

# Idaho State UNIVERSITY

## General Education Requirements Committee

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

May 31, 2016

### MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Provost Laura Woodworth-Ney  
Vice Presidents for Academic Affairs: Lyle Castle, Margaret Johnson, Selena Grace  
College Deans and Associate Deans for Assessment

**CC:** Faculty Senate  
Undergraduate Curriculum Council  
Sandi Shropshire, GERC chair-elect

**FROM:** Andy Holland  
Chair, Gen Ed Requirements Committee (GERC)

**SUBJECT:** General Education Course Assessment – next steps

I am writing with a year-end update on GERC's efforts to enact last year's plan for ongoing assessment of ISU's general education program. This year's tasks were to solicit and approve an individual course assessment plan for every general education course, and to lay the groundwork for annual reporting to begin in Fall 2016. GERC representatives have worked closely with chairs and instructors to develop plans that meaningfully assess the general education learning outcomes, and to date have approved plans for 84 courses. Another 30 plans remain in revision, but we are optimistic that they should be ready for implementation in August. The largest remaining gap in this project is a group of 11 History classes for which no plans have yet been submitted. GERC members have made every effort to reach out and remedy this situation, but next year the committee will have to consider appropriate actions with respect to courses that do not participate in the NWCCU-mandated assessment program. A spreadsheet summarizing the status of all general education course assessment plans is attached.

November 1st will be the first deadline for annual reporting of general education assessment activities, and GERC has worked with Institutional Research to set up what we hope will be a relatively painless online survey through which departments can affirm that assessment activities are taking place as planned. (The form is accessed from the IR channel on BengalWeb.) One of GERC's guiding principles throughout this process has been that the real value of assessment activities lies in the discussions and choices that happen within departments, and the committee does not intend to scrutinize reports beyond confirming that assessment is taking place. We also understand that many departments were still finalizing their plans this year and won't have much to report, but we will still ask for reports from all general education courses just to acquaint everyone with the process and expectations going forward. More comprehensive review of assessment data is tentatively scheduled to begin in 2019.

We've reminded chairs and plan authors of the status of their plans and distributed instructions for Fall 2016's reporting, and both incoming GERC Chair Sandi Shropshire and I will be available to take questions over the summer. We sincerely thank everyone involved in this project for their patience and hard work, and look forward to making this process as smooth and productive as possible going forward.