



2020-2021 General Education Assessment Report for State Council of Higher Education for Virginia

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COVID-19 Impact on the General Education Program

Virginia State University (VSU) designated the 2019-2020 academic year as the first assessment year for the required general education (GE) competency areas. The COVID-19 pandemic interrupted the 2019-2020 academic year, which prevented us from collecting and reporting assessment results on time. Virginia State University was most concerned about how to continue the GE assessment during and immediately following a lengthy campus closure due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This report contains the 2020-2021 results. The pandemic also impacted the 2020-2021 academic year, resulting in adjustments to the original GE assessment plan. Due to the unique circumstances that have arisen because of COVID-19, such as a campus closure during a portion of the testing window, it was not feasible for the University to administer some of its assessments. In this case, the University used a series of make-up assessment dates to increase student participation online, particularly for those impacted by these extraordinary circumstances. Many VSU students reported not having consistent internet access after returning home during the pandemic. Like other public institutions in the Commonwealth of Virginia that closed and scheduled late starts to the academic year, VSU considered adjusting or extending the testing window to accommodate as many students as possible, to increase student participation rates. The report outlines the changes in the *Results* section.

Overview

The General Education Program (GEP) at VSU is founded on the principles of academic excellence and personal growth. Driven by the University's mission, vision and core values, the program endeavors to develop engaged, enlightened, productive citizens in a changing world. VSU is committed to providing undergraduate students with a comprehensive General Education Program that provides a wide breadth of knowledge and complements the students' field of study. All undergraduate students are required to complete a minimum of 33-37 semester credit hours of general education requirements that include course work in areas of the Arts, Humanities, Social Sciences, Global Studies, Natural Sciences, and Mathematics. The liberal arts emphasis of VSU's General Education Program is designed to foster dispositions that value lifelong learning, personal responsibility, integrity, creative expression, and the ethic of service. The GEP requirement is based on a coherent rationale and is overseen by the General Education Subcommittee of the University Faculty Senate. This report documents the work of assessing student learning outcomes across Virginia State University during the period of fall 2020- Spring 2021 in six competency areas. The competency areas include:

1. Critical thinking
2. Written communication
3. Quantitative reasoning
4. Civic engagement
5. Professional readiness
6. Scientific literacy

The report includes the purpose, framework, and methods, data collection and reporting schedule used to assess the general education competency areas, followed by summary reports of the assessment process and results for each set of learning outcomes in the VSU GEP.

General Education Program and Expected Learning Outcomes

Based upon the University Mission and Principles, the following learning outcomes comprise the foundation for the General Education Program courses:

<i>General Education Competency (Focus Areas)</i>	<i>Proficiency Statement</i>	<i>General Education Student Learning Outcomes Students will be able to:</i>
1. Citizenship & Socio- Psychological Integrity	Students will demonstrate an understanding of, and appreciation for, the needs and aspirations of self and others in the contexts of citizenship and socio-psychological integrity	<i>Examine the influence of personal actions and decision on self and others.</i>
2. Global Cultural Literacy and Understanding	Students will demonstrate an understanding and appreciation of global cultural literacy within a trans-cultural context and preferably, a second language.	<i>Identify and analyze diverse cultures and their value to individuals and society through language, literature, arts, and cultural and historical studies.</i> <i>Examine cultural, international, or global practices or events from a variety of perspectives.</i>
3. Scholarly Disposition	Students will demonstrate a commitment to high academic standards and scholarly dispositions.	<i>Independently utilize critical thinking, ethical reasoning, and analytical skills necessary to present and explain cogent, compelling, intellectually based theses/arguments.</i> <i>Apply problem-solving techniques to evaluate arguments or conclusions.</i> <i>Explore causal questions and explanations, and engage in collaborative and individual decisionmaking</i> <i>Formulate arguments, draw logical conclusions, or support ethical decisions to engage key questions about humanity – our relation to nature, to society, and to ourselves.</i>
4. Communication Skills	Students will demonstrate reading, writing, listening, and speaking proficiency in English.	<i>Effectively communicate, orally and in writing, using Standard English and the appropriate language, tone and disposition for the purpose and audience.</i> <i>Understand and be able to explain the conventions and expectations of oral communication as practiced within the discipline of the course taken.</i>

5. Holistic Wellness	Students will gain an understanding of holistic wellness and its maintenance.	<i>Identify and analyze the interrelationships among the physical, social, emotional, intellectual, spiritual, environmental, and occupational components of wellness.</i> <i>Articulate what holistic wellness looks like for life now and in the future.</i>
6. Quantitative/Mathematical Skills	Students will demonstrate proficiency in applying mathematical concepts.	<i>Effectively apply mathematical skills, concepts, and ideas to solve problems, interpret information, make judgments, draw conclusions, and make predictions.</i>
7. Theoretical Perspectives in Social Science	Students will demonstrate an understanding of theoretical perspectives and concepts in social science.	<i>Apply knowledge of political, social, and economic concepts and theories, and principles of social science inquiry to explore contemporary issues and make informed decisions.</i>
8. Scientific Literacy	Students will demonstrate scientific literacy.	<i>Analyze and apply basic scientific principles and research methods of scientific inquiry to make informed decisions.</i>
9. Technological Literacy	Students will demonstrate technological literacy.	<i>Utilize current technology to effectively analyze and manage data, and solve problems in a variety of contexts demanding technological literacy.</i>

Data Collection and Reporting Schedule

Virginia State University will follow the schedule outlined below to report how we assessed student learning outcomes in the six competency areas within a six-year period.

Cycle 1 Competencies Assessed			Cycle 2 Competencies Assessed		
Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025	2025-2026
Critical Thinking			Critical Thinking		
Written Communication			Written Communication		
	Scientific Literacy			Scientific Literacy	
	Quantitative Literacy			Quantitative Literacy	
		Civic Engagement			Civic Engagement
		Professional Readiness			Professional Readiness

Two competencies will be formally assessed each year. For the year in which the two given competencies will be assessed, the data will be collected during the fall and spring semesters. The information will be analyzed during the summer session. The results will then be reported to SHEV and to the community during the following fall semester.

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to fulfill the requirements of the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia's (SCHEV) Policy on Student Learning Assessment and Quality in Undergraduate Education. This report outlines the shared governance process that shaped VSU's plan for outcomes assessment, a discussion of the findings from our pilot, changes and improvements made, and a discussion of the findings.

The General Education Program (GEP) framework represents a balanced menu of courses designed to enhance core skills, including synthesis and analysis of information; problem solving through structures, organizations and systems; understanding of global/cultural and historical contexts; research; and effective communication skills. Students must satisfy the University's assessment requirements to document the achievement of the core competency areas and the University's GEP student learning outcomes.

Rationale

Courses approved to be included in the selective menus for each of the GEP areas must be foundational courses appropriate for a first- or second-year student, such as 100- and 200-level courses. These foundational courses are course which are common to all majors, offering the fundamental, integrated knowledge base necessary for successful completion of courses and other requirements in the student's major area and professional studies (e.g., in teacher education programs). It is possible for a given course to be part of two different selective menus; however, students may not substitute one course to satisfy two different requirements.

VSU ensures that GEP requirements are college-level via a multi-tier system of checks and balances, including the accreditation mandates of discipline specific accrediting bodies, GEP requirements are based on the standards of the American Academy for Liberal Education (AALE), internal policy and procedure, research, including review of general education programs from other accredited institutions of higher education of comparable scope and size; published best-practice in the general education; the Virginia Standards of Learning, and the subject expertise of the faculty members that serve on the General Education Committee (GEC) and its sub-committees.

GEP Course Requirements

The General Education Program requires the successful completion of 33 credit hours that in the following areas:

- English (composition) – 6 credits
- History – 3 credits

- Humanities – 3 credits
- Global Studies – 3 credits
- Literature – 3 credits
- Health/Wellness – 2 credits
- Mathematics – 6 credits
- Social Science - 3 credits
- Natural Science and Lab – 4 credits

Students must choose courses from the categories listed. Additionally, Students may use one course simultaneously to satisfy a requirement for general education and their major; however, students may not use one course to satisfy more than one general education course requirement. The minimum grade required for successful completion of English 110/112 and English 111/113 (Composition I and Composition II) is “C.”

Credit Hour Requirements

At Virginia State University, the GEP represents no less than 25 percent of the credit hours required for completion of the degree program. VSU’s General Education Program Curriculum is segmented into broad disciplines along with the total requirement of at least 33 credit hours, which are foundational to the 120 credit hours required for an undergraduate degree, as illustrated in the program degree requirement, curriculum summaries, and graduation requirements in the Undergraduate Catalog.

VSU’s General Education Program Curriculum

	Discipline	Course(s)	Credit Hours
1	English	English 110-111	6
2	Science	Limited Menu	4
3	Mathematics	Limited Menu	6
4	Wellness	Limited Menu	2
5	History	Limited Menu	3
6	Literature	Limited Menu	3
7	Social Science	Limited Menu	3
8	Humanities	Limited Menu	3
9	Global Studies	Limited Menu	3
		TOTAL:	33

English			
<i>Students must select 6.0 credit hours from the courses listed below. (Minimum grade of ‘C’)</i>			
Credits	Course	Number	Course Title
3	ENGL	110	Composition I

3	ENGL	111	Composition II
3	ENGL	112	Composition I (Honors Students only)
3	ENGL	113	Composition II (Honors Students only)

History			
<i>Students must select 3.0 credit hours the courses listed below.</i>			
Credits	Course	Number	Course Title
3	HIST	114	World History I
3	HIST	115	World History II
3	HIST	122	U.S. History I
3	HIST	123	U.S. History II

Global Studies			
<i>Students must select 3.0 credit hours from the list of courses below.</i>			
Credits	Course	Number	Course Title
3	AGRI	295	Contemporary Global Studies
3	ARAB	110	Elementary Arabic I
3	ARAB	111	Elementary Arabic II
3	ARAB	212	Intermediate Arabic I
3	ARAB	213	Intermediate Arabic II
3	ENGL	214	World Literature I
3	ENGL	215	World Literature II
3	FREN	110	Elementary French I
3	FREN	111	Elementary French II
3	FREN	212	Intermediate French I
3	FREN	213	Intermediate French II
3	HIST	114	World History I
3	HIST	115	World History II
3	GEOG	210	World Geography
1-6	GLST	202	Global Studies Abroad
3	IDUP	270	Introduction to Africana Studies
3	MUSI	199	Music Appreciation
3	POLI	207	International Relations
3	POLI	210	Comparative Government
3	SPAN	110	Elementary Spanish I
3	SPAN	111	Elementary Spanish II
3	SPAN	212	Intermediate Spanish I
3	SPAN	213	Intermediate Spanish II

Humanities*Students must select 3.0 credit hours from the list of courses below.*

Credits	Course	Number	Course Title
3	ARTS	199	Art Appreciation
3	ARTS	200	Arts and Crafts (non-majors only)
3	DANC	100	Foundations of Dance
3	DANC	103	African and Caribbean Dance Forms
3	DANC	251	History of Dance and the Black Experience
3	DRAM	199	Drama Appreciation
3	ENGL	201	Introduction to Literature
3	ENGL	202	Introduction to African American Literature
3	ENGL	210	English Literature I
3	ENGL	211	English Literature II
3	ENGL	212	American Literature I
3	ENGL	213	American Literature II
3	ENGL	214	World Literature I
3	ENGL	215	World Literature II
3	FREN	110	Elementary French I
3	FREN	111	Elementary French II
3	FREN	212	Intermediate French I
3	FREN	213	Intermediate French II
3	HIST	122	US History I
3	HIST	123	US History II
3	PHIL	140	Introduction to Philosophy
3	MUSI	198	Jazz Appreciation
3	MUSI	199	Music Appreciation
3	MUSI	200	Blacks in American Music
3	PHIL	180	Critical Thinking
3	PHIL	220	Logic
3	PHIL	275	Ethics
3	PHIL	290	Business Ethics
3	SPAN	110	Elementary Spanish I
3	SPAN	111	Elementary Spanish II
3	SPAN	212	Intermediate Spanish I
3	SPAN	213	Intermediate Spanish II
3	SPEE	214	Introduction to Public Speaking

Literature

Students must select 3.0 credit hours from the list of courses below.

ENGL 201 and ENGL 202 are designed for students who are or plan to major in programs outside of English and or Literature. ENGL 210, 211, 212, 213, 214, and 215 are intended for students with a strong background in literature.

Credits	Course	Number	Course Title
3	ENGL	201	Introduction to Literature
3	ENGL	202	Introduction to African American Literature
3	ENGL	210	English Literature I
3	ENGL	211	English Literature II
3	ENGL	212	American Literature I
3	ENGL	213	American Literature II
3	ENGL	214	World Literature I
3	ENGL	215	World Literature II

Wellness/Health

Students must select 2.0 credit hours from the list of courses below.

This requirement can be satisfied by completing minimally one two-credit hour course or two one-credit courses.

Credits	Course	Number	Course Title
1	HPER	160	Team Sports I
1	HPER	161	Team Sports II
1	HPER	165	Personal Fitness
1	HPER	166	Beginning Swimming
1	HPER	168	Aerobics and Conditioning
1	HPER	169	Gymnastics
2	HPER	170	Health and Wellness
1	HPER	171	Lifetime Sports I
1	HPER	172	Lifetime Sports II
1	HPER	175	Dance as Art

Social Science

Students must select 3.0 credit hours from the list of courses below.

Credits	Course	Number	Course Title
3	CJUS	116	Introduction to Criminal Justice
3	ECON	100	Basic Economics
3	ECON	210	Principles of Microeconomics
3	ECON	211	Principles of Macroeconomics
3	FACS	201	Consumer Economics

3	POLI	150	United States Government
3	POLI	202	Contemporary Political Thought
3	PSYC	101	Introduction to Psychology
3	PSYC	212	Human Growth and Development
3	SOCI	101	Introduction to Sociology
3	SOCI	102	Introduction to Anthropology

Mathematics

Students must select 6.0 credit hours from the list of courses below.

It is recommended that a student successfully complete the appropriate two-course sequence [six credit hours or eight credit hours depending on major] of mathematics to satisfy the approved curriculum in the student's major and concentration.

Credits	Course	Number	Course Title
3	MATH	112	Basic Mathematics I
3	MATH	113	Basic Mathematics II
3	MATH	120	College Algebra
3	MATH	121	College Algebra & Trigonometry
3	MATH	122	Finite Mathematics
3	MATH	130	Numbers and Operations
3	MATH	131	Algebra and Functions
4	MATH	150	Pre-calculus
4	MATH	260	Calculus I
4	MATH	261	Calculus II
3	PHIL	220	Introduction to Logic (Contingent upon mathematics placement test score.)
3	STAT	210	Elementary Statistics I

Science

Students must select 4.0 credit hours from the list of courses below.

To meet the GEP requirement in Science a student must successfully complete one course with associated lab [four credit hours] or the appropriate science courses to satisfy the approved curriculum in the student's major.

Credits	Course	Number	Course Title
4	AGRI	100	Earth Science and Lab
4	AGRI	150	Introduction of Environmental Science and Lab
4	BIOL	116	Biological Science and Lab
4	BIOL	120	Principles of Biology I and Lab
4	BIOL	121	Principles of Biology II and Lab (Bio Majors Only)

4	CHEM	100	Chemistry and Society and Lab
4	CHEM	151/153 (Lab)	General Chemistry I and Lab
4	CHEM	152/154 (Lab)	General Chemistry II and Lab
4	CHEM	161/163 (Lab)	Chemistry I and Lab (Chem. Majors Only)
4	CHEM	162/164 (Lab)	Chemistry II and Lab (Chem. Majors Only)
4	DIET	101	Nutrition-Contemporary Health Issues
4	PHYS	100	Physical Science and Lab
4	PHYS	105	Introduction to Physics I
4	PHYS	106	Introduction to Physics II
4	PHYS	112	General Physics I and Lab
4	PHYS	113	General Physics II and Lab

Critical Thinking

Definition:

Critical thinking is the ability to use information, ideas, and arguments from relevant perspectives to make sense of complex issues and solve problems. Critical thinking also includes locating, evaluating, interpreting, and combining information to reach well-reasoned conclusions or solutions.

Student Learning Outcomes:

After completing the General Education Program requirement, students will be able to:

1. Distinguish between causation, correlation and association by analyzing the nature of the relationship(s), if any, within a data set.
2. Demonstrate proficiency in problem-solving strategies and skills by determining a process and creating a solution to a real-world problem.
3. Identify common fallacies by analyzing arguments.
4. Identify and challenge assumptions by evaluating conflicting narratives and interpretations.
5. Assess their ethical values and the social context of problems, recognize ethical issues in various settings, think about how different ethical perspectives might be applied to ethical dilemmas and consider the ramifications of alternative actions.

Goals:

- Seventy percent (70%) of the juniors will receive a score of “proficient” on the HEIghten® Critical Thinking Assessment, which indicates they can: make inferential connections, follow the logic of an argument, understand logical relationships between assertions/arguments and supporting information, identify implicit assumptions and evidence that supports or undermines a claim, and distinguish causation from correlation.
- Seventy percent (70%) of the students will score a minimum of milestone two or higher on a course-embedded class project score with the AAC&U VALUE Rubric for Critical Thinking.

Methods/Instruments:

- The HEIghten® Critical Thinking Assessment is administered annually to juniors on VSU Assessment Day.
- Students’ reflective essays completed for their ENGL 110 portfolio will be compared to the reflective essays completed for their Senior ePortfolio to determine the changes in their ability to think critically (as scored using the AAC&U VALUE Rubric for Critical Thinking).
- Two baseline measures will be taken: 1) a random sample of freshman essays completed for PHIL 140; and 2) a random sample of coursework from first-year students in courses that teach critical thinking in the GEP, to be collected and scored using the AAC&U Critical Thinking VALUE Rubric.
- A random sample of work from seniors in 300-level and 400-level courses that focus on critical thinking and ethical reasoning will be collected and scored using the AAC&U Critical Thinking VALUE Rubric.

- The Office of Planning and Institutional Effectiveness (OPIE) will administer the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) to first-year students and seniors every 2 to 3 years. Similarly, OPIE will administer the Faculty Survey of Student Engagement (FSSE) and an alumni survey every 2 to 3 years.
- The ETS HEIghten Proficiency Profile, a multiple-choice test, is administered to students completing an associate degree as a graduation requirement at the end of each term.
- Students enrolled in College Composition I & II (ENGL 110/111) complete a writing assignment each term. The writing assignment will be graded using the AAC&U Critical Thinking VALUE Rubric.
- Students enrolled in Principles of Macroeconomics I (ECON 210) will complete a rubric-graded writing assignment that requires students to review an article and write a narrative that acknowledges the presence of logical fallacies in the article and all economic issues addressed.

Schedule:

- Data regarding problem-solving strategies and skills, and the ability to analyze arguments, evaluate conflicting narratives, and illuminate different frames of interpretation, as demonstrated by first-year students, will be collected every year.
- OPIE will administer the NSSE, FSSE, and the alumni survey every 2-3 years.
- Data regarding problem-solving strategies and skills and the ability to analyze arguments, evaluate conflicting narratives, and illuminate different frames of interpretation will be collected every year from a random sample of work produced by seniors in 300-level and 400-level courses that focus on critical thinking.
- ETS HEIghten Proficiency Profile results are collected from bachelor's degree program completers each term. All results are collected, summarized, and reported annually to faculty, with actions for improvement implemented annually.
- Critical Thinking assessment results are collected from students enrolled in College Composition I (ENGL 110) each fall and College Composition II (ENGL 111) each spring. All results are collected, summarized, and reported annually to faculty, with actions for improvement implemented annually.
- Civic Engagement assessment results are collected from students enrolled in Principles of Macroeconomics I and II (ECON 210/211) each semester. All results are collected, summarized, and reported according to the term completed to faculty, with actions for improvement developed, shared, and implemented annually.

Results:

1. Target not met: VSU students scored 156.7 (developing) on the ETS HEIghten Proficiency Profile compared to the comparison group average of 162.6. This data is from Spring 2021. VSU did not fully administer the assessment during the 2019-2020 academic year due to COVID-19. VSU resumed the assessment was resumed in 2021-2022.
2. Target met: Students in ECON 210 scored a combined average of 72% on all assessments.
3. The results compare two approaches (self-reported effort [SRE] and response time effort [RTE]) for identifying low-effort examinees in student learning outcomes assessment. Although both approaches equally discriminated from measures of ability, RTE was

found to have a stronger relationship with test performance, identified more low-effort examinees, and led to higher mean performance upon filtering than the SRE approach.

Communication of Findings:

VSU's General Education Committee, in consultation with departmental assessment coordinators, faculty and deans, reviews assessment results annually. Results are used by faculty, administration, and staff to evaluate student performance in the VSU GEP. Results of the assessment are provided to the appropriate faculty members teaching in the VSU GEP. Assessment examples from courses that map to Critical Thinking per the VSU Curriculum Map (Appendix B) are shared in an annual report to introduce further, develop, and apply student-learning outcomes. Assessment results are reported across course types and delivery modes. Student-level assessments will capture student IDs to disaggregate results by categories such as race, ethnicity, and Pell grant status to identify disparities. A public report on this competency area will be developed and updated at least once every three years beginning 2022-2023.

Civic Engagement

Definition:

Civic engagement is defined as an array of knowledge, abilities, values, attitudes, and behaviors that in combination allow individuals to contribute to the civic life of their communities. It may include, among other things, exploration of one's role and responsibilities in society; knowledge of and ability to engage with political systems and processes; and/or course-based or extra-curricular efforts to identify and address issues of public or community concern particularly as they address the African-American community.

Student Learning Outcomes:

After completing the General Education Program requirement, students will be able to:

1. Identify civic, social, environmental, historical, or economic challenges at local, national, or global levels.
2. Give specific examples of the connections between founding documents of modern governance and national and local issues.
3. Demonstrate knowledge of political systems and how they function.
4. Develop a plan to participate in government, community and or participate in campus action.
5. Evaluate the ethical implications of individual, community, and civic actions.
6. Summarize and articulate historical knowledge and current issues that are necessary to be an informed and contributing citizen.
7. Demonstrate an understanding that each individual is unique and will recognize individual differences, including dimensions of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, age, physical abilities, religious beliefs, political beliefs, or other ideologies.
8. Apply knowledge to identify social problems and ethically implement solutions to meet community needs, especially the needs of the African American community.
9. Reflect on their own civic identity and commitment.
10. Present arguments, both for and against, regarding issues or events that are critical to participating as an informed citizen in a democratic society.
11. Describe how diverse opinions, values, perspectives, and life experiences shape and characterize a society or community.

Goals:

1. Seventy percent (70%) of students will score a 3 out of 4 using the AAC&U VALUE Rubric for Civic Engagement on the senior ePortfolio. Students will demonstrate the ability to problem solve and develop effective research skills needed to produce quantitative and qualitative research methods papers or research reports common in the academic discipline or in professional public affairs. Specifically, students in specialized courses (300- 400 level) will be able to:
 - a) Summarize and critique academic and/or professional literature on selected research topics;
 - b) Apply appropriate theories, methodologies, and/or evidence to their research topic;
 - c) Develop papers, reports, or presentations that describe their findings and conclusions on their research topics for professional or academic audiences

2. A random sample of students enrolled in College Composition I (ENGL 111) will score, on average, two (minimal proficiency) or higher on the ideas and development categories of a rubric graded writing assignment. See Appendix A to measure the extent to which students can perform the following objectives:
 - a) Identify civic, social, environmental, historical, or economic challenges at local, national, or global levels.
 - b) Identify forms of governance and leadership both nationally and globally.
3. On average, students enrolled in English Literature Courses (ENGL 210/211) will score a grade of seventy percent (70%) or better on a civic engagement related essay assignment to measure the extent to which students can perform the following objectives:
 - a) Present arguments, both for and against, regarding issues or events critical to participating as an informed citizen in a democratic society.
 - b) Evaluate the outcomes of civic actions undertaken.
 - c) Describe how diverse opinions, values, perspectives, and life experiences shape and characterize a society or community.
4. Seventy percent (70%) of students enrolled in U.S. History I & II (HIST 122/123) score a grade of seventy percent (70%) or better on a Civic Engagement related written, research-based essay to measure the extent to which students can perform the following objectives:
 - a) Present arguments, for and against, issues or events critical to participating as an informed citizen in a democratic society.
 - b) Evaluate the outcomes of civic actions undertaken.
 - c) Describe how diverse opinions, values, perspectives, and life experiences shape and characterize a society or community.
5. Seventy percent (70%) of students enrolled Principles of Macroeconomics I and II (ECON 210/211) will correctly answer questions assigned in Civic Engagement related written exercises to measure the extent to which students can perform the following objectives:
 - a) Identify civic, social, environmental, historical, or economic challenges at local, national, or global levels.
 - b) Identify forms of governance and leadership both nationally and globally.

Methods/Instruments:

1. The HEIghten® Civic Competency and Engagement Assessment will be given annually to a random sample of Juniors on Assessment Day.
2. A random sample of the senior ePortfolios will be assessed holistically using the AAC&U VALUE Rubric for Civic Engagement.
3. NSSE will be administered to first-year students and seniors every 2-3 years. Similarly, FSSE and an alumni survey will be administered every 2-3 years.
4. A college wide annual voting and voting registration drive will be conducted for state and federal elections (with student participation).
5. Students enrolled in College Composition I (ENGL 110) will complete a rubric graded writing assignment on a topic which pertains to civic engagement.
6. Students enrolled in English Literature Courses (ENGL 210/211) will examine and discuss how literary texts are informed by socio-political, economic, cultural, historical, and biographical factors.

7. Students enrolled in U.S. Government (POLI 150) will complete a written, research-based essay demonstrating their ability to analyze a politically divisive issue and, using peer-reviewed research, propose a potential equitable resolution to the issue.
8. Students enrolled in Principles of Macroeconomics I and II (ECON 210/211) will complete written assignments that acquaint students to civic engagement challenges.

Schedule:

1. The HEIghten® Civic Competency and Engagement Assessment will be given to Juniors.
2. Beginning in Fall 2020, incoming students will begin working on collecting artifacts for their senior ePortfolios. This means that the first batch of senior ePortfolios will be available for data collection and assessment at the end of the Spring semester 2023.
3. Civic Engagement assessment results will be collected from students enrolled in College Composition I (ENGL 110) each fall and College Composition II (ENGL 111) each spring. All results are collected, summarized, and reported annually to faculty with actions for improvement implemented annually.
4. Civic Engagement assessment results will be collected from students enrolled in English Literature (ENGL 210) each fall and English Literature II (ENGL 211) each spring. All results are collected, summarized, and reported annually to faculty with actions for improvement implemented annually.
5. Civic Engagement assessment results will be collected from students enrolled in U.S. History (HIST 122) each fall and U.S. History (HIST 123) each spring. All results are collected, summarized, and reported annually to faculty with actions for improvement implemented annually.
6. Civic Engagement assessment results are collected from students enrolled in Principles of Macroeconomics I (ECON 210) each term. All results are collected, summarized, and reported annually to faculty with actions for improvement implemented annually.

Results:

1. Eighty-eight percent (88%) of students achieved a score of 70 or above.
Analysis/Interpretation: Less than 10% of the students lacked the ability to satisfactorily utilize quantitative and qualitative research methods.
2. Target met: Students in ENGL 110 scored, on average, a 2.44 ENGL 111
 - a. students were not assessed due to COVID-19.
3. Target met: 77.4% of students in ENGL 210 scored a 70% or above and 71.3% of students in ENGL 211 scored a 70% or above.
4. Target met: 74.7% of students in HIST 12 scored a 70% or above and 72.2% of students in POLI 150 scored a 70% or above.
5. Target met: Students scored an average of 76% in the spring term.

Use of Results/Action Plan for Improvement of Direct Assessment:

Due to COVID-19 protocols, faculty made extra efforts to accommodate student needs, as many were doing remote learning. The departmental faculty have discussed that use of multiple measures in assessment techniques would be beneficial to assess student learning during this time frame.

Communication of Findings:

VSU's General Education Committee, in consultation with departmental assessment coordinators, faculty and deans, reviews assessment results annually. Results are used by faculty, administration, and staff to evaluate student performance in the VSU GEP. Results of the assessment are provided to the appropriate faculty members teaching in the VSU GEP. Assessment examples from courses that map to Civic Engagement per the VSU Curriculum Map (Appendix B) are shared in an annual report to introduce further, develop, and apply student-learning outcomes. Assessment results are reported across course types and delivery modes. Student-level assessments will capture student IDs to disaggregate results by categories such as race, ethnicity, and Pell grant status to identify disparities. A public report on this competency area will be developed and updated at least once every three years beginning 2022-2023.

Professional Readiness

Definition:

Professional readiness is defined as the ability to work well with others and display situationally and culturally appropriate demeanor and behavior. Degree graduates will demonstrate skills important for successful transition into the workplace and pursuit of further education.

Student Learning Outcomes:

After completing the General Education Program requirement, students will be able to:

1. Recognize appropriate workplace and classroom habits, demeanor, and behavior. Identify the qualities of an ethical decision.
2. Collaborate with others on a task to achieve a common goal. Cultivate skills to communicate effectively and professionally.
3. Set goals, and implement a plan for personal, professional, and/or academic achievement.

Goals:

1. Seventy percent (70%) of students enrolled in Health and Wellness (HPER 170) will correctly respond to questions in a Communication Styles assignment to measure the extent to which students can perform the following objectives:
 - a. Recognize appropriate workplace and classroom habits, demeanor, and behavior.
 - b. Identify the qualities of an ethical decision.
2. Seventy percent (70%) of students enrolled in Principles of Public Speaking (SPEE 214) will score seventy percent (70%) or better on a persuasive public speaking assignment to measure the extent to which students can perform the following objectives:
 - a. Collaborate with others on a task to achieve a common goal.
 - b. Cultivate skills to communicate effectively and professionally.
3. Seventy percent (70%) of students enrolled in Health and Wellness (HPER 170) will score at least seventy percent (70%) on the Career Research Assignment to measure the extent to which students can perform the following objective:
 - a. Set goals, and implement a plan for personal, professional, and/or academic achievement.

Methods/Instruments:

1. Students enrolled in Health and Wellness (HPER 170) will view Communication Style modules specific to communication style types, communicating messages, listening, and difficult conversations and complete multiple-choice questions at the end of each module.
2. Students enrolled in Principles of Public Speaking (SPEE 214) complete a graded public speaking assignment that requires the student to research a persuasive topic, use evidence to support the claim, and demonstrate components of argumentation to attempt to convince their audience of their claims.
3. In order to set goals and implement a plan for personal, professional, and/or academic achievement, students enrolled in Health and Wellness (HPER 170) will complete the Career Research Assignment.

Schedule:

1. Health and Wellness (HPER 170) assessment results are collected from students enrolled each fall and spring. All results are collected, summarized and reported annually to faculty with actions for improvement developed, shared, and implemented annually.
2. Principles of Public Speaking (SPEE 214) assessment results are collected from students enrolled each fall and spring. All results are collected, summarized and reported annually to faculty with actions for improvement developed, shared, and implemented annually.
3. Health and Wellness (HPER 170) assessment results are collected from students enrolled each fall and spring. All results are collected, summarized and reported annually to faculty with actions for improvement developed, shared, and implemented annually.

Results:

1. Target met: Students in HPER 170 scored an average of 91% on in-class assignments that, required formulation of research questions that are designed to re-test refine, and build theories.
2. Target met: Students in SPEE 214 scored an average of 76% on class activities that involved distinguishing between deductive and inductive arguments forms, and identifying their fallacies through reasoning (inductively and deductively).
3. Target met: Students in HPER 170 scored an average of 89% on assignments that focused on personal and professional actions with the knowledge and appreciation of interconnection among environmental, and social perspectives to create a more sustainable future.

Continuous Quality Improvement for the Professional Readiness Outcome:

Based on the evidence collected through analysis of outcomes assessment, the following changes and improvements were made with the intention of improving student learning:

1. Expanded assessment administration to 50% of sections to collect a larger sample of data;
2. Developed a strategy to expand assessment administration to 75% of all sections;
3. Initiated faculty peer training;
4. Added a rubric to the assessment so that students will receive feedback on their performance;
5. Focused teaching on more challenging concepts;
6. Increased communication between lead and supporting faculty;
7. Faculty met with the Office of Planning and Institutional Effectiveness to review the assessment results, and
8. Improved data collection techniques by exporting reports from Blackboard LMS and importing into a spreadsheet, to reduce the potential error of faculty typing in the wrong score.

Communication of Findings:

VSU's General Education Committee, in consultation with departmental assessment coordinators, faculty and deans, reviews assessment results annually. Results are used by faculty, administration, and staff to evaluate student performance in the VSU GEP. Results of the assessment are provided to the appropriate faculty members teaching in the VSU GEP. Assessment examples from courses that map to Professional Readiness per the VSU Curriculum

Map (Appendix B) are shared in an annual report to introduce further, develop, and apply student-learning outcomes. Assessment results are reported across course types and delivery modes. Student-level assessments will capture student IDs to disaggregate results by categories such as race, ethnicity, and Pell grant status to identify disparities. A public report on this competency area will be developed and updated at least once every three years beginning 2022-2023.

Quantitative Literacy

Definition:

Quantitative literacy is defined as the ability to perform accurate calculations, interpret quantitative information, apply and analyze relevant numerical data, and use results to support conclusions. Degree graduates will calculate, interpret, and use numerical and quantitative information in a variety of settings.

Student Learning Outcomes:

After completing the General Education Program requirement, students will be able to:

1. Distinguish between quantitative and qualitative analysis. Identify numerical information presented in relevant equations, graphs, diagrams, tables, and words.
2. Interpret quantitative information to draw relevant conclusions. Evaluate numerical information for usefulness, accuracy, and significance.
3. Calculate and convey information into relevant equations, graphs, diagrams, tables, and words.

Goals:

1. Students graduating with an associate degree will score on average above the national norm on the Mathematics scaled score of the ETS Proficiency Profile to measure the extent to which students can perform the following objectives:
 - a) Distinguish between quantitative and qualitative analysis.
 - b) Identify numerical information presented in relevant equations, graphs, diagrams, tables, and words.
2. Seventy percent (70%) of students enrolled in Principles of Biology I-II (BIOL 120/121) will correctly complete a Quantitative Literacy portion of graded lab assignments to measure the extent to which students can perform the following objectives:
 - a) Calculate and convey information into relevant equations, graphs, diagrams, tables, and words.
3. Seventy percent (70%) of students enrolled in Pre-Calculus I and Pre-Calculus II (MATH 160-161) will score sixty percent (60%) or better on Quantitative Literacy questions on a comprehensive final exam to measure the extent to which students can perform the following objective:
 - a) Calculate and convey information into relevant equations, graphs, diagrams, tables, and words.

Methods/Instruments:

1. The ETS Proficiency Profile, a multiple-choice test, is administered to students completing an associate degree as a graduation requirement at the end of each term.
2. Students enrolled in Principles of Biology I-II (BIOL 120/121) will correctly complete lab assignments that require presenting data in tables and graphs.
3. Method: Students enrolled in Pre-Calculus I and Pre-Calculus II (MATH 260-261) will complete a graded final exam that requires calculating and conveying information as part of Quantitative Literacy.

Schedule:

1. Mathematics ETS Proficiency Profile results are collected from associate degree graduates each term. All results are collected, summarized and reported annually to faculty with actions for improvement developed, shared, and implemented annually.
2. Quantitative Literacy assessment results are collected from students enrolled in General Biology I (BIOL 120) each fall and General Biology II (BIOL 121) each spring. All results are collected, summarized and reported annually to faculty with actions for improvement developed, shared, and implemented annually.
3. Quantitative Literacy assessment results are collected from students enrolled in Pre-Calculus I (MATH 260) each fall and Pre-Calculus II (MATH 261) each spring. All results are collected, summarized and reported annually to faculty with actions for improvement developed, shared, and implemented annually.

Results:

1. Target met: VSU students scored an average of 79% on calculation and conveying information into relevant equations, graphs, diagrams, tables, and words. This data is from Spring 2019. The assessment has not been administered for the last two academic years due to COVID-19. The assessment will resume in 2021-22.
2. Target met: 76.6% of students in BIOL 120 answered the questions correctly. The assessment was not delivered to BIOL 121 students due to COVID-19.
3. Target partially met: 94% of students in MATH 260 scored a 60% or above while just 67% of students in MATH 161 scored a 60% or above.

Continuous Quality Improvement for the Quantitative Literacy Outcome:

Based on the evidence collected through analysis of outcomes assessment the following changes and improvements were made with the intention of improving student learning:

1. Expanded assessment administration to 50% of sections to collect a larger sample of data;
2. Developed a strategy to expand assessment administration to 75% of all sections;
3. Initiated faculty peer training;
4. Added a rubric to the assessment so students receive feedback on their performance;
5. Focused teaching on more challenging concepts;
6. Increased communication between lead and supporting faculty;
7. Faculty requested to review assessment results from the Office of Planning and Institutional Effectiveness, and;
8. Improved data collection techniques by exporting reports from Blackboard and importing into a spreadsheet, to reduce potential for errors in faculty typing an incorrect score.

Communication of Findings:

VSU's General Education Committee, in consultation with departmental assessment coordinators, faculty and deans, reviews assessment results annually. Results are used by faculty, administration, and staff to evaluate student performance in the VSU GEP. Results of the assessment are provided to the appropriate faculty members teaching in the VSU GEP. Assessment examples from courses that map to Quantitative Literacy per the VSU Curriculum Map (Appendix B) are shared in an annual report to introduce further, develop, and apply

student-learning outcomes. Assessment results are reported across course types and delivery modes. Student-level assessments will capture student IDs to disaggregate results by categories such as race, ethnicity, and Pell grant status to identify disparities. A public report on this competency area will be developed and updated at least once every three years beginning 2022-2023.

Written Communication

Definition:

Written communication is defined as the ability to develop, convey, and exchange ideas in writing, as appropriate to a given context and audience.

Student Learning Outcomes:

After completing the General Education Program requirement, students will be able to:

1. Express themselves effectively in a variety of written forms
2. Demonstrate a mastery of Standard English by producing no less than 50 pages (total) of written work collected in an ePortfolio to be completed by their senior year.
3. Demonstrate an understanding of writing for different purposes and audiences by producing written work from a variety of courses and activities, of which only 75% may come from courses/activities directly related to their major.
4. Identify different American English dialects and explain the influence of socio-economic and cultural factors implicated in the proficient use of Standard English.
5. Demonstrate an understanding and respect for the diversity of English spoken in America.

Goals:

1. The written work in the senior ePortfolio, scored holistically using the AAC&U Written Communication Value Rubric will reach Milestone 2 for 70% of all students and Milestone 3 or higher for 25% of the students.
2. Seventy percent (70%) of students will score one category higher (using the AAC&U Written Communication Value Rubric) on their senior ePortfolio than what they scored on the portfolio completed for ENGL 110 the first time they were enrolled in the course.
3. Seventy percent (70%) of students will score one category higher (using the AAC&U Written Communication Value Rubric) on their Reflective Essay or Senior Capstone Project (included in their senior ePortfolios) than what they scored on their Freshman Read essay.
4. Seventy percent (70%) of students will report that they prepare two (2) or more drafts for written assignments greater than two pages in length.

Methods/Instruments:

1. Two baseline measures will be taken: 1) a random sample of the essays completed by first-year students in response to the Freshman Orientation will be scored using the (Association of American Colleges and Universities); 2) a random sample of the ePortfolios and/or paper portfolios completed by all students enrolled in ENGL 110: Composition I will be collected and scored holistically using the AAC&U Written Communication Value Rubric.
2. A random sample of the senior ePortfolios will be assessed holistically using the AAC&U Written Communication Value Rubric with particular attention paid to the final Reflective Essay and any writing done for the capstone course in the student's major (if such a course is required).

3. A random sample of the senior ePortfolios will be assessed for the variety of writing included in the portfolio, including writing for audiences outside of the classroom and writing for the web.
4. NSSE will be administered to first-year students and seniors every 2-3 years. Similarly, FSSE and an alumni survey will be administered every 2-3 years.
5. Students graduating with an associate degree are administered the ETS Proficiency Profile in Writing at the end of each semester as a graduation requirement.
6. Students enrolled in College Composition I & II (ENG 111/112) complete a rubric graded writing assignment each term.

Schedule:

1. Data regarding the level of writing demonstrated by first-year students will be collected each year, beginning with the data from Fall 2018, forward.
2. NSEE, FSEE, and the alumni survey will be administered every 2-3 years.
3. Beginning in Fall 2019, incoming students will begin working on collecting artifacts for their senior ePortfolios. This means that the first batch of Senior ePortfolios will be available for data collection and assessment at the end of the Spring semester 2023.
4. Written Communication ETS Proficiency Profile results are collected from Senior level students each term. All results are collected, summarized and reported annually to faculty with actions for improvement developed, shared, and implemented annually.
5. Written Communication assessment results are collected from students enrolled in College Composition I (ENGL 111) each fall and College Composition II (ENGL 112) each spring. All results are collected, summarized and reported annually to faculty with actions for improvement developed, shared, and implemented annually.

Results:

1. Target met: VSU students scored an average of 68 compared to the national average of 112. This data is from Spring 2019. The assessment has not been administered for the last two academic years due to COVID-19. The assessment will resume in 2021-22.
2. Target met: Students in ENGL 111 scored, on average, a 1.78. ENGL 112 student were not assessed due to COVID-19.
3. Target met: 400 Level students in Senior Thesis POLI 403/404 were able to orally deliver a written project that is organized coherently and logically, and that employs relevant evidence and examples from the world of politics and government. (Over 80% of students who completed the Senior Project during the spring 2020 semester passed with a 75% C- or better on their final presentation assignment for the course.

Continuous Quality Improvement for the Scientific Literacy Outcome:

Based on the evidence collected through analysis of outcomes assessment, our faculty initiated and made the following changes with the intention of improving student learning:

1. Expanded assessment administration from 50% to 100% of sections to collect a larger sample of data to evaluate;
2. Faculty initiated faculty-peer training;
3. Faculty revised the rubrics for two courses to better capture the expectations of the assignment and outcome Faculty focused teaching on providing more student supports for challenging concepts uncovered in the analysis of previous assessments;

4. Increased communication between lead and supporting faculty;
5. Faculty met with the Office of Planning and Institutional Effectiveness to review the assessment results, and;
6. Improved data collection techniques by exporting from Blackboard LMS and importing them into a spreadsheet to reduce the potential for any error of faculty typing in an incorrect score.

Communication of Findings:

VSU's General Education Committee, in consultation with departmental assessment coordinators, faculty and deans, reviews assessment results annually. Results are used by faculty, administration, and staff to evaluate student performance in the VSU GEP. Results of the assessment are provided to the appropriate faculty members teaching in the VSU GEP. Assessment examples from courses that map to Written Communication per the VSU Curriculum Map (Appendix B) are shared in an annual report to introduce further, develop, and apply student-learning outcomes. Assessment results are reported across course types and delivery modes. Student-level assessments will capture student IDs to disaggregate results by categories such as race, ethnicity, and Pell grant status to identify disparities. A public report on this competency area will be developed and updated at least once every three years beginning 2022-2023.

Conclusion per the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV) Policy on Student Learning Assessment and Quality in Undergraduate Education:

Virginia State University (VSU) and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) Principles of Accreditation 8.2a, our university assesses, documents, and makes data-informed changes and improvements tied to academic assessment of the general education competencies. We performed exploratory indirect assessments for scientific literacy (2016-2017), civic engagement (2017-2018), and critical thinking (2018-2019) to help select appropriate courses for direct assessment. Faculty administer assessments, collect data, and share results with the Office of Planning and Institutional Effectiveness (OPIE) for analysis. Once the analysis is complete, OPIE shares its findings with faculty, who determine what changes and improvements should be made to promote student learning. Assessment results are communicated within the academic departments, and amongst college-wide committees. Results are reported to SACSCOC, VSU, and SCHEV. Results may also be reported in annual academic assessment reports and in five-year comprehensive program reviews, as appropriate.

Scientific Inquiry

Definition:

Scientific literacy is the ability to apply the scientific method and related concepts and principles to make informed decisions and engage with issues related to the natural, physical, and social world.

Student Learning Outcomes:

After completing the General Education Program requirement, students will be able to:

1. recognize and know how to use the scientific method, and to evaluate empirical information.
2. Define scientific methods of analysis and investigation.
3. Demonstrate an ability to assess the scientific rigor of arguments.
4. Use scientific data to analyze, organize, interpret and predict outcomes from scientific experiments presented.
5. Understand and explain the ethical, legal, economic, and social implications of current scientific research and practices.

Goals:

1. Seventy Percent (70%) of the juniors will score 10% higher on the post-test than they did on the VSU-designed Scientific Literacy Exam pre-test.
2. Seventy Percent (70%) of the students will score a minimum of 70% (Competent) or higher on a course embedded class project assessed by a rubric.
3. Students graduating with an associate degree will score on average above the national norm on the Natural Sciences scaled score of the ETS Proficiency Profile to measure the extent to which students can perform the following objectives:
 - a) Identify the components of scientific inquiry (observation, hypothesis, independent variable, dependent variable, methodology, results, and conclusions) leading to evidence-based knowledge.
4. Seventy percent (70%) of the students enrolled in Principles of Biology I-II (BIOL 120/121) will correctly answer Scientific Literacy questions on the end-of-course examination to measure the extent to which students can perform the following objectives:
 - a) Identify the components of scientific inquiry (observation, hypothesis, independent variable, dependent variable, methodology, results, and conclusions) leading to evidence-based knowledge.
5. Seventy percent (70%) of the students enrolled in General Biology I and II (BIO 101 and 102) will complete the formative Scientific Literacy assessment assignments satisfactorily to measure the extent to which students perform the following objective:
 - a) Design an experiment to test a hypothesis.
6. Seventy percent (70%) of students enrolled in Principles of Biology I-II (BIOL 120/121) will correctly complete a Scientific Literacy portion of graded lab assignments to measure the extent to which students perform the following objective:
 - a) Conduct an experiment to test a hypothesis, analyze the results, and communicate the findings.

Methods/Instruments:

1. The ETS Proficiency Profile, a multiple-choice test, is administered to students completing an associate degree as a graduation requirement at the end of each term.
2. Students enrolled in Principles of Biology I-II (BIOL 120/121) will correctly complete lab assignments that require identifying components of scientific inquiry.
3. Students enrolled in Principles of Biology I-II (BIOL 120/121) will correctly complete lab assignments that require designing an experiment to test a hypothesis.
4. Students enrolled in Principles of Biology I-II (BIOL 120/121) will complete lab assignments that require them to conduct an experiment to test a hypothesis, analyze the results, and communicate the findings.

Schedule:

1. Natural Science ETS Proficiency Profile results are collected from bachelor degree program completers each term. All results are collected, summarized and reported annually to faculty with actions for improvement developed, shared, and implemented annually.
2. Scientific Literacy assessment results are collected from students enrolled in Principles of Biology I-II (BIOL 120/121) each fall and Principles of Biology I-II (BIOL 120/121) each spring. All results are collected, summarized and reported annually to faculty with actions for improvement developed, shared, and implemented annually.
3. Scientific Literacy assessment results are collected from students enrolled in Principles of Biology I-II (BIOL 120/121) each fall and (Principles of Biology II 121) each spring. All results are collected, summarized and reported annually to faculty with actions for improvement developed, shared, and implemented annually.
4. Scientific Literacy assessment results are collected from students enrolled in General Principles of Biology I (BIOL 120) each fall and General Biology II (BIO 102) each spring. All results are collected, summarized and reported annually to faculty with actions for improvement developed, shared, and implemented annually.

Results:

1. Target met: VSU students scored an average of 77% in CHEM 100 to explain the characteristics of basic chemical compounds. This data is from spring 2019. The assessment had not been administered for the last two academic years due to COVID-19. The assessment will resume in 2021-22.
2. Target met: 77.88% of students in BIOL 120 answered the questions correctly on in-class writing assignments. The assessment was not delivered to BIOL 121 student due to COVID-19.
3. Target met: 79.29% of BIOL 120 students correctly completed lab assignments requiring designing an experiment to test a hypothesis. BIOL 116 students were not assessed due to COVID-19.
4. Target met: 74.29% of BIOL 116 students correctly completed lab assignments requiring designing an experiment to test a hypothesis. BIOL 120 students were not assessed due to COVID-19.

Continuous Quality Improvement for the Scientific Literacy Outcome:

Based on the evidence collected through analysis of outcomes assessment, our faculty initiated and made the following changes with the intention of improving student learning:

1. Expanded assessment administration to 50% of CHEM 100 sections (with plans to expand further in the following year) and 100% of BIOL 120 sections to collect larger samples of data;
2. Included a rubric in the CHEM 100 lab activity so that students could see how they would be assessed, • Initiated faculty peer training;
3. Focused teaching on more challenging concepts;
4. Plan to solicit student feedback;
5. Increased communication between lead and supporting faculty;
6. Improved data collection techniques by downloading reports from Blackboard and importing the reports into a spreadsheet to reduce the potential error of faculty typing the incorrect score.

Communication of Findings:

VSU's General Education Committee, in consultation with departmental assessment coordinators, faculty and deans, reviews assessment results annually. Results are used by faculty, administration, and staff to evaluate student performance in the VSU GEP. Results of the assessment are provided to the appropriate faculty members teaching in the VSU GEP.

Assessment examples from courses that map to Scientific Inquiry per the VSU Curriculum Map (Appendix B) are shared in an annual report to introduce further, develop, and apply student-learning outcomes. Assessment results are reported across course types and delivery modes. Student-level assessments will capture student IDs to disaggregate results by categories such as race, ethnicity, and Pell grant status to identify disparities. A public report on this competency area will be developed and updated at least once every three years beginning 2022-2023.

Summary:

In the spring 2021 semester an indirect assessment of course-level student learning outcomes was made for core GEP courses in the department. The assessment was given as an anonymous Qualtrics survey completed by students near the end of the semester. (Note: not all courses have reported an indirect assessment for this semester and the department will be reminded that these are required for all core/required courses every semester). In general, the majority of students who completed the survey either agreed or strongly agreed that the course outcomes were being met in the courses surveyed (BIOL116 and 120; see attached Appendix C). It was noted that this was not always the case for BIOL 120 (Principles of Biology I and Lab) and a review of the expected outcomes and a closer alignment of content and requirements of that course will be undertaken for the Fall 2018 semester to better meet the outcomes. Particular areas emphasis will be related to critical thinking skills and global awareness. Data from all assessments was be repeated in the Fall 2021 and future semesters in order to determine how the students perceive the course meeting the CL-SLOs given in the syllabus. Faculty teaching these courses in the Fall 2021 semester will be provided with this feedback from students to make them aware of the perceived effectiveness of the course in achieving the CL-SLOs during the spring 2022 semester. Course content and/or assessments may be modified in order to better meet the CL-SLOs as determined by faculty review during preparation for the semester.

Appendix A: Number of Students Who Completed Tests at Each Level (2020-2021)

Year	Classification	Test Taken	Number of students enrolled	Number of students who took the test
2020-2021	Freshman	Quantitative Reasoning (designed in-house)	1149	746 (64.9% response rate)
	Sophomore	Written Communication (designed in-house)	775	530 (including 19 uncompleted and 1 inaccessible) (68.3% response rate)
	Junior	HEIghten® Civic Competency and Engagement Assessment	745	382 (51.2% response rate)
	Senior	HEIghten® Critical Thinking	871	519 (including 29 excluded from analysis) (59.5% response rate)
2021-2022	Freshman	Quantitative Reasoning (designed in-house)	1089	700 (64.2% response rate)
	Sophomore	Written Communication (designed in-house)	856	466 (54.4% response rate)
	Junior	HEIghten® Civic Competency and Engagement Assessment	773	498 (64.4% response rate)
	Senior	HEIghten® Critical Thinking	805	331 (41.1% response rate)

The results for AY 2020-2021 were presented in Appendix A. This year, satisfactory level (or better) achievement ranged from around 62 percent in the Quantitative and Formal Reasoning goals and the Information, Technology and Research goal, **aa**, to near 82 percent in a number of goals throughout the curriculum.

Caution should be used in interpreting the aggregate results from any annual cycle because only a third of the departments participating in the Core are required to report assessment results in a given year. We have now completed our second year of the Core assessment reporting cycle. All departments offering Core-certified courses now have implemented at least two rounds of learning goals assessments, and those asked to report in AY 2020-21 now have

substantial information on changes in performance over time on which to base decisions about “bridge the gap” actions to further improve student learning outcomes. As Figure 2 shows, there has been enough variation to indicate that rigorous standards are being imposed, and enough across the board success to suggest that in terms of both instruction and student learning outcomes, the Core is quite effective.

The GEC does, however, have concerns that some courses are reported as having over 64 percent of students achieving goals at the “outstanding” level. The GEC plans to continue its work with departments and instructors to refine assessment instruments and procedures to better distinguish between levels of student outcomes.

Yes	<p>Response to Assessment Results:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Describes the process used to review assessment information and use for improvement o Modification/refinement of pedagogy, curriculum, assessment tool, or learning goal based on assessment results. Provides evidence and/or examples of improvements made based on the results of learning outcomes assessment.
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As noted earlier, the GEC is impressed with faculty efforts to “bridge the gap” even when the assessment results in their courses met the benchmarks the Office of Planning and Institutional Effectiveness has set regarding the GEP. Table 1 presents data on the number of reports submitted from 2019 to 2022 indicating plans to modify courses in response to the Core goals assessment results. Over time, the number of reports with plans for modification has grown significantly. This is due to the efforts of the GEC and the OPIE to work with faculty to build an appreciation of the value of assessment and to cultivate more effective assessment methods. Over the entire period, approximately 51 percent of the reports included such plans. In AY 2020-2021, 53 percent of the reports included such plans.

Cycle Year	Assessment Results Received <i>(no. course sections)</i>	Plans to Improve Student Learning Reported			
		Fall	Winter	Spring	Year total
2019-2020	61	11		13	24 (39.3%)
2020-2021	52	14		14	28 (53.8%)
2021-2022	67	16		12	28 (41.7%)
Two-Year Totals	180	41		39	80 (44.4%)

Table 3 provides a summary of the types of modifications proposed. The process of assessment has encouraged our faculty to think about ways to improve student learning in their courses, and encouraged an increased degree of faculty engagement with the student learning outcomes of our GEP requirements as manifested in their individual courses.

Table 2: Summary of Types of Revisions Made in the GE Curriculum Courses in Response to Assessment Results, 2020-2021	
Revise / add homework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Add assignments, often requiring more frequent and regular interaction with the course material · Add more online homework practice with automated responses
Revise instructors' in-class presentations or topics or readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Add more in-class instruction targeted on problematic topic or skill; provide more explicit guidance about what students need to do <p>media sources to assist with conceptualization of abstract concepts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Introduce more authentic or primary sources · Add video instruction to free up more in-class time · Assign fewer texts and probe them in more depth
Revise in-class activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Add or re-structure peer review · Add or re-structure in-class group work · Provide more in-class examples, modeling, and group practice · Introduce i>clickers for real time assessment of student comprehension <p>Add more of an approach or activity the instructor had previous success with</p>
Revise content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Rebalance topics, rethink how topics are covered, and introduce more repetition and practice exercises · Add more instruction on critical assessment of sources and synthesis of information <p>Depart from current disciplinary orthodoxy in pedagogy or texts</p>
Add scaffolding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Add a re-write requirement or option · Scaffold assignments to guide students through a skill or process step-by-step and build ability along the way <p>Revise curricular sequencing or add prerequisites</p>
Add meta-cognition activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Add reflective and meta-cognition activities · Provide more in-class opportunities to practice and reflect on the desired skill <p>Further emphasize Core goal throughout the course</p>
Revise prompts or assessment method	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Reframe exam questions, assignments, and/or assessment prompts to bring them into better alignment with the Core goal · Align prompts, assignments, and expectations across instructors and TAs · Develop department consensus on substantive expectations at different points in the student's progress · Add a portfolio requirement <p>Use data analytics to identify and reach out to at-risk students.</p>

Yes	Successful Improvement: Provides evidence that direct GEP interventions result in improved student achievement of goals
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Future Directions in Assessment of the GE Curriculum at VSU

We remain committed to the advantages in effectiveness that we believe are derived from our authentic, embedded, direct assessment tools and process, as discussed above in the section on Assessment Plan, Structure and Process, now that we have graduated our first three cohorts of Core students (in Spring 2016, 2017, and 2018), the GEC will be exploring additional assessment tools that might be used near graduation to get a more cumulative picture of student learning as the Core Curriculum further advances. One thought is to explore how the GEC might build on assessments that should be done in major program capstone courses, recognizing that different majors emphasize the further development of different subsets of Core Curriculum goals, along with their discipline or program specific learning goals. Another option might build on the natural overlap between our liberal arts, humanities, and sciences Core Curriculum goals and “soft skills” almost universally sought by employers to develop a direct, authentic, assessment tool that students would also be motivated to use for their own purposes.

Perhaps most important, it is already clear that this ongoing assessment process will ensure continued faculty attention to the Core Curriculum and its effectiveness, which may prevent the conformity of GE that removed this course program from the daily regard of the faculty. In fact, GE continues to provoke spirited discussions among faculty and senior leaders.

We are grateful for the role assessment plays in keeping the faculty actively engaged with undergraduate education and we look forward to presenting further progress to the OPIE each year. The GEC, in alignment with the OPIE, and the University, is committed to promoting and maintaining a genuine culture of improvement through direct faculty involvement in and ownership of the assessment of student learning the assessment of the GEP.

The annual Assessment Day tests and surveys have been administered for a few years and were expanded in fall 2021 to collect self-assessments about GE competencies. VSU has experienced subject matter faculty and highly qualified personnel in its institutional research and assessment functions. VSU’s OPIE meets bi-monthly and has been involved in all aspects of developing this plan. Senior leaders have been involved in developing the plan and are supportive of these new assessments to improve teaching and learning. VSU will examine competency results in terms of equity for low-income (Pell eligible), first generation, ESL, under-represented, adult learner, and minority students where possible, given response rates and the sampling frame. This is restricted to some extent by the number of artifacts scored with rubrics, by testing, and by student participation in documented activities. Equity reporting requires the collection of student identifiers to match with the VSU Banner system Student Information System variables for the relevant student characteristics. VSU routinely analyzes progression rates based on these kinds of risk factors.

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Appendix B: Written Communication Rubric

	(A) High Proficiency - 4 pts	(B) Good Proficiency - 3 pts	(C) Minimal Proficiency - 2pts	(D) Developing Proficiency - 1 pt.	(F) Non-proficient - 0 pts	Circle
Ideas: topic thesis/claim focus purpose audience	Ideas are clear, insightful, thoughtful, and focused and consistently support the topic, thesis and audience for the paper.	Ideas are clear, focused and support a clearly-stated thesis. Ideas are not consistently insightful or thought-provoking.	Ideas are clear but generalized. The ideas do support the thesis, and audience for the paper.	Ideas are simplistic or clichéd and provide minimal support of the thesis/claim. Thesis may be vague or missing.	Ideas are unclear and unfocused; the thesis/claim is missing.	Score: 4, 3, 2, 1, 0
Development: details evidence examples logic arguments	Development is distinctive, details and examples arouse audience interest and provide relevant, concrete, specific and insightful evidence in support of sound logic.	Development is solid, but may lack depth. Details and examples arouse audience interest and provide relevant, concrete, specific evidence in support of sound logic.	Development is sufficient but generalized; it provides adequate but obvious details, examples, and evidence that include no logical fallacies or unsupported claims.	Development is insufficient, and provides scarce or inappropriate details, evidence, and examples that may include logical fallacies or unsupported claims.	Details, evidence, and examples are inappropriate or randomly inserted;	Score: 4, 3, 2, 1, 0
Organization: structure coherence unity transitions	Organization is coherent, unified and effective from the introductory section through the concluding section; it consistently demonstrates effective and appropriate rhetorical transitions between ideas and paragraphs.	Organization is coherent, unified and effective from the introductory section through the concluding section and usually demonstrates effective and appropriate rhetorical transitions between ideas and paragraphs.	Organization is generally coherent and unified overall, but it is ineffective at times and may demonstrate abrupt or weak transitions between ideas or paragraphs.	Organization is present but confused and fragmented. Support of the essay's purpose/plan demonstrated a lack of structure or coherence that negatively affects readability.	Overall organization is incoherent and renders the work unreadable.	Score: 4, 3, 2, 1, 0
Style & Mechanics: sentence structure word choice/tone grammar spelling punctuation	Style is confident, readable and rhetorically effective in tone, use of varied sentence structures, precise word choice, correct grammar, spelling, and punctuation.	Style is readable and rhetorically effective in tone, use of varied sentence structures, effective word choice, and correct grammar, spelling, and punctuation.	Style is readable, but unremarkable in tone, variety of sentence structure and effective word choice are sometimes distracting, but not serious. There are no serious errors in grammar, spelling, and punctuation.	Style is inappropriate in tone, including a lack of sentence variety, ineffective or inappropriate word choice, and serious errors in grammar, spelling, and punctuation.	The reason this is messed up is because the writer lacks. Basic comprehension of sentence structure, word use/choice, grammar, and mechanics.	Score: 4, 3, 2, 1, 0
Format: presentation sources documentation APA, MLA, and Chicago style	Format is correct, meets all argumentative research essay requirements, and works expertly to support the essay's purpose/plan.	Format is correct, meets all argumentative research essay requirements, and works generally to support the essay's purpose/plan.	Format is mostly correct, meets critical aspects of the requirements of an argumentative research essay, and works mostly to support the essay's purpose/plan.	Format is faulty, does not meet sufficient aspects of an argumentative research essay, and does not support the essay's purpose/plan.	APA, MLA, or Chicago Style is Absent	Score: 4, 3, 2, 1, 0
Raw Score (sum of individual rows)=				Net Score (Raw score / 5)=		

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Appendix C: VSU General Education Map and Map Key

VSU General Education - Students Will:						
Date: 12/11/2021	1. Written Communication -The ability to develop and communicate ideas effectively in writing as appropriate to a given context, purpose, and audience. Written communication includes a variety of styles, genres, and media, including computer-mediated communications.	2. Critical Thinking - The ability to process arguments, assumptions, and evidence in order to make an informed judgment, draw a sound conclusion, or solve a problem.	3. Global Cultural Literacy - The ability to analyze and apply basic scientific principles and methods of scientific research and inquiry in order to make informed decisions.	4. Civic Engagement - Is an array of knowledge, abilities, values, attitudes, and behaviors that in combination allow individuals to contribute to the civic life within their communities. It may include, among other things, exploration of one's role and responsibilities in society; knowledge of and ability to engage with political systems and processes; and/or course-based or extra-curricular efforts to identify and address issues of public or community concern particularly as they address the African-American community.	5. Quantitative Literacy - Is the ability to manipulate, analyze, and/or evaluate numbers and numerical data. It may involve calculation and/or analysis and interpretation of quantitative information derived from existing databases or systematic observations.	6. Scientific Literacy - The ability to analyze and apply basic scientific principles and methods of scientific research and inquiry in order to make informed decisions.
BIO 120 - General Biology I		I, M			D, M	A, M
BIO 121 - General Biology II		I, M			D, M	A, M
SPEE 214 – Introduction to Public Speaking	A, M	A, M	A, M	A, M		
ECON 210 - Principles of Macroeconomics	A, M	A, M	A	A	M	A
ENGL 110 - College Composition I	D, M	D, M	I, M	I, M		
ENGL 111 - College Composition II	A, M	A, M	A, M	A, M		
ENGL 212 - American Literature I	A, M	A, M	A, M	A, M		
ENGL 213 - American Literature II	A, M	A, M	A, M	A, M		
HIST 122 - US History I	D	D	D	D	D	
HIST 123 - US History II	D	D	D	D	D	
MATH 150 - Precalculus	I	A			A, M	
POLI 150 - US Government	D, M	D, M	A	A, M	I, M	I, M
PSY 101 – Introduction to Psychology	D, M	A, M	I, M		I, M	D, M
PSYC 212 – Human Growth and Development	D, M	A, M			I, M	D, M
SOCI 101 – Introduction to Sociology	D, M	D, M	D	D	D	I
SPAN 110 - Elementary Spanish I	A, M	A, M	A	A	A	
ART 199 – Art Appreciation	I	I, M				

I - Introduced, D - Developed, A - Applied, M – Measured

Appendix D: DFW Rates at VSU in GE Courses 2019-2021

A “DFW” rate for a course is the percentage of students who receive a D, receive an F, or withdraw. We expect our courses to have academic rigor, and certain courses may have higher-than-average DFW rates because of the challenging nature of the material. This table shows, large GE courses, which tend to enroll between thirty-five to 50 students tend to have higher DFW rates than courses with fewer students.

DFW Rates						
<i>Actuals/goals in percentages</i>	VSU Actual			VSU Goal		
Year of Fall Term	2019	2020	2021	3-year	6-year	10-year
Less than 25 students	17.9	18.2	17.9	6-7	5-6	3-4
Less than 40 students	21.2	21.3	21.0	7-8	6-7	5-6
40-50 students	27.2	25.7	24.6	10-13	9-12	8-11

It has been found that patterns of high DFW rates can also indicate opportunities for improvement. For example, if a particular course in a program seems to overwhelm students, it could be worthwhile to consider how it is taught.

Instructors have been encouraged to calculate their DFW rates from their grade rosters; from there, it is likely most useful to compare the results with rates from other sections that have been taught, other sections or courses in your program, and national standards (where available). VSU DFW rates have not changed significantly in recent years, and to decrease the DFW rates to meet projected goals. Upon review of this data, it has been greatly recognized that we must take several steps. Where we see high rates, some options include:

- Pointing struggling students to campus resources such as supplemental instruction and peer tutoring.
- Offering flexible office hours to meet individual students.
- Evaluating and changing course design.
- Developing learning materials and spaces that are accessible to all students.
- Adopting Open Educational Resources (OER).
- Using early alerts and intervention tools to determine action planning.
- Determine maximum appropriate D-W-F percentage for undergraduate courses
- Monitor and investigate where appropriate
- Prerequisites-Reviewing the completion of GE prerequisites at the correct program level
- Placement in curriculum model

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- Instructional methodology utilized in GE courses-pedagogy
- Supplemental instruction and remediation strategies
- Course content and structure of modules
- Instructor-ability to connect with students/making content connect