

Seaver College General Education (GE) Assessment – Humanities Academic Year 2011-2012

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You will find the [Office of Institutional Effectiveness web site](#) and the [Program Review Guidebook](#) to be valuable resources when assessing the General Education program.

Introduction

The Humanities General Education Program consists of 3 courses, 111, 212, 313, and the original intention in designing this sequence was to have courses be taught at the introductory, intermediate, and advanced (upper division level). The learning outcomes, besides mastering content information in the area of western culture (history, philosophy, and the arts), are concerned with being introduced to, developing, and mastering skills in the analysis of historical and cultural evidence, thinking critically and writing effectively about the course materials, and finally being able to identify and make judgments informed by values. Moreover, in terms of the General Education Program, this course is regarded as contributing to students' understanding of diversity—which we have taken to mean not only diverse cultures and values, but diverse approaches to historical and cultural evidence. So that others might fully understand the terms and outcomes upon which this assessment study has focused, the following course descriptions from the Seaver catalog should be helpful.

Western Heritage (9)

This three-course sequence, taught with progressively more rigorous expectations, gives a historical and sequential introduction to the achievements of Western culture from prehistoric times through the late Middle Ages (30,000 CE–1300 CE) in the first course, through the Early Modern Period (1300–1815) in the second, and from the Industrial Revolution to the present in the third. Through an integrated, interdisciplinary study of politics, literature, philosophy, and the arts, the sequence explores the interrelationship between the cultural arts and the spiritual, political, and intellectual commitments of men and men in the West

Courses fulfilling the Western Heritage requirement: HUM 111, HUM 212, and HUM 313, taken in sequence at the introductory, intermediate, and advanced levels:

In the Western Heritage requirement, students will:

- Develop a historical and sequential understanding of the history of Western civilization.
- Experience the West's important primary cultural "texts" (literature, philosophy, art, and music) and explore their historical contexts.
- Understand the consequences and costs of Western cultural achievements both to men and women in the West and to other civilizations with which the West has interacted.
- Learn, use, and evaluate ideas of historical periodization, such as "Classical," "Medieval," "Renaissance," "Baroque," "Enlightenment," "Romantic," "Modern," and "Postmodern."

HUM 111 Western Culture I (3)

An introduction to the West, with particular emphasis on knowledge and comprehension. Students will achieve basic cultural literacy in the following time periods: Prehistoric, Mesopotamia, Egypt, Greece, Rome, Medieval Europe (30,000 BC-AD 1300). (GE)

HUM 212 Western Culture II (3)

An analysis and interpretation of six major historical "events" during the time period 1300-1815 and their cultural implications: Renaissance, Reformation, Intercultural Encounters, Science, Enlightenment, the French Revolution. Students will achieve cultural literacy in these areas and develop skills in cultural interpretation and analysis. Prerequisite: HUM 111. (GE)

HUM 313 Western Culture III (3)

Focused on a particular topic in modern culture, the course will use historical narrative of the time period 1815 to the present as a background for investigation into a particular theme or themes. Students will engage with and assess varying cultural and historical interpretations. Students will achieve cultural literacy in the modern period and demonstrate their skill in

synthesizing and evaluating diverse historical and cultural interpretations.
Prerequisite: HUM 212. (GE)

I. Program Learning Outcome

Students express broad cultural perspectives informed by the history, literature, philosophy, or artistic achievements of western civilizations.

II. Institutional Educational Outcomes (Objectives)

The Humanities Learning Outcomes align with the following IEOs.

- I. Demonstrate a historical and chronological understanding of Western cultures from the ancient world to the present.
 - i. Knowledge & Scholarship (Purpose): Demonstrate expertise in an academic or professional discipline, display proficiency in the discipline, and engage in the process of academic discovery
- II. Demonstrate skill in analyzing and evaluating diverse voices in historical evidence from literature, the art and both primary and secondary historical texts
 - i. Community and Global Understanding (Purpose): Develop and enact a compelling personal and professional vision that values diversity.
 - ii. Knowledge & Scholarship (Leadership): Think critically and creatively, communicate clearly, and act with integrity
- III. Write clearly and coherently on the formation and global implications of western cultural values—political, philosophical, aesthetic, religious—and the historical contexts in which they were formed.
 - i. Faith & Heritage (Purpose): Appreciate the complex relationship between faith, learning and practice.
 - ii. Knowledge & Scholarship (Leadership): Think critically and creatively, communicate clearly, and act with integrity

III. Student Learning Outcome(s)

SLO #1	Students demonstrate a historical and chronological understanding of Western cultures from the ancient world to the present.
SLO #2	Demonstrate skill in analyzing and evaluating diverse voices in historical evidence from literature, the art and both primary and secondary historical texts
SLO #3	Write clearly and coherently on the formation and global implications of western cultural values—political, philosophical, aesthetic, religious—and the historical contexts in which they were formed.

IV. Curriculum Map

	<u>SLO #1</u>	<u>SLO #2</u>	<u>SLO #3</u>
<u>Hum 111</u>	<u>I</u>	<u>D</u>	<u>M</u>
<u>Hum 212</u>	<u>I</u>	<u>D</u>	<u>M</u>
<u>Hum 313</u>	<u>I</u>	<u>D</u>	<u>M</u>

V. Assessment Plan

	Direct Evidence	Indirect Evidence
SLO #1	Assessment of writing sample drawn from Humanities courses	Student and Alumni Surveys
SLO #2	Assessment of writing sample drawn from Humanities courses	Student and Alumni Surveys
SLO #3	Assessment of writing sample drawn from Humanities courses	Student and Alumni Surveys

Narrative Description of Assessment Plan: The assessment committee gathered and evaluated a collection of 78 items of representative samples of student work produced from Humanities 111, 212, and 313 courses taught in Malibu during the fall and spring semesters of 2011-2012. The committee, consisting of all the faculty teaching these courses coordinated to create a rubric (see below) for assessing student learning in these courses. The committee met on two separate mornings (March 21 and March 28, 2012, and read, discussed and scored all samples. The committee read each of the samples to determine whether and to what extent the sample in question provided evidence that the 3 SLOs had been achieved. The samples were identified only by the course.

It is important to note that we have not yet assembled a portfolio that includes courses taught in International Programs or in Seaver summer sessions. There has not been a prior effort to coordinate PLOs and SLOs, so International Programs and Seaver summer sessions have not been operating with the same outcomes. The larger Assessment Plan for Humanities Sequence is to bring IP and Seaver summer into line by providing them with the designated program outcomes and to create a portfolio of student work for the 2012-2013 academic year.

VI. Rubrics

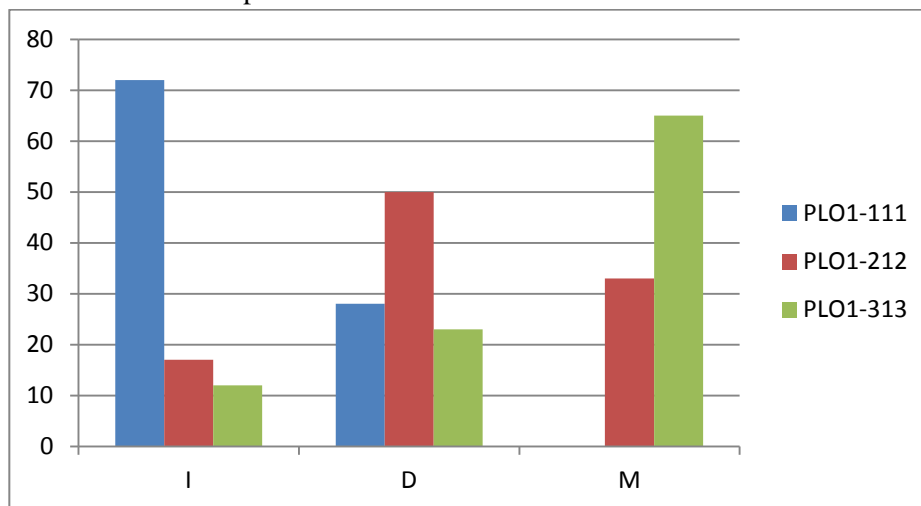
	<u>I</u>	<u>D</u>	<u>M</u>
<u>Outcome 1</u>	Places person/historical event in historical context	Discerns different ways of understanding persons/historical events and contexts	Shows understanding of interplay between multiple events and contexts
<u>Outcome 2</u>	Identifies diverse voices in art, literature and historical texts	Analyzes diverse voices in art, literature and historical texts and uses these as evidence in argument	Evaluates diverse voices in art, literature and historical texts and uses these as evidence in argument
<u>Outcome 3a</u>	Addresses the topic with specific and relevant examples	Has a clear argument supported with specific, relevant, and well described examples	Presents and evaluates multiple arguments based on specific and relevant examples
<u>Outcome 3b</u>	Identifies a culture's philosophical, political, aesthetic, and religious values	Identifies the global implications of a culture's philosophical, political, aesthetic, and religious values	Evaluates the implication of and responds to a culture's philosophical, political, aesthetic, and religious values

VII. Criteria/Benchmarks for Student Achievement / Success

The designated criterion/benchmark for adequate student performance in the area of critical thinking is that, *for each SLO, seventy percent (70%)* of the assessed samples at the designated level for each course: i.e., 70% of 111 sample would be at the introductory level, 70% of 212 sample would be at the level of developing, 70% of 313 students would be at the level of mastery.

VIII. Evidence / Data

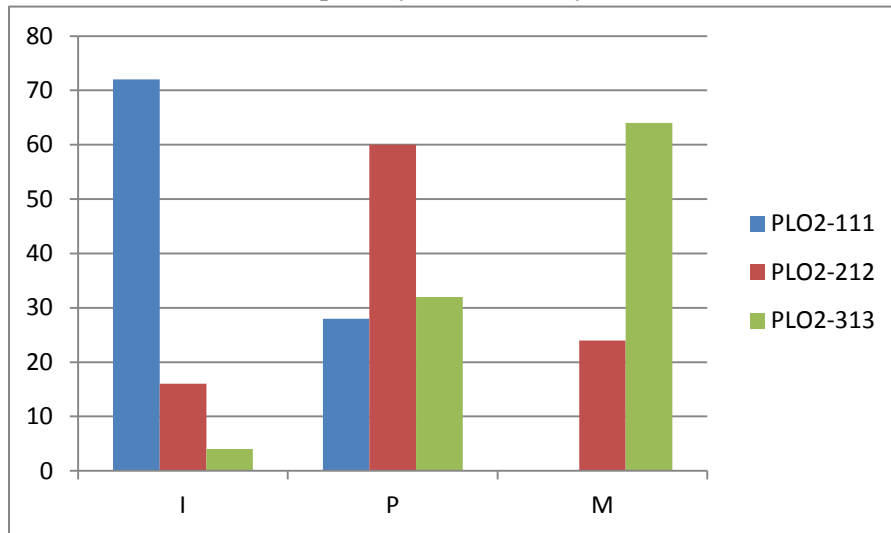
SLO 1: Students demonstrate a historical and chronological understanding of Western cultures from the ancient world to the present.



111 Slightly more than 70% of the student samples demonstrate knowledge at the introductory level in Humanities. Nearly 30% of student samples in this course demonstrate knowledge at the level of developing. **212** 82% of student samples in 212 are demonstrating knowledge at the level of developing and mastery with 30% exceeding expectations at the mastery level. **313:** 65% of student samples in 313 demonstrate knowledge at the level of mastery, 5% below the benchmark. Somewhat more troubling is that 10% of the samples demonstrate content mastery at a beginning level.

Conclusion: For Humanities 111 and 212 are exceeding expectations of student learning in the area of content. Humanities 313 come close, but not close enough. One instructor for the course suggested that the samples selected were not representative. For future assessment, we may need to be more directed in assembling the portfolio.

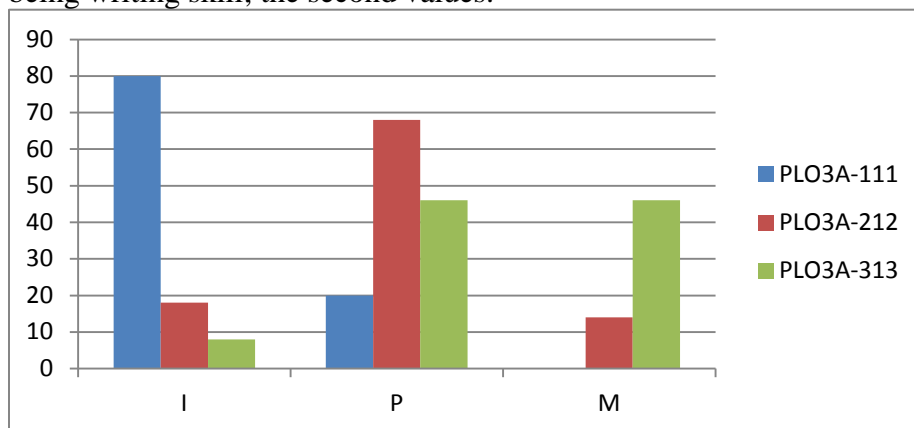
SLO 2: Demonstrate skill in analyzing and evaluating diverse voices in historical evidence from literature, the art and both primary and secondary historical texts.



111: Slightly more than 70% of the student samples demonstrate skill in historical and cultural analysis the introductory level in Humanities. Nearly 30% of student samples in this course demonstrate skill in historical and cultural analysis knowledge at the level of developing. **212** 82% of student samples in 212 are demonstrating skill in historical and cultural analysis at the level of developing and mastery with 32% exceeding expectations at the mastery level. **313:** 62% of student samples in 313 demonstrate skill in historical and cultural analysis at the level of mastery, 8% below the benchmark.

Conclusion:

SLO 3: Write clearly and coherently on the formation and global implications of western cultural values—political, philosophical, aesthetic, religious—and the historical contexts in which they were formed. This SLO was separated into two components for assessment. The first being writing skill; the second values.



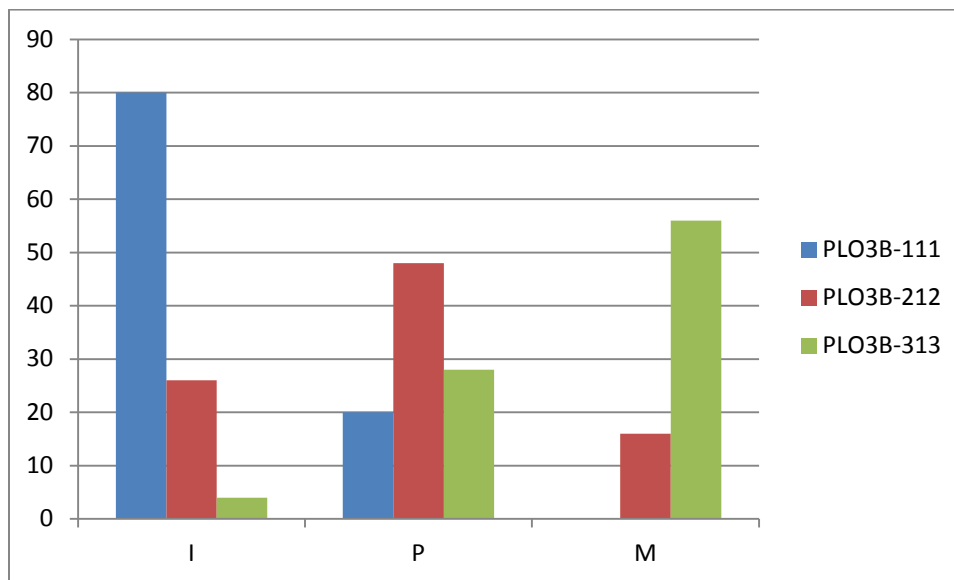
111: Slightly more than 80% of the student samples demonstrate effective writing skills the introductory level in Humanities. Nearly 20% of student samples in this course demonstrate skill in historical and cultural analysis knowledge at the level of developing. **212:** 78% of student samples in 212 are

demonstrating effective writing skills at the level of developing and mastery with 18% exceeding expectations at the mastery level. **313:** Only 48% of student samples in 313 demonstrate effective writing skills at the level of mastery, 22% below the benchmark. Even so 80% demonstrate effectiveness at the level of practicing and mastery.

Conclusion

For Humanities 111 and 212 are meeting expectations of student learning in the area of writing skills. Humanities 313 falls seriously short—short enough that the question of sample may not entirely be the issue. It is a challenge to have writing in a large lecture class, but since the other courses (111 and 212) are meeting the challenge, perhaps the program might better delineate writing expectations for all courses.

SLO 3B Values



111: Slightly more than 80% of the student samples articulate the formation of western values and their impact on other cultures in Humanities 111. 20% of student samples for this course articulate the role of values and their impact at the level of developing. **212:** 74% of student samples in 212 articulate the formation of western values and their impact on other cultures at the level of developing and mastery with 16% exceeding expectation. **313:** 55% of student samples in 313 articulate the role of values and their impact at the level of at the level of mastery, 15% below the benchmark. Here at though, nearly 30% articulate the formation of western values and their impact on other cultures.

Conclusion: Students in the humanities courses are effectively articulating the formation of values in western culture and their impact on other cultures. What all 313 students are not mastering this outcome, they are practicing it effectively.

VIII.F. INDIRECT EVIDENCE OF CRITICAL THINKING

The “indirect evidence” of the GE curriculum’s performance with respect to critical thinking was gathered by means of a survey conducted by Seaver College to the graduating Class of 2012. The survey asked respondents to answer

several questions that relate to the Humanities sequence including question 2 (critical thinking), 5 (writing), 10 (intercultural knowledge), 15 (the arts), and 21 (western culture). Questions 2 and 5 would seem to apply to the General Education Sequence generally, but it is relevant that 62% of graduating seniors felt their GE experience contributed sufficiently or considerably to their ability to their skills in critical thinking (62.9) and writing (62.1). Intercultural knowledge and competence is a bit more difficult with regard to Humanities—the subtitle of which is “Western Culture.” So students may not regard Humanities as contributing to this kind of competency and skill. Even so, 58.3% regarded their GE experience as contributing sufficiently or considerably to this competency. Since Humanities has a significant focus on the “historical, cultural, or technical significance of music, theater or art, that 64.6% of graduating seniors regarded their GE experience as contributing significantly or considerably to this competence is significant. Question 21 addresses western culture specifically.

The results of the survey administered to 2012 graduating seniors were as follows:

	Very Little	Somewhat	Sufficiently	Considerably	Response Count
21. Western Culture: The history, literature, philosophy and artistic achievements of western civilizations	10.7 (29)	22.1.0% (60)	39.7% (108)	27.6% (63)	272

It should be noted that the percentage of students who felt that the GE curriculum contributed sufficiently or considerably to their knowledge, skills, and personal development in this area was 67.3%—**the highest for all the GE categories and questions**. The next highest was in the category of Christianity (66.5%), the third foreign language (66.2%). The average reply in this survey of students reporting that the various course areas and learning skills was 57.32%. Student favorable response their learning in the Humanities was thus 10% above the average.

IX. Summary

Narrative Summary of Overall Findings:

Based on the “direct evidence” compiled in Sect. VIII of this document, the assessment committee found that the Seaver College Humanities curriculum currently meets its expectation for student learning, especially if we accept that the level of “practicing” would usually be considered adequate performance. Our expectation of mastery in 313 is perhaps as much a problem of expectation than of actual performance. Even so, in all but the area of writing, the samples from Humanities 313 came within a few percentage points of the level of mastery. In terms of the knowledge content parameters set by the General Education curriculum for the Humanities sequence, students all students samples demonstrated learning that expresses broad cultural perspectives informed by the history, literature, philosophy, or artistic achievements of western civilization. All students in the 111 sample demonstrate the knowledge and the skills associated with it at or above the level of introduced, as would be appropriate for the introductory course. 90% of students in the 212 sample demonstrate the knowledge and skills associated with it at or above the level of practice, as would be appropriate for the intermediate course, and 88% of students in the 313 sample demonstrate the knowledge and skills at or above the level of practice, with an average of 60% demonstrating mastery.

The indirect evidence confirms that students are learning sufficiently or considerably in the content area of Western Culture.

X. Recommendations (Closing the Loop)

Based upon the committee’s analysis, the following actions are necessary to assure the continued level of student learning outcomes in the humanities sequence.

Action Item #1: Follow-up on the assessment of Humanities 313, but collecting samples during the 2012-1013 year to determine whether the problem was with the sample or with learning outcomes being sufficiently clear. This may be more easily determined if writing expectations are clearly set forth for the course—especially because adjuncts will be teaching the course next year.

Evidence to support this proposed action: Outcomes from portfolio on SLO 3A.

Expected outcome (if the action item is implemented): We will have a more representative sample to evaluate student learning—and outcomes may be addressed more intentionally in the Humanities 313 course.

Expected timeline: Action will be taken before the fall semester begins.

Type of Action: **Resource Neutral** **Resources Required**

Action Item #2

We will assess International Programs and Seaver Summer as part of our assessment plan.

Evidence to support this proposed action: We had no evidence from these courses.

Expected outcome (if the action item is implemented):

We will know if there is continuity.

Expected timeline: PLOs and SLOs will be disseminated before fall. Assessment will take place during the spring term.

Type of Action: **Resource Neutral** **Resources Required**

Resource Detail: N/A

Act

XI. Contributors

Assessment of this area of the General Education program was performed by the following individual(s).

Committee Chairperson	Position Title	Academic Division
Cyndia Clegg	Distinguished Prof. of English	Humanities & Teacher Ed.

Committee Members	Position Title	Academic Division
Dr. Sonia Sorrell	Visiting Professor of Humanities	Fine Arts
Dr. Bryan Givens	Associate Prof. of History	Humanities & Teacher Ed.
Dr. Sharyl Corrado	Assistant Prof. of History	Humanities & Teacher Ed.
Dr. Andrea Siegel	Visiting Prof. of Jewish Studies	Humanities & Teacher Ed.

APPENDICES (Humanities)

Appendix A – Assessment Details (Portfolio is on file in Dr. Cyndia Clegg’s Office)

Learning Outcome 1- Student portfolio containing 78 samples of student work from Humanities Courses.

Learning Outcome 2- Student portfolio containing 78 samples of student work from Humanities Courses

Learning Outcome 3- Student portfolio containing 78 samples of student work from Humanities Courses

Appendix B - Rubrics

	<u>I</u>	<u>D</u>	<u>M</u>
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Appendix C – Evidence Data (included in report)

Appendix D Chronology

Date	Participants	Action
10/2011	CC, BG, SS, SC	Revised learning outcomes in light of GE outcomes
3/21/12	CC, BG, SS, SC, AS	Portfolio assessment for 111, 212
3/28/12	CC, BG, SS, SC, AS	Portfolio assessment for 313