

**LEARNING ASSESSMENT DEVELOPMENT PLAN:  
GENERAL EDUCATION**

General Education (GE) is central and vital to each student's university experience. Assessment of GE will be based on principles of program evaluation, and will therefore focus on the program as a whole in five areas: Communication, Science and Mathematics, Arts and Humanities, Society and the Individual, and Technology. It is important to emphasize that the complexity of a general education program means that specific outcome measures of success will not fully reflect the constructs we identify. Certain facets of the program will inevitably be left unmeasured in the interest of a tractable assessment process. Further, the methodology employed to study GE "effectiveness" will not and cannot indicate that particular program elements caused specific program results. The nature of the program precludes the use of design elements required for the establishment of cause and effect relationships. Despite these inherent constraints on the evaluation of GE, substantial information on the efficacy of GE will be obtainable through measures of association or correlational techniques. This has important implications for how the data will be disseminated and how feedback will be used to further student learning. Because no one method or measure can fully capture the complexity of such a program, this evaluation should make use of a multimethod-multimeasure approach. Cal Poly's GE 2001 program will not begin until Fall 2001. Its first graduates would be in Spring 2005. A logical time for assessment will be the end of the program when presumably all program objectives will have been fulfilled.

***Assessment Development Plan for General Education***

AY	PERIOD	TASKS	ACTION
00 - 01	Fall-Winter	Identification of Student Learning Outcomes	Each of three six-member-GE subcommittees (already formed) will be assigned the tasks of identifying and defining the present educational objectives and criteria for the areas (communication, science and mathematics, arts and humanities, society and the individual, and technology) under their purview. In addition, the subcommittees will also come together as a "group of the whole" to exchange and coordinate ideas and concepts.
	Winter-Spring		The subcommittees will be responsible for choosing/designing measures used to assess their area of GE. This will be done in consultation with experts in assessment/testing/statistical methods. Consideration will be given to choosing/designing measures that can assess multiple areas/skills at the same time. A sampling scheme will also be developed during this period.
01 - 02	Fall-Summer	Pilot Testing and Feasibility Studies	Small-scale pilot testing with samples of volunteers will occur. If necessary, rubrics for original written assessments will be created. Training for rubric scoring will occur and reliability checks will be done. Modifications to testing procedures and testing items will be made as necessary.

02 - 03	Fall-Summer	Baseline Assessment	Baseline assessments will be conducted. Additional modifications to testing procedures and testing items will be made as necessary. It is suggested that unless the results indicate that large-scale changes must be made to the program based on some glaring oversight with regard to student learning, that baseline testing should occur over the next two years before any other changes to the program are introduced.
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