



ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES IN GENERAL EDUCATION

SUMMARY REPORT

Name of Institution: SUNY at New Paltz Academic Year: 2020-2021

Report prepared by: Laurel M. Garrick Duhaney, Associate Provost for Strategic Planning and Assessment

I. GENERAL EDUCATION CONTENT AREA ASSESSMENTS

In AY 2020-2021 the GE Board, Office of Strategic Planning and Assessment, and Institutional Research coordinated the assessment of American History (United States Studies), Other World Civilizations, and Basic Communication-Oral across the campus.

II. ASSESSMENT PROCESS

Institutional Research (IR) selected the capstone courses to administer the GE assessments in early fall 2020 and the GE Board and the Associate Provost for Strategic Planning and Assessment provided information about the assessments to the faculty teaching the capstone courses, faculty teaching courses in the GE content areas being assessed, and to students participating in the assessments. The GE Board hosted a GE Forum via Zoom in fall 2020 to assist faculty to carry out the assessments successfully. During the fall, faculty teams developed prompts and scoring rubrics for each content area being assessed. The Instructional Technology staff also built the Blackboard sites for content area assessments. Faculty and students were sent several messages, especially during the spring about needing to complete the assessments.

In spring 2021, we surveyed the faculty in whose capstone courses the students who were selected to complete the assessments were enrolled. We also surveyed the faculty who taught courses in the GE content areas of American History, Other World Civilizations and Basic Communication-Oral and the students who completed the assessments in these areas. The capstone course instructors were invited to share their observations about the administration of the assessment. Content area faculty were asked to

complete a short reflective survey about their experiences teaching the GE courses and about student learning. Students were asked to share their perceptions about the assessment.

Concerns about Low Student Participation Rates and Possible Improvements

Our assessment process relies on voluntary participation, which is one of the reasons for the low student participation rate. The stress of the COVID-19 crisis made learning particularly difficult for many students during the 2020-2021 school year, so participating in assessment may have been a low priority. A raffle for two \$50 gift cards was offered to encourage more participation, but it did not improve participation rates significantly, which seems to indicate there were mitigating factors.

Moving assessment online to a Blackboard website run by the GE Board made it more difficult for faculty administering assessment in their capstone classes to keep track of student participation. There was a lack of accountability that made it easy for students to avoid participation. Faculty administering assessment stated that they found it harder to motivate students to complete work during the spring 2021 semester.

Most of the faculty who in whose capstone courses the assessment was administered did not play a role in creating or evaluating the assessments. It is possible they miscommunicated or were confused about the assessments. The GE Board provided an introductory video and a FAQ for students and faculty to prevent misunderstandings, but there is no guarantee that they looked at or used these resources.

Technical errors may have played a role in the low response rate. Since the essays were submitted online through Turnitin, it is possible that students uploaded their essay but did not hit 'Submit.'

While conducting the GE assessments online improved accessibility for students and made it easier for the GE Board to collect students' work and to distribute it to assessors, it turned out that Blackboard may not have been the best platform to use. The Blackboard websites for the GE assessment were not available to the faculty administering the assessment, which meant they could not monitor completion rates. Furthermore, having students submit their essay via Turnitin ended up being unnecessary, since all the files had to be moved to a SharePoint folder. Faculty could have simply distributed the document for the assessment assignment, collected students' work, and either sent it to the Office of Strategic Planning and Assessment or the GE Board or uploaded it to a designated folder. That might have allowed for more accountability and oversight, which may have increased student participation.

Since we presented the assessment to students as a self-reflective exercise that benefits students—in addition to providing necessary data for the university to evaluate student learning at SUNY New Paltz—the GE Board should seek more student involvement in developing future assessments.

III. GE ASSESSMENT RESULTS

Summary of GE assessment results for AY 2020-21 and of survey results from faculty who administered the assessment, faculty who taught GE courses in the categories assessed, and students who completed the assessment.

A. AMERICAN HISTORY (UNITED STATES STUDIES)

ASSESSMENT RATERS: Stephen Pampinella (Team Leader), Gregory Bynum, and Andrew Horvitz

RESULTS

The American History (hereafter, US Studies) content areas includes three student learning outcomes (SLO). An assessment prompt (see Appendix A) that Stephen Pampinella developed asked general questions about students’ experiences involving US Studies and specific questions that assessed their knowledge of each SLO. Students were instructed to answer each question with a one-paragraph essay. These results, as well as those involving more general data, are displayed and discussed below.

Seventy-one students completed the assessment prompt. Students who provided an adequate response to the three assessment questions generally met two of the three SLOs and the expectations for US Studies. The overall result (60 out of 71 or 85% met expectations) is quite high and its accuracy and validity might be questioned. However, we hypothesize the dynamics of US politics over the past 18 months enabled students to observe aspects of US society which are conducive to the SLOs. Since the content of SLOs 1 and 2 involve questions of diversity, identity, citizenship, and inequalities between groups in US society, we suspect that the broad mobilization around issues of racial justice along with the 2020 presidential election primed students to answer our questions by drawing upon those memories and experiences. We discuss these aspects of the assessment process below in relation to each SLO prompt.

General Data

Where student took GE course	Number	Percent
At New Paltz	40	56%
Elsewhere	24	34%
Not sure	7	10%
Total	71	100%

Where student completed majority of GE	Number	Percent
At New Paltz	47	66%
Elsewhere	20	28%
Not sure	4	6%
Total	71	100%

Effort	Number	Percent
0-blank	3	4%

1-irrelevant	0	0%
2- too short	6	8%
3 - long enough and relevant	62	87%
Total	71	100%

SLO 1 Basic Narrative	Number	Percent
Meets	63	89%
Does not meet	8	11%
Total	71	100%

SLO 2 Common Institutions	Number	Percent
Meets	61	86%
Does not meet	10	14%
Total	71	100%

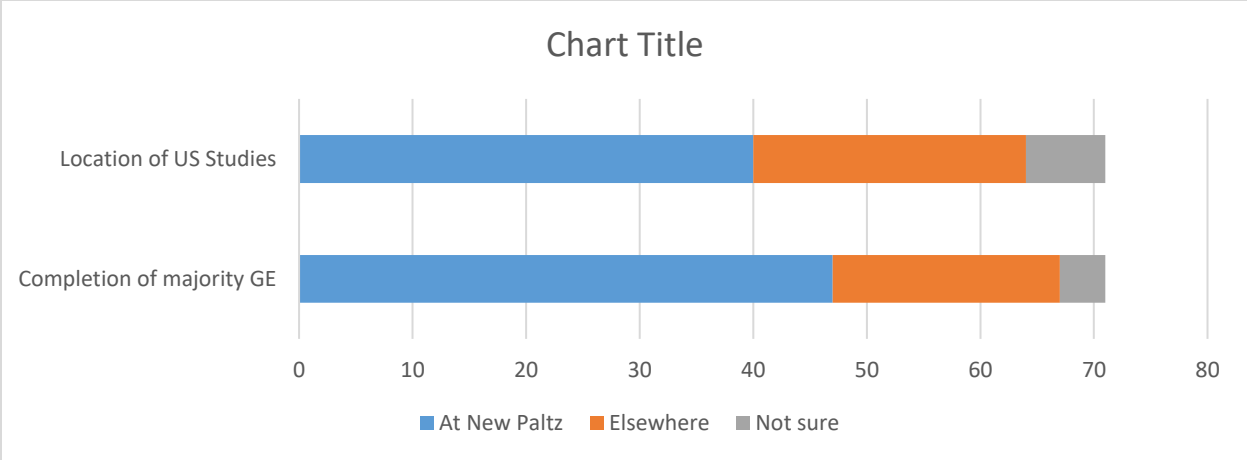
SLO 3 Relationship with world	Number	Percent
Meets	60	85%
Does not meet	11	14%
Total	71	100%

Overall results	Number	Percent
Meets	60	85%
Does not meet	11	14%
Total	71	100%

Below is a detailed discussion of each set of data.

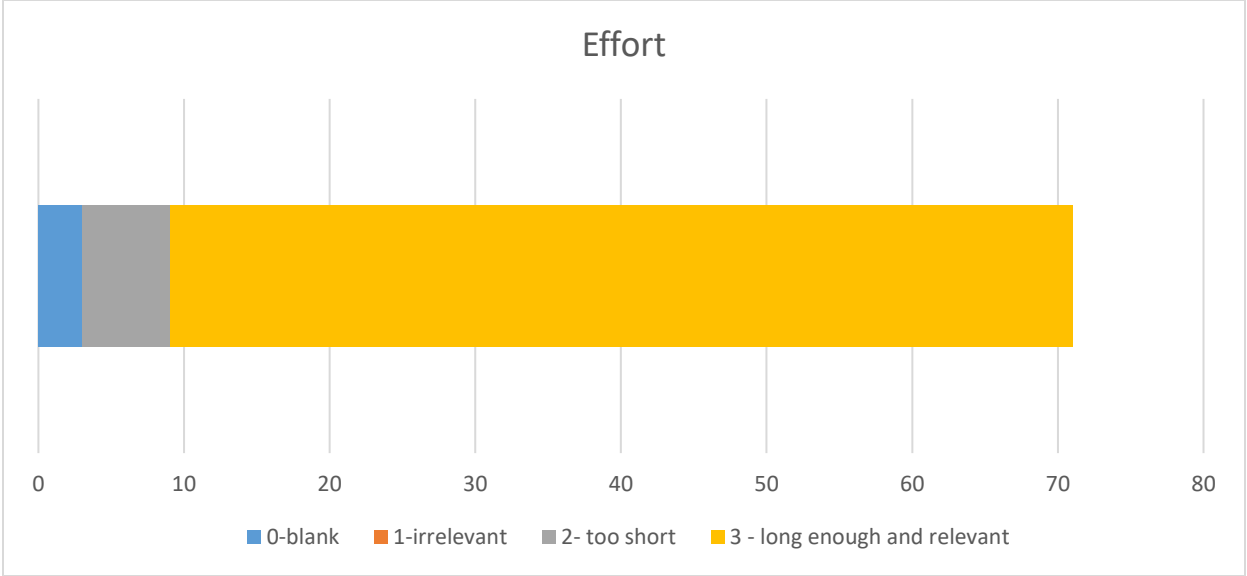
Presentation and Discussion of Responses

Student responses to Questions 1 and 3 regarding where they completed their GE requirements are displayed for comparison and discussed below.



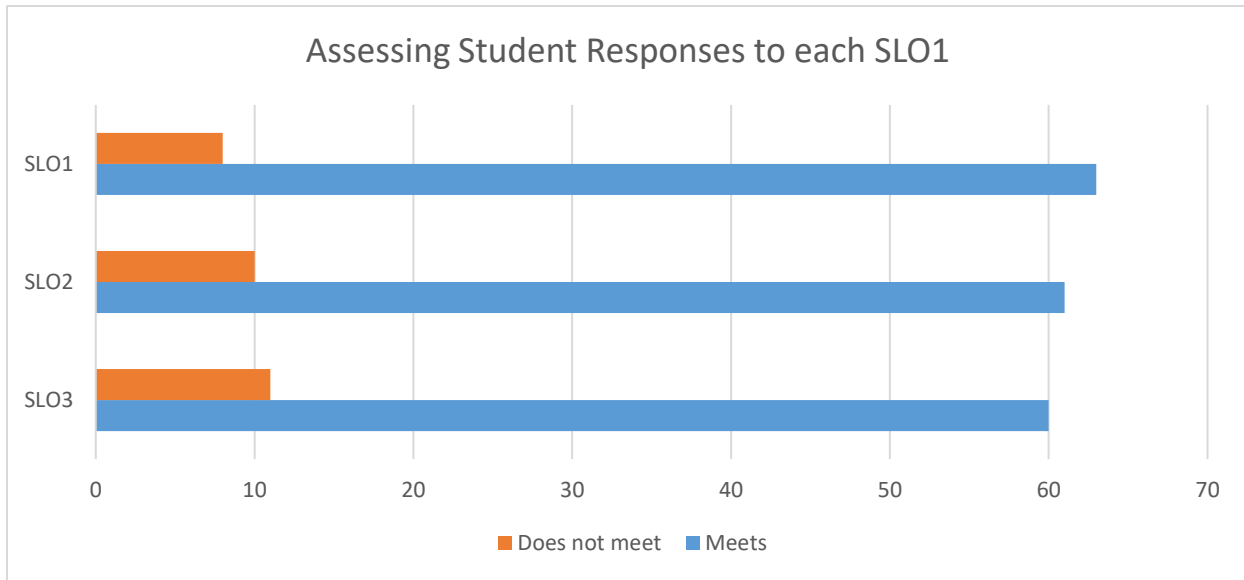
Forty (56%) of the respondents took their US Studies course at New Paltz. Although this is slightly lower than the 47 (66%) of respondents who completed a majority of their GE courses at New Paltz, this data suggests that most respondents completed their US Studies GE requirement at our college.

Effort Data



Most students provided responses to the SLO prompts that were long enough and relevant. A small number (6) gave responses that were too short, and three gave no response (“blank”).

Students' Performance on SLOs



SLO 1: Students will demonstrate knowledge of a basic narrative of American history: political, economic, social, and cultural, including knowledge of unity and diversity in American society.

We asked students about the increasing diversity of the identity of US citizens and, more broadly, US national identity:

How has the identity of a US citizen become more diverse over time? Spend 10 minutes writing a one-paragraph essay that describes how peoples of different cultural, ethnic, racial, or gender backgrounds have been included in US society after past periods of exclusion. You may discuss how one specific marginalized group has changed US national identity through their particular struggle for equality, and how those struggles have unfolded over time.

Eight-nine percent of the students met SLO 1. More students met SLO 1 than SLOs 2 and 3. Students possess a strong understanding of the “diversity” narrative. The dynamics of US politics and society have likely reinforced this narrative. Some students referenced the “melting pot” story regarding immigrants to the United States, while others referenced marginalized groups that collectively struggle for equal rights as citizens.

SLO 2: Students will demonstrate knowledge of common institutions in American society and how they have affected different groups.

We asked students about the relationship between US institutions and various groups in society:

Spend 10 minutes writing a one-paragraph essay that describes the relationship between US institutions and various groups in society. Have US institutions successfully preserved the rights of all Americans? Why or why not? In your answer, discuss how the structure of US institutions has enabled or constrained

the rights of different people during US history. You may refer to specific rights enshrined in the US constitution institutions such as the Supreme Court, or institutional forms such as federalism. You may also discuss how US institutions have enabled different kinds of inequality among groups in US society. Be sure to offer at least one example from US history of how institutions have affected the rights of people within the United States.

Eighty-six percent of the students met SLO 2. Contemporary issues in US society informed students' responses. Many students wrote about how policing and incarceration rates in the United States disproportionately affect people of color, especially Black US citizens. These issues are high priorities on the public agenda given the salience of social movements such as Black Lives Matter and their focus on the criminal justice system. But they also reflect subject matter taught in classes New Paltz that fulfill the US Studies GE requirement, such as BLK330: Race and Racism in US History and SOC220: Social Inequality in the United States.

SLO 3: Students will demonstrate [an] understanding of America's evolving relationship with the rest of the world.

We asked students about the relationship between the United States and other countries:

US society is deeply intertwined with societies across the globe. We draw upon other peoples' cultures, economies, and institutions when developing our own. Spend 10 minutes writing a short essay describing how the world has influenced the development of the United States. You may discuss how other peoples' cultures are commonplace here in the US, or how the US economy has been shaped by goods and services drawn from other parts of the world. Feel free to refer to specific regions or peoples from around the world, as well as specific cultural practices (such as cuisine or forms of dress) or economic goods (things US citizens regularly purchase and consume) that originate in other world communities but are now commonplace in the United States.

Eighty-five percentage of the students met SLO 3. One rater commented that students provided more vague answers to this prompt than to the other two SLOs. For example, students referenced multiple forms of food or dress available in the United States, yet a handful did so in cursory or non-specific ways. Some students also referenced New York City as a crossroads of the world which contains neighborhoods associated with peoples from different countries or parts of the world. Broadly, students were successful at answering this prompt, although they may be relying more on a more general knowledge of the tri-state region.

Limitations of the Assessment

Our assessment data is imperfect. The process of soliciting assessment responses from students was entirely voluntary. If a student chose not to complete the assessment, we had no way of obtaining data from them. This means that students who felt some sort of obligation to complete this exercise (perhaps due to encouragement from their instructor) were those who did so. In this way, our sample of students is highly flawed and does not necessarily represent the universe of all students taking GE courses at New Paltz. It is plausible to infer that students who were motivated to complete the assessment are the same

students who would meet the SLOs because they are more likely to perform strongly in their coursework.

In addition, the relevance of our SLOs to contemporary issues in US society makes it difficult to parse out how students developed this knowledge. Did they do so from a diligent reading of course materials assigned in BLK 330, or do they regularly participate in racial justice activism or organizations? This remains unclear. Other GE categories and SLOs which are not related to contemporary issues in US society are unlikely to face this problem.

Recommendations and Conclusions

To rectify the problem of voluntary compliance, the GE Board might consider returning to an in-person assessment process. If instructors provided time for students to complete assessment prompts in the classroom, students would be far more likely to answer the relevant prompt. However, this solution will require greater buy-in from all faculty participating in assessment. The GE Board needs them to be more active participants in the assessment process.

Overall, the high rate of “meets/not meets” for the entire assessment exercise (63/8, or 89 percent meets) suggests that SUNY New Paltz students have met the requirements for the US Studies GE SLOs.

B. OTHER WORLD CIVILIZATIONS

ASSESSMENT RATERS: Rebecca Longtin (Team Leader) and César Barros Arteaga

RESULTS

The participation rate in the Other World Civilizations assessment was very low. Of the 250 students who were asked to participate in the assessment, 96 (38%) of the students completed it and only 58 (60%) submitted essays that could be evaluated.

The GE Board encouraged student participation in the assessment process by describing it as a reflective exercise that benefits them at the same time that it provides helpful information for the university. However, many students still approached writing an essay for assessment as a test that measures their recall of information from a specific class they took (see Appendix B for the assessment prompt).

The results for the 96 student essays are as follows:

Information about General Education classes:

- 60 (67%) of the students took their GE course at New Paltz, 25 (28%) took their GE course elsewhere, and five (6%) were not sure where they took their GE classes. Six students left this question part blank.
- 55 (61%) of the students completed the majority of their GE classes at New Paltz, 31 (34%) completed the majority of their GE classes elsewhere, and four (4%) were unsure of where they took their GE classes. Six students left this question blank.

Effort:

- Only 58 (60%) of the essays were relevant and long enough to evaluate using the rubric.
- 3 (3%) of the essays were blank.
- 15 (16%) of the essays were irrelevant. Some students wrote explanations of why they did not remember their GE WORLD class. Some students wrote great essays about a Western civilization instead of a non-Western civilization. A few students wrote more general essays, about the meaning of 'culture' or the history of Western misconceptions of Asia, but not a specific non-Western civilization.
- 20 (21%) of the essays were too short to evaluate.

Student Learning Outcomes:

The SLO for GE WORLD states that students will demonstrate:

- Knowledge of either a broad outline of world history, or
- The distinctive features of the history, institutions, economy, society, culture, etc., of one non-Western civilization.

The team of faculty volunteers who created the prompt for GE WORLD assessment decided to write an essay prompt that focuses on the second SLO, but also asked students to contextualize the world civilization they discuss in a broader, global context, which addresses the first SLO. The fifth criterion of the rubric (see below) indicates the percentage of essays that fulfill the second SLO.

The rubric for evaluating the essays has five criteria:

1. Identifies a Non-Western region of the world Y / N
2. Discusses a theme within its history or a religious, economic, political, social, or cultural institution Y / N
3. Describes key features of that element of non-Western Civilization Y / N
4. Analyzes the element to make points about its implications, effects, or significance Y / N
5. Demonstrates connections that explain the significance of the element in the context of World History Y / N

If the essay achieves 4 – 5 of these elements: It meets the SLOs for WORLD

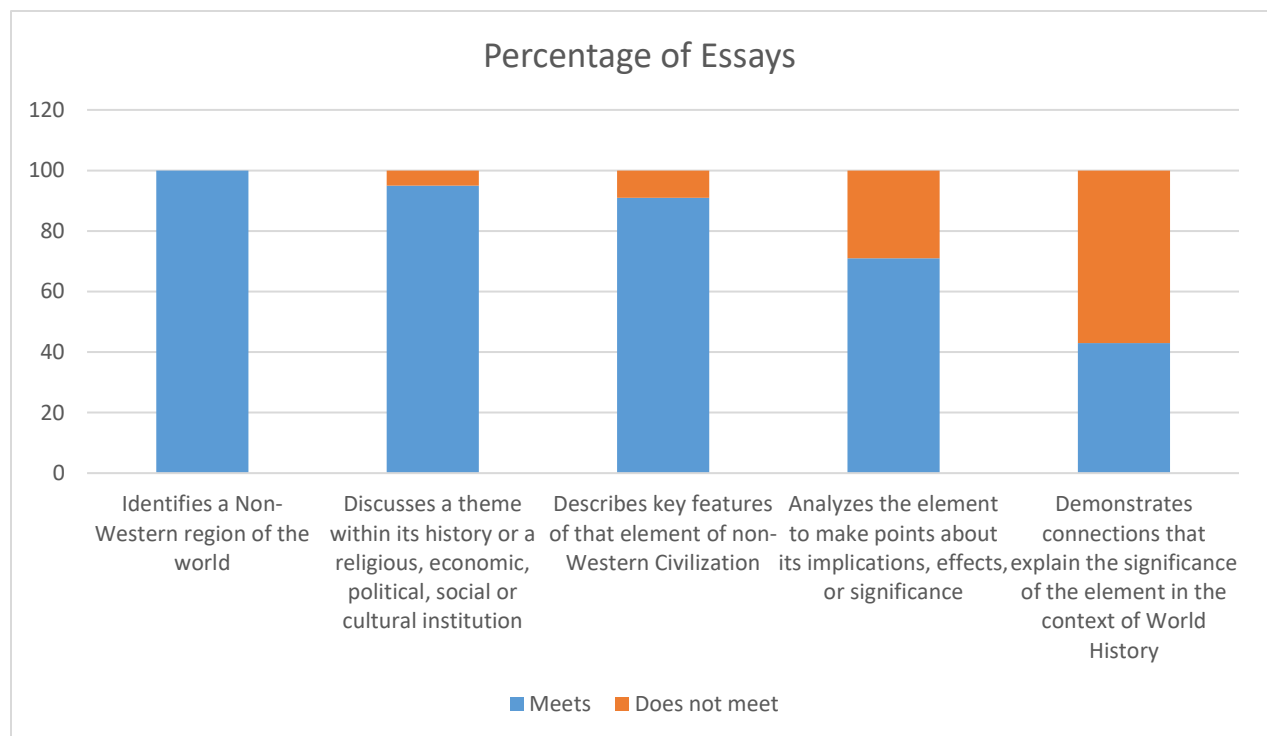
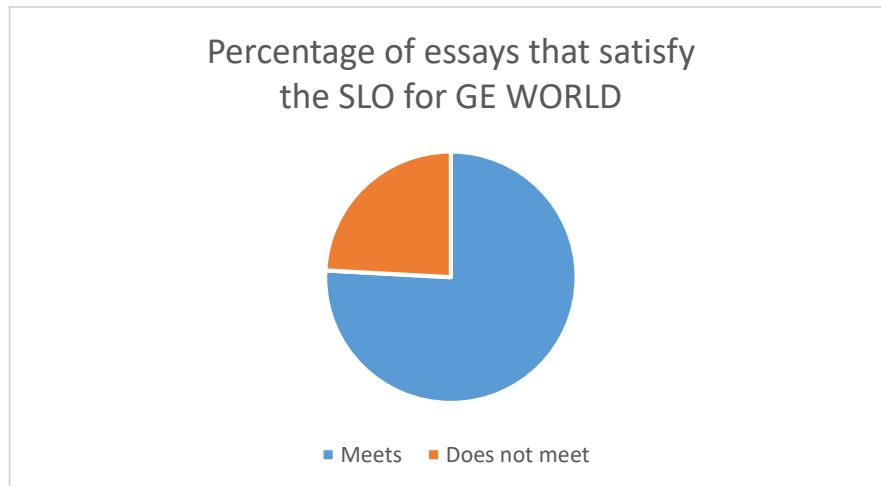
If the essay achieves 0 – 3 of these: It does not meet the SLOs for WORLD

Based on the analysis of the essays:

- 58 (100%) identified a Non-western region of the world. Essays that did not identify a Non-western region of the world were not evaluated
- 55 (95%) discussed a theme within its history or a religious, economic, political, social or cultural institution
- 53 (91%) described key features of that element of non-Western Civilization
- 41 (71%) analyzed the element to make points about its implications, effects, or significance
- 25 (43%) demonstrated connections that explain the significance of the element in the context of World History

RESULTS

Of the 58 essays evaluated, 44 (76%) of the students met the SLO. They were able to demonstrate knowledge of the distinctive features of the history, institutions, economy, society, culture, etc., of one non-Western civilization. Fourteen (24%) of the students did not meet the SLO. See chart below:



The majority of students were able to discuss themes and describe key features of a non-Western civilization. Success in these categories demonstrates general knowledge. Fewer students were able to analyze the key feature they described, and even fewer were able to draw connections to other civilizations or global history. Placing a non-Western culture within a larger framework and drawing conclusions from it is a more difficult task because it requires a more complex understanding of culture and comparative thinking skills. Such skills are also higher on Bloom's taxonomy of learning objectives. This is an important goal for World GE category pedagogy and we should keep centering it in our class designs and teaching in general.

These results demonstrate that many students have a broader concept of the world through their studies at SUNY New Paltz. They can describe and analyze different themes and institutions from a variety of cultures and value the broader perspective of the world that their education has provided.

Some students wrote great essays that showed how their classes expanded their understanding of the world. One student discussed how studying Hijras from India and Kathoey from Thailand made them aware that other cultures have had more than two genders. Another essay discussed the way African tribes used music for social solidarity and described Agbekor funeral music. One student described the meaning of the Amazon River for the Cofán people of Ecuador, how it reflects their respect for nature, and how big oil companies have endangered their way of life. A student commented with a great level of detail how Global North and Global South cultures and economies are connected and function in a hierarchical relationship by explaining some contemporary problems faced by Latin American cultures.

A number of students discussed colonization and its effects, especially in terms of historical and contemporary global inequalities. They commented not only on the origins of colonial inequalities but about the effects colonial projects have had until today.

Many students wrote about the importance of learning about other cultures and the fact that their GE WORLD class helped them to correct misconceptions that they had about other cultures. Students frequently expressed enthusiasm for the culture they explained and why studying it mattered to them, although this enthusiasm did not necessarily correlate with strong analysis of the culture.

Several students wrote irrelevant essays. They thought Western civilizations such as Italy, Russia, and ancient Rome were non-Western. The reason they did not identify a non-Western civilization may be attributed to the way global regions have or have not been presented to them in their coursework. Some faculty consider the 'Western' civilization versus 'Non-Western' civilization distinction as problematic because it centers the West by dividing the world into two regions: West versus the Rest. At the same time, faculty who use the distinction 'Western' and 'Non-western' may also find the distinction ambiguous given the many instances of cross-cultural influence and exchange in world history. It can be difficult to explain and justify this distinction.

A few students expressed resentment that they were expected to learn about other cultures. For example, one student explained that they are an American citizen, not a global citizen. Another one expressed their apprehensions about the way focusing on non-Western cultures can help a movement to "cancel" figures like Christopher Columbus.

Assessment Prompt

The assessment prompt used for GE WORLD this year was:

Pick a non-Western culture, civilization or region you learned about during your studies at SUNY New Paltz. Discuss a theme from its history or a particular religious, economic, political, social, or cultural practice or institution within that culture. How would you explain its importance to another person not familiar with it? How has learning from this culture, or set of cultures, changed the way you see your own culture and your own position as a global citizen?

The assessment prompt was developed by faculty from a variety of disciplines (Latin American and Caribbean Studies, Black Studies, and Philosophy). In addition to prompting students to write an essay that would fulfill the SLO for GE WORLD, the goal of the prompt was to help students reflect on their education at New Paltz and its value for understanding themselves as global citizens. The faculty attempted to write a prompt that felt more like a self-reflective exercise than an exam question.

Limitations of the Prompt

Some students misunderstood the prompt, particularly the part that asked them, “How would you explain its importance to another person unfamiliar with it?” Instead of writing an explanation that we could evaluate, they wrote general descriptions of how one explains things to another person. For example, one student wrote, “I would explain its importance to a person not familiar with it by sharing with them what I learned about it and trying to use specific examples that are somewhat analogous to a situation they have been in to understand it better.” However, the student did not provide specific examples or analogies. Another student wrote, “I would ask them to simply look up pictures of the country and they would be able to experience firsthand what I am referring to.” The phrasing of the prompt could have led to the students’ confusion.

Since many students did not analyze or contextualize the feature of the non-Western civilization they described, it could be helpful in the future to ask students to go into as much detail as they can. In the future, we could also provide a brief description of how their essays will be evaluated.

Students who refused to write an essay often explained that they did not remember their GE WORLD class because they took it several years ago. The instructions for assessment states, “The essay does not have to be based on the specific GE course you took but should reflect what you have learned at SUNY New Paltz,” but it would be a good idea to reiterate this in the prompt. Some students explained that they felt they had no knowledge of other cultures because it was irrelevant to their main area of study (e.g., engineering). Students also expressed frustration with GE requirements. This issue reflects some students’ attitudes toward GE at New Paltz, which means editing the prompt might not necessarily encourage more participation.

In the future, the GE Board should involve student input in the creation of the essay prompts or at least in their revision. This practice can mitigate misunderstandings and might encourage more participation.

C. Basic Communication-Oral

Assessment Raters: Nikki Wilson Clasby (Team Leader), Mercedes Rooney, Peggy Hach, and Joan Perisse

INTRODUCTION

The GE student learning outcomes for Basic Communication-Oral (B-Comm) are as follows:

1. Students will develop proficiency in oral discourse
2. Students will evaluate an oral presentation according to established criteria

The B-Comm Assessment Team addressed two primary challenges in designing this year's materials to assess these two learning outcomes:

Student Learning Outcome 1 (SLO 1): Student proficiency in oral discourse can only be assessed through an oral presentation, not via a written reflection of an oral discourse (oral discourse and written discourse are not equivalent).

Student Learning Outcome 2 (SLO 2): Assessment of this outcome requires the selection of one appropriate oral presentation for evaluation which is common enough to be generally recognized, and covers interesting but non-contentious or offensive material to which students can apply knowledge gleaned from their GE experiences to their evaluations

To address these challenges, for SLO 1 we determined students should deliver their evaluation of the oral discourse selected for assessment via a recorded oral presentation. After consultation with the university's IT team, we opted to use *Knowmia* for video capture because the university already supports it, students can download the app to their laptop and iPhones for convenience, and it is compatible with Blackboard.

For SLO 2, we took into consideration the social, cultural, and political environment of the past year to find a public oral discourse delivered by someone most students would instantly recognize and on a topic/situation that would resonate with them. This topic/situation needed to connect to multiple issues to allow students to tackle their evaluations from different perspectives. We decided to focus on the Black Lives Matter and the Me Too movements to find a suitable oral discourse. After researching different possibilities, we chose an oral presentation from a highly influential black woman, who plays an essential media role in both these movements, speaking about another highly influential black woman who changed the course of the Civil Rights movement. The team selected [Oprah Winfrey's Eulogy to Rosa Parks](#) delivered October 31, 2005, at the Metropolitan African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church, Washington D.C. This video recording of the eulogy is 4:10 minutes long.

HYPOTHESIS:

Students taking composition classes are trained in formal and informal oral discourse and are expected to have a basic understanding of how to use rhetorical tools such as ethos, pathos, and logos for analyzing and evaluating an oral discourse. They also are expected to have a basic understanding of how to use those rhetorical tools to generate formal and informal oral discourse in their own research to share with their peers. Our courses emphasize the application of oral discourse skills both in and out of college. For students taking composition classes at New Paltz instructors expect them to be able to transfer some basic knowledge/skills in terms of organizational structure, context, acknowledgement of audience and confidence in delivery, and apply them to this type of assessment.

The assessment team was interested to see how capable students were of transferring these skills, and to see how students who had taken GE course requirements at our university compared to students who took GE elsewhere. Because the assessment team had chosen an interesting oral discourse for evaluation, and had asked students to discuss their evaluations orally, they hoped to avoid “protest responses” and to engage students in productive responses.

METHODS

Assessment Prompt

Students were provided with a link to the video: [Oprah Winfrey’s Eulogy to Rosa Parks](#) and a written transcript. They were instructed to respond to one of the five prompts provided to analyze the eulogy, drawing on any knowledge or skills learned from their GE experience to engage with evidence from the eulogy itself. They were also asked to craft their response into an oral presentation between 3-5 minutes in length. While there was no requirement to produce a Google Slide or PowerPoint, students were advised to write a script and rehearse its oral delivery as they would for any presentation. Students could choose to film themselves speaking or just record their voices (see Appendix C for assessment prompt). Once students were ready, they were to record their oral presentation using *Knowmia* and insert their video link into the response sheet provided and submit their response to Blackboard.

Assessment Questions:

1. Analyze Oprah’s non-verbal language: tone, facial expressions, eye contact, gestures, posture as she unfolds her eulogy. Connecting the non-verbal to the verbal and using evidence from the video, analyze how this non-verbal language helps communicate Oprah’s message and connect to her audience.
2. Oprah begins the eulogy with a childhood memory of Rosa Parks. What is the significance of this memory, and how does it help shape Oprah’s connection to her? Oprah compares this childhood memory of Rosa Parks to the reality of meeting her in person, and the revelation she has as a result. What does Oprah want her audience to understand from the connections she is making and how does this engage the audience?
3. Using evidence from Oprah’s text, discuss the historical, political, cultural or contextual significance of her eulogy to Rosa Parks. In light of your response, what is the significance of the last two lines of her eulogy: “I owe you to succeed. I will not be moved.”
4. Of all the people who could have been invited to deliver a eulogy to Rosa Parks at her funeral, what makes Oprah Winfrey qualified to do so? What is significant and/or symbolic about Oprah’s role?

Using evidence from the language of the eulogy, describe how Oprah establishes her authority to speak. How does Oprah position herself in relationship to Rosa Parks and why is this important?

5. Oprah uses several repetitive words and phrases. Identify these words and phrases, and discuss their function within the eulogy and their intended effect on the audience. Does this style of speech remind you of other famous speeches? If so, identify one, and explain its connection to this eulogy and/or the legacy it represents.

Assessment Rubric

The assessment team, all of whom teach oral communication within New Paltz's composition classes, used the following criteria to assess each student learning outcome:

SLO 1: Students will develop proficiency in oral discourse:

1. CONTENT: Line of inquiry adequately addresses the chosen question
2. EVIDENCE: Evidence from presentation under evaluation is used to support the student's line of inquiry
3. ORGANIZATION: Student's oral evaluation shows clear organizational structure
4. STYLE: Student confidently delivers their oral evaluation paying attention to prosody & pace
5. ARTICULATION: Student confidently delivers their oral evaluation through clear enunciation & few vocal fillers
6. CAPTIVATION: Student captivates & maintains audience attention

5-6 = meets

0-4 = does not meet

SLO 2: Students will evaluate an Oral Presentation according to established criteria:

1. ETHOS/LOGOS: Student identifies rhetorical strategies presenter used to evaluate significance of presenter's authority &/or significance of their message
2. PATHOS: Student identifies & evaluates any available tactic (as dictated by the questions) presenter uses to connect to their audience (present &/or future)
3. SIGNIFICANCE: Student successfully evaluates significance of the presenter's message (within the context set by the question)

2-3 = meets

0-1 = does not meet

The assessment team added an "Efforts" category to record student engagement. Prior to the norming session, this category was set as follows:

- 0 = Blank
- 1 = Irrelevant Material
- 2 = Technical Problem
- 3 = Relevant but short
- 4 = Relevant & Adequate

Norming Session

Three student responses were randomly selected for the norming session. Team members were given the rubric and assessed each of the three student responses privately, without any prior discussion, and then the team met to discuss their findings.

Student 1 delivered a competent oral discussion, adequately satisfying SLO 1. However, for SLO 2, although this student identified the rhetorical strategies used by the presenter, the student failed to analyze why these strategies were important in the context of the speech. The team determined that demonstrating an understanding of how the rhetorical strategies worked was a necessary component of meeting the assessment criteria.

Student 2 adequately met both SLOs. However, the student's organization skills were weak. Particularly noticeable was the lack of an introduction. Anticipating this may be a problem with other submissions, the assessment team re-evaluated their expectations of the organization criteria. Given that the team had specified that the presentation was to be an informal discourse rather than a formal speech, and given that the students understood their presentation was addressed only to the assessment team, the team accepted the understanding of audience to justify not deeming an introduction necessary.

Student 3 did not provide a link to a video, so the team was unable to evaluate the student's oral presentation skills. The student however provided a transcript of their evaluation. Based on this, the team adjusted the rubric by changing the "Efforts" category:

Effort

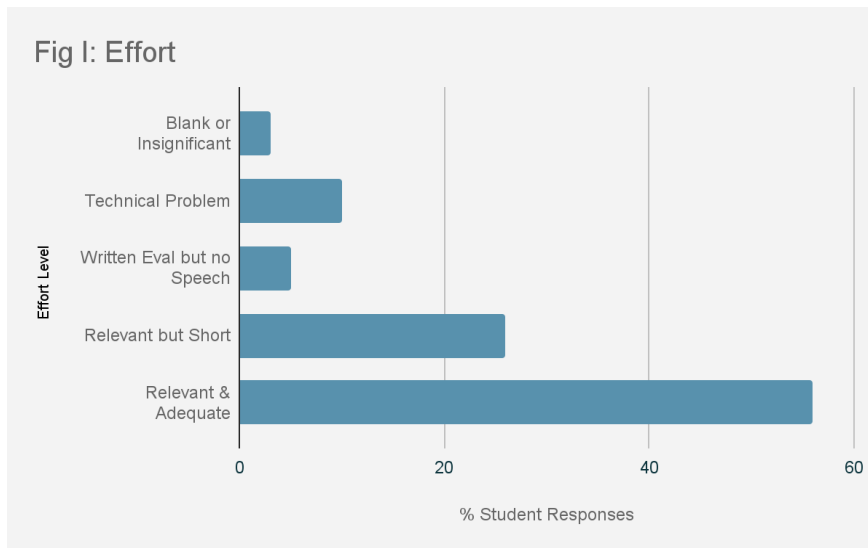
- 0 = Blank/irrelevant
- 1 = Technical Problem
- 2 = Written Evaluation: No Speech
- 3 = Relevant but Short
- 4 = Relevant & Adequate

Secondly, for SLO 1, rather than give this student a total "does not meet" across all the criteria for this learning outcome, the team decided to take into consideration criteria 1. Content, 2. Evidence & 3. Organization. Although this student could not meet the learning outcome, assessing the issue in this way would give us some information on how students at least prepared for a presentation.

RESULTS

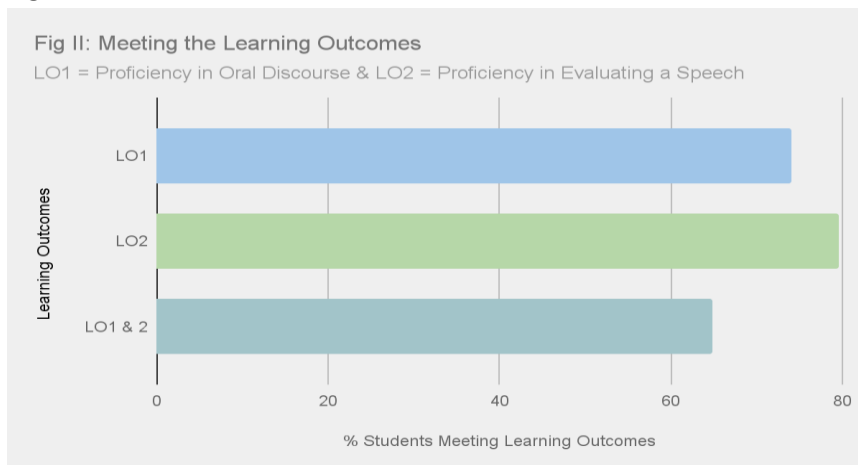
Of 62 responses, there was one blank submission and one irrelevant submission (where a student used the prompt to give personal opinions on the topic instead of addressing the question). Six submissions exhibited clear technical difficulties ranging from sound problems to incorrect links to the video (frequently students sent links to the Knowmia homepage). This left a pool of 55 student responses for assessment, of which two submissions did not include videos but included a written response. The team decided to include these two submissions in the assessment. Except for Fig. 1, all data are expressed as a percentage of this pool of 55 students.

Fig. I. Student Effort



- 40 students (72.7%) met SLO 1: Students will develop proficiency in oral discourse
- 43 students (78.2%) met SLO 2: Students will evaluate an Oral Presentation according to established criteria
- 35 students (63.6%) met both learning outcomes

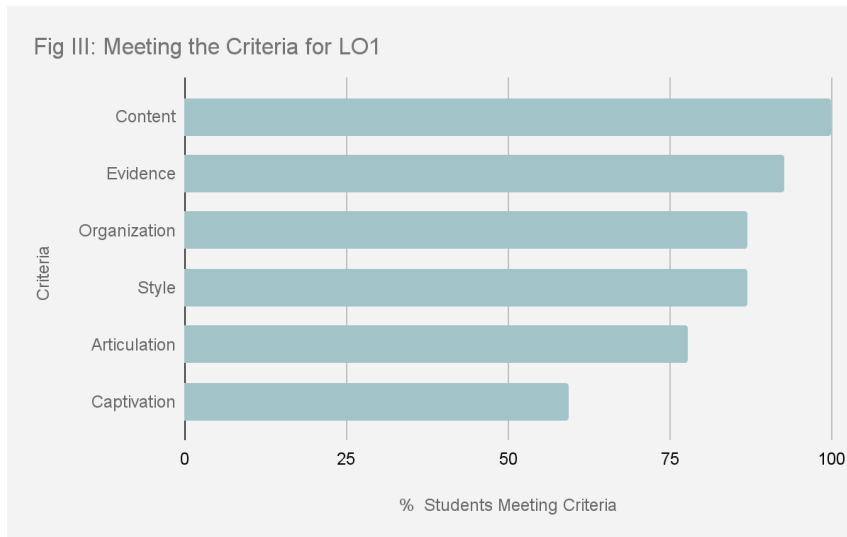
Fig. II. Students' Performance on SLO



For SLO 1: Students will develop proficiency in oral discourse:

- 54 students (98.2%) met the criteria for Content
- 50 students (90.9%) met the criteria for Evidence
- 47 students (85.5%) met the criteria for Organization
- 47 students (85.5%) met the criteria for Style
- 42 students (76.4%) met the criteria for Articulation
- 32 students (58.2%) met the criteria for Captivation

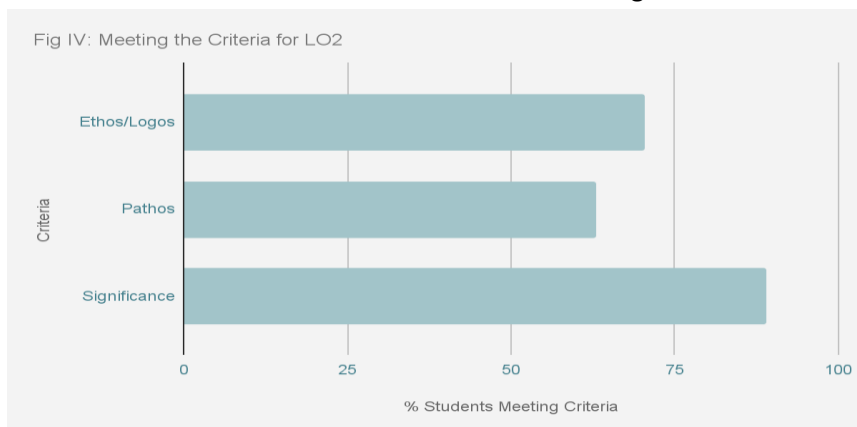
Fig III: Percentage of students meeting the criteria for SLO 1:



For SLO 2: Students will evaluate an Oral Presentation according to established criteria:

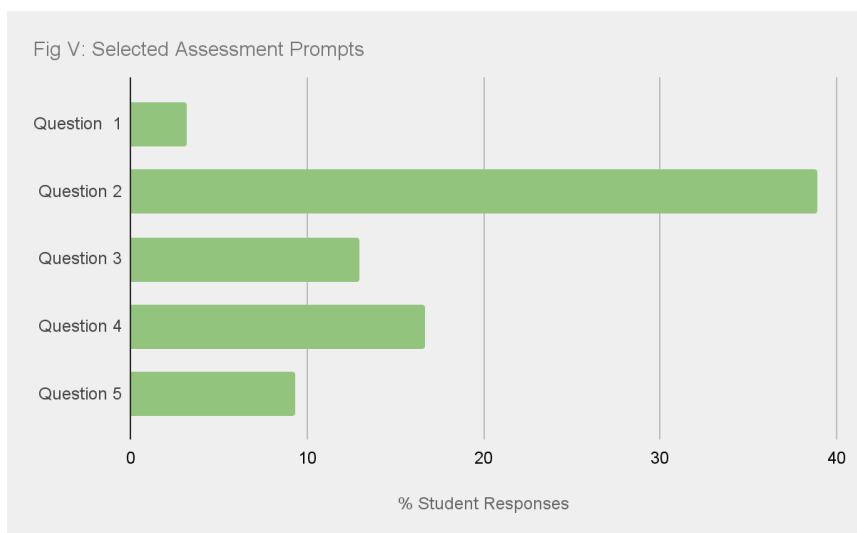
- 38 students (69.1%) met the criteria for Ethos/Logos
- 34 students (61.8%) met the criteria for Pathos
- 48 students (87.3%) met the criteria for Significance

Fig. IV. Percentage of students meeting the criteria for SLO 2:
Students will evaluate an Oral Presentation according to established criteria.



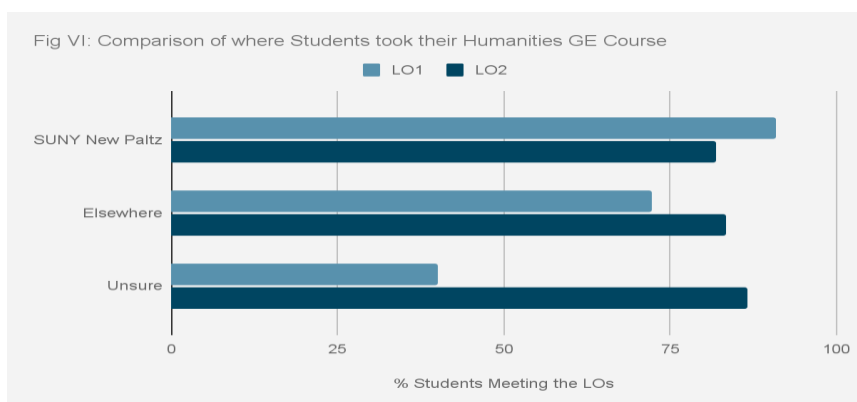
Because this is a new assessment for B-Comm Oral, the assessment team investigated which of the five prompts students gravitated toward the most. The most popular question was number two, with 19 (34.6%) responses, followed by question 1 with 16 (29.1%) responses. The least popular was question 5, with 5 (9.1%) responses.

Fig V: Frequency of selection of assessment prompts



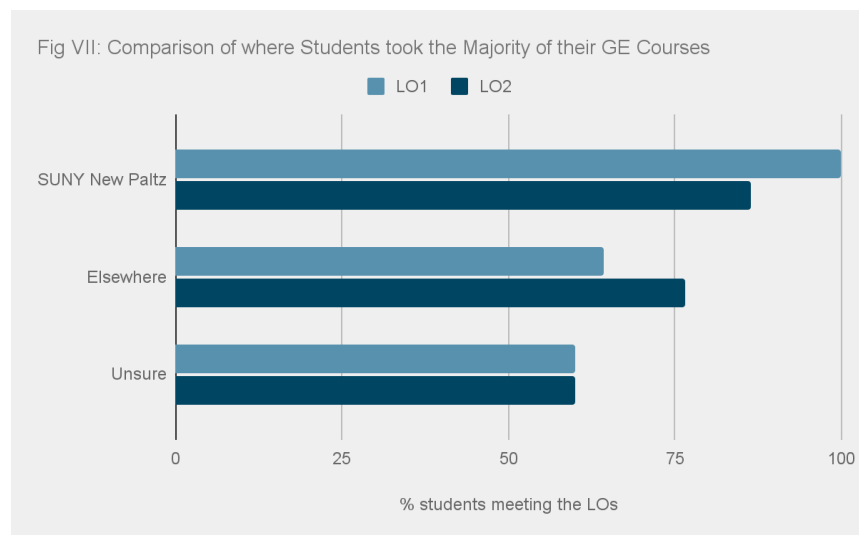
The assessment team investigated where the 55 students in the assessment pool took their Humanities courses. Twenty-two students reported that they had taken their Humanities course at New Paltz. Of these 22 students, 20 (90.9%) met SLO 1 and 17 (77.3%) met SLO 2. Eighteen students reported that they had taken their Humanities course elsewhere and of this group, 13 (72.2%) met SLO 1 and 15 (83.3%) met SLO 2. The remaining 15 students did not remember where they had taken their Humanities course. Of this group, six (40%) students met SLO 1 and nine (60%) met SLO 2.

Fig VI: Performance based on where Student took Humanities course



The assessors examined New Paltz students' performance on SLOs 1 and 2 compared to students who took their GE courses at another college. Of the 22 students who took the majority of their GE courses at New Paltz, 22 (100%) met SLO 1 and 19 (86.4%) met SLO 2. Of the 28 students who took most of their GE courses elsewhere, 18 (64.3%) met SLO 1 and 22 (76.6%) met SLO 2. Of the five students who were not certain where they had taken most of their GE courses, three (60%) met SLO 1 and three (60%) met SLO 2.

Fig. VII: compares the performance on SLOs 1 and 2 of students who took the majority of their GE courses at SUNY New Paltz with the performance of students who took the majority of their GE courses either elsewhere or were not sure.



DISCUSSION of RESULTS

Effort

At just 63, the number of responses we received was disappointingly low. Having to produce an oral presentation, the extra step of downloading *Knowmia*, the stress of learning during a pandemic, and participating in assessment online outside the classroom are all factors that may account for the low student participation rate. However, the team was encouraged by the effort students put into this assessment. Despite the six incomplete responses due to technical problems, only one student uploaded a blank submission, one student used the opportunity to talk about the topic and not address the questions, and one student who, after delivering a thoughtful and satisfactory presentation, expressed surprise and confusion at being asked to produce an oral presentation. As can see from Fig 1, 56% of the students produced adequate and relevant responses and 26% produced adequate but short responses. This means 82% of our student pool produced satisfactory responses to the prompts. This result is encouraging given the challenges of the new assessment in this unique school year.

Student Learning Outcomes & Criteria

Of the students in the pool, there was no significant difference in the number of students meeting SLO 1 (40) as opposed to SLO 2 (43). Thirty-five (64.8%) of the students met both SLOs. To learn more about students' performance, the assessment team took a closer look at the criteria for each SLO to examine areas of weakness.

SLO 1: Students will develop proficiency in oral discourse

The criteria for SLO 1 are arranged in two distinct groups: academic preparation and oral delivery. The first three criteria, Content, Evidence, and Organization address the academic preparation of an oral discourse. As illustrated in Fig III, students exhibited proficiency in academic preparation for oral discourse. Students (100%) had no difficulty addressing the questions to develop adequate content; 96.2% students did well in identifying relevant evidence from the speech to support their line of inquiry, and 87.0% of the students were able to organize their material into an expected structure. In terms of organization, however, the team noted many students did not have a good introduction. Those students assumed their audience would know both Rosa Parks and Oprah Winfrey and failed to provide background and contextual information. Had the assessment team not already known the assignment and the expectations, they would not have understood the purpose or reason behind their discourse.

The second group of criteria, Style, Articulation, and Captivation address the oral delivery of the discourse. As illustrated in Fig III, students did not perform as well on these criteria. Style, which addresses prosody and pace shows students' score of 87%. Most students demonstrated a reasonable sense of performance, but Articulation at 77.8% revealed students struggled to clearly enunciate their words and relied on vocal fillers to get through the discourse. This performance could be due to lack of preparation, nerves or just "winging it." The criterion students struggled with the most is Captivation, where only 53% managed to engage and sustain audience attention. The team noted many students failed to create an interesting hook and tended to just jump in with their first point, and many students did not know how to signal the end of their discourse. However, students were not delivering to a live audience, and the team felt this factor should be taken into consideration.

SLO 2: Students will evaluate an oral presentation according to established criteria

SLO 2 addresses students' understanding of the rhetorical strategies Oprah Winfrey used to produce an effective speech. This required students to think critically and make connections. Although slightly more students met this SLO, their performance within the criteria overall was much weaker. As shown in Fig IV, 80% of students were able to adequately evaluate the significance of the speech as defined by the question they selected. The team noted most students successfully discussed the historical, political, and/or cultural significance of Oprah Winfrey's eulogy, and that they easily made connections to the current political and social climate. Especially interesting were students who self-identified as black or Asian, who made significant and meaningful connections between Oprah's message and their own lived experiences. Although students grasped the basic understanding of how to use rhetorical tools such as ethos, pathos, and logos for analyzing and evaluating a speech, they did not do it extraordinarily well.

The criterion for Ethos and/or Logos addresses students' ability to identify the rhetorical strategies Oprah Winfrey used to evaluate the significance of her authority to speak and/or the significance of her message. Only 70.4% of students met this criterion. The team noted students tend to discuss and argue the contents of the speech rather than analyze it in context or as a genre of writing and its value as a successful, effective, or impactful piece of writing. For example, few students acknowledged Oprah's authority to speak about Rosa Parks or demonstrated an understanding of the genre of the eulogy itself.

Admittedly, the assessment tool measures students' ability to meet individual criteria at a basic level. However, although students successfully identified at least one rhetorical strategy and tactic used by Oprah to connect with and engage her audience (some even identifying the repetitions, symbolism, and metaphors she used), only 63% of students met the criteria for Pathos because they lacked development and explanations, and across the board were weak in their understanding of how rhetorical strategies work to make the writing meaningful, how they help emotionally connect to the audience to help them understand the message, or how they work to persuade the audience to draw inferences or conclusions. Most noteworthy was students' inability to identify rhetorical strategies by name. The team noted there was a distinct lack of development, thoughtfulness, and independent opinions beyond pointing out and citing examples from the text. Although students connected the concepts in the text and even the purpose to themselves, and some recognized how this speech reflects the current climate on racial disparities, they tended not go beyond this to create more of their own thinking. This reflected an inability to apply critical thinking skills independently in assessing and evaluating a piece of writing, regardless of the status of the author; the assumption seemed to be, "Well it's Oprah;" therefore, it must be a good writing/speech.

The data on SLO 2 suggest students are either not proficient in transferring oral communication skills to different situations, do not fully understand how to conduct an evaluation, or do not have (or have forgotten) basic language of rhetoric. However, the team wondered if part of this issue stems from the question the students chose to answer.

As illustrated in Fig V, 38.9% of students chose to respond to question 2:

Oprah begins the eulogy with a childhood memory of Rosa Parks. What is the significance of this memory, and how does it help shape Oprah's connection to her? Oprah compares this childhood memory of Rosa Parks to the reality of meeting her in person, and the revelation she has as a result. What does Oprah want her audience to understand from the connections she is making and how does this engage the audience?

Although the assessment clearly asks students to use this prompt to analyze Oprah's eulogy deploying evidence from that eulogy to support the analysis, the wording of the prompt itself does not specify instructions to identify and explain the rhetorical strategies Oprah uses to develop her message and connect to her audience. Rather, this is implied. As assessors, we assume students will understand what it means to rhetorically analyze, especially at the capstone level. However, we recognize that unless students are constantly using these types of rhetorical skills throughout their courses, they could lose them. Therefore, perhaps in future assessments, we should be more explicit in our language to set clearer expectations and triggers to help students recall these skills. This is a question we need to

debate in preparation for the next assessment of B-Comm Oral. Overall, we were satisfied we produced an assessment that students took seriously; despite the quality of their responses indicating they met the SLOs at a very basic level.

GE Courses

Because this assessment team all teach basic oral communication skills in our composition classes (GE foundation), there was interest to see how students who took their GE courses at New Paltz compared to students who took these courses elsewhere. As illustrated in Fig VI, students who took a Humanities class at New Paltz fared the best in SLO 1 compared to students who took this course elsewhere, but fared worse in SLO 2. While this statistic may suggest that not enough work is being done on oral presentation skills in the Humanities at SUNY New Paltz, these data are far too rudimentary to form concrete conclusions. It is significant however, as illustrated in Fig VII, that students who took the majority of their GE courses at SUNY New Paltz had a much higher incidence of meeting the SLOs compared to students who had taken their GE courses elsewhere: 100% met SLO 1 and 86.4% met SLO 2. These results are an encouraging reflection on the overall quality of our GE program at SUNY New Paltz.

IV. SURVEY RESPONSES

Responses from the three groups surveyed are presented below. The groups are faculty teaching the capstone courses whose students were selected to participate in the assessments, faculty teaching GE courses in the areas assessed, and students completing the GE assessments.

SURVEY RESPONSES FROM FACULTY TEACHING CAPSTONE COURSES

GE Assessment Spring 2021

As part of the spring 2021 GE assessment process, few surveyed faculty teaching capstone courses in which students were selected to complete an assessment in the GE content areas of American History (United States Studies), Other World Civilizations, and Basic Communication-Oral. The survey, which was administered April 29, 2021 through June 5, 2021 to 66 faculty, asked the instructors to reflect on the process. The survey yielded only six responses for a response rate of 9%.

Q1 - Did you or your students experience any technical issues?

Yes, at first. Only half my capstone class was given access due to this semester's unusual splitting of class rosters for those meeting in person. This snafu was fixed, but it did take a bit of figuring out.

No

Yes; the assessment was delayed and hard to find

Not that I am aware of.

Not that I know of

Not that I am aware of.

Q2 - Did students complete the assessment during or outside of class time?



Q2_6_TEXT - Other, please describe

Asynchronous class in Sprint 2021, so can't answer question, for Spring 2020 essays I had planned to devote in class time.

Q3 - What questions, if any, did students have about the assessment?

None, really. They pretty much got it.

They were not terribly impressed or willing to do this tag on online assignment unrelated to their current course of study, and they thought the world essay prompt was "lame"

We did not discuss it that much. They seemed confused about why it did not really relate to the course.

None

They asked if they had to complete it to pass the class and they asked if they had to complete it to graduate. There were several questions of this nature so even when communicated some are still confused as to how it related to their grade or graduation.

Q4 - What feedback, if any, did students have about the assessment?

they did not like it

None

They asked if it will impact their grade in the course they are taking with me this semester.

Too much to ask during the pandemic to produce speeches in Knowmia platform, even though it is not difficult students expressed that they were overwhelmed in general, work, COVID, living situations, technology, online classes in person work type of things that made them ask if required and not want to participate in Spring 2021.

Q5 - What feedback, if any, do you have about improving this process in the future?

You could explicitly ask instructors to carve out class time for the students to complete the assessment. Leaving it up to students to do in their own time just isn't going to be effective. That said, I speak from the perspective of being able to spare that time in class, and this may not be the case in other capstone classes.

I voted no on doing assessment in capstone courses. I think it is methodologically a flawed way to assess whether course based learning outcomes were "retained" until graduation. I understand concerns about original course based assessment falling on adjuncts, but we could just remove adjunct taught classes from sample we do...these as they stand are not likely to yield much useful data to help anyone improve the teaching of GE courses...of course if SUNY reforms go forward, there will be fewer course based categories anyways, no?

It would be helpful if I knew more about the actual exercise so that I could discuss that with them as necessary.

I'm not convinced that embedding GE assessment of specific areas (not competencies) in senior capstone courses makes sense after a few years of trying this approach. Students are consistently

perplexed why they are completing an assessment of material they learned quite a while ago (sometimes at another institution) and often in an unrelated course. This is a disincentive to complete the assessment, especially when the course is not a traditional seated course. And even when they do complete the assessment, they seem unmotivated to do it well. After the experience of the pivot to online learning, perhaps it would make sense to try an online assessment of GE outcomes at the end of a GE course. This could be triggered when they log on to my.newpaltz.edu. The institution uses these triggers for other questionnaires and requirements, so this may be a good option. I don't know how many of my students completed their GE assessment; frankly I don't even know where to look for that information. But I do know that faculty were sent many reminders asking us to urge students to complete the assessment due to low response rates. This suggests that a shift in how and when we administer the assessment should be considered.

I think that all students in senior seminars could be required to take a 1 credit co-requisite online GE Assessment Assignment (so they get 1 upper division credit, pass no pass based on whether they handed something in but not the evaluation because we are really assessing curriculum not them). It would benefit the students (some need 1 upper division credit at times) and it would have a professional, collective New Paltz feel (seniors across campus all complete the 1 credit co-requisite. A win-win that would allow the GE Board to collect better "data" in the completion rate and quality of effort put into the 1 credit GE Assessment Assignment.

SURVEY RESPONSES FROM FACULTY TEACHING GE COURSES IN THE AREAS ASSESSED

GE Assessment Spring 2021

As part of the GE Assessment process in spring 2021, faculty teaching in the GE categories being assessed (WORLD, USST, and Basic Communication-Oral) were sent a survey asking them to reflect on their GE course. The survey, which was sent to 66 faculty, was administered May 5, 2021 through June 5, 2021. We received 20 responses for a response rate of 30%. The respondents were asked two open-ended questions and then asked to estimate the number of students who met or did not meet the GE learning objective for the GE category. Due to an error in the survey setup, the faculty respondents from the GE category Basic Communication-Oral were not shown the questions to estimate the number of students meeting the learning outcome.

How do you help students understand your course within the broader context of the General Education (GE) Program?

I attempt to connect it to other courses, encouraging them to think about how work in this course would apply to or fit in with work in other courses. I sometimes explain the reasoning behind a broad GE program in general.

By referencing art, business, science, etc., as appropriate

They understand that this is the capstone course of the major and collegiate experience.

GE Student Learning Outcomes: HUMANITIES (HUM)

Students Will Be Able to Do All of the Following:

Demonstrate proficiency in the analysis of artistic, literary, philosophic or other works in the humanities

Contextualize these works historically, culturally, or by genre

Express their knowledge in forms of academic discourse or creative writing

I am attentive to the Humanities SLOs outlined above in that students engage in ongoing discussion that asks them to engage in these activities. As far as how my course ties into the broader context of our GE program, I do not regularly address this topic; however, when composing feedback to my students, I often reference the work they are doing in their majors and make connections between their fields of study and what they have posted on discussion board in regards to the texts under discussion. So, perhaps making this connection gets a bit at helping them to understand the essence of a good liberal arts education.

In the syllabus I include a Course Description that explains the goals of the class in regards to learning about United States history since 1865 by examining how the nation developed in terms of political, economic, social, and cultural events. I also include a section on Student Learning Objectives that explains the different skills they will develop in the class and how they relate to life outside the classroom.

We discuss the benefits of a wide-range of subjects to cultivate a well-rounded Liberal Arts education, and how introduction to these disciplines benefits students their appreciation for various studies as well as in deciding on a major.

This course asks students to analyze and think critically about institutions of education, institutions that they are intimately familiar with, but not necessarily from an academic or institutional point of view and not necessarily within contexts of U.S. history and society. A major theme of the course is what it means to be an educated person within a democracy; we consider questions about how we

are all part of the education system (whether as teachers, taxpayers, or community members). I consider this to be part of the GE goal of encouraging thoughtful and informed citizens.

I helped students to understand the ancient history of different parts of the world with special focus on Asia. By teaching ancient religions, scripts, art and architecture, and the process of state formation, I lead students to understand the development of ancient civilizations, languages and their complex interactions.

Writing

In our course, students focus on the ideas and purposes behind communication and its many forms (writing, oral, digital). The course starts with thinking about communication and then evolves into practical application of these ideas in writing, oral discussions, and blogs. We talk about writing and communication as much as we apply it.

I always introduce each assignment by identifying how the core skills for that project are essential and transferable to other aspects of student life, how those skills are useful for building toward a professional career and also how they can be useful in day-to-day living. This is fairly easy as writing and communication are essential skills.

I explain why there is a GE program. American Govt. and Politics is a course that makes them an informed citizen so that they can exercise their civic responsibilities in a knowledgeable way. GE broadens their perspectives.

Carefully go over the syllabus. I also show video on transference. We also do some journals on transference.

At the start of the term, I specifically talk to them about what GE is for, and what a "Liberal Education" means and how this specific topic relates to many different fields. I have also been using the Global Goals as a framework for understanding the interplay of environmental, societal, and economic issues that are clearly a part of the textile and fashion industries now and throughout history. This has seemed to be a very successful way to help them quickly understand that the topics we study are wide-ranging and not just a "curiosity" to fill a check-box on their General Ed section of the progress report!

The fact that it fulfills a GE requirement is indicated on the syllabus. I could do more.

I connect the USST learning outcomes with Honors Program learning outcomes. I also frame the course within the larger context of GE and the foundation it provides for students, regardless of major. The goals of GE and the Honors Program are interconnected. Honors Program courses and GE courses place an emphasis on teaching students how to think rather than what to think. The Honors Program and GE cultivate intellectual curiosity and encourage students to explore new perspectives and multidisciplinary learning. The Honors Program and GE prepare students to embrace a lifetime of learning and the adaptations they will make in a rapidly changing world.

I discuss the importance of studying a region that is historically, socially, demographically, politically, and economically distinct from the United States, while recognizing its ties to the reality of the United States. In doing so, students can work towards mapping a common, global reality that can give us a better understanding of the world, and the communities we inhabit.

Discussions emphasize the importance not only of learning different ways of studying Comparative Politics, but also of critically assessing these methods and students' developing a comfort level and proficiency in using these methods themselves. A required research paper allows and requires students to do a small investigation of their own. Between the rough draft and the final draft, I encourage students to improve their analysis not only based on my suggestions and criticisms, but also on the basis of their own reflection on where their paper could be improved.

What work do your students complete that aligns with the GE student learning outcomes for the content area assigned to your course?

They complete numerous papers in different genres, particularly making evidence-based arguments at moments. They also complete an oral presentation and more informally critique both student and professional presentations.

they write analytical/critical essays

They complete a 25-30 page research paper--with numerous assignments along the way (literature review, bibliography, etc.).

Discussion board posts

Multiple-choice quizzes

Final paper

Every week students read and/or watch a variety of different sources that requires students to think critically about what they are learning. Students must participate in weekly discussion forums where they must provide an analysis of primary and secondary sources. Students must also engage with other students' posts in the discussion board which encourages them to challenge other posts and/or expand upon arguments made by other students. Students also read 3 monographs throughout the semester that all focus on marginalized groups within the United States, thus they learn about other perspectives that are often not taught in traditional US history narratives.

Student apply critical thinking skills, writing, information literacy, and presentation skills throughout the semester as it is a first-year writing and academic research course.

A major assignment is a multimodal essay on the history of schooling in the United States. Preparing this essay requires that students discuss and analyze historical, political, social, economic, and/or cultural developments or trends of U.S. schooling from pre-colonial times until now. In the United States; they also presented something from their work to the whole class. Throughout the course, students also engage in writing and discussion on what it means to be an educated person in a democracy; these informal assignments ask students to consider questions and engage in analysis relevant to GE student learning outcomes.

To acquire basic knowledge of the ancient world history, students complete weekly quizzes, reading assignments, and response questions. To improve their communication skills, they do two group presentations.

My students practice communication through writing essays, research journals and research papers. They do a peer critique that helps them analyze their peers writing as a form of communication. They evaluate the message and how it was delivered and their peer's understanding of audience. We write weekly blogs using critical thinking skills to assess case studies or situations which they deconstruct and analyze scenarios, ideas and actions and suggest alternative solutions or options. These are brought into the class for discussion and we share our various options and thinking on these topics.

Students are required to produce an e-Folio at the end of the semester containing evidence of research and argument, revision and reflection. The skills required to produce the e-Folio demand an understanding of all the learning outcomes for GE in our area. Students are also required to prepare formal and informal presentations and evaluate their peers.

Students submit weekly journal entries about any governmental action that occurred within the past week. That keeps them current with politics and government - especially in the past year!!

Journals, in class assignments

The semester is divided into seven modules that each focus on a different region of the world and some of the featured cultures/societal groups/ethnicities. They learn about broad regional history, as well as some specific examples of dress evolution and expression that illustrate the cultural identities

of the indigenous peoples of that region. For each module the students participate in a discussion board that is intended for them to reflect on specific aspects of history and culture for that region. Further, they each write a research "article" through the blog feature that is on a topic specific to the region, but selected by the student to give them depth into a culture, cultural practice, or feature, etc., of that region. For their midterm and final they also select a specific cultural group or topic to research and write a more lengthy paper exploring history and contemporary expression of dress and identity.

Weekly discussion assignments, quizzes, and a final project.

Throughout the course, I remind students of the learning outcomes for USST. Each assignment, for example, asks students to consider basic narratives in American history; knowledge of unity and diversity in American history; U.S. involvement with the rest of the world; and the significance of important documents in U.S. history. Together we trace rhetorical patterns over time and actualize the learning outcomes through that lens. The final research project for the course requires students to trace an issue, and the rhetoric associated with that issue, across time. The assignment requires students to look back, examine the contemporary context, and look forward. For example, with the learning outcomes as a frame of reference, students might trace the history of the modern civil rights movement, voting rights, or immigration.

Students

- * read and discuss texts from across the disciplines on Latin American and Caribbean studies: history, economics, politics, and literature, encouraging a North by South analytical perspective.
 - * post entries in Discussion Boards based on prompts related to module readings and materials.
 - * watch videos and documentaries and fill out questionnaires for discussion and reflection on current issues relevant to the region.
 - * locate current events and prepare Blog posts to follow news in real time to share with the class and discuss their relation to readings and materials.
 - * write short responses to discuss prompts based on class materials, and a short essay on a literary testimonial text about the Dirty War in the Southern Cone.
 - * research and design a Wiki entry on a topic of their interest focused on initiatives to address and resolve the multiple challenges that region faces.
-

For each country studied students are exposed to investigations using at least two different methods of study, evidence and analysis. The discussion forums allow and require us to contrast the strengths and weaknesses of each approach.

Students will demonstrate knowledge of major concepts, models and issues: Both the textbook and my lectures introduce students to some of the most important theories and methods of studying and explaining Comparative Politics, Discussion Forums explore the applicability of these paradigms to specific questions.

American History (US Studies) – estimate of the number of students meeting or not meeting the learning objective	Meets # of Students (% of Students)	Does not meet # of Students (% of Students)	Total
Students will demonstrate knowledge of a basic narrative of American history: political, economic, social, and cultural, including knowledge of unity and diversity in American society.	199 (95%)	20 (5%)	210
Students will demonstrate knowledge of common institutions in American society and how they have affected different groups; and understanding of America's evolving relationship with the rest of the world	184 (90%)	20 (10%)	204

World – estimate of the number of students meeting or not meeting the learning objective	Meets # of Students (% of Students)	Does not meet # of Students (% of Students)	Total
Students will demonstrate knowledge of a broad outline of world history	41 (68%)	19 (32%)	60
Or, Students will demonstrate a knowledge of the distinctive features of the history, institutions, economy, society, culture, etc. of one non-Western civilization	186 (87%)	29 (13%)	215

SURVEY RESPONSES FROM STUDENTS COMPLETING THE GE ASSESSMENTS

GE Assessment Spring 2021

As part of the spring 2021 GE Assessment process, we surveyed students in capstone courses who were selected to participate in the assessment for their feedback on the assessment process. The survey was open February 18, 2021 through June 5, 2021, as different classes were doing the assignments at different times throughout the semester. Based on the course census enrollments, the survey was sent to 787 students. The survey received 25 responses for a response rate of 3%.

Q1 - Do you have any feedback or suggestions about the GE program?

n/a

I would recommend to stop using Knowmia. It makes the process all the more frustrating with unnecessary extra steps just to submit a video. It would be much easier to simply record a video and upload it.

Not about the USST GE! I would like to softly suggest that perhaps philosophy (of some kind) could be a little more emphasized as a GE!

No.

No

only 1 natural science should be required

The GE program is great.

No, not currently. I felt it strengthened my skills as a writer at college level - it is important and good for everyone to have this experience. I'm glad I took Comp II even though I took two years of AP English in high school. Initially it bothered me I couldn't place out, but I see it was clearly beneficial to me as a writer in the long run.

it is a great program there is no need at this time to make adjustments

The GE program offers lots of helpful courses and tips to help me succeed in my career.

Remove the GE requirement for graduation. GE should only be there for students who are interested in learning about it or don't know what career path they want. An engineer doesn't need to know who conducted music in the 1200s.

The GE Program is deeply flawed. While its intentions are wholesome and focused on learning, the stress, strain, and grade obsession its courses inspire often do more harm than good. When forced into classes that felt as though they would never benefit me or my career goals, a cloud of negativity easily overtook every semester involving them. I not only negatively associated the subjects themselves, but my experience studying at New Paltz as a whole. Though some broader perspectives were achieved, my experience with GE's has been mostly negative. Unfortunately, classes meant to enrich me too often felt like chores doused in grade-obsession to be truly enjoyed and appreciated.

I would suggest providing extra help for courses that students aren't comfortable with like math or science.

Oh boy do I. Let's talk about how the black studies department has their offices in that trailer on the opposite side of campus or how a majority of the Asian studies professors are white. Or how as an art student we are required to take art of the western world 1 and 2, which also count as Art GEs and we

don't have any diversity in the art history classes. Why do I have to sit and learn about cave paintings or art that Europeans stole from people of color when other people aren't required to take art classes such as maybe art in Japan. They had that really cool Edo period art movement with the woodblock prints.

Have more class options that can be applied to the work environment. I will not use philosophy in the work environment.

Personally as somebody that came into SUNY New Paltz without any AP credits, there was a ridiculous amount of GEs to complete. And this made my time here extremely stressful to the point that I was scrambling in summer and winter semesters just to make sure I completed all GEs in my 4 years here.

Would like to know if this GE essay affects us in any way. Will this affect how I graduate?

Boring. I don't like none of these classes. I think it should be elective instead of mandatory like this.

No

DONT ADD EXTRA WORK FOR NO REASON

I HATED having to download Knowmia. It was so difficult because I had to figure out how to change settings in my computer to allow it to download

Q2 - Do you have any feedback or suggestions about this assessment process?

Assign a GE that the student took at this University. I completed this category of the GE two years ago at a different university so your assessment of my answers is kind of irrelevant.

As a senior, struggling to juggle everything going on, it is hard to concentrate on another assignment that won't affect whether or not I graduate.

I think it would be beneficial to make it more clear which GE category the assessment is checking on.

Not much! I suppose I would've liked to have the emails about this assessment contain a little more information (I got a little nervous haha). I also had trouble with understanding one of the questions in terms of what it was asking me, but this wasn't a big issue I don't think, and this is not an uncommon occurrence for me.

Be more clear about what this was.

This assessment process was extremely confusing. I have never taken an oral communications class so I did not feel qualified to complete this assignment based on what I had learned in my GE courses. In the initial email we were told this would be assigned to us by a professor, and when it never was, I assumed I didn't have to do it. This assignment proved to be extremely stressful and the software was difficult to use and downloading it caused my computer to crash twice. The board should've reached out to our professors and told them to at least mention this to us.

I can't complete because I don't have Microsoft Word. There should be more flexibility with how it can be submitted.

n/a

I think that this assessment should be optional instead of mandatory.

I feel like Knowmia was a bit overly complex, it took me awhile to get set up. I was only able to use it on my Windows computer and it took a while to set up and understand. It didn't work on my

Chromebook at all, I assume it would not work on a phone or iPad but I'm not sure. Another platform might make creating submissions easier and faster for people.

it is a great reflection process

No.

This assessment is absolutely useless, and I believe it is absolutely absurd that I need to participate in this nonsense on my final semester. Additionally, I truly believe I received a better education at Ulster County Community College compared to the "education" I got from SUNY New Paltz.

Remove the assessment process

This assessment process is not horrible, but I think a greater understanding of the student experience with GE's could be achieved through asking about all of the subjects they were exposed to. Only asking about one does not seem effective. My experience with one of my GE's could vastly differ from my experience with another, and thus, my overall evaluation of the general education program has many blanks. Additionally, alongside asking about knowledge gained, I think this assessment should prioritize overall quality of experience and enrichment. Students should be asked what they learned, but also what they hoped to learn.

No

I am a senior i took comp 1 and 2 freshman year as a senior in a capstone thesis class i barely have enough time do my work for my mandatory classes let alone sit here and do this assessment it just Fstressed me out even more. I also do not see how responding to a video of oprah talking about rosa parks help you assess us.

Make it survey based not writing based.

It was a bit confusing and I had to download an app and an add on which was annoying. But I figured it out, just took longer than expected.

Make it clear if this is mandatory or optional.

It's pointless. Most of us we took GE classes just to meet the requirement for graduation, we wrote paper or took exams to go through the classes. this assessment is pointless

No

WHAT IS THIS?

Allow students to submit a .MOV or similar file type instead of having to download all these programs.

Q3 - Do you have any additional feedback?

Be mindful of transfer students who have not gone through NP's GE program as thoroughly as other students! :)

I really loved the instruction video! Everyone did such a good job, and it was very helpful!

I had no idea what this was, I was not enrolled in a capstone class and no professor told me about this despite the emails saying that they should have. I took my GE in high school. It was very unclear what this was for and why I was selected for this.

Please in the future don't assign this to be due during mid terms, and please make sure the professors mention it to the students, emails are very easy to overlook, especially as a second semester senior

who has a lot of other things going on. Perhaps just have students do a survey about their gen ed experiences rather than an assignment.

n/a

No.

not at this time

No.

N/A

No

Was not aware of this happening.

No not really

if GR program had to be mandatory, it should be reduce the amount of credits that it require so we have time to focus on more of our major classes

No

why do we have to do this? DONT ADD EXTRA WORK FOR NO REASON

This was a waste of my time.

V. SCHEDULE FOR ASSESSMENT OF GE CONTENT AREAS

- 2020-21: American History (United States Studies), ~~Other~~ World Civilizations, Basic Communication-Oral
- 2021-22: The Arts, Foreign Language, Basic Communication-Written, Mathematics, plus Critical Thinking within majors
- 2022-23: Humanities, Western Civilization, Social Sciences, and Natural Sciences, plus Information Management within majors

Appendix A

American History (United States Studies) Assessment Prompt

Instructions:

Please type your answers directly on this document, save it, and upload it to the Turnitin link provided on Blackboard. **Use about 30 minutes to answer the below three questions (10 minutes per question).** Your answers do not have to be based on the specific GE course you took but should reflect what you have learned at SUNY New Paltz.

We are interested in your own ideas and ask that you do not use external sources such as the Internet, books, magazines, or other people when writing your essay.

Survey:

1. I took my USST category GE course at A) SUNY New Paltz ____ or B) elsewhere ____ or C) not sure ____
2. The (approximate) name of the course I took to fulfill my USST GE requirement was (fill in the blank) A) _____ or B) not sure ____
3. I completed the majority of my GE requirements at A) SUNY New Paltz ____ or B) elsewhere ____ or C) not sure ____

Reflective essay prompt

1) *How has the identity of a US citizen become more diverse over time? Spend 10 minutes writing a one-paragraph essay that describes how peoples of different cultural, ethnic, racial, or gender backgrounds have been included in US society after past periods of exclusion. You may discuss how one specific marginalized group has changed US national identity through their particular struggle for equality, and how those struggles have unfolded over time.*

2) *Spend 10 minutes writing a one-paragraph essay that describes the relationship between US institutions and various groups in society. Have US institutions successfully preserved the rights of all Americans? Why or why not? In your answer, discuss how the structure of US institutions has enabled or constrained the rights of different people during US history. You may refer to specific rights enshrined in the US constitution institutions such as the Supreme Court, or institutional forms such as federalism. You may also discuss how US institutions have enabled different kinds of inequality among groups in US society. Be sure to offer at least one example from US history of how institutions have affected the rights of people within the United States.*

3) *US society is deeply intertwined with societies across the globe. We draw upon other peoples' cultures, economies, and institutions when developing our own. Spend 10 minutes writing a short essay describing how the world has influenced the development of the United States. You may discuss how other peoples' cultures are commonplace here in the US, or how the US economy has been shaped by*

goods and services drawn from other parts of the world. Feel free to refer to specific regions or peoples from around the world, as well as specific cultural practices (such as cuisine or forms of dress) or economic goods (things US citizens regularly purchase and consume) that originate in other world communities but are now commonplace in the United States.

Appendix B

Other World Civilizations Assessment Prompt

Instructions:

Please type your answers directly on this document, save it, and upload it to the Turnitin link provided on Blackboard. Use about 10 minutes to brainstorm and 30 minutes to write your essay. The essay does not have to be based on the specific GE course you took but should reflect what you have learned at SUNY New Paltz.

We are interested in your own ideas and ask that you do not use external sources such as the Internet, books, magazines, or other people when writing your essay.

Survey:

1. I took my WORLD category GE course at A) SUNY New Paltz ____ or B) elsewhere ____ or C) not sure ____
2. The (approximate) name of the course I took to fulfill my WORLD GE requirement was (fill in the blank) A) _____ or B) not sure ____
3. I completed the majority of my GE requirements at A) SUNY New Paltz ____ or B) elsewhere ____ or C) not sure ____

Reflective essay prompt:

Pick a non-Western culture, civilization or region you learned about during your studies at SUNY New Paltz. Discuss a theme from its history or a particular religious, economic, political, social, or cultural practice or institution within that culture. How would you explain its importance to another person not familiar with it? How has learning from this culture, or set of cultures, changed the way you see your own culture and your own position as a global citizen?

Appendix C

Basic Communication--Oral Assessment Prompt

Overview

Students will watch Oprah Winfrey's eulogy to Rosa Parks (4:10 mins.), then choose ONE of the five prompts to respond to, drawing on any knowledge or skills learned from the GE experience to engage with evidence from the eulogy itself. Students will then craft their response into an oral presentation between 3-5 minutes in length. While there is no requirement to produce a Google Slide or PowerPoint, students are advised to write a script and rehearse its oral delivery as they would for any presentation. Once students are ready, they will record the oral presentation using *Knowmia* and upload to the Blackboard site.

Speech

Oprah Winfrey

Eulogy for Rosa Parks

Delivered 31 October 2005, Metropolitan African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church, Washington D.C.

<https://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/oprahwinfreyonrosaparks.htm> (4:10 minutes)

Transcript

To Reverend Braxton, family, friends, admirers, and this amazing choir:

I -- I feel it an honor to be here to come and say a final goodbye.

I grew up in the South, and Rosa Parks was a hero to me long before I recognized and understood the power and impact that her life embodied. I remember my father telling me about this colored woman who had refused to give up her seat. And in my child's mind, I thought, "She must be really big." I thought she must be at least a hundred feet tall. I imagined her being stalwart and strong and carrying a shield to hold back the white folks.

And then I grew up and had the esteemed honor of meeting her. And wasn't that a surprise. Here was this petite, almost delicate lady who was the personification of grace and goodness. And I thanked her then. I said, "Thank you," for myself and for every colored girl, every colored boy, who didn't have heroes who were celebrated.

I thanked her then.

And after our first meeting I realized that God uses good people to do great things. And I'm here today to say a final thank you, Sister Rosa, for being a great woman who used your life to serve, to serve us all. That day that you refused to give up your seat on the bus, you, Sister Rosa, changed the trajectory of my life and the lives of so many other people in the world. I would not be standing here today nor standing

where I stand every day had she not chosen to sit down. I know that. I know that. I know that. I know that, and I honor that. Had she not chosen to say we shall not -- we shall not be moved.

So I thank you again, Sister Rosa, for not only confronting the one white man who[se] seat you took, not only confronting the bus driver, not only for confronting the law, but for confronting history, a history that for 400 years said that you were not even worthy of a glance, certainly no consideration. I thank you for not moving.

And in that moment when you resolved to stay in that seat, you reclaimed your humanity and you gave us all back a piece of our own. I thank you for that. I thank you for acting without concern. I often thought about what that took, knowing the climate of the times and what could have happened to you, what it took to stay seated. You acted without concern for yourself and made life better for us all. We shall not be moved.

I marvel at your will.

I celebrate your strength to this day.

And I am forever grateful, Sister Rosa, for your courage, your conviction.

I owe you -- to succeed.

I will not be moved.

Evaluation Prompts

Choose ONE of the following prompts to respond to:

1. Analyze Oprah's non-verbal language: tone, facial expressions, eye contact, gestures, posture as she unfolds her eulogy. Connecting the non-verbal to the verbal and using evidence from the video, analyze how this non-verbal language helps communicate Oprah's message and connect to her audience.
2. Oprah begins the eulogy with a childhood memory of Rosa Parks. What is the significance of this memory, and how does it help shape Oprah's connection to her? Oprah compares this childhood memory of Rosa Parks to the reality of meeting her in person, and the revelation she has as a result. What does Oprah want her audience to understand from the connections she is making and how does this engage the audience?
3. Using evidence from Oprah's text, discuss the historical, political, cultural or contextual significance of her eulogy to Rosa Parks. In light of your response, what is the significance of the last two lines of her eulogy: "I owe you to succeed. I will not be moved."
4. Of all the people who could have been invited to deliver a eulogy to Rosa Parks at her funeral, what makes Oprah Winfrey qualified to do so? What is significant and/or symbolic about

Oprah's role? Using evidence from the language of the eulogy, describe how Oprah establishes her authority to speak. How does Oprah position herself in relationship to Rosa Parks and why is this important?

5. Oprah uses several repetitive words and phrases. Identify these words and phrases, and discuss their function within the eulogy and their intended effect on the audience. Does this style of speech remind you of other famous speeches? If so, identify one, and explain its connection to this eulogy and/or the legacy it represents.

Task

- Watch the video of Oprah Winfrey's eulogy to Rosa Parks (4:10 mins.)
- Choose ONE of the five prompts that appeals to your interests
- Use the prompt to analyze the eulogy
- Draft your ideas into a response
- Fine tune the response into a script (3-5 mins. in length)
- Rehearse reading your script out loud paying attention to tone & non-verbal communication
- When you are ready, record your oral presentation using *Knowmia*
- Upload the video to the Blackboard site

Note: This whole process should take no more than 45 minutes.

Please be mindful of the difference between a formal speech and an oral presentation. You are not asked to write a speech—we want to evaluate your ability to engage in oral discourse, which is a little more informal.

VI. Disseminating Spring 2021 GE Assessment Findings and Expectations for Follow-up

The Associate Provost for Strategic Planning and Assessment will disseminate this report to the provost, GE Board, Curriculum Committee chair, chairs, faculty who taught courses in the GE content areas assessed, associate deans, deans, presiding officer of the faculty, and Vice President for Academic Affairs of the Student Association. Recipients are expected to examine the results and act on them in keeping with their role. For example, the GE Board is expected to address concerns about the low response rate and the use of Knowmia. The Board should also address questions about whether the assessments should be administration online or in-class in the future. It is expected that the Board will work with relevant campus constituencies, as necessary, in attending to the findings from these assessments.

Reports regarding the actions taken to address these assessment findings are to be sent to the associate deans for each school, copied to the dean. Associate deans are to remind departments about this requirement and, upon receiving the departmental reports, are to submit a summary of key points to the associate provost. As warranted, the deans, associate deans, and the Associate Provost for Strategic Planning and Assessment are to work to resolve important issues and concerns regarding the GE assessments.

The Associate Provost for Strategic Planning and members of the GE Board will meet with the Student Association's Vice President for Academic Affairs and student representatives to review these findings. They also will work to address students' concerns about GE and the GE assessments. The Associate Provost will keep the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs informed about key issues pertaining to the GE assessments.



Submitted by: Laurel M. Garrick Duhaney **Date:** 7.2.21
