

## General Education Assessment Fine Arts Action Plan

Please interpret the findings and provide a specific action plan that can be implemented to improve or reinforce student learning as a result of the assessment process. The action plan should address the area(s) in need of improvement or reinforcement. The plan does not have to be limited to general education student learning but could include departmental initiatives designed to improve student success.

### **Part One: Results Discussion / Reflection**

Please provide insightful interpretations of the results presented in the Findings section, noting any relevant context / background or concerns the unit may have.

The second research question refers to “each School of Fine Arts” which is not the best context to understand the four Schools in the College of Fine Arts and Communication. We hold a unique position as being a College comprised of three arts Schools, one school of Fine Arts (School of Art and Design), two performing arts schools (School of Music, and School of Theatre and Dance) and one School of Communication. We request that IA revise the report to clarify this distinction, if possible.

For the School of Art and Design’s sample, we recognize the programming error with the way the online students were asked to engage with the mapped questions. Since the mapped questions were not required, students did not engage with the assessment in a meaningful way, and the data is not helpful.

The School of Communication’s demographic data showed a distinct population among the sample in the College. The respondents appear to be much more heavily weighted toward upper-level students whereas respondents from the other three Schools seem to be more heavily weighted toward lower-level students. We discussed whether this demographic distinction had an impact on the student performance, since the sample from the School of Communication indicated consistently stronger performance on the assessments than the samples from the other Schools. At the bottom of page 15 of the report, IA commentary suggests that this situation may be the case, indeed.

Additionally, we discussed the impact that required/elective status of the selected courses may have had on the results. We included a mix of courses, some of which were required or were electives for majors, others of which were for non-majors only. We wondered if there may have been a higher engagement level in the subject matter and, accordingly, improved results on the assessment when the courses sampled include students that are majors in the representative programs.

### **Part Two: Action Plan**

Please describe what actions you will take as a result of the assessment in the following four areas.

### a. Pedagogical / Curriculum

Our primary action is to propose a revision of the student learning outcomes (SLOs) for fine arts general education classes. After having used them for our classes over the past three years, we have recognized that there were two of them that do not speak to the importance of what we do in the arts, and the form of assessment used to measure student performance on those two SLOs does not match the native form of student learning in the arts. The Unit Assessment Coordinators from the College have rewritten a justification to share with the Faculty General Education Committee to request a rewrite of the SLOs for the future. The justification is first, followed by a rewrite of the SLOs to honor the place engaging in art and design has in our curriculum.

Rationale: The arts hold a significant place in humanity, as arts have existed in all times, in all places throughout our known history. The importance of the arts can be demonstrated primarily through the multimodality of the ways in which we know the world. We experience life through sounds, pictures, physical movement, text, stories, and the relationship of each of our senses to the world. All artistic forms allow us to experience the human condition in a variety of ways and communicate with others. Those forms – music, visual arts, speech, theatre, and dance – are vital to the lived experiences of all human beings and are ways through which humans can express their understanding of the inner, emotional life. Therefore, it is important that the General Education Fine Arts Student Learning Outcomes honor and promote the multimodal literacy all humans need to interpret the world.

The faculty members of all four Schools in the College of Fine Arts and Communication have discussed and approved these revised SLOs.

#### Revised General Education Fine Arts Student Learning Outcomes

- Apply knowledge of the human condition in an area in the fine arts to convey meaning through creating, performing, producing, or responding within an artistic form.
- Analyze diverse genres, styles, and techniques in their appropriate cultural and historical context.
- Synthesize and relate discipline-specific knowledge in the fine arts through the artistic processes of creating, performing, producing, presenting or responding as applicable to cultural and personal growth.

These revised SLOs emphasize students doing and **making** in the arts as their primary evidence of student learning, whereas the current SLOs emphasize writing **about** the products of artistic student learning. We believe that securing revised SLOs is the lynchpin of our action plan to address this assessment cycle.

### b. Student Support Services

No actions are planned in this area.

**c. Faculty Development**

Unit Assessment Coordinators in the four Schools plan to assist faculty members with the development of assessment measures that capture student learning that aligns with the revised SLOs. Those new measures will be implemented in the next phase of the General Education Fine Arts Assessment cycle to yield baseline data that is appropriate to the fine arts disciplines represented in the College of Fine Arts and Communication.

In detail, we plan to work closely with faculty to address the situation where the mapped questions were optional for the School of Art and Design assessment. We will emphasize the need to make all mapped questions in the future required of the students, and not optional or extra credit.

Finally, when selected the next sample of courses to assess, we plan to discuss ways to select courses that have students with like demographic profiles, in terms of first-year versus fourth-year and major versus non-major. We believe that doing so will provide us with data that is better for our next assessment cycle.

**d. Other Areas**

n/a