
GENERAL EDUCATION COURSE REVIEW - SUBMISSION FORM

The purpose of the General Education Committee (GEC) is to provide guidance and direction to the VCAAR to improve the quality and relevance of the University's general education curriculum. The GEC considers proposals for modification of the general education curriculum and reviews each course in the general education program once every four years to determine its acceptability as a general education course. The GEC will review assessment data on the general education program provided by the Assessment Office and make recommendations to the VCAAR.

The GEC is a University Shared Governance Committee composed of members of the faculty with representatives from every college. The “general education program develops a foundation and motivation for the lifelong pursuit of learning in undergraduate students at Arkansas State University by introducing them to a broad range of essential areas of knowledge that will enable them to participate in our democratic nation and in a global society” (*Undergraduate Bulletin*).

General Education Goal: *Communicating Effectively*

The following course has been accepted into the General Education Curriculum to promote the goal of training students to “communicate effectively,” and has set as the appropriate learning outcome that students should be able to

Construct and deliver a well-organized, logical, and informative oral or written presentation, accurately documented, that demonstrates proficiency in standard American English.

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- 1. Title of Course**
SCOM 1203, Oral Communication
 - 2. Course description as it appears in the *Undergraduate Bulletin***
The theory and practice of communication in interpersonal, small groups, and public speaking contexts, emphasizing proficiency in message organization, delivery, and critical thinking.
 - 3. All prerequisites**
None
 - 4. Course Frequency (e.g. fall, spring, summer)**
Fall, spring, summer
 - 5. General education outcome the Department has chosen to assess for all sections of this course (check only one)**

- Construct and deliver a well-organized, logical, and informative oral or written presentation, accurately documented, that demonstrates proficiency in standard American English.*

6. Core content currently taught across all sections of the course

Informative speeches

7. Please detail the staffing for all sections of this course for the previous Fall and Spring semesters.

Section	Instructor delivering 50% or more content	Terminal degree	Discipline of terminal degree	Department issuing terminal degree	Instructor of record if different
1	Linda Clark	M.A.	Communication	Communication	
2	Chris Harper	Ed.D. M.A.	Education Communication	Education Communication Studies	
3	Marceline Hayes	Ph.D.	Communication	Communication	
4	Brenda Randle	Ed.D. M.A.	Education Communication	Educational Leadership Communication Studies	
5	Matthew Thatcher	Ph.D.	Communication	Communication	
6	Donald Martin	M.A.	Communication	Communication Studies	
7	Scot Loyd	M.A.	Communication	Communication Studies	
8	Steve Leslie	M.A.	Communication	Communication Studies	
9	Dana Watkins	M.A.	Communication	Communication Studies	

Please attach to this form an assessment report including the following:

- Method or methods used to measure the level of proficiency of all students completing the course.
- Documentation of how the resulting assessment data from two or more successive years were used to improve student learning outcomes. (You may list "See Tracdat" if documentation already has been sent to the Office of Assessment – Student Learning Outcomes.)

Please submit a copy of every syllabus from the current semester with faculty identifiers removed. If a faculty teaches more than one section of the course using the same syllabus and delivery method, a single syllabus may be submitted.

Assessment Coordinator _____ Date _____
(if appropriate)

Department Chair Marceline Hayes Date 1/10/13

Dean [Signature] Date 1/11/13

Received by GEC Chair SM Larry Date 1/23/13

Approved 10/30/2012 ; Revised 12/11/2012

General Education Assessment Report for Oral Communication / Fall 2012

Fall Semester 2012 was the first semester in which the general education goal for Oral Communication SCOM 1203 was changed. The new general education goal calls for students to **construct and deliver a well-organized, logical, and informative oral presentation, accurately documented, which demonstrates proficiency in standard American English.** The department was not able to overhaul the course dramatically to address the change prior to the Fall 2012 semester. This situation provided the department with an opportunity to use the past semester to conduct research to determine how well the existing course coincided with the new general education goals.

After reviewing the syllabi for each oral communication course in association with the general education goals for the course, we decided to use the informative speech assignment as an assessment instrument. A survey of the different syllabi within the department identified this as a common assignment and the course materials employ a common rubric to assess the assignment. Additionally, this rubric generally addresses the different aspects of the general education goal. The rubric assesses different public speaking constructs via a Likert-like mechanism ranging from poor to excellent. However, as our assessment of the oral communication courses indicates, not all instructors applied numerical equivalencies to the different constructs, but rather some used the terms poor, weak, average, good, and excellent as qualitative guidelines for a holistic assessment.

The combined components of the general education goals are addressed within the following rubric constructs.

Delivery - Aspects of this goal are assessed across three different constructs. The description of the “Delivery” construct is “conversational quality.” The description of the “Voice” construct is “volume, rate, pitch, and vocal quality.” The description of the “Body Actions” construct includes, “appearance, eye contact, gestures, facial expression, movement, and posture.”

Well-organized – Through our analysis of the rubric, we realized that this component is assessed across a number of constructs. The first of these constructs is titled “Organization.” The description of this construct includes the item “orderly clear main points.” Another construct addressing the organizational aspect of oral communication is “Introduction.” The description of this construct includes, “clear thesis statement and preview of speech plan.” “Body” includes “divisions and subdivisions clear.” The “conclusion” construct asks for a “summary.” And, finally, the “content” construct includes the item “time-limit.”

Logical – This component is explicitly identified as one attribute of the construct “Organization.”

Accurately documented – This component is included in the “Body” construct by the description “adequate supporting material.”

There are no constructs within the current rubric that directly address either the specific **informative** quality of the speech, nor **proficiency in standard American English**.

The rubric for the assignment is included as Appendix A.

Findings

We found that it was not possible to conduct a one to one assessment of each particular general education goal, as most of the different items included within the general education goal are included in rubric constructs with descriptions that are not mutually exclusive to any particular goal. For instance, one could not distinguish between a score for “orderly main points” and “logic” via the **organizational** construct, or “clear divisions” and “adequate supporting material” in the **body** construct.

Additionally, we realized that the constructs within the rubric were not well defined nor distinguished at a level fine enough to allow for effective measurement across multiple reviewers. Our discussion clearly indicates that the rubric allows for far variance of application.

Because of these concerns, for purposes of this initial assessment, we summed the final grades of the informative speeches across the different sections of the course. The mean score for the assignment across all sections is 80.96/100, with grades of zero excluded as outliers. While such a summary is not an ideal way to assess student learning or instruction, the overall scores provide an indirect measure that the course may be meeting the appropriate general education goals.

As assignment grades are not a comprehensive form of assessment, we conducted a separate study aimed at assessing the fit between the existing rubric and the new general education goal and developing a system for grading calibration among oral communication instructors. For this study we took a random sample of 3 recorded informative speeches from Fall 2013 oral communication courses and had six communication studies faculty grade each speech according to the rubric applying an eight item five-point Likert scale from the assignment rubric.

The following indicates the manner by which the six faculty members scored the different speeches on a scale of 40.

	Speech 1: Concussion	Speech 2: Blood Pressure	Speech 3: HIV
F1	32	29	25
F2	30	27	28
F3	24	23	29
F4	31	27	31

F5	30	33	29
F6	20	25	35

The scores for each participant by category are included as Appendix B.

Conclusions from the Assessment

The current rubric does not reflect a direct association to the general education goals and also the constructs are not clearly distinguished and mutually exclusive. Of all the specific items, only **delivery** may be clearly distinguished from items appropriate to other categories. After reviewing several different oral presentation rubrics, we discovered that all existing rubrics follow a chronological order to allow ordered grading during the presentation. This chronological structure breaks up general education goals into different rubric constructs.

The delivery construct leads to an additional concern: the categories comprising the attributes measurable as delivery account for almost 40% of the score of the overall rubric. Because the general education guideline does not address the quality of performance beyond correct use of Standard English, it would appear that either the general education guidelines should be altered to reflect this aspect of oral communication, or the rubric should be altered as to not put so much emphasis in this area.

The faculty grading exercise data indicate vast discrepancies between how different faculty scored particular students. After the exercise was completed, we discussed these particular discrepancies. The primary points of contention involved issues of following a specific formulaic approach and also the extent to which the student presented the speech extemporaneously. One faculty member in particular felt it was not appropriate to grant a student high marks in areas such as content and organization if the student read notes extensively through her/his speech, because the student had not demonstrated the ability to follow an organized pattern extemporaneously. Other faculty members marked students down substantially if they did not use highly recognizable signposts and transitions, while some faculty did not favor the use of “cookie-cutter” approaches. However, in each of these cases, we realized the rubric did not clearly distinguish these important concepts.

Plan of Action

- 1) Develop a new course assessment rubric.

The current rubric does not distinguish the general education goals in a manner that allows effective measurement of student learning. The rubric must distinguish the different items from the general education goal clearly in a manner that allows for uniform grading among different reviewers. After reviewing the different available rubrics and considering the logistical concerns of grading live performance, we decided

to develop a rubric that still employs chronological order, but distinguishes the general education items clearly within this order.

- 2) Develop an organized method of collecting assessment artifacts.

Oral presentations present a difficulty when it comes to collecting artifacts for assessment as the data must be recorded and stored in a digital format. Because of the large number of oral communication sections and the length of the oral presentations, it would not be feasible to record and store all speeches. Accordingly, we decided to randomly digitally record one section of speeches for each instructor. Instructors will not be required to submit a schedule for their informative speeches and will not be informed which course session will be recorded. The department will work with the ITTC to store the recorded speeches in a manner that will allow effective assessment by faculty and outside reviewers regarding the extent to which different performances reflect satisfaction of the general education goals.

- 3) Create a system of grade calibration.

Our review of the overall course grades and our faculty grading exercise indicates significant grading variance. While developing a more robust rubric should help with some of the grading variance, we also feel it is necessary to develop a program of grading calibration. Our plan is to follow a similar procedure as we followed during the faculty grading exercise. Beyond our procedure during the faculty grading exercise, we will include instruction regarding the appropriate application of the grading rubric and include follow up exercises to address key discrepancies.

- 4) Concentrate on improving certain key outcomes by semester.

For continued course improvement, we have decided to choose three goals for improvement in each semester. In addressing these goals we will focus on both improving student learning and assessment of student learning. In accordance with the results of our initial assessment, we have decided during the 2013 spring semester to focus on the student learning goals of improving the use of transitions, extemporaneous delivery, and organization. Our improvement plan involves providing instructors with additional resources for instruction, improvement of the grading rubric, and instruction on effective application of the rubric.

**Appendix A
Current Rubric**

Poor Weak Average Good Excellent

CONTENT

Choice of subject
Appropriate for listeners,
speaker, time limit, occasion, and
purpose

ORGANIZATION

Logical and orderly clear main points

INTRODUCTION

Gains attention, clear thesis statement,
Preview of speech plan

BODY

Divisions and subdivisions clear,
Adequate supporting material

CONCLUSION

Summary and effective final appeal

DELIVERY

Conversational

VOICE

Volume, rate, pitch, and vocal pitch

BODY ACTIONS

Appearance, eye contact, gestures, facial
Expression, movement, and posture

Appendix B
Scores by Faculty Member

	Speech 1: Concussion	Speech 2: Blood Pressure	Speech 3: HIV
F1	32	29	25
F2	30	27	28
F3	24	23	29
F4	31	27	31
F5	30	33	29
F6	20	25	35

Speech Evaluation Form: F1

	Poor-1	Weak-2	Average-3	Good-4	Excellent -5
Content			3		
Organization					5
Introduction					5
Body					5
Conclusion					5
Delivery		2			
Voice				4	
Body Action			3		

	Poor-1	Weak-2	Average-3	Good-4	Excellent -5
Content	3				
Organization					5
Introduction				4	
Body					5
Conclusion			3		
Delivery			3		
Voice			3		
Body Action			3		

	Poor-1	Weak-2	Average-3	Good-4	Excellent -5
Content				4	
Organization	1				
Introduction		2			
Body			3		
Conclusion	1				
Delivery				4	
Voice					5
Body Action					5

Speech Evaluation Form: F2

	Poor-1	Weak-2	Average-3	Good-4	Excellent -5
Content			3		
Organization					5
Introduction				4	
Body				4	
Conclusion				4	
Delivery			3		
Voice			3		
Body Action				4	

	Poor-1	Weak-2	Average-3	Good-4	Excellent -5
Content			3		
Organization				4	
Introduction				4	
Body				4	
Conclusion		2			
Delivery				3	
Voice				3	
Body Action				3	

	Poor-1	Weak-2	Average-3	Good-4	Excellent -5
Content				4	
Organization			3		
Introduction			3		
Body			3		
Conclusion			3		
Delivery					5
Voice					5
Body Action					5

Speech Evaluation Form: F3

	Poor-1	Weak-2	Average-3	Good-4	Excellent -5
Content			3		
Organization				4	
Introduction				4	
Body				4	
Conclusion			3		
Delivery		2			
Voice		2			
Body Action		2			

	Poor-1	Weak-2	Average-3	Good-4	Excellent -5
Content			3		
Organization			3		
Introduction				4	
Body		2			
Conclusion		2			
Delivery				3	
Voice				3	
Body Action				3	

	Poor-1	Weak-2	Average-3	Good-4	Excellent -5
Content				4	
Organization				4	
Introduction				4	
Body			3		
Conclusion			3		
Delivery				4	
Voice			3		
Body Action				4	

Speech Evaluation Form: F4

	Poor-1	Weak-2	Average-3	Good-4	Excellent -5
Content				4	
Organization				4	
Introduction				4	
Body				4	
Conclusion				4	
Delivery			3		
Voice				4	
Body Action				4	

	Poor-1	Weak-2	Average-3	Good-4	Excellent -5
Content			3		
Organization				4	
Introduction				4	
Body			3		
Conclusion			3		
Delivery			3		
Voice			3		
Body Action				4	

	Poor-1	Weak-2	Average-3	Good-4	Excellent -5
Content					5
Organization				4	
Introduction				4	
Body			3		
Conclusion			3		
Delivery				4	
Voice				4	
Body Action				4	

Speech Evaluation Form: F5

	Poor-1	Weak-2	Average-3	Good-4	Excellent -5
Content					5
Organization				4	
Introduction				4	
Body			3		
Conclusion					4
Delivery					4
Voice					4
Body Action		2			

	Poor-1	Weak-2	Average-3	Good-4	Excellent -5
Content					5
Organization				4	
Introduction			3		
Body		2			
Conclusion				4	
Delivery				4	
Voice				4	
Body Action			3		

	Poor-1	Weak-2	Average-3	Good-4	Excellent -5
Content					5
Organization		2			
Introduction				4	
Body		1			
Conclusion			3		
Delivery				4	
Voice					5
Body Action				4	

Speech Evaluation Form: F6

	Poor-1	Weak-2	Average-3	Good-4	Excellent -5
Content				4	
Organization		2			
Introduction			3		

Body		2			
Conclusion			3		
Delivery		2			
Voice		2			
Body Action		2			

	Poor-1	Weak-2	Average-3	Good-4	Excellent -5
Content			3		
Organization			3		
Introduction			3		
Body					
Conclusion				4	
Delivery				4	
Voice				4	
Body Action		2			

	Poor-1	Weak-2	Average-3	Good-4	Excellent -5
Content				4	
Organization				4	
Introduction				4	
Body				4	
Conclusion					5
Delivery					5
Voice				4	
Body Action					5

Appendix C
Scores by Speech (Faculty member marks by rubric item)

Speech 1: Concussion

	F1	F2	F3	F4	F5	F6
Content	3	3	3	5	4	3
Organization	5	5	4	4	4	2
Introduction	5	4	4	4	4	3
Body	5	4	4	3	4	2
Conclusion	5	4	3	4	4	3
Delivery	2	3	2	4	3	2
Voice	4	3	2	4	4	2
Bodily Actions	3	4	2	2	4	2

Speech 2: Blood Pressure

	F1	F2	F3	F4	F5	F6
Content	3	3	3	5	3	3
Organization	5	4	3	4	4	3
Introduction	4	4	4	3	4	3
Body	5	4	2	2	3	3
Conclusion	3	2	2	4	3	4
Delivery	3	3	3	4	3	4
Voice	3	3	3	4	3	4
Body Action	3	3	3	3	4	2

Speech 3: HIV

	F1	F2	F3	F4	F5	F6
Content	3	3	3	5	3	3
Organization	5	4	3	4	4	3
Introduction	4	4	4	3	4	3
Body	5	4	2	2	3	3
Conclusion	3	2	2	4	3	4
Delivery	3	3	3	4	3	4
Voice	3	3	3	4	3	4
Body Action	3	3	3	3	4	2

**Appendix D
New Rubric**

CONNECTIVES

INTRO

Attention Getter to Topic/Preview	E	G	A	F	P	NC
Preview to body	E	G	A	F	P	NC

BODY

Main Point One to Main Point Two	E	G	A	F	P	NC
Main Point One to Main Point Three	E	G	A	F	P	NC

CONCLUSION

Signal ending	E	G	A	F	P	NC
Score / Average all	5	4	3	2	1	NC

ORGANIZATION

INTRO

Attention getter	Y	N
Topic Statement	Y	N
Preview	Y	N

BODY

Main Point 1	Y	N
Support	Y	N
Main Point 2	Y	N
Support	Y	N
Main Point 3	Y	N
Support	Y	N

CONCLUSION

Reinforce Main Ideas	Y	N
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Some total Score Y =1 N=0

EXTEMPORANEOUS DELIVERY	E	G	A	F	P	NC
	10	5	0	-10	-20	-30

Assignment rubric for focus areas

Connectives	E Original and creative. Creates great flow between ideas. Acts as a point of synthesis.	G Creates good flow between ideas. Some above average elements	A Effective use of routine signposts and transitions.	F Okay, but needs some work.	P Needs significant work. Poor language choice, execution, etc.	NC No Credit Missing or highly negative impact.
Extemp. Delivery	E	G	A	F	P	NC
	No use of reference cards. Followed outline, not manuscript reading. Great flow throughout.	Rare and effective use of reference cards. Followed outline, not manuscript reading. Strong flow.	Use of reference cards at transition points. Followed outline, not manuscript reading. Good flow.	Noticeable use of reference cards outside of transition points. Some good eye contact at times. Some halting flow.	Distractive use of reference cards. Few extended points of eye contact. Poor flow.	Reading Very little eye contact. Not prepared

GENERAL EDUCATION COURSE REVIEW – CURRICULUM MAPPING INVENTORY

The following questions are used to evaluate the broader general education curriculum at ASU as it relates to University student learning outcomes. The General Education Committee is assisting the Learning Outcomes Assessment Council (LOAC) in collecting the data as part of the Quadrennial Course Review. The provided information will be reviewed by the LOAC. Each course under review is not expected to meet every campus-wide learning objective.

Directions: Each instructor of the course under review should answer the questions below and attach to this form his or her current syllabus.

Are students required to use Blackboard (Bb) for this course? Yes=7 No=4

For this course, do students use any technology other than Bb? Yes=11 No=0

If yes, please explain: ___ Powerpoint=6; YouTube=2; McGraw-hill Connect=2;

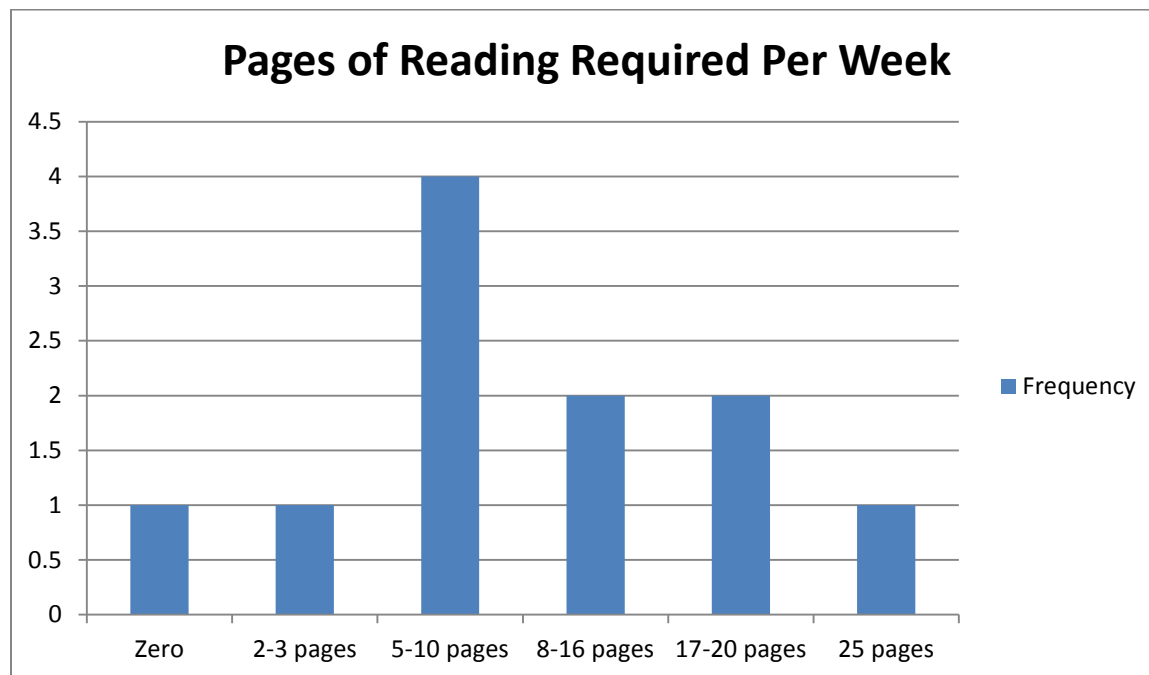
Facebook=2; internet=1, Tegrity=1, blogs=1, email=1

Does this course encourage/require use of ASU's writing center or or a college specific writing center? Yes=3 No=8

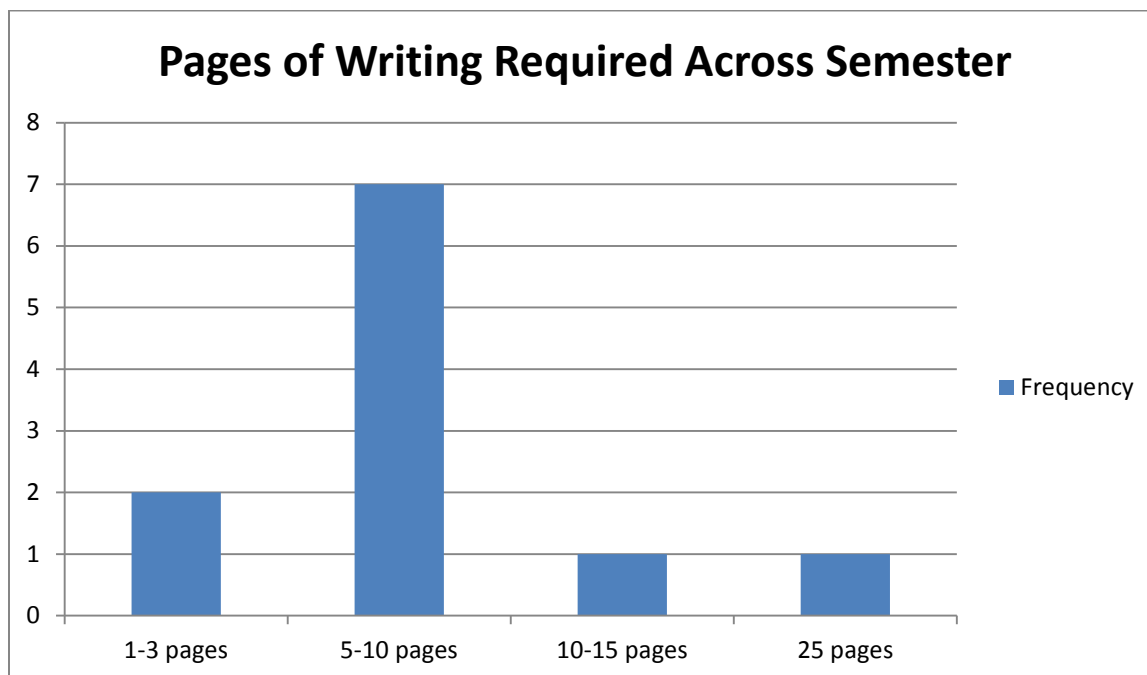
Does this course encourage/require use of Grammarly? Yes=4 No=7

Does this course include graded drafts of required papers? Yes=4 No=7

About how many pages of reading does this course require per week?



About how many pages of writing does this course require per semester? M =11;Md =7.5



Does this course require students to give an oral presentation? Yes=11 No=0

Does this course include any collaborative assignments? Yes=11 No=0

Does this course emphasize global issues? Minimally=1 Indirectly=3 Directly=7

Does this course emphasize critical thinking? Directly =11

SLOs Listed on Syllabi:

Is the General Education Goal of Communicating Effectively Listed on the Syllabus?

Yes=3 No, *Critical Thinking* is listed as GE goal = 5 No, *no Ge goal* = 3

Are course-level SLOs listed?

Yes, *same SLOs* listed by different instructors = 9 *Different SLOs* = 1 *No SLOs* = 1

GENERAL EDUCATION COURSE REVIEW - EVALUATION & FEEDBACK FORM

The purpose of the General Education Committee (GEC) is to provide guidance and direction to the VCAAR to improve the quality and relevance of the University's general education curriculum. The GEC considers proposals for modification of the general education curriculum and reviews each course in the general education program once every four years to determine its acceptability as a general education course.

The GEC will review assessment data on the general education program provided by the Assessment Office and make recommendations to the VCAAR.

Year: 2012 General Education Goal: *Communicating effectively*

Title of Course: SCOM 1203 Oral Communication

No

Syllabi reflect brief course description (40 words or fewer), as it appears in bulletin.

The course description as found in the Bulletin was not on all syllabi. Of the 11 syllabi for Fall, 1 had the course description as in the Bulletin, 4 were close but not as in the Bulletin and 6 had no course description. Spring was a slight improvement. Of the 12 syllabi, 2 had the course description as in the Bulletin, 5 were close but not as in the Bulletin and 5 did not have a course description on the syllabus.

No

Syllabi list general education goal and related student learning outcome.

The general education goal and related student learning outcome (SLO) was not listed on all syllabi. Additional student learning outcomes should be listed on the syllabus along with the general education SLO. Of the 11 syllabi for Fall, 6 had the general education goal and only 1 had the general education SLO. Three syllabi still had the critical thinking general education goal and SLO. Oral Communication was accepted under the Communicating Effectively general education category in Spring 2012. Two syllabi had no general education goal or general education SLO. For Spring 2013, one syllabus had the communicating effectively goal and SLO under the heading Course Description and under the heading Goals, Objectives & Outcomes was listed the critical thinking goal. For another syllabus, the SLO was listed under the Purpose heading and the general education goal under the Objectives heading. The remaining 10 had the general education goal and SLO with one not exact but close.

X

Prerequisites are appropriate for level of course. no prerequisites required

No

Level of education of instructors for this course complies with ADHE and ASU Faculty Handbook.

ADHE - Masters's with at least 18 graduate hours in field for general education courses

ASU Faculty Handbook - section II.h. Credentials, p. 40

In the initial submission instructors were identified as "MA degree/Teaching Assistants which does not comply with ASHE and ASU Faculty Handbook. In the revised submission all faculty were identified with either a MA or doctoral degree but not all faculty listed on the syllabi were listed and

some faculty were listed for which the General Education Committee received no syllabi. Some of the syllabi had instructors listed with @smail.astate.edu accounts which would indicate they were probably teaching assistants.

Assessment of General Education Goal – Communicating effectively:

Construct and deliver a well-organized, logical, and informative oral or written presentation, accurately documented, that demonstrates proficiency in standard American English.

The above student learning outcome is being assessed across sections for continuous quality improvement of student learning.
As noted previously the incorrect student learning outcome was identified for multiple sections. The assessment report indicated the SLO was not assessed although it appears portions were assessed using the old rubric for the informative speech in some sections of the course. The informative speech was identified as common to all sections of the course. The plan for assessment indicates a revision of the rubric for grading the informative speech that will be used by all sections beginning Spring 2013.

Report of the assessment findings has been submitted.
An assessment report was submitted with the finding of the summed final grades for the informative speech across the sections of the course. The mean score was 80.96/100. The report indicated grades of zero were excluded with no indication of the reason for the zero grade.

Data are being used to improve student learning.
The assessment report did not indicate how the mean score or the pieces of the old grading rubric were used to improve student learning. The focus of the report was revising the grading rubric for the informative speech, developing an organized method of collecting assessment artifacts, instruction on effective use of the rubric by all instructors and then for Spring semester the focus will be on student learning outcomes.

DECISION OF GENERAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE

- Course is acceptable as a general education course linked to the General Education goal of communicating effectively.
- Course is not acceptable as a general education course linked to the General Education goal of communicating effectively.

Course is acceptable as a general education course linked to the General Education goal of communicating effectively given the following modifications:

- *All syllabi must include verbatim the course description as stated in the current Bulletin, the general education goal and general education student learning outcome.*
- *All instructors of record must comply with the ADHE and ASU Faculty Handbook required education level and include all instructors on the submission form.*
- *Assessment data from the old grading rubric of the informative speech that apply to the general education student learning outcome must be reported with a plan addressing deficiencies in student learning.*
- *Continue with the identified action plan of modifying the grading rubric and instructing faculty on its use.*
- *Assess student learning during the Spring semester related to the general education student learning outcome and submit an assessment report of the learning and plans to improve student learning.*

Unable to evaluate as a general education course linked to the General Education goal of communicating effectively.

The following information or documentation is needed:

ACTION REQUIRED

None

Follow-up Review

August 2013 – Course Review Submission Form and Assessment Report

Meeting with Department Chair

GEC Chair _____ Date _____