

**Middle Tennessee State University  
General Education Competencies  
Assessment Report 2022 -2023**

## Assessment of General Education Learning Competencies

Academic Year: 2022-2023

Subject Area: Oral Communication

1. Identify the course(s) used in the assessment. Include the prefix, number, and title of each course.

COMM 2200 (Fundamentals of Communication) was used for oral communication assessment at Middle Tennessee State University (MTSU) for the Spring of 2023 semester. The prefix for this course is “COMM” which is short for communication. The number for this course is “2200.” The current title for this course is the “Fundamentals of Communication.” Persuasive speeches were the focal point of our assessment. COMM 2200 is the only course that the Department of Communication Studies utilizes for the purpose of oral communication assessment.

2. Indicate the number of students who were assessed. Was sampling used? If yes, briefly describe the method of selecting student work and the percentage of students whose work was assessed.

It was during the Spring of 2023 semester that the Department of Communication Studies assessed a total of 199 students ( $N = 199$ ). In terms of the demographics for students who were assessed, professors of COMM 2200 were instructed to collect demographic data for their evaluated sections. Based on the self-reported data that was provided by our COMM 2200 students, the demographic data for our assessed students was as follows. Female students (53.36%) were in the majority for the utilized sample whereas male students (46.63%) were in the minority for the utilized sample. A small portion identified as non-binary (0.01%). Freshman (52.42%) were the most represented class standing in our 2023 assessment followed by sophomores (31.82%), juniors (5.84%), and seniors (3.82%). Dual enrollment students accounted for 6.10% of the assessed students this year. The mean age for the assessed students in the 2023 assessment of COMM 2200 was 19.61 years of age.

A variation of a stratified random sampling procedure was used in our 2023 assessment of COMM 2200. The method for our stratified random sampling procedure in terms of selecting student work was comprised of four steps. The first step was to divide the 62 sections of COMM 2200 that were offered during the Spring of 2023 semester by the strata of “professor” (i.e., professor one, professor two, professor three, etc.). For example, professor one taught five sections of COMM 2200 in the Spring of 2023, professor two taught three sections of COMM 2200 in the Spring of 2023, professor three taught four sections of COMM 2200 in the Spring of 2023, and so forth. The second step involved a random selection of one class from each strata (e.g., professor one had one section randomly selected from their course load of COMM 2200 classes in the Spring of 2023, professor two had one section randomly selected from their course load of COMM 2200 classes in the Spring of 2023, professor three had one section randomly selected from their course load of COMM 2200 classes in the Spring of 2023, etc.). The third step involved selecting a non-random dual enrollment section. The dual enrollment section was non-randomly selected for inclusion because 1) we offer a small number of dual

enrollment types of COMM 2200 classes and 2) completing a non-random sample of this one particular section would ensure that at least one dual enrollment section was included in our assessment. It should also be noted here that online and on-ground sections were both included in our assessment. The fourth step (which occurred after data collection) was that evaluators were instructed to assess 66.67% of the speeches in each section to which they were assigned via the recorded videos tab in D2L. Evaluators were trained to assess two speeches, skip one, assess two speeches, skip one, and so forth for each selected section. The 2/3 assessment evaluation process was completed to not overburden the workload of our three evaluators.

The approximate percentage of student work on persuasive speeches that was assessed was 12.83%. This sum is an estimate based on (a) 62 sections of COMM 2200 being taught in the Spring of 2023 semester, (b) based on the estimate that most sections of COMM 2200 were filled to the maximum capacity of 25 students per section (or the maximum capacity of 20 students per section in some specialty sections of COMM 2200), and (c) our final sample of 199 students. In summation, a total of 199 students were assessed based on a modified version of a stratified random sampling procedure.

3. Do the procedures described in Items 1 and 2 represent any significant change from the pilot assessment? If so, describe the changes and rationale.

The procedures described in item 1 and item 2 represent a significant change from our pilot assessment. The changes that were made from our normal processes were to purposefully include a dual enrollment section. As alluded to previously, this required us to slightly deviate from the textbook definition of a true stratified random sampling procedure. The rationale for completing this was that instructions were given to include a dual enrollment section. Another change to be noted is that a new evaluator was brought into the mix. There were three evaluators in the Spring of 2023 semester. Two of our three evaluators assessed speeches in the previous year. One evaluator was new to the process this year, but had participated in assessment several years prior. In short, our normal sampling procedure was altered and a different evaluator was brought back into the mix to assess speeches in 2023.

4. Per the evaluation rubric utilized at your institution, adapt the table below to record the results of the assessments of each learning competency in the subject area discussed in the report. Below is an example of a table for oral communication. Revise the table to reflect the descriptors used at your institution. If you rephrased a TBR goal statement, type your institution's version below the corresponding TBR goal and within the same cell. If you addressed additional competencies not included in the TBR list, create rows for them at the bottom of the table.

(See Table 1 on the Following Pages)

**Table 1.** Oral Communication Competencies for 2023

ORAL PRESENTATION Rubric	Severely Deficient (1/A)	Inadequate (2/B)	Fair (3/C)	Good (4/D)	Excellent (5/E)
<p><b>Competency One:</b> Within the opening segment of the speech the speaker meets the four criteria for an effective opening [1. the introduction gains the audience’s attention; 2. the thesis / purpose statement is clear and concise, 3. the speaker addresses his/her credibility on the subject, and 4. the speaker clearly relates the topic to the members of the audience]; the opening segment is adequately developed.</p>	Within the opening segment the speaker fails to meet all four criteria and/or the opening segment is missing.	Within the opening segment the speaker only meets <u>two</u> of the four criteria and/or the opening segment is severely under developed.	Within the opening segment the speaker meets <u>three</u> of the four criteria; and the opening segment lacks some development.	Within the opening segment the speaker meets all <u>four</u> criteria; the opening section may contain minor flaws in development.	Within the opening segment the speaker meets all <u>four</u> criteria; the opening segment is fully developed.
<p><b>Competency One</b> (2022) <math>M = 3.94</math>, <math>SD = 1.24</math> (<math>N = 191</math>)</p> <p>(2023) <math>M = 4.04</math>, <math>SD = 1.05</math> (<math>N = 199</math>)</p>	2 (1.3%)	26 (16.6%)	23 (14.6%)	43 (27.4%)	63 (40.1%)
	2 (2.0%)	17 (8.5%)	30 (15.1%)	64 (32.2%)	84 (42.2%)
<p><b>Competency Two:</b> The speaker uses an organizational pattern appropriate to the persuasive presentation, which may include one of the four patterns addressed in the Lucas text: problem-solution, problem-cause-solution, comparative advantages, or Monroe’s Motivated Sequence</p>	The speech is clearly not persuasive and/or fails to effectively use a persuasive organizational pattern that is appropriate for the topic, and audience.	The speech is somewhat persuasive and/or the organizational pattern and expression of arguments are severely deficient [the organizational pattern is unclear and/or incomplete].	The speech is persuasive; the speaker uses an appropriate persuasive organizational pattern with some errors or omissions, and some arguments may be deficient	The speaker uses an appropriate persuasive organizational pattern. The organizational pattern is complete, and the speaker leaves the audience with a clear persuasive message or call to action.	The speech is clearly persuasive and the speaker presents an exceptionally clear and compelling argument or case. The organizational pattern is complete and the speaker leaves the audience with an undeniable message or call to action.
<p><b>Competency Two</b> (2022) <math>M = 4.15</math>, <math>SD = 1.07</math> (<math>N = 191</math>)</p> <p>(2023) <math>M = 3.78</math>, <math>SD = 1.21</math> (<math>N = 199</math>)</p>	5 (3.2%)	12 (7.6%)	22 (14.0%)	27 (17.2%)	91 (58.0%)
	10 (5.0%)	25 (12.6%)	36 (18.1%)	55 (27.6%)	73 (36.7%)
<p><b>Competency Three:</b> The speaker provides supporting material (<i>examples, statistics and testimony</i>) appropriate for a persuasive presentation; the quality and variety of support clearly enhances the credibility of the speech.</p>	The speaker uses no supporting material.	The speaker’s use of support material is lacking in variety, and/or is lacking in quality.	The speaker’s use of support material is adequate but is somewhat deficient; may be lacking in quality or variety.	The speaker uses supporting material that is appropriate in quality and variety.	The speaker’s use of support material is exceptional; utilizes all three kinds of support material. The quality and variety of support clearly enhances credibility of the speech.

<p><b>Competency Three</b> (2022) <math>M = 4.05</math>, <math>SD = 1.19</math> (<math>N = 191</math>)</p> <p>(2023) <math>M = 4.05</math>, <math>SD = 1.27</math> (<math>N = 199</math>)</p>	<p>6 (3.8%)</p> <p>12 (6.0%)</p>	<p>29 (18.5%)</p> <p>17 (8.5%)</p>	<p>17 (10.8%)</p> <p>33 (16.6%)</p>	<p>29 (18.5%)</p> <p>24 (12.2%)</p>	<p>76 (48.4%)</p> <p>113 (56.8%)</p>
<p><b>Competency Four:</b> The speaker uses language appropriate to the audience and occasion. Additionally, the vocalics are suitable to the audience and occasion. Voice is conversational, is loud enough to be easily heard, and is energetic to maintain audience interest.</p>	<p>The speaker uses unclear language and/or uses jargon and/or slang that is inappropriate for a formal occasion and for the audience; the language is sexist, racist, non-inclusive, etc. Grammar and pronunciation are incorrect and/or distracting. The speaker fails to meet <u>all</u> vocalics factors.</p>	<p>The speaker uses unclear language and/or uses jargon and/or slang that is inappropriate for a formal occasion and/or distracts from the presentation. The language attempts to be persuasive but sounds more informative. Grammar, syntax, and diction are not effective. The speaker fails to meet <u>two</u> of the three vocalics factors.</p>	<p>The speaker uses language that is reasonably clear and appropriate for a formal occasion. The speaker uses an occasional slang expression or jargon, but such language is not distracting. The language is persuasive to an extent but borders on informative. Grammar, syntax, and diction are effective. The speaker meets all but <u>one</u> of the vocalics factors.</p>	<p>The speaker uses language that is clear, vivid, and appropriate. The presentation is devoid of inappropriate slang or jargon. Language is persuasive throughout the entire speech. Grammar, syntax, and diction are used to emphasize points. The speaker meets all <u>three</u> vocalics factors.</p>	<p>The speaker uses language that is exceptionally clear, vivid, and appropriate. Language is persuasive throughout the entire speech. Grammar, syntax, and diction are used to emphasize points. The speaker uses rhythmic devices such as parallelism and/or repetition etc., to create an especially compelling and clear message. The speaker makes exceptional use of all vocalics factors.</p>
<p><b>Competency Four</b> (2022) <math>M = 4.20</math>, <math>SD = 1.01</math> (<math>N = 191</math>)</p> <p>(2023) <math>M = 4.01</math>, <math>SD = 1.04</math> (<math>N = 199</math>)</p>	<p>0 (0.0%)</p> <p>6 (3.0%)</p>	<p>10 (6.4%)</p> <p>8 (4.0%)</p>	<p>35 (22.3%)</p> <p>47 (23.6%)</p>	<p>29 (18.5%)</p> <p>56 (28.1%)</p>	<p>83 (52.9%)</p> <p>82 (41.2%)</p>
<p><b>Competency Five:</b> The speaker demonstrates the ability to effectively utilize and document a variety of multiple, credible sources.</p>	<p>The speaker fails to include any source documentation in the presentation.</p>	<p>The speaker incorporates a few sources in the presentation, but the documentation is deficient [<u>three</u> or fewer sources cited]. Some sources do not appear credible and/or a variety of sources are not used.</p>	<p>The speaker incorporates a minimum of <u>four</u> sources in the presentation and the sources appear to be credible, but the documentation is deficient. Source credibility is not always established and/or a variety of sources are not used.</p>	<p>The speaker incorporates a minimum of <u>five</u> sources in the presentation; the sources appear to be credible, a variety of sources are utilized, and the source documentation is <u>not</u> deficient.</p>	<p>The speaker incorporates <u>six</u> or more sources in the presentation; the sources are clearly credible, a variety of sources are utilized, and the source documentation is <u>not</u> deficient.</p>
<p><b>Competency Five</b> (2022) <math>M = 4.03</math>, <math>SD = 1.28</math> (<math>N = 191</math>)</p> <p>(2023) <math>M = 3.54</math>, <math>SD = 1.48</math> (<math>N = 199</math>)</p>	<p>17 (10.8%)</p> <p>26 (13.1%)</p>	<p>37 (23.6%)</p> <p>34 (17.1%)</p>	<p>9 (5.7%)</p> <p>26 (13.1%)</p>	<p>17 (10.8%)</p> <p>32 (16.1%)</p>	<p>77 (49.0%)</p> <p>81 (40.7%)</p>

<p><b>Competency Six:</b> Within the closing segment of the speech, the speaker meets the three criteria for an effective ending [1. the speaker signals the end of the speech; 2. the thesis / purpose statement is clearly restated, 3. The speaker ends with a memorable message]; the closing segment is adequately developed.</p>	<p>Within the closing segment the speaker fails to meet all three criteria and/or the closing segment is missing.</p>	<p>Within the closing segment the speaker only meets one of the three criteria and/or the closing segment is severely under developed.</p>	<p>Within the closing segment the speaker meets two of the three criteria; and the closing segment lacks some development.</p>	<p>Within the closing segment the speaker meets all three criteria; the closing section may contain minor flaws in development.</p>	<p>Within the closing segment the speaker meets all three criteria; the opening segment is exceptionally developed.</p>
<p><b>Competency Six</b> (2022) <math>M = 3.73</math>, <math>SD = 1.20</math> (<math>N = 190</math>)</p> <p>(2023) <math>M = 3.83</math>, <math>SD = 1.15</math> (<math>N = 199</math>)</p>	<p>5 (3.2%)</p> <p>10 (5.0%)</p>	<p>8 (5.1%)</p> <p>17 (8.5%)</p>	<p>33 (21.0%)</p> <p>40 (20.1%)</p>	<p>47 (29.9%)</p> <p>62 (31.2%)</p>	<p>64 (40.8%)</p> <p>70 (35.2%)</p>
<p><b>Competency Seven:</b> The speaker maintains appropriate eye contact with the entire audience throughout the presentation.</p>	<p>The speaker fails to establish any eye contact with the audience; reads the presentation.</p>	<p>The speaker establishes minimal eye contact with the audience; eye contact is limited to one focal point.</p>	<p>The speaker establishes some eye contact with the audience; eye contact is limited to one or two focal points.</p>	<p>The speaker establishes an appropriate amount of eye contact with the audience; focal points are varied.</p>	<p>The speaker establishes an appropriate amount of eye contact with the audience, the focal points are varied and the speaker is intentional in establishing eye contact with the entire audience.</p>
<p><b>Competency Seven</b> (2022) <math>M = 4.18</math>, <math>SD = 1.12</math> (<math>N = 191</math>)</p> <p>(2023) <math>M = 3.79</math>, <math>SD = 1.40</math> (<math>N = 199</math>)</p>	<p>8 (5.1%)</p> <p>18 (9.0%)</p>	<p>8 (5.1%)</p> <p>30 (15.1%)</p>	<p>28 (17.8%)</p> <p>21 (10.6%)</p>	<p>33 (21.0%)</p> <p>37 (18.6%)</p>	<p>80 (51.0%)</p> <p>93 (46.7%)</p>
<p><b>Competency Eight:</b> The speaker uses physical behaviors (body movement, gestures and posture) that support the verbal message and enhance the speaker's appearance of confidence and competence.</p>	<p>The speaker uses almost no gestures and/or body movement during the presentation to support the verbal message. The speaker's posture significantly detracts from his/her appearance as a confident and competent speaker.</p>	<p>The speaker uses very limited gestures and/or body movement during the presentation and/or the gestures do not support the verbal message. The speaker's posture detracts somewhat from his/her appearance as a confident and competent speaker.</p>	<p>The speaker utilizes some body movement gestures to support the verbal message. The speaker's posture supports his/her appearance as a somewhat confident and competent speaker.</p>	<p>The speaker uses <u>both</u> body movement and gestures during the presentation to enhance the verbal message. The speaker's posture supports his/her appearance as a confident and competent speaker.</p>	<p>The speaker uses <u>both</u> body movement and gestures during the presentation. The movement and gesture add significantly to the clarity and impact of the message and enhances the verbal message. The speaker uses posture that supports the verbal message and the speaker appears to be a strong, confident and competent speaker.</p>

<b>Competency Eight</b> (2022) $M = 4.27$ , $SD = 1.03$ ( $N = 187$ )	7 (4.5%)	8 (5.1%)	18 (11.5%)	47 (29.9%)	77 (49.0%)
(2023) $M = 3.88$ , $SD = 1.27$ ( $N = 199$ )	16 (8.0%)	16 (8.0%)	30 (15.1%)	51 (25.6%)	86 (43.2%)

\*For the purpose of comparison, data from 2023 are presented in blue whereas data from 2022 are presented in red.

5. Summarize your impressions of the results reported in item 4. Based upon your interpretation of the data, what conclusions emerge about student attainment of the learning outcomes?

Data from the 2023 assessment of COMM 2200 (as noted above) produced some interpretations and conclusions that pertain to learning outcomes. The following bullet-points provide a breakdown and comparison of each competency. The last part of this section puts forth some general conclusions and interpretations.

- **Competency I:** The first competency centered on the opening segment of the assessed speech. Results indicated that 89.5% of students were evaluated at a level that was fair or higher for the first competency. More specifically, the findings revealed that 15.1% of students ( $N = 30$ ) were evaluated as fair, 32.2% of students ( $N = 64$ ) were evaluated as good, and 42.2% of students ( $N = 84$ ) were evaluated as excellent. It was at the other end of the spectrum that 10.5% of students were evaluated as inadequate or severely deficient. An inadequate assessment was applied by evaluators to 8.5% of the student ( $N = 17$ ) speeches and an assessment of severely deficient was applied by evaluators to 2.0% of the student ( $N = 2$ ) speeches.
  - The results from competency I were respectable. A miniscule upward trend was observed on competency I in 2023 relative to the data that emerged on competency I in 2022 ( $t(372) = .883$ ,  $p = .378$ ). A closer look at the data reveals the mean score on this competency was 4.04 in 2023 while the mean score was 3.94 in 2022. This does represent a .10 increase, but this data point has historically hovered around the 4.00 mark. That is, the 2023 data suggests our students are performing at a level that is very slightly above the good category as it relates to the introductory component of a persuasive speech.
- **Competency II:** The second competency looked at whether students used an organizational pattern that was persuasive in nature. Results indicated that 82.4% of students were evaluated at a level that was fair or higher for the second competency. Categorically speaking, the findings from this analysis illustrated that 18.1% of students ( $N = 36$ ) were evaluated as fair, while 27.6% of students ( $N = 55$ ) were evaluated as good, and 36.7% of students ( $N = 73$ ) were evaluated as excellent. In contrast, a total of 17.6% of students were evaluated as inadequate or severely deficient. The breakdown reveals that evaluators assigned the label of inadequate for competency II to 12.6% of the student ( $N = 25$ ) speeches and an assessment of severely deficient was assigned by evaluators to 5.0% of the student ( $N = 10$ ) speeches.
  - The findings on competency II were okay. A statistically significant downward trend was observed when the 2023 data for competency II was compared to the 2022 data on competency II ( $t(388) = -3.136$ ,  $p = .002$ ). All things considered, the observed results on the second competency suggest students are capable of doing

better with regards to organizing their speeches in a manner that is appropriately persuasive.

- **Competency III:** The third competency for this assessment looked at the use of appropriate supporting materials. The findings for the third competency indicated that 85.6% of students were evaluated at a level that was fair or higher. A further breakdown revealed that 16.6% of students ( $N = 33$ ) were evaluated as fair, while 12.2% of the students ( $N = 24$ ) were evaluated as good, and 56.8% of students ( $N = 113$ ) were evaluated as excellent. Additional data for the third competency found that 8.5% of students ( $N = 17$ ) were evaluated as inadequate. A total of 6.0% of students ( $N = 12$ ) were evaluated as severely deficient.
  - The findings from competency III were almost the same as the year prior. Stated differently, the findings for the third competency for 2023 when compared to the third competency for 2022 showed evidence of a stable trend that was not statistically significant ( $t(388) = 0.25, p = .980$ ). Nevertheless, the mean result for the third competency revealed that students in COMM 2200 are negligibly above the category of good as it relates to incorporating supporting materials that are appropriate (e.g., statistics, examples, etc.) into their speech.
- **Competency IV:** The fourth competency for the 2023 assessment of COMM 2200 concentrated on language features such as whether appropriate grammar, diction, and syntax were used in the speech. The emergent data on the fourth competency indicated that 92.9% of students were evaluated at a level that was fair or higher. The specifics for the fourth competency illustrated that 23.6% of students ( $N = 47$ ) were evaluated as fair, while 28.1% of the students ( $N = 56$ ) were evaluated as good, and 41.2% of students ( $N = 82$ ) were evaluated as excellent. The findings also revealed that 7.0% of students were evaluated as inadequate or lower. Specifically, 4.0% of students ( $N = 10$ ) were evaluated as inadequate and 3.0% of students ( $N = 6$ ) were evaluated as severely deficient.
  - The results from competency IV were good again this year. A downward trend that was nearing statistical significance emerged when the 2023 data for the fourth competency was compared to the 2022 data for this fourth competency ( $t(388) = -1.913, p = .057$ ). Categorically speaking, the data which was uncovered on this competency shows that variables related to language and voice criteria are still above the level of good for our COMM 2200 students.
- **Competency V:** The fifth competency for our oral communication assessment focused on gathering and using multiple sources. Results indicated that 69.9% of students were evaluated at a grade of fair or higher. A further rundown for the fifth competency revealed that 13.1% of students ( $N = 26$ ) were evaluated as fair, while 16.1% of students ( $N = 32$ ) were evaluated as good, and 40.7% of students ( $N = 81$ ) were evaluated as excellent. At the same time, the evaluators found that 30.2% of student speeches were inadequate or lower. Evaluators rated 17.1% of students ( $N = 34$ ) as inadequate and evaluated 13.1% of students ( $N = 26$ ) as severely deficient.
  - The findings on competency V should be watched closely in future assessments. It was in the current analysis that comparing the observed data on the fifth competency in 2023 against the observed data on the fifth competency in 2022



revealed a statistical difference between these two years ( $t(383) = -3.457, .104, p = .001$ ). Historically speaking, the 2023 mean score of 3.54 on a 5-point Likert scale for this competency falls in line with mean scores on this competency prior to the COVID-19 pandemic.

- **Competency VI:** The sixth competency of our oral communication assessment focused on the closing segment of a speech. Results indicated that 86.5% of students were evaluated at a grade of fair or higher in 2023. A further rundown for the sixth competency revealed that 20.1% of students ( $N = 40$ ) were evaluated as fair, while 31.2% of students ( $N = 62$ ) were evaluated as good, and 35.2% of students ( $N = 70$ ) were evaluated as excellent. That noted, the evaluators found that 13.5% of student speeches were inadequate or lower. Evaluators rated 8.5% of speeches ( $N = 17$ ) as inadequate and evaluated 5.0% of speeches ( $N = 10$ ) as severely deficient.
  - The findings on competency VI are trending towards the label of good when examined with a rubric lens. The process of comparing the observed data on the fifth competency in 2023 against the observed data on the fifth competency in 2022 did not yield a statistical increase between these two years ( $t(384) = .863, p = .389$ ). Overall, the mean score on a 5-point Likert scale was 3.83 in 2023 and 3.73 in 2022.
- **Competency VII:** The seventh competency for the oral communication assessment project concentrated on appropriate eye contact. Results indicated that 75.9% of students were evaluated at a grade of fair or higher. More specifically, the findings for the seventh competency indicated that 10.6% of students ( $N = 21$ ) were evaluated as fair, while 18.6% of students ( $N = 37$ ) were evaluated as good, and 46.7% of students ( $N = 93$ ) were evaluated as excellent. In contrast, the 2023 evaluators found that 24.1% of student speeches were inadequate or lower. Evaluators rated 15.1% of students ( $N = 30$ ) as inadequate and evaluated 9.0% of students ( $N = 18$ ) as severely deficient.
  - The findings on this competency are notable. A statistically significant decrease was observed when the 2023 data on this competency was compared against the 2022 data on this competency ( $t(376) = -3.04, p = .003$ ). Indeed, the uncovered data was moderately beneath the good category for this competency, but this decreased finding in 2023 was also comparable to the observed findings on competency seven prior to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- **Competency VIII:** The eighth competency in our oral communication assessment concentrated on nonverbal communication. Results indicated that 83.9% of students were evaluated at a grade of fair or higher. Findings for the eighth competency revealed that 15.1% of students ( $N = 30$ ) were evaluated as fair, while 25.6% of students ( $N = 51$ ) were evaluated as good, and 43.2% of students ( $N = 86$ ) were evaluated as excellent. Conversely, the evaluators found that 16.0% of student speeches were inadequate or lower. Evaluators rated 8.0% of students ( $N = 16$ ) as inadequate and evaluated 8.0% of students ( $N = 16$ ) as severely deficient.
  - The findings on competency VIII were good if they are contextually situated as being based on the mean score. However, a statistically significant decrease was observed when the 2023 data on competency VIII was compared against the 2022

data on competency VIII ( $t(376) = -3.296, p = .001$ ). All things considered, this was the fourth competency in which a statistically significant decrease was uncovered when the current data from 2023 was compared to data from the Spring of 2022 semester.

## Overall Interpretation and Analysis

The overall analysis of the data which emerged in the 2023 assessment of oral communication can be summarized as not excellent. A statistically significant decrease was uncovered on competency two, competency five, competency seven, and competency eight relative to the 2022 assessment data. A non-statistically significant decrease was observed on competency four in relation to the uncovered data from the 2022 assessment of COMM 2200 for this particular competency. A non-significant increase was observed on competencies one and six when the 2023 data was matched against the 2022 data. The findings on competency three stayed mostly the same in 2023 when matched against the data from 2022. The following paragraphs provide additional context and interpretations of the uncovered findings.

There are five overall interpretations of the 2023 data for the course of COMM 2200 that should be noted in context. First, a statistically significant decrease was observed on competency five when the 2023 data on this competency was compared to the 2022 data on this competency. Competency five was also the competency in which our students obtained the overall lowest mean score. Students earned a mean score of 3.54 on a 5-point Likert scale for competency five. This is not surprising because COMM 2200 students have historically performed at a level that is low on this competency relative to the other seven competencies that are measured in our assessment efforts. Improving student performance on competency five has been discussed at four different COMM 2200 meetings in the past seven years. The general range of 3.50 to 4.00 is just where our students are at in terms of utilizing multiple sources. This is what the data has revealed to us over the past seven years. The score of 4.03 last year in 2022 was the anomaly and the high point over the past seven years. Whether incentives are put on the table or harsher grader is touted, the range of around 3.50 to 4.00 on a 5-point Likert scale is to be expected. It is likely there will always be a small faction of between 10% - 15% of our students who will just not have any sources in their speech. That is to be expected per our previous assessment reports. Our data over the past seven years has shown that. That 10% - 15% faction weighs down the general mean score on competency five almost every year. Nevertheless, strategies to increase scores for this competency have been unpacked with COMM 2200 professors over the years. For instance, in a previous year the messaging of telling students to have seven or more sources was promoted (even though the excellent category of our rubric specifies a threshold of six for this competency). Some students adhered to this message in the past. Some students did not respond to this messaging. All in all, it appears that some students are okay with having less than six sources and taking a lower grade on this criterion in lieu of putting in the appropriate time needed to secure a robust amount of sources. There is anecdotal data from COMM 2200 assessment over the past seven years which corroborates with this notion. It could be argued that finding six or more sources for a speech is probably the most time-consuming competency of the eight competencies that we measure in the performance of our students. It could also be argued that our students focus more on structural components than source components. All things considered, a score of 3.54 on a 5-point Likert scale

is closer to the good than fair rating, but it continues to be an area of improvement for our students.

Second, a statistically significant decrease was observed on the data for competency eight in 2023 when measured against the data for competency eight in 2022. This was a surprising outcome. It is difficult to present a logical reason for why this decrease occurred. One possible reason for the decrease on competency eight (which centers on nonverbal communication) is that student instruction for competency eight was just less emphasized by the professors in our classroom in the 2022-2023 academic year relative to the year prior. Comparatively speaking, this competency is less likely to be taught in-depth relative to the seven other competencies that we measure. The other seven competencies are inherently more integral components of effective *oral* communication whereas nonverbal communication is a different entity in itself. In other words, the things measured in competency eight are important, but competency eight is not like the other seven competencies for oral communication. However, it should be noted the overall mean score of 3.88 out of 5.00 on this competency in 2023 was still respectable and nearing the 4.00 threshold for good. Nevertheless, this newer outcome (which we first integrated in the 2018-2019 academic year) needs to be watched going forward. There is room for improvement here.

Third, a statistically significant decrease was observed on the data for competency seven in 2023 when measured against the data for competency seven in 2022. This observed decrease from year-to-year was because of outcomes tied to the pandemic. The data for our assessments from 2020 through 2022 were comprised almost entirely of online classes because of the pandemic. The 2022-2023 academic year was the first year we returned to our more normal, pre-pandemic pattern of having more on-ground sections evaluated than online sections evaluated. When mostly (or in some cases only) online speeches were evaluated in the pandemic years, students could configure their at-home speaking space to set up their notes behind their camera, strategically position their notes around their room, and/or in other places outside of the camera view in order to give the appearance of good eye contact. Those alterable room features for online sections lend themselves to inflated scores on the eye contact competency that cannot be manipulated in an on-ground classroom. For example, an online student giving a speech in their room at home can strategically place their notes around the camera to give the illusion of strong eye contact whereas an on-ground student in BDA 314 cannot alter the physical room environment to give the illusion of strong eye contact. The mean score of a 3.79 out of 5.00 on this competency better matches our pre-pandemic scores on this eye contact competency in 2019, 2018, and 2017. In short, the 2023 score on this competency regressed to the pre-pandemic mean on this particular outcome.

Fourth, a statistically significant decrease was observed on the data for competency two in 2023 when measured against the data for competency two in 2022. This was the most puzzling decrease that we observed in our analyses for 2023. The nature of the data we collected for this outcome in particular does not yield definitive reasons on why this decrease occurred. It is possible the some of our professors who are using open educational resource (OER) materials had content which was less focused on persuasive speaking patterns relative to our standardized course textbook that we have been using for over a decade. After all, our rubric specifically focuses on (and names) our standardized text in the description category. However, the notion that OER is tied to the

decrease on this outcome is merely conjecture. It's possible that the statistically significant decrease that was observed on this criterion is reflective of a new trend in the data emerging. That can't be ruled out either. Some students might just be missing the bigger picture so to speak and not easily recognize the organizational differences between informative speaking and persuasive speaking. This is also conjecture. Regardless, this outcome should be a point of emphasis for our professors for next year and is an area in which an increase in the future is certainly possible and perhaps warranted.

Fifth, an overarching trend in the data this year was that decreases were much more common in the 2022-2023 academic year relative to our previous assessment. As hinted at previously, some of these decreases can be categorized as regressions to the pre-pandemic mean(s) in which more on-ground sections were evaluated. However, some of these decreases (particularly on competency two) are not likely tied to different methods of delivery and data collection being used during the pandemic years. All of this said, the bigger picture data reveals that none of our scores were below a mean score of 3.5 on any of the competencies. Furthermore, the grand mean (the mean for all of our eight competencies) was a 3.86 on a 5-point Likert scale. Categorically speaking, this suggests our students are doing considerably above the category of fair while nearing the category of good. Broadly speaking, are students are doing pretty good in a categorical sense and in a literal sense.

6. Do you plan to implement strategies to correct any deficiencies that emerged from the data obtained? If yes, please explain.

The answer to this question is yes. Strategies will be implemented to correct deficiencies in the data. The main strategy will be to encourage students to use a more clearly defined speaking pattern that is persuasive in nature to hopefully improve the observed decrease on our second competency. There is room for improvement on this outcome. We can do better here. This point of deficiency will be made at our next COMM 2200 meeting in August of 2023 in a way that will hopefully result in students using language and organizational methods that are consistent with persuasive speaking. In terms of strategies for the fifth competency, the best strategy still appears to be encouraging students to use more than six sources in their speech (based on the language that is written in our rubric). Professors of COMM 2200 will again be informed of this push to have her/his/their students incorporate seven sources into her/his/their speech at a COMM 2200 meeting during the 2023-2024 academic year. We are also having a member of the library instruction team at the James E. Walker library visit our COMM 2200 meeting in August to educate some of our newer faculty about how the library can help students find sources for their speeches. This is a simple strategy to address this deficiency. However, and as noted previously, scores for this competency are rather entrenched in the .5 range which spans from around 3.50 to 4.00. In looking at previous years, the mean score on this competency ranged from a 3.84 in 2020 to a score of 3.64 in 2021, to a score of 4.03 in 2022, and to a score of 3.54 in 2023. An increase from the score of 3.54 is certainly attainable, but scores on this particular competency are likely to remain lower relative to other competencies because there are again just some students who will not find any sources for a speech. This may sound a bit defeatist, but this is that the data has shown us over the years. Another strategy that will be implemented for a different competency involves placing more COMM 2200 meeting attention on the eighth competency which broadly concentrates on nonverbal communication. Professors

of COMM 2200 will be encouraged to further and additionally illustrate what good nonverbal communication during a speech looks like relative to their teachings in the previous year. This subtle manipulation to lectures and extra attention being paid to competency eight prior to data collection will hopefully benefit our scores on this particular competency. That noted, drawing attention to areas of improvement for our lagging competencies at COMM 2200 assessment meetings has historically benefitted our data in the subsequent assessment year.

7. Have you implemented any plans to correct deficiencies based upon data obtained from previous assessments?

Yes, plans were implemented to correct deficiencies based upon the data of our previous assessment. The Department of Communication Studies reinstated a speaking center on the campus of MTSU in the 2022-2023 academic year. The last time our department had this resource on campus was the 2013-2014 academic year. Starting a departmental speaking center was noted as a plan to correct deficiencies in the Spring of 2022 assessment report. The paired data suggests the individual professor(s) who students attended tutoring with the greatest frequency were also the professor(s) who scored several standard deviations above the departmental mean for all eight competencies. It is our hope that more utilization of our departmental speaking center will help boost scores on our eight competencies. It should also be noted that plans to correct our deficiencies were addressed on an individual professor level in the 2022-2023 academic year. Each of our professors (s) that were assessed last year were provided with a detailed breakdown of how their students fared on each individual competency. Professors were told to focus their efforts on improving scores on the competency on which their students performed the lowest. This has been a recurring strategy for improving deficiencies and has been successful with some of our professors. In summation, the aforementioned deficiencies will be addressed in the forthcoming academic year, but the overall findings suggest our students are continuing to perform at a level that is categorically close to good as it pertains to the eight measured competencies which are embedded into the oral communication competency assessment report.

## References

Yook, E, & Atkins-Sayre, W. (2012). *Communication centers and oral communication programs in higher education: Advantages, challenges, and new directions*. Lexington Books, Lanham, MD.

Assessment of General Education Learning Outcomes  
 Subject Area: Mathematics  
 Academic Year: 2022-2023

Outcome Type: Mathematics\*

Start: Fall 2022\*

End: Spring 2023\*

Providing Department: Mathematical Sciences\*

Responsible Roles: Chris Stephens – Department Chair\*

Rebecca Calahan – Department General Education Committee Chair\*

Carmen Bucka – Department Secretary in charge of Implementation of Assessments and Data Reporting\*

1. Courses used in the assessment:

MATH 1710 – College Algebra

MATH 1710K – College Algebra

2. Number of students who were assessed:

A total of 1,661 students were assessed in the academic year (1,093 in fall 2022 and 568 in spring 2023). Results of all students who took the departmental final examination were used in the assessment.

3. Procedures used in the assessment:

A common final exam is administered to all students enrolled in MATH 1710 and MATH 1710K. Each of the five general education learning outcomes for mathematics is associated with a specific set of questions on the final exam. A correct response rate of:

- At least 85% is deemed superior,
- Between 60% and 84%, inclusive, is deemed satisfactory, and
- Less than 60% is deemed unsatisfactory.

Mathematics Learning Outcome to be Assessed	Test Used	Test Item Numbers
LO 1: Students can use mathematics to solve problems and determine if results are reasonable.	Math 1710 Common Final	Questions 4, 26, 28, 29, 33
LO 2: Students can use mathematics to model real-world behaviors and apply mathematical concepts to the solution of real-life problems.	Math 1710 Common Final	Questions 7, 8, 9, 11, 14
LO 3: Students can make meaningful connections between mathematics and other disciplines.	Math 1710 Common Final	Questions 5, 6, 10, 12, 21
LO 4: Students can use technology for mathematical reasoning and problem solving.	Math 1710 Common Final	Questions 3, 16, 17, 18, 24
LO 5: Students can apply mathematical and/or basic statistical reasoning to analyze data and graphs.	Math 1710 Common Final	Questions 1, 20, 30, 34, 35

4. Assessment results:

The tables below record the results of the assessments of each mathematics learning outcome for Fall 22, Spring 23 and combined AY 22-23. The data includes ground, distance, and dual enrollment sections.

<i>General Education                      Mathematics Learning Outcomes Fall 2022                      N = 1093</i>				
Mathematics Outcome to be Assessed	Superior	Satisfactory	Superior or Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
	# and %	# and %	# and %	# and %
1. Students can use mathematics to solve problems and determine if results are reasonable.	n=106 (9.7%)	n=605 (55.4%)	n=711 (65.1%)	n=382 (34.9%)
2. Students can use mathematics to model real-world behaviors and apply mathematical concepts to the solution of real-life problems.	n=642 (58.7%)	n=398 (36.4%)	n=1040 (95.1%)	n=53 (4.9%)
3. Students can make meaningful connections between mathematics and other disciplines.	n=183 (16.7%)	n=731 (66.9%)	n=914 (83.6%)	n=179 (16.4%)
4. Students can use technology for mathematical reasoning and problem solving.	n=412 (37.7%)	n=596 (54.5%)	n=1008 (92.2%)	n=85 (7.8%)
5. Students can apply mathematical and/or basic statistical reasoning to analyze data and graphs.	n=570 (52.2%)	n=493 (45.1%)	n=1063 (97.3%)	n=30 (2.7%)



General Education Mathematics Learning Outcomes Spring 2023 N = 568				
Mathematics Outcome to be Assessed	Superior	Satisfactory	Superior or Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
	# and %	# and %	# and %	# and %
1. Students can use mathematics to solve problems and determine if results are reasonable.	n=48 (8.4%)	n=286 (50.4%)	n=334 (58.8%)	n=234 (41.2%)
2. Students can use mathematics to model real-world behaviors and apply mathematical concepts to the solution of real-life problems.	n=271 (47.7%)	n=246 (43.3%)	n=517 (91%)	n=51 (9%)
3. Students can make meaningful connections between mathematics and other disciplines.	n=81 (14.3%)	n=381 (67.1%)	n=462 (81.4%)	n=106 (18.6%)
4. Students can use technology for mathematical reasoning and problem solving.	n=197 (34.7%)	n=310 (54.6%)	n=507 (89.3%)	n=61 (10.7%)
5. Students can apply mathematical and/or basic statistical reasoning to analyze data and graphs.	n=256 (45.1%)	n=289 (50.9%)	n=545 (96%)	n=23 (4%)

General Education Mathematics Learning Outcomes AY 22-23 N = 1661				
Mathematics Outcome to be Assessed	Superior	Satisfactory	Superior or Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
	# and %	# and %	# and %	# and %
1. Students can use mathematics to solve problems and determine if results are reasonable.	n=154 (9.3%)	n=891 (53.6%)	n=1045 (62.9%)	n=616 (37.1%)
2. Students can use mathematics to model real-world behaviors and apply mathematical concepts to the solution of real-life problems.	n=913 (54.9%)	n=644 (38.8%)	n=1557 (93.7%)	n=104 (6.3%)
3. Students can make meaningful connections between mathematics and other disciplines.	n=264 (15.9%)	n=1112 (66.9%)	n=1376 (82.8%)	n=285 (17.2%)
4. Students can use technology for mathematical reasoning and problem solving.	n=609 (36.7%)	n=906 (54.5%)	n=1515 (91.2%)	n=146 (8.8%)
5. Students can apply mathematical and/or basic statistical reasoning to analyze data and graphs.	n=826 (49.7%)	n=782 (47.1%)	n=1608 (96.8%)	n=53 (3.2%)

4. Analysis of Results by Learning Outcome:

Measure 1: Students can use mathematics to solve problems and determine if results are reasonable.\*

Person(s) Responsible: Chris Stephens, Rebecca Calahan, Carmen Bucka

Completion Date: Spring Semester 2023

Analysis of Result for Measure 1:

Superior	Satisfactory	Superior or Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
# and %	# and %	# and %	# and %
n=154 (9.3%)	n=891 (53.6%)	n=1045 (62.9%)	n=616 (37.1%)

The results show that 37.1% of the students scored less than 60% on the final exam questions measuring their ability to use mathematics to solve problems and determine if results are reasonable. This is the highest rate of unsatisfactory performance of the five learning outcomes.

Measure 2: Students can use mathematics to model real-world behaviors and apply mathematical concepts to the solution of real-life problems. \*

Person(s) Responsible: Chris Stephens, Rebecca Calahan, Carmen Bucka

Completion Date: Spring Semester 2023

Analysis of Result for Measure 2:

Superior	Satisfactory	Superior or Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
# and %	# and %	# and %	# and %
n=913 (54.9%)	n=664 (38.8%)	n=1557 (93.7%)	n=104 (6.3%)

An Unsatisfactory rate of 6.3% is very good for this category. This learning outcome has been one of the more difficult ones for students in the past. Learning Outcome 2 was a focus of improvement for instructors for AY 22-23.

Measure 3: Students can make meaningful connections between mathematics and other disciplines. \*

Person(s) Responsible: Chris Stephens, Rebecca Calahan, Carmen Bucka

Completion Date: Spring Semester 2023

Analysis of Result for Measure 3:

Superior	Satisfactory	Superior or Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
# and %	# and %	# and %	# and %
n=264 (15.9%)	n=1112 (66.9%)	n=1376 (82.8%)	n=285 (17.2%)

17.2% Unsatisfactory is a reasonable rate for this learning outcome and is consistent with results of past semesters.

Measure 4: Students can use technology for mathematical reasoning and problem solving. \*

Person(s) Responsible: Chris Stephens, Rebecca Calahan, Carmen Bucka

Completion Date: Spring Semester 2023

Analysis of Result for Measure 4:

Superior	Satisfactory	Superior or Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
# and %	# and %	# and %	# and %
n=609 (36.7%)	n=906 (54.5%)	n=1515 (91.2%)	n=146 (8.8%)

An Unsatisfactory rate of 8.8% is a good result and is to be expected in this learning outcome. Appropriate use of technology for mathematical reasoning and problem solving is an emphasis of this course.

Measure 5: Students can apply mathematical and/or basic statistical reasoning to analyze data and graphs. \*

Person(s) Responsible: Chris Stephens, Rebecca Calahan, Carmen Bucka =

Completion Date: Spring Semester 2023

Completion Date: Spring Semester 2023

Analysis of Result for Measure 5:

Superior	Satisfactory	Superior or Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
# and %	# and %	# and %	# and %
n=826 (49.7%)	n=782 (47.1%)	n=1608 (96.8%)	n=53 (3.2%)

Learning Outcome 5 has the best results of all of the outcomes with an Unsatisfactory rate of 3.2%. Only 3.2% of the students assessed scored less than 60% on the portion of the exam measuring the ability to apply mathematical and/or basic statistical reasoning to analyze data and graphs.

6. Analysis of results compared to previous assessments:

The table below shows results of AY 22-23 for percentages of unsatisfactory responses on each of the five mathematics learning outcomes compared to data from four previous academic years where distance and dual enrollment sections are included. Due to the global pandemic during AY 20-21 data is not available for sub-aggregate analysis.

Percentages of Unsatisfactory Responses					
Mathematics Learning Outcomes	AY 18-19	AY 19-20	AY 20-21 No Data Available	AY 21-22	AY 22-23
LO 1	22.7%	18.7%	n/a	37.8%	37.1%
LO 2	20.4%	19.3%	n/a	22.1%	6.3%
LO 3	20.4%	19.3%	n/a	17.0%	17.2%
LO 4	15.1%	19.5%	n/a	12.5%	8.8%
LO 5	12.5%	19.3%	n/a	6.2%	3.2%

Analyzing the data, and comparing it to AY 21-22, we see a decrease in the percentage of students performing at the Unsatisfactory rate for Learning Outcomes 2, 4 and 5. Learning Outcome 1 continues to have a high Unsatisfactory rate while Learning Outcome 3 remains in line with the AY 21-22 results.

Plans to correct deficiencies based upon data obtained from previous assessments:

- The final exam is in the process of being revised for use in AY 23-24. An item analysis of the five questions used to measure Learning Outcome 1 will be reviewed and considered in the revision process.
- To identify actions and strategies to improve student achievement, assessment results are provided and shared with faculty in Mathematical Sciences, faculty in University Studies, and members of the Mathematics General Education Committee. See the email below that will be sent to all 1710 instructors after course assignments have been determined for Fall 2023.
- An item analysis was executed on the final exam data. Exam questions having less than 50% student success rate were identified. Materials will be made available to Math 1710 instructors to assist with addressing these topics. Supporting data is at the end of the report.
- An Instructor's Resources Shareable Folder has been developed for this course. Instructors will be asked to submit for inclusion teaching materials that specifically address Learning Outcome 1.
- In the Department of Mathematical Sciences, College Algebra is taught almost entirely by full-time temporary instructors, adjunct instructors, and GTAs.
  - In F2022, 55 sections were taught (23 K-sections and 24 non-K sections). Of the 23 K-sections 3 were distance learning. Of the 22 non-K sections, 1 was distance learning and 10 were dual enrollment. The K sections were taught by 10

different instructors with 3 of them being tenured. The non-K sections were taught by 18 different instructors with only 2 sections taught by a tenured MTSU faculty. The remaining non-K sections were taught by GTAs, temporary and adjunct faculty. All 10 dual enrollment sections were taught by adjunct and temporary faculty.

- In S2023, 29 sections were taught (17 K-sections and 12 non-K sections). Of the 17 K-sections 2 were distance learning. Of the 12 non-K sections, 1 was distance learning and 3 were dual enrollment. The K-sections were taught by 8 different instructors with only 1 of them tenured. The non-K sections were taught by 8 different instructors with only 1 of them a tenured MTSU faculty. The remaining non-K sections were taught by GTAs, temporary faculty and adjunct faculty.

Because of an inherently higher turnover rate for adjunct and temporary faculty, the Department continues to request more tenure-track faculty lines to meet the needs of the student population enrolling in MATH 1710 to satisfy general education requirements.

5. Current strategies in place to provide a more consistent program for general education courses:
  - To ensure greater uniformity in syllabi, grading, and learning expectations, all instructors are now required to have common information on syllabi and to use the same grading scale ranges. The posted syllabus on the department website is updated and revised routinely.
  - All faculty members are instructed to keep accurate attendance records on each student to document D-F-W grades and to encourage students to attend classes.
  - Faculty members are instructed to utilize the University's Academic Alert System early and throughout the semester to notify students who are in academic jeopardy.
  - A significant and continuing goal of the Department is to develop course communities, also called professional communities, of faculty for its Gen Ed courses. MATH 1530 and MATH 1810 are examples of courses that have formed these communities where faculty teaching the courses meet on a regular basis to share and plan for ways to improve student learning in these courses. College Algebra focused Teaching Trios have been implemented and will continue to be promoted.
  - The Department of Mathematical Sciences and the Department of University Studies both continue to provide free tutoring to students in all General Education Mathematics courses. A major change in the tutoring for MATH 1710 is that it is now offered in the KOM building rather than the Walker Library. This change in location will offer more space, better accessibility, and improved training opportunities for the tutors. The University Studies Department offers tutoring for MATH 1010-K, 1710-K, and 1530-K in the KOM building. All MTSU mathematics tutors receive extensive training. University Studies offers a program called Academic Intervention in Mathematics (AIM) to promote success for those highly at-risk students who

are repeating prescribed General Education mathematics courses. AIM targets students who have failed the course in which they are enrolled. These at-risk students are identified for each instructor at the beginning of the semester. The instructor meets with each student periodically to advise, to encourage, to teach study skills, and to individualize other interventions. Interventions may include assignments of time to be spent in the math lab, notebook checks, or written assignments. Simply meeting with students to show concern for them and to build relationships with them is a proven retention tool. Students are encouraged to meet with instructors during office hours. Instructors also use phone calls, emails, and Advisor Alerts to contact students who are not attending class. It is obvious that this type of intervention would be helpful to other students, so instructors intervene when any student is not progressing well. Any intervention that is designed for repeating students is also available to non-repeaters. For students who have missed a class or for tutors who might need to review some course topic(s), videos from the online 1710K are made available for viewing with all students and all faculty given access.

- Starting Fall 2022, Dr. Jeremy Strayer assumed the role of Graduate Teaching Supervisor for all GTAs assigned to teach mathematics courses from MSE, COMMs, MSPS and Mathematical Sciences MS. The GTA supervisor mentors GTAs, giving them opportunities to deepen teaching skills, observe teaching, and implement new pedagogies. Additionally, they assist the chair in the scheduling of workloads, addressing concerns, and attending to requirements of graduate programs. MATH 1710 is a course often taught by GTAs.

6. Future Program Changes: \*

Learning Outcome 1 will be a focus of improvement. The end of course review will be revised to more fully address this learning outcome. The final exam will be revised taking into account the item analysis. Teaching materials that specifically address LO 1 will be solicited for inclusion in the Instructor's Resources Shareable Folder.

7. Future Assessment Changes: \*

None planned at this time.

8. Additional Resources: \*

To identify actions and strategies to improve student achievement, assessment results are provided and shared with faculty in Mathematical Sciences, faculty in University Studies, and members of the Mathematics General Education Committee.

Instructors of FA23 MATH 1710 will receive the email below. Suggestions for improvement are being implemented.

*Greetings All,*

*The table below shows results of AY 2022-2023 for percentages of Superior, Satisfactory and Unsatisfactory responses on each of the five General Education Learning Outcomes for the Mathematics Competency as measured by the College Algebra MATH 1710 Department Final Exam.*

A correct response rate of:

- At least 85% is deemed superior,
- Between 60% and 84%, inclusive, is deemed satisfactory, and
- Less than 60% is deemed unsatisfactory.

*Learning Outcome 1: Students can use mathematics to solve problems and determine if results are reasonable.*

*Learning Outcome 2: Students can use mathematics to model real-world behaviors and apply mathematical concepts to the solution of real-life problems.*

*Learning Outcome 3: Students can make meaningful connections between mathematics and other disciplines.*

*Learning Outcome 4: Students can use technology for mathematical reasoning and problem solving.*

*Learning Outcome 5: Students can apply mathematical and/or basic statistical reasoning to analyze data and graphs.*

*Note that Learning Outcomes 1 has a high unsatisfactory rate. If you have teaching materials that address this Learning Outcome, consider submitting them for inclusion in our Instructor's Resources Folder. The end of course review found at:*

*<https://mtsu.edu/math/docs/1710-Course-Review-F18.pdf> will be revised to address this learning outcome more adequately.*

*Please let me know if you have comments or ideas on how we can improve on these results.*

General Education Mathematics Learning Outcomes AY 22-23 N = 1661				
Mathematics Outcome to be Assessed	Superior	Satisfactory	Superior or Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
	# and %	# and %	# and %	# and %
1. Students can use mathematics to solve problems and determine if results are reasonable.	n=154 (9.3%)	n=891 (53.6%)	n=1045 (62.9%)	n=616 (37.1%)
2. Students can use mathematics to model real-world behaviors and apply mathematical concepts to the solution of real-life problems.	n=913 (54.9%)	n=644 (38.8%)	n=1557 (93.7%)	n=104 (6.3%)
3. Students can make meaningful connections between mathematics and other disciplines.	n=264 (15.9%)	n=1112 (66.9%)	n=1376 (82.8%)	n=285 (17.2%)
4. Students can use technology for mathematical reasoning and problem solving.	n=609 (36.7%)	n=906 (54.5%)	n=1515 (91.2%)	n=146 (8.8%)
5. Students can apply mathematical and/or basic statistical reasoning to analyze data and graphs.	n=826 (49.7%)	n=782 (47.1%)	n=1608 (96.8%)	n=53 (3.2%)

Question Response Rate on Final Exam by Learning Outcome  
(50% or Less Success Rate Highlighted)

Question #	Total Percent Correct
LO1 Q04	63.63
LO1 Q26	35.52
LO1 Q28	69.66
LO1 Q29	58.62
LO1 Q33	24.18
LO2 Q07	61.82
LO2 Q08	97.35
LO2 Q09	87.39
LO2 Q11	90.95
LO2 Q14	63.63
LO3 Q05	97.47
LO3 Q06	84.74
LO3 Q10	81.42
LO3 Q12	18.46
LO3 Q21	51.45
LO4 Q03	94.57
LO4 Q16	83.35
LO4 Q17	73.88
LO4 Q18	83.78
LO4 Q24	36.43
LO5 Q01	98.25
LO5 Q20	79.43
LO5 Q30	93.85
LO5 Q34	92.88
LO5 Q35	66.04

*\*Represents information to be reported on Campus Labs*



**Results of Assessment of General Education Learning Outcomes**  
**Academic Year 2022-2023**  
**Subject Area: Writing**  
**English Department**  
**Middle Tennessee State University**  
**Report Drafted by Dr. Warren Tormey (2022-23), English**

**1. Identify the course(s) used in the assessment.**

ENGL 1020 Research and Argumentative Writing

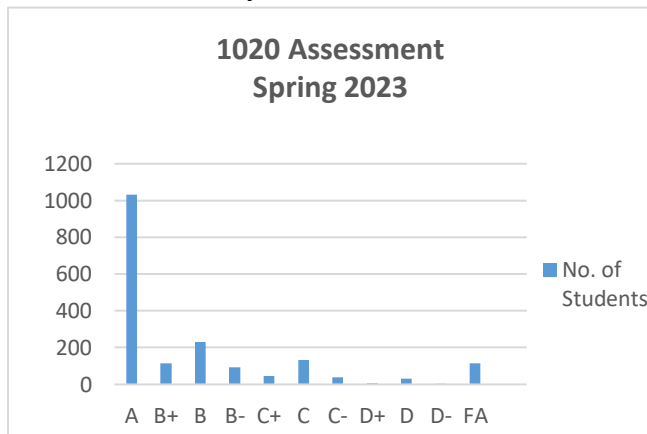
**2. Indicate the number of students who were assessed. Was sampling used? If yes, briefly describe the method of selecting student work and the percentage of students whose work was assessed.**

*Sampling process*

A random sample of 160 students was drawn from the population of 1,861 students enrolled in ENGL 1020 in spring 2022. These students' 1020 instructors were instructed to submit the most researched essay written by these students. The sample included essays from sections of 1020 taught by 38 different faculty. Of the 160 students in the sample, 133 completed the course and submitted their final essays to the department. The 133 essays were numbered and anonymized for both student-author and were distributed to be scored by two scorers each.

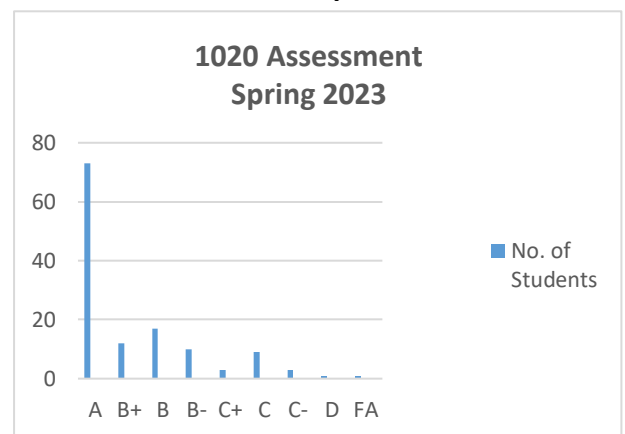
To ensure that the sample was representative of the population, we conducted a chi-square analysis of the 1020 final course grade distributions of the sample in comparison to the population. The course grade distributions of the sample and of the population were statistically divergent (i.e., "extremely statistically significant"—see Appendix B, below) in our use of ENGL 1020 student as the primary assessment vehicle in both AY 2021-22 and 2022-23 (2021-22:  $\chi^2 = 13.213$ ,  $p = .1047$ ; 2022-23:  $\chi^2 41.968$ ;  $p < 0.0001$ ). We try to account for this "extreme" divergence in the explanation below (please also see Appendix B below for data breakdown).

**Population**



**Total Students: 1974**  
**Avg. Grade: B+**  
**(excluding F's, I's, W's)**

**Sample**



**Total Students: 133**  
**Avg. Grade: B+**  
**(excluding F's, I's, W's)**

### Scoring

Nine English faculty representing two faculty ranks in the department (senior instructor and full-time temporary lecturer)<sup>1</sup> were recruited to score the essays. They were (in alphabetical order) Matt Burluson, James Hamby, Cory Hutcheson, Katrina Knebel, Jennifer Kates, Robert Lawrence, Alyson Lynn, Adam McInturff, and Candie Moonshower. Following a three-hour grade norming session led by the department's Assessment Coordinator on May 18, 2023, the scorers received 28-29 essays each to score independently over a period of eight weeks. Each essay in the sample received two separate scores from two different readers on each of six outcomes (see Appendix A). Each reader received a \$200 stipend at the conclusion of the scoring.

### Cut off scores

The following mean cut-off scores were used in this assessment (see Table 1).<sup>2</sup>

	<b>Superior</b>	<b>Satisfactory</b>	<b>Unsatisfactory</b>
<b>Grade</b>	A, B	C	D, F
<b>Score</b>	5, 4.5, 4	3.5, 3, 2.5	2, 1.5, 1

**Table 1. Score range by category**

The department's rationale for setting 2.5 as the floor of the satisfactory range was that it represents a score higher than 2 points (i.e., the score representing a D in our scoring rubric). Moreover, a score of 2.5 (which was largely the mean of a score of 2 and a score of 3) is the baseline score necessary to get credit in our General Education classes and reflects that at least one of two readers considered the student's performance satisfactory on that outcome. These cut off points were adopted by the department in 2015.

#### 1. Interrater reliability

Given multiple scorers, we evaluated interrater reliability by a two-way mixed effects intraclass correlation model based on absolute agreement (i.e., different raters assigning the same score for a given essay for a given outcome). Even as the analysis of ENGL 1020 writing continues within the post-Covid era, it is still not possible to ascertain how students and faculty responded to the residual effect or conditions of that era, or how these conditions influenced Student Learning Outcomes. Results of this analysis appear in Table 2.

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<sup>1</sup> Note: Because in AY 2016-2017 the English department had only two faculty at the rank of Assistant Professor, with only one available over the summer to serve as a scorer, this rank was under-represented in this year's assessment. Despite a rigorous recruitment effort in AY 2021-22, only individuals at the rank of Lecturer or Instructor volunteered as scorers.

	ICC 2017	ICC 2022	ICC 2023
<b>Outcome A</b>	.338	.432	.345
<b>Outcome B</b>	.510	.400	.346
<b>Outcome C</b>	.557	.432	.256
<b>Outcome D</b>	.525	.368	.388
<b>Outcome E</b>	.561	.424	.403
<b>Outcome F</b>	.587	.504	.346

**Table 2.** Interrater reliability (ICC coefficients)

**2. Do the procedures described in Items 1 and 2 represent any significant changes from previous assessments? If so, describe the changes and rationale.**

Change 1: The 2021-2022 Assessment captured a “return” to the use of ENGL 1020 as the primary assessment vehicle, and this practice was continued into AY 2022-2023. Still, given that three of the five previous AY’s were “Covid” years—In AY’s 2020-21 and 2021-22 instructional procedures and student experiences were disrupted and modified by the pandemic—we believe that these developments might contribute to the significant statistical variances noted in the Chi-square test results calculated above. Even though we continue to believe that it would be appropriate to avoid over-generalizing in accounting for any differences or variations in Student Learning Outcomes, we still might note some outcomes relating both to newly introduced “ungrading” practices (which prioritize student effort, engagement, and improvement over traditional evaluation measures) and also to score- and grade-inflating trends as students continue to catch up from the disruptions of that era.

Change 2: One such development to enhance student success would be the introduction of D-level grades and the elimination of the “N” grade, traditionally given to students who completed all assignments but not at satisfactory levels of evaluation. This change enabled lower-performing students a chance to earn passing grades in greater numbers, even as the grading trends remained consistently weighted toward the awarding of higher grades.

Change 3: Introduction of Hybrid/Blended sections and increased offering of online ENGL 1020 sections. Partly a result of changing trends and methods of course delivery the “Covid Era,” the years between 2017 and 2022 saw a vast expansion in online, hybrid, honors, and (online plus) dual enrollment sections of ENGL 1020, with pedagogical practices likely transforming in accordance with these developments. Moreover, the student’s experience in the “Covid” semesters (March 2020 through November 2021) was influenced by teaching strategies that were developed to accommodate both mandates for social distancing in classrooms and greater degrees of remote course delivery. While exact statistics are impossible to include or be reflected within this AY 2022-23 report, it is appropriate to note this feature of another “post Covid” sample in light of the changes necessitated by those developments.

3. Per the evaluation rubric utilized at your institution, adapt the table below to record the results of the assessments of each learning outcome in the subject area discussed in the report.

	Writing Outcomes	Year	Superior Score M = 5, 4.5, 4	Satisfactory Score M = 3.5, 3, 2.5	Unsatisfactory Score M = 2, 1.5, 1
<b>A</b>	<i>The student writer is able to distill a primary argument into a single, compelling statement.</i>	2014	6.1%	53.5%	40.5%
		2015	6%	66%	28%
		2016	24%	64%	12%
		2017	23%	65%	12%
		2022	18%	65%	17%
		2023	28%	60%	12%
<b>B</b>	<i>The student writer gives a clear purpose and audience.</i>	2014	3.9%	44.4%	51.7%
		2015	8%	68%	24%
		2016	16.5%	72.8%	10.7%
		2017	19%	67%	14%
		2022	14%	69%	17%
		2023	15%	78%	13%
<b>C</b>	<i>The student writer is able to order major points in a reasonable and convincing manner based on primary argument.</i>	2014	3.3%	44.4%	52.2%
		2015	3%	68%	29%
		2016	19%	65%	16%
		2017	20%	65%	15%
		2022	19%	62%	19%
		2023	20%	65%	15%

<b>D</b>	<i>Students are able to develop their ideas using appropriate rhetorical patterns (e.g., narration, example, comparison, contrast, classification, cause/effect, definition).</i>	2014	6.7%	55%	38.3%
		2015	5%	79%	16%
		2016	17.5%	68%	14.5%
		2017	22%	60%	18%
		2022	18%	63%	18%
		2023	16%	66%	18%

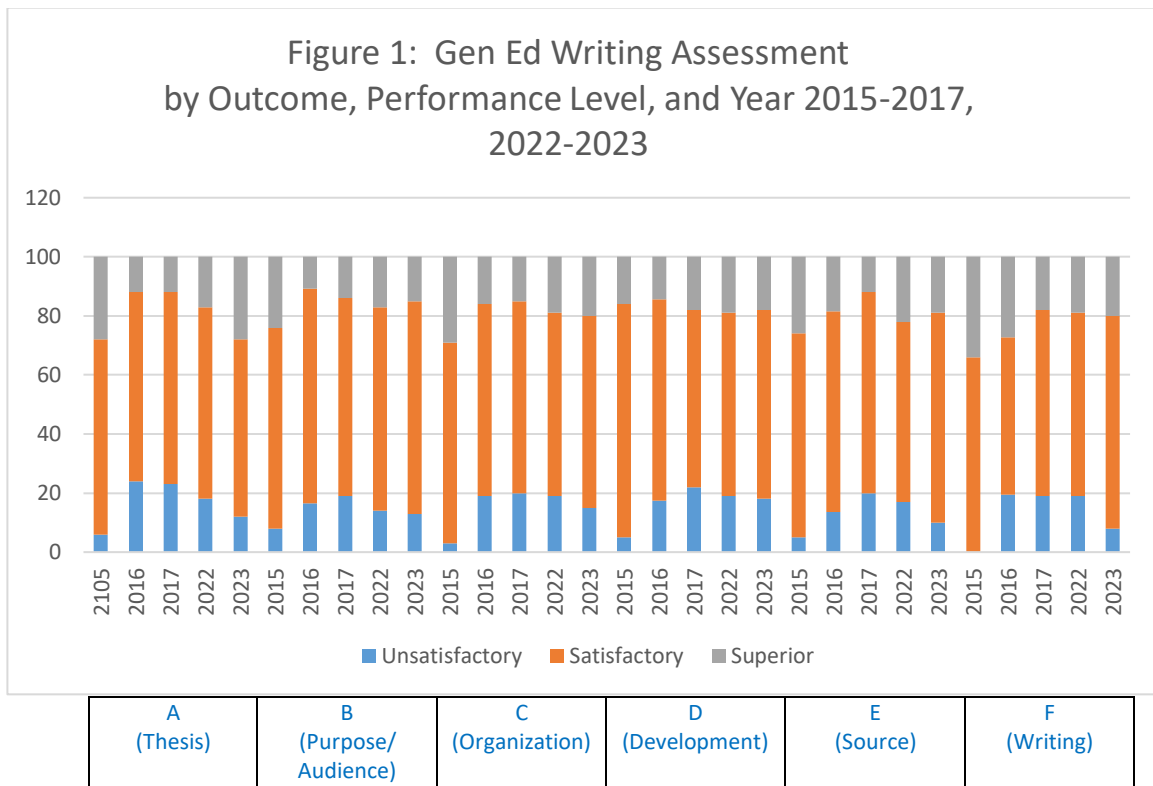
<b>E</b>	<i>The student writer is able to manage and coordinate basic information gathered from multiple secondary sources.</i>	2014	2.8%	54.4%	42.8%
		2015	5%	69%	26%
		2016	13.6%	68%	18.4%
		2017	20%	68%	12%
		2022	17%	61%	22%
		2023	19%	71%	11%

<b>F</b>	<i>Students are able to employ correct diction, syntax, usage, grammar, and mechanics.</i>	2014	2.8%	46.1%	51.1%
		2015	0%	66%	34%
		2016	19.4%	53.4%	27.2%
		2017	19%	63%	18%
		2022	18%	63%	18%
		2023	20%	72%	8%

**4. Summarize your impressions of the results reported in item 3. Based upon your interpretation of the data, what conclusions emerge about student attainment of the learning outcomes?**

A. With one minor exception, the 2023 writing assessment results show modest increases in student attainment of all learning outcomes compared to 2014 thru 2017 (see Figure 1). These increases are reflected in minor but evident declines in the proportion of students performing at the superior level. However, in noting the comparable proportion of students in all outcomes performing at levels comparable with the 2022 assessment, the results of the 2023 assessment also suggest continuing patterns of student attainment as in-person instruction resumes and as online/hybrid teaching practices continue to develop. The most notable advance occurs in category A, which suggests that our ENGL 1020 writing instruction prioritizes the articulation of argument and purpose over other aspects of essay development.

B. The 2023 writing assessments show a continuing trend in the curricular shifts toward more specialized versions of ENGL 1020 (i.e. the enhanced development of Honors, Dual Enrollment, Hybrid, and Online Sections) and also the continuing effectiveness of instructional modifications as made necessary by the disruptions of the “Covid years.” The numbers from AY 2022-23 suggest that instructional criteria and standards were maintained despite the modifications made necessary by the pandemic, and these trends have continued within our classes across all methods of delivery into the “post Covid” era. In addition, the data suggests that students continue to write effectively in the program in both online and in-person environments as reflected in the data outcomes.



**5. Do you plan to implement strategies to correct any deficiencies that emerged from the data obtained? If yes, please explain.**

The General Education English Program recently underwent a major administrative leadership change for the first time in several years. The new director (Christopher Weedman) and program coordinator (Alyson Lynn) are both in the process of learning the intricacies of the program and garnering a better understanding of how it has responded to past assessments. Despite this learning curve, the new administrative leaders are, like their predecessors, committed to the program’s goal of helping MTSU students to meet the student learning outcomes of ENGL 1020, as well as our other General Education English courses.

In 2022-23, the MTSU English Department implemented several initiatives, which demonstrate our ongoing dedication to writing excellence across all modes of course delivery of ENGL 1020 (i.e., traditional, online, blended, honors, and dual enrollment courses). We submitted a revised legacy course proposal for ENGL 1020, which was approved by the General Education Redesign Committee during the Spring 2023 semester. This course redesign realigned our ENGL 1020 course objectives to the new True Blue Core Outcomes. We are currently working with English Department faculty to ensure they are prepared to transition into the True Blue Core by the start of the official launch in Summer 2024.

Based on the assessment's findings, we plan to do the following in the coming year:

- Implement the new course objectives and the required assessable assignment in all ENGL 1020 courses
- Develop and facilitate a series of General Education English workshops for faculty and graduate teaching assistants in 2023-24 to offer training in creating syllabi and assignments that are in alignment with the new ENGL 1020 course objectives and True Blue Core Outcomes
- Gather faculty and student input on potential updates to our Open Education Resources (OER) default textbook for ENGL 1020
- Continue to develop our Open Education Resources (OER) default textbook to meet the needs of our revised curriculum

**6. Did you implement any plans to correct deficiencies based upon data obtained from previous assessments?**

Following the 2021-22 assessment, we implemented the following changes:

1. Further Implementation of OER Resources: After piloting an OER in ENGL 1020 as a replacement for *Everything's an Argument* (a traditional first-year writing textbook from Bedford Publishing), we started using this faculty-created resource as the default textbook throughout our program in Spring 2023. This resource has been advantageous to faculty and students due to its low cost and availability on the first day of class. Not only have OERs been proven to increase student success, but they are particularly invaluable for our dual enrollment students. Before adopting the OER textbook for our ENGL 1020 courses, dual enrollment students were often having difficulty coming to campus to purchase the previous textbook (*Everything's an Argument*) before the first day of class. Dual Enrollment courses made up a significant portion of our ENGL 1020 enrollment in Spring 2023 (approximately 22 of 124 sections).
2. Participation in the annual Celebration of Student Writing: Students in ENGL 1020 were invited to share their research with a public audience near the close of the Spring 2023 semester. This sharing of research is a high impact practice in line with MT Engage and Quest for Success.

3. Opportunities for Professional Development: Faculty and graduate teaching assistants who regularly teach ENGL 1020 were invited to several professional development events in 2022-23, including the annual General Education English orientation, semester Curriculum Meetings, and pedagogical workshops about teaching resources.
4. Implementation and continuing development of Guided Self-Placement (GSP): In an effort to increase student agency and respond to national concerns about equity in General Education, we first piloted GSP into first-year writing courses for international students in 2018. In 2020, we designed a GSP survey tool for students across General Education English to address difficulties in placement testing as a result of the pandemic. Further, the GSP provides multiple measures of student writing experience in lieu of one standardized test score. The GSP survey tool includes the following section: Student Information, Previous Reading and Writing Experiences, Learning Preferences, Test Scores & GPAs, and Personal Narratives
5. In recent years our Gen Ed English office has earned roughly \$70,000 in student-centered grant monies: Since 2020, the Gen Ed English office has won extensive grant monies to support OER and SSP throughout the program. One such project came to fruition in Fall 2023 with the launch of our online OER textbook in our 1010 sections, a resource now available to all enrolled students through their D2L shells and on the semester's first day. Also, as a result of these grants students enrolled in ENGL 1020 spend only \$16 on course materials, also benefitting from OER resources which we will continue to develop and adapt in coming semesters.

#### *Dissemination of Assessment Results*

1. The English Department's Assessment Coordinator and the General Education English Administrative Team regularly disseminates assessment results to the department faculty after each assessment cycle. In Fall 2023, this information will be shared with the faculty either through the listserv and/or at department meetings.

#### **Concluding Remarks**

The department has been advocating for limiting enrollment in its General Education writing courses to 20 students in line with the *Principles for the Postsecondary Teaching of Writing* advocated by the Conference on College Composition and Communication (<http://www.ncte.org/cccc/resources/positions/postsecondarywriting>). In AY 2023-24, enrollments have risen in 2000-level classes due to budget constraints and staffing considerations. In 1000-level classes, however, enrollment caps continue to be a significant variable in writing achievement because enrollment caps in writing intensive courses create opportunities for more individualized feedback during the writing process and ensure more rapid and detailed evaluation of students' writing. Thanks to the continued support of the Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and the University Provost, the department has been able to limit enrollment accordingly. The improvement in student performance is certainly largely due to the individualized attention students in ENGL 1010 and 1020 are, therefore, receiving from their ENGL instructors.



## APPENDIX A

MIDDLE TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY GENERAL EDUCATION COMPETENCY ASSESSMENT  
WRITING ASSESSMENT RUBRIC<sup>i</sup>  
ENGLISH DEPARTMENT  
June 15, 2016

**OUTCOME A: The student writer is able to distill a primary argument into a single, compelling statement.**

5	The paper foregrounds a succinct, unambiguous, & focused thesis, that is, a <i>central, controlling claim</i> that is <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>arguable</i> (rather than a fact, a recognized truth, or a matter of personal taste),</li><li>• <i>reasoned</i> (e.g., “E-cigarettes should be regulated <i>because</i> ...), and</li><li>• functions as the main <i>result</i> of the research.</li></ul>
4	The paper foregrounds a thesis that is a <i>central, controlling claim</i> but is a bit less compelling, focused, succinct or unambiguous.
3	The paper contains a thesis but, in meeting the stated purpose of the paper, is too broad, too narrow, or lacks adequate focus.
2	The paper contains elements of a thesis (e.g., a central claim, reasons) but fails to bring together these elements in a statement that most readers would recognize as a “thesis.”
1	The paper lacks any sense of a central claim related to the paper’s stated purpose.

**OUTCOME B: The student writer gives a clear purpose and audience.**

5	The paper establishes a clear, specific purpose in relation to <i>impressive</i> knowledge of pertinent research and, in doing so, establishes a strong sense of audience ( <i>viz.</i> , the paper demonstrates knowledge of an “academic conversation” and is tailored to take part in that conversation).
4	The paper establishes its purpose in relation to <i>ample</i> knowledge of pertinent research and, in doing so, establishes a clear sense of audience.
3	The paper defines a purpose and establishes a sense of audience based on <i>rudimentary</i> knowledge of pertinent research ( <i>viz.</i> , the paper demonstrates some awareness that it needs to contribute to an existing academic conversation).
2	The paper maintains a purpose and sense of audience, though not formulated in response to pertinent research ( <i>i.e.</i> , the purpose is not situated in a conversation).
1	The paper does not exhibit a <i>controlling</i> sense of purpose and audience. The paper exhibits shifts in audience or lacks a clear sense of audience altogether.

**OUTCOME C: The student writer is able to order major points in a reasonable and convincing manner based on primary argument.**

5	From the beginning, the paper provides readers with a clear sense of direction (organization). The paper maintains that sense of direction by using cues (e.g., transitions) to guide readers from one step to the next. The conclusion of the paper carries the sense that the paper's stated purpose has been achieved.
4	The paper provides readers with a clear sense of direction though that sense of direction is not always maintained clearly through the use of discursive cues.
3	The paper contains some but minimal effort to give readers a sense of its direction.
2	The paper seems to have some sense of direction but does nothing to make that direction clear to readers.
1	The paper lacks a sense of direction and, thus, lacks global organization.

**OUTCOME D: The student writer is able to develop his/her ideas using appropriate rhetorical patterns (e.g., narration, example, comparison/contrast, classification, cause/effect, definition).**

5	The paper is <i>impressive</i> in its development of arguments, e.g., by defining key words, by clarifying ideas through the use of examples or the use of comparison, by clarification through use of narration or classification.
4	The paper develops several of its arguments, e.g., by defining key words, by clarifying ideas through the use of examples or the use of comparison, by clarification through use of narration or classification.
3	The paper reflects an understanding of the need to develop ideas but develops only one or two.
2	The paper reflects some but inadequate effort at developing its ideas.
1	The paper shows no effort at developing its ideas.

**OUTCOME E: The student writer is able to manage and coordinate basic information gathered from multiple secondary sources.**

5	The paper makes <i>impressive</i> use of basic information from multiple, reliable sources to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• make clear the situation, problem, or question that the paper engages;</li> <li>• introduce readers to different positions in an academic "conversation" regarding the situation, problem, or question; and</li> </ul>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provide supporting evidence for the paper’s arguments.</li> </ul> <p>All of the information from sources is well integrated and is appropriately attributed to the sources.</p>
4	<p>The paper makes <i>good</i> use of basic information from multiple, reliable sources to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• make clear the situation, problem, or question that the paper engages;</li> <li>• introduce readers to different positions in an academic “conversation” regarding the situation, problem, or question; and</li> <li>• provide supporting evidence for the paper’s arguments.</li> </ul> <p>Most of the information from sources is well integrated and appropriately attributed to the sources.</p>
3	<p>The paper provides supporting information from multiple sources, but the reliability or appropriateness of some sources would be regarded as questionable by likely readers of the paper. Information from sources is adequately integrated and attributed to the sources.</p>
2	<p>The paper provides supporting information, but only from one source or from multiple unreliable sources. Information is poorly integrated and/or poorly attributed to the sources.</p>
1	<p>The paper fails to use basic information gathered from multiple, reliable sources. Information is not integrated and is not attributed to the sources.</p>

**OUTCOME F: The student writer is able to employ correct diction, syntax, usage, grammar, and mechanics.**

5	<p>The paper reflects a degree of mastery over diction, grammar, syntax, and usage in formal written English, as well as a degree of mastery over other conventions appropriate to academic papers (e.g., APA or MLA documentation style), including the appropriate mechanics for citing sources.</p>
4	<p>In spite of a few errors, the paper reflects control over diction, grammar, syntax, and usage in formal written English, as well as control of conventions appropriate to the purpose of the paper, including the appropriate mechanics for citing sources.</p>
3	<p>In spite of numerous errors, the paper reflects basic control over formal written English, as well as control of conventions appropriate to the purpose of the paper, including the appropriate mechanics for citing sources.</p>
2	<p>The paper contains an obtrusive number of grammatical, syntactic, or usage, and provides minimal mastery of the mechanics for citing sources.</p>

1	The paper reflects a significant lack of control over formal written English (including diction, grammar, usage, and mechanics).
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**APPENDIX B: CHI-SQUARE RESULTS TEST DATA:**

**I. SAMPLE AND POPULATION GRADE DISTRIBUTIONS (ACTUAL AND EXPECTED):**

6.

Grade	Sample	Exp Sample	Population	Exp Pop
A	73	9.5	1032	141
B+	17	9.5	114	141
B	10	9.5	229	141
B-	12	9.5	93	141
C+	9	9.5	47	141
C	3	9.5	134	141
C-	3	9.5	38	141
D+	0	9.5	7	141
D	1	9.5	33	141
D-	0	9.5	3	141
F	4	9.5	61	141
FA	1	9.5	113	141
I	0	9.5	8	141
W	0	9.5	62	141
	133		1974	
	9.5		141	

**II. SAMPLE AND POPULATION EXPECTED RESULTS (BASED ON SAMPLE POOL)**

Grade	Sample	Expected	Proportion out of 133
A	73	1032	69.7
B+	17	114	8.3
B	10	229	15.1
B-	12	93	6.6
C+	9	47	3.5
C	3	134	8.6
C-	3	38	2.6
D+	0	7	
D	1	33	2.8
D-	0	3	
F	4	61	4.1

FA	1	113	7.2
I	0	8	
W	0	62	3.9
Totals	133	1974	132.4

### III. CHI-SQUARE TEST RESULTS (ACCESSED VIA:

<https://www.graphpad.com/quickcalcs/chisquared1.Chi-square/>)

P value and statistical significance:

Chi squared equals 41.968 with 10 degrees of freedom.

The two-tailed P value is less than 0.0001

By conventional criteria, this difference is considered to be extremely statistically significant.

The P value answers this question: If the theory that generated the expected values were correct, what is the probability of observing such a large discrepancy (or larger) between observed and expected values? A small P value is evidence that the data are not sampled from the distribution you expected.

The chi-square calculations are only reliable when all the expected values are 5 or higher. This assumption is violated by your data, so the P value may not be very accurate.

Review your data:

Row #	Category	Observed	Expected #	Expected
1	A	73	70	52.632%
2	B+	17	8	6.015%
3	B	10	15	11.278%
4	B-	12	7	5.263%
5	C+	9	3	2.256%
6	C	3	9	6.767%
7	C-	3	3	2.256%
8	D	1	3	2.256%
9	F	4	4	3.008%
10	FA	1	7	5.263%
11	W	0	4	3.008%

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<sup>i</sup> This document describes the levels of quality in performance for each of the TBR-mandated outcomes for assessing General Education Competency in writing. The rubric was developed by Dr. James Comas with input from a committee of English faculty representing all the faculty ranks in the department (GTA, adjunct instructor, full-time temporary lecturer, assistant professor, associate professor, full professor). The committee consisted of Deborah Barnard, Lando Carter, James Comas, Megan Donelson, Morgan Hanson, Martha Hixon, Jennifer Kates, Rebecca King, Kate Pantelides, Robert Petersen, Aaron Shapiro, Kathleen Therrien, and Aleka Blackwell (Department's Assessment Coordinator). The following sources were consulted in the development of the rubric:

Gerald Graff and Cathy Birkenstein's *"They Say / I Say": The Moves That Matter in Academic Writing*, 3rd ed. (New York: Norton, 2014). Textbook commonly used in ENGL 1020 at MTSU.

Wayne C. Booth, Gregory G. Colomb, and Joseph M. Williams, *The Craft of Research*, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008). Standard reference work for writers of research.

## Assessment of General Education Learning Outcomes

Our most recent QEP, MT Engage emphasizes the development of critical thinking skills, specifically integrative thinking and critical reflection.

**Academic Year: 2022-2023**

**Subject Area: Critical Thinking**

1. **Identify the Performance-Funding test of general education used by your institution.**

California Critical Thinking Skills Test (CCTST)

2. **If you used sampling as permitted by THEC, describe the method used.**

Sampling was not used.

3. **Present the institutional mean scores or sub-scores on the Performance Funding instrument that your institution reviewed to assess students' comprehension and evaluation of arguments. If comparable scores for a peer group are available, also present them.**

MTSU = 16.14; National = 15.12

4. **Summarize your impressions of the results yielded by the THEC test regarding critical thinking. Based upon your interpretations of the data, what conclusions emerge about student attainment of critical thinking skills?**

The CCTST specifically targets analysis, evaluation, and inference. The test also provides traditional scores in inductive reasoning and deductive reasoning. For a detailed definition of critical thinking and a description of critical thinking skills, see link <https://www.mtsu.edu/iepr/docs/cctstinterpret.pdf>. To examine the data in greater detail, see link [https://www.mtsu.edu/iepr/field\\_test.php](https://www.mtsu.edu/iepr/field_test.php). Since 2018-2019 the average for MTSU students has been above the national average, but has decreased over the past three years. The 2018-2019 score for MTSU students (16.4) rose for the first time in five years and is above the 2018-2019 national average (15.40). Comparatively, MTSU scores are still below their 2014-2015 (16.7) and 2013-2014 (16.9) levels, but are above the national level. After several years of being below the national average, MTSU is above the national average for the 2022-2023 academic year with an average of 16.14.

5. **Do you plan any strategies to correct deficiencies or opportunities for improvement that emerged with respect to critical thinking? If so, describe them below.**

Because it is currently difficult to draw a straight line between gen ed courses and the teaching and learning of critical thinking skills, we pursue a broad plan of general support for the teaching of critical thinking across the curriculum and in a number of university initiatives, including the following:

Our newly approved Gen Ed curriculum, The True Blue Core, includes a critical thinking student learning outcome that may contribute to improving student learning and will be assessed after the launch of the new program in 2024.

The Learning, Teaching, and Innovative Technologies Center (LT&ITC) continues to offer workshops that help faculty incorporate strategies for improving critical thinking. For example, in 2022-2023, the LT&ITC offered workshops on topics such as “Creating Course Documents with the Student in Mind: A Hands-on Assignment Sheet Workshop,” “We Can Improve Math Success with Math Study Skills,” “Anxiety Reduction, and Appropriate Accommodations: They Are Not Like You,” and “Inclusive Practices: Teaching and Beyond!”

Many General Education courses emphasize the development of critical thinking, although there’s not currently a curriculum-wide requirement to do so. The three required courses in the Communication category provide incoming students with an introduction to the critical and analytical skills necessary for success in college. We maintain small class size to make sure these essential skills are taught.

Critical thinking skills will continue to be emphasized in General Education and in each degree program (see Institutional Effectiveness Reports for the various majors).

Instructors of UNIV 1010 will continue to assign textbooks that contain a critical thinking component in each chapter.

Tutoring for most gen ed courses is offered through the Office of Student Success and emphasizes the development of critical thinking skills.