



General Education Program Review
Spring 2015

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Description of General Education at GBC

Great Basin College enriches people's lives by providing student-centered, post-secondary education to rural Nevada. Educational, cultural, and related economic needs of the multi-county services area are met through programs of university transfer, applied science and technology, business and industry partnerships, developmental education, community service, and student support services in conjunction with certificates and associate and select baccalaureate degrees.

A primary goal of Great Basin College is to provide students with meaningful, relevant, and challenging learning opportunities in general education, including science and technology. We believe that general education is a continuous process and the heart of the undergraduate experience. General education constitutes learning experiences that will provide educated individuals with essential knowledge. Thus, general education aims to develop individuals with a broad span of knowledge; people who can direct their learning, who communicate clearly, who think logically and critically, and who have the capacity to work independently and as a part of a team.

It is the goal of the faculty of Great Basin College that all students who graduate with either an associate's or bachelor's degree from this institution have had the opportunity presented to them during their attendance to have acquired ability and awareness with the following objectives:

COMMUNICATION SKILLS. Communicate clearly and effectively in written and oral form, embracing discussion, reading, listening, and accessing information.

CRITICAL THINKING. Integrate creativity, logic, quantitative reasoning, and the hierarchy of inquiry and knowing in social scientific understanding. There are three elements to this objective:

QUANTITATIVE ABILITY. Understand mathematical principles and integrate quantitative methods into problem solving.

REASONING AND INDEPENDENT THOUGHT. Use logic and visual thinking in selecting, analyzing, and presenting information.

SCIENTIFIC UNDERSTANDING. Understand the essential workings of natural systems, understand the hierarchy of scientific knowing and the use of the scientific method in its pursuit, and have the ability to use this knowledge predictively.

PERSONAL/CULTURAL AWARENESS. Understand the diversity of individuals in society, the development of human societies, and the significance of creativity in the human experience. There are four elements to this objective:

SENSE OF THE INDIVIDUAL IN SOCIETY. Recognize and respect the rights of the individual, and possess an appreciation of the complexity and variety of the divergent attitudes, values, and beliefs in society.

SENSE OF THE PAST. Understand the cultural and historical heritage of contemporary society, and be able to thoughtfully consider the implications of this heritage.

SENSE OF ACCOUNTABILITY. Appreciate the consequences of human actions in social and environmental contexts, and have the ability to consider the ethical and practical implications of those actions.

APPRECIATION OF FINE ARTS. Recognize and value creative human expression.

TECHNOLOGICAL UNDERSTANDING. Function effectively in modern society through the use of technology.

Description of Changes Made to the General Education Program

Since the last program review of general education in 2010, many changes have been made. The General Education Committee was established as a standing committee of the Faculty Senate. It has been charged with reviewing the general education programs, courses, and matrix for new developments, changes, assessment, and continual program improvement. Some of the changes recommended by the committee and approved by Faculty Senate and President's Council include the following:

1. Since the fall of 2011, all gen ed classes must include the communications objective and the critical thinking objective. Faculty teaching the class must also include at least one of the remaining three objectives: Personal/cultural awareness, personal wellness, or technological understanding.
2. In the spring of 2014 it was approved to reduce the total social science credits from 12 to 9 for the AA and from 9 to 6 for the AS beginning with the 2015-16 catalog year. This better aligns GBC's general education requirements with other NSHE institutions for transferability.

The remaining changes were approved during the 2014-15 academic year to take effect during the 2015-16 catalog year.

3. Personal Wellness was removed as an objective. Faculty felt the objective was too vague to address with fidelity.
4. The definition of the Personal/Cultural Awareness objective was changed from 'Understand the roles of individuals in society' to 'Understand the diversity of individuals in society'. The objective addresses understanding of diversity, but the previous definition did not explicitly mention it.
5. Technological Understanding will remain as an objective, but programs will be given an exception to the three-credit course requirement if it can be established that technological understanding is embedded throughout the program requirements.

6. The minimum total upper-division credits required was reduced from 48 to 42 for all bachelor's degrees. The change better aligns with other NSHE institutions and allows for program flexibility, especially in science-based programs.
7. General education credit requirements in humanities and fine arts were changed from six and three, respectively, to three credits from humanities, three credits from fine arts, and three credits from either. This resolves some alignment issues for students when either transferring from GBC or to GBC. It also allows for greater student choice of general education offerings.
8. ART 160, FIS 100, MUS 121, and THTR 100 were moved from the Humanities category to the Fine Arts category. This eases transfer issues and expands the Fine Arts course offerings from application-based to include appreciation of the Fine Arts courses.
9. The upper-division general education Integrated Seminar requirements were reduced from six credits to three credits for the BA and BSN degrees. Programs will be required to choose an INT course from outside the content emphasis. For example, the BA in Secondary Education/Math will require either INT 339 (Humanities) or INT 349 (Social Science).

Program Data

The General Education program is the foundation for all degrees and certificates awarded at Great Basin College. The following data show the number of graduates by degree and certificate, disaggregated by percent women and percent minority.

Graduates Disaggregated by Women and Minorities

GBC Degrees and Certificates Awarded by Fiscal Year and Degree					
DEGREE	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
AA	73	91	86	80	72
AAS	124	104	123	123	136
AGS	14	28	13	12	15
AS	28	30	39	30	43
BA	24	22	24	14	21
BAS	17	29	22	21	27
BSN	7	3	15	6	15
CT	44	83	107	133	198
	331	390	429	419	527

Percent Degrees and Certificates Awarded to Women					
DEGREE	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
AA	78.1	84.6	75.6	82.5	79.2
AAS	46.8	49.0	58.5	48.8	47.1
AGS	71.4	67.9	69.2	50.0	60.0
AS	50.0	66.7	61.5	53.3	69.8
BA	79.2	77.3	79.2	92.9	90.5
BAS	47.1	72.4	45.5	38.1	44.4
BSN	85.7	33.3	93.3	83.3	86.7
CT	15.9	10.8	23.4	23.3	33.3

Percent Degrees and Certificates Awarded to Minority Students					
DEGREE	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
AA	20.5	14.3	16.3	20.0	23.6
AAS	15.3	17.3	22.8	22.0	25.7
AGS	7.1	32.1	15.4	0.0	20.0
AS	25.0	23.3	15.4	20.0	20.9
BA	16.7	22.7	25.0	7.1	0.0
BAS	11.8	17.2	13.6	9.5	18.5
BSN	0.0	33.3	13.3	16.7	13.3
CT	13.6	28.9	29.9	25.6	28.3

Graduation Rates	
Three-year graduation rate for certificate and associate's degree-seekers - fall 2010 cohort	23%
Six-year graduation rate for certificate, associate's and bachelor's degree-seekers - fall 2007 cohort	26%
<i>Calculated as the percentage of first-time, full-time students in fall 2010 seeking a certificate, associate's, or bachelor's degree who completed a certificate within two years, an associate's degree within three years or a bachelor's degree within six years.</i>	

Measures of Student Satisfaction and Success

Course Assessment Reports

Assessment of student achievement of the general education objectives was completed through examination of the faculty course assessment reports of general education courses taught for the academic years 2012-2013 and 2013-2014. In the course assessment reports general education objectives should be listed as course outcomes for the course, with an indication from faculty whether or not the students in the course met those objectives.

For the academic year 2012-2013, 31 general education courses had corresponding course assessment reports. Ten (32.3%) courses listed at least three general education objectives as outcomes including both the required “Communication Skills” and “Critical thinking” objectives. Eleven (35.5%) courses did not list any general education objectives in the assessment report, seven (22.5%) courses listed fewer than the required three general education objectives, and three (9.7%) courses listed at least three general education objectives, but did not list both the required “Communication Skills” and “Critical Thinking” objectives. For all of the general education objectives listed in the course assessment reports, faculty indicated the students achieved those objectives.

For the academic year 2013-2014, 24 general education courses had corresponding course assessment reports. Ten (41.7%) courses listed at least three general education objectives as outcomes including both the required “Communication Skills” and “Critical thinking” objectives. Seven (29.2%) courses did not list any general education objectives in the assessment report, four (16.7%) courses listed less than the required three general education objectives, and three (12.5%) courses listed at least three general education objectives, but did not list both the required “Communication Skills” and “Critical Thinking” objectives. For all of the general education objectives listed in the course assessment reports, faculty indicated the students achieved those objectives.

For both academic years, 2012-2013 and 2013-2014, students achieved all of the general education objectives listed in the course assessment reports. This indicates that students are meeting the general education objectives. However, for both academic years 2012-2013 and 2013-2014, only 57.1% of the general education course assessment reports listed at least three general education objectives and included both the required “Communication Skills” and “Critical Thinking” objectives. Therefore, although the majority of the course assessment reports listed the appropriate amount and required general education objectives, the numbers should be much higher. Faculty may have failed to list general education objectives in their course assessment reports due to lack of education regarding the proper way to fill out the course assessment report.

A review of the course syllabi indicates general education objectives are more likely to be listed in the syllabus even when the objectives are not listed on the course assessment as being assessed. It is recommended that professional development be offered to better inform faculty of the proper procedures for completing course assessments.

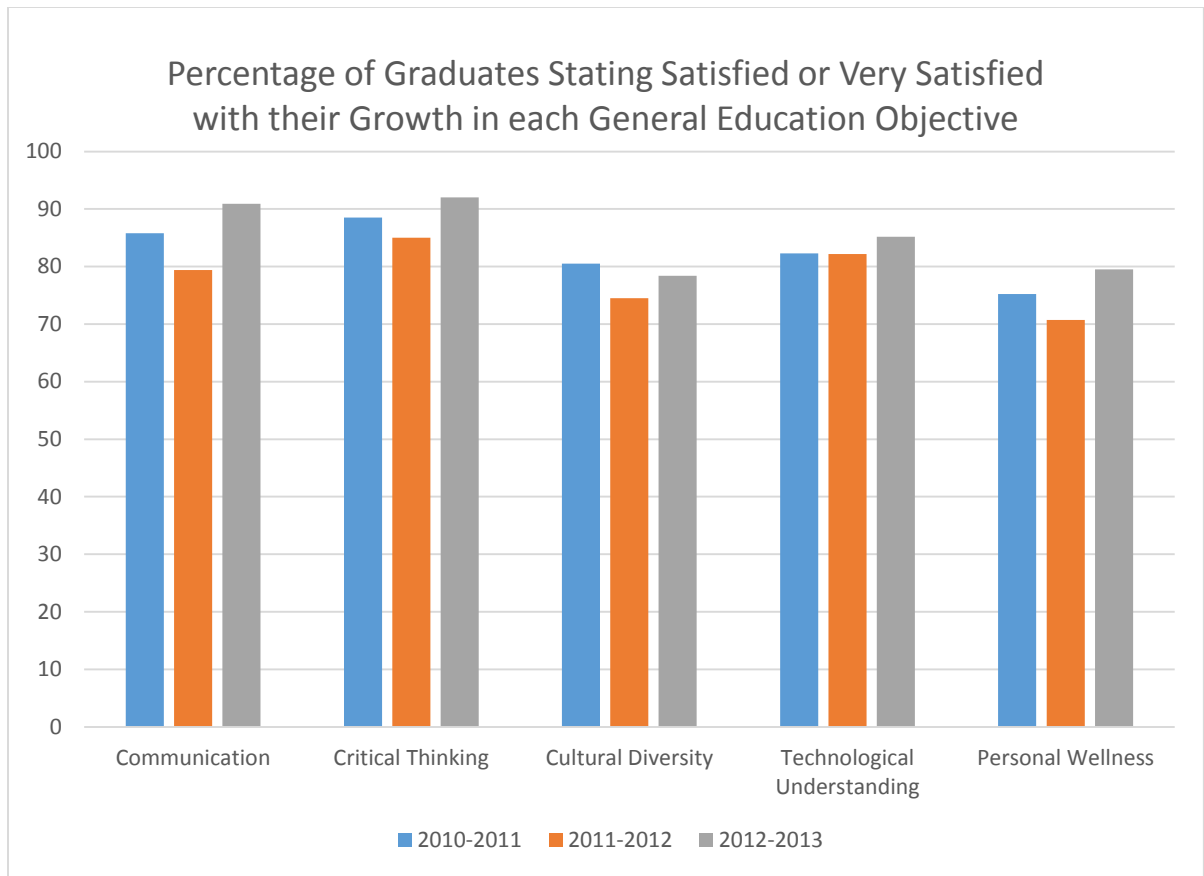
Graduate Surveys

Student satisfaction of understanding of each general education objective was assessed through the 2010-2011, 2011-2012, and 2012-2013 Graduate Surveys (See Table). Graduate survey results from students who graduated with an associate or baccalaureate were evaluated. Although students who graduated with a certificate were distributed the Graduate Survey, the results were not analyzed, because students competing certificates are not necessarily required to complete all of the general education components.

For the 2010-2011 Graduate Survey, 86 associate degree graduates and 27 baccalaureate degree graduates completed the survey. Thus, 113 total graduates completed the 2010-2011 Graduate Survey. For each general education objective graduates were asked to rate their growth in the objective by choosing very dissatisfied, dissatisfied, neutral, satisfied, very satisfied or does not apply. Ninety-seven (85.8%) graduates stated they were satisfied or very satisfied with their growth in ability to communicate. One-hundred (88.5%) graduates stated they were satisfied or very satisfied with their growth in ability to think critically. Ninety-one (80.5%) graduates stated they were satisfied or very satisfied with their growth in understanding cultural diversity. Ninety-three (82.3%) graduates stated they were satisfied or very satisfied with their growth in technological understanding. Eighty-five (75.2%) graduates stated they were satisfied or very satisfied with their growth in understanding personal wellness.

For the 2011-2012 Graduate Survey, 80 associate degree graduates and 27 baccalaureate degree graduates completed the survey. One hundred-seven total graduates completed the 2011-2012 Graduate Survey. Eighty-five (79.4%) graduates stated they were satisfied or very satisfied with their growth in ability to communicate. Ninety-one (85%) graduates stated they were satisfied or very satisfied with their growth in ability to think critically. Seventy-nine (74.5%) graduates stated they were satisfied or very satisfied with their growth in understanding cultural diversity. Eighty-eight (82.2%) graduates stated they were satisfied or very satisfied with their growth in technological understanding. Seventy-five (70.7%) graduates stated they were satisfied or very satisfied with their growth in understanding personal wellness.

For the 2012-2013 Graduate Survey, 71 associate degree graduates and 17 baccalaureate degree graduates completed the survey. Eighty-eight total graduates completed the 2012-2013 Graduate Survey. Eighty (90.9%) graduates stated they were satisfied or very satisfied with their growth in ability to communicate. Eighty-one (92%) graduates stated they were satisfied or very satisfied with their growth in ability to think critically. Sixty-nine (78.4%) graduates stated they were satisfied or very satisfied with their growth in understanding cultural diversity. Seventy-five (85.2%) graduates stated they were satisfied or very satisfied with their growth in technological understanding. Seventy (79.5%) graduates stated they were satisfied or very satisfied with their growth in understanding personal wellness.



Over the three academic years 262 (85%) graduates stated they were satisfied or very satisfied with their growth in ability to communicate. Two hundred seventy-two (88.3%) graduates stated they were satisfied or very satisfied with their growth in ability to think critically. Two hundred thirty-nine (77.8%) graduates stated they were satisfied or very satisfied with their growth in understanding cultural diversity. Two hundred fifty-six (83.1%) graduates stated they were satisfied or very satisfied with their growth in technological understanding. Two hundred-thirty (74.9%) graduates stated they were satisfied or very satisfied with their growth in understanding personal wellness.

Transfer Rates of AA, AS, and AAS Graduates

Transfer Rates	Any 4-year institution	Great Basin College
Associate of Arts and Associate of Science graduates in 2013 who enrolled at any four-year institution within one year, including GBC, and who continued their education at Great Basin College.	75%	55%
Associate of Applied Science graduates in 2013 who enrolled at any four-year institution within one year, including GBC, and who continued their education at Great Basin College.	59%	51%

The data indicate graduates tend to continue their education after completing an AA, AS, or AAS with likelihood for remaining at GBC, especially for the AAS graduates. If GBC offers a bachelor's degree specific to the graduate's AAS degree emphasis, the graduate will usually enroll back at GBC to work on the four-year degree. For example, out of the 27 Electrical Systems graduates who re-enrolled at GBC, 17 chose the BAS-Instrumentation as a course of study. It is worth noting that six of these chose not to pursue a bachelor's degree, but chose to pursue a certificate in Instrument Technology.

AAS graduates may also continue on towards a bachelor's degree that is not specific to their AAS area of study. For example, 12 of the 14 graduates in the AAS Criminal Justice chose to enroll in other four-year degree areas of study instead of transferring to a college or university that offers a bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice. This supports the argument that GBC is offering different options to AAS graduates and students are staying at GBC to take advantage of the options available, even it is a certificate instead of a bachelor's or a bachelor's outside of their area of study.

Recommendations

Although a great majority of graduates report satisfaction in their understanding of the general education objectives, improvements need to be done on the assessment of the objectives. Using faculty self-reported course assessments is a positive direction, but more professional development needs to occur to improve fidelity and usefulness of the results. The General Education Committee should explore other objective evaluations of the gen ed outcomes including AAC&U Value Rubrics or faculty generated rubrics for assessment.