

GENERAL EDUCATION ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE REPORT

SPRING 2021

Introduction/Context

The Spring 2021 assessment focused on Student Learning Outcome Four: Engaging with Creative or Artistic Works in Category D: Understanding and Creating Ideas. Prior to the start of the spring semester, faculty teaching relevant General Education Category D courses were informed about the assessment process via email. In addition, GEAC hosted two professional development sessions facilitated by Drs. George Sirkakos and John Stanley in March and April of 2021 focused on using the rubric for SLO Four. GEAC engaged in a pilot effort to whereby faculty rated their own work. Faculty were instructed to rate a sample of approximately 30 student work samples ranging from one to four. Intervals of .5 were also acceptable. The committee agreed that the benchmark score was two.

To be clear, the Spring 2021 assessment occurred during a very challenging semester, both for the students whose artifacts are the basis of the study and for the professors who rated the students' work. The significant effects of pandemic stressors cannot be discounted, including physical illness due to COVID-19, mental illnesses and isolation, and dramatic loss of life in our state and country. Many students were caring for family members or working in public-facing jobs while attending school. Without a doubt, these factors impacted teaching, learning, and the assessing of artifacts. In addition, the course modalities shifted such that classes typically in person were either 100% online or hybrid. By January 2021, the campus community had accumulated more experience with online and hybrid instruction, as those modes were widely employed in the second half of the Spring 20 semester and in the Fall 20 semester. We have learned a great deal about online instruction, but that educational and professional development was still a work in progress at the time of this assessment. Furthermore, not all instructors or all students thrive in these classroom modalities. Indeed, during that semester, KU offered students the option to choose a grade of Credit or No Credit in each of their classes, as students faced challenges far more important than adjusting to digital instruction.

Analysis of Data

There was a collection of 901 artifacts submitted via email by faculty. The average rating for SLO Four is 2.6. Approximately 60% of students met or exceeded the benchmark. The margin of error was less than 0.07.

Table 1. Ratings broken down by colleges

College	Sample size	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error
ACA	56	2.357	1.0212	.1365
Business	121	2.467	1.0892	.0990
Education	158	3.092	.9457	.0752
Liberal Arts	244	2.436	1.0313	.0660
Visual/Performing Arts	322	2.592	.9340	.0521

Ratings by Colleges

The ratings broken down by colleges showed that students in the College of Education and the College of Visual and Performing Arts were rated higher than those in other colleges. ACA had the smallest sample size at 56, but still performed higher than the goal of above 2.0. There is very strong evidence ($p < .001$) that the mean of a population represented by our sample from the College of Education (3.092) is different from the overall mean of 2.6.06. According to this data we can be 95% confident that it is between .343 and .604 higher than other colleges.

We can confidently conclude that the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences has a mean rating of at least .034 lower than the overall mean. It is doubtful that such a small difference is meaningful beyond the scope of this analysis, due to the lack of samples collected.

Also, in the college breakdown, and in the ones to follow, the conclusions are based on the data we collected. However, if any other variable not included in the data, such as the person doing the rating, is correlated with the variable used for the breakdown, then that other variable could account for any differences.

First-Generation Students

There do not appear to be significant differences between the ratings of first-generation students and those with a parent who completed college, with first-generation students scoring very close to the overall average for SLO Four. It should be noted that 53 students did not answer if they were first generation.

Table 2. Ratings for students who did or did not identify as being first generation

First Generation	Sample size *	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error
No	628	2.610	1.0078	.0402
Yes	220	2.548	1.0397	.0701

BIPOC students

There are slight differences in average ratings by racial background. We can confidently conclude that the mean rating of BIPOC students is at least .012 lower than the overall mean. As with the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, it is doubtful that such a small difference is meaningful, however we will continue to examine how minoritized students perform on SLO's.

Table 3. Ratings broken down by ethnicity

Ethnicity	Sample size *	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error
Black	43	2.195	1.0002	.1525
Hispanic	92	2.565	.9756	.1017
Two or more races	21	2.357	.9765	.2131
Unknown	32	2.734	.9244	.1634
White	712	2.638	1.0232	.0383

* Sample sizes do not add to 901 because there was one Native American student not included in the analysis because that student's data was a single observation

Pell Grant Recipients

On average, students who did not receive the PELL grant scored higher ratings than students who received the PELL grant. We can confidently conclude that the mean rating of students who received a Pell Grant is at least .017 lower than the overall mean. It is doubtful that such a small difference is meaningful, but again, whether it is or not, and if so, why it occurred, is beyond the scope of this analysis.

Table 4. Ratings for Pell Grant students

Rec'd Pell	Sample size	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error
No	658	2.660	1.0227	.0399
Yes	243	2.459	.9846	.0632

Recommendations

Based on this assessment period, GEAC will be making significant changes to our process including:

- Reconsidering the benchmarks for success on this SLO
- Requesting the assignment and sample student work from faculty to inform the benchmarks for success on this SLO
- Eliciting feedback from faculty on instruction and learning relative to this SLO
- Employing faculty feedback to inform updates to the rubric
- Developing and advertising faculty professional development for multiple points of contact. This includes holding virtual sessions and organizing curricular material on GEAC's new D2L page.
- Returning to prior process of volunteer raters

Recommendations to GEC include:

- Collaborating with the Center for Teaching Effectiveness on:
 - trauma-informed pedagogical practices to support faculty in managing instruction and assessment during times of global, national, and local crises
 - designing learning activities that align with General Education program expectations and challenge proficient students to excel
 - aligning departmental curricular scope and sequence to spiral instruction related to SLO across 100-level, 200-level, and 300-level