

**WRESTLING
WITH
ALLIGATORS:

General Education
Assessment**

Texas A&M University

*Annual Assessment
Conference*

February 17-19, 2008

WORKSHOP:

8:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.

Concurrent Session V

Brazos Amphitheater

Track 4:

Strategic Planning and
Accreditation

Track 5:

Assessing the Core
Curriculum and General
Education



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SESSION OBJECTIVES

To introduce one university's methods for developing a model of general education assessment.

To demonstrate faculty input and engagement in assessing general education competencies.

To share opportunities and challenges in preparation for general education assessment.

To help prepare for successful compliance with comprehensive standard 3.5.1.

COC/SACS

Principles of Accreditation: Foundations for Quality Enhancement

2008 Interim Edition

Comprehensive Standard 3.5.1

The institution identifies college-level general education competencies and the extent to which graduates have attained them. (College-level competencies)

McNeese's General Education Assessment Timeline

- 1984 LA Board of Regents creates a statewide Task Force on General Education.
- 1985 Regents adopt a policy on statewide general education requirements.
- 1987 McNeese implements a general education core consisting of 43 credit hours.
- 2002 Regents initiate a statewide review of general education.
- 2002 VP of Academic Affairs creates an ad hoc General Education Task Force.
- 2005 VPAA creates a standing committee, the General Education Assessment Council.
- 2006 McNeese submits Compliance Report/QEP to COC/SACS off-site committee.
- 2007 McNeese hosts SACS on-site committee to review compliance issues and QEP.
- 2007 McNeese receives reaffirmation of accreditation at SACS Annual meeting 😊
- 2008 Responsibility for general education oversight assigned to IE Director.

LOUISIANA

BOARD OF REGENTS

GENERAL EDUCATION

COMPETENCIES

- Communicate effectively in oral and written English;
- Read with comprehension;
- Reason abstractly and think critically;
- Understand numerical data and statistics;
- Understand the scientific method;
- Be familiar with key technological and informational applications;
- Learn independently;
- Recognize and appreciate cultural diversity;
- Understand the nature and value of the fine and performing arts;
- Develop a personal value system while retaining a tolerance for others;
- Understand the American political and economic system.

GENERAL EDUCATION ASSESSMENT COUNCIL (GEAC)

Responsibilities

Assess University's compliance with Board of Regents general education competencies;

Translate the Board of Regents general education competencies to fit McNeese campus culture;

Review University programs and courses to determine alignment with general education competencies;

Assess the effectiveness of the general education core curriculum;

Evaluate student achievement of general education competencies;

Allocate resources in support of general education based on outcome assessment.

Membership

Strong, faculty-led leadership;

Representatives from each academic college and general and basic studies;

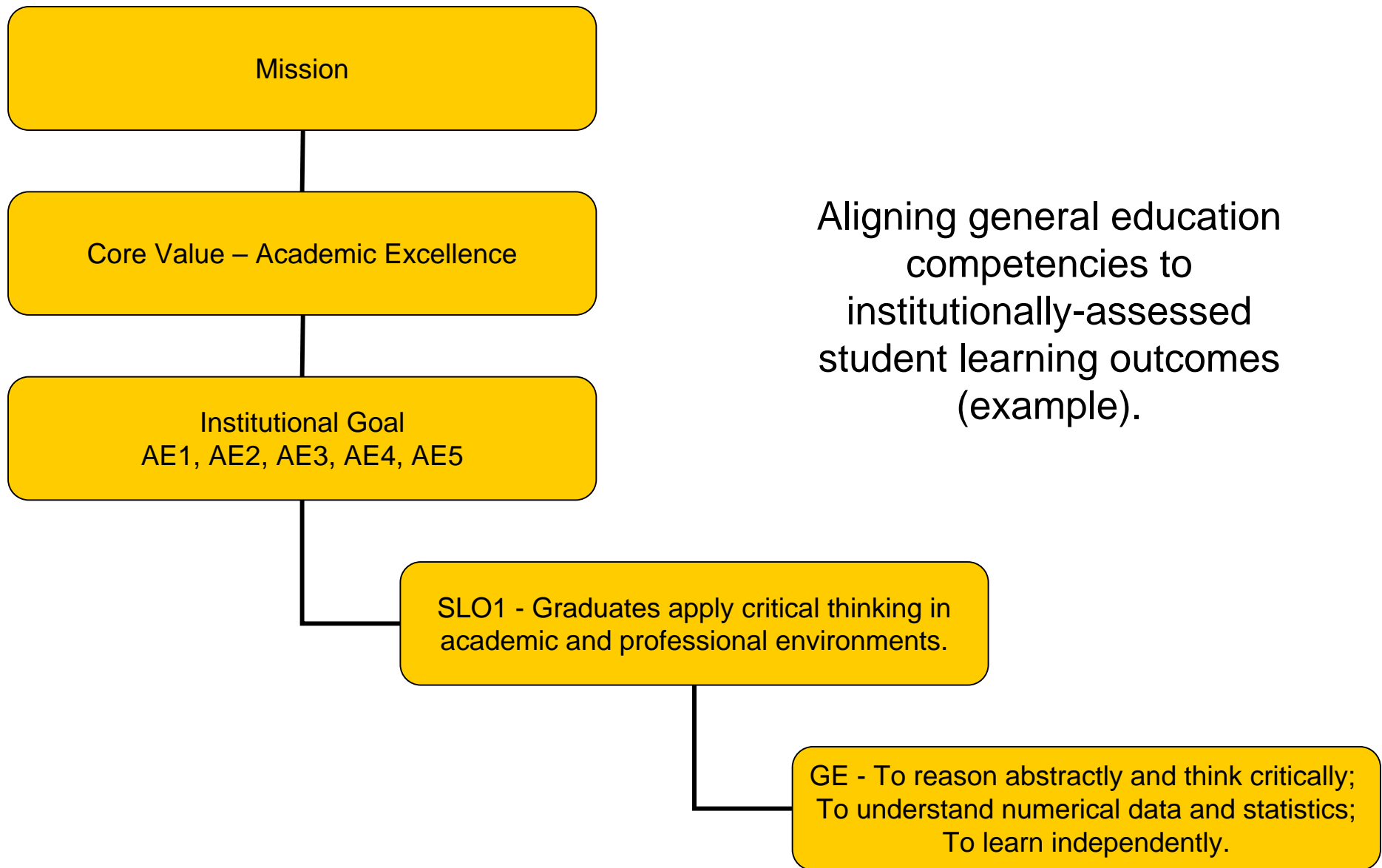
Representative(s) from IR and/or IE;

Representative(s) from academic support unit;

Adequate membership to make decisions without committee becoming too unwieldy.

Steps Taken Toward Taming the Alligator

1. Assign leadership responsibility for general education assessment.
2. Create/review/revise general education mission statement.
3. Recast the BOR competencies in terms of student learning outcomes.
4. Codify current general education assessment methods.
5. Develop general education course matrices.
6. Define outcome measures.
7. Develop a general education strategic plan.
8. Develop a general education annual master plan/progress report.
9. Require updated syllabi that speak to achievement of general education competencies throughout the course.
10. Expound on general education information in the catalog.



DATA MINING



The Office of Institutional Research performed data mining to determine which courses were taken most frequently by graduates over a five-year period.

From that compilation, the list provided information that correlated core curricula with majors.

CURRICULUM MAPPING

Courses identified as meeting one or more of the general education competencies were reflected in a matrix. Each course was then linked to one of the following descriptors:

INTRODUCED (I)
EMPHASIZED (E)
ASSESSED (A)

LEVEL OF CONTENT DELIVERY

I = Introduced - Material/skill associated with the competency is **Introduced**.

E = Emphasized - Material/skill associated with the competency is **Emphasized**.

A = Assessed - Material/skill associated with the competency is Introduced, Emphasized, and **Assessed**.

| Competency / Course | Communicate effectively in oral and written English | Learn independently | Recognize and appreciate cultural diversity | Understand the nature and value of the fine and performing arts | Understand the American economic system |
|---------------------|---|---------------------|---|---|---|
| | | | | | |
| ART 101 | E | E | | A | |
| BIOL 106 | | E | | | |
| CHEM 102 | A | E | | | |
| ENGL 106H | A | A | I | E | |
| GEOG 221 | | | E | | |
| HIST 202 | A | E | A | | A |
| MATH/STAT 231 | I | I | | | |
| MUSC 353 | | | I | A | |
| PHIL 331 | A | | E | | |
| PSYC 310 | E | I | A | | |
| SPCH 205 | E | E | E | | |
| THEA 161 | E | | E | A | |

CRIMINAL JUSTICE CURRICULUM MAP

INTEGRATION OF GENERAL EDUCATION COMPETENCIES IN DEGREE PLAN

| <i>Competency</i> | Identify courses in which this competency is INTRODUCED. | Identify courses in which this competency is EMPHASIZED. | Identify courses in which this competency is ASSESSED. |
|--|---|---|---|
| Students will communicate effectively in oral and written English. | Comp. Lit Approved Requirement (3 hrs. in Cpst 101, Csci 102, Csci 180 or Csci 241), Geol 101, Phsc (101, 235), Psyc 101 | Art (101, 102, 105, 217, 218, 361, 362, 363 or 367) Approved Elect., Geol 102, Phsc 236, Psyc (310 or 311) Approved Elect., Spch (201 or 205) Approved Elect., Thea 161 | Chem (101, 102, 135, 136), Engl (101, 102), Hist (201 & 202), Hist (101, 102, 121 or 122) Approved Requirement |
| Students will read with comprehension. | 3 hrs. of Approved Art Courses; Biol (101, 102, 105, 106), Chem 135, Comp. Lit Approved Requirement (3 hrs. in Cpst 101, Csci 102, Csci, 180 or Csci 241), Ensc (101, 102), Math 113, Math 231/Stat 231, Phsc 101, Thea 161 | Chem (101, 102, 136), Geol (101, 102), Govt 201, Hist 201, Hist 202, Phsc (235, 236), Psyc 101, Psyc (310 or 311) Approved Elect., Spch (201 or 205) Approved Requirement | Engl (101, 102), Hist (101, 102, 121, or 122) Approved Requirement; Biol (225, 226) |
| Students will reason abstractly and think critically. | Art (101, 102, 105, 217, 218, 228, 245 or 351) Approved Elect., Chem (135, 136), Cjus/Socl 401, Comp. Lit Approved Requirement (Cpst 101, Csci 102, Csci 180 or Csci 241), Govt 201, Hist (101 or 102), Hist 201, Hist 202, Math/Stat 231 | Art (361, 362, 363, 364, 365, 367 or 368) Approved Elect., 9 hrs. of Science Approved Requirements Math/Stat 231, Psyc 101, Psyc (310 or 311) Approved Elect., Spch (201 or 205) Approved Requirement | Engl 102, Phsc 235 |

METHODS OF GENERAL EDUCATION ASSESSMENT

Course-embedded assessment.

Nationally-normed mid-point proficiency exam (MAPP).

Licensure exams.

National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE).

Major field exams (MFE).

Pre- and post- assessment.

Portfolio assessment.

Graduating student survey.

Scoring rubrics.

ACT Student Opinion Survey.

Course-Level Assessment

Method/Proficiency/Achievement

| Course | Competency | Assessment Method | Level of Proficiency/Achievement |
|----------|------------|--|--|
| ENGL 101 | 1a, 2 | Pre/Post Tests 3 rubric scored essays Rubric scored final exam Mid-term exam on reading comprehension | 75% of students will score 80% on objective post-test 70% of students will score 75% on exemplification essay 60% of students will score 70% on cause/effect and definition essays 80% of students will score 75% on rubric scored final exam 65% of students will score 80% on mid-term exam on reading comprehension |
| SPCH 201 | 1b | PRCA Pre/Post Tests Presentation Evaluation Rubric | 80% of students will reduce communication apprehension by 50% from PRCA pre/post 80% will correctly answer 7 of 10 embedded final exam questions 80% will achieve a score of 75% on the standardized sections of the presentation evaluation rubric |
| CPST 101 | 6 | Embedded Questions (4 embedded questions on each of 3 areas: software applications, internet, and components of the computer system) Portfolio Evaluation | 75% will achieve a 70% average on the 12 embedded questions 75% will receive a minimum of a 70% mark on the portfolio evaluation. |
| CHEM 136 | 1a, 7 | Rubric Scored Essay Embedded exam questions | 70% will score a minimum 70% on essays scored by a language-proficiency rubric and a science content rubric 70% will correctly answer 7/10 embedded exam questions |
| PSYC 101 | 5,8 | Embedded Final Exam Questions | 50% will correctly answer 1 out of 2 embedded exam questions 50% will correctly answer 3 out of 5 embedded exam questions |
| HIST 121 | 2,8/10 | Pre/Post Tests | 70% will correctly answer 4 of 5 embedded questions assessing reading skills 70% will correctly answer 4 of 5 embedded questions assessing knowledge of other cultures |

ASSESSMENT RATING SCALE

Rating 4.0

Goal achievement is exemplary. The majority of the expected levels of achievement have been attained. Continue to monitor goals met. Review and adjust strategies for goals unmet. (85-100% of expected levels of achievement are actually attained.)

Rating 3.0

Goal achievement is satisfactory. Some expected levels of achievement have been attained. Continue to monitor data from goals met. Evaluate and adjust strategies for goals unmet. (70-84% of expected levels of achievement are actually attained.)

Rating 2.0

Goal achievement is approaching satisfactory. Few expected levels of achievement have been attained. Continue to monitor data from goals met. Evaluate and adjust strategies and assessment processes of goals unmet. (50-69% of expected levels of achievement are actually attained.)

Rating 1.0

Goal achievement is unsatisfactory. Few to any expected levels of achievement have been attained. While not discarding the goals being met, the goals and strategies for evaluation should be carefully reviewed and undergo a major revision. (1 – 49% of expected levels of achievement are actually attained.)

| | Institution Goal/Benchmark | Assessment Rating |
|--|-------------------------------|-------------------|
| Communicate effectively in written English (1a). | 3.0 | 3.80 |
| Communicate effectively in oral English (1b). | 3.0 | 4.00* |
| Read with comprehension (2). | 3.0 | 4.00* |
| Reason abstractly and think critically (3). | 3.0 | 3.25 |
| Understand numerical data and statistics (4). | 3.0 | 3.73 |
| Understand the scientific method (5). | 3.0 | 4.00 |
| Be familiar with key technological and informational applications (6). | 3.0 | 4.00* |
| Learn independently (7). | 3.0 | 4.00* |
| Recognize and appreciate cultural diversity (8)/Develop a personal value system while retaining a tolerance for others (10). | 3.0 | 4.00 |
| Understand the nature and value of the fine and performing arts (9). | 3.0 | 3.68 |
| Understand the American political system (11a). | 3.0 | 3.78 |
| Understand the American economic system (11b). | 3.0 | 3.64 |
| OVERALL | 3.0 | 3.82 |

WE HAVE TO ASSESS WHAT?

Despite the existence of a mandate by the Louisiana Board of Regents to assess general education competencies, and the requirement by COC/SACS to comply with comprehensive standard 3.5.1, many faculty were unaware of the Board of Regents core competencies and the necessity to assess them.

EPIPHANIES

Department of History forecasted increased enrollment due to the need to meet general education competencies. Newly allocated resources to fund additional faculty lines resulted in smaller class sizes.

Department of Biology and Environmental Sciences developed and implemented pre- and post-tests to assess student understanding of the scientific method. Assessment revealed an overall lack of understanding of the scientific method.

Campus-wide curriculum maps revealed a gap in assessment of critical thinking, oral communication, and independent learning.

Department of Math learned that students taking MATH 113 on MWF sequence outperformed students taking same course on TTH sequence.

College of Business recognized that faculty lines were inadequate to meet the needs for teaching non-business majors to “understand the American economic system,” while still retaining compliance with AACSB standards.

EDUCATE AND INFORM

Emulate industry best practices.

Host Fall/Spring faculty meetings.

Provide faculty workshops led by peers.

Create/maintain general education website.

Disseminate an institutional effectiveness newsletter that speaks to general education assessment.

Include general education requirements in catalog narrative and course descriptions.

Catalog Excerpt

McNeese State University General Education Requirements

The core curriculum at McNeese, which is consistent with the standards and requirements of the Louisiana Board of Regents, is intended to provide students with the skills and competencies necessary to accomplish two outcomes: (1) success in their disciplines and (2) effective and appropriate writing as required by their disciplines.

(1) Success in the disciplines:

The core curriculum aims to ensure that, upon graduation, students will:

- Communicate effectively in written English
- Communicate effectively in oral English
- Read with comprehension
- Reason abstractly and think critically
- Understand numerical data and statistics
- Understand the scientific method
- Be familiar with key technologies and informational applications
- Learn independently
- Recognize and appreciate cultural diversity
- Develop a personal value system while retaining a tolerance for others
- Understand the nature and value of the fine and performing arts
- Understand the American political and economic system

In its mission to ensure that all graduates have these skills or competencies, students are required to enroll in courses that assess these requirements, as mandated in all undergraduate degree plans. Students must enroll in at least three hours within each of these competencies:

1. Communicate effectively in written English

| | | | | |
|----------|-----------|----------|-----------|----------|
| ART 101 | CHEM 101 | ENGL 201 | HIST 102 | PHIL 311 |
| ART 102 | CHEM 102 | ENGL 202 | HIST 121 | PHIL 312 |
| ART 105* | CHEM 135 | ENGL 221 | HIST 122 | PHIL 315 |
| ART 217 | CHEM 136 | ENGL 301 | HIST 201 | PHIL 331 |
| ART 218 | ENGL 101 | ENGL 302 | HIST 202 | PHIL 341 |
| ART 351 | ENGL 102 | FFND 101 | HUMN 105H | PHSC 102 |
| BIOL 102 | ENGL 105H | GEOL 102 | MCOM 131 | PHSC 111 |
| BIOL 106 | ENGL 106H | HIST 101 | PHIL 201 | WMST 201 |

101-102. Basic Design

Lab. 6 Cr. 3 each

Foundation for the visual arts. Creative application of graphic design theory in various media. Prerequisites: none. *Gen. Ed. 1, 11*

105. Art and the Computer

Lab. 6 Cr. 3

Introduction to the computer as a tool for artistic expression. *Gen. Ed. 1, 7, 11*

211. Beginning Painting

Lab. 6 Cr. 3

Introduction to problems in composition with color. Prerequisites: ART 102, 217, or permission of department head.

217-218. Drawing

Lab. 6 Cr. 3 each

Development of skills and study of the principles underlying all creative and representational drawing. Prerequisites: ART 217 is a prerequisite to ART 218, or permission of department head. *Gen. Ed. 1, 11*

222. Introduction to Printmaking

Lab. 6 Cr. 3

Overview of the printmaking processes with technical experimentation in one or more of the major printmaking areas. Prerequisites: ART 101 and ART 217 or permission of art department head.

223-224. Monoprinting

Lab. 6 Cr. 3 each

Monoprinting techniques and processes involving printing images from Plexiglas, metal and Mylar plates. Prerequisite: ART 101 or ART 217 or permission of department head.

EMBRACE THE ALLIGATOR

Identify respected faculty that will lead/support/encourage general education assessment on your campus.

Formulate teams that will tackle the various aspects required to create a viable general education assessment model.

Work with IE/IR to ensure compliance with comprehensive standard 3.5.1.

Climb over the naysayers and continue the trek to assess general education.

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THANK YOU FOR ATTENDING

WRESTLING WITH THE ALLIGATORS

**Please visit McNeese State University's
general education website found at:**

www.mcneese.edu/gened