

Joliet Junior College's Concept of Assessment

General education objective (GEO) assessment can be done in several ways. One common method is to use a single assignment or tool created in a centralized office whose role is to be responsible for assessment. The courses where this common assignment or tool is used for data collection are selected by the same described office. It is important to note that generally the primary purpose of this assignment or tool is to collect assessment data and may not be related to the course or module learning objectives of the course. The result of this described method is that while data is collected, it only pertains to student performance with this single assignment or tool as shown in figure 1.

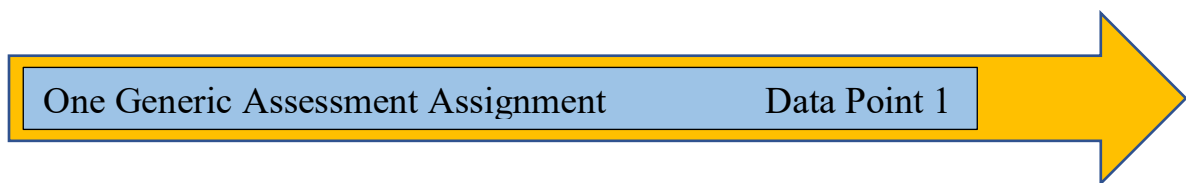


Figure 1

At JJC, GEO assessment is done a little differently. The institutionally identified GEOs are attached to courses selected by faculty who teach the course. Some courses have more than one GEO that applies to the course objectives. Faculty participation in assessment data collection is voluntary and special assignments or tools have not been developed for the assessment process. Instead, faculty are encouraged to use an assignment or activity that already exists in the course they teach that naturally addresses the GEO identified for the course. The faculty are then expected that the GEO will be assessed in the context of the discipline taught. For example, oral communication is being assessed in an applied science program class. Oral Communication is an appropriate GEO for this class because it has an assignment where the students must give an oral presentation while demonstrating how a task would be done in the workplace for that discipline. When the faculty is assessing the task through a GEO lens, the emphasis would be on the

accuracy of the oral description of the process in the *context of the discipline* and not the formal technical aspects of the oral delivery. In other words, the presentation may not be assessed the same way it would be assessed in a communications class. The advantage to this approach is that it yields a data point that is grounded in application of oral communication outside of formal oral communication education such as in a communications class.

Students and the community have a reasonable expectation that students improve their aptitude of Oral Communication, Written Communication, Applied Knowledge, Quantitative Literacy, and Cultural Literacy, also known as JJC's GEOs, during their time at JJC. Students should be able to apply the skills learned outside of a learned discipline. Evaluating student performance in core competencies within the discipline directly supporting a GEO is obviously necessary. However, compiling additional assessment data points in a context outside of the discipline provides a more complete measure of student achievement of the General Education objectives as shown in figure 2.

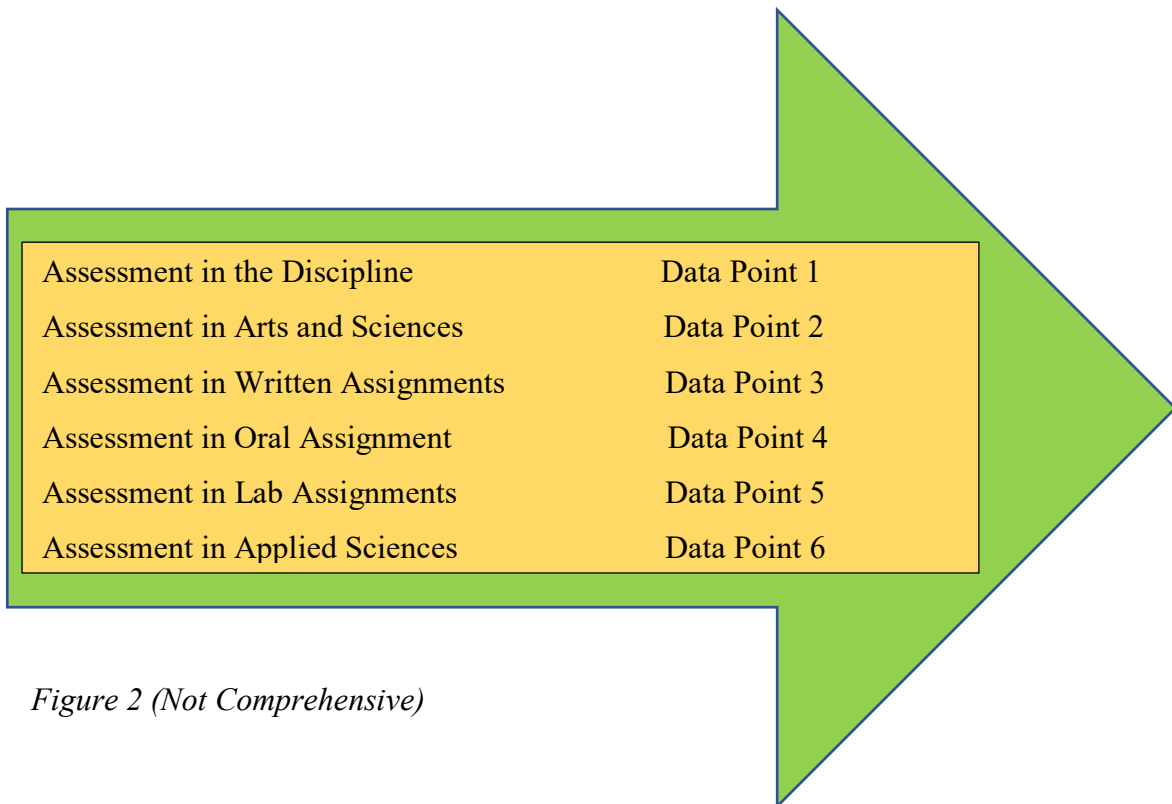


Figure 2 (Not Comprehensive)

With an impressive and expansive 81 specific academic areas of interest at JJC comprised of over 180 degree and certificate programs, not to mention the vast choices in associated courses, the number of distinct contexts for applications possible for a GEO far exceeds the 6 general areas shown in figure 2. The GEO assessment method used at JJC takes advantage of these diverse opportunities to assess a GEO in a more comprehensive way.