University of Missouri-Kansas City General Education Assessment Plan

General Education Oversight Committee

Fall 2012

Introduction

The General Education Program at UMKC is designed to provide students with an opportunity to enhance their capacity for intellectual inquiry and discovery, critical reasoning, and effective communication. These abilities are essential to assisting all students to become lifelong learners and providing them with the opportunity to be successful in their chosen fields.

The goals of General Education revision at UMKC are fourfold: 1) to increase student engagement, thereby increasing student retention and persistence; 2) to provide an opportunity to define the student learning outcomes for general education and the mechanisms to assess the achievement of the outcomes so that continuous improvements can be made; 3) to facilitate transfer from other higher education institutions and between academic units within UMKC; and 4) to ensure alignment with state and national guidelines for general education.

The current timeline is to have the General Education courses designed and approved during the 2012-2013 academic year, and for the revised General Education model to begin in fall 2013.

Learning Outcomes

The following eight Student Learning Outcomes provide the foundation for this program and the fulfillment of the University mission. Upon completion of the program of General Education, students will show evidence of learning in the following areas (which are outlined in full detail in Appendix A):

- Communication skills
- Technology and information literacy
- Scientific reasoning and quantitative analysis
- Arts and humanities
- Interdisciplinary and innovative thinking
- Culture and diversity
- Human values and ethical reasoning
- Civic and community engagement

In efforts to assess General Education outcomes, many institutions across the country have differentiated the level of student performance on their learning outcomes after two years and after four years. This differentiation has also been recommended by the Higher Learning Commission. The level of proficiency after two years typically reflects the lower levels of Bloom's Taxonomy, such as Knowledge, Comprehension, and Application. The level of proficiency after four years often includes aspects of Application, Analysis, Synthesis, and Evaluation. Following this approach, we have delineated the eight General Education outcomes according to 2-year and 4-year levels of proficiency, and correlated this to Bloom's Taxonomy (see Appendix B).

<u>Measurements</u>

Assessment of General Education at UMKC focuses on these eight learning outcomes and will consist of course-embedded assessments, standardized instruments, and student surveys/reflections. In addition to having a combination of direct and indirect assessments, we will also want to use both formative and summative assessments. General education assessment will be coordinated by the University Assessment Committee and the Assistant Vice Provost for Assessment, but will be conducted primarily by faculty who are teaching General Education courses. The approaches taken will build upon pilot studies of General Education that were facilitated by the General Education Oversight Committee (GEOC) in spring 2012 in the following classes: English 225, Communication Studies 110, and Mathematics 110.

Direct Assessments

The emphasis of General Education assessment at UMKC centers on course-embedded assessments in General Education courses. Such assessments are evaluations of signature assignments, such as final papers from discourse classes, or projects from capstone courses. These assessments often involve rubrics that evaluate students' performance on final papers, or final exams in which test items are linked to the learning outcomes.

The signature assignments can be evaluated by using or adapting AAC&U's VALUE rubrics (see www.aacu.org/value/rubrics/). The rubrics address most of UMKC's learning outcomes, as outlined below (the UMKC learning outcomes are listed in parentheses):

AAC&U Value Rubrics

Intellectual and Practical Skills

- Inquiry and analysis (Scientific Reasoning and Quantitative Analysis)
- Critical thinking
- Creative thinking
- Written communication (Communication Skills)
- Oral communication (Communication Skills)
- Reading
- Quantitative literacy (Scientific Reasoning and Quantitative Analysis)
- Information literacy (Technology and Information Literacy)
- Teamwork
- Problem solving

Personal and Social Responsibility

- Civic knowledge and engagement—local and global (Civic and Community Engagement)
- Intercultural knowledge and competence (Culture and Diversity)
- Ethical reasoning (Human Values and Ethical Reasoning)
- Foundations and skills for lifelong learning

Integrative and Applied Learning

- Integrative and applied learning (Interdisciplinary and Applied Learning)

In addition to course-embedded assessments, several standardized instruments are being used to gauge our students' proficiency on the General Education learning outcomes. The ETS-Proficiency Profile is given to all students (after they have completed 70 credit hours) to assess their skills in critical thinking, reading, writing, and mathematics. The test also produces context-based sub-scores in humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences. UMKC's faculty will use the results of these exams to plan for and make improvements to our general education curriculum, as well as program-specific curricula for undergraduate majors.

Standardized major field tests are also conducted for the following disciplines at UMKC: business, biology, chemistry, computer science, mathematics, physics, political science, and psychology. Although these tests focus heavily on disciplinary knowledge, the test scores can also be used to assess some of the General Education learning outcomes for students after they spend four years at UMKC.

Indirect Assessments

UMKC's course-embedded assessments and standardized instruments are coupled with a number of indirect assessments. Each year the Office of Institutional Research and Planning conducts a survey of graduating seniors regarding their experiences at UMKC. A portion of the survey solicits students' perceptions of their general learning, and these questions are based on the General Education learning outcomes.

We recommend that indirect assessments could also include other surveys of students' perceptions, as well as letters students write to themselves that outline where they see themselves, revisited and revised at mid-career and then completed with a final revisit/revision at the culmination of the degree program (possibly as part of a capstone requirement).

Course Approval Form

Assessment will be a major aspect determining which courses are accepted for the revised General Education curriculum. To facilitate this process, the GEOC Assessment Sub-Committee developed a General Education Course Approval Form for Anchor Courses and Platform Courses (see Appendices C & D) that mirrors many aspects of the regular course approval form, but requires faculty to specify the General Education learning outcome that will be addressed in the course, as well as how they will be assessed. In the majority of courses, only one General Education learning outcome will be assessed. The form also requires faculty to specify the achievement targets for the learning outcomes, so that a standard for evaluating students'

performance is clearly established. This consists of identifying the expected level of performance for students, as well as the percentage of students expected to perform at this level.

Curriculum Mapping

As courses are approved during the 2012-2013 academic year, a curriculum map (similar to that shown in Appendix D) will be built that outlines the courses in relation to the learning outcomes. We will work to ensure that all learning outcomes are being assessed, and that any learning outcomes needing more emphasis can be supported by additional courses.

Program Review

The General Education Implementation Committee will also develop policies and procedures for reviewing courses in the General Education program. The current plan is to review courses on a three-year, rotating basis. Courses will be reviewed to determine whether the learning outcomes are being assessed, whether students' performance is meeting expectations, and whether faculty are using assessment results to make improvements in their pedagogy and curriculum.

Reporting

Each year, instructors who are teaching a General Education course will submit the details of their assessment plan (i.e., the learning outcomes, measurements, achievement targets, findings, and action plans for their course) in a report to the Assistant Vice Provost for Assessment. The University Assessment Committee and the General Education Curriculum Committee will also assist in reviewing these plans. Assessment findings are not required for each semester, but should be collected at least once a year.

After summarizing the learning outcomes, measurements, achievement targets, findings, and action plans for General Education across campus, the Assistant Vice Provost for Assessment will report the assessment results for each of the eight General Education learning outcomes through WEAVE Online, the online assessment database used by UMKC (see https://app.weaveonline.com/umkc/login.aspx). Continued efforts will also be needed to ensure that assessment data collection is coordinated with our reporting responsibilities to the state, MDHE/CBHE, the UM System, as well as federal and national requirements (e.g., the Voluntary System of Accountability).

Appendix A: UMKC Undergraduate General Education Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the program of general education, students will show evidence of learning in the following areas:

Communication Skills

Students will develop effective written, oral, and visual/spatial communication competencies with the ability to communicate with a variety of audiences. They will develop their capacity to interpret information presented in a variety of formats. They will be able to evaluate the context of their message and use proper form and style to engage audiences using a variety of media. They will demonstrate their critical engagement with audiences through reading, listening, reflecting, and responding.

Technology and Information Literacy

Students will demonstrate effective use of research resources and can incorporate the information obtained into their academic and creative endeavors. They will demonstrate their ability to locate, evaluate, organize and use research material from a broad range of sources. Students will be able to format and document source material in properly constructed papers, presentations, and a variety of visual formats.

Scientific Reasoning and Quantitative Analysis

Students will apply principles and methods of science, math, statistics, and logic to solve problems and draw logical inferences. They will develop a level of quantitative literacy that enables them to comprehend and evaluate information in a broad range of contexts. Students will understand methods and principles of scientific discovery and their application to all areas of learning including the natural and social sciences.

Arts and Humanities

Students will develop an understanding of the human condition by exploring the variety of creative works and methods in the humanities as well as the visual and performing arts. They will be able to explain the historical, cultural and social contexts of the humanities and fine arts. Students will demonstrate an understanding of the connections between the humanities and other areas of intellectual inquiry.

Interdisciplinary and Innovative Thinking

Students will demonstrate the ability to contextualize information and use the proper methods and theories as modes of understanding. Focusing on specific problems and issues, students will demonstrate the ability to consider new modes of analysis drawn from a range of fields. Students will be able to see and understand how thinking beyond disciplinary boundaries leads to innovation in all fields.

Culture and Diversity

> Students will draw on a variety of disciplines to develop an understanding of the complexities of human cultures, past and present, and come to an informed sense of self and others. Students will demonstrate an awareness of a global culture that may include economic, environmental, political and social issues facing all cultures. They will develop an understanding of the factors defining cultural identities.

Human Values and Ethical Reasoning

> Students will understand principles of value and civic duty in a wide range of settings, and will demonstrate an understanding of personal values and the values of others. Students will also be able to identify ethical problems utilizing their understanding of ethical theory and moral reasoning.

Civic and Community Engagement

> Students will be able to identify the problems, challenges, and opportunities of an urban university. Students will also understand their relationship to both a local and global community and the social, political, and cultural issues therein. They will develop an appreciation for the meaning and global impact of urbanization. They will have an understanding of the U.S. and Missouri Constitutions and their impact on issues facing these various communities. They will engage with the UMKC community of learners.

Appendix B: UMKC General Education
Student Learning Outcomes According to Bloom's Taxonomy

In the outline below, the language from the General Education Learning Outcomes approved by the faculty in spring 2011 has been divided according to Bloom's Taxonomy. The level of proficiency after two years typically reflects the lower levels of Bloom's Taxonomy, such as Knowledge, Comprehension, and Application. The level of proficiency after four years often includes aspects of Application, Analysis, Synthesis, and Evaluation.

2-Year

Communication Skills

- Students will develop effective written, oral, and visual/spatial communication competencies with the ability to communicate with a variety of audiences.
- They will develop their capacity to interpret information presented in a variety of formats.

Technology and Information Literacy

- They will demonstrate their ability to locate, evaluate, organize and use research material from a broad range of sources.
- Students will be able to format and document source material in properly constructed papers, presentations, and a variety of visual formats.

Scientific Reasoning and Quantitative Analysis

- Students will understand methods and principles of scientific discovery and their application to all areas of learning including the natural and social sciences.

Arts and Humanities

- Students will develop an understanding of the human condition by exploring the variety of creative works and methods in the humanities as well as the visual and performing arts.
- They will be able to explain the historical, cultural and social contexts of the humanities and fine arts.

Interdisciplinary and Innovative Thinking

- Students will be able to see and understand how thinking beyond disciplinary boundaries leads to innovation in all fields.

Culture and Diversity

- They will develop an understanding of the factors defining cultural identities.
- Students will demonstrate an awareness of a global culture that may include economic, environmental, political and social issues facing all cultures.

Humans Values and Ethical Reasoning

- Students will understand principles of value and civic duty in a wide range of settings, and will demonstrate an understanding of personal values and the values of others.
- Students will also be able to identify ethical problems utilizing their understanding of ethical theory and moral reasoning.

Civic and Community Engagement

- They will engage with the UMKC community of learners.
- Students will be able to identify the problems, challenges, and opportunities of an urban university.
- They will develop an appreciation for the meaning and global impact of urbanization.
- They will have an understanding of the U.S. and Missouri Constitutions and their impact on issues facing these various communities.

4-Year

Communication Skills

- They will be able to evaluate the context of their message and use proper form and style to engage audiences using a variety of media.
- They will demonstrate their critical engagement with audiences through reading, listening, reflecting, and responding.

Technology and Information Literacy

- Students will demonstrate effective use of research resources and can incorporate the information obtained into their academic and creative endeavors.

Scientific Reasoning and Quantitative Analysis

- Students will apply principles and methods of science, math, statistics, and logic to solve problems and draw logical inferences.
- They will develop a level of quantitative literacy that enables them to comprehend and evaluate information in a broad range of contexts.

Arts and Humanities

- Students will demonstrate an understanding of the connections between the humanities and other areas of intellectual inquiry.

Interdisciplinary and Innovative Thinking

- Focusing on specific problems and issues, students will demonstrate the ability to consider new modes of analysis drawn from a range of fields.
- Students will demonstrate the ability to contextualize information and use the proper methods and theories as modes of understanding.

Culture and Diversity

- Students will draw on a variety of disciplines to develop an understanding of the complexities of human cultures, past and present, and come to an informed sense of self and others.

Civic and Community Engagement

- Students will also understand their relationship to both a local and global community and the social, political, and cultural issues therein.

Appendix C: General Education Course Approval Form for Anchor Courses

Proposed Course Title:

Course Number:

1st term to be offered: ___ FALL   ___ SPRING   ___ SUMMER

Frequency of offering course: (Check all that apply)

___ Every FALL   ___ Every other FALL   ___ Every SPRING   ___ Every other SPRING
___ Every SUMMER   ___ Every other SUMMER   _____Other (please detail)

Credit hours: Instructor(s):

Estimated Course Size:

Prerequisites:

Catalogue Description:

Please indicate which type of General Education Anchor course this will be:

- ☐ Anchor Course in Reasoning and Values (tied to Discourse I)
- ☐ Anchor Course in Culture and Diversity (tied to Discourse II)
- ☐ Anchor Course in Civic and Community Engagement (tied to Discourse III)

Which of the General Education learning outcomes does this course address? A description of these learning outcomes can be found at http://www.umkc.edu/provost/academic-assessment/general-education.asp

- ☐ Scientific Reasoning and Quantitative Analysis
- ☐ Culture and Diversity
- ☐ Human Values and Ethical Reasoning
- ☐ Civic and Community Engagement

How will the learning outcomes be <u>addressed</u> (i.e., specify how the course in general meets or is related to the learning outcomes listed above)?

Will the course include any of the following high-impact experiences (check all that apply):

☐ Service Learning (Service learning is a teaching method that combines community service with academic instruction as it focuses on critical, reflective thinking and civic responsibility).

☐ Undergraduate Research (Undergraduate research involves an undergraduate researcher who has as a mentoring relationship with a professor, rather than a student-teacher relationship. The undergraduate researcher also uses research methods that are widely accepted in his/her discipline; makes a contribution—however modest—to ongoing scholarly conversations; and disseminates his/her work to audiences beyond the classroom).

☐ Learning Communities (A learning community provides a cohort experience designed to build cohesive community among students, promote student and faculty engagement, and provide continuity of the intellectual learning experience outside of the classroom).

☐ Study Abroad (Study abroad consists of educational activities completed outside of the United States—these activities can include classroom study, research, internships or externships, and service learning).

☐ Internship (An internship is an opportunity to integrate career related experience into an undergraduate education by participating in planned, supervised work).

☐ Other: _____

(Answer the following questions in full)

How will the course connect or interact with the Discourse class?

How will this course be interdisciplinary in nature? *(Recall that the course must have at least two instructors from different departments/programs.)*

How will instructors interact in this course (what percentage of class time will be shared and how) and how will team-teaching be integrated into this course?

How will the learning outcomes be <u>assessed</u> (i.e., describe the means and frequency of assessment such as using a rubric for essays, quizzes, tests, journals, group projects, class discussion, portfolios, etc.)? The expectation is that students will be given early and regular feedback in the course. Another expectation is that the faculty member(s) submitting the course and anyone who teaches the course will be responsible for coordinating and executing the approved assessment plan.

What is the achievement target for the students' learning outcomes (i.e., what is the expected level of performance for students, and what percentage of students is expected to perform at this level)?

REQUIRED SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION (Attach all of the following to the Course Request Form):

a. An enlarged description of the course, containing a course outline and syllabus.
b. Does the course require additional allocation of funds, and if not, how will it be carried within the present budget and teaching load of the department or school?
c. Information related to course duplication: Are similar courses taught in other divisions of UMKC? If so, what is the rationale for adding this separate but similar course? To what extent has the proposed course been discussed with the instructors, chair(s), and deans of the academic units offering the similar course(s)?

APPROVALS: (Signatures below indicate approval of the proposed course)

1. Department Chair/Division Head _____ Date: _____

2. Academic Unit Curriculum Committee Chair:
_____ Date: _____

3. Academic Unit Dean / Director: (Signature certifies that the requested course does not substantially duplicate any other course presently offered by this Academic Unit, and that adequate resources are available to support this new offering at the graduate level.)

Dean/Director's Signature: _____ Date: _____

4. Faculty Senate Gen. Ed. Implementation Team: Signature certifies that the FS/Gen. Ed. Implementation Team has reviewed this request and found that it meets the standards for undergraduate offerings and does not substantially duplicate existing course offerings in other academic units.

**FS/Gen. Ed. Implementation Team Chair's Signature: _____
Date: _____**

5. Official Administrative Approval:
Vice Provost Academic Programs: _____ Date: _____

Date approved course request transmitted to RECORDS OFFICE: _____

Appendix D: General Education Course Approval Form for Platform Courses

Proposed Course Title:

Course Number:

1st term to be offered: ___ FALL   ___ SPRING   ___ SUMMER

Frequency of offering course: (Check all that apply)

___ Every FALL   ___ Every other FALL   ___ Every SPRING   ___ Every other SPRING
___ Every SUMMER   ___ Every other SUMMER   ____Other (please detail)

Credit hours: Instructor(s):

Estimated Course Size:

Prerequisites:

Catalogue Description:

Which of the General Education learning outcomes does this course address? A description
of these learning outcomes can be found at http://www.umkc.edu/provost/academic-
assessment/general-education.asp.

- ☐ Arts and Humanities
- ☐ Human Values and Ethical Reasoning
- ☐ Scientific Reasoning and Quantitative Analysis

How will the learning outcomes be <u>addressed</u> (i.e., specify how the course in general meets or
is related to the learning outcomes listed above)?

Will the course include any of the following high-impact experiences (check all that apply):

- ☐ <u>Service Learning</u> (Service learning is a teaching method that combines community
    service with academic instruction as it focuses on critical, reflective thinking and civic
    responsibility).

☐ Undergraduate Research (Undergraduate research involves an undergraduate researcher who has as a mentoring relationship with a professor, rather than a student-teacher relationship. The undergraduate researcher also uses research methods that are widely accepted in his/her discipline; makes a contribution—however modest—to ongoing scholarly conversations; and disseminates his/her work to audiences beyond the classroom).

☐ Learning Communities (A learning community provides a cohort experience designed to build cohesive community among students, promote student and faculty engagement, and provide continuity of the intellectual learning experience outside of the classroom).

☐ Study Abroad (Study abroad consists of educational activities completed outside of the United States—these activities can include classroom study, research, internships or externships, and service learning).

☐ Internship (An internship is an opportunity to integrate career related experience into an undergraduate education by participating in planned, supervised work).

☐ Other: _____

How will the learning outcomes be <u>assessed?</u> (i.e., describe the means and frequency of assessment such as using a rubric for essays, quizzes, tests, journals, group projects, class discussion, portfolios, etc.)? The expectation is that students will be given early and regular feedback in the course. Another expectation is that the faculty member(s) submitting the course and anyone who teaches the course will be responsible for coordinating and executing the approved assessment plan.

What is the achievement target for the students' learning outcomes? (i.e., what is the expected level of performance for students, and what percentage of students is expected to perform at this level)?

Are any high-impact learning practices in place for this course? (e.g., lab course, experience-based, etc.)

REQUIRED SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION (Attach all of the following to the Course Request Form):

a. An enlarged description of the course, containing a course outline and syllabus.
b. Does the course require additional allocation of funds, and if not, how will it be carried within the present budget and teaching load of the department or school?
c. Information related to course duplication: Are similar courses taught in other divisions of UMKC? If so, what is the rationale for adding this separate but similar course? To what extent

has the proposed course been discussed with the instructors, chair(s), and deans of the academic units offering the similar course(s)?

APPROVALS: (Signatures below indicate approval of the proposed course)

1. Department Chair/Division Head _____ **Date:** _____

2. Academic Unit Curriculum Committee Chair:
_____ **Date:** _____

3. Academic Unit Dean / Director: (Signature certifies that the requested course does not substantially duplicate any other course presently offered by this Academic Unit, and that adequate resources are available to support this new offering at the graduate level.)

Dean/Director's Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

4. Faculty Senate Gen. Ed. Implementation Team: Signature certifies that the FS/Gen. Ed. Implementation Team has reviewed this request and found that it meets the standards for undergraduate offerings and does not substantially duplicate existing course offerings in other academic units.

FS/Gen. Ed. Implementation Team Chair's Signature: _____
Date: _____

5. Official Administrative Approval:
Vice Provost Academic Programs: _____ **Date:** _____

Date approved course request transmitted to RECORDS OFFICE: _____

Appendix E: UMKC General Education Model and Student Learning Outcomes

UMKC General Education Student Learning Outcomes	GEOC Model Proposed Courses										Assessment
	Level I Courses		Level II Courses — Prerequisite: Discourse I		Platform Courses — Prerequisite: Discourse I or II. Level determined by learning outcomes of the course.				Level III Courses — Prerequisite: Discourse II; Upper-level course required by all transfer students		
	Anchor I (3)	Discourse I (3)	Anchor II (3)	Discourse II (3)	Platform I (3): Arts and Humanities	Platform II (3): Reasoning and Analysis	Platform III (3): Values and Ethics	Platform IV-Elective (3)	Anchor III (3)	Discourse III (3) — Co-Requisites	
Communication Skills		X		X						X	
Technology & Information Literacy				X						X	
Interdisciplinary & Innovative Thinking										X	
Human Values & Ethical Reasoning	(X)						X	(X)			
Culture & Diversity			X								
Civic & Community Engagement									X		
Scientific Reasoning & Quantitative Analysis	(X)					X		(X)			
Arts & Humanities					X			(X)			

* The X's listed in parentheses indicate those courses that can cover differing learning outcomes, depending on the course content.