

**Arts and Humanities Assessment
within a Distributional General Education Program**

**Roundtable Discussion, AAC&U
General Education and Outcomes That Matter in a Changing World
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Abstract

The assessment of student learning in the areas of the arts and humanities is notoriously difficult – a problem often compounded by the nature of distributional general education programs. This poster describes the development of an assessment program for the arts and humanities while navigating general education reform, a distributional curriculum, and the methodological challenges of measuring the goals related to the arts and humanities. The presenters will describe the process for developing such an assessment plan and an assessment tool that aims to measure core objectives while accommodating a diversity of student experiences.

Important Issues/Questions in the Process:

From Goals to Outcomes:

- The difficulty posed by a distributional curriculum is the diversity of educational experiences produced.
- Nonetheless, we began by considering as many course specific learning objectives as possible to conceptualize what learning in the Arts & Humanities means.
- Since ALL courses are designated as bearing Arts & Humanities credit, we then identified unifying themes across courses.
- Finally, we articulate a set of 9 common learning objectives or outcomes.

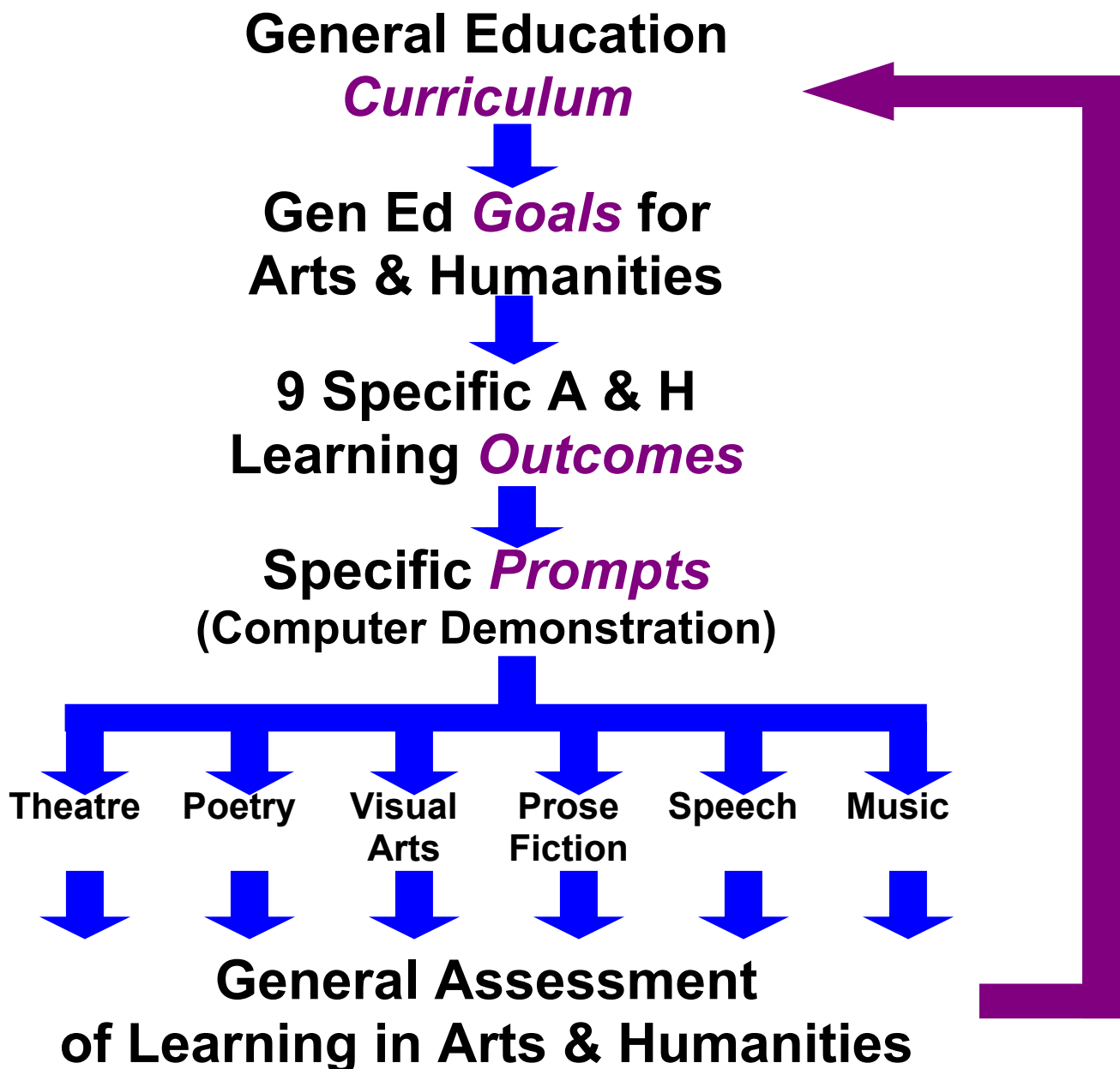
From Outcomes to Prompts:

- Since students will have exposure to one discipline within the Arts & Humanities, we had to develop 6 pairs of prompts.
- We then used web technologies to deliver multimedia choices.

Time Line

Fall '04	Solicit interested faculty in Music, Theatre, Art, Communication, Philosophy and English.
Jan. '05	Identify General Education goals to be assessed.
Feb. '05	Take Stock of course based assessments – identify common themes.
March '05	Develop and group essay questions.
April '05	Construct multimedia prompts.
Sept. '05	Obtain approval for assessment plan.
Oct. '05	Prepare web-based delivery of assessment.
Nov. '05:	Implement testing of first cohort.

Developing an Assessment Plan For the Arts & Humanities at UM-Flint



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