

Assessing General Education Proposal Spring 2008

Focus: Core ability of Critical Thinking and Problem Solving
Target areas: LLC, Social Science, Science, Math, Arts, Coop Education

A group of interested General Education faculty and chairs from the six targeted Divisions have developed this proposal for a Spring Term project that will utilize the 300 hours of curriculum development funding which OISS has made available. The plan will address how Coop Education data will be incorporated when Coop participants have been identified.

Who: Joint group of chairs and at least 2 faculty members from each target area. Participants will commit approximately 25 hours each. If larger teams are involved, funding can be split accordingly. Faculty may participate as unfunded team members also.

What: The Gen Ed Spring Team will develop a robust rubric for assessing Critical Thinking and Problem Solving (CT/PS), with examples drawn from multiple disciplines. They may also develop a rubric for a task or assignment that demonstrates CT/PS. They will design a sampling methodology and collect data from course work that demonstrates CT/PS; score the “artifacts;” and report results of the pilot study. Based on their experience, they will design a plan for continued assessment of the CT/PS core ability in Fall 08 and Spring 09, with a “value added” design. They will also revise their rubric as needed based on the pilot experience.

When: A weekly 2-hour meeting time will be found. Participants may rotate attendance if needed. The team will meet in a seminar format for the first three weeks (approx. 90 minutes/week plus homework); then divide work among smaller work teams, meeting as a larger group when needed. The approximate time line of work is—

First 3 weeks	Learning phase: Review materials, experiences from other colleges, incorporate Coop Education data into the plan, examine existing rubrics
Next 3 weeks	Design rubric, identify likely courses to sample for artifacts, develop sampling methodology, address “value added” concepts
	Work on task/assignment rubric
Weeks 7, 8	Collect data, begin analysis
Weeks 9, 10	Conclude analysis, revise rubric as needed, develop plan for Fall 08

Products:

1. Rubric for assessing Critical Thinking and Problem Solving (CT/PS), with examples drawn from multiple disciplines
2. Optional: Rubric for a task or assignment that demonstrates Critical Thinking and Problem Solving
3. Assessment baseline results from the pilot data and analysis
4. Plan for 08-09 wider implementation of the tools and methodology.

The plan was developed over the course of two meetings (April 2nd and 4th) in response to the objectives set out by Sonya. This plan was shared with Tuesday Chairs on Apr. 8, and given the go-ahead. At the two planning meetings, Sarah Ulerick shared materials and models of Gen Ed assessment that she learned at the recent League for Innovation conference. The experiences of other colleges in assessing gen ed outcomes can inform our plans, as they reported on what works and what does not. Minutes from the April 4th meeting are attached.