

Direct Measures of Students' Achievement at the Course Level:
GEC Expected Learning Outcomes

Faculty who choose not to develop custom assessment plans may assess the aggregate levels of achievement of the GEC expected learning outcomes by answering these questions regularly, at least every third time they teach a specific GEC course.

How do you evaluate your students' achievement of <GEC outcome>?

i.e. Students demonstrate understanding of the theories and methods of social scientific inquiry as they are applied to the studies of individuals, groups, organizations, and societies on a final essay exam, by applying one or more theories to analyze a given set of unfamiliar facts in each of two essays. OR

Exam questions 2, 3, 6, 9, and 12 test how well students understand basic concepts of statistics and probability; questions 1, 7, and 11 test how well students comprehend methods needed to analyze and critically evaluate statistical arguments; and questions 4, 5, 8, and 10 evaluate their ability to recognize the importance of specific statistical ideas.

How well are they doing?

i.e. More than 70% of students demonstrate an accurate, if unnuanced, understanding of most of the theories presented in the class, and can describe how these apply to the scenarios in the essay questions. However, only 45% could accurately define theory X.

OR At least 75% of students responded correctly to 2,3,6, and 9. At least 72% got 1 and 7 correct, and 70% got 4, 8, and 10 correct. Fewer than 50% were able to answer 5 and 11 right.

What if anything does this suggest you change?

i.e. Develop a new way of teaching theory X OR
Focus more attention on the concepts examined in questions 5 and 11.

Sample Assessment Questionnaire for Faculty

Please answer the following questions as fully as you can:

1. What tests or graded activities allow you to know that students learn....
[wording appropriate for GEC course objective] (e.g., “essay exam in which students are asked”)
2. Based upon your assessment of student performance in your class, how well are they achieving these goals?
3. What changes, if any, does this suggest you make the next time you offer this course?

Sample Assessment Questionnaire for Students

Please circle the appropriate response to the following. If you have no opinion, leave the question blank:

1. Political Science XXX helped me to understand the theories and methods of scientific inquiry as they are applied to the studies of individuals, groups, organizations and societies.

Strongly				Strongly
Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	
Disagree				

2. In Political Science XXX, I learned about the formation and durability of political and social organizing principles and their differences and similarities across contexts.

Strongly				Strongly
Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	
Disagree				

3. In Political Science XXX, I learned to comprehend and assess the nature and values of organizations and polities and their importance in social problem solving and policy making.

Strongly				Strongly
Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	
Disagree				

4. How might this course better achieve the objectives listed in questions 1, 2 and 3?

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Please circle the appropriate response to the following. If you have no opinion, leave the question blank:

1. Political Science XXX helped me to understand the theories and methods of scientific inquiry as they are applied to the studies of individuals, groups, organizations and societies.

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree
Disagree Agree Neutral Disagree

2. In Political Science XXX, I learned about the formation and durability of political and social organizing principles and their differences and similarities across contexts.

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree
Disagree Agree Neutral Disagree

3. In Political Science XXX, I learned to comprehend and assess the nature and values of organizations and politics and their importance in social problem solving and policy making.

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