

## **FMU’s General Education and the Composition Program: Academic Year 2019-2020**

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 2019-2020, the program pulled from indirect and direct assessments. Specifically, 513 composition students, or about 69% 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 115 randomly selected papers from 39 sections of ENG 101. For a complete explanation of the assessment methods, refer to the English Composition Program’s Institutional Effectiveness Report: Academic Year 2019-2020. 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 115 randomly selected papers 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. We piloted this method of assessing the General Education goals in 2017-2018 and are still in the process of establishing baselines, using previous years' data for general comparisons. Furthermore, results are flawed due to the fact that this year's direct assessment focuses on English 101 whereas English 102 completes the general education requirement. However, assessment of English 101 yields insight mid-way through the general education composition requirement knowing that the 102 direct assessment years will look at the general education curriculum at its conclusion. Keeping these factors in mind, we are making our benchmark lower than our programmatic benchmark, setting it at 70%. The assessment method and process mirrored our programmatic assessment and was grouped into our examination of whether or not a third reader was needed.

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

- A) RESULTS: 80% of the essays successfully met this measure. Specifically, 92 out of the 115 had an average score of 2.1 or greater on the 4-point scale.
- B) BENCHMARK ACHIEVEMENT AND DISCUSSION: The benchmark was met. No discussion needed. This increased by 3% from the 2017-2018 year's data.

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

- A) RESULTS: 58% of the essays successfully met this measure. Specifically, 67 out of the 115 had an average score of 2.1 or greater on the 4-point scale.
- B) BENCHMARK ACHIEVEMENT AND DISCUSSION: The benchmark was not met. However, due to the emphasis on the word "creatively" in the general education goal, knowing that that is problematic, the committee is not concerned about the lower score. We anticipate that this general education goal will be revised to remove that wording. That being said, we will also work with our faculty to encourage them to help students' take stylistic risks. This increased by 15% from the 2017-2018 year's data.

**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, 84 out of the 115 had an average score of 2.1 or greater on the 4-point scale.
- B) BENCHMARK ACHIEVEMENT AND DISCUSSION: The benchmark was met. No discussion needed. This increased by 1% from the 2017-2018 year's data.