

General Education Program

General Education at NJCU

Revision Approved by GECC on September 24, 2015

[Click here to view the General Education program proposal approved by the University Senate and SACC in May 2014. For comparison purposes, please see the Administrative Structure section which begins on page 11.](#)

Beginning fall 2015, NJCU will provide incoming freshmen with a comprehensive General Education program that enlarges their knowledge and understanding of themselves and the world. The program provides students with an innovative tiered curriculum that introduces them to the ways of thinking about and exploring knowledge and the world associated with various academic disciplines. As they progress through the General Education program, students develop and strengthen the skills necessary to complete college and engage in life-long learning.

In spring 2014, the University Senate established three *ad hoc* committees to implement the new program: the General Education Executive, Curriculum, and Assessment Committees. According to the original proposal, the work of these committees sunsets in January 2016. The General Education Executive Committee proposes the following structure to provide continuing programmatic oversight with regard to curriculum, assessment, and decisions related to policy and procedure: a Director of General Education who is a full-time tenured faculty member, the General Education Curriculum Committee, and a committee resulting from the merger of the General Education Assessment (GEAC) and Executive (GEEC) Committees to be known as the General Education Committee for Assessment and Policy (GECAP). The committees will be standing committees of the Senate and we propose they be added to the Senate Constitution.

General Education Administrative Structure

Director of General Education

The Director of General Education will undertake the following:

- A. Serve in an *ex officio*, non-voting capacity on the following standing committees: General Education Committee for Assessment and Policy (GECAP), the General Education Curriculum Committee (GECC), and all other committees directly related to the General Education program. These include committees created by the Senate and subcommittees created by the GECAP and GECC.
- B. Work with the elected faculty chairs(s) of the GECAP and GECC and, together with them, (1) report to the University community recommendations related to General Education; and (2) forward those recommendations to the University Senate for review and approval when appropriate.
- C. Maintain records and documentation that will be used to support the work of the General Education committees and to support the composition and publication of

reports to the University community on the General Education program, including its assessment.

- D. Establish and oversee the web presence (via a webpage or other online outlets) for the program.
- E. Help plan professional development workshops related to General Education.
- F. Identify and pursue viable grant and other funding opportunities.
- G. Coordinate the development of General Education learning communities in collaboration with the First Year Experience Program Coordinator and/or others, as appropriate, in accordance with Senate-approved curriculum and policies.
- H. Work with departments to coordinate scheduling of General Education courses.
- I. In conjunction with the GECAP, formulate a plan for maintaining the confidentiality of assessment data so that data cannot be used to evaluate individual courses or any faculty members.
- J. With the GECAP, develop an assessment timeline for submission to the Senate.
- K. Review and approve recommendations (excepting individual course approvals) of the General Education Curriculum Committee, and review any motions of the GECAP, prior to submission to the Senate for approval.
- L. Coordinate faculty participation in professional development meetings, conferences, and workshops related to General Education, subject to the University's regular travel policies.
- M. Coordinate with appropriate University offices to plan on-campus professional development, e.g. workshops and discussion sessions, for full-time and adjunct faculty and others, relating to the General Education program, in conjunction with the GECAP.
- N. Receive requests from departmental majors and programs for any waivers of General Education requirements and forward to GECAP for review.
- O. Supervise General Education support staff which the administration shall provide.
- P. Be a current full-time tenured faculty member.
- Q. Be selected through a search procedure that shall include a search committee elected by the Senate.

General Education Curriculum Committee (GECC)

The GECC will be a standing committee of the University Senate beginning in January 2016 and elected every two years beginning May 2018.

Responsibilities:

The curricular components of the General Education program will be under the direction of the GECC. This committee will undertake the following:

- A. Propose criteria or revised criteria to the Senate for the placement of courses in the Modes of Inquiry associated with the seminars in Tier 1 and in Tier 2 of the program; in order to assist faculty in determining the appropriate placement for their courses, the GECC will develop guidelines for each of the modes.

- B. Review and approve for submission to the Senate new General Education courses as part of the University Senate's curriculum review process.

The steps of the process for all courses in the General Education program require the approval of each of the following, as evidenced by their signatures on the cover sheet of the proposal:

1. Department Curriculum and Instruction Committee Chair for the faculty member(s) proposing the course.
 2. Department Chair of the faculty member(s) proposing the course.
 3. Chair(s) of the College Curriculum Committee(s) of the faculty member(s) proposing the course.
 4. Dean(s) of the college(s) and school(s) from which the course originates.
 5. Chair of the GECC.
 6. Chair of the Senate Curriculum & Instruction Committee.
 7. Provost/Chief Academic Officer.
- C. Review placement of particular courses within the four Modes of Inquiry, and across the three Tiers of the program; and review the designation of which courses cover each of the six University-Wide Learning Goals.
- D. Encourage the development of an adequate and diverse selection of course offerings covering the six University-Wide Learning Goals, in the four Modes of Inquiry, and across the three Tiers.
- E. Encourage the development of courses that teach the University-Wide Learning Goals so there is a rough equality and diversity in their distribution across the Modes of Inquiry categories and in the Tiers.
- F. Propose to GECAP (for subsequent submission to the Senate) criteria or revised criteria for Tier 3 capstone courses.
- G. In collaboration with the Director, and in consultation with the University Advisement Center, develop guidelines for correlating General Education courses with transfer student transcripts for transfer students who enroll in the University without a completed Associate's degree, and for correlating General Studies courses with General Education courses for students seeking credit in one program (i.e. General Studies or General Education) for courses taken in the other program (i.e. General Education or General Studies).
- H. In collaboration with the Director, develop forms needed to implement the program.
- I. Plan professional development events (workshops, discussion sessions) in conjunction with GECAP for full-time and adjunct faculty relating to the General Education curriculum.
- J. When requested to do so by faculty members, provide assistance in crafting signature assignment prompts.

Composition:

The composition, procedures, and election of the GECC will follow the Senate's constitutional guidelines.

The GECC will be composed of 10 members:

- 4 full-time faculty members elected from the College of Arts and Sciences
- 1 full-time faculty member elected from the College of Professional Studies
- 1 full-time faculty member elected from the College of Education.
- 1 full-time faculty member elected from the School of Business.
- 1 faculty member elected from the University Senate Curriculum and Instruction Committee
- 1 student
- The Director of General Education, *ex officio* and *non-voting*.

Election to the GECC will be staggered, with four/five members elected each year beginning in May 2018.

General Education Committee for Assessment and Policy (GECAP)

Responsibilities

Because much of the work of the General Education Executive Committee will be related to work being done on programmatic Assessment, the General Education Executive Committee and the General Education Assessment Committee will merge to become the General Education Committee for Assessment and Policy (GECAP), proposed as a standing committee of the University Senate beginning in January 2016 and elected every two years beginning May 2018. GECAP will be the primary coordinating body for the General Education program, developing and proposing policies and procedures to the Senate for all aspects (except specific courses) of the General Education program and implementing approved proposals. Further, it will organize and oversee ongoing programmatic assessment activities. GECAP will undertake the following:

- A. Assist the Director of General Education in compiling, publishing, and reporting to the Senate reports addressing program assessment, program development, and recommendations for revision and changes of any type including those related to developmental/foundations courses.
- B. Assist the Director of General Education in developing and maintaining a handbook for academic advisement that addresses issues related to the General Education program, including but not limited to basic requirements, policies for transfer students, course descriptions, and course sequencing.
- C. Develop, revise, and recommend to the Senate a plan for the assessment of the General Education program. This includes creating and revising assessment measures and ensuring that these measures map to the learning goals/outcomes. It also includes designing and implementing approved “closing the loop activities.”
- D. Review the signature assignments that faculty design for programmatic assessment of the General Education program for the purpose of providing advice and guidance.
- E. Establish a plan for selecting samples of student work to be used for programmatic assessment of the General Education program.

- F. Develop, revise, and recommend to the Senate for its approval specific, measureable General Education outcomes for each University-wide student learning goal included in the General Education program.
- G. Develop, revise, and recommend to the Senate rubrics that include measurable benchmarks for performance that are applicable to individual courses and that can be understood by students.
- H. Develop, revise, and propose to the Senate benchmarks for student performance on the University-wide learning goals.
- I. In conjunction with the Director, formulate, for submission to the Senate for its approval, a plan for maintaining the confidentiality of raw assessment data so that data cannot be used to evaluate individual courses or faculty.
- J. Propose to the Senate for its approval an assessment timeline.
- K. Review and approve any recommendations (except individual course approvals) of the General Education Curriculum Committee prior to submission to the Senate for approval.
- L. Annually identify and inform the Director of the number of courses needed across the Modes of Inquiry and the Tiers, and covering each of the Student Learning Goals.
- M. Review, approve, and announce any waivers of General Education program requirements granted to departmental majors and programs.
- N. The Director of General Education and the chair of GECAP will serve as liaisons to internal and external groups, such as accrediting bodies, regarding General Education.

Composition:

The composition and procedures and elections of the GECAP will follow the Senate's Constitutional Guidelines for standing committees unless explicitly stated to the contrary below; the GECAP will be composed of 11 members:

- 4 full-time faculty members from the College of Arts and Sciences
- 1 full-time faculty member from the College of Professional Studies
- 1 full-time faculty member from the College of Education
- 1 full-time faculty member from the School of Business
- University Assessment Coordinator serving *ex officio* and non-voting
- 1 faculty member elected from the General Education Curriculum Committee
- 1 student selected by the SGO
- The Director for General Education, *ex officio* and *non-voting*

NOTES: Election to GECAP will be staggered, with four-five members elected each year beginning May 2018. The chair of the GECAP will receive release time each semester/summer session.

Election of the Members to Standing Committees

The first election of members of the GECC and GECAP standing committees shall take place no later than November 2015 at a meeting of the University Senate. So that the staggered term system can be established, half of the members on those committees will be elected for 1 ½ year terms, while the other half will be elected for 2 ½ year terms.

The procedures used for the election of members to Senate Standing Committees (as specified in the Senate Constitution) shall be followed in the election of members to these General Education standing committees. The elections shall be conducted by members of the Senate Elections Committee.

In accordance with the Senate Constitution and procedures:

- A) Chairs of the standing committees will be elected by the members of the respective committees.
- B) With the exception of the Director, the GECC member on the GECAP, and the Curriculum and Instruction Committee member on the GECC, the members can serve on only one General Education standing committee at a given time.

NOTE: With the exception of the Director, the GECC member on the GECAP, and the Curriculum and Instruction Committee member on the GECC, no more than two members of a department/program can serve concurrently on a particular General Education standing committee.