



Ad-Hoc Self Evaluation Report College of Southern Idaho

September 13, 2013

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During its 2012 Year Three *Resources and Capacity Evaluation* the College of Southern Idaho received the following recommendation:

While the College of Southern Idaho has made substantial progress in the identification and assessment of student learning outcomes for individual courses and disciplines, the evaluation committee did not find evidence that the General Education components of its transfer associate degree programs have identifiable and assessable learning outcomes. The evaluation committee also did not find evidence that the General Education components (the related instruction) of the applied degree and certificate programs have identifiable and assessable learning outcomes that align with and support program goals or intended outcomes. The evaluation committee recommends that the College of Southern Idaho establish identifiable and assessable learning outcomes for the General Education components that are stated in relation to the institution's mission and learning outcomes for these programs (Standard 2.C.10 and 2.C.11).

In correspondence dated July 26, 2012, the Commission requested that the College address the recommendation in an Ad Hoc Self Evaluation report by the fall of 2013. This report addresses that request and the Recommendation.

Upon receipt of the Recommendation, the Executive Vice-President/Chief Academic Officer initiated a series of meetings with members of the College's Institutional Research Department and with department chairs from across the campus with responsibility for General Education courses throughout the fall of 2012. As noted in the Recommendation, the College had already focused on "the identification and assessment of student learning outcomes for individual courses..." Based upon this prior work at the course level, chairs were asked to compare the student learning outcomes in specific courses to the Comprehensive Goal of General Education and the specific discipline area goals outlined on page 51 of the 2012-2013 College of Southern Idaho Catalog (Appendix A).

In the spring of 2013, a new General Education Outcomes and Assessment Committee was formed (Appendix B). This Committee is composed of all department chairs on campus whose departments offer general education courses, the Chair of the College's Curriculum Committee, the Director of the Admissions and Records Office, and one Instructional Dean. The charge of that committee is to "establish identifiable and assessable learning outcomes for the General Education components that are stated in relation to the institution's mission and leaning outcomes for these programs (2.C.10 and 2.C.11)."

In April of 2013 department chairs began working with their faculty to review existing course level student learning outcomes in general education courses and their alignment with the existing published goals for general education. (NOTE: Academic and professional-technical programs all use the same system of general education at the College of Southern Idaho. The practice of "related instruction" is not used.)

In some areas, this review of general education student learning outcomes at the general education course level and their alignment with broader existing general education goals was the

result of work by a single department. For example, students meet the Communication requirement by taking a single course at the College, Fundamentals of Oral Communication. Because this course is the only means of meeting the requirement, the student learning outcomes for the Fundamentals of Oral Communication course became the general education student learning outcomes for the Communication Goal. However, in areas where multiple departments offer courses within a general education area, it was (and continues to be) an inter-departmental effort. For instance, because both the Fine Arts Department and the English, Philosophy and Foreign Language Department offer courses that meet the Humanities goal, the departments worked together to determine student learning outcomes in the Humanities and mapped them back to the specific courses in their departments that can be used to meet this requirement. A similar process took place when determining general education outcomes for the Science Goal and the Social Science Goal, both of which can be met by taking courses from multiple departments.

Through this process, commonalities in student learning outcomes at the course level created clear patterns of commonality in courses being taught under each general education area. This process also led to a revision of the College's discipline-specific general education goal language. For example, the language outlining the Science Goal formerly read:

Science Goal: To gain an understanding of the world through natural science.

After a review of the courses and the student learning outcomes in the science area, the goal was revised and now reads:

Science Goal: General education in science allows students to understand the process of science and the major concepts and theories found in the scientific field chosen.

In an effort to better inform the College community about general education reform at the national and regional levels, as well as to get feedback on the ongoing reform process at CSI, the College hosted Norm Jones and Dan McInerney from Utah State University on April 19, 2013. Professor Jones and Professor McInerney have both been recognized as international experts in the area of general education integration in higher education. During the morning of their visit, Professor Jones and Professor McInerney presented to a diverse group of faculty and staff about the issues confronting the integration of general education into fields of study in higher education today as well as the assessment of programs of general education. That afternoon, they worked with the College's General Education Reform Committee to review and refine the work that the committee was doing. The visit was invaluable to the College and the information learned will continue to be used as the College moves forward in this process.

In early May, the General Education Outcomes and Assessment Committee reviewed the work done in each of the six general education areas with respect to revised goals and the creation of identifiable and assessable student learning outcomes. The Committee suggested revisions in each area, and each department reviewed the revised goals and student learning outcomes with their individual departments at their May 2013 Outcomes Assessment meetings.

Upon completion of this review, department chairs submitted final copies of the revised goals and student learning outcomes to the chair of the General Education Outcomes and Assessment Committee in mid-May. This document was then forwarded to the Executive Vice-President/Chief Academic Office for approval. These changes were approved in the summer of 2013 (Appendix C).

Unfortunately, catalog deadlines prevented this work from being included in the 2013-2014 College of Southern Idaho Catalog. The changes will be included in the 2014-2015 Catalog. The changes have been included in an addendum to the 2013-2014 Catalog and are outlined in a new General Education Goals and Student Learning Outcomes link on the College website (<http://www.csi.edu/coursesAndPrograms/general-education.asp>).

Beginning in the fall of 2013 all general education course syllabi now list the philosophy and student learning outcomes for the general education area in which the course is offered (Appendix D). This will allow students to know what they can expect to learn in the course and how it aligns with the College's general education philosophy, the College's mission and core themes, and department and program goals.

While the College of Southern Idaho has worked hard to meet the Recommendation from the 2012 visit by "establishing identifiable and assessable learning outcomes for the General Education components" at the College, this is a work in progress and there is much yet to be accomplished. The College is involved in statewide efforts to reform general education across all of the public institutions of higher education in Idaho. Additionally, the General Education Outcomes and Assessment Committee travelled to Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, in May of 2013 and met for two days with colleagues from the College of Western Idaho and North Idaho College to discuss general education reform, assessment and alignment at the three community colleges in Idaho. The General Education Outcomes and Assessment Committee will continue to work with departments as they revise general education student learning outcomes in the coming semesters and will work to establish clearly defined methods of assessing these student learning outcomes and of the program of general education at the College of Southern Idaho.