Standard 2.A.3.a, b, and c

Standard 2.A.3.a: General education has comprehensive learning outcomes for the students who complete it, including the following: An understanding of the basic content and methodology of the major areas of knowledge: areas include the humanities and fine arts, the natural sciences, and the social sciences.

- How are the basic content and methodology of traditional areas of knowledge in general education determined?
- Do general education courses demonstrate student achievement of comprehensive student learning outcomes?
- Do student learning outcomes for general education courses require students to understand the basic content and methodology in the major areas of knowledge?

The overall guidelines for content and methodology in general education are established by Title 5 (section 55806). City College of San Francisco has translated these guidelines into a set of criteria that is organized into eight areas: A) Communication and Analytical Thinking, B) Written Composition, C) Natural Sciences, D) Social and Behavioral Sciences, E) Humanities, F) United States History and Government, G) Physical Skills and Health Knowledge, and H) Ethnic Studies, Women’s Studies, and Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexual Studies. Content and methodology of the traditional general education areas are based on these criteria (Academic Senate, CCSF Graduation Requirements, criteria document):

- **Natural Sciences**: “Courses…which examine the physical universe, its life forms, and its natural phenomena…should help the student develop an appreciation of the scientific method, and encourage an understanding of the relationships between science and other human activities.”
- **Social and Behavioral Sciences**: “Courses…which focus on people as members of society…should help the student develop an awareness of the method of inquiry used by the social and behavioral sciences. It should stimulate critical thinking about the ways people act and have acted in response to societies and should promote appreciation of how societies and social subgroups operate.”
- **Humanities**: “Courses…which study the cultural activities and artistic expressions of human beings…should help the student develop an awareness of the ways in which people throughout the ages and in different cultures have responded to themselves and the world around them in artistic and cultural creation and help the student develop aesthetic understanding and an ability to make value judgments.”

- What process is used to ensure that general education courses include this content and methodology? Is there a consistent process for assuring that the content and methodology are included in course outlines?

When developing or revising specific content for traditional general education courses, faculty members typically confer with their CCSF colleagues through formal departmental curriculum committees, ad hoc working groups, and/or college-wide curriculum development efforts such as the Multicultural Infusion Project and SCANS. They also consult with colleagues at baccalaureate institutions to assess the transferability of course content. Faculty leaders actively participate in curriculum discussions with their colleagues at University of California (UC), California State University (CSU), private universities, and other California community colleges via meetings of professional organizations, regional articulation groups, and the statewide Intersegmental Major Preparation Articulated Curriculum (IMPAC) project.
After courses are developed or revised, the College Curriculum Committee reviews the course outlines for appropriate content and methodology. Courses intended for the College’s General Education graduation requirement must also be reviewed and approved by the Bipartite Committee, which is made up of Academic Senate Executive Council members and select administrators. The Bipartite Committee uses the criteria referenced above to determine which courses meet the standards for general education, as well as to assign the courses to specific areas of general education. Evaluation of course content and methodology continues when course outlines are sent out to university faculty for articulation review. Courses are periodically updated to reflect changes in the field of study, university requirements, and suggestions from advisory groups.

- How well are students able to apply their understanding to subsequent coursework, employment, or other endeavors?

It is difficult to determine how well students are able to apply their understanding of general education. CCSF has not yet developed a way to isolate this factor in its research. However, there are some general indicators which support the conclusion that CCSF students are able to successfully apply their knowledge and coursework to subsequent courses and transfer.

Most of the hundreds of courses that are approved for CCSF general education have also been approved for general education at UC, CSU and many private colleges and universities. This suggests students are able to apply general education coursework to university course requirements after transfer. Also, in a recent student survey, students who petitioned to graduate in 2000 and 2001 rated the College as follows (based on a scale where 4.0 is high and 1.0 is low):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>2000 Average</th>
<th>2001 Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Content of Courses</td>
<td>3.19</td>
<td>3.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Background for Advanced Study in Major</td>
<td>3.12</td>
<td>3.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scientific Investigation</td>
<td>2.94</td>
<td>2.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appreciation of the Arts</td>
<td>3.02</td>
<td>3.08</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Most of the areas pertaining to traditional general education were given a rating of higher than 3.0, which is considered to be “good.” This implies that students are basically satisfied with CCSF’s general education curriculum. (What Do Students Think of City College of San Francisco? The Latest Survey of Students Who Petitioned for Graduation, March 2003)

**Standard 2.A.3.b:** A capability to be a productive individual and life long learner: skills include oral and written communication, information competency, computer literacy, scientific and quantitative reasoning, critical analysis/logical thinking, and the ability to acquire knowledge through a variety of means.

- What standards have been developed to determine if general education students have attained these goals?
- What criteria does the college use to assure that the required skill level meets collegiate standards? Is there a consistent process for assuring that expected skill levels are included in course outlines? What measures of student skill are employed? Is the college satisfied that these measures are effective?
The overall standards for the skills-based areas of general education are established by Title 5, much like they are for the traditional areas of general education. The CCSF-adapted criteria relating to skills-based general education include the following:

**Communication and Analytical Thinking**

*Language and Rationality:* “Courses…which develop for the student the principles and applications of language toward logical thought, clear and precise expression, and critical evaluation of communication in whatever symbol system the student uses.”

*Communication and Analytical Thinking:* “Courses…include oral communication, mathematics, logic, statistics, computer languages and programming, and related disciplines.”

*Written Composition:* “Courses…should include both expository and argumentative writing.”

The departmental, Curriculum Committee, and Bipartite Committee review process described earlier assures that the required skill levels meet collegiate standards and are reflected in the course outlines. Articulation review by university faculty further ensures that courses are presented at the collegiate level.

Student skills are first measured when students enter the College and take the English or ESL and Math placement exams. These exams have been validated as a tool for placing students in appropriate course levels. Student skills are later measured in individual courses through written exams, research papers, oral presentations, class projects, portfolios and other methods of assessing performance. Departments may also establish assessment standards specifically for their skill-based courses. For instance, the English and ESL departments require that students earn a grade of “C” or better in composition courses before they can advance to the next course in the sequence. Some departments, such as English, Math, and ESL, use common exams for all sections of a particular course to determine if a student has obtained the skills that meet the course objectives. These various assessments have proven to be an effective measure of student skills.

In 2000, following the last WASC review, the College initiated Enhanced Self Study. This was a college-wide review process which studied, among other things, “College Level Learning.” One question entertained by the College Level Learning group was, “Are the English and mathematics requirements established by the College reasonable, given the level of competence generally accepted by the Associate of Arts and Sciences Degrees?” This question was in direct response to a recommendation made by the last WASC visiting team. What followed was a year of intense study and discussion which resulted in proposal to raise the level of the English composition graduation requirement to English 96. This proposal has since worked its way through shared governance process and is now only one meeting short of reaching final approval. The projected implementation date is Fall 2005.

While increasing the math requirement was not proposed through Enhanced Self Study, it was analyzed and approved by the College’s Academic Policies and the Bipartite Committees. As a result, the Math graduation requirement for the associate degree was increased to the level of Math 840, Elementary Algebra, effective Fall 2004. Likewise, the idea of an “Information Competency” graduation requirement was introduced through the shared governance process. It was approved by Academic Policies, and received preliminary approval from the Bipartite Committee.

- How well are students achieving these outcomes? How well are students able to apply these skills to subsequent coursework, employment, or other endeavors?
The College does have some evidence of the success and validity of its skill-based general education and assessments. In a recent study of pre-collegiate basic skills students, the College found that students who placed at the upper level of pre-collegiate course sequences achieved substantially higher rates of success in college-level courses (72%) than those who placed at the lower level of pre-collegiate sequences (56.7%). (Pre-Collegiate Basic Skills Report, April 2004) This demonstrates some correlation between the skills students acquire through the sequence of skill-based courses and the skills needed for success in college-level courses. This was further supported in a study that compared students’ English level and their grades in subsequent general education courses from 1997 to 2004. This study showed a correlation between levels of English courses students passed and their success rate in social science courses (Success in GE and Last English Class Passed, 2004).

Most of the collegiate level, skill-based general education courses articulate directly with courses at UC, CSU, and many private colleges and universities. Math courses, in particular, have been accepted as comparable to university courses by almost all of the UC and CSU faculty who reviewed the course outlines. This suggests students are able to apply skill-based general education coursework to university course requirements after transfer.

Students have also demonstrated some success after transfer when they take the CCSF English sequence through the level of “Freshman Composition”. In a study of students who transferred to San Francisco State University, CCSF students who completed English 1A and 1B before transfer did just as well as the general university students on the required Junior Level English Equivalency Test. (San Francisco State University, Junior Level English Equivalency Statistics, academic years 1995-2000)

Finally, students themselves expressed satisfaction with skill-based courses at CCSF. In a recent student survey, students who petitioned to graduate in 2000 and 2001 were asked to indicate their level of satisfaction with what they learned at CCSF regarding various skills or competencies. Responses included the following (based on a scale where 4.0 is high and 1.0 is low):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>2000 Average</th>
<th>2001 Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Critical Thinking</td>
<td>3.18</td>
<td>3.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication Skills (oral, written)</td>
<td>3.18</td>
<td>3.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehension Skills (listening, reading)</td>
<td>3.19</td>
<td>3.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math/quantitative reasoning</td>
<td>2.98</td>
<td>3.07</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Almost all of the areas pertaining to skills-based general education were given a rating of higher than 3.0, which is considered to be “good.” This implies that students are basically satisfied with CCSF’s skill-based curriculum. (What Do Students Think of City College of San Francisco? The Latest Survey of Students Who Petitioned for Graduation, March 2003)

Standard 2.A.3.c: A recognition of what it means to be an ethical human being and effective citizen: qualities include an appreciation of ethical principles; civility and interpersonal skills; respect for cultural diversity; historical and aesthetic sensitivity; and the willingness to assume civic, political, and social responsibilities locally, nationally, and globally.

- How are student learning outcomes developed to address concerns about ethics and effective citizenship? How is it determined where to include student learning leading to development of these qualities?
City College historically has addressed concerns about effective citizenship and respect for cultural diversity by structuring its general education pattern so that students cannot graduate without taking courses in United States History and Government and Ethnic Studies, Women’s Studies, and Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexual Studies. The Bipartite Committee determines which courses fulfill these general education area requirements, using the following as criteria:

*United States History and Government:* “…the College intends to graduate students who have developed an appreciation and understanding of American history and government so they can be responsible and active citizens.”

*Ethnic Studies, Women’s Studies, and Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexual Studies:* “…the College intends to graduate students who…have demonstrated the ability in at least two of the following learning outcomes:

1. Identify the ways in which the historical and cultural/aesthetic experiences of women, different ethnic/racial minority groups, gays and lesbians are similar to and different from each other.
2. Identify their own value systems and/or styles of creative expression and those of other ethnic/racial groups, women, gays and lesbians.
3. Develop the understanding and behavioral competencies necessary for effective interpersonal and interethnic, female and gay and lesbian group interactions, i.e., …
4. Develop their socio-cultural participation skills, decision-making abilities, and political awareness in order to be effective citizens in an ethnically, racially, sexually, and culturally diverse nation.”

In addition to this graduation requirement, special curriculum development projects work to incorporate ethics and respect for diversity in general education and other courses. For instance, one of the SCANS “foundation skills/qualities” that is being integrated into course instruction addresses interpersonal skills; another addresses “integrity/honesty: choosing ethical courses of action.” Multicultural content and perspectives have also been built into the curriculum through the Multicultural Infusion Project.

The College has some evidence of its effectiveness in teaching multicultural awareness and good citizenship. Faculty report success in increasing the levels of students’ knowledge and sensitivity of cultural diversity issues through the many courses offered under the areas of Ethnic Studies, Women’s Studies, and Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexual Studies (the College reportedly has the only Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexual Studies department in the nation). Students also expressed satisfaction with what they learned at CCSF. In a recent survey, students who petitioned to graduate in 2000 and 2001, on an average, rated their “understanding of political and community issues” as “good.” (What Do Students Think of City College of San Francisco? The Latest Survey of Students Who Petitioned for Graduation, March 2003)

**Evidence used for Standards 2.A.3.a, b, c:**

- Title 5, Section 55806
- Academic Senate, CCSF Graduation Requirements, criteria document
- What Do Students Think of City College of San Francisco? The Latest Survey of Students Who Petitioned for Graduation, March 2003
- Pre-Collegiate Basic Skills Report, April 2004
- Success in GE and Last English Class Passed, 2004
San Francisco State University, Junior Level English Equivalency Statistics, academic years 1995-2000

Academic Policies Committee Minutes
(http://www.ccsf.edu/Offices/Shared_Governance/apc.html)

CCSF Midterm Report to WASC (2002)

CCSF Office of Research, Planning and Grants website:
http://www.ccsf.edu/Services/Research_Planning/

Consultation with:
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- Karen Cox, Instructor, English Department
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- Robert Gabriner, Dean, Office of Research, Planning and Grants
- Bonnie Gratch, Librarian (Information Competency)
- Lynda Hirose, Advisor (Multicultural Infusion Project)
- Keith McAllister, Chair, Math Department
- Kitty Moriwaki, Assessment and Prerequisite Coordinator, Office of Matriculation and Assessment
- Jim Sauve, Instructor, English Department
- Bruce Smith, Dean, School of Liberal Arts
- Andrea Speraw, Coordinator, Office of Vocational Education
- Steve Spurling, Associate Dean, Office of Research, Planning and Grants
- Wing Tsao, Dean, School of Math and Science

Rating and explanation:

My rating of all three standards combined is Satisfactory. The Curriculum Committee process for reviewing course content and the subsequent Bipartite Committee process for approving general education courses are fair and consistent, and based on established criteria. The reason I didn’t give a Superior rating is that, for years, the College graduation requirements are not fully aligned with the Title 5 minimum graduation standards for English and Math. This was noted in the last WASC review, which recommended that “the College critically analyze the existent mathematics and written composition requirements for graduation to ensure that the demonstrated levels of competence are suitable for recipients of a degree of Associate of Arts or Associate of Science.” To its credit, the College has responded to this and other external pressure and has raised the math graduation requirement. It may soon raise the English graduation requirement as well. However, in the 2002 midyear report to WASC, the College estimated that the Academic Policies review of the math and English requirements would be done by Fall 2002, after which the proposals would move to the Bipartite Committee. This did happen with the math requirement, though when it reached the Bipartite Committee it was delayed for another year, pending the results of an equivalency task force. The English requirement change was not approved by Academic Policies until late Spring 2004, and is currently awaiting the outcome of the final Bipartite Committee review.

Comments and suggestions relative to the College’s response to the standard

Approve the English graduation requirement change.