

## COM-FSM Chuuk Campus

### CERTIFICATE OF ACHIEVEMENT IN GENERAL STUDIES

#### ASSESSMENT MATRIX

#### PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES (PLOS)

Source: COM-FSM General Catalog 2005-2007 (p. 73)

- (1) Identify types of jobs available in the workplace and explore specific career field
- (2) Demonstrate general computer competence
- (3) Describe family health issues
- (4) Recognize basic science facts and principles
- (5) Demonstrate an understanding of social issues in both the home and the workplace

#### PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS (through the school year 2006-2007)

Certificate Core Requirements = 16 credits

ESL 079 Study Skills (3)

ESL 087 Listening and Speaking II (3)

ESL 089 Reading V (3)

ESL 099 Writing V (3)

MS 098 Transition to Algebra (4)

Certificate Program Requirements = 18 credits

CA 100 Computer Literacy (3)

SC 094 Family Health (3)

SC 098 Survey of Science (3)

SS 098 Introduction to Social Sciences (3)

SS 100 World of Work (3)

SS 150 History of Micronesia (3)

#### ASSESSMENT MATRIX

**I** = introduced, **D** = developed and practiced with feedback, **M** = demonstrated at the mastery level appropriate for graduation

| Course  | PLO1 | PLO2 | PLO3 | PLO4 | PLO5 |
|---------|------|------|------|------|------|
| ESL 079 |      |      |      |      |      |
| ESL 087 |      |      |      |      |      |
| ESL 089 |      |      |      |      |      |
| ESL 099 |      |      |      |      |      |
| MS 098  |      |      |      |      |      |
| CA 100  |      | I,D  |      |      |      |
| SC 094  |      |      | I    |      |      |
| SC 098  |      |      |      | I    |      |
| SS 098  |      |      |      |      | I    |
| SS 100  | I    |      |      | I    | I    |
| SS 150  |      |      |      |      |      |

The use of Dr. Mary Allen’s assessment matrix reveals the following realities:

- That only 5 General Studies courses – certificate program requirements (excluding SS 150) – encourage student learning in accordance with GS PLOs. Here, we must accept the supposition that the five certificate core requirements (ESL 079, ESL 087, ESL 089, ESL 099, and MS 098) as well as SS 150 are not specific to the needs of GS students but aligned to most of COM-FSM’s student learning outcomes for general education (General Catalog, pp. 39-40).
- That the certificate program requirements (excluding SS 150) introduce PLOs with almost no development and practice with feedback (D) and with absolutely no demonstration of mastery (M). Two exceptions exist. First, only CA 100 encourages student learning at the D-level. Second, only SS 100 encourages student learning (only at the I-level) in three PLOs.

This finding from the assessment matrix raises a number of pertinent questions regarding GS self-assessment and self-improvement:

- (1) Should we abandon the GS certificate program inasmuch as only 5 of the 11 courses make any attempt to initiate GS PLOs? Should we remove the 5 certificate core requirements, notwithstanding the need to fulfill COM-FSM’s student learning outcomes for general education, or should we replace such core requirements with other courses that address much more directly the needs of the GS program and its students, or should we revise the course learning outcomes (CLOs) embedded in the core requirements to make them more specific to the needs of the GS program and its students?
- (2) Should we change a number of PLOs? After all, five of the certificate program requirements merely introduce PLOs, and only CA 100 offers GS students the limited opportunity to learn at the D-level. Two potential changes may help to improve course offerings so that PLOs can indeed achieve the D-level. First, we may rewrite three PLOs, as underlined below:
  - PLO1: “*Identify types of jobs available in the workplace and explore specific careers in the field*”. We can now achieve the D-level through career-placement field trips, site visitations, and on-the-job observations.
  - PLO3: “*Describe family health issues and promote improvement in family health*”. We can now achieve the D-level through simulated family-menu preparation for lessons on nutrition and through practice of simple family-based physical fitness activities.
  - PLO5: “*Demonstrate an understanding of social issues at home, in the workplace, and in the community-at-large*”. We can now achieve the D-level through class projects or community services that require observation/participation in cultural literacy, including what is being revived in Chuuk as its “canoe culture” (i.e., the arts, the sciences, the humanities, and the maritime skills of traditional navigation).<sup>(1)</sup>

Second, rather than to revise the PLOs themselves, we may rewrite course outlines so that they reflect the thrust toward student learning at the D-level (even though no course attempts to achieve the M-level). Or, might we consider both changes – at the PLO level and at the CLO level?

**Recommendation #1:** *That the Curriculum Review Committee consider and approve the three proposed changes in PLO1, PLO3, and PLO5, to reflect the need of GS students to develop and practice with feedback (the D-level) and, in making such changes, to incorporate student learning activities that include M-level activities.*

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<sup>(1)</sup> For more information, please refer to Floyd Takeuchi, “Sailing With the Winds”, Pacific Magazine (Vol. 31, No. 4, Issue 208, July/August 2006), p. 6.

**Recommendation #2:** *That the course outline for SS 100 (World of Work) be revised to expand PLO1 and PLO5 so that key CLOs and SLOs direct student learning toward the D-level.*

**Recommendation #3:** *That the course outline for SC 094 (Family Health) be revised to make it less science and more social science (i.e., SS 094). This effort is on-going at the Chuuk Campus, pending other corresponding activities.<sup>(2)</sup>*

**Recommendation #4:** *That SS 150 (History of Micronesia) be replaced by SS 102c (Local Social System – Chuuk). This effort is scheduled to take effect no later than the Summer 2007 or Fall Semester 2007 and may be of benefit only in Chuuk, not elsewhere in the system.<sup>(3)</sup>*

## **PROGRAM GOALS**

The GS certificate program has no stated goal (General Catalog 2005-2007, page 73). All the same, the program requirements look like antecedent courses to “liberal arts” (i.e., a “multidisciplinary constellation of courses”). So, should we revise the program by setting appropriate goals and/or by defining how it serves as a stepping stone (General Catalog 2005-2007, page 60) to a degree program?

The program is in fact a series of developmental courses with nowhere to go. The five core requirements match no PLOs, and the six program requirements achieve very little at the PLO-level. Do we in the COM-FSM system have the right to advise students to take GS courses when we do not even have any GS goal? When we at the Chuuk Campus register students in GS courses, should we truthfully inform them that they have no known goal to achieve? We may have to overhaul the entire concept and practice of developmental coursework, even before we advise and register students to take GS courses.

## **PROGRAM HISTORY**

No records on the Chuuk Campus are available to describe GS program history. Inquiries to other state campuses have not informed on program history.

## **PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

This program presently has 11 major requirements of 34 credit hours. A description of each course, as shown above in “Program Requirements”, may be found in the General Catalog 2005-2007:

(01) ESL 079: Study Skills

*This course is designed to introduce students who are concurrently enrolled in ESL classes to academic study skills that will help develop the habits necessary for success in college.*

(02) ESL 087: Listening and Speaking II

*This course continues listening and speaking skills development with a strong emphasis on academic skills.*

(03) ESL 089: Reading V

*This course provides a more advanced focus on pre-reading, reading, and post-reading skills and strategies.*

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<sup>(2)</sup> The Curriculum Review Committee has tabled discussion on SS 094, as a replacement of SC 094. Such replacement would mean that the GS program would offer only one science course (SS 098). Program planners at the Chuuk Campus are presently considering the write-up of a new GS course for environmental studies.

<sup>(3)</sup> The Curriculum Review Committee has already approved SS 102c in lieu of SS 150. However, implementation has been delayed, pending identification of instructional staff. For one thing, we need to have an instructor certified. In addition, we need to find a way to have traditional navigation experts (without academic credentials) certified as co-instructors.

- (04) ESL 099: Writing V  
*Writing V is a writing-intensive course designed to improve the student's competency in academic writing through an increased understanding of the writing process, rhetorical patterns, and correct grammatical structures.*
- (05) MS 098: Transition to Algebra  
*This course is intended as a preparatory course for algebra. It is designed to review basic algebraic concepts before enrolling in MS 100 College Algebra.*
- (06) CA 100: Computer Literacy  
*An introduction to computer concepts and applications. Provides student basic knowledge of the computer hardware components and operating system and basic skills in using word processing, spreadsheet, database, and presentation application programs. Using the internet – electronic mail and the world wide web – is also covered.*
- (07) SC 094: Family Health  
*An introductory non-lab remedial/certificate science course about family health topics with emphasis on family structure, accurate mental and physical processes related to sexuality and family cycles, nutrition and diet, lifestyle diseases that affect families in Micronesia and limits of family resources to maintain the health of families.*
- (08) SC 098: Survey of Science  
*A non-lab remedial/certificate science course that emphasizes the development of science concepts for natural sciences such as chemistry, physics, earth science and biology, and hands-on experience to promote basic science skills such as measurement and the use of the scientific method of inquiry to explore the natural environment. In addition, scientific literacy and reading comprehension will be addressed to assist students in furthering their science education.*
- (09) SS 098: Introduction to Social Sciences  
*Introduces students to the basic skills and concepts in the social sciences.*
- (10) SS 100 (World of Work)  
*Provides the students with an opportunity to examine work roles, jobs, and attitudes relating to the world of work.*
- (11) SS 150: History of Micronesia  
*A study of Micronesian history from pre-history to the present.*

These courses ensure that GS students are introduced to expectations found in the five PLOs; however, as a set of courses, they are not intended to advance students to demonstration of mastery in the same learning outcomes.

### **ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS**

There are no formal admission requirements to the GS certificate program, except cut-off scores on the COMET. If students' COMET scores do not qualify them to enter the Intensive English Institute (IEI) and if the students choose not to enter the Bookkeeping Certificate Program, their only other option (at the certificate level) is to sign up for General Studies or for vocational education courses (and most students do not opt to take vocational education).

### **PROGRAM FACULTY**

The following faculty members taught GS courses during the school year 2005-2006, including Summer 2006:

| NAME              | FT/PT | DEGREE (AND FIELD OF STUDY)                     | STATUS             |
|-------------------|-------|---|--------------------|
| Buliche, Atkin    | FT    | B.S. (Computer and Information Systems)         | Asst.Prof.,Chair   |
| Chiwi, Richardson | FT    | B.A. (Education)                                | Asst.Prof., Chair  |
| Hartmann, Cecilia | PT    | B.A. (Sociology)                                | Instructor         |
| John, Jothy       | FT    | M.A. (Secondary Education)                      | Instructor         |
| Kanto, Kind       | FT    | B.S. (Biology)                                  | Asst.Prof.,Chair   |
| Olap, Wayne       | PT    | B.A. (History)                                  | Instructor         |
| Sipenuk, Lynn     | PT    | B.A. (General Studies)                          | Instructor         |
| Siver, Marino     | PT    | B.S. (Secondary Education, Biology)             | Instructor         |
| Winter, Steve     | PT    | Ph.D., M.S., B.M.E.<br>(Mechanical Engineering) | Instructor         |
| Ygana, Tente      | FT    | B.S. (Civil Engineering)                        | Voc.Ed. Instructor |

### **PROGRAM OUTCOME ANALYSIS**

The following data represent the experiences of the General Studies program during the school year 2005-2006, including the Summer of 2006:

| Health Indicator          | Fall 2004 | Spring 2005 | Summer 2005 |
|---------------------------|-----------|-------------|-------------|
| Program enrollment        | 211       | 199         | 33          |
| Graduation rate           | 12%       | 13%         | 6%          |
| Average class size        | 25        | 25          | 20          |
| Student's seat cost       | n/a       | n/a         | n/a         |
| Course completion rate    | 21%       | 22%         | 20%         |
| Student satisfaction rate | 12%       | 13%         | 6%          |
| Employability rate        | n/a       | n/a         | n/a         |
| Transfer rate             | n/a       | n/a         | n/a         |
| Program SLOs              | 5         | 5           | 5           |
| Course SLOs               | variable  | variable    | variable    |

### **FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS:** None.

Available data do not justify maintaining the General Studies Program, as is. To be sure, course and/or program changes may help to improve statements of learning outcomes, on paper. However, doubt regarding such statements remains for only one reason. Although data in the "Program Outcome Analysis" (above) are "less than desirable" at best, entry-level ability of GS students is already low. How much do we really expect the GS experience to help students make the quantum leap to successful graduation (or course completion)? Are we merely wasting students' time – for students who are just not college-ready – or squandering their use of US federal financial aids?

By definition, the General Studies Program is developmental. We are at a particular crossroad where we have now the opportunity to develop, or redevelop, the program – let it be done!