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**Sample Charges to General Education Task Forces**

AAC&U General Education Conference, March 5, 2011

David Potash

Institutional Leadership and General Education Reform:  Strategies and Structures to Enhance Effectiveness

**SAMPLE CHARGES TO GENERAL EDUCATION TASK FORCES**

<http://smu.edu/gec/charge.asp>

**SMU Provost’s Charge to the General Education Review Committee**

The President and Provost of the University ask that the General Education Review Committee complete a review of the University’s current General Education curriculum, formulate recommendations for any needed change, and present to the Provost a proposal for a new general education curriculum by April 25, 2009. The proposal will then be presented to the appropriate governing bodies of the University for approval in the academic year 2009-2010.

Ideally, appropriate approvals, along with any needed program and course development, will be completed in time for the new curriculum to be launched in the fall of 2010. Since the opening of Southern Methodist University, the philosophical foundation for the undergraduate curriculum has been the deep belief t hat the liberal arts are central to the goal of graduating educated women and men. The Master Plan of 1963 articulated the University’s educational commitment as follows:

“The essence of the educational philosophy which undergirds the Master Plan is that professional studies must rise from the solid foundation of a basic liberal education. The aim of the University, in other words, is to educate its students as worthy human beings and as citizens, first, and as teachers, lawyers, ministers, research scientists, businessmen [sic], engineer, and so on, second. These two aims-basic and professional education, general and special, cultural and vocational (in the best sense)-will not be separated in the program ofthis university.”

Over the history of general education curricula at SMU, the University has insisted that these programs guide all of our students in the pursuit of these goals. The curricula have emphasized learning to read, write, and think critically, while acquiring a basic understanding of human society in all its dimensions. The courses of the general education curricula have aimed at providing a solid and broad education that equips students to compete and adapt to the rapidly changing contemporary world, while complementing more focused study in their majors.

The work of the review committee, along with the general education curriculum that it formulates, should foster the mission and goals of the University. The new curriculum should also reflect best practices and contemporary thought about how to achieve our mission and goals in the twenty-first century.

In addition, the curriculum should reflect the changing demographics of the U.S., the region, and international college-ready population; allow students to pursue multiple majors or minors; reflect the need to accommodate transfer of students from other institutions; incorporate student residence life as an integral part of the University’s educational mission; accommodate the need for honors programming to attract and satisfy the aspirations of highachieving students; reflect the increasing need for international study, undergraduate research options, and internship experiences; and be feasible within current and anticipated University resources.

<http://gened.iub.edu/admin/genedcommittee.html>

**The General Education Committee and Campus Charge**

1.  The Bloomington Faculty Council will establish a General Education Committee to facilitate the implementation and ongoing assessment of the General Education program.

2.  The General Education Committee will have a voting membership consisting of the Associate Dean/Director for Undergraduate Education of each undergraduate School and the College together with other tenured/tenure-track faculty selected so that the voting membership as a whole has

a.  proportional representation based on the number of tenured/tenure-track faculty in the Bloomington Schools that offer baccalaureate degrees, and

b.  a majority consisting of tenured/tenure-track faculty who do not hold school-level administrative appointments,

and which committee has two co-chairs, one of whom is appointed by the Provost and the other of whom is appointed by the Bloomington Faculty Council Nominations Committee. Each school will recommend its members to the Provost. The Provost will formally appoint the committee membership. To conduct its work, the General Education Committee may add ex-officio, including student, non-voting members, as needed.

3.  In order for any proposal to be approved by the committee, whether concerning course recommendations or broader matters, the proposal must receive the support both (i) of a majority of the voting members and (ii) of at least some voting members from at least four academic units (i.e., the College and Schools). Only a majority vote of the committee is necessary to disapprove any such proposal.

4.  The General Education Committee is charged with:

a.  final preparation of the General Education proposal to be submitted to the Bloomington Faculty Council during the 2006–2007 academic year, including:

i.  Final definitions of curricular components including learning objectives for each component (see “General Education Requirements at Indiana University Bloomington”)

ii.  Approved course lists (including, but not limited to: evaluation of historical enrollment, grading, and instruction data, sample syllabi, frequency of course offering, etc.) (see “Courses in the General Education Curriculum”)

iii.  Unit impact evaluations (to be prepared by each school/college).

b.  reviewing proposals for general education courses in an ongoing capacity.

c.  developing assessment metrics for ongoing evaluation of the Common Ground and the Shared Goals (see “Program Monitoring and Evaluation”).

d.  conducting a baseline assessment of the campus’s current experiences with the Common Ground and Shared Goals during the period 2007–2011.

e.  reviewing unit reports on the implementation, ongoing experience, and effectiveness of the General Education Program within each degree program (Note: An initial collection of each report should be presented to the BFC by December 2008).

f.  monitoring budgetary implications, with the Vice Provost for Budgetary Administration and Planning, of the implementation and ongoing experiences with the General Education Program.

g.  delivering annual updates (in October for the previous year) and five-year reports to the BFC on the status of the General Education Program.

5.  The President, the Provost, and the College and School Deans of Indiana University Bloomington shall take steps to insure that the budgetary adjustments necessary to implement this General Education Program do not adversely impact the research mission of any unit and shall undertake to diminish the budgetary incentives for, and prevent the occurrence of, academic encroachment between academic units. The President and Provost will make the necessary resources available to support the work of the General Education Committee and the implementation of the General Education Program.

**General Education Task Force Charge**

The General Education Task Force will coordinate the development of a new general education program for the university that is focused on meeting the needs of Bloomsburg University students and the standards of accrediting, certification and licensure bodies; and is amenable to ongoing assessment and improvement. The task force should engage the entire university community in the development of the program. The products of the task force deliberations will include:

* Review successful competency-based general education models within the Middle States region;
* Based on the review of general education models, develop observable learning goals stated as outcomes as appropriate to satisfy the requirements of the Middle States Commission on Higher Education;
* Provide recommendations regarding the structure and content of a new university general education program;
* Develop a strategic plan that provides for an on-going review of the general education program that is evidence-based.
* Recommend a permanent committee structure and a long-range general education assessment protocol that is based upon measurable or observable criteria;
* Provide recommendations on resources and faculty development needed to carry out the new general education program.
* September 2009: The task force is re-formed and given its modified charge;
* November 2009: Summary report on general education models and learning outcomes.
* January 2010: Revised general education learning objectives are submitted to BUCC.
* April 2010: The final general education recommendations and strategic plan are submitted to BUCC.
* Fall 2010: Final BUCC approval and implementation.

<http://www.provost.buffalo.edu/generaleducation/taskforce-charge.shtml>

**General Education Task Force  
Charged Jointly by the Provost and Faculty Senate  
March 25, 2009**

Over the past few years, the University at Buffalo has enhanced the educational experience of our undergraduate students. Today our students benefit, for example, from the Honors College, the Undergraduate Academies, the Discovery Seminar Program, and many opportunities to participate in faculty-mentored research and creative activities.

As part of this ongoing effort to provide our students with a transformational undergraduate education, we are forming a General Education Task Force. The main charge of the Task Force is:

* to create a distinctive and innovative General Education program that responds to the changing educational and intellectual realities of our increasingly global world.

More specifically, we ask the Task Force

* To take a holistic view of the General Education Program, focusing on its underlying philosophy, intellectual purposes, and educational mission;
* To consider the opportunity to create a new signature program for the University at Buffalo while complying with the SUNY General Education requirements;
* To define the role of a new General Education program within the mission of the University at Buffalo at large;
* To submit a preliminary report by December 15, 2009.

<http://www.uwgb.edu/lasdean/gened/taskforce/>

General education represents a major component of our students’ education, a large portion of our university budget, and a major component of our faculty’s workload. Over the past several years, we have heard numerous criticisms of our general education program and we have been disheartened by the results of our assessment of our students’ general education learning outcomes. Our governance bodies have considered several proposals for general education reform – some proposing changes on a grand scale, others proposing only modest changes.  None, however, has won the support of the campus community. As a result, we continue with a general education program that has changed little over the years. It is often confusing to students, difficult to administer, and hard to defend in terms of our learning outcomes assessment results.

The charge to the Task Force is as follows:

1. Familiarize yourselves with national scholarship, trends, models, and best practices with respect to general education. My office will provide funding for your professional development in this area.
2. Develop a clear problem statement regarding general education at UW-Green Bay.  This clear identification of and agreement as to the definition of “the problem” is a necessary step before we move forward toward identifying solutions or proposals.  Without a shared agreement as to “the problem,” we talk past each other and have no shared basis on which to evaluate options or proposals.
3. Review our current general education program and offer recommendations for reform. Your recommendations should be feasible, informed by evidence, and connected to current scholarship and thinking on general education.
4. Keep the campus community and governance groups informed of your deliberations and discussions throughout the process. Share issues and key decision points throughout the process so that each phase of your work does not “slide back to Square One.”
5. Finally, do not rush to a “solution.” Complex problems require significant study, thought, debate, and attention to evidence. They may require experimentation and evaluation. This work will likely take some years, well beyond the time frame associated with our usual committee assignments. Your membership on the Task Force will be expected to continue for up to 5 years in order to enable you to successfully complete this assignment.

Finally, general education is too massive to be a curricular “orphan” without administrative responsibility and accountability. During discussions with consultant Michael Dolence, our academic leadership agreed that the Dean of Liberal Arts and Sciences is the position of the University best suited to be administratively responsible and accountable for the delivery and quality of this program. The General Education Council, of course, will retain its traditional responsibility for course approvals, advice, and recommendations to the Provost or the Senate.

<http://provost.unlv.edu/getf/>

**GENERAL EDUCATION TASK FORCE**

The President and the EVP&P are charging the General Education Task Force to bring culmination to the process of redefining general education at UNLV.

**Background**

The last reform of General Education started in 2003 with implementation of recommendations of the General Education Task Force, to develop a slimmed down, interim Core and create an advisory committee that would review and recommend further changes to UNLV’s General Education curriculum and courses. The Advisory Committee developed proposed broad University Undergraduate Learning Outcomes (UULO’s) after completion of a campus-wide, day-long general education retreat held in September 2007 and completion of the Focus 50-100 planning process in Spring 2008. The proposed outcomes were reviewed at two campus events in Fall 2008. In Fall 2010, the Advisory Committee completed a proposal that recommends changes to General Education curriculum, co-curriculum and courses, and improvements in faculty and student support to attain the UULO’s and released a draft proposal to the campus in November 2010.

**Charge**

The General Education Task Force includes faculty, Faculty Senate leaders, and administrators, charged to work together to shepherd the 2010 General Education Reform Proposal, completed by the General Education Advisory Committee, through large scale campus dialog, with the ultimate goal of creating a sustainable structure for a revised General Education paradigm at UNLV. Specifically, the General Education Task Force will:

1. Put initial effort on the large-scale vetting of the 2010 General Education Reform Proposal and create structures to facilitate Faculty Senate approval of a reform proposal. This will include:
   * developing and implementing strategies for sharing the proposal produced by the General Education Advisory Committee with a wide range of stakeholder groups, including faculty, students, co-curricular education units, and community stakeholder groups;
   * obtaining stakeholder feedback, and based on that feedback, make recommendations for changes to the proposal;
   * ensuring alignment with UNLV’s updated Focus 50-100 Strategic Plan objectives for education; and,
   * facilitating the final version to be submitted through UNLV’s Faculty Senate review processes.
2. Recommend sustainable structures for successful implementation of the proposal. This will include:
   * recommending assessment strategies for pilot projects and gathering feedback from their experiences to inform infrastructure needs;
   * supporting faculty who propose further pilot projects for new courses in the curriculum;
   * coordinating needs for faculty support and development to the Consortium on Faculty Professional Opportunities;
   * considering ways to enrich, brand, and market the UNLV undergraduate education experience by linking with UNLV’s institutes and leveraging the Brookings and Lincy partnerships;
   * soliciting input from co-curricular academic units to determine implications for implementation and infrastructure;
   * be a resource to academic units in their role of revising current courses or proposing new ones that will meet the guidelines outlined in the general education proposal and assist in shepherding these curricular proposals through the established processes of the Faculty Senate General Education and Curriculum Committees;
   * drafting an implementation timeline;
   * recommending administrative structures and processes for long term evolution of the reforms in light of new data, needs, and national trends; and
   * making recommendations to the President and to the EVP&P for resource needs and/or options for reallocation of existing resources.

**Methods**

The Task Force will be inclusive in its deliberations but will ultimately be responsible for ensuring that General Education reform is approved and can be successfully implemented. The Task Force will work with and between existing UNLV structures, including: the General Education Advisory Committee, the Faculty Senate General Education Committee, the Faculty Senate Curriculum Committee, the Consortium on Faculty Professional Opportunities, and the academic colleges and departments.

**Draft Proposal Review Timeline**

Any necessary approvals from Faculty Senate by April 2011.

Recommendations for resource allocation to President and EVP&P by May 2011.

<http://www.umkc.edu/provost/committees/general-education-advisory-task-force/default.asp>

**General Education Advisory Task Force**

The General Education Advisory Task Force leads the initiative of reviewing and making recommendations for renewing the UMKC general education program.

[**Charge/Responsibilities**](http://www.umkc.edu/provost/committees/general-education-advisory-task-force/default.asp)

The General Education Advisory Task Force is charged with developing a strategy/plan for the creation and implementation of a “new” UMKC general education program that is tied to our UMKC mission, puts student success and student retention as a focus, includes a premier student learning assessment component and has an ongoing review and revision cycle. This plan will be submitted to the Provost as a recommendation.

**The work of the committee will include:**

* Reviewing current national perspectives regarding general education experiences for undergraduate students in higher education, including: AAC&U’s position statements and publications, reviewing aspirational peer institutions’ general education and assessment programs and reviewing programs at institutions deemed to be exemplars of “best practices” associated with general education and student learning outcome assessment associated with general education programs.
* Reviewing current work in the state of Missouri regarding entrance and exit competencies (CAI) and consider this work in the revision of the UMKC general education program.
* Reviewing any additional relevant material to assist in the development of an outstanding general education program.
* Developing and implementing a plan for engaging the university campus in discussions regarding the revision of UMKC’s general education program.
* Maintaining student engagement and student retention concerns at the forefront of general education plans, including the development of a unique “UMKC” student experience in general education tied to the university mission.
* Preparing a written proposal for submission to the AAC&U General Education Summer Institute focused on our UMKC campus revision efforts.

<http://www.ric.edu/genedtaskforce/charge.php>

**COMMITTEE CHARGE**

* Review literature, including our own evidence, on general education.
* Collect input and ideas from the campus on the outcomes that students need to achieve in general education.
* Propose a structure by which to achieve those outcomes.
* Develop a plan to assess the effectiveness of the new structure.
* Obtain reactions to the proposed plans from the campus community, and incorporate those responses into the plans.
* Submit a proposal for a general education program to the Curriculum Committee.