

## GENERAL EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS: GOALS AND MEANS OF ASSESSMENT

### **General Education “Standards”**

Faculty teaching general education courses will design their own course-specific methods for assessing how their courses meet the goals established within the guidelines of the general education curriculum. Each time they teach a general education course, faculty will document assessment procedures and results for at least one goal through the General Education Assessment Matrix. Over time, it is assumed that individual faculty will assess all goals for each course.

1. To develop individual assessment measures, faculty are encouraged to look to current practice and determine methods already in place, however informally. These might include (but are not limited to) pre-tests and post-tests, evaluation of student portfolios, student self evaluations, and documented classroom conversations at the beginning and end of term.
2. Assessment of general education requirements attached to courses is considered a responsibility akin to assessing student performance in those courses and submitting grades ‘on time’ to the Office of Student Records at the conclusion of each semester. As such, the submission of assessments for courses carrying general education requirements must be completed each semester within two weeks of the deadline for submitting final grades.
3. While our individual course assessments should guide future practices in better achieving stated goals, the assessments that are submitted through the General Education Assessment Matrix will be used in the institutional assessment of each requirement that is performed by the working groups for the respective General Education Requirements.
4. Assessments submitted through this mechanism will not be employed in faculty evaluation unless the faculty member chooses to include it as part of the documentation submitted to his/her departmental evaluation committee.

## **Expressive Arts (A)**

Artistic creation is a central and enduring activity in all cultures. The arts attest to the fundamental human need for self-expression and for the transformation of human experience into lasting symbolic form. Furthermore, the great diversity of art forms across cultures is evidence of the degree to which human experience, while shared, is also culturally determined. Expressive arts classes provide the student with an appreciation for aesthetic experience by teaching the skills necessary for individual aesthetic expression or by focusing on acquiring a critical vocabulary with which to articulate aesthetic experience. The expressive arts thus encompass both primary aspects of artistic creation: its practice and its scholarly study. Upon completion of this requirement, students will be able to:

- ◆ **GOAL 1:** Demonstrate an understanding of the creative process, including the technique, processes, and concepts of artistic creation, whether from hands-on experience or from the study of the art's history, theory, and/or cultural context.
  - **ASSESSMENT:** In an essay, the student will take the vocabulary from class and apply it to an outside experience in a critical manner.  
*Or*  
The student will demonstrate practical acquisition of the skills necessary to the understanding of the creative process.

## **Knowledge of Other Cultures (C)**

Humans have adapted to a wide range of habitats and developed a variety of ways of interpreting and understanding the world. The diversity of these interpretations is part of what defines our species. By analyzing a nonwestern culture, students will better understand what is common to human nature, how societies differ from each other and how our lives are shaped by our cultural beliefs. They will also understand that culture is not an arbitrary construct, but rather consists of systems of beliefs and institutions that typically serve some purpose. Nonwestern cultures are those that are not European derived, or that may be European derived but include a substantial cultural component from African, Native American, Asian, Australian Aboriginal or Pacific Island sources. Upon completion of this requirement, students will be able to:

- ◆ **GOAL 1:** Demonstrate an understanding of a point of view characterizing a nonwestern culture including awareness of basic beliefs that are not typical of most western cultures.
  - **ASSESSMENT:** The student will write an essay in which the basic beliefs typical of a non-western culture are identified and described. Basic beliefs are those whose effects are widespread within a given culture.
  
- ◆ **GOAL 2:** Explain how a given institution or symbol system in a nonwestern culture enhances the viability of that culture or, alternately, serves the purposes of some social group or category within that culture.
  - **ASSESSMENT:** The student will write an essay explaining how a given nonwestern institution or symbol system helps a society adapt to its physical or social environment, or, alternately, serves the interests of a group or category within that culture.

### **Knowledge of Western Culture (H):**

The ideas, arts and institutions that define Western society and culture have emerged from a rich historical process. In order to understand, appreciate, and critically evaluate any aspect of this culture, one must have an understanding of the context from which it arose. By studying the Western heritage in its historical development, students will be encouraged to see the historical dimensions of the issues they face as engaged citizens today. Upon completion of this requirement, students will be able to:

- ◆ **GOAL 1:** Identify and analyze, from a historical perspective, a defining aspect of Western culture.
  - ◆ **GOAL 2:** Critically analyze and evaluate historical documents and primary sources.
  - ◆ **GOAL 3:** Understand and evaluate a narrative of an historical event, artifact or text – cognizant that no such narrative is definitive or final.
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- **ASSESSMENT (GOALS 1 AND 2):** Take an event, artifact, or text and discuss its significance in the development of the West framed within a certain time period and a particular place.
  
  - **ASSESSMENT (GOALS 1 AND 3):** Take at least one interpretation of an historical event, artifact, or text. Evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of this interpretation.

## **Literature (L)**

The L requirement seeks to develop lifelong readers, sensitive to the richness of literary texts and to the pleasure of exploring that richness. In support of this goal, the L requirement develops students' ability to discover and articulate the ways in which literature imaginatively reflects the human condition. Upon completion of this requirement, students will be able to:

- ◆ **GOAL 1:** Write valid critical essays on literary texts.
  - **ASSESSMENT:** Essays in papers or in exams, judged by the professor to demonstrate college-level understanding of literary works. Analytical approaches may vary by discipline, course, and professor.

## Scientific Perspective (P)

Humans live in and are part of the natural world. Our survival and success depends on our ability to understand, draw sustenance from, and sustain this world. Together, these courses focus on understanding the nature of science: its discovery process, the scientific method, and the historical sequence leading to major discoveries. Where possible, these courses discuss the social context of the sciences and give examples of the interplay between science and society. A laboratory experience is required. Upon completion of this requirement, students will be able to:

- ◆ **GOAL 1:** Demonstrate knowledge of scientific principles, and paradigms or models at the appropriate level of analysis;
  - **ASSESSMENT:** In tests or essays students will state and apply scientific principles, and paradigms or models to a specific case(s).
  
- ◆ **GOAL 2:** Evaluate hypotheses using empirical evidence.
  - **ASSESSMENT:** In tests or essays students will compare and contrast the level of support for competing hypotheses based on empirical evidence.
  
- ◆ **GOAL 3:** Find analyze and evaluate scientific material, which may include quantitative and qualitative data, to make an informed decision.
  - **Assessment:** In a paper, extended essay or laboratory report(s), students will apply fundamental principles introduced in the course to evaluate the merits of arguments presented in information provided with popular scientific literature or other sources.

Upon completion of the laboratory requirement (N), students will be able to:

- ◆ **GOAL 4:** Formulate a hypothesis, identify the dependent and independent variables, describe the controls used, find relationships between variables, and formulate an explanation of the results obtained from a laboratory or field investigation or from a description of a generic experiment. Discuss the sources of error involved in the acquisition of experimental data by various methods.
  - **ASSESSMENT:** Over the semester, students will submit a clearly written report(s) that formulates an hypothesis, identifies the dependent and independent variables and finds the relationship between them, describes the controls used, and formulates of an explanation of the results obtained from a laboratory investigation or from a description of an experiment.

## **Quantitative Reasoning (Q)**

Quantitative methods have become increasingly important in the natural and social sciences, business, government, and in many other activities that directly affect our lives. Furthermore, with the advent of fast computers with huge storage capabilities, it has become possible to collect, process, and disseminate large amounts of data. Playing an active role in the decision-making that shapes our society requires us to be able to interpret, analyze, and draw sound conclusions from the standard representations of data. Upon completion of this requirement, students will be able to:

- ◆ **GOAL 1:** Organize data in graphs, tables, and charts so that the essential characteristics of these data become apparent.
- ◆ **GOAL 2:** Critically analyze and interpret data in various standard representations.
- ◆ **GOAL 3:** Draw conclusions about a population from a random sample, making appropriate statements pertaining to the statistical significance of those conclusions.
- ◆ **GOAL 4:**
  - Make basic statistical calculations with small data sets, by hand or with a non-statistical calculator.
  - Use appropriate technology to perform statistical analysis on larger data sets.

## **Oral Communication (T)**

Oral Communication is the process of sending and receiving verbal and nonverbal messages to create shared meaning. Students graduating from Rollins College will be able to use oral communication skills to shape public dialogue by offering perspectives, sharing facts, raising questions, and engaging others in discussion. To achieve this goal, students will be able to organize ideas and concepts persuasively, tailor messages to a particular audience, adapt to listener feedback, and—employing appropriate technology—make effective oral presentations.



## **Written Communication (W)**

The communication of ideas, information, poetry, stories, intent, and even culture itself has been dependent on the ability of humans effectively to store facts and convert thoughts to written language. The ability to communicate ideas and information in writing is at the core of a liberal arts education and is essential for active citizenship. In covering both academic and (to a lesser degree) familiar writing, the W course focuses on understanding rhetorical strategies. Students will read the texts of others and learn to shape their own meanings by writing and editing a variety of forms.

**Goal:** Upon completion of this requirement, students will be able to write essays developing complex ideas on academic subjects, characterized by unity, order, coherence, completeness, clarity, and mechanical correctness.

**Assessment:** Students' written work (at the discretion of the professor, final essays, a final portfolio, or an average of all papers) will be graded by the instructor for unity, order, coherence, completeness, clarity, and mechanical correctness.

**Standard:** Individual faculty will design course-specific methods for assessing how a particular section meets the goal established in the guidelines of the general education curriculum. Each time they teach the W, faculty will document assessment procedures and results for the goal through the General Education Assessment Matrix.