

University General Education Council
March 9, 2016, 3:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.
Adams Center Classroom

Present: E. Gumm, G. Straughn, K. Hendrick, K. Pybus, N. Santana, B. Hammack, C. Niccum, K. Pamplin, J. Xu, M. Garver, J. Wallace, M. Smallwood, M. Lynn, R. Ashlock, P. Roggendorff

Absent: P. Wertheim,

Ex-officios: T. Milholland (T. Lee,)

Guests: Dana Pemberton, Susan Lewis

The meeting began at 3:33 p.m.

I. Call to order by E. Gumm.

II. Prayer by K. Pybus.

III. Approval of the minutes from 2.24.16

Motion to approve by C. Niccum; seconded by J. Xu; 11 in favor; none opposed; 1 abstention; motion passes.

Information Item

IV. EDUC 211 – Prerequisite Change

D. Pemberton – Because this course has become popular, we are faced with not enough seats for our teacher certification students. Even with the prerequisite change to only allow students in teacher certification programs to register for the class, this course still crosses 20 majors and three colleges. This is the gate into the education program. The content has already been approved by this council. The content has not changed. We're just having a challenge keeping the seats available for those students for whom it is a requirement.

E. Gumm – The council doesn't need to approve the prerequisite change. But with the additional language of a declared major, does it still belong on the Cultural Awareness menu? K. Pybus – Are there other courses with a similar restriction on the menu? E. Gumm – Yes, perhaps not majors only, but other restrictions such as upper level or prescribed for certain degrees. K. Pamplin – It is still a good course and a good fit for the menu. So the only restriction is the narrowing of the availability away from non-majors. So we aren't adding a barrier to the content, we just have a lack of teachers and seats to make it available to everyone who needs it with non-majors registering.

Action Items

V. SOCI 495 – New Capstone Course

E. Gumm – This will be a course added to the sociology degree plan as a capstone course. You can refer to the included chart for specific capstone requirements and how this course addresses it. G. Straughn – With Sociology's move into the Communication department, there has been a great deal of work to strengthen the program. This course is very similar to other capstone courses. UUAC has looked at it as a new course, UGEC is considering the capstone requirements. E. Gumm – The SOCI 415 course is included in several other programs and having the capstone requirements for non-sociology majors makes it burdensome. This new course would provide a better fit. The capstone attribute would be removed from SOCI 415. M. Lynn – So no other program requires SOCI 415 as their Capstone. G. Straughn – Criminal Justice has that listed currently, but they have another course approved as their capstone that will be inserted into the degree plan.

Motion by M. Lynn to transfer the capstone from SOCI 415 to SOCI 495 for sociology majors if the course is approved; seconded by J. Wallace; all in favor; motion passes.

VI. EDUC 211 – Vote on whether or not to keep the course on the University Requirements menu with the prerequisite change.

See discussion above.

Motion by K. Pamplin to keep EDUC 211 on the Cultural Awareness menu; seconded by C. Niccum; all in favor; motion passes.

VII. Definition of General Education vs. University Requirements for Historical Literacy Menu.

G. Straughn – I have tried to take threads of past conversations and boil that into the memo you have in front of you. If general education is defined as lower level, maximum flexibility, no prerequisites, we have courses on Cultural Awareness and possibly Historical Literacy menus that would not meet that definition. However, if we offer a broader "University Requirements" definition for select menus, we would not have to change the courses currently approved on the menus. This would separate things out so SACS could clearly see the 30 hours of general education while still being under our University Requirements umbrella. This would not change degree plans, it would just provide clarification for this council. And it might change the name of this committee. The catalog right now says "University Requirements" not General Education and that describes everything we're doing. I don't think this is a move away from a Liberal Arts model. I just think we've organized the garage a little.

M. Lynn – One thing I'm concerned about is that we are doing something publicly in the catalog to help us define something for ourselves. Would it be more parsimonious to

delete the part of the definition not specifically required by SACS? S. Lewis – The quote from SACS is actually a quote that we applied and filtered into the definition we’ve been using. Some of those upper level course we’ve been discussing don’t meet that, but the other general education courses in the inner circle would meet that. T. Milholland – I think adopting this would make the job of this committee easier to define which courses can be added to the various menus. Better for clarity and conformity. J. Wallace – It would help departments understand the path to approval. If their course is going to be considered for a general education menu, they will know there is a tighter level of restrictions. C. Niccum – It shouldn’t affect advising because it is still under the umbrella of University Requirements. E. Gumm – We might need to restructure our University Requirement chart to clarify the new structure. S. Lewis – Our assessments would also change because our definitions are changing. There will be some cascading affects, but I don’t think they will be negative.

M. Lynn – It is still a public listing of information, so we need to be sensitive to the people who will be dealing with these changes. E. Gumm – It is good timing to make these changes since we are making so many changes to the University Requirements. Our advisors and departments know that big changes are coming.

S. Lewis – So this definition would change the introductory paragraph to the criteria for each of the menus. E. Gumm – We are still including the lower level, etc. language for General Education side. Is the goal to open these University Requirements to anything, or do we still want to have some definition of what the goals are for what we are including? J. Wallace - The courses still have to meet menu criteria. G. Straughn – I think having the definition of University Requirements as broad as possible is the right way to go. We need to either have an option for broader definition for menus like Cultural Awareness or we need to go through and slash the courses that don’t fit the general education definition. J. Wallace – This also gives us a definite line to know which areas have flexibility and which do not. So we can stay true to the intent of general education and protect that.

So what we are voting on:

For the purposes of clarity, ACU distinguishes the difference between General Education and University Requirements as follows:

General Education: Courses that normally have lower level numbering, are free of prerequisite and co-requisites, appeal to more than one or two majors, and do not “narrowly focus on those skills, techniques, and procedures specific to a particular occupation or profession” (SACS 2.7.3).

University Requirement: Courses or experiences that satisfy the University Requirements for all Bachelor’s Degrees whether “General Education” or major/discipline-specific. Some of the courses may be upper level, require prerequisites, or be focused on a single major.

The following courses or menus of courses compose the 38 hours of General Education Requirements for the University:

- CORE: Cornerstone (3 hours)
- BIBLE: 101, 102, 211 (9 hours)
- English: 111, 112, Soph Lit (9 hours)
- Communication: 211 (3 hours)
- Science Menu (6 hours)
- Mathematics (3 hours)
- Social Science (3 hours)
- Kinesiology (2 hours)

The following courses or menus of courses compose the 18 hours of University Requirements:

- Bible: Upper-level selections (6 hours)
- Cultural Awareness (3 hours)
- Historical Literacy (3 hours)
- Selection (3 hours)
- Free Elective (3 hours)

Motion by B. Hammack to approve definition and designations as stated above; seconded by C. Niccum; all in favor; motion passes.

The meeting adjourned at 4:59 p.m.



To: University General Education Council
From: Greg Straughn, Dean, College of Arts and Sciences
Date: March 7, 2016
Re: Distinction between General Education and University Requirements

Context

This proposal seeks to provide clarity between the terms “General Education” and “University Requirement for Graduation.” Currently, the menu of courses on pages 38-39 of the Catalog refer to a set of “University Requirements for All Bachelor’s Degrees” totaling 56 hours. These include Bible, Science, Communication, Math, English, Social Science, etc. Most of these courses are lower-level, free of pre-requisites, and provide a broad introduction to the field of study.

The General Education Review that took place last year, culminating in a vote this past September, had as one of its main goals to create more flexibility for students in moving through their programs. The proposal helps to more fully realize that goal.

Definition

SACSCOC provides the following expectations of Core Requirement 2.7.3 (General Education). General Education should: (1) be a substantial component of each undergraduate degree, (2) ensure breadth of knowledge, and (3) be based on a coherent rationale. For baccalaureate degrees, SACSCOC defines this to be at least 30 semester hours drawn from the following areas: humanities/fine arts; social/behavioral sciences; and natural science/mathematics.

For the purposes of clarity, ACU distinguishes the difference between General Education and University Requirement as follows:

General Education: Courses that normally have lower-level numbering, are free of prerequisite and co-requisites, appeal to more than one or two majors, and do not “narrowly focus on those skills, techniques, and procedures specific to a particular occupation or profession” (SACSCOC 2.7.3).

University Requirement: Courses or experiences that satisfy the University Requirement for all Bachelor’s Degrees whether “General Education” or major/discipline-specific. Some of the courses may be upper level, require pre-requisites, or be focused on a single major.

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| • Communication: 211 (3 hours) | • Kinesiology (2 hours) |

The following courses or menus of courses compose the 18 hours of University Requirements:

- Bible: Upper-level selections (6 hours)
- Cultural Awareness (3 hours)
- Historical Literacy (3 hours)
- Selection (3 hours)
- Free Elective (3 hours)

Additionally, each student is required to complete a Writing Intensive course as designated by their major and to complete a Capstone course or experience as specified by their degree.

Rationale

This clarification provides several important benefits:

- It makes the courses and menus of courses designated as “general education” internally consistent and consistent with the SACSCOC definition of general education as they are populated by broad, lower-level, and pre-requisite-free courses.
- It eliminates the need for exceptions to accommodate upper-level majors classes in the Historical Literacy or Cultural Awareness menus. Courses that populate those menus must still meet the criteria that define those menus.
- It provides a more coherent rationale for the structure of requirements for all bachelor’s degrees than is currently in place.

Catalog Changes

Two changes to the catalog will need to be implemented:

- The *Definition* section above would need to be included at an appropriate location (perhaps in proximity to the table that outlines the University Requirements for all Bachelor’s Degrees).
- The term “General Education Selection” would need to be replaced with “University Requirement Selection” (p. 38).

The following diagram provides a heuristic for the distinction of terms.

