# **GENERAL EDUCATION OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT: 2008-09**

**SUMMARY OF FINDINGS** 

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<u>Acknowledgment</u>: The GEO Coordinator, Research and Institutional Effectiveness Office, and Outcomes Committee (formerl the LO and GEO Committees) would like to officiall recognize the effort, creativity, and intellectual ontributions of the faculty mem ers who participated in di logue to plan and assess GEOs over the past year. he participation of these pioneers is greatl appreci ted as their efforts, both within and outside of the classroom, support the college in building an institution-wide community of assessment and practice imed at enhancing student success.

# **INTRODUCTION**

During spring 2009, faculty members teaching courses in the five areas of the General Education (GE) pattern embarked on the first assessment of general education outcomes (GEOs). More information about GEOs can be found at http://www.mtsac.edu/i struction/generaled/. An abridged version of the Academic Senate-approved General Education Outcomes (GEO) Assessment Plan and Timeli e can be found at: <a href="http://www.mtsac.edu/i struction/generaled/docs/geo">http://www.mtsac.edu/i struction/generaled/docs/geo assessment timeline.pdf</a>. The purpose of this report is to summarize the results of their efforts.

In fall of 2008, the General Education Outcomes Committee (GEOC) identified workgroups and facilitated faculty dialogue on the development of general education outcome statements, assessment plans, and criteria for success for courses in Mt. SAC General Education Areas B (The Physical U iverse a d Life), C (Arts a d uma ities), D (Social, Political, and Eco omic Institutio s), and E (Lifelong Learning and Self-Development). Though Area A (Communications i English Language) did not atte d a facilitated workshop, two of its faculty members served on the GEOC and thus, had the resources necessary to coordinate the assessment efforts in their respective courses.

## **METHODOLOGY**

Faculty members had in-depth dialogue to develop GEOs broad enough to extend to the variety of courses i their area, yet specific enough to address the unique qualities of their respective areas. In ta dem with these outcome statements, means of assessment (rubrics), and criteria for success were also ide tified (refer to *Table 1*). Faculty members from all GE areas discussed a rage of different assessment plans and agreed to use course-embedded assessments to assess the GEOs. As outcomes were being developed, faculty members identified existing assignments or activities that could be used to assess these GEOs. Rubrics were designed to

identify expectations and yielded metrics for demonstrating how students would meet or not meet expectations. Full profiles of the GEOs by area can be found in Appendix A.

Table 1: Area GEOs, Means of Assessment (Rubri s) and Criteri for Success

General Education Area	General Education Outcome Statement	eans of Assessment (Rubrics)	Criteria for Success
A. Communication in the English language (Speech)	Students will critically evaluate public speeches.	Skills Assessed Evaluation of Communication	Students will score a "1" or above on the evaluation criteria.
A. Communication in the English language (Speech)	Students will be able to perform basic speech delivery skills.	Skills Assessed Evaluation of Communication	Students will score at least a "2" in two of four assessment categories to meet expectations.
B. The Physical Universe and Life	Students completing relevant assignments in Area B courses will evaluate the impact of science on their daily lives.	Skills Assessed Analysis, Application  Performance Levels 0 = Below expectations 1 = Meets expectations 2 = Exceeds expectations	Students will score at least a "1" in each of the two assessment categories to meet expectations.
C. Arts	Students will be able to analyze modes of artistic expression.	Skills Assessed Acquisition, Analysis, Application  Performance Levels 0 = Below expectations 1 = Meets expectations 2 = Exceeds expectations	Students will meet expectations by scoring a "1" on two of the three categories.
C. Humanities	Students completing an assignment in Humanities Area C will be able to identify the influence of culture on human expression.	Skills Assessed Identification of Culture, Influence on Expression  Performance Levels 0 = Below Expectations 1 = Meets Expectations 2 = Exceeds Expectations	Students will meet expectations by scoring a "1" on each of the two categories.
D1. Social, Political, and Economic Institutions	Students will be able to differentiate among changes in the American constitutional government over time.	Skills Assessed Differentiation  Performance Levels  1 = Not Meeting expectations 2 = Approaching expectations 3 = Meeting expectations 4 = Exceeding expectations	Students will obtain a score of "3" or better on multiple-choice or essay item related to the GEO.
D2. Social, Political, and Economic Institutions (Elective Courses)	Students completing relevant assignments in Area D2 courses will analyze the relationship between social, political, and/or economic institutions and human behavior.	Skills Assessed Analysis  Performance Levels 0 = Below expectations 1 = Meets expectations 2 = Exceeds expectations	Students must score at least a "1" to meet expectations.

General	General Education Outcome	eans of Assessment (Rubrics)	Criteria for Success
Education Area	Statement		
E. Lifelong Learning and Self-Development	Students completing an assignment in Area E courses will demonstrate meaningful self-evaluation related to increasing their lifelong personal well-being.	Skills Assessed Collection, Analysis, Application  Performance Levels 0 = Below expectations 1 = Meets expectations 2 = Exceeds expectations	Students will meet expectations by scoring a "1" or more in at least two of the three categories.

Faculty members were encouraged, both verbally and i writing, to provide their assessment results for their adopted GEOs via a reporting form. Reporting forms were provided to each participating faculty member and a template for these forms is located in Appe dix B. O ce the assessment was complete, the following i formation via the Reporting Form was submitted to the Research and Institutional Effectiveness (RIE) Office: course title and respective GE area; reference number of section(s) assessed (optional); term of assessment; the number of students who completed the assessment; the number of students who met the expectations; key findings/highlights; and, action plan/use of results.

Using a thematic analysis, researchers aggregated the results and highlighted key findings which are i cluded in the next sectio .

## **OVERALL FINDINGS**

Table 2 displays the courses which planned and assessed GEOs duri g the 2008 to 2009 academic year.

Table 2. Participating Courses by Area

AREA	PARTICIPATING COURSES
A: Com unication in the	SPC 1A – Public Speaking
English Language (Speech)	
B: The Physical Universe	Biol 6 - umans and the Environment
and Life	Biol 6 ab - umans and the Environment Laboratory
	CR 22 - Microbiology
C: Arts	SPCH 4 - Oral Interpretation of Literature
C: Hu anities	
D1: Social, Political, and	
Economic nstitutions	
D2: Social, Political, and	BUSC 1A - Principles of Macroeconomics
Economic nstitutions (Electives)	BUSC 1A - Principles of Macroeco omics
	BUSC 1B - Pri ciples of Microeconomics
	BUSC 1B - Principles of Microeco omics
	PSYC 1A – Introduction to Psychology
E: ifelong earning and	FCS 41 - Life Management
Self-Development	LEAD 55 - Exploring Leadership
	COUN5 - Career/Life Planning
	B O 5 - Co temporary Health Issues
	BIOL 15 - Human Sexuality

BIOL 15H - uman Sexuality Honors
BIOL 13 - Human Reproduction, Development, and Aging
NF 10 - Nutrition for Personal Health
NF25 – Essentials of Nutrition
NF25H - Essentials of Nutrition onors
NF 28 - Cultural and Ethnic Foods
PSYC 14 - Developmental Psychology
DN-T 20 - History and Appreciation of Dance*

<sup>\*</sup>Area C course that adopted an Area E GEO.

*Table 3* summarizes the set of reports received by the Research Office. It is important to note that the semesters of assessment are staggered for the General Education areas.

Table 3. Results

Area	Expected Semester of Assessment (according to the GEO Plan)	Total Number of Courses	Number of Courses that Assessed GEOs in 2008—09	Number of Students Assessed	# of tudents Meeting Expectations	% of Students Meeting Expectations
Α	June 2009	4	1	245	224	91.4%
Α	June 2009	4	1	151	141	93.4%
В	June 2010	53	3	†	†	†
C (Arts)	December 2010	44	1	++	††	††
C (Humanities)	December 2010	87	0	-		
D1	December 2009	13	0			
D2	une 2010	38	5	160	148	92.5%
Е	December 2009	19	13‡	659‡	625‡	94.8%

<sup>†</sup>For two of the three courses in Area B, raw numbers of students assessed were not provided; thus, total numbers and percentages cannot be calculated.

The following subsections provide a profile of the assessments by area and highlight ey findings.

#### AREA A

TOTAL NUMBER OF COURSES: 4 NUMBER OF COURSES ASSESSED: 1 TERM OF ASSESSMENT: SPRING 2009

<u>KEY FINDINGS AND TRENDS</u>: For the one course (10 sections) examined, a total of 245 students were assessed out of which 224 met expectations for the GEO (91.4%). Open-ended responses from faculty members assessing this GEO depicted desires to improve the articulation of course assignment standards when they are given to students. Faculty reactions also revealed plans to develop additional class exercises to improve the students' understanding of assignment-related standards.

<sup>++</sup> One section in one course in Area C has assessed its GEO. n order to protect its identity, the results will be shared when additional sections/courses have participated in the assessment.

<sup>‡</sup>Of the 13 courses assessing the Area E GEO, 12 were Area E courses and 1 was an Area C course. For the purposes of this report, the Area C course results have been incorporated into the overall Area E GEO findings.

#### AREA A

TOTAL NUMBER OF COURSES: 4 NUMBER OF COURSES ASSESSED: 1 TERM OF ASSESSMENT: SPRING 2009

<u>KEY FINDI GS AND TRENDS</u>: Survey design preceded GEO assessment, so there was not a parameter for "meet/does not eet" expectations as a GEO, only as an SLO. 123 students averaged a score of "2" or higher in the existing easurement, with results exceeding departmental expectations in three of four areas in the rubric as a GEO.

#### **AREA B**

TOTAL NUMBER OF COURSES: 53 NUMBER OF COURSES ASSESSED: 3 TERM OF ASSESSMENT: SPRING 2010

KEY FINDI GS AND TRENDS: For two of the three courses, the Mt. SAC five-colu n model was used instead of the GEO reporting form. Thus, the numbers of sections and students assessed are not provided. The ajority of students assessed et the expectations, however, a shared percentage cannot be calculated since the raw numbers of students are issing from two of the three courses (percentages for the three courses were 86%, 77%, and 96%). n one assessment, the percentage of those who completed the assignment versus those who were enrolled in the course was identified. One course offered distinct classroo activities which could be added or odified to continue students' development of the GEO while the other courses indicated the need for further discussion within the department about how to sustain the results.

# AREA C (ARTS)

TOTAL NUMBER OF COURSES: 44 NUMBER OF COURSES ASSESSED: 1 TERM OF ASSESSMENT: FALL 2010

<u>KEY FINDI GS AND TRENDS</u>: Students were assessed fro one course in Area C, the majority of which met expectations. Open-ended responses regarding these results indicate that the GEO findings will be com unicated to the department's SLO Com ittee and shared with the instructors teaching this course. u bers of students assessed and collective percentages will be shared as ore sections and/or courses

u bers of students assessed and collective percentages will be shared as ore sections and/or courses participate in the assessment of this GEO.

# **AREA C (HUMANITIES)**

TOTAL NUMBER OF COURSES: 87 NUMBER OF COURSES ASSESSED: 0 TERM OF ASSESSMENT: FALL 2010

KEY FINDI GS AND TRENDS: N/A.

#### AREA D1

TOTAL NUMBER OF COURSES: 13 NUMBER OF COURSES ASSESSED: 0 TERM OF ASSESSMENT: FALL 2009

KEY FINDINGS AND TRENDS: N/A.

#### AREA D2

TOTAL NUMBER OF COURSES: 38 NUMBER OF COURSES ASSESSED: 5 TERM OF ASSESSMENT: SPRING 2010

<u>KEY FINDINGS AND TRENDS</u>: A total of 160 students from five courses were assessed, of which 148 students (92.5%) met expectations. Note that of the five courses, four courses were actually two unique courses, each with an Honors course counterpart. The summaries of data document the general knowledge exhibited by the students. The use of results is identically written for four of the five courses and indicates the intention to use the GEO results to inform changes in classroom delivery. One course indicated an interest in increasing the expectation of student performance to "Exceeds Expectations."

#### AREA E

TOTAL NUMBER OF COURSES: 19 NUMBER OF COURSES ASSESSED: 13 TERM OF ASSESSMENT: FALL 2009

KEY FINDINGS AND TRENDS: Of the 659 students assessed in 13 courses within Area E, 625 (94.8%) successfully met or exceeded expectations. It is important to note that one of the courses which assessed this GEO was in fact, an Area C course; however, it was incorporated into these findings because it adopted the Area E GEO, means of assessment, and criteria for success. Various styles were used to summarize and present the data. ost expressed simply the percentage of students who met the expectations. Some additionally indicated which skills from the rubric were more commonly displayed than others. Several faculty members addressed the disparity in the number of students who were enrolled and the number who actually completed the assignment. One faculty member stated the inherent ease in being self-aware and thus, in meeting the expectations in this assessment and communicated that a GEO dealing with academic achievement may be more challenging. Many faculty members shared the intention to focus more heavily on analysis and/or application in future assignments. Plans to continue GEO assessment were clearly articulated as several intend to reassess in the fall of 2009. A couple of faculty members also addressed the research design aspect, commenting on increasing the sample size and assessing sections offered during different times of the day. Several specific considerations to modifying the course material were also indicated. Other courses in Area E indicated that the GEO findings will be communicated to the department. Additionally, one faculty member expressed that the assessment of the GEO illustrated the students' "appreciation" for learning, which was considered "essential" to the completion of the course.

### AREAS OF STRENGTH

- 1. Faculty members had in-depth dialogue to develop tatements broad enough to extend to the variety of courses in their area yet pecific enough to address the unique of their respective areas. For many faculty members, the workgroups were the first venue in which they were able to interact with other faculty members teaching courses in the same area. This led to new shared understandings about the shared competencies in their areas.
- 2. Faculty members were open to the idea of adopting a common assessment methodology as a part of this process (refer to *Table 1*). In addition to maintaining the liberty of selecting the appropriate assignment that addressed their area' GEO, faculty members were also able to agree on shared criteria for success as well as common rubrics.
- 3. Faculty members' insights regarding the use of results demonstrate a variety of intentions including communication within their departments, changes to curriculum via additional or modified assignments, the willingness to reassess the GE , changes to research design via increased sampling, and considering additional outreach and retention efforts. verall, their u es of results indicated strategies to determine whether students can achieve the expectations and how to increase tudent success.

#### AREAS OF IMPROVEMENT

- 1. There was not a shared understanding between faculty workgroups that GE were to be assessed in the spring 2009 semester and reporting forms were to be ubmitted by June 30, 2009. This expectation was unreali tic. A modified assessment plan and timeline was developed and approved by Academic enate in ay, 2009.
- 2. Though all GEO workgroups were able to develop outcome statements and rubrics, there was a variation in the completion of the actual GEO assessment. Through interviews with the GEO Coordinator as follow-up sessions, the findings indicated that there are many misconceptions about the GEO assessment process. The GEO Coordinator i working with the group in fall 2009 to clarify the issues.
- 3. The summary of data and use of result submissions were vague in many instances. In order to encourage more thorough articulation and documentation of assessment results, it would be beneficial to provide more guidance on the completion of these two sections without being prescriptive.

# SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

- 1. Address the rigor of GEO tatements, rubrics, and criteria for success for new and follow-up workgroup sessions.
- 2. Introduce the possibility of having a percentage of students who meet the criteria for success as agreed upon by faculty members assessing the ame GEO.
- 3. Encourage Area A to unify the peech and Engli h GEOs into a broader Area A GEO.
- 4. Continue to encourage the usage of GEOs a course-level SLO and facilitate their entry into department ePIEs.
- 5. Encourage the use of a common reporting form to enable compari on and summary of assessment efforts.

- 6. Provi e more guidance and direction (without eing prescriptive) to the summ ry of data nd use of results elements.
- 7. Address the reported results, in onnection with the purpose nd function of the Outcomes Committee.
- 8. Determine the appropriate strategy and set of venues to dissemine the progress of GEOs to the campus.
- 9. M ke mo ifications to recording or reporting forms b se on these collective highlights.
- 10. Consi er the ontent of future nd follow-up workgroup sessions for collective use of results.

# APPENDIX A: AREA GEOs, MEANS OF ASSESSMENT, AND CRITERIA FOR SUCCESS

# **AREA A: ORAL COMMUNICATION**

General Education Outcome: Students completing an assignment in Area A courses (SPCH 1A and SPCH 1AH) will critically evaluate public speeches.

eans of Assessment: A variety of classroom activities or assignments addressing the GEO including the following rubric.

Criteria for Success: Students must meet expectations by scoring a "1" u ing the criteria below.

PERFORMANCE LEVEL				
3	2	1	0	
Student evaluation will:	Student evaluation will	Student evaluation	Students are unable to	
- ummarize the	- ummarize the	will	critically evaluate public	
observed peech	observed peech	- ummarize the	speeches.	
- identify both content	- identify multiple areas	observed peech		
and delivery aspects of	of excellence and areas	- identify at least		
the speech.	for improvement, when	one area of		
- con istently utilize	appropriate.	strength and one		
terminology consi tent	- utilize terminology	area for		
with the course text	consi tent with the	improvement, but		
and/or lecture	course text and/or	may omit either		
- propose strategies the	lecture.	content or delivery		
speaker could utilize to		variables		
improve the content		- will not		
and/or the delivery of		con istently utilize		
the speech, when		terminology		
appropriate.		consi tent with the		
- provide at least one		text and/or lecture.		
detailed description of				
the speech as upport.				

# AREA A: COM UNICATION N THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

General Education utcome: Students will be able to perform basic speech delivery skills.

eans of Assessment: A variety of classroom activities or assignments addressing the GEO including the following rubric.

Criteria for Success: Students must meet expectations by scoring a "1" u ing the criteria below.

chteria for success. Students must meet expectations by scoring a 1 'u mg the chteria below.				
PERFORMANCE LEVEL				
3	2	1	0	
Student evaluation will:	Student evaluation will	Student evaluation	Students are unable to	
- ummarize the	- ummarize the	will	critically evaluate public	
observed peech	observed peech	- ummarize the	speeches.	
- identify both content	- identify multiple areas	observed peech		
and delivery aspects of	of excellence and areas	- identify at least		
the speech.	for improvement, when	one area of		
- con istently utilize	appropriate.	strength and one		
terminology consi tent	- utilize terminology	area for		
with the course text	consi tent with the	improvement, but		
and/or lecture	course text and/or	may omit either		

- propose strategies the	ecture.	content or delivery	
speaker cou d utilize to		variables	
improve the content		- will not	
and/or the delivery of		consistently utilize	
the speech, when		terminology	
appropriate.		consistent with the	
- provide at east one		text and/or lecture.	
detai ed description of			
the speech as support.			

## AREA B: THE PHYSICAL UNIVERSE AND LIFE

General Education Outcome: Students comp eting relevant assignments in Area B courses will evaluate the impact of science on their daily lives.

eans of Assessment: A variety of classroom activities or assignments addressing the GEO including the following rubric.

Criteria for Success: Students must score at least a "1" in each of the two criteria to meet expectations.

CRITERION	PERFORMANCE LEVEL			
	0 - Below Expectations	1 - eets Expectations	2 - Exceeds	
			Expectations	
ANALYSIS: Analysis of		Cana a analysis in alvelina	In-depth/thorough	
scientific information	No analysis	Some analysis including some key points	analysis including a key	
scientific information		some key points	points	
APPLICAT :			Thoughtful and	
Application of concepts	Not able to explain	Somewhat able to	comprehensive	
to their daily lives	relevance	explain relevance	explanation of	
to their daily lives			relevance	

#### **AREA C: ARTS**

General Education Outcome: Students comp eting an assignment in Area C (Arts) courses will be ab e to analyze modes of artistic expression.

eans of Assessment: A variety of classroom activities or assignments addressing the GEO including the following rubric.

Criteria for Success: Students will meet expectations by scoring a "1" on two of the three categories.

CRITERION	PERFORMANCE LEVEL			
	0 - Below Expectations	1 - eets Expectations	2 - Exceeds Expectations	
ACQUISITIO: Quality of information col ected	No acquisition	Somewhat detai ed and complete	Detai ed and comp ete	
ANALYSIS: Analysis of information	No analysis	Summary of information with some analysis	In-depth/thorough analysis	
APPLICAT: Application of concepts to a mode of artistic expression	o application	Some appropriate application is evident	Thoughtful and specific application	

#### **AREA C: HUMANITIES**

General Education Outcome: Students com leting an assignment in Humanities Area C will be able to identify the influence of culture on human expression.

eans of Assessment: A variety of classroom activities or assignments addressing the GEO including the following rubric.

Criteria for Success: Students will meet expectations by scoring a "1" on each of the two of the three categories.

CRITERION	PERFORMANCE LEVEL			
	0 - Below Expectations	1 - eets Expectations	2 - Exceeds Expectations	
Identify Culture	Cannot identify a culture; misidentify a culture	Accurate identification of relevant culture(s)		
Influence on Human Expression	Cannot identify or misidentify a relationship between the culture and the human expression.	Identify a relationship between the culture and the human expression.	Identify additional facets of the relationship.*	

## AREA D1: SOCIAL, OLITICAL, AND ECONOMIC INSTITUTIONS

General Education utcome: Students will be able to differentiate among changes in the American constitutional government over time.

eans of Assessment: A variety of classroom activities or assignments addressing the GEO including the following rubric.

Criteria for Success: Students will obtain a score of "3" or better on multiple-choice or essay item related to the GEO.

PERFORMANCE LEVEL				
4 – Exceeding	3 - eeting	2 – Approaching	1 – Not eeting	
Expectations	Expectations	Expectations	Expectations	
The student	The student could	The student illustrated	The student had no	
demonstrated accurate	accurately	some understanding of	awareness or very	
sequence of	identify/sequence	changes in the	inaccurate knowledge	
understanding	a few changes in	constitution.	regarding	
constitutional changes	the constitution		changes in the constitution	
over time; could also	over time.		over time.	
explain cause-effect				
relationships for events				
and changes in the				
constitution; could				
name multiple changes				
in the constitution over				
time.				

## AREA D2: SOCIAL, P T CAL, AND ECONOMIC NSTITUTIONS (ELECTIVE C URSES)

General Educati n Outcome: Students completing relevant assignments in Area D2 courses will analyze the relationship between social, p litical, and/ r econ mic institutions and human behavior.

eans of Assessment: A variety of classroom activities or assignments addressing the GEO including the following rubric.

Criteria for Success: Students must score at least a "1" to meet expectati ns.

PERFORMANCE LEVEL							
0 - Below Expectations	1 - eets Expectations	2 - Exceeds Expectations					
Identifies some relevant	Adequately identifies relevant	Th r ughly identifies relevant					
information ab ut social,	information ab ut social,	information ab ut social,					
political and/or economic	p litical, and/ r econ mic	p litical, and/ r econ mic					
instituti ns but is missing some	institutions; articulates the	institutions; articulates the					
key ideas; lacks the ability to	relationship to human behavior	relationship to human behavior					
identify related human	using one or more examples.	using one or more examples;					
behaviors.		extends analysis to predicti ns					
		and/or recommendations.					

#### AREA E: FELONG UNDERSTANDING AND SELF-DEVELOPMENT

General Educati n Outcome: Students completing an assignment in Area E courses will dem nstrate meaningful self-evaluation related to increasing their lifelong personal well-being.

eans of Assessment: A variety of classroom activities or assignments addressing the GEO including the foll wing rubric.

Criteria for Success: Students will meet expectations by scoring a "1" or more in at least two categories.

CRITERION	PERFORMANCE LEVEL				
	0 - Below Expectations	1 - eets Expectations	2 - Exceeds Expectations		
<b>COLLECTION</b> : Quality of information collection	collection	Somewhat detailed and complete	Detailed and complete		
ANALYSIS: Analysis of information	No analysis	Summary f information with some analysis	In-depth/thorough analysis		
APPLICAT: Applicati n of concepts to enhance lifelong well-being	application	Somewhat thoughtful and somewhat specific information	Thoughtful and specific application		

# **APPENDIX B: GEO REPORTING FORM TEMPLATE**

# General Education Outcome (GEO) Reporting Form AREA \_\_: Title

GEO:		 	 
Criteria:		 	 
	Reporting Date:	 	
	C urse Title:	 	
Ref	erence Number:	 	
Term	n of Assessment:	 	
	f students who the assignment:		
Of those completing number of students who m	-		
Key Findings/Highlights:			
w will the results be used?			
Please return completed forms to the		 by	