



GENERAL EDUCATION ANNUAL REPORT

Curriculum Committee 2015-2016

Abstract

Annual assessment of General Education Content Areas: History, Fine Art, and Natural Science. Juried Assessment completed Summer 2015 with reflection and comments provided Spring 2016.

Respectfully submitted, Dr. Carrie McCray

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General Education Annual Assessment Report

Curriculum Committee

2015-1026

Overview/History of General Education

Starting in 2007, the General Education program began collecting data on the performance of students in those classes listed as “General Education.”

Students in classes that satisfied each of the ten general education classes were assessed on a three year rotation: in the first year of rotation, three of the ten areas were assessed; in the next year, three other areas were assessed. In the third year, the remaining four areas were assessed, and the data collected through these methods was stored in our online portfolio system, tk20.

Students’ work in general education classes was assessed in the following way: if a student was enrolled in a general education class in an area scheduled for assessment, artifacts (essays, portfolios, etc) were collected of all students enrolled in the class. Those artifacts were then evaluated after the end of the semester using rubrics developed by faculty in those areas (in most cases, the assignments were evaluated by instructors before the end of the semester, and used in that manner as part of the grade for the class—the general education assessment, taking place after the end of the semester, had no direct effect on a student’s grade in the class, even in those cases where the assessors’ evaluation coincided with that of the instructor). It is the data collected by scoring with rubrics that was then stored. The data for the general education assessment is neutral to the course content, as it is assessed by a neutral member of the faculty.

The General Education program was restructured in the fall semester 2015 moving the content areas into clusters to assist in the coordination of assessment and evaluation of the General Education program. The new clusters are provided below and the curriculum committee will modify the assessment of General Education to a 4-year cycle focusing on one cluster each year. It is the hope of the committee that this restructure will help streamline the assessment of the General Education program.

General Education Purpose Statement

Approved April 5, 2016 Faculty Assembly

William Woods University strives to build upon student knowledge beyond their academic specialty areas. To supplement varied student goals and aspirations with core learning experiences, the University General Education curriculum engages all students in critical analysis, quantitative inquiry, creative expression, and substantive understanding of the relationships between individuals and societies. Accordingly, all undergraduate students must complete the required General Education credits in addition to the coursework for their respective majors.

Structural Changes to General Education: (the 4 overarching areas)

Fall 2015, campus faculty voted on the adoption of the following structural outline for the General education program.

Critical Analysis: (9 credit hours) Students apply logical and analytical reasoning skills to diverse source materials in the interest of discerning and debating aesthetic, thematic, and ethical content.

- Critical Thinking (3 credit hours)
- Ethical Reasoning (3 credit hours)
- Meaning (3 credit hours)

Creative Expression: (12 credit hours) Students develop the ability to express ideas and concepts, both logically and creatively, through written, oral, reflective, and aesthetic practices utilizing various media forms.

- Communication (9 credit hours)
- Fine & Performing Arts (3 credit hours)

Quantitative Inquiry: (10 credit hours) Students will develop and practice quantitative problem-solving skills in order to analyze and critically evaluate information in a larger context.

- Natural Sciences (7 credit hours)
- Mathematics (3 credit hours)

Society & the Individual: (12 credit hours) Students integrate knowledge to articulate an understanding of diverse cultures, historical contexts, and human behaviors.

- Social Science (3 credit hours)
- Diversity (3 credit hours)
- Historical Perspective (6 credit hours)

Current General Education Assessment Cycle

(will be updated beginning Fall 2016 to reflect new structure)

Outcome Area	Learning Outcomes	Assessment *Standardized Measures	Expected use for Assessment	Schedule for Analysis of Assessment Data
Communication (writing) (Oral)	Students will transmit information effectively in written or spoken form.	Communication Rubric revised by COM and ENG faculty spring 2012	CLA Writing: Value Added scores Assess sample work from English Composition General Education courses to determine if set benchmarks are met and to assess course/assessment changes in the future	Spring 2014 Spring 2017 Spring 2020
		Communication Rubric revised by COM and ENG faculty spring 2012	Assess sample work from oral communication courses to determine if benchmarks are met and to assess course/assessment changes in the future.	Spring 2014 Spring 2017 Spring 2020
Historical Perspective	Students will think historically, meaning that they will understand both how the present is shaped by the past and how the past informs our understanding of the present.	Rubric developed by History Faculty (reevaluated spring 2013)	Assess sample work from History general education courses to determine if the set benchmarks are met and to assess course/assessment changes in the future	Spring 2012 Spring 2015 Spring 2018
Fine Arts: Creative and Aesthetic Sensibility	Students will examine the products of human creativity in such endeavors as painting, sculpture, theatre, and music.	Rubric developed by Art Faculty and re-evaluated spring 2013.	Assess sample work from Art, Theatre, and Music general education courses to determine if the set benchmarks are met and to assess course/assessment changes in the future.	Spring 2012 Spring 2015 Spring 2018
Diversity	Students will analyze the traditions and values of a variety of cultures	*NSSE Results Rubric Developed by Diversity Faculty. Revised spring 2013.	Results of NSSE dealing with Diversity Assess sample work Diversity general education courses to determine if the set benchmarks are met and to assess course/assessment changes in the future.	Spring 2013 Spring 2016 Spring 2019
Natural Science	Students will understand the natural world through systematic observation, by analyzing data, and by forming, testing and revising hypotheses.	Rubric Developed by Science Faculty. Revised Spring 2013	Assess sample work Biology, Chemistry, Physics, and Science general education courses to determine if the set benchmarks are met and to assess course/assessment changes in the future.	Spring 2012 Spring 2015 Spring 2018
Social Science	Students will study the behavior of people and employ the principles of science to explain both group and individual behavior.	Rubric Developed by Social Science Faculty. Revised Spring 2013	Assess sample work Social Work, Sociology, Economics, Psychology, and Legal Studies general education courses to determine if the set benchmarks are met and to assess course/assessment changes in the future.	Spring 2014 Spring 2017 Spring 2020
Mathematics	Students will solve problems through an analysis of quantitative	Rubric developed by Math faculty and revised spring 2013	Assess sample work in Mathematics general education courses to determine if the set benchmarks are	Spring 2013 Spring 2016 Spring 2019

	relationships.		met and to assess course/assessment changes in the future.	
Meaning	Students will analyze texts (broadly defined) in order to identify central themes and interpret underlying meaning.	NSSE Rubric developed by English faculty. Re-evaluated in spring 2013.	Value added scores on Analytic Reasoning Assess sample work in Literature general education courses to determine if the set benchmarks are met and to assess course/assessment changes in the future.	Spring 2013 Spring 2016 Spring 2019
Ethical Reasoning	Students will consider ethical problems in terms of competing interests, historical and cultural roots of conflict, and use various models or theories of ethical reasoning to resolve moral dilemmas.	CLA Rubric developed by Legal Studies, Sociology, Philosophy, and other designated faculty. Re-evaluated in spring 2013.	Value added scores on Analytic Reasoning Assess sample work in Legal Studies, Sociology, Philosophy, and other designated general education courses to determine if the set benchmarks are met and to assess course/assessment changes in the future.	Spring 2013 Spring 2016 Spring 2019
Critical Thinking	Students will use the principles of logic to develop analytical and reasoning skills	CLA Rubric developed by Legal Studies, Sociology, Philosophy, and other designated faculty. Re-evaluated in spring 2013.	Value Added scores on Critical Thinking Assess sample work in Legal Studies, Sociology, Philosophy, and other designated general education courses to determine if the set benchmarks are met and to assess course/assessment changes in the future.	Spring 2014 Spring 2017 Spring 2020

Demographic Data of Assessed Content (Data represent the past 6 semesters of collected data)

GE Area	Criterion	Artifacts Uploaded	Artifacts assessed
Fine Art	Knowledge of processes and techniques specific to disciplines in the arts.	226	74
	Knowledge and/or use of medium's standard structural components.		
	Ability to critique art through the use of appropriate vocabulary.		
	Demonstrates an understanding of visual and performing arts in historical context.		
History	Students will think historically, meaning that they will understand both how the present is shaped by the past and how the past informs our understanding of the present.	296	100
	Students are able to identify well-defined historical periods and events.		
	Students are able to provide an analysis that addresses the key historical questions of causation, comparisons, and interpretation.		
	Students will understand the basic methodology and sources of historians.		

Natural Science	Understand the nature of science: that science is a way of explaining the physical world through replicable physical evidence, and that scientific knowledge is simultaneously reliable and tentative.	363	1: 94
	Understand current theories/models used to explain natural phenomena.		2: 87
	Apply the scientific method as a means for discovery of knowledge and be able to communicate those ideas		3: 88
	Interpret the validity of scientific statements in the press; make informed judgments about science-related topics and policies.		4: 72

Limitations on the data:

- Fine Arts: There were multiple empty data cells during assessment, forcing additional pushes of data to be created in order to reach the minimum sample size
- History: The faculty in history provided all the artifacts from courses when approached, but they were batch uploaded into the system and not pulled from courses based on rubric.
- Natural Science: the breakdown of the rubric requires multiple uploads/assignments to meet the 4 components of the rubric. There were many times that the student uploaded one but not the second assignment. There were empty data cells when the assessments were pulled. Again, like Fine Arts, multiple assessments had to be pulled to achieve the minimum sample.

Demographic Data per Content Area:

*Representative Sample

2015-2016 Academic Year	On Campus Courses	Uploaded Correctly	Uploaded Incorrect Rubric	% of courses completing GE task	On Line Courses	Artifact Present	% of on line courses completing GE task
History	15	14	0	93%	4	4	100%
Fine Art	35	19	5	54.2%	4	2	50%
Natural Science	16	10	0	62.5%	5	5	100%

General Education Area	Enrollment	% Withdrawn	% Fail	AVG Size	Number of Courses offered	Number of Sections offered
History (Campus) Total	796	4.5%	10.4%	17.7	10	45
History (On Line) Total	263	6.1%	13.3%	21.9	2	12
Art (Campus) Total	805	3.1%	5.1%	9.5	26	85
Art (On Line) Total	197	4.1%	8.1%	17.9	2	11
Science (Campus) Total	1362	3.0%	7.7%	21.0	12	65
Science (On Line) Total	131	6.9%	10.7%	14.6	3	10

Note: There continue to be issues with faculty having students upload content into TK20. In fact, the artifacts for several courses were uploaded in batches with files provided by instructors. The university is purchasing LiveText and working to make the implementation of the software more successful than what happened with TK20. One piece that is hopefully more beneficial is that all program assessment will use LiveText, so the General Education assessment will not be a stand alone reason to use the software. It is the intent of the Associate Dean of Academic Assessment to implement General Education Assessment on the new software as one of the first programs built. *The data for uploaded artifacts for each outcome area and the courses is a representative sample of one year (2014 -2015 academic year).

**The data for enrollment, withdrawn/fail rates, average course size, and the number of courses and sections offered is compiled from the entire three year assessment cycle.

History Faculty Comment:

Interesting that the online courses scored a bit higher than the on ground courses. I don't have an answer to why, but it would be worth exploring. It could be due to selection bias, in that the online students are more likely to be stronger academically given the nature of online work. It could be that the assignments better prepare them for History assessment. On the flip side, I'm a little concerned that the number of failing students in the online courses is 13%, which is higher than the on-ground history courses as well as all art and science GE courses. It's not a crisis, but it bears investigation.

I was pleased to see that a strong majority of our students – in both modalities – perform at or above proficient level.

Fine Art

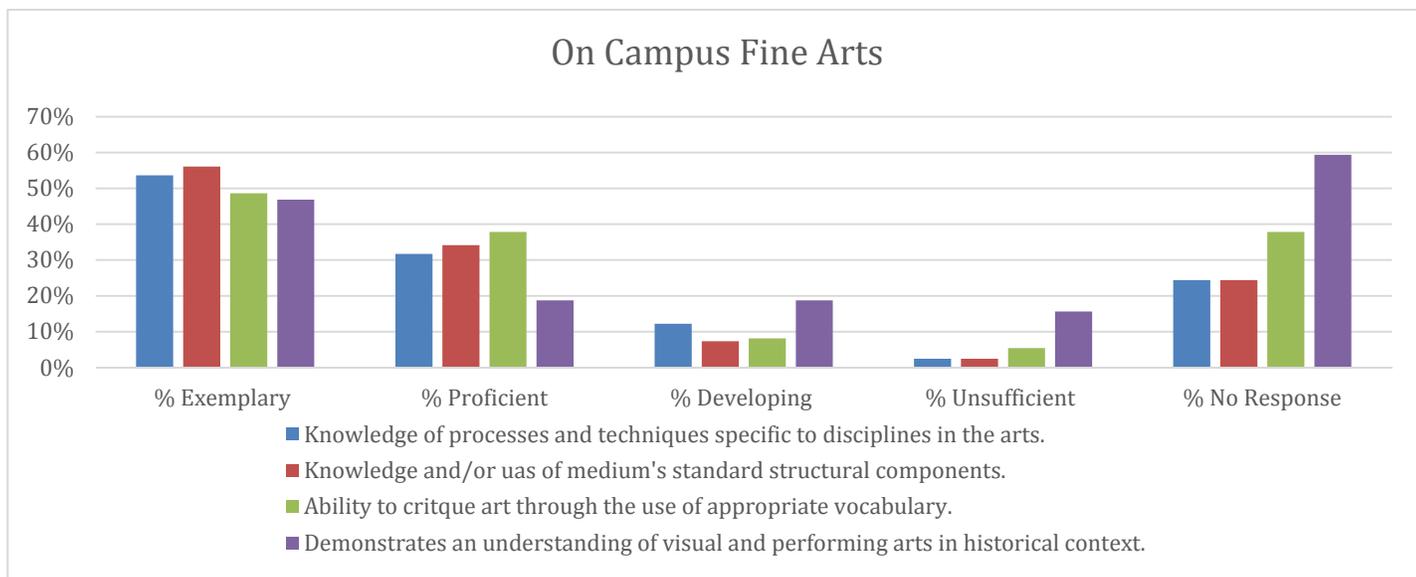
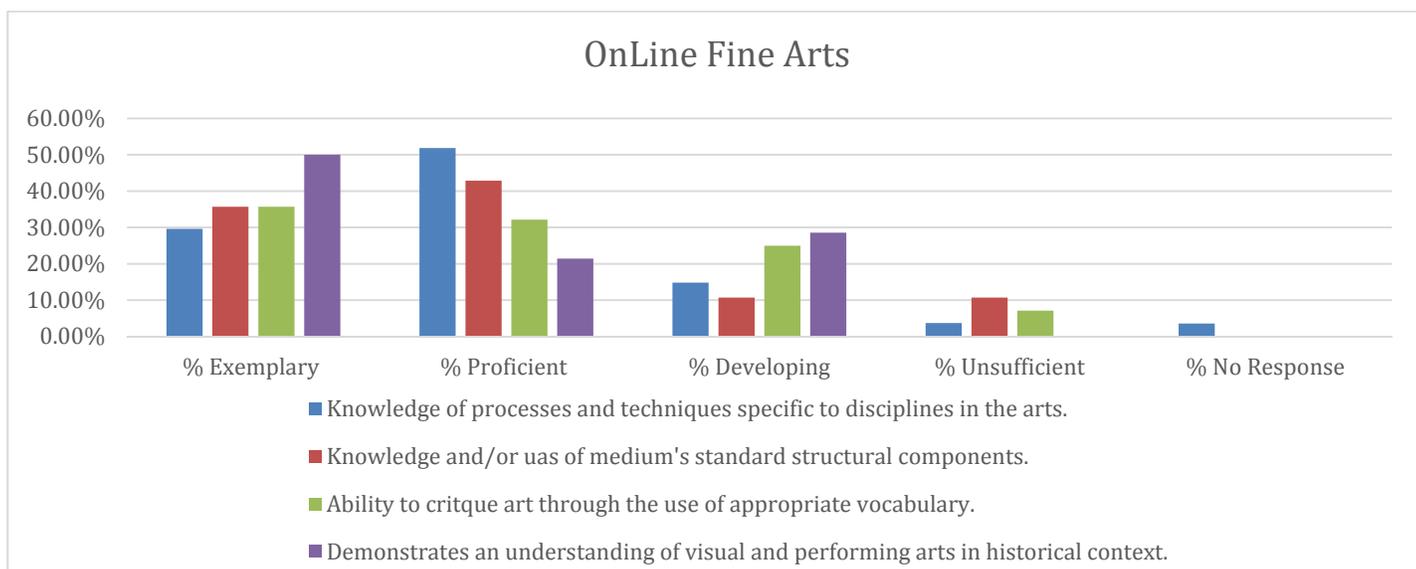
Student N=97

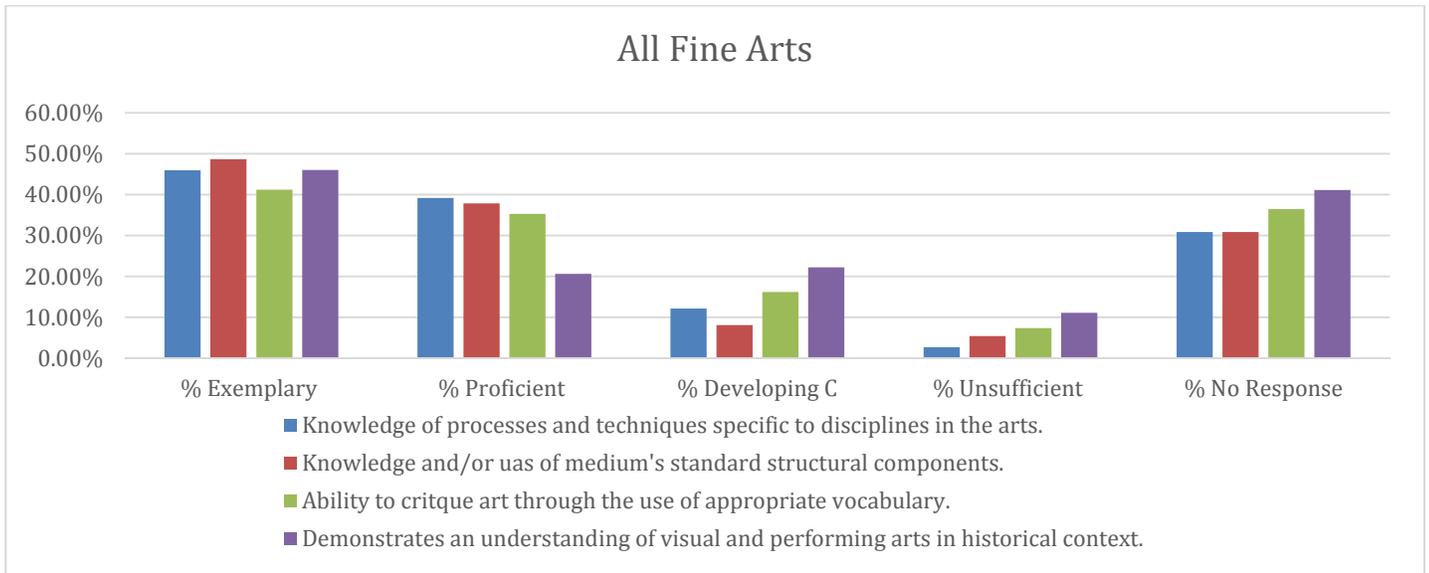
Classes involved:

On Campus: ART105(SP13, SP14); ART110 (SP15); ART115 (SP13, SP15); ART206 (F14); ART220 (SP13); ART222 (SP13); ART233 (SP15); THA110 (F14); THA255(F14)

Online: ART120 (SP13, SP14, SP15); ART105 (F14, F15)

Semesters:2013-2015





External Evaluators Response:

Many of the artifacts were very difficult to match with the rubric, some were simply a piece of art, which made it difficult to determine how well the student understands the vocabulary or history of art. Others were self-reflections on their work or reviews of a play they had seen, which are great for what they are, but didn't seem to call for the in-depth analysis that the rubric is calling for. We need to be sure that each of the artifacts being submitted line up with each item on the rubric in a clear way. I suggest prompting responses from the students in their written portion to ensure they include everything necessary. It would seem most assignments meet a couple of items from the rubric, but not all of them, which is what we need to effectively evaluate the program.

The rubric was problematic for one of the external evaluators for the art content. There are typos in criterion 2 and 3 that need to be fixed. There was some overlap in artifacts, but there was little to no guidance as to the difference between the categories.

It would be helpful if there were current examples of exemplary, proficient, developing, and unsuccessful artifacts. This is critical when using assessors who are not in the field of fine arts.

The issues in evaluating them were:

- No artifacts attached. Seems like there should be a substantial impact on a student's grade.
- They often didn't include the assignment's instructions.
- Separate image and text files. For the ease of assessment, the image should simply be added to the word document. It is not hard, and it is a "skill" that students should learn.
- In some cases, there were no images, but the entire paper was based on an analysis of that image. Hard to evaluate without the image.
- Most of the artifacts did not really speak to Criterion 1 and 2. The assignments were much stronger on the "ability to critique art through the use of appropriate vocabulary" (Crit. 3) and "demonstrates an understanding of visual and performing arts in historical context (Crit. 4).

Faculty Response

Fine Arts General Education 2016 Response to 2016 Report

Present: Terry Martin, Jane Mudd, Bob Elliott, Joe Potter, Melissa Alpers-Springer

1. *Based on the results, what changes will be made to the assignments, the rubric, or the courses in the content area?*
 - a. We will meet on May 11 after the annual assessment meeting to work on a simplified Fine Arts rubric.
 - b. We will plan artifacts that more closely target the entire rubric, or, if that is not possible, that target particular rubric criteria.

2. *Did you make any changes in the past 3 years to the coursework? no*

3. *Do you think the number of courses and sections offered are appropriate to the content area?*
 - a. We think there are too many course offerings for the required 3-hour fine arts general education requirement.
 - i. In response to that, art removed the general education designation from two classes this year.
 - ii. Theatre will propose to give Theatre History I & II history general education designations.
 - b. We would like to increase the number of credit hours required for fine arts general education from three to six.
 - i. The rationale for dropping the requirement from 6 to 3 included the idea that enrollment wouldn't be affected, but clearly it has.

4. *Any changes to the rubric or the assessment procedures?*
 - a. See #1 above.
 - b. Art will require students to include an image on the Word document they upload so that they can be seen by the outside evaluators.

History

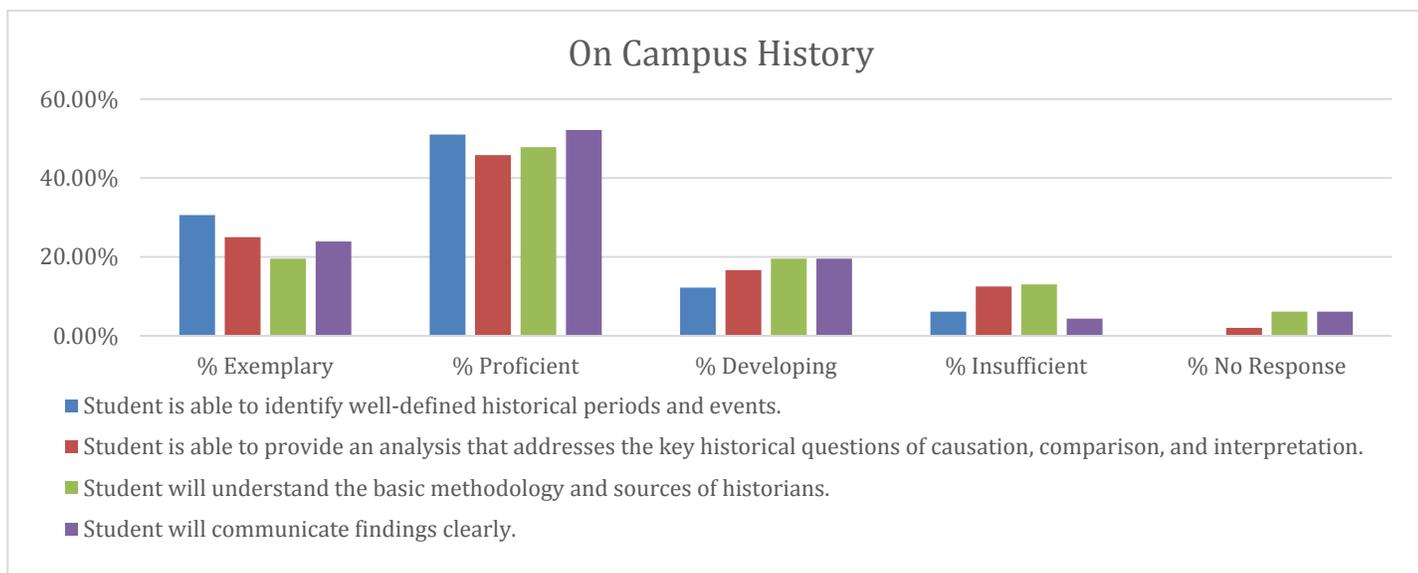
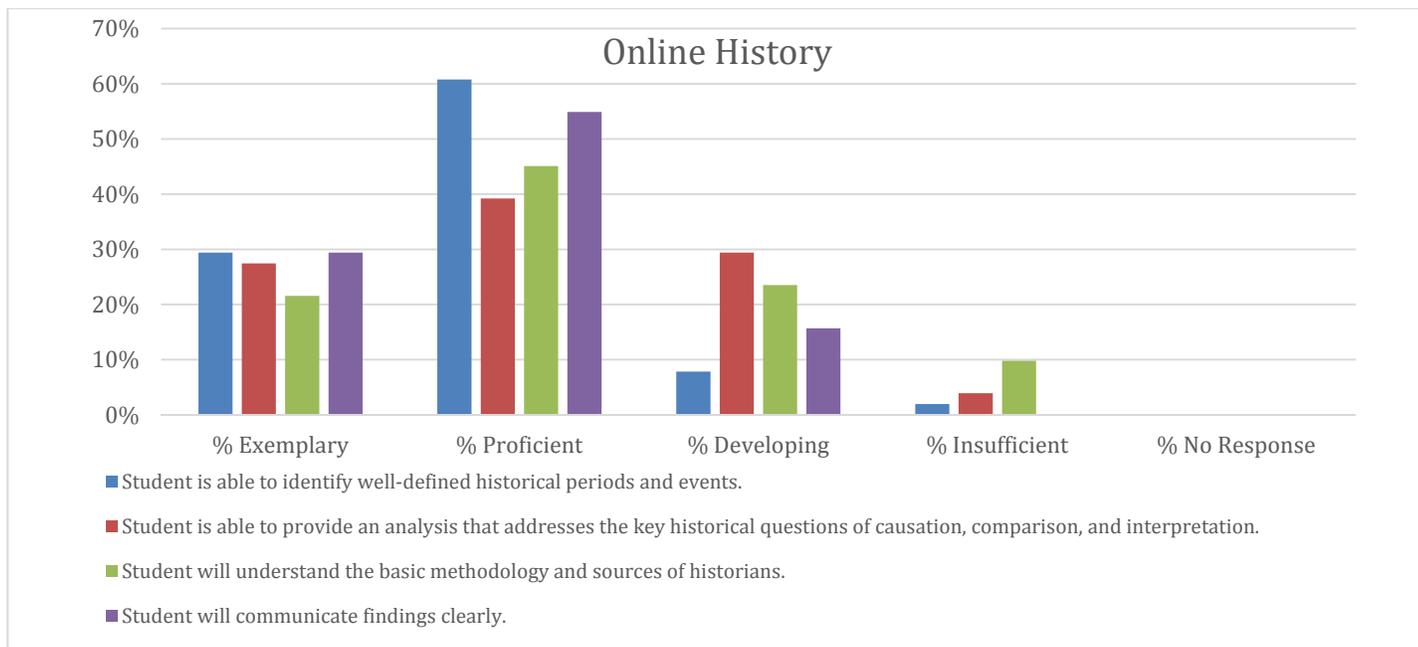
Student N=100

Classes involved:

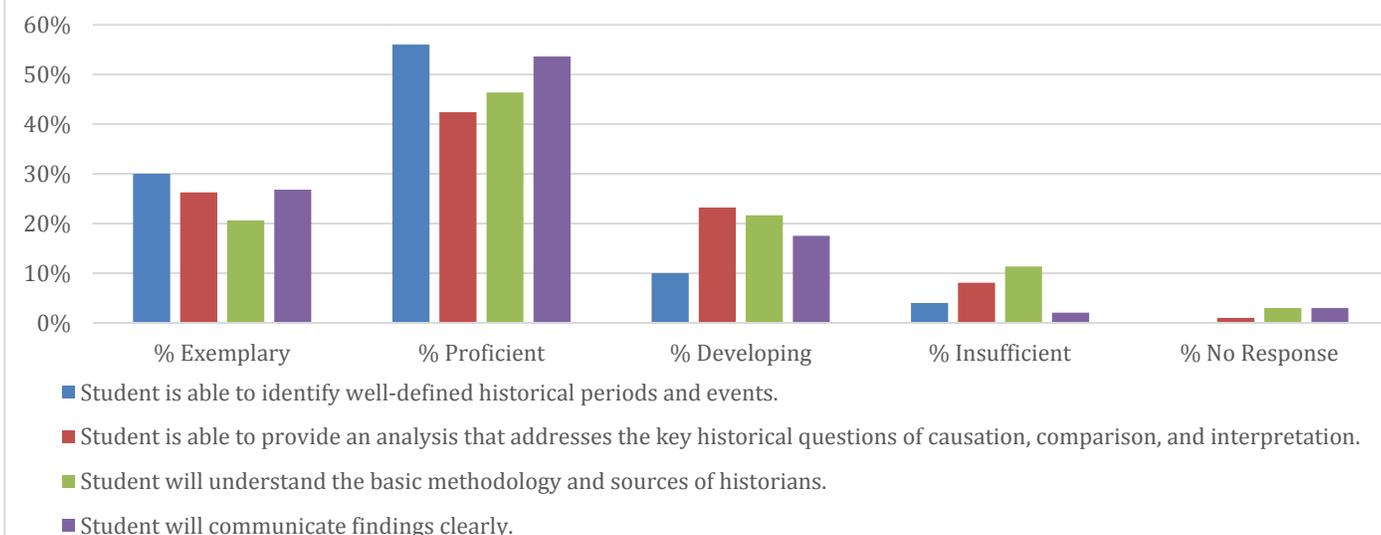
On Campus: HIS103(F12); HIS101 (F12, SUM 14); HIS200 (FA13); HIS104 (SP13, SP14); HIS102 (SP13)

Online: HIS103 (F13, SUM14, SP14,) HIS104 (F13, F14, SP14)

Semesters: 2012-2015



History Combined Assessment



External Evaluator Response:

It was more challenging to complete the assessment when the assignment directions were not included in the instruction section of TK20. I was more comfortable with my assessment when I was clear about the parameters of the assignment. For the most part, the assignments were well done and aligned to the objectives of the General Education program.

History Program Faculty: (Submitted by Dr. Shawn Hull)

I agree with the comment that assignment instructions need to be included with each artifact. Perhaps we can work with faculty to make sure that they are following the proper steps to accomplish that. Hopefully, LiveText will be a more intuitive system so that this step will/can not be omitted.

Faculty Response to the Report:

Based on the results, what changes will be made to the assignments, the rubric, or the courses in the content area?

I am basically satisfied with the GE history assessment process. The results are solid. I think that the assignments should be continuously evaluated for clarity and improvement, but I suspect we are in the “tweaking” phase. I don’t anticipate any dramatic changes to either the rubric or the courses in the content area as a result of the assessment process. I suspect we will see a move to more of a global approach to history – impacting primarily the Western Civ. Courses – but I don’t believe that that will be driven by the assessment process, but rather out of a concern to provide a history course that fits better into our increasingly globalized world.

Did you make any changes in the past 3 years to the coursework?

Upper-level history courses may now count for GE credit, but none of those courses were selected for inclusion in the GE assessment process. Within the survey courses, we made a concerted effort to create assignments that built toward the artifact used for

assessment. We also simplified the assignment to make it more streamlined. In particular the instructions were simplified and clarified. Over the last 3-4 years, we have tried to emphasize having students write – not simply read and discuss – in response to primary and secondary sources. That emphasis – which is an integral part of historical inquiry – has probably helped our students on the GE assessment artifact.

Do you think the number of courses and sections offered are appropriate to the content area?

Yes.

Any changes to the rubric? Or the assessment process?

There were no changes to the rubric. The assessment process is essentially the same.

I would like to comment just briefly on the high numbers of students who successfully uploaded their assignments for the on-ground courses. Students received a small bit of credit (5 or 10 points) for uploading their assignment. We also took away the option of uploading it to Owlnet, so TK20 became the only way to submit the assignment.

Natural Science

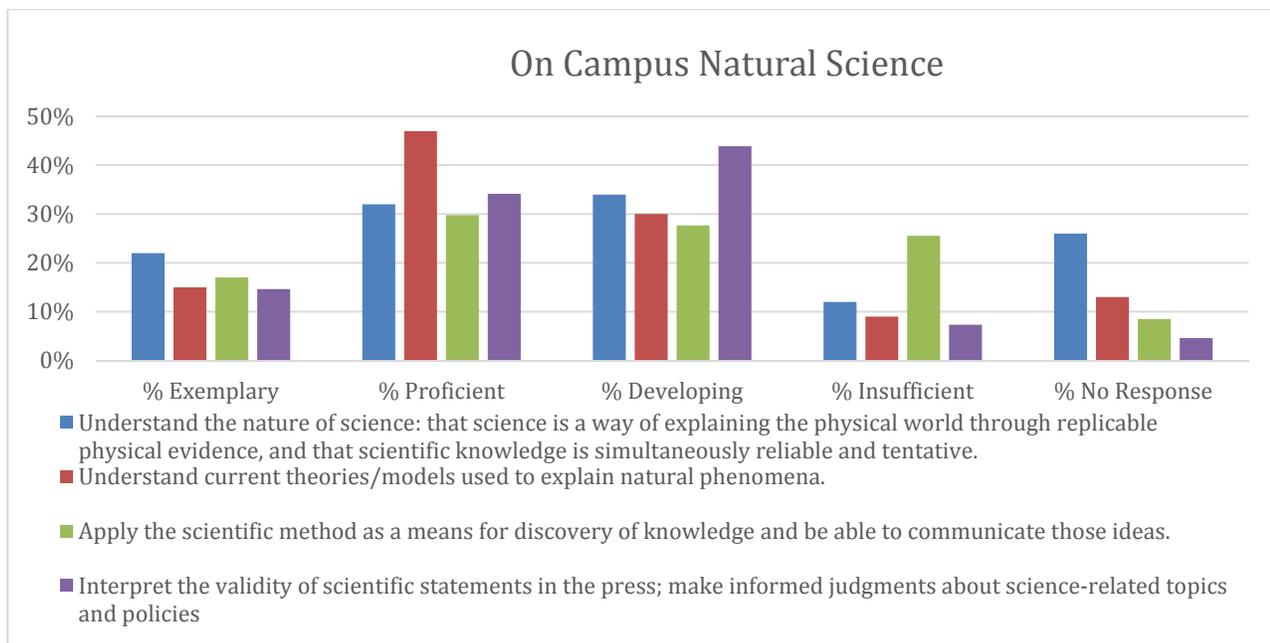
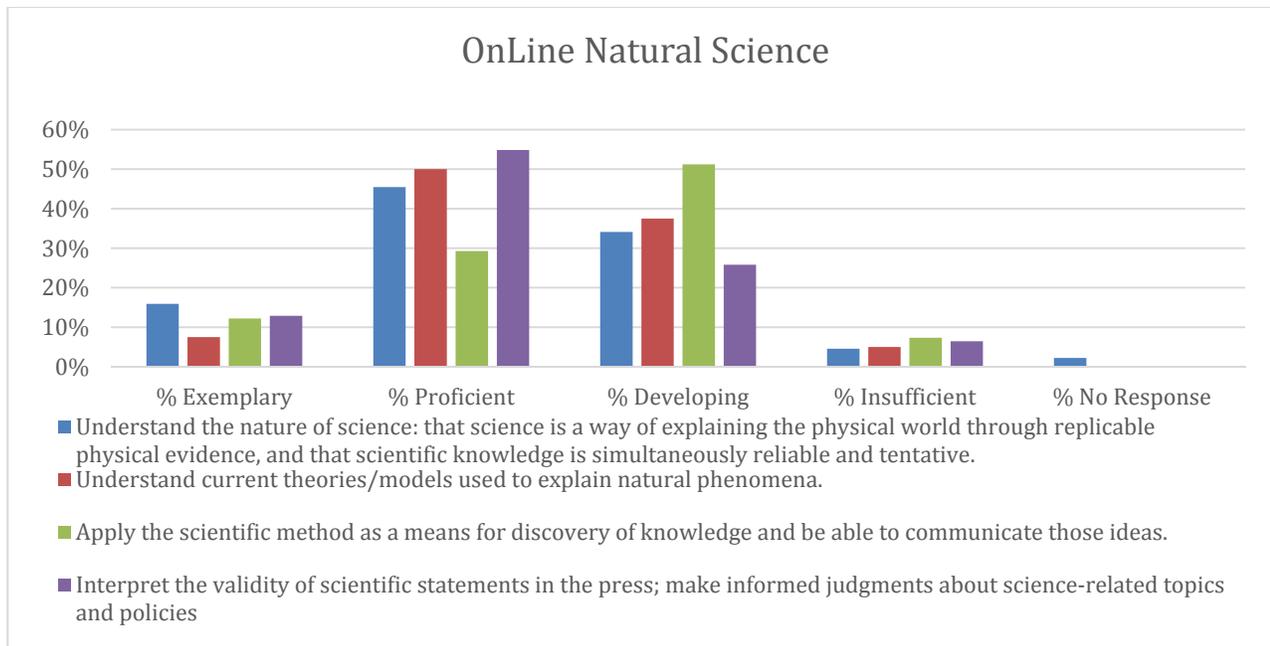
Student N= 94

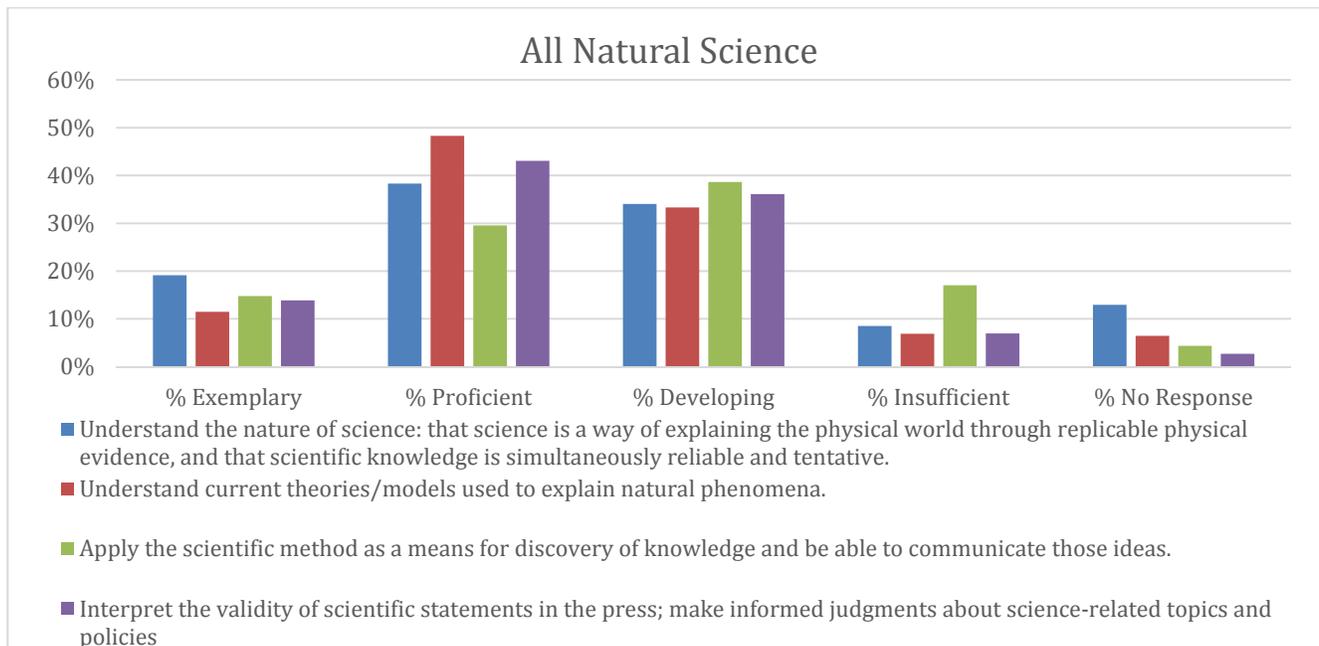
Classes involved:

On Campus BIO114(F13, F14); BIO124 (SP15); BIO 209 (F14); BIO 224 (SP15); CHM114 (F13); CHM124 (SP14); SCI130 (F13); SCI 205 (F13)

On Line: BIO209 (F14, SP15); SCI205 (SUM14, SP15)

Semesters: 2013-2015





External Evaluator Response:

I think it would be helpful to have an overview of the instructions students were given for the assignments that were uploaded. Sometimes the students provided this in their artifacts, but other times they did not, and it sometimes took some time to determine what they were attempting to focus on.

Positives of the natural science juried assessments:

1. Most of the artifacts appeared to correspond with the rubrics.
2. I could clearly identify each part of the rubric in the artifact.
3. Many artifacts were very well-done, clear and concise, and demonstrated a breadth of knowledge about the difference concepts of natural science. I actually learned a lot from completing these assessments.
4. Many of the artifacts were clearly organized, which it made it easier to assess.

Negatives/areas for improvement for the natural science juried assessments:

1. There were many incomplete artifacts, so I could not accurately assess them.
2. Many of the artifacts were entered under the incorrect rubric, so it was difficult to figure out to which rubric it should have been assigned.
3. Many artifacts were incomplete and/or missing crucial information, so it was challenging to actually assess it.
4. In response to number 4 above, many of the artifacts were organized poorly and did not contain the correct information, so that made it challenging to properly assess. Also, some rubrics were missing.

Faculty Response

There are several courses in a variety of disciplines (Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Science, and Physical Education) that count for the Natural Science General Education credits. With such a wide variety of courses, artifacts range greatly between individual courses and instructors. In order to meet some of the objectives/rubrics, multiple assignments are often linked to multiple rubrics. We

know with our current assessment software there are multiple technical issues and limitations in being able to properly pull artifacts linked to multiple rubrics for assessment. We knew this would likely be a problem prior to assessment. As we are implementing a new assessment software in the fall 2016, and we have hope this change will alleviate some of those issues of artifacts being properly pulled and linked to their corresponding objective and rubric.

We feel the four current Natural Science Objectives do not reflect the diverse courses offered in this area of General Education. Therefore, the General Education Objectives for Natural Science is being revised to meet the overarching purpose of these general education courses. This will streamline the process, where each course can more directly and sufficiently assess each objective.

In looking at the data, we would like to see an increase in “exemplary” for Objectives 2 – 4 in the on-line courses as well as a decrease in the “insufficient” for Objective 3 on campus courses.

Coursework is continually being refined at the discretion of the individual instructors.

Considering that students at William Woods are required to take 7-credit hours of Natural Science courses (at least one course with a lab for 4-credits), we feel the number of courses and sections available in this area are appropriate for our student body.

Curriculum Committee Summary

The Curriculum Committee would like to propose a modification to the assessment cycle of general education to reflect the new organizational structure. This will allow for similar areas of interest to be assessed together. This proposed change would modify the timeline to:

Spring 2017 Critical Analysis cluster
Spring 2018 Society and the Individual
Spring 2019 Creative Expression
Spring 2020 Quantitative Inquiry

This change would impact the artifacts for some areas as they will have been assessed within a 3-year cycle, but it is the belief of the committee that there is never a good time to modify a timeline and there will always be imperfections within the transition period but with the university moving to a new assessment system, that this is the best time to make the switch. This also should be less intrusive since all general education courses are currently uploading assessment artifacts each semester now and not on a rotational basis.

The new assessment system should allow for a more streamlined process for assessment of online courses and provide an easier format for the juried assessment of both online and on ground courses. It is the intent of the committee to make sure that general education is in the new system for the fall 2016 semester to allow for a “seamless” transition.