

GE SLO Self-development and Global Awareness  
Fall 2020 Assessment Narrative  
By the Riverside Assessment Committee

### Introduction

According to the Riverside City College catalog, the awarding of an associate degree is intended to represent more than just an accumulation of units. The associate degree says that recipients have taken coursework in broad areas of study, including the sciences, mathematics, and humanities, which have allowed them to develop certain capabilities including the ability to communicate clearly and to think critically. Moreover, recipients of the associate degree will be able to demonstrate those capabilities in courses that allow for the introduction, development, and, in some cases, mastery of said skills.

To this end, the College has four general education student learning outcomes (GE SLOs) that are assessed to measure to what extent (1) the courses mapped to GE outcomes encourage the development of these capabilities, and (2) the students passing these courses have, indeed, developed the capabilities.

Self-development and global awareness are primary skills that those earning an associate degree from RCC should possess. The GE outcome for self-development and global awareness reads as follows:

Students will be able to develop goals and devise strategies for personal development and well-being. They will be able to demonstrate an understanding of what it means to be an ethical human being and effective citizen in their awareness of diversity and various cultural viewpoints.

### Assessment Project and Instrument

In Fall 2020, the Riverside Assessment Committee (RAC) did a direct assessment of student artifacts in four content areas using the attached rubric, which divided the GE SLO into two parts. The courses were chosen to include assignments and student work from different divisions across the college.

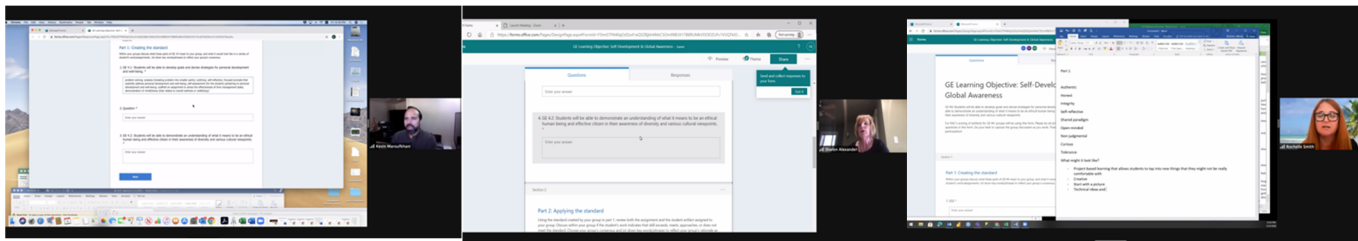
The four content areas and artifacts were as follows:

1. Kinesiology 4—Nutrition: A writing prompt and the assessment results from that prompt
2. Hum 10—World religions: A "C" and an "A" paper that employed argumentation for an assignment called, "Whose Yoga?" which addressed the status of Yoga as a spiritual/religious exercise that sparks controversy in American schools.

3. TRiO (service area)—SSS Wellness Program student survey results
4. HES 1—Health science: A pre- and post-test

Those who participated in the assessment and rubric scoring were provided with the assignment, where available, for reference only and were instructed not to grade the student work. Instead, the members were told to evaluate to what extent the assignment facilitates the students' practice, competency development, and/or mastery of the SLO. In other words, the participants were advised to look at the artifacts and see what the students were being asked to do and then determine to what degree the student demonstrated competency as described in the GE SLO.

As part of the important conversation about expectations and the purpose of assessment, those who participated in the scoring spent time norming the two subsections of the SLO before beginning the analysis of the artifacts. Because of COVID-19, we used Zoom breakout rooms and included a subject-matter expert in each of the four breakout groups. Each group normed separately rather than as a whole committee because of the limitations presented by the online format.

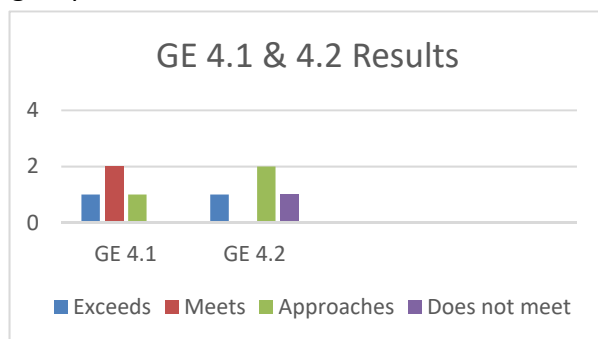


Each group developed a common vocabulary of words and phrases to discuss the skills and competencies associated with self-development and global awareness, specifically what these broad terms mean, what the component parts of self-development and global awareness competencies are, and what this might look like in various assignments and student work.

We were hoping to learn primarily to what degree our students were able to demonstrate competence in self-development and global awareness upon completion of courses mapped to this GE SLO. Secondly, we knew that we would also be evaluating the artifacts, and whether the artifacts in courses mapped to this GE SLO were allowing students to approach, meet, or exceed the standards set forth in the rubric.

## Results

Results of each group's assessment of the artifacts are shown below:



KIN 4					
GE 4.1 Students will be able to develop goals and devise strategies for personal development and well-being.	Exceeds	Meets X	Approaches	Does Not Meet	N/A
GE 4.2 They will be able to demonstrate an understanding of what it means to be an ethical human being and effective citizen in their awareness of diversity and various cultural viewpoints.			X		

HUM 10					
GE 4.1 Students will be able to develop goals and devise strategies for personal development and well-being.	Exceeds	Meets X	Approaches	Does Not Meet	N/A
GE 4.2 They will be able to demonstrate an understanding of what it means to be an ethical human being and effective citizen in their awareness of diversity and various cultural viewpoints.	X				

TRiO Survey					
GE 4.1 Students will be able to develop goals and devise strategies for personal development and well-being.	Exceeds X	Meets	Approaches	Does Not Meet	N/A
GE 4.2 They will be able to demonstrate an understanding of what it means to be an ethical human being and effective citizen in their awareness of diversity and various cultural viewpoints.				X	

HES 1					
GE 4.1 Students will be able to develop goals and devise strategies for personal development and well-being.	Exceeds	Meets	Approaches X	Does Not Meet	N/A
GE 4.2 They will be able to demonstrate an understanding of what it means to be an ethical human being and effective citizen in their awareness of diversity and various cultural viewpoints.			X		

### Analysis

One of the most interesting parts of this process was the individual norming. With the previous three GE SLO assessments, we conducted the norming session as one large group, and then broke into smaller groups to score and discuss the individual artifacts. This time, because we were working virtually, the norming and the scoring were both done in small groups. Interestingly, though the groups worked separately, they came up with many of the same words and phrases to define each of the two parts of GE SLO #4. Here is a graphic representation of the norming that was done:



It is clear that the groups separately came to see personal development, reflection, awareness, and self as important to defining self-development and global awareness.

After the groups determined the specific criteria by which they would evaluate the artifacts, then, it seemed, much of all groups' conversations focused on GE SLO 4.2. The group working with the Kinesiology artifact commented that a student's development or mastery of GE SLO 4.2 may not show in a test and that it might be easier to see students' awareness of diversity and various cultural viewpoints in a paper. One interesting point made by a kinesiology instructor was that GE SLO 4.2 seems to be reinforced in students' interactions with each other. He described the students in kinesiology classes as being representative of RCC's diverse student body, with students of varying races, ages, genders, and religions sitting and working and collaborating side by side in kinesiology classes.

The group working with the SSS Wellness Survey came to a similar conclusion about GE SLO 4.2 in that they said the "survey is meant to provide feedback for further development" rather than circling back and verifying whether that development actually happened. Their recommendation for the future was to create a post-survey "which better captures student experiences and learning as a result of participating in the activities" discussed on the survey.

The group looking at the Hum 10 artifacts had a very interesting discussion about grades versus SLO mastery. This group noted that students could earn a C on the assignment and still demonstrate that they gained demonstrable skills in the area of self-development and global awareness. In other words, students' grades in the class may or may not indicate mastery of the course SLOs of the GE SLOs. There was discussion in this group about the importance of intentionality in assignment design.

During the whole-group debrief at the end of the norming and evaluation session, one main idea that was raised was that GE SLO 4.2 seemed more problematic than 4.1. The groups said that many of the artifacts easily met GE SLO 4.1, but GE SLO 4.2 would require follow-up conversations and assignments specifically about diversity. Discussion then occurred regarding best practices in hopes that future assessment of this GE SLO may yield more meaningful discussions and insight into GE SLO 4.2. These best practices are discussed further in the next section.

### Future Implications and Recommendations

One recommendation stemming from this process centers on the group norming process. Since we had to conduct the norming not as one large group but in smaller groups due to the online nature of the meeting, we noted that, in some groups, those who were not subject-matter experts tended to be silent or offered only minimal comments. We recommend that, during the norming process, group leaders should work hard to encourage all members of the group are

heard. This can be done in Zoom through the use of gallery view, in which all group members can see the other members and note who has and has not contributed to the conversation.

A second recommendation stems from the discussion about GE SLO 4.2 specifically. One member of the group reviewing the kinesiology artifact asked pointedly “How many course SLOs actually map or point to 4.2 specifically?” This question suggests that a review and perhaps re-mapping for all courses might be necessary. Over the last couple of years, many disciplines have reviewed their course SLOs and revised or removed them; some disciplines turned some course SLOs into course objectives to represent more clearly the specific tasks students would need to complete to meet the over-arching course outcomes. With the course SLOs revised, now would be a good time to review and rethink the mapping to ensure that the courses mapped to GE SLO 4.2 truly require reflection and demonstrable understanding of self-development and global awareness. Reviewing all GE SLO mapping may be a good project for Spring 2021 semester; it would allow us to “close the loop” before assessing the GE SLOs again.

A third recommendation, and one of the best practices referenced in the previous section of this report, is explicitly linking assignments to not only course SLOs but also GE SLOs. Additionally, where applicable, programs could explicitly link their assignments to specific PLOs. Explicitly linking to the learning objectives would not only ensure awareness and deliberate intention by the instructor when creating the assignment, it would also aid the students in understanding the learning objectives and would help when it comes time to report assessment outcomes. Furthermore, when the time comes for the assessment committee to engage in the collegewide discussion of learning objectives, it would allow for more fruitful conversations and conclusions. Finally, linking the assignments to the PLOs could aid the programs when it comes time to do program learning outcome assessments.

The final recommendation and best practice discussed is linked to the previous recommendation. The final recommendation is that once the assessment of an assignment is completed and ready to be entered into Nuventive the instructor and/or assessment representative includes the assignment and student samples into the related documents. We know, from the discussion the members had during this process and in our regular meetings, faculty are doing creative and innovative assignments to assess their students’ learning! Unfortunately, this is not always captured when assessment outcome is entered into Nuventive. At times only narratives are entered, while the assignment and student samples are not included. If we could create the norm that assignments are linked to learning objectives explicitly, followed up by including the assignments and student’s work the assessment committee the committee concluded this could aid our future work in assessing GE outcomes. Additionally, we would be able easily acquire diverse samples from across the college without having to contact departments and instructors long after a semester is over.

### Conclusion

Assessing this particular GE SLO seemed more challenging than assessing previous GE SLOs, perhaps because of the amorphous nature of the concepts of self-development, well-being, and

awareness of cultural viewpoints. To echo the group working with the kinesiology artifacts, our students are surrounded by diversity each day; students of different races, ages, gender expressions, and beliefs work together, talk to each other, and mingle in classes and during extra-curricular activities. In other words, RCC students indirectly are exposed to diversity and various cultural viewpoints. But are the lessons in ethics, effective citizenship, and awareness of diversity being taught directly and reinforced in the classroom? Perhaps in some classes, but this assessment project did not examine enough artifacts to determine if this GE SLO is being reinforced widely across campus disciplines.

The good news is that, perhaps because this GE SLO involved broad interpretation, the conversations generated in the groups was particularly beneficial, especially if these conversations lead to a review of GE SLO mapping by all disciplines and to a focus on the importance of directly teaching and discussing equity and diversity in every discipline.