

**Assessment of General Education
University of Kansas
CLA&S Social Sciences, Engineering, Journalism, and Social Welfare
2002 and 2006**

Executive Summary

Background

The Assessment of General Education is an annual activity occurring with a rotating set of three professional schools and one area within the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. It involves assessing students' attainment of 6 Goals of General Education by both faculty through individual interviews between students and teams of three faculty members and student self-evaluations. Moreover, students rate 35 institutional goals on their level of organizational importance and the degree of success KU has achieved in accomplishing the goals.

2002 and 2006 interviews were conducted with students in the Schools of Engineering, Journalism, and Social Welfare and the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, Division of Social Sciences.

GOALS OF GENERAL EDUCATION

1. Critical Inquiry

Enhance the skills and knowledge needed to research, organize, evaluate, and apply new information and develop a spirit of critical inquiry and intellectual integrity.

2. Integrate Knowledge

Acquire knowledge in the fine arts, the humanities, and the social, natural, and mathematical sciences and be able to integrate that knowledge across disciplines.

3. Core Skills

Improve the core skills of reading, writing, and numeracy, and enhance communication by clear, effective use of language.

4. Appreciate Diversity

Understand and appreciate the development, culture, and diversity of the United States and of other societies and nations.

5. Contemporary Issues

Become aware of contemporary issues in society, technology, and the natural world and appreciate their complexity of cause and consequences.

6. Social Responsibility

Practice an ethic of self-discipline, social responsibility, and citizenship on a local, national, and international level.

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Goal Rating Scale:

1-little or no attainment 2-below average attainment 3-average attainment 4-above average attainment 5-outstanding attainment

The 6 goals of general education can be grouped on two separate emphases:

- **Academic Goals**
Goals 1 – 3 pertain to the acquisition of specific academic skills, knowledge, and the ability to integrate that knowledge across disciplines.
- **Social Framework Goals**
Goals 4 – 6 pertain to the development of social awareness, an understanding and appreciation of the complexities of society, and sense of social responsibility.

Trends over Time in Faculty and Student Ratings

Attainment of 6 General Education Goals

Overall, students have consistently rated themselves as more proficient on the goals than have faculty. Mean ratings across 6 goals by school:

Engineering		
	Faculty	Students
2002	3.55	3.64
2006	3.39	3.54

Journalism		
	Faculty	Students
2002	3.52	3.79
2006	3.56	3.93

CLA&S Social Sciences		
	Faculty	Students
2002	3.43	3.98
2006	3.81	3.88

Social Welfare		
	Faculty	Students
2002	3.66	3.97
2006	3.46	3.82

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Attainment of 6 General Education Goals (continued)

Highest-Rated Goals

The majority of the highest-rated goals are those with an academic emphasis.

	Faculty	Students
CLA&S Social Sciences		
2002	Core Skills (3.68)	Core Skills & Social Responsibility (4.10)
2006	Core Skills (4.00)	Core Skills (4.09)
Engineering		
2002	Critical Inquiry (3.78)	Critical Inquiry (4.00)
2006	Critical Inquiry (3.58)	Critical Inquiry (4.07)
Journalism		
2002	Social Responsibility (3.80)	Core Skills (4.17)
2006	Core Skills (3.82)	Core Skills (4.28)
Social Welfare		
2002	Social Responsibility (4.25)	Appreciate Diversity (4.29)
2006	Social Responsibility (3.88)	Social Responsibility (4.17)

Lowest-Rated Goals

Again, the majority of the lowest-rated goals are those with an academic emphasis.

	Faculty	Students
CLA&S Social Sciences		
2002	Integrate Knowledge (3.17)	Contemporary Issues (3.85)
2006	Contemporary Issues (3.54)	Integrate Knowledge (3.57)
Engineering		
2002	Integrate Knowledge (3.27)	Appreciate Diversity (2.90)
2006	Integrate Knowledge (3.06)	Appreciate Diversity (2.80)
Journalism		
2002	Critical Inquiry (3.23)	Integrate Knowledge (3.57)
2006	Integrate Knowledge (3.31)	Integrate Knowledge (3.48)
Social Welfare		
2002	Critical Inquiry (3.25)	Integrate Knowledge (3.71)
2006	Contemporary Issues (3.15)	Integrate Knowledge (3.46)

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Greatest Convergence/Divergence between Faculty and Student Goal Ratings¹

In general, the greatest convergence between faculty and student ratings occurred on the goals emphasizing social framework. The greatest divergence occurred on the academic goals.

	Greatest Convergence	Greatest Divergence
CLA&S Social Sciences		
2002	Appreciate Diversity (-.22)	Critical Inquiry & Integrate Knowledge (-.78)
2006	Social Responsibility (-.01)	Critical Inquiry (-.25)
Engineering		
2002	Contemporary Issues (-.03)	Appreciate Diversity (.43)
2006	Contemporary Issues (.09)	Integrate Knowledge (-.74)
Journalism		
2002	Social Responsibility (-.03)	Critical Inquiry (-.72)
2006	Appreciate Diversity (-.15)	Critical Inquiry (-.75)
Social Welfare		
2002	Social Responsibility (.02)	Critical Inquiry (-.69)
2006	Integrate Knowledge (-.26)	Critical Inquiry (-.56)

¹A negative number indicates that students rated themselves higher on the goal than did faculty.

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Institutional Goal Attainment Survey

Students rated the importance of 35 institutional goals and KU's success in meeting those goals.

Rating Scale:

1- Least important/Least successful ----- 10- Most important/Most successful

Trends in the Institutional Goal Attainment Ratings

Most/Least Important and Most/Least Successful Institutional Goals

In general, the goal most often identified as **most important** is "preparing students for a job after graduation," while KU is most often credited with being **most successful** in "maintaining a varied program of extracurricular activities." Goals rated **least important** are varied across year and discipline, as are the goals KU is rated as being **least successful** in meeting.

	Most Important	Least Important	Most Successful	Least Successful
CLA&S Social Sci				
2002	Teach critical thinking and knowledge integration (9.35)	Provide physical fitness programs (7.11)	Provide knowledge of western culture (8.30)	Teach relationship between environment and society (5.75)
2006	Prepare students for jobs (9.18)	Teach relationship between environment and society (6.82)	Provide physical fitness programs (8.50)	Teach basic computer competence (5.75)
Engineering				
2002	Prepare students for jobs (9.19)	Teach relationship between environment and society (5.71)	Impart knowledge in a specialized area (8.29)	Teach a second language (4.95)
2006	Impart knowledge in a specialized area (9.03)	Teach a second language (5.93)	Maintain extracurricular programs (8.63)	Deepen knowledge of non-western cultures (4.70)
Journalism				
2002	Prepare students for jobs (9.74)	Encourage artistic expression (7.26)	Enable students to study abroad (8.83)	Teach research skills (6.35)
2006	Prepare students for jobs (9.72)	Deepen appreciation for the Arts (7.21)	Maintain extracurricular programs (8.76)	Teach relationship between environment and society (5.62)
Social Welfare				
2002	Provide opportunity for adults 25+ to earn degrees (9.69)	Understand basic math concepts (7.00)	Maintain extracurricular programs & Impart knowledge in a specialized area (8.59)	Teach basic computer competence (5.88)
2006	Prepare students for jobs (9.65)	Deepen appreciation for the Arts (7.17)	Maintain extracurricular programs (8.76) (9.00)	Teach a second language (4.78)

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Trends in the Institutional Goal Attainment Ratings (continued)

Greatest Convergence/Divergence between rated importance and rated success²

In general, the goal most often identified as having the most convergence between rated importance and rated success is, “provide opportunities for adults 25 and over to earn degrees. The goal most often identified as having the most divergence between rated importance and rated success is, “prepare students for a job after graduation.”

	Greatest Convergence	Greatest Divergence
CLA&S Social Sciences		
2002	Provide opportunity for adults 25+ to earn degrees (.11)	Provide an environment of diversity (2.30)
2006	Provide opportunity for adults 25+ to earn degrees (-0.26)	Prepare students for jobs after graduation (2.30)
Engineering		
2002	Provide knowledge of western culture (0.00)	Prepare students for jobs after graduation (1.95)
2006	Deepen appreciation for the Arts (0.00)	Uphold rigorous academic standards (2.17)
Journalism		
2002	Provide opportunity for adults 25+ to earn degrees (0.00)	Teach basic computer competence (2.30)
2006	Provide knowledge of western culture (0.00)	Prepare students for jobs after graduation (2.72)
Social Welfare		
2002	Enable students to study abroad (.18), Provide knowledge of western culture & Maintain extracurricular programs (-.18)	Provide an environment of diversity (2.65)
2006	Enable students to study abroad (.09)	Teach a second language (2.87)

²A positive number indicates that the goal was perceived as more important than was KU's rated attainment of it.