

Dear Faculty Colleagues,

1 May, 2015

Over the past few weeks, the General Education Committee has received a wealth of feedback regarding the proposed General Education Program that we shared with you in March. We would like to thank you for taking the time to read the proposal with a critical eye, and for the carefully considered suggestions for improvement that we have received. In light of these discussions, the GEC has decided to submit a modified proposal, a proposal that attempts to address several of the concerns raised by faculty regarding the March proposal.

On the following pages we describe, item by item, all of the modifications that have been made to the March proposal in crafting the new (April) proposal. We also discuss some faculty concerns that did not lead to proposal modifications, but warrant discussion nonetheless. To be clear, proposal items not specifically listed below remain the same in the April proposal as they were in the March proposal.

Regards,

ESU General Education Committee

John Elwood, Chair
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Margaret Ball
Kelly Boyd
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1. PASSHE Credit Limits. Several programs rely on directed GE courses in order to avoid overstepping program credit limits as set by PASSHE. Such programs are understandably concerned that a reduction in GE credits and/or a change in program structure will make the continued use of some of these directed GE courses impossible. It is the intent of the GEC to advocate for a definition of "GE course" that allows for the continued use of directed GE credits when necessary. The GEC has discussed this issue at length with the Provost's Office, and the Provost has expressed her commitment to preserving the academic integrity of degree programs under a new GE program, should one be approved. Please see the accompanying letter from Provost Bruno explaining her position on the matter.
2. Group A Structure. The proposed requirements for Group A breadth courses were viewed as problematic by some faculty. To address such concerns, the following modifications appear in the new proposal:
 - All breadth courses in Group A now have the choice to certify under GE Standard III (the SLO III "Communication" Standard) *or* under GE Standard VI (the SLO VI "Create or Critique" Standard). All breadth courses in Group A must certify under at least one of these (although they may choose to certify under both). The Standard chosen for certification is no longer linked to the disciplinary rubric.
 - As a result of the change in the previous bullet point, a Student Learning Outcome III requirement and a Student Learning Outcome VI requirement have been added to the list of Cognate requirements. This is to ensure that all students take courses certified under Standards III and VI in completing their GE requirements. What was accomplished previously through a disciplinary rubric breadth requirement is now accomplished through these two Cognate requirements. Because every breadth course in Group A is obligated to meet either Standard III or Standard VI, there will be a large number of courses available to satisfy these Cognate requirements in Group A. That having been said, advisors will have to pay attention to ensure that these requirements are met.
 - In light of the previous bullet point, the requirement that a student take at least one course in ART, DANC, MUS, or THTR has been dropped. The Cognate Requirement for Student Learning Outcome VI is the effective replacement for this requirement.

3. First Year Experience Administration. Oversight of First Year Experience courses has been clarified as follows.

- The General Education Committee recommends that a First Year Experience Coordinating Committee be established to oversee FYE offerings, to help certify proposed FYE courses under the Standards indicated in the GE program proposal, and to consider requests for FYE waivers outside of the 24 credit rule described in the "General Education Core Program" section above. This committee will report to the Provost's Office. The General Education Committee recommends the following committee membership:

- Dean, University College (1, ex officio)
- Representative, University College (1, APSCUF elected)
- Representative, College of Health Sciences (1, APSCUF elected)
- Representative, College of Business and Management (1, APSCUF elected)
- Representative, College of Education (1, APSCUF elected)
- Representative, Faculty of Arts and Letters (1, APSCUF elected)
- Representative, Faculty of Science (1, APSCUF elected)
- Representative, Faculty of Social Science (1, APSCUF elected)
- Student Representative (1, Student Senate elected)
- Representative from General Education Committee (1, GEC elected)

4. First Year Experience Enrollment Requirements. Enrollment requirements for FYE have been clarified. In particular:

- Transfer students who transfer in at least 24 credits of coursework are exempted from the First Year Experience requirement.
- Students that have not successfully completed a certified University wide First Year Experience course during their first semester of study at ESU must enroll in one during their second semester of study at ESU. For such students, registration in second semester courses will be frozen until registration in a certified FYE course occurs.

5. ENGL 103 Enrollment Requirements. In order to ensure that students have the opportunity to take Writing Level II and Writing Level III courses in a timely fashion, enrollment requirements for ENGL 103 have been tightened as follows.

- Students that have not successfully completed ENGL 103 within their first 45 credits of study must enroll in ENGL 103 during each subsequent semester until the ENGL 103 requirement is satisfied. For such students, registration in courses beyond 45 credits will be frozen each semester until registration in ENGL 103 occurs.

6. GE Standard VII (SLO VII). Some faculty have asked for greater clarity regarding the role of physical activity in courses applying for certification under GE Standard VII (SLO VII). To that end, the proposal has been modified in the following ways:

- The language in the fourth bullet point at the beginning of the SLO VII Standard has been expanded to read:

“Course must include a physical activity component that is faculty led, and must be able to demonstrate student participation in faculty-led physical activities that explore the health-related components of physical fitness (numbered as 1 on matrix). As a guideline, a faculty member offering an SLO VII course is asked to consider devoting the appropriate percentage of their course to physical activity as determined by the matrix below. For example, a faculty member choosing 5 health areas below is asked to consider devoting 20% of their course to a physical activity component.”

- The first box of the SLO VII Standard now includes the following language:
 - ❖ *“Faculty-led, student participation in the health-related components of physical fitness must be apparent.”*
 - ❖ *“In the space below, briefly list and describe those key assessments and self-evaluative instruments that address the health-related components of physical fitness.”*
 - ❖ *“In the space below, explain how this course incorporates student participation in faculty-led physical activities in order to explore the health-related components of physical fitness.”*
- To ensure the possibility of physical activity in a course meeting the SLO VII requirement, an enrollment cap applying to the relevant course component has been included in the requirements for courses seeking certification under GE Standard VII (SLO VII Standard) as follows:

“Any course seeking to qualify as satisfying the SLO VII requirement must:

3. Have a course component containing physical activities, including the health-related components of physical activities, which is capped at 30 students.”

This allows for flexibility in course structure without sacrificing the intent of SLO VII.

7. SLO VII Course Enrollment Requirements. In order to ensure that students benefit as much as possible from the SLO VII course by taking it in a timely fashion while still allowing for some scheduling flexibility, the enrollment requirements for satisfying the SLO VII requirement have been modified as follows:

- Students must complete a three credit course certified as meeting the SLO VII Standard during their first 60 credits of study at ESU. Students that have not successfully completed such a course within their first 60 credits of study must enroll in such a course during each subsequent semester until the SLO VII requirement is satisfied. For such students, registration in courses beyond 60 credits will be frozen each semester until registration in a three credit course meeting the SLO VII Standard occurs.

8. Faculty Qualifications. The March proposal contained language about faculty expertise in some, but not all, of the Standards. Such language has been removed from all of the individual Standards and replaced by the following single statement appearing at the beginning of Appendix A that applies to all of the Standards:

"This proposal represents, in part, a move away from a GE program structured strictly along disciplinary lines. Certain Student Learning Outcomes (protected by the GE Standards in this Appendix) may be met by taking courses in a wide array of different disciplines. Because of this new structure, it is natural that the General Education Committee and/or University Wide Curriculum Committee may consider faculty expertise, credentialing, and/or area(s) or research when assessing the appropriateness of a course in meeting a given Standard. The expectation remains, as always, that faculty teaching GE courses will be experts in their areas of instruction and will possess the educational background appropriate to the Standard or Standards for which their courses have applied."

Additionally, language in GE Standard X (the FYE Standard) required faculty teaching FYE courses to be "full-time" faculty "well-connected to the campus and community". That language has been altered in the new FYE Standard, and is now a charge to the First Year Experience Coordinating Committee:

"When reviewing proposed offerings of courses approved as FYE courses, the First Year Experience Coordinating Committee is asked to consider the following factors (in addition to those detailed in the Areas on the following pages):

- *Whether or not faculty proposing to teach particular FYE offerings are permanent faculty members and the degree to which they are connected to the campus and to the community. The GE committee views such factors as important in determining the success of FYE offerings."*

9. Faculty Obligations. The March proposal obligated faculty to participate in activities outside of the classroom if they were teaching courses that met the Writing Level II, Writing Level III, and FYE Standards. This language has been softened as follows:

- For the Writing Level II and Writing Level III courses, the statement in the Standard is now:

Faculty teaching Level II Writing and Level III Writing courses may be asked to voluntarily participate in a modest number of sessions with other Level II Writing and Level III Writing faculty in order to reflect upon and improve writing across the curriculum.

- For the FYE Standard, the statement is now a charge to the First Year Experience Coordinating Committee:

"When reviewing proposed offerings of courses approved as FYE courses, the First Year Experience Coordinating Committee is asked to consider the following factors (in addition to those detailed in the Areas on the following pages):

- *Whether or not faculty proposing to teach particular FYE offerings are permanent faculty members and the degree to which they are connected to the campus and to the community. The GE committee views such factors as important in determining the success of FYE offerings."*

10. FYE Enrollment. The proposal now makes it clear in Standard X (FYE Standard) that enrollment in FYE courses is open to all students:

- *"FYE enrollment must be open to students from all majors and from all programs of study, including students who have yet to declare such majors and/or programs of study."*