

**ARTS AND HUMANITIES
CATEGORY 6
GENERAL EDUCATION ASSESSMENT
GECCIG REPORT
SEPTEMBER 15, 2005**

**GECCIG MEMBERS: Curt Germundson, Don Larsson, Dick Liebendorfer(Chair),
John Lindberg**

A. PROCESS:

Classes in which writing was required:

Samples of student work was gathered during Spring, 2001-02 and Fall, 2002-03 from students whose Tech ID ends with 6. Work collected was various. It included essays from philosophy, literature and art history classes, creative writing from creative writing classes and art work from studio art classes. Some English, music and theater classes were large lecture classes in which only true/false or multiple choice tests were employed. From some of these classes there was data provided which detailed a student's answers on such exams.

A set of 28 essays was randomly selected from a total of 58 essays collected in English, art history and philosophy classes from students with Tech ID ending in 6. While the essays were collected from students in philosophy, English and art history classes, most of them were from students in philosophy classes. Each of the four members of the GECCIG assessed those 28 essays by appeal to the following three rubrics, each in turn applied by appeal to ratings 1-4.

1. Student can create and/or critique a work in the arts or the humanities
 1. Student has observed a work of art or a work in the humanities.
 2. Student can create a work of art or a work in the humanities, and critique a work of art or a work in the humanities.
 3. Student can create a work in the arts and/or humanities, and can critique a work of art and/or evaluate a work in the humanities.
 4. Student can create a work in the arts and/or humanities, and can develop and use acceptable criteria to critique a work of art and/or evaluate a work in the humanities.

2. Student displays knowledge of the scope and variety of works in the arts and humanities.
 1. Students can list works in the arts and humanities from different eras, or list works or list works that deal with different issues from the same era.
 2. Students can describe works in the arts or humanities from different eras, or discuss works that deal with different issues from the same era.

3. Students can compare and contrast works in the arts and humanities from different eras, or compare and contrast works that deal with different issues from the same era. Student comparison shows a depth of knowledge concerning the works compared.
 4. Students can compare and contrast works in the arts and humanities from different eras, and compare and contrast works that deal with different issues from the same era. Student comparison shows a depth of knowledge concerning the works compared.
3. Student displays understanding of the relationship between the arts and the humanities and culture.
1. Student can identify a relationship or a connection between a work in the arts and/or the humanities and society.
 2. Student can explain a relationship or a connection between a work in the arts and/or the humanities and society.
 3. Student can explain how works in the arts and humanities help to define, create, recreate, change or sustain a society, or how that society creates conditions or constraints for the creation of works in the arts and humanities.
 4. Student can explain how works in the arts and humanities help to define, create, recreate, change or sustain a society, and how that society creates conditions or constraints for the creation of works in the arts and humanities.

Large lecture classes:

Several large classes in the departments of English, Theater and Music were not assessed at all. These classes all employ multiple choice and/or true/false exams. While data concerning student performance on some such tests was available, no assessment of that data was performed. There was discussion about the possibility that exam questions would be identified as addressing particular category competencies. This would permit assessment of student performance by noting student success with respect to those questions. But although there was some discussion of proceeding in this manner, this was not done and so data was not developed. One member of the GECCIG, a member who had made the most progress correlating exam questions and category competencies, resigned her faculty position and her data was lost. Thus none of these classes were taken account of in the assessment process.

Studio art classes:

Assessment of art work in studio art classes was based on a total of 11 samples of student work. These samples, as with samples of student writing, was collected from students with a Tech Id ending in 6. These sample were assessed by appeal to the same rubrics listed above used to assess samples of student writing. However the assessment of the samples of student art work was left to individual art instructors. Assessment by individual instructors is attached: attachments 1a, 1b,1c, 1d and 1e.

B. RESULTS

What assessment of the Arts and Humanities General Education category most clearly reveals is the need to revamp assessment procedures for the Arts and Humanities category.

Problems include the following:

* Courses in Category 6 are a varied lot. The size and character of the classes is various, the subject matter from one class to another is varied, and the samples of work collected were various. The rubrics employed, the rubrics listed above and used to assess the samples of student work collected, proved wholly inadequate to cope with the variety. Since the classes are extremely varied it is difficult to find common ground among the various assignments; so it is difficult to apply the rubrics with univocal meaning.

* Student work in studio art courses was not easily assessable employing the rubrics. In the studio classes students create works of art which are critically assessed orally in the studio and there is no systematic comparison with other historical works rather than work by other students. Thus while Rubric 1 applied without difficulty, Rubrics 2 and 3 were very difficult to apply. Thus also, this student work typically defied, for purposes of comparisons, groupings with student work from other courses in the category. For all these reasons assessment of these student works was deemed best left to studio art faculty. See attachments 1a, 1b, 1c, 1d and 1e).

Also, it is difficult in a systematic way to assess the connection, on the one hand, between a student's work and other works (Rubric #2) and, on the other hand, between the work created and society (Rubric #3). One art instructor remarks that what the connection is "is difficult to say from looking at the sample," difficult to say to what degree the student was influenced by the works of others (Rubric #2). But if it is difficult to say by looking, it is difficult to assess by looking, especially so by anyone other than the instructor. But none the less, the instructor also says that the work created exhibited "how abstracted visual elements can be used to convey such societal issues as "quiet space" verses "agitated space" (Rubric #3). But yet again, these are difficult judgments to make from a distance and in the systematic way that assessment, within the rubrics employed, seems to require. Yet another instructor says that "students took visual or conceptual cues from artists they were exposed to in class." This suggests some relevance of Rubric #2. Still, this is a judgment not readily made by anyone other than the instructor. Student work created in a studio art class is not amenable to assessment by a GECCIG in the way that written assignments are. And so, inclusion of such student work in generalizations about the category was difficult to impossible. It may be that rubrics suitable for literature and philosophy classes may not be suitable for studio art classes or classes which employ 'objective' testing.

*The classes for which the assessment process and rubrics employed seemed best suited were classes in which students were required to write. This portion of student work, a

sample of 56 papers, was collected from classes in English (including creative writing), art history and philosophy. From the 56 student papers 28 were randomly selected for assessment. However the vast majority of the samples, both the initial 56 and the smaller group of 28, were from Philosophy classes. A few were from literature and art history classes. The validity of any generalizations is skewed by the number of sample coming from philosophy classes. For a summary of the results of assessment of writing samples by each of the four members of the GECCIC, see attachment 1.

*Some samples of writing from philosophy classes were exercises in analyzing an issue or problem. Frequently, in such cases no works in the arts or humanities were mentioned. This student work therefore, sometimes and by some raters, fared poorly on Rubric #2 and Rubric #3.

*The rubrics were not understood in the same way by all members of the GECCIG. "Student can create a work of art...." in Rubric #1 was understood by some to mean "Student can write an essay....". Another notes that Rubric #1 is ambiguous about whether a paper counts as a work in the arts. If a paper is not "regarded as a creative work then the student will have met (perhaps) only level 1, despite the quality of the writing."

AS A RESULT OF THE FOREGOING PROBLEMS WE HESITATE TO DRAW ANY CONCLUSIONS FROM THE ASSESSMENT PERFORMED ABOUT SUCCESS OR FAILURE IN MEETING THE OUTCOME EXPECTATIONS FOR GENERAL EDUCATION CATEGORY 6.

C. RECOMMENDATIONS

* The Arts and Humanities Curriculum Committee and the Arts and Humanities assessment GECCIG members should meet to discuss and develop improved rubrics.

* Creation and performance classes in Category 6 perhaps should be separated from critique and evaluate classes. In many cases (philosophy, art history and literature) there is no call for "creative" work in the usual sense of the term. As a result, levels 3 and 4 in Rubric #1 and Rubric #2 (arguably) rarely apply. However, not all members of the GECCIG agreed on this last point. The difference is reflected in and is partially responsible for the discrepancy between the ratings (see attachment 1) of raters 1 and 2, on the one hand, and raters 3 and 4 on the other.

*Tools need to be developed for assessing student work in large lecture courses which employ multiple choice and true/false exams. Other departments in other colleges with courses in other General Education categories have dealt with this problem. Consultation with such departments, in order to develop assessment tools, should be encouraged.

Moreover, and importantly, there needs to be clarity about how it is that such tools, once developed, yield useful data.

* Steps need to be taken to guarantee full participation in the assessment process. Without full participation the process can yield no reliable generalizations.

* Syllabi and assignments should be submitted along with samples student work. Without syllabi and assignments it is often difficult to assess the student work.

Art 100: Elements and Principles of Art

Instructor: ██████████

“Following the completion of Category 6 of the General Education Program, students can:”

1. Create and/or critique artistic performances

Art 100 is a foundation level, hands-on class. In this course the students create 7 major assignments having to do with particular elements and principles of art. They experience the act of creation from a personal point of view, and then share that experience in a visual and verbal critique session. Students develop a visual vocabulary and gain the necessary skills to discuss the work, which they and their colleagues create.

The provided sample shows that the student can create a work of art and learned to visualize a concept and/or feeling. The evaluation of the student's own work and that of others took place in critiques.

2. Demonstrate awareness of the scope and variety of works in the arts and humanities

This Art 100 class functions from a base of 6 elements 6 principles of design. Each assignment covers one element and one principle. Examples from Art History are shown in order to illustrate these design basics. Students are encouraged to develop a personal solution to each problem, but they are shown examples, which increase their awareness of major artistic developments from various historical periods.

The provided sample demonstrates the awareness and mastery of design basics. It is difficult to say from looking at the sample to what degree the student was influenced by the work of other students or works from different eras.

3. Describe the relationship between the arts and the humanities and society:

In the assignment Eye of the Storm (which is what the sample is based on) students were asked to create a quiet, meditative space, and then put themselves in that space in the form of an abstract self-portrait. They then are required to create an agitated space, a “storm,” in the remaining space. When creating and discussing this piece, often students demonstrate awareness of their own personal situation and relationship to the world at large. Many of them have not had the opportunity to express that relationship in an intuitive visual way before, and the results are often revealing, and instructive in that the student discovers a new way of problem solving and self-expression.

The provided sample shows that the student has dealt with the issue of how abstracted visual elements can be used to convey such societal issues as “quiet space” versus “agitated space.”

ASSESSMENT OF THE STUDIO ART COURSES,
CATEGORY 6 (Fall 2002/Spring 2003)

I decided to assess the samples of the studio art courses (Art 100/101, Art 231, Art 231, Art 275) separately, for even though the samples demonstrate that the learning outcomes were fulfilled, the levels of mastery (point scale) can't be directly applied for the following reasons:

Rubric 1 (Students can create and/or critique artistic performance)

Students in these studio classes constantly critique and evaluate their own work and that of others. But using the point scale it would be impossible to give most samples beyond a 2, for the critique and evaluations are done mostly within the context of in-class critiques.

Rubric 2 (Students have knowledge of scope and variety of arts)

Students in these studio classes become exposed to works of art from different eras only to a limited degree; the point scale thus does not apply very well. But during critiques these students constantly compare and contrast each other's work, acknowledging different ways that the same issues can be dealt with.

Rubric 3 (Students have knowledge of the relationship of art and society or culture)

Students in these studio classes are constantly exposed to the problematic of how their works relate to society at large. The samples visually reflect a coming to terms with a variety of societal issues.

Enclosed, please find statements written in collaboration with the instructors. The parts written in cursive are my attempts to assess whether these learning outcomes were met.

Even though it is difficult to give the samples a number between 1 and 4 (levels of mastery), the statements should make it clear that the category 6 learning outcomes are an integral part of the courses.

Sincerely Yours,



Curt Germundson
Art Department

“Following the completion of Category 6 of the General Education Program, students can:”

1. Create and/or critique artistic performances

In the assignment “Visual Equivalents” students were asked to take photographs that convey a specific feeling by using places that have visually interesting shadows, reflections, or repeating elements.

The 3 sample photographs dealing with the assignment “Visual Equivalents” demonstrate that the students can make works of art. The critique and evaluation of these works took place in class.

2. Demonstrate awareness of the scope and variety of works in the arts and humanities

Although the instructor did show examples from the history of photography, the focus was on the students learning the foundations of photography and its visual language.

During critiques students evaluate each other’s work, comparing the way they solved such issues as taking a photograph that expresses mystery.

3. Describe the relationship between the arts and the humanities and society:

Students learn to look at the world with awareness by consciously finding visual equivalents for ideas and feelings: Pushing these forms radically with the tools of photography demonstrates how representational forms can be transformed and commented on. Students gain an appreciation for the ways photography can manipulate perceptions. The variety of subject matter and approaches used by students with different backgrounds provides opportunities for examining a range of cultural and personal viewpoints.

The 3 sample photographs show how different angles can be used to transform an object in order to convey a particular meaning. The students realize to what degree this same “manipulation of feelings” goes on in society at large, for example in the mass media.

“Following the completion of Category 6 of the General Education Program, students can:”

1. Create and/or critique artistic performances

In the mixed media projects students are required to use a minimum of 4 different contrasting materials in each piece (artwork) such as: metal, wood, plastic, fiber and glass. They must redefine material in order to give form to concepts such as “open and closed space.” The students learn how to use a combination of materials, process, tools and techniques in order to communicate complex thoughts and ideas.

The 3 samples show that the students can create works of art and learned to combine different materials. The evaluation of their own work and that of others took place in critiques.

2. Demonstrate awareness of the scope and variety of works in the arts and humanities

Critiques and problem solving exercises help students in Art 231 to articulate and develop an awareness of works in the arts and humanities. They tend to develop a deeper concern and caring for raw materials, tools, and the potentials of communication. Exercises in this class encourage examination of artworks from various points of view, including upside down. This encourages informed personal reactions and critical thinking in general.

During critiques these students constantly compare and contrast each other's work, acknowledging different ways that the same issues can be dealt with. It is difficult to say from looking at the 3 samples to what degree the students were influenced by the work of other students or works from different eras.

3. Describe the relationship between the arts and humanities and society

Students learn through regular class critiques to examine the creative process and to evaluate and value criteria and concept that form a foundation for works of art. The critiques are a rigorous examination and evaluation of visual art in relation to the fundamental elements and principles of design. Students explore possibilities, discover about prejudice, process, tools, materials, transformation and critical creative thinking. Students also learn how elements that society considers “residue” can be used or “recycled” in various contexts, integrating diverse elements and creating new relationships.

The 3 samples show that the students learned to look at material from different points of view. The critical and creative thinking that went into the works were discussed during critiques.

Art 100/101: Basic Principles of Design

Instructor: [REDACTED]

“Following the completion of Category 6 of the General Education Program, students can:”

1) Students can create and/or critique artistic performances.

Students are encouraged to investigate the art medium and to find their own voice. They use a sketch book in order to experiment with various concepts.

The 4 samples of sketchbooks with which we were provided demonstrate that students created works of art and were able to critique their own work, acknowledging the thought processes they went through.

2) Demonstrate awareness of the scope and variety of works in the arts and humanities:

The students are shown many slides of works by various artists from different periods, so that they get an idea of how artistic ideas have changed through time. Students are encouraged to investigate the work of artists in order to learn how they solved particular formal and/or conceptual challenges.

When looking at the 4 samples it becomes clear that students took visual or conceptual cues from artists they were exposed to in class.

3) Describe the relationship between the arts and humanities and society:

Students learn how to see objects from various points of view, which is something they can apply to their relationship to society. They learn about design principles and how these apply to the arts and to other aspects of society such as interior design, architecture and photography.

The 4 samples show that the students understand the processes involved in visualizing their ideas and how every aspect of society is affected by the principles of design.

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