

Idaho State UNIVERSITY

General Education Requirements Committee

921 South 8th Avenue, Stop 8070 • Pocatello, Idaho 83209-8070

Memorandum

25 February 2015

Re: Invitation to Comment on Assessment Plan

Dear Colleagues,

First – thank you for your contributions and forbearance during our alignment of ISU’s General Education program with the SBOE’s new General Education Matriculation (GEM) competency guidelines throughout 2014. With that task complete, the General Education Requirements Committee (GERC) has now been asked to create an assessment plan for general education learning outcomes. We write seeking your feedback on the attached draft of this plan.

The Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities highlighted the need for assessment in its recent accreditation report, reserving its most urgent language for Recommendation 5: “The evaluation committee recommends that the institution develop and implement a process of ongoing assessment of student learning outcomes for its General Education program [Standard 4.A].” ISU was found deficient in this regard, and was asked to institute a program within two years.

A team of GERC members began to develop such an assessment plan last year, and GERC as a whole has refined their draft to its current state. Our approach to crafting this plan has been to preserve the primary authority for general education course assessment in departments, with the hope that many can essentially continue or expand current assessment procedures with minimal disruption. After approving departmental plans, GERC will collect brief annual summaries of these activities, and every few years a more detailed departmental report will be reviewed by a committee formed specifically for the GEM objective in question. We believe that this plan will guarantee that the GEM program is usefully assessed, and that it leaves the task in the hands of those faculty best qualified to do it.

Our goal is to have a finalized GEM assessment plan approved by UCC and Academic Affairs by the end of this semester, to request GEM course assessment plans from departments by October 1, 2015, and to begin collecting assessment reporting in Fall 2016. Of course, GERC first needs input from the faculty and departments responsible for teaching and assessing general education courses. We humbly request that you provide feedback on this plan to your GERC representative before GERC’s **March 10** meeting, at which we will begin to revise the plan in response to suggestions.

You can find the list of GERC member representatives on our website: isu.edu/gened/.

We look forward to hearing your thoughts.

Dr. Cathy Peppers, Chair
Dr. Andy Holland, Chair-elect