

Linking Undergraduate Program Goals and Outcomes to General Education Goals

SACS requires that, “The institution identifies college-level general education competencies and the extent to which graduates have attained them. (SACS Comprehensive Standard 3.5.1)”*

The proper use of TracDat’s “related goal” functionality will assist the University in documenting our attainment of this standard. . Undergraduate academic programs’ learning goals and outcomes frequently overlap with the four goals of the general education program: Thinking Critically and Creatively, Communicating Effectively, Making Local to Global Connections, and Understanding Responsibilities of Community Membership. In addition the current General Education program was designed with components such as writing in the discipline and capstone courses that create natural opportunities for programs to collect evidence regarding the Gen Ed goals along with their program goals.

In TracDat one relates a program goal to an appropriate Gen Ed goal when editing a goal or entering it for the first time. One simply clicks on the Gen Ed goal that corresponds to the program goal. To relate a program outcome to a Gen Ed goal one clicks on the “Related Goals” subtab on the “Plan” tab then clicks on the Gen Ed goal that most closely aligns with the chosen outcome.

The reporting function in TracDat allows one to list all the programmatic outcomes along with their results and action plans that have been related to a Gen Ed goal. The resulting four reports (one for each goal of Gen Ed) should provide ample evidence of the vertical nature of the General Education program and the degree to which the academic programs are reinforcing and assessing student attainment of these goals.

We have already performed a review of the undergraduate program assessment plans and related their goals and outcomes to the Gen Ed goals in TracDat. It would be best if each program could review the decisions we made and correct any mis-designations.

*A pending change that will be voted on at the SACS conference in December 2011 replaces “graduates” with “students”.