GENERAL EDUCATION ASSESSMENT REPORT

FALL 2011

SUBMITTED BY:

Dr. Rodney Mader
Dr. R. Lorraine Bernotsky
Dr. Jeffery Osgood

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

GENERAL EDUCATION ASSESSMENT REPORT

SEPTEMBER 2010

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Within the context of flat-world knowledge, the exponential rate at which information is increasing, and the uncertainty of what lies ahead for our graduates with respect to their participation in the work force due at least in part to the globalization of the job market, the importance of providing assurance of learning for the core competencies associated with a liberal arts tradition should be clear. As faculty, we are currently preparing students for jobs and technologies that don't yet exist and to solve problems that we cannot yet imagine. While we cannot possibly provide students with the technical knowledge for a future that is changing rapidly, we can focus on core competencies that have been at the heart of the liberal arts tradition and that are still seen as critical competencies even by those who might be inclined to think about higher education from a purely utilitarian perspective. In a recent WCU survey of regional employers, business leaders were asked in an open-ended question to list the top two or three most important skills they think college graduates need to be prepared to be productive members of the 21st century workforce. Five themes were clearly cited most frequently: communication skills, critical thinking, self-reliance, interpersonal skills (including responding thoughtfully to diversity), and technology skills (including information literacy):
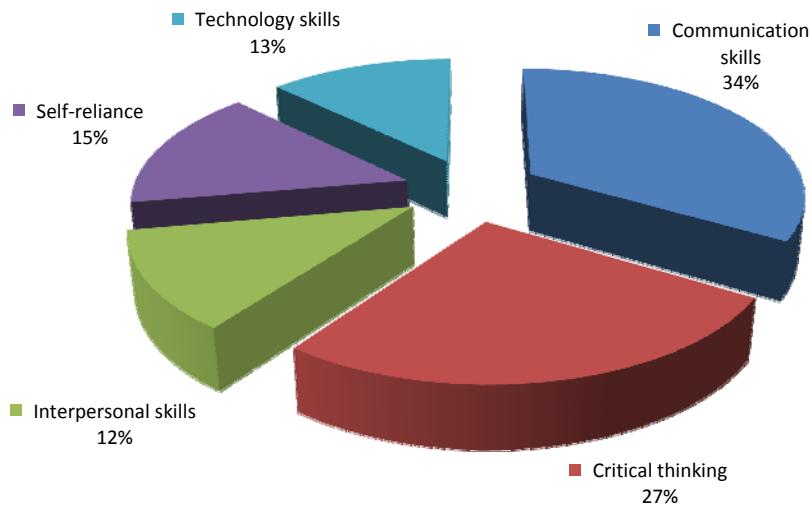
These clearly align with our own general education goals and provide one external data point to demonstrate the continued importance of general education for preparing our students to play a role in the 21st century workplace.

An additional point of external validation for academic year 2010-11 is related to our general education assessment process. Our decennial review by the Middle States Commission for Higher Education (MSCHE) singled out our general education assessment for special notice, approving of our process so far and requesting an update when we have completed assessing each of the six general education goals. MSCHE also requested that we include an update about how our assessment results are being used by faculty to improve student learning in their general education courses. As requested, a final report of the General Education Assessment will be submitted to MSCHE by April 1, 2013, that reflects the assessment of all goals and how we have created meaningful change in the general education curriculum.

2010-2011 marks the fourth year of the implementation of the revised General Education Program Assessment plan and the third year of the revised Review and Revalidation process. We continue to refine these processes, and to close the feedback loop in terms of the dissemination of results and the implementation of those results into departmental offerings of general education. In that context, we realize that we have to make better connections with individual departments to gather assessment data and to put the assessment results to use improving general education at WCU. As with prior years, however, the results of our ongoing assessment process are mixed. Some of this year's most significant findings include

- Participation in the assessment process was not as strong as previous years, with a lower number of student artifacts provided and a lower rate of compliance by faculty
  - Goal 2 (employ quantitative concepts and mathematical methods)=68 artifacts (61% response rate)
  - Goal 3 (critical and analytical thinking)=313 artifacts (30% response rate)
  - Goal 4 (demonstrating the sensibilities of a person educated in the liberal arts tradition)=21 artifacts (12% response rate)
  - Goal 6 (informed decisions and ethical choices)=169 artifacts (40% response rate)
- There were a total of 1,754 students selected for the sample from a population of 8,397 across courses for all four goals. From these, 571 artifacts were collected: 313 for Goal 3 courses (natural science and social science courses), 21 for Goal 4 courses (diverse communities courses), 169 for Goal 6 courses (humanities courses), and 68 for Goal 2 (math) courses. 53 could not be assessed using the current rubrics because the artifacts provided to us did not adequately address any of the learning outcomes on the rubrics.
- 9.3% of student artifacts were non-measurable (the artifacts could not be assessed using the current rubrics because they did not adequately address any of the learning outcomes on the rubrics).
- There appears to be a need for revisions to rubrics for Goal 4 and Goal 6.
- For Goal 3 (critical and analytical thinking), Learning Outcomes B, C, and D show slight changes in scores, but these changes are not dramatic. This is a positive outcome however, since for each of these outcomes, the gains from the lower to higher scores were maintained for the past two years.
- For Goal 4, (demonstrating the sensibilities of a person educated in the liberal arts tradition), the N is too small for assessment to be considered reliable. Additional assessment is taking place in Fall 2011 and results will be reported in the AY 2011-2012 general education report.
- Goal 6 (informed decisions and ethical choices) remains a difficult goal to assess and this is discussed in detail in the Goal 6 section below.
- For Goal 2 (employ quantitative concepts and mathematical methods), the goal we piloted this year, results were encouraging with a 61% response rate for student artifacts and 50% or more of students scoring 3s and 4s in three out of four learning outcomes on the rubric.
- 44 courses were reviewed as part of the review and revalidation process.

The first three of these indicate a need for greater understanding of, and investment in, the assessment process on the part of faculty teaching general education courses. Last year's general education report suggested a similar intervention, and some efforts were made in 2010-11 to include more faculty in assessment efforts and to share information about results. However, it is clear that more needs to be done. Since AY2011-12 will be the last chance to run our Spring assessment before we produce our report for MSCHE, it is imperative that we strive to make this year's assessment as understandable, valuable, and useful to as wide a range of faculty as possible. Therefore, during AY2011-12, CAPC's General Education committee will work to disseminate information about best practices in assessment; to gather information about changes to courses as a result of assessment; to revise the alignment of courses with goals; to revise rubrics; and to communicate the results of general education assessment directly to faculty. We are hoping to enlist the aid of the Assessment Advisory Committee and the Teaching, Learning, and Assessment Connection in some of these projects as well.

General education at West Chester University is described this way in the 2010-11 Undergraduate Catalog:

A broad education emphasizes the enhancement of oral and written communication skills and mathematics, and encompasses experiences in the humanities; the social, behavioral, and natural sciences; and the arts. At the same time, this education must be versatile because of the many new courses and areas of study that are constantly becoming available. At West Chester University, the general education program is designed to provide students with the knowledge, perspectives, and competencies expected of them as citizens of the state and of the world. The University believes that a liberal education base will prepare students to think and communicate as professionals, to understand social and global contexts of their lives, to transfer knowledge and skills from one setting and career to another, to recognize ethical implications of professional practice, and to balance the various dimensions of their personal and professional lives. Therefore, West Chester University strives to give students the abilities to

    1. communicate effectively,
    2. employ quantitative concepts and mathematical methods,
    3. think critically and analytically,
    4. demonstrate the sensibilities, understandings, and perspectives of a person educated in
        the liberal-arts tradition,
    5. respond thoughtfully to diversity, and
    6. make informed decisions and ethical choices.

The CAPC General Education committee has worked very hard over the past several years at refining, streamlining, and in some cases completely changing our assessment processes for general education, all in the hopes of finding an effective balance between what we need institutionally with respect to general education assessment and what we can organizationally bear in terms of faculty workload and organizational culture. We continue to learn each year and we find ourselves regularly "assessing our assessment." The lessons learned, and resulting changes, from this ongoing process are discussed in the first section of this report.

Since Fall 2005, CAPC has been using the table below to identify the primary (common) and secondary (recommended) goals to be included on syllabi and assessed in recommended and attribute-driven general education courses.

Gen Ed Area/Type of Assessment	Common Goals	Recommended Goals
Academic Foundations:		
English Comp/ WRT	1	3,6
Mathematics	2	1,3
Communication	1	3,4
Diverse Communities	5	4,6
Interdisciplinary	4	3,6
Distributive Requirements		
Science	3	2,6
Behavioral and Social Sciences	3	2,4,5
Humanities	6	3,4,5
The Arts	4	1,3
Writing Emphasis	1	3

This is the fourth year of the implementation of our revised program-level goal assessment plan, aimed at increasing the reliability of assessment data and of increasing the participation rate for gathering assessment data. During 2007-2008 we implemented our new plan and made significant efforts to streamline and improve the data collection process. We also targeted assessment of Goal 5 (respond thoughtfully to diversity) and began a pilot for Goal 3 (critical and analytical thinking). The primary goals targeted for assessment in 2008-2009 were Goal 5 and Goal 3; we also piloted assessment of Goal 6 (informed decisions and ethical choices). In 2009-2010, we focused on Goal 5 (respond thoughtfully to diversity), Goal 3 (critical and analytical thinking), Goal 6 (making informed decisions and ethical choices) and we piloted Goal 4 (demonstrating the sensibilities of a person educated in the liberal arts tradition). In AY 2010-11, we assessed Goals 3, 4, 6, and piloted Goal 2 (employ quantitative concepts and mathematical methods). Assessment data for these goals are presented in section four.

In addition, we continued the efforts of our revised Review and Revalidation process, reviewing 44 courses this past year, our third year of full implementation of this process. We have continued to refine this process and the outcomes of this third year of implementation around the revised process are discussed in the fifth section of the report.

In the sixth section, we lay out our revised assessment plan for 2011-2012. While the procedures are very similar to last year, we have refined some of the timelines and processes as a result of ongoing reflection about our assessment processes. These changes are increasing the efficiency of our assessment plans and maximizing the use of data collection by removing redundancies and leveraging other institutional assessment processes for the purposes of general education assessment.

Finally, in section seven, we discuss some of the continuing and newly emerging challenges for both the delivery and the assessment of general education at WCU. This, of course, related to the report that was prepared for the site visit from the Middle States accreditation team. As noted above, the team approved of our assessment process so far and requested an update when we have completed assessing each of the six general education goals. MSCHE also requested that we include an update about how our assessment results are being used by faculty to improve student learning in their general education courses. The final language that was submitted for Standard 12 (General Education) in the WCU MSCHE Self Study is included in Appendix A.

In addition, we have again included in Appendix B good examples of student assignments or exam questions that have proved very useful for assessment given the rubrics used by the assessment team. Faculty were asked for permission for these to be posted and we are grateful to have a variety of good examples for faculty to draw on in their preparation of exam questions or assignments that could be used to produce student artifacts for assessment.

Appendices C through G contain the current rubrics for Goals 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6. The general education committee and CAPC encourages faculty to freely copy, distribute, and use these rubrics not only for general education assessment but for assessment of program learning goals wherever appropriate.

During 2007-2008 we began a new program level assessment strategy after an analysis of the effectiveness of the former plan (see previous reports for detailed information). In this revised plan, assessment is based on a representative sample of West Chester University students enrolled in general education courses, according to the specific goal being assessed. Examples of student work are collected for each student in the sample and these artifacts are assessed by an independent group of faculty during the summer using a scoring rubric developed by the general education committee.

One of the most disappointing results of this year's assessment is the small number of student artifacts submitted. Compared to last year, we collected about a third of the number of student artifacts (AY2009-10=1624; AY2010-11=571). This is not due to a lack of communication. The Gen Ed Chair sent an email notice to instructors of courses for which we sought artifacts in the last weeks of Fall 2010 (dated December 15, 2010), a follow-up in the first weeks of the Spring semester (dated January 11, 2011), and a specific request for artifacts listed by student name on April 18th, 2011. When there was a poor response rate, the Gen Ed Chair sent further notices to faculty who had not submitted data. It's difficult to know what produced this poor response rate. Possible factors include:

- The change in the General Education Chair from Laurie Bernotsky to Rodney Mader, perhaps resulting in faculty not recognizing, or responding to, Mader's requests
- Effects of the MSCHE review, possibly fatigue from the process, or a feeling among faculty that assessment was not important any longer
- Misunderstanding of the logic of the process, in particular the application of certain goals to certain types of courses without faculty buy-in (to be discussed more in the section on Goals 6 and 4)
- For Goal 2, which was piloted this year, we requested a smaller number of artifacts (n=111) although we had a fair response rate of 61% (n=68)

Also affecting the overall number of artifacts collected this year is the decision to collect data for Arts courses only to represent Goal 4, rather than collecting data from Interdisciplinary courses as well. This was a result of discussions among Gen Ed committee members about the applicability of the aims of Goal 4 (demonstrate the sensibilities, understandings, and perspectives of a person educated in the liberal-arts tradition) to the wide range of interdisciplinary courses offered at WCU. One interpretation of the 09-10 results is that Interdisciplinary course faculty are less invested in the liberal arts tradition as such, and therefore don't generate assignments that can be easily measured using that rubric. Faculty teaching Arts courses (as defined by CAPC), on the other hand, are more invested in the liberal arts tradition (although there is some variability in this as well, suggesting that we might further refine what should count as an "Arts" course for the purposes of General Education; this will be discussed below).

Goal 3 Assessment

This is our third year assessing Goal 3, "think critically and analytically." This is arguably one of the most important goals to the university as a whole, and nearly every faculty member thinks she or he is teaching critical thinking in one way or another, according to their disciplinary perspective. For the purposes of assessment, however, courses in the Sciences and Social Sciences have been identified as fulfilling this part of our general education program.

The Learning Outcomes for Goal 3 are as follows:

"Students graduating from West Chester University will be able to think critically and analytically."

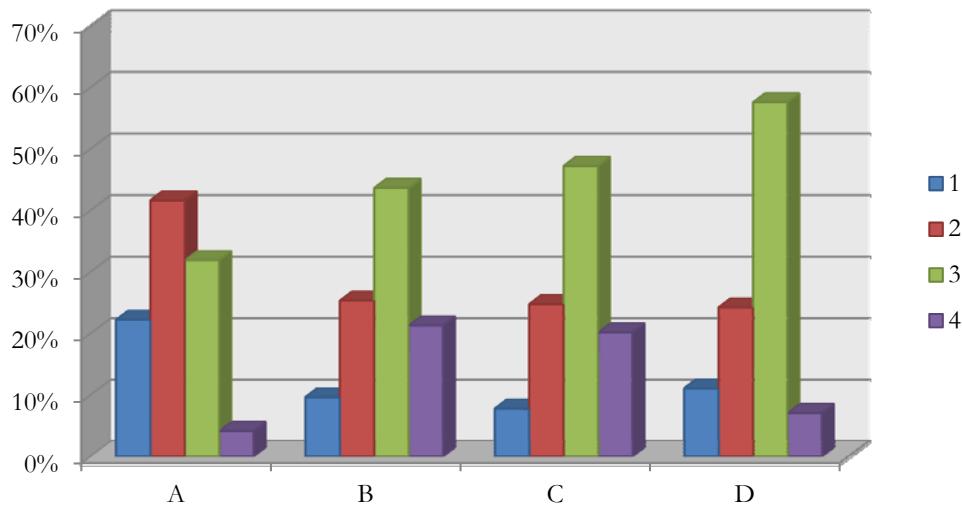| Learning Outcome	1	2	3	4
A. Effectively frame a research question, including differentiating among facts, opinions, and inferences by assessing and evaluating sources.	Student cannot frame research question, uses sources inappropriately.	Student frames an incorrect or ineffective research question (cannot be operationalized, inconsistent appropriate use of sources).	Student frames adequate research question (can be operationalized and incorporates appropriate sources).	Student frames insightful research question that can be operationalized and is framed within an appropriate research context).
B. Apply conceptual knowledge to: - identify assumptions - make logical inferences - identify defective logical inferences - reach reasonable conclusions	Student fails to recognize concept; engages material erroneously.	Student recognizes concept but is unable to apply it correctly or logically.	Student recognizes concept; applies it generally or simplistically.	Student recognizes concept and applies it thoroughly and consistently.
C. Apply procedural knowledge to: - unpack complex problems into constituent parts - identify reliable problem-solving methods - accurately apply problem-solving methods	Student fails to recognize nature of problem to be solved and/or procedure necessary to solve it.	Student recognizes necessary procedure but is unable to apply it correctly or logically.	Student recognizes procedure; applies it generally or simplistically.	Student recognizes procedure and applies it thoroughly and consistently.
D. Identify the presence of multiple perspectives and explain the contextual factors that account for these perspectives	Student is unable to identify perspectives other than own.	Student recognizes presence of multiple perspectives, but is unable to articulate them.	Student recognizes multiple perspectives; articulates them generally or simplistically.	Student recognizes multiple perspectives and articulates them clearly and specifically.

20% (1,046) of students enrolled in Goal 3 courses (5,230) comprised the sample for this subset and out of 1,046 students for whom artifacts were requested, 313 were submitted, for a response rate of 30%. Of those 313, only 72 could be assessed for Learning Outcome A and only 99 could be assessed for Learning Outcome D. 300 were assessed for Learning Outcome B and 218 were assessed for Learning Outcome C. Because the response rate for this goal was less than half of what it was least year (77% in AY 2009-2010), we

are reassessing the goal in Fall 2011 and will incorporate those results into the general education report for AY 2011-2012. Nonetheless, there were 313 artifacts collected and as noted above, this provides ample opportunity for assessment of student learning.
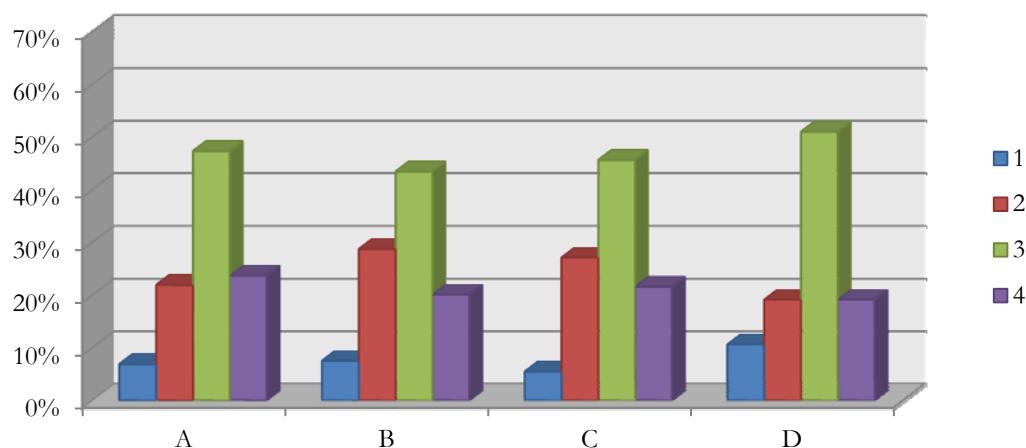
Goal 3 Assessment Data

| 2011 Results: Learning Outcome	1	2	3	4
A. Effectively frame a research question, including differentiating among facts, opinions, and inferences by assessing and evaluating sources.	22.22% (16)	41.67% (30)	31.94% (23)	4.17% (3)
B. Apply conceptual knowledge to: - identify assumptions - make logical inferences - identify defective logical inferences - reach reasonable conclusions	9.67% (29)	25.33% (76)	43.67% (131)	21.33% (64)
C. Apply procedural knowledge to: - unpack complex problems into constituent parts - identify reliable problem-solving methods - accurately apply problem-solving methods	7.80% (17)	24.77% (54)	47.25% (103)	20.18% (44)
D. Identify the presence of multiple perspectives and explain the contextual factors that account for these perspectives	11.11% (11)	24.24% (24)	57.58% (57)	7.07% (7)

Goal 3 2011: Distribution of Scores by Learning Otucome

| 2010 Results: Learning Outcome	1	2	3	4
A. Effectively frame a research question, including differentiating among facts, opinions, and inferences by assessing and evaluating sources.	6.94% (12)	21.97% (38)	47.40% (82)	23.70% (41)
B. Apply conceptual knowledge to: - identify assumptions - make logical inferences - identify defective logical inferences - reach reasonable conclusions	7.55% (42)	28.78% (160)	43.53% (242)	20.14% (112)
C. Apply procedural knowledge to: - unpack complex problems into constituent parts - identify reliable problem-solving methods - accurately apply problem-solving methods	5.50% (32)	27.15% (158)	45.70% (266)	21.65% (126)
D. Identify the presence of multiple perspectives and explain the contextual factors that account for these perspectives	10.64% (10)	19.15% (18)	51.06% (48)	19.15% (18)

Goal 3 2010: Distribution of Scores by Learning Otucome

2009 Results: Learning Outcome	1	2	3	4
A. Effectively frame a research question, including differentiating among facts, opinions, and inferences by assessing and evaluating sources.	10.32% (13)	22.22% (28)	46.03% (58)	21.43% (27)
B. Apply conceptual knowledge to: - identify assumptions - make logical inferences - identify defective logical inferences - reach reasonable conclusions	12.65% (42)	22.89% (76)	39.16% (130)	25.30% (84)
C. Apply procedural knowledge to: - unpack complex problems into constituent parts - identify reliable problem-solving methods - accurately apply problem-solving methods	13.26% (37)	20.79% (58)	40.14% (112)	25.81% (72)
D. Identify the presence of multiple perspectives and explain the contextual factors that account for these perspectives	17.31% (18)	11.54% (12)	50.00% (52)	21.15% (22)

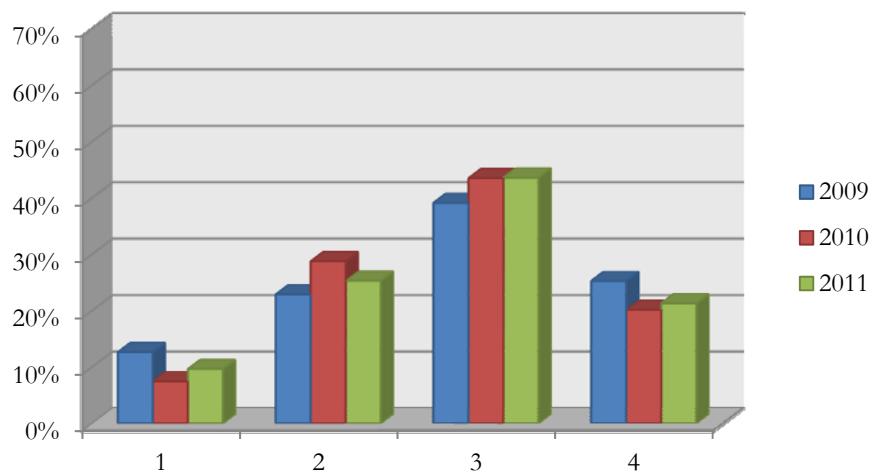**Goal 3 2009: Distribution of Scores by Learning Outcome**
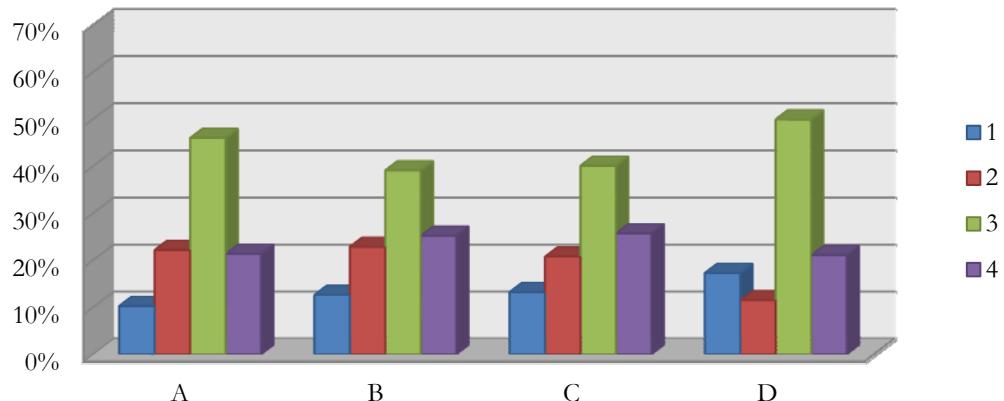
Comparison of results for learning outcomes by year of assessment
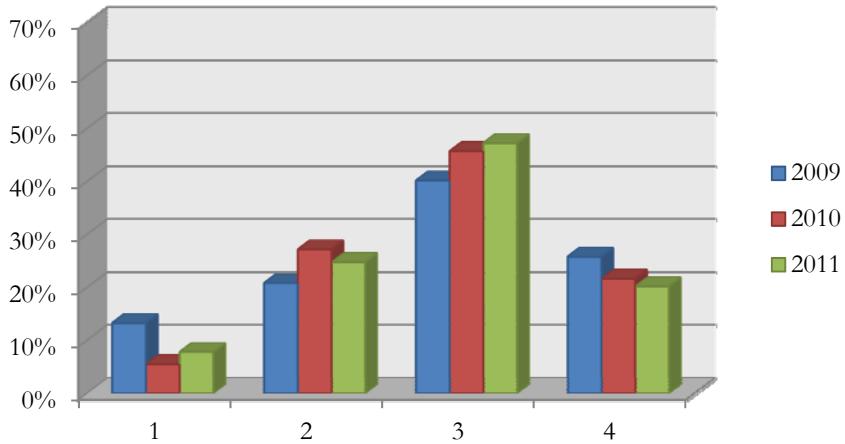
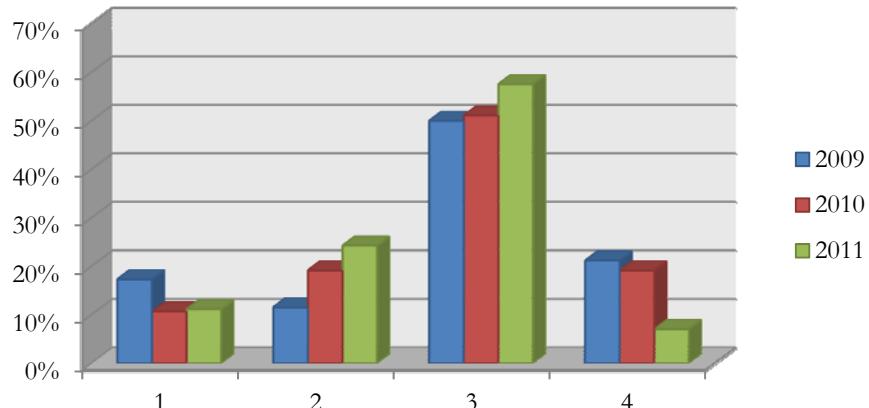**Goal 3 Learning Outcome A: Effectively frame a research question**
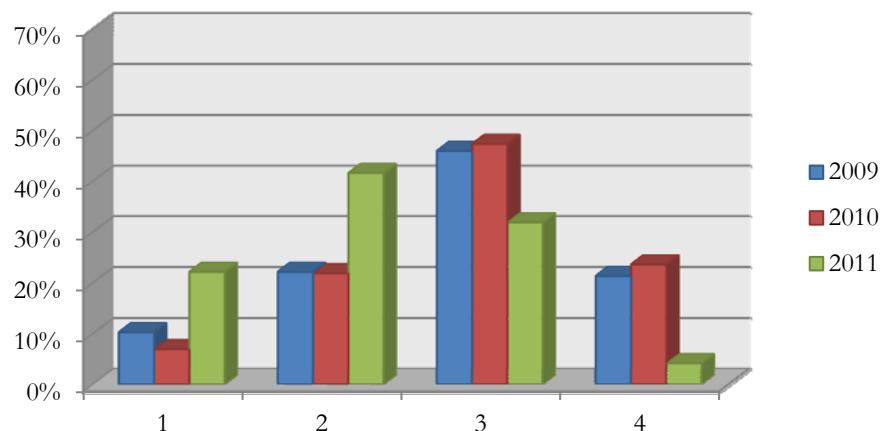
Goal 3 Learning Outcome B: Apply conceptual knowledge

Goal 3 Learning Outcome C: Apply procedural knowledge

Goal 3 Learning Outcome D: Identify and account for multiple perpectives

Key Findings and Resulting Action Items: Goal 3 Assessment
- Scores for Learning Outcome A decreased since last year, as seen in the graph above. It is important to note, however, that the number of assessable artifacts for this outcome is significantly lower than in the previous two years, so this change should be viewed with caution. The additional assessment of Goal 3 in Fall 2011 will hopefully provide a fuller picture of this learning outcome.
  - Additional assessment for Goal 3 will be conducted in Fall 2011 with a view to increasing the number of assessable artifacts for this goal.
- Learning Outcomes B, C, and D show slight changes in scores, but these changes are not dramatic. This is a positive outcome however, since for each of these outcomes, the gains from the lower to higher scores were maintained for the past two years.
  - Action Item: The general education chair will continue to work through the feedback loop process to help faculty teaching Goal 3 courses understand how these data can be used to inform their teaching and the creation of assignments with these goals in mind.

In addition to the data provided from the analysis of artifacts using the rubric, data from the NSSE survey are provided for some key questions that relate to this general education goal.[1]

NSSE Item	2008		2010	
	First Years	Seniors	First Years	Seniors
During the current school year, how much has your coursework emphasized the following mental activities?				
• Memorizing facts, ideas, or methods:	74%	61%	70%	65%
• Analyzing basic elements of an idea or theory:	77%	82%	80%	88%
• Synthesizing and organizing ideas:	66%	74%	66%	78%
• Making judgments about value of information:	70%	69%	66%	76%
• Applying theories or concepts:	75%	80%	72%	86%
To what extent has your experience at this institution contributed to your knowledge, skills, and personal development in the following areas?				
• Thinking critically and analytically	81%	84%	81%	88%

Goal 4 Assessment

AY2009-10 was the pilot year for Goal 4, and the results generated were not promising, as noted in last year's report. This goal is assessed for general education courses offered as part of "the Arts" and for Interdisciplinary ("I") courses. One of the factors involved in this may have been the disjuncture between the goal and its alignment with official Interdisciplinary courses. The General Education Committee in Fall 2010 discussed the applicability of the goal ("demonstrate the sensibilities, understandings, and perspectives of a person educated in the liberal-arts tradition") to Interdisciplinary courses. On face value, this seems to be a good fit, but "interdisciplinarity" at WCU, for the purposes of the general education program, is a more complex idea than is generally assumed. For one thing, Interdisciplinary courses must offer a critique of disciplinarity itself, as a framing structure for knowledge production in the academy. From that perspective, the liberal arts tradition is responsible for the very *idea* of disciplinarity, and could be considered antithetical to a critique of the *limits* of disciplinarity. Faculty who take seriously the call to critique the disciplinary structure of the academy may not fit well with seeing themselves as part of a liberal arts education. And, vice versa, those faculty who are (erroneously) teaching "I" courses as if they were merely a sampler of different disciplines are not reflecting spirit of the "I" designation.

An added factor is that faculty teaching Interdisciplinary courses may not think of themselves as offering something essential to a "liberal arts education," whereas faculty offering courses listed under the Arts requirement (Art, Film, Theater, etc.) certainly do. In addition, some faculty teaching courses in Literature, History, and Philosophy, which are not part of the Goal 4 assessment (rather, they are part of the Goal 6 assessment), do think they are offering something essential to a liberal arts education. As will be discussed further under Goal 6 and the conclusion, a realignment of some of the courses and goals may be in order.

20% (178) of students enrolled in Goal 4 Arts courses (890) comprised the sample for this subset and out of 178 students for whom artifacts were requested, 21 were submitted, for a response rate of 12%. The

---

total number of artifacts requested was not high at 178 because data were only requested for students in Arts courses typically taken as part of their general education requirements. In Fall 2011, "I" courses will also be assessed and those data will be considered in the AY2011-2012 general education report. Due to this small N, the results below should be considered unreliable and are reported here purely in the interests of disclosure.

"Students graduating from West Chester University will be able to demonstrate the sensibilities, understandings, and perspectives of a person educated in the liberal arts tradition"

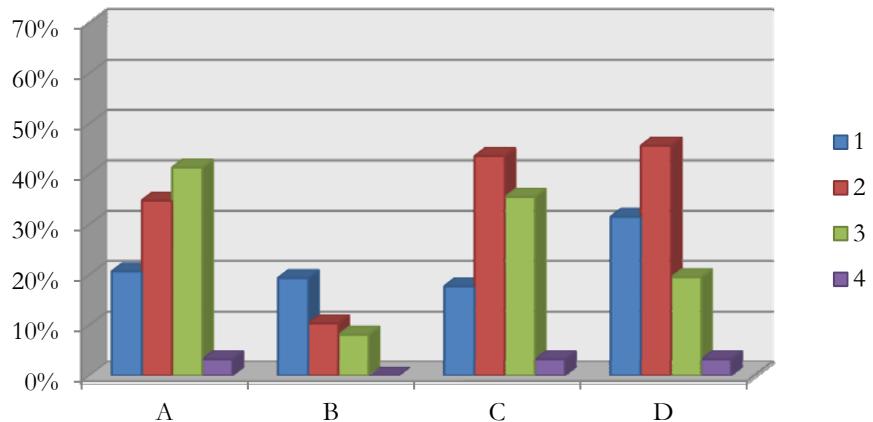| Learning Outcome	1	2	3	4
A. Demonstrates an understanding of the arts and humanities with reference to the artistic contributions of people from diverse periods, movements, and cultures	Student fails to demonstrate an understanding of the arts and humanities in light of the artistic contributions of people from diverse periods, movements, and cultures	Student demonstrates a simplistic understanding of the arts and humanities with an incomplete consideration of the artistic contributions of people from diverse periods, movements, and cultures.	Student articulates an informed under-standing of the arts and humanities and demonstrates knowledge of the artistic contributions of people from diverse periods, movements, and cultures.	Student articulates a nuanced or sophisticated understanding of the arts and humanities; demonstrates knowledge of the contributions of people from diverse periods, movements, and cultures in a way that is advanced for the course level.
B. Identify, evaluate, and apply conceptual approaches such as style, form and/or aesthetic quality in a given discipline	Student fails to identify, evaluate, or apply any conceptual approaches to the arts and humanities.	Student attempts to identify, evaluate, and apply some discipline specific conceptual approaches to the arts and humanities.	Student adequately identifies, evaluates, and applies discipline specific conceptual approaches to the arts and humanities.	Student demonstrates an understanding of discipline specific conceptual approaches and effectively applies them to the arts and humanities.
C. Compare and contrast interdisciplinary contexts such as scientific or fact based models, predictive theories, philosophical principles, and criticism (value based writings)	Student cannot differentiate between factual knowledge, philosophical principle and art or humanity based criticism	Student demonstrates a simplistic understanding of the differences between factual knowledge, philosophical principle and art or humanity based criticism	Student satisfactorily differentiates between factual knowledge, philosophical principle and art or humanity based criticism	Student demonstrates an informed understanding of the differences between factual knowledge, philosophical principle and art or humanity based criticism
D. Responds to the arts and humanities with a liberal arts sensibility and demonstrates an ability to interpret and articulate awareness of value and meaning.	Student fails to respond with a liberal arts sensibility and cannot interpret or articulate an awareness of the qualitative value of arts and humanities	Student occasionally responds with a liberal arts sensibility and inconsistently interprets and/or articulates an awareness of the qualitative value of arts and humanities	Student responds with a liberal arts sensibility. Student both interprets and articulates an awareness of the qualitative value of arts and humanities	Student responds with a sophisticated liberal arts sensibility and/or articulates an awareness of the qualitative value of arts and humanities.

Goal 4 Assessment Data

2011 Results: Learning Outcome	1	2	3	4
A. Demonstrates an understanding of the arts and humanities with reference to the artistic contributions of people from diverse periods, movements, and cultures	53.85% (7)	23.08% (3)	23.08% (3)	0.00% (0)
B. Identify, evaluate, and apply conceptual approaches such as style, form and/or aesthetic quality in a given discipline	10.00% (2)	40.00% (8)	35.00% (7)	15.00% (3)
C. Compare and contrast interdisciplinary contexts such as scientific or fact based models, predictive theories, philosophical principles, and criticism (value based writings)	37.50% (3)	37.50% (3)	25.00% (2)	0.00% (0)
D. Responds to the arts and humanities with a liberal arts sensibility and demonstrates an ability to interpret and articulate awareness of value and meaning.	5.00% (1)	30.00% (6)	60.00% (12)	5.00% (1)

Goal 4 2011: Distribution of Scores by Learning Otucome
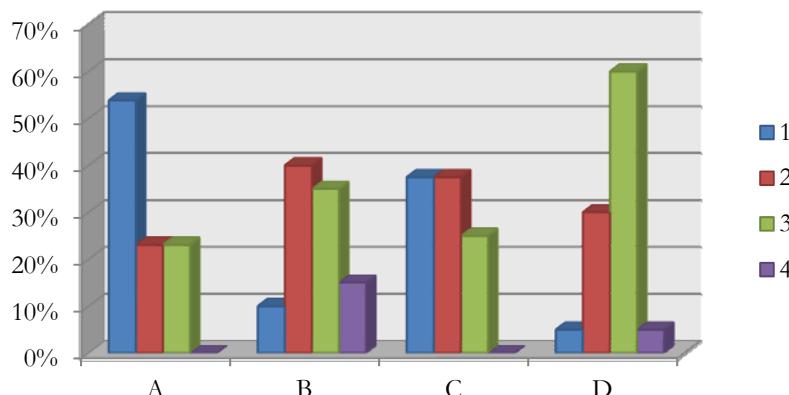
| 2010 Results: Learning Outcome	1	2	3	4
A. Demonstrates an understanding of the arts and humanities with reference to the artistic contributions of people from diverse periods, movements, and cultures	20.65% (19)	34.78% (32)	41.30% (38)	3.26% (3)
B. Identify, evaluate, and apply conceptual approaches such as style, form and/or aesthetic quality in a given discipline	19.35% (12)	45.16% (28)	35.48% (22)	0.00% (0)
C. Compare and contrast interdisciplinary contexts such as scientific or fact based models, predictive theories, philosophical principles, and criticism (value based writings)	17.74% (11)	43.55% (27)	35.48% (22)	3.23% (2)
D. Responds to the arts and humanities with a liberal arts sensibility and demonstrates an ability to interpret and articulate awareness of value and meaning.	31.52% (29)	45.65% (42)	19.57% (18)	3.26% (3)

14

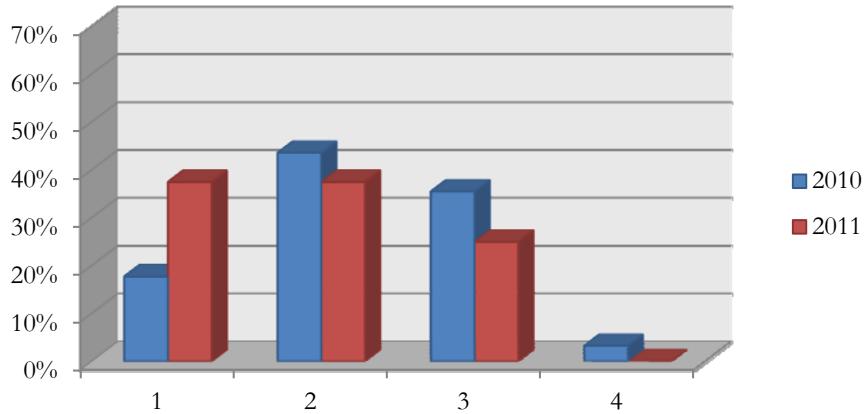**Goal 4 2010: Distribution of Scores by Learning Otucome**

Goal 4 Learning Outcome A: Demonstrate an understanding of the arts and humanities
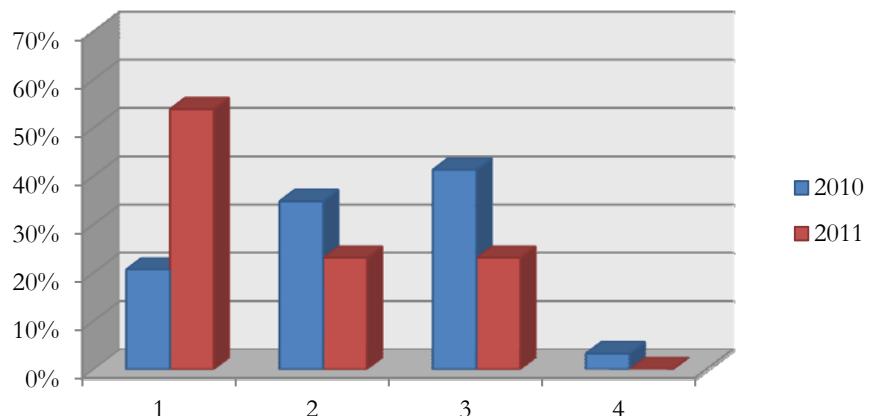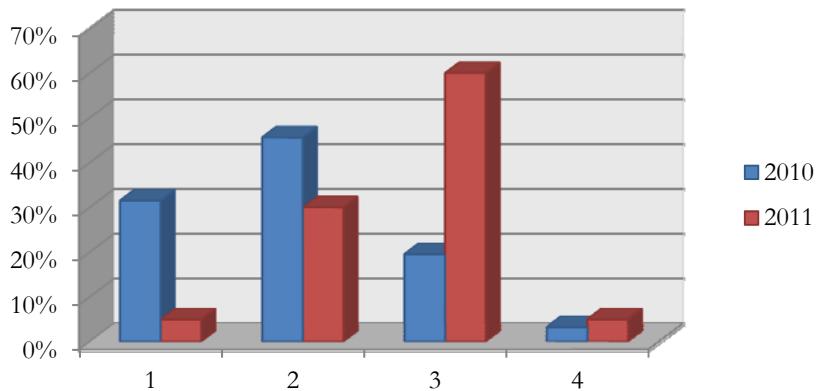

Goal 4 Learning Outcome B: Identify, evaluate, and apply conceptual approaches
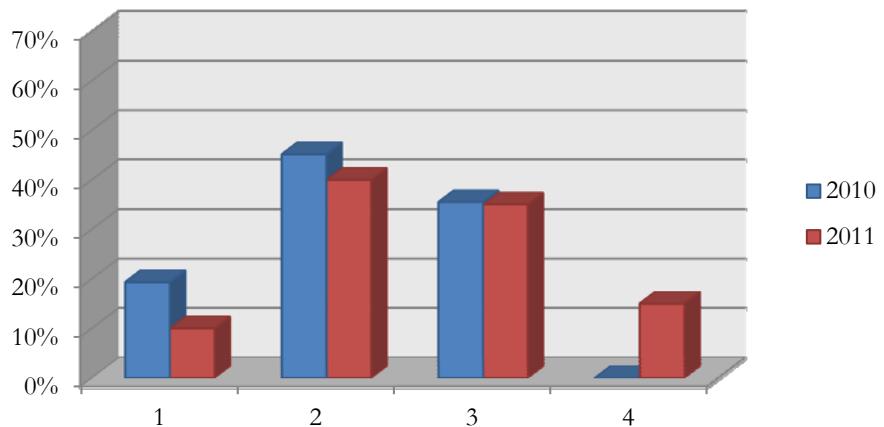
Goal 4 Learning Outcome C: Compare and contrast interdisciplinary concepts

Goal 4 Learning Outcome D: Respond to the arts and humanities with a liberal arts sensibility

Key Findings and Resulting Action Plans: Goal 4 Assessment

- Finding: As noted above, the N for these results is too small to be considered reliable. Additional assessment is taking place in Fall 2011 and results will be reported in the AY 2011-2012 general education report.
    - o Action Item: The general education chair will work with the CAPC General Education Committee to examine the utility of the Goal 4 rubric and consider making recommendations to adjust the assessment plan to take into account the concerns noted above.

Goal 6 Assessment

20% of students (419) enrolled in Goal 6 courses (2,095) comprised the sample for this subset and out of 419 students for whom artifacts were requested, 169 were submitted, for a response rate of 40%. Of those 169, 39 could not be assessed on any of the learning outcomes on the rubric, leaving 130 artifacts for the assessment. Direct faculty feedback to the general education chair indicate that the alignment of courses with Goal 6 in the current plan is in need of rethinking. In particular, History and Literature faculty are not convinced that they should be preparing students to "make informed decisions and ethical choices." What's more surprising, perhaps, is that at least one professor teaching PHI101 (Introduction to Philosophy) objected to Goal 6 being applied to his course, and at least one set of artifacts from PHI100 (Creating Meaning—a course devoted to Existentialism) were not measurable using the Goal 6 rubric.

In addition, the Summer Assessment team seriously critiqued the Goal 6 rubric as not properly designed to measure the goal. According to our team's discussion, the rubric does a great job of assessing the decision making *process*. The learning outcomes listed on the rubric are all process-oriented. So, the rubric helps us to determine if students can engage in an informed decision-making *process* (i.e., critical thinking). What the rubric does not do, however, is help us to assess whether or not students "make informed decisions and ethical choices." Assessment of this would require an evaluation of the decisions students actually make, which is problematic; we don't want to suggest what proper ethical conclusions are in advance. A revision of the wording of the goal might be in order. For example, the goal might be that students are capable of engaging in the processes required for informed decisions and ethical choices.

The larger problem presented by Goal 6 is that most faculty want their students to learn to make ethical decisions, and yet few faculty consider it their bailiwick to teach them how. Even Philosophy courses specifically in Ethics (such as PHI180, PHI371 Medical Ethics or PHI373 Business Ethics) may teach ethical concepts without touching students' decision-making skills; nevertheless, these seem to be close to what the goal is aiming at. On the other hand, faculty may deal with ethics from a disciplinary perspective within their major or minor programs, either as a course or a segment of a course. While the goal itself is laudable, it is worth asking whether it is a goal which can be assessed at a programmatic level, or whether it is a value to be articulated somewhere else, whether that be the university mission statement, the mission statements of programs or colleges, or in a mission statement for general education which stops short of suggesting that it is a measurable goal.

"Students graduating from West Chester University will be able to make informed decisions and ethical choices"

Learning Outcome	1	2	3	4
A. Identifies and summarizes ethical problem at issue	Does not correctly identify and/or summarize the problem or its underlying ethical issues	Identifies the main problem and some of the subsidiary, embedded, or implicit aspects of the problem and its underlying ethical issues	Identifies the main problem and many subsidiary, embedded, or implicit aspects of the problem and its underlying assumptions and ethical issues	Identifies not only the basics of the issue, but recognizes nuances of the issue. Analyzes the validity of key assumptions and the underlying ethical dimensions of the issue
B. Identifies other perspectives and positions	Deals only with a single perspective, possibly a personal one, and fails to identify other salient perspectives	Partially identifies other perspectives but remains within the scope of the personal or those alternatives presented in the course	Identifies other salient perspectives, including those drawn from outside information	Addresses and analyzes salient perspectives drawn from outside information
C. Examines quality of evidence	Merely repeats information provided, taking it as truth or denies evidence without adequate justification	Unevenly examines the evidence and source of evidence, questions its accuracy, precision, relevance, and completeness	Examines the evidence and source of evidence, questions its accuracy, precision, relevance, and completeness	Observes cause and effect and addresses existing or potential consequences. Clearly distinguishes between fact, opinion, and acknowledges value judgments
D. Considers conclusions, implications and consequences	Fails to identify and discusses conclusions, implications and consequences	Partially identifies and discusses conclusions, implications and consequences	Identifies and discusses conclusions, implications and consequences	Identifies and discusses conclusions, implications and consequences, and reflects upon own assertions

Goal 6 Assessment Data

2011 Results: Learning Outcome	1	2	3	4
A. Identifies and summarizes ethical problem at issue	9.43% (10)	61.32% (65)	28.30% (30)	0.94% (1)
B. Identifies other perspectives and positions	22.31% (29)	53.85% (70)	20.77% (27)	3.08% (4)
C. Examines quality of evidence	26.98% (34)	47.62% (60)	25.40% (32)	0.00% (0)
D. Considers conclusions, implications and consequences	16.28% (21)	56.59% (73)	26.36% (34)	0.78% (1)

Goal 6 2011: Distribution of Scores by Learning Otucome
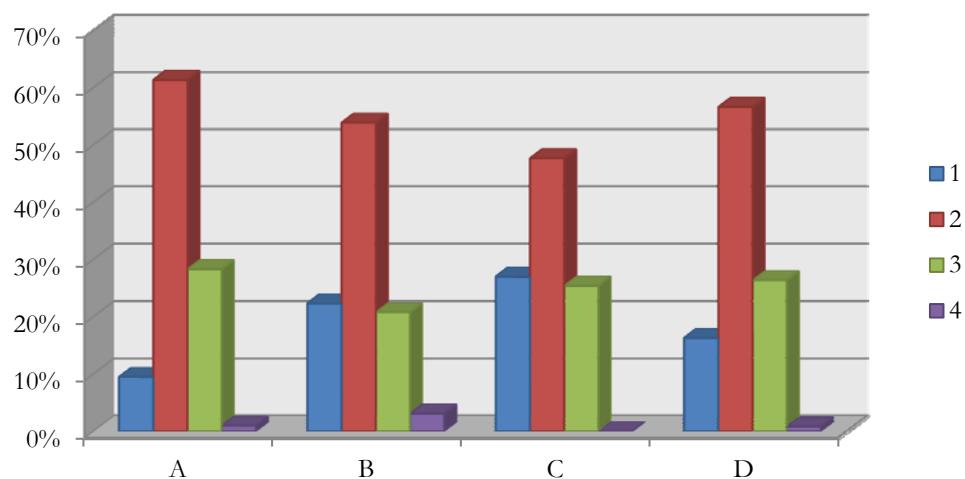
2010 Results: Learning Outcome	1	2	3	4
A. Identifies and summarizes ethical problem at issue	16.94% (21)	41.49% (52)	38.71% (48)	2.42% (3)
B. Identifies other perspectives and positions	14.10% (22)	48.72% (76)	33.33% (52)	3.85% (6)
C. Examines quality of evidence	48.15% (52)	24.07% (26)	24.07% (26)	3.70% (4)
D. Considers conclusions, implications and consequences	41.89% (62)	25.68% (42)	25.68% (38)	4.05% (6)

Goal 6 2010: Distribution of Scores by Learning Otucome
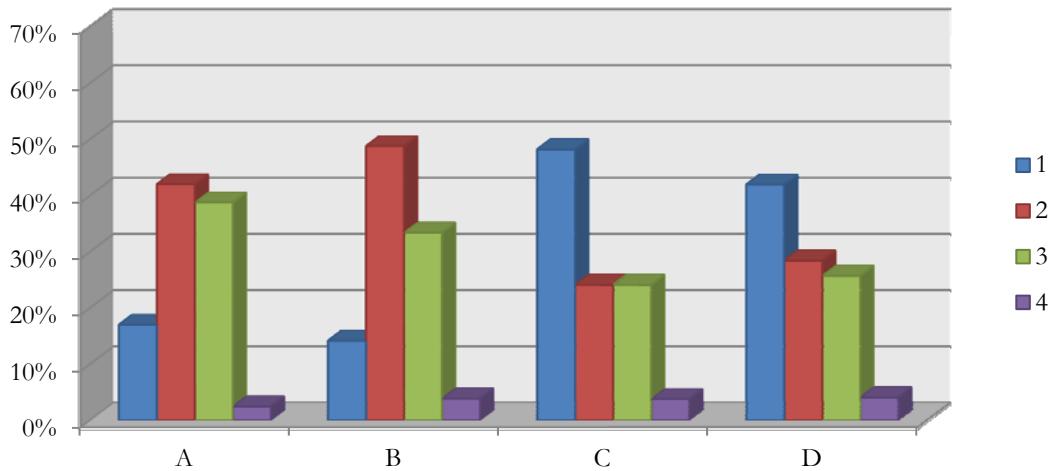
2009 Results: Learning Outcome	1	2	3	4
A. Identifies and summarizes ethical problem at issue	25.78% (33)	37.50% (48)	21.09% (27)	15.63% (20)
B. Identifies other perspectives and positions	43.24% (32)	28.38% (21)	18.92% (14)	9.46% (7)
C. Examines quality of evidence	50.00% (34)	26.47% (18)	16.18% (11)	7.35% (5)
D. Considers conclusions, implications and consequences	50.70% (72)	32.39% (46)	8.45% (12)	8.45% (12)

Goal 6 2009: Distribution of Scores by Learning Outcome
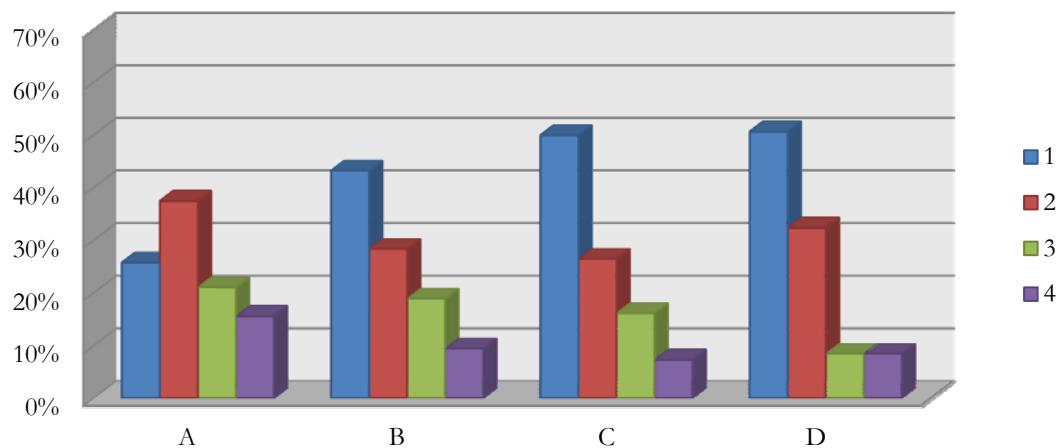
Goal 6 Learning Outcome A: Identifies and summarizes ethical problem at issue
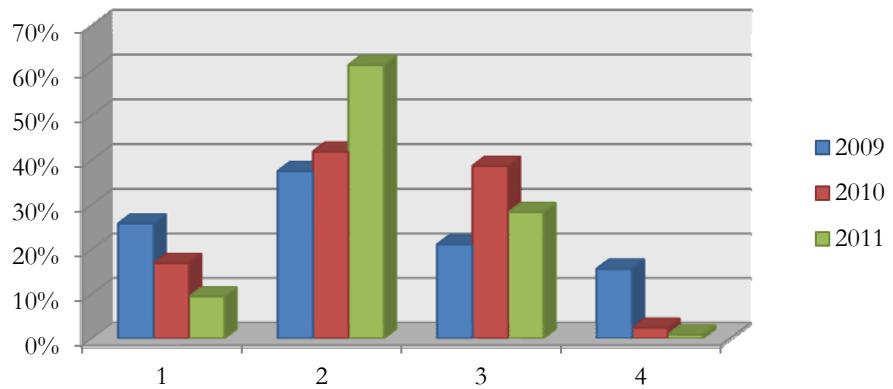
Goal 6 Learning Outcome B: Identifies other perspectives and positions

Goal 6 Learning Outcome C: Examines quality of evidence
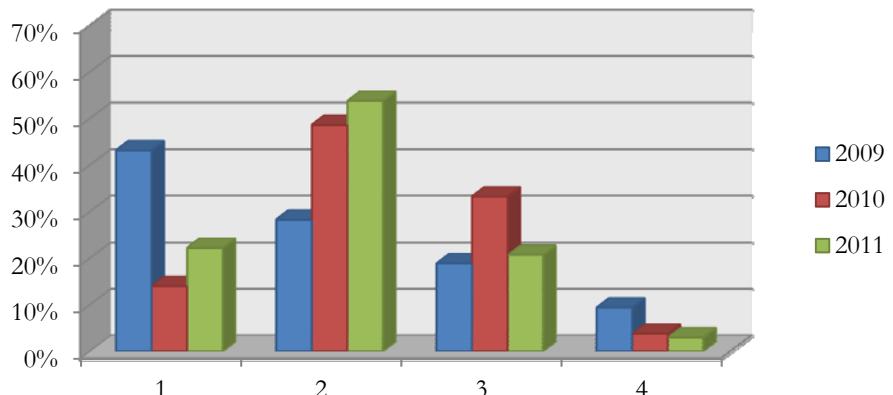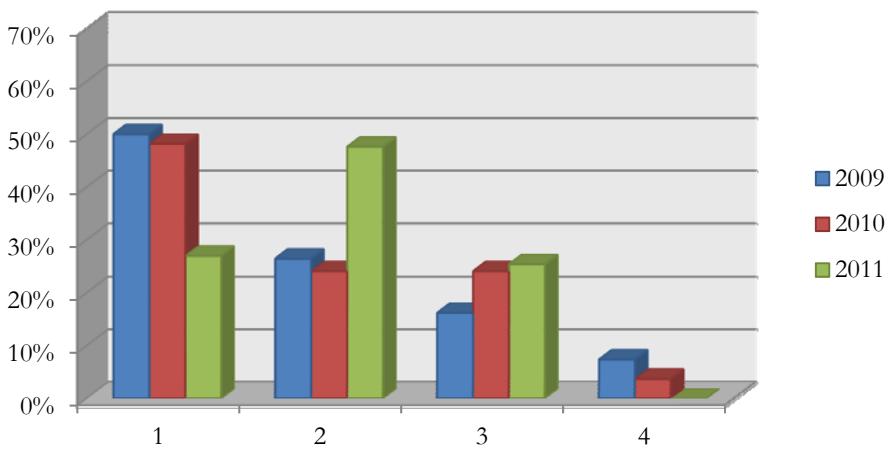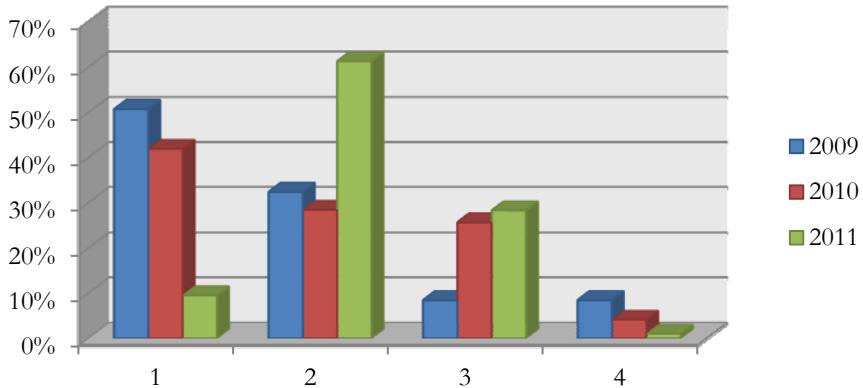
Goal 6 Learning Outcome D: Considers conclusions, implications, and consequences

Key Findings and Resulting Action Plans: Goal 6 Assessment
- Finding: Scores were lower this year, as seen in the tables and graphs above. Although there were fewer scores of 1 (an improvement over 2010), there are also more scores of 2, which is not moving in the direction we would hope to move.
  - Action Plan: The general education committee will continue to work through the feedback loop process and workshops to help faculty teaching Goal 6 courses understand and implement the learning outcomes.
- Many other schools have struggled with their desire to list "ethical thinking" as a general education goal, as described recently in *The Chronicle*.[2] In addition, the AACU has developed a rubric for Ethical Reasoning which may be helpful in our ongoing effort to refine and assess this general education goal.[3]
  - Action Plan: Goal 6 will continue to be a point of discussion during AY2011-12. One issue to be discussed will be rewriting the goal to focus on the process of ethical decision-making rather than the decisions themselves.

In addition to the data provided from the analysis of artifacts using the rubric, data from the NSSE survey are provided for some key questions that relate to this general education goal.[4]

NSSE Item	2008		2010	
	FY	SY	FY	SY
During the current school year, how often have you examined the strengths and weaknesses of your own views on a topic or issue?	44%	54%	44%	56%

Pilot: Goal 2 Assessment

Assessment of Goal 2 (employ quantitative concepts and mathematical methods) was piloted in this cycle. The rubric was developed in consultation with faculty from Mathematics in AY2010-11 and used to score artifacts during the summer. Unlike most of the other goals, responsibility for teaching courses listing Goal 2 is entirely satisfied by faculty in Math (in courses such as MAT103, MAT104, and MAT121). The

---

[2] http://chronicle.com/article/The-Challenge-of-Putting-a/128086/?key=S2p7Il8yZStGM35gaj9FPm0EaiNtNxl7YCYdYyhxblBUFw%3D%3D

[3] http://www.aacu.org/value/rubrics/pdf/ethicalreasoning.pdf.

[4] CAPC would like to thank Dr. Idna Corbett for her contribution to this element of the report. The National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) is a survey that provides annual snapshot data of student engagement in programs and activities.

coherence of this cohort is perhaps the reason for a strong participation rate for a goal's pilot year (61%, or 68 out of 111 artifacts requested). We would, of course, like to have a stronger participation rate in AY2011-12.

"Students graduating from West Chester University will be able to employ quantitative concepts and mathematical methods"

Learning Outcome	1	2	3	4
A. Understand and use mathematical symbolism	Student fails to identify, or misidentifies, mathematical symbols used in statements or formulas.	Student correctly identifies mathematical symbols but fails to use them correctly in computation or argument.	Student correctly uses given mathematical symbols.	Student correctly applies new mathematical symbols as appropriate for a calculation or argument, or in a new or unfamiliar situation.
B. Employ calculations correctly to draw mathematical conclusions	Student calculates incorrectly.	Student performs simple calculations correctly but cannot put them together into a larger computation.	Student calculates correctly but fails to draw appropriate conclusions consistent with calculated results.	Student calculates correctly and draws appropriate conclusions.
C. Understand the nature and use of mathematical arguments	Student fails to recognize or understand mathematical arguments.	Student can answer some questions about the nature of some mathematical argument.	Student shows understanding of arguments but cannot independently apply them.	Student understands and can apply mathematical arguments.
D. Understand how mathematics is used to gain insight into nature and as a tool in the world of human affairs	Student shows little awareness of a connection between mathematical symbolism, calculations, and arguments and their use outside mathematics.	Student often responds incorrectly to questions about previously discussed examples of applications of mathematics.	Student can respond appropriately to questions about previously discussed examples but cannot deal successfully with new applications.	Student shows understanding of how mathematics is used and can work new examples of applications.

2011 Results: Learning Outcome	1	2	3	4
A. Understand and use mathematical symbolism	24.07% (13)	33.33% (18)	12.96% (7)	29.63% (16)
B. Employ calculations correctly to draw mathematical conclusions	14.81% (8)	35.19% (19)	22.22% (12)	27.78% (15)
C. Understand the nature and use of mathematical arguments	38.10% (24)	11.11% (7)	19.05% (12)	31.75% (20)
D. Understand how mathematics is used to gain insight into nature and as a tool in the world of human affairs	36.76% (25)	8.82% (6)	11.76% (8)	42.65% (29)

Goal 2 2011: Distribution of Scores by Learning Otucome
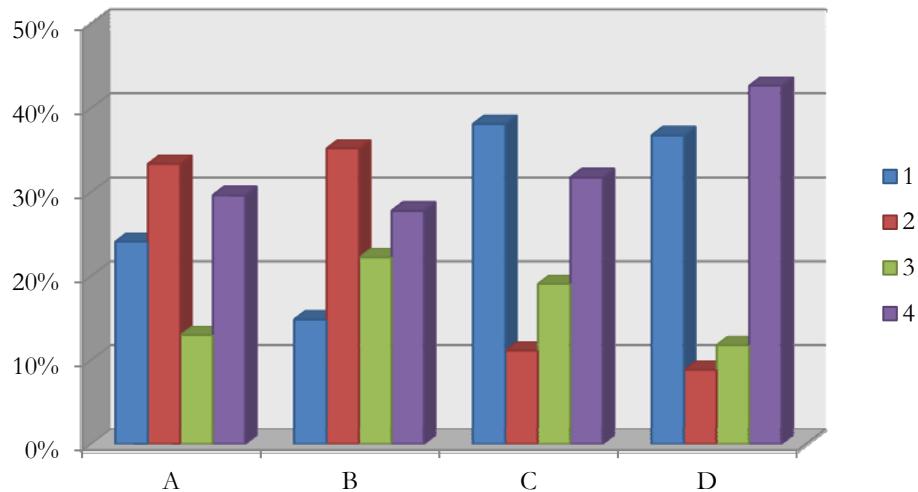
Key Findings and Resulting Action Plans: Goal 2 Pilot Assessment

- This initial assessment indicates that student artifacts are fairly evenly spread across the range of scores for these outcomes. 42.59% scored on the high end for Learning Outcome A, with 3s or 4s, while half or better scored 3 or 4 for Outcomes B (50%), C, (50.79%), and D (54.41%). While ultimately we will want more scores in the higher range, this is an impressive set of results for a pilot year.
  - Action Plan: For year 2 of the assessment of Goal 2, we will work to have higher participation rates from faculty, and give them feedback and assistance in developing assignments that can be assessed using the rubric. Reviewers identified exemplary assignments, and these will be shared with faculty. The Chair of Mathematics and the Chair of CAPC Gen Ed have agreed to hold information sessions for Math faculty during Fall 2011 in order to discuss the ongoing assessment of Goal 2.

REVIEW AND REVALIDATION

The review and revalidation of approved general education courses is the result of a previous Middle States report, and in direct response to a Middle State's concern that courses appeared to have "life long approval." Based on this finding, West Chester University instituted a "review and revalidate" process several years ago. Various iterations of this process failed to produce outcomes consistent with the spirit of the Middle States recommendation. Since its initiation in 2008, the review and revalidation process has now become an important institutional mechanism for ensuring that general education courses remain connected to the general education curriculum goals and requirements.

WCU has a university-wide program review process that is mandated by PASSHE, and, in this sense, carries the weight of Harrisburg behind it, compelling departments to respond. Our plan continues to link the CAPC review and revalidation process to the PASSHE program review cycle in an attempt to minimize the impact of multiple processes on departments.

The university Program Review Officer continues to collect, as part of their normal data collection from departments under review, syllabi for all courses that fall into the recommended distributive areas, "I", "J" and "W" categories. The CAPC Program Review Chair continues to assist in the data collection process

by confirming the list of syllabi that need to be submitted for review and revalidation and enlists the help of their subcommittee in reviewing the syllabi for their compliance with review and revalidation guidelines. Chairs are notified of courses needing revision and CAPC establishes an appropriate timeframe for revision and resubmission of revised materials.

Courses Reviewed and Results of Review

In 2009-2010, 105 courses were put on probation for the 2010-2011 academic year. Programs were required to resubmit course syllabi by January 1st of 2011 in order to be revalidated or risk having the course lose its general education designation. Of the 105, four were academic foundations courses, 14 were recommended (distributive) courses, 59 were writing emphasis courses, eight were diverse communities courses, and 20 were interdisciplinary courses.

At the end of the 2010-2011 program review cycle, of those 105 courses placed on probation, 82 were revalidated, three are still pending and 16 lost their general education designation. The courses in the latter category are as follows:

Academic Foundations
CHE 103 General Chemistry I
CHE 104 General Chemistry II
CHE 107 General Chemistry for the Allied Health Sciences

Distributive General Education Courses
FLM 300
FLM 301 Documentary Film

Writing Emphasis Courses
CRL 476 Biochemistry
CRW 313 Playwriting Workshop
ENG 200 Intermediate Composition
ESP 319 Cultural Realities of Spain
JRN 226 Public Affairs Reporting
JRN 312 Sports Reporting and Writing
LIT 309 Martin Luther King

Diverse Communities Courses
CLS 352 Modernity/Postmodernity
Interdisciplinary Courses
EFR 320 French Civilization
EGE 322 German Civilization
LIT 162 Literature of the Apocalypse

For the 2010-2011 cycle, the following programs were reviewed as part of the 5 year PASSHE program review cycle: Anthropology and Sociology, Earth Sciences, Ethnic Studies, History, Holocaust Genocide Studies, Women's and Genders Studies. During this program review cycle, 44 courses were reviewed for revalidation of their respective general education designation. Of those reviewed, 4 courses were put on probation and one course was removed from the list of approved general education courses. Departments wishing to have general education status removed from their courses were able to do so, while those who wanted to update their syllabi in order to come into compliance with general education standards were able to have courses placed on probation while those revisions take place. Those actions are as follows:

Removed from the list of approved Interdisciplinary courses:
IND 401 Applied Environmental Science

Placed on probation for the diverse communities designation:
ANT 321 American Indian Today
LAN/ENG 382 Teaching English Language Learners (ELL's) PK-12
WOS 335 Gender and Science

Placed on probation for the interdisciplinary designation:
HIS 323 Austrian Civilization
WOS 335 Gender and Science

Placed on probation for the writing emphasis designation:
HIS 366 The Turbulent 60's

OVERVIEW OF THE 2011-2012 ASSESSMENT PLAN

As noted in the detailed discussion above, general education is assessed through two processes:

General Education courses: Any course identified as part of the Academic Foundation (WRT, MAT and SPK), "recommended" in the distributive areas, or the "attribute" courses (I, J, W).

   I.   The General Education program is assessed as a whole by the CAPC General Education committee
   - Each year, two of the six General Education goals are assessed through a process of gathering "artifacts" (key assignments) that have been designed to assess student learning of the respective goal. (Email request comes from the CAPC General Education chair.)
   - The sample of students is drawn from all students enrolled in classes related to the applicable goals.
   - A team of faculty across the colleges gathers for several weeks in the summer to evaluate the artifacts via a rubric that has been developed to measure learning outcomes.
   - The scorers participate in training to ensure inter-rater reliability and meetings are held throughout the process to compare results.
   - Rubrics are revised based on the work of the committee and revisions are submitted to the Gen Ed committee in the Fall.
   - A report is written and posted on the AVP website and announced at the fall CAPC meeting.
   - One or two members of the Gen Ed committee meet with departments to discuss the findings and to discuss departmental plans to help the university better meet the applicable Gen Ed goal. The associate dean and/or the college liaison to the University Assessment Advisory Committee may participate in this meeting to assist the department in planning based on the results (revisions, changes, etc.).
   - At the end of the Spring semester or beginning of summer, the CAPC Gen Ed chair asks the department chair for feedback on any changes or revisions made to Gen Ed courses throughout the year for inclusion in the annual Gen Ed report.

   II. General Education course assessment is linked to the Program Review cycle (every program is required by Board of Governor's Policy to undergo Program Review every five years).
       A.   Review and Revalidation of course syllabi

- University Program Review requires submission of all department/program syllabi. Copies of syllabi for General Education courses will be turned over to the chair of the CAPC Gen Ed committee. [In those programs with external accreditation that offer general education courses, the same 5-year cycle will be implemented independent of the external accreditation.]
- Syllabi are reviewed to ensure that each continues to reflect the standards of a general education course (i.e., the general education goal is prominent and integrated into course objectives, readings, and assignments).
- Courses that do not meet standards are discussed with relevant department chair(s); changes are identified to bring the courses into compliance (within the current academic year).
- If courses are not appropriately revised during the current academic year, they are put on probation with a deadline provided for changes to be made (currently December 1) of the following academic year. Courses that do not make the necessary revisions within this time are removed from recommended general education status.

B. Departmental assessment of student learning outcomes
- Departments/Programs that offer any course in the General Education curriculum are notified at the beginning of their Program Review cycle (every five years) that they will need to assess their general education courses. (Programs with external accreditation with General Education courses will be placed on a five-year cycle to assess their courses and will be notified accordingly.)
- The Chair of the CAPC General Education Committee, or designee, will contact the Department chair(s) to discuss the assessment plan and to share appropriate rubrics. The department will then proceed to implement the course assessment plan(s) for two of the next three semesters.
- An assessment report (results and action plans) will be submitted to the Chair of the CAPC General Education Committee the following year.
- The Chair of the CAPC General Education Committee follows up with each department within the year to discuss the assessment findings. The associate dean and/or the college liaison to the University Assessment Advisory Committee may participate in this meeting to assist the department in planning based on the results (revisions, changes, etc.).

General education courses that are also embedded in a program's student learning outcomes will be assessed according to the department/program assessment plan.

Long Range Plan

The following revised schedule reflects our assessment plans for the next several years. It is important to note that AY 2011-2012 will be the final year in which we will need to pilot a goal, so the chart below reflects the strategy of assessing each goal across two years on a rotating schedule.

Goal	2011-12	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019
1	Pilot	Assess	Assess					Assess
2	Assess	Assess					Assess	Assess
3	Repeat			Assess	Assess			
4	Repeat					Assess	Assess	
5			Assess	Assess				
6					Assess	Assess		

AY 2011-12 presents a great opportunity—but our only opportunity—to prepare for the 2013 MSCHE Report in any meaningful way. We want to deliver impressive results to MSCHE, and this is only possible if we start planning right now. And we labor under one big disadvantage: while MSCHE was preparing its official review and asking us to file a report in 2013 on assessment results, we were simultaneously having one of the lowest compliance rates for Gen Ed assessment. We will have to overcome this in 2011-12. Toward that end, we propose the following Action Steps, which will become a charge to the CAPC Gen Ed Committee.

In order to increase compliance:

- Work with departmental assessment coordinators to develop assignments/questions that are useful for assessment and then take them back to their departments
- Make assessment as easy as possible for faculty
    - Provide workshops, visit department meetings
        - Bring good assessment questions to departments, talk about what *makes* them good, and then ask them to devise their own
    - Put examples on the CAPC website at the Associate Provost's page as well as the TLAC page
    - Produce student sampling earlier in the Spring semester
- Revise assessment process
    - Review the logic of alignment of courses and goals in Gen Ed assessment
        - Questions and/or Problems
            - How can we align Gen Ed goals with Gen Ed courses in a way that makes sense to the faculty teaching those courses?
            - Given that the Gen Ed goals were not determined as goals in advance of the Gen Ed program, but were, instead, mapped onto an existing program, does it make sense to question whether some courses that currently fulfill Gen Ed requirements should be shoehorned into our existing six goals, or whether we are either not articulating some of our goals, or have unnecessary courses in our Gen Ed program?
- Revise general education program components
    - With specific regard to Goal 6, revise the goal to focus on the decision-making process
    - Begin a conversation about cleaning up the prefix-based Distributive rules, in particular the expansiveness of the Arts Distributive

Sustaining a Culture of Assessment for General Education

General education at WCU is interdisciplinary, and as such, it is not housed in one program or college. Having said that, the majority of general education courses are housed in the College of Arts and Sciences (CAS). According to a WCU Institutional Research report, in the past five years, CAS has provided 67.0% of the 6,430 sections of recommended general education courses offered and served 68.6% of the 178,427 students taking general education courses. The College of Business and Public Affairs (CBPA) (which houses a number of social science programs) has provided 10.1% of the sections of general education in the past five years and served 11.2% of the students taking general education courses. Although no distributive area courses are offered by the College of Health Sciences (CHS), through attribute courses (writing emphasis, interdisciplinary, and diverse communities courses) they have provided 11.1% of the general education sections offered in the last five years and served 9.2% of the students taking general education courses. The College of Education has offered 7.1% of the sections of general education and

served 6.4% of the students taking general education courses while the College of Visual and Performing Arts (CVPA),through courses in the arts, has offered 4.7% of the sections and served 4.6% of the students taking general education courses.

While this has not posed a significant problem related to sustainability in the past, in recent years, particularly this past year, it has become an important issue. The way in which funding formulas have been interpreted differently by the deans of the different colleges has resulted in pressure about class sizes being applied differently by college. As a result, proposals coming out of CAS in particularly have reflected mass lecture courses for general education and disagreements between faculty and the administration regarding appropriate class size for courses such as Public Speaking, which require a performance component. This raises questions about the sustainability of the program as it is currently structured since all indications are that the nature of the courses themselves is starting to change as a result of these pressures (i.e. the pressure to reduce the performance component of Public Speaking in order to increase the class size). This is not to say that large class size per se has a measurable impact on student learning outcomes, rather, the point is that is important to understand that structural changes are affecting specific elements of general education courses and these elements bear watching through our assessment process in the years to come.

In addition, the responsibility for teaching general education is worth considering. 43.2% of general education courses in the past five years were taught by temporary faculty while 16.9% were taught by tenure-track faculty and 39.8% were taught by tenured faculty. While there is no prohibition against this by policy, it does raise questions about the ability of WCU to adequately respond to assessment results and implement changes if temporary faculty rather than tenure-track faculty are shouldering this portion of the responsibility for teaching general education since adjunct faculty have a higher turnover rate than tenure-track faculty and are not as integrally involved in departmental governance. Again, it is not the case that there is specific evidence that students in the courses adjunct faculty perform worse on assessment of student outcomes. Rather, it is one element that must be taken into account along with other elements when considering the way in which general education is resourced and assigned at WCU.

Linking Academic Program Goals and General Education Goals
Finally, the apparent division between "general education" competencies and those related to majors or programs has come under intense scrutiny by the General Education Committee and others involved in assessment at the university and department level. While this division has existed at WCU for quite some time, it appears that it was more a function of past practice than that of any pedagogically driven decision. Linking the competencies related to general education with those in the majors and programs (which in many cases are identical competencies) may serve to strengthen the relationship between general education and the academic programs and as such would enhance the sustainability of the goals of general education beyond the courses specifically designated for general education. An initial analysis of the student learning outcomes within department programs to the general education goals reveals that there are 405 instances where specific student learning outcomes within a program are comparable to general education goals. The breakdown of these 405 linkages by general education goal is as follows:
Goal 1 (communicate effectively): 19%
Goal 2 (employ quantitative concepts and mathematical methods): 11.6%
Goal 3 (think critically and analytically): 31.6%
Goal 4: (demonstrate the sensibilities, understandings, and perspectives of a person educated in the liberal arts tradition): 16%
Goal 5: (respond thoughtfully to diversity): 11.6%
Goal 6: (make informed decisions and ethical choices: 10.1%

The general education goals have served us well, but the General Education Committee is well aware that part of the work of assessment is to reflect on what changes may need to be considered moving forward. It is possible that further work related to this process would suggest the need for university-wide competencies rather than specific general goals and specific major or program goals.

Standard 12: General Education

The General Education Program at WCU is designed to provide students with the knowledge, perspectives, and competencies expected of them as citizens of the state and world. The program prescribes study in the liberal-arts trad itions in order to prepare students to think and communicate as professionals, understand the social and global contexts of their lives, transfer knowledge and skills from one setting or career to another, recognize the ethical implications of professional practice, and balance the various dimensions of their personal and professional lives. Specifically, West Chester University has defined the following competencies as its general education goals:

1. Communicate effectively.
2. Employ quantitative concepts and mathematical methods.
3. Think critically and analytically.
4. Demonstrate the sensibilities, understandings , and perspectives of a person educated in the liberal-arts tradition.
5. Respond thoughtfully to diversity.
6. Make informed decisions and ethical choices.

The program structure consists of academic foundations (oral and written communication, quantitative skills, interdisciplinary requirements, and a diverse-communities requirement), distributive-area requirements (natural science, behavioral and social science, the humanities, and the arts), and writing-emphasis courses.

All general education courses are developed by faculty and reviewed and approved by faculty through a shared-governance process within the Curriculum and Academic Policies Council (CAPC). The CAPC General Education Committee is chaired by a CAPC member who sits on the CAPC Executive Council. The General Education Committee also includes the chairs of the general-education-area subcommitt ees (Writing Emphasis, Diverse Communities, Interdisciplinary, and Distributive Areas). Curricular actions are forwarded by CAPC to the provost as recommendations for final approval.

For most programs, students have flexibility in deciding which general education courses to take. For other programs, specific general education courses are stipulated in order to meet the learning goals of the academic degree program and/or meet accreditation or certification requirements. In other circumstances, the "free" general education electives are prescribed as specific classes. In addition, departments have developed program-specific attribute courses (writing-emphasis, diverse-community, and interdisciplinary courses) in order to meet multiple program requirements with fewer courses, as well as to facilitate the integration of general education goals into programs.

General education goals and requirements are listed in the undergraduate catalog and on the university website. In addition, departments develop advising sheets/checklists to advise students on all major and general education requirements. In general, majors with a high number of required classes have very detailed checklists (e.g., nursing, chemistry, education programs), often specifying courses to be taken each semester. For majors that include fewer required classes and more electives (e.g., English, history), departments tend to have a checklist of course categories within which students have significant options. Most departments make their advising

sheets easily available to students both in print format and online through the department's web page. Since these documents are produced for the various majors, the departmental—rather than general-education—requirements are typically the focus.

PROGRAM EVOLUTION SINCE 2001 REACCREDITATION

The 2001 Middle States review suggested that West Chester University place the "highest possible priority" on action concerning general education. The review team identified three specific aspects of the General Education Program to be addressed: 1) coherence, 2) recognition of diversity, and 3) assessment. Progress in each of these areas was addressed in the 2006 Periodic Review Report (PRR) and has continued since that point.

Coherence

In May 2004, CAPC passed a motion to assign a required general education goal to each general education course to support program coherence.[1] Table 12.1 summarizes the results of the change:

Table 12.1: General Education Areas and Goals

General Education Areas (Foundation and Distributive)	General Education Goals
Academic Foundations:	
English Composition/WRT	Communicate effectively
Mathematics	Employ quantitative concepts and mathematical methods
Communication	Communicate effectively
Diverse Communities	Respond thoughtfully to diversity
Interdisciplinary	Demonstrate the sensibilities, understandings, and perspectives of a person educated in the liberal-arts tradition
Distributive Requirements	
Science	Think critically and analytically
Behavioral and Social Sciences	Think critically and analytically
Humanities	Make informed decisions and ethical choices
Arts	Demonstrate the sensibilities, understandings, and perspectives of a person educated in the liberal-arts tradition
Writing Emphasis	Communicate effectively

Consistency is further supported by the dissemination of general education information through department handbooks and electronic information posting.[2]

Recognition of Diversity

As reported in the 2006 PRR, the General Education Program now includes a requirement for a diverse-communities course (designated as a "J" course). A diverse-communities course is defined as a course that educates students about historically marginalized groups (based on gender, race, class, ethnicity, religion, disability, or sexuality), provides a theoretical framework

for an analysis of structural inequalities, fosters understanding of difference, and furthers the goal of graduating students who are committed to creating a just and equitable society.

To date, 59 courses from 26 departments and programs have been approved as diverse-communities courses.[3] Each year, CAPC makes a call for examples of "best practice" within a selected theme, and the Executive Committee selects four or five for presentation at general assembly meetings. Several of these presentations have focused on the "J" course, and there have been numerous forums and opportunities for peer dialogue about diverse-communities courses and goals. Finally, service-learning opportunities in the curriculum enrich students' learning about diversity through engagement in the community. For the academic year 2009-10, 118 courses included a service learning component.[4]

Assessment

The 2001 Middle States review team expressed concerns about general education assessment on both the micro and the macro level. On the micro level, the team noted that many courses at the University had a "lifelong course approval," which raised concerns about the legitimate verification of course goals and content over time. On the macro level, no assessment plan was in place to evaluate the program as a whole. Each concern will be discussed separately below.

Micro Level: Review and Revalidation of Courses. In response to the last Middle States review, CAPC developed a process for regularly reviewing the syllabi of all general education courses. This process has gone through several iterations to improve the method and produce outcomes consistent with the spirit of the Middle States recommendation.

Each year, from six to ten academic departments without external accreditation engage in a program-review process mandated by a PASSHE Board of Governors policy.[5] One component of this process includes submitting all course syllabi for review of the courses' relationship to the academic program's student-learning goals. CAPC now capitalizes on this process by having the CAPC Program Review Committee (PRC) simultaneously review the syllabi for all general education courses taught by the department under review to ensure compliance with the review and revalidation guidelines.[6] The chair of the CAPC PRC forwards the results of the review to the General Education Committee, whose members determine whether the courses can be revalidated or need revisions. Chairs are notified of courses needing revision and given clear revision expectations and deadlines for resubmitting syllabi (within one academic semester). If the deadline for submitting the revised syllabi is not met, the courses lose their status as recommended general education courses. For the general education courses taught within programs that have external accreditation, a similar process ensures course review.

During 2008-09, 61 general education courses were reviewed; 54 were revalidated, and 7 were placed on probation in April 2009. All probationary courses were reinstated within the following semester by revising the syllabi appropriately. In 2009-10, 156 courses were reviewed; 51 were revalidated, and 105 were placed on probation in April 2010.

Macro Level: Program Assessment. The 2001 Middle States review provoked rich dialog about the assessment of WCU's General Education Program, and in 2004, CAPC recommended and the provost approved the General Education Program Assessment Plan. This framework mapped out specific measurable sub-goals in each major goal area and identified appropriate types of data to collect, points of data collection, and timelines for the collection and synthesis of data and for the reporting and implementation of findings. At that time, elements of information

literacy were identified and linked directly to general education goals and/or sub-goals. This framework was discussed among the faculty at large, and assessment according to the plan commenced in spring 2006 with a pilot that focused on goal 1, effective communication.

In fall 2006 following this first round of pilot assessment, the General Education Committee consulted with a known national expert in assessment, Dr. Trudy Banta. It was determined that while the original plan was comprehensive, it was unwieldy and required excessive work on the part of department chairs. Further, the assessment tools employed were uneven across colleges and departments, and the results were course specific. These factors led to a significant revision of the assessment plan beginning in 2007 to improve effectiveness through program-level measures of general education competencies (as opposed to course-level assessment) and to enhance efficiency by centralizing the data collection and analysis with the General Education Committee.

With this revision, the assessment process each year includes these elements:

1. Pilot at least one new goal.
2. Assess the goal(s) piloted in the previous year.
3. Create a random sample of students enrolled in the goal-specific courses.
4. Contact instructors of the courses associated with the goals; provide rubrics, and request completion of a survey of instructor-related data (years of experience, number of times teaching the course, and questions about the rubric provided).
5. Have instructors return one ungraded copy of the selected students' work along with the assignment's directions to the General Education Committee.
6. Convene an independent group of faculty to discuss the rubric(s) and complete exercises to ensure inter-rater reliability.
7. Within this group, use the rubrics to assess the student artifacts for achievement of the respective goal(s).
8. Through group discussions, also generate some overall suggestions for future assessments.
9. Write the assessment report (prepared by the chair of the General Education Assessment Committee), submit it to the provost and the associate provost, and discuss it at the first CAPC meeting each fall.
10. Post the report on the associate provost's website.
11. Have two members of the general education assessment team meet with the departments that participated in the most recent assessments to discuss results, offer suggestions, and share raters' feedback. (Rater reflections and critical feedback, as well as examples of very good assignments with respect to their ability to be assessed, will be available in the evidence room.) Departments are then expected to share the information provided with the faculty.

Ultimately, the schedule of assessment includes two goals per year, and the cycle repeats every three years.

The schedule to assess the general education goals is depicted in Table 12.2:

Table 12.2: Schedule of Assessment for WCU's General Education Goals

Goal	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
1	Pilot					Assess		
2		Assessment of assessment with consultant			Pilot	Assess		
3			Pilot	Assess	Repeat Assess		Assess	
4				Pilot	Assess			Assess
5			Pilot	Assess			Assess	
6				Pilot	Assess			Assess

Assessment Results

Assessment of results since 2006-07 provides evidence that the general education curriculum contributes to college-level proficiency in the key competency areas addressed by the General Education Program. A brief summary of each goal follows. (Full reports will be available in the evidence room at the time of the site visit.)

Goal 1: Communicate effectively. Although the assessment plan changed after the first round of assessment in 2006, the pilot assessment of goal 1 produced strong results regarding student learning. In that round, two departments, Communication Studies and English, were selected to participate because each of these departments offers academic-foundation courses that support two means of effective communication, oral and written.

In the Communication Studies course, Public Speaking (SPK 208), speeches were evaluated utilizing a rubric to assess organization, content, and delivery. In addition, questions embedded in course tests measured students' understanding of concepts in these areas. Table 12.3 summarizes the results of the pre-test and final-exam questions:

Table 12.3: Pre/Post-test Results: Effective Communication

Question Topic	Pre-test Results (% correct)	Final-Exam Results (% correct)
1. Transition	89%	91%
2. Thesis	80%	90%
3. Support	87%	89%
4. Testimony	44%	61%
5. Delivery	71%	82%
6. Eye Contact	89%	93%

Questions related to "support" and "testimony" were also designed to capture important elements of information literacy. Although not as strong as other factors measured, the greatest learning from pre-test to final exam occurred in understanding the difference between testimony and hearsay. This result is very important for this foundation-level course.

In the writing (WRT) courses, the English Department's Composition Committee used a case-study approach to assess the writing portfolios required of all students in WRT 120 and WRT 200. A sample of portfolios was collected and evaluated using an assessment rubric to evaluate student performance in five areas—genre, content, expression, organization, and

correctness. Results reveal that well over 70% of students at both levels of the program met or exceeded baseline expectations.

Goal 2: Employ quantitative concepts and mathematical methods. Goal 2 is scheduled for its pilot assessment in spring 2011. A rubric is being developed and will be finalized in fall 2010. (Note: Pilot testing methods include generating a university-wide sample and asking faculty to submit assignments, "ideal" answers, and student artifacts for the students in the sample, just as in the full assessment.)

Goal 3: Think critically and analytically. Assessment of goal 3 was piloted in spring 2008 and fully implemented in 2009-10. The rubric was refined as a result of the pilot assessment as it became clear that the rubric did not sufficiently address "analytical thinking." The new rubric focuses on two types of knowledge—conceptual and procedural—in order to apply equally to the natural, social, and behavioral sciences. In spite of the changes made to the rubric, there was enough consistency in the two rubrics to measure change in four areas: differentiation among facts, opinions, and inferences in the framing of a research question; identification of assumptions; application of problem-solving methods; and identification of multiple perspectives.

The results show improvement in all four areas, reflected in the higher rating of artifacts in 2009 (scores of 3s and 4s) as compared to 2008. Results for the first construct are reflected in the graph below:

Outcome: *Effectively frame a research question—including differentiating among facts, opinions, and inferences—by assessing and evaluating sources* .

Table 12.4: 2008 and 2009 Comparisons: Critical and Analytical Thinking (Percentages of students earning 1-4 ratings; 1=low; 4=high)
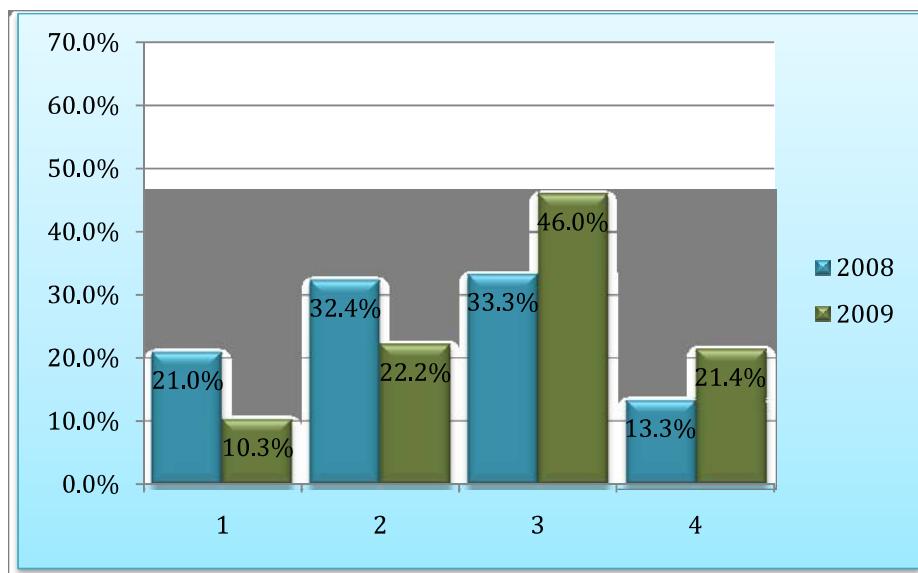
Goal 4: Demonstrate the sensibilities, understandings, and perspectives of a person educated in the liberal-arts tradition. Goal 4 was piloted in spring 2010 and will be fully assessed in 2010-11. The initial rubric was evaluated by the 2010 summer assessment team and will be revised for use in the full assessment in 2010-11.

Goal 5: Respond thoughtfully to diversity. Goal 5 was piloted in 2008-09 and assessed in 2009-10. A comparison of the data reveals that scores have improved slightly overall. (Detailed

tables, graphs, rubrics, and full assessment data will be available in the evidence room.) The slight improvement appears related to raters developing more clarity about appropriate answers for each category following the pilot. It also became apparent that the quality or clarity of assignments to assess this goal varied greatly. This analysis has been the focus of feedback to faculty teaching courses to support goal 5.

Goal 6: Make informed decisions and ethical choices. Academic year 2009-10 was the pilot year for goal 6, which has proven to be the most difficult to assess to date. A number of faculty teaching these courses were not aware that their courses addressed general education goal 6, indicating some weakness in the communication process. Thereafter, faculty were engaged to discuss and refine the rubric, creating an educational experience that will likely bring increased participation in the 2010-11 assessment cycle. (Results of the pilot will be included in the evidence room.)

ADDITIONAL MEASURES TO ASSESS WCU'S GENERAL EDUCATION PROGRAM

A number of other assessments measure constructs within the WCU General Education program, providing an opportunity to triangulate the data from the foundation-level general education courses discussed above.

NSSE and General Education

The NSSE includes items related to communication, critical thinking, and diversity, as depicted in Table 12.4:

<p style="text-align:center">Table 12.5: General Education and NSSE</p>

WCU General Education Goal	NSSE Item	2008		2010	
		First Year	Senior Year	First Year	Senior Year
1: Communicate effectively	How often have you made a class presentation (often, very often)?	40%	62%	33%	63%
3: Think critically and analytically	During the current school year, how much has your coursework emphasized the following mental activities? • Memorizing facts, ideas, or methods • Analyzing basic elements of an idea or theory • Synthesizing and organizing ideas • Making judgments about value of information • Applying theories or concepts	74% 77% 66% 70% 75%	61% 82% 74% 69% 80%	70% 80% 66% 66% 72%	65% 88% 78% 76% 86%
	To what extent has your experience at this institution contributed to your knowledge, skills, and personal development in the following areas?	81%	84%	81%	88%
	During the current school year, how often have you examined the strengths and weaknesses of your own views on a topic or issue?	44%	54%	44%	56%
5: Respond thoughtfully to diversity	During the current school year, how often have you tried to better understand someone else's views by imagining how an issue looks from his or her perspective?	53%	59%	57%	68%
	During the current school year, how often have you had serious conversations with students of a different race or ethnicity than your own (often, very often)?	56%	51%	50%	54%

In general, results show that between their first and senior years, students perceive increased opportunities to engage in these skills. One area of concern is that fewer students are engaging in serious conversations with students of a different race or ethnicity than we would expect given the general education diversity goal. This result, as well as the results of the Campus Climate Survey (discussed below), has led to the development of new programming and recommended action steps to begin in spring 2011.

Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA)

The CLA comprises a performance task and an analytical writing task that assess critical thinking, analytical reasoning, problem solving, and written communication, all goals of the General Education Program at WCU. WCU engaged in a pilot assessment of the CLA in 2009-10 and has initiated a full implementation in 2010-11. The pilot results show that WCU's graduating seniors are performing as expected (according to SAT scores) as well as showing modest evidence of "value added." However, graduating students scored above expectations in the performance task, which asks students to synthesize, analyze, and evaluate information from multiple sources—key features of information literacy competence.[7]

The results of the Collegiate Learning Assessment were brought to the Assessment Advisory Committee for discussion in early fall 2010, and additional analysis of the data is underway. As a participant in the Voluntary System of Accountability, WCU will post CLA scores on the College Portrait website.

Campus Climate Survey

The Campus Climate Survey, referenced earlier in the self-study, included several items related to diversity experiences inside and out side of the classroom and provides yet another method of assessment for goal 5 (Respond thoughtfully to diversity.). More than half of all students and faculty felt the curriculum includes materials, perspectives, and/or experiences of people based on 14 of 18 provided demographic characteristics (the exceptions included immigrant status, marital/partner status, parental status, and veteran/military status).[8] Once again, since all students must take a diversity course, we would expect this percentage to be higher.

Closing the Loop

As stated above, the last step of the process for the General Education Committee (GEC) assessment team is to meet with departments following assessment to discuss results, offer suggestions, and share raters' feedback. How departments have used assessment data to make changes has not been captured to date, though the GEC has created a process to check back in with departments in the semester following the discussion of results to capture and report these actions. This approach will begin in 2010-11.

In addition, on November 9, 2010, the Office of Teaching, Learning, and Assessment organized a forum for faculty, staff, and students that presented an integrated summary of key results from the NSSE, Beginning College Survey of Student Engagement (BCSSE), general education assessment, and the campus climate survey results in relation to critical thinking, information literacy, engagement, diversity, and advising.[9] Participants were asked to generate action steps suggested by the data and prioritized advising, study abroad, the integration of diversity content into more courses, and stronger connections among library and classroom faculty to support information literacy.[10] This presentation was also shared with the Academic Affairs Council and President's Council.

CHALLENGES AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Closing the Loop

As acknowledged in the 2010 General Education Assessment report,[11] while there is communication back to departments about the general education assessment results, creating a way to support revisions and/or changes in courses that may be indicated by the results is difficult because the General Education Committee can only provide feedback to departments and does not have the authority to influence how results are used. The GEC is discussing ways to engage departments that teach the courses to realize the full potential of the data to improve general education.

While the November 2010 forum engaged faculty, staff, and students in thinking about the integration of several key assessment results and generated good discussion about possible ways to strengthen student learning and engagement, no structure exists to ensure that any changes are made, nor is there a structure in place for the regular review of integrated assessment results.

Benchmarks

A necessary next step in the assessment of general education will be the establishment of benchmarks. Each goal will have been fully assessed by the end of 2011-12, allowing for analysis of the whole in determining what is reasonable to expect and what to aspire to in meeting general education goals in the foundation-level courses.

Sustaining a Culture of Assessment for General Education

In order to meet overall class-size targets, some departments have chosen to increase the general education class sizes in order to protect major program classes. Larger class sizes are also a way to reduce the number of temporary faculty to meet the 25% cap on temporary faculty (see Standard 10). In addition, the majority of general education courses are offered within the College of Arts and Sciences (two-thirds of general education course sections in the last five years). This fact places a larger burden on the College of Arts and Sciences in the assessment process. Finally, temporary faculty have taught a disproportionate percentage of general education courses (43.2% over the last five years).[12] If temporary faculty members are shouldering the largest portion of the responsibility for teaching general education, this situation raises questions about the ability of WCU to respond adequately to assessment results and to implement changes. All three factors create challenges in sustaining assessment efforts and influence the use of assessment results to effect change.

Transfer Legislation

In 2006, the Pennsylvania Department of Education began implementing Article XX-C of the Public School Code of 1949,[13] which stipulates that all PASSHE institutions accept 30 community-college transfer credits as general education credits. While awarding these 30 credits was largely already well established in our institutional transfer-equivalency matrices, more recent legislation stipulates that all students transferring in with an associate degree are to be accorded 60 transfer credits—i.e., "junior standing." Given the possibility that students will graduate having taken no general education at WCU, this policy challenges the institution's ability to ensure that all WCU graduates achieve the competencies of the General Education Program. Furthermore, it will create challenges for program assessment.

Linking Academic Program Goals and General Education Goals

Currently, assessment of general education goals takes place through the assessment of competencies achieved in the defined general education courses. As we move forward, creating a link between the general education goals and the student learning outcomes of academic programs will provide more meaningful ways to assess the development of competency over time, as well as to see how each competency applies to the discipline/profession. A recent analysis revealed that a number of programs articulate (and assess) goals consistent with the general education goals.[14] Linking general education courses to higher-order learning as applied in the majors provides an opportunity to strengthen achievement of the University's general education goals.

MAJOR FINDINGS

The General Education Program and its assessment processes have made considerable progress since the Periodic Review Report in regards to micro-level and program assessment. Evidence shows that the general education curriculum contributes to college-level proficiency in the key competency areas addressed by the General Education Program. Linking academic-program student learning outcomes with general education competencies will provide more overall coherence and assist in the assessment of competency achievement.

While a process has been established to communicate assessment results to departments teaching the classes, no structure is in place for ensuring the use of assessment results to influence program or curricular change. In addition, no current structure exists for the regular review of integrated assessment findings, or for the process of ensuring that results are used to effect change.

Ongoing assessment will demonstrate whether possible threats to the integrity of the general education program and its assessment (class size, temporary faculty teaching a disproportionate number of general education classes, and transfer legislation) are having a negative effect and whether adjustments will need to be made.

The following sample assignments or exam questions were submitted by faculty and are provided, with permission, to serve as examples of assignments that are useful for the rubric-based assessment process that the general education assessment is based upon.

Goal 3
Sample 1

```
ESSAY I. (20 points)

Today the U.S. economy suffers from recession, but many people
are worried that inflation will be a problem next year because
the banks might start lending their excess reserves to the
public. If the Federal Reserve decides to decrease the inflation
rate, then how could it use its three major policy tools: reserve
requirements, lending, and open market operations?  Be specific,
and explain your reasoning.
```

From the instructor:

A "good answer" might be as follows:

U.S. banks today have unprecedented amounts of excess reserves, cash balances beyond what the banks are required to have. If the banks decide to lend these reserves to the public, then there will be a huge increase in the quantity of money in circulation. Such an increase in the money supply has the potential to cause a tremendous inflation.

If the Federal Reserve decides to prevent inflation from rising to excessive levels, then it can use its three major policy tools: reserve requirements, discount window lending, and open market operations. First, reserve requirements can be increased to convert excess (lendable) reserves into required (not lendable) reserves. Second, the Fed can stop lending additional reserves to banks through the discount window. Finally, the Fed can sell some of its vast holdings of securities to the public on the open market. When the public pays the Fed for those securities, money would be taken out of circulation.

All three of these policies can be used to limit any increase in the quantity of money in circulation and the consequent increase in the cost of living.

(n.b., During the depression the Fed did something very similar to this pre-emptive strike on inflation. They doubled reserve requirements in 1936-37. As a result 1938 was nearly as bad as 1933.)

3. Consider the following diagram of two firms, A and B. Each firm has increasing marginal costs of pollution abatement, and each firm has been issued 10,000 tradable pollution credits. The current market price for a credit is $250:
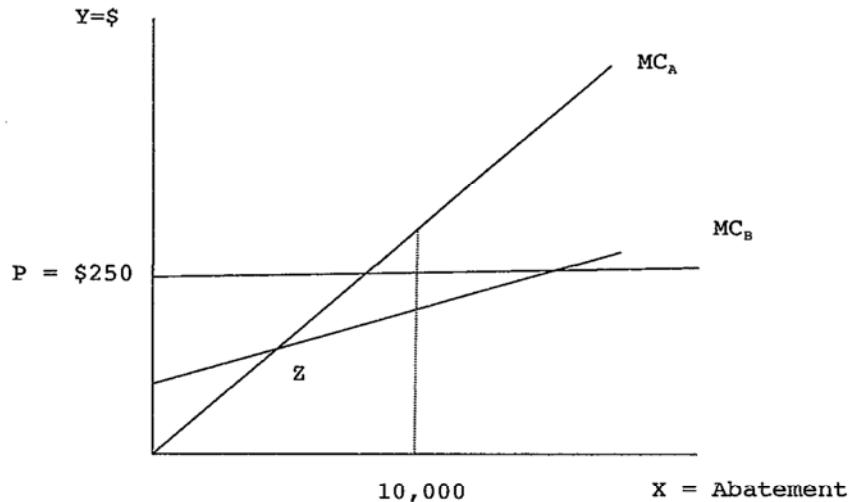
A. Should firm A buy or sell credits? Explain your reasoning, noting how and why the decision affects the profitability of the firm.

Firm A should buy credits because the marginal cost of abatement is greater than the price of the credit. Each time the firm buys a credit, it must pay the price of $250, but it reduces its abatement costs by an even greater amount, saving the firm money and increasing profits.

B. Should firm B buy or sell credits? Explain your reasoning, noting how and why the decision affects the profitability of the firm.

Firm B should sell credits because the marginal cost of abatement is less than the price of the credit. Each time the firm sells a credit, it must pay the additional abatement cost, but it increases revenue by an even greater amount (since the price from the sale is greater than marginal cost), increasing profitability.

C. A colleague suggests that the two firms will trade credits until point the intersection point, Z, where the marginal costs are equal. Is this correct? Explain your reasoning.

It is true that the firms will trade to a point where their marginal abatement costs are equal because at this point there are no further gains from trade.

It is false that this outcome is achieved at point Z. As long as the price remains $250, firms A and B will cease trading when their marginal costs equal $250.

At this point, neither firm has any trade to offer that will interest the other firm. B will not offer to sell below $250, and A will not buy at a price above $250.

Goal 4
Sample 1

Assignment:
- Find five <u>strong</u> examples of Neoclassical architecture on West Chester University campus, in the city of West Chester and elsewhere in the region.
- Record the name of the building (if identifiable) and the address (or nearest cross streets). If possible provide photographs or illustrations.
- Identify the order of the buildings. List the architectural elements that define the building as neoclassical (see diagrams).

Lastly, in two to three paragraphs, discuss the reasons why you think many American architects (such as the one who designed these buildings) imitated Classical architecture.
- Do the buildings have anything in common (e.g. public buildings, private buildings, government or religious buildings)?
- Do you think there is a connection between the purpose of the building and the architectural style?
- What sort of message do you think the architect was trying to convey by using a classical architectural style?

From the instructor:

GRADING CRITERIA

In this assignment, I expect the student to demonstrate the ability to recognize Neoclassical architecture (found on WCU's campus and in West Chester) and to identify the key architectural elements that define it as such.

Additionally, students are expected to:
- Associate the style with the tradition of ancient Greek and Roman architecture
- Demonstrate an awareness of the prevalence of the Neoclassical style in public buildings (e.g. civic, banks, churches etc.)
- Discuss the symbolic importance of the Neoclassical style as a vehicle to transmit ideas such as stability, tradition and order.
- Equate the style with the contributions of the classical world: law, democracy and education.

Sample 2

Write one or two paragraphs in answer to the following questions:

1. Discuss the role that music plays in the context of Mozart's historical period. Identify specific musical events in the movie and discuss their meaning/purpose, and then comment on the importance of such events from the viewpoint of contemporary culture.

2. Choose two pieces of music to analysis (either background music or music from question #1). Identify, to the best of your ability, aspects of timbre, time, melody, texture, and harmony.

3. Does the movie's depiction of Mozart's music affect your understanding and/or opinion of his music? Consider and comment on two of the following scenes: 1) Salieri's description of the music he sees on the page before he concludes that God has given this genius to someone who is unworthy; 2) Mozart's description of the opening of the Marriage of Figaro when he is trying to convince the emperor to allow him to finish it; and 3) the scene near the end when Salieri is writing down the music from the Requiem that Mozart is singing to him.

4. What is your overall impression of the movie?

NOTES for CAPC's General Education Assessment Committee:

1. In a good answer, I looked for a demonstrated understanding of the elements of music as presented in the course, evidence of a thoughtful analysis of the movie, and a full answer to each of the assignment's questions.

Our premise this semester has been that women have always contributed to and felt empowered by writing, around the world and from the earliest times--even when the historical, political, and social context worked to supress their literary participation. When you answer the questions, please this keep in mind. Write clear, well-organized essays, using specific examples from the texts to back up your arguments.   Do not discuss any given writer in more than one question, unless specifically permitted to do so. Please note: you may choose between questions 6 and 7.

1. Take the theme of education and trace it through several centuries and geographic regions, using at least four writers we've read this semester, from four different periods and places. Demonstrate commonalities and differences in the authors' approaches. If you use Sor Juana, please do not duplicate your response in question # 5. (20)

2. What poetic and narrative forms have women writers experimented with? Invented? Adapted? Please give at least three examples (different than those in your other answers) and describe specifically what they've done and how. (15)

3. Using two writers not discussed elsewhere in this exam, including one mystic and one from the ancient time period, demonstrate how women have claimed authority through the use of the written word. (10)

4. What specific contributions have the novels *The Tale of Genji* and *Northanger Abbey* made to narrative prose fiction as a genre? What are their most important themes? To what extent does each reflect a woman-centered consciousness? (20)

5. Several writers we have read this semester demonstrate an awareness of women's history, and of its role in their own intellectual development. Discuss this awareness in two writers read this semester, including sor Juana and one other, not discussed elsewhere in your exam. (15)

6. We have read works in unusual genres this semester; including Sei Shonagan's *Pillowbook* and Flora Tristán's *Peregrinations of a Pariah*. Describe two in terms of its genre and discuss the contributions of each to women's literature. (10) OR

7. This semester, we have read quite a bit of love poetry: Discuss the themes and images evident in two poets from different time periods and places. (One should be Colonna, Labé, or Stampa). (10)

Sample 2

Part III. Essays.

1. Provide a detailed response to ONE of the following essay questions. Consider the position and arguments of at least two figures we've read in your response. Complete sentences are required. (5 points)

(i) Should the federal government legalize same-sex marriage?

(ii) Is it always wrong to lie?

(iii) Is eating meat unethical?

(iv) Do we have an obligation to assist those who live in absolute poverty?

(v) Can a just society allow inequalities in rights and/or income?

2. Ethical perspectives can be assessed not only in terms of their reasonableness or truth, but in terms of their function or power-effects. We can ask if a view can be or has been used, wittingly or unwittingly, to legitimate or perpetuate oppression. Explore the connection between ethical theory and oppression by describing three ethical perspectives in detail and explaining their relationship to the oppression of specific groups. (7.5 points)

Sample 3

4. Feminist Analysis (200 points)

Since one of my goals for this course is that you be able to apply concepts from the course to the content of your lives; this assignment asks you to take a critical look at an everyday or text (and a contemporary one). Specifically, you will conduct a feminist analysis of some lecture, film, tv episode, poem, advertisement, interaction, style, technology, document or website (or something else that you run by me) that is CURRENT (happened within the last six months). Your task is to "unpack" the text – looking at the ways that it does; and does not; support the equality of women and other historically marginalized groups. In addition to analyzing the "text" itself; you'll want to analyze the context in which it exists (how is it framed, advertised, and attended, etc.?) and you'll want to pay attention to the reception of the event or text by audience members or attendees. I urge you to select the event or text carefully. Don't pick something that is obviously offensive to women; or something that you think embodies feminism completely. Most things are more complicated than that; and the power of sexism lies in its ability to conceal itself. Challenge yourself. You'll have more fun; and learn more; if you pick a text that is outside of your "usual" range – because that will mean that your "work" for the project will be both internal and external (you'll need to examine your own choices while analyzing the event itself.) You will need to bring in ideas from the readings for this course (and outside readings if you find them appropriate) and to provide specific evidence to support your argument about the object of analysis. 6-8 pages.

Goal 6
Sample 1

Guidelines for Response Papers:

Two response papers or reflective essays are due at various points throughout the semester. The due dates are listed on the syllabus. Each paper must be submitted in two ways: 1) electronically through Turnitin, and 2) in the form of a 'hard copy' in class on the paper is due. *No late papers will be accepted.*

Each response paper should be 1-2 pages in length, double-spaced, 12 point Times New Roman font.

Each response paper should contain:

- a brief summary of the article
- an attempt to identify the argument
- personal reflection on the ethical theory proposed or discussed in the article
- personal reflection on how the article and/or ethical theory presented may apply to issues faced by historically marginalized populations

Topic for Response Paper #1: The topic for the first response paper is either "Oppression" by Marilyn Frye or "Letter from a Birmingham Jail" by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. The assignment is to write a reflective essay that contains the criteria listed above. An attempt should be made to integrate something you learned in our in-class 'diversity workshop' into the part of the essay that deals with historically marginalized populations.

Topic for Response Paper #2: The topic for the second response paper is a news article of your choice. The article should be from a legitimate news source, and should be relevant to something we discussed in class. For example, the article can relate to a moral dilemma, a breach of ethics in the news, an ethical theory, or an ethical issue that is currently affecting a historically marginalized population. Be sure to include all of the criteria listed above.

By 'historically marginalized populations,' I mean people who have historically been discriminated against on the basis of gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, class, religion or disabilities.

Sample 2

1. Although it appears women are represented in subsidiary positions in *Gilgamesh, Mwindo Epic, The Art of War, Oresteia,* and *The Tale of Genji* in reality women constitute the forte, the actual source of power in these books. Is this statement a valid interpretation of the role of women in these literary works? Use illustrations from at least three primary works.

OR

2. What elements of social justice are privileged in *Gilgamesh, Mwindo Epic, The Art of War, Oresteia,* and *The Tale of Genji*? What kinds of resolution do these elements foster? You may discuss such details as determinateness, fairness, consensus, legitimacy, reconciliation and resolution, **pathei mathos** (complementarity/reconciliation of opposite) rather **pathein ton erksanta** (like for like; revenge; an eye for an eye).

Modern Civilization: *King Leopold's Ghost,* by Adam Hochschild

FROM THE SYLLABUS:

<u>Written Assignment:</u>

During the semester, each student will write a 2-3-page reaction paper to the (2) supplemental books. These are *not* book reports (or simply a summary of the author's main points), but a critical evaluation of the authors' handling of some aspect (or theme) of their books. As the semester progresses, I will hand out a list of possible questions that could be addressed in your reaction papers. These reaction papers will have the same weight as an exam grade.

Choose <u>only</u> one of the following questions/imperatives:

1) Consider Hochschild's story through the eyes of King Leopold II, noting how this imperialist effort affected him.
2) Consider Hochschild's story through the eyes of "Henry Morton Stanley," noting how this imperialist effort affected him.
3) Consider Hochschild's story through the eyes of the peoples of the Congo, noting how this imperialist effort affected them and their land.

- double-spaced, 12-point font, 1-inch margins
- Offer a separate title page (choose your title)
- Offer an introductory paragraph to your paper
- Offer a concluding paragraph to your paper

<u>CHECKLIST:</u>

- ✓ Avoid passive voice
- ✓ Spell check / Grammar check
- ✓ No slang (unless used by book's author)
- ✓ Be careful of singular and plural pronoun use
- ✓ Does each paragraph have a topic sentence
- ✓ Is there a good transition from paragraph to paragraph
- ✓ Read final paper aloud / Make changes (do this more than once)
- ✓ Hand in on time
- ✓ SEEK HELP if you have questions (writing center, tutors, professor,)

"Students graduating from West Chester University will be able to employ quantitative concepts and mathematical methods"

Learning Outcome	1	2	3	4
A. Understand and use mathematical symbolism	Student fails to identify, or misidentifies, mathematical symbols used in statements or formulas.	Student correctly identifies mathematical symbols but fails to use them correctly in computation or argument.	Student correctly uses given mathematical symbols.	Student correctly applies new mathematical symbols as appropriate for a calculation or argument, or in a new or unfamiliar situation.
B. Employ calculations correctly to draw mathematical conclusions	Student calculates incorrectly.	Student performs simple calculations correctly but cannot put them together into a larger computation.	Student calculates correctly but fails to draw appropriate conclusions consistent with calculated results.	Student calculates correctly and draws appropriate conclusions.
C. Understand the nature and use of mathematical arguments	Student fails to recognize or understand mathematical arguments.	Student can answer some questions about the nature of some mathematical argument.	Student shows understanding of arguments but cannot independently apply them.	Student understands and can apply mathematical arguments.
D. Understand how mathematics is used to gain insight into nature and as a tool in the world of human affairs	Student shows little awareness of a connection between mathematical symbolism, calculations, and arguments and their use outside mathematics.	Student often responds incorrectly to questions about previously discussed examples of applications of mathematics.	Student can respond appropriately to questions about previously discussed examples but cannot deal successfully with new applications.	Student shows understanding of how mathematics is used and can work new examples of applications.

"Students graduating from West Chester University will be able to think critically and analytically."

Learning Outcome	1	2	3	4
A. Effectively frame a research question, including differentiating among facts, opinions, and inferences by assessing and evaluating sources.	Student cannot frame research question, uses sources inappropriately.	Student frames an incorrect or ineffective research question (cannot be operationalized, inconsistent appropriate use of sources).	Student frames adequate research question (can be operationalized and incorporates appropriate sources).	Student frames insightful research question that can be operationalized and is framed within an appropriate research context).
B. Apply conceptual knowledge to: - identify assumptions - make logical inferences - identify defective logical inferences - reach reasonable conclusions	Student fails to recognize concept; engages material erroneously.	Student recognizes concept but is unable to apply it correctly or logically.	Student recognizes concept; applies it generally or simplistically.	Student recognizes concept and applies it thoroughly and consistently.
C. Apply procedural knowledge to: - unpack complex problems into constituent parts - identify reliable problem-solving methods - accurately apply problem-solving methods	Student fails to recognize nature of problem to be solved and/or procedure necessary to solve it.	Student recognizes necessary procedure but is unable to apply it correctly or logically.	Student recognizes procedure; applies it generally or simplistically.	Student recognizes procedure and applies it thoroughly and consistently.
D. Identify the presence of multiple perspectives and explain the contextual factors that account for these perspectives	Student is unable to identify perspectives other than own.	Student recognizes presence of multiple perspectives, but is unable to articulate them.	Student recognizes multiple perspectives; articulates them generally or simplistically.	Student recognizes multiple perspectives and articulates them clearly and specifically.

Note: The terms "conceptual knowledge" and "procedural knowledge" from Randall Knight's text, "Five Easy Lessons." In it Knight categorizes knowledge into three forms:

- Factual Knowledge – Knowledge of specific events and situations. Defining redshift (astronomy), listing checks and balances in government (political science), etc.

- Conceptual Knowledge – Knowledge of (physical) principles, knowledge that provides a unified understanding of many pieces of factual knowledge. Conceptual knowledge is generally thought of as having explanatory or predictive power. Reading supply/demand curves (economics), describing chemical reactions (chemistry), etc.

- Procedural Knowledge – Knowledge of how to apply factual and conceptual knowledge to specific problem-solving situations; knowing how to *use* what you know. Creating models, evaluating poll data, etc.

"Students graduating from West Chester University will be able to demonstrate the sensibilities, understandings, and perspectives of a person educated in the liberal arts tradition"

Learning Outcome	1	2	3	4
B. Demonstrates an understanding of the arts and humanities with reference to the artistic contributions of people from diverse periods, movements, and cultures	Student fails to demonstrate an understanding of the arts and humanities in light of the artistic contributions of people from diverse periods, movements, and cultures	Student demonstrates a simplistic understanding of the arts and humanities with an incomplete consideration of the artistic contributions of people from diverse periods, movements, and cultures.	Student articulates an informed under-standing of the arts and humanities and demonstrates knowledge of the artistic contributions of people from diverse periods, movements, and cultures.	Student articulates a nuanced or sophisticated understanding of the arts and humanities; demonstrates knowledge of the contributions of people from diverse periods, movements, and cultures in a way that is advanced for the course level.
B. Identify, evaluate, and apply conceptual approaches such as style, form and/or aesthetic quality in a given discipline	Student fails to identify, evaluate, or apply any conceptual approaches to the arts and humanities.	Student attempts to identify, evaluate, and apply some discipline specific conceptual approaches to the arts and humanities.	Student adequately identifies, evaluates, and applies discipline specific conceptual approaches to the arts and humanities.	Student demonstrates an understanding of discipline specific conceptual approaches and effectively applies them to the arts and humanities.
C. Compare and contrast interdisciplinary contexts such as scientific or fact based models, predictive theories, philosophical principles, and criticism (value based writings)	Student cannot differentiate between factual knowledge, philosophical principle and art or humanity based criticism	Student demonstrates a simplistic understanding of the differences between factual knowledge, philosophical principle and art or humanity based criticism	Student satisfactorily differentiates between factual knowledge, philosophical principle and art or humanity based criticism	Student demonstrates an informed understanding of the differences between factual knowledge, philosophical principle and art or humanity based criticism
D. Responds to the arts and humanities with a liberal arts sensibility and demonstrates an ability to interpret and articulate awareness of value and meaning.	Student fails to respond with a liberal arts sensibility and cannot interpret or articulate an awareness of the qualitative value of arts and humanities	Student occasionally responds with a liberal arts sensibility and inconsistently interprets and/or articulates an awareness of the qualitative value of arts and humanities	Student responds with a liberal arts sensibility. Student both interprets and articulates an awareness of the qualitative value of arts and humanities	Student responds with a sophisticated liberal arts sensibility and/or articulates an awareness of the qualitative value of arts and humanities.

Key terms:

Liberal arts perspective – regards facts, artifacts, or art and judges their significance using a liberal arts lens. The liberal arts perspective is a cross-disciplinary approach that combines rational thought with general knowledge acquisition from subjects in both the humanities and the sciences. Combining ideas drawn from these diverse disciplinary fields develops intellectual capabilities that enable students to formulate questions, articulate complex ideas and incorporate connections across disciplines.

Understanding – refers to a sympathetic acknowledgement and valuation of the artistic perspectives and contributions of diverse times, places, and peoples.

Aesthetics – a system of principles established to better understand and/ or appreciate nature, art, and related cultural products. Aesthetics refer to perception by one's senses and often pertain to the appreciation or criticism of what is considered beautiful or worthy of recognition.

Predictive theories - theories that explore connections between various aspects of a trend or event and use these connections to predict when analogous conditions may result in a similar phenomenon.

Sensibility – pertains to a person's moral, emotional, or aesthetic ideas and standards. Usually refers to someone with a susceptibility or sensitivity to emotional or artistic influences, who displays the capacity for sensation and emotion as opposed to cognition and will, and who develops an emotional consciousness of an idea, art form, or object.

"Students graduating from West Chester University will be able to respond thoughtfully to diversity"

Learning Outcome	1	2	3	4
A. Examine assigned issues from a diverse communities perspective	Student fails to analyze issues in light of a diverse communities perspective.	Student uses terms or ideas consistent with a diverse communities perspective without demonstrating a clear understanding of underlying issues.	Student applies terms or ideas consistent with a diverse communities perspective, demonstrating a clear understanding of underlying issues.	Student applies terms or ideas consistent with a diverse communities perspective in a way that is original, sophisticated, or advanced for the course level.
B. Demonstrate a reasoned openness to diversity	Student does not demonstrate openness in their thinking about diversity.	Student demonstrates some openness in their thinking about diversity, but in a way that is not detailed or convincing.	Student demonstrates a reasoned openness in their thinking about diversity.	Student demonstrates an active curiosity in their thinking about diversity in a way that is original, sophisticated, or advanced for the course level.
C. Evaluate the ideological, historical and cultural causes of structural inequality	Student does not indicate any awareness of the ideological, historical and cultural causes of structural inequality.	Student indicates some awareness of the ideological, historical and cultural causes of structural inequality.	Student adequately connects ideological, historical or cultural causes of structural inequality to their resulting conditions.	Student connects ideological, historical or cultural causes of structural inequality to their resulting conditions in a way that is original, sophisticated, or advanced for the course level.
D. Demonstrate an understanding of the perspectives of historically marginalized groups	Student does not demonstrate an understanding of the perspectives of historically marginalized groups on a given issue.	Student demonstrates a simplistic understanding of the perspectives of historically marginalized groups on a given issue.	Student articulates an informed understanding of the perspectives of historically marginalized groups on a given issue.	Student articulates a nuanced or original analysis of the perspectives of historically marginalized groups on a given issue in a way that is original, sophisticated, or advanced for the course level.

Key terms:
diverse communities perspective: A perspective that includes sensitivity to the historical, cultural, and ideological sources of structural inequality and of unequal privilege, as well as the ability to understand a situation or issue from the perspective of someone in a historically marginalized group. This includes but isn't limited to the ability to understand the modes and practices of resistance and negotiation by those marginalized peoples to the prevailing concepts or practices that are determined by the dominant culture.
historically marginalized groups: those groups of people who have been historically and systematically excluded from advantage, or oppressed by a dominant group. Categories of marginalization have included race, ethnicity, class, gender, sexual orientation, religion, physical ability, and immigrant status.
structural inequality: a process and a set of institutional relationships by which groups are historically and systematically excluded from advantage or oppressed by a dominant group. These inequalities are established and maintained by the dominant group, which results in the marginalization of other peoples and their concepts or practices. These marginalized groups in turn negotiate and contest the status and meaning of the concepts and practices of the dominant group.
reasoned openness: an attitude that includes acknowledging the viewpoints of others, approaching them with objectivity, and understanding the factual bases of differences in power between dominant and marginalized groups. In addition, a reasoned openness to diversity includes valuing the experiences and perspectives of historically marginalized peoples.

"Students graduating from West Chester University will be able to make informed decisions and ethical choices"

Learning Outcome	1	2	3	4
A. Identifies and summarizes ethical problem at issue	Does not correctly identify and/or summarize the problem or its underlying ethical issues	Identifies the main problem and some of the subsidiary, embedded, or implicit aspects of the problem and its underlying ethical issues	Identifies the main problem and many subsidiary, embedded, or implicit aspects of the problem and its underlying assumptions and ethical issues	Identifies not only the basics of the issue, but recognizes nuances of the issue. Analyzes the validity of key assumptions and the underlying ethical dimensions of the issue
B. Identifies other perspectives and positions	Deals only with a single perspective, possibly a personal one, and fails to identify other salient perspectives	Partially identifies other perspectives but remains within the scope of the personal or those alternatives presented in the course	Identifies other salient perspectives, including those drawn from outside information	Addresses and analyzes salient perspectives drawn from outside information
C. Examines quality of evidence	Merely repeats information provided, taking it as truth or denies evidence without adequate justification	Unevenly examines the evidence and source of evidence, questions its accuracy, precision, relevance, and completeness	Examines the evidence and source of evidence, questions its accuracy, precision, relevance, and completeness	Observes cause and effect and addresses existing or potential consequences. Clearly distinguishes between fact, opinion, and acknowledges value judgments
D. Considers conclusions, implications and consequences	Fails to identify and discusses conclusions, implications and consequences	Partially identifies and discusses conclusions, implications and consequences	Identifies and discusses conclusions, implications and consequences	Identifies and discusses conclusions, implications and consequences, and reflects upon own assertions

Please note: The General Education Committee would like to make a distinction between the knowledge of ethical theories and the ability to make ethical decisions. Our goal is the latter. While some familiarity with the great ethical thinkers or texts may be useful to the student in making decisions, this is not to be regarded as sufficient to meet the goal. The best student artifacts will show active and informed decision-making rather than a summary of ethical theories.