

3.5.1 The institution identifies college-level general education competencies and the extent to which graduates have attained them. (College-level competencies)

Compliance Status: Compliant

Narrative

Polk State College (PSC) has identified college-level General Education (GenEd) competencies that are assessed using a multitude and wide-ranging means of measurement, including outcome data that is collected from PSC graduates.

Polk State College is currently finalizing its revised General Education review process. In the first stage of this project, (begun in 2007 and completed in 2009), a [Gen Ed Task Force](#) (with faculty representation from all areas of the curriculum) reviewed the General Education outcomes in place at the time and made revisions to update those outcomes (Meeting Minutes: [October 2007](#), [November 2007](#), [December 2007](#), [January 2008](#), and [March 2008](#)).

The committee reviewed the outcomes of the other community colleges in Florida, as well the five recommended outcomes provided by the Florida Council of Instructional Affairs, a committee consisting of the academic vice presidents and deans of the 28 state colleges. The General-Education Committee reviewed and updated the purpose of the General Education Program, and this change was approved by the Academic Quality Council (AQC) in [March of 2009](#). The revised General Education Outcomes are as follows in Table 3.5.1 -1.

Table 3.5.1-1 PSC General Education Outcomes

<i>Communication</i>	<i>Demonstrate the ability to read, write, speak, and listen effectively, utilizing standard English</i>
<i>Critical Thinking</i>	<i>Demonstrate the ability to reflect on, analyze, synthesize, and apply information through problem solving</i>
<i>Scientific and Quantitative Reasoning</i>	<i>Apply mathematical and scientific principles and methods to solve abstract and real-world problems</i>
<i>Information Literacy</i>	<i>Demonstrate the ability to access, evaluate, incorporate, organize, and document information</i>
<i>Diversity</i>	<i>Demonstrate an ability to work with diverse people and show respect for their values, ideas, rights, and backgrounds</i>
<i>Culture</i>	<i>Demonstrate knowledge of global cultural influences</i>
<i>Ethics</i>	<i>Identify and describe ethical principles and their application</i>
<i>Social Responsibility</i>	<i>Understand behaviors that lead to personal, social, and professional responsibility</i>

The faculty began the assessment process by first aligning the Course Outcomes with the General Education Outcomes ([Course Matrix](#)). The Office of Institutional Research, Effectiveness and Planning assisted the faculty in gathering evidence to ensure that graduates have attained these outcomes ([Outcomes Matrix](#)). Faculty began measuring the General Education Outcomes via the course outcomes in Fall Semester of 2008. While the assessment project is ongoing, the Basic Course Information (BCI) documents have been updated to reflect the revised General-Education Outcomes ([BCI Bio](#), [BCI Coll Alg](#), [BCI ENC](#), [BCI PSY](#)). The BCI is given to each instructor and is made available to all students [online](#).

In addition to aligning Course Outcomes with the General Education Outcomes, the BCI includes general course and instructor information, as well as information about credits, pre-requisites, the course description, the course content, the availability of student help, the withdrawal process and repeating a course, academic integrity policies, PSC information technology policies, equal opportunity contacts for students with disabilities, and applicable departmental

policies. The individual syllabus ([Syllabus Bio](#), [Syllabus Chem](#), [Syllabus Chem 2](#), [Syllabus Coll Alg](#), [Syllabus ENC](#), [Syllabus Phys Sci](#), [Syllabus SYG](#)) provided by the instructors includes items such as the instructor's attendance and grading policy.

A larger committee has been formed (link [meeting minutes](#)). The committee include many members of the Academic Quality Council ([Curriculum Committee](#)) The goal of this review is for faculty to look at the distribution of the 36-credits in the General Education Program, determine what courses will be included in the General Education Program, and discuss any additional means of measuring and student learning outcomes and reviewing the General Education review process.

General Education Assessment

At the heart of the General Education evaluation process is the College's [Educational Program Assessment \(EPA\) Model](#), which is designed to apply triangulation as an overarching method of assessment (see *Comprehensive Standard* 3.3.1.1 for a more detailed explanation). Each GenEd course has identified course objectives that are linked to one or more General Education goals as shown by PSC's [GenEd Matrix](#). As indicated earlier, each of those objectives is defined and published via the Basic Course Information ([BCI](#)) documents of the College, while each associated GenEd Student Learning Outcome (SLO) is defined in more detail via the College's [General Education Assessment Form](#).

The measures the College uses to determine the extent PSC graduates have attained college level competencies are described as follows:

Course/Program Level Measures

All academic departments are responsible for determining assessment methods appropriate to their goals, and also for providing evaluation of the degree of goal attainment based on the assessment information available. Evaluation of the General Education (GenEd) program components is a collaborative process involving the district office, academic deans, departments, and departmental [Assessment Coordinators](#) (AC), while the College's Office of Institutional Research, Effectiveness, and Planning coordinates the assessment-data collection activities and facilitates/supports the process.

Each *General Education Assessment Form* is completed by the responsible faculty AC. A summary of assessment outcomes is also provided at the beginning of the College's GenEd Report via the [GenEd Outcomes Matrix](#). Since each course has intended GenEd SLO target values ([example](#)), and there is also a brief assessment to the extent that the desired SLO targets have been accomplished or not. A comprehensive [General Education Review Report](#) is compiled and published as part of the College's [Institutional Effectiveness Report](#) which includes the first two years of data collection within the College's [GenEd Review Cycle](#) (see Table 3.5.1-2 below).

Table 3.5.1-2 General Education Review Cycle 2007-2011

General Education Review Process Cycle at Polk State College				
Current Cycle	2007	2008-2009	2010	2011
Process Phases	Define/Refine Institution-wide GenEd Goals	Assess Student Learning Outcomes	Review Assessment Data	Implement Curricular Improvements
Next Cycle	2011	2012-2013	2014	2015

Assessment results for 2008-2009 have been published as part of PSC's [Institutional Effectiveness Report](#) (IER) and, as indicated in the timeline of Table 3.5.1-2, will undergo departmental and college-wide review during 2010. A summary analysis shows that, on average, 75.3% of students enrolled in GenEd courses, are achieving the desired student learning outcomes across those portions of the GenEd curriculum that faculty members have associated with the College's eight GenEd goals. Table 3.5.1-3 summarizes the preliminary findings. Course-specific outcome summaries, sorted by departmental area, are provided as

part of PSC's [General Education Review 2010](#) report.

Table 3.5.1-3 General Education Assessment Results 2008-2009

	Communication	Critical Thinking	Scientific Reasoning	Information Literacy	Diversity	Culture	Ethics	Social Responsibility
Average Value	82.5%	72.0%	64.6%	71.3%	74.5%	76.0%	76.6%	84.9%
Lowest Value	54.7%	34.9%	26.5%	41.3%	45.0%	45.0%	45.0%	81.2%

Accountability Measures

Post-graduation measures are provided as part of the Florida College System's [Program Review Level I Data Reports](#), which summarize GPA and a variety of other performance measures to track the accomplishments of the College's AA degree completers across State University System (SUS) enrollment. A particular important measure of GenEd assessment is the comparison of transfer students from PSC to the University of South Florida (USF), and the USF native students; this is due to the significant overlap of service areas for these students and the fact that most of PSC's completers transfer to USF. [Results for the last 5 years](#) show that PSC students perform at or above the level of USF native students across all or most measures.

In addition, PSC's AA transfer rate of 74% matches exactly the state average and has increased by 7% compared to the 5-year average assessed by the Florida legislature's Office Of Program Policy Analysis & Government Accountability (OPPAGA) in their January 2010 report about AA graduates from Florida College System institutions pursuing baccalaureate degrees in Florida. When combined, both of these measures are excellent indicators that PSC's AA graduates successfully transfer to 4-year institutions, and are considered key measures of effectiveness.

The data provided in the *Federal Requirements 4.1* section will provide further detail about two of the following key measures:

- AA degree transfer performance (M-5) as the percentage of students who transfer to a state university and have a Grade Point Average (GPA) of 2.5 or above. Traditionally, a high proportion of PSC students does very well after transfer and the College exceeds the FSC average in this measure for four years in a row.
- College Level Academic Skills Performance (M-5). This measure is defined as the percentage of students who passed the CLAST (or CLAST Alternative) after completing 60 or more college credit hours. For the third year in a row, the PSC values have been almost identical to the state averages in this measure, with PSC students requiring remediation performing to the same degree below their peers in the state than PSC students not requiring remediation did perform above state means for that group.

FETPIP Data

The College annually assesses the performance of its AA degree completers via the Florida Education and Training Placement Information Program (FETPIP). FETPIP is a data collection and reporting system established by [Florida Statute Section 1008.39, Florida Education and Training Placement Information Program](#), to provide follow-up data on former students. The FETPIP information ([2007 Report](#), [2008 Report](#)) provided describes continuing education experiences and other measures that inform about the success of PSC's GenEd programming for its AS and AAS program completers.

Student Perceptions

An additional section of the annual IER is devoted to student's perceptions of the College and their instructional experiences at PSC. The [2009 Student Perceptions Report](#) presents the responses of PSC graduates completing the survey just before each of the fall 2008, spring 2009, and fall 2009 graduation. Results displayed in Table 3.5.1-4 are noteworthy, since they show how much students believe that their educational experience at PSC contributed to personal growth in each of the areas listed. The five bolded items indicate where this contribution has been perceived as being particularly strong.

Table 3.5.1-4 Results of PSC Graduation survey 2007-2009

How much did your educational experience at PSC contribute to your personal growth in each area?	Very Much	Somewhat	Very Little	Doesn't Apply
Writing Effectively	49%	40%	7%	4%
Speaking Effectively	43%	40%	10%	7%
Understanding Written Information	47%	39%	9%	5%
Working Independently	52%	33%	9%	6%
Following Directions	50%	34%	8%	8%
Working Cooperatively in a Group	48%	37%	9%	6%
Organizing Your Time Effectively	56%	33%	7%	4%
Learning on Your Own	57%	32%	6%	5%
Managing Personal/Family Finances	35%	32%	16%	17%
Understanding Consumer Issues	33%	38%	12%	17%
Caring for Your Own Physical and Mental Health	43%	36%	11%	10%
Planning and Carrying Out Projects	49%	39%	7%	6%
Persisting at Difficult Tasks	58%	32%	6%	4%
Leading/Guiding Others	44%	39%	9%	8%
Recognizing Citizen's Rights, Responsibilities & Privileges	42%	35%	12%	11%


PSC's Baccalaureate Program

The program learning outcomes for each of the concentrations within the Bachelor of Applied Science (BAS) in Supervision and Management degree program were developed during 2008. The program curriculum and its learning outcomes are based on local and statewide industry requirements and are in alignment with similar programs offered by the Florida state colleges. The processes for determining the achievement of educational goals in the BAS degree program is consistent with the existing program assessment measures in place for the College's associate degree programs; this review follows the College's current strategic planning and assessment cycle.

As indicated earlier, it should be noted that the review of GenEd assessment data will continue through Academic Year 2010 for the implementation of curricula improvements in 2011. Additional assessment and accountability activities that are not covered in this narrative or as part of the annual IE reporting provided, are presented in more detail in *Comprehensive Standard 3.3.1.1*, and the *Federal Requirements Section 4.1* of this compliance certification.

Evidence

 [Gen Ed Task Force](#)

-  [Gen Ed minutes 10-8-07](#)
-  [Gen Ed minutes 11-7-07](#)
-  [Gen Ed minutes 12-5-07](#)
-  [Gen Ed minutes 1-24-08](#)
-  [Gen ed minutes 3-3-08](#)
-  [AOC Mtg Minutes 3-16-09](#)
-  [Gen Ed - Course Matrix](#)
-  [Gen Ed - Outcomes Matrix](#)
-  [BCI Bio](#)
-  [BCI Coll Alg](#)
-  [BCI ENC](#)
-  [BCI PSY](#)
-  [Basic Course Information Online](#)
-  [Syllabus Bio](#)
-  [Syllabus Chem](#)
-  [Syllabus Chem2](#)
-  [Syllabus Coll Alg](#)
-  [Syllabus Enc](#)
-  [Syllabus Phys Sci](#)
-  [Syllabus Syg](#)
-  [GenEd Committee Minutes 1-22-10](#)
-  [Gen Ed Committee](#)
- Curriculum Committee
-  [PSC Educational Program Assessment \(EPA\) Model](#)
-  [PSC Assessment Form 2009-10 \(blank\)](#)
-  [Assessment Coordinators 2009-10](#)
-  [PSC Course Assessment Form MAC 1105](#)
-  [PSC GenEd Review Report 2010](#)
-  [GenEdCycle](#)
-  [PSC IE-Report 2009](#)
-  [PSC GenEd Review Report 2010](#)
-  [PSC Level-1 Articulation Reports 2008-2009](#)
-  [PSC-USF Level-1 5-Year Summary Report](#)
-  [FS 1008.39 FETPIP](#)
-  [FETPIP 2007](#)
-  [FETPIP 2008](#)
-  [PSC 2009 Student Perceptions Report](#)