General Education Program

General Education at NJCU

Vision and Mission of the General Education Program

What is "General Education" and what does the NJCU General Education Program mean for you? At its most basic level, General Education is that part of the college experience shared by all students regardless of major. But it is much more than that. It is a special part of your educational experience. While you can pursue your major at hundreds of colleges and universities, your General Education program is unique to NJCU. This signature program is designed to help you develop, improve and ultimately showcase the skills and learning you acquire through your studies. By the time you complete this program you will have become a stronger writer, a more confident speaker, a more sophisticated user of information, and a more critical thinker. You will be better prepared for your university studies and your life outside the university.

General Education is a key component of most university programs. For much of the twentieth century, the basic aim of these programs was to provide students a broad introduction to the various disciplines within higher education. More recently, the focus has begun to shift, moving from programs designed to bring you information to those designed to help you navigate and manage the information now so readily available. Institutions across higher education have recognized that the easy access to potentially limitless information brought on by rapid technological innovation means that the challenge facing our students is not so much how to acquire information, but rather how to make sense of it all. Universities across the country have recognized that we need to help you learn how to think critically about your information sources and how to process the information you receive. We need to help you find ways to arrange and synthesize information from multiple sources and to integrate that content with your experiences in the world at large. We need to help you formulate hypotheses and discover effective solutions to life's challenges. Moreover, we need to help you develop the skills so that you are able to express those solutions clearly, confidently, and persuasively. Because the challenges you face are interdisciplinary in nature, we need to help you develop both a strong foundation in a particular academic discipline and the intellectual and social skills that extend across those academic disciplines. In short, we need to provide you with a comprehensive and flexible General Education; one that is central to your academic success and applicable to the complexities of life beyond the university. Through its innovative curriculum and the opportunities to extend learning beyond the classroom and beyond the campus, the NJCU General Education program delivers that education.

The NJCU General Education program is built on the first six University-Wide Student Learning Goals. Those goals and their connection to our General Education program are:

1. Students will demonstrate effective writing skills.

Effective writing skills are essential to learning and communication in whatever major you ultimately choose to pursue. Good writing entails more than mastering mechanics—vocabulary, grammar, sentence structure—but also developing and organizing your ideas, summarizing and expanding on your research, and expressing yourself clearly, thoughtfully, and creatively. The General Education program includes opportunities for you to develop and refine all of these skills as you enter and continue through your major.

2. Students will demonstrate effective oral communication skills.

The ability to speak clearly, persuasively, and coherently is fundamental to effective communication in both formal and informal settings. Oral communication skills prepare you to present an idea to an audience, to discuss issues with confidence, to teach a class, and to build interpersonal relationships at work, at home, and among peers.

3. Students will demonstrate effective quantitative literacy skills.

Your smart phone may have put a calculator in your hands at all times, but you still need to know what numbers to enter and how to interpret the results. Whether you are trying to calculate interest on your car loan or to understand statistics for some course, you will need the ability and confidence to interpret and manipulate numerical data. Quantitative literacy relates to the fundamental mathematical, analytical and scientific concepts and operations that are essential for your life within and beyond the university.

4. Students will demonstrate the ability to think critically to evaluate and solve problems.

Critical thinking refers to your ability to question assumptions, challenge received wisdom, and look at problems from creative perspectives. When you can carefully analyze an idea or a problem, or research and evaluate evidence, and then apply what you have learned, you are better prepared both to address the personal challenges you face in your non-academic life and to pursue a more successful academic career, whether that means envisioning new ways of approaching social and political issues, scientific hypotheses, or artistic conventions.

5. Students will demonstrate effective information and technology literacy skills.

With the rapid proliferation of devices capable of providing easy access to ever increasing quantities and types of information—smart phones, computer tablets, laptops—your ability to understand, evaluate, and use both information and the technology used to deliver that information is increasingly vital to participating fully in contemporary society. Locating, recognizing, and effectively using information

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are necessary skills for meaningful engagement in your community and successful entry into the job market. Our program will help you develop your skills in using computers, software applications, databases, and other technology tools.

6. **Students will practice responsible citizenship in a culturally complex world.**

Success beyond the university requires that you learn how to work collaboratively and to act ethically with others. All of us need to consider how our knowledge and actions shape our personal and professional relationships, our local and global communities, as well as the environment and the world around us. Practicing responsible citizenship, then, is not simply voting or showing up for jury duty. It is a commitment to participate in the life of the community. Our program encourages you to connect what you learn in the classroom to your life outside the classroom through a curriculum that both brings the community into the classroom and takes the classroom into the community. It provides opportunities for you to engage and explore our incredibly rich and diverse urban environment.

Throughout the General Education program, you will have the opportunity to develop, improve, and ultimately showcase your mastery of these essential skills.

The NJCU General Education Program

The NJCU General Education Program is composed of three tiers that take you from introductory college writing and math courses to a culminating capstone course experience. It provides for both breadth (combining an introductory seminar and more advanced interdisciplinary courses) and depth (through the tiered structure). The credit distribution for the program is:

Tier 1: Beginning the University Experience	10-20 credits[1]
Tier 2: Studying the World	22-31 credits
Tier 3: Engaging the World	3 credits
Total Credits	44-45 credits

Each of the tiers is described in more detail below.

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[1] The Tier 1 Math requirement is 3-4 credits. Students who place directly into ECI will take 10-11 credits in Tier 1 and 31 credits in Tier 2; students who place into RWAD will take 19-20 credits in Tier 1 and 22 credits in Tier 2.

Tier 1: Beginning the University Experience (10-20 credits)

The objective for this level is to provide a solid foundation for your college career and is composed of the following:

English Composition I	4 credits
Math	3-4 credits
Tier 1 Seminars	3 or 12 credits[2]

The composition course prepares you for university course work by introducing the basic communication skills (reading, writing, speaking, and listening) essential for your success and includes a writing laboratory component to provide more individualized instruction on good writing mechanics (grammar, punctuation, spelling, and vocabulary).

Basic mathematical concepts are central to nearly every academic discipline in the university and a regular feature of life outside the university. The specific math course you take will depend on factors like your intended major or your score in a placement test. But whichever course you take is designed to develop your quantitative skills and your confidence in processing and using quantitative information.

The Tier 1 seminar courses work in concert with the composition and mathematics courses to help you develop your communication, quantitative, and research skills. They introduce you to the four modes of inquiry that comprise much of the second tier of the program and provide you with your first opportunity both to conduct original research and to share the results of that research with your peers (both in written and oral presentation). Our program includes a variety of Tier 1 seminars covering a broad range of topics (recent offerings have included the physics of music, environmental ethics, and the global AIDS epidemic).[3] Consult with your advisor to select seminars that best fit your interests.

Tier 2: Studying the World (22-31 credits)

The university is composed of different colleges, departments, and programs all of which offer you different tools and perspectives for engaging the world. The next step of your General Education introduces you to the core modes of inquiry associated with higher education. In Tier 2 you will begin to identify the relative advantages of these approaches, how they differ, and what they share. Just as importantly, you will continue to sharpen the core academic skills introduced in the First Tier. So in addition to the courses connected to the four modes of inquiry, this tier also includes a second English Composition course. This second composition course builds on the research (information literacy) and critical thinking skills introduced in the previous course. As with the first English Composition course, it includes a writing laboratory component. In addition to passing the ECII course, you are

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[2] Students who place directly into ECI take one Tier 1 Seminar (3 credits) plus ECI and Math; students who place into RWAD take four Tier 1 Seminars (12 credits) plus ECI and Math.

[3] These are examples of First Year Experience courses under the prior general studies program and are included as examples of the types of courses likely to be a part of the new General Education program. This should not be taken to indicate that current FYE courses will be automatically included in the new program.

required to take 18 or 27 credits and complete at least one or two courses within each of the approaches.[4] In this tier, you will find that some courses stand alone while others come together to focus on a common topic from different perspectives. In choosing your schedule, work with your advisor to determine which courses best fit your interests. Sometimes that may mean taking a cluster of closely related courses, and sometimes it may mean taking three individual courses.

The four approaches in this level of the program are:

Creative Process and Production

Your curriculum in this category focuses on creative expression and provides you with opportunities both to develop your own forms of creative expression and to interpret and appraise those of others. You can learn to communicate ideas and information through art, design, performance, media, or creative writing; to develop particular artistic or creative skills – painting, animation, sound editing, digital arts, or memoir writing, for example – or examine the historical development and social functions of the creative arts.

Language, Literary, and Cultural Studies

Your curriculum in this category explores ideas, systems of thought, or culture(s) through language, literature, and other texts (including historical, political, and cultural narratives). You will begin to interpret and critique a range of texts and to recognize and question the various contexts in which particular narratives are produced and received. You will compare different cultural and literary histories and traditions; use texts to analyze contemporary questions and issues, and evaluate diverse identities, experiences, and perspectives in relation to your own.

Scientific and Quantitative Inquiries

Your curriculum in this category provides opportunities to examine the natural and physical world through disciplined systematic inquiry. You will learn to recognize how science investigates the world -- asking certain types of questions, generating empirical evidence, then applying logical rigor in answering those questions. This category also includes courses in which you use, interpret and apply quantitative data and inferences to the world beyond the classroom.

Social and Historical Perspectives

Your curriculum in this category addresses the historical, economic, political, psychological, and social factors that shape and influence people's thoughts and behavior. During your course of study in this area, you may examine the historical roots and contemporary

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[4] Students who place into ECI take ECII plus nine courses (27 credits) in Tier 2 (with at least two courses in each mode of inquiry); students who place into RWAD take ECII plus six courses (18 credits) in Tier 2 (with at least one course in each mode of inquiry). All students take a total of 44-45 credits in the General Education Program (Tiers 1-3).

workings of social institutions and structures – such as the family, religious institutions, schools, corporations, governments; the interconnections among and within diverse nations, cultures, and populations; and the artifacts associated with them.

Tier 3: Synthesizing, Creating and Evaluating (3 credits)

The culmination of your General Education is a single capstone course. As part of the capstone experience, you will have the chance, working individually or in collaboration with your colleagues, to develop, design, and present research or creative projects (depending on the capstone course you choose). The capstone courses provide a hands-on experience in which you will showcase your command of the skills you have been honing and the knowledge you have acquired during your course of study at the university. Because this course provides an opportunity to integrate your General Education studies with your major, consult with your advisor to select the capstone that will best supplement your major course of study.

General Education Support and Administration

Projected Costs

Given the reduced credits allotted for General Education in this proposal, we can surmise that the projected costs for the new program will be lower than those associated with the current program. However due to a variety of factors the complete budget implications will not be known until the program is fully operational.

The projections included in Appendix 3 assume a similar teaching load structure (that is, full time, adjunct, and overload) and course distribution in the current and the proposed programs. Those ratios may change, however, since the proposed program includes more upper-level courses. It is conceivable that that change could mean an increase in the number of fulltime faculty teaching General Education courses.

In addition, the proposal calls for the creation of a new administrative position (a Director for General Education, discussed below). The details of this position beyond its responsibilities (that is, issues connected to salary, staffing, office space, etc.) are deliberately omitted in this proposal in that those issues fall under the jurisdiction of the Senate Administration Coordinating Committee and University hiring officers. At best, the GSCC can recommend the creation of these positions; it does not have the authority to specify compensation, staff, etc. The GSCC strongly recommends that the overall stability of the program would be enhanced if the director had faculty status with administrative release time rather than be a separate administrative position.

The budget implications will vary depending on how the position is ultimately staffed. Assuming that the above recommendation is accepted and the director has faculty status with administrative responsibilities compensated through release time, the budgetary impact would vary depending on the faculty rank of the director, the number of release time credits being issued to administer the program, and the salary guidelines in either the prevailing

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fulltime (if extending overload opportunities to fulltime faculty members) or adjunct faculty agreements (if hiring additional adjunct faculty members) that may be required to cover the classes that would otherwise be taught in the absence of the release time. If the director is an administrative position, we could project a minimum annual salary in the $75,000 to $85,000 range.

The GSCC also recommends that at least one support staff member be available for the director, and projected salary expenses for an administrative assistant would be in the $50,000 to $60,000 range.[5]

Finally, the GSCC recommends that the University provide funding for faculty development for faculty engaged with the General Education program in the classroom and on the various committees that administer the program. Curriculum development, assessment training, pedagogical innovation are vital elements of the new program and we believe faculty should be both encouraged and rewarded for working to improve the General Education experience for our students. While we expect that at least some of these initiatives will be grant funded (see the discussion of director's responsibilities below), the University should be prepared and willing to supplement and support these development activities. A viable model for projecting those costs would be the 1 credit and .5 credit bonuses provided to faculty members who taught in early versions of the Project 100 Program, (now First Year Experience Program). Since 2008, the FYEP program has had between 75-85 faculty members teaching for it, and a half credit stipend on average would be $600, or $48,000/semester.[6] That number would increase depending on the size of the stipend and the number of faculty in the program, but it provides a reasonable benchmark.

The expenses listed above are not included in the budget projections presented in Appendix 3.

Programmatic Assessment

Assessment for the program will be the responsibility of the General Education Assessment Committee (GEAC, described in more detail below). The program is designed to support the University Wide Student Learning Goals adopted by the University Senate (see Appendix 2) and each course in the program is required to address two (2) of the student learning goals. The GSCC recommends that course proposals and course syllabi should indicate the learning goals being addressed and identify both assessment instruments and assessment criteria being used. Individual faculty members are not responsible for programmatic assessment within the confines of their individual course; however, faculty members assigned to each course will be required to provide data that can be used for programmatic assessment.

During the development of this proposal, a working group on assessment met and researched assessment design, assessment rubrics, and assessment protocol, and issues related to programmatic assessment have been discussed and considered throughout the construction phase of the proposal. Specific guidelines for programmatic assessment will be developed by

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[5] Both projections are based on compensation offered for similar positions currently in place in the University and were provided by the Director of Human Resources.

[6] These numbers were provided by Prof. Hilary Englert, Coordinator of the FYEP.

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the GEAC and distributed subsequent to the adoption and prior to implementation of this proposal. The GSCC would recommend that the GEAC begin by reviewing the AAC&U VALUE rubrics as the basis for programmatic assessment.

The following Assessment Plan was approved by the University Senate on May 5, 2014:

General Education Assessment Plan

1. The purpose of programmatic assessment in the General Education program is to determine how well the program enables students to meet the six University-wide learning goals; and to provide the University community with data to inform recommendations for potential curricular revisions and instructional improvements to enhance student learning.

2. All faculty teaching General Education courses will be expected to assign to their students, and make available for collection by the General Education Assessment Committee (GEAC), signature assignments that demonstrate the skills associated with the respective University-wide learning goals. For example, in courses in which critical thinking is addressed, signature assignments that require students to demonstrate critical thinking will be collected; in courses in which quantitative literacy is addressed, signature assignments that require students to demonstrate quantitative literacy will be collected; and so on for all six learning outcomes.

3. All signature assignments will be collected in all General Education courses. However, not all collected assignments will be scored every year. Rather, a statistically appropriate sample of the collected assignments will be selected for scoring to minimize labor and program costs without sacrificing assessment data quality.

4. Every academic year, the GEAC will train representative groups of faculty (assessment teams) to assess student work for the purpose of programmatic assessment. Each assessment team will include representatives from across the modes, and each team will be trained to assess specific learning goals. Faculty trained in assessing student work will score the selected signature assignments using GEEC-approved VALUE Rubrics. The GEAC will keep an archive of collected signature assignments and maintain a database of the results of all programmatic assessment efforts.

5. In the first year of the program, signature assignments that address all six University-wide student learning goals will be scored to establish baseline scores and ensure the availability of initial assessment data for all six learning goals. This will facilitate informed decision-making about how to proceed in the second year. For example, the data collected on all six learning goals will reveal which, if any, of the learning goals most urgently requires curricular or instructional intervention, and whether any revision (or replacement) of the approved assessment instruments is required.

6. This assessment plan will be revisited by the GEAC in the second year to determine whether all six learning goals should be assessed in subsequent years, or whether a more focused annual assessment cycle should begin, according to which fewer than six learning goals will be assessed each year. The GEAC will present its recommendations to the GEEC; and the GEEC will make recommendations to the University Senate for approval.

7. In addition to the data collection and analysis described above, a longitudinal study will be undertaken, in which a cohort of students who enter the program in a given year will be followed through their completion of the capstone course. Their work will be analyzed separately from the other data maintained by the GEAC.

8. The GEAC will present its findings to the GEEC, the University Senate, and the NJCU community on an annual basis. Its findings will inform recommendations for General Education "closing-the-loop" activities, curricular revision, and instructional improvements.

Transition from Old to New Program

Students who enrolled at the University prior to the adoption of this new program will have the option of fulfilling their General Education requirements in either the old or the new program. The completion guidelines for the current program will continue to be observed. Students who are not in compliance with this practice will have their transcripts evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Students who enroll after the adoption of this new program will be required to follow the new program.

The new program should be launched by the start of the most feasible academic year possible following adoption by the University Senate and the Senate-Administration Coordinating Committee. The committees that comprise the administrative elements of the program (described below) should be convened as quickly as possible following Senate Administration Coordinating Committee (SACC) approval. The search for the General Education Director (described below) should begin as soon as possible following SACC approval. While the search for the director is ongoing, the University should appoint an Interim Director as soon as possible following adoption by the Senate and SACC.

Timetable

We expect the transition time between the old and new General Education programs to be much shorter than was the case for the last General Education revision. The proposed program basically maintains the AUR courses of the current program with the exception of the two Civilizations courses, and does not substitute any new AUR courses for those two

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courses.[7] This means that students who have completed their early course work will be well positioned to move into the new program. From a student's perspective, doing so affords greater flexibility (more electives come into play) and an earlier opportunity to begin work in their major course of study. On the contrary, in the move from the pre-1999 program to the current program, the core courses of the pre 1999 program were replaced with new core courses while maintaining the same overall credit count. Students had very little incentive to move from the pre-1999 to the 1999 program.[8] With the proposed new General Education program, the reduced credit count and, we believe, richer curriculum in the program, should mean that students will migrate into the new program rather than continue in the current program.

Transfer Students

The Comprehensive State-Wide Transfer Agreement and any subsequent revisions to that agreement will govern General Education policies for students transferring into the University with one exception. According to the current transfer guidelines, transfer students with a completed Associate's Degree from a New Jersey community college are granted exactly half the credits necessary for graduation and are exempt from most General Education requirements. According to the agreement, transfer students with the completed Associate's Degree are required to fulfill any graduation requirements of the institution to which they seek to transfer. Note that 300- and 400-level courses have no equivalents at the community college level; our capstone course is a 300-level course, which would mean that according to the Transfer Agreement, transfer students with the completed Associate's Degree could be required to complete the capstone course.[9] However, the GSCC is recommending that transfer students should not be required to take the capstone course.

According to the state transfer guidelines, students who transfer without a completed Associate's Degree will have their transcripts reviewed on a course-by-course basis (for more on this, see the discussion on the General Education Curriculum Committee) to be applied to credits in the General Education Program.[10]

Students who transfer with 30 credits or more are exempt from one of the Tier 1 Seminars.

Policy Recommendations for Certain Majors

Insofar as one of the aims of this program is to promote cross and interdisciplinary learning, the GSCC recommends that students enrolled in majors with required courses in other departments be exempt from up to 9 General Education requirements in the Tier 2 section of the program, with the exemptions given to those courses most closely aligned to the courses taken.

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[7] Under the current program, students are required to complete Tier 1 of their AUR within the first 30 credits of their NJCU career.

[8] The last sections of a core course from the pre-1999 program to be offered ran in the fall 2006 semester.

[9] See the Comprehensive State-Wide Transfer Agreement (9/22/08), pages 1 and 2.

[10] See the Comprehensive State-Wide Transfer Agreement (9/22/08), page 3.

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Students enrolled in majors with 50 degree credits or higher due to external accreditation requirements are exempt from up to 9 General Education requirements in the Tier 2 section of the program in courses most closely aligned to the courses taken.

Students may continue to apply General Education credit for courses required for teacher certification in the current General Studies program, with the credit being applied to the Tier 2 section of the program until such time as new courses fulfilling the same teacher certification requirements are identified in the new program.

Students enrolled in any of the joint program agreements (for example with NJIT) may continue to apply General Education credit for courses required as part of any of the joint agreements, with the credit being applied to the Tier 2 section of the program in courses most closely aligned to the courses taken.

Students enrolled in the Nursing program are exempt from all General Education requirements (per the transfer agreement and University Senate motion adopted on 19 April 1999).

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Appendix 1
Comparing the New and Current Programs

The proposed General Education Program retains some features of the current program, replaces others, and introduces some new ones. This section reviews the current program and highlights the more significant changes being proposed to it.

Vision and Mission of the Program

The current General Studies Program (GSP) includes "Purpose" and "Guiding Principles" statements that present an overview of the state of General Education at that time, an engaging defense of a liberal arts education, and an important reminder to offer our students a program that "supports the University's commitment to prepare a diverse student body to participate successfully in a global society." The proposal is framed by the question: "what type of General Education program best facilitates the striving of its students toward human excellence?" The document then identifies the need to develop "a framework for discussion that promotes recognition, understanding, and respect among diverse groups and to help students achieve a broader understanding of themselves as citizens of the world."[11]

This proposal also recommends that a new General Education Program (GEP) should support the mission of the University and prepare students for success in an increasingly global and interconnected society. It also embraces the University Wide Student Learning Goals, one of which is the practice of responsible citizenship. Like its predecessor, the proposed program is based on broader developments within higher education. The model draws on current literature in the field, including that produced by: the Association of American Colleges & Universities (AACU), the Association for General and Liberal Studies; and the National Center for Science and Civic Engagement. AACU in particular has a variety of programs devoted to the design, implementation, and assessment of General Education – including General Education for a Global Century, Liberal Education and America's Promise (LEAP), Project Kaleidoscope, and Valid Assessment of Learning in Undergraduate Education (VALUE) – that have served as valuable guides in developing this General Education model.

Although the current GSP and the proposed GEP have overlapping visions, there are notable differences between the two. For example, the current program equates General Education with an encompassing liberal arts education, and the proposed model, drawing on the LEAP initiative, places General Education as *a part of* a liberal education. Accordingly, the proposed program is smaller than the current program. This smaller size is in line with other General Education programs in the state, in the region, and nationally. It also conforms to current guidelines from the Middle States Commission on Higher Education.[12]

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[11] All the quotes in this paragraph are from "Proposal for a Revised General Studies Program," p. 2.

[12] The most recent Middle States guidelines mandate at least 30 hours of General Education, see "Characteristics of Excellence in Higher Education," p. 48. Available online here: http://www.msche.org/publications/CHX06_Aug08REVMarch09.pdf. No upper limit is mentioned.

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Size and Structure

The current GSP totals 66 credits spread over a two-part structure of foundational courses (18 credits of All Undergraduate/University Requirement courses)[13] and area distribution courses (48 credits). The overwhelming majority of courses in the program are offered at the 100 level.

The proposed General Education Program includes a three-tiered structure that moves students from introductory 100-level courses through an upper-level capstone seminar. As with the current General Studies program, this model maintains the distinction between General Education and Academic Foundations courses. The Academic Foundations program was not included in this proposal (that program is being reviewed by the newly constituted Basic Literacies Committee; Academic Foundations was not included in the 1999 General Studies program either).

One difference included in the proposal relates to the curriculum hierarchy implied in the tiered structure. Under the current program students are required to complete the first level of AUR requirements (English 101, English 102, FYE, and MATH 112 or higher) within the first 30 degree credits earned, and courses in the second level (Civilizations 1 and Civilizations 2) within the first 60 degree credits earned.[14] Students are permitted to take courses elsewhere in the general studies program (that is the area distribution requirements) before they have completed the AUR level of the program. This proposal recommends that students complete the first tier of courses (analogous to the first level in the current program) before taking other courses in the program.

Learning Outcomes and Assessment

The current program identifies six learning outcomes for all courses in the program, and requires that all courses in the program address *four* of the six outcomes. Those outcomes included: reading, writing (required of all courses), critical thinking/creativity, information gathering and literacy, quantitative and computer literacy, and oral presentation.[15]

These learning outcomes preceded the adoption of the University Wide Student Learning Goals, and the General Studies Program was never adjusted for the new learning goals. As a result, over the past decade the current program has emphasized students reaching "x" number of courses in each of the areas rather than on students reaching the desired learning outcomes identified as part of either the general studies program or the university wide student learning goals.

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[13] The AUR designation is listed as "All University Requirements" in the most recent (2011-2014) University catalog (p. 26), but is listed as "All Undergraduate Requirements" in the planning sheets that are included in the Master Course Lists.

[14] See page 26 of the 2011-2014 Undergraduate Catalog, available online at: http://www.njcu.edu/uploadedFiles/Academics_Wireframe/Catalogs/undergrad%20catalog.pdf

[15] See pages 7 and 8 of the 1999 proposal.

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The current program overall lacks much meaningful assessment; assessment at the course level was limited to recorded grades, and little to no attempt has been made to use the grades as a viable substitute for programmatic assessment.[16] Programmatic assessment was made more difficult in part because the learning outcomes associated with the program were almost impossible to assess.

The learning goals for the program currently in place include[17]:

- Students will be "acquainted" with "some of humanity's most significant undertakings and achievements"
- Students will be "introduced" to knowledge and the means of acquiring it
- Students will be directed to original and great human achievements
- Students will be equipped for an uncertain future
- Students will be made "aware" of humanity's scientific and artistic achievements
- Students will "reach towards an understanding of what it means to be human"[18]
- Students are invited "to take into their hearts the intellectual achievements of humanity spanning 9,000 years"
- Students will take possession of their diverse cultural heritages
- Students will understand what is possible for them personally as they "seek to develop compelling standards of excellence"
- Students will "hone the intellectual skills that make human excellence possible"
- Students will "embrace an enduring love of learning"
- Students will be allowed to develop a "rational and coherent worldview"
- Students will develop "some understanding of the tools of individual disciplines"
- Students will comprehend both "the kind of knowledge the disciplines reveal" and the "forms of inquiry and methods of analysis used"
- Students will "employ flexibly" a range of those forms and methods
- Students will "reconquer truth by reflection, earn it by effort, embrace it in the depths of their own selves"
- Students will "animate" truth "with their own lives, and lend it strength enough to fertilize thought and direct the will."

Clearly, the current program includes learning objectives that cannot be assessed ("introducing," "embracing," "animating," "acquainting," etc.) and that are not part of the more common cognitive taxonomies (e.g., Bloom).[19] In contrast, the General Education

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[16] The assessment difficulties of the program were specifically identified in the Middle States Commission on Higher Education report in its 2010 review. See page 29. The report is available through the University's "GothicNet" portal.

[17] All quotes and references below may be found on pages 2 and 3 of the "Proposal for a Revised General Studies Program" that was adopted by the University Senate in February 1999.

[18] This and the following bullet are taken from a quote used in the 1999 proposal. The document indicates that it is taken from an address given by Frances Oakley at Williams College in 1985. No reference was provided to indicate the source of the quote.

[19] Anderson, L.W. and Krathwohl, D.R., et. al. 2001. *A Taxonomy for Learning, Teaching, and Assessing: A Revision of Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives.* Allyn & Bacon: Boston, MA.

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program outlined in this proposal incorporates and is built upon assessable learning goals. The GSCC recommends aligning both the programmatic and course-level learning outcomes of the General Education Program with the University wide student learning goals. To better ensure ongoing programmatic assessment of the General Education Program, the GSCC also recommends the creation of a new standing committee for assessment.

Curriculum

The curriculum in the current General Studies Program, with the exception of the two Civilizations courses and the FYE courses, is housed within the academic departments of the College of Arts and Sciences. In the distribution part of the program, each department is placed within a specific Area[20] and each department may designate a maximum of five (5) courses for inclusion in the program.[21]

The proposed General Education Program emphasizes learning outcomes, so the need to build the program around the departments is less compelling. Nonetheless, the GSCC recommends that prior to implementation, the GECC develop a distribution structure ensuring that students experience a broad range of disciplinary and interdisciplinary modes of inquiry. The GSCC recommends that General Education courses in the new program, like the FYE courses in the current program, continue to be housed, scheduled and staffed by their departments (rather than exist independently in the dean's office like the INTD courses in the current program). Furthermore, the GSCC recommends that the catalogue designations for courses in the program remain department-specific (i.e. History, Biology, Art, Math etc.). Courses that involve faculty from multiple departments should be cross-listed in the relevant departments and carry multiple catalogue designations.

Finally, note that while the first tier of the proposed program corresponds fairly closely with the current program, the curriculum in Tier 2 and the capstone courses will likely require new course development.[22]

Administrative Structure

The differences between the administrative structure proposed for the new program and that of the current program include:

Bloom, B.S. and Krathwohl, D.R. 1956. *Taxonomy of Educational Objectives: The Classification of Education Goals by a committee of college and university examiners; Handbook I: Cognitive Domain.* New York: Longmans, Green.

[20] There are exceptions to this rule. Area F: Quantitative is open to any department and includes offerings from Economics, Computer Science, Geoscience, Mathematics, Physics, and Political Science. Also, Geoscience/Geography is split within Area A and Area 2B.

[21] The exceptions are Modern Languages and Geoscience/Geography. Also, courses offered in Area F do not count against the 5-course limit for a department.

[22] One of the goals of the new program is to provide a more coherent General Education experience for our students than is the case with the current program. One way to accomplish this is to create course clusters – that is, courses from different approaches that address a common topic. Developing these clusters will require faculty coordination and course design, if not new courses.

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The GSCC is recommending the appointment of a Director of General Education to serve as the primary administrator overseeing the program.[23] This marks a significant departure from the current program. Beyond a call for an Evaluation and Outcomes Committee (see page 26 of the 1999 proposal) listed under "Recommendations," the guidelines for the current program made no mention of any administrative oversight once the program was implemented. The 1999 proposal did specify that incremental revisions fall under the purview of the Office of the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences (page 26, under "Recommendations"). Since 2003, the GSCC has been chaired by the Associate Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, with members of the coordinating committee selected by the Dean's Office to serve rotating terms (usually 2 years). General Education oversight, though, is not the sole job responsibility of the Associate Dean and the GSCC believes that the logistics of the curriculum are significant enough and the program important enough, that it warrants specialized attention.

The GSCC recommends that the current General Studies Coordinating Committee be dissolved and replaced with a new General Education Executive Committee to serve as the main administrative body overseeing the program. The proposal adopted in 1999 makes no mention for the continuation of the General Studies Coordinating Committee, its composition, nor the selection of its members. The recommendations in this proposal clarify that ambiguity and specify the responsibilities, composition, and selection of members to serve on the committee.

The GSCC recommends the creation of a formal standing committee to coordinate and oversee ongoing programmatic and curricular assessment as related to the General Education program. One of the real problems with the current program has been the lack of such assessment. The Evaluation and Outcomes Committee recommended in the 1999 proposal apparently stopped meeting and functioning sometime in the early to mid-2000s (records are missing for any work the committee undertook).

The GSCC recommends the creation of a formal standing committee to coordinate and oversee the curricular components of the program. The 1999 proposal included no specific language creating a committee to review general studies courses on a regular basis. On page 9 of the document, section D notes that "In order for a new course (or an existing course not previously designated as General Studies offering) to receive General Studies status, it must be reviewed through the University's traditional governance procedure with the addition of the appropriate General Studies area/cluster committee." Such committees are not mentioned anywhere else in the document, nor do we have any record that such committees ever met. With the introduction of the current program, an *ad hoc* committee was created to review all courses submitted for general studies designation. That committee was not organized by area/cluster nor was it ongoing and ceased operating once the current program was implemented.

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[23] In its report to NJCU, the Middle States Evaluation Site-Visit team specifically noted that the program "needs to be adequately staffed to properly plan, monitor review and revise the program as appropriate. This would include assigning an individual with primary responsibility to direct and oversee the program, along with the necessary steering committees." The report is available online through the University's "GothicNet" portal.

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Appendix 2
University-Wide Student Learning Outcomes

1.   Students will demonstrate effective writing skills.

Effective writing skills are characterized by adherence to conventions of standard written English, varied diction (vocabulary) and sentence structure, effective organization, personal style, accurate summaries of research (when appropriate), and the development of complex ideas.

2.   Students will demonstrate effective oral communication skills

Effective oral communication skills are characterized by the ability to speak clearly, coherently, and in an organized and persuasive fashion; and the ability to effectively present ideas and information orally.

3.   Students will demonstrate effective quantitative literacy skills.

Effective quantitative literacy skills are characterized by the knowledge skills and attitudes of mathematics and the science and confidence with mathematical/analytical concepts and operations required for problem-solving, decision-making, economic productivity and real-world applications.

4.   Students will demonstrate the ability to think critically to evaluate and solve problems.

The ability to think critically, to analyze and integrate information, to evaluate and solve problems is characterized by the application of knowledge to solve problems independently and collaboratively; to make informed decisions based on sound evidence, to challenge claims, to apply knowledge to novel situations.

5.   Students will demonstrate effective information and technology literacy skills.

Effective information and technology skills are characterized by the ability to recognize, locate, evaluate, and effectively use information in either electronic or paper forms; and to demonstrate skills in the use of computers, software applications, databases, and other technology tools to solve problems in order to achieve a wide variety of academic and personal goals.

6.   Students will practice responsible citizenship in a culturally complex world.

Responsible citizenship in a culturally complex world is characterized by having intercultural knowledge, engaging in the practice of collaborative problem solving, and the practice of civic, ethical, social, and personal responsibility.

7.   Students will demonstrate knowledge of their disciplinary or interdisciplinary fields.

Knowledge of disciplinary fields and interdisciplinary studies is characterized and defined by the individual academic fields and programs.

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Appendix 3
Projected Budgetary Implications

Costs of Running Course Sections

Calculating the number of general studies courses in the current program (and the concomitant cost of running those courses) is exceedingly difficult because the majority of courses in the current program simultaneously serve as required or elective courses for majors/minors in the departments offering the courses (see Appendix 1, attached). Thus these sections contain a mixture of students, some taking the course to fulfill an area distribution requirement and others taking it to fulfill major/minor requirement. Having students choose to stay with the current program to finish the area distribution requirements would not necessarily translate into a need to run two full programs simultaneously since most area courses would be offered regardless of whether the general studies program existed or not. We can surmise, however, that at least some departments may end up with fewer sections of these courses running, some departments may have more sections running (as the reduced credit count in the proposed program provides a better opportunity for students to embark on minors and second majors), or that sections will have higher enrollments (that is, instead of 5 sections with 15 students, we end up with 3 sections of 25 student so that we have fewer low-enrollment sections running). It is impossible to examine enrollments in the current program and predict with much accuracy how those enrollments will change during a transition phase because we do not have the ability to examine the enrollments and separate majors/minors from General Education students.[24]

The table below provides a semester by semester breakdown for the past 4 academic years of the number of sections for courses currently in the general studies program that are not simultaneously serving the curricular needs of a department's major or minor program.[25] Theoretically, none of these courses and sections—with the exception of the Civilizations courses—would need to be offered in the new program, and none would need to be offered during a transition period (students who choose to stay in the current program would have other course offerings to fulfill their distribution requirements). The only courses that would be necessary during the transition phase would be the Civilizations courses and, since students are required to complete this two-semester sequence before they reach 60 credits, we can anticipate a relatively quick draw down of the number of sections of each being offered during the transition.

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[24] Students enrolled in a course for a given semester may not be majors/minors when taking that course that semester, but could subsequently declare their major in which case the course would retroactively count towards the major.

[25] The table omits the AUR courses in the current program since they are incorporated into the proposed program.

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Number of General Studies Sections for Courses Not Connected to a Departmental Major/Minor								
Course	Academic Year 2009-2010		Academic Year 2010-1011		Academic Year 2011-2012		Academic Year 2012-2013	
Course	Fall	Spring	Fall	Spring	Fall	Spring	Fall	Spring
GSC 101	24	25	24	22	22	22	20	20
GSC 102	21	19	19	20	19	18	18	16
BIOL 100	10	7	8	8	7	8	7	7
BIOL 103	5	4	6	7	8	6	8	9
BIOL 104	5	8	8	7	6	7	6	6
BIOL 106	3	5	4	5	4	5	5	4
CHEM 111	2	0	2	0	2	0	2	0
CHEM 112	0	2	0	2	0	2	0	2
CHEM 117	1	1	0	1	0	1	1	1
CHEM 118	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
CS115	9	8	6	8	8	5	7	7
ENGL 187	3	3	2	3	2	3	2	1
ENGL 188	3	2	3	3	2	4	3	3
ENGL 190	8	8	10	6	11	8	11	9
ENGL 192	1	2	4	3	4	0	2	2
ENGL 199	12	8	7	8	12	8	9	8
GEOS 111	3	3	3	3	3	3	4	3
INTD 149	18	14	20	16	17	15	18	14
INTD 180	3	3	3	3	2	2	2	2
LANG 105	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	2
LANG 106	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
LANG 107	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
LANG 108	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	1
LANG 117	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
LANG 118	1	0	1	1	1	1	0	1
LANG 123	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
LANG 124	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
LANG 131	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1
LANG 132	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1
LANG 141	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	1
LANG 142	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	1
LANG 215	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
LANG 216	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
MATH 205	6	6	6	5	6	6	6	5
MDT 102	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	2
MDT 103	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	2
PHYS 101	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
PHYS 103	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
PSYC 100	3	2	4	4	4	4	5	6
TOTALS	158	145	157	153	158	146	151	146

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Determining the costs associated with the transition between the current general studies program and the new General Education program is in part a function of the timetable for the full transition. Obviously, the longer the transition takes, the higher the costs of maintaining both programs. In order to project the budgetary impact for the new General Education program as we transition from the current to the new program, we used enrollment data from the 2009-2012 fall semesters compiled by the Office of Institutional Research.

Student Enrollment Trends 2009-2012				
All new students - transfer or first-time				
	Fall 2009	Fall 2010	Fall 2011	Fall 2012
Full time	1334	1374	1400	1435
Part time	339	339	371	354
First time transfers from NJ community Colleges				
	Fall 2009	Fall 2010	Fall 2011	Fall 2012
Transfers	469	490	596	595
No degree	238	222	272	220
Associate's Degree	231	268	325	294
AAS	0	1	49	81
Total non Associate's Degree	238	223	321	301

As the recent enrollment data indicate (see table above) transfer students with the completed degree constituted 13.8% of the 2009 enrollment; 15.6% of the 2010 enrollment, 18.3% of 2011 enrollment and 16.4% of the 2012 enrollment, which works to a 4 year average of 16%. Transfer students with a completed Associates' Degree are exempt from General Education requirements except for courses that are above the 200-level. The average enrollment (all new students) over this period is 1386, and 16% of that would be 222 students who have their Associate's Degree and 1164 who do not. Given the difference in the credit count of the two programs, we expect a significant number of students in the 2011-2012 cohort to move into the new program quickly, and perhaps significant numbers of students in the 2009-2010 cohort as well.

Enrollment numbers and other departmental budgetary matters can be calculated for General Education courses by crediting the enrollment numbers to the host department of the faculty member assigned to the course. For instance, the student head count in a General Education course taught by a biology professor would be applied to the biology department. In the case

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of team taught section, the head counts would be divided evenly among the faculty assigned to the course and allocated to the appropriate departments accordingly.

Faculty Development, Campus without Borders, and Other Costs

The proposed program presents an exciting opportunity to invigorate our curriculum with new courses and new educational opportunities. Faculty development is going to be an integral part in launching a successful program and the General Studies Coordinating Committee has received assurances that University Administration is budgeting funds for to support our faculty. On 26 March 2013, President Henderson committed $300,000 for the first year transitional costs to the new program, with an anticipated launch for the new program now projected to be the Fall 2015 semester. We anticipate the necessity of new course development in Tiers 2 and 3, with priority on the Tier 2 courses. Accordingly, we recommend allocating approximately $3600 for each faculty team to support faculty members developing a new course clusters, with funds available 2014 Summer I or Summer II sessions.

Additional costs associated less with immediate start up and more with the implementation should also be noted. For instance, when the program is implemented and courses are running, we would recommend providing approximately $500 per course for including a "Campus Without Borders" component to offset direct costs related to the off-campus experience (for example, tour guides, honoraria, ticket costs, transportation, etc.) and an additional $250 faculty stipend for faculty developing and incorporating an off campus component. This would require approximately an additional $34,500 if every course in the program included this component. Another cost to consider would be compensation for members of the General Education Assessment Committee. Programmatic assessment is vital to the success of the program and carries with it sufficient burdens in time and energy to warrant stipends for members of the GEAC. We would recommend allocating approximately an additional $3600/faculty member of the GEAC (5 faculty members at $3600 would equal $18,000). Finally, we recommend the additional funds directly and not directly related to General Education be available to offset costs associated with items like running low-enrolled sections during the transition period, hiring additional adjunct faculty, providing for a distinguished faculty award program, developing and distributing promotional materials, etc.

Grant Opportunities

The GSCC strongly recommends that the General Education Executive Committee and its Director, working in conjunction with upper administration and the Office of Grants and Sponsored Programs pursue external funding opportunities (for example:

1.   Title III: Part A: Strengthening Institutions Program. US Department of Education:

"The program helps eligible IHEs to become self-sufficient and expand their capacity to serve low-income students by providing funds to improve and strengthen the academic quality, institutional management, and fiscal stability of eligible institutions…Funds may be used for planning, faculty development, and establishing endowment funds. Administrative

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management, and the development and improvement of academic programs also are supported. Other projects include joint use of instructional facilities, construction and maintenance, and student service programs designed to improve academic success, including innovative, customized, instruction courses designed to help retain students and move the students rapidly into core courses and through program completion, which may include remedial education and English language instruction."

http://www2.ed.gov/programs/iduestitle3a/index.html

2.   Title V: Developing Hispanic Serving Institutions Program. US Department of Education:

"The Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSI) Program provides grants to assist HSIs to expand educational opportunities for, and improve the attainment of, Hispanic students. The HSI Program grants also enable HSIs to expand and enhance their academic offerings, program quality, and institutional stability... Funds may be used for activities such as: scientific or laboratory equipment for teaching; construction or renovation of instructional facilities; faculty development; purchase of educational materials; academic tutoring or counseling programs; funds and administrative management; joint use of facilities; endowment funds; distance learning academic instruction; teacher education; and student support services."

http://www2.ed.gov/programs/idueshsi/index.html

In addition, AAC&U periodically has grant opportunities for General Education programs, and private sources of financial support ought to be pursued.

Appendix 4

The NJCU General Education Program

Tier 1: Beginning the University Experience
100-level courses; 11 credits for students who place directly into ECI;
20 credits for students who place into RWAD;
all students must take at least two seminars in each mode of inquiry by the end of Tier 2.

English Composition I (4 Credits)	Math (3-4 Credits)	One (1) Tier 1 Seminar in the Four Modes of Inquiry **for all students** (3 Credits)	Three (3) Additional Tier 1 Seminars in the Four Modes of Inquiry **for students who place into RWAD** (9 credits)

Tier 2: Studying the World
100- & 200-level courses; students who place into RWAD must take 22 credits in Tier 2;
students who place directly into ECI must take 31 credits in Tier 2;
all students must take at least two seminars in each mode of inquiry by the end of Tier 2.

English Composition II (4 credits)	Six (6) Tier 2 Seminars in the Four Modes of Inquiry **for all students** (18 credits)	Three (3) Additional Tier 2 Seminars in the Four Modes of Inquiry **for students who place directly into ECI** (9 credits)

English Composition II (4 credits, 100-level course)

Creative Process and Production: 200-level courses. Choose from among the following: [Master Course List to include relevant courses here]

Language, Literary, and Cultural Studies: 200-level courses. Choose from the among the following: [Master Course List to include relevant courses here]

Scientific and Quantitative Inquiries: 200-level courses. Choose from the among the following: [Master Course List to include relevant courses here]

Social and Historical Perspectives: 200-level courses. Choose from the among the following: [Master Course List to include relevant courses here]

Tier 3: Engaging the World
300-level; 3 credits

Choose a Capstone course from among the following: [Master Course List to include relevant courses here]

Appendix 5
Rules for Implementation of the
General Education Curriculum

1. General Education courses which are approved through the Temporary Approval Process shall be announced at the Senate and include the single semester for which the approval has been granted.
2. Unlike the 1996 General Studies program, which limits departments/programs to five courses within a distribution area, the proposed program has no such limit.
3. The requirements for a course to qualify as a Foundations Seminar or an Additional Seminar must be approved by the Senate.
4. The recommended maximum enrollment caps shall be:

Tier 1:

ENGL 101	20 maximum
Foundation Seminars	20 maximum
Additional Seminars	20 maximum
Math Courses	20 maximum

Tier 2:

ENGL 102	20 maximum
All other Tier 2 courses	25 maximum

Tier 3:

Capstone Courses	15 maximum

5. The specific requirements (and the process) for inclusion as a Tier 2 and/or a Tier 3 course will be presented to the Senate, and subject to its approval, prior to any course being designated as a Tier 2 and/or a Tier 3 course.