Introduction

General Education assessment at UNLV historically has consisted of a handful of programs submitting assessment reports for their individual component of the gen ed curriculum. This method was inadequate to provide a meaningful process for understanding student learning within gen ed or for providing guidance on how to improve student learning within gen ed. This process also was not equitable, as some gen ed areas were not submitting any assessment data, and others were doing extra work. Further, the information collected was limited in scope to the unit doing the reporting. To begin to remedy these issues, a General Education Assessment Summit was held in the spring of 2014. The purpose of the summit was to bring each of the General Education Core areas, excluding math, (First-Year Seminar, Second-Year Seminar, English Composition, and Constitutions) together to discuss their ideas for assessing student learning in general education, to develop a curriculum map for the entire gen ed curriculum.

Each area was asked to develop an assessment plan that fit the needs and interests of the collective faculty. These plans would be put into action the following academic year, with follow-up from the Office of Academic Assessment and Undergraduate Education. The following are assessment plan summaries from each General Education Core area.

First-Year Seminar (FYS)

The FYS coordinators will create their own rubrics (using the VALUE rubrics as a guide) focused on critical thinking and inquiry. Each unit will be free to customize their rubric to their unique needs. They will use these rubrics to assess student mastery of inquiry and critical thinking skills as demonstrated in samples of student work. The group will then report their findings back to the larger group to inform a discussion of student learning in FYs and subsequent assessment efforts. Liaison librarians will be a possible resource for assisting with the design of appropriate assessment methods and for assisting with the assessment process.
Second-Year Seminar (SYS)

The SYS coordinators devised a plan based on the World Literature (ENG 231 & 232) model of analyzing work samples using a rubric. SYS coordinators will collect work samples in the Fall - 1 per section for a total of about 80 samples. They will use a modified rubric common across all SYS disciplines. For the first trial, the rubric will be focused on communication. This group will meet again after the work samples are analyzed to debrief and make decisions about future assessment strategies.

English Composition

English Composition discussed eliminating the CAAP exam as a method of assessment. Instead, they would like to move toward a method similar to the World Literature model of analyzing work samples using a rubric. They proposed using a pre-post design across both ENG 101 and ENG 102, looking at very specific criteria that will allow them to make fine grained decisions about course improvement. The group identified challenges associated with this plan; namely, fairly compensating the individuals who would be doing the bulk of the assessment work (mostly PTIs), and balancing the appropriate number of samples to assess with the required work load involved with such an undertaking.

Constitutions

This group identified the Citizenship UULO as a starting point. They then narrowed the general UULO down to two specific sub-UULOs: 5.1 and 5.2. After agreeing on these sub UULOs the group came to a consensus about specific concepts that related to the sub-UULOs and that can be measured across the Constitutions courses. Each department will develop their own assessment methods for the concepts and the group will meet together in the Spring to discuss the assessment efforts and reach an agreement about moving forward with assessment of the remaining UULOs.