

**Goal 1**

**Provide assistance to departments for GE course development**

The GE Council will ensure that course development is discussed in an inclusive and collegial process. The Council will provide venues for the public discussion of outcomes and criteria in addition to responding to individual department requests for clarification and assistance in the process of adapting existing courses or developing new courses for GE. Where appropriate GE course development can be linked to faculty development initiatives as described in Goal 3.

The GE Council will

- Provide forums or other sessions to discuss course development and implementation processes
- Sponsor workshops and training to assist departments in adapting existing courses or in creating new course
- Work with other councils and units to provide assistance for GE course development such as how to incorporate course-based assessment of GE SLOS into a proposal

**Goal 2**

**Develop a systematic process for submission of courses for approval**

**A. Standing Course Approval Process for General Education**

The existing course approval process as indicated in Policy 7 applies to GE courses. The GE Council will develop a checklist to assist faculty and departments in preparing an application for a GE course. All courses submitted for GE designation must be approved by the GE Council prior to recommendation to the Provost.

In order for a GE course to be approved it:

1. Receives Department approval.
2. Receives College Curriculum approval
3. Receives approval from the Dean of the College
4. Receives GE Council approval
5. Receives Provost approval

The GE Council will outline guidelines for departments submitting courses for GE Council approval. This may include asking departments to discuss their ability to offer a reasonable number of sections and the ability to offer the course on a consistent basis. The GE Council wants to encourage creativity and choice but is aware of the need to balance choice with practical concerns about providing sufficient options for students.

The GE Council will recommend courses with GE designation based on criteria including student learning outcomes and appropriate assessments for each GE SLO addressed in the course. The GE Council may request clarification of a course proposal. Departments may resubmit courses after addressing the concerns expressed by the GE Council.

**B. First-time Implementation for a New General Education Program**

The transition to a new general education program will require a one-time special process since all proposed GE courses, including existing ones, will have to be reviewed for adherence to the GE Student Learning Outcomes and GE assessment plan components. In addition, criteria for each Designated Area will need to be developed such that the requirements for GE designation are clear. The determination of criteria for each Designated Area of GE must be completed in an open and transparent process with an opportunity for review by the faculty.

The term “Designated Area” refers to the special areas or dimensions of GE unique to each model.

### **Review Panels**

The GE Council recommends the formation of Review Panels to facilitate this first-time review. These panels will assist the GE Council in the refinement of student learning outcomes for the designated areas, in establishing criteria appropriate to the area for the review process and in assisting in the initial review of courses.

Once the Review Panels are set up, the Council will ask the Senate or Provost’s Office to issue a call for GE course proposals. The number of Review Panels may vary based on the adopted model. It is anticipated that there will be between 6 and 10 panels based on the model selected.

The new GE program will be phased in beginning with the incoming class of 2011. The Panels should complete their work no later than spring 2012.

#### **1. Composition of the Review Panels.**

Each Review Panel will have five members. One member will be from the GE Council with the other members recommended by the Senate Executive Committee. The same process currently practiced for setting up Senate Councils will be used to select members of the panels. Review Panels should be representative of both depth of expertise and breadth of discipline. The Senate Executive Committee will call for applications for each of the Review Panels and then selects the members to ensure fairness. These Panels may then be approved by the Senate.

#### **2. Review Process**

##### **Step 1**

Departments will submit course proposals to the Review Panel responsible for the GE area. A course may be submitted for more than one area and the course proposal would need to be submitted to all relevant areas as desired by the Department. The Panel will review all proposals based on their adherence to the area criteria, GE student learning outcomes, and the course-based assessments specific to the GE learning outcomes. The Review Panel may ask a department to resubmit any incomplete proposals.

##### **Step 2**

Recommendations from the Review Panels will go to the full GE Council which will make the final recommendation. The GE Council may approve recommendations of the Review Panels or suggest modifications to the course proposal if needed. The full GE Council will monitor issues of fairness, adherence to the GE outcomes and related criteria and assessment.

#### **3. GE Courses “in the major”**

While not part of the review process, both models indicate areas where GE outcomes might be incorporated into the major. The GE Council will assist departments in the implementation of GE student learning outcomes in the major.

### **Goal 3**

#### **Develop and implement a transition plan**

A transition plan will require the coordinated effort of the GE Council, Department Chairs, Deans, the Registrar, the Director of General Education and other units. Many of the issues concerning implementation fall beyond the authority of the GE Council. The GE Council's standing charges are 1) to monitor the GE Program and review and recommend all proposed course and curriculum changes to the Senate and 2) to review and make recommendations regarding all changes in GE Policy to the Senate.

The GE Council has identified the following areas as key elements of the transition.

Examples of issues to be addressed include

- Minimum number of sections required
- Comparable opportunities for departments, including small departments, to participate in GE
- Ability to meet requirements for writing intensive and other skill areas
- Caps on writing intensive courses
- Ability of departments to offer major courses that will double count
- Impact of new GE on specific majors
- Work with FYE, Departments and Student Services to determine how students will be introduced to the new GE
- Development of curriculum control sheets and training for advisement for the new GE

Small departments typically include departments with comparatively fewer majors or departments with a small number of faculty. The issues of small departments need to be addressed primarily by the dean in consultation with the department chairperson.

The following items are suggestions from the GE Council concerning ways of minimizing the impact of changes in GE on small departments.

- a. Clear administrative support and flexibility are essential. Provost should provide a grace period on GE course cancellations during the transition.
- b. Control course offerings by doing one or more of the following
  - Priority for GE courses from "at risk" departments.
  - Ensure that small departments are well-represented in GE
  - Cap on courses in any one area
- c. Encouraging participation in clusters including the development of sophomore level clusters
- d. Linking courses to FYE courses (depends on a resolution of the pilot FYI course this fall)
- e. Development and/or promotion of minors
- f. Enhanced collaboration between departments in support of double majors and minors.
- g. Examine the practice of prepackaging and its impact on student choice.

#### **Goal 4**

##### **Provide Opportunities for Faculty Development**

The success of our new General Education Program will require ongoing faculty development in a number of areas. Priorities for faculty development should focus on pedagogies to enhance the goals of the new GE. The GE Council stresses the need to provide a budget for development and can assist in investigating opportunities for external funding as well.

In addition, faculty development initiatives should address strategies for enhancing writing and oral communication, information and technological literacies or strategies for assessment of GE student learning outcomes. Once the GE program is set, the GE Council should identify and prioritize specific areas for faculty development. The GE Council can work with the Director of General Education to create a plan for faculty development.

#### **Goal 5**

##### **Develop an Assessment Plan for General Education**

The GE Council will work with the Assessment Council and Institutional Research & Assessment to develop an Assessment Plan for General Education. Both models offer suggestions and recommendations concerning GE assessment that can be incorporated into the plan.

Assessment activities will focus on three areas: program outcomes, GE student learning outcomes and process outcomes.

As a part of program review, the Council recommends that the GE program will be formally reviewed on a 7-year cycle to ensure that outcomes are being met and to address any problem areas. Selected courses may be asked to participate in this process. Course-based assessments will be incorporated where feasible. The GE Council will provide information on assessment activities in its annual report to the Senate.

The GE Council also recommends the development of a set of process outcomes that can be used to monitor student progress through our GE program.

#### **Goal 6**

##### **Revise Existing Articulation Agreements**

Articulation agreements with area colleges and community colleges and the New Jersey Transfer listings will need to be revised. This responsibility falls outside the purview of the GE Council.