



April 27, 2015

Dear Faculty Colleagues:

As the proposed general education program proceeds through the university-wide review and discussion process, I have become aware of one particular issue facing some of the academic departments who have degree programs in excess of 60 credits for the BS and 42 for the BA. Specifically, I have heard that the concern is how those degree programs, who previously depended on an additional 15 directed general credits and cognates as part of the degree major, will be accommodated in the new general education model. To that issue, I am committed as your Provost to assist those departments in finding reasonable and academically consistent solutions to their individual degree problems.

Many of you are aware of the history behind those BS and BA programs with more credits than the 60-credit rule for BS and 42 credits for BA, which originates with the PASSHE/State System, that the past solution has been to take advantage of directed general education credits. Hence, one solution may be in the modification of limits combined with identifying those credits in the general education that can be directed toward certain degree programs. Even if the solution is not with an exception to the State System rule, I am confident that together we can find reasonable solutions that will maintain the integrity of your degree programs and a timely completion of the degree for the students. It is to that end that the Office of the Provost will work with the affected departments through your chairs and deans to arrive at acceptable accommodations within the current proposed general education program, pending faculty vote and starting in the summer of 2015.

Further, I am aware of the General Education Committee's new proposal for the creation of a First Year Experience (FYE) Coordinating Committee that will directly report to the Provost in regard to FYE offerings. The Provost's office fully supports the formation of this committee to reflect the five colleges in composition and to ensure the academic rigor in FYE courses.

The work accomplished to date is nothing less than impressive beginning with the vote last year for the general education framework and culminating in the discussion of the draft general education proposal by the faculty community this spring. The work of the University-wide Curriculum committee and its Subcommittee on General Education are greatly appreciated and have resulted in a significant step toward implementing a new general education program that is aligned with the university's seven student learning outcomes. I trust that with this office's commitment to both the creation of the FYE Committee and to ensuring accommodation of those degree programs within the currently proposed model will occur with either a State System solution and/or local one, that we can accomplish together an opportunity for increased engagement of our students in the classroom and college experience.

Thank you for your work, and I look forward to working with you in the months ahead in accomplishing our shared goals.



Joanne Z. Bruno, J.D.
Provost and Vice President