GENERAL EDUCATION ASSESSMENT REPORT

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| Purpose | Faculty survey |
| Materials used, n: | 24 survey responses from faculty teaching Gen Ed courses |
| Rubric/Scoring standard used: | 20 questions via Survey Monkey |
| Date of assessment: | Spring 2016 and Fall 2016 |
| Report by: | Ana Vasovic, General Education |

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| **GOAL** |
| The goal of his project was to survey faculty activities in and opinions about General Education program. This activity was part of a larger assessment project to evaluate the effectiveness of the General Education curriculum in terms of student learning in Flexible Core courses. |
| **OVERVIEW** |
| Twenty four instructors teaching MUS 101, 102, 145, THTR 131, 211, 212, 213, SPAN 283, BLST 102, ASIA 101, JWST 10411, SOC 105, ANTH 101, 201, ECO 10250 and WCIV in spring 16 and fall 16 semesters responded to the online survey. The survey was designed to elicit responses that   * identify characteristics of Gen Ed courses (small vs. large, part-time vs. full-time instructors, prescribed curriculum/course materials, support for faculty…) * gauge faculty understanding of Gen Ed expectations * obtain faculty opinion about student learning * offer recommendations for improvement of the program |
| **FINDINGS SUMMARY** |
| The survey responses indicate that:   * The majority of the instructors teaching Gen Ed Flexible Core courses in the given semesters are **experienced, part-time faculty.** * **Most of them understand the expectations/outcomes of the Gen Ed** course they teach. * **Many don’t understand how that course fits within the General Education** requirement. * The majority of the Gen Ed classes have **between 36 and 60 students**. * About **40%** of instructors **receive training/support materials** from their department. * About **60%** of instructors follow a **prescribed curriculum**, but only **30%** are required to use a **specific book**. * Almost **all** (96%) instructors include **General Education information on their course syllabus**. * **All of the courses include** **a writing requirement**, with most asking for 6 or more pages of finished, polished writing. The writing assignments are most commonly essays, reaction papers, short paragraphs, research papers, creative pieces and journaling. * In addition to writing, **critical thinking is also assessed** in these classes mostly through evaluation of written work, but also through class participation, small group discussions, essay exams and multiple choice exams. * About **70 %** of instructors require students to conduct either **primary or secondary research**. * Most of the instructors feel that their **course helps, at least somewhat, in development of students’ writing, critical thinking, and information literacy skills as well as the content knowledge**. About 50% feel that their course significantly contributes to improvement of students’ writing skills, 87% feel so about the critical thinking skills, 78% about research, while 90% feel students’ disciplinary knowledge is significantly improved. * The majority, almost 90%, would find **faculty development** in terms of Gen Ed helpful. * Faculty **suggestions for improvement** of Gen Ed Program included:   Organizing an orientation session for Gen Ed faculty; Providing a pamphlet/email at the start of the semester on Gen Ed curriculum, suggested class activities and supports available; Organizing  Faculty workshops for sharing experiences/best practices; and offering smaller classes. |
| **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS** |
| This survey confirmed the findings of other assessments that stronger support for faculty teaching Gen Ed is needed. Instructors desire to continue improving their teaching and would welcome additional resources and support in order to better align their curriculum and pedagogy with Gen Ed expectations. Therefore, in addition to the semesterly email sent to faculty by the Gen Ed office and to orientation sessions offered by some departments (Art, Philosophy, History, English), the Office of General Education will:   * **Organize “Gen Ed 101”** sessions at the beginning of every semester to include: * Curriculum overview * Goals/Learning outcomes per category * Scoring Rubrics for used in learning outcomes assessment * Assessment overview and latest findings * Goal of making a coherent writing experience in Gen Ed; coordinated writing assignments * Coordinate with the English Department in developing **WAC workshop(s)** * Develop a Gen Ed **pamphlet/handbook** for faculty and students |

**Survey Questions and Responses**

**Q1 What General Education course are you teaching this semester?**

1. African Heritage and the Caribbean Brazilian Experience
2. ASIA 10100
3. JWST 10411, Psychology of Religion
4. Sociology 10500
5. ECO 10250
6. THTR213 Theatre History 3
7. Theatre History I
8. World Civilization, 1500 - the Present (WCIV10200)
9. WCIV 10100
10. Mus 145
11. Anth 20100 Cross Cultural Perspectives
12. Introduction to Theatre Arts
13. Theatre History 1 (THTR 21100)
14. Introduction to Anthropology
15. MUS 101 C
16. World Civilization 101
17. Intro to Theatre
18. Music 102, Introduction to World Music
19. Introduction to Theatre 13100
20. Music 101
21. History of Theatre 2
22. Intro to Theatre
23. Introduction to Theatre
24. Spanish 283

**Q2 Have you taught this course before?**

| **Answer Choices–** | **Responses–** |
| --- | --- |
| **Yes** | **79.17% (**19) |
| **No** | **20.83% (**5) |

**Q3 Please indicate if you are (select one)**

| **Answer Choices–** | **Responses–** |
| --- | --- |
| **Full Time faculty** | **20.83%** (5) |
| **Part time faculty** | **79.17%** (19) |

**Q4 How many students are in (each section) of your Gen Ed class?**

| **Answer Choices–** | **Responses–** |
| --- | --- |
| **35 or less** | **20.83%** (5) |
| **36-60** | **58.33%** (14) |
| **61-100** | **16.67%**(4) |
| **More than 100** | **8.33%** (2) |

**Q5 If more than 60 students are in your class, is there a TA?**

| **Answer Choices–** | **Responses–** |
| --- | --- |
| **Yes** | **21.74%** (5) |
| **No** | **8.70%** (2) |
| **Does not apply** | **69.57%** (16) |

**Q6 How familiar are you with General Education learning outcomes for the course you are teaching? Select one**

| **Answer Choices–** | **Responses–** |
| --- | --- |
| **Not at all** | **4.17%**(1) |
| **Somewhat familiar** | **29.17%** (7) |
| **Well informed** | **66.67%** (16) |

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**Q7 How familiar are you with the General Education requirement at the college and how your course fits within it?**

| **Answer Choices–** | **Responses–** |
| --- | --- |
| **Not at all** | **13.04%** (3) |
| **Somewhat familiar** | **39.13%** (9) |
| **Well informed** | **47.83%** (11) |

**Q8 How did you receive information about General Education outcomes and requirements for your class? Select all that apply**

| **Answer Choices–** | **Responses–** |
| --- | --- |
| **Department Chair** | **41.67%** (10) |
| **Course coordinator** | **37.50%** (9) |
| **Gene Ed office/website** | **29.17%** (7) |
| **Faculty Handbook** | **8.33%** (2) |
| **Other** | **20.83%** (5) |
| **I received no information** | **12.50%** (3) |

**Q9 Does your department offer any training/support materials for instructors teaching Gen Ed?**

| **Answer Choices–** | **Responses–** |
| --- | --- |
| **Yes** | **41.67%** (10) |
| **No** | **58.33%** (14) |

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| Comments   * If my department offers support materials, I am not aware of them. * Intra faculty communication * Not that I know of, but that doesn't mean it doesn't exist. * Low-Stakes Writing Assignment suggestions booklet from Prof Syrrakos * Sample syllabus, verbal help from other instructors * Initial, hour long orientation with follow-up email discussion * Kathleen Potts supplied me with the requirements and a sample syllabus. * Faculty have shared best practices and syllabi with me * To the best of my knowledge, workshops * I received a sample syllabus when I first started. * Syllabus from previous classes and personal feedback |

**Q10 Does your department model/mandate/prescribe curriculum for the course you teach?**

| **Answer Choices–** | **Responses–** |
| --- | --- |
| **Yes** | **62.50%** (15) |
| **No** | **37.50%** (9) |

**Q11 Does your department specify/require any specific textbook/reading materials for the course?**

| **Answer Choices–** | **Responses–** |
| --- | --- |
| **Yes** | **29.17%** (7) |
| **No** | **70.83%** (17) |
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**Q12 Does your course syllabus contain General Education information relevant to your course?**

| **Answer Choices–** | **Responses–** |
| --- | --- |
| **Yes** | **95.83%** (23) |
| **No** | **4.17%** (1) |

**Q13 What is the total number of pages of finished, polished writing students complete in your class?**

| **Answer Choices–** | **Responses–** |
| --- | --- |
| **None** | **0.00%** (0) |
| **Less than 5** | **16.67%** (4) |
| **6-10** | **37.50%** (9) |
| **More than 10** | **45.83%** (11) |

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**Q14 What types of writing assignments do students complete in your class?**

| **Answer Choices–** | **Responses–** |
| --- | --- |
| **Journaling** | **25.00%** (6) |
| **Short paragraph** | **37.50%** (9) |
| **Short essay (1-3 pages) or long essay (4-6 pages)** | **95.83%** (23) |
| **Summary** | **12.50%** (3) |
| **Reaction paper** | **83.33%** (20) |
| **Explication de texte/close reading** | **12.50%** (3) |
| **Book review** | **4.17%** (1) |
| **Research paper** | **25.00%** (6) |
| **Letter (post card, personal letter, business letter)** | **0.00%** (0) |
| **Creative piece (poem, song, fairy tale, short story, pastiche)** | **20.83%** (5) |
| **Portfolio** | **4.17%** (1) |
| **Other** | **12.50%** (3) |
| **None** | **0.00% (0)** |

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**Q15 How do you assess the critical thinking skills of students in your class? Select all that apply.**

| **Answer Choices–** | **Responses–** |
| --- | --- |
| **Evaluation of written work** | **100.00%** (24) |
| **Essay exams** | **41.67%** (10) |
| **Multiple choice exams** | **41.67%** (10) |
| **Small groups/debates** | **58.33%** (14) |
| **Participation in class discussions** | **91.67%** (22) |
| **Other** | **25.**00% (6) |
| **Not assessed** | **0.00%** (0) |

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**Q16 Are students required to conduct research – primary or secondary – in your course?**

| **Answer Choices–** | **Responses–** |
| --- | --- |
| **Yes** | **70.83%** (17) |
| **No** | **29.17%** (7) |
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**Q17 In your opinion, and on a scale of 0 (for none) to 10 (a lot), how has the course you taught this semester helped improve students’ learning/proficiency in relation to:**

| **–** | **0–** | **1–** | **2–** | **3–** | **4–** | **5–** | **6–** | **7–** | **8–** | **9–** | **10–** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **–**  **Writing skills** | **0%**  0 | **0%**  0 | **4%**  1 | **0%**  0 | **4%**  1 | **4%**  1 | **13%**  3 | **29%**  7 | **25%**  6 | **4%**  1 | **17%**  4 |
| **–**  **Critical thinking skills** | **0%**  0 | **0%**  0 | **0%**  0 | **0%**  0 | **0%**  0 | **4%**  1 | **0%**  0 | **8%**  2 | **29%**  7 | **25%**  6 | **33%**  8 |
| **–**  **Information literacy skills** | **0%**  0 | **0%**  0 | **0%**  0 | **0%**  0 | **0%**  0 | **13%**  3 | **4%**  1 | **8%**  2 | **21%**  5 | **25%**  6 | **33%**  8 |
| **–**  **Disciplinary area of your course** | **0.00%**  0 | **0.00%**  0 | **0.00%**  0 | **0.00%**  0 | **0.00%**  0 | **4.17%**  1 | **0.00%**  0 | **4.17%**  1 | **16.67%**  4 | **12.50%**  3 | **62.50%**  15 |

**Q18 With regards to the General Education Program, would you find faculty development helpful?**

| **Answer Choices–** | **Responses–** |
| --- | --- |
| **Yes** | **87.50%** (21) |
| **No** | **12.50%** (3) |

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**Q19 What could we do to improve General Education Program at City College?**

* Say more about it. I never heard about it until going through this process.
* A simple email/pamphlet at the start of the semester, pointing out the position of my class within the GenEd requirements, and where I could find support if needed would be helpful.
* In a large section of ECO 10250, it is impossible to grade writing assignments from 250-300 students. Even with one instructor and 3 TAs, that's just simply too much to read given the pay for staff and TAs.
* This course combines Gen Ed with a requirement for Theatre majors. These are quite different goals. A specific one semester Gen Ed Theatre History course seems like it would be better able to serve the vast majority of students (32 out of 40 were non-majors in my class this semester).
* It would be nice if faculty could meet to talk about their approaches to teaching this course. It would help me to know how others have taught the course in the past and what kinds of writing assignments, quizzes, and exams people have assigned.
* Most of my students were upper level. I found them to be more open to ideas than when I have taught freshmen at CCNY. I would suggest that with regard to cultural and global issues, the students are better off taking these courses after their freshman year
* Reduce class size (from 40 to 25) Subsidize field trips Install computer/media cabinet in classrooms Improve wireless service Upgrade iMedia computers Give access to theater studios for select class activities
* Let faculty members know earlier if you will require something of them, such as handing in ungraded papers of the first seven students on the roster.
* Offer best models and practices approach
* Increase instructors pay
* I think we could do more workshops, instructors could share results and methods of evaluation with others as well as with the Education Department
* Smaller classes
* More examples of class activities that suit education needs
* Perhaps a quick one-hour session for all educators who are teaching Gen Ed courses just to acclimate them to the program. If it happened before classes started, I would strongly suggest a meal to accompany this meeting, so that everyone understands the critical role the Gen Ed program plays in the curriculum and for our students.

**Q10 Other comments**

* My class could have improved students' writing more if I had fewer students. I would then have more time to address writing issues with individual students.
* Delighted to have been given the opportunity to apply for a few more GenEd courses for our program. It means a lot to us.
* I'm very interested in learning how we can make this an even more valuable general education course. I'm also teaching a smaller section (only 30 students) in addition to being a TA for the jumbo section with 280 students in the fall, so it will be good to see how smaller class sizes facilitate more writing.
* I am a Graduate Teaching Fellow who will continue on as an Adjunct Instructor in the fall and I would like to say that I do not think it's a good policy that neither the Graduate Center nor the CCNY History Department provide any training for people like me who, prior to starting here three years ago, had never taught before. I have improved a great deal over the years but I still feel bad for the students during my first semesters when I had no idea what I was doing, no training, no support, and no oversight (save for the once a semester observation). There must be some way to prepare graduate students for this, either at the GC or at CCNY, and I truly hope that either institution begins to provide training in the future. As I see it, neglecting to do this is unethical.
* Lively class discussions are more difficult to achieve with a class size larger than 25. Students on the perimeter of the class tend to withdraw.
* I did not appreciate having this reporting requirement sprung on me at the very end of the semester. Advance notice would have helped.