

Women's Studies Program
COLLEGE Of Social Science
Assessment Coordinators

Current: Dr. Loretta Kensinger, Fall 2012-current

Student Outcomes Assessment Plan (Soap)

I. Mission Statement

A. Historical Background

The Women's Studies Program (WSP) at California State University-Fresno (CSUF) is one of more than 700 such programs nation-wide. The WSP at CSUF was approved in 1971, the major was approved in 1996, and students began matriculating in 1998. The Program currently offers a major (which many students take as a double major) and a minor. There are twelve (12) units of **core courses** (courses required of all majors, double majors, and minors): **WS 143: Feminist Theory** (Fall), **WS 153: Feminist Research Methods** (Fall), **WS 103: History of Feminism** (Spring), and **WS 175: Seminar in Women's Studies** (Spring). Majors complete twenty-four (24) additional credit hours, minors complete an additional eight (8) hours, both from the faculty approved list of elective courses. Electives are drawn from an approved list of courses drawn from both courses offered directly by the program, and those offered in other programs around the university. Electives offered in the major are frequently also offered as part of the university General Education curriculum at both the lower and upper division levels. Along with, and emerging from, the mission statement, Student Learning Outcomes were originally framed with an eye to two guiding programmatic principals. First, the program's desire to provide advanced content knowledge to students and give them the ability to distinguish and appreciate multiple perspectives. Second, the program's desire to improve the ability of students to think critically, particularly in the area of information literacy, communicate effectively and act on knowledge.

The implementation of this revised SOAP (2013) is part of a six (6)-year student learning assessment plan; this is the second SOAP six-year plan implemented by the program. In this round of assessment, the Program chose to emphasize assessment of student learning outcomes (SLOs) within the four (4) core courses (courses required for the major, minor, or double major). The program decided to focus on these courses because they are the only courses all WS students are required to complete. We will also assess a sample of our General Education (GE) courses, choosing courses at both the lower and upper division level.

B. Mission Statement

Women's Studies is an approach that places women in the center of inquiry. The primary mission of Women's Studies is to analyze how gender is constructed through a variety of social institutions and cultural processes so that gender inequality can be dismantled. Students acquire both a local and global perspective on gender. The program is interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary in its approach and thereby draws on a range of feminist theories, methodologies, and practices. Attentiveness to diversity, privilege and power, and women's unique creative contributions to human experience are central aspects of this training. More than simply a body of knowledge, Women's Studies encourages students to apply their learning to transform their lives and their communities.

II. Goals and Student Learning Outcomes

Goal A. The program will provide advanced content knowledge to students and give them the ability to distinguish and appreciate multiple perspectives.

1. Students will demonstrate their comprehension of both the status of women in society and gender, as well as the unique impact of gender ideology on women, by a combination of the following: distinguishing key elements of gender; articulating elements of the social, economic, political, position of women; exploring how gender and women's statuses are socially constructed; articulating the impact of gender on particular events as well as the impact of events on women; and observing differences in the construction of gender across cultures and histories.
2. Students will demonstrate an understanding of feminism(s) theories, histories and methods, including the history of women's organizations and movements, by defining key concepts in these fields; critically assessing key aspects of these ideas; and utilizing appropriate theories, methods, and historical examples in support of their own ideas.
3. Students will demonstrate an awareness of intersectionality as well as comprehension of anti-oppression and social justice principles from within the Women's Studies perspective at the local and global levels BY articulating how women's positions are structured through a variety of contexts including racial, ethnic, class, age, sexuality, and abilities; being able to discuss important interconnections between and among the world's women; and/or by exhibiting knowledge about the effects of discrimination and social inequality and the different challenges and inequalities women have faced over time.

Goal B. Key aims of the program are to improve the ability of students to think critically, particularly in the area of information literacy, communicate effectively and act on knowledge.

4. Students will demonstrate "information literacy" by selecting and reading appropriate books and periodicals; identify significant primary sources; using Web resources appropriately by being able to identify the reliability and relevance of such sources. Students can also demonstrate information literacy through their ability to accurately respond to reading based questions, showing their ability to distinguish key facts and comprehend premises, key concepts, and main points of materials they have read.
5. Students will demonstrate communication skills by accurately summarizing texts, approaches, concepts and theories taught in the classroom as well as by formulation of their own ideas within a variety of assignments. For assessment, students will demonstrate these skills first and foremost through writing, but verbal and creative skills are also valued by the program.
6. Students will demonstrate an ability to act on knowledge by event organizing, investigative analysis and/or utilizing information skills to conduct original research projects.

III. Curriculum Map (Matrix of Courses linked to learning outcomes)

Key: A=Advanced R=Reviewed I=Introduced

Courses:	Outcome 1 Gender and the Status of Women	Outcome 2 Feminism(s) theory, methods, history	Outcome 3 Intersectionality, anti-oppression, social justice	Outcome 4 Information literacy	Outcome 5 Communication Skills	Outcome 6 Act on Knowledge
GE/ Electives						
WS 10	I	I	I	I	I	I
WS 12	I	I	I	I	I	I
WS 18	I	I	I	I	I	I
WS 120	R	R	A	R	R	R
WS 110	A	R	R	R	R	R
WS 135	R	R	A	R	R	R
Core (required for the Major, Minor, or Double Major)						
WS 103	R	A	A	A	A	R
WS 143	R	A	A	A	A	R
WS 153	R	A	A	A	R	A
WS 175	R	A	A	R	A	A

IV. Assessment Methods

A. Direct Measures

1. Capstone Learning Exam (CLE)

Faculty in the program will submit questions for the CLE to be administered in two of our upper division core courses most frequented by our graduating seniors (WS 175 and WS 153). The first question will concentrate on broad based topical knowledge of intersectional analysis regarding gender and sex, the second on more specified knowledge of feminism geared toward our capstone courses and the third question allows students to self-identify what they found important to their learning. The faculty is collectively responsible for administering and evaluating the CLE. The rubric will evaluate answers in terms of SLO 1, 2, 3, 5.

2. Analysis of Student Response to Essay Question

We will use two versions of this method.

For GE/Elective courses: Women's Studies will develop and implement a GE Assessment Plan that dovetails with its own SOAP Goals, using direct measures of student learning to assess these courses, through any of the following means a specific student essay/writing question. We will use this method in WS 10, which is a part of GE sub-area D3 course. Area D includes Social, Political, and Economic Institutions and Behavior, Historical Background with the purpose being to understand and analyze the basic principles underlying human social behavior. A specific essay question will be asked. Responses will be analyzed using a

rubric by faculty. Rubrics will assess GE area D3 SLO asking can students “Explain the influence of major social, cultural, economic and political forces on societal behavior and institutions” WS 10 will be assessed using the same method a second time. This time the rubric will focus on a different GE area D3 SLO asking can students “Discuss issues in the social sciences in their contemporary as well as historical settings and in a variety of cultural contexts.” Both rubrics will also allow WS to have direct measure of SLO 1, 3, and 5 in the Women’s Studies SOAP.

3. **Analysis of Student Assignments**

Faculty teaching upper-division core in WS 143/103 will collect and submit a random sample of student papers. These papers will be evaluated using a rubric that the faculty developed in the Spring of 2013. This evaluation will assess WS SLO’s 2, 3, 4 and 5.

4. **Post Tests:**

A post-test will be developed and administered by the program for circulation in a sample of upper division GE courses within the Multicultural International (MI) area (we will choose either WS 110 and/or WS 135). The post-test will contain 5-10 questions. Questions will be added to an existing exam or conducted during the regular class period. A benchmark will be established by the program faculty once the exact test is developed. In the first round, we will focus on GE MI outcome “Identify systems of oppression, inequality or discrimination within and among groups, cultures, and subcultures or nations.” A second round will focus on GE MI outcome “Explain and interpret aspects of race, gender, culture, class, ethnicity or the relations among nations in a multicultural world.” WS SLO’s 1, 3, and 4 will be assessed in both rounds.

B. Indirect Measures

5. **Alumni Survey**

It was a requirement of the initial soap process that the program, during its SOAP cycle conduct an alumni survey at least once. The program found this a vital component of our assessment in our first SOAP years. We plan to continue this process in this SOAP round. We will utilize the same survey, with some modifications to accommodate changes in our SOAP Learning SLO’s over time, concentrating on SLOs 1,2,3 and 6.

Benchmarks: Women’s Studies Benchmarks are as follows.

For rubric based assessments: GE and elective courses: 70% of respondents should receive a score of 2 or above on rubrics (with outcomes of: 0=unacceptable; 1=poor; 2=satisfactory; 3= good; 4=outstanding.) For Core Courses in the Major: 70% of respondents should receive a score of 2 or above on each of the four outcomes listed above. In core course, we further expect that at least 70% of students will have rubric scores on at least one rubric item at the 3 or above level.

On quantitative surveys and post-tests: At least 70% of respondents overall score should be 75% or above.

V. Student Learning Outcomes X Assessment Methods Matrix

Measures:	Outcome 1	Outcome 2	Outcome 3	Outcome 4	Outcome 5	Outcome 6
Capstone Learning Exam	X	X	X		x	
Post Tests	X		X	X		
Analysis of Written response to specific Question	X		X		x	
Analysis of Sample Student Assignment		X	X	x	x	
Post Test	X		X	X		
Alumni Survey	X	X	X	X	x	X

VI. Timeline for Implementation of Assessment Methods and Summary Evaluations

Year 2009-2010

Method 1: Capstone Learning Exam

Year 2011-2012 Major SOAP Revision per university requirements

Method 2: Analysis of Student Essay

Year 2012 to 2013 Major SOAP Revision per university requirements

Method 2: Analysis of Student Essay

Method 3: Analysis of Student Assignment

Year 2013 to 2014

Method 3: Analysis of Student Assignment

Method 4: Post Test

Year 2014 to 2015

Method 4: Post Test

Method 5: Alumni Survey

VII. Closing the Loop - Summary Evaluation, Curriculum Adjustment, and Reporting

The WSP's objective is to identify both areas of strength and weakness in terms of meeting SLOs. Here, the goal is to find alternative strategies where needed and implement necessary curricular changes. The WSP follows a multi-step process in order to collect, analyze, discuss, and make use of assessment data resulting from Program assessment activities. First, the Assessment Coordinator, with the help of WS faculty, is responsible for designing and implementing assessment activities and collecting and analyzing assessment data according to the above timeline. At least one entire Program meeting (approximately 90 minutes) per semester will be dedicated to monitor assessment activities. This on-going assessment discussion related to curricular objectives among faculty members allows the WSP to be more responsive in closing the loop on a continual basis. Second, at least one hour of the Program's full-day Faculty Retreat will be devoted to a discussion about assessment activities and outcomes, followed by a discussion of necessary curricular changes and how to implement the needed changes. This portion of the Faculty Retreat will allow the Program to evaluate in more detail the trajectory and progress of the undergraduate program in WS. The Retreat will also allow the WSP to engage in a deeper conversation about Program goals, pedagogy, and curricular strategies. Third, the Program Coordinator/Chair, with the aid of the Assessment Coordinator, will report on yearly assessment activities as part of the year-end Annual Report. The goal is to maintain an ongoing discussion about assessment with the WSP, enhancing the Program's ability to close the loop based on empirical assessment data. Fourth, and finally, the external Program Review, conducted every five years, serves as the most comprehensive Program assessment activity. The most recent review process in 2009 indicated that the WSP is performing comparable to other Women's Studies and Gender Programs of similar size across the country. Here, the Program serves to maintain our current curriculum while discussing and taking advantages of new curricular approaches.

The multi-step process described above is intricately linked to creating an academic environment that fosters successful student learning. As each assessment activity is completed, the Assessment Coordinator and faculty will evaluate the results to assess areas of strengths and weaknesses in SLOs. The WSP will document strengths so that we may continue to maintain and augment our related curriculum and pedagogical techniques. The weaknesses, if any, will be recorded and analyzed with an eye for improvement. Here, the WSP is committed to addressing weaknesses in the context of student learning by re-examining course materials and assignments. The Program's goal is to re-design these areas when necessary in order to address deficiencies in student learning. As each assessment activity reaches its second round, the evaluation data generated by the second set of assessments will inform faculty whether the curricular and/or pedagogical revisions improved SLOs. All four (4) core courses will be assessed twice within the 6-year plan as outlined in the timeline above. The Program's plan to addressing closing the loop is both systematic and continual. In other words, the plan outlined here offers an expansive opportunity to collect data on areas of student learning strengths and weaknesses; respond to the strengths and weaknesses; and observe both positive and negative results of revision efforts. Clearly, faculty will develop the ability to design and implement course revisions when needed based on the first round of an assessment activity, and then faculty will be able re-visit the success or failure of the implemented revisions after the second round of the assessment activity is completed. The Program's motivation to returning to courses for assessment indicates our commitment to closing the loop, helping to improve our curriculum and student learning outcomes. Once actual data are obtained and analysis done, this section of "Closing the Loop" will be updated with action plans to address the actual activities the Program faculty will take to improve learning.

Women's Studies Program Assessment Outcomes and Closing the Loop Report: Supplemental to Annual Report Assessment Responses for 2012/2013

Courses Assessed:

WS 143—Feminist Theory

WS 10—Introduction to Women's Studies (A GE course as well)

Submitted: November 21, 2013

Report completed by:

Professor Loretta Kensinger, WS Assessment Coordinator

Introduction to 2012-2013 Supplemental to Annual Report

As reported in the Women's Studies portion of our annual report for 2012-2013 dealing with assessment, "2012/2013 data assessment was delayed due to changes in SOAP SLO's. We will be assessing the data over the summer and reporting on it, and coming to closing the loop decisions, at our annual retreat in August." The program held those discussions in August, and over two faculty meetings in September reviewed and approved this supplemental report to last year's assessment report in order to add our "Closing the Loop" discussion. Our current SOAP calls for emphasizing assessment of our core courses, and GE/Elective courses in our latest assessment activities.

CORE COURSE ASSESSMENT OVERVIEW: WS 143

In Fall 2012 the program gathered samples of student papers completed in WS 143, Feminist Theory. This is a required core course for majors, minors, and double majors in the program. Assessed through this method will be WS SLO 2, which, to summarize, speaks to the need for students to demonstrate an understating of feminism(s) theory, methods, history; WS SLO 3, which, again, to summarize, speaks to the need for students to demonstrate awareness of intersectionality, anti-oppression, and social justice principles; WS SLO 4 which, again, to summarize, speaks to the need for students to demonstrate "information literacy and reading comprehension; and WS SLO 5 which, again, to summarize, speaks to the need for students to demonstrate communication skills.

Assessment of WS 143 utilized Direct Method 3, listed on our new SOAP as "Analysis of Student Assignments". In this case a student essay was collected. Student essays were assessed utilizing a revised rubric that better reflects our new SLO's. There are four questions that make up the assessment tool, each linked directly to a SOAP outcome. The scale for response to each element of the rubric is 0=unacceptable; 1=poor; 2=satisfactory; 3= good; 4=outstanding. Two professors divided the 14 student samples, and assessed their half using the agreed upon rubric.

Our baseline benchmark is that 70% of respondents should receive a score of 2 or above on each of the four outcomes. Since this is a core course, we further expect that at least 70% of students will have scores on at least one rubric item at the 3 or above level.

The program is proud to report that results greatly exceeded our benchmarks. On rubric question A, assessing SLO 2 which requires "students demonstrate an understanding of feminism(s)

theories...” 100% scored a 2, satisfactory, or above, indeed over 100% scored over a 3 or above, and 9 of 14 respondents were ranked 4, outstanding. Question B assessed SLO 3, which requires students to “demonstrate an awareness of intersectionality as well as comprehension of anti-oppression and social justice principles...” On question B 100% scored 2, satisfactory, or above; over 85.7% scored 3, good, or above. Question C, addressing SLO 4, dealing with “information literacy,” while still passing our benchmarks, was the weakest area on this report. While 100% scored 2, satisfactory, or above, only 71.4% scored 3, good, or above in this area. Finally, Question D, which assessed SLO 5 states “students will demonstrate communications skills by accurately summarizing texts...formulation of their own ideas...through writing.” Again, 100% of students scored over 2, satisfactory, or above; and 85.7% scored over 3, good, or above.

CLOSING THE LOOP DISCUSSION: WS 143

At the August 21, 2013 faculty retreat 70 minutes was devoted to closing the loop discussions of our assessment activities for 2012/2013. Faculty were very pleased that our core courses continue to rank high in our assessment, and to do so across instructors. When looking at WS 10 and WS 143 together, faculty did believe some tentative evidence was present that students improve their skills over the course of their time in the program. Further, WS 143 is more than meeting the program objectives and students were able to exhibit very high achievement in the SLO areas required.

However, while the course exceeded all benchmarks, faculty did note a number of places where improvement might occur. Discussion was particularly lively regarding the information literacy results. It was observed that WS 143 is not one of the courses we have directly linked to the library based Information literacy program (those courses being WS10 and WS 103). So in this sense the scores in this area are impressive. Indeed we discussed if this SLO is most appropriately linked to this course, given its emphasis in other courses. No conclusive decision was made here, but in the meantime faculty believed simple things could improve the scores.

Faculty reviewing the data found two areas important to consideration of improving information literacy. One concern was that students be consistent and accurate in using evidence to back claims. All faculty teaching this course will be encouraged in the future to directly draw students' attention to where claims are being backed by evidence in course readings. The means of achieving this was left to faculty, and could be done in an assignment, in lecture, in group work or on-blackboard. This was agreed upon as one way to close this loop.

Delving further into the data, including qualitative comments from the reviewers, it became clear that citation use and consistency, including the use of signal phrases to introduce materials drawn from research, was a primary concern for reviewers. Faculty agreed that across the core curriculum all faculty would build into their Blackboard pages for their courses resource pages for students explaining citation styles expected in the class, and signal phrase use. This would be pointed out to students during class. Purdue's OWL resources were cited as excellent examples for use in this regard. Faculty believed this would help by providing students with a consistent guide acceptable to their course that all students would have at their fingertips when writing papers.

ASSESSMENT OVERVIEW: WS 10

In Spring 2013 the program continued on its path of assessing GE/Elective courses. Assessment of WS 10 was conducted by Direct Method 2, listed on our new SOAP as “Analysis of Student Response to Essay Question.” The question was one utilized in a previous round of GE assessment, and asks: “In ‘Taking the Field’ (2002), Messner argues that sport plays a conservative role in gender relations. That is, traditional understandings of masculinity and femininity are reproduced and re-asserted through the institution of sport. His book surveys a variety of practices, ideas, and structural organizations that prove this point. In this essay, you will focus only on the following question: How does sport reproduce traditional understandings of masculinity and femininity through homophobia and through sex segregation in sport?” Women’s Studies randomly selected ½ of the students in two sections of this class for review, which gave us one full class to assess. Assessment utilized a rubric based one developed for our last analysis of Direct Method 2, but modified to fit the new GE outcome we are looking at in this round.

We utilized WS 10 for a second time, since this is a class we often teach, and teach multiple sections of. In 2011/2012 we assessed essays for GE Area D3 SLO: “explain the influence of major social, cultural, economic and political forces on societal behavior and institutions.” This year we assessed the results in terms of GE Area D3 SLO: “Discuss issues in the social sciences in their contemporary as well as historical settings and in a variety of cultural contexts.” Along with assessing this course for its ability to address GE outcomes, we also assessed it for meeting WS outcomes. In particular, using the new SOAP, we assessed the course for WS SLO 1 which speaks to the need for students to demonstrate awareness of gender and the status of women; SLO 3 speaks to the need for students to demonstrate awareness of intersectionality, anti-oppression, and social justice principals; and WS SLO 5 which speaks to the need for students to demonstrate communication skills. There are four questions on the assessment rubric. The first three questions of our assessment rubric addressed GE Area D3 SLO outcome components. All also addressed our programmatic SLO.

The scale for response to each element of the rubric is 0=unacceptable; 1=poor; 2=satisfactory; 3= good; 4=outstanding. As in previous rounds, our benchmark is that 70% of respondents should receive a score of 2 or above on each of the four outcomes.

We were very pleased that overall results were well above our benchmark in all areas. On all four questions, 91.3% of respondents scored 2, satisfactory or above, on each of the four rubric outcome questions. Scores were highest in the 3 rubric questions related to the GE SLO area. To break this down further, Question 1 asked, “Did the student show good understanding of the social science issue within the construction of gender?” This assessed GE Area D 3, definition of the issue under investigation, and WS SLO 1. The percentage of students who scored 2 or above was 91.3%. Question 2, assessing “How well did students discuss gender in contemporary settings and/or historical settings?” addressed the GE Area D3 mandate that students “Discuss issues in the social sciences in their contemporary as well as historical settings” and gave further data to enrich discussion of WS program SLO 1. Again, the percent of students who scored 2 or above was 91.3%. These were the highest of the rubric scores, indicating that the courses are meeting and exceeding GE objectives. Question 3, assessing “how well did students reveal understanding of a variety of cultural contexts in which gender occurs?” addressed the last part

of the GE Area D3 mandate that students discuss social science issues “in a variety of cultural contexts” as well as WS programmatic SLO 3. Once again, 91.3% scored 2 or above on this answer. While well above our benchmark, when we looked deeper at the data beyond the benchmark (for example, overall score averages as well as percentages for students at 3 or above or 4 or above on the rubric) this question elicited lowest of the three scores related to GE. Question 4 on the rubric assessed “the extent to which the work is well-organized and well-written.” This question is geared solely at program SLO 5, relating to good communication skills. 91.3% scored 2 or above on this answer. While well above our benchmark, when we looked deeper at the data beyond the benchmark (for example, overall score averages as well as percentages for students at 3 or above or 4 or above on the rubric) this question elicited scores that were the lowest of any question on the rubric and elicited the most discussion during our faculty meeting.

CLOSING THE LOOP DISCUSSION: WS 10

At the August 21, 2013 faculty retreat 70 minutes was devoted to closing the loop discussions of our assessment activities for 2012/2013. At least 1/3 of this time was specifically devoted to GE assessment. Faculty noted first our excellent achievement in meeting benchmarks in this round. We are particularly happy that scores on the three questions central to GE on the rubric were the highest of the report, and were some 21% points higher than the benchmark.

Regarding closing the loop in both GE and WS assessment goals, we believe instructors should be encouraged to continue their excellent results in this area.

Again, in our attempt to ensure we are getting the most reliable assessment results some of our discussion centered on the tool of assessment. The exceptionally high performance in the class was reviewed to see if it presented a concern with the instrument itself. However, our discussions reasserted our benchmark as a rigorous and sound standard. We noted that the criteria would mean 70% of the projects reviewed would achieve the equivalent of a C or above, when translated in terms teachers understand (0=F; 1=D; 2=C, etc.), on the rubric. Further, it was a benchmark used in the earlier assessment review of WS 10, and so had been already proved a solid standard for the program as well as the wider GE committee. We, did, however, note that rubric question 2 had a potential interpretive issue in its wording, since it asked about two separate assessment issues (i.e. “contemporary settings” and “historical settings”) in one question. It would be good to separate these into two issues so we can get a little better handle on whether both areas are being addressed well in the course. In future rubrics we will be sure that we have discrete data regarding each unique element of complex assessment items.

Some of our discussion focused on Question 3, because while the result of 91.3% was very much above our benchmark, the question garnered the lowest of the GE related question scores. As reported in our GE Closing the loop Report “upon closer examination of the data, faculty felt respondents did well in understanding the institutional culture of the sports world and its gendered dynamics, including the heteronormative context of sports. However, students were less skilled at making intersectional connections between gender and other aspects of the culture of sports. We wondered if part of this was a result of the particular text (Messner) that was chosen for the question. In the end, faculty were not overly concerned, but did resolve to

reiterate with all WS 10 teachers, particularly those new to the program, the importance to the course of a focused discussion on intersectionality. We also thought it would be helpful to be sure all instructors of WS 10 were sent the GE objectives on a yearly basis, as a regular reminder regarding the fuller range of standards to be addressed in the course.”

In turning attention to the one assessment question not overlapping with GE, SLO 4, the program was again happy that overall, our scores in this area were well above our benchmark.¹ But because this was one of the lower scoring areas of the report, it engendered our longest conversation. The main concern emerging from these samples was with the flow of information and linkages of ideas in the samples. Some faculty speculated that difficulties in linking paragraphs and ideas in the samples might come from students’ greater familiarity with electronic text and social media based writing styles and less familiarity with formal writing conventions. Ultimately, however, all faculty agreed we want students to write logically, both in content (ideas) and structure, regardless of the format. In these samples, students seemed to have problems transitioning because they do not know how to properly use paragraphs to construct and organize an argument; transitions can only be successful if the structure of their argument already makes sense. To close the loop, faculty agreed to review sections of WS 10 to be sure all sections included some attention to academic writing conventions, including thesis construction, transitions, and logical paragraphing. This could come in the form of in-class exercises, provision of on-line writing resources, or encouraging participation in writing workshops offered through campus writing centers or learning labs. Within the class, faculty in this area will also be encouraged to do more to teach students to read rhetorically, using reading to help students identify writing conventions and how they function, particularly within scholarly essay forms. It was also decided that faculty should provide at least one extended in-class free-write or ungraded writing assignment aimed at helping students become more comfortable with conventional, particularly essay style, answers.

¹ While not required to do so, the program elected to include this discussion in its annual GE Closing the Loop report.