

Humanities General Education Annual Assessment Report 2011-2012 June 11, 2012

I. Introduction

The Humanities General Education Program serves all OIT degree students, who are each required to take nine credits in this general education area. The program offers courses in art, literature, humanities, music, philosophy, languages, and intercultural communication. The program also offers a number of online courses to serve degree completion students as well as on-campus students.

II. Program Purpose, Objectives and Student Learning Outcomes

The Humanities faculty reviewed the program purpose, objectives, and learning outcomes during the fall faculty meeting in September 2011. The faculty reaffirmed the statements below:

Humanities General Education Program Purpose

The Humanities General Education Program provides for the study of fine arts, literature, humanities, drama, film, music, philosophy and foreign language which allows students the opportunity to learn specific methods for critically evaluating human values and conduct within historical and cultural contexts.

Program Educational Objectives

1. Foster intellectual curiosity, global knowledge, critical thinking, personal responsibility, and ethical and cultural awareness.
2. Prepare students to use language effectively.
3. Establish a framework for students to develop an aesthetic appreciation for fine arts.
4. Prepare students to be responsible citizens, lifelong learners, and world-ready leaders in their chosen fields.

Expected Program Learning Outcomes

Graduates from this program will be able to:

1. Articulate significant social, literary, and political perspectives found in humanities.
2. Critically analyze ideas and cultural values that have profoundly influenced Western culture, using appropriate support.
3. Read and discuss humanistic works critically with significant reference to irony, symbolism, imagery, and interpretation.
4. Identify or create key elements of individual expression within film and/or fiction writing.
5. Explain how historical and social contexts influence various types of artistic expression.
6. Identify and analyze universal themes reflected in the humanities, using appropriate support.

7. Identify and describe specific personal connections to literary themes in writing, using appropriate support, vocabulary, and first person point of view.

III. Three-Year Cycle for Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes

The faculty also confirmed the assessment cycle planned last year, as listed in Table 1 below.

Learning Outcomes	'11-12	'12-13	'13-14	'14-15	'15-16	'16-17
1. Articulate significant social, ethical, literary, and political perspectives found in humanities.			X			X
2. Critically analyze ideas and cultural values that have profoundly influenced Western culture, using appropriate support.			X			X
3. Read and discuss humanistic works critically with significant reference to irony, symbolism, imagery, and interpretation.		X			X	
4. Identify or create key elements of individual expression within art, film and/or fiction writing.		X			X	
5. Explain how historical and social contexts influence various types of artistic expression.		X			X	
6. Identify and analyze universal themes reflected in the humanities, using appropriate support.	X			X		
7. Identify and describe specific personal connections to literary themes in writing, using appropriate support, vocabulary, and first person point of view.	X			X		

Table 1. Humanities General Education Assessment Cycle

IV. Assessment Activities

The Humanities faculty conducted formal assessment of two student learning outcomes during 2011-2012, SLO's #6 & 7. Additionally, the Humanities faculty conducted an analysis of where these outcomes are reflected in the curriculum. The mapping of these Humanities outcomes can be found in Appendix A, Student Learning Outcome-Course Matrices Tables A1 and A2.

Student Learning Outcome # 6: Identify and analyze universal themes reflected in the humanities, using appropriate support.

Direct Assessment #1

The faculty assessed this outcome in HUM 147, Introduction to the Humanities I, fall 2011, using several assignments, including formal essays and quizzes, identifying and analyzing universal themes reflected in the humanities. Over the course of the term, the goal was for students to become more proficient in identifying and analyzing universal themes & values, using appropriate support. There were 66 students enrolled in this course. The minimum acceptable performance is set at 70% because student performance varies widely in large, lower division courses taught in CU 151, a large auditorium.

It's common to see higher drop/withdrawal/failure rates in humanities courses during fall term. This appears to be a result of first-term freshmen being admitted with poor results on the reading placement test. These students typically struggle in the humanities courses primarily because their reading skills are insufficient for the difficulty of the required reading assignments. HUM 147, for example, requires that students understand and analyze *The Iliad*, *The Odyssey*, four Greek plays, the philosophical ideals of Socrates, Plato and Aristotle, as well as understanding Roman and early Christian literature and values.

These results are summarized using the performance criteria shown in Table 2 below.

Performance Criteria	Assessment Method	Measurement Scale	Minimum Acceptable Performance	Results
<u>Identify</u> universal themes reflected in the humanities.	Student essay, rubric	1 - 4 scale, % at 3 or 4	70% at 3 or 4	76%
<u>Analyze</u> universal themes reflected in the humanities.	Student essay, rubric	1 - 4 scale, % at 3 or 4	70% at 3 or 4	73.6%
Accurately <u>support</u> conclusions with quotes from the text.	Student essay, rubric	1 - 4 scale, % at 3 or 4	70% at 3 or 4	71%

Table 2 Assessment Results for SLO #6, in HUM 147, fall 2011

Indirect Assessment #1:

To accompany the assessment above, the faculty indirectly assessed this outcome in HUM 147, Introduction to the Humanities I, fall 2011, by asking students to rate their proficiency on the formal essays, using the same rubric used by faculty to assess their performance. These results are summarized as shown in Table 3 below.

Performance Criteria	Assessment Method	Measurement Scale	Minimum Acceptable Performance	Results
<u>Identify</u> universal themes reflected in the humanities.	Student essay, rubric	1 - 4 scale, % at 3 or 4	70% at 3 or 4	93%
<u>Analyze</u> universal themes reflected in the humanities.	Student essay, rubric	1 - 4 scale, % at 3 or 4	70% at 3 or 4	95%
Accurately <u>support</u> conclusions with quotes from the text.	Student essay, rubric	1 - 4 scale, % at 3 or 4	70% at 3 or 4	86.6%

Table 3 Student self-assessment results for SLO #6 in HUM 147, fall 2011.

Students clearly saw themselves as significantly more proficient than the data shows in the direct assessment results above.

The Humanities & Social Sciences faculty conducted an analysis of where this outcome is reflected in the curriculum. The mapping of this outcome in the Humanities courses will be found in Appendix A, Student Learning Outcome-Course Matrices Table A2.

Detailed records of all assessment activities can be found in the department assessment coordinator's notebook.

Student Learning Outcome #7: Identify and describe specific personal connections to literary themes in writing, using appropriate support, vocabulary, and first person point of view.

Direct Assessment #1

The faculty assessed this outcome in ENG 235, American Multicultural Literature, fall of 2011, using a series of formal written responses to literature with faculty feedback. Seventeen students participated. Formal analysis of the oral presentation and/or student essays and the course term project were used to measure student progress based on the three performance criteria for SLO #7. These results are summarized in Table 4 below.

Performance Criteria	Assessment Method	Measurement Scale	Minimum Acceptable Performance	Results
Identifying and describing specific personal connections to literary themes in writing.	Student essay, rubric	1 - 4 scale, % at 3 or 4	80% at 3 or 4	84%
Using appropriate support and vocabulary.	Student essay, rubric	1 - 4 scale, % at 3 or 4	80% at 3 or 4	89%
Using first person point of view.	Student essay, rubric	1 - 4 scale, % at 3 or 4	80% at 3 or 4	94%

Table 4 Assessment Results for SLO #7 in ENG 235, fall 2011

Indirect Assessment #1:

To accompany the assessment above, the faculty indirectly assessed this outcome in ENG 235, American Multicultural Literature, fall 2011, by asking students to rate their proficiency on the oral presentation and/or essays, using the same rubric used by faculty to assess their performance. These results are summarized in Table 5 below.

Performance Criteria	Assessment Method	Measurement Scale	Minimum Acceptable Performance	Results
Identifying and describing specific personal connections to literary themes in writing.	Student essay, rubric	1 - 4 scale, % at 3 or 4	80% at 3 or 4	95%
Using appropriate support and vocabulary.	Student essay, rubric	1 - 4 scale, % at 3 or 4	80% at 3 or 4	87%
Using first person point of view.	Student essay, rubric	1 - 4 scale, % at 3 or 4	80% at 3 or 4	90%

Table 5 Student self-assessment results for SLO #7 in ENG 235, fall 2011

The instructor provided examples and assignments, both essays and presentations that allowed students access to literary and political perspectives in literature. The small class size fostered appropriate individual instruction.

The addition of SLO #7 this academic year illustrates our desire to continually review and update expectations in the HUM area. SLO #7 encourages individualized instruction in a seminar type setting. Students are asked to find personal connections to literary themes in writing. This is best taught in small classes, where student participation is a requirement for successful completion of the course.

The Humanities & Social Sciences faculty also conducted an analysis of where this outcome is reflected in the curriculum. The mapping of this outcome in the Humanities courses can be found in Appendix A, Student Learning Outcome-Course Matrices Table A1.

V. Summary of Student Learning

Student Learning Outcome #6: Identify and analyze universal themes reflected in the humanities, using appropriate support.

Strengths: Students demonstrated acceptable performance on all performance criteria for this SLO, including identifying and analyzing universal themes. Students were also able to appropriately support their conclusions with quotes from the texts. Direct assessment data indicated that student performance was slightly above 70%, or “average.”

Weaknesses: This HUM 147 course was a freshman survey course taught in a large auditorium, with an enrollment of 52 students. Indirect assessment data indicates that students significantly over-estimated their analytical abilities, perceiving their proficiency as above 90%, or “excellent.” This is not an uncommon perception for students just coming out of high school. They often begin entry level college courses with an inflated sense of their own abilities. Sometimes this perception makes them a bit complacent about their study habits, resulting in lower than expected grades.

At the end of fall term, 9% of these students received “D” or “F” grades, which suggests problems with being unprepared for college. In this large academic setting, it’s extremely difficult for the instructor to provide individualized instruction for students who don’t have the necessary skills to succeed. These students often stop attending and/or participating somewhere during the middle of the term.

Actions: No further action is required.

Student Learning Outcome #7: Identify and describe specific personal connections to literary themes in writing, using appropriate support, vocabulary, and first person point of view.

Strengths: The low enrollment (16 students) and the special focus for this course allows for an extensive, elevated reading list and sophisticated class discussion. Examinations and written responses achieved high expectations. Students demonstrated acceptable

performance on Performance Criteria #2 & #3. In both cases their Indirect Assessment was slightly lower than their performance.

Weaknesses: Indirect Assessment data indicates that students significantly overestimated their ability to find personal connection to literature's themes (Performance Criteria #1). This reflects a natural tendency to generalize and therefore rationalize personal behavior and hypocrisy.

Actions: The course materials need to reveal a stronger method for locating credible personal responsibility for the thematic references found in literature. The instructor will use more and better writing examples to demonstrate techniques for accomplishing this goal.

VI. Changes Resulting from Assessment

HUM faculty propose that we develop a new lower division, "basic literature," ENG course designed specifically for students who need special assistance developing college level reading skills. This would be similar to a reading course offered several years ago through the HSS department. The enrollment would be limited to 20 or less, to allow the instructor to work with students individually.

VII. Additional Suggestions Resulting from Assessment

OIT would benefit greatly by implementing a new reading placement exam in addition to the math and writing placement exams already in place during fall orientation. This would allow us to identify students who simply cannot read at the college level. These students could then be enrolled in a remedial course (perhaps a new ENG reading course) or referred to CFLAT for mentoring. This new assessment tool could significantly improve our retention rate.

Appendix A

Student Learning Outcome-Course Matrices

Student Learning Outcome #6: Identify and analyze universal themes reflected in the humanities, using appropriate support. Table A1 demonstrates the mapping of this outcome to humanities courses.

Humanities Course	Fall	Winter	Spring
ART 207 Watercolor			
ART 207 Graphic Design			
ART 207 Digital Photography			
ART 220			
ENG 104			
ENG 105			
ENG 106			
ENG 235	X		
ENG 246		X	
ENG 253			
ENG 254			
ENG 255			
ENG 266	X		X
ENG 367			X
ENG 381	X		
ENG 456			X
ENG 407	X	X	X
HUM 125	X	X	X
HUM 147	X		
HUM 148		X	
HUM 149			X
MUS 207			
PHIL 331			

Table A1. Student Learning Outcome #1-Course Matrix

X indicates the courses and terms that offer SLO #6.

Student Learning Outcome #7: Identify and describe specific personal connections to literary themes in writing, using appropriate support, vocabulary, and first person point of view.

Table A2 demonstrates the mapping of this outcome to humanities courses.

Humanities Course	Fall	Winter	Spring
ART 207 Watercolor			
ART 207 Graphic Design			
ART 207 Digital Photography			
ART 220			
ENG 104	X		
ENG 105		X	
ENG 106			X
ENG 235	X		X
ENG 246		X	
ENG 253	X		
ENG 254		X	
ENG 255			X
ENG 266			X
ENG 367		X	
ENG 381	X		
ENG 407	X	X	X
ENG 456	X		
HUM 125			
HUM 147			
HUM 148			
HUM 149			
HUM 197			
MUS 207			
PHIL 331			

Table A2. Student Learning Outcome #2-Course Matrix

X indicates the courses and terms that offer SLO #7.

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