

## GEC Learning Outcomes (GLOs) Assessment

### Critical Thinking–Composite Report

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**Assessment Type:** GLO

**Academic Year:** AY18

**Level:** 100- & 200-Level GEC Courses

**Learning Outcome:** GLO Critical Thinking

**Assessment Method/Tool:** Common Rubric-EPCC

**Measurement Scale:** 3-1

**Sample Size:** 369 (38% On-Campus Student FTE)

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|   | <b>Proficient<br/>(median %)</b> | <b>Adequate<br/>(median %)</b> | <b>Developing<br/>(median %)</b> |
|---|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <b>Identifies and explains Issues</b>   | 71%                              | 20%                            | 9%                               |
| <b>Recognizes contexts and assumptions</b>  | 53%                              | 25%                            | 22%                              |
| <b>Acknowledges multiple perspectives or multiple approaches to problem solving</b> | 51%                              | 33%                            | 16%                              |
| <b>Effectively evaluates evidence to reach conclusions</b>                          | 45%                              | 40%                            | 15%                              |
| <b>Medians</b>  |                                  |                                |                                  |
| <b>Proficient + Adequate</b>  |                                  | <b>85%</b>                     | <b>15%</b>                       |
| <b>Developing</b>   |                                  |                                |                                  |
| <b>(based on 369 student sample size)</b>   |                                  |                                |                                  |

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|-------------------------------------|------------|--|
| <b>Benchmark:</b>                   | <b>85%</b> | Institutional benchmark goal for percent of students to meet “Proficient” or “Adequate” levels |
| <b>Percent Achieving Benchmark:</b> | <b>85%</b> | Median percentage of students meeting “Adequate” or “Proficient” levels                        |

## Closing the Loop

The institutional effectiveness threshold for General Education Learning Outcomes (GLOs) assessment is a median of 85% of student samples scoring at the Proficient or Adequate Levels (a 3 or 2 on the rubric). The median for the AY18 Critical Thinking Outcome is 85%, meeting the threshold. AY18 produced a sampling of 369 students in eleven lower division General Education courses from nine different programs across the curriculum (Anthropology/ Sociology, Art, Biology, Chemistry, Communication Studies, Economics, Music, Physics, and Writing). The data shows faculty are effectively incorporating Critical Thinking into their General Education courses, encompassing the following outcomes: Identifying and Explaining Issues Clearly, Recognizing Contexts and Assumptions, Acknowledging Multiple Perspectives or Multiple Approaches to Problem Solving, and Effective Evaluation of Evidence to Reach Sound Conclusions.

Especially effective is the teaching of Identifying and Explaining Issues Clearly across the curriculum, with a median of 91%. Effective Evaluation of Evidence to Reach Sound Conclusions meets the threshold at 85%, with Acknowledging Multiple Perspectives or Multiple Approaches to Problem Solving within one point of the target at 84%. The weakest performance level is found in the criterion, Recognizing Contexts and Assumptions at 78%. These results indicate:

1) Effectively recognizing contexts and assumptions appears to be an advanced college-level literacy capability, highly dependent not only on an extensive amount of reading experience, but also a distinct capacity for self-reflection, for recognizing one's own assumptions. The majority of EOU students are first generation and Pell-eligible, so it is not surprising that at the introductory, general education level lower division students are just learning these central elements of critical thinking. It takes time to develop this capacity, which is not usually taught in high school. In fact, in individual courses where students performed below the threshold level overall on Critical Thinking, a number of faculty not only cited the challenging aspects of the critical thinking criteria in their assignments, but were also quick to point out that the students scoring at the Developing level often simply did not turn in the assignment. This aspect of student self-agency is a challenge in many lower division courses and requires well-developed, consistent, proactive advising interventions, a goal EOU is working toward. Nationally, proactive advising is key to retention and completion. Also key is assignment design and scaffolding, which faculty cited as key in courses where students met or exceeded thresholds for the Critical Thinking criteria.

2) While these are important points to keep in mind, it is equally important to remember the largely successful teaching and learning of Critical Thinking at the lower division level— university-wide, across the disciplines at EOU. The amount of effort faculty expend in helping students achieve proficiency in identifying and explaining issues is impressive. It certainly represents a core belief and the critical need of our delineated Critical Thinking outcomes,

highly valued both at the university and in the world beyond college. The assessment of 369 student work samples represents 38% of EOU's student on-campus FTE. For the most part, EOU is doing well teaching Critical Thinking in General Education Courses as evidenced by the 85% median in samples from across the curriculum, all the while continuously looking for ways to improve, as reflected in faculty Closing the Loop statements for the courses assessed, found in the individual reports for each course on the [GEC—Critical Thinking Assessment Results](#) webpage.

Thirty-six online student samples from 2 courses were also assessed, representing about 4% of EOU's student online FTE. The median for those samples was 76%, not meeting the 85% target. However, one must be cautious in drawing any conclusions based on such a small sampling, especially in light of the stronger showing in the AY 18 Academic Program assessment where the sampling of 77 online students met the Critical Thinking threshold.

**Action Plan:** The Vice Provost for Academic Quality will work with the Center for Teaching, Learning, and Assessment to offer professional opportunities in for teaching and learning with respect to effectively Recognizing Contexts and Assumptions and for Acknowledging Multiple Perspectives or Multiple Approaches to Problem Solving.