

LOS MEDANOS
COLLEGE

Contra Costa Community College District
Los Medanos College

General Education Committee Assessment Report
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Prepared for
The Los Medanos Academic Senate

By the

General Education Committee

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Introduction

Fall 2021 was the first semester that Los Medanos College adopted the new GE model. The GE Committee decided that no new evaluations or common GE assignment would be requested of faculty because of Covid. In addition, there would be little data available until more faculty have adopted the new GE model and more students have a chance to enroll in the classes that are utilizing the new GE SLOs.

In terms of how the new GE model came about, there was a General Education Program Assessment in spring 2018, which included an initial survey from faculty about the GE program. The report findings, linked in the [Appendix](#) of this report, would lead to changes in the GE program.

In Spring 2020, another GE survey was sent to faculty by the GE Chair that semester, Cindy McGrath. The purpose of the survey was to get even more information about how comfortable faculty would be with revising the GE model. There was a lot of participation with the survey; a total number of 165 faculty responded, which included 77 full-time faculty and 88 part-time faculty. The full survey results are linked in the [Appendix](#) of this report. It is also located on the GE website under the GE Assessment page.

The key recommendations from this report include:

- Track enrollment data for the new GE model to determine if students are taking classes in all the GE SLO areas.
- Integrate a GE/ISLO section in eLumen for faculty to check what GE SLOs that they are mapping to directly on the COOR.
- TLC assess the Universal COOR, Reading, Writing and Critical thinking, and provide faculty training for creativity and professional development.
- Be prepared for Title 5 changes that will impact our GE SLO Diverse Perspectives, which will need to be changed to follow Title 5 revisions.
- Continual strengthening of Guided Pathways within the GE program, especially as we have clarified the path for students.
- Implement a fully online GE program, which will align with the programs that can already be completed fully online.

The General Education Committee wants to encourage the Curriculum Committee and the eLumen tech representative to add the GE SLOs directly to the COORs in eLumen. Thus, faculty will be able to check which GE SLO(s) they map to. This feature will help when the ISLO's are being implemented, and it will allow the GE Committee to easily aggregate the data for future program review.

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The new GE criteria were an important aspect for the implementation of recommendations made by faculty because it created a “decentralized approach to the teaching of the GE SLOs.” Essentially, the older GE model relied on a centralized approach to the teaching of the GE SLOs; thus, to be considered a GE class, faculty had to map to all five GE SLOs. This created a hinderance for faculty who found it difficult to map to all the GE SLOs, so many faculty chose to not offer their classes as GE courses.

Rather than have a completely decentralized model, in which faculty could choose their GE SLO to map to, the new model presented a compromise. All disciplines are assigned to one GE SLO that naturally maps to their field of study. For example, math courses can now map to the GE SLO that naturally fits with their field of study, quantitative reasoning. Thus, all math courses are assigned this GE SLO. However, faculty still retain an amount of freedom in which they can choose another category or map to several categories as is appropriate for the content of the class. For example, an Ethnic Studies class is assigned to the diversity GE SLO category. However, many Ethnic Studies classes might also map to another category, such as ethical insight. Faculty are still encouraged to map to additional GE SLOs as is appropriate for their fields of study.

The new GE SLOs were developed by the GE Committee during their GE meetings. The current GE SLOs are

1. Human Communication (Arts and Humanities)
2. Information Literacy (English Composition)
3. Ethical Insights (Social and Behavioral Sciences)
4. Diverse Perspectives (Ethnic and Multicultural Studies)
5. Quantitative Reasoning (Mathematics)
6. Scientific Inquiry (Natural Sciences)

The new list of SLOs were based on faculty feedback from the 2018 and 2020 surveys and as an attempt to address concerns that were brought up by faculty. The descriptors for assessment were also developed during the GE Committee meetings by faculty who represented each GE area. Drafts of the new GE SLOs and the accompanying descriptors were disseminated to department chairs and other faculty members at the academic senate for feedback. This participation was extremely helpful when providing examples of how faculty in different fields could utilize the new GE SLOs.

The process to create the new GE model took about 2 years to complete.

The new GE criteria resolved prior issues surrounding some of the topics reported about from the 2018 GE report. For example, faculty cited disagreements about how to interpret and apply topics such as “diversity” and “global interdependence” to their courses. One key feature of the new GE model is that faculty who struggled with this predicament will no longer be assigned to

this GE SLO. Ethnic and Multicultural Studies is the new assigned box, and courses that naturally map to these areas will be assigned this category. These faculty will do a better job of implementing the GE SLO into their courses.

The committee is constantly pondering the effectiveness of the new model. With the older model, a student was guaranteed to take all five GE SLOs at least four times in four different classes. Now, a student is only guaranteed to take each of the six GE SLOs at least one time. There is a chance that students might not even get all the new GE SLOs if a faculty member maps outside its category box. For example, if a history class, which would normally map to the GE SLO “ethical insight” maps to a different category, such as “human communication,” then there is a chance that the student will never take a class that offers “ethical insight.” If the student never takes another Social and Behavioral Science course that focuses on “ethical insight,” then there will be a gap in that student’s GE education.

The GE Committee is concerned that the outcomes might be harder to measure in the current state that this information is tracked via eLumen. GE tech review relies on comments that are deleted after a COOR is approved through all the stages in eLumen. GE Committee members are tracking their comments via Google Documents that can be saved for future reference, either on the GE website or via a Microsoft SharePoint space. Still, the GE Committee asserts that eLumen techs need to add a feature directly to the COORs that allows faculty members to select which GE SLO(s) they are mapping to. This will allow for a quicker aggregation of data, which will become especially important once the ISLOs are needing assessment.

The GE Committee is also concerned with how the new GE criteria helps faculty incorporate assignments and assessments of creative thinking, which used to be part of the critical and creative thinking GE SLO in the older model. Now, creative thinking is part of the Universal COOR, which is Reading, Writing and Critical thinking. In the new model, the TLC Committee was tasked by the senate to evaluate the Universal COORs in all classes. The old descriptors were provided to the TLC Chair, and the GE Committee looks forward to future collaborations about the Universal COOR as is needed.

Gaps and Concerns

As expressed in the report contents section of this assessment, an important question remains:

- Do LMC students take all areas in the new GE SLO model?

To answer this question in a future assessment, the GE Committee will need to review the enrollment of the courses in the new GE SLO model. The GE Committee will also need to review the courses and where they map to. It cannot be assumed that because courses are assigned to a category box, they will map there as faculty do have the freedom to change their mapping if another GE SLO fits their course better.

To easily aggregate this data, Curriculum Committee and the LMC eLumen tech will need to add a feature to eLumen that allows GE faculty to check the GE SLOs that they are mapping to. This will allow the GE Committee to quickly pull data for future assessments of the GE program.

The GE Committee has discussed that with the ISLO implementation that is forthcoming, this is a valuable time to adjust this data in eLumen for both the GE SLOs and the ISLOs.

A final concern that the GE Committee had was about creativity and professional development. They suggested that there be more professional development to address the Universal COOR and that the TLC Committee take this task as a future project for faculty.

Conclusion

Our key recommendations and summaries surround the future of the GE Committee work. The GE Committee is aware that Title 5 updates are forthcoming with Ethnic Studies, a potential date of spring 2023 with implementation expected for fall 2024. This will require a change in the new GE model because Ethnic Studies and Multicultural Studies will no longer be able to be collapsed as a single category. Thus, the Multicultural Studies courses will potentially need to be shifted to a different GE SLO, whether that is an addition of another GE SLO or collapsed into other existing GE SLOs is yet to be determined.

The GE Committee also wants to tie its future work with Guided Pathways even more. The committee is asking additional questions that they want to answer in future assessments:

- Has the GE Committee made it easier for students, counselors, and instructors to understand the GE program?
- Are students taking the appropriate number of units to meet the criteria for their local AA degrees?

The GE Committee is committed to “clarifying the path,” and we are working toward clarifying the General Education path. The committee also feels that this ties directly into the Chancellor’s Vision for Success by reducing the number of accumulated units.

Another area that the GE Committee wants to work on involves online education. Specifically, we had a guest speaker at one of the GE meetings, Joanna Miller, who explained that the district wants to implement a fully online GE program. If we can ensure that we have enough GE offerings taught fully online, students will be able to complete all their GE courses this way, which will contribute to certain degrees that are already offered completely online. The GE Committee understands that the CVC and OEI exchange are important avenues that offer more equitable options for students who need the flexibility of an online program to complete their degrees. We hope to track this data with SQL reports to determine if the success rates for a fully integrated online GE program is higher than a face-to-face GE program.

The GE Committee wants to provide students with options that will help them “stay on the path” and will help them with their future educational or career goals.

Appendix

2018 GE Program Report

Visit [link to PDF report](#)

2020 Faculty Survey

Visit [link to PDF report](#)