General Education Assessment Program

The Faculty Senate University Assessment Council (FSUAC), with the approval of the Provost, the Faculty Senate, and the General Education Program Review Committee, is pleased to announce the following changes to the General Education Assessment Policy.

The following change to the General Education Assessment Policy does NOT apply to teacher education majors, post-baccalaureate or graduate students. The Missouri Department of Elementary & Secondary Education continues to require teacher education majors to take and pass five subject areas of the College-BASE for Teacher Education exam as one criterion for admission to the Teacher Education Program. Teacher Education students who withdraw from the Teacher Education Program to major in another field and who have successfully fulfilled the College BASE for Teacher Education exam requirement will have fulfilled the General Education Assessment Policy.

Why is the University changing the general education assessment?
The College-BASE for General Education, which has been used by the University for the past five years as its major general education assessment instrument, is a content-based exam. Nationally, however, general education assessment has shifted from measures of content knowledge to assessment of intellectual skills. The FSUAC supports this national trend. The GEA exam is a computer-based, multiple-choice exam that measures four core intellectual skill areas – critical thinking, reading, writing, and mathematics.

What score is required on the GEA to fulfill the Policy?
To fulfill the General Education Assessment Policy as a condition for graduation, students must earn a minimum total score of 425. This score is based on a scaled score range of 400-500. Test scores are available immediately after testing. A period of 30 days must elapse between test dates.

When should the GEA exam be taken?
To avoid delays in progression towards a degree, students should take the GEA exam as soon as they have earned a total of 45 or more credit hours. Effective August 2009, all UCM students who have earned a total of 45 or more credit hours will receive a personal message on MyCentral directing them to take the GEA. This policy applies to all degree programs, regardless of mode of delivery.

Effective fall 2009, students enrolled in online degree programs who have earned 45 or more credit hours may take the General Education Assessment (GEA) exam either at UCM or at a UCM-approved test center. Testing Services will send a personal message on MyCentral to these students about the policy change and will assist them in the identification of a test center closest to their residence.

Is there a consequence for not testing?
Yes! Students who have earned a total of 45 or more credit hours and who fail to test will have a TC HOLD placed on the students’ academic account. The TC HOLD will prevent students from enrolling in future semester courses.

When will the TC HOLD be removed?
The TC HOLD will be removed AFTER the GEA exam has been taken.
How should students prepare for the exam?
No specific general education courses need to be taken prior to testing. However, students are advised to take general education courses during their first 45 hours of credit. GEA Measures of Proficiency and Sample Questions are available on MyCentral (Student Services tab).

When do students have to pass the GEA?
Students must pass the GEA no later than the semester in which they have earned a total of 75 or more credit hours. Exceptions: Students majoring in programs that require the General Education Assessment Policy be fulfilled as one criterion for admission to the program (such as Nursing or Business) should consult their department for program-specific requirements. Testing Services will continue the practice of sending personal messages on MyCentral to students each semester informing them that the General Education Assessment Policy has not been fulfilled and that graduation might be delayed.

Is there a fee for taking the GEA?
University assessment funding pays for the first general education exam. Thereafter, students pay a $15 retest fee. Testing Services bills the retest fee to the students’ financial account the day following the test date.

Additional information or for questions and/or concerns, contact Cindy Bertalott, Interim Director Testing Services, 660-543-4919, testingservices@ucmo.edu, ADM 102. When communicating with Assessment and/or Testing Services, students need to provide their UCM ID#, full name, and UCM email address. Providing this information will assist in responding to your question.

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