



**College Outcomes Committee
2012-2013 General Education Learning Outcomes (GELOs) Review and Evaluation Report**

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Submitted to:

- Pierce College Academic Senate
- Department Council
- Student Services VP
- Administrative Services VP

Recommendations to Pierce College for Future Outcomes Reporting:

- ❖ **Faculty should refer to the specific GELO(s) to which a course is mapped (using provided glossary, reporting instructions, and relevant language from the GELO(s))**
- ❖ **If, during the assessment process, you find that a course is not properly mapped to a GELO, let us know.**
- ❖ **Write a report that anyone from another discipline could understand — they can learn something about what the course is about, how it's going, and how it fits into the GE program. Someone who knows nothing about your course and its outcomes should have a general (layperson's) understanding of your course and its SLOs from reading the report.**
- ❖ **Reference the SLOs language, along with a summary of the assessment data in the Course Level Summary: SLO Outcomes & Analysis.**
- ❖ **Discuss this report, along with your authentic assessment report results, at your next department meeting.**

Background (see also the [2013 Outcomes Report](#) and the Authentic Assessment Report 2013, to be published on the [College Outcomes Committee](#) site by early November, 2013):

In the summer of 2011, members of the Outcomes Team, along with Vice President of Academic Affairs, Anna Davies, developed six (6) General Education Learning Outcomes (GELOs). These outcomes were



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intended to unite the college's General Education Program around core knowledge, skills, and intellectual dispositions.

Once developed, a preliminary mapping of GE courses to one or more GELOs was completed, and department chairs were asked to validate or revise the results. Meanwhile, the Outcomes Team, Web Master, student worker, and college researcher developed and executed a plan to create a central database and repository for SLOs, PLOs, and GELOs, and their reports.

In January 2012, and June 2012, the Outcomes Team worked with GELO review committees (ad hoc) to review course reports for each GELO, and, on the basis of these reports, evaluate how well the GELOs were being achieved. These committees were constituted by faculty members from across the disciplines. (Reports from these first evaluations can be found on the college's [SLO database and reporting repository](#).)

The teams understood that campus faculty were still fairly new to using the database and to collaborating on outcomes assessment and reporting, and many had not assessed entire courses (i.e., all SLOs for a given course in a single semester). Consequently, they read through reports and found that it was difficult to evaluate the GE program through GELOs review. In other words, course reports were often not robust enough to determine how they supported the GE program.

As the college prepared for the March 2013 ACCJC site visit, the Outcomes Team proposed inaugurating a College Outcomes Committee, which would serve as a subcommittee of the Educational Planning Committee (EPC). The EPC is itself a standing committee of the Academic Senate. A charter was written, discussed, and ultimately approved in October, 2012.¹

The College Outcomes Committee decided to complete the GELO review and evaluation itself for the 2012-2013 academic year, rather than assemble another set of ad hoc committees. The reasoning behind it was to have a more concentrated and unified approach to reviewing course reports, so as to provide the college with a road map for bolstering the course-to-GELO connection, and in so doing, work toward a stronger and more coherent GE program.

Process and Methodology:

Members of the College Outcomes Committee convened on September 3 and 17, and October 1 and 15. The purpose of these meetings, apart from regular committee business, was to plan the GELO review, and then discuss findings and agree on a plan to report the results.

¹ One of the major advances gained by generating a formal committee was the institutionalization of 60 years of supporting educational achievement. "Student Learning Outcomes," a phrase developed sometime in the late 1980s, does not reflect a new concept. Instead, it reflects what educators have always expected their students to pursue: composite conceptual and practical knowledge, skills, and intellectual dispositions. Part of this formalization involved including the Service Area Outcomes work completed in both Student Services and Administrative Services. Integrating these divisions with the existing outcomes work is among the committee's long-term goals.



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Two rubrics were created for the review. (See Appendix 1) One focused on the course summary's connection to the GELO(s) to which a course is currently mapped. The other focused on how readable and useful the summary is.

The group divided the work according to interest and expertise, with one or two committee members assigned to a given GELO according to the type of review planned, and the number of courses and disciplines mapped to each GELO. Each group looked at approximately 50 course report summaries, and each discipline mapped to the GELO reviewed was represented.

Using the rubrics mentioned above, the GELO reviewers evaluated the course report summaries and presented their findings to the committee. The group discussed and affirmed its findings for this report.

Findings:

- As expected, few reports reflected any connection between the SLO summary and the GELO(s) to which they were mapped. Faculty were not instructed to make such a connection, so this lack was predicted.
- Most summaries dealt fairly well with explaining the data, but the summaries did not include data — this was expected because instructions could be clearer.
- Many reports reflected a lack of direct connection between the assessment results and the content of the SLOs.
- Some summaries used GELOs language without making explicit the connection between the assessment results (statistics) and what the result was for (a description of the assessment itself).
- There were some stellar assessment reports for each GELO. Please see Appendix 2 to read the samples.
- Stats for our review: raw numeric data for each rubric across the GELOs: Please see Appendix 3

The College Outcomes Committee believes the faculty at Pierce College have conducted and continue to conduct quality assessments. The faculty are also making progress on sharing their assessment results with their colleagues within their disciplines, so as to improve their courses.

The General Education Program at Pierce College is strong, but more emphasis should be placed on how courses contribute to the GE program. What this means is not only more mindfulness in the process of creating or revising courses that satisfy GE requirements, but also how these courses are or can be compatible with other courses across the disciplines, so as to generate a coherent and meaningful student experience.

Please see the reviews of courses in your department, along with the evaluation rubric. The reviews will be sent under separate cover, in order to provide feedback relevant to your department.

College Outcomes Committee's Next Steps:

- Submit report to relevant constituents



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- Provide review details (i.e., individual course summary reviews and evaluations) to department chairs for distribution
- PAD on November 12, 12:00-2:00 PM (Location TBD)
- Revised Reporting Instructions and Glossary (Monique will distribute)
- Pursuit of authentic assessment across all disciplines (see college adapted and adopted definition)

Respectfully submitted,
The College Outcomes Committee



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Appendix 1 GELO Review Instructions and Rubrics for Sample Course Reports

Each member of the team has been assigned one of six GELO's. Using the *Course to GELO Map*, (provided by Mia Wood)

1. Randomly choose 50 courses that are mapped to your specific GELO.
2. Go to the SLO Database and access the SLO Course Reports. The best way to access the SLO Course Reports is to go directly to this link:
<https://webapps.piercecollege.edu/outcomes/mdslof3.aspx>
3. Review and score each SLO Course Report (*remember, we are not scoring the SLO's or the courses, just the SLO Course Reports*) in two categories:
 - a. **Robustness (1–5)***;
 - b. **Connection of the SLO Course Report to GELO (1–3)***. (*Note: check the connection of the SLO Course Report, NOT the SLO's or the courses.*)
4. There is a section in the report (**Reviewer's Comments**) where you can write your observations and explain your review.

#	ROBUSTNESS	#	CONNECTION TO GELO # _____
1	Course reports are too incomplete to evaluate. Recommend another round of data interpretation from most recent assessment and a new assessment in 2013-2014, with an emphasis on a clear narrative explaining the connection between the course and the relevant GELO(s), and a coherent summary and action plan that any faculty could understand.	1	There is no narrative explaining the connection between the course and the relevant GELO.
2	One of more of the reporting elements is missing, resulting in an incomplete review.	2	There is some narrative explaining the connection between the course and the relevant GELO, but it is unclear.
3	Data are described and explained, but the course summary and action plan sections are underdeveloped. Both should provide ample explanation of results and proposed action plans for lay readers.	3	There is a clear narrative explaining the connection between the course and the relevant GELO.
4	Data are described and explained, and the course summary and action plan sections are adequately developed.		
5	Data are described and explained, and the course summary and action plan sections are adequately developed. In addition, there is clear narrative concerning the connection between the course and the relevant GELO(s).		



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Appendix 2: Sample Course Report Summaries (These are reports that scored 5 and 3, on, respectively, the robustness and GELO connection rubrics.)

GELO 1: Communication. The student will demonstrate proficiency in communication skills, including active listening, textual interpretation and comprehension, and oral and written expression.

Anthropology 161: Student[s] did quite well understanding cultural relativism by analyzing behavior and language. They did adequately well applying anthropological principles in everyday life. However, room for improvement exists for interpreting cultural and linguistic behavior.

Cinema 5: Students were able to create effective pitches, work out synopses and basic treatments; as well, they were able through careful examination of produced films to create more rounded characters with which to infuse their scenes. About 25% of students dropped as they might have perceived the course too demanding or their actual commitment to good product not really what they were after. Those remaining achieved B or A work predominantly, except for some who haphazardly attended lectures and peer-editing feedback sessions. The online Moodle peer-editing assignments in which students had to read and critique each others' scripts based on 7-10 key questions was quite demanding but effective for the last four weeks of class. 14 students attempted out of an active 17 with an average grade of 74%. (6 students achieved 95% or higher and read/critiqued according to criteria all 17 student scripts, both in rough draft and Final Wk. 15 form.) Students overall seemed to appreciate the coursework's logic and its demands as evidenced by the end of term pride with their projects and the numerous recommendation requests for transfer to university programs.

GELO 2: Critical Thinking. The student will demonstrate proficiency in identifying and clarifying issues, problems, questions, and assumptions; analyzing data and relevant information including alternative approaches; differentiating between facts, opinions, and biases; synthesizing and generating solutions and possible outcomes; and using evidence and reasoning to support conclusions.

PD 40: 82.8% to 97.4% of students scored a 2 or better on each SLO assessment question. These scores indicate a very high level of understanding with every learning outcome. It can be reasonably assumed that the PD40 team is successfully covering these topics and that students are utilizing these skills in future semesters. Each one of the SLO assessments required students to demonstrate their proficiency in critical thinking. SLO #1 (Resources) required students to analyze a scenario and recommend approaches that will help ensure academic success. SLO #2 (Learning Styles and Personality Types) required students to assess themselves and synthesize, both, their strengths and weaknesses. SLO #3 (Study Skills) asked students to evaluate various approaches to a problem and generate a positive solution. SLO #4 (Education Plan) and SLO#5 (Transfer Process) called on students to clarify questions and create a solution based on evidence and facts. SLO #6 (Research Sources) required students to analyze relevant information and to use evidence and reasoning to support conclusions.

GELO 3: Research and Information Literacy. The student will demonstrate proficiency in modes of inquiry specific to the discipline of study-and discernment of relevant and appropriate sources of information.



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BIO 110: I am very pleased with the level at which these students are managing very difficult information. The work load involving problem solving in addition to the lab work is rigorous. To do well on their quizzes means they have completed their problem sets during the week. Achieving high scores on the problem solving of genetic problems is a key barometer of whether or not the student understands the concepts. The exam demonstrates retention of information. Performance is absolutely tied to accomplishing the work, studying and attendance in lab and lecture.

GEOG 3: Overall, students performed well on only one out of the four SLOs. Students did well on applying scientific principles, theories and methods to weather/climate conditions. However, students did not do well on the physical processes of weather/climate, applying scientific systems of measurement to describe weather/climate phenomena, and analyzing positive/negative feedback systems within the framework on the course.

GELO 4: Civic Responsibility and Ethical Reasoning in a Diverse Society. The student will demonstrate proficiency in understanding, and engaging with, contemporary notions of the public good in a democratic and diverse society-and the relevant principles, concepts, and arguments that guide ethical decision-making.

Phil 2: The course is taught by five instructors, using diverse assessment tools and teaching methods. It covers introductory concepts, problems, and arguments in moral and political philosophy. A solid majority (69.4%) of the students demonstrated adequate levels of proficiency or better, which may not be surprising given the introductory nature of the course. Assessment results across sections were largely similar, despite the diversity of instructors and their assessment tools. Philosophy is an abstract discipline requiring students to draw on a variety of analytical, knowledge-based, and verbal skills. Assessing such skills using rote formats such as multiple-choice exams is difficult and yields limited information about student comprehension or proficiency. Several instructors expressed the desire to improve students' ability to read challenging material analytically, and to articulate their own reasoning in a logical, critical manner.

GELO 5: Quantitative Analysis and Scientific Reasoning. The student will demonstrate proficiency in the interpretation and description of quantitative data and situations-and relevant graphs, symbols, or mathematical relationships and concepts to solve problems.

CAOT 82: Students met the desired assessment outcomes for Windows, Word, Excel, and PowerPoint. They did not meet the desired level for Access. Students had difficulty in comprehending descriptions of results desired for designing database queries in Access. Broad areas in which students learning could improve include the following: 1. Proofreading and applying writing mechanics in both Word and PowerPoint; 2. Understanding percentages and basic mathematical concepts such as using parentheses for order of operations; 3. Understanding basic business accounting and finance terms for creating formulas in Excel. [Plans] Encourage those CAOT 82 students who are very new to computers to take one of the following classes first: CAOT 100, CAOT 92, or CAOT 2. Most of the daytime CAOT 82 students have some experience with computers. Improve student learning in Access by providing a practice test and/or assignments in which keys are not initially provided. In this way, students will need to correctly interpret the information desired in queries. On a college-wide level, strongly encourage students to



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complete their math and English requirements early in their tenure at Pierce. Math and other general education courses involving logic would also be helpful for designing Access queries. Before business majors take CAOT 82 or other courses that provide the tools for working with business information, they should be encouraged to first take Business 1, Accounting 1, and/or Finance 1. In this way, students would have a better context for completing documents, including spreadsheets.

Physical Science 4: Physical Science 4 is the course that requires no prerequisites. Variety of students, with some science backgrounds or without any science backgrounds takes this course. For this reason, no mathematics is used for this course. This means that the students learn only concepts. There are many students who cannot explain physical and chemical phenomena conceptually even though they know some mathematics (Once in a while some students have some background of calculus). The new method, which is “active and interactive method” was employed here at Pierce College 2007. This computerized method was designed for these students mentioned above. We always get some 70% class average per Chapter test. This implies that the course level is just right! The questions for final examination are very similar to the assessment test. The difference between them is that while the assessment test is a multiple test and the FINAL is essay type. The class average of final is also 74%. [Plans] Because of poor skill in writing the answer the essay type test questions, those students should be encouraged to attend English Writing Lab. Also, since every semester, some students have some difficulties in doing simple arithmetic, they are encouraged to attend Math Lab. Probably these comments mentioned above are required just every semester. Once in a while, I realize a better way of interpreting some experimental results. So I am planning to change the questions on the assessment tests. I am making some effort to improve the student retention. This semester, the average retention is about 80%.

[This course was similarly reported in other semesters from 2011-2013.]

GELO 6: Arts & Cultural Awareness. The student will demonstrate proficiency in the identification, recognition, description, and explanation of his or her interaction with, and understanding of, cultural practices and social structures.

Art 105 [Note: The course report summary was rated 4 and 2]: A high percentage of students (88%) are able to make connections between class content and new artworks, indicating that students are able to embrace and apply the overarching key themes and analytical approaches of the course. However, only about 70% are able to employ art historical concepts in their approach to the specific course material.



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Appendix 3: Statistics on Evaluations (Note: These figures include those courses for which no report existed in the database, since they were nevertheless part of the random [and representative] sample.)

Robustness	GELO 1	GELO 2	GELO 3	GELO 4	GELO 5	GELO 6
1	14	15	19	0	3	9
2	6	23	9	13	12	17
3	10	3	9	16	20	10
4	13	2	9	9	10	13
5	7	2	7	4	10	0

Connection	GELO 1	GELO 2	GELO 3	GELO 4	GELO 5	GELO 6
1	23	18	25	39	35	37
2	8	20	12	5	19	12
3	17	5	12	0	4	0

# of Courses Reviewed	GELO 1	GELO 2	GELO 3	GELO 4	GELO 5	GELO 6
	50	50	50	54	75	50