE
- Adapt strategies for fostering continuous improvement

Challenges

- What challenges do you face with assessing GE?
- Why did you come to this session?
- What do you hope to get out of this session?
What is GE?

Definition
- “a program of education (as in some liberal-arts colleges and secondary schools) intended to develop students as personalities rather than trained specialists and to transmit a common cultural heritage” (Merriam-Webster)

How do you define GE at your institution?

Who owns GE?

How many have heard faculty complain about...?

ODU’s GE – Approved 2010: 15 Areas

Lower Division – Skills
1. Written Communication Skills (100 Level)
2. Written Communication Skills (200 Level)
3. Mathematical Skills
4. Oral Communication
5. Information Literacy and Research
6. Language and Culture

Lower Division – Ways of Knowing
7. Human Creativity
8. Literature
9. The Nature of Science
10. Human Behavior
11. Interpreting the Past

Lower and Upper Division – Ways of Knowing
12. Philosophy and Ethics
13. The Impact of Technology

Upper Division
14. Written Communication within the Major
15. Upper Division Fulfillment Options

Where to Start?!?!

Do your institution’s GE areas have Student Learning Outcomes?
- AAC&U
- Form a Committee
  - Core Committee – College Leadership and Faculty Senate
  - Sub-committee – faculty teaching GE courses, coordinators, department chairs
- Support faculty with the development of Student Learning Outcomes
  - Training and resources
### Assessing GE: 2016-2022

#### Steps to Assessing GE

- After developed a plan and formed a committee
- Steps are not linear or mutually exclusive
- Faculty should be involved in all of the steps

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**Now What?**

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**Steps to Assessing GE**

- Faculty should be involved in all of the steps
Five Steps to Assessing General Education

1. Identify the Artifacts
   - Identify artifacts related to the GE areas and assess Student Learning Outcomes.
   - Talk with faculty – ask questions!
   - What assignment or series of assignments in your course assesses student’s ability to:
     - explain an issue/problem
     - select and use information to develop a coherent analysis and synthesis
     - identify the influence of context, own and others’ assumptions
     - state a position (thesis/hypothesis)
     - construct a conclusion logically related to a range of information and implications

2. Obtain Access to the Data
   - Does the faculty member use a course management system (e.g. Blackboard) or an e-Portfolio?
   - “Just give me access”
   - Randomly select from a course roster
   - Download and compile the artifacts

3. Create a Rubric
   - Manage Logistics
   - Conduct the Assessment
5 Steps to Assessing General Education

3 Create a Rubric
Ask Faculty to help
- Get them involved with setting rubric standards and ratings
- Provide examples

4 Logistics
Tend to the details so information about student learning can be collected well
- Identify faculty to participate in assessment
  - At least 4 faculty per GE area
  - Randomly select artifacts (redacted)
  - Set-up electronic access
    - Google Drive – upload artifacts
    - Qualtrics – online rubric
- Assign artifacts
  - Artifacts are read by 2 faculty
  - Ratings with +1 point discrepancy on majority of the outcomes is assigned to a third faculty reader

Examples

<table>
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<th>Reader 2</th>
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2019 SACSCOC Annual Meeting
Steps to Assessing General Education

1. Conduct the Assessment
2. 2-day Assessment Summit

- 2 days, 9am – 4pm
- Gather 4 faculty/GE area to read and rate artifacts
- $750 stipend
- Day 1:
  - 10am – noon: Calibration
  - 1-4pm: Faculty read & rate student artifacts
- Day 2:
  - 9-1pm: Faculty read & rate student artifacts
  - 1-4pm: Discussion and Report out

Calibration Process Directions

- Read and rate a sample artifact
- Read the entire artifact through one time
- Rate the artifact on each SLO
- Each rater to report their scores on each SLO
  - variability in scores – do they vary by a point or less?
    - Ask raters who rated an SLO as a 4 to share why
- Read, rate, and discuss a second example using a different artifact
- Read, rate, and discuss a third example using a different artifact
- Read, rate, and discuss additional examples as necessary using different artifacts

Faculty Discussion About Student Learning

- The goal is to leave the final session with a “draft” assessment report, informed by faculty discussions
- Process
  - How rigorous and accurate was the calibration and rating process? How valid and reliable are our results?
  - What are your suggestions/recommendations for improving the assessment process?
Reporting Results (cont.)

**Student Learning**
- What have you observed about the achievement of the XX SLO?
- What are areas of strength related to the SLOs?
- What are areas that need improvement related to the SLOs?
- To what extent were all of the SLO addressed in the artifacts?
- Based on your ratings of XX artifacts, please rate the current status of each of the XX SLO using the XX rubric.

**Recommendations**
- What recommendations would you make to GEAC regarding improving disciplinary writing?
- What recommendations would you make to your colleagues regarding improving XX area?

Disseminate Data

- Committee
- Leadership
- Faculty teaching courses

Faculty Involvement
Resistance to Involvement

- Lack of Ownership
- Lack of Benefit
- Increased burdens
- Loneliness
- Insecurity
- Norm incongruence
- Boredom
- Chaos
- Superiority
- Differential Knowledge
- Lack of Recognition
- Sudden wholesale change
- Failure
- Extremes in organizational structure

Manage Resistance: Change Strategies

- Rational – Empirical (Educational)
- Power – Coercive
- Normative re-educative
  - These are not mutually exclusive because of the complexity of higher education elements of all three may need to be employed
- Your ability to use these strategies may depend upon the amount of time you have to complete the change you desire.
- If your accreditation visit is next year it may not be possible to use all of these strategies
- This may also impact your ability to maintain the change you desire

Multiple Ways to Involve Faculty

- Manage Resistance
  - Recognize it
  - Embrace it
  - Plan to overcome it
- Sub-committees
- Rubric development
- Assessment Summit
- Reporting
When Engaging Faculty Remember to...

- Facilitate meeting faculty needs
- Engage faculty in solving potential problems and taking responsibility for SL
- Focus on the process and the people involved as much as the end result
- Embrace resistance and discomfort
- Maintain focus on improving student learning

6 Years of Learning

Assessing GE: 2016-2022

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### Lessons Learned

- Start Early
- Involve faculty often
- Communication
- Expand timeline
- Faculty Development opportunities

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### Thank you

Questions?
Comments?

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