

**COMMITTEE ON ACADEMIC AND STUDENT AFFAIRS**

Wednesday, April 20, 2011

**SUBJECT:      REPORT ON ASSESSMENT:  
                 Academic Learning Compacts, General Education Curriculum**

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**PROPOSED COMMITTEE ACTION**

This is an information item. No action required.

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Assessment, in the broadest sense, is the appraisal and evaluation of a behavior, outcome, or achievement. Educational assessment generally means documenting, in measurable terms, knowledge, skills, attitudes and beliefs. The focus may be on the individual learner, a learning community, or the institution as a whole.

The mission of Assessment at Florida Atlantic University is to assess student learning outcomes. This may be accomplished through a review of Academic Learning Compacts for each degree program or a study of the new General Education Curriculum, known as the Intellectual Foundations Program.

In 2005, the Florida Board of Governors established a policy requiring each university to develop and implement Academic Learning Compacts (“ALCs”) to account for student achievement in Baccalaureate degree programs. Every year FAU submits a status report to the Florida Board of Governors on our progress in this area.

In 2008, the FAU Board of Trustees approved a new General Education Curriculum, known as the Intellectual Foundations Program (“IFP”), which went into effect in Fall 2009. The IFP is a carefully devised program of study with clearly stated learning objectives. Currently the Core Curriculum Committee is reviewing all syllabi to ensure that learning objectives are clearly outlined. In Fall 2011, this Committee will undertake a full-scale review to ascertain the extent that learning objectives are being met.

**IMPLEMENTATION PLAN/DATE**

Ongoing

**FISCAL IMPLICATIONS**

N/A

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**Supporting Documentation**

**Executive Summaries**

**Presented by:**

**Dr. Diane Alperin, Interim Provost**

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## **Academic Learning Compact Status Report for the Board of Trustees: Overview**

Prepared by: Dr. Gail Wisan  
University Director of Assessment  
Florida Atlantic University  
April 11, 2011

**Background:** Effective February 2005, Florida's Board of Governors established **Policy Guideline 05.02.15** for universities "to develop and implement Academic Learning Compacts" (ALCs) to "account for student achievement in baccalaureate degree programs."

- ALCs for each degree program must identify baccalaureate degree recipients' expected core learning outcomes (content/discipline knowledge and skills, communication skills, and critical thinking skills) and assessments to measure student achievement;
- FAU ALC's can be found at:  
<http://www.fau.edu/iea/assessment/alc.php> ;
- Each university must establish effective assessment and evaluation processes to gather information to ensure that students are achieving expected outcomes and "to improve student achievement and program effectiveness";
- Universities shall periodically submit status reports "that include an analysis of the progress being made in each baccalaureate program";
- Academic program reviews need to demonstrate "how information from periodic review of student learning outcomes, as well as from the evaluation of corresponding assessment mechanisms, has been used to improve student achievement and program effectiveness".

**Scope:** BOG Policy Guideline 05.02.15 applies to all State University System (SUS) institutions. An ALC is required for each and every baccalaureate degree program in each SUS institution.

### **Highlights of and Further Information Related to the ALC Status Report:**

- Annual reports on assessment of degree programs and their ALCs are filed with the BOG in January.
- FAU filed, according to schedule, its 2009-2010 annual Academic Learning Compacts (ALCs) Status Report in January, 2011.
- ALC bachelor's degree programs are regularly engaging in assessment and reporting results and planned improvements in the FAU Assessment Database.
- The interdisciplinary Arts and Humanities baccalaureate program in the Dorothy F. Schmidt College of Arts and Letters is the only FAU bachelor's degree program that does not have an extant ALC. The Dean of Arts and Letters appointed a professor to lead both this program and the interdisciplinary Social Science degree program in early 2011. Dr. Branaman has revised the requirements of the degree program and these changes have been approved by the UUPC. Using the new requirements structure, Dr. Branaman will create the ALC for the interdisciplinary Arts and Humanities baccalaureate degree.

**Academic Learning Compacts -- Status Report #8 2009-2010 (Due by January 21, 2011)**

University: Florida Atlantic University				Prepared By: Dr. Gail Wisan				Date: January 12, 2011		
Task									Date Submitted	
The University must construct clearly defined <b>POLICIES AND PROCEDURES</b> (aligned with System policies and including elements required in Policy Guidelines) for developing, implementing, and reviewing Academic Learning Compacts and associated activities. A current copy of each university's policies and procedures regarding Academic Learning Compacts shall remain on file in the Office of the Board of Governors.									1/18/2011	
<p>1. <b>PROCESS:</b> Program faculty have identified expected core student learning outcomes in the areas of communication, critical thinking, and content/ discipline knowledge and skills.</p> <p>2. <b>PRODUCT:</b> Program faculty have made core learning expectations in the areas of communication, critical thinking, and content/ discipline knowledge and skills readily available to prospective and enrolled students.</p> <p>3. <b>PROCESS:</b> Program faculty have identified the different ways in which individual students are assessed within the context of the program to determine if they have mastered the articulated core learning expectations.</p> <p>4. <b>PRODUCT:</b> Program faculty have included <b>EXAMPLES</b> of the kinds of assessments individual students will encounter in the program to determine if they have mastered these core learning expectations.</p> <p>5. <b>PROCESS:</b> Program faculty have developed a system of program assessment/ evaluation, including external validations, (which can involve sampling) to corroborate that graduates have truly attained the expected core competencies.</p> <p>6. <b>PRODUCT:</b> Program Faculty have submitted a Seven-Year Program Review Summary Report to the Board of Governors Office - Must include a hyperlink to the Academic Learning Compact for each baccalaureate degree program under review.</p> <p>7. <b>PROCESS:</b> Program faculty have used information from the periodic review of Student Learning Outcomes, as well as from the evaluation of corresponding assessment mechanisms to improve student achievement and program effectiveness.</p>										
CIP CODE	DEGREE TYPE(S)  (e.g., BA, BS, BFA, BEd, BBA, BAA)	PROGRAM TITLE  (MAJOR)	1. PROCESS:  Expected core student learning outcomes.	2. PRODUCT:  Core learning expectations POSTED ON THE WEB.	3. PROCESS:  How expectations are assessed in program.	4. PRODUCT:  EXAMPLES of how expectations are assessed in the program POSTED ON THE WEB.	5. PROCESS:  System of program assessment/ evaluation.	6. PRODUCT:  Seven-Year Program Review Summary Report SUBMITTED TO BOG VIA THE WEB.	7. PROCESS:  Use of information to improve student achievement and program effectiveness.	COMMENTS
040201	BArch	Architecture	CI	CI	CI	CI	CI		CI	
430103	BA	Criminal Justice	CI	CI	CI	CI	PC		PC	Crim. Justice has new faculty assess. Coordinator who is systematizing process and use of results.
430104	BPM	Public Management	CI	CI	CI	CI	CI		CI	
440701	BSW	Social Work	CI	CI	CI	CI	CI		CI	
040301	BURP	Urban and Regional Planning	CI	CI	CI	CI	CI		CI	
450201	BA	Anthropology	CI	CI	CI	CI	CI		CI	
500701	BFA BFA BFA BA	Graphic Design Studio Art Computer Arts in Animation Art History	CI	CI	CI	CI	CI	2009-2010	CI	
240101	BA	Interdisc. Studies: Arts and Humanities	PC	PC	PC	PC	PC		PC	New Director Position created and faculty appointed as new Director to lead assessment and CI process.
450101	BA	Interdisc. Studies: Social Science	CI	CI	CI	CI	PC		PC	New Director Position created and faculty appointed as new Director to lead assessment and CI process.
090702	BA	Multimedia Studies	CI	CI	CI	CI	CI		CI	
231001	BA	Communication	CI	CI	CI	CI	CI		CI	
<p align="center">PLEASE USE THIS DESIGNATED KEY TO PROVIDE STATUS REPORT ON EACH PROGRAM: NS = No Evidence That Process/Product is Started. PC = Evidence That Process/Product Is Partially Completed. CI = Evidence That Process/Product is Completed and in Continuous Improvement Mode.</p>										

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230101	BA	English	CI	CI	CI	CI	CI		CI	
540101	BA	History	CI	CI	CI	CI	CI		CI	
380206	BA	Jewish Studies	CI	CI	CI	CI	CI		CI	
160102	BA BA	Linguistics Italian	CI	CI	CI	CI	CI		CI	
160501	BA BA	German	CI	CI	CI	CI	CI		CI	
160901	BA BA	French	CI	CI	CI	CI	CI		CI	
160905	BA BA	Spanish	CI	CI	CI	CI	CI		CI	
500901	BMP BME BA	Music Performance Music Education Music	CI	CI	CI	CI	CI	2009-2010	CI	
380101	BA	Philosophy	CI	CI	CI	CI	CI		CI	
451001	BA	Political Science	CI	CI	CI	CI	PC		PC	Process under review by Department
451101	BA	Sociology	CI	CI	CI	CI	CI		CI	
500501	BA	Theatre	CI	CI	CI	CI	CI	2009-2010	CI	
520301	BBA & BS	Accounting	CI	CI	CI	CI	CI		CI	
450601	BBA & BS	Economics	CI	CI	CI	CI	PC		PC	Changes in policy have led to increased enrollments and need to revise assessment process.
520801	BBA & BS	Finance	CI	CI	CI	CI	CI		CI	
510701	BHS	Health Services	CI	CI	CI	CI	CI		CI	
520901	BBA & BS	Hospitality and Tourism Management	CI	CI	CI	CI	CI		CI	
521201	BBA & BS	Management Information Systems	CI	CI	CI	CI	CI		CI	
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520201	BBA & BS	Management	CI	CI	CI	CI	CI		CI	
521101	BA	International Business & Trade	CI	CI	CI	CI	CI		CI	
521401	BBA & BS	Marketing	CI	CI	CI	CI	CI		CI	
131001	BA & BAE	Exceptional Student Education	CI	CI	CI	CI	CI	2007-2008	CI	
310505	BS & BSE	Exercise Science & Health Promotion	CI	CI	CI	CI	CI	2007-2008	CI	
131202	BA	Elementary Education - ESOL Endorsement	CI	CI	CI	CI	CI	2007-2008	CI	
131305	BA	English + Florida Teacher Certification	CI	CI	CI	CI	CI	2007-2008	CI	
131311	BA	Mathematics + Florida Teacher Certification	CI	CI	CI	CI	CI	2007-2008	CI	
131312	BA	Music + Florida Teacher Certification	CI	CI	CI	CI	CI	2007-2008	CI	
131316	BA BA BA	Biology + Florida Teacher Certification Chemistry + Florida Teacher Certification Physics + Florida Teacher Certification	CI	CI	CI	CI	CI	2007-2008	CI	
131317	BA	Social Science + Florida Teacher Certification	CI	CI	CI	CI	CI	2007-2008	CI	
140801	BS	Civil Engineering	CI	CI	CI	CI	CI		CI	
110101	BS	Computer Science	CI	CI	CI	CI	CI		CI	
140901	BS	Computer Engineering	CI	CI	CI	CI	CI		CI	
141001	BS	Electrical Engineering	CI	CI	CI	CI	PC		PC	Departments have merged and assessment process is under review.
141901	BS	Mechanical Engineering	CI	CI	CI	CI	CI		CI	
142401	BS	Ocean Engineering	CI	CI	CI	CI	CI		PC	Departments have merged and assessment process is under review.
240104	BA	Honors College: Liberal Arts & Sciences	CI	CI	CI	CI	CI		CI	
511601	BS	Nursing	CI	CI	CI	CI	CI		CI	
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260101	BA & BS	Biology	CI	CI	CI	CI	CI	2008-2009	CI	
400501	BA & BS	Chemistry	CI	CI	CI	CI	CI	2008-2009	CI	
400601	BA & BS	Geology	CI	CI	CI	CI	CI	2008-2009	CI	
450701	BA & BS	Geography	CI	CI	CI	CI	CI	2008-2009	CI	
270101	BA & BS	Mathematics	CI	CI	CI	CI	CI	2008-2009	CI	
400801	BA & BS	Physics	CI	CI	CI	CI	CI	2008-2009	CI	
420101	BA	Psychology	CI	CI	CI	CI	CI	2008-2009	CI	
421101	BS	Psychobiology	CI	CI	CI	CI	CI	2008-2009	CI	
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General Education Curriculum Assessment Status Report  
Prepared by Dr. Edward E. Pratt  
Dean of Undergraduate Studies  
April 2011

Florida Atlantic University's new general education curriculum, known as the Intellectual Foundations Program (IFP), received BOT approval in June 2008 and went into effect in fall 2009. The IFP is a carefully devised program of study with clearly stated learning objectives. A system of assessment has been instituted to ensure that all courses approved for the IFP meet the stated learning objectives. A guiding principle of IFP assessment is faculty ownership of student learning. If problems are identified in student learning, faculty must devise suitable remedies. Standardized testing oftentimes removes that ownership from faculty and is thus not a part of our assessment program. IFP assessment includes the following components:

1. Approval process. The Core Curriculum Committee carefully reviews all courses for inclusion in the IFP. Faculty must demonstrate how their course meets the stated learning objectives, both through an online approval process and by submitting their course syllabus. The approval process took place largely in 2008-2009, but several new courses have been considered for inclusion since the IFP went into effect in fall 2009.
2. Syllabi review. The Core Curriculum Committee has been undertaking a careful review of IFP syllabi to ensure that learning objectives are clearly outlined, as well as to ensure that the course meets our own expectations for a college-level course, which is also a key component of SACS reaccreditation. The review of syllabi will be complete by early May 2011.
3. Full-scale review. In fall 2011, every IFP course will undergo a full-scale review. The Core Curriculum Committee will examine not only course syllabi but student work in assignments and exams to ascertain the extent to which learning objectives are being met. This review is expected to be completed in December 2011. A regular, three-year, system of assessment will be instituted thereafter.

Reports from all IFP assessments will be given to departments and colleges, and they will be asked to address how they will respond to shortcomings. Evidence of improvement must appear in subsequent assessments.

In addition to IFP-specific assessment, the Office of University Assessment has conducted a careful review of student learning in lower-division mathematics courses and in courses designated as writing-intensive, most of which are also part of the IFP. The results from the mathematics assessment have been used to institute changes in instruction and to implement a system of coordination for multi-sectioned mathematics courses. These changes have led to significant improvements in passage rates in those courses. Results from the assessment of writing-intensive courses have been relayed to the departments teaching those courses. The assessment identified problems associated with some writing-intensive courses (philosophy and English, for example), and those departments will need to address particular deficiencies. This dual system of assessment will ensure that FAU students are receiving the best possible education in their formative years at this institution.



## **Intellectual Foundations Program : FAU's General Education Curriculum**

FAU believes that higher education should go well beyond the preparation of individuals for demanding careers in their chosen fields. It should also provide broad intellectual enrichment through systematic exposure to a diversity of academic experiences. The purpose of the general education curriculum in this endeavor is to develop the intellectual skills, habits of thought, ethical values, and love of learning that transcend the choice of major. These are the hallmarks of educated men and women capable of meeting effectively the social, political, and economic challenges of contemporary life. Perhaps at no other time in history has a well-rounded, inquiring intellect been more important and useful than in the world of rapid technological change and ever increasing globalization in which we now live. Thus, the mission of a comprehensive university education is to produce graduates who can intelligently analyze information, appreciate diverse peoples and ideas, and adapt to change through the self-motivated acquisition of new knowledge. Consequently, the FAU general education curriculum is a carefully devised program that draws on many subject areas to provide and reinforce essential skills and values from different points of view. It equips students with the academic tools they will need to succeed, not only as undergraduates in their degree programs but also as responsible citizens in a complex world. **The courses that comprise the FAU general education curriculum combine to develop:**

- 1. Knowledge in several different disciplines;**
- 2. The ability to think critically;**
- 3. The ability to communicate effectively;**
- 4. An appreciation for how knowledge is discovered, challenged, and transformed as it advances; and**
- 5. An understanding of ethics and ethical behavior.**

Students are invited to select from a number of courses, all at the lower-division level, in completing their general education requirements. All of the courses contribute to meeting the overall goals of the general education curriculum, thereby allowing flexibility in making individual choices. Students must complete a minimum of thirty-six credit hours of general education coursework, distributed as indicated in the six categories below.

Students who enter FAU as freshmen or as transfer students with fewer than 30 credits must fulfill the University's general education curriculum requirements as described below. A course may be used to simultaneously satisfy a general education curriculum requirement and a requirement of the student's major program. All course selections should be made in consultation with an advisor.

## **I. Foundations of Written Communication (6 credit hours)**

Learning to communicate effectively is much more than the putting of thoughts and ideas into words. Writing, in particular, allows us to develop and organize our thoughts and ideas in intelligible and meaningful ways. Effective communication involves the examination of evidence, the development of ideas, and the clear expression of those ideas. Communication also involves the application of ethical standards when using words or ideas that are not one's own. Courses that fulfill this requirement are designed not only to develop students' writing skills but their ability to think critically -- to question habitual ways of thinking, to move beyond obvious responses, and to develop new ways to see themselves and the world around them.

**Students who complete the Written Communication requirement will be able to:**

- 1. Produce clear writing that performs specific rhetorical tasks;**
- 2. Respond critically to a variety of written materials in order to position their own ideas and arguments relative to the arguments and strategies of others;**
- 3. Use writing not only to communicate but also to think critically -- examining assumptions that underlie the readings and their own writing;**
- 4. Demonstrate an understanding of the ethical standards that apply to the use of external sources in one's writing.**

## **II. Foundations of Mathematics and Quantitative Reasoning (6 credit hours)**

Mathematics is a peculiarly human endeavor that attempts to organize our experience in a quantitative fashion. It aids and supplements our intuitions about the physical universe and about human behavior. The Mathematics and Quantitative Reasoning requirement is intended to give students an appreciation of mathematics and to prepare them to think precisely and critically about quantitative problems.

**Students who satisfy the Mathematics and Quantitative Reasoning requirement will:**

- 1. Demonstrate an understanding of mathematical theories and their applications;**
- 2. Be able to identify and apply mathematical concepts most appropriate to solving quantitative problems.**

## **III. Foundations of Science and the Natural World (6 credit hours; two courses, one with a lab, from two different departments)**

Scientific principles are behind what we find in nature and in natural occurrences. Scientific issues, such as those dealing with stem-cell research, cloning, and global warming, are hotly debated by policy makers. Courses that meet this requirement share the goal of seeking to understand patterns and principles behind phenomena and occurrences, both in the inorganic world and in the living world. They typically fall

within either the physical sciences (Astronomy, Physics, Chemistry, and the Earth Sciences) or the Biological sciences.

**Students who satisfy the Science and the Natural World requirement will demonstrate:**

1. **An understanding of the nature of science, including important principles and paradigms;**
2. **An understanding of the limits of scientific knowledge and of how scientific knowledge changes;**
3. **An understanding of the nature of scientific inquiry and its ethical standards, in particular how to pose questions and how to develop possible explanations;**
4. **An ability to discern claims based on rigorous scientific methods from those based on illogical or incomplete scientific methods.**

**After completion of the associated lab, the student will:**

1. **Demonstrate an understanding of how experiments are conducted;**
2. **Be able to analyze resulting data; and**
3. **Be able to draw appropriate conclusions from such data.**

#### **IV. Foundations of Society and Human Behavior (6 credit hours; two courses from two different departments)**

The social sciences examine the forms of social activity. They study the social behavior of individuals and organizations, the structure of organizations and institutions, and the organization of society. Social science deals with such things as the formation of attitudes; how institutions develop, function, and change; how technology transforms society and social institutions; how societies change the environment and respond to environmental change; the relationships between individuals and society; and matters of race, gender, and class.

Courses that meet this requirement teach students to understand the complexities of human and societal behavior, to predict future behavior, and to understand the consequences of behavior.

**Students who satisfy the Society and Human Behavior requirement will:**

1. **Be able to identify patterns of human behavior;**
2. **Demonstrate an understanding of how political, social, cultural, or economic institutions influence human behavior;**
3. **Understand key social science methods and the theoretical foundations behind these methods;**
4. **Be able to apply social science methods to the analysis of social, cultural, psychological, ethical, political, technological, or economic issues or problems.**

## **V. Foundations in Global Citizenship (6 credit hours; two courses from two different departments)**

FAU students live in an increasingly diverse region. They also live in a world in which individuals, societies, and governments are becoming more and more interconnected. To succeed in this interconnected world, students must have an understanding of diverse cultures and inherited traditions; they must be able to communicate across these diverse cultures; they must understand why societies make the choices that they make; and they must have an awareness of how their actions affect others.

Courses that meet this requirement examine aspects of the diverse human experience (inclusive of issues of race, ethnicity, and gender), leading to a better understanding of ourselves and of people from other cultural traditions. Students will select courses from the following areas, one of which must be from the global perspectives category:

- 1. Western identities**
- 2. Global perspectives**

**Students completing the Global Citizenship requirement will demonstrate an understanding of:**

- 1. Different individual, cultural, and national identities;**
- 2. The economic, political, environmental, and/or social processes that influence human action/interaction.**

## **VI. Foundations of Creative Expression (6 credit hours; two courses from two different departments)**

Creative expression is a uniquely human attribute. Through literature, the creative and performing arts, and architecture, individuals and cultures express their values and ideals, as well as explore human potential, the human condition, and the imagination.

**Students fulfilling the Creative Expression requirement will demonstrate an understanding of:**

- 1. One or more forms/genres of creative expression;**
- 2. The theory or methods behind the creative expression;**
- 3. The social, cultural, or historical context of the creative expression(s).**