

## **FMU’s General Education and the Composition Program: Academic Year 2021-2022**

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 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 2021-2022, the program pulled from indirect and direct assessments. Specifically, 402 composition students, or about 83% of fall composition students taking any composition course, participated in a writing attitude survey. In addition, we performed a direct assessment of our ENGL 101. Our end-of-the-semester direct assessment of ENGL 101 consisted of 109 randomly selected portfolios. For a complete explanation of the assessment methods, refer to the English Composition Program’s Institutional Effectiveness Report: Academic Year 2021-2022. 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 109 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 relatively General Education goal, and thus, our first time assessing it for English 101, baselines are not yet available. 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: 80% of the student papers successfully met this measure, or 87 out of 109 had an average score of 2.5 or greater on the 4-point scale.
- B) BENCHMARK ACHIEVEMENT AND DISCUSSION: The benchmark was met. There was a 5% decrease from last year’s assessment of 102, but overall, students are still doing well with this measure even in English 101. Because this is the first year, we have assessed it for 101, we are still working to establish baselines for that course, which as a more introductory course, we would expect to achieve lower scores than English 102.

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

- A) RESULTS: 55% of the student papers successfully met this measure. Specifically, 60 out of 109 papers had an average score of 2.5 or greater on a 4-point scale.
- B) BENCHMARK ACHIEVEMENT AND DISCUSSION: The benchmark was not met. While 82% of students in English 102 achieved this measure last year, we have to expect a much lower score for 101, which does not focus as much on research and is an introductory course. Since this is our first time assessing this measure for 101, we are still forming expectations for what is normal for 101.

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

- A) RESULTS: 56% of student papers successfully met this measure. Specifically, 61 out of 109 papers had an average score of 2.5 or greater on a 4-point scale.
- B) BENCHMARK ACHIEVEMENT AND DISCUSSION: The benchmark was not met. This is the first time we have assessed this goal for 101; thus, baselines are in process. This score was lower than that which was achieved by 102 students last year (81% successfully met the measure), but again, we would expect a lower score from a more introductory class.