



ACADEMIC SENATE, MERCED DIVISION
GENERAL EDUCATION SUBCOMMITTEE
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Christopher Viney, Chair, Undergraduate Council
Tom Peterson, Co-Chair, Periodic Review Oversight Committee
Josh Viers, Co-Chair, Periodic Review Oversight Committee

RE: General Education Program Review Response

The General Education (GE) Subcommittee (GESC) of Undergraduate Council is in the response phase of program review. These documents complete the response phase (see p. 14, [Undergraduate Program Review Policy and Procedures](#)). We have provided a narrative (the rest of this memo) which describes our process, an action plan with a timetable and associated tasks, and the template we will use as a framework for our final proposal for a revised GE program. Together, these three documents provide the road map for the work we will undertake through the rest of this year. These three documents are inter-related.

Response Phase: Internal and External Priorities

A subcommittee of Undergraduate Council, the GESC functions as the curriculum committee for the GE program. This is the first academic program review for GE at UC Merced and, in addition to assessing our current GE program, the self-study (submitted by the GESC in November 2014) provided a framework for:

- Development of a broadly inclusive GE program¹ that is reflective of our institutional context
- Processes for systematic and sustainable assessment of GE
- Structures for allocating appropriate resources and incentives to engage Senate faculty in the oversight and delivery of GE (GE Self-Study, p. 4)

The self-study included analyses of student and faculty survey data, census data of GE courses, instructor type, course grades and persistence data. While much could be said about these data, the most salient statement about the self-study conclusions is:

“Although initial plans for a GE program at UCM emphasized interdisciplinary goals, GE has been delivered almost entirely through discipline-specific courses associated with degree program requirements and the menu-based system of breadth offerings specific to each school.”

¹ UCM [policy](#) defines program as “an academic degree program is considered any regularized sequence of courses leading to a degree, including those programs sponsored by groups of faculty from different academic units.”

The external review team visited in February 2015 and provided a report in April 2015 which echoed the self-study and provided many recommendations, including the following:

“It is the Review Team’s recommendation that the current General Education requirements, including School requirements, are insufficient, lack coherence, and are simply not serving the students or campus well. Tinkering with the current requirements will not fix the problem. A thorough reconsideration is needed, of both content and delivery.” (p.1)

In sum, outcomes of our self-study and review by the external review team both concluded that a significant revision of our GE program is needed.

During April 2015, PROC and UGC provided feedback to GESC about priorities. The following are emphases from the PROC memo dated April 30, 2015:

1. Continue to act as the “chair” of the GE program for the purposes of the review process.
2. Pursue multiple avenues for enlisting faculty participation, including School Curriculum Committees, School Executive Committees, Undergraduate Program Chairs, and Academic Senate Committees.
3. Ensure administrative inclusion in the response phase, as a thorough response to the External Team Report will require integrated planning, including attention to resources (of all types) and the institution’s growth trajectory and related timeline.
4. Evaluate the Strategic Academic Focusing pillars as an organizing structure for the redesign of GE
5. Attend to the WSCUC accreditation expectations that intersect with GE.

Undergraduate Council affirmed these recommendations with minor refinements. To summarize the PROC and UGC comments, then, GESC is a curricular committee coordinating the review of GE consistent with UGC by-laws. The GESC will proceed with planning for GE revisions in light of the review recommendations and will consider internal and external factors in that planning process. Also, the role of GESC with regard to resources is advisory to both Senate and administrative entities.

Proposal and Action Plan

The self-study, external team report, and campus-wide GE retreats in 2014 and 2015 have made it evident that aspirations for a UCM GE program have not been translated into a thoughtful and sustained design for integrative and interdisciplinary learning experiences.

To address this, we have adapted the program proposal template as a framework for the GE proposal, to ensure that all dimensions are fully addressed. As we develop the proposal, we will consult widely with the campus, according to the schedule outlined in the related action plan and timetable. We have defined all necessary steps and responsibilities. .

We will engage in a process of meaningful campus involvement and resource planning, while recognizing the opportunity the GE review creates for action. Therefore, we aim for creating a GE program that will begin in AY 2017-2018. Our process will incorporate the review recommendations, input from PROC and UGC, and the results of the 2014 and 2015 GE retreats and will focus on the following priorities:

- A GE program design that aligns with the Hallmarks of UC Merced Baccalaureate Degrees, reviewed by the faculty during 2014-15.
- Common integrative (e.g., curricular and co-curricular, cross-disciplinary) experiences and outcomes for all undergraduates for all four years of study.
- An assessment plan for reviewing outcomes (e.g., student learning, student success) and making improvements based on assessment data.
- Significant engagement of Senate faculty in designing and implementing the GE program.
- Sustainable design that aligns with internal and external expectations (e.g., strategic academic planning, SAFI pillars, WSCUC Core Competencies) and reflects institutional capacity (e.g., faculty size, student enrollments), in light of projected campus growth. and associated academic planning
- Clear administrative structure
- Informed resource planning, focused on campus scale and budgetary considerations

With this approach, we will address all the process and content priorities we have identified in an organized and intentional way and in accordance with Senate policies.

Partnerships with Senate and administrative units, as well as other campus entities and constituents are crucial to our ability to propose and implement a campus GE program. We appreciate the guidance of UGC and PROC in this important academic planning process and look forward to additional assistance as we proceed. Please let us know if further information is needed.

Sincerely,



Virginia Adan-Lifante
Chair, General Education Subcommittee (AY 2015-2016)



Anne Zanzucchi
Former Chair, General Education Subcommittee (AY 2012-2015)

Cc: GESC Members
UGC Members
PROC Members
Fatima Paul, Senate Interim Director

Encl. (2) GE Action Plan (Timeline)
GE Program Proposal Template

Action Plan

Proposed Teams	Team 1: Foundational Elements - Hallmark of the Undergraduate Degree Recipient, GE Mission, and Program Learning Outcomes (LOs). Team 1 will join team 3 in spring 2016	Team 2: Resources - Identify existing and future resources; flesh out administrative structure to manage GE program.	Team 3: Curriculum - Curricular design of GE program (academic and co-curricular), including assessment and curriculum implementation plan by year.	Team 4: Communication – Strategy for communicating and seeking feedback, including website and unit contact (by-laws, UG chairs, and co-curriculum). Also work on phase out plan.
Relevant Sections of GE Proposal Template	2 - Rationale 3 – Mission, Goals, & LOs	6 – Enrollment Projections & Instructor Needs 7 – Program Administration 9 – Impact on University Resources	4 – Academic Requirements, Curriculum 5 – Assessment Plan	8 – Impact on Existing Programs 10 – Phase out plan
Fall 2015				
Deliverable Date	Deliverables by Team			
By November 15	Team membership established, with clear point person(s)			
By December 3	Building on GE Retreat Outcomes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete and gain approval on Hallmarks of Undergraduate Degree Recipient as framework for GE program • Define purpose for GE mission statement and draft mission statement • Draft GE Learning Outcomes <p>With this work, we will have drafted responses to all questions in sections 2 and 3 of GE proposal template.</p>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiate communication about GE planning (e.g., Notify program chairs that feedback on Hallmarks of Undergraduate Degree Recipient will be solicited, GE mission and learning outcomes; put on agendas.) • Develop mechanisms for soliciting feedback on Hallmarks, mission and LOs by spring. • Identify potential “pain points” for advancing goals for GE and potential strategies for managing those concerns. • Work with VPDUE to get a website created and launched by start of spring semester.

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By Dec 7		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyze existing GE resource commitments, predict future commitments based on enrollment projections, and predicted instructor needs, etc. Draft a proposal to resource GE as a basis for program planning Share proposal with administration and senate to gather preliminary feedback on proposal As part of plan, propose strategy for engaging ladder-rank faculty; revisit “Cameron model” <p>With this work, we will have drafted response to 6.1 of GE proposal template.</p>	Drawing on External Review Team Report, and GE Retreat Outcomes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research GE curriculum structures, including planning for co-curricular involvement (Full curricular planning pending Team 1 deliverables.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Distribute Hallmarks, mission statement, and LOs for feedback by the end of January/start of February Communication plan for shopping GE revisions and related elements, and plan for keeping campus generally informed as program planning and implementation proceeds
Spring 2016				
By March 1			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Informed by Mission, PLOs, self-study, and report from external review team, draft GE program requirements and curriculum (including potential courses and co-curricular experiences that fill requirements), revising as necessary to respond to feedback from faculty 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Circulate draft of curriculum requirements to all campus stakeholders for feedback (see outcomes of team 3); faculty, staff, alumni, and student groups respond to program draft in some combination of meetings, emails, focus groups, town halls, and surveys.

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft of program assessment plan <p>With this work, we will have drafted responses to sections 4, 5 of GE proposal template.</p>	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommend structure to administer GE program Revisit and as necessary update estimated faculty and staff demand based on design of GE curriculum (Section 6) <p>With this work, we will have drafted responses to sections 7 and 8 of GE proposal template.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> During March, begin planning May GE retreat. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Solicit feedback on impact on existing programs? Planning for 2016 GE Retreat Drafting phase out plan (Section 10 of GE proposal) Identify impact on existing academic programs <p>With this work will have drafted responses to sections 8 and 10 of GE proposal template</p>
By April 1	Receive feedback from campus on GE curriculum design			
By May 14		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finalize proposals for sections 6, 7, and 9 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Synthesize campus feedback on proposed program, revising curriculum plan accordingly Finalize program proposal, and draft Overview/Executive Summary (Section 1) 	
By May 15				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Submit complete program proposal to Senate for review and approval in fall 2016 and to Student Affairs

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				for consideration in annual planning process [Prior to this will need to shop around the program/curriculum design. Shop around draft curriculum starting March 1, responses by April 1, revisions and submission by May 15 th . Senate review in fall of 2016.]
May 2016		Host GE Retreat: Focused on the specifics of curriculum and course development		
June/July 2016		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GESC creates guidelines for revising extant courses and creating new courses that fulfill GE requirements 		
Fall 2016				
By August 17, 2016 (start of fall semester)				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GESC circulates CRF guidelines to faculty with call for first year GE offerings, i.e. those courses to be offered in 2017 •
By December 15, 2016		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GESC creates implementation plans for 2017-2021, confirms phase out plans • GESC adjusts program design based on feedback from UGC, Deans, etc. 		
Spring 2017				
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refine implementation plan for entering class of fall 2017 • Communicate 2017-18 implementation plan to campus • GESC ensures that all courses are in place for freshmen in 2017-18 • Administrative structure for overseeing GE is up and running • Initiate call for course proposals for sophomore/junior GE 		

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Fall 2017				
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GE program begins for freshmen (class of 2021) • Continue to work on phase out plan, in light of student data • CRFs submitted for sophomore/junior experiences 		

UC Merced, Proposal for a New General Education Program

1.0 PROGRAM OVERVIEW/EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. Provide a concise description of the program, including its motivation, essential features, students it serves, and required resources, in language accessible to faculty from across disciplines.

2.0 RATIONALE

- 2.1 Program Motivation: Explain why UC Merced needs this program as well as why our region/California/nation/world need students educated via the proposed program – now and for the foreseeable future. Identify how the program impacts and supports student population(s) (e.g., transfer, resident/commuter, etc.), including any specifically targeted by the program.
- 2.2 Briefly explain any distinctive program characteristics, specific to UC Merced relative to the UC more broadly. As relevant, please describe how the program addresses UC system-wide initiatives and programs.
- 2.3 Describe the program's contributions to UC Merced's priorities: In what ways does this proposed program address priorities articulated in UC Merced's mission, the hallmarks of the undergraduate degree, and other institutional plans? In what ways does this program distinguish UC Merced, nationally and/or regionally?
- 2.4 Describe how the program will contribute to campus goals for student success, including persistence, diversity, and timely degree progress.
- 2.5 If the new program represents a revision of an existing program, briefly describe the reasons for and extent of the revision.

3.0 PROGRAM MISSION, GOALS, AND LEARNING OUTCOMES

- 3.1 Describe principles and/or priorities guiding the program's design.
- 3.2 Provide the program's mission statement as it will appear in public documents.
- 3.3 Describe the educational goals of the program. What will students learn through the program?
- 3.4 Provide the program's intended program learning outcomes. What will students demonstrably know and be able to do at the conclusion of the program?

4.0 ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS, CURRICULUM, PEDAGOGY

- 4.1 Use Table 1 to detail all course requirements for the program, including credit-bearing experiences in or out of the classroom and/or for-credit other off campus activities (e.g., field studies, service learning, internships). Provide the total credits required for required and elective aspects of the program.

Table 1:

Year	Courses	Total Annual Credits Earned
First		
Second		
Third		
Fourth		

Total Program Credits:

Total Required Credits:

Total Elective Credits:

4.2 Please briefly summarize co-curricular (non-credit bearing) experiences, on or off-campus (e.g., student affairs programming, professional societies, service, etc.) as relevant. If related, distinguish required versus elective co-curricular experiences.

Table 2:

Co-curricular experiences	Required (R) or Elective (E)	Explanation & Rationale

4.3 Provide the program’s curriculum map as Table 3. Distinguish required from elective courses; illustrate development of learning outcomes through the degree; and identify where evidence of student learning will be gathered (assessment).

4.4 Describe the logic driving the selection and timing of requirements, including co-curricular experiences (if relevant). In what ways will these various curricular elements be intentionally sequenced to complement and augment each other? Explain how and why.

4.5 Provide a teaching plan, preferably in table form, for delivering at least one full cycle of the program (4 years).

4.6 Provide a sample plan for students, showing all requirements and examples of elective courses. Illustrate how cohorts of students can complete the program, including any pre-requisites, in four years, or two years, if transfer. If relevant, please describe how school requirements factor into the design and implementation of this academic program.

4.7 How do the curriculum and program structure compare with those of similar programs offered by benchmark institutions and/or by other UC campuses? Explain the rationale for either similarity or distinctiveness.

5.0 PROGRAM ASSESSMENT PLAN

- 5.1 Provide a multi-year plan for assessing the program learning outcomes, as well as the WSCUC Core Competencies. A template is available [here](http://assessment.ucmerced.edu/academic/guidelines-and-templates) (<http://assessment.ucmerced.edu/academic/guidelines-and-templates>).
- 5.2 Detail any additional program goals (other than learning outcomes) – e.g., student retention and graduation rates, program rankings, faculty productivity, etc. — and specific annual performance targets. Summarize assessment methods for measuring progress. Performance toward each target noted will be evaluated as part of program review.

6.0 ENROLLMENT PROJECTIONS & INSTRUCTOR NEEDS

- 6.1 In the table below, record student enrollment projections in each category for the first five years.
- 6.2. Project instructor demand, including faculty (Senate and Non-Senate) and graduate student instructors, and calculate instructor to student ratios. [*Note: This portion will include a template*]
- 6.3 If there are special considerations for these ratios, please explain. Instructional demands should reflect any defining characteristics of the program design, e.g., dedicated space, pedagogy, laboratory experiences, writing-intensive outcomes, etc.
- 6.4 If implementing the proposed program requires more instructors than currently exist, explain the demand and how that demand will be met. (This must be addressed in support letters from the administration.)
- 6.5 If the program includes co-curricular requirements, project co-curricular staff needs, and calculate staff to student ratios.

** FTE is "Full-Time Equivalent", calculated as the number of all full-time students plus 1/3 of all part-time students*

7.0 PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

- 7.1 Detail the administrative structure for the program, indicating if any additional staff will be required within five years. Consider support functions, internship/clinical experience placement and coordination, etc.
- 7.2 Does this proposal necessitate the creation (either immediately or within five years) of a new academic department or other administrative structure, or significant modification of an existing one(s)? If so, explain.

8.0 IMPACT ON EXISTING ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

- 8.1 Describe how this program will impact other programs or individual courses delivered by programs. Solicit and attach statements (of either support or concern) from all relevant units and/or deans of programs potentially impacted.
- 8.2 If your program has writing-intensive components that indirectly or directly involve the Merritt Writing Program (MWP), please solicit and attach all relevant support materials (including a statement from the MWP).

9.0 IMPACT ON UNIVERSITY RESOURCES

- 9.1 Identify the administrative unit(s) responsible for resourcing the program. What resources are directly needed for administering and coordinating the program?
- 9.2 For the first five years of the program, estimate the additional costs of the program, by year, for each of the following:
 - a. Instructor (FTE Senate, lecturing, and TAs)
 - b. Staff
 - c. Library acquisition
 - d. Computing costs
 - e. IT/software costs
 - f. Professional development support
 - g. Equipment
 - h. Space or other capital facilities
 - i. Other operating costs
- 9.3 Summarize the library resources needed for implementing and sustaining this program. Solicit from the University Librarian a formal review of available and needed resources (complete with cost estimates), and attach a copy of her/his report.
- 9.4 Describe any information technology or computing resources needed for the successful conduct of this program (special software, hardware, related equipment, special IT support, etc.). Solicit from the CIO/Associate Vice Chancellor for Information Technology a formal review of available and needed resources (complete with cost estimates), and attach a copy of her/his report.
- 9.5 Describe any additional equipment, facilities or other University resources needed for the conduct of this program in the first five years of operation, including cost estimates.