

Notes from S&BS (SS1, 2, 3 subgroup) (Phil Crossley, WSCU, scribe)

Guiding Questions for the Discussion:

1. **Compare the current gtPathways competencies to the proposed, revised competencies. In what ways can the revised competencies help you create assessments and make decisions about student learning?**

Question: would some currently approved courses be removed from gtPathways if don't meet the new standards

What will the new approval process/forms look like (esp. with regard to how many learning outcomes are entailed in the set of competencies)?

2. **Are you currently assessing these competencies? Would using the indicated learning outcomes and the rubric help improve your ability to measure this competency?**

Mixed: Some use of these (current) competency rubrics as part of grading of assignments; some examples of a summative assessment. Also a lot of anecdotes about assignments that in general 'we do that' but not specifically scoring separate competencies. Tends to be done at faculty and Chair level.

Some concern that writing competency may force too much attention on certain kinds of writing vs. a more critical thinking-based approach to writing

Great concern if ALL learning outcomes within each competency required. We need to be able to select discipline and course-appropriate outcomes within each each competency. Many faculty from 2 yr inst. Seem to feel that current expectation is that all courses will address all outcomes.

General agreement that disciplines need to be allowed to choose/emphasize the learning outcomes appropriate for the course/discipline (especially if additional competency areas are required): (insistence that need to add the "Meets most though not all" statement to the competency statement).

3. **How can the revised competencies be built into your syllabi and assessment plans? Think about this idea in relation to nominating a course for gtPathways peer review.**

Concern expresses that 4 required competencies is too many; could we make more optional/fewer required.

Are all outcomes required within each competency?

Could we call them “recommended” rather than optional?

**General sense that more/several pairs of “either/or” would be better
e.g. civic engagement or global learning
critical thinking or problem solving
make quantitative optional (esp. appreciated in economics and sociology)**

why not include creative thinking an option also?

Perhaps creative thinking or _____

better than forcing certain competencies

Desire for recognition of more competencies widely appreciated, but concern that

4. *These proposed, revised competencies contain the desired skills and dispositions needed for students to be successful in the Gen Ed courses in your discipline, subsequent coursework, and the workforce. Should any of the optional competencies be required?*

Some interest in requiring global learning more broadly across the SS areas;

Some sense that the info. literacy is already entailed in the critical thinking and written communication outcomes, so not needed to be specified as a separate requirement;

I. Final take-away of the session:

Provide a group response (in writing and to share at “the reporting out” session) to the following 3 questions:

- a. *Do these proposed, revised competencies meet the needs of learners better than the current competencies? If not, why?*

Written: Content Develop. A more important focus than the rhetorical knowledge outcome; but in general, yes, the proposed competencies clearer, more focused

Global Learning: Absolutely. But some concern that some courses (e.g. US History) that are deliberately focused on national issues shouldn't be forced into global topics (this is a lot of the argument for the civic engagement or global learning) recommendation.

Critical thinking: good.

Civic Engagement: its good that this one includes the optional (asterisked statement) outcome for the service learning/study abroad... Couldn't expect all students to engage in a civic project during the course of a semester due to some students time constraints; need to recognize that some students' choices of engagement might be deemed problematic to certain stakeholders, and that faculty not be held responsible beyond having stated certain principles/parameters for the projects.

Info Literacy: some feeling that its characterizations/outcomes are already included in writing and critical thinking, so not necessary to require separately, and certainly not as a mandatory

b. Can we move forward with the proposed, revised competencies for each content area?

Yes, with consideration of the suggestions for either/or requirements; and freedom to emphasize certain outcomes that are disciplinary appropriate;

c. Please share any concerns or challenges you foresee.

May require faculty submitting courses for approval as gtPathways to more clearly demonstrate alignment of specific assignments and grading criteria to ensure acceptance.....

4 required competencies may inhibit both satisfying content goals (and additional disciplinary goals) and inclusion of other 21st Century competencies; general preference for 3 required/baseline competencies (with the others assumed to be optional and a good idea to include where appropriate/); suggestion: make 2 the same 2 already required and add a third which entails an option

Comments:
