

GEC Learning Outcomes (GLOs) Assessment: Civic Engagement

Assessment Type: GEC

Year/Term: AY19

Course: MUS 195/395E

Learning Outcome: Civic Engagement

Assessment Method/Tool: Common Rubric-EPCC

Measurement Scale: 3-1

Sample Size: 4

	Proficient (# of students %)		Adequate (# of students %)		Developing (# of students %)	
Purposefully reflects on and applies skills and knowledge acquired in the classroom to settings in the public sector.	4	57%	3	43%	0	0%
Synthesizes multiple viewpoints and reflects on changes in personal attitudes and beliefs.	7	100%	0	0%	0	0%
Demonstrates an ability to listen, communicate, and act in inclusive ways within a civic discourse community.	5	71%	2	29%	0	0%
Demonstrates a consistent readiness for civic engagement via participation in campus and community-based groups.	5	71%	2	29%	0	0%
Means % (based on 4 student sample size)		75%		25%		0%

Benchmark:	85%	Institutional benchmark goal for median percentage of students to meet “Proficient” or “Adequate” levels in the GEC
% Achieving Benchmark:	100%	percentage of students meeting “Adequate” or “Proficient” levels

Closing the Loop:

- 1) Summarize the results. For Academic Program assessments (upper division level) the Target is 100% scoring a 2 or 3.

We achieved 100% of students scoring a 2 or 3.

Criterion 1 was judged on consistent attendance and participation at rehearsals; three out of seven students missed two to three rehearsals, whereas the other four missed one or fewer.

Criteria 2 and 3 were assessed based on a group discussion, and individual discussions with selected students, which arose from a conflict within the group. One student brought to my attention concerns that there was bullying or “vibing” going on within the group, originating with one ensemble member who was perceived as behaving in an intimidating manner. The student who brought the complaint stated that one student who had participated in spring quarter was no longer willing to participate, and that the bullying was directed at students who were perceived as being weaker players or less willing to commit the requisite practice time. Immediately thereafter, I discussed this complaint with the student who was accused of the behavior, and also with another student who had mentioned similar concerns.

Subsequent to the discussions with the three individuals, we devoted half of one rehearsal to discussion of the four CE criteria with particular attention Criterion 3 focusing on “Inclusivity.” I led a lengthy discussion on the possible interpretations of “Civic Engagement” within an ensemble and with particular attention to the jazz ensemble, where each individual solo voice makes an important contribution, and where there is much musical dialogue, interaction, and negotiation.

The result of the discussion was ultimately very positive, as the band members were at times very frank with sharing their feelings with each other, and the negative behavior on the part of the student accused of bullying improved greatly.

Criterion 4 was assessed based on students’ participation outside of class with various musical groups of their own devising. All but two of the seven students are involved in some form of independently conceived musical ensemble, composition, or music-making.

- 2) Account for Results

A) Strengths:

Students performed well due to the fact that they are reasonably well-prepared for independent civic engagement work in campus and community based groups (Criterion 4); one of the learning outcomes of this class is geared toward building students’ ability to lead and form their own ensembles, put together their own song arrangements, and prepare to perform in an independent group in the

community. They also were prepared by the process of group improvisation exercises where each member of the group is given a chance to play a short phrase (“trading fours” or “trading eights” in jazz parlance), and they are encouraged to listen to each other’s ideas and use techniques such as imitation, repetition, variation, purposeful contrast or contradiction, etc. This technique was reinforced this term by Visiting Artist Dmitri Matheny, who worked with the students on techniques for this type of musical dialogue.

B) Challenges:

The biggest challenges for the group continue to be in the ability to function smoothly integrating the very disparate ability levels within the ensemble. Especially since we are such a small program, we have fewer students on each instrument, and the level of playing is not at all uniform from section to section, or even within sections. This creates friction within the group when some musicians are able to rise to the demands of the material, but others struggle, or simply don’t engage with the material (i.e., “practice”) enough to master it. Finding the right way to handle comments, suggestions, and constructive criticism that originates with peers, rather than the instructor, continues to be a challenge—but is ultimately worth it, as students need to learn to interact in ways that are both positive (“civil discourse”) but that also move the group forward toward a goal of a cohesive ensemble.

Action Plan (Academic Program):

I am not sure what improvements could be made to this process. It would be better if I had introduced this content earlier in the term, with discussion of what “civil discourse” or “civic engagement” might look like in a jazz band, and then did another closing exercise near the end of the quarter. It might be worth designing some sort of writing exercise that students would be tasked with at the beginning (predictive) and at the end (evaluative).

Of course, I am committed and open to sharing the results of this assessment with all program faculty, and we already discussed this situation during our music faculty meetings as the situation arose and was being dealt with.

AY20 Civic Engagement Improvement Plan Recommendation

(Office of the Vice Provost for Academic Quality)

Music’s approach to Civic Engagement for General Education should be used as a model for all programs in terms of effective assignment design and sequencing of steps, with a clear, succinct, insightful analysis of results, indicating how the General Education Civic Engagement outcome aligns well with the program’s Civic Engagement outcome.

The AY20 MUS Gen Ed Civic Engagement Improvement Plan: The program should follow through on the suggestion above. The program should develop a common approach to “Reflecting and applying skills and knowledge acquired in the classroom in the public setting” in order to improve student performance where the dip is most noticeable in the criteria. The AY20 Gen Ed CE Improvement Plan should report on the results of this effort and provide data on a course where the improvements have been operationalized.