

FMU’s General Education and the Composition Program: Academic Year 2020-2021

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Introduction

FMU’s Composition Program holds four primary goals:

1. To prepare students to use language conventions and styles for writing in a variety of rhetorical situations
2. To deepen students’ understanding of the power and influence of written, digital, and visual texts, both those they read and those they writing themselves
3. To develop students’ information literacy
4. To guide students through processes of reflection so they can evaluate and improve their current and future reading and writing practices.

While we recognize FMU’s Composition Program’s vital role in FMU’s General Education requirements and view its four programmatic goals as being tied to these goals, there is one General Education goal to which the composition program is closely linked:

Goal 1: The ability to compose effectively with rhetorical awareness, integrate relevant research when appropriate, and produce developed, insightful arguments. [Note: The composition program divided this goal into three measures: 1a, the ability to compose effectively with rhetorical awareness; 1b, the ability to integrate relevant research when appropriate; and 1c, the ability to produce developed, insightful arguments.]

Program Assessment and Extension to General Education Goals

Our Composition Program goals unfold in conjunction with individual course student learning outcomes. In the academic year 2020-2021, the program pulled from indirect and direct assessments. Specifically, 283 composition students, or about 42% of fall composition students taking any composition course, participated in a writing attitude survey. In addition, we performed a direct assessment of our ENGL 102. Our end-of-the-semester direct assessment of ENGL 102 consisted of 108 randomly selected portfolios from 36 sections of ENG 102. For a complete explanation of the assessment methods, refer to the English Composition Program’s Institutional Effectiveness Report: Academic Year 2020-2021. That report also contains the program’s mission as well as the results of direct and indirect assessment.

In order to assess the above General Education goals, our First-Year Advisory Committee created and assessed those same 108 randomly selected papers based on the below measures:

- Goal-GE-SLO 1a: The portfolio demonstrates the student’s ability to compose effectively with rhetorical awareness.
- Goal-GE-SLO 1b: The portfolio demonstrates the student’s ability to integrate relevant research when appropriate.
- Goal-GE-SLO 1c: The portfolio demonstrates the student’s ability to produce developed, insightful arguments.

Again, papers were scored on a 4-point scale where 4 excelled at meeting the SLO, 3 satisfied the SLO, 2 partially met the SLO, and 1 failed to meet the SLO. Since this is a new General Education goal, and thus, our first time assessing it, baselines are not yet available. With this year’s direct assessment being on English 102, our assessment of this general education goal looks at portfolios at the sequence conclusion (whereas the years that assess English 101 offers mid-way insight). The benchmark for the general education goal is set at 75%. The assessment method and process mirrored our programmatic assessment; in addition, it was also grouped into our examination of whether or not a third reader was needed.

GE-SLO 1a: The portfolio demonstrates the student’s ability to compose effectively with rhetorical awareness.

- A) RESULTS: 85% of the portfolios successfully met this measure. Specifically, 92 out of the 108 portfolios had an average score of 2.5 or greater on the 4-point scale.
- B) BENCHMARK ACHIEVEMENT AND DISCUSSION: The benchmark was met. No discussion needed. This is the first time we have assessed this goal; thus, baselines are in process.

GE-SLO 1b: The portfolio demonstrates the student’s ability to integrate relevant research when appropriate.

- A) RESULTS: 82% of the portfolios successfully met this measure. Specifically, 88 out of the 108 portfolios had an average score of 2.5 or greater on the 4-point scale.
- B) BENCHMARK ACHIEVEMENT AND DISCUSSION: The benchmark was met. No discussion needed. This is the first time we have assessed this goal; thus, baselines are in process.

GE-SLO 1c: The portfolio demonstrates the student’s ability to produce developed, insightful arguments.

- A) RESULTS: 81% of the portfolios successfully met this measure. Specifically, 87 out of the 108 portfolios had an average score of 2.5 or greater on the 4-point scale.
- B) BENCHMARK ACHIEVEMENT AND DISCUSSION: The benchmark was met. No discussion needed. This is the first time we have assessed this goal; thus, baselines are in process.