

**Assessing the General Education Requirement  
of Global Awareness/Foreign Language  
Pilot Study**  
submitted by  
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Three credits of Chaminade's General Education Requirements for all Baccalaureate Degrees is a Global Awareness/Foreign Language course. Consistent with the need for assessing student learning outcomes at the program level, the student learning outcomes for the General Education Requirements also need to be assessed. As there is, at this time, no agreed upon approach for assessing the overall student learning outcomes for the General Education Requirements, it is necessary to perform this assessment of student learning outcomes within the specific course, in this case, the Global Awareness/Foreign Language course. The *Chaminade University Catalog 2008-2009*, on page 72, states that the student for the Global Awareness/Foreign Language Requirement will

1. Demonstrate an awareness of the diversity of peoples and cultures.

In order to assess this student learning outcome, a series of multiple choice questions was developed and assessed for the final exams in the Global Awareness courses of Re 365 **Introduction to Chinese Thought** and Psy 477 **Daoist Psychology**. A sample from these questions is presented below. It must be noted, however, that the very nature of these courses **Introduction to Chinese Thought** and Psy 477 **Daoist Psychology**, by definition, presents a diversity of peoples and cultures. Thus, in one sense, all the questions on the final exam are assessing awareness of the diversity of peoples and cultures.

**Re 365 Introduction to Chinese Thought**

The final exam for **Re 365 Introduction to Chinese Thought** consisted of 50 multiple choice items for a total of 200 points. The mean score was 142.91 with a standard deviation of 18.69. The reliability for the exam was **.67**. 22 students took the exam.

Question #8 assesses the students understanding of Buddhism within the culture of India and the barriers this cultural perspective faced relative to its introduction into the cultural perspective of China.

8. One of the barriers to Buddhism being integrated into Chinese culture was its
- a) offering salvation to all.
  - b) focus on practicality.
  - c) practice of celibacy.
  - d) offering a solution to suffering for the common people.

**68.18% of the students provided the correct answer of C. 83.33% of the upper 27% of the students answered this question correctly. 50% of the lower 27% of the students answered this question correctly.**

Question #14 assesses the student's understanding of the difference, within Chinese culture itself, between the early or more philosophical approach of Taoism with the later or more religious approach of Taoism.

14. One of the distinguishing characteristics of the teachings of Chang Tao Ling in comparison with early Taoism was that his teachings
- developed out of the sacred texts.
  - were revealed by the deity Lao Tzu.
  - were not concerned with the afterlife.
  - developed out of the teachings of Confucius.

**90.91% of the students provided the correct answer of B. 100% of the upper 27% of the students answered this question correctly. 66.67% of the lower 27% of the students answered this question correctly.**

Question # 49 assesses the student's understanding of the various cultural perspectives that make up Chinese folk religion.

49. Chinese folk religion is an integration of
- Taoism and Shamanism.
  - Confucianism and Buddhism.
  - Buddhism, Taoism, Confucianism, and Shamanism.
  - Buddhism, Taoism, Confucianism.

**100% of the students provided the correct answer of C. 100% of the upper 27% of the students answered this question correctly. 100% of the lower 27% of the students answered this question correctly.**

### **Psy 477 Daoist Psychology**

The final exam for **Psy 477 Daoist Psychology** consisted of 50 multiple choice items for a total of 200 points. The mean score was 150.62 with a standard deviation of 21.07. The reliability for the exam was **.78**. 29 students took the exam.

Question # 6 assesses the student's ability to contrast the Western psychotherapeutic cultural perspective of self with the Chinese Daoist cultural perspective of self.

6. Regarding the concept of self
- Western psychotherapy focuses on strengthening it while the Daoists focus on eliminating it.
  - Western psychotherapy focuses on eliminating it while the Daoists focus on strengthening it.

- c) both Western psychotherapy and the Daoists focus on eliminating it.
- d) both Western psychotherapy and the Daoists focus on strengthening it.

**93.10% of the students provided the correct answer of A. 100% of the upper 27% of the students answered this question correctly. 87.50% of the lower 27% of the students answered this question correctly.**

Question # 9 assesses the student's ability to find commonality between a specific approach of Western psychotherapy and the Chinese Daoist teachings of Zhuangzi.

9. From the perspective of Western psychotherapy, Zhuangzi is most similar to
- a) existential psychotherapy.
  - b) cognitive psychotherapy.
  - c) humanistic psychotherapy.
  - d) behavioral psychotherapy.

**82.76% of the students provided the correct answer of A. 87.50% of the upper 27% of the students answered this question correctly. 75.00% of the lower 27% of the students answered this question correctly.**

Question # 47 assesses the student's understanding of a Chinese Daoist text.

47. The *Classic of Clearness and Stillness* states that "sentient beings do not attain the True Dao because
- a) they do not have faith".
  - b) they have a distractible mind/heart".
  - c) they have not studied the sacred texts".
  - d) they did not receive grace from Laochun".

**96.55% of the students provided the correct answer of B. 100% of the upper 27% of the students answered this question correctly. 100% of the lower 27% of the students answered this question correctly.**

### **Conclusion**

The data and analysis of the data for assessing the General Education Requirement of a Global Awareness/Foreign Language course clearly indicated that students have indeed demonstrated an understanding of

1. an awareness of the diversity of peoples and cultures.

The overall percentage of students answering the items/questions correctly is satisfactory given a normal distribution of performance. The lower reliability ( $r=.67$ ) for the final exam in the **Introduction to Chinese Thought** course is reflective of the fact of limited variance on a number of questions/items and point biserial issues. These specific questions/items will be explored and addressed.

## **Recommendations**

1. As an agreed upon approach to assessing the General Education Requirements in an integrative and cumulative manner relative to specific majors has not been established, the initial focus of assessment of the General Education Requirements should be on the specific course.
2. The student learning outcomes for each of the General Education Requirements as specified in the Chaminade University Catalog 2008-2009 must be utilized.
3. A written report is submitted to Brother Bernie/Assessment Team.
4. In this written report, an explanation/description of the type of instrument/assessment tool utilized: essay, multiple choice exam, true/false exam, etc.
5. In this written report, aggregate data is required: total number of students assessed, reliability of the instrument/assessment tool utilized for measurement, the mean total score, and the standard deviation of the instrument.
6. In this written report, each item/question that is used to assess the specific General Education Requirement is presented and analyzed. This analysis must include percentage of total students answering the item/question correctly, upper percentage (usually 25 or 27%) answering the item/question correctly, lower percentage (usually 25 or 27%) answering the item/question correctly, and if warranted, further analysis to explain student performance on the item/question.
7. In this written report, a conclusion is provided.
8. This pilot study be used as an example to assure standardization of the reports.