

## General Education Outcomes Action Project

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**Institution:** Upper Iowa University  
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### Timeline:

Planned project kickoff date: 12-15-2005

Target completion date: 09-30-2008

Actual completion date: --

A. Give this Action Project a short title in 10 words or fewer:

Enhancing the General Education Outcomes and Simplifying Their Assessment

B. Describe this Action Project's goal in 100 words or fewer:

The Project will modify the General Education Outcomes so they are learning rather than teaching centered, and it will simplify data collection and analysis by collapsing the 26 current learning Outcomes into a dozen specific tasks for students to accomplish.

C. Identify the single AQIP Category which the Action Project will most affect or impact:

Primary Category: Helping Students Learn

D. Describe briefly your institution's reasons for taking on this Action Project now -- why the project and its goals are high among your current priorities:

The results of Vital Focus self-assessment suggested that the Assessment process needed to be examined; the Assessment Office suggested that the General Education Outcomes would be the appropriate place to start. Upon examination, it was discovered that nearly one-third of the General Education Outcomes are more closely associated with the social sciences than elsewhere, yet instruction in the social sciences accounts for only one-sixth of the General Education curriculum. In addition, those Outcomes relating to global and national diversity tend to be concentrated in the specific disciplines which emphasize how society is and has been structured (history, macroeconomics, political science), while those relating to social responsibility tend to be found in the disciplines more closely associated with the study of human behavior (anthropology, psychology, sociology). Because there is a tendency among students to choose both of their social science General Education courses from among either the first group or the second, many of them forego explicit instruction in areas the faculty have determined to be necessary to their education.

E. List the organizational areas - -institutional departments, programs, divisions, or units -- most affected by or involved in this Action Project:

This project will directly affect the Academic Divisions of Business, Education, Liberal Arts, and Science & Mathematics. It directly involves the offices of the Dean of Extended University, Academic Assessment, and the Senior Vice-President of the Residential University. It will require cooperation and collaboration between the Extended and Residential universities.

F. Name and describe briefly the key organizational process(es) that you expect this Action Project to change or improve:

Faculty will have quicker evaluative feedback from the Assessment Office; Institutional Portfolio evaluators among faculty will have a simpler task; administration will see results more quickly. Students will benefit through the shifting of emphasis from teaching to learning in the General Education Outcomes. The primary culture change associated with the project will involve the University's continuing shift from a teaching culture to a learning culture.

G. Explain the rationale for the length of time planned for this Action Project (from kickoff to target completion):

By May, 2006, we expect the UIU faculty to have approved a set of finalized the General Education task statements, and a revised format for Institutional Portfolio data collection. We expect to begin implementation of the project in September, 2006.

H. Describe how you plan to monitor how successfully your efforts on this Action Project are progressing:

Data will be collected through the Office of Academic Assessment under the direction of the ongoing AQIP General Education team. The team includes representation from the academic divisions and the Dean of the Extended University as well from academic assessment. Team members will serve as liaisons between the team and their respective constituencies, and will report regularly to those constituencies.

I. Describe the overall "outcome" measures or indicators that will tell you whether this Action Project has been a success or failure in achieving its goals:

In the Fall of 2008, the Director of Academic Assessment will report to the faculty what specific enhancements of student learning within the General Education have taken place as a result of the project's implementation.

J. Other information (e.g., publicity, sponsor or champion, etc.):

Sponsors include Dr. Mari Molseed, Chair of the Faculty, and Dr. Linda Haines, Dean of the Extended University.

K. Project Leader and contact person:

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