

Middle Tennessee State University

General Education Assessment Report 2013-14

Assessment of General Education Learning Outcomes

Academic Year: 2013-2014

Subject Area: Mathematics

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

MATH 1710 – College Algebra

MATH 1710K – College Algebra

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.

A total of 1,966 students were assessed in the academic year (1,335 in fall 2013 and 631 in spring 2014). Results of all (100%) of the students who took the departmental final examination were used in the assessment.

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

There were no changes from previous assessments. The procedures used are the same as used in the 2011, 2012, and 2013 reports. Each of the five learning outcomes for mathematics is associated with a specific set of questions on the final examination—40 questions for the first learning outcome and 16 questions for each of the four additional learning outcomes.

The same set of questions was used to assess both Learning Outcome 2 (real-life problems) and Learning Outcome 3 (meaningful connections), as it was thought that the distinction between these two learning outcomes was too subtle to measure with a single examination.

A correct response rate of:

- At least 85% was deemed to be superior,
- Between 60% and 84% was deemed to be satisfactory, and
- Less than 60% was deemed to be unsatisfactory.

Mathematics Learning Outcome to be Assessed	<u>Test Used</u>	<u>Test Item Numbers</u>
Learning Outcome 1: Students are able to use mathematics to solve problems and determine if results are reasonable.	Math 1710 Common Final	Questions ALL (1-40)
Learning Outcome 2: Students are able to use mathematics to model real-world behaviors and apply mathematical concepts to the solution of real life problems.	Math 1710 Common Final	Questions 2,3,4,6,7,8,10,11,14,15,16,17,18,19,32,37
Learning Outcome 3: Students are able to make meaningful connections between mathematics and other disciplines.	Math 1710 Common Final	Questions 2,3,4,6,7,8,10,11,14,15,16,17,18,19,32,37
Learning Outcome 4: Students are able to use technology for mathematical reasoning and problem solving.	Math 1710 Common Final	Questions 2,3,4,7,10,11,12,13,14,15,16,17,18,20,27,37
Learning Outcome 5: Students are able to apply mathematical and/or basic statistical reasoning to analyze data and graphs.	Math 1710 Common Final	Questions 1,5,6,7,11,12,14,25,28,29,31,39

4. 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. 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.

Mathematics Learning Outcomes, Academic Year 2013-14

Mathematics Outcome to be Assessed		Superior	Satisfactory	Superior or Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
	N	# and %	# and %	# and %	# and %
1. Students are able to use mathematics to solve problems and determine if results are reasonable.	1966	267 –13.6%	1198 – 60.9%	1465 - 74.5%	501 – 25.5%
2. Students are able to use mathematics to model real-world behaviors and apply mathematical concepts to the solution of real life problems.	1966	198 - 10.1%	1077 - 54.8%	1275 –64.9%	691 - 35.1%
3. Students are able to make meaningful connections between mathematics and other disciplines.	1966	198 - 10.1%	1077 - 54.8%	1275 -64.9%	691 - 35.1%
4. Students are able to use technology for mathematical reasoning and problem solving.	1966	260 - 13.2%	1183 - 60.2%	1443 -73.4%	523 - 26.6%
5. Students are able to apply mathematical and/or basic statistical reasoning to analyze data and graphs.	1966	565 - 28.7%	1071 - 54.5%	1636 -83.2%	330 – 16.8%

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?

The combined results for fall 2013/spring 2014 show a decrease in “unsatisfactory” percentages (less than 60% correct response rate on the corresponding set of test items) for each of the five TBR mathematics learning outcomes:

TBR Learning Outcomes	% Unsatisfactory in 2012-2013	% Unsatisfactory in 2013-2014
Outcome 1	27.5%	25.5% (-2%)
Outcome 2	37.7%	35.1% (-2.6%)
Outcome 3	37.7%	35.1% (-2.6%)
Outcome 4	28.4%	26.6% (-1.8%)
Outcome 5	19.5%	16.8% (-2.7%)

Accordingly, student results showed that the superior or satisfactory correct response rate increased at least 1.8% for each TBR learning outcome. It is encouraging to note that the percentage of correct student responses improved the most for Learning Outcome 2 (ability to model real-world behaviors and apply mathematical concepts to the solution of real life problems), Learning Outcome 3 (ability to make meaningful connections between mathematics and other disciplines), and Learning Outcome 5 (ability to apply mathematical and/or basic statistical reasoning to analyze data and graphs). However, the department would like to see “unsatisfactory” rates lower than 25% on each learning outcome, which indicates that instructional techniques need to focus on increasing student abilities to model and solve real life problems and increasing student awareness and ability to connect mathematics to other disciplines.

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

The Department of Mathematical Sciences appointed a General Education Coordinator who chairs the Department’s General Education Committee. Several strategies have been taken to provide a more consistent program for general education courses—

- The committee developed and administered a survey of faculty in general education courses, MATH 1010, MATH 1710, MATH 1810, MATH 1530, and MATH 1630. A summary of responses for MATH 1710 (College Algebra) indicated an appropriate curriculum, use of technology, and textbook for the course. However, in response to faculty feedback, the committee recommended an improvement in the sophistication

and breadth of assessments for the course, including examinations that consist of different types of questions, not solely multiple-choice items.

- The Committee created common departmental syllabi and common course schedules listing topics to cover for all instructors of MATH 1710 (also for MATH 1010, MATH 1530, MATH 1630, & MATH 1810).
 - 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.
 - Students are encouraged to use all available resources to receive tutoring and help with classwork.
 - Currently, the overwhelming majority of college algebra sections are taught either by full-time temporary, graduate teaching assistants, or adjunct faculty. Some semesters have had as many as 34 different instructors teaching college algebra. Consequently, the Department will continue to seek administrative support for more tenure-track lines to provide a greater consistency in instruction for all general education courses.
 - The department's MS GTAs are currently supervised by Dr. Rebecca Calahan. Supervision of GTAs in the Ph.D. program is assigned to Dr. Angie Murdock. In supervising the teaching assistants, these faculty members provide teaching mentoring, help with instructional practices, scheduling of workloads, and oversight of University and Departmental requirements in these graduate programs.
 - Fewer than one-quarter of College algebra students present an ACT Math score as high as 22, the ACT College Readiness Benchmark for a 75% chance of passing College Algebra with a C or better.
 - In the Department of Mathematical Sciences, College Algebra is taught almost entirely by full-time temporary instructors, adjunct instructors, and GTAs. Fifty-nine sections of College Algebra were taught in fall 2013, by thirty-three different instructors. Twenty-seven of these sections were taught by the Department of University Studies faculty (K-sections). Of the thirty-two sections taught by the Department of Mathematical Sciences faculty, thirteen were taught by Full-Time Temporary Instructors, and seventeen were taught by GTAs. FTTs teach a minimum of fifteen hours, and in the Department of Mathematical Sciences usually more than. These sections are often filled to or near the fire code maximum enrollment, and these FTTs typically teach more than 150 students.
7. Did you implement any plans to correct deficiencies based upon data obtained from the assessment of 2012-13? If yes, please explain.
- In order to insure 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 Department of Mathematical Sciences and the Department of University Studies both continue to provide free tutoring to students in all General Education Mathematics courses. In support of the University's Quest for Student Success, last spring the General Education tutoring operation for MATH 1010, 1410, 1420, 1530, 1630, and 1710 was relocated to the Walker Library, extending tutoring services into the evening and weekend hours. The Department continues to offer tutoring in Calculus and Precalculus in KOM. The University Studies Department offers tutoring for MATH 1010-K, 1710-K, and 1530-K in the SAG building.
- University Studies continues to offer 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.
- In order to identify actions and strategies to improve student achievement, assessment results were provided and shared with faculty in Mathematical Sciences, faculty in University Studies, and members of the Mathematics General Education Committee.

Assessment of General Education Learning Outcomes

Academic Year 2013 – 2014

Subject Area: Writing

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

English 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.

All 1020 instructors were asked to submit one copy of a research essay (specifically the essay requiring the most research) submitted by each student. There were 2,089 students enrolled in English 1020 in spring 2014; a pool of 1,638 essays was collected. Essays for 242 students enrolled in English 1020 were not able to be used for the study due to two main issues this year: the non-compliance of three instructors who did not turn in student papers as required (a total of 83 missing essays) and the non-compliance of three instructors who turned in annotated bibliographies from students, rather than the required research essay.

A computer-generated randomizer (www.random.org/lists) was used to decrease the original pool of 1,638 essays to a pool of 250 essays that were double blinded by clerical staff, using cover-up tape. The assessment organizer then double checked that the pool of 250 essays matched the data generated by the clerical staff. The computer-generated randomizer was used again on these 250 essays, and the first 150 essays from the randomized pool were chosen as the final sample. Out of the original 1,638 essays, 100 essays—6.11% of the total essays— were chosen for the final sample and grading session. The next 50 essays picked by the randomizer were considered for the grade norming session, and five essays dealing with proposed change in the MTSU community (from five different instructors) were chosen as the grade-norming samples. Twelve faculty members at six different levels (GTA, adjunct, instructor, assistant professor, associate professor, full professor) graded the 100 essays with each essay being read twice and scored with the assessment rubric approved by the general education committee and TBR. Each grader was given a \$100 stipend for the full day of reading.

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

The procedures used this year were the same as the procedures used last year except for two non-compliance issues. After the grading session, ten essays were removed from the pool due to student non-compliance (plagiarized essays) and instructor non-compliance (Annotated Bibliographies). These papers essentially were not the type of essays being studied in the overall investigation.

4. 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. Below is an example of a table for writing. 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 outcomes not included in the TBR list, create rows for them at the bottom of the table.

Better ↑ or Worse ↓ than Last Year	Writing Outcome to be Assessed	Superior (More than Adequate) Number and Percent	Satisfactory (Adequate) Number and Percent	Unsatisfactory (Less than Adequate) Number and Percent
↓	Outcome A: Students are able to distill a primary purpose into a single, compelling statement. [revised on our rubric to: The student writer is able to distill a primary argument into a single, compelling statement.]	(2013: 18/200=9%) *2014: 11/180=6.1%	(2013: 111/200=55.5%) 2014: 96/180=53.3%	(2013: 71/200=35.5%) 2014: 93/180=40.5%
↓	Outcome C: Students are able to order major points in a reasonable and convincing manner based on that purpose. [revised on our rubric to: The student writer is able to order major points in a reasonable and convincing manner based on primary argument .]	(2013: 22/200=11%) 2014: 6/180=3.3%	(2013: 88/200=44%) 2014: 80/180=44.4%	(2013: 90/200=45%) 2014: 114/180=52.2%
↓	Outcome D: Students are able to develop their ideas using appropriate rhetorical patterns (e.g., narration, example, comparison/contrast, classification, cause/effect, definition).	(2013: 20/200=10%) 2014: 12/180=6.7%	(2013: 122/200=61%) 2014: 99/180=55%	(2013: 58/200=29%) 2014: 89/180=38.3%
↓	Outcome E: Students are able to employ correct diction, syntax, usage, grammar, and mechanics.	(2013: 16/200=8%) 2014: 5/180=2.7%	(2013: 107/200=53.5%) 2014: 83/180=46.1%	(2013: 77/200=38.5%) 2014: 112/180=51.1%
↔	Outcome F: Students are able to manage and coordinate basic information gathered from multiple sources. [revised on our rubric to: The student writer is able to manage and coordinate basic information gathered from multiple secondary sources.]	(2013: 20/200=10%) 2014: 5/180=2.7%	(2013: 94/200=47%) 2014: 98/180=54.4%	(2013: 86/200=43%) 2014: 97/180=42.8%
↓	Outcome B: [added criterion for our rubric: The student writer gives a clear purpose and audience.]	(2013: 19/200=9.5%) 2014: 7/180=3.9%	(2013: 111/200=55.5%) 2014: 80/180=44.4%	(2013: 70/200=35%) 2014: 113/180=51.7%
↑	Outcome G: [added criterion for our rubric: The student writer has written a minimum of 1,000 words or four typed pages at 250 words per page (please estimate).]	Not Applicable	(2013: 164/200=82%) 2014: 155/180=86.11%	(2013: 36/200=18%) 2014: 45/180=13.8%

*Due to submission of plagiarized essays (student non-compliance) and also submission of Annotated Bibliographies (instructor non-compliance) this year, the total essays used for the study was 90, instead of 100. With two readings of each essay, the total described in this table is 180.

FIGURE 1: Outcome Results (A to G)

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?
 - Although not represented in the preceding table, **inter-rater reliability** for this assessment project ranges from 51% to 83%, dependent on the assessment objective. Each objective, except the one on rhetorical patterns is within an acceptable range of inter-rater reliability based on composition studies models.
 - Based on the successful collection of assessment data for the last seven years, we are now raising standards and revising the pedagogy our department used to teach English 1020. An effective program assessment has both **structure** and **fluidity**, and our plan has both in that we can now use the same criteria and process each year, but we can also expect that as we make changes, our data and results will not be stagnant and will show both positive and negative fluctuations as course standards change. Some of the recent departmental 1020 changes, based on the assessment data, include:
 - the formal requirement for all English 1020 instructors to take their classes to the library for at least one class period for a librarian-led session on conducting research.
 - the Lower Division review of all English 1010 and 1020 syllabi each semester, paying particular attention to how each syllabus represents and fulfills course objectives.
 - the development of grade norming sessions for GTAs.
 - the creation of two Lower Division webpages that provide immediate access for instructors to course objectives, teaching and learning objectives, sample syllabi and assignments, and specific assistance with grading, developing effective assignments, and judging written work in general education courses.
 - the switchover to new curriculum for English 1010 with a focus on Literacy for Life to better prepare students to transfer writing and thinking skills to other general education courses, courses in their majors, and the workforce.
 - the switchover to new curriculum for English 1020 with a focus on Writing Across the Curriculum to better prepare students for both academic and workplace literacy.
 - the provision of professional development opportunities through the GTA and Lower Division offices.
 - Because a long-range view of how teaching of writing is improving at MTSU is necessary for us to track how our newly added strategies are working, we will now compare data across all years (seven years of data is now available). Two charts showing the comparison are included here, and specific numerical breakdowns for this year are given after the two charts. Other comparison methods will be shared with the department, and a general overview of how each year compares with others and with the average TBR scores will help us make internal decisions about further steps to take.

FIGURE 2: Acceptable Scores (Satisfactory + Superior) from 2008-14 for Outcomes A, B, and C

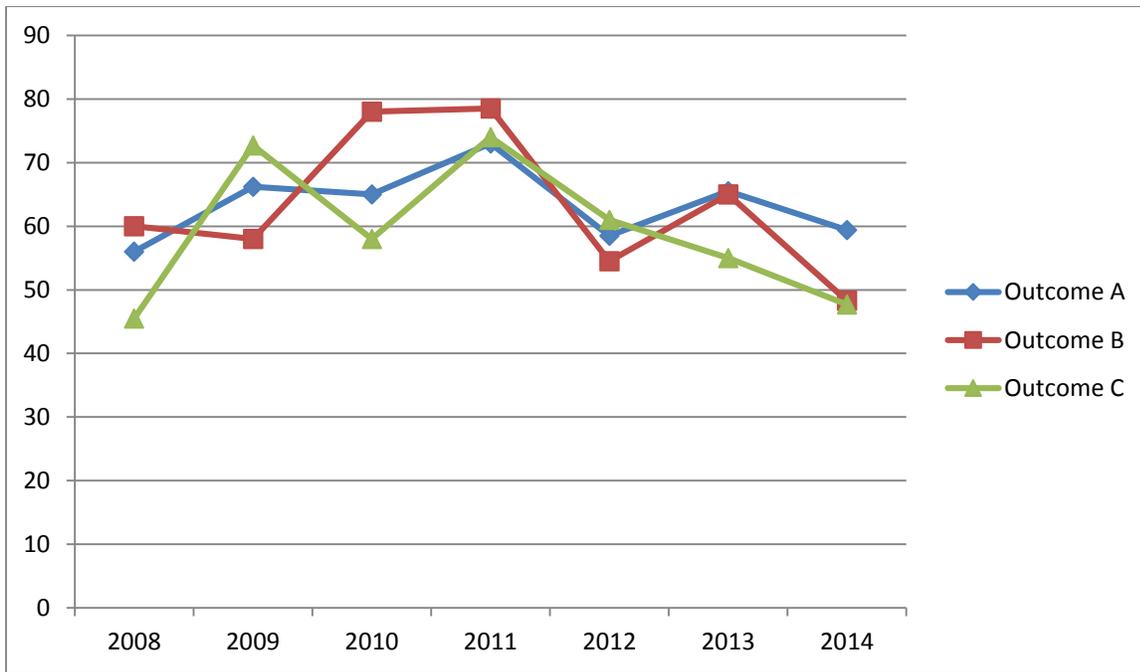
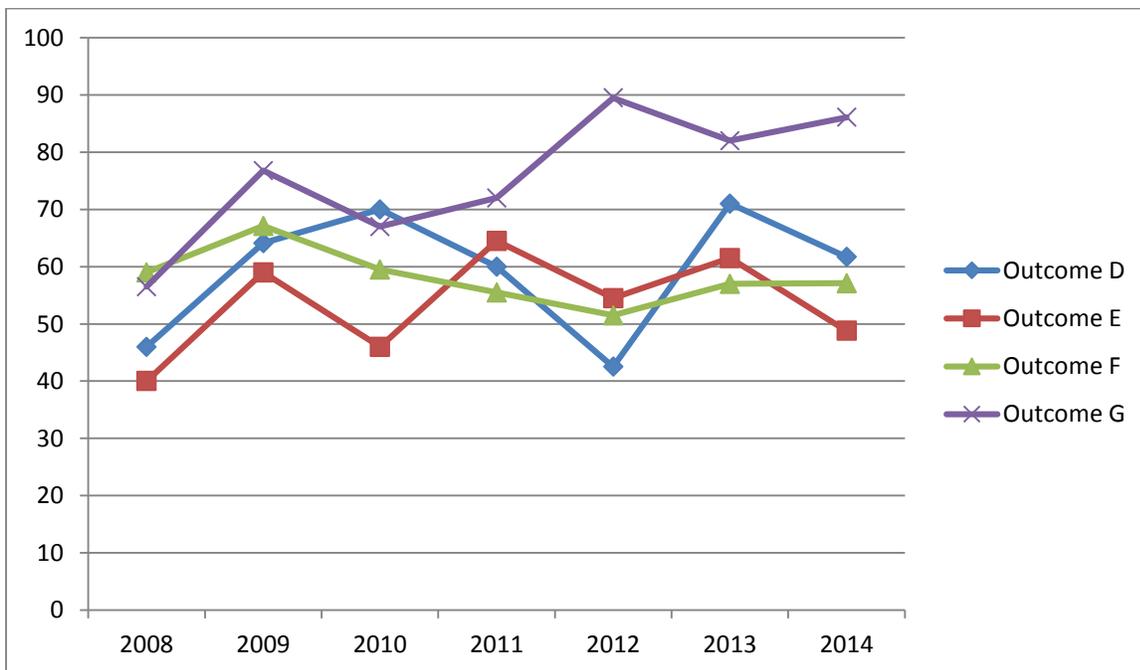


FIGURE 2: Acceptable Scores (Satisfactory + Superior) from 2008-14 for Outcomes D, E, F, and G



- Outcomes for this year compared to all other years:
 - i. For Outcome A, acceptable scores are lower this year (59.4%) than last year (65.6%) but higher than two other years in the long-term study.
 - ii. For Outcome B, acceptable scores are significantly lower this year (48.3%) than any other year in the long-term study.
 - iii. For Outcome C, acceptable scores are lower this year (47.7%) than last year (55%) but higher than one other year in the long-term study.
 - iv. For Outcome D, acceptable scores are lower this year (61.7%) than last year (71%) but higher than four other years in the study.
 - v. For Outcome E, acceptable scores are lower this year (48.8%) than last year (61.5%) but higher than two other years in the long-term study.
 - vi. For Outcome F, acceptable scores are higher this year (57.1%) than last year (57%) and one other year in the long-term study.
 - vii. For Outcome G, acceptable scores are higher this year (86.1%) than last year (82%) and are higher than five other years in the long-term study.

- The department has undergone two recent major curriculum changes in English 1010 and 1020, and the new curriculum hasn't been picked up by all instructors as of yet. One of the main problems in a department of our size is the number of instructors who teach both 1010 and 1020. Change is not immediately seen in this year's results due to:
 - i. not all instructors at the adjunct, lecturer, and tenure-track/tenured faculty ranks following through with full curriculum changes [which will be rectified with the annual Lower Division review of syllabi for 1010 and 1020].
 - ii. the high number of adjuncts that our department hires each semester to offer enough courses for the students seeking 1010 and 1020 [which will be rectified by providing clear instructions upon hiring about the requirements and objectives for 1010 and 1020].
 - iii. all graders for the assessment project having changed to the new curriculum, and many other instructors (whose student papers were in the graded set) haven't made this change. This provided a disconnect between the graders (who are following the new curriculum in their courses and in their grading) and the papers (some followed the new curriculum and some didn't) [which will be rectified with the annual Lower Division review of syllabi for 1010 and 1020].

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

- We will continue to take a long-range view of how to improve the teaching of writing at MTSU, and we will continue to place **primary** focus on three of the outcomes of concern from this year's data analysis. This year, our primary areas of focus will be
 - i. Outcome B: [added criterion for our rubric] The student writer gives a clear purpose and audience. –51.7% unsatisfactory this year
 - ii. Outcome C: [revised criterion for our rubric] The student writer is able to order major points in a reasonable and convincing manner based on **primary argument**. – 52.2% unsatisfactory this year
 - iii. Outcome E: Students are able to employ correct diction, syntax, usage, grammar, and mechanics. – 51.1% unsatisfactory this year

- Although the acceptable scores for Outcome G are higher this year, our department will continue to focus on this criterion that is closely related to incidents of plagiarism, a troubling student behavior that showed up in this year's set of essays.

Based on the deficiencies discussed above, the English Department plans to

- disseminate results of the 2013-14 assessment study. We will
 - provide copies of the results to Dr. Maria Bachman, Department Chair; Dr. Tom Strawman, English Lower Division Director, Dr. Ellen Donovan, English Coordinator of Graduate Teaching Assistants, and Dr. Bene Cox, Director of the University Writing Center.
 - discuss the results at the departmental Lower Division spring curriculum meeting, highlighting the three outcomes our department instructors should focus on.
 - provide access to assessment results via the link to general education faculty resources on the English department website. (Additional resources include teaching and learning objectives for 1020, sample syllabi and assignments.)
 - email the faculty listserv with this year's results and highlight the three outcomes that should be focused on this year.
- actively encourage tenure-track and tenured faculty to include ENGL 1020 on their requests for either fall or spring semester teaching.
- focus on student management and coordination of sources. We will
 - have Dr. Tom Strawman, English Lower Division Director, and Dr. Ellen Donovan, English Coordinator of Graduate Teaching Assistants, continue to invite Dr. Jason Vance and others from James E. Walker Library to GTA/adjunct/FTT orientations to discuss available library assistance, including Research Coach, SearchPath, and Embed a Librarian options.
 - have the English Lower Division Committee continue the requirement for each English 1020 instructor to take their classes to the library for at least one class period for a librarian-led introduction to using the library effectively for research in 1020.
- investigate the role departmental grade inflation may play in less than adequate scores. We will
 - have Dr. Tom Strawman, English Lower Division Director, and the Lower Division Committee continue to review 1020 syllabi (for GTAs, adjuncts, FTTs and tenure-track faculty) for how instructors represented and fulfilled the Course Objectives for English 1020. The results will be given to each instructor with a request to revise any deficiencies before the instructor teaches 1020 again. The committee will also confirm that each 1020 instructor uses appropriate texts that focus on the specific course objectives for 1020.
 - have Dr. Tom Strawman, English Lower Division Director, and Dr. Ellen Donovan, Coordinator of Teaching Assistants, organize grade norming sessions for GTAs/adjuncts/instructors for academic year 2014-15.
- continue the restructuring of the English 1020 course into a research and argumentative course that focuses on Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC), rather than on one that focuses on literary analysis, to stimulate more student interest and more student experience in research and argumentation. We will

- have Dr. Tom Strawman, English Lower Division Director, lead the way in this restructuring. All 1020 instructors are required to choose one of the new WAC-based books and prepare new syllabi for this focus.
- continue to review and revise the curriculum for ENGL 1010 to better prepare students not only for the demands of ENGL 1020 but for expository writing requirements in other courses. Dr. Tom Strawman, Lower Division Director, and Dr. Ellen Donovan, TA Coordinator, will continue to work with instructors and teaching assistants to revise their ENGL 1010 classes with the overall theme of Literacy for Life. The Lower Division office will continue to provide new textbooks and assignments that focus on writing (and reading) as literacy skills that will not only help students succeed in general education courses and courses in their major, but also be vital in the transfer of writing skills and knowledge to the workforce post-graduation.
- further customize the new handbooks for ENGL 1010 and ENGL 1020 to emphasize the course objectives, the General Education Learning Outcomes, and the resources available to MTSU composition students. Dr. Laura Dubek, last year's Lower Division Director, made specific significant changes to the department handbooks for ENGL 1010 and ENGL 1020, customizing them for our students, our program, and our university. Dr. Jason Vance, from the James E. Walker Library on campus, contributed customized screen shots of library search engines that are particular to our university for the 1020 handbook, *Research Matters at MTSU*. (Instructors of COMM 2200: Interpersonal Communication, are now investigating the feasibility of this handbook for their program.)
- provide opportunities for professional development for adjuncts and full-time instructors. Dr. Tom Strawman, Lower Division Director, will
 - continue managing the foundation account with grant monies donated by Bedford/St. Martin's, publishers of our new 1010 handbook *Easy Writer*, and McGraw-Hill, publishers of our new 1020 handbook, *Research Matters at MTSU*. Dr. Strawman and the Lower Division Committee will evaluate applications for travels funds for faculty to attend the annual Composition and Communication Conference, sponsored by the National Council of Teachers of English. Recipients will write successful grant proposals (an important form of professional development) will return to the department and host information sessions or conduct workshops on composition topics.
- emphasize the 1020 course objectives for new hires and returning GTAs, adjuncts, and instructors. We will
 - guide all GTAs, adjuncts, and instructors to the General Education Faculty Resources and Lower Division FAQs web pages, located on the English Department website, that include the course learning and teaching objectives, sample syllabi and assignments, general information for contingent faculty, and specific assistance with grading, developing effective assignments, and judging written work in General Education courses.
 - provide more intensive oversight of General Education faculty. Course objectives, syllabi, assignments, and grading are already reviewed in the annual evaluation of each GTA, adjunct, and instructor in the department. Contingent faculty (adjuncts and FTT's) complete a self-evaluation checklist every semester that clarifies expectations for teaching general education courses (including an expectation to participate in two professional development activities per semester) and asks instructors to state their primary teaching goal for that semester. Dr. Tom Strawman will receive reassigned time to conduct additional classroom observations.

- emphasize the need for freshman writing courses to follow the guidelines of the National Council of Teachers of English with regard to class size. Dr. Maria Bachman and Dr. Tom Strawman will
 - make a request to upper administration that the current class size of 25 students per freshman writing class conform to NCTE guidelines: “No more than 20 students should be permitted in any writing class. Ideally, classes should be limited to 15. Students cannot learn to write without writing. In sections larger than 20, teachers cannot possibly give student writing the immediate and individual response necessary for growth and improvement.”
- emphasize the need for sufficient reassigned time for Dr. Tom Strawman, Lower Division Director, so he can focus necessary attention and time to the mentoring of our temporary English 1020 instructors.

As the English Department assessor, I recommend the following be considered:

- Hiring fewer adjuncts each semester. The department needs to hire instructors who are familiar with the curriculum changes in English 1010 and 1020 or those instructors who are committed to learning about and following through on the curriculum changes. Since most of the instructors who do not comply with turning in the 1020 papers for this study each year are adjuncts (who may not strongly identify with MTSU), this would also alleviate the situation.
- Offering fall and spring curriculum meetings for all instructors who teach 1010 and 1020. With the high number of instructors in our department, requiring attendance at professional development meetings will underscore the curriculum changes.
- Including one reassigned course for professional development throughout the year for the new lecturer positions, which now have a 5 (fall)/ 5 (spring) load. These instructors teach the majority of the 1010 and 1020 courses in our department but are not given any time for professional development opportunities.
- Capping 1010 and 1020 courses at 18 to 20 students per course, in keeping with the National Council of Teachers of English recommendations. The more time instructors can spend with individual students, the more successful students will be.

7. Did you implement any plans to correct deficiencies based upon data obtained from the assessment in 2013-14?

The English Department has

- disseminated results of the assessment studies. The assessment organizer, has
 - provided copies of the results to Dr. Tom Strawman, last year’s Department Chair; Dr. Tom Strawman, English Lower Division Director; Dr. Maria Bachman, this year’s Department Chair; Dr. Ellen Donovan, English Coordinator of Graduate Teaching Assistants; and Dr. Bene Cox, Director of the University Writing Center.
 - emailed results to the faculty and GTA listservs.
- continued to focus on student management and coordination of basic information. Dr. Laura Dubek, out-going English Lower Division Director,

- formalized the requirement for all English 1020 instructors to take their classes to the library for at least one class period for a librarian-led introduction to conducting research.
- continued to investigate the role departmental grade inflation may play in less than adequate scores. Dr. Tom Strawman, English Lower Division Director, and the English Lower Division Committee continue to
 - review ENGL 1010 and 1020 syllabi and meticulously noted how each syllabus (for GTAs, adjuncts, and instructors) represented and fulfilled the Course Objectives. The results were given to each instructor with a request to revise any deficiencies. This syllabus review continues each year.
 - organize grade norming sessions for adjuncts/instructors in fall 2010 and spring 2011. Dr. Allison Smith, last year's Coordinator of GTAs, also organized grade norming sessions for the GTAs.
- emphasized the 1020 course objectives for new hires and returning GTAs, adjuncts, and instructors. Dr. Laura Dubek, out-going English Lower Division Director,
 - created two new web pages—General Education Faculty Resources and Lower Division FAQs—that include the course objectives, teaching and learning objectives, sample syllabi and assignments, general information for General Education faculty, and specific assistance with grading, developing effective assignments, and judging written work in GE courses. Course objectives, syllabi, assignments, and grading are all reviewed in the annual evaluation of each GTA, adjunct, and instructor in the department.
- formalized the revision of the ENGL 1020 curriculum to be more closely aligned with the General Education Outcomes. The Lower Division Committee
 - selected new textbooks for ENGL 1020 that have a Writing Across the Curriculum focus and that better support the General Education Learning Outcomes.
 - selected new handbooks for both ENGL 1010 and 1020 that emphasize the distinctions between the two courses.
 - used the Syllabus Review to encourage more required reading and additional reading instruction in both ENGL 1010 and 1020 and more classroom workshops and peer review opportunities.
- hosted Dr. Cheryl Ball, who is an expert on multi-modal writing, as the Peck Composition Series speaker in spring 2014. Since the new focus on Literacy for Life entails including more reading and writing of multi-modal projects, her visit sparked an interest in both multi-modal writing and the Literacy for Life focus of English 1010.
- provided new opportunities for professional development for adjuncts and full-time instructors. Dr. Laura Dubek, outgoing Lower Division Director, has
 - established a foundation account with grant monies donated by Bedford/St. Martin's, publishers of our new 1010 handbook *Easy Writer*, and McGraw-Hill, publishers of our new 1020 handbook, *Research Matters at MTSU*. Dr. Dubek and the Lower Division Committee evaluated applications for travels funds for faculty to attend the annual Composition and Communication Conference, sponsored by the National Council of Teachers of English, and other conferences that allowed faculty to focus on improving their teaching of writing. Recipients received travel expenses and returned to the department to host information sessions and/or lead workshops on composition topics.

- Faculty are encouraged to apply for professional development grants at Lower Division and TA curriculum meetings. Information about particular conferences, workshops, and seminars is disseminated via the faculty listserv.
- established adjunct and FTT teaching awards. Dr. Laura Dubek, out-going Lower Division Director, and the Lower Division Committee have
 - created new teaching awards for adjunct and FTT instructors, funded by the grant monies described above. This recognition of some of the best teachers of writing in our department is a critical step in acknowledging the important work the members of our department do.
 - Adam McInturff received the award for best FTT teaching in 2014. Wil Onstott received the award for best adjunct teaching in 2014. Instructors nominated for these awards put together a portfolio of materials, the compilation of which is an important professional development activity. The Lower Division Committee reviews the portfolios and selects a winner who is then honored at the annual Liberal Arts Award ceremony.

Assessment of General Education Learning Outcomes

Academic Year 2013-2014

Subject Area: Oral Communication

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

The course Fundamentals of Communication, COMM 2200, was used in the assessment of Oral Communication. To evaluate student performance in constructing and delivering an oral presentation, Informative Speech Outlines and Persuasive Speech Oral Presentations were assessed.

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.

The COMM 2200 procedure consisted of random stratified samples of representative populations of the COMM 2200 sections offered in Spring 2014. The total enrollment in COMM 2200 for Spring 2014 was 1763. The 71 sections of COMM 2200 were stratified into morning, afternoon and evening classes. From this list a representative sample of sections was then selected based on the stratification. (38 sections were used for the outline assessment and 38 sections were used for the oral presentation assessment.)

From the randomly selected sections of COMM 2200 Informative Speech Presentation Outlines and Oral Persuasive Speech Presentations were randomly selected for evaluation. The data was then collected from a total of 229 students (110 Presentation Outlines and 119 Oral Presentations). The outlines consisted of blind copies requested from the instructors. Selected student oral presentations were video recorded. No identifying elements were used for individual students or instructors. Assigned numbers for the study identified outlines, demographics instructions, videotapes and sections. Assigned number listings were secured in a locked drawer in the principal investigator's office.

All random selections were generated using Research Randomizer (Urbaniak and Plous, 2008) from the Social Psychology Network.

Seven faculty members in Communication Studies participated in a Pre-Assessment Workshop in order to modify and refine the rubrics used to assess both Persuasive Speech Presentations and the Informative Speech Outlines. This change was based on COMM 2200 instructors' feedback as well as feedback from evaluators, who sought to increase the sensitivity of the measurements used in the assessment. In order to capture the nuanced difference in the various aspects of the speeches and outlines being assessed, the faculty also adopted a 5-point Likert Scale. The previous 3-point scale ("Unsatisfactory"(1), "Satisfactory" (2), and "Excellent,"(3) was discarded and replaced by the following 5-point scale: "Severely Deficient" (1), "Inadequate"(2), "Fair" (3), "Good" (4) and "Excellent" (5). Copies of the old rubrics and the new rubrics are included in the appendixes.

Training for the faculty members serving as evaluators consisted of three hours of training per evaluator to familiarize each evaluator with the new rubrics and rating systems. All six evaluators utilized in 2014 had previously participated in the assessment project. Five full-time temporary faculty members and one member the adjunct faculty served as evaluators in 2014.

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 number of participants was increased from the number used in the pilot study to insure a valid representative sample (at least 10 percent of the total enrollment) as well as provide a baseline for future assessment.

For the pre-pilot and for the 2010 assessment, informative speech outlines from all students enrolled in 12 different sections of COMM 2200 were collected while 5 to 7 persuasive speeches were recorded in 40 different sections of COMM 2200.

To increase sampling representativeness, the number of randomly stratified sections from which outlines and speeches were collected was increased for the Spring 2014 to 38 sections for the outline assessment and 38 sections for the speech assessment.

4. 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. 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 outcomes not included in the TBR list, create rows for them at the bottom of the table.

TABLES (2014)

<p align="center">Oral Communication TBR Competencies to be Assessed <i>NOTE: Since we assess persuasive oral presentations AND informative speech outlines, more than one table may be included for each TBR Outcome.</i></p>	<p align="center">Severely Deficient (1/A) Number and Percentage</p>	<p align="center">Inadequate (2/B) Number and Percentage</p>	<p align="center">Fair (3/C) Number and Percentage</p>	<p align="center">Good (4/D) Number and Percentage</p>	<p align="center">Excellent (5/E) Number and Percentage</p>
<p>TBR Outcome I Students are able to distill a primary purpose into a single, compelling statement. [Table A: Revised on our rubric (item #2s) for the persuasive oral presentation to: Within the opening segment of the speech the speaker communicates a) a thesis or purpose statement that is clear and concise, b) is appropriate for a persuasive presentation and, c) clearly relates to the members of the audience.]</p>	0; (0%)	10; (8.4%)	45; (37.8%)	64; (53.8%)	0; (0%)
<p>[Table B: Revised on our rubric for the informative speech outline (item #1i) to: Student outlines contain a purpose statement that is appropriate for an informative speech, is clear and concise, and contains no deficiencies in expression].</p>	12; (10.9%)	10; (9.1%)	11; (10%)	61; (55.5%)	16; 14.5%
<p>TBR Outcome II. Students are able to order major points in a reasonable and convincing manner based on that purpose. [Table C: Revised on our rubric (item# 4s) for the persuasive oral presentation to: 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>	4;(3.4%)	14; (11.8%)	53; (44.5%)	46; (38.7%)	2; (1.6%)
<p>TBR Outcome III. Organizational Patterns. Students are able to develop their ideas using appropriate rhetorical patterns (e.g., narration, example, comparison/contrast, classification, cause/effect, definition). [Table D: Revised on our rubric for the informative speech outline (item #6i) to: Student outlines contain 2 to 5 main points; each point is clear and wording is consistent; all main points and sub-points</p>	0; (0%)	7; (6.3%)	30; (27.3%)	51; (46.4%)	22; (20%)

are well developed and an appropriate pattern is utilized throughout.]					
TBR Outcome IV. Students are able to employ correct diction, syntax, usage, grammar, and mechanics. [Table E: Revised on our rubric (item # 6s) for the persuasive oral presentation to: The speaker uses language that is exceptionally clear, vivid, and appropriate for a formal occasion and for the audience; the language is not sexist, racist, non-inclusive, etc.]	0; (0%)	1; (.8%)	29; (24.4%)	89; (74.8%)	0; (0%)
[Table F: Revised on our rubric for the informative speech outline (item # 9i) to: Student outlines contain no major errors in spelling, syntax and/or grammar.]	0; (0%)	1; (0.9%)	15; (13.6%)	88; (80%)	6; (5.5%)
TBR Outcome V. Students are able to manage and coordinate basic information gathered from multiple sources. [Table G: Revised on our rubric (item # 3s) for the persuasive oral presentation to: The speaker's use of support material is exceptional. (I.E. the speaker uses all three kinds of support material; source credibility is clearly established; the quality and variety of support clearly enhances credibility of the speech.)	10; (8.4%)	47 (39.5%)	43; (36.1%)	19; (16%)	0; (0%)
[Table H: Revised on our rubric for the informative speech outline (item # 10i) to: Bibliography /Works Cited page contains 6 or more sources; citations are formatted correctly.	20; (18.2%)	18; (16.3%)	9; (8.2%)	33; (30%)	30; (27.3%)

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?

Outcome I: Articulation of a Purpose Statement [Tables A, B]. Results remain high with 92% of students scoring Fair or Good on the oral assessment. These results are similar to results reported in 2013 when over 90% of students scored at the Satisfactory or Superior levels. Unfortunately the results on the outlines assessment for this outcome remain problematic, with 11% of students scored as Severely Deficient, and 9% scored as Inadequate. Overall, however, 65.5% of the students received scores at the adequate level (Fair 10%; Good 55.5%), and 14.5% receive excellent scores on Outcome I. Performance on the outlines is similar to outcomes reported in 2013 when 82% of students scored at the Satisfactory level or higher. Although 19% of students' scores were Unsatisfactory in 2014, this was an improvement from the 2013 assessment when 27% of students were scored as Unsatisfactory.

Outcome II: the Ordering of Main Points in a reasonable and convincing manner [Table C]. Performance held steady with 84.8% of students scored as adequate (Fair 44.5% Good 38.7%; Excellent 1.6%). The remaining students received Unsatisfactory scores (Severely Deficient

3.4%; Inadequate 11.8%), which is an increase from 7% of students who scored at the Unsatisfactory level in 2013.

Outcome III: use of appropriate rhetorical patterns [Tables D]. Performance on outline organization remained high, as 93.7% of students scored at the satisfactory level or higher (Fair 27.3%, Good 46.4%, Excellent 20%). This is significantly higher than the outcomes in 2013 when 82% of students scored at the satisfactory level or higher. A higher percentage of students also scored Excellent in 2014 (20%) compared to 10% in 2013.

Outcome IV: diction, syntax, usage, grammar, mechanics [Tables E and F]. Performance remained high with 99% of students scoring at the satisfactory level or higher on the speech assessments. The same percentage of students scored at the satisfactory level or higher in 2013. Performance on outlines also remained strong with 99% scoring Satisfactory or higher on spelling, syntax, and grammar, the same percentage as 2013.

Outcome V: the gathering and use of multiple sources [Tables G and H]. For the first time, the use of source material was included in the assessment of the oral presentations. The outcome shows a significant deficiency in the use of sources in these presentations. Only 52% of students scored at the satisfactory level (Fair 36.1%; Good 16%; 0% Excellent); 8.4 % were scored as Severely Deficient and 39.5% were scored as Deficient. Performance on outlines remained strong as 65.5% of the students were scored Satisfactory or above on the outlines (Fair 8.2%, Good 30%, Excellent 27.3%). In 2013 64% of students received a score or Satisfactory or higher.

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

Prior to the Fall 2014 workshop, each instructor was sent a copy of the outcomes from the 2013 assessment. In addition to the overall assessment results, each instructor also received a report on how well his/her students performed on the outline assessment and on the speech assessment. The results from the Spring 2014 assessment will also be sent to each instructor mid-semester. Instructors whose students are not doing well on the assessment will be encouraged to meet with the Basic Course Coordinator in order to develop specific strategies for improvement. The plan will be implemented beginning in the spring semester.

Because the COMM 2200 faculty are responsible for providing assistance to struggling students, the workshop agenda will also include a discussion of effective strategies to assist students and also to develop ways to improve coordination with the Writing Center staff who, on occasion, are called upon to assist COMM 2200 students. Additionally, the Coordinator will continue to assist the COMM 2200 faculty in developing specific strategies to improve student retention and success.

A portion of the spring 2015 workshop will be devoted to reviewing the assessment outcomes for 2014 and a review of the rubrics used for the assessment. Particular emphasis will be placed on strategies for improving Outcome I - Outlines, Outcome II -Speeches, and Outcome V -Outlines and Speeches.

We will continue to use the 11th edition of The Art of Public Speaking through Spring 2015. All instructors are required to use this text in part, because of its focus on organization, outlines, and research. Several exercises have also been added to our custom edition of the text and we are exploring the possibility of adding additional materials beginning in the fall 2015.

We will continue to work closely with the MTSU Writing Center and with the MTSU library staff to create additional class materials to assist COMM 2200 students.

A high percentage (90%) of the COMM 2200 courses at MTSU are taught by Full-Time Temporary Faculty (75%) and Adjunct Faculty (15%). In addition two of the T/TT faculty who regularly teach COMM 2200 and three FTTs have terminal degrees in Communication. Professional development workshops and seminars would greatly benefit the COMM 2200 faculty. It is strongly recommended that the General Education Committee sponsor workshops and seminars specifically for the General Education Faculty at MTSU, and that faculty members who participate in professional development receive both financial remuneration and recognition for their participation.

In addition, it is important that the Basic Course Coordinator continue to receive release time each semester. Providing the Coordinator with a 4/4 schedule will ensure that the Coordinator has sufficient time to adequately mentor COMM 2200 faculty, participate in Faculty Learning Communities, further cultivate the on-going relations with the Library staff and the Writing Center, design and lead workshops for our COMM 2200 faculty as well as provide workshops for LT &ITC and to assist other entities within the university to enhance student success.

Because there are not tutoring services currently available for COMM 2200 students and because the COMM 2200 faculty are solely responsible for assisting students in their classes, it is also imperative that all COMM 2200 instructors have their own office space where they can meet with and tutor students.

The success of this assessment project depends on the utilization of well-trained and appropriately compensated evaluators. Faculty members involved in assessing the materials for this project must continue to receive financial compensation for the work they do during the summer. The Director of Assessment and the one faculty member responsible for tabulating the results of the assessment should also continue to receive financial compensation for the additional work that must be done during the summer

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

Since fall 2011 at least two workshops have been conducted for all COMM 2200 instructor each academic year. During these workshops instructors have an opportunity to discuss and develop specific strategies for improving instruction on all the competencies, with special focus on those areas where students continue to fall below the satisfactory level of competence. We will continue to monitor the data from the assessment and will continue to provide information and assistance to instructors in order to continue to improve instruction.

We will continue to work closely with the library staff, the writing center staff.

Currently COMM 2200 sections are being capped at a 25:1 student/faculty ratio. We would strongly recommend that class sizes remain at this 25:1 ratio as recommended by the National Communication Association.¹ Any increase in class size will only hamper efforts to

¹ According to *The National Communication Association's Standards for Undergraduate Communication Programs*, “. . . all performance courses, (e.g. public speaking.) should not have more than a 25:1 student /faculty ratio”. <<http://www.natcom.org/Default.aspx?id=1128&libID=1149>> .

maintain and improve the ability of our instructors to provide adequate instruction in COMM 2200 and assure that all students meet the minimum competency requirements.

APPENDIX A - RUBRICS FOR 2014 ASSESSMENT
SPEECH OUTLINE RUBRIC

Department of Speech and Theatre / Middle Tennessee State University - 2014

Outline assessment	Severely Deficient 1/A	Inadequate 2/B	Fair 3/C	Good 4/D	Excellent 5/E
1) Specific Purpose Statement	Specific Purpose Statement is missing.	The specific purpose statement is significantly deficient – [is not concise, contains an incomplete thought, is unclear, contains errors in grammar and spelling].	The specific purpose statement is fair, but contains one or two deficiencies [is not concise, contains an incomplete thought, is unclear, contains errors in grammar and spelling].	The specific purpose statement is clear, contains no errors in grammar or spelling, but is not concise.	The specific purpose statement is clear, concise, contains no errors in grammar or spelling.
(Introduction) 2) Attention Segment	Attention segment is missing	Attention segment fails to gain the audience’s attention and/or relate the topic to the audience. No attention gaining techniques are utilized.	Attention segment attempts to gain the audience’s attention and/or relate the topic to the audience, but minor deficiencies are present. At least one attention gaining technique is utilized.	Attention segment is successful in gaining the audience’s attention and relating the topic to the audience. At least one attention gaining technique is effectively utilized.	Attention segment is successful in gaining both the audience’s attention and relating the topic to the audience. Two or more attention gaining techniques are effectively utilized.
(Introduction) 3) Credibility Segment	Credibility segment is missing	Credibility segment is present, but does not establish the speaker’s credibility.	Credibility segment is present and addresses at least one aspect of the speaker’s credibility [education or experience]. Credibility segment includes some deficiencies in expression [grammatical and spelling errors, lacks clarity and/or conciseness].	Credibility segment is present and addresses both aspects of speaker’s credibility [education and experience]. Credibility segment includes no significant deficiencies in expression, but may include a few minor deficiencies [grammatical and/or spelling errors, clarity and conciseness].	Credibility segment is present and addresses both aspects of speaker’s credibility, is clear, concise and contains no grammatical or spelling errors.
(Introduction) 4) Preview Statement	Preview Statement is missing.	Preview Statement is unclear and/or does not accurately reveal the main points (Roman Numerals) in the body of speech, and contains two or more major errors [points are out of order and/or phrasing is not consistent, and/or contains frequent grammatical and/or spelling errors].	Preview Statement is clear and accurately reveals the main points (Roman Numerals) in the speech. Contains no more than one major error [points are out of order and/or phrasing is not consistent] and/or contains a few grammatical and/or spelling errors.	Preview Statement is clear and accurately reveals the main points (Roman Numerals) in the speech; phrasing is consistent; may lack conciseness but contains no grammatical or spelling errors.	Preview Statement is clear and accurately reveals the main points (Roman Numerals) in the speech; the order and phrasing of main point is consistent in expression and order; contains no grammatical or spelling errors.

(Outline) 5) Technical Form - only	Outline formatting is missing or severely deficient	Outline formatting contains multiple deficiencies and errors in notation, subordination, formatting, and/or indentation [the three parts of the speech are not labeled; transitions are missing].	Outline formatting contains some deficiencies and errors in notation, subordination, formatting, and/or indentation.	Outline formatting contains few minor deficiencies and errors in notation, subordination, formatting, and/or indentation.	Outline formatting contains no errors in notation, subordination. Formatting is consistent. There are no errors in indentation.
(Outline) 6) Main Points (Roman Numerals)	Outline contains one or more than five main points.	Outline contains two to five main points but points are unclear. Outline is significantly unbalanced and/or poorly developed [two or more points are inadequately developed and/or the organizational pattern is inconsistent].	Outline contains two to five main points; points are clear but contain flaws in expression. The organizational pattern is consistent throughout, but some sub-points may have minor deficiencies and/or one point may not be adequately developed.	Contains two to five main points. The main points are clear and consistent. An appropriate organizational pattern is utilized throughout, but some sub-points may contain minor deficiencies in expression.	Contains two to five main points. Main points are clear, consistent and an appropriate organizational pattern is utilized throughout. No deficiencies in expression.
(Conclusion) 7) Summary	A summary is missing	The summary is seriously deficient [some main points are missing, and/or are out of order and/or additional material is included in the summary statement]; and summary is deficient in expression [unclear or are not concise] and/or contains grammatical errors and spelling errors.	The main points are stated but points are out of order and/or additional material is included in the summary statement; and/or summary is deficient in expression [unclear, or not concise]; and/or contain grammatical errors and spelling errors.	The main points are clear and concise and in order, but may have a few deficiencies in expression [additional material is included and/or contains grammatical errors and spelling errors].	The main points are clearly and consistently stated and the summary contains no deficiencies and contains no grammatical or spelling errors.
(Conclusion) 8) The Close	Closing segment is missing	Closing segment is seriously deficient [Does not effectively signal the end of the speech and/or contains significant amount of new information and/or the speech does not end smoothly].	Closing segment clearly signals the end of the speech but no clear closing strategy is utilized and/or the strategy is ineffective and/or the close lacks development.	Closing segment clearly signals the end of the speech. The speaker effectively utilizes one closing strategy but close lacks adequate development and/or a smooth ending.	Closing segment clearly signals the end of speech. At least one closing strategy is effectively utilized. The close is adequately developed, and the speech ends smoothly.
9) Language	Overall, language used is inappropriate [Contains inappropriate jargon or slang and/or includes language that is sexist, racist, etc.], and/or outline contains major errors in spelling, syntax and/or grammar.	Overall language is clear and appropriate, but is deficient in clarity and/or conciseness and/or contains frequent errors in spelling, syntax, and/or grammar	Overall language used is clear and appropriate, but contains some errors in spelling, syntax, and/or grammar.	Overall, language used is clear and appropriate, may contain few minor errors in spelling, syntax, and/or grammar.	Overall language is clear and appropriate; contains no deficiencies in expression and contains a measure of creativity [metaphors, parallel structure, etc.].
10) Research / Source Citations	Works Cited page is missing.	Works Cited page contains fewer than six sources and/or citations are deficient in form and content [citations contain	Works Cited page contains six sources and citations are formatted utilizing a	Works Cited page contains six sources and citations are formatted utilizing a	Works Cited page contains more than six sources and citations are

		multiple errors or omissions, indentation errors, sources not alphabetized].	consistent pattern but the form and/or content contain some deficiencies [Some errors or omissions, a few indentation errors]. Sources are correctly alphabetized.	consistent pattern and citations contain very few errors or omissions. Indentation and alphabetization is correct.	formatted correctly utilizing MLA or APA format. May have a few minor errors or omissions in citations. Indentation and alphabetization is correct.
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APPENDIX B
PRESENTATIONAL COMPETENCIES

Rubrics for the 2014 assessment
 Department of Speech and Theatre / Middle Tennessee State University - 2014

ORAL PRESENTATION Rubric	Severely Deficient (1/A)	Inadequate (2/B)	Fair (3/C)	Good (4/D)	Excellent (5/E)
<u>Competency One:</u> chooses a topic that is appropriate for 1. the persuasive purpose, 2. the time constraints, and 3. the audience and occasion.	The speaker's topic fails to meet all three criteria.	The speaker's topic only meets one of the three criteria	The speaker's topic meets two of the three criteria.	The speaker's topic meets all three criteria.	The speaker meets all three criteria / the topic selected is timely and/or unique.
<u>Competency Two:</u> 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 purpose is appropriate for a persuasive presentation, and 4. the speaker clearly relates the topic to the members of the audience]; and the opening segment is adequately developed.	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 two of the four criteria and/or the opening segment is severely under developed.	Within the opening segment the speaker meets three of the four criteria; and the opening segment lacks some development.	Within the opening segment the speaker meets all four criteria; the opening section may contain minor flaws in development.	Within the opening segment the speaker meets all four criteria; the opening segment is fully developed.
<u>Competency Three:</u> The speaker provides supporting material (examples, statistics and testimony) appropriate for a persuasive presentation; the quality and variety of support clearly enhances the credibility of the speech and source credibility is clearly established.	The speaker uses no supporting material	The speaker's use of support material is lacking in variety, and/or is lacking in quality and/or quantity; source credibility is not established.	The speaker's use of support material is adequate but is somewhat deficient [may be lacking in quality and/or quantity; source credibility is not established].	The speaker uses supporting material that is appropriate in quality, quantity and variety; source credibility may not always be established.	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 and source credibility is clearly established.

<p><u>Competency Four:</u> The speaker uses an organizational pattern appropriate to the persuasive presentation.</p>	<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.</p>	<p>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].</p>	<p>The speech is persuasive; the speaker uses an appropriate persuasive organizational pattern with some errors or omissions, and some arguments may be deficient</p>	<p>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.</p>	<p>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>
<p><u>Competency Five:</u> The speaker demonstrates the ability to effectively utilize material gathered from multiple 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 [five or fewer sources cited and/or a variety of sources are not used and/or some sources do not appear to be credible].</p>	<p>The speaker incorporates a minimum of six sources in the presentation and the sources appear to be credible, but the documentation is deficient [a variety of sources is not used and/or source credibility is not always established].</p>	<p>The speaker incorporates a minimum of six sources in the presentation; the sources appear to be credible, and the source documentation is <u>not</u> deficient [a variety of sources is utilized].</p>	<p>The speaker incorporates more than six sources in the presentation; the sources are clearly credible, and the source documentation is <u>not</u> deficient.</p>
<p><u>Competency Six:</u> The speaker uses language appropriate to the audience and occasion.</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.</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.</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.</p>	<p>The speaker uses language that is clear, vivid, and appropriate. The presentation is devoid of inappropriate slang or jargon.</p>	<p>The speaker uses language that is exceptionally clear, vivid, appropriate, and the speaker uses parallel sentence structure and/or repetition etc.</p>
<p><u>Competency Seven:</u> The speaker: 1. speaks in a conversational manner, 2. utilizes intensity to heighten and maintain interest appropriate to the audience and occasion, 3. speaks loud enough to be easily heard at all times, and 4. speaks with energy appropriate for the audience and occasion.</p>	<p>The speaker fails to meet all four factors [does not speak in a conversational manner, fails to use vocal variety; fails to speak loud enough to be easily heard at all times, and speaks with little energy].</p>	<p>The speaker fails to meet three of the four factors [does not speak in a conversational manner, and/or fails to use vocal variety; and/or fails to speak loud enough to be easily heard at all times, and/or speaks with little energy].</p>	<p>The speaker meets all but one of the four factors [speaks in a conversational manner, and/or uses vocal variety; and/or speaks loud enough to be easily heard at all times, and/or speaks with some energy].</p>	<p>The speaker meets all four factors [speaks in a conversational manner, does use vocal variety; speaks loud enough to be easily heard at all times, and/or speaks with some energy].</p>	<p>The speaker utilizes an effective conversational style, and makes exceptional use of vocal variety, utilizes the proper volume throughout the presentation and speaks with energy throughout the speech.</p>

<p><u>Competency Eight:</u> 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.</p>	<p>The speaker establishes minimal eye contact with the audience, and eye contact is limited to one focal point.</p>	<p>The speaker establishes some eye contact with the audience and the eye contact is limited to more than one focal points.</p>	<p>The speaker establishes an appropriate amount of eye contact with the audience and the 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><u>Competency Nine:</u> The speaker uses appropriate facial expressions that enhance the verbal message.</p>	<p>The speaker fails to vary his/her facial expression throughout the presentation and/or the expression is inappropriate and/ or it does not correspond to the verbal message.</p>	<p>The speaker utilizes very few facial expressions during the presentation and/or some of expressions are inappropriate and/ or they do not correspond to the verbal message.</p>	<p>The speaker uses a variety of facial expressions throughout the presentation, but some of the expressions are inappropriate and/or fail to correspond to the verbal message.</p>	<p>The speaker uses a variety of facial expressions throughout the presentation and all expressions are appropriate and correspond to the verbal message.</p>	<p>The speaker uses a variety of facial expressions and all the expressions are appropriate and correspond to the verbal message. In addition the speaker's facial expressions clearly enhance the verbal message.</p>
<p><u>Competency Ten:</u> The speaker uses physical behaviors (body movement and gestures) that support the verbal message.</p>	<p>The speaker uses almost no body movement or gestures during the presentation to support the verbal message.</p>	<p>The speaker uses very limited body movements and/or gestures during the presentation and/or the body movement and gestures do not support the verbal message.</p>	<p>The speaker uses very little body movement during the presentation but he/she utilizes gestures to support the verbal message.</p>	<p>The speaker uses <u>both</u> body movement and gestures during the presentation to enhance the verbal message.</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 to the message and enhances the verbal message.</p>
<p><u>Competency Eleven:</u> The speaker uses posture that supports the verbal message and enhances the speaker's appearance of confidence and competence.</p>	<p>The speaker's posture significantly detracts from his/her appearance as a confident and competent speaker.</p>	<p>The speaker's posture detracts somewhat from his/her appearance as a confident and competent speaker.</p>	<p>The speaker's posture supports his/her appearance as a somewhat confident and competent speaker.</p>	<p>The speaker's posture supports his/her appearance as a confident and competent speaker.</p>	<p>The speaker uses posture that supports the verbal message and the speaker appears to be a strong, confident and competent speaker.</p>

APPENDIX C - PREVIOUS RUBRICS FOR ASSESSMENT
INFORMATIVE SPEECH OUTLINE Rubric
 Department of Speech and Theatre / Middle Tennessee State University - 2012/ 2013

	UNSATISFACTORY (A)	SATISFACTORY (B)	EXCELLENT (C)
1) Specific Purpose Statement	Specific Purpose Statement is missing /is inappropriate / or is significantly deficient.	Specific Purpose Statement is appropriate / may contain some deficiencies in expression /	Specific Purpose Statement is appropriate / clear /concise/ no deficiencies in expression.
(Introduction) 2) Attention Segment	Attention segment is missing or fails to accomplish any objectives of an attention segment.	Attention segment accomplishes both objectives / utilizes one technique to gain the audience's attention and interest.	Attention segment clearly accomplishes both objectives / utilizes two or more techniques to gain the audiences attention and interest. If labeled, content is consistent with the label.
(Introduction) 3) Credibility Segment	Credibility segment is missing or is significantly deficient.	The credibility segment establishes the speaker's credibility (e.g. experience and/ or research) / may contain minor flaws in expression.	The credibility segment clearly establishes and enhances the speaker's credibility (e.g. experience and/ or research) / contains no flaws in expression. If labeled, content is consistent with the label.
(Introduction) 4) Preview Segment	Preview is missing or is unclear / does not accurately reveal the main points (Roman Numerals) in the speech.	Preview identifies the main points (Roman Numerals) in the body of the speech.	Preview clearly and accurately identifies main points (Roman Numerals) in the body of the speech / the order is consistent / phrasing is clear and concise. If labeled, content is consistent with the label.
(Outline) 5) Technical Form - only	Outline formatting is seriously deficient / multiple errors in notation, subordination and/or division.	Outline formatting is generally correct / a few errors in notation, subordination and division	Outline formatting is correct with no errors in subordination and division / notations are used consistently throughout.
(Outline) 6) Main Points (Roman Numerals)	Contains only 1 or more than 5 main points / two or more points are poorly developed / outline is significantly unbalanced	Contains 2 to 5 main points / main points are clear, consistent / an appropriate organizational pattern is utilized throughout / some sub-points points may have minor deficiencies.	Contains 2 to 5 main points / main points are clear, wording is consistent / all points and sub-points are fully developed/ an appropriate pattern is utilized throughout.
(Conclusion) 7) Summary	Summary is missing or is seriously deficient.	Summary is present but may contain minor deficiencies in expression or content / points may be out of order.	Summary is effective / contains no deficiencies in expression / points are in order. If labeled, content is consistent with the label.
(Conclusion) 8) The Close	Closing segment is missing / inappropriate / does not effectively signal end of speech /contains significant amount of new information.	Closing segment is present /clearly signals the end of speech / at least 1 closing strategy is utilized but may contain minor deficiencies. (e.g. too short).	Closing segment is appropriate / clearly signals the end of speech / effectively uses 1 or more closing strategies. If labeled, content is consistent with the label.
9) Language	Overall, language used is inappropriate / contains inappropriate jargon / slang and/or includes language that is sexist, racist, etc.	Overall, language is clear and appropriate / is free from inappropriate jargon / slang and excludes language that is sexist, racist, etc. / may contain some deficiencies in expression.	Overall language is clear and appropriate / contains a measure of creativity / is free from inappropriate jargon / slang and excludes language that is sexist, racist, etc. / contains few deficiencies in expression
10) Spelling / syntax / grammar	Outline contains major errors in spelling, syntax and/or grammar.	Outline contains minor errors in spelling, syntax and /or grammar.	Overall outline contains no errors in spelling, syntax, and/or grammar.

11) Research	No bibliography or Works Cited pg. or contains fewer than 6 sources / no acceptable form is used or form is inconsistent / citations contain multiple errors or omissions.	Bibliography / Works Cited pg. contains 6 sources / citations are formatted utilizing a consistent pattern / citations contain no major errors or omissions.	Bibliography /Works Cited pg. contains 6 or more sources / citations are formatted correctly utilizing MLA or APA format / may have a few minor errors or omissions in citations.
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APPENDIX D PREVIOUS RUBRICS FOR ASSESSMENT
PRESENTATIONAL COMPETENCIES

Department of Speech and Theatre / Middle Tennessee State University - 2012-2013

	UNSATISFACTORY (1)	SATISFACTORY (2)	EXCELLENT (3)
1) Chooses and narrows persuasive topic appropriate for the audience & occasion.	UNSATISFACTORY: The speaker's topic is <u>inappropriate</u> for the persuasive purpose, OR the time constrains, OR the audience and occasions. (I.E. topic fails to meet all 3 criteria)	SATISFACTORY: The speaker's topic is <u>appropriate</u> for the persuasive purpose, and the time constrains, and the audience and occasions. (I.E. meets all 3 criteria)	EXCELLENT: Excellent: The speaker meets all 3 criteria / the topic selected is timely and/or unique.
2) Within the opening segment of the speech the speaker communicates a) a thesis / purpose statement that is clear and concise, b) is appropriate for a persuasive presentation and, c) clearly relates to the members of the audience.	UNSATISFACTORY: Within the opening segment the speaker <u>fails</u> to communicate a) a thesis / purpose statement that is clear and concise, and/or b) the purpose is <u>inappropriate</u> for a persuasive presentation, and/or c) the <u>thesis/</u> purpose is not related to the members of the audience (I.E. fails to meet 2 of the 3 criteria).	SATISFACTORY: Within the opening segment the speaker communicates a) a thesis / purpose statement that is clear and concise, b) is <u>appropriate</u> for a persuasive presentation, and is related to the members of the audience (I.E. meets all 3 criteria).	EXCELLENT: Within the opening - segment the speaker communicates a) a thesis / purpose statement that is clear and concise, b) is <u>appropriate</u> for a persuasive presentation, c) is specifically and purposefully relates the members of the audience (I.E. meets all 3 criteria and effectively relates thesis to the specific audience).
3) Provides supporting material appropriate for the persuasive presentation.	UNSATISFACTORY: The speaker's use of support material is lacking in variety, and/or is lacking in quality and/or quantity). (I.E. fails to meet 2 of the 3 criteria)	SATISFACTORY The speaker uses supporting material that is appropriate in quality, quantity and variety. (I.E. meets all but 1 of the criteria.).	EXCELLENT: The speaker's use of support material is exceptional. (I.E. the speaker uses all three kinds of support material, source credibility is clearly established, the quality and variety of support clearly enhances credibility of the speech)
4) The speaker uses an organizational pattern appropriate to the persuasive presentation.	UNSATISFACTORY: The speech is somewhat persuasive and/or the organizational pattern and expression of arguments are severely deficient. (I.E. the organizational pattern is unclear and/or incomplete).	SATISFACTORY: 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.	EXCELLENT: 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.
5) The speaker demonstrates the ability to effectively utilize material gathered from multiple sources.	UNSATISFACTORY: The speaker incorporates a few sources in the presentation but the documentation is deficient. (I.E. 5 or fewer sources cited and/or a variety of sources are not used and/or some sources do not appear to be credible)	SATISFACTORY: The speaker incorporates a minimum of 6 sources in the presentation; the sources appear to be credible, and the source documentation is <u>not</u> deficient (I.E. a variety of sources are utilized.)	EXCELLENT: The speaker incorporates more than 6 sources in the presentation; the sources appear to be credible, and the source documentation is <u>not</u> deficient (I.E. a variety of sources are used.)

6) The speaker uses language appropriate to the audience & occasion.	UNSATISFACTORY: 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.	SATISFACTORY: The speaker uses language that is clear, vivid, and appropriate. The presentation is devoid of inappropriate slang or jargon.	EXCELLENT: The speaker uses language that is exceptionally clear, vivid, and appropriate for a formal occasion and for the audience; the language is sexist, racist, non-inclusive, etc.
7) The speaker a) speaks in a conversational manner & b) utilizes intensity (volume) to heighten & maintain interest appropriate to the audience and occasion; and c) speaks loud enough to be easily heard at all times, and d) speaks with energy appropriate for the audience and occasion.	UNSATISFACTORY: The speaker fails to meet three of the four factors (I.E. does not speak in a conversational manner, and/or fails to use vocal variety (e.g. is monotone); and/or fails to speak loud enough to be easily heard at all times, and/or speaks with little energy	SATISFACTORY: The speaker meets all four factors (I.E. speaks in a conversational manner, does use vocal variety (e.g. is not monotone); speaks loud enough to be easily heard at all times, and/or speaks with some energy.	EXCELLENT: The speaker utilizes an effective conversational style, and makes exceptional use of vocal variety, utilizes the proper volume throughout the presentation and speaks with energy throughout the speech.
8) The speaker maintains appropriate eye contact with the entire audience throughout the presentation.	UNSATISFACTORY: The speaker establishes minimal eye contact with the audience, and eye contact is limited to one focal point.	SATISFACTORY: The speaker establishes an appropriate amount of eye contact with the audience and the focal points are varied.	EXCELLENT: The speaker establishes an appropriate amount of eye contact with the audience, the focal points are varied and the speaker is intentional with establishing eye contact with the entire audience. -
9) The speaker uses appropriate facial expressions that enhance the verbal message.	UNSATISFACTORY: The speaker utilizes very few facial expressions during the presentation and/or some of expressions are inappropriate and/ or they do not correspond to the verbal message.	SATISFACTORY: The speaker uses a variety of facial expressions throughout the presentation and all expressions are appropriate and correspond to the verbal message.	EXCELLENT: The speaker uses a variety of facial expressions and all the expressions are appropriate and correspond to the verbal message. In addition the speaker's facial expressions clearly enhance the verbal message.
10) The speaker uses physical behaviors (body movement and gestures) that support the verbal message.	UNSATISFACTORY: The speaker uses very limited body movements and/or gestures during the presentation and/or the body movement and gestures do not support the verbal message	SATISFACTORY: The speaker uses <u>both</u> body movement and gestures during the presentation to enhance the verbal message.	EXCELLENT: 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 of the message and enhances the verbal message
11) The speaker uses posture that supports the verbal message, enhances the speaker's appearance of confidence and competence	UNSATISFACTORY The speaker's posture detracts somewhat from his/her appearance as a confident and competent speaker.	SATISFACTORY: His/her posture supports the speaker's appearance as a confident and competent speaker	EXCELLENT: The speaker demonstrates exceptional posture and appears to be a strong, confident and competent speaker

Assessment of Critical Thinking

Academic Year 2013-2014

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

California Critical Thinking Skills Test

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 = 16.9

National = 17.1

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 requires students to draw inferences, make interpretations, analyze information, draw warranted inferences, identify claims and reasons, and evaluate the quality of arguments using brief passages, diagrams, and charts. For the first time in seven years, the score for MTSU students (16.9) was slightly below the national average (17.1).

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.**

Critical thinking is addressed across the curriculum and in a number of university initiatives, including the following:

- All General Education courses emphasize the development of critical thinking skills. The three required courses in the Communication category, in particular, provide incoming students with an introduction to the critical and analytical skills necessary for success in college. Small class size in these courses is essential to insure that students receive the individual attention they need to develop these skills. The General Education Committee has recommended to the Provost that class size in the courses in the Communication category not exceed the recommendations of the National Council of Teachers of English and the National Communication Association. In most cases, class sizes are now within the recommended guidelines. The General Education Committee continues to recommend that class size not exceed the guidelines endorsed by professional organizations.
- Instructors of UNIV 1010 will continue to assign textbooks that contain a critical thinking component in each chapter.
- Tutoring in the University Writing Center emphasizes the development of critical thinking skills in the writing process. Instructors will continue to encourage students to work with the Center's trained tutors.
- The University Library Research Coach service (which offers students in-depth, one-on-one sessions with a librarian) emphasizes critical thinking in finding and selecting the best books, articles, and database resources for projects, papers, and presentations. Instructors will continue to advise students to use this service.

- Critical thinking skills will continue to be emphasized in the General Education Program and in each degree program (see Institutional Effectiveness Reports for the various majors).
- MTSU's new Quality Enhancement Plan will emphasize critical thinking, particularly critical reflection.