

# Academic Program Assessment Report, US

COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS

General Education

ACADEMIC YEAR: 2016-2017

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## PROGRAM STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

Student Learning Objective	Introductory		Intermediate		Advanced	
	FA16	SP17	FA16	SP17	FA16	SP17
1. Transdisciplinarity	x	x	x	x	x	x
2. Critical Thinking		x	x	x	x	x
3. Quantitative Literacy	x	x	x			
4. Communication Literacies: Speech	x	x	x	x	x	x
4. Communication Literacies: Writing		x	x	x	x	x
5. Information and Technology Literacy	x	x	x	x		
6. Active Citizenship	x				x	
7. Ethical Judgment and Integrity			x	x	x	
8. Diversity	x	x			x	x

### DIRECT MEASURE:

All Student Learning Objectives were assessed using student work samples, including presentations, writing and projects using standard General Education rubrics (2016-17). More information on each is available in the detailed reports.

### TARGET:

Information on target expectations is available in the detailed reports.

### **Summary:**

During academic year 2016-17, General education continued to work from and assess the 8 General Education student learning objectives approved in 2015. Each of these learning objectives has an associated rubric which is used throughout the General Education program. We currently assess in the first year, second year and again at the final year/capstone level.

Data was collected from courses throughout the General Education program and was analyzed by either the course coordinator or by faculty within the General Education program. Student work samples varied by course, with writing samples, presentations and other project and portfolio work included and assessed using the current General Education rubrics.

Because of the importance of information about our graduating students, the faculty of General Education looked carefully at assessment results with special emphasis on the capstone courses. Analysis meetings were held in January for fall data and June for spring data. All General Education faculty participated. Outcomes from this analysis was used to formulate the plan for AY 2017-18, which appears below.

### **Overall closing the loop for GE**

To improve student learning in AY17-18, a number of changes will be made in the General Education program. These changes, which are in line with the analysis of the data done by the GE faculty in both Fall 16 and Spring 17, are intended on providing a stronger foundation for students in the first two years. Two areas of focus have been identified in ay17-18: academic learning culture and critical thinking. Academic learning culture serves as a foundation for all general education which is especially important in the areas of critical thinking and transdisciplinarity.

The first semester is crucial to the development of academic habits and learning culture. During this time, the first foundations for critical thinking can be built. Students need to be exposed to challenging issues from the first day to develop critical thinking skills. In order to learn transdisciplinarity, the solution oriented application of critical thinking, the first semester should keep the focus on community action and problem solving. The first year seminar ID 1500 Critical Reading and Community, that was piloted since Fall 2016 is a good start for the development of a university wide first year seminar. The class needs to be further assessed and developed for the next year as the required first year seminar for all students.

The assessment data overall shows that students need to develop further foundations for their academic work. Students have, for example, difficulty finding the appropriate information when doing research. Students tend to jump to the final line of the research and writing process. Careful scaffolding on all levels is necessary to support students in learning that all steps of the research and critical thinking process are crucial for success. Critical reading of different genres of academic literature is necessary for students to develop a better understanding of text. This can help with the writing issues still seen on the capstone level.

The report shows that the GE program continues to reach its goals in all 8 SLOs. We continue to see areas in need of improvement, specifically in higher order thinking tasks which require a student to access, interpret, and synthesize information. In an interesting pattern, students do well in areas with explicit instruction in categories considered complex however we believe this the result of the work process. For example, students remain better at drawing conclusions than finding material and using evidence. This points to a continued need for explicit support in starting work and a focus on deeper understanding of the work process (instead of just the outcomes of the work process). This slowing down is essential to deep and sustained learning.

The program continues to adjust to the Values portion of the program. Values, because of their very nature, can be difficult to articulate, measure, and encourage. We continue to work on a program structure that will encourage students to frame a problem clearly (understand), gather evidence, evaluate, and synthesize (study), and craft new work based on what they've learned (act). We continue to work as a department towards a new General Education program, based on this model.

Results at WKU were comparable to results in Union, with students at WKU often doing a bit better than students in Union. Going forward, we need to get more data on the value rubrics from WKU.

## **Student Learning Objective 1: Transdisciplinarity**

Transdisciplinarity, the ability to integrate knowledge and methods from different fields to address historical or contemporary questions, is assessed at three levels in General Education courses using the transdisciplinarity rubric.

### DATA COLLECTION AND RESULTS

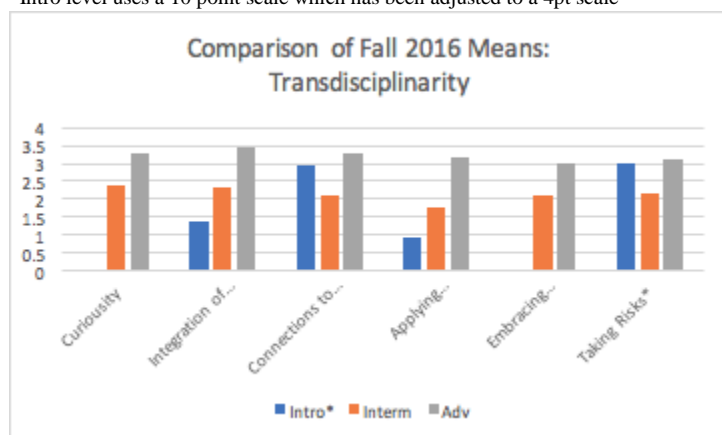
#### Semester(s): Fall 2016

	Intro	Interm	Advd
<b>Number of students:</b>	435	67	98
<b>Number of sections:</b>	21	4	8
<b>Courses assessed</b>	BIO 1000	GE 202x	Capstone

#### Mean Scores overall:

Category/Criterion	Intro*	Interm	Adv
Curiosity	-	2.36	3.31
Integration of Prior Learning	3.46	2.31	3.43
Connections to discipline*	7.35	2.13	3.29
Applying Methods and Knowledge	2.28	1.78	3.16
Embracing Contradictions	-	2.10	3.01
Taking Risks*	7.49	2.15	3.12

\*Intro level uses a 10 point scale which has been adjusted to a 4pt scale



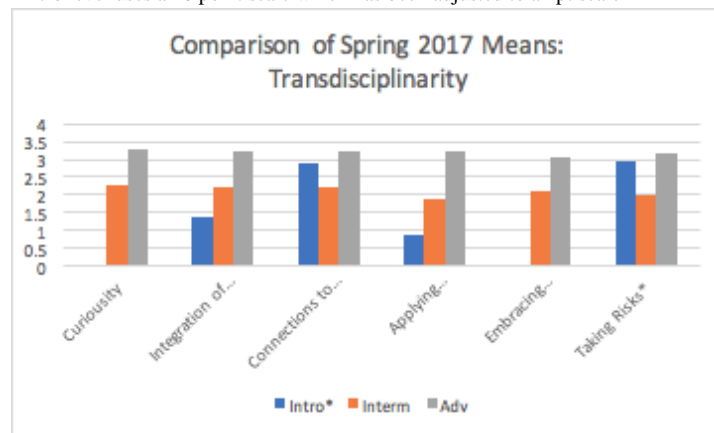
#### Semester(s): Spring 2017

	Intro	Interm	Advd
<b>Number of students</b>	431	121	167
<b>Number of sections</b>	19	4	10
<b>Courses assessed</b>	BIO 1000	GE 202X	Capstone

#### Mean Scores overall:

Category/Criterion	Intro*	Interm	Adv
Curiosity	-	2.28	3.3
Integration of Prior Learning	3.48	2.22	3.23
Connections to discipline*	7.28	2.20	3.22
Applying Methods and Knowledge	2.25	1.88	3.20
Embracing Contradictions	-	2.13	3.06
Taking Risks*	7.41	2.01	3.16

\*Intro level uses a 10 point scale which has been adjusted to a 4pt scale



#### Discussion of Findings:

Transdisciplinarity is a new student learning outcome and serves as a foundational concept in general education. Initial data collected on this SLO shows that both faculty and students are beginning to integrate the concept of

transdisciplinarity into their courses and work and are fulfilling expectations. There is room for improvement at all levels and to ensure that this SLO receives more attention.

**Curricular Actions/Closing the Loop:**

Starting with the Fall of 2017, Transdisciplinarity will be communicated to faculty and students as the central learning outcome in General Education. The overall curriculum will be further developed with this focus in mind.

**Supporting Evidence (data):**

X Detailed reports are on file in General Education

## Student Learning Objective 2: Critical Thinking

Critical thinking, the ability to utilize reflective analysis to draw informed conclusions, was assessed at 2 levels in Fall 2015 and at 3 levels in Spring 2016 in General Education courses using the critical thinking rubric.

### DATA COLLECTION AND RESULTS

Semester(s): <u>Fall 2016</u>				Semester(s): <u>Spring 2017</u>			
	Intro	Interm	Advd		Intro	Interm	Advd
Number of students:		149	131	Number of students	208	126	343
Number of sections:		7	9	Number of sections	7	6	-
Courses assessed		GE 202x	capstone	Courses assessed	SOC 1000	GE 202x	Capstone
<b>Mean Scores overall:</b>				<b>Mean Scores overall:</b>			
Category/Criterion	Intro	Interm	Adv	Category/Criterion	Intro	Interm	Adv
Explanation of issues		2.33	3.65	Explanation of issues	2.98	2.54	3.34
Evidence		2.10	3.67	Evidence	2.76	2.21	3.34
Influence of Context and Assumptions		1.88	3.55	Influence of Context and Assumptions	2.67	2.08	3.34
Student's Position		2.01	3.53	Student's Position	2.86	2.32	3.36
Connecting, synthesizing, transforming		2.11	3.31	Connecting, synthesizing and transforming	2.54	2.23	3.33
Conclusions and related outcomes		2.16	3.41	Conclusions and related outcomes	2.63	2.26	3.35

Category	Interm	Adv
Explanation of issues	2.33	3.65
Evidence	2.10	3.67
Influence of Context and Assumptions	1.88	3.55
Student's Position	2.01	3.53
Connecting, synthesizing, transforming	2.11	3.31
Conclusions and related outcomes	2.16	3.41

Category	Intro	Interm	Adv
Explanation of issues	2.98	2.54	3.34
Evidence	2.76	2.21	3.34
Influence of Context and Assumptions	2.67	2.08	3.34
Student's Position	2.86	2.32	3.36
Connecting, synthesizing and transforming	2.54	2.23	3.33
Conclusions and related outcomes	2.63	2.26	3.35

### Discussion of Findings:

Looking at the intermediate and advanced levels of critical thinking scores, students improved in critical thinking. These numbers are consistent with prior semester. Students in the intermediate level are not consistently reaching the target level of 3 on the rubric, which should be addressed in the next academic year, throughout General Education. In looking at the introductory level, it is unclear why scores are higher. There is a concern that sociology, the course assessed at the introductory level, may be taking much later in the undergraduate program and could be reflecting scores of juniors and seniors instead of first and second year students.

Regardless, critical thinking remains an area where students need consistent, explicit instruction at all levels and should be a primary focus in the next academic year.

**Curricular Actions/Closing the Loop:**

In order to improve critical thinking skills, the General Education program will plan and integrate lessons on critical thinking into all core GE courses across the introductory and intermediate levels.

**Supporting Evidence (data):**

X Detailed reports are on file in General Education

## Student Learning Objective 3: Quantitative Literacy

Quantitative literacy, defined as the ability to utilize numerical data accurately and effectively to address real world problems, is assessed at 3 levels in the General Education program using the Quantitative Literacy rubric.

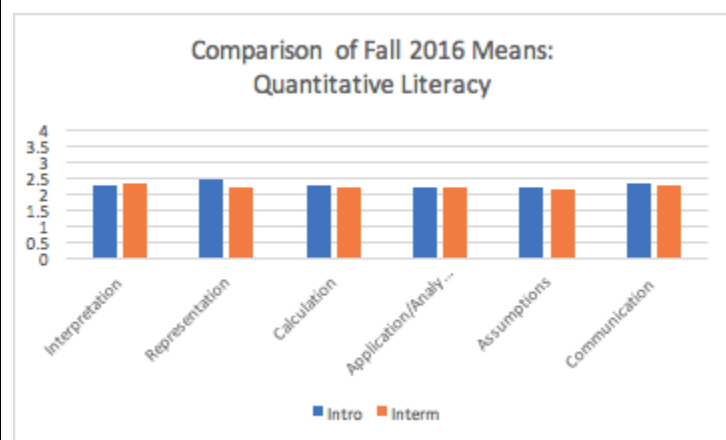
### DATA COLLECTION AND RESULTS

Semester(s): Fall 2016

	Intro	Interm	Advd
Number of students:	558	106	
Number of sections:	24	5	
Courses assessed	MAT H 1010, MAT H 1016	GE202x	

Mean Scores overall:

Category/Criterion	Intro	Interm	Adv
Interpretation	2.28	2.31	
Representation	2.48	2.23	
Calculation	2.29	2.20	
Application/Analysis	2.19	2.19	
Assumptions	2.18	2.14	
Communication	2.32	2.24	

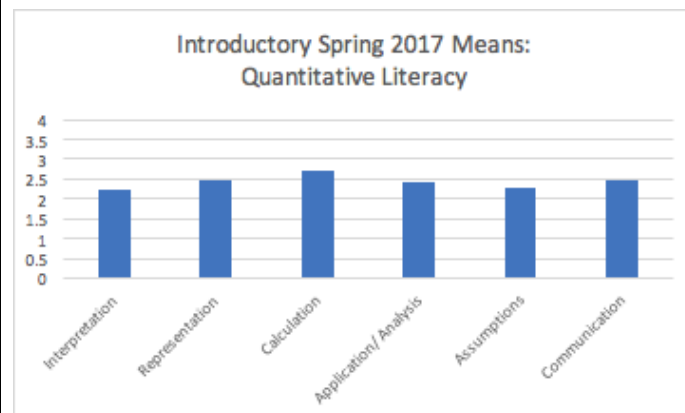


Semester(s): Spring 2017

	Intro	Interm	Advd
Number of students:	502		
Number of sections:	23		
Courses assessed	MAT H 1010, MAT H 1016		

Mean Scores overall:

Category/Criterion	Intro	Interm	Adv
Interpretation	2.22		
Representation	2.49		
Calculation	2.73		
Application/ Analysis	2.42		
Assumptions	2.28		
Communication	2.46		



Discussion of Findings:

Quantitative literacy scores remain fairly consistent with prior results however the difference in scores in the fall semester, between introductory and intermediate level is a concern. The two sets of scores are difficult to compare based on sample size and lack of connection between 1000 level math and GE 202x. Data was unavailable in the spring for GE 202x and further investigation is needed in the next academic year.

**Curricular Actions/Closing the Loop:**

A stronger communication between the faculty of the different levels is necessary in order to develop more lasting teaching strategies. Further development of General Education with a stronger emphasis on a combination of skills and their applications from early on can also be helpful in generating more lasting skills in this area.

**Supporting Evidence (data):**

X Detailed reports are on file in General Education

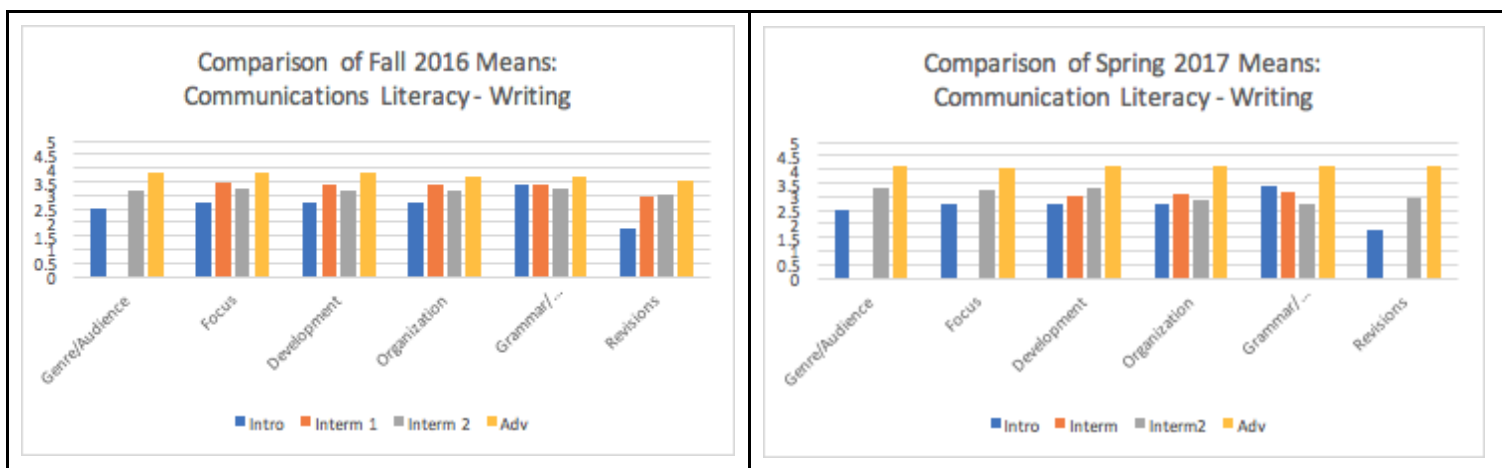


## Student Learning Objective 4: Communication Literacies- Writing

Writing, as a communication literacy, is defined as the ability to write effectively to convey and make an evidence-based argument, is assessed at 3 levels in the General Education program using the Kean University writing rubric.

### DATA COLLECTION AND RESULTS

Semester(s): <u>Fall 2016</u>					Semester(s): <u>Spring 2017</u>				
	Intro	Interm	Interm2	Advd		Intro	Interm	Interm2	Adv
<b>Number of students:</b>	-	146	156	186	<b>Number of students:</b>	170	264		469
<b>Number of sections:</b>	-	7	8	14	<b>Number of sections:</b>	na	12	10	34
<b>Courses assessed</b>	-	ENG 2403	GE3000	Capstone	<b>Courses assessed</b>	All first year writing	ENG 2403	GE3000	Capstone
<b>Mean Scores overall:</b>					<b>Mean Scores overall:</b>				
Category/ Criterion	Intro	Interm	Interm2	Adv	Category/ Criterion	Intro	Interm	Interm2	Adv
Genre/ Audience	-	-	3.17	3.86	Genre/ Audience	2.5	-	3.30	4.10
Focus	-	3.43	3.24	3.85	Focus	2.7	-	3.26	4.08
Development	-	3.40	3.17	3.83	Development	2.7	3.06	3.32	4.10
Organization	-	3.41	3.18	3.72	Organization	2.7	3.08	2.86	4.12
Grammar/ Mechanics	-	3.39	3.23	3.69	Grammar/ Mechanics	3.4	3.19	2.74	4.12
Revisions	-	2.97	3.02	3.57	Revisions	1.8	-	2.95	4.12
*First Year Writing is assessed at one time per year, after the spring semester has ended					*First Year Writing covers multiple courses, including Eng1030,1031/32, Eng1430				



### Discussion of Findings:

The results show the continued importance of GE 3000, as there are areas where the scores in this class are consistently lower than in the comparable classes.

Grammar and mechanics results are acceptable on all levels. In fact, the scores for grammar and mechanics indicates that faculty should expect students to be competent writers and work to use this strength to encourage the style and conventions within the disciplines. Faculty in higher level courses should incorporate models and lessons specific to disciplines within their courses.

The focus on critical thinking can strengthen student writing especially in the areas of focus and development. There are signs that students are capable of writing to the requirements set by the university though revisions, which is both a skill and habit, should receive continued support and focus throughout all courses in the university.

### Curricular Actions/Closing the Loop:

While students show an increase in scores over the three levels, “revisions” remains the weakest aspect. On the beginning level, this has been addressed through a handbook for instructors and instructor training that emphasizes different ways of teaching revisions.

The results in “Intermediate 2”, GE 3000 are very encouraging. If students develop stronger revision skills and habits, their writing should improve overall.

### Supporting Evidence (data):

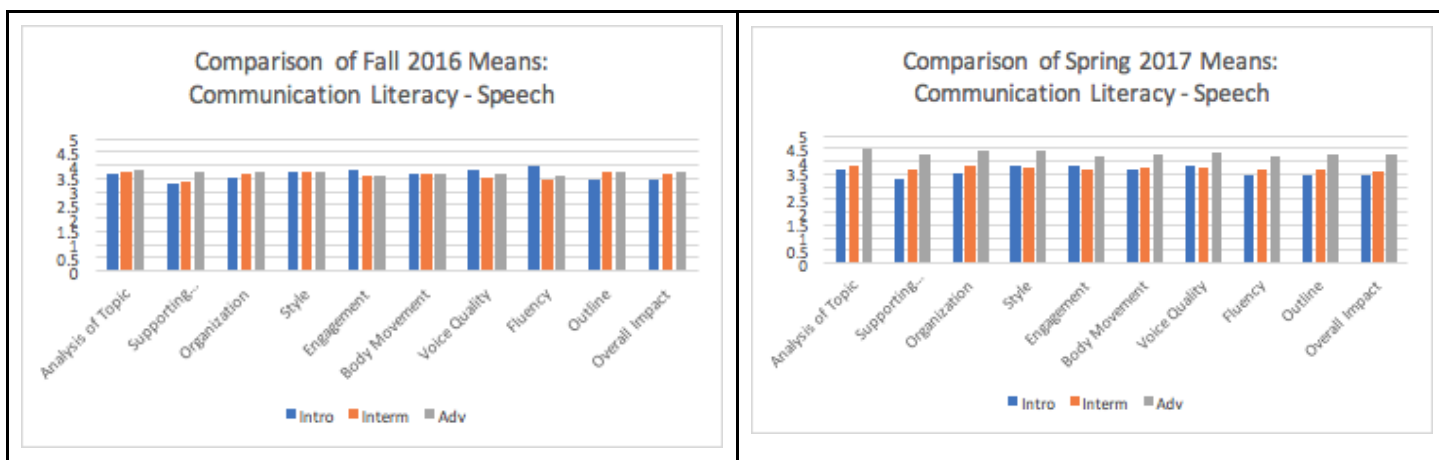
X Detailed reports are on file in General Education

## Student Learning Objective 4: Communication Literacies- Speech

Communication Literacies- Speech- is assessed at 3 levels in the General Education program. Speech is assessed using the Kean University Speaker Evaluation rubric in Comm1402, a required General Education foundation course, in GE202x and at the capstone level.

### DATA COLLECTION AND RESULTS

Semester(s): <u>Fall 2016</u>				Semester(s): <u>Spring 2017</u>			
	Intro	Interm	Advd		Intro	Interm	Advd
Number of students	515	373	226	Number of students	441	570	394
Number of sections	31	26	-	Number of sections	31	33	26
Courses assessed	COMM 1402	GE 202x	Capstone	Courses assessed	COMM 1402	GE202x	Capstone
<b>Mean Scores overall:</b>				<b>Mean Scores overall:</b>			
Category/Criterion	Intro	Interm	Adv	Category/Criterion	Intro	Interm	Adv
Analysis of Topic	3.69	3.73	3.81	Analysis of Topic	3.69	3.84	4.46
Supporting Material	3.32	3.39	3.74	Supporting Material	3.32	3.69	4.30
Organization	3.54	3.69	3.77	Organization	3.55	3.83	4.39
Style	3.78	3.75	3.77	Style	3.79	3.73	4.39
Engagement	3.81	3.57	3.62	Engagement	3.81	3.67	4.21
Body Movement	3.67	3.68	3.66	Body Movement	3.67	3.78	4.24
Voice Quality	3.82	3.55	3.69	Voice Quality	3.82	3.78	4.33
Fluency	3.94	3.43	3.64	Fluency	3.49	3.65	4.20
Outline	3.42	3.73	3.78	Outline	3.43	3.69	4.27
Overall Impact	3.49	3.67	3.75	Overall Impact	3.49	3.61	4.26



### Discussion of Findings:

The data from the spring 2017 semester is consistent with prior years of assessment however, the fall 2016 data does conform to the typical pattern. The spring data shows a consistent increase in most categories, with slight variation between the introductory and intermediate levels. This is most likely due to the fact that the introductory level course is immediately followed by the intermediate course for the majority of students.

The introductory level shows high scores in most areas which demonstrates the effectiveness of the course design. In Comm 1402, students give two speeches over the course of the semester. They receive feedback and have the chance to improve after the first speech. The very good results in this course show that this chance for improvement is very beneficial.

### Curricular Actions/Closing the Loop:

Speech, like many skills, requires scaffolding and support throughout all courses that students take. A lack of scaffolding can explain the implementation dip that occurs when students leave a course that had high levels of explicit instruction. It is possible that professional development for faculty in this area will improve student success.

### Supporting Evidence (data):

X Detailed reports are on file in General Education

## Student Learning Objective 5: Information and Technology Literacy

Information and Technology literacy- is assessed at 2 levels in the General Education program using a Kean University test. The test is administered to students in various 1000 level courses as well as in GE202x and GE3000.

### DATA COLLECTION AND RESULTS

Semester(s): <u>Fall 2016</u>	Semester(s): <u>Spring 2017</u>																
<p><b>Number of students: 301 students</b></p> <p>ENG 103x: 80 students            ENG 1430: 10 students            GE 202x: 129 students            GE 3000: 82 students</p> <p><b>Mean score by course:</b></p> <table border="1"> <tbody> <tr> <td><b>ENG 103x</b></td> <td>54.7</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>ENG 1430</b></td> <td>50.3</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>GE 202x</b></td> <td>57.7</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>GE 3000</b></td> <td>60.2</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>This data does not include Wenzhou students</p>	<b>ENG 103x</b>	54.7	<b>ENG 1430</b>	50.3	<b>GE 202x</b>	57.7	<b>GE 3000</b>	60.2	<p><b>Number of students: 342 students</b></p> <p>ENG 103x: 43 students            ENG 1430: 16 students            GE 202x: 95 students            GE 3000: 70 students</p> <p><b>Mean score by course:</b></p> <table border="1"> <tbody> <tr> <td><b>ENG 103x</b></td> <td>55.1</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>ENG 1430</b></td> <td>42.7</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>GE 202x</b></td> <td>58.7</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>GE 3000</b></td> <td>60.1</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>This data does not include Wenzhou students</p>	<b>ENG 103x</b>	55.1	<b>ENG 1430</b>	42.7	<b>GE 202x</b>	58.7	<b>GE 3000</b>	60.1
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<b>ENG 1430</b>	42.7																
<b>GE 202x</b>	58.7																
<b>GE 3000</b>	60.1																

#### Discussion of Findings:

The expectation is for students on the introductory level to reach 50% correct answers and for students on the intermediate level to reach 60-75%.

The most interesting finding is the similarity in average scores recorded by GE 202x and GE 3000 students, it indicates that transfer students do not lack skills compared to our own students.

Students had the lowest percentage of correct answers in the category "Accesses Needed Information;" while all students in this sample had the highest percentage of correct answers in the category "Uses information in a responsible, ethical and legal manner." This indicates that the ethical training in GE works in the application and that the NIH certificate prepares students well for the ethical questions of their research.

#### Curricular Actions/Closing the Loop:

It is important to continue the close cooperation between the library and GE courses in terms of Information Literacy. Students are doing well in most areas. As students need to develop more specific skills in "Accessing Information," the more specific instruction in GE 202x has to be intensified.

#### Supporting Evidence (data):

X Detailed reports are on file in General Education

## Student Learning Objective 6: Active Citizenship

### DATA COLLECTION AND RESULTS

Semester(s): <u>Fall 2016</u>			
	Intro	Interm	Advd
Number of students:	1415		3
Number of sections:	61		1
Courses assessed	GE 1000		Capstone

**Mean Scores overall:**

Category/Criterion	Intro	Interm	Adv
Diversity of Communities	1.52		4
Civic Identity	1.69		4
Civic Action	1.59		4
Civic Context/Structures	1.52		4

#### Discussion of Findings:

Active citizenship is an important part of Transition to Kean. This semester, only one capstone, with a low number of students collected data on active citizenship which makes it difficult to compare the two areas. First year students score the highest in the Civic Identity category (1.95) and lowest in . Students scored the lowest in the Civic context/Structures category, although these differences are small. Students are expected to score a 1 or 2 on the rubric at this level.

#### Curricular Actions/Closing the Loop:

Active Citizenship is a new student learning outcome. It takes time for it to be implemented across classes and levels. As it is an important part of the Kean mission statement, emphasis over the next year needs to be on broadening the application in teaching on all levels.

#### Supporting Evidence (data):

X Detailed reports are on file in General Education

## Student Learning Objective 7: Ethical Judgement and Integrity

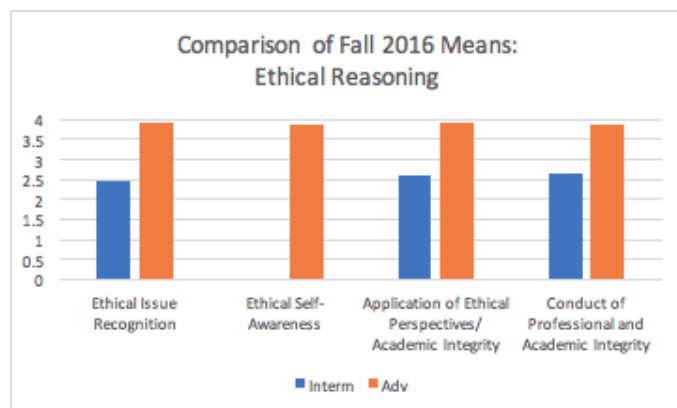
### DATA COLLECTION AND RESULTS

Semester(s): Fall 2016

	Intro	Interm	Advd
Number of students:		97	26
Number of sections:		3	2
Courses assessed		GE 202x	Capstone

Mean Scores overall:

Category/Criterion	Intro	Interm	Adv
Ethical Issue Recognition		2.46	3.92
Ethical Self-Awareness		-	3.85
Application of Ethical Perspectives/ Academic Integrity		2.59	3.92
Conduct of Professional and Academic Integrity		2.66	3.85

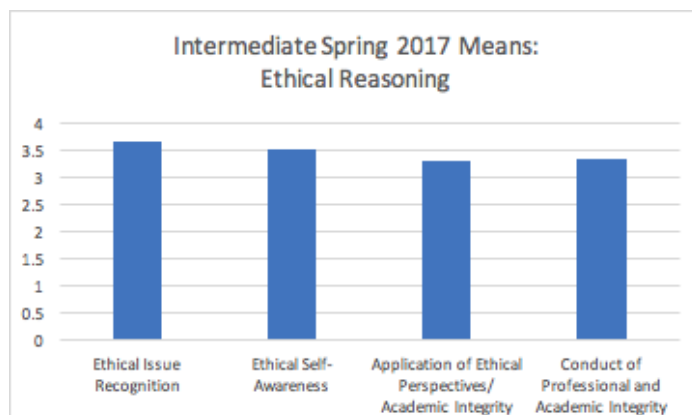


Semester(s): Spring 2017

	Intro	Interm	Advd
Number of students:		137	
Number of sections:		9	
Courses assessed		GE 202x	

Mean Scores overall:

Category/Criterion	Intro	Interm	Adv
Ethical Issue Recognition		3.64	
Ethical Self-Awareness		3.52	
Application of Ethical Perspectives/ Academic Integrity		3.31	
Conduct of Professional and Academic Integrity		3.34	



#### Discussion of Findings:

In GE202x, ethics is covered as a mandatory and important part of research. As such, there are strict rules that apply to working with human subjects and their information. During the fall semester, instructors in GE202x created a midpoint assignment which was designed to encourage students to think more deeply about their research projects and the potential ethical issues. This assignment was used by a number of instructors in the spring semester, which may have led to the higher scores comparatively.

#### Curricular Action/Closing the Loop:

Going forward, all instructors should review and consider use of a midpoint, ethics focused assignment.

#### Supporting Evidence (data):

X Detailed reports are on file in General Education

## Student Learning Objective 8: Diversity

### DATA COLLECTION AND RESULTS

Semester(s): <u>Fall 2016</u>				Semester(s): <u>Spring 2017</u>			
	Intro	Interm	Advd		Intro	Interm	Advd
Number of students	1421	-	56	Number of students	208	-	33
Number of sections	61	-	4	Number of sections	8	-	2
Courses assessed	GE 1000	-	Capstone	Courses assessed	GE 1000	-	Capstone

Mean Scores overall:				Mean Scores overall:			
Category/Criterion	Intro	Interm	Adv	Category/Criterion	Intro	Interm	Adv
Global self-awareness	1.61	-	3.80	Global self-awareness	1.77	-	3.97
Perspective	1.55	-	3.73	Perspective	1.63	-	3.94
Cultural Diversity	1.60	-	3.73	Cultural Diversity	1.69	-	3.97
Attitudes: curiosity	1.54	-	3.73	Attitudes: curiosity	1.68	-	3.88
Attitudes: openness	1.54	-	3.59	Attitudes: openness	1.64	-	3.94

**Comparison of Fall 2016 Means: Diversity**

**Comparison of Spring 2017 Means: Diversity**

#### Discussion of Findings:

On the introductory level, scores were consistent with expectations in GE 1000. On the capstone level, scores were as expected in the Fall and even higher in the spring, approaching the level of 4 almost across the board. The sample here was very small and thus it is impossible to draw strong conclusions from the data.

#### Curricular Actions/Closing the Loop:

Diversity is a crucial learning outcome for GE. It needs to be implemented in GE courses across the curriculum and assignments need to be developed in order to make sure students are achieving the desired outcomes.

#### Supporting Evidence (data):

X Detailed reports are on file in General Education