

General Education Assessment Summary

Weber State University

Reporting on the 2017 to 2019 Academic Years

Prepared by

General Education Improvement and Assessment Committee (GEIAC)

Overview

- 1) Core and Breadth Area Committees are staffed with representatives from relevant departments and a liaison from the General Education Improvement and Assessment Committee (GEIAC). Area Committees did not meet this year except virtually, to consider proposals for new Gen Ed courses. Proposals were reviewed by the Humanities Area Committee (PS 1143) and the Social Science Area Committee (ETC 2001 for DV designation).
- 2) GEIAC recommends that general education (GE) courses be assessed twice in the 5-year cycle that supports Program Review. GEIAC works with the Office of Institutional Effectiveness (OIE) to ensure that departments teaching GE courses both set and keep to their assessment schedules. With the recent move from annual to biennial reporting, GEIAC can expect to receive data from approximately 30% of GE courses each year.
- 3) GEIAC assumed responsibility for assessment of General Education courses beginning with the 2019/20 academic year. This replaces the seven-year Gen Ed renewal process via the University Curriculum Committee. GEIAC developed an evaluation rubric (see appendix A) and used that rubric to evaluate the submitted assessment reports and provide feedback to the department chairs of each assessed course. This feedback was included with the Biennial Assessment Report feedback provided by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness.
 - a. Assessment was done in teams of two faculty each with initial training to support consistency and some level of inter-rater reliability. Feedback on that process is being sought as GEIAC works to develop an efficient and effective assessment process.
- 4) The common reporting tool – evidence of learning rubric –includes these items (see https://www.weber.edu/ie/Review_and_Assessment/Checklists_and_Templates.html):
 - a. GE learning goal
 - b. Course-specific measurable learning outcome aligned to GE outcome
 - c. Identified assessment(s) for measuring student learning
 - d. Threshold for expected student performance
 - e. Actual student performance data
 - f. Analysis/interpretation of findings
 - g. Action plan for changes to be put in place based upon performance and analysis and intentions for ‘closing the loop’ on those changes
- 5) Integration of GE reporting with Department Annual Assessment reporting.
 - a. Development of tools and functionality to support GE assessment.
 - i. Chitester question-level outcome alignment tool with reporting feature
 - ii. GE learning outcomes are available in Canvas as learning outcomes from which faculty can design rubrics.
- 6) Results of assessment:
 - a. Core areas: From academic years 18 and 19 (summer 2017 through spring 2019), data were gathered in 11 of 16 courses (overall yield of 69%). It is expected that data will be provided for the remaining 5 courses (POLS 1100, Math 1030, 1040, 1050, and 1080) in next year’s report.

- b. Breadth areas: From academic years 18 and 19 (summer 2017 through spring 2019), data were gathered in 5 of 28 Humanities GE courses (18%), 5 of 24 Creative Arts GE courses (21%), 10 of 17 life Science GE courses (59%), 2 of 20 physical science GE courses (10%), and 13 of 39 Social Science courses (33%). This results in an overall yield of 27%.
 - c. WSU courses: I have data for two courses only; maybe Leigh has additional?
- 7) Because the renewal process through Curriculum Committee has been eliminated, it is imperative that departments submit Gen Ed assessment data with every Biennial Assessment Report. Much of the missing data is due to the every-other-year reporting cycle now in place.

Composition

- 1) Engl 2010 was indirectly assessed through the CLA administered to a random selection of English 2010 courses taught in the fall of 2019.
- 2) Random Artifact Assessment
 - a. English 1010 and 2010 were assessed using randomized artifacts collected between fall 2017 and spring 2019. In all, 152 artifacts were assessed, 95 from 2010 and 57 from 1010.
 - b. Assessors were assembled and lead through a set of norming exercises meant to increase inter-rater reliability – an issue identified in the previous assessment exercise.
 - c. Each assessor was then given 20-25 artifacts to assess using an assessment tool delivered via a Qualtrics survey instrument. Each student artifact was rated on 6 (English 1010) or 7 (English 2010) outcomes using a scale of exceeds, meets, or did not meet.
- 3) Findings:
 - a. With a threshold for ‘success’ set at 70% (that is, 70% of assessed artifacts will score at a level of “meets” or “exceeds”) it was determined that students are meeting the threshold for all but one of the Composition outcomes. Students in both 1010 and 2010 fell below the threshold for the outcome “Use MLA and/or APA citation method correctly.” Composition Director, Dr. Jason Barrett-Fox, will build training in these areas into the Engl 1010 and 2010 faculty curriculum for 2020.

American Institutions

- 1) Data were gathered for 80% of AI courses (i.e., HIST 1700, HIST 2700, HIST 2710, ECON 1740) on four outcomes. (*The significant political, economic, and social changes in American history; the major principles of American civilization; the institutions and practices of the government provided for in the United States Constitution; the basic workings and evolution of a market economy in the United States*).
- 2) The following AI courses were not assessed in 2017-2019: POLS 1100. The Political Science was not asked to submit a Biennial Report in November of 2019; that program will be submitting a report in November of 2020, which should include data on this course.
- 3) Findings for HIST 1700:
 In 2018 this course was presented for renewal before the University Curriculum Committee and received support for renewal.
 A new methodology was implemented for Gen Ed assessment that the department felt was a more realistic and valuable indication of student learning and comprehension. Exam questions

were aligned to specific AI outcomes and student performance, at the aggregate, was reported. Students achieved all AI outcomes at the approximate rate of 75% (75% of aligned questions were answered correctly), which meets the program's identified threshold of 65%. Courses will continue to be offered without substantial revision.

A note was made concerning students taking History 1700 and a developmental Math course at the same time; the high failure rate of these students in Hist 1700 has raised concerns. The department is developing a variation of History 1700 focused on under-prepared students and will begin teaching it in the spring of 2020.

4) Findings for HIST 2700 and 2710:

In 2018 these courses went up for renewal before the University Curriculum Committee and received support for renewal.

Data for the 2700 course were disaggregated by student status (concurrent vs not concurrent) and results indicate that concurrent students, overall, do not achieve outcomes at acceptable levels. These students struggle with concepts around government and the Market Economy. The department will continue to offer these classes with substantial revision.

5) Findings for ECON 1740:

Findings were reported for four sections of Econ 1740, taught in fall of 2018 and spring of 2019. Students achieved AI learning outcomes at the identified threshold of 60% of students achieving 60% or higher in all but one outcome. The action plan for the outcome not achieved is to provide more questions for student review and include explicit discussion of the relevant topics in review sessions prior to the midterm and final.

Quantitative Literacy

1) Data were gathered for 20% of QL courses, i.e., Math 2020

2) The following QL courses were not reported: Math 1030, Math 1040, Math 1050, and Math 1080. The Math Department was not asked to submit a Biennial Report in November of 2019. Math will be conducting a program review during this upcoming year. They will be advised to include assessment data for these courses.

3) Findings for Math 2020:

Assessment data and analysis were provided for two sections of Math 2020; one in fall of 2018, one in spring of 2019. The faculty use both direct measures (problems on exams) and indirect measures (course grades) in their analysis. Where outcome thresholds were not met, action plans generally call for additional items on homework and increased focus on relevant topics during reviews.

Information Literacy

1) Data were gathered for 83% (5 of 6) IL courses (it is unclear what can or should be gathered for the 1504 – test out option).

2) Data were not gathered for Libs 2504; the class was taught in spring and fall of 2018.

- 3) The Library is working with the English Department to offer partnered sections of Libs 1704 and English 2010.
- 4) Findings for Libs 1704:
Data were submitted for 4 semesters, 2 of which fall within this window of evaluation (AY17 to AY19). Students were successful in meeting outcomes at or above the established thresholds for three of the four high-level outcomes. The outcome where students did not meet the threshold, 'Find Information Effectively', was barely missed in summer of 17, but significantly missed in fall of 17. Likely reasons for the results were provided, but no plans for addressing.
- 5) Findings for Libs/EDUC 2604:
Data were submitted for 4 semesters, but the first 3 are outside the window of this report (AY17 through AY19). For the semester within this range, students met all four outcomes at or above the identified threshold.
- 6) Findings for Libs/BSAD 2704:
Data were submitted for 3 semesters, two of which fall within this evaluation period. Outcomes were met at or above identified threshold for outcomes 3 and 4, while thresholds were not reached for outcomes 1 and 2. Course modifications may have contributed to the missed threshold for outcome 1, "Identify Information Needs". This will be monitored going forward. The missed threshold for outcome 2, "Find Information Effectively" is likely due to students' habits with Google searching. Continue monitoring while consider possible changes to course content were identified as the actions.
- 7) Findings for Libs 2804:
Data were submitted for 3 semesters, 2 of which fall within this evaluation period. Similar to the other Libs courses, students are generally meeting thresholds for outcomes 1, 3, and 4 and not meeting them for outcome 2, "Find Information Effectively". The identified plan of action includes identifying new strategies appropriate for improving student learning in this area. Strategies will focus on group work and implementing approaches supported by current research.
- 8) Findings for Libs/Hths 2904:
Students were successful in meeting outcomes at or above the established thresholds for three of the four high-level outcomes. The outcome where students did not meet the threshold, 'Find Information Effectively', is one with which students continually struggle. The instructor has implemented some changes in the course to better support this outcome, including having students record their search processes so that the instructor can provide direct feedback; this has become a renewed focus of the course. Data were provided for four semesters.

Diversity

- 1) Data were gathered for all three outcomes in 7 courses (i.e., Danc 1010, Engl 2200, Engl 2220, Engl 2230, Engl 2240, CHF 1500, and Hist 1510), and 2 courses reported only on 1 or 2 outcomes (English 2710 and 3510); this represents 33% of all DV courses.

- 2) The following DV courses did not report data in the 2017-2019 period: Anth 1000, Anth 1040, Anth 2010, CHF 2400, Geog 1300, Geog 1520, Hnrs 210, Musc 1040, POLS, 2500, *Soc 1010*, *Soc 1020*, *WGS 1500*, *WGS 2500*. Data will potentially be submitted in the coming year for the courses in italics.
 - a. While the Diversity requirement is being discussed at a broader level this year, there still exists the expectation that courses designated as DV continue to assess the current DV outcomes. Department chairs may need to be reminded about this.
- 3) Findings for Danc 1010:

Data were aggregated over multiple semesters (unclear which). Analysis was done overall, not at the specific outcome level – that is, performance, interpretation, analysis, and closing of the loop were identical for all three outcomes. Target thresholds were set high (90% of students will achieve 80% or greater) and actual performance was lower (75% of students achieved 80% or greater); but interpretation was always ‘students were successful’. The actual performance is a reasonable threshold for Gen Ed, and it is recommended that the target threshold be reset to this level. The program is encouraged to differentiate the outcomes.
- 4) Findings for Engl 2200 (threshold for all English GE courses; 75% will earn 80% or higher):

Data were gathered for one semester, one sections, but only for diversity outcomes 2 (values and biases) and 3 (rights). All students (20) met or exceeded the expected level of mastery (4 or 5, on a 5-point scale) for both outcomes.
- 5) Findings for Engl 2220: 6

Data were gathered for two semesters; fall 17 and spring 18, but only for Diversity outcome 2 (values and biases). Taken together, 21 of 31 students (68%) met or exceeded the expected level of mastery (4 or 5, on a 5 point scale). The chair has noted the need to ensure that all outcomes are included and that the faculty need to focus explicitly on diversity. It’s possible this is covered, but not being aligned for reporting.
- 6) Findings for Engl 2230:

Data were gathered for two sections over two semesters, spring 2018 and spring 2019 (total of 14 students). All three diversity outcomes were included in the analysis and results indicate all three thresholds were met or exceeded at a rate of 86% and higher.
- 7) Findings for Engl 2240:

Data were gathered for 1 section in fall of 2017 and included all three diversity outcomes. Students met outcomes 2 and 3 at or above the established threshold and missed the threshold for outcome 1 (perspective) where 69% hit the mark. Faculty will be encouraged to be more deliberate about aligning.
- 8) Findings for CHF 1500:

Data were collected on multiple sections (how many is unclear) over two academic years (AY18 and AY19). The faculty utilized a pre-test, post-test assessment model with three multiple-choice questions on two different exams for each outcome. Students overall showed adequate improvement in achieving the outcomes from pre to post test. A 70% threshold is indicated and

that was met at rates between 68% and 85% for the various outcomes as measured on the post-test.

9) Findings for Hist 1510:

Data were gathered over multiple semesters from summer 2017 to spring 2019. A threshold of 70% is identified as acceptable and the 3 diversity outcomes were all met at a level of about 73%. Assessments used vary by instructor and no detail about them is shared.

10) Findings for Engl 2710: 2

Data were gathered for 1 section in spring of 2018 on diversity outcome 2 (only), values and biases. 75% of students met or exceeded the identified level of mastery (4 or 5, on a 5-point scale). Faculty will be encouraged to include all outcomes and to be more deliberate about aligning outcomes to various assessments.

11) Findings for Engl 3510:

Data were gathered for 3 sections taught in fall 17 and spring 18 on diversity outcomes 2 and 3 (only). Students overwhelmingly met or exceeded the identified threshold (4 or 5, on a 5-point scale). Faculty will be encouraged to include all outcomes and to be more deliberate about aligning outcomes to various assessments.

Physical Science

1) Data were gathered for 10% of PS courses (i.e., Geog 1000 and 1500).

2) The following PS courses were not assessed during the 2017-2019 period: Chem 1010, 1050, 1110, 1210, 1360; GEO 1030, 1060, 1110, 1130; Hnrs 1500, 2030; Phys 1010, 1040, 1360, 2010, 2040, 2090, 2210. None of these programs was required to submit a Biennial Assessment Report in November of 2019, so there is an expectation of data being provided in November of 2020.

3) It was noted in the previous (2018) General Education Assessment Summary that the courses that did report provided data on only the natural science, not the physical science outcomes.

4) Findings for Geog 1000:

Data were gathered from five sections over three semesters. Results were reported as a range of percentages of students who scored 70% or better on the set of questions identified as aligned to the eight different physical science outcomes. It's not clear what the threshold is, but analysis concluded in all cases that students are successfully meeting the outcomes (this ranged from 57% to 91% achieving 70% or better). The department is in the process of revising core essential content for each Gen Ed course. They will be developing new questions for assessment to be included in every section of the course.

5) Findings for Geog 1500:

Data were gathered from three sections over three semesters. . Results were reported as a range of percentages of students who scored 70% or better on the set of questions identified as aligned to the eight different physical science outcomes. It's not clear what the threshold is, but analysis concluded in all cases that students are successfully meeting the outcomes (this ranged

from 64% to 92% achieving 70% or better). The department is in the process of revising core essential content for each Gen Ed course. They will be developing new questions for assessment to be included in every section of the course.

Life Science

- 1) Data were gathered for 56% of LS Courses (i.e., Btnt 1303, 1403; Micr 2054; Nutr 1020; Zool 1020, 1030, 1110, 2200).
- 2) The following LS courses were not assessed during the 2017-2019 period: Anth 1020; Btnt 1203; HTHS 1110; Hnrs 1510, 2040; Micr 1113, 1153; Zool 1010 (to clarify, Zool 1010 was reported, but only that data had not been collected, and Anth 1020 was assessed against program outcomes, but not Gen Ed LS outcomes). Health Sciences, Honors, and Microbiology should be submitting Biennial Assessment reports in November of 2020 and these will ideally include GE LS assessment data.
- 3) Findings for Btnt 1303:
Data were gathered in two sections taught fall 18 and spring 19 (105 total students). The department has established a threshold of 80% of students will answer 70% or higher successfully. One or two measures were identified for each natural science outcome; students were less successful with traditional exam questions than they were with alternative assessments in showing successful achievement of the outcomes. The use of multiple measures is commended. Faculty will review exam questions. Students were generally not successful in meeting life science outcomes, measured with multiple-choice questions on exams. The faculty will re-evaluate question concentrations and review questions based upon item analysis results.
- 4) Findings for Btnt 1403:
Data were gathered for one section in spring 18, with 86 students. The department has established a threshold of 80% of students will answer 70% or higher successfully. Students met the threshold for six of the eight outcomes, missing outcome 5 (levels of organization) and outcome 8 (ecological interaction). The faculty will add more questions to these two categories as many students missed 2 of 3 (which misses the threshold), while also spending more time in class on these topics.
- 5) Findings for Micr 2054:
Aggregated data were provided for all sections taught in AY18 and AY19, as well as comparative data for previous years. A threshold of "70% of students will have 70% or better" in each category was identified. The data suggest students are not meeting the threshold for natural science outcomes 1, 2, and 4, nor for life science outcomes 2 and 4. No discussion, interpretation, not actions were provided.
- 6) Findings for NUTR 1020:
Data were aggregated from multiple sections over multiple semesters (from summer 17 through spring 19). The identified threshold is "students will answer 65% of aligned exam questions correctly", aggregated over all sections. Thresholds were successfully met for all four life science and all four natural science outcomes. No changes are needed; the faculty will continue to

collect and monitor student performance.

7) Findings for Zool 1020:

Data were gathered for five sections taught during fall 17 and spring 18 (combined), fall 18, and spring 19. Two thresholds are identified for each outcome (presumably two different course instructors); the first “combined student performance of 65% or higher” and the second “at least 70% of students above 70%”. The methods of measure provided are somewhat ambiguous and it is difficult to understand the results provided, but overall students were successful in meeting all outcomes.

8) Findings for Zool 1030:

Data were gathered for 3 sections over three semesters (all of AY18). The threshold was identified as “combined student performance of 65% or higher” and that threshold was met for all outcomes for all three terms included.

9) Findings for Zool 1110:

Data were gathered for one section, spring 2019. The threshold was identified as “combined student performance of 65% or higher” and that threshold was met for all outcomes.

10) Findings for Zool 2200:

Data were gathered for two sections of the course taught in fall 17; one face-to-face, the other online. The threshold was identified as “combined student performance of 65% or higher” and that threshold was met for all outcomes.

Social Science

1) Data were gathered for 33% of SS courses (i.e., Anth 1000, 2010, 2030; CHF 1500, 2400; CJ 1010; Econ 1010, 2010, 2020; Geog 1300, 1520; Hist 1500, 1510. Two WSU courses, 1560 (with HU) and 1680 (with LS) also provided data.

2) The following SS courses were not assessed during the 2017-2019 period: Econ 1100; *Gert 1010; Hlth 1030; Hnrs 1520, 2050, 2110, 2120, 2130; MIS 1100; Psy 1010, 2000; Soc 1010, 1020* (these courses were assessed against program outcomes only); *PEP 2700; WS 1500, 2500; SW 1010, 2100, 2200; POLS 1520, 2100, 2200, 2300, 2400, 2500*. The italicized courses should be assessed and reported on in the November 2020 report.

3) Findings for Anth 1000:

Data were gathered from 2 sections of the class taught in spring of 2019. Students were assessed with a set of questions on course exams. The identified threshold, “at least a combined 70% of students will answer the questions correctly. Outcome 1 was measured with one set of exam questions; outcomes 2 and 3 with two sets of exam questions each. Students exceeded the identified threshold in all cases.

4) Findings for Anth 2010:

Data were gathered in two sections of the course taught in fall of 2017 and spring of 2018. A

variety of assessments were used; essays, take home exams, quiz questions, and short writing assignments. The identified threshold “average performance on assignment should exceed 70%”, was exceeded in all measures and all outcomes.

5) Findings for Anth 2030:

Data were gathered from one section taught in fall of 2017. Multiple measures were used to assess students. Results were gauged against a threshold of “at least 70% of students will be able to....”. The threshold was met in all cases except one (measure 2 of outcome 1 – how individuals and groups influence and are influenced by....). Faculty concluded that more in-class time would be spent on the study of pre-industrial people adapted.

6) Findings for CHF 1500:

Data were gathered on all sections taught between summer 2017 and spring 2019. The faculty used a pre-post test protocol and identified a threshold of ‘75% of students showing mastery at or above 70%’. In all cases, students showed an adequate mastery of outcomes at the time of the post-test. The faculty will continue to review and test effective teaching strategies.

7) Findings for CHF 2400:

Data were gathered on sections taught in fall of 2018 and spring of 2019. The faculty used a pre-post test protocol and identified a threshold of ‘75% of students showing mastery at or above 70%’. In all cases, students showed an adequate mastery of outcomes at the time of the post-test. Faculty monitor the assessment and remove the questions that are accurately responded to on the pre-test, with no growth at the post-test.

8) Findings for CJ 1010:

Data were collected during four semester from all CJ 1010 courses and were aggregated for this analysis (n=994). Each outcome was measured with 10 exam questions. A general threshold of ‘students will demonstrate mastery with an overall average score of 70% or higher...’ was identified. Students achieved an average of 60.92% on outcome 1, an average of 63.8% on outcome 2, and 64.1% on outcome 3. The program is currently undergoing an overhaul of the program’s learning outcomes. A new measurement tool is being designed that blends the GELO signature assignment, the SS Gen Ed requirements, and the program assessment requirements. The program will develop deliberate alignment between the SS Gen Ed outcomes and CJ content.

9) Findings for Econ 1010:

Data were gathered from two sections, taught fall 2017 and spring 2018, then two additional sections in fall of 2018 and spring 2019 using revised measures. For the early measures the program identified a threshold of ‘70% of students will correctly answer the questions’; the revised measures were measured against the threshold ‘70% of students will score 80% or higher...’. Students met the threshold for all measures except social science outcome 2 (application of concepts, theories, and methods) using the early measure. Better results using the new measures were attributed to the scaffolding provided by the signature assignment. The

program will continue to monitor results based on this new assessment.

10) Findings for Econ 2010:

Data were collected in 5 sections taught fall 2017 through spring 2018, and in three sections taught fall 2018 and spring 2019. Student results were measured against a threshold identified as '70% of students will correctly answer the questions'. Students met the threshold for all three social science outcomes. Students struggled most with outcome 2 (application of concepts, theories, and methods) and after discussing, the instructors agreed that students need more practice with applications and therefore created and provided more application based problems in homework assignments.

11) Findings for Econ 2020:

Data were collected in four sections taught fall 2017 through spring 2018, and in four sections taught fall 2018 through spring 2019. Student results were measured against a threshold identified as '70% of students will correctly answer the questions'. Students regularly meet or exceed the threshold for social science outcomes 1 and 3, and tend to miss the threshold for outcome 2. Instructors feel the examples used in class may be too abstract and will strive to give simpler examples to explain concepts.

12) Findings for Geog 1300:

Data were gathered for 259 students (3 semesters, 7 sections). Student results were measured against a threshold identified as 'students need to score better than 70% on average on the sample questions over the three semesters'. Exam questions administered through Chi Tester were the measures used. Students met or exceeded the threshold for all three social science outcomes. The program is not planning any curricular change. They will attempt to include more sections of the course in the assessment process.

The data suggest that each outcome is assessed with one multiple-choice question. If that is the case, the program is encouraged to provide a greater depth of measurement.

13) Findings for Geog 1520:

Data were collected from three sections over three semesters (n=104). Student results were measured against a threshold identified as 'students need to score better than 70% on average on the sample questions over the three semesters'. Exam questions administered through Chi Tester were the measures used. Students met or exceeded the threshold for all three social science outcomes. The program is not planning any curricular change.

The data suggest that each outcome is assessed with one multiple-choice question. If that is the case, the program is encouraged to provide a greater depth of measurement.

14) Findings for Hist 1500:

Data were gathered over multiple semesters from summer 2017 to spring 2019. A threshold of 70% is identified as acceptable and the 3 social science outcomes were all met at a level of about 73%. Assessments used vary by instructor and no detail about them is shared.

15) Findings for Hist 1510:

Data were gathered over multiple semesters from summer 2017 to spring 2019. A threshold of 70% is identified as acceptable and the 3 social science outcomes were all met at a level of about 73%. Assessments used vary by instructor and no detail about them is shared. Results appear to be identical to the results for History 1500.

16) Findings for WSU 1560:

Data were gathered in one section taught spring of 2019. A threshold was identified as '80% of students should score at 75% or higher'. Students were allowed to drop their lowest quiz score for the course and 8 of the 15 students chose to drop the signature assignment. Results are incomplete, but those students who did complete this assessment all scored at 75% or higher. The instructors have determined that students will not be allowed to drop this assignment in the future. The assessment combined all outcomes for both SS and HU. It is recommended that the instructors provide some differentiation of assessment data for each outcome.

17) Findings for WSU 1680:

Data were reported for a single semester. A threshold was identified as, "the majority of students will score at least 80% on their essays". Students were assessed using results of 8 essays and a Big Question essay. Students met the threshold on all outcomes (assessed together) though the instructor noted lower performance on one or two essays for which they will consider different approaches to the content.

Creative Arts

- 1) Data were gathered on 5 of 24 (21%) Creative Arts courses (i.e., Danc 1010; Engl 2250, 2260, 2270; IDT 1010).
- 2) The following CA courses were not assessed during the 2017-2019 period: Art 1010, 1030, 1110, 2450; ArtH 1090, 1100; CS 1010; Hnrs 1530, 2020; Musc 1010, 1030, 1033, 1035, 1040, 1063; Thea 1013, 1023, 1033, 1043. None of these programs was asked to submit a Biennial Assessment report in November 2019, so it is anticipated that data will be provided for all these courses in the 2020 Biennial Assessment reports.

3) Findings for Danc 1010:

Data were gathered over multiple semesters. Thresholds are ambitious (90% of students will achieve 80% or greater). Interpretation of findings indicate 'students successfully demonstrated...', but at levels below the threshold. The faculty should be encouraged to either lower their target threshold, or take action when results fall below. The program includes some sound practices in their 'close the loop' section.

4) Findings for Engl 2250:

The department utilized a group of instructors (not including the instructors of record) to evaluate randomly selected artifacts (24 total; 12 from a face-to-face class, 12 from an online class). Results were provided for learning outcome 1 (students will create works of art and/or increase their understanding of creative processes....); all 24 artifacts were rated at meets or exceeds expectations. The reviewers suggest that learning outcome 2 (students will

demonstrate knowledge of key themes, concepts.... and use this knowledge to analyze works of art) is implicitly demonstrated in the writing samples reviewed. Reviewers observed that samples from the online course were not as strong; the department plans to brainstorm ways to get the fledgling online offerings up to the standards set by the face-to-face classes. The faculty are encouraged to assess the second learning outcome more explicitly.

5) Findings for Engl 2260:

The department utilized a group of instructors (not including the instructor of record) to evaluate randomly selected artifacts (8 total; unclear what term). Results were provided for both creative arts learning outcomes and all eight students met or exceeded expectations for both outcomes. With 100% of students meeting/exceeding threshold, no further action was identified. Improvement was discussed.

6) Findings for Engl 2270:

The department utilized a group of instructors (not including the instructor of record) to evaluate randomly selected artifacts (16 total; unclear what term). Results were provided for creative arts learning outcome 1, and all 16 students met or exceeded expectations for the outcome. The review team suggests that the second learning outcome is implicitly demonstrated in this writing sample.

The faculty are encourage to assess the second learning outcome more explicitly.

7) Findings for IDT 1010:

Data were gathered for two semesters; fall 2017 and spring 2018. Learning outcome 1 was assessed with 107 students in the fall, but learning outcome 2 was assessed with only 52 students that same term. The spring term assessed 91 and 90 students respectively. There seems to be a mix-up in the data gathered.

Findings indicate student improvement between the early pre-test and the end-of-semester post-test, with the identified threshold of 70% performance being met for both outcomes. Different thresholds for the two outcomes is confusing; the faculty are recommended to establish consistency.

Humanities

1) Data were gathered for 5 of 37 (13%) HU courses (i.e., Anth 1040; Engl 2200, 2220, 2230, 2240).

2) The following HU courses were not assessed during the 2017-2019 period: *Comm 1020, 2010, 2110; Engl 2510, 2710, 2750, 3500, 3520, 3750; ALS 2020; Chns 2020; FRCH 2020, 2600; GRMN 2020, 2600; ITLN 2020, JPNS 2020; PTGS 2020; SPAN 2020, 2600; FL 2600; Hnrs 1110, 1540, 2010, 2110, 2120, 2130; Musc 1043; Phil 1000, 1120, 1250; Thea 2821*. The courses in italics will likely be reported in the upcoming Biennial Assessment reports due November 2020.

3) Findings for Anth 1040:

Data were gathered from the spring 2019 semester. Outcome 1 was measured with a quiz question on quiz 1, and a quiz question on quiz 2. One question exceeded the threshold; the other did not meet the threshold. Actions suggest additional class time will be spent on the module. Outcome 2 was addressed in a similar way with similar results and actions indicated.

The 3rd outcome was measured with a speech; students exceeded the threshold (avg performance should exceed 70%). Students demonstrated a strong grasp of the analytical framework.

Faculty are recommended to consider a deeper set of questions to measure outcomes 1 and 2

4) Findings for Engl 2200:

Data were provided for two sections of 2200, one in fall 2017 and the other in spring of 2018. Combined results indicate students met HU outcomes 1 and 2, but did not meet outcome 3. Chair concludes that the department needs to work on HU outcome 3 (communication).

5) Findings for Engl 2220:

Data were gathered for three sections (total n=33) taught in spring of 2018. The identified threshold '75% of students will meet or exceed standards' (4 or 5, on a 5 point scale) was met on all three Humanities outcomes.

6) Findings for Engl 2230:

Data were gathered for one section (n=6) taught in spring of 2019. Students overwhelmingly met or exceeded the identified threshold of '75% of students will meet or exceed standards' (4 or 5, on a 5-point scale).

7) Findings for Engl 2240:

Data were gathered for section (n=13) taught in the fall of 2017. Students met or exceeded the identified threshold for outcomes 1 and 2, but missed the threshold for outcome 3 (effective communication). Chair concludes that the department needs to work on HU outcome 3.

Signature Assignment as a General Education Pedagogical Approach and Assessment

The General Education program at Weber State University underwent a revitalization beginning in the 2016-17 academic year. The result of campus-wide discussions was a proposal to engage students in a common activity across their Gen Ed courses in order to help them work towards mastery of a set of shared Gen Ed learning outcomes, referred to as GELOs.

The common activity included framing all Gen Ed courses around a Big Question (BQ) that taps into the heart of the discipline addressed by the course. The Signature Assignment (SA) is the pedagogical manifestation of the Big Question and is as varied as the instructors who teach the Gen Ed courses. Students have multiple opportunities to acquire and strengthen their intellectual skills, apply their learning, and develop personal and social responsibility, as they complete their General Education requirements.

The BQ and SA format was first piloted in the spring of 2017 in 31 courses across the expanse of core and breadth areas. Subsequent pilots followed, bringing additional faculty and courses. The goal was to have a full roll-out by fall semester of 2019.

One of the selling points of the BQ/SA strategy was that assessment of the signature assignments would not be the direct responsibility of the faculty teaching the Gen Ed courses, but would be conducted using volunteer faculty over a two-day assessment session. Participating faculty were provided a small stipend for their time. The faculty assessors are provided with a short training which includes a group assessment in order to support improved inter-rater reliability. Faculty then work in pairs to assess approximately 60 student artifacts.

After two years of pilots, the full roll-out of Signature Assignments was anticipated for the fall 2019 semester. The percentage of courses using Signature Assignments, by attribute is shown below. Note that there exists a margin of error in these data due to several factors; instructors may not have identified the assignment in Canvas as a 'Signature Assignment' or the assignment may not have been administered through Canvas. Faculty are encouraged to accommodate these requests.

Attribute	Overall Adoption Rate
COMP	61.98%
QL	79.01%
AI	43.62%
IL	66.67%
HU	36.17%
CA	32.09%
SS	51.71%
LS	67.33%
PS	57.66%

The General Education Director reached out to department chairs of General Education courses to encourage further adoption during the AY21 year. Concurrent enrollment course instructors will also be asked to develop and administer Signature Assignments.

The achievement of GELOs (noble GELOs 2-4) are assessed through [signature assignments](#) which require students to *integrate and apply* (GELO 4) course content knowledge to a *significant issue bearing on self or others* (GELO 3) by using select *intellectual tools* (GELO 2). After each semester, a team of faculty assesses a sampling of signature assignments for evidence of students' achievement of the GELO 2-4. Working with the Office of Institutional Effectiveness, multiple faculty pairs are trained to code the student artifacts using VALUE and related rubrics (for more details of the coding, see [Grading and Assessing of Signature Assignments](#)). Such an assessment occurred after spring and fall semesters in both the 2018 and 2019 and now includes 1,237 students enrolled in more than 127 Gen Ed courses from each core and breadth area.

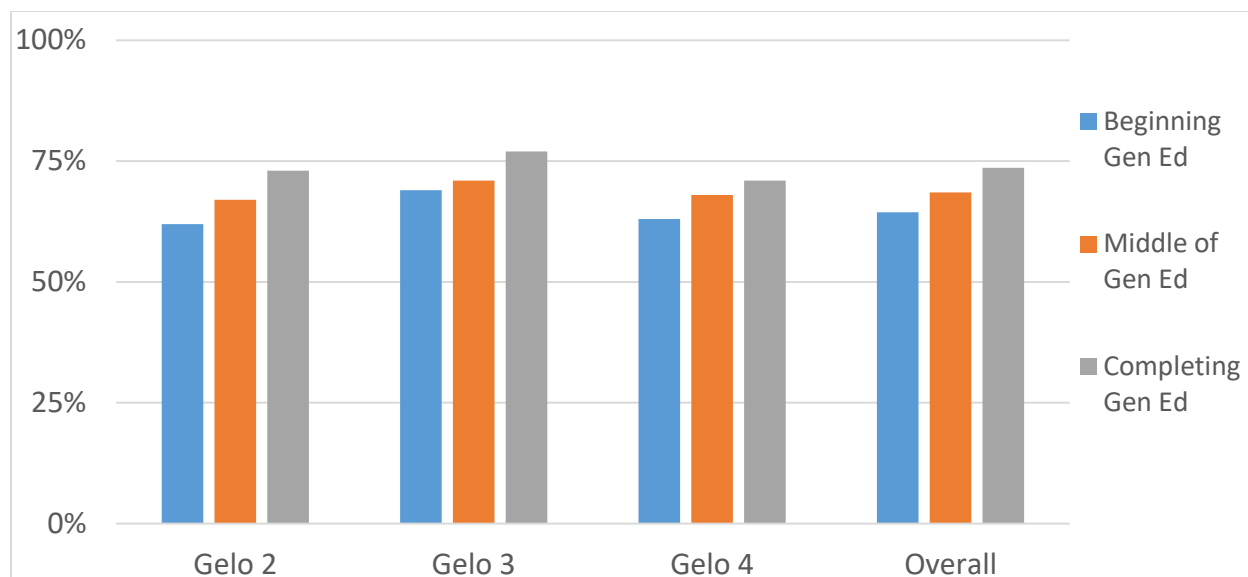
The multiple faculty pairs reviewed the Signature Assignments of about 7 to 10 students in each of 30 classes sampled in a given assessment. The robust average interrater reliability (.87) across faculty pairs for all GELOs affirms that reviewers were consistent in coding Signature Assignments for GELOs. The calibration of the coding teams was also assessed by having 11 different faculty pairs evaluate the same signature assignments. They agreed, on average, 64% of the time across the three GELOs.

Overall, GELO scores were positively correlated with students' final grade in their Gen Ed class ($r = .19, p < .001$), and their overall WSU GPAs ($r = .23, p < .001$), independently of their status (freshman, sophomore, junior, or senior) and the number of prior Gen Ed credits. The analyses suggest that students who better learn the content knowledge, as reflected by their grades in their Gen Ed and other courses, also tend to demonstrate general Gen Ed learning skills, independently of their background and experience.

The results of the assessment suggest that measures are related to student learning and achievement. The assessments also show differences in GELO assessment scores depending on the number of Gen Ed courses students have completed. We grouped students according to the number of Gen Ed credits they had completed in previous semesters:

- Students **beginning** Gen Ed coursework, who had earned nine or fewer Gen Ed credits (N=521, 65% freshmen)
- Students in the **middle** of their Gen Ed coursework, who had earned 10-29 Gen Ed credits (N=539, 72% freshman and sophomores)
- Students **completing** Gen Ed, who had earned 30 or more Gen Ed credits (N=177, 60% juniors, and seniors)

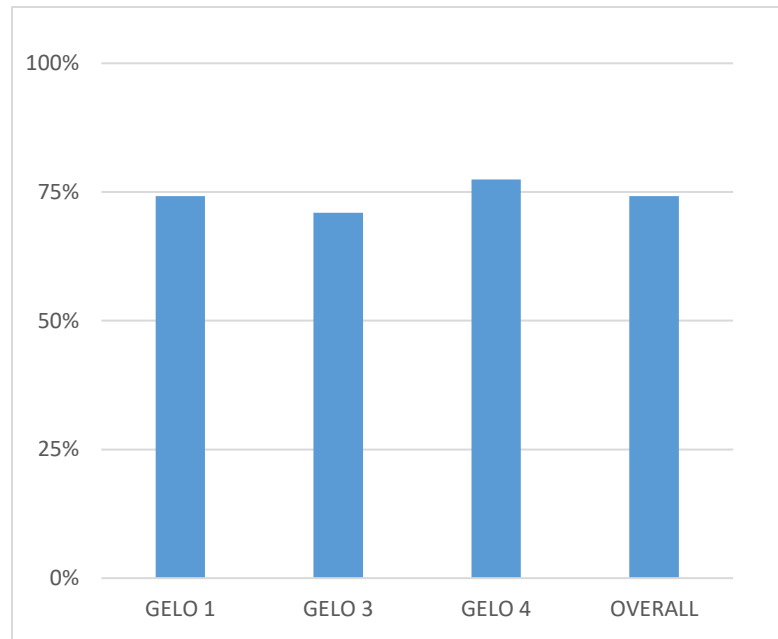
The figure below shows the percentage of students demonstrating each GELO by Gen Ed Credit-level group, and students' overall average assessment score (computed as the sum of GELO scores for each student). More student achieved GELO 3 (M = 71%) than GELO 2 (M = 66%) and GELO 4 (M = 66%). The differences between the Gen Ed Credit-level Groups on overall GELO achievement are statistically significant but moderate, with *Beginning* students scoring significantly lower than *Completing* students. As further evidence of the performance differences between groups, a significantly higher percentage of students Beginning than Completing Gen Ed were coded as achieving no GELOs (Beginning = 19% vs. Completing = 10%), and a lower percentage were coded as achieving all three GELOs (Beginning = 41% vs. Completing = 50%).



It is important to note that these results reflect data with only one semester implementing the requirement that students complete signature assignments in all their Gen Ed classes. We expect to see improved and more dramatic differences in performance between Gen Ed Credit-level groups as students regularly complete Signature Assignments in each of their Gen Ed courses. We further expect that the Completing Gen Ed group will achieve the program goal of 75% performance on each GELO and overall across all GELOs.

An additional analysis in Spring 2020 explored the signature assignment performance of 31 students who completed an Associate's Degree in General Studies that semester. Most of these students were sophomores and were selected because of their focus on the General Studies degree. They were also selected based on have completed at least one other Signature Assignment in a previous class in another semester. Again faculty teams reviewed and coded these students' performance. A total of 65% were Caucasian, and 58% were females. The students' overall GPA was 3.3, with a .56 standard deviation, reflecting the variability of academic performance. The data presented addresses the performance of these students on the Signature Assignment in the final Gen Ed course before their spring 2020 graduation. The signature assignments came from 14 different classes with more than half of the students completing Core Gen Ed courses -- 8 completing QL, 5 completing IL, 3 completing AI, and 2 completing COMP. There was at least one course from each of the five Breath Areas as well.

The performance of the General Studies graduates was consistent with the 75% threshold achievement for each GELO (71% - 77%) and overall (74%), with none of the values significantly different than 75%. These students' means were comparable to those of *Completing* students in the previous analysis. Also, 57% of the Gen Studies graduates were coded as demonstrating all three GELOs, and 10% demonstrated none, which is comparable to the performance of *Completing* students. The data provides more direct evidence that students completing Gen Ed are achieving GELOs.



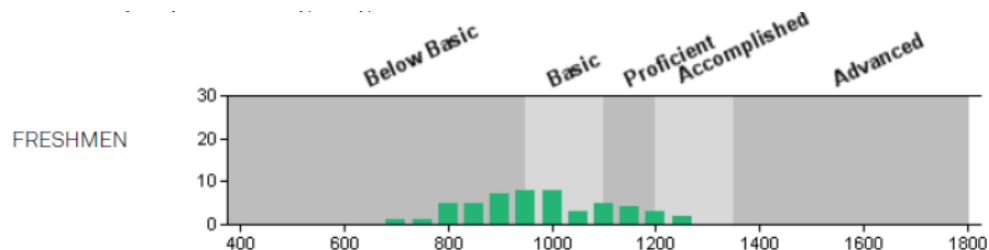
As noted, these students were selected because there was a record of at least one earlier signature assignment assessment. The number of average semesters between SA assignment assessments for these students was 1.8, with 45% having a single semester, and an additional 36% having two semesters separating assessments. Although most of these students may fall within the same Gen Ed completion category (described above), the graduating General Studies students showed a slight improvement in their overall GELO achievement from 72% to 74% from earlier and later assessed performance. The improvement was not significant, and both rates are no different than the 75% threshold. Most students (14/31 or 45%) scored no differently on the two assessments, which is higher than expected by chance alone (25%), suggesting a stable assessment protocol. Another 10 improved and 7 scored lower, perhaps suggesting a slight growth bias. Additional prospective longitudinal studies will be important to assess the impact of the revitalization effort.

CLA Trend Analysis and Discussion

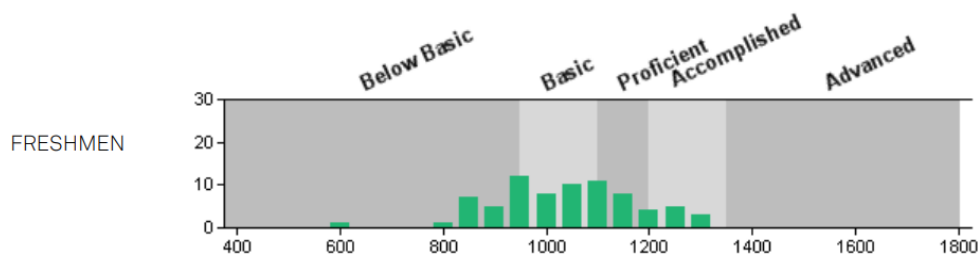
The Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA) was administered in Fall of 2017, 2018 and Fall 2019 to (primarily) freshmen from English 1010 and English 2010 – the Gen Ed composition courses. In Spring of 2018 and 2019 the CLA was administered to (primarily) senior students who were completing capstone courses or senior seminars in their major. The administration in Spring 2020 was interrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic and the assessment was completed by only 9 students.

Freshmen

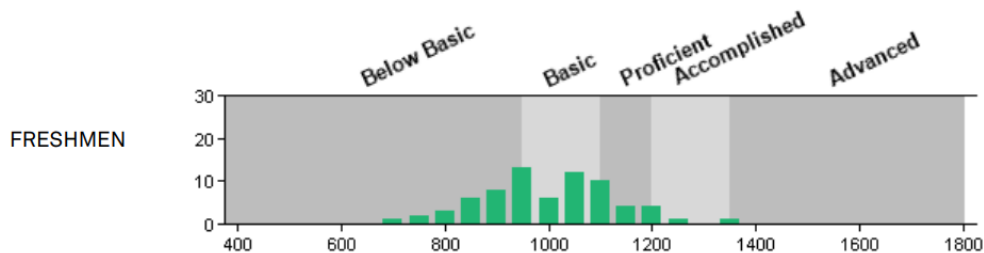
Fall 2017 (n=78; average score = 1055 – Basic, 38th percentile ranking)



Fall 2018 (n=75; average score = 1065 – Basic, 59% percentile ranking)



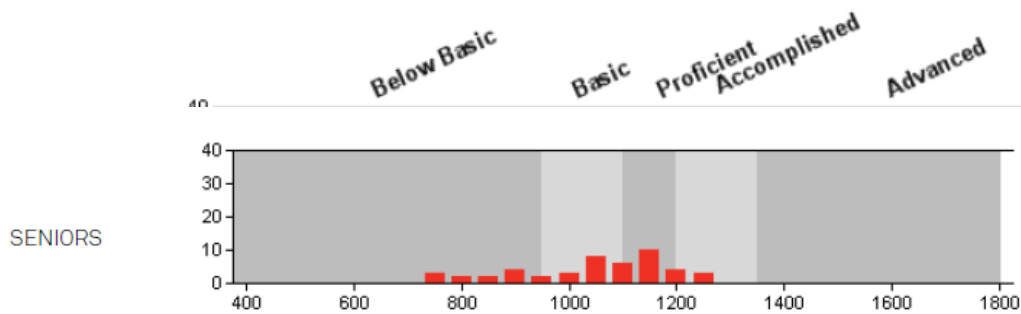
Fall 2019 (n=71; average score = 1026 = Basic, 59% percentile ranking)



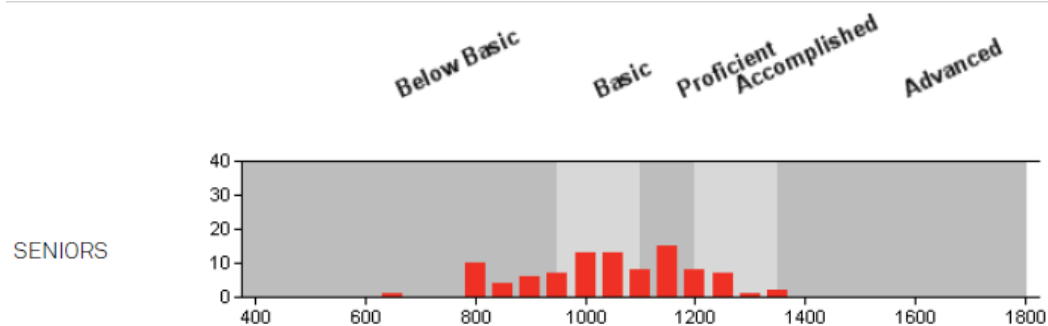
All three of these administrations showed lower results than those last reported (2016) when our students showed an overall level of mastery = Proficient, at the 82% percentile. In 2016, we specifically targeted first-term freshmen in English 2010. This is a cohort of students who are likely better prepared than typical first-term freshmen. They have either completed or tested out of English 1010. Subsequent cohorts are made up of students from English 1010 and 2010. Additionally, as more and more students complete some or all their composition requirement through concurrent enrollment, the students presenting in these classes are potentially less well-prepared and less academically experienced.

Seniors

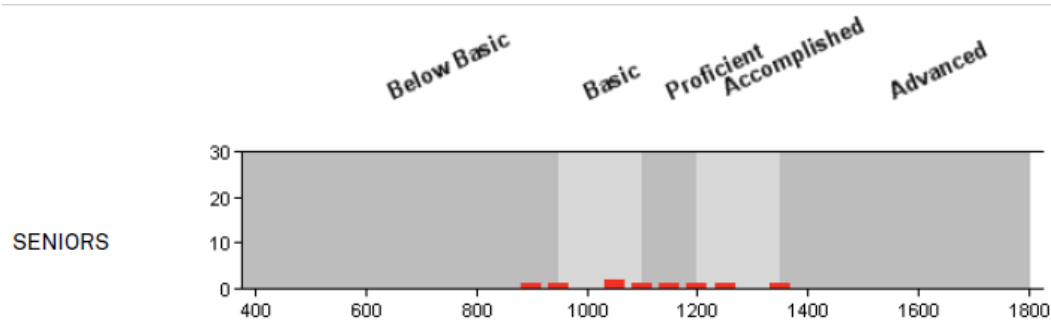
Spring 2018 (n=47; average score = 1071 – Basic, 18th percentile ranking)



Spring 2019 (n=95, average score = 1068 – Basic, 21st percentile ranking)



Spring 2020 (n=9, average score = 1141 – proficient, 60th percentile ranking)



Too many seniors do not take this assessment seriously, as is evidenced by both the low scores and the time spent on the assessment. The exception to this is the group of students who completed the spring 2020 CLA+ with their instructor in the testing room. The 'value-added' calculation for the spring 2018 and 2019 senior administration is consistently below what would be expected relative to other schools testing similar populations of students.

Conclusions

- 1) With the move from annual reporting to biennial reporting, General Education data were collected on approximately 1/3 of all Gen Ed courses this year. Next year should see the submission of the majority of the remaining 2/3 of Gen Ed courses.
- 2) The traditional General Education renewal process, where courses were reviewed and approved through the University Curriculum Committee, was replaced this year with an assessment process completed by the General Education Assessment and Improvement Committee (GEIAC). Gen Ed course assessment data were submitted through the Biennial Assessment Reporting process administered by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness. These data were culled from the reports and made available to GEIAC. An assessment process was defined by GEIAC and included an evaluation rubric (see appendix A) against which data were evaluated. GEIAC members, in teams of two, reviewed the assessment data and provided formative feedback to department chairs based upon the rubric criteria.
- 3) Signature Assignment assessment has now been completed six times. The first five times used a stratified random sampling methodology, selecting 10 representative artifacts from approximately 30 different courses from every Gen Ed core and breadth area. The last assessment utilized a longitudinal methodology where students who had just completed their associate degree in General Studies were culled for multiple (at least two, and sometimes three) signature assignments over several semesters. The goal was to determine if evaluators could detect academic growth over the course of the signature assignments.

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