

General Education Outcomes Report

Introduction

In order to better understand students' status and progress on Gavilan College General Education Student Learning Outcomes (GESLO), a student survey was developed and administered. Gavilan College General Education Student Learning Outcomes center on 6 areas: *Communications in the English Language, Physical Universe and its Life Forms, Arts, Foreign, Literature, Philosophy, Social Political and Economic Institutions, Lifelong Understanding and Self-Development, and Cultural Diversity.*

Methods

For each General Education Outcome area, two survey items were developed to assess corresponding GE Student Learning Outcomes (See Appendix A). The items were developed by the Director of Institutional Research reviewed and revised by the Student Learning Outcomes Advisory Committee and the Department Chairs' Committee. The survey was piloted with a small group of students. At the end of the Spring '10 term, the survey was administered to a 12% stratified, randomly selected sample. The total number of respondents was 635, 9.94% of the total 1st census unduplicated student headcount.

Results

Table I: Students' rating of their improvement on GESLOs since attending Gavilan College.

ISLO Area	ISLO	Not at all		A little		Much		Very much	
		Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Commun.	<i>Write clearly and effectively.</i>	22	4.3%	140	27.4%	213	41.7%	136	26.6%
Commun.	<i>Read and understand college textbooks.</i>	25	5.0%	123	24.7%	204	41.0%	146	29.3%
Phys Uni.	<i>Explain physical and biological ideas, theories, and processes.</i>	47	10.0%	148	31.5%	192	40.9%	83	17.7%
Phys Uni.	<i>Work collaboratively with others on labs, projects, and/or presentations.</i>	44	8.5%	129	25.0%	192	37.2%	151	29.3%
Arts, Lit.	<i>Perform or understand at least one artistic form (music, visual arts, theater, film/television, writing, digital arts).</i>	70	15.8%	118	26.7%	134	30.3%	120	27.1%
Arts, Lit.	<i>Analyze or review an artistic work.</i>	83	19.2%	125	28.9%	129	29.8%	96	22.2%
Soc. Pol.	<i>Understand key concepts and theories of human and/or societal development.</i>	46	9.8%	123	26.3%	178	38.0%	121	25.9%
Soc. Pol.	<i>Use research that you have done or learned about to understand human behavior and/or societal change.</i>	46	9.8%	122	26.0%	175	37.3%	126	26.9%
Life Und.	<i>Know how important it is to improve myself.</i>	40	7.7%	82	15.8%	157	30.3%	239	46.1%
Life Und.	<i>Understand myself better.</i>	37	7.1%	109	20.8%	178	34.0%	199	38.0%
Cult. Div.	<i>Understand how you as an individual fit into your and others' cultures.</i>	45	8.7%	140	27.1%	160	30.9%	172	33.3%

Table 2: Comparison of means of General Education Student Learning Outcomes, all respondents

		N	Mean
Commun.	<i>Write clearly and effectively.</i>	511	2.91
Commun.	<i>Read and understand college textbooks.</i>	498	2.95
Phys Uni.	<i>Explain physical and biological ideas, theories, and processes.</i>	470	2.66
Phys Uni.	<i>Work collaboratively with others on labs, projects, and/or presentations.</i>	516	2.87
Arts, Lit.	<i>Perform or understand at least one artistic form (music, visual arts, theater, film/television, writing, digital arts).</i>	442	2.69
Arts, Lit.	<i>Analyze or review an artistic work.</i>	433	2.55
Soc. Pol.	<i>Understand key concepts and theories of human and/or societal development.</i>	468	2.80
Soc. Pol.	<i>Use research that you have done or learned about to understand human behavior and/or societal change.</i>	469	2.81
Life Und.	<i>Know how important it is to improve myself.</i>	518	3.15
Life Und.	<i>Understand myself better.</i>	523	3.03
Cult. Div.	<i>Understand how you as an individual fit into your and others' cultures.</i>	517	2.89

Table 3: Comparison of means of General Education Student Learning Outcomes, 30+ units students

		N	Mean	Gain	Sig Gain
Commun.	<i>Write clearly and effectively.</i>	206	3.02	X	.000*
Commun.	<i>Read and understand college textbooks.</i>	209	2.99	X	.044*
Phys Uni.	<i>Explain physical and biological ideas, theories, and processes.</i>	195	2.82	X	.000*
Phys Uni.	<i>Work collaboratively with others on labs, projects, and/or presentations.</i>	202	3.02	X	.000*
Arts, Lit.	<i>Perform or understand at least one artistic form (music, visual arts, theater, film/television, writing, digital arts).</i>	184	2.82	X	.001*
Arts, Lit.	<i>Analyze or review an artistic work.</i>	181	2.64	X	.013*
Soc. Pol.	<i>Understand key concepts and theories of human and/or societal development.</i>	201	2.98	X	.000*
Soc. Pol.	<i>Use research that you have done or learned about to understand human behavior and/or societal change.</i>	201	2.94	X	.008*
Life Und.	<i>Know how important it is to improve myself.</i>	199	3.23	X	.000*
Life Und.	<i>Understand myself better.</i>	200	3.07	X	.006*
Cult. Div.	<i>Understand how you as an individual fit into your and others' cultures.</i>	194	2.89	X	.000*

Note: Gain was determined by increased means of those who reported '0 units' and those who reported '30+ units'.

* Significant change at the $p < .05$

Diagram 1: Units completed by GESLO mean.

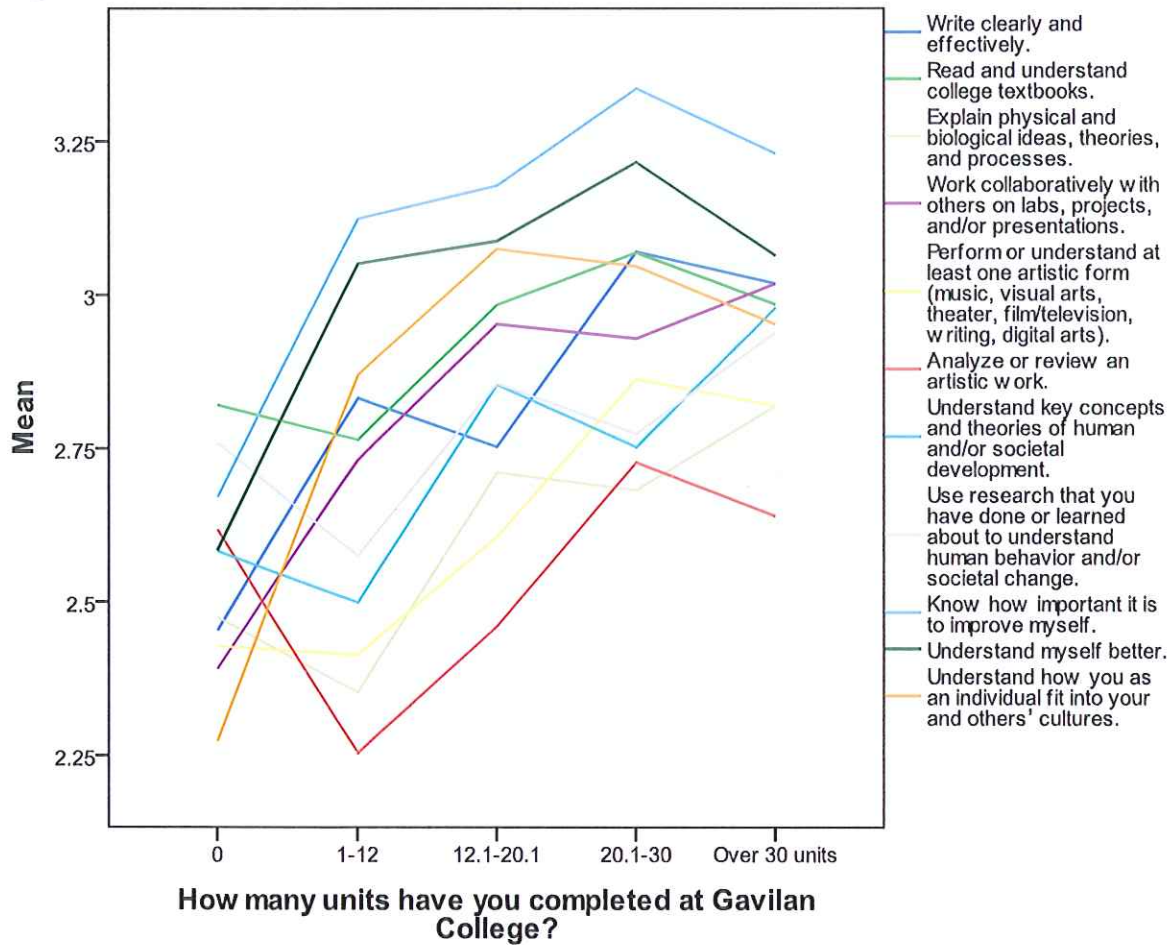


Table 4: Comparison of means of GESLO between students who took classes in GE areas.

		Lang.	Natural Sci.	Fine Arts	Social Sci
Commun.	<i>Write clearly and effectively.</i>	2.97*	3.02*	3.04*	2.97*
Commun.	<i>Read and understand college textbooks.</i>	2.96	2.99*	3.05*	2.98
Phys Uni.	<i>Explain physical and biological ideas, theories, and processes.</i>	3.68	2.73**	2.76*	2.72*
Phys Uni.	<i>Work collaboratively with others on labs, projects, and/or presentations.</i>	2.94*	2.95	3.01*	3.01*
Arts, Lit.	<i>Perform or understand at least one artistic form (music, visual arts, theater, film/television, writing, digital arts).</i>	2.72	2.71	2.89*	2.68
Arts, Lit.	<i>Analyze or review an artistic work.</i>	2.55	2.57	2.77*	2.58
Soc. Pol.	<i>Understand key concepts and theories of human and/or societal development.</i>	2.82	2.84*	2.93*	2.90*
Soc. Pol.	<i>Use research that you have done or learned about to understand human behavior and/or societal change.</i>	2.84	2.87*	2.93*	2.87*
Life Und.	<i>Know how important it is to improve myself.</i>	2.23*	3.22*	3.28*	3.22*
Life Und.	<i>Understand myself better.</i>	3.11*	3.11*	3.11*	3.10*
Cult. Div.	<i>Understand how you as an individual fit into your and others' cultures.</i>	2.96*	2.96	2.99*	2.89*

* Significantly different ($p < .01$) than those students who did not report taking a class from this area.

Summary

Prior to summarizing the results, some of the most significant limitations of the current study need to be acknowledged. While self-report instruments can be a useful way to measure latent variables, they rely upon a respondents' accurate and genuine assessment of the variable's degree. It is exceedingly difficult to construct reliable and valid self-report items to assess the change in intangible phenomenon such as GESLOs.

The cross-sectional model used in the current study to answer how students may improve over their time at Gavilan College does not follow students over time, as such is prone to several potential weaknesses. For example, students who are able to complete 30+ units may be qualitatively different than those who complete only a few units, making comparisons of these groups unsound.

Recognizing these weaknesses, the results suggest that most students seem to be improving on outcomes the more units they complete. These increases were significant, when tested, for all of the assessed GESLOs.

While these results are informative, future administration of this instrument will allow the institution to monitor any effect of large scale changes or look for other cohort effects. Moreover, similar result patterns will substantiate the reliability of the instrument.

Lastly, these results are just one piece of the picture in terms of student progress on general education outcomes. Additional sources, both quantitative and qualitative, will be needed to strengthen our College's success on general education outcomes.

Appendix A: General Education Student Learning Outcomes Assessed

AREA A – Communications in the English Language

Upon Completion of courses in Area A, students will be able to do the following:

- Write clear and effective prose using forms, methods, modes and conventions of English grammar that best achieve the writing's purpose
- Read college course texts and summarize the information presented

AREA B – Physical Universe and its Life Forms

Upon Completion of courses in Area B, students will be able to do the following:

- Explain concepts and theories related to physical and biological phenomena
- Work collaboratively with others on labs, projects, and presentations

AREA C – Arts, Foreign Language, Literature and Philosophy

Upon Completion of courses in Area C, students will be able to do the following:

- Demonstrate knowledge of the language and content of one or more artistic forms: visual arts, music, theater, film/television, writing, digital arts
- Analyze an artistic work on both its emotional and intellectual levels

AREA D – Social, Political, and Economic Institutions

Upon Completion of courses in Area D, students will be able to do the following:

- Identify and analyze key concepts and theories about human and/or societal development
- Demonstrate an understanding of the use of research and scientific methodologies in the study of human behavior and societal change

AREA E – Lifelong Understanding and Self-Development

Upon Completion of courses in Area E, students will be able to do the following:

- Demonstrate an awareness of the importance of personal development
- Examine the integration of one's self as a psychological, social, and physiological being

AREA F – Cultural Diversity

Upon Completion of courses in Area F, students will be able to do the following:

- Connect knowledge of self and society to larger cultural contexts
- Articulate the differences and similarities between and within cultures