General Education Student Learning Report

Fall 2023 - Spring 2024

Department of Biology

Effectively assessing a degree program should address a number of factors:

- 1) Valid student learning outcomes should be clearly articulated;
- 2) Valid assessment measures should be used, consistent with the standards of professional practice;
- 3) There should be evidence that assessment data are being used by faculty to make necessary instructional or assessment changes; and there should be evidence that instructional or assessment changes are being implemented to improve student learning.

Relationship of Degree Program Learning Outcomes to Departmental and University Missions

RSU Mission	General Education Mission
Our mission is to ensure students develop the skills and knowledge required to achieve professional and personal goals in dynamic local and global communities	
RSU Commitments	General Education Outcomes
To provide quality associate, baccalaureate, and graduate degree opportunities and educational experiences which foster student excellence in oral and written communications, scientific reasoning, and critical and creative thinking.	 Think critically and creatively. Acquire, analyze, and evaluate knowledge of human cultures and the physical and natural world. Use written, oral, and visual communication effectively. Develop an individual perspective on the human experience, and demonstrate an understanding of diverse perspectives and values. Demonstrate civic knowledge and engagement, ethical reasoning, and skills for lifelong learning.
To promote an atmosphere of academic and intellectual freedom and respect for diverse expression in an environment of physical safety that is supportive of teaching and learning.	
To provide a general liberal arts education that supports specialized academic programs and prepares students for lifelong learning and service in a diverse society.	 Think critically and creatively. Acquire, analyze, and evaluate knowledge of human cultures and the physical and natural world. Use written, oral, and visual communication effectively. Develop an individual perspective on the human experience, and demonstrate an understanding of diverse perspectives and values.

RSU Mission	General Education Mission
	5) Demonstrate civic knowledge and engagement, ethical reasoning, and skills for lifelong learning.
To provide students with a diverse, innovative faculty dedicated to excellence in teaching, scholarly pursuits, and continuous improvement of programs.	
To provide university-wide student services, activities, and resources that complement academic programs.	
To support and strengthen student, faculty, and administrative structures that promote shared governance of the institution.	
To promote and encourage student, faculty, staff, and community interaction in a positive academic climate that creates opportunities for cultural, intellectual, and personal enrichment for the university and the communities it serves.	

PART 1

Discussion of Instructional Changes Resulting from 2022-2023 General Education Student Learning Report

List and discuss all instructional or assessment changes proposed in Part 4 of last year's General Education Student Learning Report, whether implemented or not. Any other changes or assessment activities from last year, but not mentioned in last year's report, should be discussed here as well. Emphasis should be placed on student learning and considerations such as course improvements, the assessment process, and the budget. If no changes were planned or implemented, simply state "No changes were planned or implemented."

Instructional or Assessment Changes	Changes Implemented (Y/N)	Impact of Changes on Curriculum or Budget
Online lab sections are going to become hybridized with some take home labs that students can order and work at home. Applies to lab sections of BIOL 1114/1144.	Y	None
BIOL 1134R was QM certified in Spring 2023.	Y	None
BIOL 1114R is scheduled to be QM certified in Fall 2023.	N	N/A
BIOL 1144R is scheduled to be QM certified in Fall 2023.	N	N/A

PART 2

Discussion of the University Assessment Committee's 2022-2023 Peer Review Report

The University Assessment Committee in its Peer Review Report provided feedback and recommendations for improvement in assessment. List or accurately summarize all feedback and recommendations from the committee, and state whether they were implemented or will be implemented at a future date. If they were not or will not be implemented, please explain why. If no changes were recommended last year, simply state "No changes were recommended."

Feedback and Recommended Changes from the University Assessment Committee	Suggestions Implemented (Y/N)	Changes that Were or Will Be Implemented, or Rationale for Changes that Were Not Implemented
No feedback provided.		

PART 3 Analysis of Evidence of Student Learning Outcomes

The five General Education Outcomes are listed below. For each outcome, indicate the General Education courses being assessed, and provide a brief narrative of the assessment measures and performance standards used, as well as the sampling methods and sample sizes. For each measure, document the results of the activity measured and draw any relevant conclusions related to strengths and weaknesses of their performance. Finally, indicate whether the performance measure was met or not.

OUTCOME 1: Think critically and creatively.

A. Course	B. Assessment Measures	C. Performance Standards	D. Sampling Methods	E. Sample Size (N)	F. Results	G. Conclusions	H. Performance Standards Met (Y/N)
BIOL 1114: General Biology	Science Literacy Quiz Comprises a 15-question multiple choice quiz on principles of science & the scientific method. Given in our lab sections.	70% of students will score 70% or above.	Given to all enrolled students in Fall & Spring terms.	31	This table summarizes for student scores. Score Distribution	The average score was 78%. 71% (22 of 31) scored ≥70%. Below are average score and percentage that met the standard for the last five years. 2023-24 78.3 71% 2022-23 77.2 76% 2021-22 77.2 78% 2020-21 76.7 71% 2019-20 76.9 72%	Y

A. Course	B. Assessment Measures	C. Performance Standards	D. Sampling Methods	E. Sample Size (N)	F. Results	G. Conclusions	H. Performance Standards Met (Y/N)
						Student performance has met the standard in all of the last five years. This demonstrates that students can apply critical thinking in evaluating scientific evidence.	
BIOL 1144: General Cell Biology	Science Literacy Quiz Comprises a 15-question multiple choice assessment on the principles of science and the scientific method. Given in our lab sections.	70% of students will score 70% or above.	Given to all enrolled students in Fall & Spring terms.	120	This table summarizes student scores. Score Distribution	The average score was 76%. 70% (83 of 120) scored ≥70%. Below are average score and percentage that met the standard for the last five years. 2023-24 75.8 70% 2022-23 75.8 70% 2021-22 78.8 77% 2020-21 79.5 80% 2019-20 76.5 77% Students have met the standard in all of the last five years. This demonstrates that students can apply critical thinking in evaluating scientific evidence.	Y

OUTCOME 2: Acquire, analyze, and evaluate knowledge of human cultures and the physical and natural world.

A. Course	B. Assessment Measures	C. Performance Standards	D. Sampling Methods	E. Sample Size (N)	F. Results	G. Conclusions	H. Performance Standards Met (Y/N)
BIOL 1114: General Biology	Comprehensive Pre-Post Exam 50 multiple-choice question exam on basic concepts of biology. Administered on first day of lecture class and at the time of final exam. We consider two results: 1) post test scores, and 2) the difference in pre-post test scores. Here, we discuss the post-test score results. Change in pre-post scores is discussed in next section.	70% of students will score 70% or above.	Given to all enrolled students in Fall & Spring terms.	60	This table summarizes student scores. Score Distribution	The average score was 70% 58% (35 of 60) scored ≥70% Below are average scores and percentage that met the standard for the last five years. 2023-24 69.6 58% 2022-23 53.5 12% 2021-22 69.4 54% 2020-21 72.6 62% 2019-20 73.1 67% 2018-19 67.8 47% Student performance on this measure hit a historic low last year. We've seen a similar decline in student performance in BIOL 1144 in 2021. Such drops are possibly due to the lingering effects of COVID on student learning. Fortunately, results from the current year have returned to the level seen before this drop	N
BIOL 1114: General Biology	Comprehensive Pre-Post Exam 50 multiple- choice question	70% of students will improve on the post-test	Given to all enrolled students in	59	This table summarizes the change in student scores for the pre & post test scores.	Mean improvement was 28 percentage points. 82% (46 of 59) of students improved their	Y

A. Course	B. Assessment Measures	C. Performance Standards	D. Sampling Methods	E. Sample Size (N)	F. Results	G. Conclusions	H. Performance Standards Met (Y/N)
	exam on basic concepts of biology. Administered on first day of lecture class and at the time of final exam. We consider two results: 1) post test scores, and 2) the difference in pre-post test scores Here, we discuss the change between pre and pre-post test scores.	by 20% or greater over the pre-test.	Fall & Spring terms.		Score Distribution (Post Test Improvement) 0-10% 3 10-20% 10 20-30% 18 30-40% 17 40-50% 9 50-60% 2 60-70% 0 Avg gain: 28.3	score by 20 percentage points or more. Below are the average score improvement and percentage that met the standard for the last six years. 2023-24 28.3 82% 2022-23 17.3 48% 2020-21 28.3 84% 2019-20 37.2 90% 2018-19 29.1 70% 2017-18 25.6 74% While student progress on this measure hit a historic low in AY 2022, this year's findings are more in line with those seen prior to this drop. Over 80% of the class improved over their pretest score by at least 20 percentage points, indicating a significant improvement of student understanding of science.	
BIOL 1114R: General Biology (Online)	Comprehensive Final Exam Comprehensive review of topics covered over the entire term.	70% of students will score 70% or above.	Given to all enrolled students in Fall & Spring terms.	147	This frequency table summarizes student scores.	The average score was 89%. 98% (143 of 147) scored ≥70%. Below are exam averages and percentage that met the standard for the last five years.	Y

A. Course	B. Assessment Measures	C. Performance Standards	D. Sampling Methods	E. Sample Size (N)	F. Results	G. Conclusions	H. Performance Standards Met (Y/N)
					Score Distribution 0-49% 0 50-59% 0 60-69% 4 70-79% 11 80-89% 52 90-100% 80 Average: 88.9%	2023-24 88.9 98% 2022-23 87.4 98% 2021-22 87.0 94% 2020-21 89.5 97% 2019-20 91.5 96% 2018-19 81.1 91% Students have met the standard in all of the last five academic years. Student progress in this online course has been much higher than the onground course. This course has been routinely taught by an adjunct, so there may be differences in the course rigor. It is not known whether the instructor requires any proctoring for exams.	
BIOL 1144: General Cell Biology	Comprehensive Pre-Post Exam 50 multiple-choice question exam on basic concepts of biology. Administered on first day of lecture class and at the time of final exam. We consider two results: 1)	70% of students will score 70% or above.	Given to all enrolled students in Fall & Spring terms.	129	This table summarizes student scores. Score Distribution 0-49%	The average score was 58% 29% (38 of 129) scored ≥ 70% Below are average scores and percentage that met the standard for the last five years. 2023-24 58.2 29% 2022-23 67.0 42% 2021-22 54.1 12% 2020-21 2019-20 73.1 67%	N

A. Course	B. Assessment Measures	C. Performance Standards	D. Sampling Methods	E. Sample Size (N)	F. Results	G. Conclusions	H. Performance Standards Met (Y/N)
	post test scores, and 2) the difference in pre-post test scores. Here, we discuss the post-test score results. Change in pre-post scores is discussed in next section.					Student performance on this measure hit two historic lows in the three year period between 2021 and 2024. Scores dropped to a historic low in AY 2021. After a rebound in AY 2022, scores have dropped a second time. Similar recent declines in performance have been seen in other biology courses. This suggests the influence of COVID on student learning is having long-lasting effects.	
BIOL 1144: General Cell Biology	Comprehensive Pre-Post Exam 50 multiple-choice question exam on basic concepts of biology. Administered on first day of lecture class and at the time of final exam. We consider two results: 1) post test scores, and 2) the difference	70% of students will improve on the post-test by 20% or greater over the pre-test.	Given to all enrolled students in Fall & Spring terms.	117	This frequency table summarizes student scores. Score Distribution (Post Test Improvement) 0-10%	Mean improvement was 23 percentage points. 58% (68 of 117) of students improved their score by ≥20%. Below are the average score improvement and percentage that met the standard for the last five years. 2023-24 22.7 58% 2022-23 31.0 77% 2021-22 18.9 46% 2020-21 33.1 94% 2019-20 33.2 77% See comments for post test results above.	N

A. Course	B. Assessment Measures	C. Performance Standards	D. Sampling Methods	E. Sample Size (N)	F. Results	G. Conclusions	H. Performance Standards Met (Y/N)
	in pre-post test scores Here, we discuss the change between pre and pre-post test scores.						
BIOL 1144: General Cell Biology (Online)	Comprehensive Final Exam	70% of students will score 70% or higher.	Given to all enrolled students in Fall & Spring terms.	40	This frequency table summarizes student scores. Score Distribution	The average score was 54%. 10% (4 of 40) scored ≥70%. These results are well below the standard. Below are the average post-test score and the percentage of students that met the standard for the last five years. 2023-24 53.7 10% 2022-23 54.3 11% 2021-22 53.8 29% 2020-21 49.7 17% 2019-20 45.6 10% Final exam scores in this online course have been notably low. The unit exam scores, in contrast, are much higher. The instructor indicates that the final is proctored, while the individual unit exams are not. This	N

A. Course	B. Assessment Measures	C. Performance Standards	D. Sampling Methods	E. Sample Size (N)	F. Results	G. Conclusions	H. Performance Standards Met (Y/N)
						suggests that some students may be cheating in the unproctored exams and are not prepared for the proctored final.	
BIOL 1134: General Environmental Biology	Comprehensive Final Exam Multiple-choice comprehensive exam of the concepts covered during the semester.	70% of students will score 70% or higher.	Given to all enrolled students in the Fall & Spring terms	11	This frequency table summarizes student scores. Score Distribution	The average score was 69%. 36% (4 of 11) scored ≥70%. Below are the average post-test score and the percentage of students that met the standard for the last four years. 2023-24 69.1 36% 2021-22 74.1 77% 2020-21 85.0 100% 2019-20 78.0 92% This measure has reliably met the standard for the last decade. A sharp decline in performance is seen in the current year. This is consistent with similar declines seen in BIOL 1114 and BIOL 1144 over the last three years. The potential of COVID having long-lasting effects on student learning is a concern.	N

A. Course	B. Assessment Measures	C. Performance Standards	D. Sampling Methods	E. Sample Size (N)	F. Results	G. Conclusions	H. Performance Standards Met (Y/N)
BIOL 1134R: General Environmental Biology (Online)	Final Exam or Average of Unit Exams	70% of students will score 70% or above.	Given to all enrolled students in online sections	52	This frequency table summarizes student scores. Score Distribution	The average score was 87%. 98% (51 of 52) scored ≥70%. Shown are the average test score and the percentage of students that met the standard for the last five years. 2023-24 87.3 98% 2022-23 86.1 100% 2021-22 82.1 94% 2020-21 80.0 88% 2019-20 77.0 83% Students that had a score >70% has exceeded 80% in three of the last five years. The 86% average of this AY is the highest over this time period. Moreover, 100% of students met the desired standard. This is also the highest in this period. This shows that students demonstrate an ability to acquire and analyze knowledge about the natural world.	Y

OUTCOME 3: Use written, oral, and visual communication effectively.

A. Course	B. Assessment Measures	C. Performance Standards	D. Sampling Methods	E. Sample Size (N)	F. Results	G. Conclusions	H. Performance Standards Met (Y/N)
BIOL 3103: Plants and Civilization	Written Paper This term students presented their research as a poster for the whole class.	70% of students will score 70% or higher.	Given to all enrolled students in the semester.	9	This table summarizes Score Distribution	The average score was 88%. 100% (6 of 6) scored ≥70%. Shown are the average test score and the percentage of students that met the standard for the last five years. 2023-24 88.0 100% 2022-23 92.2 100% 2021-22 88.1 100% 2021-22 88.2 100% 2019-20 88.2 100% Student achievement with this measure has been strong. The desired standard has been met in all of the past five years. This shows students are meeting the goal of effective written & visual communication.	Y

OUTCOME 4: Develop an individual perspective on the human experience, and demonstrate an understanding of diverse perspectives and values.

A. Course	B. Assessment Measures	C. Performance Standards	D. Sampling Methods	E. Sample Size (N)	F. Results	G. Conclusions	H. Performance Standards Met (Y/N)
BIOL 3103: Plants and Civilization	Comprehensive Final Exam		Given to all enrolled	9		The average score was 89%.	Y

A. Course	B. Assessment Measures	C. Performance Standards	D. Sampling Methods	E. Sample Size (N)	F. Results	G. Conclusions	H. Performance Standards Met (Y/N)
		score 70% or higher.	students in the semester.		Score Distribution 0-49% 0 50-59% 0 60-69% 0 70-79% 0 80-89% 3 90-100% 3 Average: 89.3%	100% (6 of 6) scored ≥70%. Shown are the average test score and the percentage of students that met the standard for the last five years. 2023-24 89.3 100% 2022-23 77.5 78% 2021-22 82.9 92% 2020-21 76.2 88% 2019-20 82.0 97% 2018-19 89.6 100% Student progress in this measure has remained robust over the last five years. The desired standard has been met in every year it has been assessed. This shows students are meeting the goal of developing an understanding of the human experience.	

OUTCOME 5: Demonstrate civic knowledge and engagement, ethical reasoning, and skills for lifelong learning.

A. Course	B. Assessment Measures	C. Performance Standards	D. Sampling Methods	E. Sample Size (N)	F. Results	G. Conclusions	H. Performance Standards Met (Y/N)
N/A							

PART 4
Proposed Instructional Changes Based on Conclusions Drawn from Evidence Presented Above

State any proposed instructional or assessment changes to be implemented for the next academic year. Explain the rationale for these changes and how they will impact student learning and other considerations, such as curriculum, degree plan, assessment process, or budget. If no changes are planned, simply state "No changes are planned."

General Education Outcomes	Instructional or Assessment Changes	Rationale for Changes	Impact of Planned Changes on Student Learning and Other Considerations.
SLO 1 / SLO 2	BIOL 1114R was QM certified in Spring 2023.	QM certification ensures quality online instruction. It is a key part of the university initiative to deliver quality distance learning.	QM review results in better course design, which makes navigation easier for students, reduces barriers to student achievement, and results in better outcomes
SLO 1 / SLO 2	BIOL 1144R is scheduled to be QM certified in Fall 2023.	See above.	

PART 6 (A & B)

Documentation of Faculty Participation and Review

A. Provide the names and signatures of all faculty members who contributed to this report and indicate their respective roles.

Faculty Members	Roles in the Assessment Process	Signatures
Craig Zimmermann	Provided data, analyzed data, prepared report	Craig Zimmermann*
Jerry Bowen	Provided data and reviewed report	
Mark Peaden	Provided data and reviewed report	Mark Peaden*
Hannah King	Provided data and reviewed report	Hannah King*
Rance Kingfisher	Provided data and reviewed report	Rance Kingfisher*
Cheyanne Olson	Provided data and reviewed report	Cheyanne Olson*
Keith Martin	Provided data and reviewed report	Keith Martin*
Jae-Ho Kim	Reviewed report	Jae-Ho Kim*
Jin Seo	Reviewed report	Jin Seo*
Gifty Benson	Provided data	N/A

*Denotes approval by email.

B. Reviewed by:

Titles	Names	Signatures	Date
Department Head	Dr. Jin Seo	Jin Seo	5/31/24
Dean	Dr. Susan Willis	Owen Willis	5-31-24