

# FMU's General Education and the Composition Program

## Academic Year 2017-2018

Submitted by  
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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 are two General Education goals to which the composition program is closely linked:

- Goal 1: The ability to write and speak English clearly, logically, creatively, and effectively. [Note: The composition program does not assess speaking skills.]
- Goal 9: The ability to reason logically and think critically in order to develop problem-solving skills and to make informed and responsible choices. [Note: The composition program does not assess the ability to make "responsible choices."]

### ***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 2017-2018, the program pulled from indirect and direct assessments. Specifically, 556 composition students, or about 71% of fall composition students taking any composition course, participated in a writing attitude survey. In addition, we performed a direct assessment of our ENG 101. Our end-of-the-semester direct assessment of ENG 101 consisted of 90 randomly selected papers from 18 sections of ENG 101. For a complete explanation of the assessment methods, refer to the English Composition Program's Institutional Effectiveness Report: Academic Year 2017-2018. 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 90 randomly selected essays based on the below measures:

- GE-SLO 1a: The paper(s) demonstrate(s) that the student can write English clearly, logically, and effectively.
- GE-SLO 1b: The paper(s) demonstrate(s) that the student can write English creatively (or stylistically).
- GE-SLO 9: The paper(s) convey(s) that the student can reason logically and critically in relation to their research and composition skills.

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. With this being our pilot year to assess the General Education goals in this manner, we do not yet have baselines and will use this pilot to establish such. In addition, we recognize that this assessment does not account for the different layers in which the paper may be assessed in relation to the General Education goals and that the data may be skewed, limiting the assessment in this manner. As a result, we are making our target lower than our program target, setting it at 70%. The assessment method mirrored our programmatic assessment. When two or more scores deviated by more than one point, the essay had a third read; seven essays had third reads.

**GE-SLO 1a: The paper(s) demonstrate(s) that the student can write English clearly, logically, and effectively.**

- A) RESULTS: 77% of the essays successfully met this measure. Specifically, 69 out of the 90 had an average score of 2.5 or greater on the 4-point scale.
- B) TARGET ACHIEVEMENT AND DISCUSSION: The target was met. No discussion needed.

**GE-SLO 1b: The paper(s) demonstrate(s) that the student can write English creatively (or stylistically).**

- A) RESULTS: 43% of the essays successfully met this measure. Specifically, 39 out of the 90 had an average score of 2.5 or greater on the 4-point scale.
- B) TARGET ACHIEVEMENT AND DISCUSSION: The target was not met. This particular SLO 1 was divided into an (a) and (b) category by the committee as we thought that it might be hard for assessors to accurately assess based on that “creatively” wording. However, there may also be some correlation to students’ lack in confidence to write with “effective rhetorical strategies” (something we saw with the indirect assessment of the program). We will continue to watch this to determine whether or not we feel as if we can assess this measure accurately. In addition, action items related to helping to improve students’ ability to write with effective rhetorical strategies extends to this and will double as an action item related to this GE-SLO 1b as well.

**GE-SLO 9: The paper(s) convey(s) that the student can reason logically and critically in relation to their research and composition skills.**

- A) RESULTS: 73% of the essays successfully met this measure. Specifically, 66 out of the 90 had an average score of 2.5 or greater on the 4-point scale.
- B) TARGET ACHIEVEMENT AND DISCUSSION: The target was met. No discussion needed.