

To: UGEC members

From: Jessica Smith, UGEC chair

Date: February 24, 2025

How should we address sections of Study Abroad courses in general education assessment?

We currently have two types of course sections:

1. Taught by an Abilene faculty member in residence with students.
2. Taught by an adjunct faculty member exclusively to ACU students.

A third type may be added with the addition of the Valencia campus:

3. Taught by an adjunct faculty member who's teaching students from other institutions in the same course section.

The [2023-24 Outcomes Assessment General Education Menus](#) report shows several sections of courses offered for Study Abroad students on the lists that didn't submit data. This was primarily an issue on the Arts and Humanities menu and Cultural Literacy menu. The council discussed this issue ([data presented to council](#) and [council minutes from Jan. 24, 2024](#)) for the first at the end of the Fall 2023 semester. In 2023-24, at least a third of the sections with missing data for both the A&H and CL menus were from Study Abroad sections. I will bring data about Fall 2024 to the council meeting.

Since then, Mark Barneche, executive director for international education and Study Abroad, has expressed commitment to forming better connections to university systems, and faculty of both existing types of course sections participated at a higher rate in Spring 2024.

Courses have the same outcomes regardless of location or modality. This council requires that general education assessment happens with the same assignment approved by this council regardless of location or modality. (Note: Sections offered by the Dallas campus, which are identified by a separate course subject code and are cross-listed with the original Abilene course, have separate measurements in assessment plans that were developed after the original Abilene courses were approved.)

Faculty in all three types of course sections, but particularly the second and third, may take a different approach to the course content than faculty teaching residually, which makes it difficult or impossible to include the designated assignments.

I would like some guidance from the council about how to address Study Abroad sections to carry out the assessment plan that you have approved. Some questions that you might consider include:

1. Should we include all sections of Study Abroad sections in our assessment? If not, how will we know whether students are meeting outcomes if they take courses through our Study Abroad route?

2. Should we exempt some or all Study Abroad sections from menu assessment? If so, how do we determine which sections qualify?
3. Rather than assignment-based assessment for courses that are frequently taught in Study Abroad sections, should we consider a survey instrument or something similar that's administered to all students (residential and Study Abroad) instead of a course assignment? If so, how could we manage that?

We expect that adding the third type of course mentioned above will increase the number of sections affected in 2025-26, so this discussion by the council will be timely planning!