

GER Policies & Procedures

Table of Contents:

- I. Background**
- II. How GER Works**
- III. SUNY Canton General Education Requirement Assessment Policies**
 - a. Protocol for Creating a New Course for GER Approval**
 - b. Protocol for Methodology Revision**
 - c. Timeline for GER Assessment**
- IV. GER Coordinator Charge**
- V. GER Subcommittee Responsibilities**

Appendices

Appendix A: Sample quality report annotated with committee feedback

Appendix B: Coordinator's Explanation of Reporting Process

I. Background

The SUNY General Education Requirement (SUNY-GER) enables students to acquire knowledge and skills that are useful and important for all educated persons, regardless of their jobs or professions. (SUNY Board of Trustees Resolution, January 2010)

The SUNY-GER is required for all bachelor's degree candidates. Every four-year SUNY campus has a general education curriculum that reflects the SUNY-GER and is designed to provide a solid foundation for your college education and make transfers within SUNY as smooth and seamless as possible.

II. How GER Works

At SUNY Canton, students enrolled in the Associate of Arts (AA) or Associate of Science (AS) degree must complete seven of the ten Knowledge and Skills Areas of General Education in order to transfer seamlessly to another SUNY college to earn a baccalaureate degree. In order to meet graduation requirements, students enrolled in a SUNY Canton baccalaureate degree program must complete 30 credit hours of general education which must include Mathematics (GER 1) and Basic Communication (GER 10) as well as at least three credits each in at least five of the following academic areas – natural science, social science, American history, Western Civilization, Other World Civilizations, humanities, the arts and foreign languages. (See individual baccalaureate degree requirements for exceptions to this mandate.) All students will fulfill competency

outcomes in Critical Thinking and Information Management, which are infused throughout the curricula.

Knowledge and Skills Areas:

Basic Communication (*required*)
Mathematics (*required*)
American History
Other World Civilizations
Foreign Language
Social Sciences
Humanities
The Arts
Natural Sciences
Western Civilization

Competencies:

Critical Thinking (*required*)
Information Management (*required*)

III. SUNY Canton General Education Requirement Assessment Policies

Faculty and students will periodically be required to engage in assessment activities to ensure that the General Education Requirement (GER) student learning outcomes are being met.

- GER student learning outcomes are assessed on a three-year cycle through the courses designated as meeting that GER.
- Any instructor (full-time or adjunct) teaching any course with a GER designator (online or face-to-face) may be called to participate in GER assessment activities.
- A random sample of GER designated courses are selected by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness during the spring semester preceding the GER assessment year. If a faculty member is teaching two of the same course, they have the option of choosing either section for assessment.

a. Protocol for Creating a New Course for GER Approval:

- For a course to be accepted as a GER course, the GER assessment methodology must be attached to the course proposal as it moves forward to curriculum committee.
- Additionally, indicate which course objective will be used to GER assessment.
- Upon approval, the course objectives must be mapped to the GER the course is approved for in Task Stream

b. Protocol for Methodology Revision:

- Faculty who wish to revise their GER methodology must submit proposed methodology to the GER committee by the fifth week of the spring semester before their fall assessment cycle begins.
- The GER committee will review and provide feedback for revision, and if necessary request a meeting with the GER coordinator. They will provide feedback within six weeks.

- Resubmission of the revised methodology must occur by the last day of the semester prior to the assessment cycle the methodology will be used in.
- If the methodology does not comply with the needs of the campus and SUNY standards, the previous methodology will be employed for the assessment cycle.

c. Timeline for GER Assessment:

- February: Office of Institutional Effectiveness (OIE) notifies GER assessment coordinator of upcoming assessment and calls for methodology revisions (if any)
- March 1: Methodology changes for upcoming assessment cycle must be submitted to GER Assessment Subgroup
- Mid-April: OIE selects courses up for GER review the following fall and notifies faculty
- 1st week of classes (fall): OIE reminds faculty (and notifies new faculty) of GER assessment requirements
- End of 4th week of classes: Faculty must enter their assessment measures of GER course SLOs into Taskstream.
- End of 5th week of classes: Faculty update GER coordinator on progress with measure entry in Taskstream.
- 1 week after final grade submission: Faculty must enter findings to Taskstream measures and submit Data Collection Reports to GER coordinator along with student artifacts.
- Friday before the first week of classes: faculty will meet to discuss GER findings and strategic plan for improving student learning.
- March 1: GER Summary Report and GER Campus Report due to GER Assessment Subcommittee for review and recommendations.
- March 15: GER Assessment Subcommittee presents reports and recommendations to Academic Assessment Committee
- April 1: Academic Assessment Committee presents reports to Deans' Cabinet for inclusion in budget (if applicable.)

IV. GER Coordinator Charge

The GER Coordinator:

1. Reviews all relevant policies, procedures, and timelines associated with GER assessment,
2. Updates the methodology for their assigned GER area or competency, when necessary.
3. Reviews participant measure and finding entry on Taskstream to ensure timely completion of GER report.

4. Compiles the *Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes in General Education Summary Report* in accordance with the GER Timeline (above) for their assigned GER area or competency,
5. Reviews the *SUNY Canton General Education Assessment Review Form: Campus Closing the Loop Report*, which is completed by the GER Assessment Subcommittee, and
6. Implements revisions suggested by GER Assessment Subcommittee and meets with the Subcommittee to discuss any unclear information or revisions.

V. GER Subcommittee Rules & Regulations

GER Subcommittee: Responsibilities

The GER Subcommittee meets during periods of faculty obligation on an as-needed basis to do the following:

1. Review newly-proposed GER methodologies and/or revisions to GER methodologies.
2. Oversee report writing and completion in the areas of GER assessment.
3. Find new GER coordinators in the event of others leaving or finishing their term.
4. Help new coordinators understand their roles and responsibilities in GER assessment.
5. Review completed GER reports each cycle and provide feedback to coordinators as to how they can more effectively complete the process in future cycles.
6. Report their findings to the Academic Assessment Committee.
7. Assist in the compilation and reporting of GER-Related materials for Middle States reports.

The following data must be stored in the Blackboard GER Subcommittee shell online:

- Meeting minutes
- Revised and completed GER reports
- Rubrics for report and methodology evaluation

Subcommittee Composition, Roles, and Terms

For effective operation of the subcommittee, the subcommittee must be minimally composed of:

1 faculty member from each school on campus

1 faculty member at large (if possible)

Titles:

The subcommittee must have a chair and secretary.

Chair responsibilities:

- Coordinate meetings to ensure all roles and responsibilities of the subcommittee are completed according to the cycle timeline
- Present findings to AAC

Secretary responsibilities:

- Take minutes
- House minutes and other necessary documentation in the Blackboard GER

Subcommittee shell online

Term of obligation:

An elected member serves for two years.

Appendices

Appendix A: Sample quality report annotated with committee feedback

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

GER (name and #): The ARTS GER 8 **Academic Year:** Fall 2016

Improvements Made as a Result of Previous Assessment

Recommendations from GER Assessment Subcommittee made in previous assessment report (please copy and paste below):

There were no previous assessment reports that I am aware of in the GER Assessment Subcommittee folder in Blackboard. Previous endeavors had been split between two departments in the two schools and a consolidated report was not generated as a result. This is the first consolidated GER 8 report in several cycles. The improvement will be to start having the assessments and a complete report for all GER8 approved courses filed in the GER Subcommittee folder.

1. What program improvements in curriculum and/or teaching were made as a result of the previous assessment of General Education? If no program improvements were made, please provide a rationale for why recommendations made in previous assessment report were not implemented.

There were no program improvements in curriculum and/or teaching made as a result of previous assessments for GER 8. Recommendations were not made in previous assessment reports due to assessment being a new requirement for GER 8. The GER Assessment Subcommittee has been developing a standard and a procedure for Assessment that will enable the GER coordinators to follow a set procedure for assessing courses within the General Educations Requirements. This procedure includes access to and explanation of the forms and the methodology.

Moving forward, any program improvements can be mapped, linked and assessed using a standard methodology and rubrics and be documented and applied in individual classrooms as needed.

Deviations from Approved Methodology

2. *Were there any significant deviations from the GER assessment plan that was approved by the Academic Assessment Committee? If so, please comment on why these changes were necessary and how these changes may have affected the reported results, if at all.*

Kathleen Mahoney is the new GER 8 coordinator. She spent considerable time meeting with each professor in 2 departments to be sure that they were mapping the GER 8 requirements to the student learning outcomes in Taskstream and using data pulled from Blackboard to complete the data portion of the GER8 rubric. All professors were able to supply student artifacts that Exceeded, Met or Did Not Meet the GER 8 requirements.

Major Findings of this Assessment

3. *Please include the numerical data from last cycle's report and the current cycle's report below. What are the major findings for the assessment of all GER SLOs assessed? Please include a comprehensive narrative or discussion outlining these findings and a complete interpretation of these results in addition to completing the table.*

Previous Year's Result: No previous year's results.

SLO	# Students Assessed	% Exceeding Standards	% Meeting Standards	% Not Meeting Standards
NA				

Current Year's Assessment Results:

SLO	# Students Assessed	% Exceeding Standards	% Meeting Standards	% Not Meeting Standards
Understanding of at least one principle form of artistic expression and the creative process inherent therein.	147	63%	24%	13%
Proficiency in the execution of artistic expression	147	63%	25%	12%

Assessment Results Narrative and Interpretation (i.e., What conclusions can be drawn from the numbers above, including a comparative analysis with last year's data?)

Based on the percentages of 63% Exceeding Standards, 24% Meeting Standards, and 13% Not Meeting Standards, the majority of students are meeting or exceeding the student learning outcomes for all courses. The distribution of grades seems high. More students should be meeting standards and fewer students should be exceeding standards. Standards may be set too low.

Recommendations for Improvement in Student Learning

4. *Based on the assessment results, what changes to curriculum and/or teaching should be made to improve student learning?*

The GER 8 coordinator recommendation for improvement in student learning is to grade harder. GER 8 courses include writing and studio arts. Courses assessed include Introductory Drawing, Short Fiction, Acting and Improvisation, Studies in Genre Film, Digital Photography and Creative Writing. Drawing, Photography, Film and Writing are very different media with different teaching techniques. However, even though the

coursework, the method of assigning work, and the assessment strategies are so different, grades currently seem inflated.

4a. *Based on the assessment results, what other resources, if any, are needed to improve student learning? Please check all that apply and include a rationale below (academic support services, equipment, software, etc.) are needed.*

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Academic support services (tutoring, accommodative services, etc.)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Classroom equipment needed	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Software needed	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify below)
--	--	---	--

This response includes feedback from the professors who taught the classes assessed.

Professor 1: None

Professor 2: I think overall students would benefit more from using the Writing Center - many students struggle with getting ideas together and writing in a way that most succinctly and successfully conveys their ideas. Unfortunately, since I'm teaching online, students in my classes may not be on campus. I can suggest in my comments that they proofread or visit the writing center, but I've done that, and haven't seen any changes in students' writing.

Professor 3: I would like to see more rulers. This would allow students to work on their projects for the duration of the class period without needing to share a ruler with another student.

Professor 4: Based on assessment results in my section of Drawing, we need a better space to work. This is a classroom used for lecture and software instruction. The furniture and arrangement of it are not conducive to teaching a drawing class. Rather than traditional desk sized table where several students sit side by side without enough room to spread out, drafting or drawing table with an adjustable height and angle and a larger work area are needed. The classroom had at least 10 fluorescent bulbs burnt out for a couple of years. Most of them were replaced, but the space is still dark and there are not enough portable spotlights to create dramatic lighting for value projects. Without the correct furniture and lighting, the students are not learning the full spectrum of drawing value. The easels are also falling apart and need to be replaced.

Professor 5: Funding for Small Theater Program

Closing the Loop

5. *What mechanisms are in place for documenting and sharing assessment results, closing the loop processes, and intended changes resulting from these assessment results? (i.e., presentations, school meetings, etc.)*

According to the Timeline for GER Assessment in the GER Assessment Policies, the Friday before the first week of classes, faculty will meet to discuss GER findings and strategic plan for improving student learning. This is challenging for 2 separate departments in 2 separate schools in 2 separate buildings on campus. Also, several of the courses selected for assessment review are taught by off campus adjuncts who would be unable to join us. Kathleen Mahoney, GER 8 coordinator will be available in person on January 20 if professors would like to discuss the findings in person. However, Kathleen did not schedule a meeting with all GER 8 faculty before the end of the fall semester.

Professor 1: *Departments will be meeting prior to the semester to discuss any changes as a result of the findings.*

For Creative Writing, I need to make the terminology a more integral part of the course. Teaching the terminology and conventions has become prominent, but having students report it back has remained minor. I plan to:

increase the weight of the Reflective Essay.

Increase the weight of the Reader Responses.

These are the areas in which students demonstrate their understanding of genre conventions.

Professor 2: In terms of self-assessment, I've learned to change the wording of several stock questions so that students' reading levels are honored, and I get the answers I'm looking for. Overall, I didn't gather much from the assessment of a single assignment.

Professor 3: I will conduct research looking for different approaches to teaching perspective. Some methods will include conferring with other drawing instructors, researching in textbooks and online.

6. *What closing the loop activities, such as ongoing professional development activities for faculty and staff, will be implemented as a result of these assessment results?*

Faculty would have to be proactive in contacting the GER 8 coordinator with ongoing Professional Development activities and the GER 8 coordinator would have to be more detail oriented to be sure to log activities. The GER 8 coordinator suggests an education assessment retreat for the entire faculty. A group could come to campus to explain the reasoning behind the process, what the process should be, how the software repositories work, and what the end result should be as well as best practices for completing rubrics and developing teaching strategies based on assessment results.

Professor 1: None yet. This is my first time teaching this class, so the loop has just begun...

7. *What changes to the assessment process should be made for the following cycle? If methodology revisions are needed, please submit a proposal to GER Assessment Subcommittee.*

Please see above.

None. So far this methodology has proven consistent in providing findings that allow me to make meaningful changes to my course.

Appendix B: Coordinator's Explanation of Reporting Process

I was tasked with being GER 8 coordinator in Fall 2016. I received an e-mail with a list of 7 courses that would be assessed for GER 8 outcomes.

I started by going to the Academic Assessment repository in Blackboard. Inside the Content folder is a folder called GER and AIM Information. (GER – General Education Requirements, AIM – Assessment in the Major)

I spent some time reviewing the FAQs, methodologies, reports and rubrics. The best decision I made as GER 8 coordinator was to begin sitting in on the GER meetings in the Library and becoming part of the GER committee.

I learned what forms were for what, I got to ask questions about the process and I got to review the reports from other GERs to get a better understanding of what I was doing. To create a thorough assessment, I found it necessary to use Blackboard to get the data and Taskstream to record the data.

Mapping Outcomes

I contacted each professor who was having a course assessed and walked them through the process of choosing a project to assess for GER 8. I met with each professor and had them log into taskstream and link a project to GER 8. The project was linked to the department ISLO as well as GER 8. For instance, as well as being coordinator, I was also having a class assessed. I chose to assess the mid-term portfolio project. If you look at the accompanying screenshot, you can see GER Student Learning Outcome mapped to the project.

This was done with each professor by the end of the third week of classes.

Creating a Blackboard Rubric

The next step was done in Blackboard. I met with each professor and walked them through creating a GER specific rubric for the project.

One professor did not wish to use the rubric as part of the grading process, so I recommended that they use it and not include it in final grading. I was able to use the rubric for grading. The rubric information was pulled from the GER 8 rubric supplied at the beginning of the process. It was time consuming to create a rubric in Blackboard by hand. We are working on how to make the process easier. Hopefully at some point, there will be a repository in Blackboard where we will be able to pick them up.

Here is an example of the attached rubric as well as the Blackboard rubric.

RUBRIC DETAIL

The Rubric Grid lists **Criteria** (rows) for measuring **Levels of Achievement** (columns)

This rubric has been used for grading and cannot be modified.

Criteria	Levels of Achievement		
	Exceeds Standards	Meets Standards	Does Not Meet Standards
Body of Work: Conceptual	17 to 25 points Demonstrates a high level of conceptual understanding, awareness, and expression. Stated conceptual concerns are clearly present in the work, with aplomb. Excellent evidence of concepts and all assignment specifications were met or exceeded.	9 to 16 points Demonstrates an adequate level of conceptual understanding, awareness, and expression. Stated conceptual concerns are present in the work. Average ideas with little evidence of curiosity.	1 to 8 points Demonstrates little or no conceptual understanding, awareness and expression. Stated conceptual concerns are not present in the work. Many key conceptual assignment specifications were not met.
Knowledge of Related Established Works	17 to 25 points Demonstrates a high level of awareness and knowledge of well-known work that has a relationship to the work of the student. Good understanding and evidence of integration of the significance of established works.	9 to 16 points Demonstrates an adequate level of awareness and knowledge of well-known work that has a relationship to the work of student. Average ideas with little evidence of risk-taking.	1 to 8 points Demonstrates little or no awareness and/or knowledge of well-known work that has a relationship to the work of students. More research and personal exploration required.
Body of Work: Technical	17 to 25 points Demonstrates a high level of technical mastery of skills in the particular medium. Excellent understanding and use of skills. All key specifications exceeded.	9 to 16 points Demonstrates an adequate level of technical mastery of skills in the particular medium. Some issues related to craftsmanship.	1 to 8 points Demonstrates little or no technical mastery of skills in the particular medium. Many key technical specifications were not met.
Body of Work: Formal	17 to 25 points Demonstrates a high level of formal understanding in the work. Excellent craftsmanship and presentation.	9 to 16 points Demonstrates an adequate level of formal understanding in the work. Some minor issues related to presentation.	1 to 8 points Demonstrates little or no formal understanding in the work. Presentation needs improvement.



ASSIGNMENT FILES

Attach File

DUE DATES

Submissions are accepted after this date, but are marked Late.

Due Date
Enter dates in mm/dd/yyyy. Time may be entered in any format.

GRADING

Points Possible

Associated Rubric

Name	Type	Date Last Edited	Show Rubric to Students
GR 6 Rubric	Used for Grading	Oct 5, 2016 2:48:20 PM	Yes (All Public Scores)

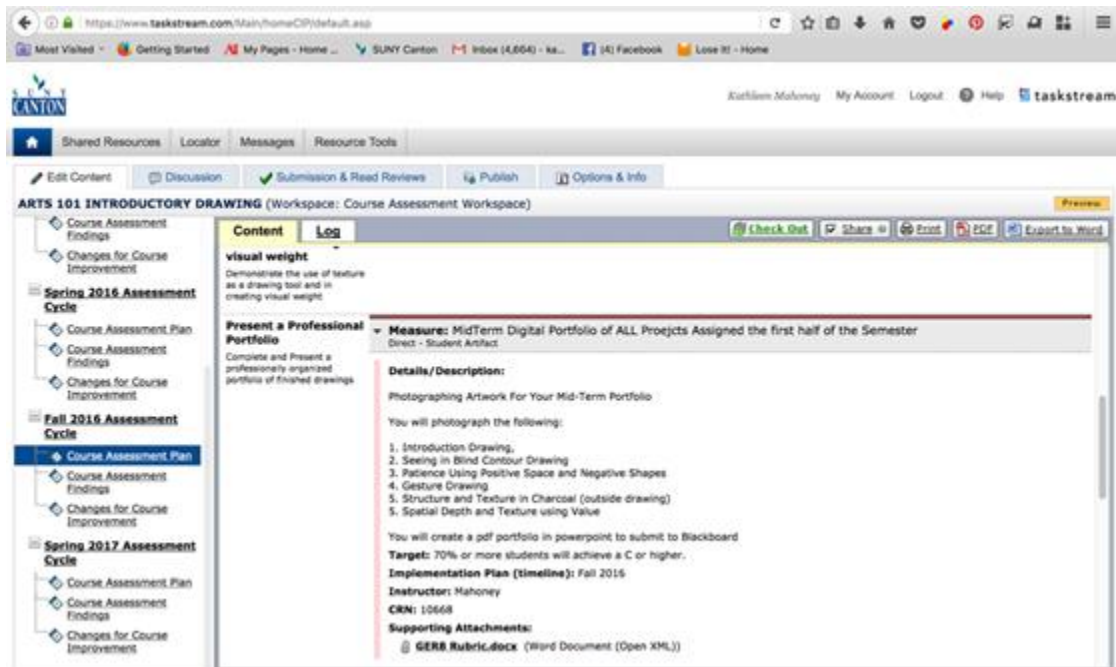
[Submission Details](#)

[Grading Options](#)

Mapping the rubric to the Course Assessment Plan in Blackboard

The rubric should be saved as a document and uploaded to the course assessment plan by mid-semester. I created the rubric, e-mailed it to each professor and then met with them in person to be sure the rubric was mapped to the assignment.

This is a screenshot of the Fall 2016 Course Assessment Plan for Drawing.



The screenshot shows the Blackboard interface for the course 'ARTS 101 INTRODUCTORY DRAWING'. The left sidebar contains a navigation menu with categories like 'Course Assessment Findings', 'Spring 2016 Assessment Cycle', 'Fall 2016 Assessment Cycle', and 'Spring 2017 Assessment Cycle'. The 'Fall 2016 Assessment Cycle' is expanded to show 'Course Assessment Plan', 'Course Assessment Findings', and 'Changes for Course Improvement'. The 'Course Assessment Plan' is selected, displaying a table of assessment items. The table has columns for 'Content' and 'Log'. The 'Content' column lists items such as 'visual weight', 'Present a Professional Portfolio', and 'Measure: MidTerm Digital Portfolio of ALL Projects Assigned the first half of the Semester'. The 'Log' column is currently empty. The 'Measure' item is expanded to show details: 'Photographing Artwork For Your Mid-Term Portfolio', a list of five drawing tasks, a target of 70% or more students achieving a C or higher, and an implementation plan for Fall 2016. A supporting attachment 'GERB Rubric.docx' is listed at the bottom.

After using the rubric for grading, which is fairly easy, it is possible to run a report from Blackboard that can be saved as a pdf. Chris Sweeney made a step by step pdf that should be attached to this.

The other thing that had to happen was that the professor has a “student artifact” or something electronic that could be uploaded to Taskstream.

For a drawing class, I required the students to create an electronic portfolio in PowerPoint. This made it possible to choose the top submission as “Exceeds Expectations”, a middle of the road submission to be “Meets Expectations” and one that was really bad to be “Does Not Meet Expectations.” These artifacts (projects) could be uploaded to Taskstream and labeled according to their quality along with the pdf of the data report from Blackboard. I again met with each professor to be sure they understood the process of using student artifacts and creating a data report as a pdf in Blackboard.

I recommend that coordinators encourage professors to choose assignments that will create an artifact as well as assignments that are due earlier in the semester. This will give you as coordinator time to follow up with each professor and be sure they are going through the process correctly.

The screenshot displays the taskstream.com interface for a course assessment workspace. The browser address bar shows the URL: <https://www.taskstream.com/Main/HomeCPI/default.asp>. The page title is "ARTS 101 INTRODUCTORY DRAWING (Workspace: Course Assessment Workspace)". The interface includes a navigation menu on the left with sections for "Fall 2015 Assessment Cycle", "Spring 2016 Assessment Cycle", "Fall 2016 Assessment Cycle", and "Spring 2017 Assessment Cycle". The main content area is titled "Outcome" and contains the following information:

- Measure:** Portfolio (Direct - Student Artifact)
- Details/Description:** Local value assignment PHYSICAL PAPER PROJECTS SUBMITTED and photographed
- Target:** 70% OR MORE STUDENTS RECEIVE C OR BETTER
- Implementation Plan (timeline):** FALL 2016
- Instructor:** SHANNON DROWNE
- CRN:** 10667
- Supporting Attachments:** GERB_Rubric.docx (Word Document (Open XML))
- Findings for Portfolio:**
 - Summary of Findings:** 1 received an A, 4 received a B, 5 received a C, 4 did not submit
 - Results:** Target Achievement: Met
 - Recommendations:** Choose a more specific assignment
 - Reflections/Notes:**
 - Substantiating Evidence:**
 - Did not meet GER 8 standards (JPEG (Image))
 - Exceeded standards for GERB (JPEG (Image))
 - Met GER 8 Standards (JPEG (Image))
 - rubricstatistics.pdf (Adobe Acrobat Document)

Filling Out the GER Report

The last step will be to fill out the GER report. I sent out the report to each professor via e-mail and gave them a deadline of about a week before my deadline. 6 out of 7 professors met the deadline and filled out the report accurately. The form is located somewhere in the GER Blackboard shell. If you cannot find it, please contact one of the GER committee members. You will need to collect the forms and attach them to your report. You will be filling out the GER 8 report. You will need to request comments from each professor about the process and include it in the notes. I found it easiest to copy the questions and e-mail them to each professor to be sure they focused on the task at hand. This is due after the end of the semester, so collecting data at the mid-term gives time to collect it and organize it and fill out the forms.

If you have any questions about collecting data, filling out the reports, or deadlines, please be sure to contact the members of the GER committee.