

**Template:**  
**Summary of Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes in General Education**

*This template, a slight revision of a form that was originally developed as part of the SUNY Assessment Initiative, can be used as a guide for maintaining summary records of the assessment of student learning outcomes in general education.*

Year of Previous Assessment		Year of Current Assessment	
<b>Student Outcome Areas Included in Report (Circle all that apply.)</b>			
<b>America History</b>	<b>Humanities</b>	<b>Other World Civilizations</b>	
<b>Basic Communication- Written Basic Communication-Oral</b>	<b>Information Management</b>	<b>Social Sciences</b>	
<b>Critical Thinking</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>	<b>The Arts</b>	
<b>Foreign Language</b>	✓ <b>Natural Sciences</b>	<b>Western Civilization</b>	

**1. Describe program improvements made as a result of the previous assessment of General Education.**

The two immediately prior Natural Science assessments in 2007 and 2010 used a standardized and nationally-normed test, the ACT Collegiate Assessment of Academic Proficiency (CAAP). Results showed that overall proficiency declined between 2007 and 2010:  
 BSC 2010 mean = 58.74, SD = 3.73, n = 336. 24% scored at or above national mean.  
 BSC 2007 mean = 59.60, SD = 4.30, n = 403. 33% scored at or above national mean.

Unfortunately, the results provided by the CAAP did not include feedback about which specific items the students were weak on, so there was little guidance about the changes that were needed. Although not based on natural science assessment, in 2014 the Intellectual Foundations program was revised so that now only ONE course is required in the Natural Science category.

**2. In the course of conducting this cycle of assessment, were there any significant deviations from the plan that was approved by the General Education Assessment Review (GEAR) Group? If so, please comment on why the campus felt that it was necessary to make these changes and how these changes may have affected findings, if at all.**

The implementation of the natural science assessment was supposed to occur in spring 2015. However, the chairperson of the faculty committee charged with conducting this assessment

failed to carry it out. The fall 2015 process was not faculty-driven. On September 22, 2015, an e-mail was sent to faculty members who had been randomly selected to participate in the fall assessment (see Appendix 1). This e-mail included attachments containing detailed instructions about the options available for the instructors, given the fact that instructors were not notified of their selection prior to the beginning of the semester. Please see Appendices 2 and 3, describing assessment of SLOs using multiple choice exams, and assessment of SLOs using short answer and essay exams. Also on September 22, an e-mail (see Appendix 4) was sent to the natural science department chairs asking for their support and encouragement in this effort. On December 9, 2015, a reminder e-mail (see Appendix 3) was sent to the same sampled faculty members.

However, the response rate among sampled faculty was relatively low. Several faculty failed to return their assessment results. For faculty who did participate in the assessment, the number of students who were assessed was sometimes considerably lower than we had expected. For example, the “actual” number of students in the sampled section of CHE 100 at the beginning of the semester was 121, but only 35 students were assessed (27%). Thus, the overall sample of 246 was lower than SUNY assessment expectations.

### **3. Describe the major findings of this assessment.**

Table 1 summarizes results for each SLO for all returned assessments. For SLO #1, a majority of students (58.9%) either met or exceeded the standard. For SLO #2, a slightly lower (56.1%) majority either met or exceeded the standard. More than 1/3 of the students did not meet the standard for SLO #2.

Examination of the variation from class to class reveals wide variation in success rates, e.g., the two sections of BIO 104. One section had a very high percentage of students who did not meet the standard for either SLO #1 or SLO #2. This section administered the assessment quite early in the semester. In IF14, students take only one natural science course, so it is likely that they had not yet acquired the relevant knowledge.

### **4. Describe the actions to be taken to address these specific findings, showing the relationship between the findings and the response.**

These results will be shared with SIFOC and the relevant oversight committee. It is clear that faculty “buy-in” is a problem to be addressed. This problem seems to be particularly acute within the natural sciences. Faculty participation in the assessment process was low. We need to examine how to encourage faculty to take a leadership role in assessment.

Other actions should be developed in discussion with faculty and with the oversight of SIFOC.

**5. As applicable, describe what has been learned that could be helpful in your next assessment cycle.**

Given that only one natural science course is required in IF14, we should administer the assessment as late in the semester as possible, after students have had an opportunity to acquire the course content.