

February 22nd,
2019

General Education Assessment Plan Fall 2019 to Spring 2022

Report to the
Acting Vice
President for
Academic Affairs

This paper outlines Queensborough Community College's General Education Assessment Plan from Fall 2019 to Spring 2022.

Queensborough Community College
Three-Year General Education Assessment Plan
Fall 2019 to Spring 2022

Scope of this Project

This paper outlines Queensborough Community Colleges' (QCC) General Education Assessment plan. The plan begins by defining assessment and outlines the college's perspective regarding the purpose of assessment. Next the plan describes General Education at QCC as well as the outcomes that are assessed. The plan continues by discussing the changes the faculty committee that oversees General Education assessment implemented and concludes by describing the current and future General Education Assessment protocols.

What is Assessment?

"Assessment is the ongoing process of:

- Establishing clear, measurable expected outcomes of student learning
- Ensuring that students have sufficient opportunities to achieve those outcomes
- Systematically gathering, analyzing, and interpreting evidence to determine how well student learning matches our expectations
- Using the resulting information to understand and improve student learning."

Linda Suskie (2018), *Assessing Student Learning: A Common Sense Guide*

Assessment Principles and Guidelines

What is General Education assessment?

General Education assessment is a process that measures the effectiveness of the College's General Education Program through the systematic collection and evaluation of information about student learning.

Why does General Education assessment matter?

General Education assessment is important because it:

- Provides a way to demonstrate the College's level of success in General Education
- Allows the College to effectively analyze the strengths and weaknesses of the General Education Program

- Informs decisions concerning the improvement of the General Education Program
- Enables the College to better meet students' educational needs

Context for General Education at Queensborough Community College

Within the City University of New York (CUNY), general education is also referred to as the Pathways common core. Completing the common core¹ at any one college in CUNY means that students have completed the common core for any other college in CUNY. For students in an A.A. or A.S. degree program, the common core is 30 credits of the program; its purpose is to develop a broad range of knowledge and skills and to build a solid intellectual foundation on which students can engage in more sophisticated study and analysis at successively higher levels as they complete their degrees. For students in career or A.A.S. degree programs, the common core is approximately 20 credits.

Each category of the common core has a distinct set of student learning outcomes. The General Education program at QCC acknowledges the Pathways student learning outcomes. A concrete example of how this is accomplished is that from both a curricular and assessment perspective the college has adopted a [crosswalk](#) in order to align the Pathways student learning outcomes with the local QCC student learning outcomes.

General Education Outcomes at QCC

A robust general education is founded on the knowledge, concepts, methods, and perspectives that students gain through the study of many academic disciplines. These disciplinary studies stimulate intellectual inquiry, global awareness, and cultural and artistic appreciation. They equip students to make informed judgments and remain engaged beyond the classroom. To that end, QCC promotes educational activities that allow students to demonstrate that they can²:

1. Communicate effectively in various forms
2. Use analytical reasoning to identify issues or problems and evaluate evidence in order to make informed decisions

¹ The Required Common Core consists of 4 courses /12 credits for students in AA, AS and bachelor's degree programs. The Flexible Common Core consists of 6 courses, students in AA, AS and bachelor's degree programs must complete at least one course in each of the five Flexible Core areas and an additional sixth course in one of them. See Appendix A for a complete description of the common core.

² Rubrics for these outcomes may be found in Appendix C.

3. Reason quantitatively as required in various fields of interest and in everyday life
4. Apply information management and digital technology skills useful for academic research and lifelong learning

To support these local general education outcomes, the academic departments may also choose to assess the following optional outcomes:

- Integrate knowledge and skills in the program of study
- Make ethical judgments while recognizing multiple perspectives, as appropriate in the program of study
- Work collaboratively to accomplish learning objectives

General Education Outcomes³

The QCC General Education outcomes are evident in the following explicit skills:

Communicate effectively in various forms

- interpret texts critically
- use writing to create and clarify meaning
- write in varied rhetorical modes, poetic forms and voices
- use writing and oral communication to connect prior knowledge to disciplinary discourse
- speak clearly, accurately, and coherently in several modes of delivery

Use analytical reasoning to identify issues or problems and evaluate evidence in order to make informed decisions

- distinguish the problem or question from a proposed solution or answer
- differentiate among facts, assumptions, and conclusions in the formulation of a proposed solution or answer
- evaluate the quality of evidence
- describe and compare the way questions, issues, or problems are formulated within various fields of study

³ Approved by the Academic Senate on February 13, 2018.

Reason quantitatively as required in various fields of interest and in everyday life

- identify problems that need a mathematical solution, and use computational methods in the mathematics applicable in everyday life
- use the language, notation, and inductive and deductive methods of mathematics to formulate quantitative ideas and patterns
- use mathematics appropriate to specific fields of study
- estimate when doing mathematical calculations
- employ technology to collect, process, and present mathematical information
- describe mathematical, statistical and probabilistic models and methods, and identify how they are used to obtain knowledge
- organize and interpret data and use the data to draw conclusions

Apply information management and digital technology skills useful for academic research and lifelong learning

- determine the extent of information needed for a research question, problem, or issue
- access needed information effectively and efficiently
- evaluate information and its sources critically and assimilate selected information
- use information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose
- demonstrate an understanding of the economic, legal, social, and ethical issues surrounding the use of information and information technology
- employ technology in research and fields of interest
- identify the role of technology and its impact on the individual, society and the environment

General Education Task Force

A systematic process for assessing General Education at Queensborough Community College was implemented when the General Education Assessment Task Force was established in June of 2014. The charge of this group was:

- To develop a process for regular, cross-disciplinary, anonymous review of student artifacts as evidence of student learning outcomes (college-wide) for each of the four General Education Outcomes
- To recommend modifications to the previous Educational Outcomes

The task force created and normed a rubric for Analytical Reasoning. In fall 2014, the group created and normed rubrics for Communication (Reading, Writing, Speaking,

and Listening). During this time, the task force also reported to the Academic Senate that the then current General Education outcomes⁴ needed to be reviewed for possible revision. Over the next three years, the taskforce simultaneously developed and normed rubrics for quantitative reasoning and information management as well as oversaw the assessment of artifacts for these first four General Education outcomes. The first assessment management tool utilized was Digication, followed by Aqua-Watermark.

General Education Assessment

Since 2014, General Education outcomes assessment has been based on the four General Education outcomes of the college referenced in the previous section. Faculty have submitted student artifacts from a wide variety of courses. The artifacts have been collected and organized by General Education outcome, and faculty have scored the de-identified artifacts, using Watermark Aqua, according to rubrics developed by faculty. Assessment results have been discussed by the General Education Task Force and General Education Working Group,⁵ and findings and recommendations have been articulated in annual reports, which have been submitted to the Academic Senate. From spring 2015 to spring 2018, over 4,000 artifacts have been assessed against the four General Education outcomes.

Faculty who have submitted student artifacts have received confidential individualized reports on their students' performance on the General Education outcomes against which they had their student artifacts assessed. Several faculty members have indicated that these reports are useful in (1) modifying courses, (2) refining instructional practice, and (3) deepening a sense of how much students are learning.

Current Assessment Process

Prior to fall 2018, the Director of Policy Analysis solicited student artifacts from faculty across the institution to be assessed against the four General Education rubrics. In fall 2018, a more systematic and intentional process was implemented to assess artifacts against the four General Education outcomes to assess a larger percentage of Pathways common core courses. This process has involved the following steps:

- Randomly sampling among the various Pathways courses for assessment

⁴ There were originally 10 general Education outcomes.

⁵ The General Educations Task Force's mandate was completed in spring 2018, and the General Education Working Group was created to oversee General Education.

- Sending the faculty of selected courses an informative promotional video (produced using Powtoon, an educational video⁶ application) to solicit their participation in the semester's General Education Assessment project.
- Faculty completing a Survey Monkey survey in which they provide course information and select the outcome (s) against which they would like their artifacts assessed
- Collecting and processing submitted artifacts using Watermark Aqua
- Faculty scoring artifacts in June of each year
- Collating the assessment data
- Sharing assessment data with the General Education Working group for analysis
- Writing and disseminating an annual assessment report.

In fall 2019, the General Education Assessment Protocol will be refined again. Specifically, based on the schedule in Appendix B, courses in selected Pathways categories, within the Pathway's Common Core, will be targeted for assessment. This refinement to the protocol ensures an increase to the number of Pathways courses that will be assessed within a three-year period.

⁶ A web-based animation software that allows users to create animated presentations by manipulating pre-created objects, imported images, provided music and user-created voice-overs.

APPENDIX A

Required Common Core

The Required Common Core consists of 4 courses /12 credits for students in AA, AS and bachelor's degree programs. Special conditions apply in the case of AAS students. [Click here](#) to learn more about the learning outcomes for courses in the Required Common Core and consult the college website for further guidelines and course information.

- **English Composition (2 courses / 6 credits)**
- **Mathematical and Quantitative Reasoning (1 course / 3 or more credits)**
- **Life and Physical Sciences (1 course / 3 or more credits)**

Flexible Common Core

To reach the required total of 6 courses, students in AA, AS and bachelor's degree programs must complete at least one course in each of the five Flexible Core areas and an additional sixth course in one of them. Students can complete no more than two courses from any one discipline or interdisciplinary field. In many cases, colleges will specify how the sixth course must be chosen. [Click here](#) to learn more about the learning outcomes for courses in the Flexible Common Core, and consult the college website for further guidelines and course information.

- **World Cultures and Global Issues — 3 credits**
- **U.S. Experience in its Diversity — 3 credits**
- **Creative Expression — 3 credits**
- **Individual and Society — 3 credits**
- **Scientific World — 3 credits**

APPENDIX B

Three-Year General Education call for participation Assessment Cycle
Fall 2019 to Spring 2022

PATHWAYS CATEGORY	SEMESTER					
	Fall 2019	Spring 2020	Fall 2020	Spring 2021	Fall 2021	Spring 2022
English Composition	X	X	X	X		
Mathematics & Quantitative Reasoning			X	X	X	X
Life & Physical Sciences					X	X
World Cultures & Global Issues	X	X				
Creative Expression			X	X		
Individual & Society					X	X
Scientific World	X	X				

APPENDIX C

RUBRICS FOR QCC EDUCATIONAL OUTCOME #1:

COMMUNICATE EFFECTIVELY THROUGH READING, WRITING, SPEAKING AND LISTENING: ALTERNATE WRITING RUBRIC for Spring 2016

DIMENSIONS	<u>Superior - 4</u>	<u>Competent - 3</u>	<u>Developing - 2</u>	<u>Novice - 1</u>	<u>Insufficient - 0</u>
Awareness of audience, purpose, and genre	Skillfully addresses the issue and audience using tone, vocabulary, and voice appropriate to the purpose and genre.	Sufficiently addresses the issue and audience using tone, vocabulary, and voice appropriate to the purpose and genre.	Sometimes addresses the issue and audience using tone, vocabulary, and voice appropriate to the purpose and genre.	Rarely addresses the issue and audience using tone, vocabulary, and voice appropriate to the purpose and genre.	Does not address the issue and audience with appropriate tone, vocabulary, and voice.
Content development and organization	Consistently develops ideas with logical and coherent organization.	Generally develops ideas with logical and coherent organization	Sometimes develops ideas with logical and coherent organization. Sometimes vague and/or redundant.	Rarely develops ideas and coherent organization. Frequently vague and/or redundant.	Never develops ideas and does not use coherent organization
Control of Grammar and Mechanics	Uses language skillfully, conveying meaning to readers with clarity and fluency, and virtually error free.	Uses language appropriately, conveying meaning to readers with sufficient clarity and fluency though with minimal errors.	Uses language that generally conveys meaning to readers, with some errors that impede understanding.	Uses language that frequently impedes meaning because of errors in usage.	Does not use language that conveys meaning to readers, with significant errors that impede understanding.

1/22/15 – 3/3/16: this version does not include the dimension Evidence and/or Sources

WRITING RUBRIC Spring 2015

DIMENSIONS	<u>Superior - 4</u>	<u>Competent - 3</u>	<u>Developing - 2</u>	<u>Novice - 1</u>	<u>Insufficient - 0</u>
Awareness of Audience, Purpose, and Genre	Skillfully addresses the issue and audience using tone, vocabulary, and voice appropriate to the purpose and genre.	Sufficiently addresses the issue and audience using tone, vocabulary, and voice appropriate to the purpose and genre.	Sometimes addresses the issue and audience using tone, vocabulary, and voice appropriate to the purpose and genre.	Rarely addresses the issue and audience using tone, vocabulary, and voice appropriate to the purpose and genre.	Does not address the issue and audience with appropriate tone, vocabulary, and voice.
Content Development and Organization	Consistently develops ideas with logical and coherent organization.	Generally develops ideas with logical and coherent organization	Sometimes develops ideas with logical and coherent organization. Sometimes vague and/or redundant.	Rarely develops ideas and coherent organization. Frequently vague and/or redundant.	Never develops ideas and does not use coherent organization
Control of Grammar and Mechanics	Uses language skillfully, conveying meaning to readers with clarity and fluency, and virtually error free.	Uses language appropriately, conveying meaning to readers with sufficient clarity and fluency though with minimal errors.	Uses language that generally conveys meaning to readers, with some errors that impede understanding.	Uses language that frequently impedes meaning because of errors in usage.	Does not use language that conveys meaning to readers, with significant errors that impede understanding.
Evidence and/or Sources	Skillfully and ethically uses high-quality, credible, relevant evidence and/or sources to develop ideas that are appropriate for the discipline and genre.	Sufficiently and ethically uses credible, relevant evidence and/or sources to support ideas that are appropriate for the genre.	Ethically uses some credible, relevant evidence and/or sources to support ideas that are appropriate for the discipline and genre.	Rarely uses credible, relevant evidence and/or sources to support ideas.	Does not use evidence and/or sources to support ideas.

1/22/15

RUBRIC FOR QCC EDUCATIONAL OUTCOME #2:

USE ANALYTICAL REASONING TO IDENTIFY ISSUES OR PROBLEMS AND EVALUATE EVIDENCE IN ORDER TO MAKE INFORMED DECISIONS

ANALYTICAL REASONING RUBRIC for Spring 2015

DIMENSIONS	<u>Superior - 4</u>	<u>Competent - 3</u>	<u>Developing - 2</u>	<u>Novice - 1</u>	<u>Insufficient – 0</u>
Issue: Identify and explain the issue, problem, or question.	Clearly and comprehensively identifies and explains the issue, problem, or question	Clearly and sufficiently identifies and explains issue, problem, or question with minor omissions	Partially identifies and explains the issue, problem, or question with some explanation	Minimally identifies and explains the issue, problem, or question without explanation	Does not identify or explain the issue, problem, or question
Evidence: Present, organize, and evaluate sufficient and relevant evidence.	Clearly and comprehensively presents, organizes, and evaluates sufficient and relevant evidence	Clearly presents, organizes, and evaluates relevant evidence with minor omissions	Partially presents, organizes, and evaluates mostly relevant evidence	Minimally presents, organizes, and evaluates some relevant evidence	Does not present, organize or evaluate sufficient relevant evidence
Conclusion: Reach an informed conclusion or solution.	The conclusion is a clear, well supported, and logical statement that reflects the complexity of the argument or problem	The conclusion or solution is sufficiently supported by the provided evidence	The conclusion is unfocused or minimally supported by the provided evidence	The conclusion is ambiguous, illogical, or unsupported by the provided evidence	The conclusion is absent

**RUBRIC FOR QCC EDUCATIONAL OUTCOME #3:
REASON QUANTITATIVELY AND MATHEMATICALLY AS REQUIRED IN STUDENTS' FIELDS OF INTEREST**

QUANTITATIVE REASONING RUBRIC FOR Spring 2018

<u>DIMENSIONS</u>	<u>Superior - 4</u>	<u>Competent - 3</u>	<u>Developing - 2</u>	<u>Novice - 1</u>	<u>Insufficient - 0</u>
Identify and Extract relevant quantitative information	Demonstrates full understanding of quantitative information presented.	Demonstrates understanding of most quantitative information presented.	Demonstrates understanding of some quantitative information presented.	Uses very little of the quantitative information presented.	Does not use quantitative information presented
Application of Quantitative Data to Derive Information	Skillfully calculates or applies information to solve a problem or generate information.	Adequately performs calculations and applies information to solve a problem or generate information with minor errors.	Calculates or applies information to solve a problem or generate information with errors.	Inaccurately performs calculations resulting in an inability to solve problems or generate information	Calculations are missing.
Analysis, explanation, and interpretation of quantitative results.	Demonstrates an understanding of the <i>meaning</i> of quantitative results/information AND uses result/info to articulate an informed judgement	Demonstrates an understanding of the <i>meaning</i> of quantitative results/information.	Demonstrates a partial understanding of the meaning of quantitative results/information.	Demonstrates a misunderstanding of the meaning of quantitative results/information (misinterpretation).	No analysis is offered for quantitative results obtained.

2/5/18

RUBRIC FOR QCC EDUCATIONAL OUTCOME #4:

APPLY INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY SKILLS USEFUL FOR ACADEMIC RESEARCH AND LIFELONG LEARNING

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY SKILLS RUBRIC FOR Spring 2018

	Superior-4	Competent-3	Developing-2	Novice-1	Insufficient-0
Identify the scope of inquiry or investigation needed for the assignment.	Effectively identifies the task/scope of inquiry.	Sufficiently identifies the task/scope of inquiry.	Superficially identifies the task/scope of inquiry.	Rarely identifies the task/scope of inquiry.	Does not include any inquiry or investigation.
Navigate digital resources to obtain relevant Information	Accesses information from effective appropriate information sources.	Accesses information from a variety of relevant information sources.	Accesses information from limited and similar sources.	Accesses information randomly, lacking relevance and quality.	Does not access any information.
Use Information	<p>Students use correctly at least 4 of the following information use strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use of citations and references • choice of paraphrasing summary, or quoting • using information in ways that are true to original context • distinguishing between common knowledge and ideas requiring attribution • evaluates the limitations and assumptions of the information and sources. 	<p>Students use correctly three of the following information use strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use of citations and references • choice of paraphrasing summary, or quoting • using information in ways that are true to original context • distinguishing between common knowledge and ideas requiring attribution • evaluates the limitations and assumptions of the information and sources. 	<p>Students use correctly two of the following information use strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use of citations and references • choice of paraphrasing summary, or quoting • using information in ways that are true to original context • distinguishing between common knowledge and ideas requiring attribution • evaluates the limitations and assumptions of the information and sources 	<p>Students use correctly one of the following information use strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use of citations and references • choice of paraphrasing summary, or quoting • using information in ways that are true to original context • distinguishing between common knowledge and ideas requiring attribution • evaluates the limitations and assumptions of the information and sources 	Students do not use correctly any of the information use strategies.

