

**Report of the General Education Task Force: A Proposal for Change  
Western Carolina University  
Spring, 2012**

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## **General Education Review Task Force Membership**

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## Background

The General Education Review Task Force was charged by the University Senate with: (a) reviewing the current Liberal Studies program with wide faculty input; (b) reviewing the available recent literature on general education; (c) examining the general education programs of other institutions like Western; and (d) proposing changes to the current Liberal Studies program based on the information gathered. The proposed changes are summarized below. The results of our reviews and examinations are provided in the Appendices.

The guidelines and mission of the Task Force were summarized by the Senate in 2009, using the term “Liberal Studies” rather than “General Education” (see Appendix A, *Faculty Senate Guidelines for the Constitution and Mission of the Liberal Studies Task Force*). Operating under a set of guiding principles (see Appendix B, *Guiding Principles for the General Education Program at Western Carolina University*), the Task Force identified and examined a number of concerns about our current program (for a description of Task Force activities see Appendix C). One concern stemmed from the last Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) reaccreditation visit in April of 2007. The SACS Visiting Committee noted that the University did not provide evidence that graduates attained competencies in all areas of Liberal Studies. Moreover, since 2007 accreditation requirements for SACS and other accrediting agencies have increasingly emphasized that evidence of program quality should be based on assessment of common outcomes rather than an evaluation of instructional processes and resources.

Additional concerns included:

- too many hours required by the program (some majors would like to expand the number of credit hours in their curricula)
- difficulties encountered by students, especially transfer students, in meeting the upper level perspective requirement
- lack of connection between liberal studies and the QEP
- inconsistencies in course categories within and across categories
- perceptions that some course syllabi do not represent their categories
- lack of common assessments within categories
- assessment focused on processes rather than outcomes
- absence of a foreign language competency requirement
- over-representation of some disciplines in the perspectives area (e.g., in the 2010-2011 Undergraduate Catalog, 40 percent of the courses listed in the general education perspectives areas came from three disciplines)
- insufficient opportunities for students to learn to interact with each other
- wide perception of a lack of rigor in liberal studies courses’ reading, writing and thinking requirements

## **Overarching Goals of the Proposed Program**

The ultimate goal of a new general education plan (GEP) is to adopt a model that maximizes the intellectual, physical, and emotional wellbeing of WCU's students in the context of the exigencies of the twenty-first century. The revision of any general education plan is naturally of great concern to faculty due to the corresponding shifts in student credit hour distribution, and possible implications for the distribution of university resources. In pursuing its work, members of the Task Force felt strongly that decisions about the GEP be made based on student needs, rather than the needs of faculty members or their departments. The consensus among the Task Force membership is that the Faculty Senate should pursue a fully-integrated university education that provides WCU students with the benefits afforded by both a liberal arts and a professional approach to education. The combination of the cognitive flexibility derived from a liberal arts education and the practical knowledge derived from a content-specific degree will provide WCU graduates with the critical reading, writing, and thinking skills needed to become well-rounded citizens of the world.

The heart of this proposal is its relationship to the Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP), *Synthesis: A Pathway to Intentional Learning*. As a guiding principle of the University, the QEP offers a logical and robust way to envision, deliver, and assess the education mandated not only by the QEP, but also by *UNC Tomorrow* and the Stewardship of Place model. At the same time, this proposal seeks to account for other imperatives of general education. First, the GEP will satisfy the accreditation requirements of SACS fully. Second, the GEP will articulate reasonably with WCU's community college partners. Third, the GEP will be integrated both logically and seamlessly with the major programs offered across the University, at the same time as it retains its status as the central component of the high-quality education students receive at WCU. Fourth, transfer students will be easily incorporated into the program and benefit from its unique qualities.

## **Learning Goals and Outcomes of the QEP**

The overarching goal of the QEP is to empower students to integrate knowledge and skills from their academic and co-curricular experiences to become intentional participants in their own learning. To that end, WCU hopes to impact students' understanding of self, intellectual flexibility and versatility, and capacity for integrated learning. WCU expects students to:

- Identify their aptitudes, abilities, and interests and articulate their future goals and aspirations
- Modify their behaviors and values in response to knowledge and skills gained from their academic and co-curricular experiences
- Recognize the synthesis of their university experiences relative to their future education and career plans.

To achieve the expected learning goals, WCU has identified a set of core skills and behaviors (assessable outcomes) that are central to a student's development as an integrated, intentional learner. These core expectations include the abilities to: 1) Integrate information from a variety of contexts; 2) Solve complex problems; 3) Communicate effectively and responsibly; 4) Prac-

tice civic engagement; and 5) Clarify and act on purpose and values, QEP Learning Goals and Outcomes.

### **Major Changes**

These are some of the important changes in the proposed program compared to the current Liberal Studies curriculum:

- Inclusion of a 9-hour requirement of integrative courses that tie to the QEP with emphases in civic engagement, ethical commitment, and global awareness
- Elimination of the upper level perspective requirement
- Overall reduction of 3 credit hours in the size of the program
- Reduction of the 3 credit hours each in the social and behavioral sciences and the physical and natural sciences
- Shift from the assessment of processes to the assessment of outcomes
- Decrease in the number of different courses offered in order to facilitate consistency in delivery and the conduct of common assessments

### **Administration of General Education**

Administration, oversight and assessment remain central to the quality control of general education. The Task Force sees the question of assessment as central to the success of the GEP. Assessment is also important in the reaccreditation process for the University and its various programs. Whatever general education program the university has, there will be a special need for attention to assessment. There will need to be a unit of the governance for general education that is responsible for comprehensive assessment.

Through two years of discussion, the Task Force arrived at consensus that it is imperative to limit the number of different courses in order to adequately assess program outcomes for the purposes of accreditation; but also to meet the new teaching and learning goals demanded by the QEP, and the *UNC Tomorrow* report. To meet those demands requires significant change in the GEP, and the way departments deliver general education. We recognize that these course limitations will likely not be popular with faculty, but they are necessary. After much debate, the task force settled on a two-course-per-discipline limitation in two of the three categories of the proposed program. Other possibilities were discussed, but this seemed the best way to limit the number of different courses while ensuring that students still had access to a breadth of subject matter.

### **Structure of Proposed Program (39 hrs.)**

#### **First Year Seminar (3 hrs.)**

The primary goal of the First-Year Seminar (FYS) is to introduce students immediately and dramatically to intellectual life at the University. Seminars encourage exploration and active learning as students engage in scholarly discourse about new ideas, distinctive topics, and diverse perspectives. With an emphasis on depth rather than breadth, the FYS both contrasts with and complements the introductory survey that is a staple of the first-year student's course of study. With

limited enrollment, the FYS creates a community of learners and sets the tone for the value of general education and enforces the importance of faculty and student relationships. The FYS environment promotes scholarly discussion, significant reading and writing, and active engagement.

With regard to the student class-size limitation, this proposal is consistent with the University mission to provide a distinctive and enriching educational experience. First-year students are enrolled either in English 101 or in the FYS during each of their first two semesters at WCU. Through limited enrollment and an emphasis on reading and writing, these two courses, provide pedagogical balance, as new students transition to the academic rigor expected of college-level learning.

**FYS objectives.** The FYS will:

- Allow students working in a collaborative environment to meet other students with similar interests
- Offer an intensive exploration and application of selected concepts, principles, theories, and modes of inquiry
- Include a significant writing component incorporating rigorous reading and information use
- Promote seminar-format discussions, including critical analysis of arguments
- Assess student accomplishment with consistent and rigorous standards of excellence
- Address the overall objectives of the GEP
- Encourage students to develop rigorous intellectual habits as they begin their university studies

**Learning outcomes for the FYS.** By the end of this seminar students will:

1. Perceive that cultural, social, economic and political issues of a global society are not limited to one academic discipline or one profession (QEP outcome: Integrate information from a variety of contexts)
2. Examine selected principles, theories, and modes of inquiry within a disciplinary context
3. Engage in scholarly discourse, demonstrating the ability to support arguments and respect for diverse views; (QEP outcome: Communicate effectively and responsibly)
4. Integrate information literacy, technology, classroom discussions, collaborative processes, and communication skills to effectively convey serious ideas via written papers and public presentation (QEP outcomes: Integrate information from a variety of contexts, Solve complex problems)
5. Understand the value of liberal studies in a university education and how reasoning and communication skills are the foundations for lifelong intellectual and professional growth (QEP outcome: Communicate effectively and responsibly)
6. Through collaboration and through intellectual discourse, exhibit empathy, respect and appreciation for others who are different (QEP outcome: Clarify and act on purpose and values)
7. Exhibit confidence as they evaluate and refine choices (academic, personal and civic) (QEP outcome: Clarify and act on purpose and values, Practice civic engagement)

8. Demonstrate rigorous intellectual habits applied to reading, writing, research, and creative assignments. (QEP outcomes: Integrate information from a variety of contexts, Communicate effectively and responsibly)

**Parameters and expectations.** The FYS has three levels of expectations:

- Universal: The seminar becomes a 'first-year embodiment' of the meta-goals for a college education. Students are introduced to the intellectual rigor of college study; to the institutional mission and identity; and to the University's QEP learning goals and outcomes (see Appendix D).
- Foundational to general education at WCU: The FYS sets the tone for the value of a liberal studies education and enforces the importance of faculty and student ships. Preparing students to thrive in a community of learners, the seminar provides an environment that promotes scholarly discourse, persistence and engagement.
- Specific to a FYS: The defining aspect of the seminar is that it welcomes new students to the rigor of college-level learning in an environment that promotes scholarly discussion, deep thinking, and critical reflection on the human dimension of learning. The seminar establishes a framework for intellectual habits that will ground a successful college career. While each seminar is unique based on the topic chosen, the depth—rather than breadth—of its scope, the disciplinary lens through which it is examined, and the particular strengths of the professor, each also shares common overarching learning goals and performance expectations including:
  - Reading: Include significant reading assignments as related to the course topic. Students are expected to interact with texts, critically evaluate content, and respond appropriately in seminar discussions and written assignments
  - Writing: Writing assignments should include both formal and informal papers as appropriate to the course topic. Students should produce effective scholarly writing that is free of spelling and grammatical errors, integrates and properly cites research, demonstrates critical and reflective thinking, and addresses serious ideas. Students should be introduced to the types of writing that will be expected of them in future courses (e.g., abstracts, annotated bibliographies, creative narratives, reflection papers, analytical works, journals, etc.)
  - Seminar Discussion: Scholarly discourse is a primary focus for the seminar. Students should be active participants in seminar discussions, be prepared for scholarly debate as informed by assigned texts, and demonstrate respect for diverse viewpoints.
  - Active Learning: Seminars should integrate active learning strategies that encourage students to communicate effectively and responsibly and to integrate information from a variety of contexts (e.g., seminar presentations, projects, collaborative work)

**Limits and conditions for FYS.** Following a series of FYS focus group discussions (see Appendix E), the following limits and conditions for the seminars are strongly recommended.

**Administration and support.** We propose establishment of a specific advisory/review group. The FYS advisory board would not only review FYS proposals, but also work with the [Writing and Learning Commons](#) (WaLC), the First Year Cabinet, the first-year research and instruction librarian, and the Faculty Commons to provide professional development and consultation for faculty who teach the FYS.

The Liberal Studies (General Education) Committee will review FYSs to insure that the objectives and learning outcomes that define the seminar are accomplished. Because the FYS is a complex category that encompasses all colleges and disciplines, it warrants additional support and review, thus all instructors of proposed seminars will submit seminar proposals to the proposed FYS advisory board in advance of submission to the Liberal Studies Committee. The advisory board will not make or control policy but will provide a support network. The FYS Advisory board will be chaired by the Director of First Year Experience and be comprised of FYS instructors (as elected by their FYS peers).

**Limits.** No limits are imposed as to how many FYSs may be offered in a given discipline. However, each new seminar (defined as any new topic or major topic revision) must adhere to the approval process. Disciplines may maintain a primary seminar number (such as ENG 190 and designate topics by section numbers) to keep registration and AA5 processes less cumbersome. A department could have multiple sections of the same seminar, or, for example, a department could have four different sections that are each unique in topic; thus each would secure approval via the FYS Advisory and Liberal Studies processes.

As a component of WCU's General Education curriculum, the FYS cannot be required as a gateway course for the major.

**Conditions.** The following conditions will apply to the FYS:

- Instructors will provide required course documents to the First Year Experience office (e.g. seminar description for the website, syllabus, student work examples).
- Instructors are expected to participate in selected professional development sessions and opportunities
- Seminars must be accessible to all students. If colleges or departments are approved to offer a seminar that is particular (and limited) to their disciplines, they must also offer a different FYS that is open to all students. The FYS must be equally accessible to all students.
- Enrollments are limited to 22 students in order to maintain the integrity of the seminar format and to allow instructors and new students to make meaningful connections that will encourage persistence and engagement.
- Students must enroll in a FYS during one of their first two semesters, unless they transfer in with 30+ credits.
- Students who transfer in with 30+ credits will have the FYS requirement waived, but will take an additional three credit hours in a liberal studies course of their choosing.

## Foundational Experiences (15 hrs.)

**Composition (6 hrs.).** Administered by faculty in the English Department, we propose a two-year sequence consisting of ENGL 101: Writing and Rhetoric, a course that introduces students to rhetoric, college-level writing, reading, and critical thinking; and ENGL 202: Writing and Critical Inquiry, a research-based course that focuses on interdisciplinary writing, synthesis of diverse materials, formulation of sound arguments, and collaborative learning.

*Learning outcomes for composition.* (Adapted from the *Writing, Rhetoric, and Critical Studies Curriculum Guide*)

For ENGL 101 students will:

1. Identify and employ all stages of the writing process, individually and collaboratively, using appropriate technologies and document design
2. Identify and demonstrate clear purpose and attention to designated audience to address and solve complex problems within and between their discourse communities
3. Individually and collaboratively utilize appropriate, scholarly research processes to locate effective resources for a defined communication purpose
4. Exhibit clear, sound reasoning in their analysis and synthesis of both individual and scholarly information
5. Exhibit an understanding of the power of rhetoric as it affects diversity, public policy, and their role as responsible citizens

For ENGL 202 or its equivalent students will:

1. Integrate additional processes such as invention, revision, editing, layout, etc. into writing
2. Hone individual writing methods and strategies
3. Conduct secondary research and critically evaluate source materials across disciplines
4. Integrate and synthesize information from a variety of sources and across disciplines
5. Meaningfully and ethically engage in the debates surrounding public policies and controversies (from local to global), with an emphasis on integrating expertise from across disciplines
6. Analyze the arguments (and expectations) of others in applied settings
7. Make constructive, persuasive written arguments for applied settings (from local to global)
8. Apply multi-disciplinary rhetorical and writing conventions
9. Evaluate, communicate, and act upon personal and professional values
10. Engage other citizens

### *Limits and conditions for composition.*

- Students must complete ENGL 101 in their first year and ENGL 202 in their second, although due to current staffing constraints, such a model is difficult to enforce.
- ENGL 101 is a prerequisite to all other English courses.

- In each course, students will write [at least] three essays taken through multiple drafts and generate a final portfolio demonstrating proficiency in interdisciplinary approaches to research. They will read extensively and write weekly critical reflections of those readings. They will engage in and utilize in their writing both primary and secondary research.
- There are to be no course substitutions for ENGL 101
- Approved courses in the major may be substituted for ENGL 202.
- Students may be exempted from ENGL 101 only if they receive credit by exam or for AP credit.
- Major programs who wish to offer a version of the second writing course in the major must demonstrate the fulfillment of the outcomes and artifacts mandated by ENGL 202.

**Oral Communication (3 hrs.).** Courses in this category will help develop proficiency in various forms of oral presentation. Proficiency will be demonstrated by a series of recorded presentations that represent the various forms of oral communication identified as essential by the Communications faculty (for an adapted version of the Oral Communication outcomes, see Appendix F). Those objectives address the basic competencies in the contexts of interpersonal, small group, and public speaking. Major programs that wish to offer an oral communications course in the major must demonstrate the fulfillment of the outcomes and artifacts mandated by COMM 201.

**Mathematics (3 hrs.).** Courses in this category will require students to interpret, represent, apply, and communicate quantitative information and concepts in verbal, numeric, and graphical forms, as well as symbolic forms where appropriate. Courses will also require students to assess and solve complex problems using appropriate reasoning skills and/or mathematical tools. Assessments will include responses to specific complex problems from final exams, labs, or projects. Students may meet the mathematics requirement by completing an upper-level course in mathematics.

**Health and Wellness (3 hrs.).** Courses in health and wellness will require students to understand the seven dimensions of wellness – environmental, physical, emotional, intellectual, spiritual, social, and occupational – as demonstrated by examination and a significant project related to individuals' lifestyles, and will include a significant component of physical activity. Wellness is a broad, holistic concept that involves an ongoing and modifiable process that requires long-term commitment. The wellness requirement will provide students with a multidimensional set of knowledge and skills to enjoy a high quality of life with positive health outcomes throughout their lifespan. Students will be challenged to explore the active process, awareness, and personal responsibility associated with behavior change that will promote lifelong health. The roles of personal lifestyle, behavior choices, community, and the environment will be examined. Students will have the opportunity to participate in an integrated fitness component and/or leisure activity, which will emphasize the critical role of physical activity in lifelong wellness. Health and wellness decisions are lifelong considerations for any human being, and healthy people have the best chance of contributing fully to their own potential and to the global society in which they live.

***Learning outcomes for health and wellness.*** Students will:

1. Find, critically examine, and compare several authoritative versus unreliable sources of health information in order to write a short paper (2-3 pages) on a health and wellness topic of their choice. (QEP outcomes: Integrate information from a variety of situations; Communicate effectively and responsibly)
2. Design and implement a personal behavior change project and/or wellness plan to be implemented as a requirement of the wellness course in order to reflect upon and evaluate their experience through an oral or written presentation (QEP outcomes: Integrates information from a variety of contexts; Solves complex problems; Communicates effectively and responsibly, Practice civic engagement; Clarify and act on purpose and values)
3. Reflect on the connection between wellness and community through participation in a service-learning project related to multiple dimensions of wellness (QEP outcomes: Practice civic engagement; Clarify and act on purpose and values; Communicates effectively and responsibly)
4. Produce a paper, reflective journal, or small group assignment that examines the value to the community of their own lives as healthy, active citizens. (QEP outcomes: Practice civic engagement; Clarify and act on purpose and values; Communicate effectively and responsibly, Integrate information from a variety of contexts)
5. Analyze their personal health based on the multiple dimensions of wellness through a variety of assessments and lab activities, such as pre and post fitness testing, or wellness, and nutritional analyses, in order to develop measurable and specific goals for improvement. Students will report progress throughout the semester, identifying strengths and weaknesses, and they will develop strategies for success. Measurement of student understanding may occur through a short paper (2-3 pages), an oral presentation, a reflective semester summary, journaling, or successfully answering questions on the final exam. (QEP outcomes: Integrate information from a variety of contexts; Solve complex problems; Communicate effectively and responsibly; Clarify and act on purpose and values)
6. Participate in an integrated physical and/or leisure activity, which may be administered by the instructor of record or selected by each individual student to match his or her abilities and interests. The activity component may include quizzes, assessments, journaling, labs, short papers, and/or a cumulative event (such as a 5K race, fitness competition, endurance activity, field trip). (QEP outcome: Clarify and act on purpose and values)

### **Ways of Knowing (12 hrs.)**

**Limits and Conditions for Ways of Knowing.** Disciplines will offer no more than two different courses in this category to ensure the ability to use a common assessment.

Majors related to a ways of knowing category will specify those courses with their major prefix that can be counted for general education credit in that category.

***Humanities (3 hrs.)***. The study of the humanities engages students with textual analysis in order to examine the nature of human thought and culture. Humanities courses also aim to encourage students to respect and understand the world around them through the study of individu-

als, societies, and environments in a wide context: historical, contemporary, geographical, linguistic, political, social, economic, religious, technological, and cultural. Because these dimensions are expressed through texts and artifacts, students sharpen their reading, interpretative, and analytical skills as they develop a critical understanding of different cultures and traditions. Humanities also encourage a thoughtful examination into the nature of rational inquiry itself and into the values, ethics, and moral dimensions of private and public life. The traditional disciplines in the humanities are history, literature, philosophy and religion.

Humanities courses will introduce students to the humanistic worldview and the skills of reading, writing, and thinking about landmark works that have served to shape human experience. Exposure to and understanding of landmark texts and their historical context will be demonstrated by significant written projects and examination.

*Learning outcomes for humanities.* Students will:

1. Demonstrate through oral and written analysis how works in the humanities illuminate, examine, and critique human concerns and questions, as these are shaped by specific cultural institutions during specific historical moments.
2. Analyze orally and in writing the intellectual and cultural traditions within which these concerns and questions arise, including both classical and contemporary artists, theorists, critics, and philosophers from Western and non-Western traditions.
3. Analyze orally and in writing the interaction among historical and cultural contexts, individual works, and the development of the humanities over time.
4. Critically employ through oral and written work concepts, theories, and methods of analysis used in the humanities to interpret and evaluate texts that reveal, illuminate, and question human experience.
5. Critically reflect through written and oral work on the formation of human goals and values, and articulate an understanding of the creativity reflected in works of the humanities that influenced the formation of those values.
6. Attend humanities-based cultural events (lectures, film series, performances, etc.) on campus and/or in the region in order to engage with and analyze the role of the humanities beyond the classroom.

*Limits and conditions for humanities.* Students in humanities courses will engage in:

- Reading: broadly, a variety of types of texts and other cultural artifacts of different genres
- Writing: at least three essays of increasing rigor as well as shorter reflective works about daily reading assignments and cultural events
- Information literacy: find, evaluate and use information through collaborative oral presentations, use of the online learning management system, electronic portfolios, etc.

***Fine Arts (3 hrs.)***. Learning in the Fine Arts courses will be concerned with appreciating, interpreting, and critically analyzing creative works and events, as well as understanding the artistic intentions of the creators. Introduction to traditional and contemporary concepts within the various modes of expression will be achieved through an analysis of individual or collaborative works that includes the study of the nature of self-expression and the critical evaluation of works

or events as interpreted through their socio-cultural contexts. An important course component will be out-of-classroom experiences such as visits to gallery and museum exhibitions, attendance at theater and musical productions and performances, and making visits to artists, performers and writers to attend their lectures, readings, and presentations. Courses may have an applied component to provide experience with personal artistic expression in order to help the student understand a creative concept or an artist's intention. Courses in the Fine Arts category must be accessible by students with no prior knowledge or experience in the Arts. The traditional areas of the fine arts are art, theater, and music.

*Learning outcomes for fine arts.* Students will:

1. Appreciate, interpret, and critically analyze creative works and events
2. Analyze works that include self-expression
3. Understand the artistic intentions and techniques of the creator
4. Critically evaluate works considering their socio-cultural context
5. Participate in out-of-classroom experiences such as attending exhibitions, performances, lectures, and readings
6. Respond to works of art thoughtfully and critically in writing

*Limits and conditions for Fine Arts.* Courses in the Fine Arts category must be accessible by students with no prior knowledge or experience in the Arts.

***Natural and physical sciences (3 hrs.).*** Courses in this category will expose students to the scientific method and will include laboratory experiences. Proficiency in the scientific method will be demonstrated by examination and significant laboratory report projects.

***Social and behavioral sciences (3 hrs.).*** Courses in the social and behavioral sciences will include systematic study of observational and analytic methods of investigating individuals and groups demonstrated by a significant written analysis of data and/or case studies. The social and behavioral sciences provide students with: (a) knowledge of broad concepts for understanding human behavior from individual, community, political, economic or cultural perspectives in a wide range of contexts; and (b) knowledge of methods for dealing with quantitative and qualitative data that help explain or interpret human actions in a wide array of contexts. Courses in this category will be broad enough to provide students with comprehensive theoretical tools for understanding human behavior. Students completing social and behavioral science courses should be able to: (a) apply multiple concepts from the discipline to human behavior in realistic situations; (b) use methods from the discipline to plan the collection and analysis of data from realistic situations; (c) show how alternative theoretical positions from the discipline could apply to particular situations; and (d) discuss the limitations of any disciplinary concepts and theories for completely explaining any particular human behavior.

*Learning outcomes for social and behavioral sciences.* Students will:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of issues involving social institutions, interpersonal and group dynamics, human development and behavior, and cultural diversity

*Limits and Conditions for social and behavioral sciences.* All courses in the Social and Behavioral Sciences would require substantial reading by students (at least 2-3 hours per week). Courses will require at least one significant evaluated written assignment of 10-20 pages or multiple evaluated assignments that added up to 10-20 pages. All courses will require students to demonstrate their ability to use library resources and services in a written or oral assignment.

The traditional disciplines in the social and behavioral sciences are anthropology, cultural geography, economics, political science, psychology, and sociology. Proposed courses that touch on these disciplines but do not focus on the basic theories, concepts and methods of the disciplines would not be appropriate for this category (but could be appropriate for the Integrative Experiences category).

### **Integrative Experiences (9 hrs.)**

Courses that meet the Integrative Experiences criteria will foster integrative learning in specified ways via defined linkages. The American Association of Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) defines integrative learning as “an understanding and a disposition that a student builds across the curriculum and co-curriculum, from making simple connections among ideas and experiences to synthesizing and transferring learning to new, complex situations within and beyond the campus” (AAC&U). Integrative learning, in other words, transcends disciplinary boundaries and may frequently go beyond the academy itself. This definition is captured within the goals of WCU’s QEP, which states as a goal student ability to integrate information from a variety of contexts: “Students will make connections between personal interest and abilities, Liberal Studies [General Education], programs of study, general electives, and experiential learning opportunities, and other co-curricular activities; and relate the implications/value of these connections to ‘real world’ scenarios.”

The AAC&U document describing integrated learning goes on to state that “Developing students’ capacities for integrative learning is central to personal success, social responsibility, and civic engagement in today’s global society. Students face a rapidly changing and increasingly connected world where integrative learning becomes not just a benefit . . . but a necessity.”

The QEP mandates the development of behaviors (outcomes) that are central to a student’s development as an integrated, intentional learner. Among the core expectations are the ability to practice civic engagement and to clarify and act on purpose and values. *UNC Tomorrow* states the need for global awareness, and the 2020 Commission is working to restate this need in its vision for the future of the university. These are three areas, among others, potentially well addressed by the Integrative Experiences category.

An Integrative Experience course will:

1. Enhance connections between personal experiences and academic knowledge
2. Engender connections between and across academic disciplines
3. Facilitate the transfer and application of knowledge or of a method of inquiry from one discipline to another

4. Foster student self-awareness as active learners capable of synthesis of content and methodology across academic disciplines and personal contexts

Students will take a course in each of three areas of integrative experiences:

- **Civic Engagement (3 hrs.):** Developing a sense of place through the exploration of such topics as environmental issues, state and regional history, diversity, and growth/development in the context of public policies that affect human lives, students will demonstrate information literacy (the ability to find, evaluate, and use information) and complete a significant writing project derived from a service-learning component.
- **Ethical Commitment (3 hrs.):** Acting on Purposes and Values: Courses in this category will explore ethical decision making and its relation to personal values framed by the context of multiple disciplines. Students will demonstrate information literacy and complete a significant writing project that integrates individual purposes and values with course content.
- **Global Awareness (3 hrs.):** Courses in this category should explore issues of cultural diversity in order to increase awareness of diversity in the context of interrelationships among world cultures.

Ideally the Global Awareness category would be met by demonstrating fluency in a foreign language. Such a commitment, however, would require a major shift in the educational approaches from pre-kindergarten onward. The administrative and pedagogical impossibilities of the ideal, however, should not prevent us from elevating the standard so that students may not satisfy the Global Awareness category simply by passing MFL 101.

Students seeking a BA degree will satisfy this requirement by completing the MFL sequence already mandated by that degree (through MFL 232). Students seeking BSED with an MFL requirement degrees will satisfy the Global Awareness category by taking MFL 101 and 102, which are already required in these programs. Students seeking BS and BSED students without an MFL requirement must satisfy the requirement either by taking a course developed to meet the outcomes of the category, or by completing MFL 101 and 102. The Task Force recognizes the apparent disparity of the BA and the BS requirement for foreign language. This difference is not the result of divergent standards. Rather, especially in the case of students seeking the BSED degree, the Task Force is aware of the very limited number of hours available for expanding the requirements of these students as they seek licensure.

MFL majors will meet the Global Awareness requirement by completing designated upper-level classes in their major.

Students who fulfill the requirement via language will be assessed by examination and one or more written projects. Courses designed to fulfill the requirement must include a significant writing project, demonstrating information literacy that integrates global issues with students' individual purposes and values.

**Learning outcomes for Integrative Experiences.** On the successful completion of an Integrative Experience course students will:

1. Select relevant personal experiences from a variety of contexts (individual, family, social) to illustrate academic knowledge
2. Connect academic knowledge from more than one discipline or field of study
3. Use academic knowledge and/or personal experiences gained in one context to solve a problem in a new situation
4. Articulate and evaluate how one's performance as a learner has changed over time and in different contexts
5. Draw from theories, principles, methods, and/or knowledge from other disciplines to help solve a problem or to engage with an issue in their own respective fields
6. Find, evaluate, and use information from more than one discipline or field of study

**Limits and conditions for Integrative Experiences.**

- Integrative Experiences are interdisciplinary in nature, ideally co-taught courses that synthesize multiple worldviews of various disciplines. There are several ways that a course could procure the designation of Integrative Experiences: 1) a course could be inherently cross-disciplinary, e.g., ENGL/BIOL 507, a course that focuses on environmental issues from the dual perspectives of writing and of field work; 2) an instructor could partner with another course and share or exchange a significant percentage of student work products or artifacts; 3) an instructor could partner in some specific and formal way with a defined student co-curricular activity; 4) an extant course such as ENGL 209, "Past Times: Literature and History" or BIOL 334, "Biotechnology and Society," for example, will satisfy the principles of the integrative emphasis and would require minor adjustments to course activities in order to satisfy the outcomes of the new Integrative Experiences category. These four examples are not intended to be an exhaustive accounting of the possibilities. In the case of the Integrative Experiences, the focus should be about outcomes and delivery, not on creating a limiting, cookie-cutter approach for instructors.
- Disciplines that offer courses in the Integrative Experiences area are limited to two individual course offerings in each category, meaning integrative courses listed in one department (ENGL 209, for example). There is no limit on cross-listed, interdisciplinary courses.
- The intent of the Task Force is for all Integrative courses to re-emphasize the "soft essential skills," i.e., "to think critically, reason analytically, solve problems, communicate clearly both orally and in writing, work in teams, and be comfortable within a diverse workforce" (UNC Tomorrow).
- All Integrative Experience courses must include a significant writing component to hone composition skills and develop students' ability to access, comprehend, analyze, and evaluate information from multiple primary and secondary sources. It is imperative that the traditional student 'term' paper, citing references from the two or more disciplines (and/or co-curricular activities), does not serve as the sole means for student expression. Although research indicates that courses requiring a significant amount of student composition produce the best results in the development of student writing, other possibilities for student expression exist—possibilities that facilitate the exchange of information

across organizational boundaries. These are electronic in nature, easily shared, and typically more generative of student excitement (and engagement). Integrative courses, then, should establish an expectation of knowledge acquisition and synthesis expressed not only by research-centric writing, formally assessed, but also evidenced by public expression and active feedback via public webpage bookmarks, blogs, wikis, and other collaborative software and channels of social media.

- Departments may not require particular Integrative courses for their majors, nor may they restrict these courses to their majors. “Intentional learning” suggests the need for students to shape their own educational experiences according to their interests. But, as long as the course is listed in the major, or if one of the cross-listings of the courses resides in the student’s major, the Major Programs may allow Integrative Courses to count as Major Elective courses.
- The Liberal Studies (General Education) Committee will be responsible for ensuring that undue influence is not exercised by any one department. Students, in other words, should have a breadth of choice in this category.

### **Assessment of the General Education Program**

As part of our proposal we offer the following suggestions for assessment. Particular attention is given to new or altered aspects of the proposed program. Whenever possible, we have included existing assessments from the current Liberal Studies program.

#### **Assessments and Artifacts for First Year Seminar**

Assessments and artifacts must demonstrate learning outcomes specified in the overall objectives for a FYS, as well as seminar specific objectives. The education portfolio is a resource for students and repository for course-specific documentation as required. It is not a replacement for appropriate seminar assessments. Common assessments /artifacts for all FYSs should include the following:

- **Writing:** Students write a minimum of two formal papers that require rigorous expectations for content, style, grammatical structure, and accuracy. Additional informal writings that demonstrate specific seminar learning goals should be a prominent feature.
- **Collaboration:** Students participate in a collaborative project that culminates in a class presentation, with written documentation of the work process and product (e.g. project, research, discovery, outcome).
- **Presentation:** Students prepare a formal class presentation that demonstrates content understanding, developing communication skills, technology use, and information integration (including text, class discussions and arguments, etc.).
- **Education portfolio (e-briefcase):** Students should deposit a minimum of two assignments, including a written paper and one additional, appropriate to the individual course, into their education portfolio.

Seminar Goal	Learning Outcome	Assessment/Artifact Examples
1 - Offer an intensive exploration and application of selected concepts, principles, theories, and modes of inquiry.	1. See that cultural, social, economic and political issues of a global society are not limited to one academic discipline or one profession;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>§ Class discussion &amp; participation</li> <li>§ Homework</li> <li>§ Writing</li> <li>§ Projects</li> <li>§ Research</li> <li>§ Use of technology</li> </ul>
	2. Examine selected principles, theories, and modes of inquiry within a disciplinary context.	
2 - Promote seminar-format discussions, including critical analysis of arguments.  QEP Outcomes: Communicate effectively and responsibly	3. Engage in scholarly discourse, demonstrating the ability to support arguments and respect for diverse views.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>§ Class discussion &amp; participation</li> <li>§ Homework</li> <li>§ Analysis paper</li> </ul>
3 - Include a significant writing component incorporating rigorous reading and information use.  QEP Outcomes: Integrate information from a variety of contexts. Solve complex problems.	4. Integrate information literacy, technology, classroom discussions, collaborative processes, and communication skills to effectively convey serious ideas via written papers and public presentation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>§ Writing</li> <li>§ Presentations</li> <li>§ Projects</li> <li>§ Research</li> <li>§ Collaborative work</li> <li>§ Education Briefcase</li> </ul>
4 - Address the overall objectives of the university General Education curriculum.	5. Understand the value of Liberal Studies in a university education and how reasoning and communication skills are the foundations for life-long intellectual and professional growth.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>§ Reflection paper</li> <li>§ Presentation</li> <li>§ Project</li> <li>§ Research</li> <li>§ Collaborative work</li> </ul>

<p>5- Help students meet other students with similar interests working in a collaborative environment.</p> <p>QEP Goals: Clarify and act on purpose and values, Practice civic engagement.</p>	<p>6. Exhibit empathy, respect and appreciation for others who are different through collaboration and through intellectual discourse.</p>	<p>§ Collaborative project § Reflection paper § Service Learning § Campus events attendance § Class participation § Reflection paper</p>
	<p>7. Exhibit confidence as they evaluate and refine choices (academic, personal and the role of responsible citizenship)</p>	
<p>6- Encourage students to develop rigorous intellectual habits as they begin university studies.</p>	<p>8. Demonstrate rigorous intellectual habits applied to reading, writing, assignments, research, and creative assignments</p>	<p>§ Writing § Homework § Class participation § Technology use § Examination § Education Briefcase</p>
<p>7. Assess student accomplishment with consistent and rigorous standards of excellence.</p>		

### Assessment for Composition

In ENGL 101, two of the three required assignments are stipulated by the program as an individual/cultural values assignment and a personal reflection assignment. In ENGL 202, two of the three required assignments are stipulated by the program as a discipline-specific goals assignment and an interdisciplinary research assignment. Instructors have some flexibility with regard to how they construct these assignments.

In addition to these common assignments, students will produce a portfolio of work that will be evaluated by members of the Writing, Rhetoric, and Composition Studies (WRCS) faculty to ascertain whether the work meets the objectives of the course. The portfolio prompt follows:

#### WRCS Portfolio Prompt—Students

For your final project in your writing class, you will create a portfolio document based on your writings over the course of the semester. Using any of the work that you have already generated for the class as evidence for your claims, as well as instructor comments, or any other feedback on your work that you have received over the course of the semester, you should reflect upon your experiences with and progress towards the five learning outcomes listed in the syllabus.

You will submit this document to your instructor as a single MS Word document no larger than 1MB in file size, and you should support your claims with evidence from your assignments and activities in this class.

You might consider your portfolio as your final research project, with yourself and your writing as the subject, and with your own writings as supporting materials. You will be drawing upon your own, previously generated work as your primary source of evidence for your claims. At the end of the document please provide a list of the assignments or writings of yours that you refer to in this final reflection. You should reference specific evidence from those writings in order to substantiate your claims about your progress through the course.

Your portfolio should thoroughly address the five following outcomes/issues.

1. Identify and employ all stages of the writing process, individually and collaboratively, using appropriate technologies and document design.
2. Identify and demonstrate clear purpose and attention to designated audiences in order to address and solve complex problems within and between their discourse communities.
3. Individually and collaboratively utilize appropriate, scholarly research processes to locate effective resources for a defined communication purpose.
4. Exhibit clear, sound reasoning in the analysis and synthesis of both individual and scholarly information.
5. Exhibit an understanding of the power of rhetoric as it affects diversity, public policy, and their role as responsible citizens.

Your portfolio should be a reflection on your progress and evolving understanding of rhetoric and writing over the course of the semester. The examples from your previous work that you cite should demonstrate that progress or evolution. You may structure this document in any way that you like, and you should feel free to integrate examples of all kinds of texts.

### **Assessment for Wellness**

These examples could be artifacts for the education portfolio (eBriefcase):

- Students will complete a personal evaluation of themselves based on the multiple dimensions of wellness. (Wellness inventory or lab assessment)
- Students will demonstrate competence evaluating health information literacy by completing a short paper (2-3 pages).
- Students will evaluate their role as healthy citizens in society by completing a short paper (2-3 pages), and/or participating in and reflecting upon an activity within the WCU community (service learning opportunity, Campus Recreation or Base Camp Cullowhee activity, etc.).

- Students will complete a behavior change project or wellness plan throughout the semester with multiple submissions on progress, successes, barriers and strategies. The project or plan will cumulate with a reflective evaluation of their personal outcome.
- Students will participate in an integrated physical activity that represents a percentage of their overall course grade. Assessment outcomes may include weekly instructor-led activity, weekly physical activity journals, post-fitness testing improvement, quizzes, personalized exercise programs, etc. The physical activity component should encourage students to engage in moderate-intensity cardiorespiratory exercise training for  $\geq 30$  minutes day on  $\geq 5$  days a week for a total of  $\geq 150$  minutes a week; resistance exercises for each major muscle group and neuromotor exercise involving balance, agility, and coordination on 2-3 days a week; and complete a series of flexibility exercises for each of the major muscle-tendon groups on  $\geq 2$  days a week. (Garber, C.E. et al, 2011)
- Students will complete a variety of wellness activities and assessments to assist them in developing knowledge of a multidimensional set of skills in order to enjoy a high quality of life with positive health outcomes throughout their lifespans. These activities and assessment may include (but are not limited to): nutrition/dietary analysis; activity analysis; labs which focus on the core elements of physical fitness (cardiorespiratory endurance, muscular strength/endurance, flexibility, body composition); wellness inventory and reflection; time management analysis; money management analysis; sleep diary and reflection; relaxation project; physical activity journals; personalized exercise prescriptions; stress management analysis; risky behaviors self-study; quizzes and exams.

### Assessment for Humanities

All assignments will be discipline specific but some could have a common rubric. Essays would be the easiest to evaluate in terms of such a rubric by utilizing criteria a-c below.

Written assignments:

1. Essays: in humanities courses, students will write at least three analytical essays of increasing rigor that accomplish the course objectives through demonstration of the following skills:
  - a. Engagement/Argument: the ability to adopt and support an argumentative position, to engage and question meaning
  - b. Critical inquiry: the ability to perform close reading and textual analysis and to incorporate supporting evidence
  - c. Articulation/Exposition: narrative clarity and a mastery of spelling, grammatical structure, and stylistic specifications (MLA, APA, etc.)

A sample common rubric for essay analysis:

Expectations	Unsatisfactory	Emerging	Achieving	Exemplary
Engagement/Argument	Work does not engage or question, any meanings, values, language(s), cultures, experienc-	Work superficially engages or begins to question at least one meaning, value, language,	Work engages or questions one or more meaning, value, language, culture, experience, or prac-	Work deeply engages or questions one or more meaning, value, language, culture, ex-

	es, or practices in the texts, cultural artifacts under consideration.	culture, experience, or practices in the texts, cultural artifacts under consideration.	tices in the texts, cultural artifacts under consideration.	perience, or practices in the texts, cultural artifacts under consideration.
Critical Inquiry	Does not develop ideas or provide evidence about the texts or cultural artifacts under consideration. Point of view or perspective is unrecognized	Develops ideas and offers evidence inconsistently about the texts, cultural artifacts under consideration. Point of view or perspective is inconsistently acknowledged	Provides ideas and evidence that are reasonably well elaborated with respect to the texts, cultural artifacts under consideration. Points of view or perspective is acknowledged and point alternative points of view/perspectives are recognized	Ideas and evidence about the text, cultural artifacts under consideration are challenging and insightful. Multiple points of view or perspectives are acknowledged and addressed
Articulation/Exposition	Articulation of ideas and evidence is incomprehensible or irrelevant to the text, cultural artifact under consideration.	Articulation of ideas and evidence is comprehensible and relevant to the text, cultural artifact under consideration, but content is largely summative.	Articulation of ideas and evidence is combines summative information with interpretation or analysis. Prose is generally comprehensible, but efforts to communicate complexity or difficulty may occasionally interrupt effective communication.	Articulation of ideas and evidence is primarily interpretive or analytical. Prose effectively communicates complexity or difficulty.

2. Short reflections: students in humanities courses will be required to write reflective pieces (individually in the form of short essays and/or collaboratively, in the form of blogs or wikis, for example) in response to required readings and cultural events.
3. Oral collaborative presentations: In small groups, students will work together to present material – including, for example, historical and cultural background material, textual analysis, and questions for discussion and debate – to the class, to demonstrate mastery of course material, and to engage their classmates in discussion, debate, and critique of the material presented. Presentations should demonstrate some aspect of information literacy.
4. Exam: Students will be assessed on their overall course performance on basis of their final exam.

## Assessment for Fine Arts

Student learning will be measured through exams. In addition, each course in the Fine Arts category will include multiple writing assignments in which students are asked to apply the terms and concepts from the course to specific works of art. Some examples of written assignments include:

- a concert report about a live musical performance the student attended
- a comparative analysis of two artists' treatment of the same subject
- an analysis of an artist's use of materials in a particular work, or across their entire output
- a discussion of a work of art in its cultural/historical context
- the application of course concepts to a current popular artist, song, actor, cultural movement, etc.

## Assessment for Social and Behavioral Sciences

**Option One: Common prompt with a common rubric.** Students in each course in the social and behavioral sciences will analyze a scenario involving human behavior in one of six settings: workplace, natural environment, government, educational, health, or family. The scenarios will be broadly conceived so that 3-5 concepts from any one of the social and behavioral sciences could be applied to the situation and could be approached from multiple theoretical perspectives. Students will also be asked to plan a process of data collection and analysis involving quantitative and/or qualitative data that would help elucidate explanations related to the scenario. The setting for the scenario will change from semester to semester but a common rubric (see below) will apply to student responses regardless of the scenario used.

**Example: Common prompt.** Metropolis, a large, ethnically diverse city in the southeast United States has been devastated by flooding due to spring rains for a two-week period in April. Many homes, businesses, schools, churches, and medical facilities have been affected. You have been called in as an expert to plan the recovery. You will be meeting with other experts to discuss: (a) the nature of the problems likely to be encountered and what you will do to identify the problems; (b) the kinds of quantitative and/or qualitative information that need to be gathered to both respond to the immediate problems and to be used in future situations here and elsewhere; and (c) the nature of the analyses you would need to conduct and a brief description of the types of recommendations you would anticipate being able to make.

Specifically, you should respond to each of the following:

1. What questions would you as a \_\_\_\_\_ ask about the situation? List 4-5 questions, framing them using theories, concepts, and principles from your discipline.
2. Indicate the kinds of quantitative and/or qualitative data that you would need to gather to answer your questions.
3. Discuss the nature of the data analyses you would use to answer your questions.
4. Anticipate possible outcomes to your analyses with some possible recommendations. Use your imagination and creativity as well as your knowledge to make connections to

course concepts.

**Option two: Disciplinary prompt.** The only difference with this option would be that the scenarios or prompts would be tailored to specific disciplines to make the application of concepts and methods easier. The rubric (see below) would be general enough to be applicable across disciplines and scenarios and so could be used with either a common or disciplinary prompt.

Each of the scenarios below is broad enough to allow students to use theories and concepts from numerous disciplines in their analyses. For example, here are illustrative theories and concepts from psychology that would apply to one or more of the scenarios above:

Maslow's motivational theory; learning theory (classical and operant forms); social exchange theory; cognitive theory; attribution theory; cognitive dissonance; attitude formation; reinforcement; parenting styles; stress; social support; attachment; cultural differences; individual differences in personality; achievement motivation; anxiety; decision making heuristics; critical thinking; locus of control; intrinsic versus extrinsic motivation; functional fixedness/creativity; prejudice; stereotype; dependent measure; independent variable; control group; random sampling; random assignment; reliability; validity; cross sectional design; longitudinal design; and operational definition.

*Example: Disciplinary-specific assessment with a common rubric.* You are a psychologist who has been called in as an expert by Adam Smith Charter Schools, Inc. They are starting several new schools in ethnically diverse neighborhoods in Metropolis. They want you to help them frame the psychology-related questions they should be concerned with in making their plans, setting up their schools, and evaluating their effectiveness. They are particularly concerned about student learning and motivation and how to deal with cultural, developmental, and individual differences.

Specifically, you should respond to each of the following.

1. What questions would you as a psychologist ask about the issues they are concerned about? List 4-5 questions, framing them using theories, concepts, and principles from psychology.
2. Indicate the kinds of quantitative and/or qualitative data that you would need to gather to answer your questions.
3. Discuss the nature of the data analyses you would use to answer your questions.
4. Anticipate possible outcomes to your analyses with some possible recommendations you might be able to make as a psychologist.
5. Use your imagination and creativity as well as your knowledge to make connections to course concepts.

*Example: Disciplinary-specific assessment with a common rubric.* You are an economist who has been called in as an expert by Adam Smith Charter Schools, Inc. They are starting several new schools in ethnically diverse neighborhoods in Metropolis. They want you to help them

frame the economic questions they should be concerned with in making their plans, setting up their schools, and evaluating their effectiveness. They are particularly concerned about how they should finance the building of the schools, how to talk with parents of prospective students about the costs and benefits of tuition-based education for their children, and about the economic impact of the schools on the communities involved.

Specifically, you should respond to each of the following:

1. What questions would you as an economist ask about the issues they are concerned about? List 4-5 questions, framing them using theories, concepts, and principles from economics.
2. Indicate the kinds of quantitative and/or qualitative data that you would need to gather to answer your questions.
3. Discuss the nature of the data analyses you would use to answer your questions.
4. Anticipate possible outcomes to your analyses with some possible recommendations you might be able to make as an economist.

Use your imagination and creativity as well as your knowledge to make connections to course concepts.

*Example: Disciplinary-specific assessment with a common rubric.* The International Video Game Co., Inc. is setting up two new plants to make their latest game, one in rural California and one on the outskirts of Beijing. At both sites executives from existing plants in the eastern United States and India will be transferred in for three-year stints. They will be moving their families and most of the executives have school-age children who will be enrolled in public schools (a company policy designed to engender positive community relations). The top brass at company headquarters in Toronto is concerned about the effects of the new plants on overall corporate effectiveness and international reputation. They have called in you and other social and behavioral scientists to advise them.

1. What questions would you as a [insert appropriate disciplinary expert] ask about the situation? List 4-5 questions, framing them using theories, concepts, and principles from your discipline.
2. Indicate the kinds of quantitative and/or qualitative data that you would need to gather to answer your questions.
3. Discuss the nature of the data analyses you would use to answer your questions.
4. Anticipate possible outcomes to your analyses with some possible recommendations.

Use your imagination and creativity as well as your knowledge to make connections to course concepts.

**Sample common rubric.**

Competency	Unsatisfactory	Emerging	Achieving	Exemplary
Demonstrate the	Does not make	Can generate	Is able to gener-	Uses questions

ability to use social and behavioral science concepts to raise questions that could help explain behavior.	any meaningful connections between the scenario and disciplinary concepts.	one or two appropriate questions using disciplinary concepts.	ate 3-4 disciplinary appropriate questions.	involving a variety of concepts that show the complexity of the problems involved.
Explore explanations of human behavior from different theoretical perspectives.	Does not use disciplinary theories to raise questions about the scenario.	Raises a question that reflects at least one important theoretical perspective.	Generates questions that reflect at least two distinct theoretical approaches to exploring human behavior.	Develops questions that reflect the major theories or models in the discipline that provide alternative approaches to the issues.
Demonstrate that social and behavioral science methods can be used to address important questions.	Does not use social and behavioral science methods to address important questions.	Uses a social and behavioral science method to address at least one important question	Uses social and behavioral science methods to address at least two important questions	Uses social and behavioral science methods to address a variety of important questions and their complexity
Projects possible outcomes from the application of social and behavioral science methods.	Does not project possible outcomes from the application of social and behavioral science methods.	Uses a social and behavioral science method to project at least one possible outcome.	Uses social and behavioral science methods to project at least two possible outcomes.	Uses a range of social and behavioral science methods to project a variety of potential outcomes.
Discusses the limitations of social and behavioral science concepts and theories to explain human behavior	Does not discuss limitations of social and behavioral science theories.	Discusses the limitations of social and behavioral science concepts to explain at least one human behavior.	Discusses 3-4 limitations to social and behavioral science theories to explain at least two human behaviors.	Discusses multiple limitations of a variety of social and behavioral concepts to explain a range of human behaviors.

## Assessment for Integrative Experiences

One possibility for producing an artifact for assessment would be to develop a significant writing project, with both group and individual components that are linked to a Service Learning Project, which might be in association with a variety of organizations besides Service Learning. Such a project would include prompts for the written components that would focus the students' attention to responding in a way that would demonstrate the connections that define the courses in these categories.

A particularly useful tool when considering assessment of the Integrative Experience is the relevant QEP rubric:

From WCU QEP Outcomes – Metarubrics – 27Oct09 (Adopted from AAC&U Integrated Learning Rubric)

Emerging When prompted	Developing When prompted	Achieving Independently		Exemplary Independently
Between personal experiences and academic knowledge	identifies connections between personal experiences and closely related academic knowledge (i.e., facts, ideas, concepts, experiences)	infers differences and similarities between personal experiences and academic knowledge	selects relevant personal experiences from a variety of contexts (family, individual, social, etc.) to illustrate academic knowledge	synthesizes connections between personal experiences and academic knowledge to expand own abilities and perspectives
Between/across academic disciplines	refers to academic knowledge from more than one discipline or field of study	connects academic knowledge from more than one discipline or field of study	connects academic knowledge from more than one discipline or field of study	synthesizes academic knowledge from more than one discipline or field of study to draw a conclusion or resolve a problem

Application/ Transfer	applies basic academic knowledge and/or personal experiences gained in one context to a new situation	uses academic knowledge and/or personal experiences gained in one context to deepen understanding of a problem or issue in a new situation	uses academic knowledge and/or personal experiences gained in one context to solve a problem or clarify an issue in a new situation	...and creatively applies academic knowledge and/or personal experiences gained in one context to solve difficult problems or clarify complex issues in a new situation
Self-Awareness/ Reflection	describes own performance as a learner	articulates own strengths and challenges as a learner in dealing with a specific task, performance, event, etc.	evaluates how own performance as a learner has changed over time and in different contexts	sets goals based on past personal and academic experiences in diverse contexts

## **Appendix A: Western Carolina University Faculty Senate Guidelines for the Constitution and Mission of the Liberal Studies Task Force 2009**

The mission of the Liberal Studies Task Force is to assess the current Liberal Studies Program to determine whether or not it serves our students optimally in the context of the new guiding principles for the University, including the QEP, the UNC Tomorrow report, and the Stewardship of Place model. If the Task Force determines that there is need for changes to the Liberal Studies Program, the Liberal Studies Task Force will recommend them based on their assessment. These recommendations would then become the basis for a revised or replaced Liberal Studies Program document.

During the first stage in this process, which will begin with the 2009/2010 academic year, the Liberal Studies Task Force will gather information about the current Liberal Studies Program from a wide range of faculty and other constituents at WCU in order to summarize the Program's strengths and weaknesses. The resulting report will combine this summary with a rationale for retaining, modifying, or reforming the Liberal Studies Program. The completion of this report will be followed by a period of comment and review by the faculty.

If changes to the Liberal Studies Program are considered necessary, the Liberal Studies Task Force will begin a second stage of work in which they produce a set of recommendations to improve the Liberal Studies Program in the context of the new guiding principles of the University. The Task Force would again seek a wide range of faculty input while producing this report. The completion of this second report would also be followed by a period of comment and review by the faculty. Following this second review period, the Task Force would then produce a new Liberal Studies Program document, which would be submitted to the Liberal Studies Oversight Committee, the Academic Policy and Review Council, and the Faculty Senate for approval.

Membership on the Liberal Studies Task Force will comprise between 20-25 faculty members, determined by the ratio of full-time faculty in that College relative to the total number of full-time faculty at the University. Task Force members will be elected by the faculty in their Colleges, in a special election administered by CONECC.

## **Appendix B: Guiding Principles for General Education**

At the beginning of their work, the Task Force members agreed on a set of guiding principles:

1. General Education should be general. All students at the university should meet the same set of general education requirements.
2. General Education courses should be taught by highly qualified faculty with appropriate institutional support to teach the courses.
3. There should be one General Education Program for all Students.
4. General Education must be fully integrated within the QEP.
5. Students have the right and the responsibility to receive a high quality education at WCU.
6. General Education is not remedial.
7. General Education must be integrated with the Major Programs.
8. General Education should be multi-disciplinary.
9. General Education should include extracurricular experiences, such as study abroad, service learning, civic engagement, and other cultural experiences.
10. General Education outcomes should be assessable in a coherent and productive manner.
11. General Education should take place throughout a student's career and not simply during the first two years of study.

### Appendix C: Work of the Task Force

2009	Western Carolina University Faculty Senate issues Guidelines for the Constitution and Mission of the Liberal Studies Task Force (Appendix A)
Spring 2010	Task Force elected
2010/2011	<p>Conducted and analyzed an institutional comparative survey (Appendix G)</p> <p>Determined guiding principles for general education at WCU (Appendix B)</p> <p>Reviewed and analyzed the recent literature (Appendix H)</p> <p>Reviewed and discussed significant reports on general education (e.g., the Lumina Foundation's <i>Degree Qualifications Profile</i>, the Liberal Studies Assessment Report and Action Plan, the Honor's College proposal for changes in liberal studies)</p> <p>Reviewed and discussed several years of data from the student assessments of instruction (SAI)</p> <p>Reviewed and discussed SACs <i>Principles of Accreditation: Foundations for Quality Enhancement</i> (Appendix I)</p> <p>Issued call for statements on general education from the deans</p> <p>Hosted a series of public forums for faculty and other interested parties</p>
2011/2012	<p>Drafted and discussed in detail two formal proposals</p> <p>Conducted a comprehensive survey of the WCU faculty; analyzed and discussed results (Appendix I)</p> <p>Conducted FYS focus groups (Appendix E)</p> <p>Wrote a final draft of the proposal and circulated a summary to faculty</p> <p>Held two public forums for feedback on the summary, which were also attended by our community college partners</p> <p>Finalized report incorporating feedback from the forums</p>

## **Appendix D: Synthesis: A pathway to intentional learning at Western Carolina University, Learning Goals and Outcomes**

The overarching goal is to empower students to integrate knowledge and skills from their academic and co-curricular experiences to become intentional participants in their own learning. To that end, WCU hopes to impact students' understanding of self, intellectual flexibility and versatility, and capacity for integrated learning. As a result, WCU expects students to:

1. identify their aptitudes, abilities, and interests and articulate their future goals and aspirations;
2. modify their behaviors and values in response to knowledge and skills gained from their academic and co-curricular experiences; and
3. recognize the synthesis of their university experiences relative to their future education and career plans.

To achieve the expected learning goals, WCU has identified a set of core skills and behaviors (outcomes) that are central to a student's development as an integrated, intentional learner. These core expectations include the ability to:

*Integrate information from a variety of contexts* – Students will make connections between personal interest and abilities, Liberal Studies, programs of study, general electives, and experiential learning opportunities, and other co-curricular activities; and relate the implications/value of these connections to 'real world' scenarios.

*Solve complex problems* – Students will identify the dimensions of complex issues or problems; analyze and evaluate multiple sources of information/data; apply knowledge and decision-making processes to new questions or issues; and reflect on the implications of their solution/decision.

*Communicate effectively and responsibly* – Students will convey complex information in a variety of formats and contexts; identify intended audience and communicate appropriately and respectfully.

*Practice civic engagement* – Students will identify their roles and responsibilities as engaged citizens by considering the public policies that affect their choices and actions; by recognizing commonalities and interdependence of diverse views/values; and by acting responsibly to positively affect public policy.

*Clarify and act on purpose and values* – Students will examine the values that influence their own decision making processes; take responsibility for their own learning and development in a manner consistent with academic integrity and their own goals and aspirations; intentionally use knowledge gained from learning experiences to make informed judgments about their future plans; and bring those plans into action.

The metarubrics are an attempt to provide clarity to the core skills and behaviors that are identified above as essential to the development of student as an integrated, intentional learner. The intent of the metarubrics is to:

- Identify and describe commonly shared expectations for learning for each outcome
- Represent how student learning should become progressively more complex over time
- Provide flexible criteria for making judgments about student work that might result from a wide range of learning opportunities
- Allow students to understand what is expected of them in terms of their learning at WCU

**Integrate information from a variety of contexts [DRAFT]**- Students will make connections between personal interest and abilities, general education, programs of study, general electives, experiential learning opportunities, and other co-curricular activities; and relate the implications/value of these connections to “real world” scenarios.

1		<b>Emerging</b> When prompted ...	<b>Developing</b> When prompted ...	<b>Achieving</b> Independently ...	<b>Exemplary</b> Independently ...
<b>Making Connections</b>	<b>Between personal experiences and academic knowlege</b>	identifies connections between personal experiences and closely related academic knowledge (i.e., facts, ideas, concepts, experiences)	infers differences and similarities between personal experiences and academic knowledge	selects relevant personal experiences from a variety of contexts (family, individual, social, etc.) to illustrate academic knowledge	synthesizes connections between personal experiences and academic knowledge to expand own abilities and perspectives
	<b>Between/across academic disciplines</b>	refers to academic knowledge from more than one discipline or field of study	connects academic knowledge from more than one discipline or field of study	connects academic knowledge from more than one discipline or field of study	synthesizes academic knowledge from more than one discipline or field of study to draw a conclusion or resolve a problem
	<b>Application/ Transfer</b>	applies basic academic knowledge and/or personal experiences gained in one context to a new situation	uses academic knowledge and/or personal experiences gained in one context to deepen understanding of a problem or issue in a new situation	uses academic knowledge and/or personal experiences gained in one context to solve a problem or clarify an issue in a new situation	and creatively applies academic knowledge and/or personal experiences gained in one context to solve difficult problems or clarify complex issues in a new situation
	<b>Self-Awareness/ Reflection</b>	describes own performance as a learner	articulates own strengths and challenges as a learner in dealing with a specific task, performance, event, etc.	evaluates how own performance as a learner has changed over time and in different contexts	sets goals based on past personal and academic experiences in diverse contexts

<sup>1</sup> Adapted from AAC&U Integrated Learning Rubric

***Solve Complex Problems***- Students will identify the dimensions of complex issues or problems; analyze and evaluate multiple sources of information/data; apply knowledge and decision-making processes to new questions or issues; and reflect on the implications of their solution/decision.

	<b>Emerging</b>	<b>Developing</b>	<b>Achieving</b>	<b>Exemplary</b>
<b>Define Problem</b>	Identifies problem	Identifies aspects of problem	Considers problem from multiple perspectives	Articulates problem complexity
<b>Identify Strategies</b>	Gathers info relevant to problem	Identifies a strategy/approach	Identifies a viable strategy	Identifies multiple viable solutions
<b>Application</b>	Applies available or prescribed solution	Formulates and applies solution without consideration of strategy	Formulates and applies solution with consideration of strategy	Formulates multiple solutions applicable to each strategy
<b>Reflection/Evaluation</b>	Recognizes some effect of attempted solution	Evaluates the intended effect of solution	Evaluates intended and unintended effects of solution	Evaluates applicability of solutions to new problem

*Communicate effectively and responsibly* – Students will convey complex information in a variety of formats and contexts; identify intended audience and communicate appropriately and respectfully.

		<b>Emerging</b>	<b>Developing</b>	<b>Achieving</b>	<b>Exemplary</b>
<b>Exchange of ideas</b>	<b>Information in</b>	Recognizes that information is available in a variety of forms	Gathers information from a broad assortment of resources	Sorts and integrates information from a variety of sources	Evaluates the quality and credibility of information and selects appropriate information
	<b>Information out</b>	Recognizes that different types of information and ideas can be expressed differently	Conveys basic information in a variety of contexts	Conveys information and ideas in a tactful and considerate manner	Chooses communication techniques appropriate to the context and the audience
	<b>Self-Assessment</b>	Understands that self-assessment is important for the formulation of ideas	Demonstrates critical thinking in self- assessment	Uses self-assessment as a means to control expression and revision	Applies knowledge gained from utilizing diverse communication techniques in order to achieve life goals

**Practice civic engagement** –Students will identify their roles and responsibilities as engaged citizens by considering the public policies that affect their choices and actions; by recognizing commonalities and interdependence of diverse views/values; and by acting responsibly to positively affect public policy.

	<b>Emerging</b>	<b>Developing</b>	<b>Achieving</b>	<b>Exemplary</b>
<b>Awareness and Participation</b>	Recognizes that there are differences between civic engagement, community service, and service learning	Identifies how civic engagement intersects with interests	Selects and participates in civic engagement activities consistent with interests	Demonstrates leadership in chosen civic engagement activities
<b>Value and Reflection</b>	Recognizes the value of civic engagement for the community	Recognizes the value of civic engagement for personal enrichment	Considers how civic engagement activities affect the University, community, and student's educational experience	Considers how a change in behavior could affect the future of the University, community, and student's educational experience

**Clarify and act on purpose and values** - Students will examine the values that influence their own decision-making processes; take responsibility for their own learning and development in a manner consistent with academic integrity and their own goals and aspirations; intentionally use knowledge gained from learning experiences to make informed judgments about their future plans; and bring those plans into action.

	<b>Emerging</b>	<b>Developing</b>	<b>Achieving</b>	<b>Exemplary</b>
<b>Identification and Development</b>	Identifies values that influence decision making	Recognizes how values are shaped	Prioritizes values	Connects values with career and life plans
<b>Self Awareness</b>	Recognizes that behaviors have consequences	Acknowledges responsibility for behavior	Weighs the potential consequences of behavior(s)	Makes choices to achieve goals
<b>Application of Knowledge</b>	Chooses learning experiences consistent with values and goals	Develops future plans	Prioritizes necessary steps for progressing toward goals	Demonstrates how learning experiences affect goals
<b>Knowledge in Action</b>	Identifies necessary components of a curricular and co-curricular plan	Creates initial curricular and co-curricular plan consistent with goals	Makes necessary modifications to plan as goals are refined	Plans post-graduation actions to move forward with plan and goals

## **Appendix E: Focus Group Results for FYS**

### **Process to arrive at the proposal:**

Review research and documents collected by the General Education Task Force (institutional comparison, survey, literature review, etc.).

Reference documents from the Liberal Studies Committee, Office of First Year Experience, and institutional data.

Include feedback from focus groups:

- students (current or from the past two years - five, including students in the Honors College and in the Academic Success Program)
- faculty who teach (or have taught in the past three years) a FYS (five, from four departments and three colleges)
- department heads (13, from all colleges)

### **Focus Group Summary:**

Common themes that emerged from focus group discussions are reflected in this recommendation. Overall, these groups supported continuation of First-year Seminars as they originally were designed.

#### Purpose & Goals:

Emphasized by all three groups, the primary goals of the First-year Seminar are to: 1) introduce students to the rigor of intellectual life at the college level (with particular emphasis on rigor) and 2) introduce students to new ideas they may not otherwise encounter.

#### Student comments:

"The FYS should challenge us to dig deeper for bigger meaning - by the time I finished with class, I felt confident to go forward *and that should be an outcome!*"

"The course challenged us to back up our views with research and facts – to develop informed opinions."

"The FYS helped focus our attention and time - to be successful - and this should be a constant outcome and to maintain high expectations."

#### Faculty comments:

"Having students develop comfort and confidence with reading and talking in groups."

"Course should address 'how is college different from High school?'"

"Should introduce scholarly discourse and should be rigorous."

"It is an oasis – an opportunity to step away from a hard-core discipline stance [sic] to look out, rather than in."

"What is it that makes WCU unique? Personal attention and small classes! This is how we justify the resources devoted to the FYS!"

Department Head comments:

"Set the context for University life and the nature of inquiry"

"Teaching a course that excites the students and the professors-- that has a hint of the discipline."

Administration and Standards:

Many focus group participants expressed concerns that some seminars have lost sight of the nature and requisite goals of a seminar. They expressed support for clearer standards in order to maintain seminar integrity, academic rigor, and consistent measurable outcomes. Participants also expressed needs for accountability and suggested several items that would support their work, including professional development, enhanced program assessment, and continuation of the resource guide.

Faculty comments:

"Ask students as a final reflection how they met the LS outcomes – this is an excellent way to see if the course met its mark and if students really ‘got it’ --- plus they become accustomed to learning to assess their own learning."

"Students should emerge with comparable goals in all FYS."

"There’s no point in having a FYS if it’s not restricted in size and guided by distinctive goals."

Department Head comments:

"Should not allow departments to commandeer First-year Seminars for internal curriculum needs and not allow loopholes."

"Provide incentives for faculty and departments to offer a FYS. Reduce current disincentives, including pressure to produce SCH."

Enrollment caps:

All three groups expressed that maintaining a lower enrollment cap is critical to the success of the seminar. Instructors do not want additional funds or special treatment, but they do want to teach the seminar as it is envisioned and for it to maintain its "integrity." Department Heads support the ideals and goals of the seminar, but feel that economic pressures interfere with their ability to balance faculty load; they will need support from administration. Students emphasized how much the seminar format helped them develop good intellectual habits early on and gain a sense of comfort with the institution while also developing a sense of community with each other and with their professors.

Department Head comments:

"Benefits [of low caps] outweigh the cost."

"The smaller classes help prepare students in transitioning into the larger classes they will have."

Faculty comments:

"One important thing that students can get from a seminar is social interaction and connection."

"We're really re-evaluating the core values of the institution; this class helps students make a connection with the institution and the core values."

## **Appendix F: Extended Outcomes for Oral Communication (adapted from the current COMM 201)**

Week 1

### **Overall objectives**

1A. Determine the Purpose of Effective Human Communication

1A1. Identify the various purposes for human communication.

1A2. Understand that different contexts require different methods and strategies.

1B. Assess Communication Skills, Abilities, and Styles

1B1. Identify individual communication style(s) & ways they affect interpersonal communication.

1B2. Set personal goals for developing a clear, concise, assertive interpersonal communication style

### Lesson objectives

- Establish a personal baseline for oral communication competency
- Define the communication process
- Understand the functions of communication
- Assess the quality of communication by examining its six characteristics
- Define competent communication
- Describe the various models of communication
- Understand the ways in which communication is vital to everyone

Week 2

### **Verbal Communication & Perception**

#### **Overall objectives**

##### *Verbal Communication*

2A. Demonstrate Need for the Careful Choice of Words

2A1. Demonstrate an understanding of the power and consequences of language.

2A2. Employ language that promotes clarity and the receiver's understanding and acceptance of the message.

2A3. Select words that are 1) appropriate to the topic, audience, purpose, context, and speaker; and 2) avoid sexism, racism, and other forms of prejudice.

2A4. Explain how jargon, slang, idiomatic language, and regionalisms may facilitate or hinder understanding.

##### *Perception*

2B. Demonstrate Need for Accurate Perception

2B1. Understand how personal perspectives on the world and previous experiences influence communication

2B2. Explain how stereotypes, perceptual sets and attributions influence communication

2B3. Understand how cultural differences may influence perception

### Lesson objectives

#### *Verbal Communication*

- Understand the power of language
- Identify the ways in which communication functions for people
- Recognize and address communication problems
- Understand that language reflects, builds on, and determines context

#### *Perception*

- Understand how our personal perspectives on the world influence our communication
- Explain how we use and misuse schemas when communicating with others
- Discuss how and why we use attributions to explain behavior
- Understand how cultural differences influence perception
- Identify how our self-concept influences communication
- Describe how our cognitions about ourselves and our behavior affect our communication with others

### Week 3

## **Nonverbal Communication & Cultural Competence**

### *Non-verbal communication*

3A. Demonstrate Nonverbal Behavior That Supports The Verbal Message

3A1. Use appropriate nonverbal elements (paralanguage, kinesics, chronemics, proxemics, personal appearance) to enhance credibility and effectiveness in communication.

3A2. Explain how nonverbal communication may be arbitrary, intentional, unintentional and influenced by culture.

### *Cultural Competence*

3B. Demonstrate an understanding of Cultural Competence

3B1. Identify the demographic changes underway in American society

3B2. Understand and adapt communication to people from other cultures, co-cultures or groups.

3B3. Understand how communication is affected by high and low context culture

## Lesson objectives

### Nonverbal Communication

- Understand the nature of nonverbal communication
- Outline the function of nonverbal communication
- Describe the set of communication symbols that are nonverbal codes
- Understand the influences of culture, technology, and situation on our nonverbal behavior

### Cultural Competence

- Understand how our personal perspectives on the world influence our communication
- Explain how we use and misuse schemas when communicating with others
- Understand how cultural differences influence perception

### Week 4

## Listening, Processing Information & Providing Effective Feedback

### Overall objectives

#### 4A. Demonstrate the Ability to Actively Listen

4A1. Demonstrate awareness that each person has a unique perspective, and that one's knowledge, experience, and emotions affect listening.

4A2. Demonstrate comprehension by formulating questions that clarify or qualify the speaker's content and paraphrasing the speaker's message.

4A3. Identify the speaker's purpose and important points.

4A4. Distinguish between fact and opinions.

#### 4B. Demonstrate the Ability to Process Messages

4B1. Identify instances of bias and prejudice in a spoken message and specify how this may affect the impact of a spoken message.

4B2. Demonstrate an understanding that arguments have both emotional and logical dimensions.

4C. Demonstrate the Ability to Provide Effective Constructive Feedback that is descriptive, specific, relevant, current, and factual.

4D. Demonstrate the ability to check with the receiver for understanding of both content and intent.

### Week 5

## Applying interpersonal communication knowledge and skills to working in groups

## Overall objectives

- 5A. Identify and assess own group communication styles and skills
- 5B. Use effective communication skills in creative problem-solving and team building activities
- 5C. Apply knowledge of cultural diversity to creative problem-solving and team building activities
- 5D. Evaluate the effects of individual behavior on small group process

## Lesson objectives

- Apply effective interpersonal skills to working collaboratively in creative problem-solving and team building activities
- Develop an awareness of how own group communication skills strengths and weaknesses affect the group's process
- Discuss observations of individual behavior in group activities and how that behavior affected the group's dynamics and outcomes in the creative problem-solving and team building activities
- Explain key aspects of interpersonal relationships
- Understand how and why we form relationships
- See that every relationship has advantages and disadvantages
- Consider how people in relationships choose to divulge or withhold personal information
- Outline the predictable stages of most relationships

Week 6

## Group Communication Skills

### Overall objectives

- 6A. Identify and assess own group communication styles and skills
- 6B. Demonstrate the ability to use positive, effective interpersonal communication skills in groups and teams: actively listening, using positive & descriptive language, using open-ended questions and paraphrasing to clarify issues, asserting own ideas without dominating or withdrawing, Understand and value differences in communication styles.
- 6B1. Apply effective interpersonal interaction skills to working collaborative in groups
- 6C. Recognize positive group interaction skills and behaviors in self and others in classroom activities
- 6C1. Demonstrate the following skills in classroom activities: indicating empathy, staying on track, verbally recognizing others' ideas and accepting others' points of view as valid, encouraging participation, identifying shared interests, asserting own ideas without dominating or withdrawing, using reasons, fact, & common interests to influence, summarizing to keep the group on track, getting agreement, helping to manage time

## Lesson objectives

- List the characteristics and types of groups and explain how groups develop
- Understand how group size affects communication
- Identify the influence of networks in groups
- Analyze aspects that determine a group's effectiveness
- Define the roles individuals play in a group
- Identify other issues affecting group communication—goal clarity, groupthink, conflict, individual differences, communication apprehension

Week 7

## Group Dynamics

### Overall objectives

- 7A. Understand the types of groups and how groups develop
- 7A1. Identify types and purposes of groups, from informal to formal.
- 7A2. Identify and demonstrate the ability to recognize group development stages
- 7B. Define the roles individuals play in a group, both constructive and destructive
- 7B1. Demonstrate the ability to use appropriate team roles in team activities
- 7B2. Demonstrate the ability to fulfill leadership functions in group activities.
- 7C. Discuss structured and creative problem-solving methods that can be used in groups.
- 7C 1. Demonstrate the ability to use appropriate methods in group activities.

## Lesson objectives

- Understand what makes an effective leader.
- Describe leadership styles.
- Identify how culture affects leadership.
- List the forces that shape a group's decisions.
- Explain the six-step group decision process.
- Show how effective leadership is crucial for good communication in meetings.
- Know the three aspects of assessing group performance.

Week 8

## Managing & Resolving Conflicts in Groups/Teams

### Overall objectives

- 8A. Understand how conflict can be managed productively in teams/groups
- 8A1. Describe the types and sources of conflict in groups.
- 8A2. Recognize the characteristics of constructive and destructive conflict in groups

8A3. List the forces that shape a group's decisions, including cultural forces

8B. Demonstrate the use of conflict resolution methods and strategies to resolve conflicts

8B1. Identify important issues or problems before they become barriers

8B2. Demonstrate the ability to choose the conflict style that is most appropriate to the situation and participants.

8B3. Demonstrate the ability to negotiate an agreement effectively

### **Lesson objectives**

- Group communication skills and styles assessment discussion
- Application of interpersonal skills to group communication
- Understand how conflict can be managed productively.
- Identify conflict triggers.
- Explain the forces that influence how people handle conflict.
- Employ strategies for managing conflict.
- Recognize that even though a conflict cannot be resolved, it does have an outcome.

Week 9

### **Developing & planning a team project**

Team Presentation skills—Delivery

### **Overall objectives**

9A. Create a team project agreement and begin to plan for a team presentation.

9A1. Create a team agreement/contract to cover group norms, conflict resolution agreements, and project plans

9A2. Demonstrate the ability to apply group decision making processes to plan the team presentation project.

9B. Understand the basics of delivering a presentation

9B1. List methods to control nervousness

9B2. Describe the guidelines for effective delivery

### **Lesson objectives**

- Understand what is involved in planning and implementing a team project and to develop a team agreement to support a successful outcome.
- Understand how preparation eases natural nervousness.
- Understand how to control nervousness
- Determine a delivery style that is suitable for self and speaking situation
- Examine four speech delivery options and the benefits and pitfalls of each.

Week 10

## **Organizing, research, & visual aids**

### **Overall objectives**

10A. Demonstrate the ability to choose an appropriate topic and narrow it for the time limit and purpose

10A1. Choose and narrow an appropriate topic, given the guidelines provided.

10A2. Clarify the general specific purpose of the speech.

10B. Demonstrate the ability to develop a clear thesis statement for an informative speech.

10C. Demonstrate the ability to analyze an audience.

10C1. Identify demographic factors that can influence an audience's reception of a speech—age, background, values, etc.

10C2. Identify other factors than can influence an audience's reception of a speech—interest, knowledge, expectations.

10D. Understand how to use college level research and information utilization skills in preparing and delivering presentations.

10C1. Recognize and evaluate primary and secondary sources. [*apparently mis-numbered in original document*]

10C2. Locate and select appropriate support materials based on the topic, audience, setting, and purpose.

10E. Develop an understanding of how to design and use visual aids that enhance presentations.

### **Lesson objectives**

- Choose an appropriate topic and narrow it for time limit and purpose.
- Identify the general and specific purposes of your speech.
- Analyze your audience for demographics, interest, knowledge, and expectations.
- Support and enliven your speech with effective research.
- Cull from among your sources the material that will be most convincing.
- Give proper credit to sources and take responsibility for your speech content.
- Know how to develop effective visual aids

Week 11

## **Informative speaking in teams: organizing and preparing**

## **Overall objectives**

11A. Understand the goals, purposes, and methods of informative speaking

11B. Demonstrate the ability to develop and organize an informative message for effectiveness.

11B1. Select an organizational pattern that is appropriate to the topic, audience, context, and purpose.

11B2. Prepare an introduction that makes the purpose clear, gives an overview of the key points, and focuses the attention of the audience.

11B3. Using a sentence outline prepare the body of the speech

11B4. Create a conclusion that summarizes key points and reinforces the thesis.

11B5. Create transitions from speaker to speaker.

## **Lesson objectives**

- Understand the goals of informative speaking
- Understand the methods that can be used
- Organize the body of an informative speech
- Create strong introductions and conclusions
- Prepare transitions from speaker to speaker

Week 12

## **Team Presentations**

### **Overall objectives**

12A. Demonstrate the ability to present as a member of a team.

12B. Write an analysis of own team's process and dynamics.

12C. Evaluate own presentation as part of a team.

Week 13

Persuasive Speaking

### **Overall objectives**

13A. Understand how to apply effective persuasive organization patterns in constructing a message to influence.

13A1. Demonstrate the ability organize a persuasive message in a preparation outline.

13A2. Critically evaluate another's preparation outline for effectiveness, clarity, and use of persuasive organization patterns.

## **Lesson objectives**

- Define the goals of persuasive speaking.
- Know how to develop a persuasive topic and thesis.
- Understand your listeners and tailor your speech to them.
- Explain three forms of rhetorical proof: ethos, logos, and pathos.
- Recognize the logical fallacies, deceptive forms of reasoning.
- Choose an appropriate organizational strategy for your speech.

Week 14

## **Individual persuasive presentation preparation**

### **Overall objectives**

13A. Understand how to apply effective persuasive organization patterns in constructing a message to influence.

13A1. Demonstrate the ability organize a persuasive message in a preparation outline.

13A2. Critically evaluate another's preparation outline for effectiveness, clarity, and use of persuasive organization patterns.

### **Lesson objectives**

- Define the goals of persuasive speaking.
- Know how to develop a persuasive topic and thesis.
- Understand your listeners and tailor your speech to them.
- Explain three forms of rhetorical proof: ethos, logos, and pathos.
- Recognize the logical fallacies, deceptive forms of reasoning.
- Choose an appropriate organizational strategy for your speech.

Week 15

## **Individual persuasive presentations**

### **Overall objectives**

13A. Understand how to apply effective persuasive organization patterns and strategies in delivering a message to influence.

13A1. Demonstrate the ability organize and deliver a persuasive message

### **Lesson objectives**

- Deliver an effective persuasive speech

## Lesson Content

- Individual persuasive presentations
- Assess own performance

## Week 16

### **Individual persuasive presentations**

#### **Overall objectives**

13A. Understand how to apply effective persuasive organization patterns and strategies in delivering a message to influence.

13A1. Demonstrate the ability organize and deliver a persuasive message

#### **Lesson objectives**

- Deliver an effective persuasive speech
- Summarize key learning objectives for course
- Identify goals achieved
- Assess own performance

## Appendix G: Institutional Comparative Survey

The Senate resolution asked the Task Force to examine what other master's universities are doing in their general education programs. We did so in some detail. We gathered quantitative data on a large sample of universities like WCU. Those data are included in Appendix D (the data are presented in three charts because of differences in formatting used by reporters). Then we looked in more detail at the offerings at a substantial subgroup. This report describes what we found.

### Selection of comparable programs

We started our process by identifying other state-funded master's universities (also known as state comprehensive universities) from the website of the Carnegie Foundation (<http://classifications.carnegiefoundation.org/>). We included 75 universities from all the states that have comprehensive universities. Multiple campuses were included from some of the larger state systems like those in New York, California, and Wisconsin. We also looked at the alma maters of the Task Force members for context, but those institutions were not included in our analyses (unless the member had attended one of the master's universities on our list).

For each university in the larger group, we categorized the institution's approach to general education as fitting one of three models based on the self-descriptions of their programs: (a) a traditional core model in which each student takes the same set of courses that stress the development of key skills such as writing and critical thinking, but also stress core content in courses in literature, history, sciences, social sciences, and humanities, often in interdisciplinary offerings (this approach is historically associated with the programs at institutions such as Columbia University and the University of Chicago); (b) a distribution model that requires students to take a certain number of courses from each of several categories in literature, history, sciences, social sciences, and humanities; or (c) a hybrid model that includes courses in skills areas (writing, mathematics, oral communication) and courses in a variety of clusters such as in literature, history, sciences, social sciences, and humanities. However, as indicated in the first footnote to Table 3, when the details of the programs were charted, the approaches of the three models were virtually indistinguishable. We also recorded the number of credit hours required in general education, the hours required for a degree, the size of the student body, any important general-education related extracurricular activities (e.g., service learning), and special features of the program's approach to assessment.

For the smaller sample of the larger group general education programs from each of the models was examined in detail. A comprehensive list of general education categories was used to chart the programs from distribution and hybrid models (see the Key to Appendices C and D).

### Overall descriptive results

The descriptive data for the larger group of universities we examined are provided in Table 1. Perhaps the most informative data for comparison to our program are the proportions of hours required for a degree that are constituted by general education requirements. Because hours for a degree vary from university to university, proportions provide the most comparable metric. The mean proportion of .38 corresponds to 45.6 semester hours in a 120-hour program or 48.6 semes-

ter hours in a 128-hour program. The standard deviation (an indicator of the dispersion of the scores) of the proportions is quite small (.05). That means that the number of general education hours is tightly distributed around the middle. Not many scores are very far below or above the .38 average. Table 2 shows the general education hours distributed by tenths (deciles). Our current 42-hour program falls in the lowest third of the distribution.

**Table 1 Descriptive Data, General Education at State Masters Universities**

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<b>Min</b>	<b>Max</b>
Enrollment	11,544	7079	2920	37347
Gen ed hours	45.8	6.1	34	66
Total hours	121.1	3.29	103	130
Proportion GE	.38	.05	.28	.52

**Table 2 Distribution of General Education Hour Proportions**

	<b>Deciles</b>								
	<b>10</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>90</b>
Proportion	.31	.33	.34	.36	.37	.39	.40	.42	.44
# (on 120)		40		43		47		50	

Mean=.38, median=.37, mode=.40

### Detailed Analyses

The more detailed analysis was conducted on a subsample that included 14 distribution model programs, 19 hybrid programs and all 3 programs we identified as core models at state institutions. The data from the analysis of the programs are presented in Appendix G. The entries represent semester hour equivalents with a few noted exceptions. The general patterns are clear. Every program includes the following components:

1. **Composition.** The writing requirements range from 3 to 9 hours. In some programs there are requirements for upper level writing courses. In others there is a requirement that students complete a specific number of upper level courses with a strong writing component. A few programs include upper level writing experiences but the courses are not credited to general education.
2. **Mathematics.** Requirements in mathematics range from 3 to 6 hours. What level counts as a mathematics course is usually college algebra or above.
3. **Science.** All programs require science but there is considerable variability in the amount required, from 4 to 11 hours. Some universities have separate requirements for biological and physical sciences.
4. **Humanities and fine arts.** Requirements in the humanities range from 6 to 14 hours. A typical distribution would be half music art, and theater and half literature and philosophy. At some universities history is included in this category.
5. **Social and behavioral sciences.** Requirements in this category range from 3 to 15 hours. The institutions with the high number of required hours are usually those that require specific courses, usually in government and history (e.g., Texas). There is more variety of

courses in this category than any other, but commonly it includes anthropology, economics, history, political science, psychology, and sociology.

After the five ubiquitous categories, the commonalities decline. Just over half of the programs require a course in **speech or oral communication**. Common among fewer than half the programs are **wellness** (1-4 hrs.), **diversity or world cultures** (3-9 hrs.), and **critical thinking** (3 hrs., sometimes a course in logic, sometimes a broader range of options). Rarer are courses labeled as **freshman or senior seminars** and rarer still are required courses in **computer skills**.

The programs are similar in many ways to our current general education program. However our current program is almost unique in at least two ways. No other program comes close to the number of possible options within categories (perhaps the exception being one category at Rhode Island College). And no other program includes within categories courses from so many applied fields not usually associated with the liberal arts (e.g., business and marketing, health sciences, nutrition, construction management).

While the patterns reported here are quite general, there are exceptions. Not listed in Appendix C because of its complexity, the program at Minnesota State (at Mankato) lists 11 different categories with some unusual themes among the requirements. Listed in Appendix C, but difficult to capture with conventional categories is the program at Southeast Missouri State. The general education courses there often have a strong sense of a traditional core model with its emphasis on interdisciplinary courses throughout the program.

**Table 3****Distribution of Credit Hours in General Education Programs<sup>1</sup>**

	Comp	Mth	OC	Wel	Sci	HFA	SBS	Glb	DIV	FSM	UL	CT	CAP	Oth <sup>2</sup>
<b>BSU<sup>3</sup></b>	6	9	3		6	15	9	6	3	3				3
<b>NCCU<sup>4</sup></b>	6	6		4	6	6	6							5
<b>Clrk<sup>5</sup></b>	3	6	3		6	3	3	3		3	3		y	6
<b>Stout<sup>6</sup></b>	8	6		2	4	9	9		6					2
<b>Radfd</b>	6-9	6		3	8	15	12	6						
<b>TTech</b>	6	3	3		8	9	12							
<b>UTPA</b>	6	3			8	9	15							2
<b>GCSU</b>	6	6			8	2	12		2					

<sup>1</sup> The Bridgewater through Alabama State programs are designated as distribution model programs, the Wisconsin through Youngstown State programs as hybrids, and Sonoma State through Prairie View as Core, but as is apparent in the table, those distinctions do not hold up well.

<sup>2</sup> The Other category sometimes represents a computer-oriented course but also may indicate general education electives.

<sup>3</sup> Included at Bridgewater must be one speaking-intensive and one writing-intensive course, one of the math classes is an application course, and there is a required sophomore seminar.

<sup>4</sup> At NC Central there is a required foreign language course and a 2-hour career development course.

<sup>5</sup> Clarkson has an unusually flexible “Clarkson Common Experience” integrated with major.

<sup>6</sup> Stout is considered Wisconsin’s polytech. The mathematics requirement can include logic or computer courses.

<b>CPly<sup>7</sup></b>	8	8	4		8	20	20					4
<b>WWas</b>	7-9	3-8			12	20	17		8			
<b>UIS</b>	8	6	3		7	9	9					
<b>SaSt<sup>8</sup></b>	6	3	3	4	7	12	18		9	3		
<b>StC<sup>9</sup></b>	6	3			7	6	6	3	3		3	6
<b>AlSt</b>	6	3			8	12	12					1
<b>WLx<sup>10</sup></b>	3	3	3	3	4	7	3	6	3			13
<b>UHCL</b>	6	3	3		6	6	6	15				3
<b>SoMe<sup>11</sup></b>	3	3			4	12					3	
<b>Lamr</b>	6	6	3	1	8	6	15				3	
<b>UNFI<sup>12</sup></b>	3	6			6	6	3	3		3	3	3
<b>SeMo<sup>13</sup></b>	6	3	3		6	15				3	6	3

<sup>7</sup> Cal Poly San Obispo requires 72 QHs in general education courses for all students, but engineering majors take 12 hrs less in technology, humanities and fine arts, and social sciences and 12 more in mathematics and science.

<sup>8</sup> Salem State requires an additional 12 hours of foreign language for most BA degrees.

<sup>9</sup> The "Other" for St. Cloud is an ethics course and a people-environment course typical for Minnesota schools.

<sup>10</sup> Wisconsin-Lacrosse includes 13 hours of general education electives from the approved list.

<sup>11</sup> Southern Maine also requires an upper-level writing-intensive course not included in the 44 hours of GE. One GE course can count toward a major.

<sup>12</sup> North Florida's upper-level course must be writing-intensive.

<sup>13</sup> Southeast Missouri's upper-level courses and the senior seminar are interdisciplinary.

<b>EmpSt<sup>14</sup></b>	6	3-5	3	4	9-11	8-14	6	6		2-3
<b>Frsno<sup>15</sup></b>	3	3	3		6	9	9		12	3
<b>Clrion<sup>16</sup></b>	3	3		2	9	3	3			25
<b>IUSE</b>	6	3	3		8	6	6	3		3
<b>SELA</b>	6	6			9	12	6	3		3
<b>FtHays</b>	6	3	3	3						3
<b>ApSt</b>	6	4		2	8	9	9	6		
<b>EKU<sup>17</sup></b>	6	3	3	3	6	9				12
<b>Troy</b>	6	3	3		9	13	12		1	
<b>Cokl</b>	6	3	3		7	3	9			6
<b>WCon</b>	3	3	3	2	3	15	12			3
<b>RICol</b>	4	4			7	11	10			4
<b>CSNo</b>	3	3	3		8	6	12	6		3

<sup>14</sup> The ranges at Emporia State reflect differences as a function of major. The wellness category includes choices in ethics, personal finance, leadership, health, physical education, and finance.

<sup>15</sup> Fresno's upper level category requires 1 science or social science, 1 arts or humanities, 1 institutions/history, 1 diversity; honors students, liberal studies majors and engineers have different GE requirements (engineers have 42 hours).

<sup>16</sup> Clarion requires 48 hrs of GE, but much of it is elective. Within the electives, 6 hrs has to be writing-intensive, 6 hrs in quantitative reasoning and 6 hrs in values-intensive courses.

<sup>17</sup> Eastern Kentucky's GE electives have their own set of complex distribution requirements, some with themes such as gender, race, sexuality, issues in technology, war and peace.

<b>YSU<sup>18</sup></b>	6	3	3		6	6	6			3	3	6
<b>SonSt<sup>19</sup></b>	6	3			9	12	15			3		3
<b>UHCL<sup>20</sup></b>	6	3	3		9	9	15					3
<b>PVAM<sup>21</sup></b>	6	3	3		6	6	15					3
<b>WCU<sup>22</sup></b>	6	3	3	3	6	6	9	3		3	Y	

**KEY:** **Comp:** composition—writing courses, usually first-year; **Mth:** mathematics, including statistics; **OC:** oral communication or speech; **Wel:** physical education, wellness, nutrition courses; **Sci:** science (natural—sometimes distributed as physical and biological); **HFA:** humanities (includes literature, religion, philosophy, history, many others, often with at least one literature required) and fine arts (music, art, theater); **SBS,** social and behavioral sciences (usually includes history); **GLB:** world cultures (listed only if used as a category separate from social sciences); **Div:** diversity (sometimes called multicultural—often a humanities course, but sometimes social science can count too); **FSM:** freshmen seminar or university orientation; **UL:** upper level GE requirements; **CT:** critical thinking course (often philosophy, logic, but sometimes others); **Cap:** capstone (in general education, not major); **OTH:** often GE electives or a computer course requirement

<sup>18</sup> Youngstown State’s GE electives must come from science, humanities and fine arts, or social sciences.

<sup>19</sup> Sonoma State’s “Other” is a course on “the integrated person.”

<sup>20</sup> The University of Houston at Clear Lake program follows the Texas Core Curriculum. Individual majors designate specific courses within the constraints of the Texas curriculum. The “other” is a computer-oriented course.

<sup>21</sup> Like other Texas schools, Prairie View follows the Core Curriculum.

<sup>22</sup> One upper level course is required in humanities and fine arts, social sciences, or world cultures that is not a part of the student’s major.

## Institutional Comparison Survey: Raw Data

Institution	Location	Size - # students Undergrad	Model Type	Liberal Studies # hrs	Degree avg. hrs	No-cr Co-cur	Of special interest or unique quality	Assessments of note
a. Core Model (all students take the same courses)		b. Distribution Model (students take so many hours in so many categories)		c. Hybrid Model (combination of core and distribution)		d. Skills Model (students take courses to acquire prescribed skills)		
Roger Williams University <a href="http://www.rwu.edu/">http://www.rwu.edu/</a>	Bristol RI	3,667	Core + Core Concentration	27 core 15 concentration	120	none	Core concentration -a specified sequence in a discipline housed in a college different from the major, can be a minor with 2 additional courses	
Sonoma State University <a href="http://www.sonoma.edu/">http://www.sonoma.edu/</a>	Rohnert Park CA	3,100	Core	46	120	none		
University of Houston Clear Lake <a href="http://prtl.uhcl.edu/">http://prtl.uhcl.edu/</a>	Clear Lake TX	7,878	Core	34	120	none	6 hours required by statute, U.S. & Texas constitutional history	
Prarie View A&M, TX <a href="http://www.pvamu.edu/pages/1.asp">http://www.pvamu.edu/pages/1.asp</a>	Texas Gulf coast region	6,617	Core	42- Gen Ed.	130-133 Major Req.	None	Referred to the <i>Core curriculum</i> – not Gen ed or LS...	<a href="http://www.pvamu.edu/pages/4923.asp">http://www.pvamu.edu/pages/4923.asp</a>
Clarkson University <a href="http://www.clarkson.edu/">http://www.clarkson.edu/</a>	Potsdam NY	2,648	Distribution	30	120	none	Requirements exceptionally vague	
Loyola Marymount University <a href="http://admission.lmu.edu/">http://admission.lmu.edu/</a>	Los Angeles CA		Distribution	30	120	none		
Queens College <a href="http://www.qc.cuny.edu/">http://www.qc.cuny.edu/</a>	New York NY	15,400	Distribution	58	120	none		
Radford Univ. VA <a href="http://www.radford.edu/">http://www.radford.edu/</a>	Radford VA	7,773	Distribution	50 – Gen Ed.	120	one req. but suggested	<a href="http://www.radford.edu/~gened/">http://www.radford.edu/~gened/</a> Alternative options for advance placement credit	<a href="http://www.radford.edu/~gened/assess.html">http://www.radford.edu/~gened/assess.html</a>
Tennessee Tech, Cookeville <a href="http://www.tntech.edu/">http://www.tntech.edu/</a>	Cookeville TN	10,847	Distribution	41- Gen Ed.	120	None	Interdisciplinary Studies major. <a href="http://www.tntech.edu/is/home">http://www.tntech.edu/is/home</a>	<a href="http://www.tntech.edu/is/outcomes/">http://www.tntech.edu/is/outcomes/</a>
Univ. of TX, Pan American, PA <a href="http://www.tntech.edu">http://www.tntech.edu</a>	Edinburg TX – at the boarder/panhandle	15,947	Distribution	48- Gen Ed.	60 Major Req.	None	Sustainability Curriculum: <a href="https://portal.utpa.edu/portal/page/portal/utpa_main/dba_home/sustainability_home/images_files_page/A_Call_to_Action_final(2).pdf">https://portal.utpa.edu/portal/page/portal/utpa_main/dba_home/sustainability_home/images_files_page/A_Call_to_Action_final(2).pdf</a>	<a href="http://www.tntech.edu/is/outcomes">http://www.tntech.edu/is/outcomes</a>

Institution	Location	Size - # students Undergrad	Model Type	Liberal Studies # hrs	Degree avg. hrs	No-cr Co-cur	Of special interest or unique quality	Assessments of note
UNC- Greensboro <a href="http://www.uncg.edu">http://www.uncg.edu</a>	Greensboro NC	18,500	Distribution	36-37-Gen Ed.	122	none	Particularly well organized web site	<a href="http://provost.uncg.edu/Underedu/GeneralEducation/">http://provost.uncg.edu/Underedu/General Education/</a>
California State University-San Bernardino <a href="http://www.csusb.edu/">http://www.csusb.edu/</a>	San Bernardino, CA	14,000	Distribution	78 qtr (52 sem.)	BA=180 Qtr (120 sem.), BS= 198 Qtr (132 sem.)	None listed	1. Self-defined as a liberal studies university program 2. CSUSB pledges to provide sufficient classes for Four-Year Degree Pledge Program. Student signs pledge form. If doesn't graduate in 4 years because a course was not provided, no tuition fee for additional course work. 3.50 undergrad degrees	Discusses establishing assessment methodologies for general education and has formulated learning goals, but no evidence of a report on learning outcomes from gen ed
Georgia College and State University <a href="http://www.gcsu.edu/">http://www.gcsu.edu/</a>	Milledgeville, GA	5,100	Distribution	60 hours	120 hours	None listed	1. Includes 18 hours in general education with courses selected as appropriate to each major.  2.36 undergrad degrees	Discusses documentation of goals and learning outcomes, but no specifics on how learning outcomes are assessed.
University of Southern Maine <a href="http://www.usm.maine.edu/">http://www.usm.maine.edu/</a>	Portland, ME	7,870	Distribution	36 hours	120 hours	None listed.	1. Has separate honors courses accepted for core requirements. 2. 115 areas of study 3. One of the most difficulty web sites to find information	Not clearly delineated in terms of specific learning outcomes or assessment process

Institution	Location	Size - # students Undergrad	Model Type	Liberal Studies # hrs	Degree avg. hrs	No-cr Co-cur	Of special interest or unique quality	Assessments of note
California Polytechnic <a href="http://www.ge.calpoly.edu">http://www.ge.calpoly.edu</a>	San Luis Obispo	18,500 (Fall 2008)	Distribution	72 quarter hours	180 quarter hours	None	Small variation in course requirements across majors. Limited "double-dipping" with major permitted.	<a href="http://www.ge.calpoly.edu/pdfs/facultyandstaff/9mapuloandgedf">http://www.ge.calpoly.edu/pdfs/facultyandstaff/9mapuloandgedf</a> Matrix of LOs and GE courses
Western Washington University <a href="http://pandora.cii.wwu.edu/gened/">http://pandora.cii.wwu.edu/gened/</a>	Bellingham, WA	Fall 2010 13,789	Distribution	67-77 quarter hours	180 quarter hours	None	<a href="http://pandora.cii.wwu.edu/gened/que.htm">http://pandora.cii.wwu.edu/gened/que.htm</a> Includes recommendations for faculty hiring and development	
University of Illinois at Springfield <a href="http://www.uis.edu/generaleducation/">http://www.uis.edu/generaleducation/</a>	Springfield	3,027	Distribution	42 Gen Ed + 13Eng. Citizenship Com Experience	120	none	Engaged Citizenship Common Experience <a href="http://www.uis.edu/generaleducation/transfer/ecce.html">http://www.uis.edu/generaleducation/transfer/ecce.html</a>	
Lamar University	Beaumont, TX	8k	Distribution	45-46	120			<a href="https://sacs.lamar.edu/assessment/assesscomm/CC.php">https://sacs.lamar.edu/assessment/assesscomm/CC.php</a>
Salem State U	Salem, MA	8k	Distribution	33-35	BA:120 BS:120-124; special; 120-125			Assessment: <a href="http://www.salemstate.edu/ir/">http://www.salemstate.edu/ir/</a>
Drake University	Des Moines, Iowa	4k	Distribution (?)	43 (?)	Minimum of 124		Drake has a separate honors core curriculum	<a href="http://www.drake.edu/selfstudy/process/description.php">http://www.drake.edu/selfstudy/process/description.php</a>
UNC-Greensboro <a href="http://www.uncg.edu">http://www.uncg.edu</a>	Greensboro NC	18,500	Distribution	36-37-Gen Ed.	122	none	Particularly well organized web site	<a href="http://provost.uncg.edu/Underedu/GeneralEducation/">http://provost.uncg.edu/Underedu/GeneralEducation/</a>

Institution	Location	Size - # students Undergrad	Model Type	Liberal Studies # hrs	Degree avg. hrs	No-cr Co-cur	Of special interest or unique quality	Assessments of note
Saint Cloud University <a href="http://www.stcloudstate.edu">http://www.stcloudstate.edu</a>	Saint Cloud, MN	15,800	Distribution	40	120	None listed	1. Largest school in the Minnesota system 2. 96 majors	Clearly defined GE learning outcomes. Univ. assessment plan w/prelim data sheets.
Bowie State University <a href="http://www.bowiestate.edu/">http://www.bowiestate.edu/</a>	Bowie MD	5,617	Hybrid	21 core 25 gen ed	120	none		
Illinois Institute of Technology <a href="http://www.iit.edu/">http://www.iit.edu/</a>	Chicago IL	2,618	Hybrid	18 core 40 gen ed	120-136	none	6 hours of interprofessional projects	
Missouri State University <a href="http://www.missouristate.edu/">http://www.missouristate.edu/</a>	Springfield MO		Hybrid	18 core 30 gen ed	120	none		
SUNY Binghamton <a href="http://www.binghamton.edu/">http://www.binghamton.edu/</a>	Binghamton NY	11,706	Hybrid	20 core 24 gen ed	120	none		
Western Kentucky University <a href="http://www.wku.edu/">http://www.wku.edu/</a>	Bowling Green KY	17,645	Hybrid	44	120	none		
Chicago State <a href="http://www.csu.edu/">http://www.csu.edu/</a>	Chicago IL	7000	Hybrid	18-core 24-Gen ed	120	none	LS degree: 18-core 27 – Gen ed select 18 – concentration in 1 of humanities + 33 electives	<a href="http://www.csu.edu/examinations/clep.htm">http://www.csu.edu/examinations/clep.htm</a>
Indiana Univ. – SE, New Albany <a href="http://www.ius.edu/index.cfm">http://www.ius.edu/index.cfm</a>	New Albany, Indiana SE	6,840	Hybrid: emphasis on distribution	45 Gen Ed. LOTs of discipline flexibility	120 Major Req.	None	3 categories of Gen Ed. Courses, tailored to degree specific needs and req. + Master of Liberal Studies <a href="http://www.ius.edu/gened/">http://www.ius.edu/gened/</a>	<a href="http://www.ius.edu/assessment/GenEdAssessment.cfm">http://www.ius.edu/assessment/GenEdAssessment.cfm</a>
Chicago State <a href="http://www.csu.edu/">http://www.csu.edu/</a>	Chicago IL	7000 2/3 from Chicago Metro	Hybrid	18-core 24-Gen ed	120	none	LS degree: 18-core 27 – Gen ed select 18 – concentration in 1 of humanities + 33 electives	<a href="http://www.csu.edu/examinations/clep.htm">http://www.csu.edu/examinations/clep.htm</a>

Institution	Location	Size - # students Undergrad	Model Type	Liberal Studies # hrs	Degree avg. hrs	No-cr Co-cur	Of special interest or unique quality	Assessments of note
Southeast Missouri State University <a href="http://www.semo.edu/">http://www.semo.edu/</a>	Cape Girardeau, MO	10,800	Hybrid	51 hours	120 hours	100% of majors offer an exp.comp.	200 areas of study	Not clearly defined
Shenandoah University <a href="http://www.su.edu/">http://www.su.edu/</a>	Winchester, VA --	3,000	Hybrid	30 hours (min)	120 hours	None listed	1. 80 majors	Clearly identifies learning objectives for 8 areas. Direct assessment by academic profile test and student portfolio.
SUNY College at Oswego <a href="http://www.oswego.edu/">http://www.oswego.edu/</a>	Oswego, NY	7,100	Hybrid	45-51 hours	122 hours	Promoted not required	1. 60 majors	Not clearly delineated in terms of specific learning outcomes or assessment process
Morehead St University <a href="http://www.moreheadstate.edu/smartcatalog/undergraduate-2010-11/2534.htm">http://www.moreheadstate.edu/smartcatalog/undergraduate-2010-11/2534.htm</a>	Morehead, KY	Fall 2009 9,060 total 1,260 New FY students	Hybrid	33: 15 Core (incl. FYS) & 18 distribution	120	None	2010-2011 Transition to Gen Ed	<a href="http://www.moreheadstate.edu/files/projects/genedreform/General_Education_Assessment_Report_and_Plan-FS_5-7-09.pdf">http://www.moreheadstate.edu/files/projects/genedreform/General_Education_Assessment_Report_and_Plan-FS_5-7-09.pdf</a>
Mercer University Private, "faith based" <a href="http://www.mercer.edu/ccps/general/">http://www.mercer.edu/ccps/general/</a>	Main campus Macon, GA	Fall 2009 8072 Total 4531 Undergrad	Hybrid	42	120	None		
E. Stroudsburg U <a href="http://www4.esu.edu/academics/catalogs/undergrad/the-general-education-program.htm#o5132">http://www4.esu.edu/academics/catalogs/undergrad/the-general-education-program.htm#o5132</a>	East Stroudsburg, PA	Fall 2010 6,372	Hybrid but heavily distribution	50: 5 Core & 45 Distribution	120	None		

Institution	Location	Size - # students Undergrad	Model Type	Liberal Studies # hrs	Degree avg. hrs	No-cr Co-cur	Of special interest or unique quality	Assessments of note
Southeastern Louisiana University	Hammond 50 miles N of New Orleans	14,780	Core/Skills Hybrid multiple versions	43-46 Gen ed + technical, industrial, mechanical	120	Vary by major	Multiple versions core/concentration <a href="http://www.selu.edu/acad_research/depts/cs_it/undergrad_degree/courses/pdfs/ET_Courses_List-w.pdf">http://www.selu.edu/acad_research/depts/cs_it/undergrad_degree/courses/pdfs/ET_Courses_List-w.pdf</a>	
U of Michigan, College of Lit, Sciences & Arts <a href="http://www.lsa.umich.edu/advising/requirements/requirements">http://www.lsa.umich.edu/advising/requirements/requirements</a>	Ann Arbor	16,309	Distribution/Skills Hybrid	30 in Distribution plus "skills" hours	120	Varies by major		
U of Michigan, College of Engineering <a href="http://www.engin.umich.edu/students/academics/undergrad/degreeoptions.html">http://www.engin.umich.edu/students/academics/undergrad/degreeoptions.html</a>	Ann Arbor	5,220	Distribution/Skills Hybrid	30 in Distribution plus "skills" hours	128	Varies by major		

Institution	Location	Size - # students Undergrad	Model Type	Liberal Studies # hrs	Degree avg. hrs	No-cr Co-cur	Of special interest or unique quality	Assessments of note
Arizona State U at the West Campus	Phoenix	9K	hybrid	35	120	Some programs require more than 120 cr/hr + 45 upper-div. cr. hours	<p>“<b>The General Studies</b> ...mastery of critical learning skills, investigate the traditional branches of knowledge, and develop the broad perspective that frees one to appreciate diversity and change across time, culture, and national boundaries.” <u>Five core areas:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Literacy and Critical Inquiry</li> <li>Mathematical Studies</li> <li>Humanities, Fine Arts, and Design</li> <li>Social and Behavioral Sciences</li> <li>Natural Sciences</li> </ul> <p><u>Three Awareness areas:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cultural Diversity in the United States (C)</li> <li>Global Awareness (G)</li> <li>Historical Awareness (H)</li> </ul>	Assessment web site for the U of Arizona (can't find one for the West campus): <a href="http://assessment.arizona.edu/">http://assessment.arizona.edu/</a>
University of Alaska	Anchorage, AK	15K?	Hybrid	37	120 42 Upper Div. Cr. incl. 24 residence Cr. 30 cr residence			Assessments: <a href="http://www.uaa.alaska.edu/assessment/">http://www.uaa.alaska.edu/assessment/</a>
Valdosta State U	Valdosta, GA	10K	Hybrid	60	120 include 39 hrs. upper div. incl. min 21 hrs upper in major.		Gen Ed. Courses appropriate to the major (18 hours) A unique feature of this program is the fact that it allows for specific courses in the major (it does so by making its Gen Ed. program 60 hours).	Assessment: <a href="http://www.valdosta.edu/academic/CoreCurriculum.shtml">http://www.valdosta.edu/academic/CoreCurriculum.shtml</a> (Matrix found at this link)
East Carolina U	Greenville, NC	15K or more	Hybrid	45	120			Assessment: <a href="http://www.ecu.edu/cacad/ipar/assessment/index.cfm">http://www.ecu.edu/cacad/ipar/assessment/index.cfm</a>

Institution	Location	Size - # students Undergrad	Model Type	Liberal Studies # hrs	Degree avg. hrs	No-cr Co-cur	Of special interest or unique quality	Assessments of note
Univ of Georgia <a href="http://www.uga.edu/">http://www.uga.edu/</a>	Athens, GA	26,142	Hybrid	60-core 42-gen.ed 18-major/r	120	none	At least 21 semester hours of upper division courses in the major field At least 39 semester hours of upper division work overall.	<a href="http://www.bulletin.uga.edu/Bulletin_Files/acad/general_Link.htm">http://www.bulletin.uga.edu/Bulletin_Files/acad/general_Link.htm</a>
Calif. State Northridge <a href="http://www.csun.edu/">http://www.csun.edu/</a>	Northridge, LA, CA	21,943 FT 7,817 PT	Hybrid	48 units of Gen. Ed.	120	None	<a href="http://www.csun.edu/catalog/general/education.html#basicskills">http://www.csun.edu/catalog/general/education.html#basicskills</a>	<a href="http://www.csun.edu/catalog/general/education.html">http://www.csun.edu/catalog/general/education.html</a>
Framingham State, MA <a href="http://www.framingham.edu/">http://www.framingham.edu/</a>	Framingham, MA	3,847	Hybrid	42-Gen Ed.	?	None	Bachelor of Arts with a Major in Liberal Studies <a href="http://www.framingham.edu/graduate-and-continuing-education/undergraduate-evening-programs/liberal-studies.htm">http://www.framingham.edu/graduate-and-continuing-education/undergraduate-evening-programs/liberal-studies.htm</a>	<a href="http://www.framingham.edu/undergraduate-and-continuing-education/documents/1011/academic-programs.pdf">http://www.framingham.edu/undergraduate-and-continuing-education/documents/1011/academic-programs.pdf</a>
Northern Michigan, Marquette <a href="http://www.nmu.edu/">http://www.nmu.edu/</a>	Marquette-Michigan	8,400	Hybrid	40 liberal studies credits	124-150	None	Bachelor of Arts / Science with a Major in Liberal Studies <a href="http://www.nmu.edu/departments/interdisciplinary/liberalarts/">http://www.nmu.edu/departments/interdisciplinary/liberalarts/</a>	Individual programs <a href="http://www.nmu.edu/academics/icp.shtml">http://www.nmu.edu/academics/icp.shtml</a> FYE <a href="http://webb.nmu.edu/FirstYearPrograms/SiteSections/FirstYearExperience/FirstYearExperience.shtml">http://webb.nmu.edu/FirstYearPrograms/SiteSections/FirstYearExperience/FirstYearExperience.shtml</a>
SUNY Fredonia <a href="http://www.fredonia.edu/">http://www.fredonia.edu/</a>	Western New York	4,848	Hybrid	33-42 Core Curic.	128 hours	None	Core Curriculum Check sheet: <a href="http://www.fredonia.edu/departments/gened/checksheet.pdf">http://www.fredonia.edu/departments/gened/checksheet.pdf</a> CCC waiver <a href="http://www.fredonia.edu/departments/gened/waivers.asp">http://www.fredonia.edu/departments/gened/waivers.asp</a>	Liberal Arts FYE <a href="http://www.fredonia.edu/acadadv/lafye/">http://www.fredonia.edu/acadadv/lafye/</a>
Santa Clara University, CA <a href="http://www.scu.edu/">http://www.scu.edu/</a>	Santa Clara, CA	5,267	Hybrid /Core	p.7- Core Curriculum <a href="http://www.scu.edu/prov-">http://www.scu.edu/prov-</a>	BA /BS min. of 175 qt units & 197 qt	none	“Education of the whole person in the Jesuit and Catholic tradition with a vision of developing men and women to be leaders of competence, conscience, and compassion.”	Very detailed – unique from all other programs reviewed on this list.

Institution	Location	Size - # students Undergrad	Model Type	Liberal Studies # hrs	Degree avg. hrs	No-cr Co-cur	Of special interest or unique quality	Assessments of note
				<a href="#">ost/ugst/core2009/upload/Core-Guide-Web-Version-9-15-10.pdf</a>	units for physics engineering maj.		BS in Liberal Studies <a href="http://www.scu.edu/academics/bulletins/undergraduate/Liberal-Studies-Program.cfm">http://www.scu.edu/academics/bulletins/undergraduate/Liberal-Studies-Program.cfm</a>	
Fort Hayes State Univ. <a href="http://www.fhsu.edu/">http://www.fhsu.edu/</a>	Hays, KS	4,415 campus 7,468 online Total 11,883	Hybrid	Gen. ed. 55 hrs 2parts: Foundation Studies & Liberal Arts	124 Non-teaching	none	Bachelor of General Studies Degree	
Cal St Dominguez Hills	Carson, CA	10,247	hybrid	55-62	120-132	- "Graduation Writing Assessment Requirement"	-Requires a course (3 hrs) in Logic/Critical Reasoning -Requires 9 hrs of "Upper Level Integrative Studies"	
New Mexico Highlands	Las Vegas, NM	2,257	hybrid	56	128			
Southern U & A&M	Baton Rouge, LA	7,627	hybrid	50-56	124	-60 hrs of service learning	-Capstone Project/Internship -3 hrs of African American Experience	
U Michigan Dearborn	Dearborn, MI	6,959	hybrid	45-48	120		-3 cr hr "Diversity" req'd	
Youngstown St	Youngstown, OH	13,373	hybrid	48	124		-1 capstone course req'd -1 interdisciplinary course	

Institution	Location	Size - # students Undergrad	Model Type	Liberal Studies # hrs	Degree avg. hrs	No-cr Co-cur	Of special interest or unique quality	Assessments of note
Pfeiffer U	Misenheisenheimer, NC	1,800	hybrid	47-53	124	-60 units in Cultural Program, by attending lectures, concerts, etc. -Sr. Project in the major		
Florida St	Tallahassee, FL	31,698	hybrid	36	120			
Adams State College	Alamosa CO	2,920						
Clarion University www.clarion.edu	Clarion PA	<b>7,315</b>	Distribution	48 h	81-120 h	None	Identifies "nine goals for undergraduate education," "applicable to the lives of all students regardless of major." Degree offerings include a BA degree in Liberal Studies, with several concentration areas	
James Madison University www.jmu.edu	Harrisonburg VA	17,657	Distribution	41 h	120 h	None	General Education courses and requirements are organized into five areas of study. Has a School of Liberal Arts.	
Rhode Island College www.ric.edu	Providence RI	9,000	Hybrid	39-44 h	79-103 h	None		
Texas State University www.txstate.edu	San Marcos TX	26,000	Hybrid	47	120-137	none		

<b>Institution</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Size - # students Undergrad</b>	<b>Model Type</b>	<b>Liberal Studies # hrs</b>	<b>Degree avg. hrs</b>	<b>No-cr Co-cur</b>	<b>Of special interest or unique quality</b>	<b>Assessments of note</b>
Univ of Wisconsin La Crosse <a href="http://www.uwlax.edu">www.uwlax.edu</a>	Menomonie WI	8,758	Distribution	48	72-88	None	GE program includes a liberal studies <i>component</i> with thematic categories and inquiry-based teaching / learning. Has College of Liberal Studies.	
Bradley University <a href="http://www.bradley.edu">www.bradley.edu</a>	Peoria IL	5,067	Distribution	36	60-126	None		
SUNY Cortland <a href="http://www.cortland.edu">www.cortland.edu</a>	Cortland NY	6,326	Distribution	44-47	120-124	None	Requires coursework in 13 study areas, or "learning outcome study areas."	General Education program revised July 2010

## Appendix H: A Review of the Recent General Education Literature

The General Education Review Task Force received its charge from the Faculty Senate to review the general education program at Western Carolina University (WCU) and to make recommendations for changes in the current program. This report is offered as a survey of what is currently known about best practices in general education.

While much has been written about general education, the literature review working group quickly found that most of what has been published has been in the forms of opinion and discussion. In order to uncover the most relevant and reliable information, the articles for this review were limited to high-quality research studies and influential reports. In concluding that recent studies had accounted for prior work, and because the review group wished to focus on the latest information available, only studies and reports published since 2000 were considered.

### General Education

General education is an “important feature of the student academic experience in American colleges and universities,” that comprises nearly 30 percent of the undergraduate curriculum (Brint, Proctor, Murphy, Turk-Bicakci, & Hanneman, 2009, p. 605). Leskes and Wright (2005) defined three “anchoring concepts” related to general education: a) clear programmatic purpose for general education; b) resonance with the institution’s distinctive mission, and c) transparent, powerful goals and outcomes of learning.

Warner and Koepfel (2009) emphasized the importance of general education to undergraduate education, “Every institution of higher education is required by its accrediting body to offer some form of general education,” Specifically, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools’ (SACS) *Principles of Accreditation* (2010) states their requirements:

In each undergraduate degree program, the institution requires the successful completion of a general education component at the collegiate level that (1) is a substantial component of each undergraduate degree, (2) ensures breadth of knowledge, and (3) is based on a coherent rationale . . . [and] for baccalaureate programs, [requires] a minimum of 30 semester hours or the equivalent. These credit hours are to be drawn from and include at least one course from each of the following areas: humanities/fine arts, social/behavioral sciences, and natural science/mathematics. The courses do not narrowly focus on those skills, techniques, and procedures specific to a particular occupation or profession . . . (p. 17).

In 2009 The Association of American Colleges and Universities (AACU) surveyed 433 colleges and universities and identified the percentage of institutions that included the following overlapping models and elements of general education programs: distribution models (80%); common intellectual experiences (41%); thematic required courses (36%); upper level requirements (33%); core curriculum (30%); and learning communities (24%).

Brint, et al. (2009) analyzed general education requirements in the United States over a quarter century, 1975-2000. Traditional models of general education – core distribution areas and liberal arts – persisted through the 1975-2000 period, and two newer models – cultures and ethics, and civic/utilitarian preparation – originated early in the period and also persisted.

According to Brint, et al., during the 25-year period, general education curricula primarily expanded and diversified to include more subject areas. This change generally occurred incrementally, through addition and elimination of individual courses. Expansion of general education programs was driven partly by a perceived need to demonstrate enhanced career outcomes for graduates, called for by political and business stakeholders. The increased breadth of general education was also partly due to the “guild interests” of faculty who see inclusion of their courses in the general education curriculum as securing them to their positions in the university (p. 39). The authors also identified a trend toward diversification of requirements, with the addition of subjects such as academic skills, gender and racial-ethnic diversity, and non-Western cultures. The authors concluded by making the case for thematically integrated groups of courses:

In recent years, these proposals have included, most notably, the introduction of thematic “bundles” of courses to provide perspectives on such important issues as race relations, environmental sustainability, energy and society, and terrorism (Carnegie Foundation, 2008; University of California, 2007). A number of universities have experimented successfully with this approach. It is possible that the new wave of thematically bundled courses will provide a way to bridge the guild interests of department-based faculty while harkening to the spirit of the original general education movement by encouraging a confrontation between knowledge drawn from many disciplines and issues of great moment. (p. 635)

McNertney and Ferrandino (2010) described the process of general education reform at Texas Christian University (TCU). TCU embraced a hybrid general education model with elements of both distribution and core curriculum models, and a common intellectual experience. The authors offered some very useful suggestions for how to manage the mechanics of general education reform. Finally, describing a problem that WCU will likely strive to avoid, the authors also explained how they solved the dilemma of requiring an unusually large number of general education credits (by allowing for very significant double-counting of hours in student programs).

#### Student Views, Achievement, and Outcomes

Student motivations for attending college have changed significantly over time (McNertney & Ferrandino, 2010). Between 1970 and 2006, the percentage of college students who rated “being well off financially” as an “essential” or “very important” goal rose from 36.2 to 73.6 percent, while the percentage of those students who attached similar importance to “acquiring a meaningful philosophy of life” fell from 79.0 to 39.6 percent (Bok, 2006, p. 26). According to Bok, this change in student goals may have accompanied the increase in college tuition and other costs, which calls for an increased material return to justify the financial outlay for college.

A series of studies that examined student attitudes toward general education courses indicated that such courses are not valued by students (Miller & Sundre, 2008). While students enter college placing equal value on all of their courses, by the second year of college there is a significant difference in students' motivation to achieve in general education courses as compared to their performance in non-general education courses: "Students became only *slightly* less motivated to learn and perform well in their overall coursework while becoming *much* less motivated to learn and perform in their general education courses" (p. 164). Miller and Sundre concluded that students believe that general education courses are less engaging, and not as in-depth as courses that are not classified as general education.

Other research has demonstrated that an emphasis on liberal studies has positive impacts on student achievement in areas such as reading comprehension, writing, and scientific reasoning (Pascarella, Wonaik, Seifert, Cruce, & Blaich, 2005). Of particular interest is that these gains were more significant for students who entered college with low test scores and for people of color.

Laird, Niskode-Dossett and Kuh (2009) examined what general education courses contribute to essential learning outcomes, using data from the 2005 administration of the Faculty Survey of Student Engagement (FSSE), which included approximately 11,000 respondents from 109 institutions. The authors concluded that "compared with non-GECS [general education courses], GECS are structured to a greater extent to promote intellectual skills (writing and speaking clearly and effectively, thinking critically, and learning effectively on one's own) and individual and social responsibility (understanding oneself, understanding people of other racial and ethnic backgrounds, developing a personal code of values and ethics, and developing a deepened sense of spirituality)" (p. 80).

### **First Year Experience and Retention**

First Year Experience (FYE) programs are often connected with both general education programs (Wehlburg, 2010) and retention (Orillian, 2009; Strayhorn, 2009). The AACU (2009) survey mentioned above found that 58 percent of its member institutions had FYE as a particular aspect of their general education programs. Wehlburg (2010) argued that FYE programs have many goals, "most [of them] focused on introducing the first-year student to the institution, preparing them for university-level education, and affording some element of general education (global understanding, cultural awareness, or ethical thinking)" (p. 9). Wehlburg concluded that FYE programs can become instruments to communicate expectations to students and assure a common baccalaureate experience.

Although Strayhorn (2009) analyzed a first-year seminar that was very different from the kind of experience offered at WCU (the course was more similar to our USI 130 experience), he concluded that "First-year seminars that bring students in contact with advisors frequently are believed to be most effective in terms of promoting student success" (p. 12). In order to improve this relationship, Strayhorn also suggested that "[w]hile first-year seminars are largely designed

to assist students in their adjustment to college, mere participation does not guarantee integration or satisfaction. Based on findings from this analysis, educators should design first-year seminars that integrate both academic and social learning outcomes” (p. 23).

Porter and Swing (2006) surveyed approximately 20,000 first-year students attending 45 four-year institutions, and analyzed institutional data to comprehend how specific aspects of first-year seminars affected early desire to persist. Their literature review revealed numerous studies that demonstrated a relationship between positive intent to persist and enrollment in first year seminars. The study examined the impacts of specific aspects of first-year seminars, including study skills, campus policies, campus engagement, peer connection, and health information. Of those, study skills and health education were found to be significantly related to student intent to persist. The authors theorized that health education was valued by students because it was personal to their lives, and faculty seemed to care about them. Course syllabi and selection of topics for the first-year seminar were considered by the authors to be an opportunity for the creation of outcomes to align with institutional goals.

Harvey, Drew, and Smith (2006) also examined the connection between first-year experience and retention. The “key factors in ensuring progression appeared to be: personal goal setting and motivation; family and friends; paid work and financial situation; peer support; institutional habits; cultural capital; prior information and choices; expectations; satisfaction; teaching and learning process and engagement with teachers; assessment and discussion of progress” (p. 5). The authors concluded that the FYE needed to be a “holistic and evolving experience,” with a focus on “building on their strengths, rather than do[ing] things to students on the basis of a deficit model that emphasizes inadequacies” (p. 8).

Orillion (2009) studied the relationships between interdisciplinary approaches and student outcomes. Citing Tsui (2001), Orillion maintained “that faculty at research universities were less likely than faculty at colleges and universities that supported instructional efforts to engage in practices that would develop students’ critical-thinking skills.” She went on to conclude that “[t]hese choices have significant effects on student learning and retention” (p. 16).

### **Capstone Courses, Learning Communities, and Relationships with Disciplines**

Huber and Hutchings (2004) made the case for placing integrative learning at the center of educational mission, something that we have already done at WCU in the context of the QEP. The authors found that capstone experiences can serve both learning and assessment functions.

Hawthorne, Kelsch, and Steen (2010) contended that colleges and universities have an opportunity to link general education and the overall undergraduate experience with major course work through the capstone experience. They claimed that this requirement introduces a means of reinforcing the goals of the program for students who transfer in with most of their general education coursework completed. Further, the capstone experience, because it is offered in the con-

text of the major programs, serves as an effective means of integrating undergraduate experiences with those of the major.

According to Hawthorne, et al. (2010) an unexpected benefit of the capstone approach at the University of North Dakota has been that many faculty members teaching capstone courses are modifying them to emphasize general education goals more explicitly:

The standards required to achieve validation of courses are higher, with direct assessment of clearly articulated goals required as part of revalidation. Because more departments are offering courses to meet the special emphasis requirements, general education goals are being integrated at all levels of the curriculum and in courses taught by a greater range of faculty. The general education capstone commonly doubles as a disciplinary capstone, so departments are focused in a new way on general education outcomes. (p. 32)

Henscheid, Breitmeyer, and Mercer (2000) conducted a survey of senior seminars and capstone courses across all types of American colleges and universities and found that such courses are usually designed to give students an understanding and appreciation for single academic disciplines. The authors concluded that senior seminar and capstone courses usually focused on specialization and preparation for work in the field of the academic major. Furthermore, the authors identified the following areas for possible development and improvement:

- Experiences that took students out of the classroom, either into the work place, the community, or an educational travel experience were the least likely instructional components in senior seminars and capstone courses.
- Generally, senior seminars and capstone courses were taught by individual faculty members, and most courses, including interdisciplinary courses, were administered by individual academic departments.
- The majority of senior seminars and capstone courses were not part of a comprehensive assessment process. When senior seminars and capstone courses were evaluated, it was by the students and faculty members who participated in these courses.

AACU (2007) investigated the FYE, learning communities, and capstone experiences as innovative educational methods that are also well suited for assessing students' collective learning. However, the study reports that these methods usually remain optional rather than required.

### **Assessment**

The literature related to the subject of assessment tends to revolve around safe assumptions in this new era of accountability to state legislators, to accrediting agencies, and to students. First, there is a need to articulate learning outcomes clearly and in relation to the mission of the institution and its major programs. Second, arriving at a coherent and reliable way of assessing these outcomes is made complex by a wide range of factors, including the amount of choice that stu-

dents have in the general education programs, faculty engagement, and institutional emphasis. What follows are brief summaries of some of these conclusions found in leading studies.

Terenzini (2010) defined assessment as “the measurement of the educational impact of an institution on its students” (p. 29). He presented a thorough outline of the problems that arise when creating, implementing, and instituting student outcome standards in the areas of definitional issues, organizational/implementation issues, and methodological issues. Many of the suggestions were very practical, such as starting with small pilot projects to build support, and inventorying existing data collection points.

The authors of the Lumina Foundation Report (2011) contend that “[r]egardless of their degree level, students certified to go forward as adaptive, creative and entrepreneurial persons must demonstrate competence in understanding and applying differing cultural, political and technological perspectives” (p 8).

AACU (2009) measured the prevalence of specified learning outcomes and documented recent trends in curriculum change in general education and assessment. The authors concluded that although the surveyed institutions felt they had developed clear learning goals with requirements linked to those goals, they did not feel that a highly useful assessment of student achievement of those goals had been achieved. The authors also contended that there is not appropriate integration of general education with student’s major requirements.

Brint et al. (2009) discussed the importance of “accountability” in the context of legislatures that fund universities and of employers who express dissatisfaction with the skill sets of new employees. Laird et al. (2009) affirmed the value of general education courses (as opposed to non-general education courses) as a vehicle for more effectively delivering and assessing “intellectual skills . . . and individual and social responsibility” (p. 80). Warner and Koeppel (2009) concluded that “the more options a student has to fulfill general education requirements, the more assessment must focus on skills and broader knowledge rather than specific content” (p. 257).

AACU (2007) contended that on the basis of clear outcomes and expectations “assessments should be imbedded at milestone points in the curriculum” (p. 41). These assessments should include portfolios and other capstone experiences that represent “authentic performances” of student learning

AACU (2009) found that when asked to rate their institutions two thirds of general education program administrators reported strong evidence of clear learning goals and requirements linked to those goals. However, only half reported strong evidence in assessing their students’ achievement of those goals. Factors that strongly correlated with clear learning goals and requirements linked to those goals were: broad assessments, integration of general education and majors, and a capstone project for students.

## Future Directions

According to AACU (2007) learning goals should not be limited to the general education program—some must be fulfilled by major courses. Instead, the authors contended that a college curriculum should intentionally foster learning, “across multiple fields of study, wide-ranging knowledge of sciences, cultures, and society; high-level intellectual skills; an active commitment to personal and social responsibility; and the demonstrated ability to apply learning to complex problems and challenges” (p. 4). Thus serving a diverse student body drawn from a diverse population precludes any one-size-fits-all approach (AACU, 2007, p. 4). Scope and depth of learning are now perceived as more valuable than particular content, given that students will have to function in an increasingly complex and rapidly-changing social, and technological environment (AACU, 2007, p. 13). The authors concluded that fostering flexibility will be increasingly more important than any particular factual or theoretical knowledge.

The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill refashioned its general education program to focus on “making connections” (Smith & Kruse, 2009). Although a significant portion of that effort was focused on internationalizing the curriculum (which seems less than a primary consideration here at Western), much of the reform did involve encouraging cognitive integration of knowledge across disciplines. UNC-CH encountered numerous challenges. A planned increase in foreign language requirements was delayed because instructional staff could not be hired. A large and highly bureaucratized research university, where faculty members have more competing demands on their time and attention, provides a poor environment for sustained attention to curricular reform, even when consensus is reached on desired learning outcomes (Smith & Kruse, 2009, p. 118). A smaller regional comprehensive institution may be a better venue for implementing a coherent and effective general education program.

Huber and Hutchings (2004) identified useful types of learning experiences that universities have developed, including “connected learning through first-year seminars, learning communities, interdisciplinary studies programs, capstone experiences, individual portfolios, advising, student self-assessment, and other initiatives” (p. 13). But for them these approaches are too often isolated and un-integrated among general education, major, and elective experiences: “[A] variety of opportunities to develop the capacity for integrative learning should be available to all students throughout their college years, and should be a cornerstone of a twenty-first-century education” (p. 13).

Huber and Hutchings identified benefits generated by programs that are justified as intentionally structured to achieve well-articulated outcomes. They note, “students need programs of study that will help them understand the nature and advantages of integrative learning and assist them in pursuing their college experience in intentionally connected ways” (p. 13). The need for a curriculum to emphasize learning as an intentional process aiming at a coherent and explicated goal (AACU, 2007, pp. 4, 26) may seem desirable, but Huber and Hutchings (2004) found such

approaches are rarely implemented well, much less attempted and curricula are often presented to students as: here are your requirements: go out and satisfy them.

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## Appendix I: Results of the Faculty Survey

Both the complete data from the Faculty Survey and a summary of the qualitative analysis of comments are available on the public General Education folder of the H: drive. Provided here are the tables from the report and an analysis of the qualitative comments provided by respondents.

### 1. What is your faculty status?

#	Answer		Response	%
1	Full time		281	92%
2	Adjunct		23	8%
	Total		304	100%

Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	2
Mean	1.08
Variance	0.07
Standard Deviation	0.26
Total Responses	304

### 2. Please indicate your rank:

#	Answer		Response	%
1	Instructor/Lecturer		41	13%
2	Assistant Professor		88	29%
3	Associate Professor		108	35%

4	Full Professor		48	16%
5	Visiting Professor		4	1%
6	Emeritus Professor		0	0%
7	Professional Staff/Administrator with Teaching Responsibilities		17	6%
	Total		306	100%

Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	7
Mean	2.85
Variance	1.91
Standard Deviation	1.38
Total Responses	306

### 3. How long have you taught at WCU?

#	Answer		Response	%
1	3 years or less		64	21%
2	4 to 7 years		91	30%
3	8 to 10 years		60	20%
4	more than 10 years		89	29%
	Total		304	100%

Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	4
Mean	2.57
Variance	1.26
Standard Deviation	1.12
Total Responses	304

#### 4. How many other institutions have you taught at?

#	Question	none	1-2	3 or more	Responses	Mean
1	Number of other institutions	60	181	65	306	2.02

Statistic	Number of other institutions
Min Value	1
Max Value	3
Mean	2.02
Variance	0.41
Standard Deviation	0.64
Total Responses	306

**5. Do you currently teach liberal studies courses or have you taught them in the last year at WCU? (liberal studies includes core, perspectives, first year seminar, upper level perspectives)**

#	Answer		Response	%
1	Yes		163	53%
2	No		143	47%
	Total		306	100%

Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	2
Mean	1.47
Variance	0.25
Standard Deviation	0.50
Total Responses	306

**6. On average, how many liberal studies courses do you teach each semester?**

#	Question	one	two	three	four	Responses	Mean
1	Number of Liberal Studies courses taught per semester	98	32	16	10	156	1.60
	Statistic	Number of Liberal Studies courses taught per semester					
	Min Value	1					
	Max Value	4					
	Mean	1.60					

Variance	0.83
Standard Deviation	0.91
Total Responses	156

### 7. Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statements

#	Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Responses	Mean
1	I feel supported in my liberal studies teaching by appropriate administrative personnel	29	72	41	12	2	156	2.27
2	I can identify administrative personnel who can assist me with my liberal studies course(s).	30	66	31	23	5	155	2.40
3	I have access to resources that assist me in achieving liberal studies education goals.	30	79	32	14	0	155	2.19
4	Entering students are prepared for college-level work.	2	29	44	56	24	155	3.46
5	WCU's current liberal education curriculum aligns with the QEP Learning Outcomes (i.e., integrates information, solves complex problems, communicate effectively/responsibly, practices civic engagement, clarifies/acts on purpose/values).	24	70	38	17	6	155	2.43
6	I am aware of the current liberal studies objectives for my college/department.	46	71	23	13	2	155	2.06

7	I am aware of the liberal studies objectives for my liberal studies course(s).	67	68	11	8	0	154	1.74
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Statistic	I feel supported in my liberal studies teaching by appropriate administrative personnel	I can identify administrative personnel who can assist me with my liberal studies course(s).	I have access to resources that assist me in achieving liberal studies education goals.	Entering students are prepared for college-level work.	WCU's current liberal education curriculum aligns with the QEP Learning Outcomes (i.e., integrates information, solves complex problems, communicate effectively/responsibly, practices civic engagement, clarifies/acts on purpose/values).	I am aware of the current liberal studies objectives for my college/department.	I am aware of the liberal studies objectives for my liberal studies course(s).
Min Value	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Max Value	5	5	4	5	5	5	4
Mean	2.27	2.40	2.19	3.46	2.43	2.06	1.74
Variance	0.80	1.12	0.73	1.02	1.01	0.90	0.65
Standard Deviation	0.90	1.06	0.85	1.01	1.01	0.95	0.81
Total Responses	156	155	155	155	155	155	154

**8. Which of the following activities would you ACTUALLY participate in to strengthen your engagement with the general education program and objectives? (check all that apply)**

#	Answer		Response	%
1	Small group analysis		51	36%
2	Faculty learning communities		37	26%
3	Reader's roundtables		19	14%
4	Summer institute on teaching and learning		40	29%
5	Workshop/seminar series		61	44%
6	Student evaluation data analysis		48	34%
7	Assessment support		35	25%
8	Educational briefcase		22	16%
9	QEP implementation support		39	28%
10	Scholarship of teaching and learning		38	27%
11	Scholarship of engagement		30	21%
12	Faculty writing circles		7	5%
13	Instructional technology support		47	34%
14	Mentoring program		36	26%

Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	14
Total Responses	140

**13. Please indicate whether you agree or disagree on the importance of the following components of the existing WCU liberal studies curriculum:**

#	Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Responses	Mean
1	Composition	245	37	7	1	1	291	1.20
2	Mathematics	195	81	12	2	1	291	1.40
3	Science	191	74	20	7	1	293	1.47
4	Humanities and the Fine Arts	155	98	28	10	2	293	1.66
5	Social and Behavioral Sciences	134	109	33	11	1	288	1.74
6	Speech/Oral Communication	144	91	33	16	8	292	1.81
7	Wellness	81	79	61	37	33	291	2.53
8	Diversity of World Cultures	127	100	46	11	9	293	1.89
9	First Year Seminar	57	64	76	50	42	289	2.85
10	Upper Level Perspectives	56	65	73	42	52	288	2.89

Statistic	Composition	Mathematics	Science	Humanities and the Fine Arts	Social and Behavioral Sciences	Speech/Oral Communication	Wellness	Diversity of World Cultures	First Year Seminar	Upper Level Perspectives
Min Value	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Max	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
Mean	1.20	1.40	1.47	1.66	1.74	1.81	2.53	1.89	2.85	2.89
Vari-	0.27	0.41	0.57	0.71	0.70	1.04	1.75	1.01	1.75	1.87
Standard Deviation	0.52	0.64	0.76	0.84	0.83	1.02	1.32	1.00	1.32	1.37
Total	291	291	293	293	288	292	291	293	289	288

**14. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following proposed Guiding Principles for the future General Education Program at WCU**

#	Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Responses	Mean
1	General Education should be general. All students at the university should meet the same set of general education outcomes.	122	95	25	31	16	289	2.04
2	There should be one General Education Program for all Students.	114	67	38	50	20	289	2.29
4	General Education must be fully integrated within the QEP.	76	95	77	26	16	290	2.35
6	General Education is not remedial.	167	77	25	18	4	291	1.68



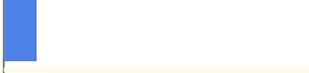
Mean	2.04	2.29	2.35	1.68	2.42	1.67	2.56	2.14
Variance	1.44	1.76	1.27	0.93	1.36	0.73	1.39	1.32
Standard Deviation	1.20	1.33	1.13	0.96	1.17	0.85	1.18	1.15
Total Responses	289	289	290	291	287	291	289	288

**15. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? WCU's future General Education Program should...**

#	Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Responses	Mean
1	offer students the opportunity to take courses from a variety of academic disciplines.	185	94	8	5	1	293	1.44
2	give students an interdisciplinary curricular experience	159	104	21	4	5	293	1.61
3	offer students a wide variety of choice.	118	105	38	27	5	293	1.96

Statistic	offer students the opportunity to take courses from a variety of academic disciplines.	give students an interdisciplinary curricular experience	offer students a wide variety of choice.
Min Value	1	1	1
Max Value	5	5	5
Mean	1.44	1.61	1.96
Variance	0.45	0.67	1.06
Standard Deviation	0.67	0.82	1.03
Total Responses	293	293	293

**18. Please check your college:**

#	Answer		Response	%
1	Arts and Sciences		134	44%
2	Business		36	12%
3	Education and Allied Professions		40	13%
4	Fine and Performing Arts		32	10%
5	Health and Human Sciences		42	14%
6	Kimmel School of Construction Management and Technology.		11	4%
7	Hunter Library		8	3%
8	Other, please describe		3	1%
	Total		306	100%

Other, please describe
Academic Advising
Academic Advising
administration

Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	8
Mean	2.65
Variance	3.40

Standard Deviation	1.84
Total Responses	306

**19. Please indicate the degree to which the liberal studies program contributes to the WCU QEP learning outcomes:**

#	Question	Contributes Significantly	Contributes	Neither contributes nor fails to contribute	Adds little	Does not Contribute	Responses	Mean
1	Integrates information from a variety of contexts	108	104	39	23	10	284	2.02
2	Solves complex problems	59	105	58	43	18	283	2.49
3	Communicates effectively and responsibly	78	130	46	23	6	283	2.11
4	Practices civic engagement	45	99	83	36	20	283	2.60
5	Clarify and act on purpose and values	51	98	82	33	18	282	2.54

Statistic	Integrates information from a variety of contexts	Solves complex problems	Communicates effectively and responsibly	Practices civic engagement	Clarify and act on purpose and values
Min Value	1	1	1	1	1
Max Value	5	5	5	5	5
Mean	2.02	2.49	2.11	2.60	2.54
Variance	1.16	1.36	0.94	1.24	1.23
Standard Deviation	1.08	1.16	0.97	1.11	1.11
Total Responses	284	283	283	283	282

**20. How many academic hours should be required in a future General Education Program at WCU?**

#	Answer		Response	%
1	30 hours minimum as required by SACS		121	43%
2	31-35 hours		52	18%
3	36-40 hours		65	23%
4	41-45 hours		30	11%
5	46-50 hours		15	5%
	Total		283	100%

Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	5
Mean	2.17
Variance	1.53
Standard Deviation	1.24
Total Responses	283

**21. How many hours in the future General Education Program should be allowed to also satisfy major requirements (i.e., "double dipping")?**

#	Answer		Response	%
1	none		41	14%
2	3-6 hours		120	42%

3	7-10 hours		64	23%
4	more than 10 hours		59	21%
	Total		284	100%

Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	4
Mean	2.50
Variance	0.96
Standard Deviation	0.98
Total Responses	284

**22. Which of the following would you be willing to teach in a future general education program? (check all that apply)**

#	Answer		Response	%
1	first year seminar		156	62%
2	upper level perspective		161	64%
3	interdisciplinary courses		171	68%
5	team taught courses		144	57%
4	learning communities		76	30%

Statistic	Value
Min Value	1

Max Value	5
Total Responses	252

## **Faculty Liberal Studies Survey**

### **Qualitative results – major themes**

Faculty members shared their opinions on the current liberal studies (LS) program as well as the future of general education at Western Carolina University.

#### **The Current LS Program**

##### **Students**

Faculty members appreciate students' "who want to learn" and enjoy helping students with the first year college transition. They enjoy "opening students' eyes" to their respective disciplines as well as working with students from a variety of majors. However, faculty members also struggle with the skill and knowledge base that students come to WCU with (e.g., writing, higher order thinking). Many students need "remediating skills that [they] should already have when they enter my classes," and others have "prejudice against LS courses."

##### **Program structure**

Some faculty members believe that the LS program goals and curriculum are appropriate while others believe that the overall program purpose needs more clarity (i.e., "I'd like to see a clearer purpose articulated, and that students, faculty, staff, and administration all know of this purpose and recognize its benefit to our students. It should have clear connections with QEP goals and assessment."). The focus on interdisciplinary, integrative, concept-based teaching is a plus, and the faculty appreciates the writing-intensive nature of the program as well as the relatively small class sizes. However, others worry about the increasing class sizes at WCU as well as a lack of rigor in the courses ("courses are too easy"). Some faculty members are likewise concerned about how the courses are distributed across programs (e.g., "Too many history courses and sections..." and "PAR has too many courses in liberal studies..."), and they worry about the impact of this "turfiness" ("My guess would be turf warfare. Everyone wants his or her disciplines covered...").

In general, faculty members are split on two major fronts regarding the LS program:

- Too restrictive ("More flexibility in how to meet the objectives") vs. too flexible ("... Too many choices, too much variation within a given category (e.g., P1).")
- Focus on pre-career education vs. broader LS objectives ("Preservation of a broad liberal studies base while the institutional mission and the QEP steer us more toward career training.")

### **Support for LS program faculty**

Many faculty members are comfortable with the current levels of LS support (“I have the resources I need”). However, others are hoping to increase professional development for LS faculty (e.g., differentiated instruction, higher order thinking skills, covering objectives). They also look for increased support for using technological resources (“We have wonderful technological support, but they are overwhelmed and most of us teaching LS are NOT technologically savvy – an increase in tech building of courses/support would be extremely helpful.”). In addition to these supports, faculty hope for an increase in peer support (“There is not a widespread buy-in to the program from faculty”) as well as access to LS course modules and/or models to help improve their teaching (“previously prepared course modules that have been effective for others in the past”).

### **University/institutional support for LS**

Increasing time for LS development and an increase in funding/resources (“funding for library materials, funding for outside speakers, funding for field trips”) stand at the forefront of current weaknesses in terms of institutional support. In addition, faculty request more/better marketing (“A way to promote my course directly to students who might excel”) of the LS program and an increase in general LS faculty support (“Clear leadership and buy-in from all on campus.”).

### **The Future of General Education at WCU**

While many faculty members felt that no changes are needed to the liberal studies program (“Continue to focus on the whole student – intellectual, physical, emotional.”), others believe that any future general education program needs program clarification and work on the teaching and content.

#### **Program clarification**

Some faculty members agreed that clarification is needed for LS program assessment (“... must build assessment in on the front end” and “It should have clear connections with... assessment”) as well as connection to the QEP (“... integrated into the QEP”). Still other faculty members believe that including different tracks for Honors vs. non-Honors students is inconsistent with the LS philosophy (“I have heard that Honors College students may be given different requirements, and I don’t agree with that. Gen Ed is Gen Ed, and it should be consistent across the board.”). Others disagree where the future of general education should move at WCU, particularly in regards to:

- Program objectives – skills and knowledge (“Our student profile is changing, we are not a liberal arts univ...” and “... memorization and knowing facts about the subject area studied”) vs. a broad, liberal studies perspective (“stick to a ‘liberal’ education format” and “WCU without a broad general education program would be a far weaker institution”)
- Curriculum – simplify (“please simplify the curriculum...”) vs. broaden (“I would love to see more LS course options within majors”)

- Hours required – retain current requirements (“keep it at 30 hours”) vs. decrease hours (“The idea that there is some sort of inherent danger in less than 42 hours of liberal studies has got to be abandoned” and “Less is more!”)

*Teaching and content*

Faculty members believe that future general education needs to include a focus on teaching (“need to keep courses updated with current pedagogical and global trends”) across disciplines (“It would be nice to see a requirement for interdisciplinary/collaborative work”). In addition, a future curriculum should include focus on:

- More writing, including ‘research’ or ‘technical’ writing (“Students should be required to do more analytical research writing in all of their classes.”)
- More science/math (...”mathematics and a physical science must be included”)
- A foreign language requirement (“I’d require 2-3 years of MFL for every student we graduate”)

### **Appendix J: SACS General Education Guidelines**

The institution . . . requires in each undergraduate degree program the successful completion of a general education component at the collegiate level that (1) is a substantial component of each undergraduate degree, (2) ensures breadth of knowledge, and (3) is based on a coherent rationale. For degree completion in associate programs, the component constitutes a minimum of 15 semester hours or the equivalent; for baccalaureate programs, a minimum of 30 semester hours or the equivalent. These credit hours are to be drawn from and include at least one course from each of the following areas: humanities/fine arts; social/behavioral sciences; and natural science/mathematics. The courses do not narrowly focus on those skills, techniques, and procedures specific to a particular occupation or profession. The institution provides a written justification and rationale for course equivalency (General Education).