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REPORT ON AY2022-2023 ACADEMIC ASSESSMENT (Due to the provost on November 15)

Submission date: 11/15/2023 rev. 02/09/24

Assessment Plan covered in the report: *General Education

College: n/a (General Education)

Campuses where the program(s) is delivered: ☒Anchorage ☒KOD ☒KPC ☒MSC ☒PWSC

Submitted by: UAA General Education Assessment Working Group

After responding to the questions below, the program should email this form to the dean, with a copy to the appropriate community campus director(s) if the program is delivered on a community campus.

1. **Please list and number the Program Student Learning Outcomes your program assessed in AY23. For each outcome, indicate one of the following: Exceeded faculty expectations, Met faculty expectations, or Did not meet faculty expectations.**

   Example: 1. Communicate effectively in a variety of contexts and formats – Exceeded faculty expectations; 2. Adopt critical perspectives for understanding the forces of globalization and diversity – Met faculty expectations.

   1. Communicate effectively in a variety of contexts and formats – met faculty expectations in all except two constructs on the Oral Communication Rubric for the 400 level classes.

2. **Describe your assessment process in AY23 for these Program Student Learning Outcomes, including the collection of data, analysis of data, and faculty (and other, e.g., advisory board) conversations around the findings.** *(1000 words or less)*

   Near the end of AY22, the UAA Faculty Senate created the General Education Council (GEC) and charged them with the coordination of general education efforts throughout the system. Over the summer of 2022, two faculty, experienced in general education, worked with the Vice Provost for Academic Affairs and Institutional Effectiveness to create an assessment process for AY23 and drafted communication to deans and faculty.

   Late in Summer 2022, emails were sent to the college Deans informing them of the plan and asking for their support with workload assignments. After faculty contracts for Fall 2022 began, an email was sent to all UAA faculty informing them of the SLO that would be assessed. The email to faculty included a copy of the previously established rubrics for both oral and written communication and requested information on any courses and assignments relevant to the SLOs. Faculty

responses were collected in a Google form.

The returning members of the General Education Working Group, who had coordinated general education efforts for the previous two academic years, met once or twice monthly throughout AY23 and were joined by the assessment sub-committee of the GEC after membership of that group was established in Fall 2022. From here on in this report the full group of assessment faculty will be referred to as the "assessment team." After the GEC was established, monthly reports from the assessment team were made to the full council.

The fall assessment team meetings included explanations and discussions to introduce new members to the existing general education assessment structure and processes, review of the information on assignments submitted by faculty, and discussions on processes for the rest of the academic year. The team concluded that artifacts from all faculty that responded and those who were individually contacted by the team to add depth and breadth. To assess the impact of general education from its introduction to its later use in both associate and baccalaureate degrees, the team requested and received artifacts from all course levels (100-400) and from both general education and non-general education courses.

In Spring 2023, the assessment team used artifacts from previous assessment years to begin norming exercises with the Oral and Written Communication rubrics. Communication about artifacts with faculty continued throughout the semester. Toward the end of the semester, artifacts were collected from faculty. During the week after classes ended, the assessment team met over two days to finish norming both rubrics, using current artifacts and dividing the individual scoring work that was left after the live meetings. Over the summer, the scoring was completed by faculty. In total, the assessment team scored 179 student artifacts from 11 disciplinary prefixes across all four levels of classes.

In Fall 2023, descriptive statistics were calculated, graphs were created, and the assessment team met to discuss the results and recommendations for our future work. In the Spring 2024 semester, the assessment team will create a full report of findings and historical comparison and review.

3. **What are the findings and what do they tell the faculty about student learning in your program?** *(1000 words or less)*

ORAL COMMUNICATION

The Oral Communication Rubric contains four constructs: "Demonstrates clear and appropriate organization", "Uses clear and suitable language", "Includes appropriate verbal and non-verbal cues", and ""Develops relevant and adequate content". Each artifact was assigned a score from 0 to 4 on any constructs relevant to that assignment. A score of 4 indicated "Mastery" in that construct, a score of 3 indicated "Proficiency", a score of 2 indicated the artifact was "Developing" in that construct, a score of 1 indicated an artifact was at the "Beginning" level, and a score of zero indicated that artifact did not meet the descriptors for the "Beginning" level. The scores were compiled by course level and a median score was computed as the summary statistic for the ordinal Likert-scale data.

100-level courses:

For AY23, the median score for 100 level course artifacts for the constructs "Demonstrates clear and appropriate organization" and "Uses clear and suitable language" was a score of 3 which is the "proficient" level on our rubric. This score is above our goal for this level of course which is a score of 2. This also is an increase from the developing level (median score of 2) in the two previous years this SLO was assessed using the same rubric. The median score on the construct "Includes appropriate verbal and non-verbal cues" was a 2 (developing) and for "Develops relevant and adequate content" the median score was a 3 (proficient). Both of these were the same median scores as in previous years.

200-level courses:

For AY23, the median score for 200-level course artifacts for the constructs "Demonstrates clear and appropriate organization", and "Uses clear and suitable language", were at the proficient level (score of 3). The median scores for the constructs "Includes appropriate verbal and non-verbal cues" and "Develops relevant and adequate content" were both 2 ("Developing"). The median scores for all four constructs were the same as they had been in the two previous years; this rubric was used to assess artifacts at this level.

300-level courses:

For AY23, the median score for 300-level course artifacts for all four constructs was a 3 ("Proficient"). This was the first time that median scores were computed for artifacts at this course level using this rubric, so this will be a baseline set of scores for future years when this SLO is assessed.

400-level courses:

For AY23, the median score for 400-level course artifacts for the construct "Demonstrates clear and appropriate organization" was a 4, which indicates a typical score at the "Mastery" level. The median score for the construct "Uses clear and suitable language" was a 2.5 which puts the typical score somewhere between the "Developing" and "Proficient" levels. The median score for the construct "Incorporates appropriate verbal and non-verbal cues" was a 2, which is at the "Developing" level. The median score for the construct "Develops relevant and adequate content" was a 3, which is at the "Proficient" level. This was the first time that median scores were computed for artifacts at this course level using this rubric, so this will be a baseline set of scores for future years when this SLO is assessed.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATION

The Written Communication Rubric contains four constructs: "Responds effectively to the assignment", "Demonstrates effective organization", "Develops content adequately", and "Controls syntax and mechanics". Each artifact was assigned a score from 0 to a 4 on any constructs relevant to that assignment. A score of 4 indicated "Mastery" in that construct, a

score of 3 indicated "Proficiency", a score of 2 indicated the artifact was "Developing" in that construct, a score of 1 indicated an artifact was at the "Beginning" level, and a score of zero indicated that artifact did not meet the descriptors for the "Beginning" level. The scores were compiled by course level and a median score was computed as the summary statistic for the ordinal Likert-scale data.

100-level courses:

For AY23, the median score for 100 level course artifacts for the constructs "Responds effectively to the assignment" was a score of 3 which is the "proficient" level on our rubric. This score is above our goal for this level of course which is a score of 2. This is consistent with historical data which showed either a median score of 2.75 or 3 for the three academic years this SLO had been assessed using these methods. The 100-level courses had a median score of 2.5 for the construct "Develops content adequately" and median scores of 2 for the constructs "Demonstrates effective organization" and "Controls syntax and mechanics".

200-level courses:

In AY23, the artifacts scored from 200-level courses received a median score of 3 or "proficient" for three of the constructs: "Responds effectively to the assignment", "Demonstrates effective organization", and "Develops content adequately". The artifacts from 200-level courses have a median score of 2 or "Developing" for the construct "Controls syntax and mechanics". These median scores were greater than or equal to the median scores for the previous years this SLO was assessed.

300-level courses:

For AY23, the 300-level course artifacts had a median score of 3 or at the "proficient" level in all four constructs on the Written Communication Rubric. The median scores for all four constructs were equal to or very similar to the median scores from the two previous years this rubric was used to assess artifacts at this level.

400-level courses:

For AY23, the 400-level course artifacts had a median score of 3 or at the "proficient" level in all four constructs on the Written Communication Rubric. The median scores for all four constructs were the same as they had been in the two previous years; this rubric was used to assess artifacts at this level.

Due to the limited number of courses from which artifacts were received, no generalized conclusions can be made with certainty for either of these SLOs. This resulted in most of our recommendations being about process rather than about general education quality.

4. **Based on the findings, did the faculty make any recommendations for changes to improve student achievement of the Program Student Learning Outcomes?** Yes

   i. **Please describe the recommended action(s), what improvements in student learning the program hopes to see, the proposed timeline, and how the program will know if the change(s) has worked. If no recommendations for changes were made, please explain that decision.** *(1000 words or less)*

   Because the General Education Program has no major requirements, it is critical for students to be aware of how they benefit from completing this part of their degree programs. This need is compounded in an era when the value of general education is less accepted or understood by students, as noted in national news sources. Thus, the following recommendation of the GEC is important.

   The General Education Assessment Working Group along with the General Education Council recommend that instructors work to make the connection to general education outcomes and the value of those to their lives more explicit in teaching. This may include adding general education student learning outcomes to their course syllabi, including GER SLOs in assignments with an explanation of how it is achieved (TILT like) when they are applicable, and taking time to help students recognize what the lasting benefit of an assignment is.

   By aligning the work of the General Education Assessment Working Group with the newly established Faculty Senate General Education Council, we continue to have a consistent assessment team infused with new members which includes content area experts in each of the general education areas. Through our work and planning in AY23, we have established the following list to help guide our future work:

   a. continue to work on a systematic approach with depth and breadth to get student artifacts from across the system

   b. recognize broad faculty support is needed to ensure content area expertise in all gen ed areas

   c. spread out the assessment efforts (specifically to lighten the load from the May assessment efforts)

   d. look into the potential to collect student data along with the artifacts to aid us in conversations around achievement gaps

   e. explore the idea of key assignments that can be used across sections, course levels, and possibly programs

   f. ask instructors who submit artifacts where/how the SLO constructs are present in the assignment.

   Every general education outcome is assessed at least once in each accreditation cycle. AY23-24 will assess humanities, fine arts, and quantitative literacy.

5. **In the past academic year, how did your program use the results of previous assessment cycles to make changes intended to improve student achievement of the Program Student Learning Outcomes? Please check all that apply.**

☐ Course curriculum changes
☐ Course prerequisite changes
☐ Changes in teaching methods
☐ Changes in advising
☐ Degree requirement changes
☐ Degree course sequencing
☐ Course enrollment changes (e.g., course capacity, grading structure [pass/fail, A-F])
☒ Changes in program policies/procedures
☐ Changes to Program Student Learning Outcomes (PSLOs)
☐ College-wide initiatives (e.g., High-Impact Practices)
☐ Faculty, staff, student development
☐ Other
☐ No changes were implemented in AY23. *(If no options above were selected)*

If you checked "Other" above, please describe. *(100 words or less)*

6. **Do you have any information about how well these or other past improvements are working? Are they achieving their intended goals? Please include any data or assessment results that help you demonstrate this.** *(1000 words or less)*

The General Education Working Group has been tasked with general education assessment for multiple years, with the General Education Council in existence for one year. There are no results because this is the first year the two groups are working together.

PROVOST SECTION (Due to the program on January 15)

After completing the Provost Section and signing it, the provost should email this form to the program, and copy uaa_oaa@alaska.edu for posting. If the program is delivered on one or more community campus, the provost should consult with the appropriate community campus director(s) on the response and copy the appropriate community campus director(s) when emailing the response to the program.

1. **Based on the program's responses above, what guidance and support do you have for the program moving forward?** *(200 words or less)*

I thank all involved for their time and the collaboration with which they approached this work. I continue to encourage you to work toward offering shared prompts. I'm encouraged to see a

reference to something similar in point "e" in your plans for future years! I also suggest that you reflect upon the current model for the Integrative Capstone, and seek evidence of its effectiveness.

Finally, I am concerned with your decision not to attempt to draw generalized conclusions. This, as noted, results in a focus on process, rather than outcomes. Small samples, if repeated at regular intervals and compared across time[1], are acceptable for making such inferences. For example, for Written Communication you compare this year's scores to those in the previous years. That combined sample tells us that, in fact, we can be reasonably certain that students at the 300 and 400 level are "proficient" in all four constructs, and that those at the 100 and 200 course level could use further support in developing content adequately and controlling syntax and mechanics. Sharing this information back with the faculty teaching courses at the 100 and 200 level is an important way the group can help UAA to close the loop and potentially improve student performance in written communication.

2. **Discuss what the program is doing particularly well in terms of its processes for the assessment and improvement of student learning, for example, the use of a common rubric or prompt, a signature assignment, etc.** *(200 words or less)*

   I'm very pleased with the great progress that has been made around process, input, gathering artifacts, and ensuring adequate participation by working with the College Deans. All of these are important milestones that we should celebrate. Furthermore, your plans for the future are sound and your recommendations regarding "TILT-ing" assignments are helpful.

Provost's signature: _Denise Runge_
DocuSigned by:
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Date: February 19, 2024

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[1] e.g., Repeated measures, or longitudinal research designs