Foreword

The purpose of this document is to address Core Requirement 2.7.3 and Comprehensive Standard 3.5.1 of the Principles of Accreditation: Foundations for Quality Enhancement (2008 Edition) published by the Commission on Colleges, Southern Association of Colleges and Schools in 2008.

Core Requirement 2.7.3

In each undergraduate degree program, the institution requires the successful completion of a general education component at the collegiate level that

1. is a substantial component of each undergraduate degree,
2. ensures breadth of knowledge, and
3. is based on a coherent rationale.

For degree completion in ...baccalaureate programs, [the component constitutes] a minimum of 30 semester hours or the equivalent. These credit hours are to be drawn from and include at least one course from each of the following areas: humanities/fine arts, social/behavioral sciences, and natural science/mathematics. The courses do not narrowly focus on those skills, techniques, and procedures specific to a particular occupation or profession.

3.5 Educational Programs: Undergraduate Programs

3.5.1 The institution identifies college-level general education competencies and the extent to which graduates have attained them. (College-level Competencies)

Overview of SACS Outcomes Assessment

Assessment is "A systematic process of looking at student achievement within and across courses by gathering, interpreting and using information about student learning for educational improvement" (Thomas A. Angelo, AAHE Bulletin, April 1995, p.11).

The purpose of assessment is to produce meaningful feedback on the performance of students; it is not an evaluation of individual students, courses or faculty. The intent is to collect, analyze and report data in a format to help inform faculty of the progress/ accomplishments of students, support decisions targeting improvement of student abilities, and inform strategic planning and accreditation. For students, outcomes assessment will communicate clear expectations about important goals of a USC Upstate Bachelor’s degree, inform them that they will be evaluated in a consistent and transparent way, and reassure them that there is common core content across majors.

Although a particular method of assessing General Education is not mandated in the current SACS criteria for accreditation, each institution is expected to evaluate the
effectiveness of its General Education courses by implementing an assessment plan that:

- is broad-based,
- is derived from the institution's purpose and goals, 
- uses a variety of assessment methods, and 
- demonstrates the use of results for the improvement of the general education program.

**General Education at USC Upstate**

The faculty at USC Upstate developed two frameworks—a course distribution and a competency-based learning outcomes and assessment process—that together form the University’s general education program. Because of this approach, the University’s general education program offers all USC Upstate students with a common academic experience that provides the foundational and supporting skills on which the degree programs can build rather than a collection of course content specific knowledge strung together.

**Course distribution**

It is imperative for students to have exposure to a broad range of courses in order to develop the breadth of knowledge necessary for college completion. To that end, a course distribution was created with courses divided into eight general content areas. (see Attachment 1)

**Competency-Based Learning Outcomes**

The USC Upstate faculty developed five competencies and nine student learning outcomes (SLOs) that they felt encompassed the knowledge and skills USC Upstate students should learn through their general education coursework.

**Competency 1:** The USC Upstate graduate should demonstrate an ability to communicate in English, both orally and in writing.

1.1 Students are able to create and deliver coherent, grammatically correct oral presentations.

1.2 Students are able to create coherent, grammatically correct written responses to prompts and questions.

**Competency 2:** The USC Upstate graduate should demonstrate an understanding of and an ability to apply scientific investigation and quantitative and logical reasoning.

2.1 Students demonstrate an ability to apply scientific reasoning by drawing appropriate conclusions from scientific data.

2.2 Students demonstrate an ability to apply quantitative and logical reasoning by producing solutions to or analyses of appropriate problems.
Competency 3: The USC Upstate graduate should be able to integrate and critically evaluate information.
3.1 Students are able to evaluate strengths and weaknesses of varying points of view.
3.2 Students demonstrate the ability to distinguish between pertinent and irrelevant information.

Competency 4: The USC Upstate graduate should understand and demonstrate an awareness of distinctive features of language and cultures.
4.1 Students demonstrate knowledge of linguistic and cultural diversity and contributions of such diversity to society.

Competency 5: The USC Upstate graduate should demonstrate responsible and appropriate use of information technologies.
5.1 Students are able to gather and correctly process information through appropriate use of technological tools.
5.2 Students demonstrate the ability to use information technologies to communicate information to others.

Submission of New Courses to the General Education Program

New courses, or courses not currently included in the General Education course distribution, that wish to be included in the distribution must submit a rationale for their inclusion to the General Education Committee for approval. Only 100- and 200-level courses will be considered for addition to the course distribution. In order to be approved as part of the general education course distribution, the faculty of the associated department must also identify at least two competencies the course supports and provide an explanation of how the course contributes to student abilities in each. The rationale must be submitted on the General Education Competency Alignment Form. (see Attachment 2)

Assessment

Assessments of student abilities relating to the general education competencies will be administered on a rotation that allows each competency to be assessed each year. For example, two competencies might be assessed in the Fall semester and the remaining three would then be assessed in the Spring. Senior Seminar/capstone courses will be the main assessment venue, and assessments will be assigned to each course each semester by the office of Institutional Research, Assessment, and Planning in consultation with the appropriate CATs and the General Education Committee.

The results of these assessments will be analyzed and discussed by faculty. If benchmarks for a competency are not met, the faculty will make suggestions of improvement measures to departments teaching courses supporting each competency. By aligning with a competency, the departments agree to develop specific improvement measures they feel are appropriate and provide these improvement suggestions to the
General Education Committee. If a department does not provide these improvement measures to the Committee, their courses will be removed from the general education curriculum. The General Education Committee will then compile all relevant information to create an annual University reports on the General Education program.

Faculty representatives from units teaching courses that support a specific competency and at least one member of the General Education Committee will join to create a “competency assessment team” (CAT) that will oversee and execute much of this assessment process. The CATs are charged with:

- Deciding how to assess the competency,
- Developing internal assessments that are more reflective of the intent of the competencies to replace or support existing assessment,
- Evaluating how well the assessments measure the competency,
- Reviewing and analyzing assessment results,
- Providing the data to units offering courses supporting the competency.
- Providing units with suggestions of improvement measures if benchmarks are not met.
- Collecting improvement measures provided by departments
- Submitting departments’ improvement measures to the General Education Committee.

Attachment 3 is an example of the form created to document the competency assessment process.

**Timeline**

*I will create this.*

**Archiving Reports**

All reports of the CATs and the General Education Committee will be archived with the Office of Institutional Research, Assessment and Planning and will be linked on the IRAP web page under the General Education assessment area.
Description of the General Education Committee (From USC Upstate Faculty Manual approved by Board of Trustees 6-2006)

The General Education Committee is composed of one designated representative from each voting unit. *Ex officio* members are the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences and the Registrar.

The general education program of USCS (sic) is under the supervision of the College of Arts and Sciences. The administration of the program is the responsibility of the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences subject to normal curriculum and program development or deletion procedures.

The committee reports to the Faculty Senate. The committee is responsible for the management and assessment of the general education program. The committee is responsible for reviewing all courses suggested for inclusion in the general education curriculum. The committee determines if the courses included in the general education curriculum contribute to the goals of general education as they are stated in the catalog under Academic Programs. It may also review the general education curriculum to determine if the curriculum meets the objectives established by the faculty of the university. In addition, the committee makes recommendations to the Faculty Senate on the consequences of any change in general education course requirements.
## General Education Course Distribution

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I. Communication</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SEGL101 and SEGL102</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSPH 201</td>
<td>3</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>II. Mathematics and Logic</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One math course</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMTH 102, 120, 121, 122, 126, 127, 141, 142, 231</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One course from math, logic or statistics</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SECO 291; SLGC 205, 207; SMTH 102, 120, 121, 122, 126, 127, 141, 142, 202, 231; SPSY 225; SSOC 201</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>III. Information Technology</th>
<th>3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SCSC138, 150; SIMS 101</td>
<td></td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IV. Natural Science</th>
<th>7-8</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2 courses from the following (at least one with the associated lab)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAST 111/L; SBIO 101/L, 102/L, 110/L, 206, 240, 242/L; 270; SCHM 101/L, 105, 106, 107, 109/L, 111/L, 112/L; SGE 201/L, 202; SGEL 101/L, 102/L, 103/L, 120, 121, 123/L, 131; SPSH 101/L, 201/L, 202/L, 211/L, 212/L</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>V. Arts and Humanities</th>
<th>6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 fine arts course</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAAS 204 SAT 101, 105, 106; SMUS 110, 140; STH 161, 170;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 course from the following: (no more than 3 credit hours from a specific discipline)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAAS 204; SAMS 101, 102; SEGL 250, 275, 279, 280, 283, 289, 290, 291; SEGL 252; SFLM 240; SPSH 102, 211; SREL103; STH 161, 170;</td>
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</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VI. Foreign Language and Culture</th>
<th>3</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Foreign Language minimum 102 level</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SFRN 102; SGRM 102; SSPN 102</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
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<tr>
<th>VII. History</th>
<th>3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SHST 101, SHST 102, SHST 105, or SHST 106</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VIII. Social and Behavioral Sciences</th>
<th>6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2 courses from the following with two disciplines represented:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SANT 102; SAAS 201; SECO 221, 222; SGE 101,103; SGIS 201, 301, 320; SPSY 101; SSOC 101; SWST 101;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

September 2008
Attachment 2

University of South Carolina Upstate
General Education Competency Alignment Form

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dept. Offering Course</th>
<th>Dept. Contact Person</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phone</th>
<th>Email Address</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Discipline &amp; Course Number</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
<th>Number of Credit Hours</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

New Course ☐ Existing Course Update ☑ Delete Course ☐

Please choose the distribution area in which you would like this course placed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Communication</th>
<th>Math &amp; Logic</th>
<th>Arts &amp; Humanities</th>
<th>Social &amp; Behavioral Sciences</th>
<th>Foreign Language/Culture</th>
<th>Information Technology</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td>Math</td>
<td>Fine Arts</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural Science</td>
<td>Math/Logic/Statistics</td>
<td>Other Arts &amp; Humanities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Place an “X” beside the SLO’s your course will support. All courses must support at least one SLO under each of two competencies. In the space provided, please briefly explain how your course will support the selected SLO(s). After receiving the department head’s signature, submit this form to the General Education Committee Chair.

Competency 1: The USC Upstate graduate should demonstrate an ability to communicate in English, both orally and in writing.

☐ SLO 1.1. Students are able to create and deliver coherent, grammatically correct oral presentations.

☐ SLO 1.2. Students are able to create coherent, grammatically correct written responses to prompts and questions.

What aspect(s) of your course contribute to or support the SLO(s)?

Competency 2: The USC Upstate graduate should demonstrate an understanding of and an ability to apply scientific investigation and quantitative and logical reasoning.

☐ SLO 2.1 Students demonstrate an ability to apply scientific reasoning by drawing appropriate conclusions from scientific data.

☐ SLO 2.2 Students demonstrate an ability to apply quantitative and logical reasoning by producing solutions to or analyses of appropriate problems.

What aspect(s) of your course contribute to or support the SLO(s)?

4.8.09 USC Upstate General Education Committee

Page 1 of 2
Competency 3: The USC Upstate graduate should be able to integrate and critically evaluate information.

☐ SLO 3.1 Students are able to evaluate strengths and weaknesses of varying points of view.

☐ SLO 3.2 Students demonstrate the ability to distinguish between pertinent and irrelevant information.

*What aspect(s) of your course contribute to or support the SLO(s)?*

Competency 4: The USC Upstate graduate should understand and demonstrate an awareness of distinctive features of language and cultures.

☐ SLO 4.1 Students demonstrate knowledge of linguistic and cultural diversity and contributions of such diversity to society.

*What aspect(s) of your course contribute to or support the SLO(s)?*

Competency 5: The USC Upstate graduate should demonstrate responsible and appropriate use of information technologies.

☐ SLO 5.1 Students are able to gather and correctly process information through appropriate use of technological tools.

☐ SLO 5.2 Students demonstrate the ability to use information technologies to communicate information to others.

*What aspect(s) of your course contribute to or support the SLO(s)?*

Completed by: ___________________________ Date: __________

Department Head Signature: ___________________________ Date: __________

General Education Committee Chair: ___________________________ Date: __________
Attachment 3

CAT 4
Globalization/Diversity

Competency 4: The USC Upstate graduate should understand and demonstrate an awareness of distinctive features of language and cultures.

4.1 Students demonstrate knowledge of linguistic and cultural diversity and contributions of such diversity to society.

Assessment Measures

4.1 The Intercultural Developmental Inventory (IDI)

The Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) measures how a person or a group of people tend to think and feel about cultural difference stemming from any aspect of diversity and human identity. IDI is the basis for developing competence leading, working, and succeeding in an increasingly-diverse domestic and global workplace and marketplace. IDI contains fifty items or statements to be answered at the extent to which a person agrees or disagrees with the statement. IDI measures how a person feels, thinks about, and reacts to cultural difference. It is, therefore, measuring how a person construes and organizes events, guided and limited by their cultural patterns. This is called one’s “worldview” regarding cultural difference. Unlike many other instruments, it does not compare a person to typical behaviors and it does not analyze behavioral reactions. IDI operates at the worldview level of how a person feels and thinks about cultural difference. This deeper level of one’s cognitive experience is what guides and limits behavior.

- The IDI tests sensitivity, worldview, acceptance, adaptation, similarity, behavioral avoidance, denial and defense.
- The DD Scale measures a worldview that simplifies and/or polarizes cultural difference. This orientation ranges from a tendency toward disinterest and avoidance of cultural difference to a tendency to view the work in terms of “us” and “them” where “us” is superior.
- The R Scale measures a worldview that revalues the “us” and “them” polarization, where “them” is superior.
- The M Scale measures a worldview that highlights cultural commonality and universal values through an emphasis on similarity and/or universalism.
- The AA Scale measures a worldview that can comprehend and accommodate complex cultural difference. This can range from acceptance to adaptation.
- The EM Scale measures a worldview that incorporates a multicultural identity with confused cultural perspectives. EM measures encapsulated marginality, which is one of the two theorized aspects of a broader development worldview called “Integration.”
CAT 4
Globalization/Diversity

CAT findings from data
CAT 4
Globalization/Diversity

Suggestions for improvement (from CAT to departments with courses supporting this competency)
CAT 4
Globalization/Diversity

Action Plan (from departments with courses supporting this competency)

Department:  
Course(s):

Department Chair Signature: ______________________  Date: ________________