

Academic Programs

September 1, 2023

MEMORANDUM

To: All Faculty & Staff, Students and members of the University Community

From: Carmen Bustos-Work, Associate Vice President of Academic Programs

Subject: General Education and All-University Requirements (GEAR) Program Review 2023

What is the GEAR program review?

Our GEAR program review will involve a systematic examination of our university's shared curriculum—the curriculum that the CSU describes as assuring that our graduates have progressed toward becoming truly educated persons. Through this process, we will reflect on how well we are meeting our obligation to develop our students' knowledge and skills “related to quantitative reasoning, information literacy, intellectual inquiry, global awareness and understanding, human diversity including ethnic studies, civic engagement, communication competence, ethical decision making, environmental systems, technology, lifelong learning and self-development, and physical and emotional health throughout a lifetime.”

Why is the GEAR program review necessary?

1. The main reason to engage in a program review is to ensure that all stakeholders (faculty, staff, and students) have a shared understanding of our GEAR program and its importance.
2. To ensure that our GEAR program remains effective and relevant, it's crucial to periodically review and update the program in response to changing educational goals and societal demands.

3. Moreover, this endeavor is a CSU requirement. From EO1100: "In accordance with WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC) accreditation requirements, campuses shall provide for regular periodic reviews of GE program policies and practices in a manner comparable to those of major programs, including evaluation by an external reviewer. The review should include a statement of the Meaning, Quality, and Integrity of the campus GE program and the ongoing assessment of GE student learning outcomes."

4. By reviewing our GEAR program requirements and developing a shared understanding of our goals and protocols, we engage in continuous improvement aimed at use of best practices to help our students achieve their academic and career goals, and aimed at listening to the faculty and staff who facilitate this learning.

How will the GEAR program review be conducted?

1. This process will be organized by the Office of Undergraduate Studies in close collaboration with the ICC and its GEAR and APP subcommittees. These committees are faculty members, administrators, staff, and (hopefully) student representatives.

2. The Office of Undergraduate Studies will work with the above committees and collect standard program review data on student performance, course demand, number of courses, equity gaps, etc. In addition, the process will collect feedback from students, staff, and faculty as well as external benchmarking data to inform the narrative and recommendations.

3. We will seek input from all stakeholders, including faculty, students, alumni, and employers, through surveys, open forum events, and focus groups. When possible we will serve food and will utilize google forms to collect feedback from as many participants as possible.

4. The process will compare our GEAR program with best practices at peer institutions and consider trends in higher education.

5. Based on the data and input collected, the committee will develop recommendations for program improvements. These recommendations will be shared with the university community for feedback.

6. At the conclusion, we will establish a schedule for recurring reviews to ensure that our GEAR program remains current and effective.