

## **Overview and Rationale of General Education Assessment at Edison State College (Seybert model) by Dr. Steve Atkins (District Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs)**

The purpose of the Seybert model is to foster the development of a learning-centered college by encouraging faculty to engage students in each of the Edison State college-wide learning outcomes within their classes. The outcomes are those general skills that all graduates should possess (critical thinking, writing, information literacy, quantitative literacy,...) by virtue of completing a college degree. All faculty are expected to integrate those learning outcomes into every course as appropriate to engage students in high level academic tasks that both actively engage students and facilitate establishing a college-wide assessment of general education learning outcomes. We are striving to create common intellectual experiences for all students – acquiring basic skills and core competencies in the context of a discipline

The approach is an across-the-curriculum model that shifts the responsibility for ensuring that students develop flexible skill sets needed for lifelong learning from general education faculty to all faculty including those teaching Professional and Technical and Baccalaureate level courses. The method provides students' opportunities to continually engage in content specific activities while constantly rehearsing and developing general skill sets that are valued across all programs. The across-the-curriculum approach provides opportunities that support broad-based faculty exploration of how development of general academic skills that transcend disciplines could at the same time facilitate discipline-area learning, for example, through such pedagogies as "writing to learn."

Our approach provides a comprehensive general education program around a series of competencies or proficiencies required across all majors, rather than around a limited number of required courses. Those competencies should be tightly linked to discipline-area content and imbedded within the teaching at the course level and not in isolation. The integrative aspect of learning general education skills conveys to students and faculty that writing is not something confined to English composition classes, nor oral presentations for speech class, but rather these skills also need to be developed in the context of the disciplines. We want this level of integration to extend to developmental education as well.

### **Relationship of Course Syllabi and Student Artifacts**

In establishing these general education core competencies, and approving them through college governance, faculty have taken responsibility for reinforcing these competencies within each discipline. Faculty have specified in their syllabi which general education competencies will be addressed in each course. The model requires that faculty include at least one assignment or project designed to reinforce and assess the general education outcome identified in the course syllabus. Student work should be capable of being assessed against the faculty-developed rubrics for each core competency. Results aggregated over time will provide information on whether or not students are achieving required levels and if not, where improvement is needed. Recommendations from program review of general education can then become part of a program's strategic plan goals. Using artifacts and the institutional Portfolio for assessment will allow the College to capture a rich, longitudinal picture of student development and learning through systematic examination of student work.