

# Citrus College GE Assessment Dialogue Report

May 8, 2014

Present:

Facilitators – Stephanie Yee and Michelle Plug-Gordin

**Area A:** Faculty: Eric Odegaard, English; Carsten Dau, English; Becky Rudd, English; Alfie Swan, Math; Roberto Solis, CIS; Selene Pineda, Librarian; Toby Guebert, English

Notetaker: Roberto Solis, Faculty

**Area B:** Faculty: Dr. Dave Kary, Astronomy; Gloria Ramos, Physics; Dr. Barbara Juncosa, Biology; Dr. Christine Goedhart, Biology

Notetaker: Jody Barrass, Secretary - Transfer Center

**Area C:** Faculty: Dr. Jack Call, Philosophy; Alex Galvan, Music; Roberta Eisel, English; Michael Bobo, Humanities; Anna McGarry, Spanish; Samantha Agoncillo, Honors Program student

Notetaker: Dr. Lan Hao, Director of Institutional Research

**Area D:** Faculty: Jim Woolum, Administration of Justice; Brian Waddington, History; Carolyn Perry, Child Development; Sheryl Walz, Sociology; Dr. Gailynn White, Sociology; Lisa Villa, Counseling; Dr. Dana Hester, Dean, Social and Behavioral Sciences;

Notes: Gayle Allen, Secretary - Social and Behavioral Sciences

**Area E:** Faculty: John Vaughan, Dance; Alicia Longyear, Kinesiology/Athletics Counseling

Notes: Isabel Bellman, Secretary - Kinesiology

**Student Services:** Michelle Plug, Articulation Officer; Stephanie Yee, Counseling Faculty; Lisa Villa, Counseling Faculty and Academic Senate President

**Library Services:** Selene Pineda, Librarian

**Others:** Dr. Lan Hao, Director of Institutional Research; Dr. Dana Hester, Dean, Social and Behavioral Sciences

Each area group was provided the learning outcomes in their GE area, updated Mastery Matrix, and summaries of the reports from 2012 and 2013 GE Assessment Session. The group was then asked to discuss the following questions:

1. Do your course-level outcomes and assessment reflect student achievement of the GE outcome in your area? How successful are students in achieving this GE outcome?
2. In your opinion, what core competencies/skills should a transfer student be able to demonstrate after successfully completing coursework in your area?
3. How do you think their success in achieving this GE outcome will impact their transfer? Is there anything that we need to think about as a group that could improve area-wide successful outcome achievement?
4. As a group, is there a common skill or behavior that you would like to assess for the next academic year? If so, what is it, and what are some examples of course-level assessments for this skill or behavior?
5. In what ways can the library and our student services be utilized to better enhance student attainment of the GE outcome in your area?

#### **General Summary of Dialogue:**

Like in past years, areas again noted the need to communicate more within, between, and among divisions.

Regarding **question 1** – Most areas emphasized concerns in the area of critical thinking. Groups felt that there is need to take advantage of technological ways to help students think critically and introduce them to tools available. Along this line, several areas found students struggle with reading comprehension and discerning what the question is really asking. Another identified weakness is in students' ability to express themselves clearly in writing. These concerns can impact students' ability to meet GE outcomes. There is a talk of decentralizing the Writing Café, and this could possibly help more students. As noted the last two years, some groups expressed concern over the struggle that many students have with course-level outcomes dependent on college success skills. This could be correlated with the fact that most GE courses do not have college-level pre-requisites. Many comments were made about the need for more basic reading and writing training and creating prerequisites, such as English 99 or English 101 for some courses. For example, there is no pre-requisite course for the 200 level English literature courses, and this presents a challenge for the instructor teaching a class with a wide variety of levels of preparedness.

The discussion of **question 2** provides an informal assessment of the college's core competencies. Each area considered the various Citrus College core competencies which include: Communication; Computation; Creative, Critical, and Analytical Thinking/Information Competency; Community and Global Consciousness; Technology; and Discipline/Subject Area Specific Content Material.

**Question 3** addresses how students' achievement of the GE outcomes impacts transfer, and also how each area could improve achievement of the outcome. Most groups agreed that by achieving all of the GE outcomes (A-E), students will have enhanced transfer success. At least one area suggested the need to consider English 99 as a prerequisite for some GE courses and tied this to concerns about students' abilities to write effectively at the college level. Groups commented on the need to expand support services such as the Writing Café, Supplemental Instruction, and other services – and the need to make such services permanent.

**Question 4** calls attention to common skills or behaviors to receive attention in the next academic year. Critical thinking and problem solving skills were identified by multiple groups. Specific examples of assessment were mentioned, including: verbal assessment, group work, class presentations, and class discussion. Emphasis on college level readiness was mentioned as well.

**Question 5** invites comments about better use of library and student services to enhance achievement of the GE outcomes. One recommendation was the need for materials from the Citrus College Library designated by discipline and course. An example of this would be having course-specific, discipline-specific resource page (linked from the library home page). Another suggestion, which was also recommended in prior sessions, is to continue to request ongoing specialized relationship with counseling, such as a division representative to attend counseling meetings and convey relevant information to the divisions. The idea of a discipline-specific counselor was addressed by one group. As noted throughout the discussions, representatives value the importance of communicating more within, between, and among divisions.

Overall, in discussing course assessment for the GE program, several assessment practices were discussed such as:

- Having exam questions tied to individual course SLO's which reflect the GE outcomes.
- Asking three questions in the beginning of the class and then asking the same set of questions toward the end of the semester. Students' answers are very informative and it is a great way of assessment.
- Allowing students a range of options in terms of the assessment, with a rubric, so the students could choose. "It is really transformative."
- "We don't have to do the same thing every year." Faculty should be willing to have flexibility and variability in the assessment methods since it is ok to be creative.

One good question that was brought up in two groups was "How do you measure success?" One faculty member asked "How do we measure appreciation and expression?" This can be different for courses such as performance based music courses, and kinesiology. Do course grades imply that the student has met the outcomes of a course? If a student does not pass a course, it does not mean the student did not achieve outcomes. Success cannot be measured by achievement, such as grades, earning a degree, or even transfer. There are many external factors that can affect student achievement. If a student learned something, isn't that also success? This can be an interesting topic at a FLEX or FLI workshop.

#### **Specific Recommendations:**

- Having library services highlighted at FLEX day to promote awareness campus wide.
- Include other completion patterns with GE in next year's dialogue.
- Analyze 'Early Alert' intervention and perhaps enhance or expand 'Early Alert' to support the GE outcome achievement of students
- Revise discussion prompts for 2015, and include DE prompts for each question.
- Critical Thinking Workshops for students (1-unit Counseling or Library courses?)

**Note:** At least two specific research questions was generated from the session – "How is 'Early Alert' intervention being utilized?" and "To what degree do students use tutorial services?"

#### **3 Key Findings:**

1. The Citrus College core competencies were informally assessed through this dialogue and reinforced as valuable student skills in the local GE pattern (see question 2 above).
2. Reading, writing, and critical thinking at the college level is a broad concern. This relates very closely to the competency of critical thinking. Continued college wide attention to the matter of pre requisites seems necessary. Also, discussion between and among divisions regarding common concerns and assessment strategies should be instituted.
3. There is a need for better understanding of student college readiness and the degree to which they use tutorial services and take advantage of Early Alert.

The detailed notes from each area are attached to this report

**Area A: Language and Rationality**

Students completing courses in Area A will be able to investigate and explain physical phenomena through application of empirical knowledge using mathematical and scientific processes and concepts

- I. Biological Sciences
- II. Physical Sciences

**Faculty/Instructors:**

**Alfie Swan  
Carsten Dau  
Rebecca Rudd  
Eric Odegaard  
Roberto Solis  
Toby Guebert**

**Note Taker:****Roberto Solis**

- 1. Do your course-level outcomes and assessment reflect student achievement of the GE outcome in your area? How successful are students in achieving this GE outcome.**
  - Math: A new SLO has been added to several math classes assessing whether the students comprehend and utilize mathematical notation as well as computational skills. These skill sets would be applied to the professional and academic settings. In older communication SLO's the communication part assessment was implied, but now it's directly assessed.
  - English: recommendation. Change the word "creatively" to "critically". The students are achieving the SLO's highlights (purpose, audience, tone) to a high degree.
- 2. In your opinion, what core competences/skills should a transfer student be able to demonstrate after successfully completing coursework in your area?**
  - All of them with varying degree. As a table, we are addressing all of the core competences (communication, computation, creative, critical and analytical thinking, information competency, community/global consciousness and responsibility, technology).
- 3. How do you think their success in achieving this GE outcome will impact their transfer? Is there anything that we need to think about as a group that could improve area-wide successful outcome achievement?**
  - Math: how can we improve. develop new strategies to help students gain a better understanding of mathematical notation.
  - English: use technological ways to help students think critically. To help students use the collaborative tools available.
- 4. As a group, is there a common skill or behavior that you would like to assess for the next academic year? If so, what is it, and what are some examples of course-level assessment for this skill or behavior?**
  - Math: In terms of behavior, how often do the students use the Math (or any) tutorial services available on the campus? Is it possible to find out who is taking advantage of these services?
  - We need a better understanding of student college readiness and the degree they use tutorial services.
  - How can we help students strive for accuracy and professionalism.
- 5. In what ways can the library and our student services be utilized to better enhance student attainment of the GE outcome in your area?**
  - Does the library offer MS Office workshops? Calculator tutorials (i.e., Texas Instruments calculators). Do they offer training of how to use the campus email, attachment, etc.?
  - First year college readiness class that involves various instructors sharing a brief training on their area of expertise? Perhaps a session on how we do things at Citrus College in terms of technology and process. extended orientation of how to register for class, use the Citrus website, use the campus

**Area B: Natural Sciences**

Students completing courses in Area B will be able to investigate and explain physical phenomena through application of empirical knowledge using mathematical and scientific processes and concepts

III. Biological Sciences

IV. Physical Sciences

**Faculty/Instructors:**

**Dave Kary  
Christine Goedhart  
Gloria Ramos  
Barbara Juncosa**

**Note Taker:**

**Jody Barrass**

1. Do your course-level outcomes and assessment reflect student achievement of the GE outcome in your area? How successful are students in achieving this GE outcome?

Course-level outcomes do reflect the GE outcomes. We feel that students who successfully pass the class achieve this outcome, but many students struggle to pass the class. They memorize the material but don't understand it and struggle to think critically. David Kary has been using *Turn It In* and finds that some students are semi-plagiarizing their assignments. Content is good – it's how the content is assessed.

Possible solutions: **1)** Lab exams done by individuals instead of in groups (where possibly one student has done most of the work/research). It's difficult to assess individual students when they are working in groups. **2)** Having exam questions tied to individual course SLO's which reflect the GE outcomes.

2. In your opinion, what core competencies/skills should a transfer student be able to demonstrate after successfully completing coursework in your area?

- 1) Ability to connect mathematics to physical world.
- 2) Understand the nature of science.
- 3) Evaluate the source of information.
- 4) Think critically about scientific matters as they relate to everyday life.
- 5) Be able to communicate/collaborate with others effectively.
- 6) Effective communication as an individual.

3. How do you think their success in achieving this GE outcome will impact their transfer? Is there anything that we need to think about as a group that could improve area-wide successful outcome achievement?

Students struggle with reading comprehension, AND understanding and /or discerning what the question is really asking. Adequate critical thinking is essential.

Possible solution: Add a pre-requisite of ENG099

4. As a group, is there a common skill or behavior that you would like to assess for the next academic year? If so, what is it, and what are some examples of course-level assessments for this skill or behavior?

1. Critical thinking
2. Prediction skills
3. Critically assessing information and lab results

5. In what ways can the library and our student services be utilized to better enhance student attainment of the GE outcome in your area?

Library: It's very helpful to have a Library representative attend and participate in these discussions.

Student Services: Critical Thinking Workshop (College Success/Early Alert)

**Area C: Arts and Humanities**

Students successfully completing courses in Area C are able to appreciate, critically understand, and express artistic, philosophical, and cultural sensibilities in historical and contemporary contexts.

- I. Arts
- II. Humanities

**Present:** Jack Call (Philosophy)  
Roberta Eisel (English)  
Alex Galvan (Music)  
Michael Bobo (Humanities)  
Anna McGarry (Spanish)  
Lan Hao (institutional research)  
Samantha Agoncillo (student)

**Q1: Do your course-level outcomes and assessment reflect student achievement of the GE outcome in your area? How successful are students in achieving this GE outcome?**

- Yes! The language of our course-level outcomes is very similar to that of the GE outcome. They align very nicely.
- The hard part is how we know that our students are successful. Alex asked: How do you measure success? How do we measure appreciation and expression? The word 'success' was intended to be correlated with appreciation and expression which, he believes, require measuring tools that encompass dialogue and other behaviors. In our area, the result is a student's demonstration of the integration of a particular style [for example] into one's performance, or as was the case with a recent student, further study into the improvisatory practices of an innovative jazz artist of the past. There was a lengthy discussion around this topic.
- How would we know that students are understanding the historical context, and being able to apply the skills onto the next level of courses? That's something that seems impossible to catch.
- Roberta responded that we are able to tell from students' response in their assignments, such as essays. Also, appreciation will be at different levels for different level of courses.
- Anna mentioned that student presentation to the class is a good way to demonstrate if students mastered the outcomes or not. We can also tell from the fact that they asked great questions in class, the ah-ha moments, they came back to tell us how much they appreciate the class, the class had impacted their enthusiasm and future pursuing in the field, and positively affected their career choice, etc. We inspire our students, and as a result they inspire us teachers too!
- We don't have to assess all the aspects of this outcome at all times. Assessment data compliments nicely with the student achievement data.
- Michael said in Humanities they use a variety of assessments, such as verbal assessment, group work, and essays.
- Jack asks his students three questions in the beginning of the class. And he asks the same set of questions toward the end of the semester. Students' answers are very informative and it is a great way of assessment. These three questions are:
  - What's your current state of understanding about religions of the world?
  - What's the ideal state of understanding about religions of the world?
  - How do you hope/expect to bring these two together during this semester?

- Everybody at the table liked Jack's way of assessment.
- There was a sentiment that faculty sometimes feel the type of SLO assessment they have been doing in the past doesn't sufficiently capture what they are doing in the classroom. So they feel they should change/alter the assessment method. "We don't have to do the same thing every year." We should be willing to have flexibility and variability in the assessment methods and be creative.
- Success stories from students validate teaching.
- Michael mentioned that he gave students a range of options in terms of the assessment, with a rubric, so the students could choose. It is really transformative. Roberta said she let her students build their own exams, as a result, the essays are more interesting to read.

**Q2: In your opinion, what core competencies/skills should a transfer student be able to demonstrate after successfully completing coursework in your area?**

- Students should be able to demonstrate the following core competencies
  - 1. Communication
  - 3. Creative, critical and analytical thinking/information competency
  - 4. Community /global consciousness and responsibility
  - 6. Discipline/subject area specific content material

**Q3: How do you think their success in achieving this GE outcome will impact their transfer? Is there anything that we need to think about as a group that could improve area-wide successful outcome achievement?**

- GE area C outcomes are critical; they enable them to be better students.
- Students who just came from K-12 are used to multiple choices and they sometimes need general reading and writing training.
- Our current situation is that there is no pre-requisite course for the 200 level English courses; this presents a challenge for the instructor teaching a class with a wide variety of levels of preparedness.
- Same is true for the Philosophy courses.
- There is a talk of decentralizing the Writing Café, maybe that will help our students. Writing is a common area and important skill that students need help.
- Other type of intervention mentioned was learning community classes.

**Q4: As a group, is there a common skill or behavior that you would like to assess for the next academic year? If so, what is it, and what are some examples of course-level assessments for this skill or behavior?**

- Curiosity!
- [We didn't get the time to talk about examples.]

**Q5: In what ways can the library and our student services be utilized to better enhance student attainment of the GE outcome in your area?**

- Our library is great! A big shout out to our librarians.
- The student rep Samantha mentioned maybe we can think of a way to improve our website and to come up with an easier way to navigate the website.
- Samantha also mentioned if we could expand students' online access to services, such as online access to counseling appointment, with the knowledge of knowing which counselor to see.
- English Supplemental Instruction (SI) was great! It provided a more comfortable environment for the students to learn.

## **Area D: Social and Behavioral Sciences**

Students completing Area D can identify, analyze, and communicate an understanding of self and society through systematic investigation of social behavior, institutions, and culture.

- I. History and Political Science
- II. Behavioral Sciences

Present: Dr. Dana Hester, Gayle Allen, Carolyn Perry, Brian Waddington, Sheryl Walz, Gailynn White, Jim Woolum, and Lisa Villa

**1. Do your course-level outcomes and assessment reflect student achievement of the GE outcomes in your area? How successful are students in achieving this GE outcome?**

Yes

Administration of Justice – AJ 101 and AJ 102 courses cover – generally very successful

History covers all > 80% success rate

Psychology covers all – minimum 70% meet or exceed.

Sociology – 75% are C or better.

**2. In your opinion, what core competencies/skills should a transfer student be able to demonstrate after successfully completing coursework in your area?**

Those who pass – are able to be proficient. Not all students are proficient in technology.

History – 1, 3, 4, 6 (see below)

Psychology and Child Development – 1, 3, 4, 6 (see below)

History and Economics Honors – Technology

1 – Communication

3 – Creative, Critical, and Analytical Thinking/Information Competency

4 – Community/Global Consciousness and Responsibility

6 – Discipline/Subject Area Specific Content Material

**3. How do you think their success in achieving this GE outcome will impact their transfer? Is there anything that we need to think about as a group that could improve area-wide successful outcome achievement?**

Brian Waddington – The outcome is strong will serve transfer students well. This will benefit students and lead to lifetime success.

Jim Woolum – Successful achievement impacts students academically and personally.

Utilize 'Early Alert' intervention to reach the missing 10%.

4. **As a group, is there a common skill or behavior that you would like to assess for the next academic year? If so, what is it, and what are some examples of course-level assessments for the skill or behavior?**

Analyze 'Early Alert' intervention and follow up with Dr. Lan Hao in the Institutional Research Department. Stay with critical thinking for SLOA as addressed on Flex Day.

5. **In what ways can the library and our student services be utilized for better enhance student attainment of the GE outcome in your area?**

Need materials from the Citrus College Library by discipline and course.

Request ongoing specialized relationship with counseling; perhaps a division representative to attend counseling meetings and convey relevant information to Social and Behavioral Sciences. Enhanced/expanded 'Early Alert' to support the missing 10% of students.

Example with course-specific, discipline-specific resource page (linked from the library home page).

6. **Success Stories**

- ↑AA-T and AS-T degree earners
- Administration of Justice is #7 in numbers of degrees earned
- (transfer and local degree)
- Child Development Certificates are up.
- Susan Hensley is discipline-specific counselor for Child Development.
- Honors Research Symposium presenters/honors – many this past year.

Recommendation for next year:

Include DE prompts for each question.

Example: Is it true for both face-to-face and DE courses in each area?

## E. Kinesiology & Dance

### I. Students who complete Area E courses demonstrate personal responsibility, health literacy, and the importance of physical health and wellbeing.

Present: John Vaughan (Dance), Alicia Longyear (Kinesiology and Athletics Counselor)

#### 1. Do your course-level outcomes and assessment reflect student achievement of the GE outcome in your area? How successful are students in achieving this GE outcome?

John: Yes they do all of Dance classes with the exception of Dance History have the personal responsibility component, health literacy and have the understanding that they need to make a life commitment to Dance or some other form of exercise. Dance130 has the kinesiology component alignment, the pilates portion addresses the physical health. In dance the success is very high from entry to intermediate dance skills are based individually and are better at the end of a class than in the beginning.

Alicia- Most all kinesiology classes address personal responsibility, physical health and well being. Outcomes highly varied ie: 10% to 90% is a huge range. Difficult to indicate how successful are students. For example Nicki Shaw's class most of her outcomes are 50% however these are not for student athletes but rather for the general population. Should the focus be on different SLO's to reflect better?

#### 2. In your opinion, what core competencies/skills should a transfer student be able to demonstrate after successfully completing coursework in your area?

John: Primarily SLOs for the dance department cover the creative analytical. Through dance students are able to display skills of creativity, curiosity and aesthetic awareness. History of dance allows for research/analysis and all the other components. Dance also allows for the Global Consciousness aspects for example self-esteem and life-long learning.

Alicia: Life-long learning nutrition and diet are more sports related as well as the theory, physiological type of stuff. The Global consciousness and responsibility pertains more to kinesiology. As well as the learning strategies.

#### 3. How do you think their success in achieving this GE outcome will impact their transfer? Is there anything that we need to think about as a group that could improve area-wide successful outcome achievement?

Alicia: Citrus still requires PE as part of their degree requirements, where most other colleges do not. The requirement causes the student to be more aware of health by making a life-long commitment to fitness. This life-long commitment to fitness is not required at other JC's.

John: This requirement gives a good dose of reality.

Stephanie Yee: The requirement at other colleges can be met with classes that are not related to physical education or dance such as they are here at Citrus. Students can take an additional class from another discipline to meet that requirement.

John: the improvement would be to have both programs Kin & Dance have more dialogue.

Alicia: Most other JC's have both programs combined, improvement would be to have more connection between both departments. The benefits of Dance and Kin are a life-long learning commitment to health providing confidence and self- esteem.

**4. As group, is there common skill or behavior that you would like to assess for the next academic year? If so, what is it, and what are some examples of course-level assessments for this skill or behavior?**

John: What you find and is common in both disciplines is physical awareness of your body, self-esteem and body image. These things avoid the techniques which are different in both Dance and Kin.

Alicia: More communication and collaboration among both departments, the outcomes are very similar.

**5. In what ways can the library and our student services be utilized to better enhance student attainment of the GE outcome in your area.**

John: Dance History is a 6 week course and I do not teach it so I am unable to answer. The activity dance classes no longer require a text since a person is unable to learn a skill from a book, video or dvd. It has to be taught in person.

Alicia: I don't teach kinesiology classes but in the past I have taught counseling classes and have brought in my students to tour the library. Having students come in and become aware of the services is a very valuable tool.

John suggested having the library services highlighted at flex day to promote awareness campus wide.