General Education Policies

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# The General Education Committee

The General Education (GE) Committee is a Standing Committee of the Academic Senate. The Committee consists of thirteen voting members:

1. Faculty: Ten members, each to be elected for a three-year term by the University faculty, to represent the entire University. One shall be elected from each of the Colleges/Schools. In addition, two shall be elected from among the Colleges of Arts and Humanities, Science and Mathematics, and Social Sciences with no more than two from any College. In the event of a failure to elect a member, or should a member become unable to serve, a replacement from the appropriate School may be appointed by the Executive Committee of the Academic Senate until such time as the position can be filled by election.

2. Students: Two students designated by the Associated Students, Inc.

3. Ex-Officio: One representative from the Office of the Provost.

4. Chair: The Chair should be nominated and elected from the elected members of the Committee.

5. The Committee shall also include one non-voting representative appointed by the Vice President for Student Affairs.

The Committee's responsibilities are as follows:

1. Evaluating and approving courses for inclusion in the GE Program.

A. When evaluating proposed courses the Committee must follow the general statewide requirements of the Executive Order on GE as well as the specific local criteria approved by the Academic Senate and the Provost (the GE Program Description).

B. Course approval shall be based upon the GE Policy (this document) and upon the GE program description provided by the Academic Senate as approved by the Provost.

2. Coordinating a regularly scheduled review of GE courses to ensure compliance with GE Policies and Program Description.

A. All GE courses will be subject to periodic and detailed review.

B. A course which appears to be in serious violation of GE Policy and Program Description and/or is inconsistent with the approved course proposal may be reviewed at any time.

3. Providing oversight and analysis of the assessment of student learning outcomes across the GE Program.

4. Implementing GE Policy and Procedures as adopted by the University.

A. Courses found in violation of current GE Policies and Procedures (e.g., failure to meet the writing requirements, exceeding enrollment limits, failure to offer courses consistently), as well as courses whose grading practices appear inappropriate, are subject to deletion from GE. The Provost’s Office shall issue a notice of violation and identify the remedial action that must be taken and a deadline for compliance. If remedial action is not taken by the date specified, the course will be removed from the GE Program.

B. A failure by Departments/Programs to fully participate in the process of periodic reviews and assessment of student learning outcomes will result in the removal of the non-compliant course(s) from the GE Program.

5. Submitting, on a yearly basis, a report on the status and functioning of the GE Program as a whole to the Executive Committee of the Academic Senate.

6. Developing and forwarding to the Executive Committee of the Academic Senate recommendations for changes in GE Policy and Procedures and in the Program Description.

## Appeals/Reinstatement:

1. A Department or Program may appeal to the Provost a decision by the GE Committee that a Department or Program course is in violation of GE policy. If the appeal is upheld, the matter shall be remanded to the GE Committee for reconsideration. If the Committee rejects the decision of the Provost, the appeal shall be forwarded along with the recommendations of the Provost and the GE Committee to the Academic Senate for final resolution.

2. Courses which have been proposed for inclusion in the GE Program, but have been rejected by the Committee, may be resubmitted no sooner than the following semester.

3. Courses that have been removed from the GE Program may be considered for reinstatement, if requested by the Department/Program, no sooner than one calendar year from the date of the notice of removal. Reinstatement will be treated in the same way as a new submission.

## Exceptions to GE Requirements:

1. Requests for exceptions to the GE requirements submitted by high-unit professional degree programs will be received and considered by the GE Committee.

A. Academic justifications for such requests are to be presented to the Committee.

B. If the request concerns campus policies alone, the Committee's recommendations, with complete documentation, will be forwarded to the Provost.

C. If the request concerns system-wide policies, the Committee's recommendations, with complete justification, will be forwarded to the Provost for submission to the Chancellor's Office.

D. Colleges that may be academically affected by any exception will be notified prior to a decision by the committee.

2. Individual student requests for exemptions or substitutions shall be received and acted upon by the Student Academic Petitions Committee.

## Area A-E

1. All areas and subareas must contain a substantial number of 3 unit courses in order to assure that students do not face a *de facto* increase in the minimum required GE units.
2. Only rarely shall Departments or Programs have courses in more than one GE Area B, C, D, or E.
3. A student must complete the lower division course requirements before enrolling in an upper division Integration course in that same area.
4. A maximum of two courses from one Department or Program may be applied to satisfy the Breadth requirements. However, a Department or Program may prohibit any Breadth course from simultaneously satisfying its own Departmental or programmatic requirements.

## Foundation (Areas A1, A2, A3 and B4)

1. Courses in Area A must meet the current mode and level standards set for C4 lecture discussion courses (normal class size of 25). Larger class size may be permitted based on the ability of the course to meet the area criteria and by outcomes assessment measures. Exceptions to the enrollment size limits will be considered by the GE Committee if they are consistent with the interactive, active learning model of lecture/discussion (C4) courses. Small enrollment may be necessary to achieve the required objectives in some courses, while labs, break-out groups, or other means of providing individual student-instructor communication and feedback may work well in other courses. In some courses, enrollment may be limited by available facilities (e.g. computer stations). While differences in pedagogy and methodology exist between and within instructors, Departments, and Colleges/Schools, course (enrollment) size is an important consideration in achieving educational objectives.
2. No GE credit will be given for any Foundation course in which the student received less than a "C" grade.
3. Students must complete all Foundation courses by the time they have completed 30 semester units. If students fail to complete successfully (C or better) any of the courses in this area, they must continuously register for an appropriate course until they remediate that deficiency.
4. All Foundation courses must be lower division.

## Area B

1. All courses in B1 Physical Science must make use of the knowledge and skills students learn in the B4 courses. Therefore all students must complete the B4 Quantitative Reasoning requirement prior to completing the B1 Physical Science requirement.
2. Integral laboratory components must be associated with all courses in Subareas B1 and B2.
3. All courses in Subareas B1 and B2 must be lower division.

## Area C

1. Students must take a minimum of three units in the arts (Subarea C1) and a minimum of three units in the humanities (Subarea C2), and an additional three units in Subarea C1 and C2.
2. All courses in Subareas C1 and C2 must be lower division.

# Approval and Evaluation of General Education Courses

**Note: Sections I and II below are also included within the GE Procedures Document for additional clarity**

## I. Goals Guiding General Education

The GE Program expands students’ intellectual horizons, fosters lifelong learning, prepares them for further professional study and instills within them an appreciation of cultures other than their own. The University will remain committed to providing a quality general education experience for all students and make it clear that such an experience is the foundation of all applied and professional programs.

## II. Criteria for Evaluation

### Characteristics of GE Courses in All Areas

Courses proposed for, or under review in, GE are expected to meet the following criteria:

1. Courses are grounded in the Liberal Arts and Sciences, though professional courses that meet the guidelines may be included.
2. Courses must cover subjects by exploring major ideas, themes, and concepts consistent with the intent of the subarea goals, specifications, and learning outcomes, all of which should be integrated into the course in a meaningful way.
3. Faculty must assign to students and incorporate into their GE courses significant non-textbook readings to provide students an opportunity for sustained reading that enhances their command of language, rhetoric, and argumentation.
4. A course may only use prerequisites which are also in GE, though courses may require work normally completed in high school to meet CSU admission requirements.
5. The GE Writing Requirements must be integrated into each course.
6. Courses must be taught at least once in four consecutive semesters or be dropped from the list of GE offerings.
7. Courses must be submitted for review every five years or be dropped from the list of GE courses.
8. When proposals are rejected by the General Education Committee written reasons will be provided.

### Characteristics of GE Upper Division Integration Courses (Areas IB, IC and ID)

1. These courses are designed to provide opportunities for students to discover a variety of ways in which specific areas of human knowledge are related.
2. All upper division Integration courses must:
3. Be congruent with an area (B, C, or D) goal, as well as the appropriate subarea goals, specifications and learning outcomes.
4. Be integrative, aiming toward a genuine appreciation of the linkages among subareas as well as the area goal.
5. Be taken outside the student's major Department unless the course is interdisciplinary involving more than one Department.

### Characteristics of GE Upper Division Integration and Multicultural International Courses (Areas IB, IC, ID and MI)

Be limited to the maximum enrollment allowed for lecture/discussion classes but not to exceed 50 students in any section. Exceptions may be granted by the GE Committee in consultation with the appropriate Departments if:

a. A larger class can be shown to satisfy the goals, specifications, and learning outcomes of upper division GE,

b. The larger class size will not create an imbalance in the distribution of enrollment in an area that adversely affects the other participating courses in the same area (for example, by decreasing their enrollment so that their contribution to the area is incidentally reduced),

c. The exception must be renewed every two years to ensure that the GE has the opportunity to gauge the impact of large sections on the area, based on assessment of student learning data provided by the Department, School or College.

### Area Enrollment Management Criteria

The following ensures that area offerings maintain a breadth of alternatives:

1. Courses should be offered in a sufficient balance within each area (B, C, D and E) so that students have a choice among a solid range of courses in each area. The distribution of course sections and enrollment in sections of each area shall be monitored by the GE Committee.
2. School or College curriculum committees, Deans, and the Provost or Provost’s designee shall support the goals of breadth in each area by assuring that no individual course is offered with sufficient frequency (for example, through a large number of sections or multiple sections of large classes) as to dominate the enrollment in the area.
3. If necessary to restore enrollment diversity in an area, upon the recommendation of the GE Committee, Schools or Colleges that allow multiple sections of a course to dominate the distribution of enrollment in an area may be restricted by the Provost or Provost’s designee with regard to the number of sections they may conduct.