

ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE
A Subcommittee of the Council on Educational Policy
ANNUAL REPORT
2016-2017 Academic Year

The responsibilities of the Assessment Committee are to:

1. Provide guidance on all matters related to student learning assessment, including policy development around assessment of student learning at the classroom, course, program, general education, and institutional levels.
2. Provide counsel to departments, schools, and Academic Senate committees on matters relating to student learning assessment. Review program assessment plans and reports and make recommendations to improve student learning. Prepare periodic reports on the status of student learning assessment within academic programs.
3. Make recommendations to CEP regarding the assessment of the general education program, including recommendations based on the review of general education courses and categories.
 - a. Develop and maintain guidelines and procedures for both periodic comprehensive assessment and continual ongoing assessment of learning outcomes for each general education category.
 - b. Evaluate the results of these assessments and make recommendations to CEP based on these results.
4. Monitor the University's progress in implementing its assessment plans, including those resulting from regional re-accreditation review, and promote the use of assessment results in planning activities.

I. Review of Assessment Reports on Learning Outcomes in the major.

Each year AC evaluates Assessment Reports from each of the majors in two or three UCI Schools. The review of Assessment Reports is based on specific criteria developed by the Assessment Committee. For AY16-17, majors in the School of Physical Sciences and majors in the School of Information and Technology were scheduled to submit assessment reports to AC. AC received assessment reports from three of the four majors in the School of Physical Sciences (EES, Physics, and Math). AC received reports from ICS but they were not scored during AY2016-2017.

II. Upcoming Deadlines for Schools to submit Assessment Reports

The Assessment Reports from majors in Health Sciences (Public Health, Nursing, Pharmaceutical Sciences) in the School of Biological Sciences and the School of the Arts are due November 1, 2017. These reports along with assessment reports for the majors in the School of Information and Computer Sciences will be scored by the assessment coordinator.

- B.A. in Policy, Planning and Design? (carry over from AY15-16)
- B.S. in Chemistry (carry over from AY16-17)
- B.S. in Informatics (carry over from AY16-17)
- B.S. in Computer Science (carry over from AY16-17)
- B.S. in Computer Science and Engineering (carry over from AY16-17)

- B.S. in Software Engineering (carry over from AY16-17)
- B.S. in Computer Game Science (carry over from AY16-17)
- B.S. in Data Science (carry over from AY16-17)
- B.S. in Nursing
- B.S. in Public Health
- B.S. in Pharmaceutical Sciences
- B.A. in Art
- B.A. in Dance
- B.A. in Drama
- B.A. in Music
- B.S. in Biological Sciences
- B.S. in Biology/Education
- B.S. in Developmental and Cell Biology
- B.S. in Ecology and Evolutionary Biology\
- B.S. in Exercise Sciences
- B.S. in Genetics
- B.S. in Human Biology
- B.S. in Microbiology and Immunology
- B.S. in Neurobiology

The Assessment Committee has asked each program listed above to assess at least one of the learning outcomes in the major. Programs have been asked to incorporate prior feedback AC provided for previous assessment report submissions. Assessment Reports are expected to address and show evidence of how previous assessment work findings have been used to improve student learning, to describe the process for reviewing previous assessment evidence and the role of the faculty.

III. GE Assessment AY 2016-2017: Assessment of GE IV (Arts and Humanities) and GE VI (Languages Other Than English)

Review materials from GE IV and VI instructors were requested by the assessment coordinator in April. The deadline for instructors to submit materials (i.e., GE assessment reports) was June 16, 2017. Instructors teaching GE IV and VI courses during spring quarter, 2017 were contacted early in the quarter and were provided with instructions on the GE assessment process. Specifically, instructors were asked to review whether the learning outcomes in the category by students.

AC's GE review requires instructors to: 1) describe how their current course outline and course assignments correspond with the course learning outcomes for the GE course; 2) summarize the extent to which they feel students successfully met the GE's course learning outcomes. Instructors are also asked to provide a percentage of how many students successfully met each outcomes. For example, 80% of students achieved learning outcome 1, 70% of students achieved learning outcome 2, 60% of students achieved learning outcome 3, etc.; 3) describe how they plan to use these results to improve the course.

The response rate for AC's GE IV exercise was 23% (13 out of 57 instructors responded) and the response rate for GE VI was 30% (8 out of 27 instructors responded).

AC's concern regarding the low response rate grew this year as similarly low response rates for the GE II (Science and Technology) and GE III (Social and Behavioral Sciences) AC reviews also occurred the previous year, AY15-16.

IV. AC's efforts to address the low response rate of GE reports.

While AC understand that several factors contribute to the low response rate, the committee believes one way departments could be aided in their assessment of GE would be to require each GE course to have a faculty member oversee the course. The faculty member designee would, in most cases, serve as the main instructor and creator of the GE course and would be responsible for managing the assessment of the GE course when/if the course is taught by other ladder rank faculty, SOE, or PSOE, and less commonly, by Unit 18 lecturers. AC and CEP approved a proposal from AC to require a GE point person (ladder rank faculty, PSOE, or SOE) to be listed in the course proposal for each new GE designation. AC expects the new policy requirement will improve the response rate for both AC and CEP GE report requests.

In addition to requiring a point person to oversee new GE courses, AC and CEP also endorsed a proposal to allow CEP, in its own review of GE (which is broader but only requires instructors to provide evidence the Course Learning Outcomes in the GE are taught and evaluated), to consider stripping the GE designation on courses whose instructors have not submitted GE assessment reports to AC or on courses whose instructors submitted GE reports to AC without significant evidence to indicate they have followed AC's instructions. AC believes connecting its GE review to CEP's GE review would motivate departments to learn the value and skills involved in GE course assessment, which would in turn, help increase both the quality and the response rate of AC GE reports in future years. Implementation of this requirement is expected to begin during winter or spring quarter of 2018.

IV. AC review of request from the Vice Provost of Academic Affairs to have the Associate Vice Provost of Academic Affairs serve as an ex-officio member of AC.

The request was declined by AC due to the following concerns:

- The Assessment Committee already has an Assessment Coordinator for undergraduate assessment serving as an ex officio member and is not in need of a second ex officio member. AC is satisfied with the current ex-officio member's contributions to the committee work.
- The request from Academic Affairs seemed to be based on the desire for Academic Affairs to notify AC about requirements of WASC. AC noted it is the responsibility of the UCI administrators who oversee WASC accreditation to communicate with the current AC ex officio member about Assessment Committee matters as may relate to accreditation. AC encourages communication between the Associate Vice Chancellor of Academic Planning and the Assessment Coordinator in areas related to undergraduate assessment. However, it important to emphasize that AC's charge does not concern issues related to WASC accreditation. Rather the committee is responsible for ensuring UCI's undergraduates are properly assessed in General Education courses and learning outcomes in each of UCI's 87 majors.

VI. Core Competencies

The Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC), the agency that accredits UCI every ten years, will soon require universities and colleges to assess students' core competencies around the time of graduation. The core competencies are:

1. **Written communication:** communication using written language for informational, persuasive, and expressive purposes. Written communication may appear in many forms or genres. Successfully written communication depends on mastery of the conventions of the written language, facility with culturally accepted structures for presentation and argument, awareness of audience, and other situation-specific factors.
2. **Oral communication:** communication using spoken language for informational, persuasive, and expressive purposes. In addition to speech, oral communication may employ visual aids, body language, intonation, and other non-verbal elements to support the conveyance of meaning and connection with the audience. Oral communication may include speeches, presentations, discussions, dialog, and other forms of interpersonal communication, either delivered face to face or mediated technologically.
3. **Quantitative reasoning:** the ability to apply mathematical concepts to the interpretation and analysis of quantitative information in order to solve a wide range of problems, from those arising in pure and applied research to everyday issues and questions. It may include such dimensions as the ability to apply math skills, judge reasonableness, communicate quantitative information, and recognize the limits of mathematical or statistical methods.
4. **Information literacy:** according to the Association of College and Research Libraries, the ability to “recognize when information is needed and have the ability to locate, evaluate, and use the needed information” for a wide range of purposes. An information-literate individual can determine the extent of information needed, access it, evaluate it and its sources, use the information effectively, and do so ethically and legally.
5. **Critical thinking:** the ability to think in a way that is clear, reasoned, reflective, informed by evidence, and aimed at deciding what to believe or do. Dispositions supporting critical thinking include open-mindedness and motivation to seek the truth.

The first step in the task of testing core competencies of undergraduates in the third or fourth year was for AC to determine which majors already satisfy some or all of the core competencies. AC is asking Associate Deans to provide a core competencies mapping matrix to AC. In 2017, the first such request was sent to the Associate Dean of the School of Social Sciences with a request to have Undergraduate chairs in the School consider how the five core competencies can be defined and measured in students' final year of study in their major. Specifically, AC is asking that Chairs “map” each core competency to 1) one or more of the learning outcomes already established for the major; 2) one or more required upper-division courses where the core competency could be measured; or (3) one or more elective upper-division courses where the core competency could be measured. Alternatively, the core competency may not be reflected in the curriculum and consequently is not assessed in the major. AC asks each chair to complete a mapping matrix provided to the Associate Dean.

Associate Deans are told that AC does not expect that every competency can or will be assessed by every major and that the competencies themselves are not limited to one specific genre or approach. For example, the competency of quantitative reasoning. At first blush, quantitative reasoning may seem difficult to assess in arts and humanities majors; however, when quantitative reasoning is re-imagined as not just mathematical or statistical computation but rather as “a habit of mind, a way of thinking about the world that relies on data and on the mathematical analysis of data to make connections and draw conclusions.”

Written communication: Communication by means of written language for informational, persuasive, and expressive purposes. Written communication may appear in many forms, or genres. Successful written communication depends on mastery of the conventions of the written language, facility with culturally accepted structures for presentation and argument, awareness of audience, and other situation-specific factors.

2. Oral communication: communication by means of spoken language for informational, persuasive, and expressive purposes. In addition to speech, oral communication may employ visual aids, body language, intonation, and other non-verbal elements to support the conveyance of meaning and connection with the audience. Oral communication may include speeches, presentations,

discussions, dialogue, and other forms of interpersonal communication, either delivered face to face or mediated technologically. 3. Quantitative reasoning: the ability to apply mathematical concepts to the interpretation and analysis of quantitative information in order to solve a wide range of problems, from those arising in pure and applied research to everyday issues and questions. It may include such dimensions as ability to apply math skills, judge reasonableness, communicate quantitative information, and recognize the limits of mathematical or statistical methods. 4. Information literacy: according the Association of College and Research Libraries, the ability to “recognize when information is needed and have the ability to locate, evaluate, and use the needed information” for a wide range of purposes. An information-literate individual is able to determine the extent of information needed, access it, evaluate it and its sources, use the information effectively, and do so ethically and legally. 5. Critical thinking: the ability to think in a way that is clear, reasoned, reflective, informed by evidence, and aimed at deciding what to believe or do. Dispositions supporting critical thinking include open-mindedness and motivation to seek the truth.

VII. Carry Forward Issues

- Is AC assessment of GE working? Assessment of GE by AC is not working well. To address the problem, CEP will now have the ability to strip GE from courses whose instructors submit incomplete GE reports to no GE report to AC.
- AC will review Assessment Reports for General Education VII (Multicultural Studies) courses offered Spring quarter, 2018.
- Core competencies plan AC still needs to develop a plan for assessment of the WASC core competencies during the undergraduate student’s third and fourth year.
- Assessment Reports on learning outcomes in ICS majors still need to be reviewed by AC in addition to Assessment Reports from majors in Nursing, Public Health, Pharmaceutical Sciences, majors in the School of Biological Sciences and majors in the School of the Arts.

VIII Annual Schedule for CEP/AC General Education Reviews

Past: 2010-12: Policy Committee reviews courses in Categories V, VII and VIII. Conduct pilot student survey for Category VII

Year 0, 2012-13: Education phase, as previously discussed, and Policy Committee reviews courses in Cats II and VI

Year 1, 2013-14: Education phase continued. GE course learning outcomes were included on instructors’ learning management system (i.e., EEE) course sites. Letters were sent to GE instructors informing them of the upcoming review.

Year 2, 2014-15: Assessment of GE Categories VII (Multicultural) and VIII (International) (CEP only)

Year 3, 2015-16: Assessment of GE Categories II (Science and Technology) and III (Social and Behavioral Sciences) (CEP and AC)

Year 4, 2016-17: Assessment of GE Category VI (Languages other than English) and IV (Arts and Humanities) (CEP and AC)

Year 5, 2017-18: Assessment of GE Category VII based on revised CLOs (VII, review will be different based on revisions of course specific learning outcomes in the category). (CEP and AC)

Year 6, 2018-2019: Assessment of GE Category I (Writing) (CEP and AC)

Years 7 and onward : Repeat five year cycle

•

VIII. AC membership AY2016-2017

Justin Shaffer, (Biological Sciences), AC Chair, fall and spring quarter

Russel Detwiler, (Engineering), AC Chair, winter quarter

Elizabeth Van Es, Education

Rebeca Helfer, Humanities

Joseph Lewis, Arts

Michele Guindani, ICS

Brian Jenkins, Social Sciences

Devin Shanthikumar, Business

Kenneth Chew, Social Ecology

Scott Bartell, Public Health

Mu-Chun Chen, Physical Sciences

Valeria Guadalupe Herrera, Representative ASUCI

Ex Officio

Venette Van Duyn, Assessment Coordinator, Division of Undergraduate Education

Academic Senate

Michelle AuCoin, Academic Senate Principal Analyst