



## Graduate Student Learning Goals (GSLG)

University Assessment: Office of Institutional Assessment and Accreditation

AY 2020-2021

## Annual Assessment Report: Year 2 of the GSLG Assessment Plan

During academic year 2020-2021, the census of the Georgian Court University (GCU) stated a head count of 589 graduate students, 161 of whom were full-time, 428 were part-time giving a full-time equivalent count of 399. Completions of graduate degrees was earned by 228 students in 2019-2020. The School of Arts and Sciences has seven (7) graduate degree programs, the School of Business and Digital Media has two (2) degree programs, and the School of Education has five (5) degree programs. The number of graduate and non-degree supplemental programs in the School of Arts and Sciences is four (4), the School of Business and Digital Media has one (1), and the School of Education has nine (9) such programs.

During the summer 2020 semester, 94 graduate courses were offered. During the fall 2020 semester, 163 graduate courses were offered by the university. During the spring 2021 semester, 168 graduate courses were offered. The total number of course offerings for Academic Year (AY) 2020-2021 was 425.

The data within this report follows the plan for assessment of the graduate student learning goals for year 2 out of 3 years. This is the second 3-year cycle of this assessment plan. For AY 2020-2021, the utility of the AEFIS (Assessment, Evaluation, Feedback & Intervention System) software system allowed for the collection of direct assessment results. Artifacts resulting from aligned coursework could be linked from BlackBoard Gradebook directly to AEFIS. The utility of using course evaluations for indirect assessment was hampered by the restrictions on data reporting from the same AEFIS system. Finally, the results of the Graduate Student Survey conducted in spring 2021, are included since the progress on GSLG achievement was included among the questions asked of respondents.

### GSLG Goal #3: Communication

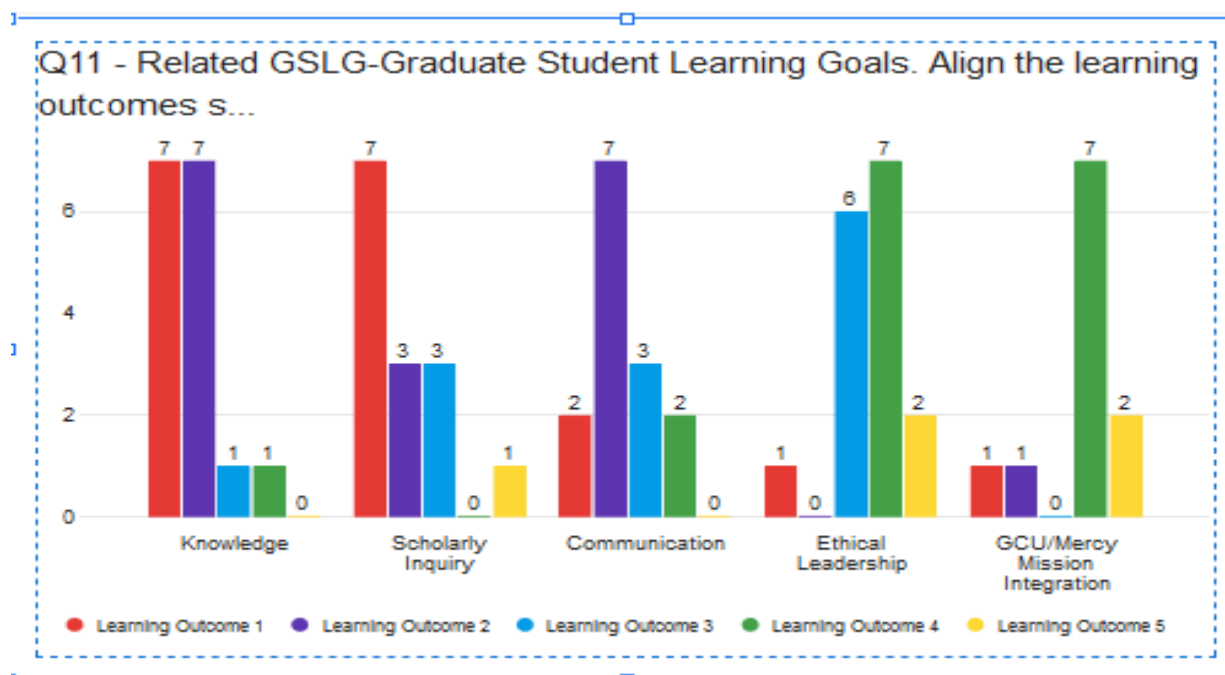
**Learning Outcome:** Apply clear and effective oral, written, and technological communication skills appropriate to engagement with general and specialized audiences.

**Assessment:** Achievement of this goal may be evidenced through assigned writing or scholarly presentations using various media.

## Direct Evidence of Achievement of Learning Outcome

### Academic Program Assessment Plans Aligned with GSLG Goal 3

Within the 14 Graduate Academic Program Assessment Plans updated in 2019, the following alignment with the GSLGs was given. Note that 14 programs submitted plans, and each learning outcome could be aligned with more than one goal. Each of the programs included a program learning outcome related to effective communications, however not all programs assessed this outcome in AY 2020-2021.



In all, fourteen (14) out of sixteen (16) academic programs at the graduate level included a learning outcome related to GSLG Goal 3: Communication. Only two programs stated this as Learning Outcome 1, while seven (7) programs included this goal as Learning Outcome 2. The sequential placement of this goal among the program's learning outcomes indicates the importance of this learning goal for all programs.

The MBA program submitted assessment results related to GSLG Goal 3 in AY 2019-2020. See the executive summary of assessment reporting for AY 2019-2020 for further information.

#### Master of Business Administration Program: Executive Summary of 2019-2020 Assessment Report

The Master of Business Administration Program conducted an assessment for the 2020 academic year by evaluating student work obtained from BU691: Strategic Management. This is the capstone course for graduate students. The learning objective being assessed was: Learning Objective 1: Effective oral, written, and technological business communication skills for managerial and executive settings. This was year 1 of the assessment cycle. Three formative assessments occurred during a pre-class writing assignment and 2 case studies. Students showed significant improvement as the assessments continued. The class average went from a 65% to a 91%. Summative assessment occurred through a comprehensive business analysis paper on a SBU (strategic business unit) on an assigned company. All 5 teams exceeded the expectations on both the paper and presentation. The assessment plan stated that indirect assessment

would be derived from the SIR II. However, GCU did not utilize the SIR II this academic year and this must be changed in subsequent advising cycles.

The following academic programs submitted assessment results related to GSLG Goal 3 in AY 2020-2021. See the executive summary of assessment reporting for AY 2020-2021 for further information.

### Integrative Health

The Department of Integrative Health and Exercise Science conducted its annual assessment for year 2 of the Master of Arts in Integrative Health program by evaluating the learners' journal entries in HH515 Integrative Stress Management and HH525's Discussion Forum entries. 100% of the learners in HH515 were able to demonstrate their ability to apply theory to practice in their journaling. HH525's discussion forums yielded 100% of its learners to demonstrate their understanding of compassion and empathy as well as their ability to use such skills in their written communication with one another. While these direct evidence show that both outcome 2 and 5 were attained. However, their indirect evidence learners' perceived attainment of such outcomes were not obtained at this time. Therefore, we would like to implement online survey among all learners in the next academic year to compile this indirect measurement for both formative and summative assessment. For the summative assessment will be through HH599 Final Project in Holistic Health.

### Criminal Justice and Human Rights

Executive Summary: The Masters in Criminal Justice and Human Rights Program conducted an assessment for Year 2 Program: LO2: Communication and research skills Students will demonstrate effective communication skills appropriate to an academic Social Science Masters' program and competence in research methodology through the development of a research proposal and, subsequently, through carrying out original research and writing a capstone paper. Methods employed must be appropriate to the research problem and will be evaluated by social science standards, assessed by faculty according to established rubrics, with the capstone reviewed by a panel of at least two faculty members. GSLG 2): Scholarly Inquiry: Engage in academic research, which includes scholarly inquiry for evidence-based practice and knowledge integration. GSLG 3) Communication: Apply clear and effective oral, written, and technological communication skills appropriate to engagement with general and specialized audiences (2) Effective communication and presentation skills, appropriate to the master's level; (3) Accomplishment in research methodology appropriate to issues and problems presented; CJ511 Research Design was the course selected as a formative assessment of Communication and research skills. Students were required to apply the research skills obtained in CJ510 Research Methods, and review the research on their topic, construct and Annotated Bibliography and complete a Literature review, organize the research in their Annotated Bibliography. Students were also required to 1) identify a problem, 2) develop a research question and hypothesis or argument, and 3) develop a research project to address the problem, address their research question that would support their hypothesis or argument. This was to be prepared in written form. Because the MA in CJHS has low enrollment, this report is preliminary and the data from this report will be added to data in future semesters. The report (i.e., author) reviewed a final paper (i.e., artifact) from one student, the grading rubric, and the completed grading rubric report as direct evidence of: GSLG 2): Scholarly Inquiry: Engage in academic research, which includes scholarly inquiry for evidence-based practice and knowledge integration. GSLG 3) Communication: Apply clear and effective oral, written, and technological communication skills appropriate to engagement with general and specialized audiences Program: LO2: Communication and research skills Students will demonstrate effective communication skills appropriate to an academic Social Science Masters' program and competence in research methodology through the development of a research proposal and, subsequently,

through carrying out original research and writing a capstone paper. Methods employed must be appropriate to the research problem and will be evaluated by social science standards, assessed by faculty according to established rubrics, with the capstone reviewed by a panel of at least two faculty members. Although not valid for an assessment of the program, the student who completed CJ511 was unable to meet the standards towards the benchmarks established at this time. The student who completed CJ590 was able to meet the standards towards the benchmarks established at this time.

AEFIS: Collection of results of assessment artifacts aligned with GSLG 3 (Fall 2020, Spring 2021)

College	Department	Program	Term	Outcome	Total # of Assessments	Total # of Assessments Exceeded Expectations	Percentage of Assessments Met Expectations
School of Arts & Sciences	Psychology & Counseling	School Psychology	Fall 2020	Goal 3	24	24	100
School of Arts & Sciences	Psychology & Counseling	School Psychology	Fall 2020	Goal 3	22	22	100
School of Business & Digital Media	Communication & Graph Design Multi Media	MS: Communication and Digital Marketing	Spring 2021	Goal 3	5	5	100
School of Business & Digital Media	Communication & Graph Design Multi Media	MS: Communication and Digital Marketing	Spring 2021	Goal 3	6	6	100
School of Education	Education	Administration & Leadership-Masters	Spring 2021	Goal 3	22	22	100
School of Education	Education	Administration & Leadership-Masters	Spring 2021	Goal 3	2	2	100
School of Education	Education	Administration & Leadership-Masters	Spring 2021	Goal 3	12	12	100

College	Department	Program	Term	Outcome	Total # of Assessments	Total # of Assessments Exceeded Expectations	Percentage of Assessments Met Expectations
School of Education	Education	Administration & Leadership-Masters	Spring 2021	Goal 3	10	10	100
School of Education	Education	Administration & Leadership-Masters	Spring 2021	Goal 3	2	2	100
School of Education	Education	Autism Studies (graduate)	Spring 2021	Goal 3	24	24	100
School of Education	Education	ESL Education-Masters	Spring 2021	Goal 3	8	8	100
School of Education	Education	Reading/Literacy Specialization	Spring 2021	Goal 3	6	6	100
School of Education	Education	Reading/Literacy Specialization	Spring 2021	Goal 3	1	1	100
School of Education	Education	Reading/Literacy Specialization	Spring 2021	Goal 3	6	6	100
School of Education	Education	Reading/Literacy Specialization	Spring 2021	Goal 3	7	7	100
School of Education	Education	School Counseling	Spring 2021	Goal 3	6	6	100

College	Department	Program	Term	Outcome	Total # of Assessments	Total # of Assessments Exceeded Expectations	Percentage of Assessments Met Expectations
School of Education	Education	Teacher Education Elementary with TSWD (MAT)- Graduate	Spring 2021	Goal 3	8	8	100
School of Education	Education	Teacher of Students with Disabilities- Masters	Spring 2021	Goal 3	8	8	100
School of Education	Education	Teacher Education: K-12 Subject TSWD (Graduate)	Spring 2021	Goal 3	4	4	100
School of Education	Education	Autism Studies (graduate)	Spring 2021	Goal 3	86	84	97.67
School of Education	Education	Administration & Leadership- Masters	Spring 2021	Goal 3	70	65	92.86
School of Education	Education	ESL Education- Masters	Spring 2021	Goal 3	22	20	90.91
<b>TOTALS</b>					<b>361</b>	<b>352</b>	<b>99.16</b>

Twenty-three graduate (23) courses, with 361 artifacts, were linked to GSLG Goal 3 for analysis of direct assessment artifacts. These courses covered 12 programs, and both the fall 2020 and spring 2021 semesters. Of these courses, nineteen (19) had all (100%) students meet or exceed expectations. The remaining three courses had 90% or greater meet the expectations. The direct assessments were keystone or signature course assignments, most requiring presentations as well as written reports. They were graded by rubrics particular to the course and assignment, with final results pulled into the AEFIS system from the BlackBoard Gradebook for the course. The remaining courses aligned with GSLG Goal 3 did not have assignments in BlackBoard Gradebook for this spring term. Overall, of the 361 artifacts, 352 or 99% met the expectations of achievement of learning for this outcome.

## Indirect Evidence of Achievement of Learning Outcome

### Course Evaluations

Course evaluations are conducted within three surveys: ETS SIRII, eSIR (Student Instructional Report) and the GCU SET (Student Evaluation of Teaching). The E section (Supplementary Instructional Methods) from the ETS surveys related to GSLG Goal 3 are the questions related to group discussion, teams, and chat rooms. The SET questionnaire includes a question related to the environment for contributing to class. However, the SET was used mainly with undergraduate courses, so that data point will not be referenced in this report.

The following table shows overall university means for the selected questions. The means reflect a Likert scale where 5 = very effective and 1 = ineffective.

Survey and Questions	Spring 20	Fall 20	Spring 21
<b>ETS SIR II</b>			
E. 22 (group discussion)	4.40	4.38	4.39
E. 25 (teamwork)	4.33	4.25	4.26
<b>ETS eSIR</b>			
E. 24 (group discussion)	4.24	4.25	4.44
E. 26 (teamwork)	3.91	4.46	4.25
E. 29 (chat rooms)	4.26	4.21	4.38

Looking at the eSIR results for the School of Education for spring 2021, the following data may be more indicative of graduate student responses. Within the AEFIS system disaggregation of results by graduate only students are not yet an option.

eSIR: E. 24 group discussion: mean = 4.5 with 66 respondents, and an additional 2 respondents stating that this instructional method was not used.

eSIR: E. 26 teamwork: mean = 4.61 with 33 respondents, and an additional 33 respondents stating that this instructional method was not used.

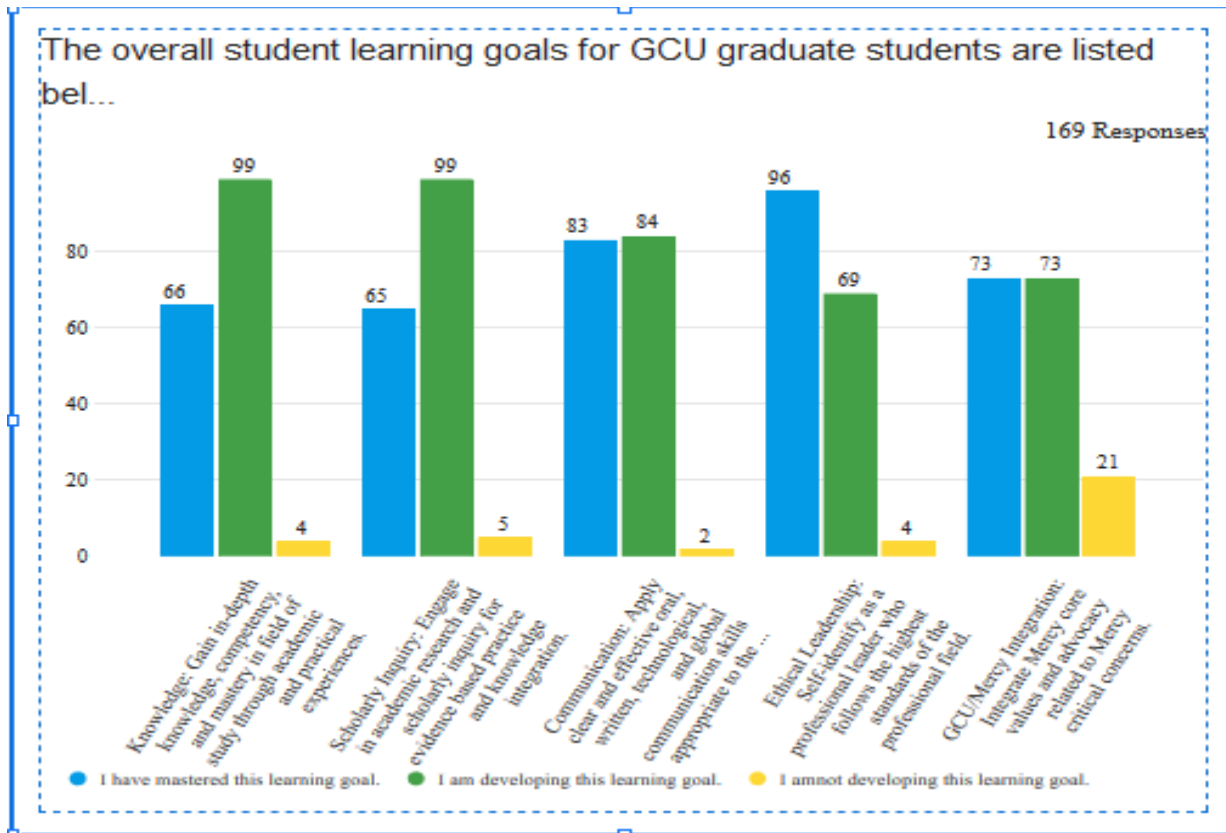
eSIR: E. 29 chatrooms: mean = 4.34 with 62 respondents, and an additional 5 respondents stating that this instructional method was not used.

The above means for the SOE shows results at or above the university's weighted means listed in the above table. ETS does not provide a normed mean for section E since these are considered optional methods. With mean scores at or above 4, the majority of students who took the survey considered these optional methods as effective for learning.

### Graduate Student Survey – 2021

When asked to state whether they have mastered, are developing, or are not developing the GSLGs, the students responded as shown in the graph below. For Goal 3, 83 students stated that they have mastered the goal, 84 are developing the goal, and 2 are not developing the goal, based

on 169 responses. Hence, 98.8% of the responders acknowledged that they are developing or have mastered Goal 3: Communication.





## Analysis and Action Plan

Using the AEFIS system to collect direct assessment of student assignments aligned with Goal 3: Communication of the Graduate Student Learning Goals provided ample evidence of goal achievement. For the spring 2021 semester, of the 43 courses linked through program learning outcomes to the GSLG, data was collected from 20 (46.5%). This was the first semester where linkage of assignments to program outcomes was universally done within the AEFIS system. The courses which were linked but had no data was due to the instructor not using the BlackBoard grading system to record student assignment and assessment.

The use of AEFIS for course evaluation allows for the use of several surveys for this purpose. While reports can be generated for programs, schools, and instructors, the data is not aggregated by graduate or undergraduate coursework, nor is the data from the same survey able to be aggregated across the various schools. Each school sets up its own survey schedule. Schools survey by term and by survey type. A more detailed analysis by program at the graduate level is hampered by this lack of functionality. A snapshot analysis using the School of Education showed that the graduate students in this program meet or exceed the means of the university overall for those items aligned with GSLG Goal 3.

In the spring term, 169 graduate-level students (28.7%) responded to an in-house satisfaction survey. Of these students, more than 98% stated that they had mastered or were developing GSLG Goal 3: Communication. This goal had the least number of students who stated that they were not developing the goal within their program.

Further information on GSLG Goal 3 may be had from the annual assessment reports from the graduate programs. This will depend on the program goal alignment selected for this reporting year, although data from previous years may also be inferred from the Executive Summary of all program assessment. See the institutional reports on the university's assessment webpage: [Annual Assessment Reports | Georgian Court University, New Jersey](#)

### Action Plan

These results will be shared with the Graduate Council of Georgian Court University at their fall meeting. Actions related to these findings will be discussed. It will be recommended that all faculty use the BlackBoard Gradebook to record results from assessment related assignments aligned with program goals so that these can be more readily available in the AEFIS system. This will also assist in program assessment reports going forward.