

Transcript Analysis Spring 2004 UND Graduates Summary completed in Spring 2005

1. Gen ed course inventory.

A goal inventory, designed by the Gen Ed Committee, was sent to each department offering one or more courses for gen ed credit. Each department was responsible for completing the inventory by checking the gen ed goals which are addressed in each gen ed course offered by the department. Through follow-up phone calls, completed goal inventories were obtained for all of the 30 most popular gen ed courses and, in fact, for the vast majority of gen ed courses offered at UND (and occurring on student transcripts).

The registrar's office randomly selected 50 transcripts of graduating seniors for analysis, and on each of those transcripts, marked all gen ed-eligible courses. Of all gen ed courses marked on transcripts, goal inventory data were available except as indicated below:

industrial technology - appearing on 2 transcripts
theatre arts - appearing on 4 transcripts
EHD 200 (library) - appearing on 2 transcripts
honors - appearing on 3 transcripts

2. Gen ed goal summary data.

Without data from the few departments failing to complete the goal inventory, summary data for the goals are as follows:

Communicate effectively	12.28 mean number of times a course emphasizing this goal was listed on students' transcripts, with a range of 5-27
Think critically/creatively	15.82 mean, 6-28 range
Make informed choices	14.42 mean, 6-26 range
Understand conclusions in natural sciences, social sciences, arts and humanities	15.34 mean, 5-28 range
Acquire knowledge	12.98 mean, 5-26 range
Familiar with cultures	6.42 mean, 1-20 range

A review of the mean number of hits on each gen ed skill shows that the average student in this group took far fewer courses addressing the cultures goal than addressing any other goal. In fact, the mean number of courses taken that address the cultures goal is about half of that for any other goal.

A glance at the data distribution for all six goals (see chart on page 3) shows that data are least widespread (most clustered) for communication and cultures. Cultures especially is clustered,

with a range of only 1-13 courses if a single outlying data point (one student who took 20 courses addressing the cultures goal) is put aside. Even within that small range, only five students are in the top third of the range, with the vast majority clustered near the middle or bottom (roughly 2-9 relevant courses). The range of heaviest concentration within the communication goal is 9-16 relevant courses taken. The mean and range for communication is the second lowest of the gen ed goals, but still substantially higher than that for the cultures goal.

No standard has been set to indicate the number of times we would hope to have students exposed to a particular gen ed goal within a gen ed course, but it is clear that, except for the cultures goal, these students have been exposed to each skill category through at least five different gen ed courses, in addition to whatever exposures they may have received through major coursework or extracurricular activities. In fact, only a small proportion of UND graduates accumulates 8 or fewer hits on each of the first five goals (7 students for the communication goal, 3 for critical/creative thinking, 3 for making choices, 3 for understanding conclusions, and 8 for knowledge).

In contrast, two of these seniors graduated with only a single exposure to a course aiming to meet UND's goal of cultural familiarity. In fact, 18 out of the 50 students (36%) graduated with fewer than five exposures to this goal, placing it far behind the other goals in level of purposeful curricular exposures.

It is worth noting, however, that foreign language credit was brought into UND by a large number (21) of these students, almost always through on-campus testing and presumably as a result of strong preparation in a second language at the secondary level. Students' ability to obtain substantial credit (an average of more than 8 credits/student bringing in credit) often means that they need not take additional language courses while on campus. Perhaps these students made strong progress toward the "cultures" goal before coming to UND (as part of their language study). Or perhaps completing their language study before college causes them to miss what might be one of their best opportunities for additional exposure to cultures other than their own.

	<i>Comm</i>	<i>Crit</i>	<i>Choices</i>	<i>Conclus</i>	<i>Knowl</i>	<i>Cultures</i>
<i>1</i>						XX
<i>2</i>						XXXX
<i>3</i>						XXXXX
<i>4</i>						XXXXX XX
<i>5</i>	X			X	XXX	XXXXX XXXX
<i>6</i>	XX	XX	XX	X		XXXXX
<i>7</i>	XX			X	XX	
<i>8</i>	XX	X	X		XXX	XXXXX
<i>9</i>	XXXXX XX	X	XXXX	XX	X	XXXXX XX
<i>10</i>	XXXX	XXX	XX	XXX	XXXXX X	
<i>11</i>	XXXXX	XX	XX	XX	XXXX	X
<i>12</i>	XXX	XXX	XXXXX	XX	XXXXX XXX	X
<i>13</i>	XXXXX XX	XXXXX	XXXXX	XXXXX	XXXXX	XX
<i>14</i>	XXXXX	XX	XXXXX X	XXXXX XXX	XXXXX	
<i>15</i>	XX	XXXXX XX	XXXXX	XXX	X	
<i>16</i>	XXX	XXXX	XX	XXXXX X	XXX	
<i>17</i>		XXXX	X	X	XX	
<i>18</i>	XX	XXXX	XX	XXX	X	
<i>19</i>	XX	X	XX	XX	XXXX	
<i>20</i>		XXXX	X	XX	X	X
<i>21</i>		X	XXXX	XXX		
<i>22+</i>	XX	XXXXX X	XXXXX	XXXXX	XX	

3. Non-UND “gen ed” credits.

Most students (36 out of 50) brought in some credits from outside UND, and, in many cases, these external credits counted toward the fulfillment of gen ed requirements. Credits brought in came from three sources: transfer credit, for courses taken on or off-site at another institution (virtually always a two-year institution, in-state or out); exam credit from AP courses; and exam credit earned through tests of knowledge, either standardized or UND-generated (almost all of the languages credit and some of the other credit came from these tests).

Considering all 50 students, the number of credits brought in from courses that normally “count” toward gen ed credit had a mean of 8.24 with a range of 0-34. Two students out of the 50 could be considered transfer students in that each completed a year or two of study at a community college prior to attending UND. Eliminating data from the two transfer students, the mean of external credits brought in is still 7.25 and the range of credits brought in is 0-30.

The distribution is as follows:

0 credits	14 students
3	6
4	4
6	1
7	2
8	8
9	2
11	1
12	1
14	1
17	1
19	2
21	1
22	1
23	1
24	1
30	2 (1 is a transfer)
34	1 (transfer)

4. Non-UND gen ed credit by field and frequency.

Of the credits that were brought in and that fit within traditional gen ed areas, the following is a list of departments and includes the number of students (out of 50) who brought in credit in the particular area plus the average number of credits brought in. The list is organized with most popular/common outside credit first, least common last.

languages	21 students, mean of 8.6 credits
math	16 students, mean of 3.44
composition	9 students, mean of 5.2
psychology	5 students, mean of 3
economics	4 students, mean of 3.75

physics	4 students, mean of 3.75
biology	3 students mean of 7.33
chemistry	3 students, mean of 4.67
history	3 students, mean of 4
speech/comm	3 students, mean of 3
political sci	2 students, mean of 3
English	2 students, mean of 3
rel/phil	2 students, mean of 2.5
anat/phys	1 student, 8 credits
natural sci	1 student, 4 credits
sociology	1 student, 3 credits
comp sci	1 student, 3 credits

To be perfectly frank, it is very easy to tell from transcripts that much of the transfer credit in physics and math, especially, is earned after the student finds him/herself unable to pass UND versions of the courses (there's a pattern of taking and retaking, with withdrawals or grades of D and F as the outcome, followed by transfer credit -- almost always with an A or B grade). This same transfer pattern is found in some non-gen ed areas, most notably accounting.

5. Demographic information on students in the study.

All majors and minors listed on the transcripts were recorded (without distinction between majors and minors) to provide a sense of how these students (and their curricula) compare with typical UND grads. The breakdown is as follows:

Science and technology students (9)

- 4 chemistry
- 1 biology
- 1 math
- 1 computer science
- 1 mechanical engineering
- 1 industrial technology

Business students (17)

- 3 marketing
- 3 financial management
- 2 information systems
- 5 accounting
- 3 management
- 1 office administration

Aviation related students (13)

- 9 commercial aviation
- 1 aerospace science
- 1 military science
- 1 airport management
- 1 aviation management

Social science students (8)

- 3 political science
- 1 criminal justice
- 2 psychology
- 2 communication

Arts and humanities students (8)

- 1 English
- 2 music
- 1 philosophy
- 1 religion
- 1 honors
- 2 languages

Health care students (10)

- 1 pre-med
- 5 nursing
- 1 clinical lab science
- 3 communication disorders

Education (7)

- 5 elementary education
- 1 physical education
- 1 coaching

Note that the total will add up to more than 50, since a single student could be listed under two or three different headings if his/her majors and/or minors were in different general fields.