

## 2023-24 Reynolds General Education Executive Summary

### Introduction

General education at Reynolds is foundational knowledge for all transfer programs and supports basic understanding of core components of learning necessary for all students' success. Informed by external requirements from the VCCS and SACSCOC, general education efforts at Reynolds are led by faculty who teach selected courses to measure student learning with nationally-normed rubrics. These efforts are designed to provide actionable results to improve learning opportunities within fundamental courses at the college.

In academic year 2023-24, Reynolds focused on two core general education competencies, while continuing to collect student evidence on all six (see Table 1 below for courses and competencies). Using seven courses (PHI 220 and ASL 125 for Critical Thinking (CT) and HIS 121, HIS122, PLS 135, PLS136, and SOC 200 for Civic Engagement CE)), assignments were identified to measure student learning related to the following definitions:

***Civic Engagement** is the ability to contribute to the civic life and well-being of local, national, and global communities both as social responsibility and a life-long learning process. Degree graduates will demonstrate the knowledge and civic values necessary to become informed and contributing participants in a democratic society.*

***Critical Thinking** is the ability to use information, ideas and arguments from relevant perspectives to make sense of complex issues and solve problems. Degree graduates will locate, evaluate, interpret, and combine information to reach well-reasoned conclusions or solutions.*

**Table 1: Reynolds Courses used for General Education Competency Measurement**

2023-24	Civic Engagement	Critical Thinking	Professional Readiness	Quantitative Literacy	Scientific Literacy	Written Communication
Currently active	HIS 121, HIS 122, PLS 135, PLS 136, SOC 200	PHI 220 ASL 125	SDV 100	MTH 154, MTH 245	BIO 101, BIO 106	ENG 111
Proposed additions		EGR	CST 100/110, SDV 101, MDL	ECO 201, ECO 202, ITE 140	CHM 112, PSY 200	BUS 100

### Methodology

- Instructors were given the college-adapted AAC&U rubric and definition, asked to select an assignment to match, and provided a code to use for collection.
- 100 student artifacts for each competency were randomly selected across all sections in Canvas.
- Faculty Gen Ed scorers (n=10) each evaluated 20 artifacts for each competency.
- The average score for each artifact was used to determine whether the student demonstrated "Proficiency" by achieving a 2 out of 3 on the rubric.

**Table 2: Quantitative Results**

	# artifacts	Avg./Median scores*	SD / % proficient	Interrater # / Avg. score diff.	# Dual Enroll	Avg./Median of DE
<b>Critical Thinking</b>	100	11.1 / 11.5	2.56 / 86%	6 of 72 same / 3.1 – avg.	10	10.8 / 11.3
<b>Civic Engagement</b>	99	6.3 / 5.5	1.36 / 40%	10 of 78 same / 2.3 – avg.	10	5.37/5.5

\*15 total points for CT, 9 total points for CE

## Qualitative Results

- Particularly for CE, misalignment between rubric and assignment created challenges to scoring
- Scoring categories should include the full range of insufficient demonstration of proficiency to the developing stage.
- The CE rubric should allow for reflection on civic engagement and not just participation, so it will be reviewed and perhaps adjusted.
- A pre-designed assignment option might help provide faculty with an option to consider.

## Limitations / Challenges

Assignment and rubric alignment continue to be an area of needed improvement. Expanding the number of student work collected and reviewed will enable stronger conclusions about learning, and how to improve. Providing more guidance and support to faculty as they consider using assignments for dual purposes of course content and general education core competency scoring.

## Conclusions

Overall results may be insufficient for clear guidance on instructional adjustments to improve student learning, but may encourage assignment redesign and better learning alignment. While CE results are complicated, CT scores indicate proficiency of learning. While the methodology to collect and score results is effective, as Canvas scoring works well, more classes are being recruited for artifact collection in order to strengthen PR and SL conclusions. In addition, a greater focus on alignment with the rubrics may improve the application of these results to seek improvement in learning.

**Table 3: Schedule of Core Competency Detailed Review**

Competency	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
Civic Engagement		✓		
Critical Thinking		✓		
Professional Readiness			✓	
Quantitative Literacy	✓			✓
Scientific Literacy			✓	
Written Communication	✓			✓