EMPORIA STATE
UNIVERSITY

Gaining a Greater Understanding of Embedded Core Skills in the Content of General Education Courses

Assessment Matters Conference – Regional Community College Assessment Conference

Johnson County Community College / Regnier Center – May 5, 2017

General Education Assessment

General Education Assessment Steering Committee (GEAS)

- Dr. David Cordle - Provost & Vice President for Academic Affairs
- Dr. Brent Thomas - Dean of the School of Liberal Arts & Sciences
- Dr. Rich Sleezer - Associate Dean of the School of Liberal Arts & Sciences and the Director of General Education
- Dr. JoLanna Kord - Assistant Provost for Institutional Research & Assessment

General Education Assessment Team (GEAT)

- Dr. Sheryl Lidzy - Department of Communication & Theatre - Faculty
- Dr. Katherine Daily-O'Meara - Department of English, Modern Languages, & Journalism – Faculty/Director of Composition
- Dr. Rachelle Smith - Department of English, Modern Languages, & Journalism - Faculty
- Ms. Cynthia Kane - University Libraries & Archives - Director of Instruction and Director of Assessment
- Ms. Christa Curl - Department of Mathematics & Economics - Faculty

GEAT 2016-2017 Accomplishments

◻ Reviewed the student learning outcomes (SLO's) listed on syllabi for courses mapped to the General Education Program Goal 1: Core Skills to identify the curriculum structure that was embedded in the courses.

  ◻ Was there at least one SLO that aligned student learning with General Education Program Goal 1: Core Skills?

  ◻ If a SLO was listed, was there a direct assessment mechanism identified to measure student learning success in core skills?

◻ Surveyed general education faculty with assigned courses during AY 2017. The faculty self-identified the inclusion of Goal 1: Core Skills in their course curriculum and provided information on the extent to which the goal was learned/practiced within their specific courses.

EMPORIA STATE
U N I V E R S I T Y

Dr. Rachelle M. Smith and Dr. Katherine Daily O'Meara

Department of English, Modern Languages, and Journalism

Toward Promoting A Culture of Writing Across the Emporia State Campus: Written Communication GenEd Survey Results

Toward Promoting a Culture of Writing Across the Emporia State Campus: Written Communication GenEd Survey Results

EMPORIA STATE UNIVERSITY

Dr. Rachelle M. Smith
Dr. Katherine Daily O'Meara

Introduction & Context

General Education Goal 1:
Acquire proficiency in core skills necessary for academic success, including written and spoken communication, quantitative and mathematical reasoning, and information technology and literacy.
1a: Demonstrate effective communication skills in writing .

- 53 total respondents to Written Communication GenEd survey
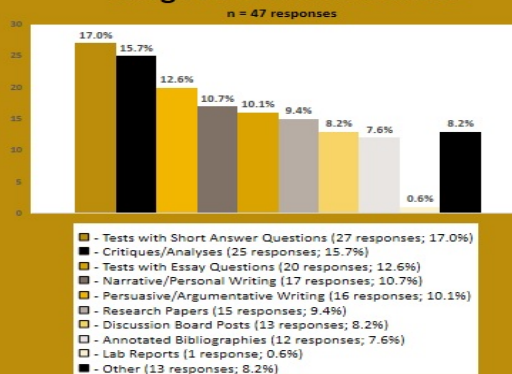- 28 GenEd courses represented across 12 departments

What Do GenEd Instructors Think Students Do WELL?

- Explaining processes in writing
- Applying concepts and theories; seeing connections to their own lives
- Writing discussion posts, reflections, and essay questions on tests
- Expressing their own thoughts and experiences
- Evaluating sources
- Articulating ideas clearly
- Citing from credible sources
- Putting ideas together in writing in logical ways
- Communicating their values and beliefs

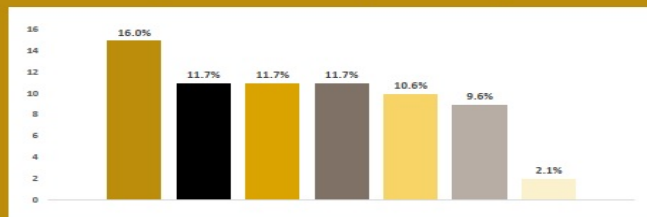## What Do GenEd Instructors Think Students STRUGGLE With?

- Sentence-level skills/Lower-order concerns
- Working with sources effectively
- Critical analysis skills: Making deeper connections to texts and concepts
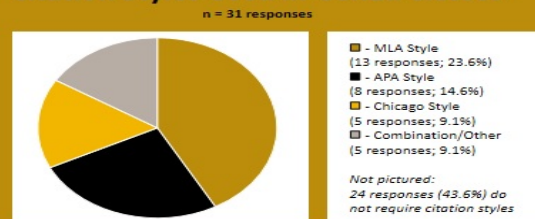
Types/Genres of Writing Assigned in GenEd Classes

n = 47 responses

- Tests with Short Answer Questions (27 responses; 17.0%)
- Critiques/Analyses (25 responses; 15.7%)
- Tests with Essay Questions (20 responses; 12.6%)
- Narrative/Personal Writing (17 responses; 10.7%)
- Persuasive/Argumentative Writing (16 responses; 10.1%)
- Research Papers (15 responses; 9.4%)
- Discussion Board Posts (13 responses; 8.2%)
- Annotated Bibliographies (12 responses; 7.6%)
- Lab Reports (1 response; 0.6%)
- Other (13 responses; 8.2%)

Citation Styles Used in GenEd Classes

n = 31 responses

- MLA Style (13 responses; 23.6%)
- APA Style (8 responses; 14.6%)
- Chicago Style (5 responses; 9.1%)
- Combination/Other (5 responses; 9.1%)

Not pictured: 24 responses (43.6%) do not require citation styles

Written communication "provides students the necessary skills to be successful in both other courses and life beyond college."

What Writing Workshops Do Instructors Want?

n = 22 respondents
(47% of GenEd teachers who responded to the survey)

- Working with Multilingual Students (15 responses; 16.0%)
- Creating Rubrics for Writing Assignments (11 responses; 11.7%)
- Assessing Writing (11 responses; 11.7%)
- Designing Collaborative Writing Assignments (11 responses; 11.7%)
- Designing General Writing Assignments (10 responses; 10.6%)
- Designing a Writing Class for My Discipline (9 responses; 9.6%)
- Other (2 responses; 4.3%)

Note: 25 respondents (53.2%) are not interested in attending writing workshops

Implications & Recommendations

Recommendation 1:
Cultivate a culture of writing across GenEd courses

Recommendation 2:
Place greater focus on WAC/WID (writing across the curriculum/ writing in the disciplines) initiatives across ESU campus

Recommendation 3:
Offer workshops related to written communication

Dr. Sheryl Lidzy

Department of Communication & Theatre

Improving Communication Skills Across the Emporia State Campus: Effective Speaking & Listening Skills Survey Results

Improving Communication Skills Across the Emporia State Campus:
Effective Speaking & Listening Skills Survey Results

Dr. Sheryl Lidzy

EMPORIA STATE UNIVERSITY

Introduction & Content

General Education Goal:
Acquire proficiency in core skills necessary for academic success, including written and spoken communication, qualitative and mathematical reasoning, and information technology and literacy.
  1.b: Demonstrate effective communication skills in speaking and listening.

Total Respondents to Speaking and Listening Section (n=48)
-College of Liberal Arts & Sciences (n=41)
-The Teachers College (n=4)
-University Libraries and Archives (n=2)
-School of Business (n=1)
  "85% of respondents said their students mainly represented a variety of majors who may or may not be related to their discipline."

When asked, **"What types of assignments do you require students to do as a part of the Speaking and Listening learning experience in your General Education course?"** the three major themes revealed were:

  • **Written analysis based on an observation**
  • **Exams or quizzes**
  • **Discussions**

For example: Whole-class discussions are daily activities in my class; I also regularly assign small-group discussions and impromptu mini-presentations (in which each student chooses a specific passage from the literary text we are studying, and explains his/her interpretation of the passage). Students in Honors sections of this course also make formal informative presentations (3 per semester).

Once students have completed Public Speaking and/or Interpersonal Communication, they have been exposed to both Speaking and Listening content knowledge and practical application skills.   **In what ways do you evaluate Speaking and Listening content knowledge and practical application skills in your assignments?**

- Rubrics Class Participation
- Do not evaluate
- I don't know
- Quizzes
- Informally
- In-Class Activity Assessments
- Mini-Conference Panel Assignment
- Online Presentations
- Written Feedback

Which Speaking and Listening content knowledge and practical application skills do you evaluate in your course assignments?

INTRODUCTIONS:
• Attention getters
• Credibility
• Thesis Statements, Previews

CONTENT
• Clarity of information
• Organization well-developed
• Appropriate and sufficient support
• **Oral citations**
• Transitions
• Outlining
• Time Management

DELIVERY
• Appropriate Attire
• Appropriate language, grammar, volume use
• **Confidence Level**
• Facial Expressions
• Good eye contact
• Loudness
• No Chewing Gum
• Use of Gestures
• Vocal Variety

INTERPERSONAL SKILLS
• Costs & Benefits of Friendships
• Culture & Gender Effects
• Deception
• **Effective Conflict Management**
• Effects of Self-Concept
• Family Communication
• Friendships

CONCLUSIONS
• Summary
• Concluding Remarks

OTHER
• Ability to ask pointed question and contribute to the class discussion
• **Effective Team Process**
• Clear Lesson Delivery
• **Use of Visual Aids**
• Use of Podium
• **Use of Notes**
• **Adapt to Audience Feedback**
• Use Culturally Sensitive Language
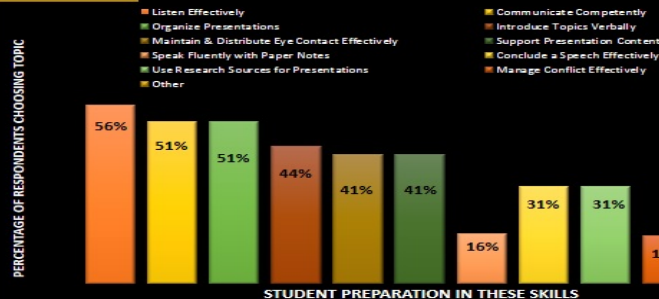• **Critical Thinking Skills**

• Language/Verbal Communication
• Nonverbal Communication
• Perception Process
• Romantic, Workplace & Family Relationships
• Self Disclosure

AUDIENCE SKILLS
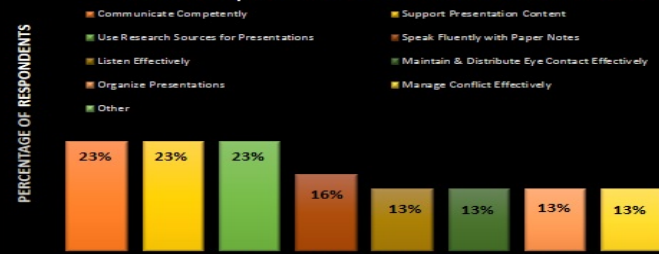• **Listening Skills**
• Self-Analysis Skill

NOTE
White Font items indicate those areas which reportedly make the greatest contribution by other courses to student development.

Based on Students' Speaking & Listening, I believe Public Speaking and Interpersonal Communication Prepares Students to:

■ Listen Effectively
■ Organize Presentations
■ Maintain & Distribute Eye Contact Effectively
■ Speak Fluently with Paper Notes
■ Use Research Sources for Presentations
■ Other
■ Communicate Competently
■ Introduce Topics Verbally
■ Support Presentation Content
■ Conclude a Speech Effectively
■ Manage Conflict Effectively

PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS CHOOSING TOPIC

56% | 51% | 51% | 44% | 41% | 41% | 16% | 31% | 31% | 15% | 31%

STUDENT PREPARATION IN THESE SKILLS

A Greater Emphasis Should be Placed on these Skills in Courses

■ Communicate Competently
■ Use Research Sources for Presentations
■ Listen Effectively
■ Organize Presentations
■ Other
■ Support Presentation Content
■ Speak Fluently with Paper Notes
■ Maintain & Distribute Eye Contact Effectively
■ Manage Conflict Effectively

PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS

23% | 23% | 23% | 16% | 13% | 13% | 13% | 13% | 33%

Ms. Christa Curl - Instructor

Department of Mathematics & Economics

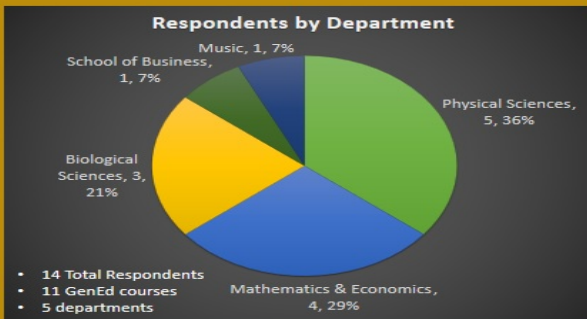Demonstrate Effective Skills in Quantitative & Mathematical Reasoning

Goal 1.c. Demonstrate Effective Skills in Quantitative & Mathematical Reasoning.
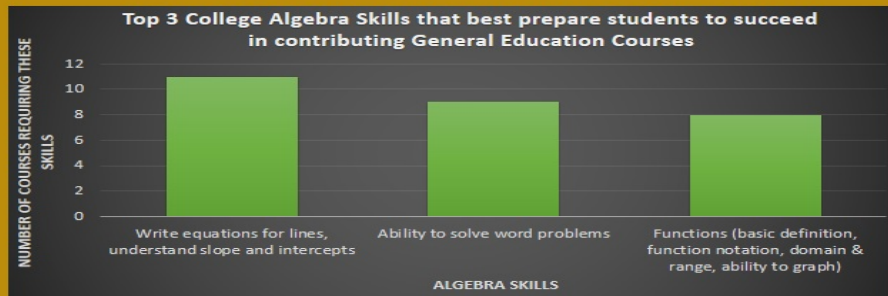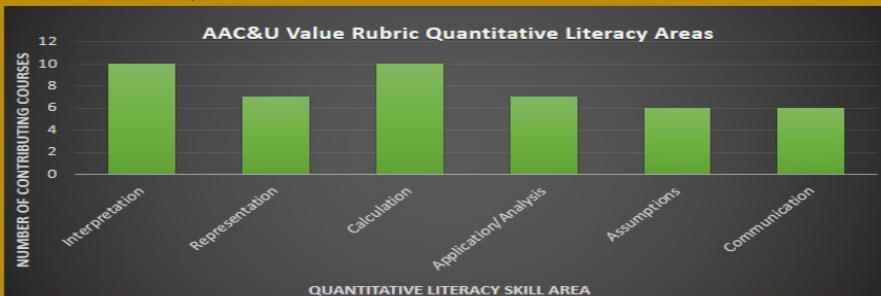
EMPORIA STATE UNIVERSITY

Ms. Christa Curl

American Association of Colleges & Universities (AAC&U) Quantitative Literacy Value Rubric Areas:

- **Interpretation** — Ability to explain information presented in mathematical forms (e.g., equations, graphs, diagrams, tables, words)
- **Representation** — Ability to convert relevant information into various mathematical forms (e.g., equations, graphs, diagrams, tables, words)
- **Calculation**
- **Application/Analysis** — Ability to make judgments and draw appropriate conclusions based on the quantitative analysis of data, while recognizing the limits of this analysis
- **Assumptions** — Ability to make and evaluate important assumptions in estimation, modeling, and data analysis
- **Communication** — Expressing quantitative evidence in support of the argument or purpose of the work (in terms of what evidence is used and how it is formatted, presented, and contextualized)

Respondents by Department

- Physical Sciences, 5, 36%
- Mathematics & Economics, 4, 29%
- Biological Sciences, 3, 21%
- Music, 1, 7%
- School of Business, 1, 7%

- 14 Total Respondents
- 11 GenEd courses
- 5 departments

Concepts/Skills Respondents would like emphasized more in College Algebra:

- Calculating with powers of tens and logarithms
- Re-arranging a formula to get a desired term on one side of = sign
- Solving word problems
- A deeper understanding of how to read a graph
- Transforming and simply changing scale of a graph
- Ability to generalize beyond the literal language of a word problem

AAC&U Value Rubric Quantitative Literacy Areas

NUMBER OF CONTRIBUTING COURSES vs QUANTITATIVE LITERACY SKILL AREA (Interpretation, Representation, Calculation, Application/Analysis, Assumptions, Communication)

Top 3 College Algebra Skills that best prepare students to succeed in contributing General Education Courses

NUMBER OF COURSES REQUIRING THESE SKILLS vs ALGEBRA SKILLS (Write equations for lines, understand slope and intercepts; Ability to solve word problems; Functions (basic definition, function notation, domain & range, ability to graph))

Summary:

- Mostly math and science courses contribute to Goal 1.c. which was to be expected.
- All six areas of the AAC&U rubric are being reinforced in multiple courses.
- The ability to read and understand graphs and to solve word problems are the main skills that could use more reinforcing.
- Contributing General Education courses believe that they are:
  - Providing students more practice with skills they should already know
  - Teaching real-world applications of mathematical concepts
  - Teaching critical thinking/problem solving skills
- The evidence is now documented to show that multiple General Education courses at ESU are contributing to the quantitative and mathematical reasoning skills of our students.

Conclusion:

Continued focus in College Algebra courses on word problem strategies should be encouraged. Also the evaluation and discussion of other items that could be emphasized more in College Algebra should take place. With that in mind, I would like to note this comment from the survey,

"Students taking MA110, MA165, or MA161 at ESU seldom have difficulty with the quantitative aspects of economics. The same generally cannot be said of students who took college algebra at their high school."

This comment speaks to the quality of our general education mathematics classes at ESU. It is important to continue to enforce expectations of learning that are truly "college level." It may be of interest to assess the classes ESU does accept from high schools to make sure the students' learning meets the expectations of our on-campus courses.

Ms. Cynthia Kane - Professor

University Libraries & Archives

You Say IT, I Say Information Technology: The GEAT Information Technology Survey

EMPORIA STATE UNIVERSITY

You Say IT, I Say Information Technology: The GEAT Information Technology Survey

Cynthia Kane, Emporia State University Libraries and Archives

"Information Technology" is the one Core Skill in the ESU General Education curriculum that is not well-defined. To fulfill the requirement, undergraduate students may take ONE of the following courses:

- CS301, Fluency with Information Technology (3 credit hours)
- IS110/113, Introduction to Microcomputer Applications plus lab (3 credit hours)
- UL100, Research Skills, Information, and Technology (2 credit hours)
- An approved substitution course in one's discipline (currently, there are 14 approved courses — many of which are upper-division undergraduate courses)

PROBLEM: With so many choices and little agreement on an Information Technology definition, what student learning assessments are actually taking place in these courses?

- There were 30 respondents to the Information Technology portion of the GEAT survey.
- The majority of students enrolled in Information Technology general education courses are from a variety of majors that may or may NOT be in the instructor's discipline.
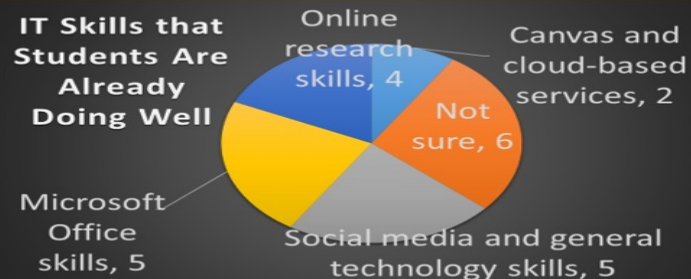
RECOMMENDATIONS from the GEAT Information Technology Survey Results:

- Identify data showing the numbers of students by disciplines who take CS301, IS110/113, or UL100 as opposed to one of the approved substitution courses in order to meet the Information Technology requirement.
- Seek feedback via a similar survey from faculty teaching the approved substitution courses in order to gain a better sense of their student learning outcomes and their own perceptions of Information Technology in the ESU curriculum.

Top Three Ways that Students Learn about Skills Related to IT

- Word processing programs
- Presentation programs
- General research databases

IT Skills that Students Are Already Doing Well

- Online research skills, 4
- Canvas and cloud-based services, 2
- Not sure, 6
- Microsoft Office skills, 5
- Social media and general technology skills, 5

Top Three Contributions of Courses to IT Content Knowledge/Practical Skills

- Online research skills
- Microsoft Office skills
- General technology skills