

**Kennesaw State University
Institutional Review Board**

Approval Request for Research with Human Participants

To ensure a more timely review of your study:

- Answer each question** on the IRB Approval Request.
- Check spelling and grammar.** This is a protected form. You must cut and paste your answers into the question blocks or unprotect the form to run the spell check feature in Word. To unprotect the form, select the Developer tab, select the "Restrict Editing" tool, select the "Stop Protection" button, run spell check. When you have finished checking spelling and grammar, select the "Yes, Start Enforcing Protection" button, and save your document. The form is not password protected, so there is no need to enter a password when prompted.
- Ensure consent documents contain all of the required elements of informed consent** (see <http://www.kennesaw.edu/irb/forms.html> for examples of a consent form and a consent letter). If required elements are missing, you will be asked to revise documents before the study is assigned to the board for review.
- Ensure all materials cited are referenced.** This may be done within the body of the IRB Approval Request or you may submit a separate reference document.
- Submit your materials** (or have your faculty advisor submit) to irb@kennesaw.edu:
 - a. IRB Approval Request
 - b. Consent document(s)
 - c. Survey instrument(s)
 - d. IRB training certificate for all researchers (unless CITI course has been completed at KSU)

Refer all questions to the IRB at (678) 797-2268 or irb@kennesaw.edu.

Status of Researcher: Faculty Staff Student Other (explain): _____

Title of Research:

Kennesaw State University General Education Learning Outcomes Assessment

Date Research Begins: 1-7-2012 **Date Research Ends:** 7-31-2015

Research is Funded Externally: Yes* No

***Name of Funding Agency**

By submitting this form, you agree that you have read KSU's "Assurance of Compliance" (<http://www.kennesaw.edu/irb/policies/assurance.doc>) and agree to provide for the protection of the rights and welfare of your research participants as outlined in the Assurance. You also agree to submit any significant changes in the procedures of your project to the IRB for prior approval and agree to report to the IRB any unanticipated problems involving risks to subjects or others.

Primary Investigator

Name:

Valerie Whittlesey

PI's Department:

Office of Provost

PI's Phone:

770-423-6603

PI's Email:

vwhittle@kennesaw.edu

Co-Investigator(s) who are faculty, staff, students at KSU:

Name: Tom Doleys, Tom Pusateri, Beth Daniell, Ryan Ronnenberg, Jeff DeWitt, Jan Phillips, Noah McLaughlin, Kristen Seaman, Edward Eanes, Sandra Parks Email: tdoleys@kennesaw.edu; tpusater@kennesaw.edu; bdaniell@kennesaw.edu; pryan4@kennesaw.edu; jdewitt@kennesaw.edu; jphillip@kennesaw.edu; nmclaugh@kennesaw.edu; kseaman1@kennesaw.edu; eeanes@kennesaw.edu; sparks8@kennesaw.edu	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Faculty <input type="checkbox"/> Staff <input type="checkbox"/> Student
Name: Email:	<input type="checkbox"/> Faculty <input type="checkbox"/> Staff <input type="checkbox"/> Student
Name: Email:	<input type="checkbox"/> Faculty <input type="checkbox"/> Staff <input type="checkbox"/> Student
Additional Names (include status and email):	

Co-Investigator(s) who are NOT employees or students at KSU:

Name: Email: Home Institution:
Name: Email: Home Institution:
Additional Names (include email and home institution):

FOR RESEARCH CONDUCTED BY STUDENTS OR NON-FACULTY STAFF: This research involving human participants, if approved, will be under the direct supervision of the following faculty advisor:

Faculty Advisor

Name:

Department:

Phone:

Email:

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1. Prior Research

Have you submitted research on this topic to the IRB previously? Yes* No

*If yes, list the date, title, name of investigator, and study number, if known:

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2. Description of Research

a. Purpose of research:

KSU articulated new learning outcomes for each core curriculum area and for three overlay areas (critical thinking, global perspectives, and U.S. perspectives), as specified by BOR policy. During the 2010-11 academic year, the learning outcomes were approved by the appropriate KSU curriculum review committees and administrators and the USG General Education Council.

Beginning fall, 2011, the KSU General Education Council (GEC) as well as departments and faculty teaching general education courses launched their student learning outcomes assessment of the general education program. As part of this study, randomly selected student work from general education courses will be identified and evaluated to determine whether students are achieving the learning outcomes of the program. General Education program assessment data and results will be reported in the following ways: 1) to KSU faculty and departments involved in the general education program so that continuous improvements can be made, 2) as a comprehensive program review report to the USG in 2015-16, 3) as part of the ten-year reaccreditation report to the SACS-Commission on Colleges in 2016-17, and 4) for assessment-related professional conferences and publications (e.g., scholarly journals and books). Presentations and publications of assessment work will be authored/co-authored by the PI and/or Co-Investigators of this IRB proposal.

b. Nature of data to be collected:

A Faculty Coordinator for General Education Learning Outcomes Assessment (GELOA) has been identified by the GEC and appointed by the Provost. This individual will provide overall coordination for general education assessment, including serving as a liaison to the General Education Disciplinary Assessment Coordinators. The courses in each core area that will be assessed are: Area A1- ENGL 1101 and 1102, Area A2- MATH 1101, 1111, 1112, 1113, and 1190, Area B- AMST 1102, COM 1109, FL 1002, and PHIL 2200, Area C- ART 1107, DANC 1107, MUSI 1107, and THTR 1107, Area D- SCI 1101 and SCI 1102 or CHEM 1211/L and 1212/L or CHEM 1151/L and 1152/L or PHYS 1111 and 1112 or PHYS 2111/L and 2112/L or GEOG 1112 or 1113, and Area E- HIST 1110 and POLS 1101. For each of the courses assessed, a faculty member for that discipline has been (or will be) identified to serve as a Disciplinary Assessment Coordinator (DAC). The DACs will coordinate general education assessment for their respective disciplines.

The nature of the data collected will be direct assessments of student learning that are already occurring in the General Education courses. Student work from class assignments and examinations may include: essays, short answers, papers assignments, and multiple choice questions. For those class assignments and examinations that are not objective (i.e.

not multiple choice questions), student work will be evaluated using rubrics that assess the general education learning outcomes. The rubrics will be created by the faculty teaching general education courses and coordinated by the DACs. The AAC&U's VALUE rubrics (http://www.aacu.org/value/rubrics/index_p.cfm?CFID=33597469&CFTOKEN=6933892) will serve as a starting point for developing the general education assessment rubrics.

Although this proposal is a request to use data collected from direct assessments of student learning occurring in General Education courses, this data will be supplemented by other, institutional indirect data of student learning. KSU has participated in the National Survey for Student Engagement (NSSE) (<http://nsse.iub.edu/>). Hundreds of four-year colleges and universities annually administer the NSSE survey to their students. The survey examines the amount of time and effort students put into their studies and other educational purposeful activities. It also examines how the institution deploys its resources and organizes the curriculum and other learning opportunities to get students to participate and engage in activities that are linked to student learning.

KSU participates in NSSE every three years (2004/5, 2008, and 2011), and KSU's Center for Statistics and Analytical Services analyses the data and reports the results to campus groups. The report compares educational growth for KSU students from the first to senior year and compares KSU first and senior year students against several benchmarks (USG institutions; institutions in KSU's Carnegie classification, and KSU's peer institutions). NSSE item #11 links most closely to KSU's general education learning outcomes. The PI and co-PIs, in addition to presenting and publishing data they have collected from direct assessments of student learning from General Education courses, would like to supplement the course-embedded data with KSU administrations of indirect NSSE data. Only summarized NSSE (item #11) data that the Center for Statistics and Analytical Services has presented to campus groups will be used.

c. Data collection procedures:

Assessment data will be collected over a four-year period. Learning outcomes A1 (Communications) and E (U.S. Perspectives) will be assessed during 2011-2012 (pilot year) and 2012-2013 (actual data collection); this first wave of assessment includes the disciplines of English and Political Science. Learning outcomes B (Institutional Options/Critical Thinking), C (Humanities/Global Perspectives), and E (Social Sciences) will be assessed during 2012-2013 (pilot year) and 2013-2014 (actual data collection); this second wave of assessment includes the disciplines of Communication, Foreign Languages, History, Interdisciplinary Studies, Philosophy, Art and Design, Theatre and Performance Studies, Music, and Dance. Finally, learning outcomes A2 (Quantitative) and D (Science/Mathematics/Technology) will be assessed during 2013-2014 (pilot year) and 2014-2015 (actual data collection); this third, final wave of assessment includes the disciplines of Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Geography, and Mathematics.

During the fall of the pilot year, the Faculty Coordinator for GELOA will work with the DACs to create instruments and rubrics to assess student work. During spring of the pilot year, the Faculty Coordinator for GELOA will train DACs and other faculty volunteers to collect pilot assessment data using the created instruments and report the pilot data results. During fall of the actual data collection year, the Faculty Coordinator for GELOA and DACs will review pilot data and refine the instruments and rubrics. During spring of the actual data collection year, the DACs will conduct assessment workshops with faculty teaching general education courses. Faculty will collect actual assessment data using the refined instruments and rubrics and report the data to the DACs. During the summer of the actual data collection year, the DACs, Faculty Coordinator for GELOA, and trained graduate students (or part-time faculty) will aggregate assessment data, analyze the results,

and report the results back to the General Education Council and faculty and departments teaching general education courses for use in making enhancements to the courses.

d. Instruments to be used:

Student work occurring in the course will be evaluated by General Education faculty members, trained graduate students, or part-time faculty. For non-objective assignments and examinations, these faculty or trained graduate students will use rubrics that assess the general education learning outcomes. If trained graduate students or part-time faculty are used, they will be supervised by DACs. The rubrics will be created by the DACs working with faculty teaching general education courses.

e. Method of selection/recruitment of participants:

Of the general education courses selected for assessment in each core area, all course sections will be assessed. Faculty will be asked to identify one assignment for evaluation, and to collect a small number of randomly selected work products (artifacts) from each course section for scoring.

f. Participant age range: **See below in incentives box** Number: **See below in incentives box**
Sex: Males Females Both

g. Incentives, follow-ups, compensation to be used:

The age range and gender distribution for the students assessed will be consistent with the age range for KSU's undergraduate student body, since those are the students taking general education courses. It is not possible to estimate how many students will be sampled, since we don't know how many general education courses each individual student will take and how many students will complete the assignment the faculty member has identified for evaluation. As described in the "Consent" section, all students younger than 18 years old are to sign and return the "opting out" form, so that their student work will not be used in presentations and publications from the study.

3. Risks

Describe in detail any psychological, social, legal, economic or physical risk that might occur to participants. *Note that all research may entail some level of risk, though perhaps minimal.*

No known risks

Anticipated risks include (this information should be reflected within consent documents):

4. Benefits

University policy requires that risks from participation be outweighed by potential benefits to participants and/or humankind in general. **Benefits should be reflected within consent documents.**

a. Identify benefits to participants resulting from this research:

KSU's general education program is designed as a solid, comprehensive

foundational academic experience for undergraduate students. Assessment of the program is critical and ensures that students have the requisite knowledge and skills for their major degree programs and ultimately, for a KSU graduate.

- b. Identify benefits to humankind in general resulting from this research:

5. Informed Consent

All studies must include informed consent. Consent may require signature or may simply require that participants be informed. If deception is necessary, please justify and describe, and submit debriefing procedures. What is the consent process to be followed in this study?

As mentioned, there are no risks associated with this project, and data will be anonymous. Names will be removed from student work, and aggregated data will be reported and presented.

Since all students taking general education course(s) receive a course syllabus, all general education course syllabi will include a paragraph about the general education assessment initiative, and there will be a link to a description of the general education assessment initiative and consent form on the General Education Program webpage of the Academic Affairs website. The description and consent form will: 1) describe the purposes and goals in assessing the general education program and courses, 2) describe the processes used to ensure confidentiality of student work and identify no known risks of the assessment initiative, 3) indicate that student work will be randomly selected from the population of all students enrolled in general education courses, and 4) provide an "opt out" option if a student doesn't want his/her student work used for presentations and publications resulting from the assessment initiative. The description and consent form makes the following clear. 1) Students who do not want their student work included in presentations and publications resulting from the study should "opt out" by completing the form at the link. 2) All students younger than 18 years old are to sign and return the "opting out" form, so that their student work will not be used in presentations and publications from the study. (The DACs will ask all general education faculty members to double check Owl Express to ensure that all students younger than 18 have completed the "opting out" form. DACs will also ask all general education faculty members to mention this "opting out" procedure to all students during the first day of class.) Since a large number of KSU's undergraduate students are taking one or more general education courses each semester, providing a signed "opt out" is the most efficient and accurate method for ensuring student consent or nonconsent related to this study for both the student and the course instructor.

Use of Online Survey Programs

If your study involves use of an online survey, you must:

- a. Provide participants with information regarding whether or not the survey software has been programmed to collect Internet Protocol (IP) addresses (see http://www.kennesaw.edu/irb/documents/online_survey_tips.html) by selecting and including one of the following three statements in your consent document.

Data collected will be handled in an anonymous manner and Internet Protocol addresses **WILL NOT** be collected by the survey program.

Data collected will be handled in a confidential manner (identifiers will be used) but Internet Protocol addresses **WILL NOT** be collected by the survey program.

Data collected will be handled in a confidential manner and Internet Protocol addresses **WILL** be collected by the survey program.

- b. Include an "I agree to participate" **and** an "I do not agree to participate" answer at the bottom of your consent document. Within the online survey software, program the "I do not agree to participate" answer, when selected by the participant, to exclude the participant from answering the remainder of the questions (this is accomplished through "question logic" in Survey Monkey).

6. Vulnerable Participants

Will minors or other vulnerable participants be included in this research?

Yes. Outline procedures to be used in obtaining their agreement (assent) to participate in addition to obtaining consent of the parent, guardian, or authorized representative.

No. All studies excluding minors as participants should include language within the consent document stating that only participants aged 18 and over may participate in the study.

7. Future Risks

How are participants protected from the potentially harmful future use of the data collected in this research?

- a. Describe measures planned to ensure anonymity or confidentiality.

Student work will be stored without any identifying information in the Office of the Provost in a secured location.

- b. Describe methods for storing data while study is underway.

Student work will be stored without any identifying information in the Office of the Provost in a secured location.

- c. List dates and plans for destroying data and media once study has been completed.

General education assessment data will be destroyed after the current general education curriculum is significantly restructured.

- d. If audio, videotape or other electronic data are to be used, when will they be erased?

8. Illegal Activities

Do the data to be collected relate to any illegal activities? Yes* No

*If yes, please explain.

9. Is my Study Ready for Review?

Every research protocol, consent document, and survey instrument approved by the IRB is designated as an official institutional document; therefore, study documents must be as complete as possible. All proposed documents, which

- a. contain spelling or grammatical errors,
- b. do not reflect all of the required elements of informed consent (within consent or assent documents),
- c. are missing copies of survey instruments (questionnaires, surveys, interview and focus group questions, etc.) to be used in the study, or
- d. do not address all of the questions within this form

will be classified as incomplete. **All studies classified as incomplete will be administratively rejected and returned to the researcher and/or faculty advisor without further processing.**

Please return to Page 1 of this form to ensure that you have completed all of the steps reflected within the blue instruction box located at the top of the form.