

**Indiana University Purdue University Fort Wayne**

**Assessment Report for General Studies 2007**

<b>Criterion</b>	<b>Y / N</b>	<b>Comments/recommendations</b>
All departments/programs have assessment plans	Y	We are the only academic unit in the Division of Continuing Studies.
Assessment measures are linked to program goals	Y	We are revising our program goals.
Assessment Plan Standards in Paragraph III.B.1. of SD 98-22 have been followed.		See below.
All departments/programs submitted reports	Y	
Departments/programs use assessment for program improvement (please include examples from each program).		We are a system-wide degree program through Indiana University's School of Continuing Studies. Final decisions regarding degree policies and procedures are not made at this campus. We may make suggestions for changes that would affect the whole system through our campus faculty representative to the School of Continuing Studies Faculty Council. Approval of changes through this body would then be implemented throughout the system. The system-wide School does not have an assessment process or program learning objectives in place. We are among the first to do so.
Departments/programs base recommendations on data		See above.
Prior year recommendations were implemented	Y	A pilot was done three years ago. The recommendation was to repeat the study each year. We did.

School*-level review effective	N	There is no “school” review.
University-level support for assessment requested/needed	N	
Recommended changes to department/program plans	Y	See “Concluding Thoughts”.
Recommendations to Assessment Council		
*includes ACCS & Honors Program Revised and approved by the Assessment Council, February 2005		

The original mission/goals/assessment plan was approved in Senate Document 98-21. This mission/goals/assessment plan is not accurate and we feel the following mission/goals statement more accurately reflects our program at this time.

## GENERAL STUDIES DEGREE PROGRAMS ASSESSMENT REPORT

The General Studies Degree Program is a unique program, part of the university-wide system of the Indiana University School of Continuing Studies. Students may start and complete an Associate of Arts in General Studies or a Bachelor of General Studies on any of Indiana University's campuses or through Independent Study. Students are subject to the policies, procedures, and graduation certification processes of the system-wide School of Continuing Studies. A key characteristic of an adult-oriented program is the flexibility that allows students to individualize the program, incorporating their academic and career goals into the degree requirements. Students bring multiple sources of knowledge to the program, based upon personal experiences and life responsibilities. Because of the unique nature of the program, students may only be with the program for as little as 10 credit hours (Associate of Arts) or the entire 120 credits for the Bachelor's Degree.

### GOALS FOR THE GENERAL STUDIES DEGREE PROGRAMS

- \*Provide students with the opportunity to complete a non-specialized curriculum based on individual choices or needs.
- \*Enable transfer students to maximize the number of credit hours applicable toward the degree.
- \*Provide students with a means of professional advancement and development of specific career related skills.
- \*Provide students with a degree program that offers quality, convenience, reputable advising, and personal satisfaction.

### ADDITIONAL GOALS FOR ASSOCIATE OF ARTS IN GENERAL STUDIES

- \*Help students to view this degree as progress toward educational goals.
- \*Help students build confidence by excelling in college courses, no matter what their age.

### ADDITIONAL GOAL FOR THE BACHELOR OF GENERAL STUDIES

- \*Provide students with basic preparation for many careers and graduate programs.

## Direct Measures of Student Learning Outcomes

Compare a sample of General Studies students in General Education Area VI classes to a sample of IPFW students in Area VI using the attached rubric.

- Five (5) faculty members from the General Studies Advisory Committee met to review the papers.
- Two (2) to three (3) faculty reviewed each paper.
- Using the rubric each faculty member scored each paper.
- The faculty then discussed each paper's score.
- Adjust the rubric as appropriate.

Papers from fifteen (15) students were received from General Education Area VI classes. This was more than last year. Five (5) faculty members from the General Studies Faculty Advisory Committee (3 reviewed last year) reviewed the papers using an analytical rubric that was revised after last year's assessment. Discussion took place between the faculty reviewing each paper regarding assessment of the paper. Some of the assessments were adjusted. A lively discussion concerning General Education Area VI courses and requirements took place. The faculty determined after the review that there was not an adequate sample to make any recommendations for program changes. They also recommended continuing this measure and suggested some changes in the process. One faculty member completed a numerical analysis of the scores from the papers using the rubric. This will assist in making changes to the rubric for next year. As there is still no assessment for General Education Area VI, no comparison was done.

### Reviewer Analysis of Student Papers

General Studies Program Assessment 2007  
(N=15 Papers)

Criteria	Mean	S.D.	Median	Mode
Purpose & Audit	1.63	0.65	1.75	2
Organization	1.56	0.65	1.75	2
Development	1.56	0.70	1.75	2
Language	1.65	0.65	1.50	1
Source	1.63	0.85	1.00	1

Sources of Disagreement among Raters  
(Individual Papers)

Paper Number	Criteria	Overall Approval
1	Development, Source	Disagree
2	Development, Organization	Agree
4	Language	Agree
5	Purpose, Organization, Source	Agree
7	Source	Agree
8	Source	Disagree
11	Purpose, Organization, Source	Agree
	Purpose, Development,	
12	Language	Agree
13	Purpose, Organization	Agree

**Indirect Measures (Fall 2007 Enrollment/607 Students/5799 Hours)\***

1. Collect demographic information on General Studies students and compare to university data from fall semester to fall semester. Collect information about such areas as: age, gender, ethnicity, enrollment status, and class standing.

		Fall 2006			Fall 2007		
		IPFW %	General Studies %	G.S. % of IPFW's Total	IPFW %	General Studies %	G.S. % of IPFW's Total
Gender	Male	43.3	36.05	5	43.1	39.04	5.09
	Female	56.7	63.95	6	56.9	60.96	6.16
Ethnicity	Asian/Pac.Is.	2	.38	.01	.4	.66	1.76
	Black	5	7.64	9.2	5.1	8.90	9.73
Ethnicity	Hispanic	3	2.04	19.2	2.7	2.64	5.32
	Am.Ind./Alas.	.4	.51	6.5	.4	.33	4.65
Age	0-17	1.6	0	0	.42	0	0
	18-20	33.8	8.92	1.7	39.29	8.40	1.28
Age	21-25	31.9	37.32	5.9	33.73	36.24	6.09
	26-30	12.8	14.90	6.2	11.41	15.82	7.72
Age	31-50	17.6	32.61	9.8	13.81	33.44	12.76
	Over 50	2.3	6.24	16	1.34	6.10	21.51
Enrollment	Part-time	39	49.76	7	38	48.43	9.36
	Full-time	61	50.24	4.5	62	51.57	4.02
Class Standing	Freshmen	42	15.79	2.5	46.92	13.84	1.75
	Sophomore	21	22.03	5.6	24.04	24.05	5.7
Class Standing	Junior	12	21.66	11.6	12.09	25.7	11.38
	Seniors	15	40.51	12	16.96	36.41	11.47

\* Fall 2006 Enrollment: 620 Students/5799 Credit Hours

2. Collect information on numbers of students declaring majors in General Studies, prior majors, admission categories, fall semester to fall semester.

		Fall 2006	Fall 2007
Admission Category	Adult Admit	16	8
	GED Admit	3	4
	High School Admit	13	2
	Permanent Intercampus Transfer	11	16
	Re-admit	7	2
	Re-entry	54	52
	Transfer	43	41
Change of Major	A&S	24	16
	BUS	4	3
	EDUC	18	15
	ETCS	2	10
	HS/HHS	18	17
	OLS	1	0
	SPEA	1	5
	ACCS/MAC	19	13
	VPA	7	10

3. Survey graduates, five years and one year out.

We had a much better response this year to the survey. We sent out 354 surveys, with an 8.5% return (30 returned). Last year it was less than 1%. We sent it out by mail with a return postage-paid envelope. We also included the web site for the survey as an alternative to returning it. We sent a reminder postcard with the web site on it to those that did not complete the survey. 80% were returned by mail. The survey results are attached.

## **2007 GENERAL SURVEY RESULTS**

- 354 students who graduated from General Studies in 2005-2006 and 2001-02 (1 and 5 years out) were sent the survey
- 8.5% of the surveys were returned (30)
- 73% of those who responded were still living in Indiana (22)
- 93% of the respondents received their bachelor's degree with General Studies and 23% received their associate degree
- 76% of the respondents were women and 23% were men
- 86% felt their degree expectations were met, 10% did not.
- 43% felt their IPFW experience was excellent and 57% felt it was good.
- 36% of the respondents pursued credits in higher education after graduation

### **Participants were employed by:**

- Allen County Government
- Charter One
- Chicago Storm
- City of Fort Wayne
- Classic City Center for Arts & Athletics
- Dick's Sporting Goods
- Do It Best Corp
- Dr. Richard Sweeney
- Fort Wayne Community Schools
- Fort Wayne Metals
- Girl Scouts
- IPFW
- McDonalds Corp
- McMillen Center
- Medical Protective
- Parkview Health System
- Ride the Wave Pro- Watersports
- Self Employed
- Smokey Bones
- St. Mary's City Public Schools
- State of IN-Whitley Co. Dept of Child Services
- Swiss Village, Inc.
- Symetra Financial
- Target
- Vincent Village
- Youth Services Bureau, Huntington

**Current job titles included:**

- Accountant
- Athletic Camp Director / Coach
- Attorney
- Banker
- Case Manager
- Communications Manager
- CSR
- Culinary Manager
- Dental Hygienist
- Director of Marketing
- Family Development Specialist
- HR Manager
- Insurance Broker
- Membership Clerk, Girl Scouts of America
- Merchandise Buyer, Dick's Corporate Office
- Office Manager
- Police Officer
- President Construction Company
- Program Coordinator, DCS
- Registered Nurse
- RMT for McDonald's Corp
- Sales Coordinator
- Spanish Teacher
- Store Manager
- Teacher
- Team Leader, Target
- Transportation Coordinator

**Skills former students reported using:**

- Advocating
- Bookwork
- Business
- Communication
- Computer, Excel
- Conflict management
- General Education courses
- Language Skills
- Management, working with people
- Math
- Organization
- Parenting
- Persuasion
- Professionalism
- Psychology
- Reason, logic
- Social Services
- Supervision
- Writing/reports

### **Did the degree meet your career or educational goals?**

- It helped me with my previous profession at Lincoln Life. I later went back for more education
- My current position doesn't require a degree but I want to go back and get my Masters later.
- It allowed me to about anything, job-wise.
- Degree not highly recognized or specific to one area.
- I was able to obtain employment right out of school.
- Enjoyed the accessibility of degree and program; still trying to achieve career goals
- I have had a real hard time marketing this degree and has really limited my employment options.
- It was a great degree for a returning adult, working full-time, raising a family and being involved in the community.
- The GENERAL STUDIES degree allowed me to develop a more well-rounded education rather than a degree which would narrow career options.
- I have applied for several naturalist positions and various other environmental positions. Have had a few interviews but nothing more. Am still unemployed.
- I now own a construction company and use the skills I obtained through school to manage business/workers.
- With my BGS I was able to obtain full-time case management work at Vincent House Homeless Shelter.
- The BGS program is great because it allows you to tailor your classes to fit the needs of your career choice.
- I have exceeded my expectations. I am an assistant manager for McDonald's (hired for my degree) and working on my master's in criminal justice.
- BGS goes with my Dental Hygiene.
- I had to change midway due to a medical condition.
- Need my bachelor to teach English in China which I will be doing in 2008.

### **Comments received on academic experience:**

- Loved most my classes & professors.
- Did not like foreign teachers for computer classes —difficult to understand
- Staff friendly, professional, and willing to answer questions and address concerns
- Loved going to school
- Wish I could continue now towards a Masters
- Fantastic advisors, great profs-many were encouraging
- Good only because I did not get a great deal of guidance until I transferred into Gen Studies
- Knowledgeable, caring profs
- Able to choose courses of interest & of use in career

**Please make any comments you have about the General Studies Degree Program or its services:**

- I don't think the dept. has any problems other than the name of the degree. "General Studies" doesn't sound good to employers. Maybe a fancier name would help sell it more.
- It was great learning everything I did—I only wish I had learned everything sooner and finished my degree after 4 yrs—not 15 yrs!
- There are so many positives about this program it would be difficult to name. I appreciated being able to walk in to IPFW quite awhile after graduating, and they all knew my name! They are such an encouraging group/ they make you feel like you can do anything. With this degree I just have so many options. My first career choice was being a Probation Officer which I was until recently. I decided I wanted to help needy children and now I am. There seems to be no limits.
- I'd like to get a secondary teaching license. Could someone tell me about "transitions to teaching" thru IPFW?
- Great degree for someone who wants a broad spectrum of abilities to apply to the work force.
- Sandy McMurtrie is very knowledgeable and is a wonderful advisor!! I plan to return for my Master's degree.
- I excelled with Criminal Justice. Sandy has been a part of my life in one way or another since childhood. My academic guidance was great in General Studies! ☺
- The advisors in General Studies were extremely helpful as I put together my class schedule & obtained my degree.
- General Studies made me a world-rounded person. Taking OLS and Human Service classes made me understand what I wanted to do. General Studies gave me a better view on my future.
- I took some professional writing courses at Taylor University to learn how publication works. I also took a grant writing class at IPFW to make myself more employable for not-for-profit agencies.

#### 4. Focus group with alumni.

Last year, based upon a recommendation from the keynote speaker at last year's Assessment Workshop, we used a focus group of alumni (7). The focus group was facilitated by a member of another division. The group was asked to respond to several questions:

- ❖ Services provided by the department (advising)
- ❖ Communication provided by the department (newsletters, emails)
- ❖ Alumni survey
- ❖ Baccalaureate Framework
- ❖ Learning statements for General Studies

The group, as a whole, indicated very positive feelings about their experiences as General Studies students, how their degree fit into the Baccalaureate Framework and the program learning goals. They felt strongly about their positive relationships with the staff during their time both as undergraduates and alumni. It was suggested that a piece, separate from the newsletter, be developed listing graduates and places of employment, sent to alumni. It was also suggested that a focus group be done with graduating seniors.

#### Concluding Thoughts

The system-wide School of Continuing Studies has a new Dean as of January 1, 2007. He is very interested in assessment and wants to pursue this process system-wide. The system-wide General Studies Program has also changed some degree requirements that could have an impact on our assessment process as well. I believe, based on these two things, we will be changing our assessment process again. We have been collecting data for some time now about the students in the General Studies program. We have also been working on our learning outcome statements. We have developed the following plan of action:

1. There will be changes made to the rubric before the next assessment. Faculty and students will be contacted regarding sending papers and a copy of the course syllabus for the next reading in the spring.
2. The alumni survey is available on the web, however, we hardly had any alumni emails (alumni/development do not have many either), so we are going to send out a mailing asking for email addresses. The survey will continue to be offered both in paper and web format. Only 6 surveys were received by web, and 24 were received in paper format. The surveys did provide several "human interest" story possibilities about our alums and we are pursuing those for future newsletters.

3. This spring two focus groups, one for graduating seniors and one for alumni, will take place. There was an article in the spring newsletter, *Generally Speaking*, listing places of employment from the survey. We also plan to update our "business card book" with a request for more cards.
4. There was an article in the spring issue of *Generally Speaking* about assessment and how important it is for students to participate.
5. Discussion in the School of Continuing Studies is strongly advocating a capstone to be required by Spring '09. We will then assess our direct measures of outcome using this course.
6. We will share this information with our Executive Director, the Dean of the School of Continuing Studies and the Faculty Advisory Council.

Written Communication Rubric  
General Studies

Analytic written communication rubric:

Criteria	Developing	Proficient	Superior
Purpose & Audience	Purpose unclear, does not address topic/directions, does not grasp issues, does not use appropriate style for the audience	Adheres to purpose, fulfills assignment, shows adequate understanding of issues, style is appropriate for audience	Addresses purpose effectively, uses assignment to explore topic's intrinsic interest, shows full understanding of issues, style engages audience effectively
Organization	No central idea, introduction/conclusion do not relate to purpose, no clear logic or focus, many repetitions or digressions, lack of structure	Central idea is clear, introduction/conclusion relate to purpose, paragraph structure is adequate, some problems with consistency, logic or transitions	Focuses consistently on clearly expressed central idea, introduction/conclusion flow well with the purpose, uses paragraph structure and transitions to guide reader effectively
Development	Most ideas unsupported, confusion between personal and external evidence, unclear use of distinction or levels of generality, reasoning flawed	Supports most ideas with effective examples and details finds suitable balance between references to personal and external evidence, makes key distinctions	Explores ideas vigorously, supports points fully using an appropriate balance of subjective and objective evidence, reasons effectively making useful distinctions
Language	Word use is unclear, sentence structures are inadequate for clarity, uses ungrammatical English, errors are distracting	Word forms are correct, sentence structure is effective, applies standard English grammar and mechanics, presence of a few errors is not distracting	Employs words with fluency, develops concise standard, grammatical English sentences, balances a variety of sentence structures effectively
Source	Cites sources but does not effectively use or document them	Cites sources with minor errors, all quoted material is documented	Cites sources correctly, all quoted material is documented

*Superior* represents writing that stands out as excellent and above the IPFW minimum standard. *Proficient* represents the standard we expect for college-level writing. *Developing* does not meet the minimum level of writing for IPFW students.

1/08