
General Education

Philosophy

General Education

Competencies

Model of Assessment

Embedded Assessment

Assignments

Rubric Writing & Testing

Evaluation of Assessment Plan

Timeline

Recommendations

Appendix

Philosophy of General Education

The inclusion of specific general education requirements in all degree plans is an integral part of the overall purpose and philosophy of Texas Wesleyan University. The faculty, administration, Board of Trustees, and student body reaffirm the mission of the University to combine for the student the traditional liberal arts with preparation for a professional career in contemporary society. Thus, the curriculum followed by the student unites the general requirements outlined here and the specific offerings of the chosen major in order to provide an effective educational experience for each Texas Wesleyan University graduate.

As a private four-year liberal arts institution stressing small classes and individual attention, Texas Wesleyan is committed to the liberal arts and general education as a means to the overall goal of a complete education for each student.

General Education Curriculum

Each Texas Wesleyan University graduate should demonstrate competencies and attainments in preparation to be an informed and effective citizen of the world. To prepare each student for this goal, the University strives to instill literacy in the four areas of Language Literacy, Analytic Literacy, Cultural Literacy, and Social Literacy, with “literacy” defined as college-level knowledge with the ability to read and write. The ten expected competencies within each of the literacy areas are listed below.

I. Language Literacy

Language literacy is accomplished by acquiring the following three competencies:

A. Competency in a variety of communication skills

- This competency includes the ability to speak and write conventional English both clearly and correctly. The development of individual communicative style should also be encouraged.
- This competency also includes the ability to speak and write interactively. This includes elements of effective reading, listening, and analysis as well as the framing of appropriate and intelligible responses.

B. A summative experience regarding the total curriculum

- The graduate should reflect an ability to integrate the broad scope of her/his learning in a meaningful manner.

C. Sufficient skills in information technology and information retrieval methods

II. Analytic Literacy

Analytic literacy is accomplished by acquiring the following two competencies:

- A. Understanding how, when, and in what fields the scientific method is used
 - Personal experience in the method in a laboratory setting
 - Exposure to current scientific issues and knowledge
- B. Ability to formulate a precise, concise, logical argument concerning a wide variety of problems in politics, science, mathematics, psychology, sociology, etc.
 - The graduate should be proficient in applying problem solving skills in her/his life.

III. Cultural Literacy

Cultural literacy is accomplished by acquiring the following three competencies:

- A. An appreciation of and some direct experience with the creative arts as expressions of cultural and artistic values.
 - This experience should include some combination of attendance at various art exhibits or performances, formal exposition of art works representative of various cultural periods, and personal participation.
- B. An understanding of the history and defining character of western culture and an appreciation of other cultures
 - Cultural differences may be expressed in terms of linguistic structures, the creative arts, religious traditions, political values, etc.
- C. Knowledge of religious history and tradition from its written word, including an awareness of Judeo-Christian values and ethics and an understanding of questions of moral behavior as applied to home, professional, civic, and social life.
 - The student should be encouraged to formulate a clearly thought-out philosophy of ethical and moral values.

IV. Social Literacy

Social literacy is accomplished by acquiring the following two competencies:

- A. Informed citizenship with an understanding of the structure and operation of the American democratic political system and of the philosophical values that underlie this tradition
 - An understanding of how American capitalism relates both philosophically and operationally to that system.
- B. An understanding of the principles and practices required to exercise responsibility for one's own well-being, including physical, psychological, and intellectual health

Model of Assessment

The general education plan uses both direct and indirect measures to assess student attainment of the competencies. Course embedded assessment is used to directly measure the ten competencies in the appropriate general education courses. The assessment rubrics generated to evaluate these competencies use a standard of 70% to reflect successful completion of the competencies. All ten of the competencies are assessed annually, with all general education courses assessed at least once, every three years. The three-year rotation of courses to be assessed appears in the appendix.

The indirect assessment of these competencies is accomplished with the Individual Development & Educational Assessment (IDEA) full diagnostic survey, which is the University's standard assessment of teaching in all courses (fall 2007). Each term, the completed IDEA surveys are compiled in the Office of the Dean of Arts & Sciences. The instructor items (1-20) are scored and a report of aggregate findings is provided to course instructors for personal growth and improvement of instruction and to the Associate Provost.

Embedded Assessment Assignment Selection

The Deans coordinate with the Department Chairs in the selection of general education faculty who identify and choose a standard course assignment to be used each term the course is taught. The standard assignment may be structured in various ways (i.e., reflection paper, portfolio, research paper, capstone project) but should be summative in nature and align with at least one of the appropriate ten competencies.

Rubric Writing and Testing

Standard rubrics are used to assess student attainment of competencies on the selected assignments. In coordination with the department chairs, the Deans select faculty who represent their disciplines to serve on one of four collaborative rubric teams. The rubric teams complete rubric writing and calibration training and create standard rubrics, one for each competency, that are used to assess the selected assignments. To ensure validity and reliability, the use of each rubric is calibrated each summer using a random subset of general education courses offered the previous spring.

Evaluation of General Education Assessment Plan

The ongoing evaluation of the general education assessment plan is both formative and summative in nature. Each term, the general education instructors grade the selected assignments per the rubric and provide individual feedback to *students*. Then instructors create grade distributions across students within their section(s) and provide the aggregate report to the Associate Dean of Assessment for Arts & Sciences. The Associate Dean of Assessment summarizes the individual instructor findings into reports across all courses that meet the same

competency. The Associate Dean of Assessment sends the competency reports to the appropriate *instructors* to assist them with continual improvement of instruction and to the Associate Provost to assist with *institutional* assessment.

Assessment Plan Timeline

The general education assessment plan will be implemented according to the following timeline.

Action Item	Date
General assessment training of Deans and Department Chairpersons	Summer 2007
Rubric writing and calibration training of Deans and Department Chairpersons	Summer 2007
Rubric writing and calibration training of general education faculty	Fall 2007
GE Faculty select standard assignments and Rubric Teams create rubrics	Fall 2007
Pilot run of general education assessment plan	Spring 2008
Full implementation of general education assessment plan	Fall 2008

Recommendations

As a prelude to the implementation of the general education assessment plan, the General Education Committee offers the following recommendations:

- 1) There is a need to hire an Associate Dean of Assessment within the School of Arts and Sciences. The Associate Dean of Assessment would oversee the implementation of the general education assessment plan as well as assist the School's faculty with their other assessment responsibilities (i.e., strategic planning, program review, etc).
- 2) There is a need to provide two forms of training to the Deans, Department Chairs and general education faculty. We recommend that Deans and Department Chairs receive general assessment training and rubric writing and calibration training during the summer prior to the implementation of the general education assessment plan.

Appendix

GENERAL EDUCATION CURRICULUM REQUIREMENTS

Language Literacy12

- English..... 9
- ENG 1301
- ENG 1302
- one of the following courses:
ENG 2301, ENG 2302, ENG 2311, ENG 2312,
ENG 2321, or ENG 2322
- Interdisciplinary Integrative Course 3
- choose one course:
HUM 2340
HUM 2341

Analytic Literacy..... 10-11

- Choose one option:
Option #1: two math / one science (10 hours);
Option #2: one math / two sciences (11 hours)

Mathematics:

MAT 1302, MAT 1304 (if allowed by major), or any math course with MAT 1302 or higher as a prerequisite (excluding MAT 1304)

Note: MAT 1304 is acceptable for all programs in the School of Arts and Sciences except for the programs in Biology, Chemistry, Computer Science, and Mathematics. MAT 1304 is acceptable for all programs in the School of Education. MAT 1304 is not acceptable for any programs in the School of Business and Professional Programs.

Science:

Choose 1 or 2 of the following courses with accompanying lab:
BIO 1321 and 1121, BIO 1322, and 1122, BIO 1340 and 1140, BIO 1341 and 1141, CHE 1315 and 1115, CHE 1316 and 1116, GEO 1401, GEO 1402, NSC 1403, NSC 1404, NSC 1405, NSC 1406, NSC 1407, NSC 1408, NSC 1409, NSC 1410, NSC 1412, NSC 2401, NSC 2402, PHY 1401, PHY 1402

Cultural Literacy12

HIS 2322

Choose 3 hours from one of the following:

ART, FAR, MUS, or THA

Choose 3 hours from one of the following:

REL 1311, REL 1312, REL 1313, REL 1321

Choose 3 hours from one of the following:

.....ART, FAR, MUS, THA, HIS
2321, HIS 2301, HIS 2303, PHI 2301, PHI 2321, REL 1311, REL 1312, REL
1313, or REL 1321

Social Literacy 10-11

KIN 1220

Choose any 3 of the following courses with at least two different academic areas represented: BUA 1301, ECO 2305, POL 2311, PSY 1301, SOC 2301, SOC 1302, SOC 2302

TOTAL 44-46

**GENERAL EDUCATION CURRICULUM COMMITTEE
2006-2007**

Dr. Melinda Cline, Associate Professor, MIS

Dr. Lisa Dryden, Associate Professor of Education & Reading, Chairperson

Dr. John Hall, Professor of Psychology

Dr. Allen Henderson, Professor of Psychology and Provost

Dr. Marcel S. Kerr, Associate Professor of Psychology

Dr. Brenda Taylor Matthews, Associate Professor of History, Secretary

Dr. Kalpana Pai, Assistant Professor of Economics & Finance

Ms. Ann Reed, Associate Professor of Education

Dr. Ibrahim Salih, Professor of Political Science

THREE-YEAR COURSE ROTATION OF EMBEDDED ASSESSMENT COURSES

Literacy	Competencies	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Analytic	A	BIO 1321 & 1121 BIO 1341 & 1141 GEO 1401 NSC 1404 NSC 1407 NSC 1410 NSC 2402 PHY 1402	BIO 1322 & 1122 CHE 1315 & 1115 GEO 1402 NSC 1405 NSC 1408 NSC 1412 NSC 1421	BIO 1340 & 1140 CHE 1316 & 1116 NSC 1403 NSC 1406 NSC 1409 NSC 2401 PHY 1401
	B	MAT 1302	MAT 1304	MAT 1302
Cultural	A	ART THA	FAR ART	MUS FAR
	B	HIS 2322 HIS 2303	HIS 2321 MUS	HIS 2301 THA
	C	REL 1311 REL 1321	REL 1312 PHI 2301	REL 1313 PHI 2321
Language	A	ENG 1301 HUM 2340	ENG 1302 HUM 2341	ENG 2301
	B	ENG 2302	ENG 2311	ENG 2312
	C	ENG 2321	ENG 2322	
Social	A	BUA 1301	ECO 2305	POL 2311
	B	KIN 1220 SOC 2301	PSY 1301 SOC 2302	SOC 1302

Note: The above courses are those approved through the 2007-2009 undergraduate catalog.