



# CHAPMAN UNIVERSITY

## GENERAL EDUCATION ASSESSMENT REPORT 2017-2018

General Information	
General Education Assessment Area	General Education – Written Inquiry
Department/ School	N/A
Number of students currently in the discipline	N/A
Contact Person	
Name ( <i>Person coordinating assessment effort</i> )	Morgan Read-Davidson
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### **OVERVIEW/DESCRIPTION**

In keeping with the Shared Inquiry model, Written Inquiry introduces students to the disciplinary way of thinking about rhetoric and writing through both active learning and reflective thought. Specifically, WI courses focus on the ways language is used to negotiate social, educational, and intellectual relationships in various contexts to a range of audiences. Students explore, through analysis and practice, genre, rhetorical exigencies and situations, discourses, and discourse communities to better understand, articulate, and practice the complex social act of writing/composing. A special attention is paid to the networked ecologies of media-based, digital composing and delivery.

#### **What makes WI different from a creative writing, journalism, or literature course?**

The key focus is the depth *and* breadth of study into “the ways language is used to negotiate social, educational, and intellectual relationships in various contexts, to a range of audiences.” Written Inquiry courses from 100-300 level serve as an inquiry into rhetoric and writing studies, using as a lens the various course themes (104: Writing About Culture, for example, or 208: Composing the Self); students explore rhetorical theory and practice (praxis) as the basis of this inquiry, and through a variety of genres, forms, and practices. Creative Writing and Journalism courses, on the other hand, are focused on a *specific practice* of writing. While that practice certainly must include rhetorical considerations of purpose, audience and genre (as all writing must), the focus is not on rhetorical praxis and does not contain the breadth required to be considered Written Inquiry. Literature-based English classes, while heavy in writing, are focused on *content*, analyzing literature through literary theories, and not rhetorical praxis.

## Learning Outcome Assessment

### I. Process:

<p>Student Learning Outcomes</p>	<p>Students will compose texts that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish active, genuine, and responsible authorial engagement</li> <li>• Communicate a purpose—an argument or other intentional point/goal</li> <li>• Invoke a specific audience</li> <li>• Develop the argument/content with an internal logic/organization</li> <li>• Integrate references, citations, and source material logically and dialogically, indicating how forms of evidence relate to each other and the author's position</li> <li>• Compose with rhetorically effective use of language, form and genre, voice and tone, and style</li> </ul>
<p>Supports University Theme (<i>Some or all of the program's learning outcomes must support at least two of the university's strategic themes</i>)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Themes: Global Citizenship, Personalized Education, Faculty/Student Research, Interdisciplinarity, or Student Writing</i></li> <li>• <i>Describe how the theme is supported by the learning outcome</i></li> </ul>	<p><b>Personalized Education:</b> students are able to self-place into 100-, 200-, or 300- course levels and themes/topics, supporting Chapman's goal that each student make their education as meaningful and valuable as possible. In addition, most WI courses provide an element of personalized choice in what students research and write.</p> <p><b>Student Writing:</b> WI courses have rhetoric and writing as a focus, in particular, student writing. The texts and topics of the themes serve as lenses for student writing, but the focus is always on student writing/composing and revision.</p>
<p>Supports WASC Core Competency, For Undergraduate Programs Only (<i>Please indicate whether this outcome supports any of WASC's core competencies</i>)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Oral Communication</i></li> <li>• <i>Written communication</i></li> <li>• <i>Information Literacy</i></li> <li>• <i>Quantitative Reasoning</i></li> <li>• <i>Critical Thinking</i></li> </ul>	<p>Written Communication Information Literacy Critical Thinking</p>
<p>Where is the outcome published for students?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Syllabi (If syllabi, list course numbers)</i></li> <li>• <i>Website</i></li> <li>• <i>Handbook</i></li> </ul>	<p>The outcomes are published on course syllabi, the GE website, and the <i>Learning at Chapman</i> website.</p>
<p>Evidence of Learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>capstone project</i></li> <li>• <i>presentation</i></li> <li>• <i>performance</i></li> <li>• <i>course-embedded exam</i></li> <li>• <i>assignment</i></li> <li>• <i>standardized test</i></li> <li>• <i>portfolio</i></li> </ul>	<p>GE WI Instructors were instructed to choose an assignment from their course that would address the WI Learning Outcome (see assessment instructions below). Given the variety of courses in <del>different programs</del> that meet the GE WI requirement, it was not possible to assign a common assignment across courses. This challenge and requirements for choosing an appropriate assignment were discussed and agreed to during the initial assessment meeting with the instructors on 3/1/18. As such, a variety of assignments were chosen for this assessment (see assignment prompts folder).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">GE WI Assessment Instructions for Instructors</a></li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">GE WI Assignment Prompts</a></li> </ul>
<p>Collecting and Analyzing the Data</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>How did you select the sample?</i></li> <li>• <i>What was your sample size (number of students)?</i></li> <li>• <i>Provide the percentage of the sample size as compared to the relevant population.</i></li> <li>• <i>How did you assess the student work/data collected?</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Possible Tools: rubric, exam questions, portfolio samples</i></li> <li>• <i>Attach all assessment tools</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>In spring 2018, Chapman University offered 35 GE WI course sections. There were a total 419 students enrolled in these courses.</p> <p>In order to get a representative sample across these sections, we employed a stratified sampling design. From each program, we randomly selected instructors and asked if they would be interested in participating in the GE assessment. Six instructors teaching 11 sections volunteered to participate in the GE assessment. The 11 sections 177 students or 42.2% of students enrolled for GE WI this term.</p> <p>Instructors assessed their chosen assignment (see explanation for prompt #5 above) using the GE WI Learning Outcome Rubric (see below). For this year's assessment, one additional rating-level (i.e., partial evidence) was added to better differentiate student work samples. This change was adopted during the 3/1/18 meeting. Instructors were instructed to choose an assignment toward the end of the course in order to appropriately assess their knowledge and skills in this GE area.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">GE WI Rubric</a></li> </ul>
<p>Expected Level of Achievement</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>What was your target(s) for student performance for this outcome? (This should tie to the methods in which you assessed the students and collected and analyzed data in the section above.)</i></li> </ol>	<p>We did not choose an arbitrary target but, instead, approached this assessment as exploratory. Our main goal is to understand if the SLO effectively articulates the Written Inquiry course, how our writing faculty interprets and incorporates the SLO, and what students are achieving in relation to that SLO.</p>
<b>II. Progress</b>	
<p>How have previous years' findings been used to improve learning, courses and program in relation to this outcome? Specify.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. <i>Refer to previous years' assessment reports/responses for this section.</i></li> <li>3. <i>How did this year's achievement level compare to past years?</i></li> <li>4. <i>Show year-to-year progress, preferably in a data table.</i></li> </ol>	<p>Assessment in 2010-2011 led to the creation of writing faculty workshops starting in 2011-2012, where all instructors of WI met the week before the Fall semester to discuss SLOs, program goals and focus, and issues within the classroom and the discipline at large. Participants in the workshops were paid a stipend of \$100 each for attending the 2+ hours, which came out of the provost's office. These workshops proved invaluable in bringing the WI program together, providing cohesiveness in understanding of purpose, goals, and learning outcomes, and creating a sense of community among almost exclusively adjunct faculty. After the change in provost/vice-provost/assistant provost, the source of the stipend funding came into question, though it was resolved (temporarily?) in the last year through the assistant provost's office. This funding <b>MUST</b> continue, and if possible increase to allow for two workshops per year, one before each semester. Consistent (and compensated) pedagogy workshops will ensure a robust conversation about SLOs and purpose, will create a stronger investment from contingent faculty who we rely upon to make this GE possible, and will ensure our ability to develop progress toward more effective integration of the SLOS, <i>and</i> continued assessment of them.</p>

The assessment process this year (2018) compensated participating faculty, and more importantly, included their voice in a transactional process beyond the scoring data. **That data is meaningless without context and robust reflection and interrogation, which is in turn not possible without continued investment of adjunct and full-faculty time (and financial compensation for that time).**

The assessment process between 2012 and 2017 was spotty at best, in large part due to the overwhelming demands of time upon the five full-time faculty members in the program (who must balance their responsibilities in the writing program with other programs in the English department and university) and the program director, who receives a single course release for the entire year. Adjunct faculty who teach the majority of WI courses cannot be expected to adequately nor effectively contributed to assessment without financial compensation for their time, and no compensation was offered through the assessment office from 2012-2017. As a result, assessment was conducted ad hoc, and more generally consisted of annual faculty observations and reviews rather than a comprehensive analysis of student work across the writing program.

This year's assessment approach felt like a watershed moment with the close collaboration between participating adjunct faculty and the three full-time faculty members, as well as members of the provost's office. Of particular importance was the critical reflections written by the participating adjunct faculty, who independently addressed common issues with interpreting the SLOs and the means of scoring "engagement." These critical reflections became the contextual basis for rethinking what the WI SLO(s) communicate to students, faculty, and external audiences, for how we measure achievement and why, and for our next moves in developing the WI program.