

## General Education Spring 2025 Executive Summary

### *Report of the* General Education Council Commonwealth University of Pennsylvania

The General Education Council members analyzed data from the Spring 2025 assessment of general education courses for all 16 general education learning goals of Commonwealth University of Pennsylvania (CU). Each general education learning goal has 3-4 student learning objectives, and assessment data was submitted for each student learning objective.

#### **GENERAL OVERVIEW**

For each general education learning goal, data on the number and percent of courses assessed was submitted and varied widely. Table 1 shows the total number of courses assessed, including 265 out of 638 potential general education courses, which was a 42% submission rate (down from 45% in Fall 2024). Differences in submission rates show variation across learning goals, with quantitative reasoning having the highest assessment rate at 73% (37 out of 51 courses) while citizenship & society had only 19% assessed (10 out of 54 courses). The number of courses assessed also varied by learning goal ranging from three (3) courses assessed for both ethical reasoning and first year experience to 37 courses assessed for quantitative reasoning and 36 for natural world.

**Table 1: Number and Percent of Courses Assessed**

| Learning Goal                   | #Courses Assessed SP 2025 | Grand Total SP 2025 | Percent Assessed SP 2025 | Percent Assessed FA 2024 | Percent Assessed SP 2024 | Percent Assessed FA 2023 |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Arts                            | 8                         | 17                  | 47%                      | 27%                      | 54%                      | 59%                      |
| Citizenship & Society           | 10                        | 54                  | 19%                      | 56%                      | 52%                      | 58%                      |
| Creative                        | 20                        | 46                  | 43%                      | 42%                      | 38%                      | 81%                      |
| Critical Analysis and Reasoning | 27                        | 45                  | 60%                      | 69%                      | 44%                      | 48%                      |
| Diversity                       | 22                        | 44                  | 50%                      | 67%                      | 93%                      | 96%                      |
| Ethical Reasoning               | 3                         | 9                   | 33%                      | 33%                      | 33%                      | 20%                      |
| First Year Seminar              | 3                         | 10                  | 30%                      | 29%                      | 9%                       | 37%                      |
| Foreign Language                | 11                        | 19                  | 58%                      | 33%                      | 14%                      | 56%                      |
| Global Perspectives             | 28                        | 66                  | 42%                      | 39%                      | 22%                      | 64%                      |
| Historical Themes               | 12                        | 35                  | 34%                      | 29%                      | 42%                      | 33%                      |
| Literature                      | 13                        | 36                  | 36%                      | 31%                      | 37%                      | 42%                      |
| Natural World                   | 36                        | 93                  | 39%                      | 39%                      | 39%                      | 24%                      |
| Oral Communication              | 15                        | 50                  | 30%                      | 74%                      | 55%                      | 62%                      |
| Quantitative Reasoning          | 37                        | 51                  | 73%                      | 69%                      | 84%                      | 84%                      |
| Technology                      | 10                        | 27                  | 37%                      | 40%                      | 67%                      | 67%                      |
| Writing                         | 10                        | 36                  | 28%                      | 24%                      | 32%                      | 44%                      |

| Table 1: Number and Percent of Courses Assessed |                           |                     |                          |                          |                          |                          |
|-------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Learning Goal                                   | #Courses Assessed SP 2025 | Grand Total SP 2025 | Percent Assessed SP 2025 | Percent Assessed FA 2024 | Percent Assessed SP 2024 | Percent Assessed FA 2023 |
| Grand Total                                     | 265                       | 638                 | 42%                      | 45%                      | 45%                      | 51%                      |

The method of assessment was determined by the individual instructor and included the options of exam or quiz objective questions, exam or quiz essay questions, projects, essays, reports and written reflections, and other categories. The assessment method appears to depend on the nature of the general education learning goal and types of learning activities and assessments that match well with the content and ways of demonstrating knowledge and skill.

For all learning goals and courses, Table 2 shows that the aggregate percent of students scoring competency at the Proficient or Mastery levels was 73.05% (up from 68.40% in Fall 2024). In each general education learning goal for each student learning outcome (SLO), the percentage of students who scored unsatisfactory, emerging, developing, proficient, and mastery differed. For each SLO, it was determined whether students met (i.e., scoring proficient or mastery on the SLO) or did not meet expectations. The competency data was provided overall and for each modality, if applicable. In the assessment of various general education learning goals, different modalities included F2F, asynchronous DE, blended hybrid, mixed remote, multi-classroom synchronous, simultaneous modalities, synchronous DE, and Hyflex. This allowed for a comparison of outcomes based on these different modalities.

| Table 2: Number and Percent of Students Assessed and Meeting Expectations |             |                   |                |          |            |            |         |      |                  |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|-------------------|----------------|----------|------------|------------|---------|------|------------------|
| Category                                                                  | Submissions | Students Assessed | Unsatisfactory | Emerging | Developing | Proficient | Mastery | None | Met and Exceeded |
| Totals                                                                    | 190         | 21,511            | 983            | 1,549    | 3,265      | 8,857      | 6,857   | 811  | 73.05%           |

*Note: The number of submissions may differ from (< than) the number of courses assessed due to multiple courses included in one submission*

Finally, for most general education learning goals, faculty quotes described action plans to move general education assessment forward. While we appreciate the actions listed by faculty, the responses to this section of the submission form varied widely across learning goals, with some areas providing comprehensive action plans while others had limited responses.

### ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Observations were documented on methods, observations about the results, and discussion and recommendations.

#### Methods Used

For Spring 2025, the Qualtrics platform was again utilized to gather information from 16 general education learning goals. Email reminders were sent to faculty about GE data submissions during and at semester end from the Provost and GEC Chair. Assessment sessions were held to cover academic program assessment which included segments on GE assessment (e.g., timelines, web resources, etc.). In addition, CTL sessions and GEC-sponsored Q&A sessions were held to share information about the process and outcomes. Technical assistance was provided by OIE to assist faculty with the Qualtrics submission form and related questions. OIE also pulled data to populate the charts and tables in the reports and updated the data dashboard available on the GE web page.

#### Results

The analysis of outcomes of general education learning goals provided an understanding of student performance overall and by modality (e.g., F2F, asynchronous DE, blended hybrid, mixed remote, multi-classroom synchronous, simultaneous

modalities, synchronous DE, and Hyflex). Table 3 shows the number of submissions (may include multiple sections) by learning goal, number of students assessed for each learning goal/SLO, and percent of the students that met or exceeded expectations. Similar to previous semesters, a 70% benchmark for competency was used as a baseline. Overall results show improvement from Fall 2024, with most learning goals now meeting or approaching the 70% threshold.

Based on Table 3, learning goals/SLOs that showed exceptional performance ( $\geq 85\%$ ) include arts (all three SLOs at 85-86%), while areas needing continued attention include some SLOs in creativity, ethical reasoning, foreign languages, global perspectives, natural world, and written communication that remain below the 70% threshold for most or all SLOs.

| Table 3: Percent of Students Meeting Expectations by Learning Goal / SLO |             |                   |                 |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| Category                                                                 | Submissions | Students Assessed | Met or Exceeded |
| Arts - Descriptive Communication                                         | 7           | 518               | 85%             |
| Arts - Analysis and Context                                              | 7           | 600               | 86%             |
| Arts - Interpretation and Response                                       | 7           | 564               | 85%             |
| Creative - Creative Competencies                                         | 17          | 350               | 70%             |
| Creative - Problem Solving and Process                                   | 17          | 351               | 72%             |
| Creative - Creativity and Transformation                                 | 17          | 331               | 69%             |
| Diversity - Human Diversity                                              | 17          | 750               | 76%             |
| Diversity - Roots of Inequality                                          | 17          | 761               | 71%             |
| Diversity - Awareness                                                    | 17          | 762               | 79%             |
| Ethical Reasoning - Conceptualization                                    | 3           | 101               | 67%             |
| Ethical Reasoning - Application                                          | 3           | 101               | 70%             |
| Ethical Reasoning - Comparison and Evaluation                            | 3           | 101               | 67%             |
| Foreign Languages - Oral Communication                                   | 7           | 257               | 50%             |
| Foreign Languages - Written Communication                                | 7           | 257               | 43%             |
| Foreign Languages - Cultural Awareness                                   | 7           | 257               | 49%             |
| Global Perspectives - Factors and Interactions                           | 20          | 865               | 71%             |
| Global Perspectives - Representation and Sources                         | 20          | 719               | 63%             |
| Global Perspectives - Perspectives                                       | 20          | 797               | 65%             |
| Historical Themes - Knowledge and Understanding                          | 7           | 369               | 77%             |
| Historical Themes - Sources and Evidence                                 | 7           | 364               | 76%             |
| Historical Themes - Application of Language and Critical Thinking Skills | 7           | 359               | 84%             |
| Literature - Comprehension                                               | 13          | 350               | 73%             |
| Literature - Analysis                                                    | 13          | 346               | 79%             |

**Table 3: Percent of Students Meeting Expectations by Learning Goal / SLO**

| Category                                                                          | Submissions | Students Assessed | Met or Exceeded |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| Literature - Interpretation and Significance                                      | 13          | 348               | 75%             |
| Natural World - Scientific Method                                                 | 21          | 1,057             | 61%             |
| Natural World - Scientific Principles                                             | 21          | 1,038             | 57%             |
| Natural World - Data and Problem Solving                                          | 21          | 1,097             | 65%             |
| Oral Communication - Organization                                                 | 8           | 321               | 89%             |
| Oral Communication - Supporting Material                                          | 8           | 320               | 79%             |
| Oral Communication - Delivery                                                     | 8           | 318               | 81%             |
| Quantitative Reasoning - Interpretation                                           | 27          | 785               | 77%             |
| Quantitative Reasoning - Analysis                                                 | 27          | 785               | 73%             |
| Quantitative Reasoning - Communication                                            | 27          | 743               | 73%             |
| Critical Analysis and Reasoning - Conceptualization                               | 17          | 762               | 85%             |
| Critical Analysis and Reasoning - Analysis                                        | 17          | 758               | 88%             |
| Critical Analysis and Reasoning - Evaluation                                      | 17          | 764               | 80%             |
| Citizenship and Society - Civil Rights and Civil Liberties                        | 9           | 297               | 74%             |
| Citizenship and Society - Individual and Collective Action                        | 9           | 301               | 79%             |
| Citizenship and Society - Responsibilities of Citizenship                         | 9           | 287               | 82%             |
| Technology - Information Technology                                               | 8           | 181               | 78%             |
| Technology - Software and Systems                                                 | 8           | 181               | 78%             |
| Technology - Appropriate Use                                                      | 8           | 173               | 84%             |
| Written Communication - Logic and Order                                           | 6           | 172               | 60%             |
| Written Communication - Sources and Evidence                                      | 6           | 171               | 58%             |
| Written Communication - Control of Language and Syntax                            | 6           | 174               | 66%             |
| First Year Seminar - Cultivate Scholarly and Academic Success                     | 3           | 73                | 74%             |
| First Year Seminar - Engagement with the University Community                     | 3           | 53                | 87%             |
| First Year Seminar - Foster Personal Development and Wellness                     | 3           | 53                | 77%             |
| First Year Seminar - Promote Understanding of Diversity and Social Responsibility | 3           | 69                | 88%             |
| <b>Totals</b>                                                                     | <b>190</b>  | <b>21,511</b>     | <b>73.05%</b>   |

CU and its campuses have continued the trend toward offering courses through various delivery modalities. Analyzing student performance by modality provides faculty with insights and opportunities to consider teaching strategies that align well with specific delivery modes. The Spring 2025 data continues to show variation in performance across modalities, with some learning goals showing particularly strong results in distance education formats.

There were numerous conclusions and action plans based on the results of the data. Faculty articulated specific action plans for course-level adjustments, and the continued collection of longitudinal data will assist the GEC in considering potential changes to GE at the program level and recommendations for various modalities. Such longitudinal analysis provides clearer insights into the true impact of instructional methods on student learning outcomes, and continued training on best practices in various delivery modes positively influences student learning across all environments.

### **Discussion and Recommendations**

The data reveals notable improvement in assessment results for Spring 2025 compared to Fall 2024, with the overall percentage of students meeting expectations rising from 68.40% to 73.05%. This improvement suggests that interventions and adjustments made by faculty may have been effective. However, submission rates for assessment continue to vary widely across learning goals, and continued efforts to increase participation in the assessment process are essential, especially to establish robust longitudinal data. The gains in performance across multiple learning goals, highlights the potential, positive impact of targeted interventions, faculty development, and assessment refinements on student learning outcomes. The following recommendations will assist in the ongoing development of the GE assessment approach and process:

#### **Communication and Accountability**

- Continue to send email reminders about assessment deadlines, expectations, and where to find trend data.
- Send department chairs reports of courses missing assessment data or required information.
- Reinforce with faculty the importance of reporting actions taken to improve student performance.

#### **Faculty Engagement and Development**

- Continue to hold assessment sessions in collaboration with CTL and assessment councils/committees, including GEC Q&A sessions.
- Facilitate sessions with faculty to discuss rubrics and best practices in instructional strategies and appropriate modalities within each learning goal or theme.
- Use deep-dive analyses and open forums to share results, collect feedback, and establish benchmarks for consistent assessment of SLOs.
- Discuss results with faculty to identify areas where students struggle and develop targeted instructional strategies and recommended support services including university libraries, student support services, and student success services.

#### **Benchmarking and Assessment Practices**

- Recommend benchmark criteria and evaluate whether current proficiency and mastery expectations are appropriate across all learning goals.
- Consider reducing levels of competency from five to three for clearer performance differentiation.
- Assist faculty with standardizing or developing exemplars of assessments with a program goal area and/or department.
- Continue monitoring faculty understanding and application of the GE assessment rubric scoring.

#### **Data-Driven Improvement**

- Investigate the factors behind the Spring 2025 improvements to identify best practices that can be sustained and replicated across all learning goals.
- Document and replicate successful interventions that led to improved performance.

The improvement in student performance across most learning objectives from Fall 2024 to Spring 2025 represents an achievement for CU's general education program. Continued monitoring and refinement of assessment practices, combined with faculty development and support, will be essential to sustaining and building upon these positive outcomes.

**Appendices:**

- A. GE Spring 2025 Assessment Summary Report -- Arts
- B. GE Spring 2025 Assessment Summary Report -- Citizenship & Society
- C. GE Spring 2025 Assessment Summary Report -- Creative
- D. GE Spring 2025 Assessment Summary Report -- Critical Analysis and Reasoning
- E. GE Spring 2025 Assessment Summary Report -- Diversity
- F. GE Spring 2025 Assessment Summary Report -- Ethical Reasoning
- G. GE Spring 2025 Assessment Summary Report -- Foreign Language
- H. GE Spring 2025 Assessment Summary Report -- FYS
- I. GE Spring 2025 Assessment Summary Report -- Global Perspectives
- J. GE Spring 2025 Assessment Summary Report -- Historical Themes
- K. GE Spring 2025 Assessment Summary Report -- Literature
- L. GE Spring 2025 Assessment Summary Report -- Natural World
- M. GE Spring 2025 Assessment Summary Report -- Oral Communication
- N. GE Spring 2025 Assessment Summary Report -- Quantitative Reasoning
- O. GE Spring 2025 Assessment Summary Report -- Technology
- P. GE Spring 2025 Assessment Summary Report -- Written Communication
- Q. GE Spring 2025 Assessment Data