

# Did You Know?

77%

of faculty surveyed in 2014 believed their coursework greatly contributed to students acquiring a broad general education. By 2016, that number rose to

94%

## Over that same time

71%

of students surveyed in 2014 believed the courses they took contributed greatly to a broad general education, and remained similar in 2016 at

73%

During that two-year time span, FSW embarked upon a new assessment plan for the General Education program. Results of that program were first disseminated in May 2015 and professional development opportunities in response to that program began in fall 2015.

[CCSSE/CCFSSE Report, 2016](#)

While connection to a general education has increased over the last two years, student perception of that connection lags behind. And this is not unique to FSW. A study by Ferren and Kinch (2003) suggested that students often see general education courses as incoherent and unconnected. This idea was echoed in a later study by Harmes and Miller (2007). That said, here are some viewpoints to consider when thinking of ways you can help promote a connection between your course and a broader scope of education outside your course:

- In a study by Harmes and Miller (2007), students reported that their experiences in the classroom weren't discussed in relation to current events or contemporary issues, a component of a general education. Consider taking time out in your class to make explicit comparisons and connections external to your class.
- General Education goals are meant to foster a pathway for students to recognize and appreciate the variety of learning in a variety of fields (Washington State Univ., 2014). Consider using a concept map that helps build a scaffold on how your course connects externally to other courses and society as a whole.
- Use a group brainstorming activity to get students to define what sorts of ways the course topic will progress or affect their lives once this class is over and how it affects other classes they may take (McGlynn, 2001).

Have you noticed changes in the attitudes of your students, colleagues, or yourself? Let us know about it. Reply via email to Allison Studer ([astuder@fsw.edu](mailto:astuder@fsw.edu)) and give us your feedback!

Best wishes!

QEP Assessment Sub-Committee

### References:

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