

# GENERAL EDUCATION PROGRAM

# ASSESSMENT

S P R I N G 2 0 1 8

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LOS MEDANOS  
COLLEGE

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**GENERAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE:**

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## **I. Introduction**

Los Medanos College completed the program assessment of the college's general education program during the Spring and Fall 2017 semesters. The GE committee completed the program assessment and engaged a broad cross-section of faculty and disciplines within the GE program. This document details the work of the committee and presents the committee's major findings and recommendations to the college faculty for further consideration and action.

The current GE student learning outcomes are as follows:

1. Read critically and communicate effectively as a writer and speaker.
2. Understand connections among disciplines and apply interdisciplinary approaches to problem solving.
3. Think critically and creatively.
4. Consider the ethical implications inherent in knowledge, decision-making and action.
5. Possess a worldview informed by diverse social, multicultural and global perspectives.

## **II. Key Findings and Recommendations:**

The most important findings and recommendations of the GE committee are as follows:

1. We recommend a de-centralized approach to the teaching of the GE SLOs. Each disciplinary area should decide which GE SLOs they feel best align with the nature of their disciplines (example: faculty in Natural Sciences disciplinary area would be able to decide which of the GE SLOs they are best equipped to teach.)
2. The GE committee noted a startling amount of dissonance regarding how faculty understand and teach concepts such as "diversity" and "global interdependence" ( GE SLO #5). We recommend the college invest time and resources establishing some common definitions regarding these important concepts
3. The GE faculty need to discuss and analyze the importance of creative thinking in the student learning outcomes. If this is indeed an important outcome for the GE program, we need more professional development and training regarding how to teach and assess creative thinking.

## **III. Research Questions**

The GE committee decided to assess the learning outcomes related to oral communication, creative thinking, and multicultural/global perspectives. The following research questions guided the assessment process:

- a. Do our students develop "novel ways of defining problems, and generating and evaluating innovative solutions?" as defined in the GE Assessment Criteria (adopted 2005).

- b. Can our students make oral presentations that clearly communicate ideas to a wider audience?
- c. Do our students possess a worldview informed by diverse social, multicultural, and global perspectives?

#### **IV. Research Method**

The GE committee designed an assignment that required students to make a video response to the following prompt: *How did this class change and/or inform your understanding of diversity and global interdependence? (Provide 2-3 examples from the class that helped you think creatively about some of the problems in the world today.)*

In the Fall 2016 semester the committee randomly selected 40 sections of GE classes that were scheduled to be taught in Spring 2017 to participate in this assessment project. The professors of these sections were contacted in December 2016 to provide time for the assessment to be incorporated into the course syllabus. Of the 40 sections that were randomly selected, 18 professors actively participated in the assessment of the general education program by incorporating this assignment into their Spring 2017 courses.

At the end of the Spring 2017 semester, 385 video assignments were collected from the 18 classes that participated in the assessment. The committee randomly selected 40 of these to be evaluated for the purposes of the program assessment.

In addition to the video assignment, the GE committee conducted a student focus group on October 25, 2017. Twelve students and six faculty participated the focus group. Students were asked to respond to questions regarding how diversity and creative thinking have been incorporated into their coursework. The insights from the focus group are incorporated into this report.

The committee also sent a survey to all faculty asking for responses to questions about our general education program. A total of 54 faculty (29 full time/25 part time) responded to this survey.

#### **V. Evaluation Method**

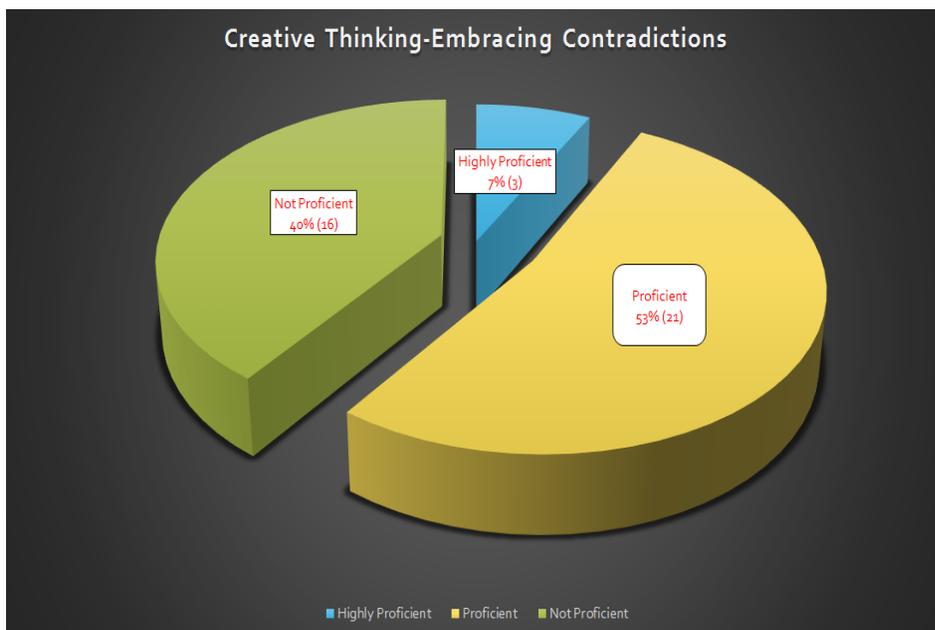
In Spring 2017 the committee adopted three different rubrics to measure “creative thinking,” “global interdependence,” and “oral communication.” The committee was careful to align the rubrics, which were modified by those published by the AACU, with the published assessment criteria adopted by the college in 2005

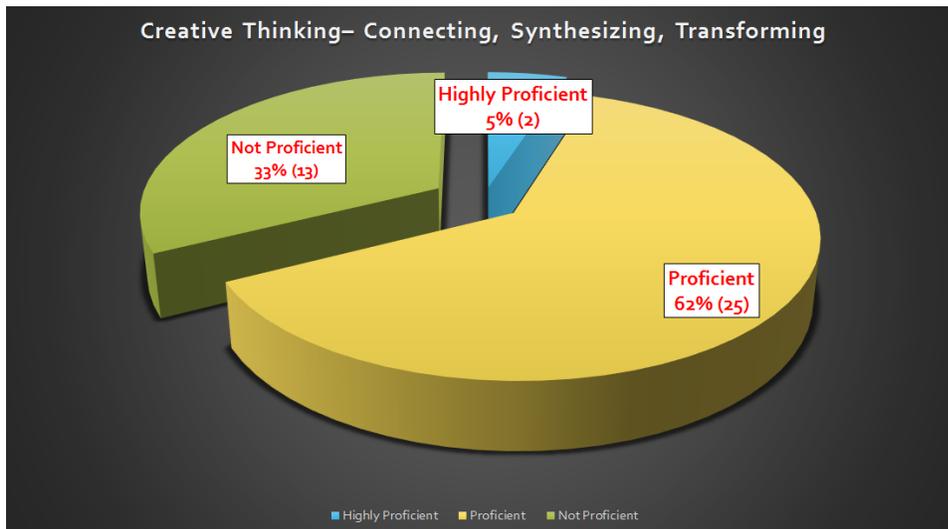
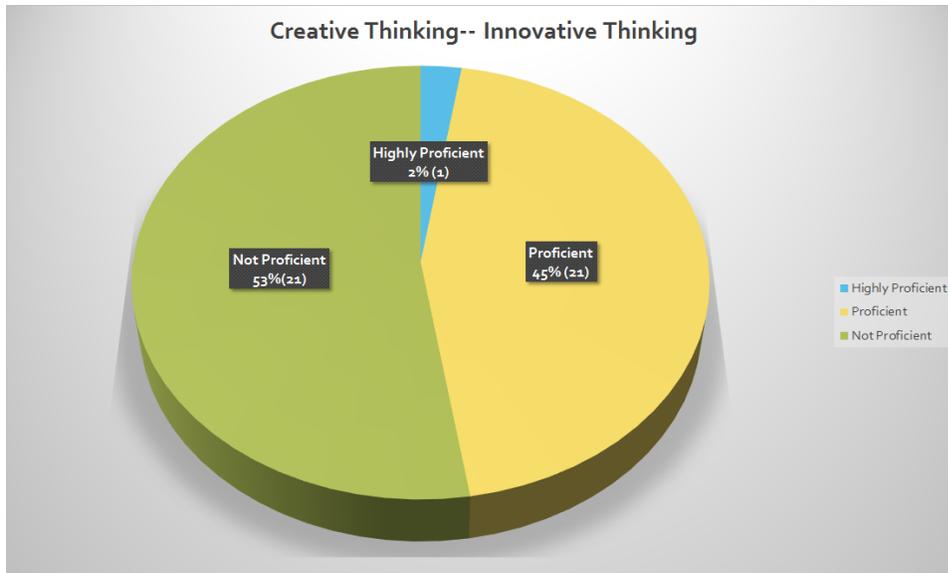
The committee held a norming session at two different GE meetings in Fall 2017, and the committee agreed upon standards for evaluating the videos. Each video was assessed by at least three members of the GE committee using a scoring of "proficient," "not proficient," or "highly proficient."

**VI. Findings**

**A. Creative Thinking**  
**a. Data**

The committee determined that 47% of students were proficient/highly proficient at "creating novel or unique ideas, questions, or formats," while 60% of students were proficient or highly proficient at embracing contradictions. The committee rated 67% of our students as either proficient or highly proficient at synthesizing data and connecting the data to a larger argument.





#### b. Discussion of Data—Creative Thinking

Of the three criteria assessed, the committee rated our students the lowest on "creative thinking."

We believe GE faculty should have a conversation regarding whether or not we expect all classes to teach creative thinking in ways that will "create novel ideas, questions, or formats." Is this still a value that we embrace in our GE classes, and if so, what kind of professional development does the college need to improve our students' ability to demonstrate creative thinking? For example, should faculty consider implementing more active learning strategies and/or more varied learning modalities in GE courses?

At the student focus group, one student said the following, "For me, creativity involves thinking outside the box. I believe GE classes should involve hands-on activities, like building things so that they are not just mental, but physical."

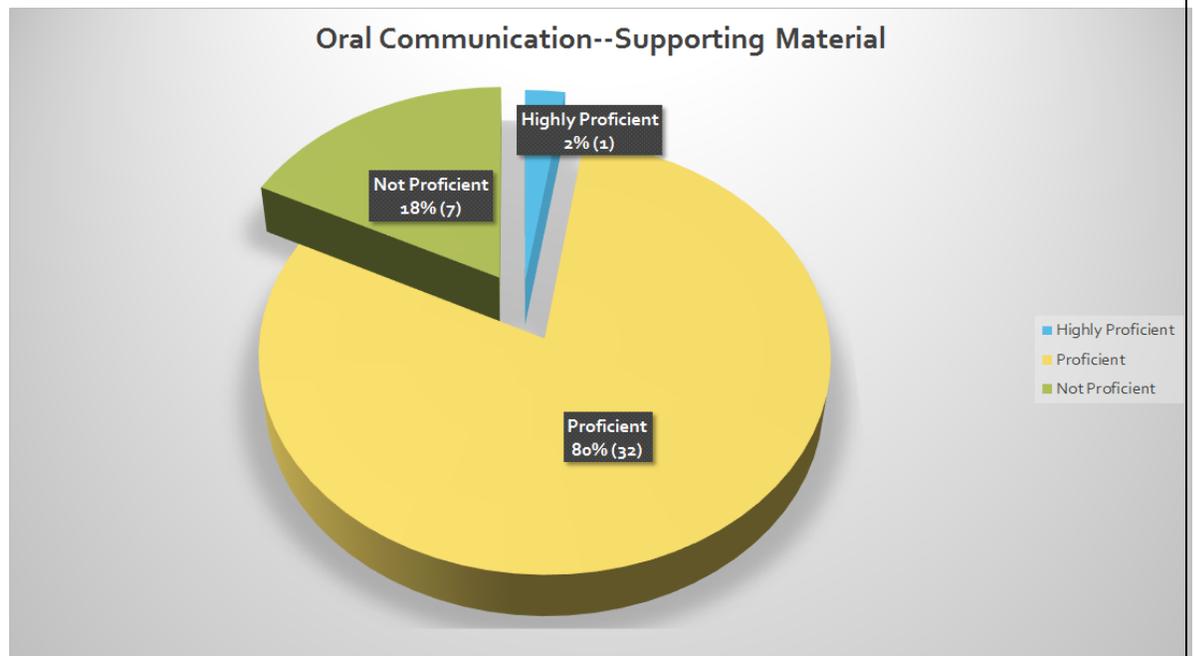
c. Committee Recommendations—Creative Thinking

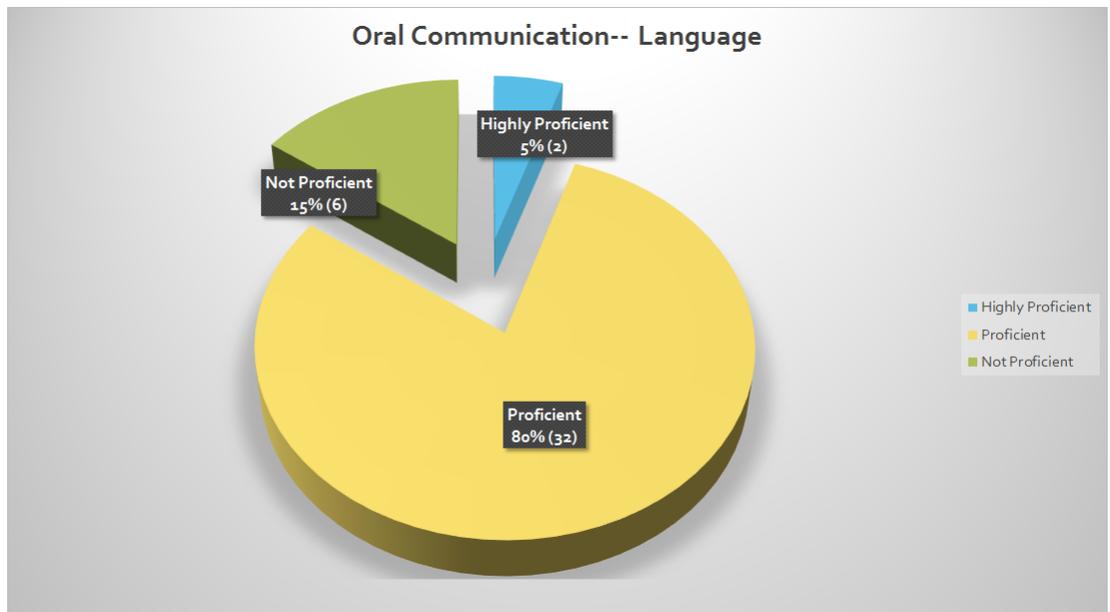
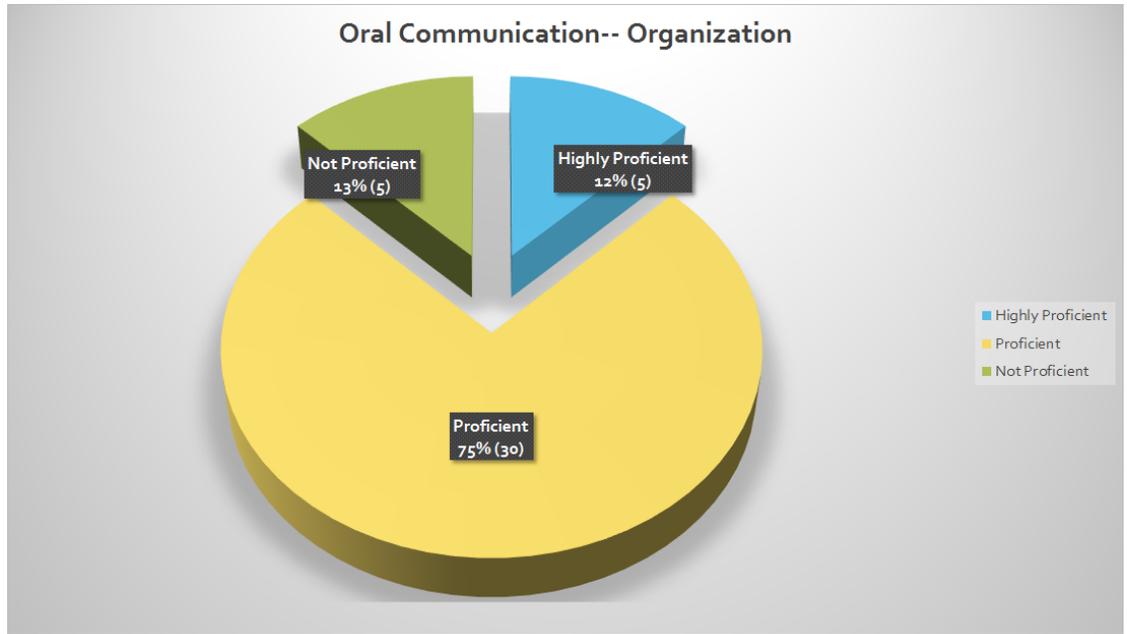
The college faculty should determine whether or not creative thinking should remain a part of the GE SLOs. If yes, we recommend more professional development on how to effectively teach creative thinking.

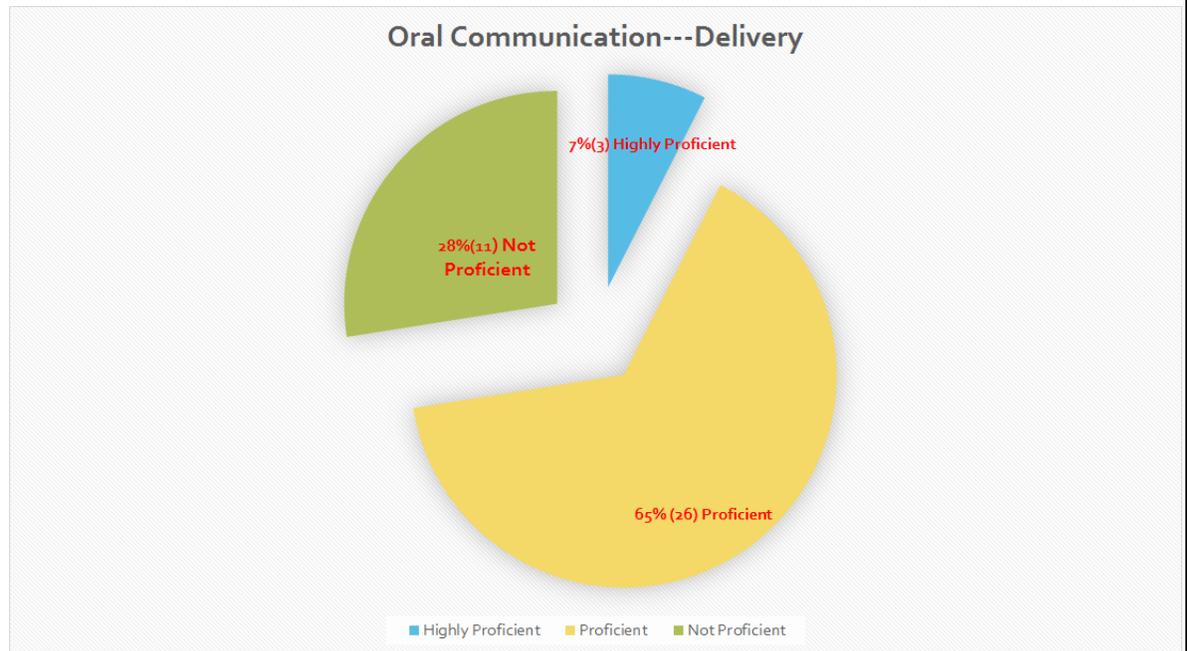
B. Oral Communication

a. Data

We found 87% of students were proficient/highly proficient at organization; 72% were proficient/highly proficient at delivery; 85% were proficient/highly proficient at making appropriate language choices; 82% were proficient/highly proficient at using supporting material to make a larger argument.







#### b. Discussion of Data—Oral Communication

Our students the highest ratings on the oral communication criteria. We observe that LMC students excel at communicating information orally. Furthermore, focus group data indicates that students are eager to use this strength in their general education classes as illustrated by the following comments:

- Only critique I have is provide more open discussion during classes with professor overview.
- { } never had class discussions to hear what students had to say about a certain topic. She would just talk/lecture.
- More presentations! It forces us to learn in ways that challenges our mind!
- Open circles for engaged students to discuss.

This sample of students indicated that they wanted more opportunity to engage with their instructors and fellow students during classes. This could take the form of small group discussions, formal presentations, etc.

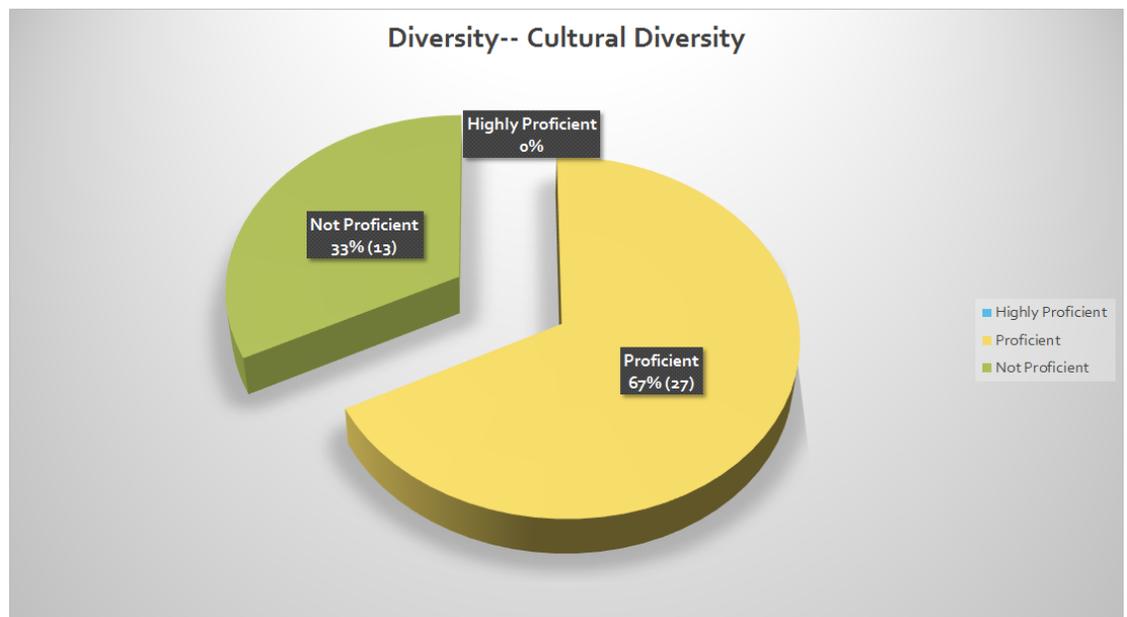
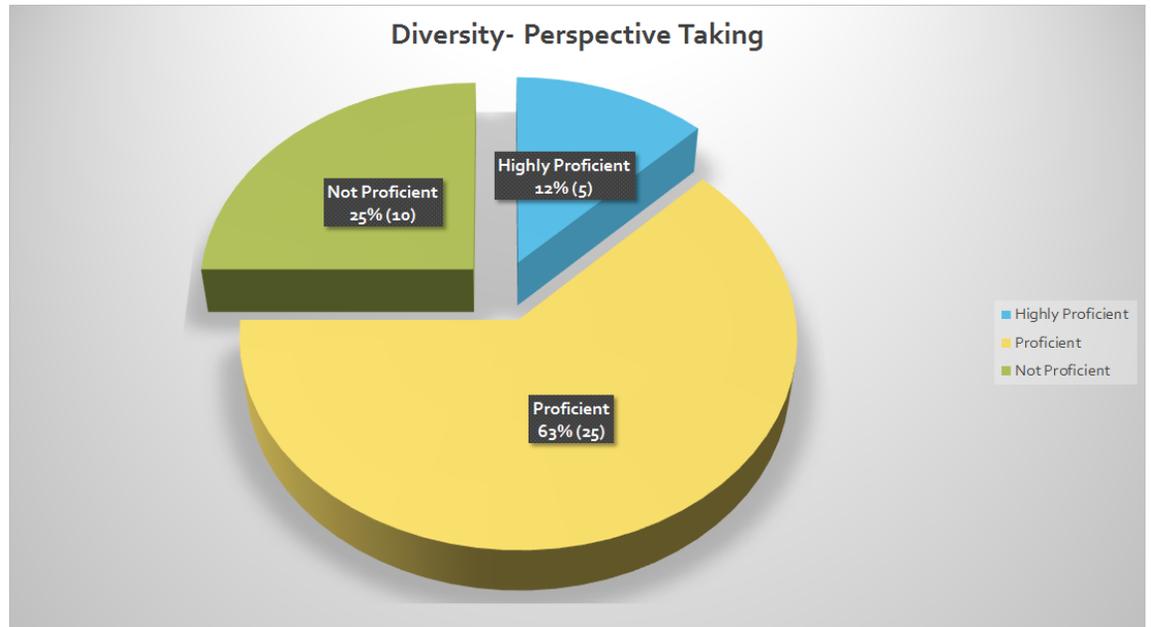
#### c. Recommendations—Oral Communication

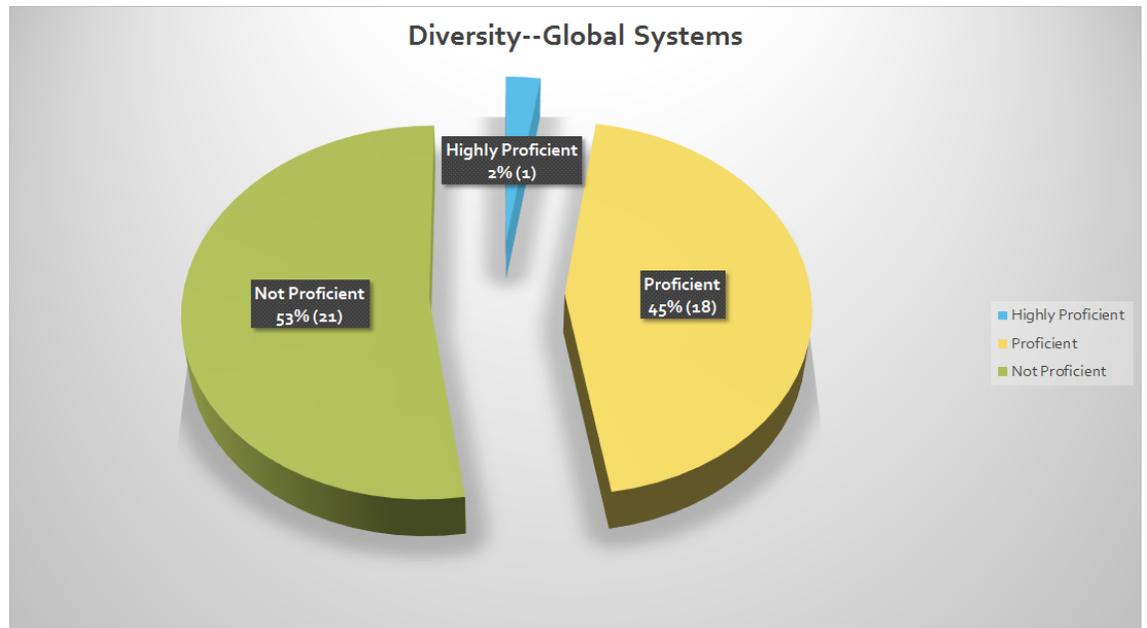
We recommend that the GE coordinator work in conjunction with TLC and the CSLO coordinators to plan more professional development around using active learning strategies in the classroom.

### C. Diversity

#### a. Data

We found that 75% of students were proficient/highly proficient at perspective taking; 67% were proficient/highly proficient at acknowledging cultural diversity; 47% were proficient or highly proficient at making connections among global systems.





#### b. Discussion of Data—Diversity

Of the criteria evaluated by the committee, “making connections among global systems” was one of the lowest evaluated categories both within the diversity category and across the other criteria that we evaluated.

We need to have a college-wide conversation regarding what we mean by asking students to possess "a worldview informed by diverse social, multicultural, and global perspectives." We observe that students excel at identifying multiple perspectives and are able to "analyze substantial connections between worldviews..." (see rubric). However, we also observe that of all the criteria that we assessed, students scored the lowest at "understanding global systems." This includes the ability to examine the "effects of human organizations and actions on global systems within the human and natural worlds" (see rubric.)

As a college do we value and teach students to understand global systems? Is "global citizenship" a desired outcome of a general education program? This is a conversation worth having, and the outcomes of that conversation should inform the redesign of the General Education program.

Our students have expressed a strong desire for us to reconsider how we teach diversity and global interdependence. The following comments from the student focus group are instructive:

- I always hear about Hispanic, white, and black communities, but what about Asian, Pacific Islander, etc. I feel like the other students in our community aren't really focused on. I see that a lot of students are shy/lack of confidence to share about their opinion.
- I need this school to be more open minded.

- A student shared the following: he overheard a staff member say “I got ripped off by those gypsies.” He felt this demonstrated a lack of understanding of gypsies as an ethnic group and demonstrated bias against gypsie people.
- Most classes at LMC are narrow in what they teach about cultures and focus primarily on 2 or 3 groups, missing an opportunity to focus on global diversity. It feels very strict.
- • Should acknowledge all student backgrounds because incorporating student perspectives will diversify the discussion and perspectives students come away with.

In addition, some faculty expressed frustration with how our GE program approaches diversity. Below are informative comments taken from the faculty survey:

- Stop limiting our exposure to what the data from the equity plan suggests. There are many student groups who were not highlighted in the data (which is a bit skewed) but who are often omitted in focus groups, conversations, and overall college talking points.
- It could be interesting to have a theme or book that the whole college teaches to help promote diversity and multicultural perspectives.

c. Recommendations—Diversity and Global Interdependence

The college needs to more clearly articulate what we want students to learn around diversity and global interdependence. We note that the term “diversity” is ill-defined and that many students and faculty have different ideas about how this should be taught. The college needs to invest time and resources in establishing some common definitions among the faculty and staff regarding how diversity is taught.

Furthermore, the committee discussed the similarities and differences among global citizenship, global interdependence, and diversity. The fact that our students scored lowest in “making connections among global systems” indicates that we may not be doing an adequate job teaching these important concepts.

## **VII. The Future of the General Education Program**

We believe that now is an ideal time to re-evaluate what we as a college expect a general education to provide students. The GE assessment criteria was adopted 12 years ago. The current GE SLOs were also adopted 12 years ago. We are currently at the beginning of the second 5 year assessment cycle. We believe that now is a good time for the faculty to be mindful of what we do in the GE program and discuss how it could possibly change in the future.

Many faculty expressed the need to re-think our general education program in the survey. When asked to give feedback regarding the interdisciplinary SLO, 81% of faculty agreed that this SLO should be removed from the general education requirements. The following comments provide insight into faculty thinking in this matter:

- If we could remove GE SLO 2 (interdisciplinary problem solving), then there would be more time in a semester for students to achieve the ability to do the remaining GE SLOs.
- How could you effectively assess this?
- There are some disciplines in which interdisciplinary problem solving may not be viable. How can we know what other courses related to our discipline our students in GE have taken? It seems unreasonable to assume that in addition to teaching students about our discipline specific ways to solve problems we'd also have time to teach them about other disciplines approaches.
- That SLO is too vague for any clear assignment and benchmark to assess.

In addition to deleting the interdisciplinary SLO, faculty also suggested that the college should re-think the content of the current GE SLOs. The following comments from the faculty survey captures the spirit of the feedback the committee has received from faculty:

- In my class, there are really seven GE SLOs because I treat reading, writing, and speaking as three separate SLOs. It would make the GE SLOs simpler and more manageable if we could eliminate one of them. The remaining GE SLOs would still be pretty comprehensive.
- Fewer and more clearly written SLOs. 5 max.
- Add an information literacy SLO, using the Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education (<http://www.ala.org/acrl/standards/ilframework>) as our guide.
- Change the GE program to be more of a cafeteria-style program based on a diversity of content.
- 3 memorable SLOs that we could all align our CSLOs with
- Lower the amount to 3, with a single objectively measurable outcome in each. Right now we have about 8 objectives shoved into 5 SLOs. Let's consolidate, streamline, and better focus in on what can actually be assessed and improved.

**Committee Recommendations on the Future of the GE Program:**

The trend among faculty members has been to suggest a wholesale revision of the current 5 GE SLOs, with many faculty recommending fewer SLOs. Now is an ideal time to open this discussion, as we are more than a decade into the creation of the current model GE program and the assessment cycle. The GE committee will build consensus around revisions to the GE SLO package and forward our recommendations to the Curriculum Committee and Academic Senate by the end of the Spring 2018 semester.

We also recommend that now is the time to revise/update the GE committee's position paper that articulates the principles of our general education program. Much has changed since the beginning of the GE program, and the college as a whole is experiencing a moment of transition. This revision of the position paper would create institutional memory for future GE committees and more clearly define the purpose/scope of the GE program.

The GE faculty needs to engage in a significant dialogue regarding what we mean by the terms "diversity" and "global interdependence." We recommend a series of flex workshops and professional development trainings as a necessary first step in building consensus around what it means to teach these two different, yet interrelated, concepts. Once the college has reached consensus around these issues, the GE chair/assessment coordinator, working in conjunction with the TLC chair and the PSLO/CSLO coordinator, should invest time and energy offering training to the faculty on what it means to teach diversity and global interdependence at Los Medanos College. We also believe the GE committee should offer special feedback and guidance to authors of course outlines on how to teach and assess diversity and global interdependence.

The GE committee, in conjunction with TLC and other appropriate groups on campus, should offer more professional development on the teaching of creative thinking. The GE assessment process made clear that the faculty and students have experienced dissonance regarding what the teaching of creative thinking means and how it can be assessed. We need to build consensus around this SLO and provide more professional development.

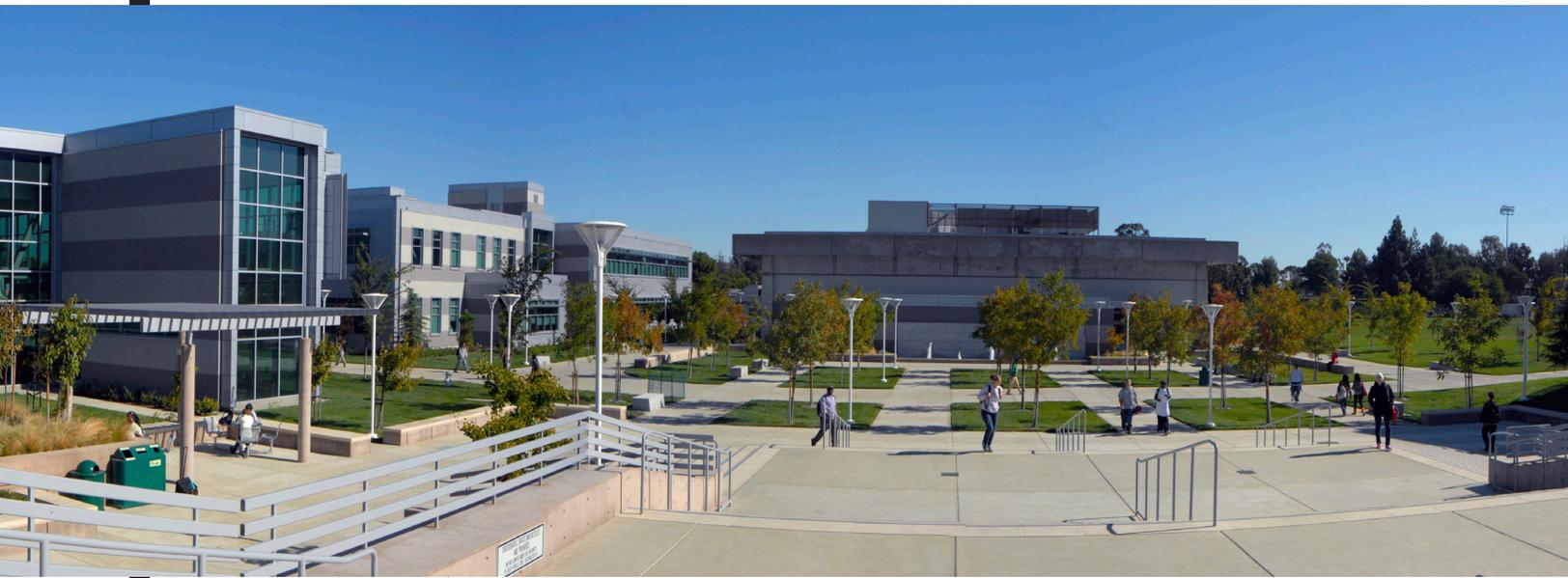
GE faculty have expressed significant concern over the complexity and number of general education student learning outcomes. The committee feels that we can achieve both a rejuvenation of and recommitment to the college's general education program by taking the following steps:

We recommend a thorough analysis of the current 5 GE SLOs. Some student learning outcomes, such as the one recommending interdisciplinary engagement, should probably be deleted as a student learning outcome from the GE program for reasons noted earlier in this report. The addition of other SLOs, such as information literacy, might be necessary at this point.

We strongly recommend the decentralization of the teaching of the GE SLOs. Rather than having every course in the GE program teach to every GE student learning outcome, we recommend the college adopt an approach in which each overarching disciplinary area would decide which SLOs it feels best align with the nature of their discipline. These are the 5 “boxes” listed as GE Requirements in our college catalog: Natural Sciences, Social & Behavioral Sciences, Arts and Humanities, Language and Rationality, and Ethnic/Multicultural Studies. This would allow disciplines to specialize in the teaching of specific SLOs and would give instructors more autonomy over what and how they teach in the general education program.

The GE committee would then need to structure course requirements in such a way so as to guarantee that students are exposed to and demonstrate mastery over all GE SLOs. We strongly believe that students would be better served by focusing on fewer SLOs in each course, yet having a stronger emphasis placed on the outcomes which are assessed.

To determine support for this idea, the GE Committee will organize a referendum in which all GE faculty members will vote on whether or not to support the revision of the current GE SLOs and have faculty who teach courses in the 5 broad disciplinary grouping of the “boxes”, e.g. Natural Science, Arts & Humanities, etc. decide which of the GE SLOS should be common to the courses in their area.



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# Appendix

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# GE Assessment Prompt for Discipline X: Course XXX-yyyy

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Student ID \_\_\_\_\_

Video link: \_\_\_\_\_

Intended goal:  transfer  AA/AS  undecided

**Assignment:** Please create a three-to-five minute oral presentation on the following prompt:

*How did this class change and/or inform your understanding of diversity and global interdependence? (Provide 2-3 examples from the class that helped you think creatively about some of the problems in the world today.)*

As you plan your speech, make sure to take an organized approach with an introduction designed to interest your audience, a body filled with facts to support your opinion, and a strong ending. Pay attention to your vocal projection, tone, eye contact, body language and find ways to connect with your intended audience.

The speech will be graded on both the content and quality of the speech based on the following assessment criteria:

■ **Discipline content:** Information and ideas are sound and directly connected to the discipline.

■ **Speaking:** Synthesize facts and ideas into a meaningful persuasive speech supported by facts, integrated with experience, and delivered in a way that clearly communicates with the audience. **Do not read from a prepared document.** Be sure to make eye contact with the audience (look into the camera!)

■ **Creative thinking:** Generate and articulate creative solutions to problems.

■ **Worldview:** Presentation demonstrates ability to explain contrasting experiences and divergent viewpoints, analyze and evaluate implications of diversity and illustrate global interdependency and its implications.

**Technical details:** You will record your presentation as a video, and may deliver the speech directly to a camera, or to an audience at your discretion and comfort level. Turn in the assignment as a link to a youtube video.

# ORAL COMMUNICATION RUBRIC

## Explanation

General Education courses demand analysis and synthesis, and require students to comprehend relationships and establish new ones. To help students organize facts and ideas into a meaningful framework and integrate them with personal experience, a GE course should require a significant amount of reading, writing and speaking appropriate to the discipline. Reading should be viewed as a primary source of information for students and should constitute a substantial portion of course assignments. Students should be asked to analyze, synthesize and evaluate concepts derived from reading, going beyond skills required for literal comprehension of text. Writing should be used to develop thinking and promote learning, as well as serving as an evaluation instrument to measure student progress. Students should be asked to write with frequency and depth to explore ideas and relationships, and should demonstrate the clarity and command of conventional grammar expected of college level writing.

Courses should provide regular opportunities for students to explore ideas and communicate orally. Students should demonstrate the ability to speak effectively both in small groups and whole class presentations.

	<b>Highly Proficient 3</b>	<b>Proficient 2</b>	<b>Not Proficient 1</b>
<b>Organization</b>	Organizational pattern (specific introduction and conclusion, sequenced material within the body, and transitions) is clearly and consistently observable and is skillful and makes the content of the presentation cohesive.	Organizational pattern (specific introduction and conclusion, sequenced material within the body, and transitions) is intermittently observable within the presentation.	Organizational pattern (specific introduction and conclusion, sequenced material within the body, and transitions) is not observable within the presentation.
<b>Language</b>	Language choices are imaginative, memorable, and compelling, and enhance the effectiveness of the presentation. Language in presentation is appropriate to audience.	Language choices are mundane and commonplace and partially support the effectiveness of the presentation. Language in presentation is appropriate to audience.	Language choices are unclear and minimally support the effectiveness of the presentation. Language in presentation is not appropriate to audience.
<b>Delivery</b>	Delivery techniques (posture, gesture, eye contact, and vocal expressiveness) make the presentation compelling, and speaker appears polished and confident.	Delivery techniques (posture, gesture, eye contact, and vocal expressiveness) make the presentation understandable, and speaker appears tentative.	Delivery techniques (posture, gesture, eye contact, and vocal expressiveness) detract from the understandability of the presentation, and speaker appears uncomfortable.
<b>Supporting Material</b>	A variety of types of supporting materials (explanations, examples, illustrations, statistics, analogies, quotations from relevant authorities) make appropriate reference to information or analysis that significantly supports the presentation or establishes the presenter's credibility/authority on the topic.	Supporting materials (explanations, examples, illustrations, statistics, analogies, quotations from relevant authorities) make appropriate reference to information or analysis that partially supports the presentation or establishes the presenter's credibility/authority on the topic.	Insufficient supporting materials (explanations, examples, illustrations, statistics, analogies, quotations from relevant authorities) make reference to information or analysis that minimally supports the presentation or establishes the presenter's credibility/authority on the topic.
<b>Central Message</b>	Central message is compelling (precisely stated, appropriately repeated, memorable, and strongly supported.)	Central message is basically understandable but is not often repeated and is not memorable.	Central message can be deduced, but is not explicitly stated in the presentation.

## DIVERSITY AND GLOBAL INTERDEPENDENCE

### Explanation

General education courses should include any social group within the United States that has bearing on the subject matter. Distinctions of race, class, ethnicity, gender, religion, age, disability, sexual orientation, and political persuasion are common referents in modern societal debates and need specific treatment where applicable.

Much instruction at LMC is routinely taught within a narrowly American purview. Such national centrism should give way to more inclusive consideration of the international developments, patterns, and trends that conjoin Americans with other peoples around the globe.

*Evaluators are encouraged to assign a zero to any work sample or collection of work that does not meet benchmark (cell one) level performance.*

	<b>Highly Proficient 3</b>	<b>Proficient 2</b>	<b>Not Proficient 1</b>
<b>Perspective Taking</b> 5 (A)  <b>Identify and explain contrasting experiences and divergent viewpoints among social and cultural groups.</b>	Identifies and explains multiple perspectives (such as cultural, disciplinary, and ethical) when exploring subjects within natural and human systems.	Identifies multiple perspectives while maintaining a value preference for own positioning (such as cultural, disciplinary, and ethical).	Identifies a single perspective while not acknowledging that other perspectives exist.
<b>Cultural Diversity</b> 5 (B)  <b>Analyze and evaluate the implications of social and cultural diversity.</b>	Analyzes substantial connections between the worldviews, power structures, and experiences of multiple cultures historically or in contemporary contexts, incorporating respectful interactions with other cultures.	Explains and connects two or more cultures historically or in contemporary contexts with some acknowledgement of power structures, demonstrating respectful interaction with varied cultures and worldviews.	Describes the experiences of others historically or in contemporary contexts primarily through one cultural perspective, demonstrating some openness to varied cultures and worldviews.
<b>Understanding Global Systems</b> 5-C  <b>Explain and illustrate global interdependency and its implications.</b>	Examines the historical and contemporary roles, interconnections, and differential effects of human organizations and actions on global systems within the human and the natural worlds.	Identifies the basic role of some global and local institutions, ideas, and processes in the human and natural worlds.	Does not acknowledge global interdependence

# CREATIVE THINKING VALUE RUBRIC

for more information, please contact [value@aacu.org](mailto:value@aacu.org)

## Explanation

Critical and creative thinking involves the ability of individuals to take charge of their own thinking; they develop sound criteria and standards of analyzing and assessing their thinking to improve its quality. Critical thinking, sometimes referred to as “reasonable and reflective thinking,” therefore, requires a high degree of continual self-reflection and intellectual civility. As the standards and discipline of critical thinking become internalized, students should develop intellectually and affectively-based traits – intellectual autonomy, intellectual civility, intellectual humility, intellectual integrity, intellectual perseverance, etc.

Critical thinking is not something additional to content, but rather integral to it; something that defines the manner in which the content is organized, conceptualized and applied. Content should not be presented as fragmented bits and pieces of information, but as a system with a definite set of logical relationships; an organized structure of concepts, principles and understandings; a system which requires the asking and answering of a certain set of questions and problems; and, ultimately, a disciplined mode of thinking.

Creative thinking processes involve ways of defining the problems, and generating and evaluating innovative solutions.

	<b>Highly Proficient</b> 3	<b>Proficient</b> 2	<b>Not Proficient</b> 1
<b>Embracing Contradictions</b>	Integrates alternate, divergent, or contradictory perspectives or ideas fully.	Includes (recognizes the value of) alternate, divergent, or contradictory perspectives or ideas in a small way.	Does not knowledges (or mentions in passing) alternate, divergent, or contradictory perspectives or ideas.
<b>Innovative Thinking</b> 3-E  Analyze and Articulate innovative solutions to problems	Creates a novel or unique idea, question, format, or product.	Experiments with creating a novel or unique idea, question, format, or product.	Repeats readily available information.
<b>Connecting, Synthesizing, Transforming</b>  3-F <b>Generate innovative solutions to problems.</b>	Synthesizes ideas or solutions into a coherent whole.	Connects ideas or solutions in novel ways.	Recognizes existing connections among ideas or solutions.

## GE Student Focus Group--- Notes

One student mentioned that she felt LMC defines diversity in very limited ways--- she believed we talk about the groups that are on campus, but we don't really mention any groups outside of those we teach. For example, she shared that we rarely learn about Pacific Islanders, Native Americans, Jews, Italians, etc.

A student shared the following: he overheard a staff member say "I got ripped off by those gypsies." He felt this demonstrated a lack of understanding of gypsies as an ethnic group and demonstrated bias against gypsie people.

A lot of GE courses have just been lecturing. It would be great if professors would use different types of teaching strategies. One student shared that Socratic dialogue helped him understand the material better. Other students pointed out that class discussion/dialogue was actually a good way to make sure that diverse viewpoints are shared in the classroom, assuming that the professor creates a climate welcoming to other opinions.

Students said they appreciated having more creative assignments--- provide some framework, a little structure, but then give students a say in what the final product would look like.

One student shared that his astronomy class helped him appreciate the history and cultures of other people, i.e., the contributions of Muslim people to astronomy, etc.

One student shared that her Engl 100 professor had the entire course centered around gender. At the beginning of the focus group, she seemed to say that she felt that this professor had an agenda and she was being forced to buy into this agenda. But at the end of the focus group, the student referenced this same class again and said that it taught her critical and creative thinking because she was forced to deal with topics that she previously had never studied before.

The notes below are transcription of written notes the students provided during the focus group.

- For me, creativity involves thinking outside the box. I believe GE classes should involve hands-on activities, like building things so that they are not just mental, but physical.
- Great Job! Only critique I have is provide more open discussion during classes with professor overview.
- More student involvement. More personal classes so they're more interested.
- I have enjoyed most of my GE classes. I believe that GE courses could be more enjoyable if they are all student centered and engaging along with not being afraid to tell the truth on issues even if they are not popular.
- I loved how my professor showed support in my writing, even in my weak spots, she gave me guidelines on how to strengthen those weak spots. And she encouraged me to be more specific when explaining things.
- I need this school to be more open minded.

- I appreciate how my teachers respected an individual's point of view concerning politics, today's economy, ect. Even if they had other ideas. One professor never had class discussions to hear what students had to say about a certain topic. She would just talk/lecture.
- Instructors should be more mindful of their tone; condescending behavior towards students. Include a more diverse; global perspective.
- More presentations! It forces us to learn in ways that challenges our mind!
- I have found most GE classes to hit the SLOs. Admittedly I am biased or have been fortunate to have been in great classes.
- Open circles for engaged students to discuss. I always hear about Hispanic, white, and black communities, but what about Asian, Pacific Islander, ect. I feel like the other students in our community aren't really focused on. I see that a lot of students are shy/lack of confidence to share about their opinion.

## Iris's notes from focus group:

### Question #1---

**The GE committee asked students in various GE classes last semester to record a video speech to the following prompt:**

**How did this class change your ideas about diversity and global interdependence?**

**After reading over this, how would you respond to the ideas of this student?**

The facilitator added the following prompt: *"Do the Student responses indicate that they actually developed a global perspective, or changed their view of diversity?"*

## Focus Group Responses

- Responses were shallow
- Responses were "surface level"
- No significant account of how objectives were met
- Lacked specific examples
- Courses have "shoved down" curriculum

The facilitator added this additional question: *“Would you take this class based on the student assessment?”*

### **Focus Group Responses**

- Felt like they didn’t get any more than a grammar school exposure to diversity and globalization
- No
- Felt like the Professor did not clearly articulate the outcomes they sought in a way that the student understood them
- I want the ability to form my own ideas, so not sure I would or would not take the course based on the student responses

The facilitator added the following prompt: *“How many questions should students be asked to respond to in an assessment video?”*

### **Focus Group Responses**

- 8
- 3
- Between 3 and 8
- Depends on length of video

The facilitator added the following prompt: *“What is a good length of time for a student assessment video?”*

### **Focus Group Responses**

- 3-5 minutes

The facilitator added the following prompt: *“How willing are you to do a 5 minute video?”*

### **Focus Group Responses**

- No audible responses heard but several hands raised and some affirmative nods.

The facilitator added the following prompt: *“Have you felt a professor was shoving an ideology down your throat?”*

- Yes, having that happen to me right now. I feel like my Professor shots down my views and my opinion doesn't matter because I have not always lived in California.
- Took an English class that only allowed one perspective on an important topic. It was an English composition class and the discussions were not at all flexible.
- If professors have strong beliefs they consider it passion and not inflexibility
- Professors inflexible and dismissive towards students who have different viewpoint.
- What makes a terrible professor is one who can't hear diverse viewpoints
- Have had music classes where professors focus on things that are miniscule
- Have friends that have told me about a Political Science class teacher jokingly offering bonus points for voting for Hillary Clinton. Also have friends who say that their Professors refuse to allow opposing political ideas. One was told that if he disagreed with the professors political views that it would be bad.

## Question #2:

### How have your GE Courses met the SLOs listed for the course?

- Math classes have only talked about basics of math- no essays
- Statistics class required surveys that could have met SLOs if it had included oral presentations
- Anthropology, course was effective in hitting SLOs
- Social Science 45 helped inform how he applies SLOs to journalism  
International art forms
- Drama 16 changed how I view the world
- Econ 5 was very engaging

The facilitator added the following prompt: *“Have you felt that there were GE courses that inspired creativity?”*

- International Art Forms
- Drama 16
- Speech
- Philosophy 100
- English 100 Composition
- English Composition
- Speech 110
- English class
- In my Drama 30 course creativity was required
- My Engineering 110 class required that I be creative in designing and building

The facilitator added the following prompt: *“What makes a class creative?”*

- Less rules related to guidelines and more input from the professor on the final project
- Prefers a Socratic classroom environment because its more engaging
- English 100 classes that give freedom of choice with respect to writing topics within a set of guidelines.

The facilitator added the following prompt: *“How can GE Professors improve teaching for SLOS?”*

- Professors must be more politically open-minded
- What is important is that Professors teach fact so that people can fairly assess political ideology
- Most classes at LMC are narrow in what they teach about cultures and focus primarily on 2 or 3 groups, missing an opportunity to focus on global diversity. It feels very strict.
- Should acknowledge all student backgrounds because incorporating student perspectives will diversify the discussion and perspectives students come away with.
- Most students feel that the majority of GE classes are straight lecture and very little student participates is encouraged.  
Some professors have class discussions and prompt students to give their point of view.

### **Question #3:**

**In your own words, please define: Creative Thinking. Critical Thinking. Diversity. Global Interdependence. What do these things means to you?**

- Appreciating diverse cultures and their contributions
- Thinking outside the culture we were raised within

The facilitator added the following prompt: *“What perspectives must be incorporated?”*

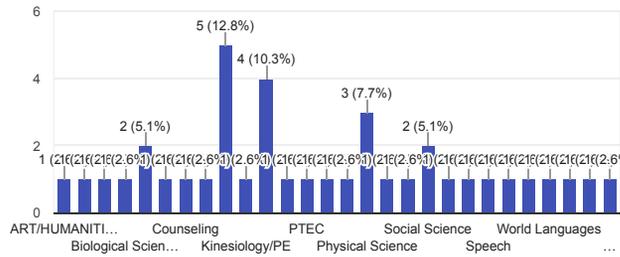
- Jewish
- Italian
- Pacific Islander
- Native American

## Los Medanos College---GE Faculty Survey

54 responses

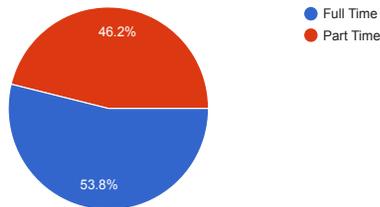
Which department do you teach a majority of your classes?

39 responses



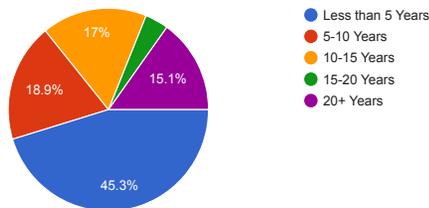
Are you full time or part time faculty?

52 responses



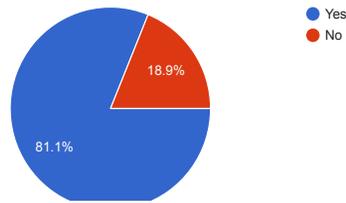
How many years have you taught at LMC?

53 responses



The GE committee is evaluating GE SLOs and has received feedback that the SLO requiring "interdisciplinary approaches to problem solving" is not assessable as a student learning outcome. While the GE committee believes GE courses are by nature interdisciplinary, we are considering removing this as an SLO that must be assessed. Would you support the removal of the interdisciplinary SLO?

53 responses



Please give any written feedback you would like to provide the GE committee regarding the removal of the interdisciplinary SLO:

17 responses

How could you effectively assess this?

If you just mean that the student has to display some kind of problem solving process unique to their course, that is OK. But if we have to develop a generic problem solving process that applies to all GE courses, that's a real problem.

If we could remove GE SLO 2 (interdisciplinary problem solving), then there would be more time in a semester for students to achieve the ability to do the remaining GE SLOs.

We should have an information literacy GESLO instead

It is important that students are able to approach problems through an interdisciplinary approach as opposed to through one-lenses

problem solving can be assessed, it can measure the student's research and analysis of a problem prior to proposing a solution. In each course, these methodologies may be measured differently but they can and should be assessed. It is imperative that this be a requirement for GE courses, the future generations will need to have a good solid understanding of problem solving through multiple methods in order to work out the immediate needs for global warming, overpopulations and resource (water/food) efficiency as our global population grows.

There are some disciplines in which interdisciplinary problem solving may not be viable. How can we know what other courses related to our discipline our students in GE have taken? It seems unreasonable to assume that in addition to teaching students about our discipline specific ways to solve problems we'd also have time to teach them about other disciplines approaches.

you know me- please include nursing as a GE

I agree this is very difficult to assess

I guess I feel confused about why it's not assessable. They must do some kind of assignment that's interdisciplinary? Or, if they don't do that assignment, it's not because the SLO is unassessable but because people are not teaching to the SLO? That said, I'm not sure why GE courses ARE by nature interdisciplinary...are they?

I think it is a good idea. I agree it is hard to assess and many classes give lip service to this SLO.

I think that "interdisciplinary approaches to problem solving" is the solution, NOT the problem. Instructors need to think out of their "curricular boxes" by engaging their own creativity, modeling it for their students and offering such "problems" for students to solve.

REMOVE IT.

This is true -- hard to assess. I worked as part of the previous GE assessment and assessing the SLO's in general was challenging across disciplines.

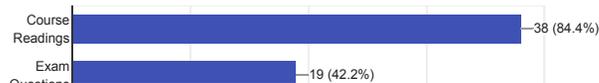
Seems like it could be superfluous in the context of a class which is not interdisciplinary.

That SLO is too vague for any clear assignment and benchmark to assess.

I'd prefer that we do this as an animating principle, rather than just a tacked-on SLO. It would require a huge amount of work and culture shift for that to happen, and I don't think that's possible at LMC. So, I suggest removing the SLO. Do it well, or don't do it at all, I say.

One of the current GE SLOs is "possess a worldview informed by diverse social, multicultural, and global perspectives." In what ways does your department teach social diversity and multicultural perspectives? (Please check all that apply)

45 responses



Please provide more specific feedback regarding how your department teaches diversity and multicultural perspectives:

31 responses

Essays based on current events, with at least 1/3 of essay topics covering and requiring detailed research into multicultural issues.

We have no GE courses in Math so we do not have this CSLO.

Student read articles about scientists from diverse, multicultural backgrounds and they read about science as carried out by diverse cultures both today and historically. They then write essays based on the readings.

We examine work of non western cultures in both lecture and reading.

Diversity and alternate perspectives are covered in lecture discussion, homework and lab assignments

Through guest lecturers who can bring a wider worldview, special projects, and interactive group work.

In English this is built in to most of our COORs anyway, GE or not

We theme courses in English. Featuring diverse voices and perspectives is an important part of all of our courses. This drives our selection of readings and the crafting of assignments.

Foundation in learning, student success, and academic identity that focus on enhancing diversity awareness, appreciation, and competence as it relates to succeeding in college

Provide class time to discuss social diversity and multicultural perspectives with in a Statistical context.

Check the COOR

We require art gallery visits. students research must include research from published artists in and must be able to connect what they research and how it applies to their life. Our artists include works beyond the western perspective in or Art 5 and several of our Art History courses on Asian Art, Modern Art, and Art of the Ancient world.

In Speech/Communication it's essentially built into our discipline and how I approach the classroom.

I don't think all classes do, but I think Bio5, 7, 21 incorporate multicultural perspectives. Other courses can, depending on instructor

In PTEC 007 which focuses on soft skills, defined as the behaviors we use to interact favorably with ourselves and others, we emphasize the importance of challenging our paradigms. Critical to this is the need to try to understand others and why they are the way they are before we evaluate, agree, disagree or stereotype them. Attempting to understand others does not necessarily mean agreeing with them (although it may lead to that), but it is a behavior that is rarely exhibited. Practicing this would go a long way to breaking down barriers to understanding other cultures and why there is social diversity. Hopefully there would be greater understanding that diversity is enormous plus rather than problem. We tend to think of diversity as ethnic diversity but there are all kinds of ways we may be different; many a plus, some not so much.

Transfer level math courses are aligned with UC, CSU, and C-ID learning outcomes and do not include social diversity and multicultural perspective. When possible, faculty include diverse contextualized examples and culturally relevant contexts, but incorporating additional learning outcomes or additional material is not possible given the extent of mathematics content we must include for transfer articulation.

Field trips or events

we teach culturally competent care which addresses multicultural factors in patient care.

Discussions regarding contributions to science from a variety of individuals from a diverse background.

Every dimension of child growth and development is examined from a cultural context in our CHDEV 10 course. CHDEV 50 is entirely FOCUSED on understanding diverse perspectives

It is left to individual instructors to determine how to incorporate this SLO

Guest Speakers, Field trips, Events

Heh we don't :( We're math and math chose not to be part of GE, I believe, specifically because of this SLO. Crazy I know. I try to focus on this in my statistics class but we have nothing in our course outlines that speaks to this. In fact, on our evaluations, we always write NA for "teaching controversial material" questions.

The art department also requires students to attend a museum, where they will encounter creations/perspectives from various cultures.

Through curriculum that represents diverse peoples/cultures, emphasizing critical thinking and multiple perspectives on an issue, through examining how arguments are constructed, through cultural studies and other theoretical frameworks that critique dominant narratives or provide alternative narratives,

We work it into the course readings, by making sure the ideas presented in those readings are diverse but also come from a diverse body of peoples. As a department we discuss and share the works that we can bring into our classes.

Art, literature and music are universal human activities. By introducing images, source documents and sounds from diverse cultures, one can create contrasts and alternative viewpoints as compared with more dominant Western cultures. The success of introducing these comparisons and contrasts in histories, religions and philosophies depends on the course being taught and the open-mindedness, curiosity and willingness to learn on the part of the instructor.

MY DEPARTMENT DOES NOT - SELECT FACULTY IN THE DEPARTMENT MAKE AN EFFORT TO DO SO.

I don't teach any GE courses, so I have nothing to add

Guest speakers and other types of media.

I can only speak to what I teach personally. My courses look at readings, primary documents from a broad range of perspectives, especially those largely left out of historical record.

**In what ways could LMC as a whole improve our teaching of diversity and multicultural perspectives? Please provide the GE committee with any thoughts/feedback that you have:**

17 responses

I do not have enough of a broad-based perspective to make suggestions. Part-time faculty are not usually brought into those discussions, nor are they made aware of the overall posture of the college.

It might help to have flex workshops where faculty share their GE SLO 5 (diverse, multicultural perspectives) curricula.

Require professional development so that instructors learn multicultural and global perspectives

It could be interesting to have a theme or book that the whole college teaches to help promote diversity and multicultural perspectives.

Require faculty to attend cultural awareness trainings, micro-aggressions, privilege, and/or personal biases every semester as FLEX or at all college day

Professional Development, Fun-non shaming ways to enhance our own perspective.

All good ideas begin with professional development and leadership that embraces and encourages change. Without the backing of department chairs, programs and adjunct faculty, then this will not happen as a college wide goal. Faculty need to collectively agree to the importance of the concept and make a commitment to see the goal through, knowing this may be a 5-20 year goal. (those that are retiring need to support the long term vision so that the new faculty can carry the torch)

We could offer more lectures on-campus and provide funding for departments to create these multicultural events for their disciplines and the community at large. We could also offer Seminar courses centered on diversity and multicultural perspective that students could take for non-transferable units.

PD focused on incorporating multicultural perspectives into diverse disciplines and sharing the evidence that supports its efficacy

See previous.

I would appreciate presentations from faculty about how they incorporate diversity and multicultural perspectives in their courses. Not just to give me ideas for the courses I teach, but also to provide a sense of perspective about the courses students take in different departments.

Guest speakers

I think we do a pretty good job, but as the Audre Lorde quote goes- "For the master's tools will never dismantle the master's house...." There needs to be a lot of work done and much of it needs to be done before students get to college.

I would like to see my department incorporate these perspectives into the Activities Packets written by the department for Math 12, 25, 27, 29, 30, and 34

The college could work on religious pluralism and opening a discussion about how religious beliefs are being taught at the college (or really not at all).

Create and foster an environment that does not browbeat a professor for teaching what she/he knows, finding it misguided or close-minded, but rather, incentivize them to continually expand their cultural knowledge, develop their ethical commitment to greater diversity and acknowledge those who do.

Stop limiting our exposure to what the data from the equity plan suggests. There are many student groups who were not highlighted in the data (which is a bit skewed) but who are often omitted in focus groups, conversations, and overall college talking points.

**If you could revise the GE SLOs, what changes would you make?**

21 responses

See above two answers

In my class, there are really seven GE SLOs because I treat reading, writing, and speaking as three separate SLOs. It would make the GE SLOs simpler and more manageable if we could eliminate one of them. The remaining GE SLOs would still be pretty comprehensive.

Fewer and more clearly written SLOs. 5 max.

I'd have them be more focused on teaching students to learn how to learn.

Add an information literacy SLO, using the Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education (<http://www.ala.org/acrl/standards/ilframework>) as our guide.

I do not have any recommendations.

N/A

Change the GE program to be more of a cafeteria-style program based on a diversity of content.

I wouldn't change them, just make it easier to asses/deal with the paperwork burden.

I would need to be more informed as to the discussion. As someone who does not often teach a GE course, this would be difficult for me to answer.

I think that GE SLO #4 is vague at best and could be written in a way that is more easily assessed. I don't actually know what that would look like though.

3 memorable SLOs that we could all align our CSLOs with

What is stated in the SLO's and the COOR's may vastly differ from what is actually taught in class. Until this is fixed, why does it matter what is written in the SLO's?

none

None. Only to clarify the interdisciplinary issue. Like, if they really are supposed to be that.

I would take out the interdisciplinary one. I understand we want interdisciplinary courses, but not every course should be and many courses seem to be forcing it. I would also consider the ethics SLO. I am not sure many people know what it means or how to implement it. It would be good to have an off brand holiday themed flex about it. But truthfully I don't know if it should really be in every course. I don't know if it is really being done service by being spread across GE. Considering the colleges commitment to ethics, it might make more sense to have a required ethics course as part of the GE requirements.

SLOS are a joke, the trend du jour, and a soul-killing time suck, invented and embraced by dessicated pedants who wouldn't recognize an original thought or concept if it smacked them in the face. Lose them...

The SLOs are fine, as is. What is needed is a greater sense of mission and esprit de corps among GE instructors. When I surveyed GE faculty years ago regarding these same SLOs, I was shocked to find how many expressed no knowledge (or understanding) of them, much less any any clarity on how to utilize them. In-service training is necessary.

I wouldn't - I think they're a good representation of what we do as a college.

I would remove the speaking portion of GE SLO #1 because it severely disadvantages our introverted students. It is also a criteria that is extremely difficult to assess because of the subjective nature of grading spoken work.

Lower the amount to 3, with a single objectively measurable outcome in each. Right now we have about 8 objectives shoved into 5 SLOs. Let's consolidate, streamline, and better focus in on what can actually be assessed and improved.

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