

Assessment Report - C. Julian Jiménez
Program: VAPA (Visual and Performing Arts)
Assessment of General Education Objective

GENERAL EDUCATION OBJECTIVE ASSESSMENT -

1. **Background for VAPA assessment pilot for QCC General Education Outcome #10:** Students will apply aesthetic and intellectual criteria in the evaluation or creation of works in the humanities or the arts.

As part of assessment of the QCC General Education Assessment, four arts instructors, Aviva Geismar (Dance), Jennifer Gliere (Music), C. Julian Jiménez (Theatre), and Michael Ritchie (Art), assessed the General Education Objective in arts courses. The assessment took place in sections of Advanced Beginning Modern (DAN 121), Intermediate Modern Dance I (DAN 220), Introduction to Music (MU 110), Introduction to Theatre (TH 111), and Introduction to Sculpture: Three-Dimensional Design (AR 122) during the Academic year of 2013 - 2014.

Course Catalogue Descriptions:

Introduction to Sculpture: Three-Dimensional Design (AR 122) – A study of three-dimensional elements of line, plane, and volume: the use of basic tools and experience with various media (paper, wood, plastic, metal, plaster). Lectures, classroom projects, and additional work required outside the classroom.

Advanced Beginning Modern (DAN 121) – A continuation of DAN 120, this course will continue to develop movement skills and will introduce choreographic concepts and terminology.

Intermediate Modern I (DAN 220) - Designed to develop intermediate-level modern dance skills with emphasis on techniques and movement phrasing.

Introduction to Music (MU 110) – A basic course, designed to develop in the student an understanding of musical art. After a discussion of basic concepts, terms, and principles of design in music, representative works of the great masters of Baroque, Classical, Romantic, and Modern eras are played and analyzed. Aims for intelligent listening habits and recognition of specific forms and styles. Required readings, listening, and concert attendance.

Introduction to Theatre (TH 111) – An introduction to the fundamentals of theatre with an emphasis on the evolution of theatrical conventions and practices in Western Society. Material for analysis, discussion and illustration is selected from a body of dramaturgy that spans the history of the theatre from the Greeks to the present day. Students are required to attend and critique theatrical performances on campus.

The purpose of the assessment was to determine the extent to which students achieve the intended General Education Outcome.

Criteria for Outcomes Assessment

What follows are the criteria used to assess student outcomes. This year we are using three key criteria to assess student performance:

Criteria: VAPA General Education Assessment—specifically developed and designed to gauge students' level competence in understanding aesthetic and intellectual criteria in the evaluation or creation of works in the humanities or the arts.

1. VAPA students shall demonstrate, at a minimum, *Basic Level competence (with the expectation to exceed standards competence upon graduation, classes progress)* —on a test/instrument designed for assessment, otherwise known as the *VAPA Gen Ed Assessment* rubric.

Instructors used the same scoring rubric:

VAPA General Education Assessment –

- Students will apply aesthetic and intellectual criteria in the evaluation or creation of works in the humanities or the arts.

Outcomes Ratings Scale (ORC)

	EXCEEDS STANDARDS (4)	CLASS LEVEL (3)	BASIC (2)	BELOW BASIC (1)
Students apply aesthetic criteria/evaluation by identifying or creating visual cues to/on an established or created work of art	Identified the aesthetic devices of the work with clarity and sophistication.	Identified the aesthetic devices of the work with clarity.	Identified the aesthetic devices of the work but was vague.	Did not identify any aesthetic devices of the work.
Students will apply intellectual criteria/evaluation by identifying or using theory and or artistic accuracy to/on an established or created work of art.	Identified the intellectual/theoretical devices of the work with clarity and sophistication.	Identified the intellectual/theoretical devices of the work with clarity.	Identified the intellectual/theoretical devices of the work, but was vague.	Did not identify intellectual/theoretical devices of the work.
Students will use the proper lexicon to their discipline to appropriately write/discuss the work.	Language use is sophisticated or otherwise exceptional and skillfully communicates meaning to readers/listeners with clarity and fluency.	Language use is straightforward and clearly conveys meaning to readers/listeners.	Language use generally conveys meaning to readers with clarity, although some areas are ambiguous or otherwise unclear.	Language is error-ridden and incomprehensible to the

- **Art (See Appendix A)** Students constructed a circular symmetrical relief from foam core. This relief is made from separate flat parts and glued together to create a three-dimension relief. The relief must be symmetrical. Each shapes created must be repeated at least 4 items to maintain symmetry. There must be a number of related shapes of different sizes to maintain design unity. There must also be different levels of foam core to create the feeling of a relief. The assignment takes place during 2 periods. This is about 7 hours of work.
 - a. Students will construct a project that demonstrates their ability to measure accurately.
 - b. Through their artwork, students will demonstrate neat edges with thorough cutting and sanding.
 - c. Students will cut repeated units the same size and shape to construct part of their design.
 - d. Students will transform, synthesize, or connect ideas or solutions to create a whole design from disparate parts.

- **Dance (See Appendix B)** Students attended a live dance performance and wrote a 2 – 3 page paper.
 - a. Identify the choreographer's intentions.
 - b. Describe ideas and feelings evoked by the dance.
 - c. Discuss how movement in the dance is used to express those ideas and feelings.
 - d. Discuss the dance structure, movement vocabulary, and the use of space.
 - e. How did the design choices of the performance contribute to the performance?

- **Music (See Appendix C)** Students chose a work of music that they spoke to them or wanted to know more about. The work had to be at least 3:30 (three minutes and thirty seconds) long, excluding silence. They were asked to write a paper of 1,110 – 1,300 words, including a YouTube link or Mp3 of the music. Music must be something that falls within the scope of the class (e.g. folk, jazz, classical, Broadway, Latino, R&B, etc).
 - a. Listen for Melody, Harmony, Rhythm, Texture, Timbre, Form
 - b. Identify Central Elements
 - c. Provide short background of composer/artist

- **Theatre (See Appendix D)** Students watched a play within the current QCC Theatre Season and were asked to write a play response:
 - a. Discuss the development and believability of the characters (e.g. familiarity with the script, connection to material, dramatic choices, etc).
 - b. Discuss how the costumes, scenery, lighting and makeup support or doesn't support the overall look and believability of the play.

- 2. Test administration and scoring.** Instructors tested students in their classes within the 2013-2014 Academic Year as part of regular class assignments. The device of a formal paper was used for Dance, Music, and Theatre (Students will apply aesthetic and intellectual criteria in the evaluation of works in the humanities or the arts); however Art's assignment assesses student artistic creations. (Students will apply aesthetic and intellectual criteria in the creation of works in the humanities or the arts).

NOTE: General Education Objective assessment in dance was administered to two different courses due to class size. The assignment remained the same.

All students in the courses completed the assignment; however stratified random samples of 65 student's work over the four disciplines were selected for the assessment.

Table 1: Category 1

Students apply aesthetic criteria/evaluation by identifying or creating visual cues to/on an established or created work of art

Results.

	EXCEEDS STANDARDS (4)	CLASS LEVEL (3)	BASIC (2)	BELOW BASIC (1)		
Art (out of 18 students)	6 (33%)	8 (44%)	3 (17%)	1 (6%)		
Dance (Out of 13 students)	3 (23%)	6 (46%)	3 (23%)	1 (8%)		
Music (Out of 17 students)	9 (53%)	4 (23%)	2 (12%)	2 (12%)		
Theatre (out of 17 student)	2 (12%)	6 (35%)	6 (35%)	3 (18%)		
TOTALS (Across VAPA out of 65 students)	20 (31%)	24 (37%)	14 (21%)	7 (11%)		

In effect, students could articulate aesthetic value to the work mostly at a Basic (2) or Class Level (3) with the exception of Music with more than half (53%) Exceeding Standards (4). This exceeds the projection outlined in the Assessment Plan Criteria; comprehension was hypothesized to be at a Basic Level. Art and Dance, and Music are mostly at Class Level or above, whereas Theatre is split evenly with a 35% in each Class Level (3) and Basic (2). Theatre meets and slightly surpasses the projection; the other three disciplines go above the projection.

Table 2: Category 2

Students will apply intellectual criteria/evaluation by identifying or using theory and or artistic accuracy to/on an established or created work of art.

Results.

	EXCEEDS STANDARDS (4)	CLASS LEVEL (3)	BASIC (2)	BELOW BASIC (1)		
Art (out of 18 students)	5 (27%)	9 (50%)	3 (17%)	1 (6%)		
Dance (Out of 13 students)	2 (15%)	4 (31%)	7 (54%)	0 (0%)		
Music (Out of 17 students)	7 (41%)	3 (18%)	6 (35%)	1 (6%)		
Theatre (out of 17 student)	2 (12%)	5 (29%)	7 (41%)	3 (18%)		
TOTALS (Across VAPA out of 65 students)	16 (25%)	21 (32%)	23 (35%)	5 (8%)		

In Category 1, students could articulate aesthetic value to the work, but in Category 2 most students did not provide a very compelling argument as to the theory behind the work. Art surpass the projection with 50% at Class Level (3). This isn't surprising, since the nature of the Art Assignment was in the creation of the student's own work, rather than in the evaluation of someone else's creation. Dance and Theatre are mostly at the Criteria projection with Dance at 54% for Basic Level (2) and Theatre at 41% for Basic (2). Music students interestingly were split with 41% Exceeding Standards (4) and 35% at Basic Level (2).

Table 3: Category 3

Students will use the proper lexicon to their discipline to appropriately write/discuss the work.

Results.

	EXCEEDS STANDARDS (4)	CLASS LEVEL (3)	BASIC (2)	BELOW BASIC (1)	
Art (out of 18 students)	2 (11%)	9 (50%)	6 (33%)	1 (6%)	
Dance (Out of 13 students)	1 (8%)	6 (46%)	4 (31%)	2 (15%)	
Music (Out of 17 students)	8 (47%)	4 (23%)	2 (12%)	3 (18%)	
Theatre (out of 17 student)	7 (41%)	4 (23%)	3 (18%)	3 (18%)	
TOTALS (Across VAPA out of 65 students)	18 (27%)	23 (35%)	15 (23%)	9 (14%)	

Students used the proper lexicon for their discipline at a Class Level (3) or above. 50% of Art students and 46% of Dance student were at Class Level (3). Music with 47% and Theatre with 41% Exceeded Standards (4) in this category. This exceeds the projection outlined in the Assessment Plan Criteria; comprehension was hypothesized to be at a Basic Level. Art and Music meet and slightly surpasses the projection; Music and Art go above the projection.

Discussion.

These findings show, as anticipated, that the QCC General Education Objective #10 (*Students will apply aesthetic and intellectual criteria in the evaluation or creation of works in the humanities or the arts*) is largely being obtained at the Basic (2) or Class Level (3), with some Exceeding Standards as outlined within each category.

Still, a large number of students still produced weak or marginal answers. These cannot be explained by lack of student motivation, since the assignments were assigned as part of the courses. Students were better able to analyze a work of art than to formulate an argument on how it applies to theory. This difference probably is due to the fact that many of these courses focus directly on learning to understand, create, and analyze art. The question about the value of arts in society and/or theory may not be addressed in the courses. However, it still seems to be a fair "general education" question because it invites students to use what they have learned in a class and apply it to a new circumstance.

Assessment will have little effect on students' learning unless the arts instructors examine the results--and collectively discuss what they are trying to accomplish within these courses. We can imagine important questions that need to be addressed such as, "Are we satisfied with students' abilities to articulate the theory behind a piece of art or the creation of one?" "Are we satisfied with students' abilities to interpret and discuss works of art?" "Do the learning outcomes for the arts category accurately reflect what instructors are really trying to teach?"

It is essential to do this assessment over the course of the next academic year and subsequent years to get an accurate account if the courses are providing assignments that best meet this objective. We have learned from this assessment that, in fact, they do, and quite successfully - achieving higher levels than anticipated.

Appendix A – Art (assignment used to assess)

Three-dimensional design

General Education Objective

- Integrate knowledge and skills in their program of study
- Apply aesthetic and intellectual criteria in the evaluation or creation of works in the humanities or the arts
- Differentiate and make informed decisions about issues based on multiple value systems

Learning outcomes

- a. Students will construct a project that demonstrates their ability to measure accurately.
- b. Through their artwork, students will demonstrate neat edges with thorough cutting and sanding.
- c. Students will cut repeated units the same size and shape to construct part of their design.
- d. Students will transform, synthesize, or connect ideas or solutions to create a whole design from disparate parts.

Construction of a relief in foam core.

- a. Create a right angled triangle
4 1/8 " high 4 3/4 wide
- b. Trace the triangle 3 more times
- c. Draw a square 5x5 inches Bisect the square. Draw those lines in pencil.
- d. Place the 4 triangles diagonally with one end of each triangle in the center.

3. Student Assignment

Students are constructing a circular symmetrical relief from foam core. This relief is made from separate flat parts and glued together to create a three-dimension relief. The relief must be symmetrical. Each shapes created must be repeated at least 4 items to maintain symmetry. There must be a number of related shapes of different sizes to maintain design unity. There must also be different levels of foam core to create the feeling of a relief. The assignment will take 2 periods. This is about 7 hours of work.

Week I. Formulating and idea, cutting the larger pieces

Week 2. Cutting the smaller shapes. Cutting and gluing the pieces symmetrically

Appendix B – Dance (assignment used to assess)

Guidelines for Writing the Reaction Paper

You were going to attend a live dance performance and write a 2 to 3 page paper about it. I will forward to you a list of performances taking place in the city this semester to give you some suggestions for shows that you might choose to see.

In the introduction to the paper, explain what performance you went to see and give me some background about the company, the theater, and why you chose this concert to attend. This is a brief introduction to the performance. Please do not quote the company's mission statement word for word from the program without proper citation.

In the body of the paper you will do an in-depth analysis of the one dance on the program that affected you the most. When a dance piece is successful it is a transformative experience for the viewer, that is, it changes the viewer in some way. While you're watching the performance, allow yourself to be transported emotionally physically or intellectually. Hopefully you will find one piece (at least) on the program you attend that does this for you. Explain what this piece did for you and why. Bear in mind that some dances are representational - the movement has dramatic or narrative points of inspiration. Other dances are abstract; that is the movement is intended to be appreciated for its own merit. See if you can get a sense of the choreographer's intention for what you saw in the piece and through reading the program and the promotional material about the show. Once you have stated what your reaction to the dance was, back it up with examples of what was happening on stage. How was the dance structured? What was the movement vocabulary like? What was the use of space like? How did the dancers relate to each other and the audience? How did the music, costume design, lighting design, and other elements contribute to the piece? What was unique about the way the dancers performed? How did they communicate with their bodies? Did you recognize any familiar movement from class or observe technical skill we have been working on?

It will be useful to take notes about the show while you are there. In between the pieces the lights will come up and this will give you a chance to write down some ideas. Try to record as much as you can. Remember to back up your response to the piece. Later you can phrase it in a more fully fleshed out way.

Here's an example of backing up your response with description of what you saw on stage. "The piece was exciting to me because of the choreographer's use of space. The dancers repeatedly cross the stage just barely missing each other and moving out of break neck speed. Their precise, technique, and the surprising phrasing of movement added to the effects of the spatial patterning. The high energy saxophone music also contributed to the excitement of the piece..."

If you need some help with your paper you can visit the writing center.

Appendix C – Music (assignment used to assess)

Final Project – worth 10% of your grade

High Stakes Paper: 1100-1300+ words

Due Dates (all submitted through Blackboard)

Friday, 4 April 11:59PM: Your final project piece, elements, & link must be approved.

Submit as text through BB (20 points)

Friday, 2 May in class: Writing Center Proof due (so you must have written the paper before this!) (30 points)

Sunday, 4 May 11:59PM: Final Paper Draft Due (after writing center trip) (100 points)

Sunday, 16 May: Final paper Due – **THIS CANNOT BE LATE.** (200 points)

For your final project, you will create your own listening guide for a musical work of your choice. This exercise will allow you to apply the listening skills, terminology, and musical knowledge you've acquired over the course of the semester to a specific work of music, one that *you* enjoy.

Step 1: Choose Your Work

Choose a work of music you like or you'd like to know more about (or better still, both). You may want to look back at the pieces you've posted on the blog for a head start.

Guidelines:

- It must be at least 3:30 (three minutes and thirty seconds) long excluding silence;
- You must provide a YouTube link or upload an MP3 of the piece;
- It must be at least something that falls remotely within the scope of this class, *e.g.* folk, jazz, classical, Broadway, Latino, R&B, "oldies," etc. – In other words, no death metal or rap.

Step 2: Listen

You will have almost certainly listened to your chosen work before, but this time, listen with an ear toward the elements we've talked about in class: melody, rhythm, harmony, texture, timbre, dynamics, form, and word-music relationships. It will help to focus on only one or two elements at a time. Listen once, for example, for changes in timbre, listen another time for changes in rhythm, and so on.

Ideas as you listen for aspects of the different main elements we've talked about:

Melody: antecedent/consequent phrases, contour, a melodic ostinato, word painting, cadenza

Harmony: cadences, modulation, chord changes, "blue notes," tonal/atonal, sequence

Rhythm: tempo, meter (duple or triple), rhythmic ostinato, syncopation

Texture: thin, thick, mono-, homo- or polyphonic, changes in texture

Timbre: what instruments there are, solos, changes in instrumentation/timbre

Form: strophic, ABA, verse/chorus, bar form, repeated sections, ritornello, rondo, etc.

Step 3: Identify the Central Elements - Decide which three (3) or four (4) elements are central to this work. If an element does not change at any point – for example, if your work is loud from beginning to end – this will not be a particularly meaningful basis on which to break down the music. If, on the other hand, the dynamics keep moving between *forte* and *piano*, that well may be a useful parameter to explain how the work is constructed (like Beethoven’s 5th Symphony). Make special note of the timing of important changes in the music in specific minutes and seconds. When the words begin a new section, does the music change as well? Do you hear a modulation at some point? Does the timbre shift? Does the texture change markedly 2 anywhere? Are there antecedent/consequent phrases? It is very helpful to write these things down in a grid like the listening guides we’ve used in class and in your book.

The big question to ask yourself here as you start to compose your paper is, “why?” Why did the composer/artist choose to compose the piece as s/he did? When you note something interesting or quirky about your piece, try to figure out what the composer might be trying to tell you. (Things like word painting are especially fun to notice.)

Step 4: Review Your Work

Have you identified the key elements in your work? Have you charted their progression through the work *thoroughly* and *accurately*? (I promise this will make your paper a LOT easier to write!) Listen again, following your grid, and imagine that you have never heard the work before. Does your grid show the piece’s essential features? Are the timings accurate? Remember to proofread your work. You could even trade grids with a friend to see if s/he can follow it or sees anything you may have missed.

Step 5: Write Your Paper

Now that you have your grid and know your piece well, write a paper, 1100-1300+ words. **You must take the rough draft to the Writing Center by the time you turn it in and bring the half sheet of paper to class as proof.** *Don’t forget to take your bibliography!*

The **top of your paper should include the YouTube link** to your work along with your name and section or class time. Additionally, your paper should be divided into sections as outlined below.

Provide a short background on the composer/artist (~150 words). This will require some research, thereby necessitating a *properly formatted* bibliography with *at least* two sources. DO NOT just copy and paste three paragraphs from a website (that includes Wikipedia!), but find several sites and then put the main points in your own words, **with a citation in the paper (inline)**. The Writing Center or I will help you with this if you are unsure. Use http://www.ehow.com/how_4443438_cite-website-using-mla-format.html as a guide to help you with your bibliography if needed; you can even use <http://www.bibme.org/> to help! Remember QCC’s policy on plagiarism (copy and pasting): <http://www.qcc.cuny.edu/socialsciences/ppectorino/Academic-Integrity-Student-notice.html>

If it’s relevant, provide some political/social context in which the work was written (*e.g.* Billy Joel’s “We Didn’t Start the Fire,” Verdi’s *Nabucco*). This shouldn’t take more than about 150 words. When was the piece written? Was there a certain reason it was written – a reaction to an event, either a world event or something in that composer/artist’s life? Was it controversial in any way?

The body of the paper (~900 words+) should describe how the elements you chose combine to make your work, what effect they have on the overall piece, and how it is perceived. Make sure to **cite specific minutes and seconds throughout**. This is where your grid will help a LOT!

As a concluding paragraph or two, write your ideas and insights into doing the project – what did it feel like? What are your afterthoughts about the assignment? How many times did you have to listen to your piece? What did you discover? Which was the hardest element to hear and why? How did you choose your work? Why did you like or dislike the project?

If you have done this assignment carefully, you will almost certainly have gained added appreciation of how music works. What might seem like a simple piece is often far more intricate than it appears on the surface. Most importantly, you will have learned valuable skills that will help you listen to any kind of music, from any time or place, with greater understanding.

Appendix D – Theatre (assignment used to assess)

THEATRE REVIEW PURPOSE & TIPS:

When writing a theatre review, you should remember and include three main components: the acting, the technical, and the overall view.

The acting aspect is probably most important. It is a good idea to read the play before you go see it so that you are familiar with the script ahead of time. Make sure you know all of the characters' names and the actors who are playing them; a playbill is an ideal place in which to find all this information. There are several possible questions to ask yourself about the acting which can help to generate topics for your review.

- Ask yourself if the actors understand what they are saying.
- How familiar are they with the script?
- Do they really know what the play is all about? Also look to see if each actor is connecting well with his/her character.
- How well are they giving and taking focus?
- Is there any one person who sticks out in your head as "hogging" all the attention?

The second aspect to look at is the technical. This includes everything from the lights and sound to the costumes. Someone once said that if the technical aspect of the performance becomes noticeable, then it was not effective. Keep in mind that the lights, sound, scenery, etc. are there to enhance the performance, not to be the main focus. Things to ask yourself about the technical aspect of the play:

- Do the lights reflect the time of day, the season and so on?
- Do the lights cast any shadows on the actors' faces?
- Does the sound accent the style and format of the play?
- Do the sound effects make sense?
- Are they using microphones? (Look for the quality of sound coming from that)
- Do the costumes portray the time period and are they part of each character's personality?
- Does the scenery help to create an environment that supports the text of the play?

The overall view of the theater will give the reader a feel of exactly how well you enjoyed your experience at this play. Include ticket prices here and your opinion of the worthiness of that cost. Also, keep in mind the quality of the theater and its facilities. The audience is also a major part of your theatre experience. Was the audience big? Were they perceptive and interactive? Remember, you shouldn't make this the main point, but it would be good to comment on it. This entire portion should convey your opinion and feeling of how the show went.

Remember the acting, the technical, and the overall view, and you will have a lot of material to put in a successful theatre review. One more thing: Don't ever lie so as not to hurt someone's feelings. Constructive criticism will only do someone good. Keep all these things in mind when writing your review and it will be great. Have fun!