

General Studies Working Group Preliminary Reporting

On 30 April 2010, the General Studies Coordinating Committee and the volunteer members of the various general studies working groups met to discuss the progress of the working groups, review the working group model, and lay out a provisional timetable for the revision.

5 of the 6 working groups presented written copy of their progress; the sixth group presented an extended oral presentation. Following are copies of the *preliminary* reports that were circulated at the meeting (that is, none of what follows represents final policy, prescriptions, recommendations; it is an opening move). The tiering group edited its report to address some of the comments and feedback from the meeting so the document included below differs in some ways from the document distributed at the meeting.

[Edit, 19 July 2010]. The FYE/WAC group emailed an update that has been incorporated into this collection]

General Studies Working Group Report- Tiering

Members: Deborah Freile, Ivan Steinberg, Marc Dalio, John Debrizzi, Barbara Hildner, Rosamond Hooper-Hammersley, Joanne Junker, Ethan Prosen, Dennis Raverty and Beimnet Teclezghi

Members present: Deborah Freile, Ivan Steinberg, Barbara Hildner, Rosamond Hooper-Hammersley, Ethan Prosen, Dennis Raverty and Beimnet Teclezghi

The group met a total of two times. At the first meeting, the discussion centered on what courses should be taken at the 100-level. The group felt that our students needed much more exposure to analytical reading and writing, maybe a total of 8 hours instead of the current 6 of English Composition 1 and 2. Also 4 hours of math instead of 3, since the quantitative literacy requirements are not being adequately met. We felt that Civilizations I and II should remain in place at the 200 level.

At our second meeting some members questioned the need for tiering, since we can't seem to get our students through our standard competency classes -- English and Math -- in a reasonable time frame. One of our members commented that 80% of our students need remedial English so that by the time the students get through English Composition 1/2 they maybe Juniors; and it can be a worse case for those students getting through the math requirements. So the point was made that we need to develop basic skills before trying to accomplish higher level General Studies classes that require lower level prerequisites. What will this mean for our students and graduation rates? If they spend one or two years taking remedial classes can they move on to higher level General Studies classes or will they be frustrated?

Questions were asked on how long it currently takes students to get through English Composition 1 and English Composition 2 and Math 112. Do we currently enforce the time limits on completing the AUR (after the first 36 hours of study)? Will this process change somehow with a tiered system? Should Tiering be based on skills rather than content?

Lastly a proposal was made by Ethan Prosen as follows:

- 100-level** courses should consist of basic reading writing, basic research, and basic mathematical concepts
- 200-level** intermediate analysis, complex research, applied mathematical concepts
- 300-level** complex analysis, foot noting, bibliographical searches, advanced mathematical concepts
- 400-level** capstone integration

Other questions raised by the group members:

1. Would tiering create more or less order than the present system?
2. Are 38 or 40 credits too few for a General Studies curriculum? Should we have more credits, say 50 credits?
3. What do we want General Studies to accomplish? (some members wanted answers)
4. What is the real need for tiering?- Is it the need for our community college transfers students (those with AA or AS degrees) to take common courses with the rest of the NJCU population that start out as Freshmen or have to have General Studies courses, hence the 300 and 400-level designation? Or do we want to truly build up a foundation of knowledge?

GENERAL STUDIES WORKING GROUP ON INTERDISCIPLINARY ISSUES REPORT: APRIL 23RD, 2010

Members: Mort Aabdollah, Chris Cunningham, Vera Dika, Jacqueline Ellis (Co-Chair), Anne Mabry, Jason Martinek, Aisa Said-Mohand, Bill Montgomery, Rosilyn Overton, Ellen Quinn (Co-Chair), Mirtha Quintanales,

1. INTRODUCTION:

The working group met on three face-to-face on three occasions and had continuing discussions via email and in a Google Group. At the first meeting we discussed various definitions of “interdisciplinary” (see “Defining the Terms” below); at the second meeting we established three possible models for the General Studies Program that utilize interdisciplinarity in particular ways: an interdisciplinary meta-structure, an interdisciplinary structure with interdisciplinary courses, and a crossdisciplinary/multidisciplinary structure with discipline-specific courses. We then divided into subgroups that researched and discussed the pros and cons of a particular model. At our final meeting we discussed each sub-group’s findings.

2. DEFINING OUR TERMS:

At the outset we found that “interdisciplinary” was an especially fluid term—each of us had particular understandings of it based on our academic training, our teaching experiences, and the ways it is currently used on campus. We therefore found it necessary to define the terms. Michael Seipel’s article, “Interdisciplinarity: An Introduction” was useful in this regard. The following definitions are drawn from his work:

- **Intradisciplinary** “analysis involves work within a single discipline, such as the biologist investigating cell structure of a particular organism” (2).
- **Multidisciplinary** “analysis draws on the knowledge of several disciplines, each of which provides a different perspective on a problem or issue. In multidisciplinary analysis, each discipline makes a contribution to the overall understanding of the issue, but in a primarily additive fashion. Students must then make the connections between the various disciplinary contributions” (3).
- **Crossdisciplinary** “activity views one discipline from the perspective of another, such as a Physics 100 lab in which principles of physics are used to understand acoustics of music” (3).
- **Interdisciplinary** “analysis requires integration of knowledge from the disciplines being brought to bear on an issue. Disciplinary knowledge, concepts, tools, and rules of investigation are considered, contrasted, and combined in such a way that the resulting understanding is greater than simply the sum of its disciplinary parts... Analysis which works through...tensions and contradictions between disciplinary systems of knowledge with the goal of synthesis—the creation of new knowledge— often characterizes the richest interdisciplinary work” (3).

3. INTERDISCIPLINARY MODELS FOR GENERAL STUDIES

a. Interdisciplinary Meta-Structure (Jason Martinek, Ellen Quinn, Vera Dika):

Although interdisciplinarity is that which lies at the interstice between traditional disciplinary boundaries and often stands in opposition to disciplinary institutionalizations, many colleges and universities have nonetheless institutionalized interdisciplinary studies as its own disciplinary department. One of the major questions that we need to ask is if this model is appropriate for NJCU. This brief report answers that question.

In the humanities, interdisciplinary studies emerged as a radical critique of the limits of disciplinarity, especially in addressing questions of culture, gender, race, and colonialism. Practitioners in the sciences and social sciences also felt the limits of disciplinary boundaries, seeking to engage a broader set of methodologies and practices to address questions that did not fit neatly within a single discipline (i.e. urban studies, environmental studies, bioethics, etc.). Given its origins as an alternative to institutionalized structures, institutionalizing interdisciplinarity would seem to be antithetical to the central goals of interdisciplinary studies.

Opponents of institutionalization often point to the rigidity of disciplinarity as stifling the freedom implicit in interdisciplinary work, especially in terms of methodological flexibility and theoretical openness. In lieu of departmental structures, these opponents often point to the use of specialized seminars and colloquia to address interdisciplinary questions. Supporters, however, argue for the necessity of institutionalization to better develop, coordinate, and administer interdisciplinary activity across a campus. Furthermore, they argue that only a departmental structure brings with it institutional and academic legitimacy and the benefits that come with these things: designated faculty lines, budgets, and other kinds of formalized support.

NJCU's history with interdisciplinary departments has been patchy at best. Institutional support has been uneven, and has tended to lead to weak programs. The department of Women's and Gender Studies has tended to buck this trend; however, it is the exception rather than the rule. Thus, a departmental structure, especially as witnessed here, will not necessarily lead to a strong, faculty-supported framework for interdisciplinary programming.

One alternative to a departmental structure is coordination at the dean's or provost's (VPAA) level. Temple University, whose multidisciplinary general studies program has been touted as a model for NJCU, is administered by the provost's office. Such an approach goes against NJCU's proud tradition of having a faculty-driven curricula. And historically academic programs and courses coordinated by the Dean's Office have not been nurtured (i.e. INTD courses and the honor's program). At other institutions, the major problem with strong administration-led efforts has been what happens after the administrator-in-charge leaves. Without a replacement who values interdisciplinarity, the programs tended to wither or were replaced by new program initiatives.

One model that seems to hold much promise at NJCU is the center or program model. The school's ESL program has been designed along these lines. It is a faculty-driven model that is flexible enough to allow for interdisciplinary collaboration across the departments, but not so rigid as to limit interdisciplinary engagement to just one department. Defined as a center for integrative teaching and research, CAS can also serve as an institutional nexus for outside funding. On top of that, a center can coordinate the assessment of general studies interdisciplinary courses and provide a meta-structure for future interdisciplinary collaborations.

b. Interdisciplinary Structure with Interdisciplinary Course and Instructional Approaches (Chris Cunningham, Ellen Quinn, Anne Mabry, Mirtha Quintanales):

The following sketch of a 36 credit General Studies plan (put, for the purposes of clarity here, into a 4-year format) is organized around several goals: 1) to sketch the outlines of a General Studies program, all of whose courses have interdisciplinary content and instructional approaches; 2) to extend the General Studies experience over the whole of the college experience.

General Studies courses may be team taught to heighten interdisciplinarity
General Studies courses may be large lecture courses, co-taught by a number of instructors, with smaller sections, which may or may not have disciplinary focus.

First Year, First Semester

Introduction to College course (will be interdisciplinary in content and instruction and organized around theme, problem or topic; may contain elements of the courses Orientation to College, Reading and Study Skills, Computer as a Tool and / or may have an organizing quantitative reasoning component)

College Composition course (similar to NJCU's current English Composition 1, but will be interdisciplinary in content and instruction; while developing basic competencies in academic writing, will be organized around a topic, theme or problematic; will offer cross-disciplinary instruction in academic format (MLA, APA, AAA formats to be taught))

General Studies 1 "General Studies 1-8" represents single courses or several courses constructed sequentially (in time, scope (i.e. global to local, etc.) or not, but of increasing complexity to be taken in order across college career. Suggested General Studies 1 course: NJCU as Urban Public University, an interdisciplinary course examining the history, demographics, environmental quality, culture, economics, etc. of Jersey City and its impact on the University and its students.

First Year, Second Semester

First Year Experience course (will be interdisciplinary in content and instruction and organized around a theme, problem or topic)

College Composition course (similar to NJCU's current English Composition 2, but will be interdisciplinary in content and instruction; will center, as does EC 2,

on the development of a research essay, here of either a discipline-specific or interdisciplinary character)

General Studies 2

Second Year, First Semester

General Studies 3

Second Year, Second Semester

General Studies 4

Third Year, First Semester

General Studies 5

Third Year, Second Semester

General Studies 6

Fourth Year, First Semester

General Studies 7 (Course may be of a service or internship nature (a service-learning course, an internship, a labor project, a short term travel course, an education practicum, participation in a theatre lab production, an independent research project, etc.) or have the character of a capstone, organized around a problem, question or topic.)

Fourth Year, Second Semester

(Course may be in the form of a General Studies Capstone, inviting students to pool the discipline-specific skills they've developed in their majors to produce interdisciplinary final projects or essays.)

c. Cross Disciplinary/Multi-Disciplinary Structure With Discipline-Specific Courses (Bill Montgomery, Aisa Said-Mohand):

According to Seipel's definition ("activity views one discipline from the perspective of another, such as a Physics 100 lab in which principles of physics are used to understand acoustics of music"), we do not feel that a "cross-disciplinary" structure will be particularly effective in a General Studies curriculum, as it does not appear to lend itself particularly well to collaborative efforts. Although this approach, which looks at other disciplines with a different "lens" has been used to some degree in FYE at NJCU (e.g., Physics of Sports), we are not aware of its widespread adoption at NJCU.

Collaboration in a multidisciplinary sense, where "analysis draws on the knowledge of several disciplines, each of which provides a different perspective on a problem or issue" more closely characterizes collaborative efforts at NJCU, but even here a high degree of interdisciplinarity exists. For example, Geoscience has developed a multidisciplinary, 12 CH Certificate of Geographic Information Science (GIS) through collaboration with faculty from a wide variety of Departments in CPS and CAS who have found applications of this technology in their disciplines / professions. These efforts have produced a collection of GIS exercises that train students in the use of GIS in disciplines including: Health Science, Criminal Justice, Professional Security, Nursing, and Business. These

exercises both require and provide computer- and spatially-based “perspective” on disciplinary content with which the student is familiar, so to some degree these exercises represent “cross-disciplinarity”. However, the use of GIS enables the student to gain new insight and knowledge about not only their discipline, but GIS technology itself, which argues that these efforts are multidisciplinary.

Another example of multidisciplinary collaboration is one in which Geoscience and Computer Science have developed a Concentration in Geographic Information Science (GIS) that will equip recipients with knowledge and skills in GIS, database management, and visual programming that are in very high demand in the high-tech, 21st century workplace. These efforts seem to border upon interdisciplinarity in that the student is synthesizing knowledge and perspective about all of these fields in the context of all of these fields.

The most recent example of multidisciplinary (bordering upon interdisciplinarity) is our new Concentration in Urban Environmental Science being developed by Biology, Chemistry, and Geoscience. Although courses for the Concentration will reside in each discipline, it is envisioned that a large number of enrollees will comprise “cadres” or cohorts of students that will take a number of these courses together. Our vision is that Biology, Chemistry, and Geoscience majors will be working together, in the lab and in the field, to study and solve urban environmental science problems, bringing their disciplinary perspective to bear in a collaborative setting. One may choose to define our collaborative efforts as “multidisciplinary” or “interdisciplinary”, but there is no doubt that students will benefit from different perspectives and will synthesize new knowledge under the general heading of “urban environmental science”.

4. ADDITIONAL SUGGESTIONS, QUESTIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Working Group discussed potential themes for structuring an interdisciplinary General Studies Program including Cultural Relativity, Ethnocentrism and Human Rights, Nature/Nurture Debates, War and Peace, Visual Culture in Theory and Practice, Global Studies, etc., but decide against making any specific recommendations.

The Working Group also recommends that any interdisciplinary General Studies Program would require resources for creating new courses and for faculty development in team teaching and interdisciplinary teaching methods.

5. NEXT STEPS:

The Working Group intends to continue its work through the summer. In particular, we would like to survey the campus about current interdisciplinary offerings at NJCU.

**GENERAL STUDIES WORKING GROUP ON LEARNING
COMMUNITIES/WRITING ACROSS CURRICULUM INITIATIVES/FYEP:
APRIL 23RD, 2010**

Members: Jennifer Aitken, Elaine Gargiulo, Max Herman, Laura Pannaman, Deb Woo

This working group was charged with exploring three dimensions of the general studies program as it is currently configured and as we might like to propose it be re-imagined. They include:

1. The First Year Experience seminar
2. The Learning Communities Curricular Structure (currently organizing the First Year Experience Program)
3. Writing Across the Curriculum Initiatives

1. FIRST YEAR EXPERIENCE SEMINAR and FIRST YEAR EXPERIENCE PROGRAM

After reviewing the 1999 GS proposal with a focus on the FYE component and its requirements (articulated in Appendix 3), the group identified several ways in which the original conception of the course is or may not have been actualized.

- A. FYE seminars were intended to receive temporary approval and not be taught more than twice. In the interest of offering a range of seminars and in the absence of new proposals, the administration agreed to extend temporary approval semester after semester and granted all existing FYE seminars permanent approval in 2009.
- B. FYE seminars were intended to be theme-based and less tethered to particular disciplines than other GS courses, and reflective of the recent or in-progress scholarship or intellectual interests of their instructors. In these ways, FYE seminars were intended to be distinct from other GS courses. In practice, many FYE seminars appear to include content and assignments that are indistinguishable from that of other GS courses.
- C. FYE seminars were intended to emphasize the cultivation of basic competencies in reading, writing, critical thinking, information literacy, oral communication, and, when appropriate, quantitative analysis. In practice, the degree of emphasis on skills-building in these courses may not significantly differ from that of other GS courses.
- D. FYE seminars were intended to ease the transition to college for first-year students. There are no specified guidelines for this support, and in practice, it is unclear what strategies individual instructors use to provide it or how this course is aligned with the one-credit Orientation to College course.
- E. FYE seminars were intended to be accompanied by a peer assistant program and a faculty incentive grant program, neither of which was implemented.

The group would like to confirm some of its anecdotal findings with a more systematic review of FYE syllabi, course design, and assignments and by surveying FYE faculty and students. However, based on perceived discrepancies between the plan and execution of the FYE seminar, and our concern that this course does not introduce new students to the college experience in a distinctive way, the group is entertaining the possibility of suggesting that the FYE seminar be replaced by a new 3-credit course (or two-semester, 4-credit sequence of courses) called Freshman Seminar or Transition to NJCU (or some such) that would absorb the curriculum and purpose (hence obviating) the existing one-credit course Orientation to College. The Freshman Seminar would introduce students to:

- the culture and expectations of higher education
- the structure and basic epistemological assumptions of a wide array of academic disciplines
- preliminary career counseling
- study skills, time management, test taking workshops
- using academic resources (including basic, responsible research practices)

2. (FIRST YEAR) LEARNING COMMUNITIES

The group reviewed the statistical data collected by the FYEP Coordinating Committee, which indicates that the learning communities structure of Project 100 and the FYEP has consistently had a positive impact on student retention and graduation rates.

The group takes it as a premise that the new GS program proposal will include a learning communities structure, though it is in the process of formulating recommendations about that structure.

3. WRITING ACROSS THE CURRICULUM/WRITING INTENSIVE COURSES

The need for a Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) program at NJCU has recently been widely articulated: the NJCU Speaking and Writing Across the Curriculum Committee charged by VP Joanne Bruno will include the implementation of such a program in its recommendations and the need for a WAC program was noted in the English department self-study report and the report issued by outside consultant to the English department Dennis Paoli, Hunter College Reading and Writing Coordinator and Coordinator of the Hunter College WAC Program. Given the centrality of speaking and writing to academic work throughout the university, and the well-documented difficulties that students experience in completing speaking and writing assignments, we follow the lead of the WAC movement nation-wide in positing that instruction in these skills can no longer be relegated to the work of one or two departments. Rather, the responsibility for providing sound instruction in written and verbal communication must be adopted across the disciplines and carried out in a consistent way throughout each student's college career.

For context, we offer an excerpt from the Hunter College WAC web pages:

Writing Across the Curriculum is founded on the principle that students learn by writing—they learn to write by engaging in a variety of academic writing activities, and they learn subject matter by writing about it. WAC is a practical pedagogy, rich in methods teachers can use to design effective assignments, perform efficient assessment, provide useful feedback to student writers, and utilize writing to engage course material. WAC is prescriptive but not restrictive. Faculty can adopt or adapt whatever means or insight they find in extensive literature on WAC and its best practices that is appropriate and advantageous to learning in the discipline or the lesson at hand. You do not have to be an expert on writing or on WAC to apply its methods and benefit from its application.

The group is in on-going discussions with the Writing Across the Curriculum coordinators at Rutgers, Newark, and Hunter College. We have also researched the WAC models at Temple, Monmouth, and Colorado State Universities. The “WAC Clearinghouse” – an extensive online research center sponsored by Colorado State University in partnership with the International WAC Network – has provided an especially useful resource and offers a great number of research studies, scholarly articles, promising curricular models, faculty development materials, and assessment suggestions.

Among the principle articles we’ve reviewed is “Toward a Unified Writing Curriculum” by Jonathan Hall, Rutgers, Newark, which offers the following questions as points of departure for the design and review of writing programs in and across the disciplines:

- *Articulating Goals:* What, exactly, should our graduating majors be able to do, in terms of reading, writing, critical thinking, and research?
- *Assessment:* Does our current program of courses that assign writing take our students progressively from where we can expect them to be after freshman composition to where we need them to be by graduation?
- *Curriculum Development:* If assessment revealed any gaps in our writing offerings, what adjustments do we need to make to departmental curricular requirements or particular course designs?
- *Support:* When students need extra help to meet our goals for reading, writing, critical thinking, and research, what is our department-specific plan for getting them extra help? (This might include referring students to WAC tutoring or WAC workshops, developing discipline-specific WAC workshops, embedding tutors in specific courses, etc. The key is to front-load support by making referrals early in the semester on the basis of, for example, a first-week diagnostic essay.)
- *Professional Development:* What does our department faculty need to learn to make us comfortable with the pedagogical challenges of writing instruction, and what is the most effective way to learn it? (This might include encouraging faculty to attend colloquia sponsored by the WAC Program, or developing a department-specific training program.)

The group plans to begin answering these questions based on responses to a faculty survey that we've developed and which we plan to administer in the Fall. Moreover, two members of this working group (joined by VP Jo Bruno and two other faculty members) will attend the Institute for Higher Education Policy Summer Academy this July as part of a grant awarded to NJCU to fund enhancements to the First Year Experience Program that will emphasize a refined, systemic, cross-disciplinary approach to the teaching of reading and writing at both developmental and college levels. We hope to draw on their work as we develop our recommendations for a WAC program.

While the group is far from finalizing a formal proposal, we have concluded that our proposal will stress two fundamental elements:

- 1) it will be implemented by a WAC Coordinator through a WAC Center and
- 2). it will be supported by an ongoing faculty development campaign including presentations and workshops by outside experts, as well as the hire of a number of WAC Fellows each year.

Clearly, these elements will require significant administrative support.

Assessment Working Group Report:

Members: Arthur Kramer, Fran Moran, Debbie Bennett, Ken Good, Joe Moskowitz, Muriel Rand, Ken Yamaguchi

The working group met twice since the initial working group meeting and recommends assessment be targeted to two major areas:

1. Student learning outcomes:

We pretty much agree on the recommendation that we should explore ways other institutions assess their program. While started preliminary work on this, we believe that we should check to see if other institutions have “published” the goals and objectives of their programs, especially if the institutions are similar to NJCU in enrollment, (Carnegie Classification??), size,--other criteria??)

Another component of this is whether we will be assessing skills and knowledge possessed by the students—this reverts back to goals and objectives, for which we are dependent on other working groups—and if so, what minimal levels of mastery of skills to assess. Then, methodology of assessment becomes a factor—should we use a standardized test, a locally developed test, or a combination.

In the area of content, what quality and quantity of content should the program possess? And to that end, the working group agrees in the recommendation the assessment, in general, should be on the program level, not course level.

2. Program review:

The process by which the program is experienced by the students, the level of compliance with the policies of the program, and the financial and human resources devoted to the program. Building on the Middle States self study report and the recommendations of previous General Studies Coordinating Committees, we believe it essential to have this component in mind as the revision process moves forward.

In considering the two target areas, it is recommended student input should be included, that is, student satisfaction with the program and student engagement in the program. Methods of assessing these would have to be developed, as well.

One question that was raised at the last meeting was assessment of the current program. Is that to be in our purview? It was mentioned that students are currently enrolled who are bound to that program—if we can find a clear statement of the goals and objectives of the program, perhaps we can address it.

Engaging the Community Working Group Report

Members: Ethan Bumas, Donna Connolly, Helen Hoch, Fran Moran (co-chair), John Porcaro (co-chair), Jeanette Ramos-Alexander, Herb Rosenberg, Tim White

Because scheduling conflicts made it difficult to convene as a single body, the working group met separately and virtually over the past month. The committee agreed that incorporating a more formalized connection to the surrounding communities (Jersey City, Hudson County, North Jersey, and NY metro area) would help connect the general studies program more closely to the University's Mission and Vision statements and could potentially make for a more vibrant and meaningful general studies program.

To ascertain the viability of this idea, the working group adopted a two pronged approach of 1) compiling a list of available resources that could be drawn upon to build a community-engagement component (Bumas, Moran, Ramos-Alexander, and Rosenberg); and 2) ascertaining the extent to which at least some of this outreach is already in place in the University (Hoch, White).

In terms of the first point, we continued to add links and information on the GSCC website dedicated to community resources. Prof. Rosenberg is working on adding more cultural links (and supplementing the more overtly "artistic" links gathered), and Prof. Ramos-Alexander is exploring the business/corporate based resources.

In terms of the second point, Professor Hoch has reached out to the faculty to send along information as to how different faculty members are incorporating the community in their courses, and Prof. White has reached out to determine faculty receptiveness to integrating a tighter connection to the community in courses (either existing or to be created).

Finally, at one of the early meetings, Prof. Ramos-Alexander worked on a vision statement to help in creating a new general studies program. The group discussed the statement and it was subsequently circulated to the other working groups.*

** In a paper saving move, the report distributed at the meeting did not include the draft. It is reproduced below.*

DRAFT VISIONS for GENERAL STUDIES REVISIONS

V1:

Promote the personal, professional and civic development of urban learners within a global society by providing a cohesive academic foundation in the Arts & Humanities, Natural & Social Sciences, Multicultural disciplines, Quantitative skills and Information Gathering & Literacy that is anchored by knowledge, applied skills and critical inquiry.

V2:

Promote the personal, professional and civic development of urban learners within a global society by providing a cohesive academic foundation anchored by knowledge, skills and critical inquiry within the Arts & Humanities, Natural & Social Sciences, Multicultural disciplines, Quantitative skills and Information Gathering & Literacy.

GOALS:

- Reduce the Number of General Studies Degree Credits Required (p. 42)*
- Reduce the Number of 100 Level and Introductory Courses Involved (p. 45)
- Improve the Assessment Protocol and Oversight (p. 51)
- Sharpen the Cohesion of Courses Included in Area Groupings (p. 52)
- Tighten the Connection between General Studies and the Vision 2010 Plan (p.53)

**Page numbers refer to the evaluation report the GSCC developed and published on the website.*

Note: *No action* was taken on this, and beyond its email distribution, no further work has been undertaken in refining, amending, or adopting it.

General Studies AURs and Pre-College Programs Working Group Report

Members: Regina Adesanya, Cindy Arrigo, Joshua Fausty, Hyun Hochsmann, Karen Ivy (chair), Cora Lagos, Andrew Platizky, Michael Rotenberg-Schwartz, Cheryl Swider, Rosemary Thurston

The charge of the General Studies AURs and Pre-College Programs Working Group was to address the following issues: 1) the status of current Pre-College Programs, i.e., the Academic Foundations Courses Program; 2) the status of the current AUR courses; 3) Incorporating other AUR courses (higher level, e.g., language? lab? capstone?). In addressing the issues above, the AURs and Pre-College Programs Working Group agreed that its view of the AUR component of the General Studies Program would encompass the required courses for every student who graduates from New Jersey City University should take to increase their broad based knowledge & skills needed to enhance their ability to take upper level courses and to compete in today's economy & society.

Overview of Current Program

The All University Requirements (AUR) component of the General Studies Program consists of 18 credits distributed among two 3-credit English Composition courses, one 3-credit Mathematics course, two 3-credit Civilization courses, and one 3-credit Freshman Year Experience (FYE) course. Students are placed into a mathematics and/or English course based on their scores from a University-administered placement exam. Thus, some students' scores may place them in the University's Academic Foundations Program, which serves to develop students' basic writing and mathematical skills and to provide additional support services to students.

Recommendations

Pre-College Programs:

1. Offer a 5-credit accelerated course that integrates both Basic College Mathematics and Algebra for College, thus expediting the possibility of remediation in mathematics. Placement in this course will also be determined by scores on University-administered placement exam. Include a one-hour lab that incorporates math study skills.
2. Upon passing this 5-cr proposed course or Algebra for College, permit students to take a 3-cr Liberal Arts Mathematics course or the current Intermediate Algebra course.
3. Continue to offer the current 3-cr Basic College Mathematics and 4-cr Algebra for College course sequence where placement is determined by scores on University-administered placement exam.
4. Continue to offer the RWAD.

AURs:

1. Require students to successfully complete 30 credits of coursework: English Composition I and II; Speech; Liberal Arts Mathematics/non-Liberal Arts Mathematics; *Signature Course*; Senior Capstone Project; and a generalized or survey course in each of the following disciplines: Humanities; Natural Sciences; Social Sciences; and Art. As a non-AUR follow-up, require students to select another course from one of the four disciplines for depth.
2. Remove the First Year Experience (FYE) requirement from the AURs.

Assessment:

Although this Committee has not been asked to review the issue of assessment, we feel the topic, as it pertains to our Committee's recommendation, is essential. Therefore the following additional recommendations are made.

1. Implement University-wide assessment measures complete with follow ups/ checks-and-balances for all GS courses; i.e., close the loop and make sure that critical thinking/creativity, information gathering, literacy, quantitative, computer literacy, and oral presentation exercises/experiences are included in each course.
2. Require uniformity in all GS courses, i.e., a common syllabus.
3. Develop an assessment process for measuring general study skills; math study skills; reading, writing, and speaking study skills; learning styles; and math anxiety for students. Then provide effective treatment strategies.