

Actionable Improvement Plan:

None

II.A.3

The institution requires of all academic and vocational degree programs a component of general education based on a carefully considered philosophy that is clearly stated in its catalog. The institution, relying on the expertise of its faculty, determines the appropriateness of each course for inclusion in the general education curriculum by examining the stated learning outcomes for the course.

Descriptive Summary:

All academic and vocational degree programs require completion of a general education (GE) component. As explained in the catalog and on the college website, this general education component may be satisfied by one of the following options [**doc. 76**]:

- Option A: Cerro Coso Local General Education Pattern
- Option B: CSU General Education Breadth
- Option C: IGETC for either UC or CSU

The College has a clear GE philosophy that adheres closely to Title 5 regulations. A recent revision to this philosophy was adopted by the Academic Senate in December 2011 and is stated in the catalog:

The awarding of an Associate Degree at Cerro Coso Community College is intended to represent more than an accumulation of units. It is intended to lead students through patterns of learning experiences designed to develop certain capabilities and insights. Among these are the ability to think and to communicate clearly and effectively both orally and in writing; to use mathematics; to understand the modes of inquiry of the major disciplines; to be aware of other cultures and times; to achieve insights gained through experience in thinking about ethical problems; and to develop the capacity for self-understanding.

Central to an Associate Degree, General Education reflects the conviction of Cerro Coso Community College that those who receive their degrees share certain basic principles, concepts, and methodologies both unique to and shared by the various disciplines. College educated persons must be able to use this knowledge when evaluating and appreciating the physical environment, the culture, and the society in which they live. General Education should lead to better self-understanding and involve students in actively examining values inherent in proposed solutions to major social problems [**doc. 76**].

GE areas and specific course requirements are collectively decided upon by the Academic Senate and applied to both the Associate in Arts and the Associate in Science degrees. The College's local GE pattern includes course requirements in the areas of:

- Natural Science
- Social and Behavioral Sciences
- Humanities
- Language and Rationality
- Information Competency
- Diversity
- Health and Wellness

In Fall 2011, a General Education Task Force was convened by the vice president of Academic Affairs to review the general education philosophy, establish general education learning outcomes (GELO's), and create a process for mapping individual courses to GELO's. Up to that time, the College had no established GELO's and no process for evaluating the appropriateness for a course designated as fulfilling a GE area. The task force was composed of faculty members, educational administrators, and the SLO coordinator.

In January 2011, a set of GELO's for the general education areas was recommended by the task force and adopted by the Senate [doc. 4_3]. These were communicated out to faculty, posted on the SLO website, and entered into the CurricUNET Assessment Module. In January 2012, the task force developed a process for assigning specific courses to GE areas that called for at least one course-level SLO to match up with at least one GELO in the appropriate area. Faculty chairs with courses on the general education pattern completed the mapping project by the end of Spring 2012 [doc. 139, doc. 325].

An additional layer of scrutiny in this process is provided in annual submission of courses for transfer acceptance. University faculty carefully scrutinize the course outlines and decide whether or not the courses can be added to fulfill the requirements of CSU General Education Breadth or the Intersegmental General Education Transfer Core (IGETC) [doc. 162]. Although these decisions do not directly affect the College's general education requirement list, they do provide an external evaluation of the criteria used to assess courses for applicability.

Self-Evaluation:

The College meets this Standard. A GE philosophy has been established that is accessible to students. The pattern includes knowledge and skills that are essential for students to be successful and productive in a global and knowledge-based economy. GE requirements and the courses that satisfy those requirements are developed collegially by faculty and educational administrators. The existing College process ensures the linkage between requirements and courses.

However, what has not been completed yet is a GE program review. Now that the College has a set of an established philosophy, an agreed-upon group of student learning outcomes, and a set of criteria for determining the tie between courses and requirements, it is in position for the first time to comprehensively assess its local GE program. The General Education Program Review is on the program review schedule for 2012-2013 [**doc. 282**].

Actionable Improvement Plan:

Complete the General Education Program Review in 2012-2013.

II.A.3.a

General education has comprehensive learning outcomes for the students who complete it, including the following:

- a. An understanding of the basic content and methodology of the major areas of knowledge: areas include the humanities and fine arts, the natural sciences, and the social sciences.

Descriptive Summary:

Natural science, social and behavioral sciences, and humanities comprise a substantial portion of the general education pattern, representing a breadth of knowledge in these content-focused areas. Student learning outcomes for general education areas have been defined, and courses that are approved to satisfy a specific area of general education must map over to one or more general education student learning outcomes [**doc. 325**].

Student learning outcome for humanities include the ability to:

- Describe how people throughout the ages and in different cultures have responded to themselves and the world around them in artistic and cultural creation.
- Evaluate the significance of artistic and cultural constructions.

Student learning outcomes for the natural sciences include the ability to:

- Effectively communicate scientific results, including graphically, verbally and in writing.
- Demonstrate competency of the Scientific Method, including the experimental and empirical methodologies characteristic of Science and the modern methods and tools used in scientific inquiry.

Student learning outcomes for the social and behavioral sciences include the ability to:

- Describe the method of inquiry used by the social and behavioral sciences.
- Evaluate the operation of societies and social sub-groups.

Students must complete a minimum of 6 units from the humanities area, 2 lecture course (6 units) or a lecture/laboratory course (4 units) from the natural sciences area, and 6 units from the social and behavioral sciences area [doc. 76].

Self-Evaluation:

The College meets this Standard. The College's GE pattern sufficiently addresses content and methodology of the majors areas of study addressed in this topic. SLO's exist for each of these areas and are being assessed through direct measures. The descriptions of these assessments, the results, and the analysis with recommendations for improvement are located in the Assessment Module of CurricUNET [doc. 296]. The GE program review slated for 2012-2013 will assess the results in the aggregate, identify gaps, and recommend improvements.

Actionable Improvement Plan:

None

II.A.3.b

- b. A capability to be a productive individual and lifelong learner: skills include oral and written communication, information competency, computer literacy, scientific and quantitative reasoning, critical analysis/logical thinking, and the ability to acquire knowledge through a variety of means.

Descriptive Summary:

In addition to addressing the broad areas of knowledge described in the preceding standard, Cerro Coso's local general education pattern requires fulfillment of SLO's in language and rationality and information competency [doc. 325].

Student learning outcomes for language and rationality include the ability to:

- Use clear and precise language to express logical thought
- Use a complex symbol system to solve problems

Student learning outcomes for information competency include the ability to:

- Explain the fundamentals of the research process and documentation style

- Clearly identify types of information needed to address a research problem and evaluate the credibility of sources

Students must choose two courses from the language and rationality area, including a course of English composition and a course of analytical thinking. Students must also complete Information Competency C075, Introduction to Library Research and Bibliography or pass the Information Competency Proficiency Exam [**doc. 76**].

Computer literacy is not required as a graduation component. But many courses that are technologically oriented have an advisory requisite of computer competency or the course equivalent, Computer Science C070, Computer Literacy. Student learning outcomes for computer competency include the ability to:

- Perform computer start up and shut down procedures correctly.
- Use computer input and output devices, such as the keyboard, mouse, stylus, trackball, or printer with proficiency.
- Access and manage login accounts and documents effectively. This includes downloading, creating, naming, retrieving, and decompressing files and folders with an awareness of file size, location of saved files and folders, and available space on storage media and a clear distinction between various campus, email, and course login accounts.
- Perform editing tasks, such as copying, cutting, and pasting of content and applying spell checking.
- Send an outgoing email with an attachment, and open an incoming email and its attachment.
- Search and navigate the Internet and other types of media and environments easily.
- Be aware of the need to evaluate Internet content for relevance, authenticity, authority, and currency.

Scientific and quantitative reasoning and the ability to acquire knowledge through a variety of means are assessed in the GE requirements of the natural sciences, the social and behavioral sciences, and the humanities as explained in the preceding Standard.

Critical analysis/logical thinking is directly assessed in the analytical thinking requirement of the language and rationality area and indirectly communicated and evaluated in the most of the other areas. Critical thinking is expected of all college-level courses. This is evaluated in the curriculum committee through review and discussion of SLO's for the courses that come through for creation or revision [**doc. 102**]. Although no set description has been established by CIC for what constitutes an acceptable level of critical thinking, the discussion of SLO's at curriculum meetings often turn on the suitability of the verbs chosen by faculty proposers, especially to what extent they demonstrate higher order cognitive skills as expressed, for example, in Bloom's Taxonomy of cognitive domains. One of the topics of the SLO Professional Development day for

part-time instructors in November 2011 was the appropriate selection of assessment artifacts to match the critical thinking skills in their courses [doc. 242].

Self-Evaluation:

The College meets this Standard. Cerro Coso's local GE pattern sufficiently addresses lifelong learning in the areas of oral and written communication, information competency, scientific and quantitative reasoning, and critical analysis/logical thinking. Student learning outcomes exist for each of these areas and are being assessed through direct measures.

One such measure was afforded by the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) administered in Spring 2011. Lifelong learning, oral and written communication, information competency, computer literacy, and high-order critical thinking skills were assessed by a questions in sections 4, 5, and 12. The responses from Cerro Coso students in these areas averaged a 2.5 (63%). Although this outcome is very close to the national cohort score of 2.6 (65%), it falls below our target of 70% [doc. 319].

The College is continuing to make changes as part of quality improvement. It recognizes it does less well directly teaching computer literacy, which has been more of an incoming expectation than a learning outcome. In the last annual unit plan cycle, several departments expressed dissatisfaction with the level of technological preparedness of students, especially in the online environment [doc. 31, doc. 32]. One of the recommendations of the Distance Education Task Force was to develop a required modular self-assessment orientation/tool for first-time online students to assess readiness for courses offered via Distance Education [doc. 119]. The College is currently looking at the commercially developed tool SmarterMeasure, which is a multi-faceted assessment tool and diagnostic that can evaluate the technological readiness of students for online learning and indicate places where they could benefit from improvement/instruction.

Actionable Improvement Plan:

None.

II.A.3.c

- c. A recognition of what it means to be an ethical human being and effective citizen: qualities include an appreciation of ethical principles; civility and interpersonal skills; respect for cultural diversity; historical and aesthetic sensitivity; and the willingness to assume civic, political, and social responsibilities locally, nationally, and globally.

Descriptive Summary:

Many sections of the GE requirements are designed to enhance students' cultural awareness

and appreciation of their personal and social responsibilities. The general education areas of the natural sciences, social and behavioral sciences, and humanities addresses topics of ethics and citizenship. One special general education area requirement at Cerro Coso is diversity.

Student learning outcome for diversity is the ability to:

- Describe and analyze the effects of race, ethnicity, class, gender, sexuality, disability or religion on human interactions [**doc. 103**].

Students must complete one courses from the approved list of diversity courses on the Cerro Coso Local GE pattern [**doc. 76**].

Besides academic courses designed to develop ethical, cultural, and aesthetic understanding, Cerro Coso provides students with a rich program of student activities, including eight clubs and organizations, an active student government, and an arts, drama, and music program [**doc. 38**]. Student clubs and the Cerro Coso student government association (ASCC) are co-curricular avenues for providing students ways to exercise responsibilities of a civic, political, and social nature. Students representing the ASCC sit on participatory governance committees and make recommendations to the faculty and college administration regarding campus policies and procedures [**doc. 251**]. Participation in the student government is open to all students who meet the minimum academic requirements.

Self-Evaluation:

The College partially meets this Standard. The GE pattern sufficiently addresses topics like respect for cultural diversity and historical and aesthetic sensitivity. Student learning outcomes exist for each of these areas and are being assessed through direct measures. The descriptions of these assessments, the results, and the analysis with recommendations for improvement are located in the Assessment Module of CurricUNET [**doc. 296**].

Other topics in this Standard are addressed by daily classroom interaction and by students being members of the college community: civility, interpersonal skills, and an appreciation of ethical principles. These are expressed as expectations of student behavior in the student conduct policy and made available in the catalog, on the College website, and through orientation workshops and classes [**doc. 71, doc. 190_34, doc. 342, doc. 351**]. But they are not systematically taught or assessed. Formal instruction in what it means to be an effective citizen and assume civic, political, and social responsibilities is not required of every student. In the College's review of its mission begun in Spring 2012, this gap was discussed and the preliminary revision of the mission statement (to be discussed and vetted more thoroughly by all stakeholders in 2012-2013) includes a commitment to developing the ethical understanding and effective citizenship of students [**doc. 81**].

Actionable Improvement Plan:

Complete the revision of the mission statement as appropriate, implement programmatic changes as needed, design or adapt a method of assessment.

II.A.4

All degree programs include focused study in at least one area of inquiry or in an established interdisciplinary core.

Descriptive Summary:

All Associate degrees at Cerro Coso require satisfactory completion of at least 18 semester units in a specific area of study. For all non-liberal arts degrees, these 18 units are required in a specific major. For the liberal arts degrees, they are required in an area of emphasis [doc. 71, doc. 77].

Self-Evaluation:

The College meets this standard. All degrees at Cerro Coso are built on the same philosophy that broad introductory courses should lead to more focused study. Every course applicable to a degree is specifically listed in the program description as either a required course or a restricted elective.

To assure understanding and compliance in the area of program requirements and electives, the College curriculum committee carries out Stand-Alone Training every year, as mandated by the California Community College Chancellor's Office [doc. 53].

Actionable Improvement Plan:

None

II.A.5

Students completing vocational and occupational certificates and degrees demonstrate technical and professional competencies that meet employment and other applicable standards and are prepared for external licensure and certification.

Descriptive Summary:

Cerro Coso Community College prepares students to enter the workforce based on industry standards and requirements including those occupations that require licensure or certification. The College has the following courses and programs which require external licensure following completion: Administration of Justice, Emergency Medical Technology, Certified Nursing