ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES
IN GENERAL EDUCATION

General Education and Institutional Learning Outcomes

Nassau Community College has adopted the SUNY General Education Requirements for all General Education areas. We require evidence of competency in seven of the ten required General Education areas for every AA and AS degree that we offer. In order to ensure consistency in assessment standards, the General Education Subcommittee of the Assessment Committee of the Academic Senate (ASAC) developed or adapted rubrics for General Education and Institutional Learning Outcomes. Most of these rubrics use the SUNY General Education standards, except where otherwise noted. Faculty within each discipline adopted either these grading rubrics or objective exams for all of the knowledge areas and competencies. A summary of learning objectives and measurement tools is listed below. Section 3 contains a comprehensive description of measurement details; rubrics are listed in the Appendix.

A.1. American History
Students will demonstrate:
- Knowledge of a basic narrative of American history: political, economic, social and cultural, including knowledge of unity and diversity in American society;
- Knowledge will also be demonstrated of the common institutions in American society and how they have affected different groups;
- Understanding of America’s evolving relationship with the rest of the world.

A.2. Western Civilization Outcomes
Students will:
- Demonstrate knowledge of the distinctive features of the history, institutions, economy, society, culture, etc., of Western civilization; and
- Relate the development of Western civilization to that of other regions of the world.

A.3. World Civilization Outcomes
Students will demonstrate:
- Knowledge of either a broad outline of world history, or
- The distinctive features of the history, institutions, economy, society, culture, etc., of one non-Western civilization.

Measure: rubrics or exams developed by the History, Political Science and Geography Department (need to check with Rob Genter)

B. The Arts
Students will demonstrate:
- Understanding of at least one principle form of artistic expression and the creative processes inherent therein.

Measure: rubric developed by the General Education Subcommittee of the Assessment Committee of the Academic Senate (ASAC)
Evidence may include examinations, graded papers, visual artifacts, special projects, and/or a performance evaluation.

C. Communication
Students will:
• Produce coherent texts within college level written forms. This includes generating a thesis and supporting it with appropriate detail as well as an understanding of written organization, focus, and grammar.
• Demonstrate the ability to revise and improve such texts;
• Research a topic, develop an argument, and organize supporting details;
• Develop proficiency in oral discourse; and
• Evaluate an oral presentation according to established criteria.

Measure for oral communication: rubric developed by the Communications Department

Measure for written communication: rubric developed by SUNY and adapted by the English Department

Evidence may include at least one paper with a draft and final revision and an assignment that is the result of research with cited references.

D. Foreign Language
Students will demonstrate:
• Basic proficiency in the understanding and use of a foreign language; and
• Knowledge of the distinctive features of the culture(s) associated with the language they are studying.

Measure: Rubric developed by SUNY and adapted by the Foreign Language Department

E. Humanities
Students will demonstrate:
• Knowledge of the conventions and methods of at least one of the humanities in addition to those encompassed by other knowledge areas required by the General Education program. [This includes art, communications, drama, foreign languages, literature, music, and philosophy]
• Measure: rubric developed by Rubric developed by SUNY and adapted by the General Education Subcommittee of ASAC

Evidence: may include graded papers, examinations, visual artifacts, and/or assessment of performances.

F. Mathematics / Quantitative Literacy
Students will demonstrate the ability to:
• interpret and draw inferences from mathematical models such as formulas, graphs, tables, and schematics;
• represent mathematical information symbolically, visually, numerically and verbally;
• employ quantitative methods such as, arithmetic, algebra, geometry, or statistics to solve problems;
• estimate and check mathematical results for reasonableness;
• recognize the limits of mathematical and statistical methods.

**Measure:** rubric developed by SUNY and adapted by Mathematics department.

G. **Natural Sciences**

Students will demonstrate:

• Understanding of the methods scientists use to explore natural phenomena, including observation, hypothesis development, measurement and data collection, experimentation, evaluation of evidence and employment of mathematical analysis; and
• Application of scientific data, concepts and models in one of the natural sciences.

**Measure:** rubric developed by SUNY and adapted by the General Education Subcommittee of ASAC

H. **Social Sciences**

Students will demonstrate:

• Understanding of the methods social scientists use to explore social phenomena, including observation, hypothesis development, measurement and data collection, experimentation, evaluation of evidence, and employment of mathematical and interpretive analysis; and
• Knowledge of major concepts, models and issues of at least one discipline in the social sciences.

**Measure:** rubric developed by SUNY and adapted by General Education Subcommittee of ASAC

I. **Critical Thinking Institutional Learning Outcome (infused competency)**

Students will demonstrate:

• Identify, analyze, and evaluate arguments as they occur in their own work or the work of others; and
• Develop well-reasoned arguments.

**Measure:** Rubric developed by SUNY and adapted by each discipline.

J. **Information Literacy Institutional Learning Outcome (infused competency)**

Students will:

• Perform the basic operations of personal computer use;
• Understand and use basic research techniques; and
• Locate, evaluate, and synthesize information from a variety of sources.

**Measure:** Rubric developed by SUNY and adapted by each discipline

K. **Global Awareness, Pluralism and Diversity**

Student will
• Student demonstrates an acceptable ability to recognize differences and commonalities between cultures while respecting cultural differences.
• Student recognizes the challenges of a global society and demonstrates an ability to identify alternatives and solutions to these challenges; student understands their role and responsibility as a global citizen.

**Measure:** Rubric developed by General Education Subcommittee of ASAC

**Ensuring that students meet the General Education and Institutional Learning Outcomes.**

General Education courses are created by faculty in their disciplines and are approved through our College Wide Curriculum Committee. Liberal Arts and Sciences faculty follow the SNY guidelines for developing and assessing courses meeting the SUNY General Education requirements.

The NCC catalogue maintains a listing of required courses for every program and each program has statements regarding the necessity for students to meet the appropriate number of SUNY General Education requirements as indicated in Section 1. There is a summary page in the catalogue that lists all of the approved courses and the category that they satisfy. The Advisement Center provides guidance to students to ensure that they fulfill all general education requirements for General Liberal Arts AA and AS degrees. Banner degree profile also helps students identify courses that are still needed to fulfill their general education requirements in order to graduate. In addition, all of our discrete program advisement sheets (used by advisors with students to record progress toward their degree) include a listing of required general education courses for each degree.

**Credible, Defensible Evidence that students are meeting standards.**

Embedded assessment measures are used for all general education categories. Depending on the category, one of the following measures is used to assess the student learning outcomes: locally developed objective exams, locally developed rubrics, and SUNY developed rubrics.

Locally developed objective exams are written by appropriate discipline-specific experts, generally composed of faculty teaching the courses in the General education category. For all exams, the discipline experts ensure that the assessment measures map directly to the corresponding SUNY learning outcomes and yield separate sub-scores for each learning outcome. The objective exams are course specific. For each approved course within a category, the SUNY learning outcomes are integrated into the course-specific learning outcomes. Assessment exams are administered within a class session and counted toward student grades. These steps ensure that faculty have the freedom to tailor the SUNY learning outcomes to the specific discipline and course and that students are invested in the outcomes assessment. For each learning outcome, grade-equivalents are defined for the four standards (Exceeding, Meeting, Approaching, and Not Meeting).

85%-100% Exceeding,
70-84.9% Meeting,
60-69.9% Approaching,
0-59.9% Not Meeting

Locally developed rubrics were created for *Global Awareness, Pluralism & Diversity, Aesthetic Literacy, and Basic Communication [Oral]*. The rubrics were written by discipline-specific experts, generally composed of faculty teaching the courses in the General Education or ILO category, and all have been approved by the General Education Subcommittee of the ASAC. Each rubric directly addresses the General Education or Institutional learning outcomes and yields separate sub-scores for each learning outcome. For each learning outcome, grade-equivalents are defined for the four standards (Exceeding, Meeting, Approaching, and Not Meeting). The evidence collected for assessment by rubric is a part of the student’s grade for the respective course, so all assessment is done by the course/section instructor.

SUNY developed rubrics and standards are used to assess *Mathematics, and Basic Communication [Written], Critical Thinking, Information Literacy, Social Science, Natural Science, Foreign Language, The Arts, and Humanities*. The evidence collected for assessment in these categories is part of the student’s grade for the respective courses, so all assessment is done by the course/section instructor.

Assessment of the General Education and Institutional learning outcomes is divided evenly so that they rotate over a three-year cycle. The Office of Assessment and Program Review created this cycle and identifies courses that are assessed for each category in each cycle. For General Education outcomes, assessment data is gathered from 30%-100% of the sections of the courses that satisfy that learning outcome. For Institutional Learning Outcomes, assessment data is gathered from courses in every discipline where that outcome is addressed, with the goal of including at least 70% of the students at NCC in the sample.

**Established Standards for each Learning Outcome**

All locally developed exams and rubrics have clearly defined standards. They are described in Section 3 of this report. In addition, all assessment measures map directly to the corresponding SUNY learning outcomes and yield separate sub-scores for each learning outcome. For exams, the standards are: 85-100% Exceeding, 70-84.9% Meeting, 60-69.9% Approaching, 0-59.9% Not Meeting. For rubrics, the standards vary according to the construction of the rubric. For the ACT exam and the SUNY developed rubrics, the standards are defined by the teams constructing the measures.

**Establishing the degree to which the learning objectives are achieved, making it possible to identify areas that need to be addressed in order to improve learning.**

By using common rubrics and locally-developed assignments or exams, we are able to determine the degree to which our students achieve each General Education and Institutional learning outcome. We have set a criterion of at least 75% of our students meeting or exceeding our standards for each outcome. If more than 25% of our students are not able to
meet our standards for an outcome, this indicates a need for professional development or other resources (such as intensive instruction, tutoring centers or learning laboratories) to improve student learning.

Furthermore, in using SUNY standards wherever they have been provided, our students are able to determine their level of competency in comparison to their peers throughout the SUNY system. This will ensure that when students transfer to 4-year institutions, their General Education competencies have prepared them for advanced studies.

**How our campus academic environment is assessed**

The campus uses the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) and the SUNY Student Opinion Survey (SUNY SOS) to assess the campus academic environment. The Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Strategic Planning is responsible for selecting course sections for sampling. OIESP looks for correlations between the SOS results, the CCSSE results and the academic assessment results. The findings are addressed by the Vice-president for Academic Affairs, the Dean of Social Sciences and General Education, the Academic Department Chairs, and the Academic Senate.

**Faculty Governance review and approval of curriculum and assessment**

The College Wide Curriculum Committee, comprised of elected faculty members from every department, Deans and Administrative representatives, reviews every course proposal to ensure that the learning outcomes are appropriately addressed through the proposed curriculum. If course learning outcomes address general education requirements, then the course is approved to have an NCC General Education designation. The primary group responsible for developing the General Education Assessment Plan is the General Education Subcommittee of the Academic Senate Assessment Committee (ASAC). This committee consists of the dean of the Social Science and General Education, the Assessment Coordinator for the Office of Assessment and Program Review, and faculty representatives from every academic department on campus. This committee is responsible for the assessment of all of the SUNY-approved General Education courses on campus. All recommendations for changes to the plan are discussed and voted on at the department level and then brought to the ASAC for further discussion and final recommendation. The final recommendation of this group is sent to the Academic Senate Executive Committee and the Vice-president for Academic Affairs for review and eventual endorsement.

**The timetable for General Education Assessment ensures frequent analysis of student learning outcomes.**

Assessment Cycle of ILOs and General Education Learning Outcomes
The assessment process includes an assessment of the process itself and ensures disseminating assessment results to the appropriate campus community.

Assessing the Assessment Process:

Departments and the programs they coordinate assess and report on the appropriate General Education outcomes in Taskstream, our accountability management system. When fewer than 75% of the students assessed for an outcome meet or exceed our standards, the departments develop action plans to improve student outcomes. Assessment plans, findings and action plans are reported to OAPR in June of every year. These reports are reviewed by two independent faculty peers who are experts in assessment and by the OAPR coordinator. The departments are assessed to determine the extent to which their assessment processes meet with the standards of the Middle States Commission on Higher Education and the SUNY Council on Assessment. OAPR tracks the rating of the reviewers and creates a color-coded map to help highlight areas of strength and weakness in regards to assessment across the campus. This is one way that we identify assessment issues that require campus-wide professional development or resources. It also highlights exemplary practices, which are then posted on the OAPR website for the campus community to read.

A summary of the findings of each department and program review is provided to the Department Chair, Dean and the Vice President of Academic Affairs for their review. If a

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<td>Creative &amp; Aesthetic Literacy</td>
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department is found to be deficient with regard to any standard, they address these deficiencies in the subsequent year and report on their progress in their next Annual Departmental Assessment Report.

Yet another assurance that we assess our assessment practices is that each department is assigned an Assessment Fellow, a faculty peer who is an expert in assessment. The Assessment Fellow reviews each department’s assessment plans in the Fall of every year and helps the Department Chair, Program Coordinators, and Department Assessment Coordinators develop plans and processes that meet MSCHE and SUNY SCoA standards.

**Dissemination of General Education and Institutional Learning Outcomes Assessment Findings:**

The results of assessment findings are gathered by OAPR and analyzed each summer. A report of these findings is provided to the Dean of Social Science and General Liberal Arts in August and shared with the Academic Senate Assessment Committee and the Academic Department Chairs in the Fall. The information is also maintained in the General Education Handbook, which can be found on the OAPR website and on the OIESP dashboard, both of which are available to the entire campus community.
Appendices
Include all ILO and Gen Ed rubrics.