

**Content Area 4 (Diversity and Multiculturalism) Assessment 2009-2010:**

**Redefine CA4 Learning Goals and Student Learning Outcomes  
for Effective Assessment**

**Final Report**

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## **Redefine CA4 Learning Goals and Student Learning Outcomes for Effective Assessment**

### **Background**

In June 2009, the *Report on the Alignment and Assessment of CA4 Diversity and Multicultural Learning Objectives of the General Education Curriculum* was completed by Helen Marx and David Moss for the Phase I Assessment. The purpose of this study was to determine whether individual Content Area 4 courses are aligned with the learning goals and that the goals are assessed adequately. A random sample of twenty-one courses from Content Area 4 Diversity and Multiculturalism was created that represented several schools, departments, class sizes and levels. From this sample, ten instructors elected to participate in the study and have their courses reviewed to determine the extent to which Content Area 4 (CA4) Learning Goals and Student Learning Outcomes were being met.

The results indicate that instructors were meeting at least one, and often several, learning goals and student learning outcomes in each course. However, instructors also voiced concern that the current CA4 Learning Goals and Student Learning Outcomes lacked scope and depth and expressed an interest in developing a more “comprehensive, unified, and well articulated set of outcomes for this program” (pg.17). Moss and Marx recommended that the learning goals and student learning outcomes be reviewed by CA4 instructors before the implementation of the Phase II assessment of student learning. In October 2009, Vice President Veronica Makowsky approved changing the CA4 faculty coordinator’s role to that of a facilitator who would coordinate efforts to have CA4 instructors revisit, redefine, and rewrite CA4 Learning Goals and Student Learning Outcomes for use in future Phase II assessment. This report details that process.

## Procedures

At the GEOC Assessment Committee meeting on February 9, 2010, the members agreed that a series of faculty forums be held for CA4 instructors during the Spring 2010 semester to elicit recommendations and revisions for CA4 Learning Goals and Student Learning Outcomes. The twenty-one CA4 courses used in the Marx & Moss study served as the initial representative sample for this project. The sample was expanded to include instructors who worked with the Institute of Teaching and Learning on CA4 course development along with others that the facilitators thought may be interested in the topic. If a course was currently being taught by a teaching assistant, the professor in charge of the course was invited. It should be noted that even with the representative sample as a starting point, it still took a substantial amount of time to find full-time faculty members teaching CA4 courses. The final sample consisted of a group of 28 courses/instructors (see Appendix A).

Given that instructional styles and assessment procedures vary according to class size, courses from the sample were divided into three categories-large lecture classes of 100+ students, medium-enrollment classes of 40-100 students and small-enrollment classes of 8-40 students. Four Faculty Forums were held on March 18<sup>th</sup>, March 25<sup>th</sup>, April 1<sup>st</sup> and April 8<sup>th</sup>. Instructors of large, medium and small-enrollment classes were invited by email to the first three forums on March 18<sup>th</sup>, March 25<sup>th</sup> and April 1<sup>st</sup> respectively (see Appendix B). The invitations included the current CA4 Learning Goals and Student Learning Outcomes for review. In order to increase participation at the third forum, invitations were also sent to the Heads of the African American, Puerto Rican and Latino, Asian American and Women's Studies Institutes and the Departments of Anthropology and Sociology to share with their CA4 faculty members. The goal was to solicit input from a sampling of areas that service large numbers of students, offering a broad cross-section of courses in CA4 and to encourage faculty attendance at the forums.

Participants in the Faculty Forums included two assistant professors, one associate professor, one full professor and an assistant professor-in-residence, all of whom taught at

the Storrs Campus. These faculty members represented six departments (Political Science, African American Studies, Anthropology, Art and Art History, Human Development and Family Relations, and Nursing) and three schools (Fine Arts, CLAS and Nursing,) and the seating capacity for their courses ranged from 19 to 231. Three faculty members responded by email that they would like to participate in the forums, but did not have time during the Spring 2010 semester.

Each forum lasted approximately 1 hour and forty-five minutes. In addition to the current CA4 Learning Goals and Student Learning Outcomes provided by email, faculty members were given examples of diversity and multicultural goals and objectives from the University of Louisville (<http://louisville.edu/provost/GER/GER-Preface.pdf>) and Kansas State University (<http://www.sc.edu/univ101/aboutus/goals.html>), and copies of Bloom's Taxonomy (<http://www.edpsycinteractive.org/topics/cogsys/bloom.html>).

To start the discussion, faculty members were asked the following questions:

- 1) Does your course currently meet one or more of the CA4 Learning Goals and one of the Student Learning Outcomes?
- 2) Can you provide evidence of meeting the goals and learning outcomes from course activities, assessments and student artifacts?
- 3) Should CA4 courses that fulfill the criteria for "international" have separate learning goals and student learning outcomes from courses without this distinction?
- 4) Do you understand all of the CA4 Learning Goals and Student Learning Outcomes?
- 5) Do you believe that the Learning Goals and Student Learning Outcomes are aligned with the CA4 Criteria for course approval?
- 6) Can you recommend any additional goals and student learning outcomes that should be included?

In preparation for the final Faculty Forum, the revised learning goals and student learning outcomes were emailed all of the instructors in the sample as well as to the Heads of the Institutes and the Departments of Anthropology and Sociology to share with their faculty members. Two faculty members attended the final forum and three faculty members from

one department sent email responses to the revisions. Recommendations and data were presented to the CA4 Subcommittee to review on April 21<sup>st</sup> and the GEOC Assessment Committee on April 27th.

### **Discussion Results**

The faculty members who attended the Faculty Forums were passionate about diversity and multiculturalism education and its function as an agent of transformation in the lives of students as they gain understanding of themselves and others. They expressed that the Content Area 4 Diversity and Multiculturalism is critical because many students have not had exposure to different cultures and lifestyles. Faculty members also voiced the need to recognize social justice as an emerging focal point of discussion in CA4 courses. They delved into the task of reviewing the current goals and outcomes and thoughtfully offered recommendations for revisions and additional outcomes. All expressed that they enjoyed the opportunity to speak to others about teaching and learning in this important content area and wanted the discussions to continue.

All of the participants in the Faculty Forums shared that they first became aware of current CA4 Learning Goals and Student Learning Objectives through the invitation to the Faculty Forums. All were confident that they addressed at least one goal and student outcome in their respective courses, and some felt that they met several; however, not everyone could provide evidence of meeting the goals and outcomes from course activities and student artifacts. One faculty member of a large-enrollment class admitted that his course assessments were largely content-driven and did not necessarily reflect the changes in student behavior stated in the student learning outcomes. Faculty members that were from content areas that typically address issues in diversity and/or had worked with the Institute for Teaching and Learning were more confident about their assessment procedures and ability to provide evidence of student outcomes. It was noted, though, that teaching assistant support was needed to implement varied modes of assessment, particularly in large-enrollment classes.

Concerning the current goals and learning outcomes, faculty members agreed that separate learning goals and outcomes were not needed for international courses. They did, however, think that several learning outcomes either needed to be clarified or more specific, and that additional learning outcomes were needed that addressed the affective domain, a broader and deeper understanding of cultural diversity, and the students' own cultural perspectives and biases. Recommendations were reviewed at each of the forums to ensure that revised or additional student outcomes were clearly stated, aligned to specific goals and could be assessed using varied modes.

The revised learning goals and student learning outcomes are included in Appendix C and include a statement of purpose. Four of the five goals were clarified and/or expanded (see Revised Learning Goals 1, 2, 3 and 5 in Appendix D). In terms of the Student Outcomes, almost all were modified to improve clarity and seven new student learning outcomes were created, five of which made the final copy (see Revised Student Outcomes 1-2, 1-3, 2-3, 3-2, 5-2 in Appendix D). The following two proposed outcomes were eliminated, the first one by the CA4 committee and the second by the GEOC assessment committee, primarily due to concerns with assessment.

- 1) demonstrate a greater degree of comfort in culturally diverse circumstances and experiences.
- 2) demonstrate an empathic engagement with other cultures

Three faculty members from one department voiced concerns via email that the revisions emphasized cultural competency more than social inequality; however, they did not include any recommendations either in their initial correspondence or after a request from the facilitator. It seems that they may have misinterpreted the revisions to be to the CA4 course approval criteria, not the Learning Goals and Student Learning Outcomes.

Participants in the forums also shared ways that the instruction of CA4 courses could be improved. First, the CA4 Learning Goals and Student Learning Outcomes needed to be

shared with all CA4 instructors to guide their course development. There was concern too that the content and assessment varied greatly in CA4 courses that were taught by several rotating instructors and teaching assistants. One department's solution to this dilemma was to provide course outlines and a choice of instructional materials for the instructors of these CA4 courses in order to have some consistency in instruction. Other suggestions regarded the role of the Institute of Teaching and Learning. It was articulated that there are clear benefits for individual faculty members to work with the staff at ITL. This collaboration is particularly beneficial to instructors that either develop new CA4 courses and/or are novices at teaching about diversity, multiculturalism and social justice. Faculty members also thought that ITL could provide a means for CA4 faculty members and instructors to be able to share their best practices, activities and modes of assessment, particularly for those with large-enrollment classes.

Given that CA4 courses are probably the most complex and difficult to assess, faculty members agreed that teaching assistants were absolutely necessary, particularly in the large-enrollment classes. The request to provide more evidence than "student discussion" is meeting the CA4 goals and student learning outcomes makes TA support even more critical. HuskyCT provides methods that can be useful, such as blogs and discussion groups, but faculty members were united in stating that TA support is essential for grading student participation and responses in order to assess the student learning outcomes. Currently, teaching assistants were provided in the courses discussed; however, the number had been reduced so that the TA-student ratio was 1-60 in one course and 1-75 in another. Faculty members thought that this ratio was too high and should be reduced.

The CA4 Subcommittee met on April 23<sup>rd</sup> for two and one half hours to review thoroughly each recommendation, revision and concern voiced by CA4 faculty at the forums and via email. The committee made editorial and minor content changes to the goals and outcomes, and eliminated one additional student outcome as stated above. The revised CA4 Learning Goals and Student Learning Outcomes were reviewed by the GEOC Assessment Committee on April 27th. Committee members chose to eliminate one additional student outcome and recommended that the student outcomes associated with

each goal be considered as a unit or cluster. The final version of the CA4 Learning Goals and Student Learning Outcomes is included in Appendix E.

## **Recommendations**

The CA4 Subcommittee and GEOC Assessment Committee recommend that courses proposed for CA4 must meet at least one of the five CA4 criteria approved by the Senate in 2003(see Gen Ed Guidelines <http://www.geoc.uconn.edu/geocguidelines.htm>). Accordingly, they should meet at least one corresponding learning goal with the cluster of *all* of the associated student learning outcomes for that learning goal. The revised CA4 Learning Goals and Student Learning Outcomes should be disseminated to all CA4 instructors so that they can plan their CA4 courses accordingly. It is recommended that all proposed CA4 courses teach toward at least one cluster of CA4 Student Learning Outcomes corresponding to the approval criteria and provide evidence on how the outcomes will be assessed.

The following recommendations are a result of the Faculty Forums:

- The Institute for Teaching and Learning (ITL) should provide assistance to CA4 instructors as they strive to meet the learning goals and student learning outcomes in their courses. Instructors who are novices at teaching from a diversity/multicultural/social justice perspective would benefit from working with the ITL in developing CA4-specific course activities and assessments. Also, ITL should provide a means for CA4 instructors to 1) share specific tests, tools and activities that facilitate assessment initiatives and 2) continue the conversations and discussion started this semester.
- Priority should be given to Teaching Assistant support in CA4 courses, particularly large-enrollment classes, to enable a wider variety of activities and modes of assessment to be implemented. It is recommended that one teaching assistant be



assigned for every 50 students in order to meet the learning goals and student learning outcomes.

- Department Heads should initiate conversations among CA4 instructors within their department to ensure they are teaching towards CA4 learning goals and student learning outcomes and have opportunities to share best practices. To standardize content in CA4 courses that are taught by numerous instructors, department heads should work with CA4 instructors to develop basic course outlines and recommended course materials to provide guidance and parameters for all of the faculty members (including those at the branch campuses), instructors, and teaching assistants for each course.
- Conversations about diversity and multicultural education should continue as these conversations both inspire and challenge faculty members to thoughtfully reflect on the teaching-learning process and our role in educating students for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

**Appendix A**  
**CA4 Course Sample**

COURSE	Number	Size	Course Title
AASI/ENGL	3212	40	Asian American Literature
ANTH	1000	147	Other People's Worlds
ANTH	3401	45	World Religions
ANTH	3150	32	Migration
ANTH	3202W	19	Illness and Curing
ARAB	1122	104	Modern Arabic Culture
ARTH	1128	200	Introduction to Western Art II: The Renaissance to the Present, A World Perspective
CDIS	1150	150	Introduction to Communication Disorders
DRAM	3130	12	Women in Theatre
ENGL	3318	40	Literature and Culture of the Third World
FREN	1177	130	Magicians, Witches, Wizards: Parallel Beliefs & Popular Culture in France
GEOG	1100	127	Globalization
HDFS	2001	150	Diversity Issues in Human Development and Family
HDFS	3261	45	Men and Masculinity: A Social Psychological Perspective
HIST	1570	8	Migrant workers in CT
HIST	3609	40	Latin America in the National Period
HRTS	1007	87	Introduction to Human Rights
HRTS/AFAM/SOCI	3505	40	White Racism
MUSI	1995	50	History of Rock and Society
NRME	3305	28	African Field Ecology & Renewable Resources Management
NURS	1175W	19	The End of Life: A Multicultural Interdisciplinary Experience
PHIL	1106	231	Non-western and Comparative Philosophy
PLSC	1125	50	Insects, Food and Culture
POLS/AFAM	3642	40	African-American Politics
PSYC	2701	40	Psychology of Multiculturalism
SOCI/WS	3621	69	Sociology of Sexualities
WS	1104	147	Feminism and the arts
WS	1124	150	Gender in Global Perspective

## **Appendix B Invitation to Faculty Forums**

Dear Colleagues,

You are invited to attend a Faculty Forum to discuss suggestions and potential revisions to the Content Area 4 Diversity and Multicultural learning objectives and student outcomes. Last year, the CA4 Assessment Report recommended that faculty members teaching CA4 courses be consulted to review, rethink and redefine the objectives and outcomes. As a professor with expertise in teaching a CA4 course, we would like for you to be a part of this process.

Three forums will be held on consecutive Thursdays at 12:00 P.M. starting on March 18. The first session is for faculty members teaching CA4 lecture classes with 100+ students; the next two on March 25 and April 1 will be for professors who teach mid-size and smaller classes. All participating faculty are invited to attend the final Faculty Forum on Thursday, April 8 at 12:00 to review the recommendations from the previous three sessions and to organize a final draft for review by the CA4 Subcommittee members.

We hope that you will be able to participate in the Faculty Forums on Thursday, March 18 at 12:00 in Gentry Room 246 and April 8 at 12:00 in Gentry Room 430. We anticipate a lively discussion as we develop a draft of workable learning objectives and outcomes that will be of help to CA4 instructors and can be used for future CA4 assessment of student learning. *Lunch will be provided at all of the Faculty Forums.*

*Attachments include the 2009 CA4 Final Report, along with an edited version that features the current CA4 goals and outcomes, for you to review before the forum. We invite you to share your own course goals and objectives at this forum as well either by sending them to us or having hard copies available.*

Please RSVP to Leah Brown by responding to this email. Also, feel free to contact either one of us directly if you want to participate but cannot make the meeting time, and we will try to make accommodations for you.

We look forward to your response.

Best,

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**Appendix C**  
**Preliminary and Revised CA4 Goals and Student Learning Outcomes**

*The purpose of CA4 instruction is to inform, educate and initiate culturally conversant citizens who have a greater level of comfort with and the ability to navigate cultural differences.*

<b>PRELIMINARY STATEMENT OF LEARNING GOALS (2008):</b>	
Students should be aware of and sensitive to different cultural perspectives of groups that traditionally have been underrepresented. They should be able to understand and articulate in some measurable manner, with respect to “race,” ethnicity, gender, sexual identity, political system, religious tradition, or of disability, at least one of the following:	
<b>REVISED STATEMENT OF LEARNING GOALS (2010):</b>	
<i>Students are aware of and sensitive to different cultural perspectives and representations of groups that traditionally have been misrepresented and/or underrepresented in mainstream media, education and other cultural systems. They will understand and articulate in some measurable manner, with respect to race, ethnicity, gender, sexual identity, political system, religious tradition, or of disability, at least one of the following:</i>	
<b>Preliminary Learning Goals (2008)</b>	<b>Revised Learning Goals (2010)</b>
1) the varieties of human experiences, perceptions, thoughts, values, and/or modes of creativity	1) the varieties of human experiences, perceptions, thoughts, values, and/or modes of creativity <i>including those of their own indigenous cultural viewpoint</i>
2) interpretive systems and/or social structures as cultural creations	2) <i>perspectives that determine interpretive systems and social, cultural and economic constructions</i>
3) the similarities that may exist among diverse groups	3) <i>the differences and similarities among human groups</i>
4) issues involving human rights and migration	4) issues involving human rights and migration
5) the dynamics of social, political, and/or economic power	5) the dynamics of social, <i>cultural</i> , political, and/or economic power

<b>PRELIMINARY STUDENT OUTCOMES (2008):</b> Students should be able to carry out, in a reflective manner that is theoretically informed and illustrated with specific examples, with respect to “race,” ethnicity, gender, sexual identity, political system, religious tradition, or of disability, at least one of the following:	
<b>REVISED STUDENT OUTCOMES (2010):</b> <i>Students will demonstrate at least one of the following clusters of student learning outcomes in a reflective manner that is theoretically informed with specific examples:</i>	
<b>Preliminary Student Outcomes (2008)</b>	<b>Revised Student Outcomes (2010)</b>
1-1: Differentiate varieties of human experiences, thoughts, values, and/or modes of creativity	1-1: Differentiate varieties, <i>their own and others</i> , of human experiences, modes of thinking, values, and/or modes of creativity
	1-2: <i>Analyze problems or issues showing an understanding of cultural diversity, including his/her own cultural perspective</i>
	1-3: <i>Critically review pertinent information and assertions for relevance, bias, stereotyping, manipulation and thoroughness</i>
2-1: Analyze interpretive systems, political systems, or social structures as cultural/social constructions	2-1: Analyze interpretive systems, political systems, or social structures as cultural/social constructions
2-2: Explain perspectives on effects of various cultural, social, or political systems on groups of individuals	2-2: <i>Explain how social, political, cultural and historical contexts affect individual and group lives and experiences</i>
	2-3: <i>Explain the effects of external changes on local and indigenous institutions</i>
3-1: Describe the interrelatedness of various cultures or peoples	3-1: <i>Identify points of comparison and contrast between various cultures or peoples</i>
	3-2: <i>Articulate the competence of all human cultures as functioning ways of life</i>
4-1: Contrast definitions of human rights that are derived from at least two different legal, cultural, or values systems	4-1: Contrast definitions of human rights that are derived from at least two different legal, cultural, or values systems
4-2: Explain the causes and consequences of human migration	4-2: Explain the causes and consequences of human migration
5-1: Discuss social, political, and/or economic power	5-1: <i>Compare and contrast the institutional forms of different systems of power</i>

	<i>5-2: Describe the consequences of social, cultural, political and economic inequality</i>
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## **Appendix D**

### **Revised CA4 Goals and Student Learning Outcomes (2010)**

*The purpose of CA4 instruction is to inform, educate and initiate culturally conversant citizens who have a greater level of comfort with and the ability to navigate cultural differences.*

#### **Goals**

*Students are aware of and sensitive to different cultural perspectives and representations of groups that traditionally have been misrepresented and/or underrepresented in mainstream media, education and other cultural systems. They will understand and articulate in some measurable manner, with respect to race, ethnicity, gender, sexual identity, political system, religious tradition, or of disability, at least one of the following:*

- 1) the varieties of human experiences, perceptions, thoughts, values, and/or modes of creativity including those of their own indigenous cultural viewpoint
- 2) perspectives that determine social, cultural and economic constructions
- 3) the differences and similarities among human groups
- 4) issues involving human rights and migration
- 5) the dynamics of social, cultural, political, and/or economic power

#### **Student Outcomes**

*Students will demonstrate at least one of the following clusters of student learning outcomes in a reflective manner that is theoretically informed with specific examples:*

- 1-1: Differentiate varieties, *their own and others*, of human experiences, modes of thinking, values, and/or modes of creativity
- 1-2: Analyze problems or issues showing an understanding of cultural diversity, including his/her own cultural perspective.
- 1-3: Critically review pertinent information and assertions for relevance, bias, stereotyping, manipulation and thoroughness
  
- 2-1: Analyze interpretive systems, political systems, or social structures as cultural/social constructions
- 2-2: Explain how social, political, cultural and historical contexts affect individual and group lives and experiences
- 2-3: Explain the effects of external changes on local and indigenous institutions
  
- 3-1: Identify points of comparison and contrast between various cultures or peoples
- 3-2: Articulate the competence of all human cultures as functioning ways of life
  
- 4-1: Contrast definitions of human rights that are derived from at least two different legal,

cultural or values systems

4-2: Explain the causes and consequences of human migration

5-1: Compare and contrast the institutional forms of different systems of power

5-2: Describe the consequences of social, cultural political and economic inequality