**GE C2 Oral Communication SLO Evaluation Report July 2021**

**Background/Description of GE Program ePortfolio:**

Prior to the 2017-2018 AY, departments/programs were responsible for assessing GE student learning outcomes and submitting a report every year for the GE Committee to review. This system had several weaknesses. Departments and programs were responsible for deciding which of the two to four outcomes designated for a specific GE Area to assess; thus some outcomes were evaluated multiple times within a year and others were not evaluated at all in certain years. It was also not possible for departments to access and evaluate a representative sample of student work, nor was it possible to compare the results from GE courses in the same GE Area taught by different departments/programs, because each department/program used its own criteria/rubrics. Finally, the GE Committee was not able to review and analyze the GE assessment reports in a comprehensive fashion, since the committee was also tasked with reviewing all GE curriculum proposals, as well as with discussing and updating GE policies and procedures.

Therefore, Fresno State developed a proposal for a new system of evaluating GE student learning outcomes during the 2014-2015 AY. The proposal was approved by Fresno State’s Academic Senate in May 2017 and by Dr. Joseph Castro in August of 2017. Essentially, all freshmen and transfer students admitted to Fresno State beginning in Fall 2018 will submit one designated assignment aligned to one GE student outcome from lower-division (for freshmen) and upper-division (for freshmen and transfer students) GE courses to a GE Program ePortfolio. Students will also write 300-word reflections (freshmen write three and transfer students write one) about their learning and submit these to the GE Program ePortfolio. The GE Program ePortfolio was set up by the Director of Assessment and students were automatically enrolled. Handouts, videos, and other resources that were posted previously to Blackboard were uploaded to Canvas when the campus transitioned from Blackboard to Canvas.

During the first year of implementation (2017-2018 AY), efforts focused on electing members to the new GE Assessment Subcommittee and on approving common rubrics to be used to evaluate GE student learning outcomes. Fresno State’s GE student learning outcomes were approved by the Academic Senate in 2010. These forty outcomes are evaluated on a five-year schedule. In the 2020-2021 AY, the Director of Assessment selected a random sample of student submissions for the three learning outcomes in Area C2, Humanities. The Chair of the GE Assessment Subcommittee selected two faculty members from the subcommittee to assess each learning outcome. The Director of Assessment collaborated with each team of subcommittee members to determine which assignments aligned well with the relevant learning outcome. The Director of Assessment then provided a random sample of assignments to the team and they applied the appropriate rubric to assess the assignments and determine student proficiency in each learning outcome.

**GE Assessment Subcommittee: Evaluation and Norming Process:**

The GE Assessment Subcommittee had previously reviewed and approved common rubrics for evaluating each of the three GE learning outcomes designated for GE Area C2. Prior to conducting the assessment, the Director of Assessment met with each faculty team for the purpose of norming. Each team member had independently reviewed a sample of student work and used the rubric to evaluate the work. Where there were discrepancies in the team members’ ratings of proficiency, the Director of Assessment and team members discussed the reasons for the differences and reached a consensus on how to apply the rubric going forward. The faculty teams then independently scored all of the selected assignments. After scoring the work, faculty teams met to identify common strengths and weaknesses. A third reviewer scored all assignments on which the two reviewers did not agree about proficiency.

**Outcomes and measures (assignments) used to evaluate C2 outcomes:**

Upon completion of an Area C2 (Humanities) course, students will be able to**:**

1. Objectively review and explain important philosophical, historical, or linguistic findings and developments.

2. Recognize, describe, and interpret works of the human imagination or intellect in their cultural context, either subjectively or objectively.

3. Demonstrate basic competence with a language (not English) and interpret texts or speech produced in that language from a relevant cultural perspective.

Assignments:

Six departments offer thirty-four total courses that satisfy GE Area C2. The Assessment Team members and Director of Assessment selected assignments that best aligned with each of the C2 learning outcomes.

For learning outcome 1, assignments selected came from courses in Armenian Studies, Humanities, Linguistics, and Philosophy. Assignments required students to:

* Discuss historical findings and developments presented in a campus lecture
* Apply linguistic concepts on an exam
* Record a conversation and apply linguistic concepts to that discussion
* Explain significant philosophical theories
* Analyze significant philosophical works
* Conduct a dialogue on moral issues with another person and analyze the ethical frameworks that underlie the participant’s beliefs
* Create a narrative set in a historical period.

For learning outcome 2, assignments came from courses in Communicative Sciences and Deaf Studies, English, Latin, and Humanities. Assignments required students to:

* Discuss creative works from Deaf Culture
* Analyze literary prose or poetry
* Conduct an epideictic analysis of a character in the classics
* Craft a narrative based on a historical figure
* Write a letter to a friend or relative explaining quotation(s) from classical literature

For learning outcome 3, assignments selected came from Spanish 2A, Spanish 2B, Spanish 3, and Spanish 4. The faculty team and coordinator determined that assignments from first-year language courses did not align with this learning outcome. The assignments that were selected required students to demonstrate competence with a language (not English). The faculty team and assessment coordinator determined that the prompts for assignments in this area did not require students to interpretmessages from a relevant cultural context; therefore, assignments were not evaluated for this criteria.

**Results Area C2 Outcome 1**

The evaluation of Area C2 assignments for students’ ability to objectively review and explain important philosophical, historical, or linguistic findings and developments demonstrated that a majority of students were proficient. The thirty-six assignments that evaluated earned the following scores:

* Proficient 26 (72.2%)
* Emerging 10 (27.8%)

Inter-rater reliability was 88.9%, just below Fresno State’s benchmark of 90%.

Students were rated proficient if they scored 3 (advanced) or 2 (proficient) on the rubric. Students were not proficient if they scored a 1 (emerging) on the rubric.

On assignments rated advanced, the faculty team made comments such as these:

* Discusses several findings and developments in the field
* Provides numerous findings, with examples and connections to figures in the field
* Provides multiple examples with relevant connections to figures in the field
* Well supported points, meets the criteria for advanced
* Provides multiple connections and developments
* Explains findings and develops well, provided two illustrative scenarios.

On assignments rated proficient, the faculty team made comments such as these:

* Discusses course concepts, lacks further development
* Provided examples with description
* Includes examples, but does not develop them significantly
* Discusses findings and developments, but could be developed significantly more
* Notes findings and examples with character examples

On assignments rated emerging, the faculty team made comments such as these:

* Summarizes the work without review or explanation
* Summarizes with weak explanation
* Lacks connections to findings and developments
* Fails to discuss developments
* Analysis is too short, insufficient development
* Lacks examples of findings and developments

In summary, the faculty team’s qualitative comments indicated that advanced papers included multiple findings and developments and provided good supporting analysis with several examples or connections. Proficient papers included findings and developments, but could have developed the ideas in more detail. Emerging papers failed to review or explain findings and developments or were very brief.

**Results Area C2 Outcome 2**

The evaluation of Area C2 Learning Outcome 2 indicated that Fresno State students had a very high degree of proficiency in recognizing, describing, and interpreting works of human imagination or intellect in their cultural context. The thirty-five students evaluated earned the following scores:

* Proficient in recognizing works 35 (100%)
* Proficient in describing works 35 (100%)
* Proficient interpreting works 35 (100%)

Inter-rater reliability was 94.3%, meeting Fresno State’s benchmark of 90%.

It is noteworthy that twenty-seven student papers (77.1%) were rated advanced in all three categories (recognize, describe, and interpret) by both reviewers. Three additional students received at least one rating of advanced from both reviewers.

On assignments rated advanced, the faculty team made comments such as these:

* Meets the criteria with multiple examples
* Many details and connections
* Meets the criteria with lots of evidence from the text
* Multiple positions and examples
* Many examples, lots of textual description and cross-textual interpretation

On assignments rated proficient, the faculty team made comments such as these:

* Multiple examples, could use more connections and details
* Some evidence and examples, lacking in detail
* Multiple examples, but lacks more than one example in interpretation and description
* Lacks sufficient elaboration

**Results Area C2 Outcome 3**

The evaluation of Area C2 assignments for demonstration of basic competence with a language demonstrated that a majority of students were advanced or proficient and that most of the students who did not meet this benchmark demonstrated partial proficiency. The thirty-two students evaluated earned the following scores:

* Proficient 17 (53.1%)
* Partially Proficient 11 (34.3%)
* Needs Improvement 4 (12.5%)

Inter-rater reliability was 90.6%, meeting Fresno State’s benchmark of 90%.

On assignments rated advanced, the faculty team made comments such as these:

* Well written
* Good command of future and conditional tenses
* Syntactical complexity attempted and achieved
* Good command of the relative clauses—rare at this level

On assignments rated proficient, the faculty team made comments such as these:

* Comprehension was not inhibited, although students made minor grammatical mistakes.
* Students used complex sentences, although there was some misuse of idiomatic phrases.
* Comprehensibility was good, although punctuation was irregular.
* Some complexity was attempted, some errors are to be expected at this level.

On assignments rated partially proficient, the faculty team made comments such as these:

* Syntactical simplicity
* Punctuation errors
* Accentuation missing
* Grammatical errors
* Spelling errors
* English interference

On assignments rated needs improvement, the faculty team made comments such as these:

* Many spelling and accentuation errors
* Reads like a list of foods
* The entire essay was plagiarized from different online sources
* Syntax is limited, little subordination, reads like a computer translation

In summary, the faculty team’s qualitative comments indicated that advanced papers employed higher-level skills and strong writing. Proficient papers had more minor errors, but comprehensibility was good and students made an effort to use complex sentences. Partially proficient papers had a higher rate of errors in categories such as syntax, spelling, grammar, accentuation, and punctuation. Needs improvement papers made more substantial errors, did not express ideas, or did not reflect the student’s original work.

The evaluation of Area C2 assignments for interpretation of texts from a relevant cultural perspective was more problematic.  The faculty team noted that most of the papers contained a cultural component, but did not *interpret* the texts from a relevant cultural context.  The absence of interpretation did not necessarily indicate that students were not proficient in this skill.  The assignment prompts did not seem to require students to interpret the texts.  For example, many assignments called for students to compare and contrast without requiring interpretation.  Furthermore, the rubric does not provide any definition of cultural context.  As a result of these challenges, the faculty team conferred with the assessment coordinator and it was determined that it would not be fair to assess student performance on the interpretation component.

**Conclusions**

The results of the assessment of Area C2 (Humanities) were mixed. For Learning Outcome 1 (review and explain important philosophical, historical, or linguistic findings and developments), 72.2% of the submissions were rated proficient and 27.8% were rated emerging. For Learning Outcome 2 (recognize, describe and interpret works of the human imagination or intellect), 100% of the submissions) rated proficient. Seventy-seven percent (77%) of the submissions rated advanced in each of the three criteria. The strong performance in analyzing works of the imagination or intellect is consistent with the assessment results in Area C1 (Arts). For Learning Outcome 3 (demonstrate basic competence with a language—not English—and interpret texts or speech in that language from a cultural perspective, 53.1% of the submissions were rated proficient. It should be noted that most of the submissions that were not proficient rated partially proficient (34.3%) and only 12.5% rated needs improvement.

Inter-rater reliability was high in each of the three learning outcomes, 88.9%, 94.3%, and 90.6% for outcomes 1, 2, and 3 respectively.

Faculty teams’ comments on assignments they did not rate proficient had some common themes. For Learning Outcome 1, assignments rated emerging often reviewed the philosophical, historical, or linguistic *findings* effectively but did not address *developments* sufficiently. These papers often needed to provide more examples or include more details in the analysis. For Learning Outcome 3, the faculty team noted that partially proficient papers contained too many errors in punctuation, spelling, grammar, and/or accentuation.

The GE Assessment Subcommittee should address the alignment of Learning Outcome 3 assignments and the “interpretation of texts or speech from a relevant cultural perspective” rubric criteria. For example, GE Assessment Subcommittee members could meet with coordinators of the GE courses that correspond with this learning outcome to discuss how to strengthen the alignment between assignments/course content and the rubric.

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