

Longitudinal Study of Staff and Student Expectations and Attitudes towards GE: An Assessment of the Early Implementation of GE

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Abstract:

Gateway Education (GE) courses were first offered at CityU in Semester B of the 2007-08 academic year. In the new 4-year degree, the GE programme will account for 25% of the curriculum, gradually replacing out-of-discipline (OOD) courses. GE courses are not OODs and must not be treated as such. There are both content and pedagogical differences between OODs and GE. The GE programme aims not only to broaden students knowledge-base but also seeks interdisciplinary exposure and learner-centered classroom engagement (see GE Programme Intended Learning Outcomes and Desired Characteristics of GE Courses, attached).

The central theme of this project is to assess how well the early courses offered in GE are succeeding in communicating the purposes and value of GE to students and in helping them to achieve the GE programme intended learning outcomes (PILOs). This project examines the degree to which the curricular and pedagogical changes are being implemented as planned. Specifically, we hope to:

evaluate teaching staff and students' perceptions of the goals, purposes, pedagogies, and intended learning outcomes of the GE course (at the beginning and end of the GE course as well as at the end of their programme) and examine the degree to which these perceptions parallel the overall GE programme outcomes and goals;

quantify any changes in perceptions that occur as a result of enrolment in GE courses, both over a single semester and possibly over a longer time period during which students may be enrolled in multiple GE courses;

assess the degree to which students have achieved the GE Programme Outcomes.

One of the PIs, Dr Susan Gano-Phillips has been our Fulbright Scholar in GE for 2008-09. She will be returning to the University of Michigan-Flint in the 2009-2010 academic year and plans to conduct a similar study with the students in Michigan. This will enable the investigating team to extend the study to include cross-cultural aspects, hence allowing comparisons to be drawn between an institution starting to implement GE with one that has had a GE programme in place for many years.