UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND EASTERN SHORE

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT REPORT (SLOAR)

Maryland Higher Education Commission
Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Report (SLOAR) 2011

Instructions: Each institution should use this template to report on its key student learning assessment activities. Part One should provide a summary of all institutional assessment activities in which your institution is currently engaged. Part Two should describe key student learning outcomes assessment activities for each of the four major competency areas. Part Two also provides space in which to highlight up to three additional institution-specific competency areas. Part Three should summarize modifications and adjustments to your institutional assessment activities since 2007. The template can be expanded, if necessary. The body of this report should not exceed 20 pages. Up to 5 pages of appendices may also be included.

Part One: Summary of Assessment Activities

Provide a summary of institutional assessment activities and guidelines used. Part I should highlight your institution's activities that align with Middle States standard 7, 12 and 14. Include the organizational structure and institutional leadership for assessment activities. Limit to two pages.

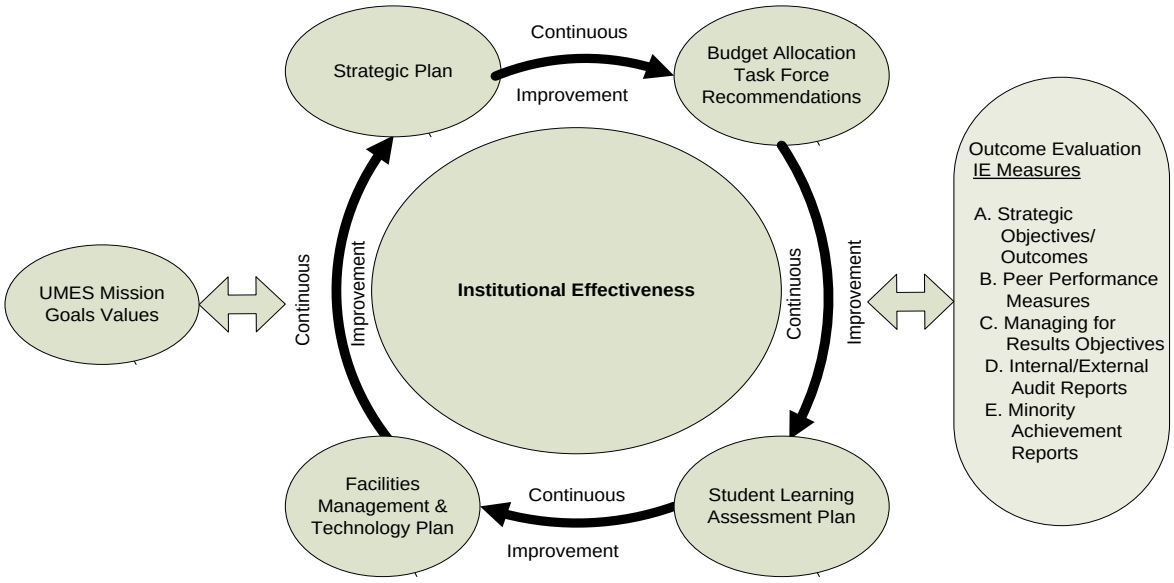
This section provides an overview and analysis of the UMES' assessment process based on institutional assessment (Standard 7), General Education assessment (Standard 12), and assessment of student learning (Standard 14) as they relate to Middle States Commission on Higher Education.

UMES utilizes an Institutional Effectiveness Management Model (see Figure 1) grounded in shared governance to ensure buy-in from and implementation by the University community. This process is also a tool for guiding implementation and evaluation of the overall effectiveness of UMES in fulfilling its mission including resources; leadership and governance; administrative structures and services; institutional integrity; and assurance that institutional processes and resources support appropriate student learning and other outcomes. Considered in a continuous cycle of planning and evaluation, the model considers four key components-Strategic Planning, Budget Allocation Task Force recommendations, student learning assessment planning, facilities management, and technology planning. Missions, Goals and Values drive the institutional Effectiveness Management Model of UMES. The current mission statement, goals and core values were developed through a participative process by the entire University. As an integral part of the Institutional Effectiveness Management Model, the Student Learning Assessment Plan is a comprehensive process that focuses

on the contentious improvement of student learning. Every component of the UMES Institutional Effectiveness Model is designed to facilitate the University's accomplishment of its mission.

The assessment of institutional effectiveness includes four major cycles, they are: (1) developing clearly articulated goals, (2) implementing strategies for achieving the goals, (3) assessing the achievement of the goals, and (4) using the results of the assessment. The process of assessing student learning outcomes is analyzed under two-sections for improvement, General Education assessment (Standard 12) and assessment of student learning in the programs/majors (Standard 14).

Figure1. 1: UMES Institutional Effectiveness Management Model



Assessment at UMES is a systematic, proactive, data/informed and collaborative process. This process occurs at different levels—course, program, department, school or institutional level. Direct and indirect measures used include strategic operational plan outcomes, student learning, and Discipline Specific Accreditation outcomes measures. Student learning assessment is monitored by the University Assessment Council, comprising of all academic department chairs, and a student

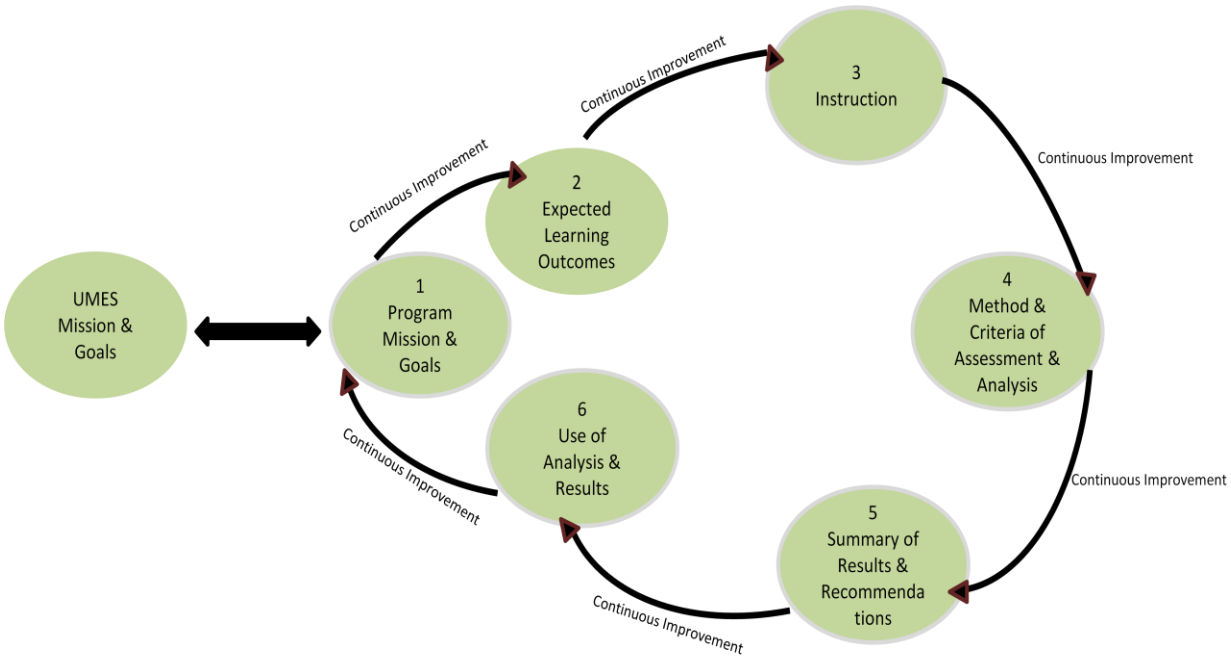
representative. Members meet twice every semester to monitor the student learning assessment plan outcomes and make recommendations for change in the University-wide assessment process and policies. Student learning assessment involves systematic collection and analysis of program assessment data within the major and in General Education. Every academic program offered by UMES developed an assessment plan that includes program Mission (always tied to the University Mission), goals, and student learning outcomes with a clear process for measuring them and using the results to improve the teaching and learning process.

The University's General Education courses are adequately structured and delivered through the Maryland Higher Education Commission's (MHEC) mandated six curriculum areas: Area I:Arts and Humanities, Area II: Social and Behavioral Sciences, Area III: Biological and Physical Sciences, Area IV: Mathematics, and Area VI: Emerging Issues. The University's General Education requirements provide students with the ability to develop a comprehensive educational foundation that will effectively support a student's choice of major. Each graduate should be a competent communicator in both written and spoken language, and competent in reasoning, (quantitatively and scientifically). Students should have an appreciation and understanding of the arts and an awareness of the contemporary issues trends. Additionally, each student should be competent in utilizing technology as a tool to produce word processing documents, spreadsheets/graphics, databases, and PowerPoint presentations. In addition, using technology communicates ideas and evaluates the ideas of others (Standard 12). The University has developed operational definitions for the five competencies identified by Middle States: (1) Written and Oral Communication, (2) Critical Analysis and Reasoning, (3) Scientific and Quantitative Reasoning, (4) Technological Literacy and (5) Information Literacy and has developed a course mapping matrix that identifies in which courses these competencies are taught. Direct measures include internal comprehensive examination for oral communication skills, external national Educational Testing Services (ETS) examinations for general education, national Accuplacer examination for written communication, and national Certiport (IC^3 FastTrack) examination for technology assessment

UMES uses the *Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Process* (SLOAP) (see Figure 2) for assessing students in their majors. SLOAP uses a set of guidelines established in 2005 by the Assessment Council that provides each academic department with a format for planning and implementing an effective assessment process. The program requires that each assessment plan have clearly articulated expected student learning outcomes, aligned with program goals, core

courses/capstone experiences, and assessment methods that yield meaningful results to be used for continuous improvement of student learning and instruction. The results and/or recommendations from academic programs assessments become critical inputs for the Strategic Plan, the budget process, facilities management, and technology plans.

Figure 2: UMES Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Process (SLOAP)



Part Two: Four Major Competency Areas

For each of the four competency areas listed below, discuss the institution's current activities. Space is provided for three additional competencies, if applicable. Part Two, including additional competencies, should not exceed 12 pages.

I. Written and Oral Communication

A. Institution's definition of competency

The ability to prepare essays, other written assignments and spoken presentations that demonstrate clarity, coherence, and organization.

B. Level(s) at which the competency is assessed (e.g., department, program, course)

Written Communication

Since the 2007 SLOAR report, UMES continues to require assessment external to the English 101, and English 102 courses and the assessment is on the institutional level. After extensive review of available assessments instruments for written communication on the college level, UMES elected to continue to use the College Board's Writeplacer Plus that is administered online. UMES has labeled this examination the English Proficiency Examination (EPE). To satisfy the communication competency, the EPE is administered to all students, who must pass the examination to graduate.

Oral Communication

Establishing a process to critique oral communication skills proved to be more challenging than the one for creating the process for critiquing written communication. After a long deliberation process that included the review of other direct measures of assessment (e.g. ratings of student skills in the context of class activities, portfolios of student work, and scores on nationally-normed instruments) it was determined that oral communication evaluation would best be evaluated using performance-based assessment that would be conducted as the final oral assessment in the general education course ENGL 203 (Fundamentals of Contemporary Speech) taught by faculty in the English Department.

Process (es) used to evaluate competency (i.e., methods, measures, instruments)

Written Communication

Students are still required to write a 500 essay on topics randomly selected by the software from a list of ten (10) topics determined by the University. A unique feature of Writerplacer Plus is that it uses artificial intelligence (AI) to evaluate the essay. Pilot testing by the English department faculty has verified that the online test results are comparable to faculty evaluation of the same essay and this process was used to develop the cut-off score. Upon completion of the EPE, WritePlacer Plus provides students with immediate feedback on their examination score and students are directed to print a hardcopy of their results for their records.

Oral Communication

English Department faculty in conjunction with the General Education Committee created a standard course syllabus for all ENGL 203 (Fundamentals of Contemporary Speech) sections with agreed upon learning outcomes and assignments, established the performance prompt for the oral communication assessment, established the criteria used to judge student performance (creation of standard rubric) , and established the mode for student feedback.

C. Describe the results of the assessment work related to this competency.
Detail results of assessment efforts, and where possible, provide data which demonstrate the assessment outcomes.

Written Communication:

Every semester when English 102 is offered, students are administered the EPE. During 2007-2008 and 2008-2009 academic years, 90.2% and 92.5% of our students respectively performed at the proficiency level of seven and above on the 12 point scale, with the proficiency cut off score of seven. This was strong performance by our students. In 2009-2010 the College Board revised the WriterPlacer Plus scoring rubric and the percentage of our students who were assessed as proficient was 70%. Since students cannot graduate at UMES without passing the EPE, those who were unsuccessful were given the opportunity to retake the examination after receiving further instruction, and all students passed.

Oral Communication:

The oral communication assessment, a pilot project using the oral communication rubric and 94 students participated in the pilot and 70% were found to be proficient. Full implementation of the assessment will be in place during the 2011-2012 academic year.

II. Scientific and Quantitative Reasoning

A. Institution's definition of competency

The ability to identify and apply basic scientific principles to enhance understanding of our universe; to assign and use numbers, read and analyze numerical data, create models, draw inferences and support conclusion.

B. Indicate level(s) at which the competency is assessed (e.g., institutional, program, course)

The GenEd Committee conducted a trend analysis for the GenEd courses that were used by the majority of the academic disciplines and then mapped into those courses to show the link between the general education competencies. The results indicated that specific mathematics, natural sciences and philosophy course(s) required quantitative reasoning skills. The GenEd committee elected to use external assessment instrument to collect data on student proficiency in this area.

C. Process(es) used to evaluate competency (i.e., methods, measures, instruments)

The University System of Maryland (USM) required each institution to select one of three general education assessment instruments and the University elected to administer the national standardized assessment instrument, the ETS Proficiency Profile.

D. Describe the results of the assessment work related to this competency.
Detail results of assessment efforts, and where possible, provide data which demonstrate the assessment outcomes.

Beginning in fall 2009, UMES administered the ETS Proficiency Profile to freshman and senior students every semester except spring 2011. The results of testing provided individual student raw scores, average scores and in addition to a these scores, proficiency classifications (proficient, marginal or not proficient) that measured how well students have mastered each level of proficiency within mathematics, natural and social sciences. Initial results have provided entry level scores that can be compared to national data that will be used as benchmark data to improve student proficiency in critical thinking. These data provide us with an opportunity to ensure that our GenEd courses are providing our students

with the necessary content and experiences needed to improve their scores. The data on natural sciences are provided as sub scores with standard deviations and mean scores. The University has identified the national sub scores, standard deviations and means scores to be used as a benchmark. The next step in the process will be to establish target goals in this area.

III. Critical Analysis and Reasoning

A. Institution's definition of competency

The ability to demonstrate in writing and speaking to use logic and balanced thinking; formulation of solutions to problems by objective consideration of all possible alternatives; and demonstrate recognition of importance of ethics.

B. Indicate level(s) at which the competency is assessed (e.g., institutional, program, course)

The evaluation of critical thinking is conducted by external institutional assessment.

C. Process(es) used to evaluate competency (i.e., methods, measures, instruments)

A review of the GenEd sequence identified courses in all five curriculum areas that provide students with opportunities to develop critical thinking skills. Critical thinking skills transcend all curriculum areas and are deemed vital for higher order learning not only in GenEd but also in the major field. Beginning fall 2009, the ETS *Proficiency Profile* was used to evaluate critical thinking skills for freshman and senior students. Critical thinking assessment data provided proficiency classifications (proficient, marginal or not proficient) with only one level of proficiency.

D. Describe the results of the assessment work related to this competency.
Detail results of assessment efforts, and where possible, provide data which demonstrate the assessment outcomes.

The critical thinking data for the freshman students from fall 2009 until fall 2010, paralleled the data obtained from our senior students. Proficiency data obtained revealed a need to increase our efforts in providing students with opportunities to increase their critical thinking skills and will be used to establish a target goal in the area in critical thinking. The critical thinking assessment results have had a positive impact on both the GenEd and major field curricula. The impact on the GenEd curriculum has been the review and modification as needed to the specific GenEd courses that have been identified as high frequency courses that include critical thinking.

IV. Technological Competency

A. Institution's definition of competency

Information Technology at UMES involves the use of hardware, software, services, and supporting infrastructure to manage and deliver information using voice, data and video.

The overarching outcome pertaining to this competency is effective utilization of technology in the communication of ideas; and the management, organization, and examination of information. Specific student learning outcomes include students will be able to (1) describe the essential components of a computer system and distinguish between system and software usage; (2) define and identify the basic components of a database; (3) identify and define basic internet terminology and activities; (4) demonstrate the ability to utilize Microsoft Word to create and edit documents, author reports and newsletters, merge documents, and create tables and charts; (5) demonstrate their knowledge and skills to utilize Microsoft Excel to create and edit spreadsheets, manage large notebooks, and create and print graphs; (6) create a simple database using Microsoft Access; (7) use Microsoft Outlook to send, organize, compose, edit, and merge messages; and (8) use Internet Explorer and a variety of search services to locate and evaluate resources.

B. Indicate level(s) at which the competency is assessed (e.g., institutional, program, course)

Assessment of technological competency occurs at the freshman level mainly in two courses—BUED 212 (Computer Concepts) and CDSP 120/121 (Introduction to Computing)—offered by the Departments of Business Management and Accounting, and Math and Computer Science, respectively. BUED 212 introduces students to electronic information processing. Emphasis in this course is placed on various computer concepts and applications. Contemporary computer software for word processing, spreadsheets, and databases relevant to business and industry are explored.

CSDP 120/121 is designed for non-technical majors covering different applications of modern computing systems. The course surveys computing hardware and software systems; and introduces students to the present state-of-the art word processing, spreadsheet, and

database software. Applications to other disciplines, such as medicine, administration, accounting, social sciences, and humanities are also considered.

In addition to course level assessment, UMES also incorporates institutional level assessment for technological competencies.

C. Process(es) used to evaluate competency (i.e., methods, measures, instruments)

Even though the committee had identified courses in the GenEd sequence that require students to use their technology skills and courses were technological competencies are taught and evaluated; the committee decided to develop an assessment protocol that did not require course-embedded assessment. To this end, UMES reviewed several available external assessment tools for measuring technology proficiency; the IC^3 FastTrack by Certiport was selected. IC^3 tests relevant digitals skills and helps institutions define their students' technology proficiency. The IC^3/GS3 FastTrack assessment is certified and based on the globally recognized IC3 standard. There are 75 questions comprising the assessment. These questions are divided into three components: Computing Fundamentals, Key Applications, and Living Online. The assessment test uniquely pulls from a bank of questions, randomizing questions for each testing session. IC^3/GS3 FastTrack is programmed and timed for universal standard. Candidates have 60 minutes to complete the assessment. IC^3/GS3 FastTrack provides features that allow the testing center to:

- assess student digital literacy in one-hour performance-based test
- track individual and school-wide digital literacy with custom reporting
- measure student digital literacy against the globally recognized Certiport IC^3/GS3 fastTrack standard; and
- lay a foundation for addressing accreditation requirements for student digital literacy.

To ensure that UMES students meet the technological competency required by Middle State Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE) and to provide an objective and external validation of Student Learning Outcomes, the University decided to use Microsoft Professional Certification and/or IC^3 Track to assess technological competency.

D. Describe the results of the assessment work related to this competency.
Detail results of assessment efforts, and where possible, provide data which demonstrate the assessment outcomes.

The pilot assessment was done in spring 2011 with volunteer students from BUED 212/213 classes. Students enrolled in BUED 212 were selected for this pilot study because they were just entering this course and had not been formerly instructed in technology at UMES; whereas the students enrolled in BUED 213 had already taken BUED 212. Therefore, the data from students enrolled in BUED 213 were used as control group data. One hundred and five (105) students participated in the pilot testing program during spring 2011 for IC^3/GS3 FastTrack and the students were drawn from BUAD 212/213. The primary purpose of the testing was to establish a proficiency cut-off score. At the completion of the Pilot testing the program members of the subcommittee on technology assessment analyzed the results to determine the cut-off score. A combined score of 1,000 is the maximum possible score. Test scores ranged from 307 to 853 with an average score of 593. The initial cut-off score was set at 500. Implementation of this assessment will begin in fall 2011.

Any students taking this assessment and not meeting the cutoff score will be able to select one of two options to obtain the necessary skills. They can enroll BUED 212, CSDP 102, or attend a specialized workshop series offered to meet the students' needs based on their assessment results. After the completion of the course or workshop students will be retested.

Even though departmental assessment continued during this process, data collection was put on hold until the assessment protocol selection had been completed.

Additional Competencies

Because institutional mission and goals differ, institutions may wish to report on assessment activities beyond the four major competency areas. However, this is not mandatory; institutions may report on up to three additional competencies.

V. Diversity

A. Institution's definition of competency

Diversity encompasses acceptance and respect. It means understanding that each individual is unique, and recognizing our individual differences; dimensions of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, age, physical abilities, religious beliefs, political beliefs, or other ideologies.

B. Indicate level(s) at which the competency is assessed (e.g., institutional, program, course)

The University has completed the task of mapping the competency of diversity within the GenEd sequence and has identified GenEd courses that address this competency.

C. Process(es) used to evaluate competency (i.e., methods, measures, instruments)

This is an ongoing process and the General Education Committee will be exploring the concept of evaluating competencies relative to diversity that will include the method, measures and instrumentation.

D. Describe the results of the assessment work related to this competency.
Detail results of assessment efforts, and where possible, provide data which demonstrate the assessment outcomes.

After the selection and administration of the instrumentation for evaluating diversity, the General Education Committee will provide the results to the entire campus and seek ways to address concerns.

Part Three: Evolution of Assessment Activities

Provide concrete examples of how your institution's assessment activities have impacted and/or improved teaching and learning. Also, describe how the assessment of the major competency areas has been integrated into the structure of the institution.

Modifications and Adjustments to Assessment Activities Since 2007

In 2008, the new leadership in Academic Affairs reconstituted the General Education Committee (GenEd) with the Assistant Vice President for Academic Affairs, who is also a tenured associate professor in the Department of Education, as Chair. Other members included representatives from each of the four schools (i.e., Agriculture and Natural Sciences, Arts and Professions, Business and Technology, Pharmacy and Health Professions), and Library Services. In addition, there were departmental representatives for each of the GenEd curriculum areas (Fine Arts, Biological Sciences, English and Mathematics), making a total of 15 members. The GenEd Committee reviewed requirements by MHEC for any changes or updates and then matched the MHEC sequence to the UMES GenEd sequence. The committee reviewed and modified the student learning outcomes identified for each curriculum area and then review all the courses in each curriculum areas to verify that each course was the right fit for each of the six curriculum areas.

At the time of the 2006 Middle State Commission on Higher Education's (MSCHE) site visit, and the last SLOAR report, assessment of GenEd was course embedded and each program specified its course requirements from the six curriculum area. The curriculum organization did not easily lend itself to assessment of competencies. Therefore, the GenEd committee conducted mapping of GenEd courses onto competencies/general education expected student learning outcomes (see Appendix A). This process ensured that relevant courses for general education competencies were identified, resulting in the adjustment of and deletion of some courses and inclusion of new courses for three of the six GenEd curriculum areas (see Appendix B)

As a result of the 2006 site visit, the Middle States review team suggested that:

- UMES begin to consider assessing "proficiencies," rather than "areas of instruction. Proficiency may be evaluated in the ways that transcends the units of instruction and individual academic departments.
- The team suggests that the University better define "course-embedded" assessments so that there is a consistency among faculty and administration as to what this implies. This clarity

can be achieved though the institution's continuing commitment to faculty development on student learning outcomes assessment**.**

After the Middle States visit, the state of Maryland initiated the Voluntary System of Accountability (VSA) in fall 2008. The VSA required each Maryland higher education institution to select an external general education assessment instrument from a list three nationally standardized instruments (e.g., Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA), Collegiate Assessment of Academic Proficiency (CAAP), and Educational Testing Service (ETS) Proficiency Profile (formerly Measurement of Academic Proficiency and Progress (MAPP)). These three instruments were selected by the VSA initiative because they recognized the reliability and validity of all three instruments and each provides student proficiency data in writing, critical thinking and reading.

In order to select the best instrument for General Education assessment, the University faculty and administrators: 1) attended workshops on all three instruments, 2) collected and reviewed published materials obtained on each instrument, 3) attended on-campus faculty workshops and/or webinars, provided by the vendors and 4) administered demo versions of two of the instruments (CLA and ETS Proficiency Profile) to members of the GenEd Committee. After an extensive review of the current state of its general education sequence and the review of several general education assessment instruments, UMES has elected to administer the ETS Proficiency Profile test. This General Education test measures proficiency in critical thinking, reading, written communication and mathematics in the context of humanities, social sciences and natural sciences as well as academic skills developed, as opposed to subject knowledge taught, in general education courses. Use of this test is one of a series of multiple measures of GenED skills and competencies that will help ensure that the UMES fulfills MSCHE's requirement for General Education (Standard 12) and institutional effectiveness (Standard 14).

In addition to adding ETS Proficiency Profile to the University's assessment protocol for direct measures, the University has added the two other new measures of student learning outcomes: 1) course-embedded assessment for oral communication, and Certiport IC^3/GBS FastTrack external assessment for competency in technology. The University continues to use the national WritePlacer Plus by Accuplacer as an external measure for written communication; however, College Board has recently modified and made its scoring rubric for the WriterPlacer Plus more rigorous making the examination stronger assessment tool.

Impact of Assessment on Teaching and Learning

Oral communication

Establishing a process to critique oral communication skills proved to be more challenging than the one for creating the process for critiquing written communication. Due to changes in leadership, department chairs for English and Modern Languages, a process was just recently put in place. After a long deliberation process that included the review of other direct measures of assessment (e.g. ratings of student skills in the context of class activities, portfolios of student work and scores on nationally-normed instruments), it was determined that oral communication evaluation would best be evaluated using performance-based assessment that would be conducted as the final oral assessment in the general education course ENGL 203 (Fundamentals of Cotemporary Speech) taught by faculty in the English Department. The process used to create this assessment was as follows: 1) identifying the oral communication competencies in conjunction with the work completed by the GenEd committee, 2) creating a standard course syllabus for all ENGL 203 sections with agreed upon learning outcomes and assignments, 2) creating standard assignments with linked assessments, 3) establishing the performance prompt for the oral communication assessment, 4) establishing the criteria used to judge student performance (creation of standard rubric) , and 5) establishing the mode for student feedback rubric). The process of creating standardized course syllabus with common student learning outcomes and combining that with a common oral communication assessment is going to increase student participation in the learning process. We will know the desired behaviors for success and will be have to participate in their assessment.

The oral communication assessment, a pilot project using the oral communication rubric and 94 students enrolled in ENGL 203, revealed that only 70 of the students in the pilot project were found to be proficient in oral communication skills. Lessons learned from these data impact how the evaluation process will be implemented for the next testing. Students enrolled in ENGL203 during this next semester will be given the opportunity to be evaluated using the rubric on three other oral presentations prior to the last oral presentation that will be used to collect data on student proficiency. Students' presentations will be videotaped to provide further student feedback and opportunity for student self-evaluation.

Written Communication

The results of student proficiency in written communication has resulted in the English faculty taken steps to increase the success of the student enrolled in ENGL 102 by ensuring the standardization of the course syllabus that includes common assignments, tests, and course textbook. Students must receive a grade of "C" to pass any of the English composition courses and are referred to the campus *Writing Center* when instructors identify students with deficiencies. Additionally, students who do not pass the EPE are referred to the Writing Center for remediation based on the diagnostic data that is provided by WritePlacer Plus on the printed results. The EPE coordinator ensures that the *Writing Center* receives a copy of the students' diagnostic information.

Administration of the ETS Proficiency Profile

Even the process of developing the process for administering the ETS Proficiency Profile had a positive impact on the curriculum offerings in the academic disciplines. The VSA required that freshman and senior students be tested and the need to identify senior students promoted the discussion on identifying courses in each department that was would have primarily seniors in the class composition. These discussions lead to the merits of capstone courses and a review of programs that provided these courses. After the lengthy discussions, each department decided to develop a capstone course and seniors enrolled in these courses were to be selected for testing.

Critical Analysis and Reasoning; and Scientific and Quantitative Reasoning

A review of the GenEd sequence identified courses in all five curriculum areas that provide students with opportunities to develop critical thinking skills. Critical thinking skills transcend all curriculum areas and are deemed vital for higher order learning not only in GenEd, but also in the major fields. Beginning fall 2009, the ETS Proficiency Profile was used to evaluate critical thinking skills for freshman and senior students. Critical thinking assessment data provided proficiency classifications (proficient, marginal or not proficient) with only one level of proficiency. Proficiency data obtained will be used to establish a target goal in the area in critical thinking. The critical thinking assessment results have had a positive impact on both the GenEd and major field curricula. The impact on the GenEd curriculum has been the review and modification as needed to the specific GenEd courses that have been identified as high frequency courses that include critical thinking. Additionally, academic departments have elected to infuse critical thinking across the curriculum in each academic discipline.

This task was completed in three Phases. Phase 1, required each department to review their program outcomes and link them to the Middle States Competencies. Phase 2, demonstrated the link between program outcomes, Middle State Competencies (general education competencies), departmental courses, and course related assessments and criteria. Phase 3, required course syllabi modifications that included the student learning outcomes, related assessment tasks and assessment criteria. (Appendix C) This progress will provide a continuing cycle of both course-embedded and external assessments that leads to continuous course improvement and student learning.

Course Redesign

The data from the ETS Proficiency Profile has made is even more evident that our students are in need of assistance in the area of Mathematics and other courses in the natural and social sciences. To this end, the University has written two proposals, one from the Lumina Foundation and to other to University System of Maryland (USM) to acquire funding to assist us in our course redesign efforts for two of our gatekeeper mathematics courses (Math 101 and 109), Psychology 200, Art 101 and Biology 101. All proposals were funded and the faculty had already begun work on these course redesigns.

Integration of Competency Assessment into the University Structure

The data from the ETS Proficiency Profile have made it evident that critical thinking skills is an area in which our students need improvement and it further believed that a change in test results in this area will require not only a change in way critical thinking skills are taught in the GenEd sequence, but also the way it is fostered in the academic disciplines. By infusing critical thinking skills development both in the GenEd sequence and the academic disciplines builds the integration of competency assessment into the University structure.

In addition to mapping the critical thinking skills with courses in each academic discipline, the same mapping was conducted for all of the competency areas. The long term plan is to eventually develop activities in the identified courses to teach and reinforce the GenEd competencies. The University has started the process of developing a campus-wide writing across the curriculum program. Whereas the EPE is used to access our freshman student writing skills, the ETS Proficiency Profile will be used to evaluate value added for our seniors.

In order to see a measureable different in our assessment data, a shift in the assessment climate on campus is required. Faculty and staff must embrace the conceptual framework of the Institutional

Effectiveness Management Model. The fact that assessment of student learning outcomes is ongoing from the freshman to the senior year bridges the integration of competency assessment in the University structure. Future workshops will be required to assist all faculty in understanding that assessment as an integral part of teaching and learning process.

Conclusion

Since the last SLOAR report in 2007, UMES has made considerable progress in reviewing, modifying and strengthening its GenEd curriculum and restricting its assessment process for General Education. There is now a greater focus on aligning General Education learning outcomes with the GenEd Program mission and in ensuring that the assessment tools used provid3e meaningful data for identifying areas of the curriculum, student learning, or instructional strategies that need improvement. The implementation of four new assessment instruments and processes will yield new data that will assist the University in further curriculum redesign and enhancement. Departments that offer General Education courses in general and those offering courses that speak to the five competencies in particular, that are reported to both the Middle States Commission on Higher Education have embraced the idea that meaningful assessment is required to develop and enhance the curriculum. Our course redesign efforts during the reporting period provides further evidence that assessment results are being used to improve student learning, instruction, and curriculum. In addition, a review of the competency of critical analysis and reasoning has resulted in the infusion critical thinking assessment in GenEd courses and in specific courses in the academic disciplines. All academic departments are currently examining General Education competencies for their programs and infusing these competencies into their academic disciplines. At the same time, a General Education Assessment Committee has been reconstituted to ensure that systematic collection, analysis and use of assessment results become an integral part of the strategic planning process with a visible organizational structure within the Division of Academic Affairs. UMES recognizes that building the foundations of lifelong learning through a strengthened General Education curriculum, and instruction in general is a continuous process; therefore, more work remains to be done for continuous improvement.

APPENDIX A

DEPARTMENTAL MAPPING OF GENERAL EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS AND COMEPTENCIES

general Education Curriculum Areas **Total = 40-43 credits**	**MS Competency #1** ***Written and Oral Communication*** *(ability to prepare essays, other written assignments and spoken presentations that demonstrate clarity, coherence, and organization)*	**MS Competency #2** ***Critical Analysis and Reasoning*** *(ability to demonstrate in writing and speaking to use logic and balanced thinking; formulation of solutions to problems by objective consideration of all possible alternatives; demonstrate recognition of importance of ethics)*	**MS Competency #3** ***Scientific and Quantitative Reasoning*** (*ability to identify and apply basic scientific principles to enhance understanding of our universe; to assign and use numbers, read and analyze numerical data, create models, draw inferences and support conclusions*)	**MS Competency #4** ***Technological Literacy*** (*ability to use hardware, software, services to manage and deliver information.*	**MS Competency #5** ***Information Literacy*** *(defined as the provision of a framework which enables students to identify, retrieve, evaluate, and use information effectively and efficiently (includes social, legal and economic issues; students acquire skills necessary to succeed in academic and professional arenas*	**Diversity (This area was not officially included)** (*diversity encompasses acceptance and respect.* *It means understanding that each individual is unique,* *and recognizing our individual differences; dimensions of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, age, physical abilities, religious beliefs,* *political beliefs, or other ideologies)*
I. Arts and Humanities (9 credits)						
ENG 203 plus one course in each of 2 disciplines	X	X		X	X	
Discipline A: Arts 101		X				
Discipline B: History						

II. Curriculum area (Social Sciences	***Written and Oral Communication***	***Critical Analysis and Reasoning***	***Scientific and Quantitative Reasoning***	***Technological Literacy***	***Information Literacy***	***Diversity***
HIST 101	X	X		X	X	X
PSYC 200	X	X		X	X	X
SOCI101	X	X		X	X	
POLI 200	X	X		X	X	X
HIST 201	X	X		X	X	X

III. Curriculum Areas (Biological Phys Sciences	***Written and Oral Communication***	***Critical Analysis and Reasoning***	***Scientific and Quantitative Reasoning***	***Technological Literacy***	***Information Literacy***	***Diversity***
ENVS 101		X			X	
BIOL 101		X	X		X	
BIOL 103		X	X		X	

IV. Curriculum (Math)	***Written and Oral Communication***	***Critical Analysis and Reasoning***	***Scientific and Quantitative Reasoning***	***Technological Literacy***	***Information Literacy***	***Diversity***
Math 102	X	X	X	X	X	
Math 109	X	X	X	X	X	

V. Curriculum Area (Languages)	***Written and Oral Communication***	***Critical Analysis and Reasoning***	***Scientific and Quantitative Reasoning***	***Technological Literacy***	***Information Literacy***	***Diversity***
ENGL 101	X	X		X	X	
ENGL 102	X	X		X	X	
ENGL 305/310	X	X		X	X	X

VI. Curriculum Area (Emerging Issues)	***Written and Oral Communication***	***Critical Analysis and Reasoning***	***Scientific and Quantitative Reasoning***	***Technological Literacy***	***Information Literacy***	***Diversity***
GNST 100	X	X			X	X

APPENDIX B

In spring 2007, a General Education (GenED) taskforce was established and reconstituted under new leadership in fall 2008. The committee composition included faculty from all four academic schools in the Division of Academic Affairs and a member of the library faculty. The configuration of the committee allowed for direct communication with the faculty on pertinent decisions as they related to the GenED sequence. The charge of the committee was to: (a) examine current general education courses required for students to meet the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) and Middle States Competencies, (b) define general education student learning outcomes and make specific recommendations for changes, (c) identify an assessment process using the student learning outcomes and (d) select the appropriate assessment instruments.

The GenED committee reviewed requirements by MHEC for any changes or updates and then matched the MHEC requirements to the UMES GenED sequence. The GenED committee reviewed the courses in each curriculum area to verify that each course was the right fit for that Curriculum Area. This review was conducted by using five basic guidelines: 1) did the course meet the MHEC guidelines, 2) did the course match the modified student learning outcomes, 3) did the course add value and currency to the curriculum area, 4) did the enrollment data verify student usage, and 5) did the course met the criteria for lower-level courses. By implementing these guidelines, modifications were made in Curriculum Areas I, II, and VI.

In Curriculum Area I, Discipline B: four courses were removed (HIST 333, HIST 334, HIST 341 & HIST360) and three courses were added (HIST101, HIST102, & PHIL201). One course was added in Discipline C: ASLS203. Additional changes to Curriculum Area I, Discipline D: five courses were removed (ENGL215, ENGL218, ENGL 328, ENGL 329, & ENGL401).

In Curriculum Area II, Discipline A: one course was removed (HIST112H) and four courses were added (HIST 102/H, HIST201, HIST 202, & PHIL201). Additional changes in Curriculum II, Discipline B: four courses were removed (HUEC361, HUEC 280, & SOWK200, SOWK200H).

In Curriculum Area VI: two courses were removed (ENGL412 & ENGL413) and in addition to the First Year Experience (FYE) course (GNST100) that is already in this area; each academic department developed its own FYE course that included six common goals contained in the original GNST100 course. This requirement made it possible for students to change their major without penalty of having to repeat this course in their major.

The above adjustments notwithstanding, the general conclusion of the GenEd Committee, was that the UMES' curriculum for General Education was appropriate for providing students the General Education competencies they need to be successful.

APPENDIX C

Program Outcomes	**Competencies**	Related Courses	**Related Assessment**
1. Students will demonstrate knowledge of history taking and skills in performing physical examinations directed at selected medical conditions.	• Communication skills (oral and written) • Critical Analysis and Reasoning • Information Literacy • Diversity	Didactic: PHAS 316 Physical Diagnosis II Clinical: PHAS 400 Internal Medicine Clerkship	**CL: 1, 2, & 3** Students produce a written Hx & PE paper using communication processes purposely to make meaning in physical assessment contexts. Connects discrete modes of communication and integrates them effectively within the frameworks of medical disciplines. A portfolio review of student clinical work: Typhon logs, Hx & PE papers and Journal Article critique with rubric likert scale 1-4; 70=proficient ;Students must prepare Grand Rounds Case Study: Oral/PPT evaluated by jury which must address style, content, delivery, medical fund, therapeutic management and citation. Med Challenger/ End-of- Rotation summative exams and Objective Structured Clinical Exam (OSCE) requiring 80% proficiency.
2. Students will demonstrate knowledge of the indications, normal and abnormal results, and cost effectiveness for diagnostic or laboratory studies relevant to selected medical conditions and skill in selecting, collecting and interpreting diagnostic and laboratory results.	• Scientific and Quantitative • Critical Analysis and Reasoning • Technology Competency • Information Literacy	Didactic: PHAS 303 Clinical Laboratory Procedures Clinical: PHAS 409 Family Medicine I Clerkship	**CL: 1, 2, & 3** Students demonstrate clinical reasoning in laboratory practicum reports and didactic summative exams= 70 % proficiency A portfolio review of student clinical work: Typhon logs, Hx & PE papers and Journal Article critique with rubric likert scale 1-4; 70=proficient ;Students must prepare Grand Rounds Case Study: Oral/PPT evaluated by jury which must address style, content, delivery, medical fund, therapeutic management and citation. Med Challenger/ End-of- Rotation summative exams and OSCE requiring 80% proficiency;