General Education Core Curriculum: Humanities (Core Competency #4)

Humanities: To understand the diversity of human knowledge and experience across cultures as examined through the humanities.

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Approved by: Greg Handel   **Date:**

Northwestern Mission. Northwestern State University is a responsive, student-oriented institution that is committed to the creation, dissemination, and acquisition of knowledge through teaching, research, and service. The University maintains as its highest priority excellence in teaching in graduate and undergraduate programs. Northwestern State University prepares its students to become productive members of society and promotes economic development and improvements in the quality of life of the citizens in its region.

Northwestern Core Curriculum. Northwestern has a broadly-based core curriculum that is central to the University's mission and consistent with the Louisiana Board of Regents' requirements for general education survey courses applicable to all students regardless of their major. The core encompasses the knowledge and abilities that Northwestern believes are essential to college graduates. Its requirements are designed to improve students' writing and speaking, to expand students' aptitude in mathematics and its applications, to strengthen students' understanding of biological, physical, social, and behavioral sciences, and to develop an appreciation and knowledge of the arts and humanities.

The goal of the core curriculum is for undergraduate students, depending on their respective degree program, to obtain appropriate learning outcomes for this general education competency.

General Education Requirements: Under the university requirements for the Bachelor's degree, the student must complete nine credit hours (three courses) in the Humanities area of General Education, one course in each of three sub-areas:
- Literature: English 2110: Introduction to Literature (3 hours);
  [English majors—English 2070: Major Writers in World Literature (3 hours)]
- History: History 1010, 1020, 2010, OR 2020 (3 credit hours)
- Communication: Business Administration 2200, Communication 1010 or 2500, OR Philosophy 1010 (3 hours).

Methodology: The assessment process includes:

(1) Data from assessment tools (direct & indirect and quantitative & qualitative) are collected and returned to the executive director at the end of each term indicated (see Student Learning Outcomes section, below, for details).

(2) The executive director will analyze the data to determine whether the

applicable outcomes are met:

(3)   Results from the assessment will be discussed with the appropriate staff members.

(4)   The executive director, in consultation with the staff and senior leadership, will determine proposed changes to measurable outcomes, assessment tools for the next assessment period and, where needed, service changes.

NOTE: Through AY 2017-18, the University Core for the Humanities consisted of four different competencies, each assessed by a different course offered by one of several Humanities academic disciplines. Starting with AY 2018-19, the four Core competencies were eliminated; instead, the state Board of Regents definition of the Humanities competency was adopted (see "Humanities: Core Competency" on page 1 of this report). The goals of this change were to align with the Regents requirements for the competency and to facilitate the collection of data *across* the Humanities disciplines for the purpose of determining the effect of the program *as a whole* on student learning outcomes. The focus of our assessment work is now on the entire Humanities program curriculum, in order to assess its ability to help students to learn about ideas that are key to understanding the Humanities and its value and place in the world.

The AY 2018-19 Humanities Assessment Group employed the new Humanities Competency definition to formulate new Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs), measures (including a Method and a Target for each), the data collection process, and the data analysis procedure. The Report that follows details the work completed for the Assessment, and the results of the data analysis. Finally, based on those results, our plan of action moving forward is outlined.

Student Learning Outcomes (SLO): The following SLOs apply to Humanities courses.
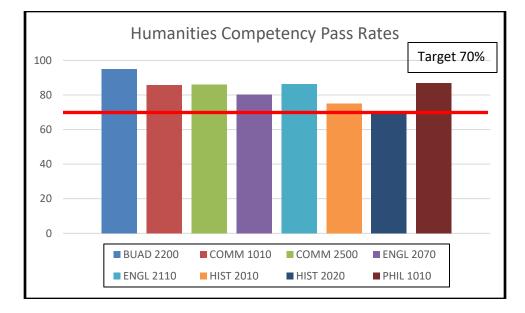
Student Learning Outcome 1. Students will communicate an understanding of the diversity of human experience, including issues such as nationality, ethnicity, race, language, gender, sexuality, exceptionalities, religion, and culture.

Student Learning Outcome 2. Students will demonstrate an understanding of how various political, economic, social, and cultural movements emerge, evolve, and influence human thought and experience over time.

Measures. Combines the assessment of a Methodology and a Target.
NOTE: All disciplines employed 70% as the common Target score.

Competency	Course Name	Methodology	SLO Measure	Target %	Term	# Assessed
4. Humanities	BUAD 2200	Paper / Pres.	1 / 1.7	95	2018-19	180
	COMM 1010	Presentation	1 / 1.5, 1.6	85.8	2018-19	1,001
	COMM 2500	Project / Paper	1 / 1.5, 1.6	86.02	2018-19	101
	ENGL 2070	Writing Assign.	1 / 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4	80.31%	2018-19	21
	ENGL 2110	Writing Assign.	1 / 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4	86.32	2018-29	488
	HIST 2010	Post Class Survey	2 / 2.1	75	2018-19	142
	HIST 2020	Post Class Survey	2 / 2.1	70	2018-19	140
	PHIL 1010	Writing Assign.	2 / 2.2	87	2018-19	132

Humanities Assessment Finding. Number assessed: 2,205. Target Met.

Graph: Humanities Assessment Results, 2018-19.

Summary: 2018-19 Humanities Assessment Results. Students met or exceeded the Humanities Competency Target Score in all disciplines and courses in 2018-19. The remainder of this Report provides the results for SLO 1 and 2 and their associated Measures. At the end of the Report, based on the results of the 2018-19 Humanities Assessment, the section "Plan of Action Moving Forward" is presented.

SLO 1. Number assessed: 1,791. Students will communicate an understanding of the diversity of human experience, including issues such as nationality, ethnicity, race, language, gender, sexuality, exceptionalities, religion, and culture.

Measure 1.1. (Direct – Knowledge)
One written assignment of at least 500 words from all ENGL 2110 and 2070 students will be evaluated by a panel of faculty members, using the standardized Assessment Rubric for ENGL 2070/2110. The writing will be evaluated to determine if students can demonstrate a basic awareness and understanding of cultural differences (behaviors, expressions, etc.). At least 70% of students sampled will score a 3 (competency) or higher on the evaluation.

Course Name	Methodology	Target	Term
ENGL 2070	Writing Assignment	85.71%	Fall, Spring
ENGL 2110	Writing Assignment	86.27%	Fall, Spring

Finding. Target Met.

Analysis. The analysis of the writing assignment showed that students in both

ENGL 2070 and 2110 showed a high level of competency in their understanding of the diversity of human experience, exceeding the Target by a full 15%. These results validate both the usefulness of the writing assignment and the rubric and also the data collection procedure. Conversely, the initial understanding by faculty concerning the new assessment process and the design of the assignment were at times in need of refinement.

Decision or action to drive future improvement. The Target was met and exceeded for Measure 1.1. Based on the analysis of the 2018-19 results, in 2019-20 we will make the following changes: 1.) Increase the Target (see the section, "Plan of Action Moving Forward," for discussion); 2.) Provide workshops for faculty on assignment design; 3.) Provide workshops for faculty on class lessons related to instruction in awareness and understanding of cultural differences.

Measure 1.2. (Direct – Knowledge)
One written assignment of at least 500 words from all ENGL 2110 and 2070 students taught will be evaluated by a panel of faculty members, using the standardized Assessment Rubric for ENGL 2070/2110 (attached). The writing will be evaluated to determine if students can demonstrate a basic knowledge of social, literary, and historical contexts. At least 70% of students sampled will score a 3 (competency) or higher on the evaluation.

Course Name	Methodology	Target	Term
ENGL 2070	Writing Assignment	72.73%	Spring
ENGL 2110	Writing Assignment	88.21%	Spring

Finding. Target Met.

Analysis. The analysis of the writing assignment showed that students in both ENGL 2070 and 2110 showed a high level of competency in demonstrating a basic knowledge of social, literary, and historical contexts, exceeding the Target by up to 18%. These results validate both the usefulness of the writing assignment and the rubric and also the data collection procedure. Conversely, the initial understanding by faculty concerning the new assessment process and the design of the assignment were at times in need of refinement.

Decision or action to drive future improvement. The Target was met and exceeded for Measure 1.2. Based on the analysis of the 2018-19 results, in 2019-20 we will make the following changes: 1.) Increase the Target (see the section, "Plan of Action Moving Forward," for discussion; 2.) Provide workshops for faculty on assignment design; 3.) Provide workshops for faculty on class lessons related to instruction in awareness and understanding of cultural differences.

Measure 1.3. (Direct – Knowledge/skill)
One written assignment of at least 500 words from all ENGL 2110 and 2070 students taught will be evaluated by a panel of faculty members, using the standardized

Assessment Rubric for ENGL 2070/2110 (attached). The writing will be evaluated to determine students' ability to analyze literary material and show understanding of diversity through that literary analysis. At least 70% of students sampled will score a 3 (competency) or higher on the evaluation.

Course Name	Methodology	Target	Term
ENGL 2070	Writing Assignment	80.95%	Spring
ENGL 2110	Writing Assignment	83.00%	Spring

Finding. Target Met.

Analysis. The analysis of the writing assignment showed that students in both ENGL 2070 and 2110 showed a high level of competency in their ability to analyze literary material and show understanding of diversity, exceeding the Target by more than 10%. These results validate both the usefulness of the writing assignment and the rubric and also the data collection procedure. Conversely, the initial understanding by faculty concerning the new assessment process and the design of the assignment were at times in need of refinement.

Decision or action to drive future improvement. The Target was met and exceeded for Measure 1.3. Based on the analysis of the 2018-19 results, in 2019-20 we will make the following changes: 1.) Increase the Target (see the section, "Plan of Action Moving Forward," for discussion; 2.) Provide workshops for faculty on assignment design; 3.) Provide workshops for faculty on class lessons related to instruction in awareness and understanding of cultural differences.

<u>**Measure 1.4.**</u> (Direct – Knowledge)
One written assignment of at least 500 words from all ENGL 2110 and 2070 students will be evaluated by a panel of faculty members, using the standardized Assessment Rubric for ENGL 2070/2110 (attached). The writing will be evaluated to determine if students can demonstrate a basic understanding of the relationships between identities and writing. At least 70% of students sampled will score a 3 (competency) or higher on the evaluation.

Course Name	Methodology	Target	Term
ENGL 2070	Writing Assignment	81.82%	Spring
ENGL 2110	Writing Assignment	87.80%	Spring

Finding. Target Met.

Analysis. The analysis of the writing assignment showed that students in both ENGL 2070 and 2110 showed a high level of competency to demonstrate a basic understanding of the relationships between identities and writing, exceeding the Target by up to 18%. These results validate both the usefulness of the writing assignment and the rubric and also the data collection procedure. Conversely, the initial understanding by faculty concerning the new assessment process and the design of the assignment were at times in need of refinement.

Decision or action to drive future improvement. The Target was met and exceeded for Measure 1.4. Based on the analysis of the 2018-19 results, in 2019-20 we will make the following changes: 1.) Increase the Target (see the section, "Plan of Action Moving Forward," for discussion; 2.) Provide workshops for faculty on assignment design; 3.) Provide workshops for faculty on class lessons related to instruction in awareness and understanding of cultural differences.

Measure 1.5. (Direct – Knowledge)
Students will demonstrate competence in researching and delivering an effective oral persuasive presentation designed for diverse audiences and contexts and scoring an average minimum of an 70% on the assessment rubric.

Course Name	Methodology	Target	Term
COMM 1010	Persuasive Presentation; Informative Culture Presentation	85.80%	Spring
COMM 2500	Culture Project Presentation	89.79%	Spring

Finding. Target Met.

Analysis. The analysis of the presentation assignment showed that students in both COMM 1010 and 2500 showed a high level of competency to research and deliver an effective oral presentation designed for diverse audiences and contexts, exceeding the Target by up to 20%. These results show that the rubric and the data collection procedure worked as intended. However, data required from third-party providers for the assessment increased the time needed to collect the data. Also, some students had trouble uploading the presentation video to the grading platform.

Decision or action to drive future improvement. The Target was met and exceeded for Measure 1.5. Based on the analysis of the 2018-19 results, in 2019-20 we will make the following changes: 1.) Form faculty teams to evaluate the presentation videos to ensure parity in grading across sections; 2.) Update the software required for uploading the videos for grading to simplify the procedure for students.

Measure 1.6. (Direct – Knowledge)
Students will recognize and analyze how verbal and nonverbal communication styles vary across cultures and affect the way people communicate by completing a Culture Project and Presentation and scoring an average minimum of 70% on each of the two assessment rubrics.

Course Name	Methodology	Target	Term
COMM 1010	Persuasive Presentation; Informative Culture Presentation	85.80%	Spring
COMM 2500	Culture Project Research Paper	82.25%	Spring

Finding. Target Met.

Analysis. The analysis of the oral presentation and research paper assignments showed that students in both COMM 1010 and 2500 showed a high level of competency to recognize and analyze how verbal and non-verbal communication styles vary across cultures and affect the way people communicate, exceeding the Target by up to 16%. These results show that the rubric and the data collection procedure worked as intended. However, data required from third-party providers for the assessment increased the time needed to collect the data. Also, some students had trouble uploading the presentation video to the grading platform.

Decision or action to drive future improvement. The Target was met and exceeded for Measure 1.6. Based on the analysis of the 2018-19 results, in 2019-20 we will make the following changes: 1.) Form faculty teams to evaluate the presentation videos to ensure parity in grading across sections; 2.) Update the software required for uploading the videos for grading to simplify the procedure for students; 3.) Continue to evaluate the goals and objectives of the assignments as well as the rubric focus/language to ensure that the assignment is testing and evaluating the leu components of our SLOs; 4.) Next year, students in all sections will be evaluated under both criteria.

Measure 1.7. (Direct – Knowledge)

One team-created written assignment and one team or individual presentation of the written assignment from all BUAD 2200 students will be evaluated by a panel of faculty members. The writing and oral presentation will be evaluated to determine if students can demonstrate a basic awareness and understanding of cultural differences (socialized norms, politics, religion, etc.). At least 70% of students sampled will score a 3 (competency) or higher on the evaluation.

Course Name	Methodology	Target	Term
BUAD 2200	Informative Research Paper and Informative Presentation	95.00%	Spring

Finding. Target Met.

Analysis. The analysis of the oral presentation and research paper assignments showed that students in BUAD 2200 demonstrated a high level of competency a basic awareness and understanding of cultural differences, exceeding the Target by up to 25%. The results indicate that the new instructor for the online sections was more closely able to mimic what was being done in the face-to-face courses, an improvement over the fall 2018 online data, which had to be removed from the assessment. However, the spring semester showed that some of the groups did not function well together, especially in the online sections, who needed more directions and examples for the assignment.

Decision or action to drive future improvement. The Target was met and exceeded for Measure 1.7. Based on the analysis of the 2018-19 results, in 2019-20 we will make the following changes: 1.) Instructors will meet several times during each semester to ensure that the courses are very closely aligned and that all grading rubrics and assignments are the same; 2.) To further aid students with the

expectations for the written portion of the assignment, short instructional videos will be posted on Moodle to help with the instructions for the assignments; 3.) To further aid students in their ability to demonstrate basic awareness and understanding of cultural differences, we will increase instruction in the areas of business and social etiquette in foreign countries; 4.) To further aid students in their ability to deliver and oral presentation, we will create short instructional videos to help guide students in what is expected in a satisfactory oral presentation.

SLO 1: Results Summary**.** The Target was met and exceeded for Measures 1.1 to 1.7. Data collection and analysis procedures worked as anticipated, and student awareness and understanding of culture and cultural differences was generally found to be well above the expected 70% Target.

SLO 2**.** Number assessed: 414. Students will demonstrate an understanding of how various political, economic, social, and cultural movements emerge, evolve, and influence human thought and experience over time.

Measure 2.1. (Indirect – Knowledge)
Students will demonstrate their understanding of political, economic, social, and cultural movements. Comprehension of how human thought and historical concepts emerge over time will be evaluated in a post-class survey, in each of the four core classes (HIST 1010, 1020, 2010, and 2020). Benchmarks of 70% of students scoring 70% on the quiz will be the goal in the first assessment cycle.

Course Name	Methodology	Target	Term
HIST 1010	Post-class Survey	N/A	Fall
HIST 1020	Post-class Survey	N/A	Fall
HIST 2010	Post-class Survey	75.00%	Spring
HIST 2020	Post-class Survey	70.00%	Spring

Finding. Target Met.

Analysis. The analysis of the post-class survey assignment showed that students in History 2010 and 2020 demonstrated a high level of competency in their awareness and understanding of how human thought and historical concepts emerge over time, exceeding the Target by up to 5%. The assignment served as an effective method to measure student comprehension and understanding of culture. The survey proved to be easy to implement in Moodle shells for both face-to-face and online sections. Response rates for students were consistent across the multiple sections of HIST 2010 and 2010, though the response rate can be improved, as well. Finally, a few questions may have been difficult for students to answer, due to the wording of each item on the survey, and some students may have struggled with the concepts as taught in class.

Decision or action to drive future improvement. The Target was met and exceeded for Measure 2.1. Based on the analysis of the 2018-19 results, in 2019-20 we will

make the following changes: 1.) Identify questions in the survey that students struggled to answer correctly, due to ambiguity or confusion over the wording; 2.) Faculty will increase focused classroom instruction on students' ability to comprehend historical concepts; 3.) Increase the Target (see the section, "Plan of Action Moving Forward," for discussion.

Measure 2.2. (Direct – Knowledge)
The specific assessment is to be chosen by the instructor of each section of PHIL 1010. It will consist of a written assignment of at least 400 words integrated into some part of the course. The writing can be obtained in several ways: as a Discussion Forum posting, as an essay question on an exam, a journal entry, or something similar. Therefore, the assessment will contribute to the final grade for the course as well as satisfy the requirement for a SACS assessment.

Course Name	Methodology	Target	Term
PHIL 1010	Writing Assignment	87.00%	Spring

Finding. Target Met.

Analysis. The analysis of the writing assignment showed that students in PHIL 1010 demonstrated competency in their awareness and understanding of how human thought and historical concepts emerge over time, exceeding the Target by 17%, which was higher than expected. Also, the questions asked on the assignment were creative and fit well with the SLO. In addition, all students in the class were required to take the assessment, providing more and better data in the spring semester. However, the topic of how war affects philosophical speculation may have been difficult for students to address because the topic was not explicitly or completely foregrounded in class lectures.

Decision or action to drive future improvement. The Target was met and exceeded for Measure 2.2. Based on the analysis of the 2018-19 results, in 2019-20 we will make the following changes: 1.) Revise the reporting form to collect all data required for the Humanities Assessment Project; 2.) Add supplementary reading material on the Peloponnesian War, the Peace of Westphalia, and World War II to help with background on the war and philosophical speculation question, thereby giving students better tools to meet the SLO; 3.) Require all students in the class to take the assessment.

SLO 2: Results Summary. The Target was met and/or exceeded for Measures 2.1 and 2.2. Data collection and analysis procedures worked as anticipated, and student awareness and understanding of how human thought and historical concepts emerge over time were generally found to be above the expected Target of 70%.

Comprehensive summary of key evidence based on an analysis of the 2018-19 results (to be implemented in 2019-20):

- All nine Measures met the Target and eight of the nine exceeded the Target by between 2% and 25%. Based on these results, a new common Target must be selected for 2019-20.

- These results also validate the usefulness of the new assessment instruments, which captured information about student performance that was not collected in previous assessment cycles.

- However, the wide range in the results across Measures may indicate issues in the design of the assessments or rubrics.

- All students enrolled in each Humanities course were required to take the assessment in spring 2019, providing more detailed data on student performance across the Humanities disciplines, compared to fall 2018.

- The new data collection and analysis procedures were also generally easier to administer and to follow, compared to previous years.

- Conversely, faculty unfamiliarity concerning the new assessment process and its design led to some inconsistent applications of the assignments and administration procedures.

- Student understanding of key concepts in the Humanities Competency can be improved further via increased and better instruction in each course.

- Scoring of the assessments was generally consistent across disciplines, but there is room for improvement.

- In addition, student understanding of assessment assignments and their instructions were at times incomplete or confused.

- As well, a couple of assessments experienced technical difficulties with technology, including problems with online uploading of students' completed assignments for evaluation.

Plan of Action Moving Forward:

To address the areas for improvement noted in the Comprehensive Summary, the Humanities Assessment Group identified the following changes, to be enacted in 2019-20:

1. Choose a new common Target, considering the wide range of results across the five Humanities disciplines. Choosing the new Target will likely require careful consideration of the 2018-19 results, the various assessments currently in use, and the methods for evaluating them.

2. Analyze the 2018-19 assessment data to determine the items on each assessment that were confusing to students and revise them as necessary.

3. Organize workshops with faculty on the assessment design, assessment

assignments, and evaluation procedures, to improve understanding of the assessment program and increase consistency in its administration.

4. Organize workshops with faculty on increasing and improving classroom instruction of the Humanities competency in their courses.

5. Hold meetings with faculty who conduct the scoring of the assessment assignments to improve consistency across course sections.

6. Provide materials to students, including brief videos, on the assessment assignment and required instructions, to improve student understanding of the assessment, the assignment, and the requirements for completing it.

7. Work with NSU IT and ECE concerning the technology issues that affected data collection of students' completed assignments.