



To: Deans and Department Chairs
From: Ron Nickerson, Faculty Chair, General Education Committee
Warren Sandmann, Assistant Vice President for Undergraduate Studies
Re: General Education Category Outcomes

One of the features of the General Education curriculum at Minnesota State University, Mankato is that specific student learning outcomes are identified and assessed for each of the General Education categories. The General Education Committee and the University have been engaged in assessing student learning in General Education for the past few years. Now that the current General Education curriculum has been in place since 1998 and the University has nearly completed its first round of General Education Assessment according to the University's General Education Assessment Plan, it is time to develop a procedure to insure that courses within the various General Education categories continue to offer opportunities for students to achieve the learning outcomes associated with each category over time.

In the 2004-2005 Academic Year, The General Education Committee will pilot test a two step process for reviewing General Education courses to insure that the General Education learning outcomes required of courses in each General Education category are being addressed. The committee has chosen to focus on the courses in Categories 7 (Human Diversity) and 8 (Global Perspectives) for this pilot test.

To start this process, we are sending this memorandum out to remind Deans, Chairs and Faculty teaching General Education courses that addressing the learning outcomes for General Education is a requirement for all courses in each General Education category. Including the General Education category learning outcomes in course syllabi is one possible way of demonstrating that faculty are aware of and addressing the outcomes. Although this is not a requirement, it is recommended.

Step 1 (Fall, 2004):

We request departments that offer one or more General Education courses in Categories 7 & 8 engage in a simple review of their General Education course syllabi in relation to the learning outcomes for the relevant category. Attached to this memo is a simple form (also available in electronic format at <http://www.mnsu.edu/acadaf/words/GeneralEdCategorySyllabusReview.doc>) that we ask departments to complete as they review the syllabi for their Category 7 and 8 General

Education courses. Please follow the instructions on the form and make sure that all sections of individual courses are reported separately on the form. Please return the completed form(s) to Ron Nickerson (Ronald.nickerson@mnsu.edu; HN 213) no later than **December 3, 2004**.

Step 2 (Spring, 2005):

Once results are in from the Step 1 review process, departments offering courses in Categories 7 and 8 will be contacted in Spring Semester 2005 and asked to provide syllabi, course outlines or other information that documents the degree to which the General Education learning outcomes for the relevant category are being addressed by specific courses they teach. The specific courses to be included in this step of the process are currently unknown and will be determined during review of the Step 1 reports.

The General Education Committee will summarize the results from Steps 1 and 2 and make appropriate recommendations regarding the courses currently included in Categories 7 & 8, the learning outcomes associated with those categories and adaptation of the review process for use with other General Education categories.

General Education is at the heart of our teaching and learning efforts at Minnesota State University, Mankato, and we thank you for your involvement in General Education and your help in making sure that the General Education curriculum continues to serve the purpose for which it was designed.