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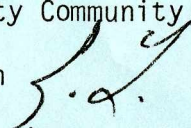
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Edwardsville Bulletin

To the Faculty, Staff and Students of Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville

June 11, 1984
Vol. 15, No. 11

MEMO TO: The University Community
FROM: Earl Lazerson 
SUBJECT: General Education

The revised General Education Proposal, submitted by the Faculty Senate on May 22, 1984, has been approved and is attached herewith. There remain several points requiring clarification, but I am confident, following assurances from Faculty Senate President Tom Paxson, that this can be accomplished satisfactorily in the implementation process.

I want to express my appreciation to everyone who has been engaged in this long and arduous effort to revise the General Studies Program since I first charged the Task Force on General Education on December 13, 1978. The University's need for a clear rationale and program of general education has long existed and was the subject of criticism in the 1969 accreditation review conducted by the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools. Seven years later, in 1976, another NCA examination team observed some progress, but its report with regard to the General Studies Program proved no less critical.

On November 1, 1983, I requested the Faculty Senate, through the Curriculum Council, to complete a task well begun. At that time, I reviewed the University's need for a strong, clear rationale on general education, and I pointed to particular components in the Faculty Senate proposal which, in my opinion, required reconsideration, revision, or development.

It is now my view that the earlier criticism submitted by the NCA teams in 1969 and 1976 and my requests of November 1, 1983 have been satisfactorily answered, and preparation for implementation of the proposal is the most important priority for the University in the coming year. Assuming the new Program is instituted in the Fall Quarter of 1985, I have requested that a full review of the Program take place commencing in the Fall Quarter of 1987, with details of the review to be worked out between the Faculty Senate and the Provost.

The General Education Program is the cornerstone of baccalaureate education at the University. I am grateful to all who have had a role in this important achievement.

Attachment

THE GENERAL EDUCATION PROGRAM

at

Southern Illinois University

at Edwardsville

THE GOALS OF THE SIUE GENERAL EDUCATION PROGRAM

The specific objectives of the program of general education at Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville are the following:

1. To develop to maturity the student's skills in logic, computations, and linguistic communication.
2. To introduce the student, through rigorous introductory courses, to the principles, substance, and methodology of at least six disciplines outside his or her major. The courses are distributed equally through three General Education Areas: Fine Arts and Humanities, Natural Sciences and Mathematics, and Social Sciences.
3. To require of the student advanced study in at least two Areas outside the GE Area of his or her major. The minimal requirement is two advanced courses, either in one or two disciplines, in each GE Area. Two advanced courses in the student's major discipline will satisfy the requirement for that GE Area.
4. To foster the student's awareness of the interrelationships between fields of human knowledge by requiring interdisciplinary study. The minimal requirement is one interdisciplinary course; a second interdisciplinary course may substitute for an advanced course if both share the same GE Area.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS FOR GENERAL EDUCATION (GE)

Skills Courses (to be completed by the end of the sophomore year) 20 or 24 hours

Written Expression 8

and

Option A: Oral Communication 4

Critical Thinking 4

Statistics or 4

Computer Programming

or Option B: Foreign Language 12

Critical Thinking or 4

Statistics or

Computer Programming

Introductory Courses (may be taken at anytime) 24 hours

GE Area--Fine Arts and Humanities 8

GE Area--Natural Sciences and Math 8

GE Area--Social Sciences 8

No introductory course may be taken in the discipline of the student's major; one introductory course in the GE Area--Social Sciences may be from the Western Civilization sequence.

Advanced Courses (may be taken at anytime) 24 hours

GE Area--Fine Arts and Humanities 8

GE Area--Natural Sciences and Math 8

GE Area--Social Sciences 8

One advanced course in GE Area--Natural Sciences and Math may be a History or Science Course.

Interdisciplinary Course (junior or senior standing required) 4 hours

Total in General Education 72 or 76 hours

DEFINITIONS

Discipline =

an academic field of study or inquiry usually, but not always, co-terminous with a department. Several SIUE departments--for example, Earth Science, Geography and Planning; Mathematics, Statistics and Computer Science--offer majors in related but separate disciplines. The General Education program involves disciplines, not departments.

GE Area =

one of three aggregates of schools and disciplines: 1) Fine Arts and Humanities; 2) Natural Sciences and Mathematics; 3) Social Sciences. The departments of Psychology (Education) and Economics (Business) participate in the General Education program through the GE Area--Social Sciences.

Skills Course =

a fundamental course that develops the student's proficiency in a particular academic skill. Basic courses in written expression, oral communication, critical thinking, statistics, computer programming, and foreign language are skills courses. Demonstrated competence may exempt a student for the requirement for a particular skills course.

Introductory Course =

a special course that focuses imaginatively upon the elementary theory, principles, and methods of the discipline; in highlighting the essence of the subject, the introductory course need not present all the elements of the discipline, nor need the material be presented in smorgasbord or survey fashion. Emphasis in the introductory course will be on the student's abilities to think and communicate clearly; essays, reports, examinations, and other assignments will support this emphasis. Each discipline within the three GE Areas may offer one, but not more than one, introductory course. The net effect of this restriction is that every student will take six introductory courses outside his or her major.

Disciplines having a highly structured, sequential curriculum beginning in the freshman year may designate the first quarter of their first major sequence as "introductory" for purposes of the General Education program. If the preparation expected for entry into such a course exceeds that required for admission to the University, the department may designate one other course as "introductory", subject to the criteria for acceptability as a General Education course. Students majoring in disciplines in which the major curriculum already requires coursework in other departments in the same area will be deemed to have fulfilled the requirement of introductory hours in that area.

Advanced Course =

a course, prescribed or elective, that is acceptable to a discipline in fulfillment of requirements for the major or minor program. Some courses may require prerequisites, and some may require sequential linkage to other courses. Some, however, may be inherently unsuitable for the non-specialist, and university publications will identify these as courses not recommended for general education. A course that is not approved by a discipline for major or minor credit is not acceptable for general education. The GE Area appropriate to advanced courses in disciplines in the professional schools of Business, Education, Engineering, and Nursing will be determined by the GEPCI Committee or its successor.

If approved by the General Education Committee, the second and third quarters of a three-quarter sequence may be used as "advanced" courses, provided that the first quarter of the sequence qualifies as an "introductory" course, and provided that the entire sequence is applicable to some major or minor curriculum.

Interdisciplinary Course =

a course with subject matter that combines disciplines from at least two GE Areas or from at least two schools within one GE Area. An interdisciplinary course is ordinarily team-taught by two or more instructors.

RATIONALE

Many students enter SIUE with the expectation that a college education will give them the skills and knowledge necessary to pursue a career appropriate to their interests. This function of a University is served by the student's major discipline, but it is not by any means the sole purpose of a college education. A student may reasonably expect that much of the specific content of his or her discipline will have changed or even become obsolete during the course of that person's adult life. However, the habits of thought, perspectives, and approaches to new challenges that are the mark of a liberal education, will remain with students throughout their lives. The university recognizes a responsibility, equal to that of providing a strong foundation in major discipline, to assist a student in becoming a liberally educated person. This is the purpose of the General Education program at SIUE.

These characteristics of general education are of course well known, and are not unique to the present program. However, an explanation of the particular aspects of the University's new program is proper since the program differs markedly from the general education scheme previously in place at the University. Remaining relatively constant from old program to new program are the total hours of general education required of the student, the hours required for skills courses, and the underlying intentions of the University. Beyond these familiarities lie changes, some subtle,

others substantial.

The four components of the SIUE General Education program -- the skills, introductory, advanced, and interdisciplinary courses -- have been conceived, developed, and scheduled to afford the maximum benefit to the SIUE student. Skills courses, which emphasize practical communicative abilities, dominate much of the freshman curriculum; the skills component includes two sequential courses of study and practice in written expression; courses in oral expression, logical thought process, statistics or computer programming, and as an option a three-term sequence in a foreign language. The total of 20 or 24 hours, depending on the option, will prepare the student for the communicative demands of upper-level university work as well as for professional needs in the chosen career. To ensure sufficient and timely preparation for upper-level academic study, the student must have successfully completed the skills courses by the end of the sophomore year.

The concept of SIUE's introductory course is different, if not unique. A general education scheme commonly found in universities permits relatively unrestricted access by students to any courses taught on campus. In this program, each participating discipline at the University will develop one special course that emphasizes the fundamental principles, matter, and methodology of that discipline within a pedagogical context of interest, enthusiasm, and imagination. In some cases, the introductory course will not survey the field of inquiry of the particular discipline; rather, it will engage the student through close, thoughtful investigation of several key issues of the discipline. The requirement that the student take six of these introductory courses, none in the student's major, ensures a breadth of study: the courses are distributed through the three General Education Areas of Fine Arts and Humanities, Natural Sciences and Mathematics, and Social Sciences. In contrast to the skills courses, the introductory courses may be taken anytime before graduation.

Most general education programs not as structured as the SIUE program permit students to fulfill much if not all of their liberal education requirement through elementary or introductory level courses. SIUE has chosen a strong, distinctive, alternate route. Beyond the intellectually broadening study accomplished through introductory courses in six discrete disciplines is the in-depth study of other fields of knowledge besides the student's major. Six advanced courses are required: although two courses taken in the student's discipline are acceptable toward fulfillment of the requirement, the student faces the challenge of completing satisfactorily four courses equally divided between the two non-major GE Areas. The student has choices here: he or she may take courses in two, three, or four disciplines from the two non-major GE Areas. Several levels of protection -- program regulations, departmental restrictions, and the student's common sense -- assure the student that he or she cannot attempt a course that would overwhelm a non-specialist's ability.

The fourth component of the General Education program, the interdisciplinary course, furnishes the student an opportunity to witness and partake of the interaction of two or more disciplines upon a specific issue, problem, or phenomenon of society, present or past. That the interdisciplinary courses be team-taught is not to deny the existence of instructors capable

of presenting impartially the disparate, and sometimes incompatible, perspectives on an issue or problem; it is to recognize the advantage gained from access to differing approaches to a subject. To bear the fullest fruit, the interdisciplinary course is taken in either the junior or senior year. A second interdisciplinary course may be taken to fulfill a GE Area advanced requirement, if the course represents a discipline within that Area.

Appendix A

ADDITIONAL PROVISIONS AND CONDITIONS

1. University departments have the authority, subject to established University procedures, to require of their degree candidates more specific or more extensive study in general education than the program requires. This departmental authority, however, does not extend in the opposite direction to forgiveness or diminution of general education requirements.
2. In order to integrate general education into the curricular mainstream at SIUE, departments shall designate by appropriate identifying letters (e.g., "HIST101 I") the general education courses offered by their disciplines and programs. The old designations GHA, GIS, GSK, GSM, and GSS shall be abolished.
3. The legal requirement of the State of Illinois that every student demonstrate knowledge of the United States Constitution may be satisfied by examination at the university's Testing Center, by evidence of previous fulfillment of the requirement, or by satisfactory completion of a university course directed to that purpose. The course may count toward fulfillment of either general education or constitution requirements, but not both.
4. The concepts of "Advanced Standing" and "Substitutions" are irrelevant in the new program: university advisement will place students in appropriate general education courses, based on levels of preparation. Because most undergraduate courses in the university curriculum qualify, in theory, as general education courses, the ideas of substitution and waivers are redundant. All students will participate in a General Education program.
5. Departments proposing an Interdisciplinary course may petition for a waiver of the requirement that the course be team-taught. Such petitions will be considered on an individual basis.

REQUIREMENTS FOR THE TRANSFER STUDENT

Students who transfer to SIUE from an accredited community college, college, or university will have their transcripts evaluated for partial or complete fulfillment of general education requirements. An exception is the transfer student bearing an associate degree from a baccalaureate-oriented program at an accredited two-year institution. This student shall be considered as having fulfilled the skills and introductory course requirements of the General Education program at SIUE. Transcripts will be evaluated for fulfillment of advanced GE requirements.

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS AND SPECIAL ASSISTANCE PROVISIONS

The Curriculum Council endorses the report of the Task Force where it states on page 26:

To ensure that students entering the General Education Program possess sufficient competence in fundamental intellectual skills to perform satisfactorily in the coursework, we recommend establishment of an appropriate testing program. Students should be required to demonstrate, through examination or other appropriate means, college-entry levels of competence in writing, reading, and arithmetic, and a college-entry level of knowledge of U.S. history and world geography. In addition, students should be required to demonstrate a college-entry level of competence in mathematics prior to taking general education courses in the area of natural sciences and mathematics. Deficiencies should be identified as early as possible in the student's academic career, and corrective steps taken. Appropriate opportunities should be provided, through the special assistance programs, for the student to eliminate the deficiencies.

Upon approval of this proposal by the Faculty Senate and the President of SIUE, the Curriculum Council will charge the special committee created to implement the general education program with the responsibility of establishing a sub-committee on entry requirements, tests, and special assistance provisions. The sub-committee will follow the procedures and recommendations stated on Page 27 of the Task Force Report, consistent with the policies being developed by the Task Force on Admissions standards.

Appendix B

IMPLEMENTATION PROCEDURES

The implementation phase of the General Education program will, in some cases, require temporary changes in the Bylaws of the Curriculum Council or other Faculty Senate bodies. Accordingly, the Rules and Procedures Council will assist those bodies in making the necessary procedural changes.

Upon adoption of the Council's proposal for general education by the Faculty Senate and by the University President, the Curriculum Council shall designate an ad hoc committee for the sole purpose of establishing the program. Known as the General Education Program Committee for Implementation (GEPCI), this committee shall have a chairperson, appointed by the President of the Faculty Senate in consultation with the chairperson of the Curriculum Council. The GEPCI chairperson shall serve as an ex officio member of the Council. The GEPCI chairperson, the chairperson of the Curriculum Council, and the President of Faculty Senate in turn shall nominate six faculty (at least two from the Council) and two students, and shall request the Vice President and Provost to appoint a representative for membership on the committee; the GEPCI chairperson and the six faculty members shall be subject to approval by the Faculty Senate. Faculty members will include at least one person each from the skills area, Fine Arts and Humanities, Natural Science and Mathematics, and Social Sciences. It is strongly recommended that close liaison be maintained with the Admissions and Advisement Offices, either through the Vice President and Provost's representative or through other means.

The GEPCI will work with schools and departments, and through them, individual faculty members in formulating suitable descriptions and specifications for courses comprising the new program and will coordinate the process of revising existing courses and creating new ones where necessary. The GEPCI will be specifically charged with the responsibility of evaluating and approving all courses--skills, introductory, advanced, and interdisciplinary--according to the philosophy, goals, and criteria as stated in the proposal.

The time-table that GEPCI will use in implementing the new program in general education shall be as follows, to the extent feasible:

FSA	Date of Faculty Senate Approval (and President's Acceptance)
FSA + 10 days	Letters from the GEPCI to the Deans and Directors of Academic Units explaining the procedures for implementation and requesting cooperation.
FSA + 20 days	1. Letters to the departments involved with skills courses requesting Form 90A's for new skills courses that fit the stated

goals and criteria of the new program.

2. Letters to all departments explaining the concept of the introductory course and requesting Form 90A's for courses to be included in the new program.
3. Letters to all departments explaining the interdisciplinary course requirements and requesting Form 90A's for courses to be included in the new program.

The Form 90A's of skills, introductory, and interdisciplinary course proposals will proceed in the usual fashion through departmental fabrication and approval and School acceptance.

FSA + 50 days

Form 90A's at School level for approval.

FSA + 70 days

Form 90A's at GEPCI for evaluation and approval or rejection; the GEPCI will consult and cooperate with departments to make acceptable any proposed courses not meeting the goals and criteria of the program.

As of the date of approval of the new program by the President, no existing General Studies course shall be assumed appropriate to the new General Education program. All courses to be incorporated into the new program shall undergo close scrutiny by GEPCI to determine their accord with the stated goals and criteria pertinent to them.

As the Forms 90A enter the Curriculum Council, they shall be sent immediately to the GEPCI for examination, possible revision in cooperation with the affected departments, and finally approval. The GEPCI shall have the authority to question the purpose, objectives, structure, materials, assignments, and overall pedagogy of skills courses whose Forms 90A are submitted to the committee. If the proposed course fails to meet the relevant goals and criteria, the department will be asked to revise accordingly. Proposed introductory and interdisciplinary courses will undergo a similar study prior to approval by GEPCI. Approval of a course for the General Education program shall be for periods of up to five years. The approval may be renewed for additional periods, if the General Education Committee (see below) finds that the course still meets the goals and purposes of the program.

The GEPCI will be charged not only with the implementation of the new program but also with the initial review of the program at the end of the first year of operation. In addition it will make recommendations to the Curriculum Council about the concerns noted in the Task Force Report under "Implementation Procedures" (pages 27-28).

The GEPCI will be responsible for developing the materials--letters, brochures, booklets--used by the University to explain the purposes, goals,

options, and requirements of the new general education program. For this task the GEPCI shall solicit the assistance of interested University parties such as the Registrar, Advisement, Student Affairs, University Graphics and Publications, and so forth.

Because the Faculty of the University has original jurisdiction in matters pertaining to curriculum, and because the Curriculum Council has been designated as the faculty body to review all undergraduate courses and programs, the Curriculum Council will review and have countermanding authority upon all actions taken by the GEPCI. Upon completion of its first-year review of the General Education program and submission of its report to the Curriculum Council, the GEPCI will be dissolved and replaced by the regular General Education (formerly General Studies) Committee of the University. The General Education Committee shall apply the same criteria for approval and review of courses as used by GEPCI.