

In Fall 2017 the Gen Ed Working Group was comprised of the following members: Chair Anne Galbraith (Biology), Colin Belby (Geography and Earth Science), Samuel Cocks (Philosophy), Natalie Eschenbaum (English), Taviare Hawkins (Physics), Shelley Hay (Global Cultures and Languages), Heather Hulett (Mathematics and Statistics), John Nunley (Economics), Kenneth Shonk (History), and Lauren Mason (student). The group held nearly weekly meetings and the Chair periodically updated Faculty Senate throughout the year.

August/September 2017

On August 28, 2017 the Gen Ed Working Group hosted a brainstorming session of about 40 attendees. Members of every department were invited to attend, along with other stakeholders. Notes from this session were reviewed and used to develop four proposals that were drafted in September 2017, and shared with faculty via email 9/19/17 for review at the first two Fall Open Fora. The Chair visited GEAC (9/18/17) and GEC (9/18/17) to update both committees on the work completed over the summer and early fall, soliciting specific feedback from each group. The Open Fora were held on September 20th and September 21st with approximately 20-30 attendees at each forum. Feedback from these fora was compiled along with feedback solicited by Qualtrics survey and reviewed by the Working Group at their 9/22/17 meeting. Based on responses from faculty, the decision was made to prioritize a) the creation of a topic-based first year seminar (2 or 3 credits), and b) consideration of possible themes/constellations/strands that would encompass the additional required GE courses. Each of these themes was to take into account existing GE categories and courses, so that faculty teaching in the current program could imagine a "home" for their courses in any newly-proposed program. The Working Group also chose to revise the current list of GE Program SLOs after feedback from GEAC indicated that these are not currently assessable at the program level.

October 2017

The Chair visited GEC (10/2/17) to update the Committee on the Working Group's progress and to solicit feedback on next steps. The Chair also offered Student Senate an update at its October 4th meeting. The Working Group split into small groups to revise the two most promising proposals with an eye to fleshing out possible "themes" that would integrate current SLOs and current GE classes. Two meetings were held (10/13/17, 10/20/17) to discuss both proposals, with the decision made to create one combined proposal for consideration at the next campus-wide discussion (recognizing many similarities and overlaps between the two drafts). Some pertinent elements of this draft included:

- Required 3-credit First Year Seminar (1 cr. online, 2 cr. face-to-face)
- ENG 110/112, CST 110, MTH/STAT required within first 30 credits
- Distribution categories with minimum requirements in each grouping
- Themes housing groups of related courses (e.g., "The Environment", "Diversity", "Wellness") with minimum requirements for the Theme (the Theme would be chosen by the student), and the ability of Theme courses to double dip as Distribution courses
- Minimum of 39 credits of non-FYS course work for a total of 42 credits

This proposal was brought before faculty in two open fora held on October 23rd and October 24th. Again, feedback was also taken by Qualtrics survey.

November 2017

The Chair visited GEC (11/6/17) to update the Committee on the Working Group's progress and to solicit feedback on next steps. The Working Group continued to revise proposals based on feedback from faculty (at the Open Fora) and students (via Lauren Mason, student representative). In addition, the Working Group reviewed concerns from the Registrar's office, heard suggestions from Shari Shoohs (Academic Advisor) and Scott Johns (Transfer Admissions Counselor) regarding particular difficulties facing transfer students with Gen Ed courses, and developed a workplan for December and winter break.

December 2017

The Working Group divided into sub-groups, each tasked with reviewing and revising remaining issues raised in the feedback from faculty and others. These smaller groups met throughout the month of December and the Working Group reconvened on 12/20/17 to finalize the proposal and schedule two open fora for early January (1/12/18 and 1/18/18) to solicit feedback prior to bringing the proposal before Faculty Senate. To build in time to implement feedback from Senate, the Working Group planned to bring the proposal for two readings (January 25th and February 8th) with a vote scheduled for February 8th.

January 2018 (Winter Intersession)

The Open Fora were held as scheduled in early January and were attended by 20-30 people at each forum. Feedback was also solicited by Qualtrics survey. The final proposal was brought before Faculty Senate for its first reading, as scheduled, on January 25th. The proposal included the addition of a required 3-credit FYS course for all New Students and all Transfer Students with less than 30 credits, and eliminated the nine elective GE credits, resulting in a final total minimum number of 42 required GE credits (Phase I). The proposal also requested permission to continue working on the category portion of the GE program (Phase II).

February 2018

Student Senate passed a resolution supporting the proposal on February 7th. A second reading at Faculty Senate on February 8th resulted in the following motion: "We in principal support the revision of the university General Education program to include the addition of a First Year Seminar and a reduction in minimum required credits to 42, to return with an implementation plan for final approval before the end of Spring 2018." M/S/P to approve the motion; motion passed with 18 yeas, two nays, and one abstention.