



ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES IN GENERAL EDUCATION

SUMMARY REPORT

*Use this form to provide a summary report on campus-based assessment
of student learning outcomes in General Education*

Name of Institution: SUNY Canton
{specify name of branch campus, if relevant}

Academic Year: 2014-2015

History of GER 12 Assessment at SUNY Canton:

According to the *2008-2009 Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes in General Education Summary Report for GER 12*, during the 2007-2008 academic year, "the assessment was conducted via a pencil and paper multiple choice survey. Information from SUNY Central lead [sic] the campus to collect a sample which was too small to provide any statistically valid insight into student abilities in these areas." In 2008-2009, Outcome 1 (Students will perform the basic operations of personal computer use) was assessed using an online instrument. SUNY Canton defined "Basic operations of personal computer use" as "(1) basic computer operations and application fundamentals (2) Email communication (3) basic word processing (4) basic spreadsheet operations (5) online course participation and (6) presentation graphics."

Outcomes 2 and 3 (Students will understand and use basic research techniques; and Students will locate, evaluate and synthesize information from a variety of sources) "were measured by a 40 question survey which was administered to students in writing intensive classes in all three schools on the campus. Approximately 370 students completed this assessment."

A gap in information exists between the years 2009 and 2012; however, a document from 2010 provides evidence that the same assessment instruments and processes were utilized during this period (Appendix A).

Then, in March 2014, Professor Paul Bowdre provided the GER 12 Task Force with a summary of all activities performed between 2012 and 2014:

"During the 2012-2013 academic year [SUNY Canton was] presented with the ACRL Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education during several of our meetings and the linkages between the standards, information literacy in general, and information literacy at SUNY Canton had been discussed. On 09/30/2014, the GER 12 Task Force was presented with the information literacy assessment as recommended by the staff of the Southworth Library and provided to the GER 12 Task Force by Michelle Currier and Cori Wilhelm. The assessment was developed by utilizing questions that had been developed by Project SAILS and that aligned with the ACRL Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education. [Michelle Currier] received permission from Project SAILS on 04/25/2013 to use the Project SAILS questions in our

information literacy assessment. The GER 12 Task Force approved the use of the Project SAILS questions as the basis of our information literacy assessment pending the development of an information literacy plan/program on campus and the hiring of a librarian with an expertise in information literacy.

“On 10/28/2013, the GER 12 Task Force was presented with the information technology competencies and the assessment that was developed by the Decisions Systems Department. During our meeting on that date, all members of the task force present for the meeting had the opportunity to discuss the assessment. At the conclusion of the meeting the information management assessment was approved by the task force members as the tool that should be used to assess information management. Additionally, the task force members also recommended that both the information literacy and the information technology assessments be delivered through the use of ANGEL.

“[Professor Bowdre] notified all members of the GER 12 Task Force in late 2013 that they were given access to a GER 12 ANGEL shell where the samples of the assessment were available to view and test drive. The information literacy sample assessment (under the Course Documents) includes all 50 assessment questions in question banks [and] links to the information literacy standards. The information technology assessment has many of the 211 questions that were developed included in the question banks by information management competencies and sub-competencies.

“During our meetings, we recommended to Provost Spellacy and Sarah Todd that the assessments be given to the following populations so that GER 12 assessment could resume:

“a. Information Literacy: Select a sample of students in or who have completed ENGL 101 and 102 since both classes have information literacy course objective(s) and assess their information literacy utilizing the Project SAILS questions.

“b. Information Technology: Select a sample of freshman/sophomore students and have them complete the information technology assessment as presented by Eric and members of the Decision Support Department. There were discussions that were future oriented that the information technology assessment may be given to graduating seniors by various departments so that information technology could be assessed over time by segments of the student population.”

Provost Spellacy and the Director of Institutional Research, Sarah Todd, recommended that both Information Literacy and the computer competency be assessed during the spring 2014 semester. Professor Bowdre made the following recommendation:

“I will pull all 200 and 300 writing intensive courses offered this spring. For the 200 level courses, 50% of those courses will take the information literacy component, and 50% will take the computer competency piece. The same will happen for the 300 level courses. This will be treated just like any other GER – it will not be optional, but will be a necessary part of the class for the students to be assessed.”

Program improvements made as a result of the previous assessment of General Education:

No report provided for the 2013-2014 assessment of GER 12; therefore, results are undetermined.

In the course of conducting this cycle of assessment, were there any significant deviations from the plan that was approved by the General Education Assessment Review (GEAR) Group? If so, please comment on why the campus felt that it was necessary to make these changes and how these changes may have affected the reported results, if at all.

In July 2014, Instruction and Assessment Assistant Librarian, Rachel Santose, was notified of her new duties as GER 12 Information Management Representative.

To streamline the GER 12 process for the 2014-2015 academic year, it was recommended that the English 101 and 102 courses be assessed. All students are required to take either English 101 or English 102, and

information literacy is covered explicitly. Rachel Santose and Library Director Michelle Currier met with the English faculty, who approved the implementation.

The assessment instruments for 2013-2014 were utilized for the 2014-2015 assessment, with half of the English 101 and 102 courses receiving the Information Management assessment and the other half receiving the Information Literacy assessment. The assessments were distributed via Angel, and students were not required to take the assessment. English faculty were asked to have their students complete the assessment, and the GER 12 Information Management Representative delivered weekly reminder emails.

Findings are noted for both Fall 2014 and Spring 2015 semesters.

Major findings of this assessment:	Action to be taken in addressing these assessment findings:
<p>a. The assessment instruments need to be revised. There are a number of questions within the Information Management assessment that are too specific for the typical user of a personal computer. Only students studying computer science would be able to answer those questions correctly. This is reflected by low scores on certain difficult questions. Similarly, a few questions from the Information Literacy assessment should be eliminated due to poor wording or confusion.</p> <p>b. The number of student-respondents to the assessment was low. 57 students responded to the Information Management assessment and 97 responded to the Information Literacy assessment. The assessment was not required; however, faculty were encouraged to use class time for their students to complete the assignment, to assign the assessment as extra credit, or to incorporate the assessment into participation grades.</p> <p>c. Students scored low overall. The average question difficulty for the assessment of Information Management was 59.95%, and the average question difficulty for the assessment of Information Literacy was 64.18%. Overall, the percentage of students not meeting the three GER 12 outcomes (37.5%, 23%, and 27.3%) is far higher than the percentage of students who are exceeding standards (6.25%, 8%, and 0%).</p> <p>d. SUNY Canton students have difficulty understanding jargon associated with library research and computer skills. For instance, students scored low on questions that dealt with distinguishing differences between library databases, journals, and articles. Additionally, students scored low when asked to differentiate between a root folder, system file, folder, and user file.</p>	<p>a. The GER 12 Information Management Representative is revising the assessment method and instruments. Revisions will be submitted as a proposal to Academic Assessment Committee at the beginning of fall 2015, and will be implemented accordingly.</p> <p>b. The results of the 2014-2015 assessments will be shared with the Academic Assessment Committee, faculty (especially English 101 and 102 faculty), and the administration. It will also be reviewed by the faculty librarians. It is hoped that the results of the assessments will open a dialogue between faculty, administration, and librarians about ways to improve upon information literacy and information management instruction and curricula infusion.</p> <p>c. The Southworth Library Learning Commons has purchased a series of information literacy modules through Credo, an information skills solutions provider. Faculty may utilize these modules in their courses to improve information literacy skills.</p> <p>d. A discussion should occur that addresses whether or not the GER 12 assessment can be made mandatory.</p>

Chief Academic Officer: _____

Date: _____

Appendix A

GER Competency 12 Information Management

Students will

- Perform the basic operations of personal computer use.
- Understand and use basic research techniques; and
- Locate, evaluate and synthesize information from a variety of sources.

There are two parts to the assessment of this competency. SUNY Canton now requires students to either take CITA 110 or SOET 110 to be considered proficient in the basic operations of computer use. Those who do not take these courses have to complete an online competency exam as a requirement for graduation. The online exam is designed to measure student ability in the following: (1) computer operations and application fundamentals (2) Email communication (3) basic word processing (4) basic spreadsheet operations (5) online course participation and (6) presentation graphics.