Name of Program: Pilot General Education Assessment of HUM 2230

Name of Program Leader: Dr. Wendy Chase, Lead Faculty in Humanities

Report Written by: Prof. Marty Ambrose

LEARNING OUTCOME(S): The assessment project used a Common Graded Assignment with an "Assessment Rubric for General Education Competencies" to evaluate the following general education competencies:
1. written communication
2. critical thinking
3. technology/information management
4. ethics/values

ASSESSMENT PLAN

This assessment pilot adapted a six-point rubric to assess four general education competencies in HUM 2230. The rubric was designed by Dr. Henry Linck, Dr. Wendy Chase, and Prof. Marty Ambrose (see Appendix A). The humanities faculty collaborated to create a common-graded assignment, using a passage from the HUM 2230 textbook (see Appendix B) and having students respond to it in essay form.

Six classes gave the assessment assignment during Summer A, 2007. The essays were sent electronically to Dr. Chase who chose a random 30% for scoring (approximately 23 essays). On June 20, 2007, five faculty convened to score the essays (see Appendix C) in each of the four general education competencies.

Once the scoring was completed, the essays were sent to Institutional Effectiveness for data analysis.

DATA ANALYSIS

The data showed the scorers' inter-rater reliability was "reliable" to "highly reliable" in each competency, even though the rubric had not been tested in other classes. Scorers A and B also had very similar "scorer means" in all competencies; this fact is significant because they have had extensive experience scoring together.

Overall, the data indicated that students' scores on the assessment in all four competencies increased along with the hours earned from 1 - 45 hours. This information suggests students improve in their general education competencies as they take more classes at Edison College. However, students in the 46 – 60 hours range declined slightly in all categories. For the most part, students with higher GPAs scored higher in all competencies; also, students who earned higher grades in ENC 1101 scored higher in all competencies (see Diagrams below).

Students' scores on the assessment increased along with hours earned from 1-45 hours. Above 45 hours, students' performance on the assessment declined.							
Hours Earned	**Communication**	**Critical Thinking**	**Technology**	**Ethics & Values**	**Composite Score**	**Students**	**%**
0	3.3	3.0	2.3	1.8	2.6	2	10.5%
1-15	3.3	3.3	2.6	2.3	2.9	6	31.6%
16-30	3.1	3.4	2.7	2.3	2.9	6	31.6%
31-45	5.0	4.7	4.8	2.6	4.3	2	10.5%
46-60	3.7	4.5	3.5	2.0	3.4	1	5.3%
>60	3.8	3.3	3.3	2.5	3.2	2	10.5%
Total						19	100.0%

For the most part, students' performance on the assessment was related to GPA. Students with higher GPAs, in general, scored higher on the assessment.							
GPA Category	**Communication**	**Critical Thinking**	**Technology**	**Ethics & Values**	**Composite Score**	**Students**	**%**
0.00	3.3	3.0	2.3	2.9	2.9	2	10.5%
0.00-1.00	3.5	4.5	2.5	3.0	3.4	1	5.3%
1.01-2.00	3.3	2.5	1.5	2.0	2.3	1	5.3%
2.01-3.00	3.1	3.2	2.6	1.8	2.7	6	31.6%
3.01-4.00	3.8	3.7	3.5	2.4	3.4	9	47.4%
Total						19	100.0%

Students who had taken college preparatory courses scored only slightly lower in the assessment than those students who had not taken preparatory courses.

Only two students who took the assessment had been placed into prep. Both of these students had exited prep by the time they took this assessment. The prep students' scores were slightly lower than those of non-prep students.							
Reading and Writing Prep (Exit)	**Communication**	**Critical Thinking**	**Technology**	**Ethics & Values**	**Composite Score**	**Students**	**%**
Did not test into prep	3.5	3.5	3.0	2.3	3.1	17	89.5%
Exited from prep	3.3	3.0	2.5	2.3	2.8	2	10.5%
						19	100.0%

Overall, taking each general education competency separately, the two strengths of the Edison College General Education program are evident: written communication and, to a lesser extent, critical thinking. These are the two areas that Edison College has targeted for improvement within the Writing Program in the last two years.

In the HUM 2230 general education common graded assignment, the follow scores illustrate the number of students (within the entire 1 – 60 hours cohort) who earned an "acceptable" score: a "3" or above:

Written Communication = 87% of the students earned a "3" or above;
Critical Thinking = 79% of the students earned a "3" or above;
Technology/ Information Management = 53% of the students earned a "3" or above;
Ethics/Values = 27% of the students earned a "3" or above.

Recommended Changes Based on Assessment Data:

This "common graded assignment" method of assessing 4 out of 6 general education competencies proved successful. The data was reliable and the scoring session instructive.

Suggestions for Assessment Process:

1. The development of the "common graded assignment" needs to match the rubric more carefully. When revising this assessment process for the general education assessment of ECO 2013 and PHI 2600 in Spring, 2008, it would be helpful to have the scoring team that participated in the pilot to assist faculty develop the rubric, especially in "technology/information management" and "ethics/values." The lower scores in the latter two competencies reflect, to some extent, the ambiguity of the rubric in these areas.

2. The scorers felt a 4 – point rubric would be easier and more effective to use for this type of assessment.

3. The "norming" process for scoring this type of analytical essay has to occur throughout the scoring session; generally, every third essay should be normed by each pair.

Action Plan:

The data seemed to indicate that students improved in their performance of general education competencies as they progressed through their classes at Edison College. However, the slight decline in scores above 45 hours indicate the following steps be taken:

1. Analyze the data more fully for any lengthy gaps in students' college career (this could affect their retention of general education competencies);

2. Review courses taken after 45 hours in the student assessment sample and evaluate how general education competencies are being reinforced in these classes;

3. Train more faculty to score this type of "common graded assignment" with workshops taught by faculty who have participated in the process;

4. Conduct similar general education assessment projects in 2008 – 2009.

The data also seemed to indicate that while students have been acquiring adequate written communication skills and critical thinking skills during their career at Edison College, the two aspects of technology/information management and ethics/values that they performed poorly related to incorporating research into an essay and documenting it correctly. These problematic areas have been

noted by faculty in the Writing Program. Thus, the following steps should be taken:

1.   Review the written communication competency in courses other than those designated as writing intensive and add a research component in selected courses;

2.   Create an "MLA Guidelines" link on the Edison Homepage for students' quick reference;

3.   Offer more MLA workshops in the Writing Center.

DESCRIBE HOW DATA AND RECOMMENDATIONS WERE SHARED WITH FACULTY

A copy of this report will be placed on the Edison College website, and the information will also be shared with faculty during duty days in August, 2007.

Appendix A
Assessment Rubric for General Education Competencies

HUM 2230

Gen. Ed. Criteria	6 High	5	4	3	2	1 Low
Communication	Excels in expressing ideas in clear, well-formatted sentences. Makes very few errors in grammar and spelling. Excels at developing and expressing ideas. Expertly demonstrates good organization and coherence	Consistently expresses ideas in clear, well-formed sentences. Makes few errors in grammar and spelling. Very good at expressing ideas. Clearly demonstrates good organization and coherence	Generally expresses ideas in clear, well-formed sentences. Makes more than a few errors in grammar and spelling. Fairly good at developing and expressing thoughts, ideas and beliefs. Shows some evidence of organization and coherence.	Inconsistent in expressing ideas in clear, well-formed sentences. Makes enough errors in spelling and grammar to affect the positive flow of the assignment. Adequate at developing and expressing thoughts and beliefs. Shows some difficulty in organization and coherence.	Ideas are frequently expressed in unclear and confusing sentences. So many errors in grammar and spelling that content is overshadowed. Poorly develops and expresses thoughts and ideas. Shows little evidence of organization and coherence.	Ideas are almost always expressed in unclear and confusing sentences. Makes excessive errors in grammar and spelling. Fails to adequately develop and express thoughts and ideas. Little to no evidence of organization and coherence.
Critical Thinking	Excels in evaluating and articulating the relative importance of issues discussed as part of the topic.	Generally succeeds in evaluating and articulating the relative importance of issues discussed as part of the topic.	Adequately evaluates and articulates the relative importance of the issue(s).	Inconsistently evaluates the relative importance of issues discussed as part of the topic and leaves some questions unanswered.	Generally misunderstands and poorly articulates the relative importance of the issues discussed as part of the topic and leaves many questions unanswered	Completely misunderstands and very poorly articulates the relative importance of the issues discussed as part of the topic.
Technology/Information Management	Very effectively uses internet resources to develop a very relevant and provocative argument	Generally effective in using internet resources to develop a generally relevant and somewhat provocative argument	Somewhat effective in using internet resources to develop a somewhat relevant argument.	Uses internet resources, but develops a somewhat irrelevant and/or confusing argument.	Uses internet resources, but develops a completely irrelevant or inappropriate argument.	Does not use internet resources and fails to develop a relevant or provocative argument based on internet resources.
Ethics and Values	Work is original and always accurately documented. Excels at comparing, contrasting and evaluating pro/con positions for an ethical issue.	Work is original and usually accurately documented. Effectively compares, contrasts and evaluates pro/con positions for an ethical issue.	Work is original but documentation is not always accurate. Able to compare, contrast and evaluate pro/con positions for an ethical issue.	Work is original but documentation is often inaccurate. Able to describe the pro/con positions for an ethical issue.	Work is original but documentation is almost always inaccurate. Able to identify the pro/con positions for an ethical issue.	Work is not original and documentation is always inaccurate. Unable to identify, describe or evaluate pro/con positions for an ethical issue.

Appendix B
HUM 2230 Pilot General Education Assessment

General Education Assessment in Humanities

This assignment will serve as both a graded assignment in our course and an assignment that will be used to determine how well Edison College is meeting its goal to hone your skills in Communications, Critical Thinking, Ethics and Values and Technology. You must submit a 400-500 word essay that addresses the assignment below according to the following guidelines; failure to follow these instructions may result in a zero for the assignment. Please read all instructions carefully.

Submission Guidelines:
- Compose your essay in Microsoft Word, and title it "Assessment Essay."
- Place your student I.D. number (**not your social security number**) in the upper left-hand corner.
- Double-space your essay, using the Times New Roman 12 font.
- You must include one quotation in your essay, either from the primary text or the critical analysis of the text that you will also be reading. Be sure to properly cite your source using the MLA guidelines.
- Proofread your essay for grammar and mechanics, using both the spell-check software available on Microsoft Word and any grammar manuals in your possession.
- Submit your essay electronically as a Word attachment to your professor within one week from the date of the initial assignment.

Essay Guidelines:
- Read the excerpt from Ibsen's *A Doll's House* in Volume 5 of The Humanistic Tradition on pp. 91-92 .
- Use the Academic Search Premier database that can be accessed through the "Edison Libraries" tab on the Edison Portal to locate the following article: **Ibsens' A Doll's House. By: Rosefeldt, Paul, Explicator, Winter 2003, Vol. 61 Issue 2, p.84, 2p..**
- After having read and thought about both texts, write a fluid essay that addresses the following:
  - Include an introductory paragraph that conveys to someone who has not read or viewed this work an overview of the scene you will be analyzing. You will want to include the author's name and the title of the work in this introduction.
  - Describe the two ethical positions concerning Nora's decision to leave Helmer and the children.
  - Identify the values that each character asserts to justify their respective positions.
  - Explain which ethical point of view in the narrative you most agree with and why.
  - Integrate Rosefeldt's analysis of the text into your assessment of the characters and their respective positions.

  If you have any questions, please contact your professor.

Appendix C

Scoring Pair One:
A – Noelle Burr
B – Marty Ambrose

Scoring Pair Two:
C – Pam Mangene
D – Dale Hoover

Third Scorer (if needed):
E - Russell Swanson

Directions:

When you read the essay analytically, think about each of the four student learning outcomes categories as you go through the paper:

- *communication*
- *critical thinking*
- *technology/information management*
- *ethics/values*

The first scorer should write four categories on the back of the essay:

CO   CT   TI   EV
(corresponding with the four abovementioned competencies)

Then, pass on to the second scorer who will do the same thing on the bottom of the last page. If the scores in any one category are "discrepant," fold up the bottom of the page and write the category on the top of the first page. Then, give the essay to the third reader.

Keep referring to the rubric if you need to reference how the competency is being evaluated.