

General Studies [BGS] [GNST]

Cycles included in this report:

Jun 1, 2018 to May 31, 2019

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Program Name: General Studies [BGS] [GNST]

Reporting Cycle: Jun 1, 2018 to May 31, 2019

1 Is this program offered via Distance Learning?

50-99% Distance/Traditional

2 Is this program offered at an off-site location?

No

2.1 If yes to previous, provide addresses for each location where 50% or more of program credits may be earned.

3 Example of Program Improvement

2014-2015:

In 2013-2014, we assessed integrative learning of a sample population of our graduates by utilizing the AACU VALUE rubric. Our goal was not met.

2016-2017:

This year, the writing prompts were changed and all graduates will be assessed.

2017-2018:

Changes are being made to delete the Associate of General Studies degree (or drastically change it), so it will no longer be an option for students to select as a major after spring 2019. The Bachelor of General Studies will be moved to the College of Liberal Arts during 2018-2019. No changes to the current degree plan are being made until the College of Liberal Arts has a chance to acquire it and review it.

2018-2019:

The University decided to keep the AGS degree and leave it unchanged for the time being. We did move the AGS and the BGS to the College of Liberal Arts at the end of the spring 2019 semester. The BGS was also left unchanged but the plan is to change the name of the degree to Interdisciplinary Studies (pending BOR and UL System approval) in the next year. The only change to the program in recent years was allowing any of the six credits of General Education Math/Analytical Reasoning classes to be utilized in the degree. The hope is to allow students more flexibility in this area and to reduce substitutions for transfer students. We were also seeing quite a few students struggling to pass College Algebra and Statistics.

We are marketing the AGS and BGS through an effort made by the Department Head of Interdisciplinary Studies and the Director of Electronic Learning to students who left the university, but who are within a semester or two of completing the AGS or BGS degree. This effort is to see if they might be interested in re-enrolling to complete the degree (either in-house or online) to service the students and increase graduation numbers. We reached out to approx. 250 people and awarded close to 50 AGS degrees and approximately 10-15 have re-enrolled in hopes to complete their Bachelor degree in majors around campus.

Recruiting back students that have stopped-out will be an ongoing effort with the help of CompeteLA.

4 Program Highlights from the Reporting Year

2016-2017:

Alison Blevins, formerly the director of this program, left in 2015-2016. Her replacement is Marshal Guidry.

2017-2018:

While we do teach a GNST 400 (one credit, seven week long) course in the graduating semester, that does not have much impact in the overall learning of these General Studies students who take a wide variety of courses making up the 119 other credits in the degree. With that said, there is little that we can do that will influence the scores of these students since so much of what we do is just to report on the learning that has taken place over a four year period, in many other

departments. No significant changes were made to the BGS program other than the decision to move it under the College of Liberal Arts during the 2018-2019 academic year.

2018-2019:

The AGS and BGS programs were successfully moved into the College of Liberal Arts. A new department called Interdisciplinary Studies was created and the former General Studies advisor was named as Department Head at the end of the spring 2019 semester. No changes were made to the program this year but plans are in place to change the name of the degree to Interdisciplinary Studies for the next Catalog year and we hope to be able to add an advisor to assist the director in advising and expanding the program.

5 Program Mission

The Department of Interdisciplinary Studies offers programs leading to the Associate of Interdisciplinary Studies(AIS) and Bachelor of Interdisciplinary Studies(BIS) degrees for students who have a broad range of interests and are seeking a diverse curriculum. Interdisciplinary studies degree programs allow students to explore their interests while simultaneously preparing them for a variety of careers. Furthermore, the interdisciplinary studies programs allow students to combine the credits they may have accumulated as a result of changing their curriculum while searching for their best educational plan. The general studies programs also serve as a stepping stone for students wishing to further their education at the undergraduate and graduate levels.

The interdisciplinary studies degree programs have a significant population of students consisting of local traditional students, student-athletes, and non-traditional adult students. The traditional and non-traditional student population demands flexible college courses. The general studies programs are available part-time, full-time, on-campus, online, or in hybrid formats. Daytime, weekend, and accelerated online courses allow education to fit seamlessly into our students' busy lives. Consistent with the mission of McNeese State University, the general studies degree programs focus on the educational and economic needs of Southwest Louisiana. We change the lives of students through a mix of research, instruction, and student life activities, with a focus on student learning and mentoring.

6 Institutional Mission Reference

The mission of the university is to "change lives". The BGS degree allows students who have credits from pursuing other degrees to easily move them into this program and complete a four-year degree. The vast majority of students who finish the BGS come from other programs or transfer in from other schools. It fills the niche for so many students who would otherwise drop out of college without completing their degree. Having the flexibility to complete the degree through on-campus or on-line formats, we literally change lives every semester. We also maintain all the academic standards of the university, BOR, and UL System to assure that the AGS and BGS degrees meet the same academic rigor as our other degree programs.

Interdisciplinary Studies Rationale

It is reasonable for institutions of higher learning, such as McNeese State University to reorganize themselves around new structures that best support students. The primary goal of the reorganization of what is now the Department of Interdisciplinary Studies within the College of Liberal Arts is to provide an opportunity for undergraduate students to learn and work in an interdisciplinary environment and to gain real-world experience through internships and a capstone experience in professionalism.

The Interdisciplinary Studies associate (AIS) and bachelor's (BIS) degree will allow students to self-design their own major by combining different disciplines together and by doing so, will develop perspectives that are unique, diverse, and conducive to problem solving and critical thinking in today's global environment.

7 Assessment and Benchmark GNST 400 Ethical Workplace Scenario

Assessment: GNST 400 Ethical Workplace Scenario.

Benchmark: 90% of students will earn a score of 90% or better on this assignment.

Prior to 2014-2015, the benchmark was for 90% of students to earn 67.5% or better.

Files: See list of attachments to view. (Requires Adobe Reader or compatible viewer).

Critical Thinking Rubric

Course Links

GNST400 [General Studies Capstone (Lec. 1, Cr. 1)]

Outcome Links

Critical Thinking [Program]

Graduates solve problems using critical thinking skills.

7.1 Data

Ethical Workplace Scenerio: Data Prior to 2017-2018		
Academic Year	% of students earning 90% or higher	Benchmark met?
2014-2015	89%	No
2015-2016	58%	No
2016-2017	90%	No

Ethical Workplace Scenerio: Traditional Program: 62 students						
Academic Year	Students earning 90% or higher		Mean	Median	Mode	Benchmark met?
	#	%				
2016-2017	–	90%	–	–	–	Yes
2017-2018	–	81%	69.53	75	75	No
2018-2019	48/62	77%	68	75	75	No

Ethical Workplace Scenerio: Online Program: 73 students						
Academic Year	Students earning 90% or higher		Mean	Median	Mode	Benchmark met?
	#	%				
2016-2017	–	89%	–	–	–	No
2017-2018	–	89%	71.76	75	75	No
2018-2019	60/73	82%	70	75	75	No

***135 total Students 2018-2019**

***Assignment is worth 75 points**

Course Links

GNST400 [General Studies Capstone (Lec. 1, Cr. 1)]**7.1.1 Analysis of Data and Plan for Continuous Improvement**

2015-2016:

The benchmark was raised to 90% of students earning 90% or better on their assignment, but we raised the benchmark too much.

2017-2018:

In 2017-2018 we started tracking data in a new chart to try to determine a better benchmark. The score range for this assignment was 0 to 75.

The GNST 400 class covers a full chapter on ethics in the workplace and we hope that stressing this information will improve scores in this area. Current year statistics show a decline in scores. We will track them another year to see if this trend holds.

We would like to keep the benchmark at 90% until we receive mean, median, and mode scores from this area for a couple years to determine a new benchmark.

2018-2019:

Benchmark score is being reviewed with the re-organization of the department.

Course Links

GNST400 [General Studies Capstone (Lec. 1, Cr. 1)]

8 Assessment and Benchmark GNST 400 Cover Letter and Resume

Assessment: One page cover letter and résumé to a prospective employer.

Benchmark: 75% of students will earn a score of 90% or higher on this assignment.

Prior to 2016-2017, the benchmark was 85% of students earning 90% or higher on this assignment.

Files: See list of attachments to view. (Requires Adobe Reader or compatible viewer).

Learning Outcome Writing Enriched rubric 2012

Course Links

GNST400 [General Studies Capstone (Lec. 1, Cr. 1)]

Outcome Links

Communication [Program]

Graduates formulate and express ideas effectively through written and/or technological communications skills.

8.1 Data

Cover Letter and Resume: Data Prior to 2017-2018		
Academic Year	% of students earning 90% or higher	Benchmark met?
2014-2015	80%	No
2015-2016	74%	No
2016-2017	77%	No

Cover Letter and Resume: Traditional Program: 62 Students						
Academic Year	Students earning 90% or higher		Mean	Median	Mode	Benchmark met?
	#	%				
2016-2017	–	78%	–	–	–	No
2017-2018	–	70%	89.66	95	100	No
2018-2019	48/62	77%	90	96	100	Yes

Cover Letter and Resume: Online Program 73 students						
Academic Year	Students earning 90% or higher		Mean	Median	Mode	Benchmark met?
	#	%				
2016-2017	–	89%	–	–	–	No
2017-2018	–	89%	90.98	95	100	Yes
2018-2019	60/73	92%	96	100	100	Yes

***135 total Students 2018-2019**

*Assignment worth 100 points

Course Links

GNST400 [General Studies Capstone (Lec. 1, Cr. 1)]

8.1.1 Analysis of Data and Plan for Continuous Improvement

2016-2017:

The capstone course will continue to be delivered in an online format through Moodle. Efficient navigation of Moodle is essential for completion of this course and demonstrates the ability to communicate using technology. The rubric developed by the English and Foreign Languages department will continue to be the tool used to assess written communication skills.

The benchmark for this assessment has been too high. The new benchmark will be set at 75% of students earning at least 90% on this assignment. While we do believe the benchmark was set too aggressively, we have revised our course effective fall 2017 to include referring each student to our Career and Student Development Center for assistance with their résumé and cover letter. We have also added a seven-question survey to try to determine if students are using these services.

2017-2018:

In 2017-2018 we started tracking data in the following chart to try to determine a better benchmark. The score range for this assignment was 0 to 100.

The benchmark was met with the distance learners but not met with the face-to-face learners. This would be the opposite of what I expected since the face-to-face learners do have the added benefit of being able to utilize the Career Services office on campus to assist with resume and cover letter preparation. Our survey results from this year indicated that of the 26 voluntary responses, only 11 indicated that they utilized the Career Services office for assistance. This is the first year we have data from this survey and only the second year we have tracked these statistics broken down by face-to-face vs distance. We are looking into how we can revise our lesson and improve students resume and cover letters for the upcoming year. We would like to keep the benchmark the same until the new data being collected on mean, median, and mode scores can be reviewed and a better benchmark set.

2018-2019:

Although the benchmark score was met, it is being reviewed with the re-organization of the department.

Course Links

GNST400 [General Studies Capstone (Lec. 1, Cr. 1)]

9 Assessment and Benchmark GBST 400 Final Reflective Essay

Assessment: GBST 400 Final Reflective Essay.

Benchmark: Students will earn an overall average score of 95% or better on this essay.

Files: See list of attachments to view. (Requires Adobe Reader or compatible viewer).

GNST 400 Final Essay Rubric

Course Links

GNST400 [General Studies Capstone (Lec. 1, Cr. 1)]

Outcome Links

Integrative Learning [Program]

Graduates demonstrate integrative learning through connecting academic knowledge and life experience.

9.1 Data

Final: Data Prior to 2017-2018

Academic Year	Average Score	Benchmark met?
2014-2015	96.8%	Yes
2015-2016	—	—
2016-2017	75%	No

*67% for students with GPA lower than 2.5, 100% for students with GPA above 2.5.

Final: Traditional Program: 62 Students						
Academic Year	Average Score		Mean	Median	Mode	Benchmark met?
	#	%				
2016-2017	—	76%	—	—	—	No
2017-2018	—	64%	91.96	100	100	No
2018-2019	53/62	85%	96	100	100	No

Final: Online Program: 73 Students						
Academic Year	Average Score		Mean	Median	Mode	Benchmark met?
	#	%				
2016-2017	—	67%	—	—	—	No
2017-2018	—	61%	90.91	100	100	No
2018-2019	67/73	91%	98	100	100	Yes

***135 total Students 2018-2019**

***Assignment worth 100 points**

Course Links

GNST400 [General Studies Capstone (Lec. 1, Cr. 1)]

9.1.1 Analysis of Data and Plan for Continuous Improvement

2016-2017:

The Integrative Learning VALUE rubric created by the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) will continue to be used, but in a revised form. Writing prompts in the reflective essay were revised this year.

2017-2018:

In 2017-2018 we started tracking data in the following chart to try to determine a better benchmark. The score range for this assignment was 0 to 100.

The benchmark was not met. In analyzing scores from the two instructors who teach this course, the scores are vastly different. One instructor would have met the benchmark and one would have almost no student meeting it. I have talked with the instructors to ask them to come to some sort of an agreement on what the rubric is measuring and try to get their scoring more consistent with each other. We will see if this impacts the benchmark for next year. Would like to leave the benchmark where it is for another year.

2018-2019:

Benchmark score is being reviewed with the re-organization of the department.

Course Links

GNST400 [General Studies Capstone (Lec. 1, Cr. 1)]

End of report