



GEC Assessment Plan, Cycle, Methods, and Tools: 2008-2018

I. Assessment Plan & Cycle

Date Implemented	Action Item
F10	Second Cycle of GEC Learning Outcomes Assessment begins
W – S11	EPCC determines criteria for GEC courses reviews and makes final revisions to goals, outcomes, and rubric criteria for assessment—approved by Faculty Senate
S – F11	Curriculum Maps for GEC Learning Outcomes due to EPCC w/ clear identification of GEC courses that will be reviewed for GEC status and learning outcome criteria
F11	Faculty training in use of TracDat software for data collection, analysis, closing loop
First Full Cycle	GEC Outcome(s)
S08	Critical Thinking
F08-S09	Inquiry, Communication
F09-S10	Civic Engagement, Communication
S10	Program Review
Second Full Cycle	GEC Outcome(s)
F10-S11	Critical Thinking
F11-S12	Inquiry
F12-S13	Communication
F13-S14	Civic Engagement
S14	Program Review
Third Full Cycle	GEC Outcome(s)
F14-S15	Critical Thinking
F15-S16	Inquiry
F16-S17	Communication
F17-S18	Civic Engagement
S18	Program Review

II. Assessment Protocol and Methods

The following protocol and methodology were initially developed by Donald Wolff, Professor of English/Writing, for purposes of piloting the GEC learning-outcome rubrics beginning in Spring 2008. They were adapted and updated in Fall 2012 by Sarah Witte, AVPAA and Dr. Donna Evans, Director of the Writing Center and faculty Coordinator of GEC Assessment.

When possible, two faculty members per division (or partner university) are involved in the annual GEC Assessment Sampling. Participants will be determined based upon courses correlated to learning outcomes as defined in GEC Program Objectives at < <http://www.eou.edu/assess/general-education-assessment/>>. One GEC learning outcome will be assessed annually, beginning with data collection in the Fall term, data analysis in the Winter term, and closing the loop in Spring term. All GEC learning outcomes will be assessed within a four-year cycle, with GEC program review recommendations to be made at the end of every four-year assessment cycle.

Protocol:

1. The AVPAA invites faculty members selected to participate in a given year's GEC assessment sampling. The selection is based on curriculum mapping in TracDat. The AVPAA and faculty Coordinator of GEC assessment meet with faculty participants prior to the beginning of classes in the Fall to receive the charge, review outcome traits to be assessed, review the rubric to be employed, engage in criteria mapping, and share assignments where students will demonstrate the level of achievement against rubric criteria.
2. Each faculty member involved in the GEC Assessment Sampling participates in a criteria mapping exercise at the beginning of the academic year and correlates it to the approved GEC rubric to assess the abilities of the students in the selected class. Discipline-specific adaptation of the designated rubric criteria is permissible—adapted rubrics may be uploaded—but aggregate data collection will be based on the more generic GEC criteria for a given learning outcome. Results will be entered into TracDat in late fall or early Winter terms.
3. It is expected that faculty will include the primary GEC learning outcome on the course syllabus, inform students of their participation in an assessment sampling, and identify the assignment and share the rubric with students.
4. Faculty will enter results into an appropriate data portal or software system, and the number of students/percentages of those Proficient, Adequate, and Developing are calculated accordingly. The number of students (in each class) involved in the assessment is recorded as well. Data will be collected using TracDat software, and faculty participants will be trained annually to use this software system to input their data and provide analysis and commentary on recommendations for improvement.
5. Each faculty member is expected to upload to TracDat a sample assignment demonstrating Proficient, Adequate, and Developing levels of competence based on a common (but adapted based on discipline-specific needs) GEC rubric for that outcome.
6. The faculty members in the sampling meet at the beginning and the end of the data sampling to share results; the AVPAA is responsible for aggregating, sharing results with the participants, and making recommendations to the EPCC and Colleges.
7. The faculty members in the sampling review the aggregate report and provide any additional recommendations for revision or refinement of the general rubric or the GEC program as a whole, if any are needed.

8. The faculty members in the sampling reflect on this assessment and note (as well as record) changes they will make in their syllabi , assignments, and pedagogy in response to the results of this assessment (Closing the Loop).
9. Recommendations for faculty development in learning outcomes assessment will be referred to the Center for Teaching and Learning Advisory Group.

Methods

Using Elements of Dynamic Criteria Mapping as a Process Facilitating GEC Learning Outcomes Assessment

Dr. Donna Evans, Eastern Oregon University, Fall 2012

Introduction

In Fall 2012, EOU began a process of discovery in attempting to model “authentic assessment,” and Dynamic Criteria Mapping (DCM) methods offer potential to facilitate the invitational local conversation important to faculty buy-in. First described by Broad in *What We Really Value: Beyond Rubrics in Teaching and Assessing Writing* (2003), the theoretical origin of DCM was “inspired by Guba and Lincoln’s *Fourth Generation Evaluation* (1989) and Glaser and Strauss’s grounded theory (1967)” (p.5). The appeal the DCM approach is that it “promotes inductive (democratic) and empirical (ethnographic) methods for generating accurate and useful accounts of what faculty and administrators value in their students’ work” (p. 5). Since Broad’s introduction of DCM, writing program administrators at other institutions have adopted it for various assessment foci—writing placement, first year writing program, assessment across the curriculum, and writing and critical thinking assessment—and have demonstrated its flexibility, broad applicability, and richness. These efforts are documented in *Organic Writing Assessment: Dynamic Criteria Mapping in Action* by Broad et al.

While application of DCM as such in EOU’s General Education Core sampling process would likely oppose the spirit of DCM as locally grown, organic assessment, and would not result in a purely dynamic criteria map, it would promote a bottom-up element of inquiry that invites the voices of local faculty to join in the process of developing a discipline-based understanding of established GEC learning outcomes and rubrics, and how the institutional rubric might be usefully embedded in a discipline-based assessment you are already doing. In addition, DCM would contribute an expanded vocabulary of assessment at institutional, program, course, and classroom levels, and do so in a way meaningful to local assessment teams. Further, DCM will help uncover criteria commonly applied in assessment that fall outside of and currently remain undocumented in an authorized rubric.

Example

This year’s EOU GEC assessment focuses on Communication, one of four GEC outcomes, for each of which an established rubric is in place. The purpose of the initial meeting is to orient faculty on the sampling team to the assessment process through conversation, activity, and collaboration. We will also try to get a sense of what DCM might offer to processes leading to faculty engagement in assessment. A proposed outline of the approach to this session follows:

GEC Assessment Sampling Team Meeting: Session 1

Date: beginning of fall orientation week

Time: TBD

Location: TBD

Facilitators, including Recorder (Donna Evans and Sarah Witte)

Materials to Bring With You:

1 copy of Syllabus for course w/ GEC Communication Learning Outcome and assignment to be assessed clearly indicated

Required Materials/Technology

Computer/projector/screen

Typing paper/pencils or pens

Copies of Communication rubric

Process

1. Introductions (name/class)
2. Explain purpose of meeting: to begin the process of assessing Communication as one of the four GEC values.
3. Invite discussion. (Recorder types defining and descriptive words/phrases, which are projected on screen for all participants to see.) Suggested starters¹:
 - a. What is Communication (or learning outcome to be assessed)? Take a minute or two to write down your response...Let's talk about this now. What is communication?
 - b. Why is it important in the class you teach?
 - c. What are important elements of communication?
 - d. What do you value in assessing communication?
 - e. What words do you use to describe the characteristics of valued criteria?
 - f. Do you ever struggle to name or define what you like or do not like about a student's response to an assignment that involves assessment of communication?
 - g. (And so on...)
4. Introduce the basic task the team is charged with:

Each faculty represents a class for which Communication outcomes will be assessed with the GEC Language Alignment Document. Faculty will collect, analyze, and interpret pedagogically (close the loop) the data gathered from their own class.

Take-home Assignment—Bring with you to Session 2, Thursday September 20

Instruct Sampling Team members to ***come to the follow-up meeting with two documents:***

1. **A draft of a class assignment that includes an assessable Communication component.** This assignment may be something already in use or recently designed

¹ This *hermeneutic dialectic* process of inquiry is flexible (Guba and Lincoln, 1989). Inquiry is not confined to a strict list of predetermined questions. A response may yield unexpected ideas or criteria that prompt Facilitators (investigators) to ask one or more questions not previously anticipated. Facilitators may backtrack to ask new questions of any stakeholder at any point of the inquiry.

Conversation is dynamic in a group setting, such as the GEC Sampling Team, in which hermeneutic dialectics are employed. Questions--and so, too, data— are not limited to predetermined criteria but provide space for disciplinary faculty to contribute a variety of responses, some of which may fall outside authorized rubrics.

to fit into your course plan, or it may be a standalone assignment designed specifically for GEC assessment. Use **both** of the following as you consider the assessment outcomes the assignment will meet:

The GEC Communication rubric (found at <http://www.eou.edu/epcc/> “GEC Rubric and Alignment Language”)

AND

Criteria discussed in group discussion, or that you think of afterward, that are not acknowledged in the GEC rubric (Following the meeting, a copy of the criteria list generated by the group will be sent by email to each team member.)

2. **A visual representation—a map—that brings together the GEC rubric and the additional criteria you value.** This may be hand or computer drawn. If the criteria you value do not align with the GEC rubric, position where you think it should fit.
3. If time permits, have faculty begin mapping listed criteria over GEC rubric on clean sheets of paper.
4. Remind faculty that they can contact the facilitators if they have questions or want a sounding board or support while drafting the course assignment.

GEC Assessment Sampling Team Meeting: Session 2

Date: Later during Fall Orientation Week

Time: TBD

Location: TBD

Facilitators, including Recorder (Donna Evans and Sarah Witte)

Required Materials/Technology*

Document camera

Typing paper/pencils or pens

Copies of Communication rubric

*Remind team members to bring assignments and maps

Discussion

1. Each team member will present and explain choices they made in designing their assignment and mapping new criteria to the GEC rubric. Team members may ask questions or make suggestions.
2. The group will discuss the criteria mapping process.

References

Broad, B. (2003). *What we really value: Beyond rubrics in teaching and assessing writing*.

Logan, UT: Utah State University Press.

Broad, B., Adler-Kassner, L., Alford, B., Detweiler, J., Estrem, H., Harrington, S.,...Weeden, S.

(2009). *Organic writing assessment: Dynamic criteria mapping in action*. Logan, UT:

Utah State University Press.

Guba, Egon G., and Yvonna S. Lincoln. (1989). *Fourth generation evaluation*. Newbury Park,

CA: Sage Publications.

III. Assessment Tools

To view the current GEC Rubrics, please go to the following site: <http://www.eou.edu/epcc/>

IV. Levels of Performance

General Education Core (GEC) program assessment and achievement of mission is determined through cyclic collection, study, and analysis of data that indexes identified GEC outcomes with selected assignments in individual courses across or within breadth categories.

Rubrics have been established for each of four GEC outcomes: Civic Engagement, Communication, Critical Thinking, and Inquiry. Content Knowledge for GEC courses will be assessed by Academic Degree Programs using program-specific tools and rubrics. Levels of student performance are generally defined here, with specific definitions given in each rubric that apply the traits of each outcome to the level of performance.

Proficient means:

- Demonstrable, competent and expected evidence at the college level

Adequate means:

- Acceptable performance at the college level

Developing means:

- Unacceptable performance at the college level