

Commonwealth



# Special Committee on Revising General Education (SCORE)

## PROGRESS REPORT 4: Model of General Education, Area Descriptions and Learning Outcomes

### Table of Contents

<b>Table of Contents</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Introduction</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Background</b>	<b>3</b>
Community Engagement	4
Table 1: Community Engagement	4
<b>WSU's New Program of General Education</b>	<b>7</b>
General Education Statement	8
Broad Learning Goals (BLGs)	8
WSU's Model of General Education	8
BLGs and the Model	9
High Impact Practices Infused in the Model	10
Table 2: HIPs in WSU's Model of General Education	11
<b>Required Components Fulfilled as part of the Major</b>	<b>12</b>
Advanced Rhetoric and Inquiry as a General Education Requirement	12
Integrative Experience as a General Education Requirement	12
Size of General Education if Major Components Required	13
<b>Cost of General Education</b>	<b>14</b>
HIPs as an Expense	14
Course Sizes	15
Faculty and Department Representation in Current Core versus New Gen Ed	15
<b>General Education Area Descriptions and Learning Outcomes</b>	<b>16</b>
Purpose of Learning Outcomes	16
Development of WSU's Gen Ed Learning Outcomes	16
Assessment and Learning Outcomes	16
A Living Document and Piloting Learning Outcomes	17
<b>Preliminary Guidelines About General Education</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Timeline</b>	<b>17</b>

<b>Leadership of WSU's General Education</b>	<b>18</b>
Director of General Education	19
Program Area Chair of General Education and High Impact Practices	19
Current Status of Leadership Requests	19
<b>Conclusion</b>	<b>20</b>
Appendix A: SCORE's Charge	21
Appendix B: SCORE Membership	22
Appendix C: SCORE's Process Principles	23
Appendix D: SCORE's General Education Design Principles	24
Appendix E: Guiding Principles on Assessment	25
Appendix F: General Education Area Descriptions and Learning Outcomes	26
Westfield State Journey	26
First Year Journey: Academic Inquiry	26
Wellbeing: Caring for the Holistic Self	26
Integrative Experience	27
Analysis, Practice, and Inquiry	28
Rhetoric and Inquiry	28
Inquiry into Patterns, Data and Reasoning	28
Creative Arts Practice	29
Inquiry into the Natural Sciences	30
Advanced Rhetoric and Inquiry	30
Complex Problems	31
Perspectives	32
Individuals in Context	32
Social Groups and Culture	32
Civic Learning	33
Power and Perspectives	33
Appendix G: Preliminary Guidelines for General Education	35

## SCORE's PROGRESS REPORT 4: Model of General Education, Area Descriptions and Learning Outcomes

### Introduction

This document describes SCORE's work since Progress Report 3, and includes a complete *General Education Model, Proposed Area Descriptions and Learning Outcomes*. **At this time SCORE is asking for endorsement of these items as "Ready to Pilot."** Such endorsement would signify to the campus that the model, area descriptions, and learning outcomes are in a state that they are ready to be rolled out on campus, however, SCORE is proposing that these items also be viewed as living documents that should be reviewed and revised on a regular basis.

### Background

The Special Committee On Reforming General Education (SCORE) is a special committee approved by the All-University Committee (AUC) February 5, 2021. Its charge is to "*reimagine and redesign general education in the long term at Westfield State University*," and to do so in a manner that is inclusive (See Charge in Appendix A). SCORE reports to the All-University Committee and keeps the University Curriculum Committee updated on its work. There are 18 current members of SCORE (see Appendix B). The committee began meeting in spring 2021 and has worked continuously since then, including during summers. Committee members typically devote 3 hours each week to SCORE.

SCORE began by creating *Process Principles*, which dictate how the committee works (see Appendix C) and *Design Principles* that guide the development of a curriculum model (see Appendix D). The *Process* and *Design Principles* were included in Progress Report 1 and were endorsed by the AUC and the University Curriculum Committee (UCC) in Fall 2021.

Progress Report 2 included *Guiding Principles on General Education Assessment*, a *Statement on General Education*, and *Broad Learning Goals* (BLGs). The *Guiding Principles for General Education Assessment* (Appendix E) will direct WSU's general education assessment practices. The *General Education Statement* was designed for a general audience, including faculty, librarians, staff, administrators, students, potential students, and families, and is intended to concisely convey the rationale, mission, and goals of the general education program of study. *Broad Learning Goals* (BLGs) are long-term, broad, and achievable goals that we expect WSU students to achieve upon completion of the general education program. They reflect what is promised in the *General Education Statement*. BLGs are not necessarily

measurable, but rather they are reflected in the final model of general education. The AUC and UCC also endorsed Progress Report 2 (Spring 2022) and included suggestions for revising the BLGs.

Progress Report 3 was submitted to governance fall 2022 and endorsed in spring 2023. These contained a *Proposed Model for General Education* and Revised BLGs. Every decision related to the model was based on extensive research (see Progress Report 3 for a full rationale).

### Community Engagement

A key process principle is to “*Engage and collaborate with all relevant stakeholders, including historically marginalized groups. Listen genuinely.*” Thus, all of SCORE’s work has been based on extensive community engagement. Table 1 includes a description of SCORE’s efforts to engage with the community. Many different approaches have been used, including surveys, in-person coffee hours, zoom working meetings, department visits (both on zoom and in-person), town halls, world cafés, and large and small listening sessions. SCORE has invited experts in the field to present to campus, and has harnessed the expertise on campus and paid participants to participate in focus groups and working groups. These varied approaches yielded different types of information, all of which have guided and continue SCORE’s work.

Table 1: Community Engagement

Date	Type of Event	Event	Participants
June 2021	Faculty Survey 1	Faculty Survey about Core and General Education	79 Respondents
Sept 2021	Opening Day Town Hall- Zoom	Overview and Orientation of SCORE work and Survey Results from First Faculty Survey	About 50 attendees
Sept 2021	Coffee Hour	In-Person Listening Session to receive feedback about Design and Process Principles	About 18 attendees
Sept & Oct 2021	2 Zoom Listening Sessions	Zoom Listening Sessions to receive feedback about Design and Process Principles	18 Faculty and Librarians
Oct & Nov 2021	23 Meetings With Departments and 2 Program Areas	SCORE members met with 25 Departments/Programs to hear ideas and concerns about new gen ed (mostly in-person, but some on zoom)	93 Faculty
Sept 2021	Speaker Series	Heather Lettner-Rust, Sharon Emerson-Stonnell, Longwood College	24 participants
Oct 2021	Speaker Series	Bradly Knight & Cynthia Bair Van Dam, American University	35 participants

Date	Type of Event	Event	Participants
Nov 2021	Speaker Series	Kris Wobbe, Worcester Polytechnic Institute	24 participants
Jan 2022	Speaker Series	Paul Hanstedt, W&L University	52 participants
Jan 2022	2 Focus Groups	Discussed Hanstedt talk about Rationale for General Education and Possible Models (zoom) <i>(paid participants)</i>	25 Participants + 10 SCORE members
<b>Jan 2022</b>	<b>Governance</b>	<b>Progress Report 1 presented at AUC</b>	
Feb & March 2022	4 Working Meetings	Zoom meetings where we edited our Statement on General Education and used Jamboards to prepare Broad Learning Goals.	48 Faculty Attendees + 14 SCORE members
<b>Feb 2022</b>	<b>Governance</b>	<b>Progress Report 1 presented at UCC &amp; Endorsed</b>	
Mar 2022	Faculty Survey HIPs Spring '22	Faculty Survey on High Impact Practices	107 Faculty
<b>Mar 2022</b>	<b>Governance</b>	<b>Progress Report 2 presented at AUC</b>	
<b>April 2022</b>	<b>Governance</b>	<b>Progress Reports 1 &amp; 2 presented at SGA</b>	
Aril 2022	Student Survey 1	Student Experiences with Core Curriculum and suggestions for change	189 Students
<b>April 2022</b>	<b>Governance</b>	<b>Progress Report 2 presented at UCC &amp; endorsed</b>	
May 2022	End of Semester Town Hall	Shared General Education Statement and Broad Learning Goals with Campus Community at a meeting that was both in-person and on zoom	96 Attendees
June 2022	Survey of Department Chairs	19 Chairs representing 21 departments completed a survey about major/program requirements and reasons for requirements-accreditation	19 Chairs
July 2022	Working Group on First Year Seminar	Working group researched and prepared a presentation about the HIP First Year	6 Faculty -Librarians
July 2022	Working Group on Writing Intensive	Working group researched and prepared a presentation about the HIP Writing Intensive <i>(paid participants)</i>	5 Faculty
July 2022	Working Group on ePortfolios	Working group researched and prepared a presentation about the HIP ePortfolios <i>(paid participants)</i>	5 Faculty

Date	Type of Event	Event	Participants
July 2022	Working Group on Learning Communities	Working group researched and prepared a presentation about the HIP Learning Communities ( <i>paid participants</i> )	5 Faculty
Aug 2022	Working Group on Assessment	Working group researched and prepared guidelines for SCORE about how to do Assessment in Gen Ed ( <i>paid participants</i> )	5 Faculty + 3 SCORE members
Aug 2022	Working Group on JEDI	Working group researched and prepared guidelines for SCORE about how to infuse Gen Ed with JEDI ( <i>paid participants</i> )	6 Faculty
Aug 2022	Working Group on Collaborative Projects	Working group researched and prepared guidelines for SCORE about how to include collaborative projects in Gen Ed ( <i>paid participants</i> )	3 Faculty Members
Sept 2022	Opening Day In-Person & Zoom	Shared General Education Statement and Broad Learning Goals with Campus Community at a meeting that was both in-person and on zoom	127 Faculty, Staff, and Administration, attendees
Oct 2022	Meeting with Associate Deans and Registrar	Score Co-chairs met with the 4 Associate Deans and the Registrar to gather feedback on the model and process of Gen Ed Reform	5 Administrators + 2 SCORE members
Oct 2022	23 Meetings With Departments - Divisions	SCORE members met with 23 Departments/Programs to hear ideas and concerns about SCORE's proposed model of gen ed	154 Faculty and Librarians
Nov 2022	4 Listening Sessions	2 zoom and 2 in-person Listening Sessions to hear feedback about SCORE's Proposed Model of Gen Ed	15 Attendees + 10 SCORE members
Nov 2022	1 Student Focus Group	Student Focus Group ( <i>paid participants</i> ) to Hear Ideas about Gen Ed, Needs in the first year, interests in gen ed	10 students
<b>Nov 2022</b>	<b>Governance</b>	<b>Progress Report 3 to AUC</b>	
Dec 2022	Board of Trustees Meeting	Model Shared at Board of Trustees Meeting, where Trustees, President, Representatives from Academic Affairs and Guests were present	7 Trustees + 9 Others
<b>Jan &amp; Feb 2023</b>	<b>Governance</b>	<b>Progress Report 3 presented at UCC &amp; Endorsed</b>	

Date	Type of Event	Event	Participants
Jan 31 & Feb 1 2023	2 World Café	Brainstormed Specific Learning Outcomes, shared food and beverages (supported by Davis Education Foundation Grant)	35 Attendees
Jan 2023	4 School Chair Meetings	SCORE Co-chairs attended all School Chairs Meetings to discuss and seek feedback about In-Major Components of General Education	3 Deans, 21 Department and Program Area Chairs
Feb 2023	2 Working Meetings	SCORE members and Faculty met on zoom to refine the SLOs Proposed During World Cafe (participants were paid; supported by Davis Education Foundation Grant)	33 Attendees
<b>Feb 2023</b>	<b>Governance</b>	<b>Progress Report 3 Endorsed by AUC</b>	
March 2023	Domain Week (3 Meetings)	Discipline Specific Meetings held on Zoom to refine and finalize Specific Learning Outcomes (participants paid; supported by Davis Education Foundation Grant)	28 Attendees
March 2023	Speakers to Launch FY Journey Course Construction	Germán Mora and Kendall Kennison Presented: Teaching First-Year Seminars at Goucher College: Reflections and Insights	27 Attendees + event recorded and shared
March-May 2023	FY Journey Course Construction Crew	Working Group that will prepare Syllabi to be submitted to governance for First Year Journey Academic Inquiry (participants paid)	32 faculty



## WSU's New Program of General Education

The following are WSU's *General Education Statement*, *Broad Learning Goals*, and Model of General Education. **These items were previously endorsed by governance.**

### General Education Statement

General education at Westfield State University places curiosity, excitement, and a commitment to social justice and cultural understanding at the heart of our curriculum. In the classroom and across communities, students draw on diverse areas of knowledge to integrate ideas, identify and pursue meaningful questions, tackle complex problems from the local to the global, think critically and creatively, communicate and collaborate effectively, and promote well-being for all of our community members. Students develop the self-awareness and confidence necessary to engage meaningfully with and care for others; to navigate their personal, professional, and civic lives; and to build a more just and kind world.

### Broad Learning Goals (BLGs)

- WSU students grow as self-aware, creative, curious, and confident individuals who are invested in the well-being of themselves and others.
- WSU students use the tools of multiple fields of study, critically evaluate sources of information, and apply logical reasoning, critical thinking, and appropriate methodology to draw conclusions and communicate effectively.
- WSU students identify and pursue meaningful questions where there is no single correct answer, and it is necessary to consider diverse areas of knowledge and ways of knowing in order to integrate knowledge and tackle complex problems.
- WSU students develop cultural curiosity and humility alongside interpersonal skills to effectively collaborate and communicate within and across diverse communities. They act as conscientious, ethical, and responsible community members who address issues of social justice, work for positive change, and care for others and the planet



Table 2: WSU Model of General Education

Westfield State Journey	Analysis, Practice, and Inquiry	Complex Problem	Perspectives
<b>First Year Journey: Academic Inquiry</b> (3 Credits)	<b>Rhetoric and Inquiry</b> (4 Credits)	<b>Complex Problems Anchored in Mathematics, Computing, and Natural Sciences</b> (3 Credits)	<b>Individuals in Context</b> (3 Credits)
<b>Wellbeing: Caring For the Holistic Self</b> (3 credits: 1.5 credits x 2 classes)	<b>Inquiry into Patterns, Data and Reasoning</b> (3 Credits)	<b>Complex Problems Anchored in Arts and Humanities</b> (3 Credits)	<b>Social Groups and Culture</b> (3 Credits)
	<b>Creative Arts Practice</b> (3 Credits)	<b>Complex Problems Anchored in the Social and Health Sciences</b> (3 Credits)	<b>Civic Learning</b> (3 Credits)
	<b>Inquiry into the Natural World</b> (4 Credits)		<b>Power and Perspectives</b> (3 Credits)
University Curriculum Requirements fulfilled as part of Major			
<b>Integrative Experience</b> (credits determined by major)	<b>Advanced Rhetoric and Inquiry</b> (credits determined by major)		

General Education=41 Credits + additional requirements in major, credits determined by major department

### Changes in Terminology

Several terms on the model have been changed since Progress Report 3 reflecting faculty feedback, and updated area descriptions and learning outcomes.

Table 3: Changes in Terminology\$

Terminology in Progress Report 3	Current Wording
Creative Arts Inquiry	Creative Arts Practice
Big Thinking, Big Ideas	Complex Problems
Individuals and Culture	Individuals in Context
Critical Analysis and Inquiry	Analysis, Practice and Inquiry

### BLGs and the Model

The four BLGs are reflected in the columns of WSU's *General Education Model*. The first column, called "Westfield State Journey," supports students' development as academic and lifelong learners, thereby supporting the BLG *"WSU students grow as self-aware, creative, curious, and confident individuals who are invested in the well-being of themselves and others."*

The second column, "Analysis, Practice and Inquiry," has students practice varied approaches to critical and creative thinking, with an emphasis on learning how to evaluate sources of information and communicate effectively. This column reflects the BLG that states, *"WSU students use the tools of multiple fields of study, critically evaluate sources of information, and apply logical reasoning, critical thinking, and appropriate methodology to draw conclusions and communicate effectively."*

The third column, "Complex Problems," requires students to explore and tackle complex, authentic problems drawing on diverse perspectives and theories, modes of inquiry, and domains of knowledge, and they do so three times, each time using a distinctly different disciplinary lens. Thus, this column reflects the BLG, *"WSU students identify and pursue meaningful questions where there is no single correct answer, and it is necessary to consider diverse areas of knowledge and ways of knowing in order to integrate knowledge and tackle complex problems."* This BLG is also discussed below as it relates to scaffolding.

The final column, "Perspectives," is where students will acquire skills to critically analyze social structures and contrasting viewpoints, explore how to act and communicate as conscientious, ethical, and responsible community members who are concerned about social justice, and care for others and the environment. These goals mirror the BLG *"WSU students develop cultural curiosity and humility alongside interpersonal skills to effectively collaborate and communicate within and across diverse communities. They act as conscientious, ethical, and responsible community members who address issues of social justice, work for positive change, and care for others and the planet."*

### High Impact Practices Infused in the Model

As described in Progress Report 3, every decision related to the model was based on research. The American Association of Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) identified high-impact practices, or HIPs, which are teaching and learning practices that are beneficial to students who participate in them, and especially beneficial to students from demographic groups historically underserved by higher education. **Thus, HIPs can be used as tools for academic retention and to address opportunity gaps/achievement gaps (the term achievement gap is used by NECHE) which are areas identified as needing improvement at WSU.**

SCORE found WSU students are most likely to encounter HIPs in their majors and in their last year at WSU, and rarely in core classes. Thus, SCORE saw a missed opportunity to use HIPs as tools for enhancing student success and retention, and therefore HIPs are infused throughout the new general education model. Plus, HIPs are enjoyable for both students and faculty. A Process Principle of SCORE is, “*Generate Excitement: General education will promote recruitment, retention, and include classes students are excited about taking and faculty are excited to teach.*” Not only do the HIPs incorporated into the new model of general education generate excitement, they are also expected to “cost” about the same as the existing core curriculum (see Cost of General Education).

Table 4: HIPs in WSU’s Model of General Education

HIP	Definition	Where in Model
First Year Experience	These courses support students’ academic performance, persistence, and sense of campus community by introducing them to campus resources, time management, study skills, and other issues relevant to student development.	~First Year Journey: Academic Inquiry
(First Year) Seminar** This is AAC&U’s terminology, at WSU these will not be limited to the first year.	These are small seminar style courses that use a cutting-edge question to have students practice critical inquiry, frequent writing, information literacy, and collaborative learning.	~First Year Journey: Academic Inquiry ~Complex Problems anchored in Mathematics, Computing, and Natural Sciences ~Complex Problems anchored in Arts and Humanities ~Complex Problems anchored in Social and Health Sciences
Diversity/ Global Learning	These are courses and programs where students explore cultures and worldviews different from their own. They explore differences such as racial, ethnic, and gender inequality, or continuing struggles around the globe for human rights, freedom, and power.	~Individuals in Context ~Social Groups and Cultures ~Civic Learning ~Power and Perspectives
Writing Intensive	These courses emphasize writing at all levels of instruction and across the curriculum. These can be courses where writing is explicitly taught or writing infused, where students regularly engage in written exercises and activities, receive feedback on their writing from professors and peers, and writing is used as a mode of learning.	~Rhetoric and Inquiry ~Complex Problems anchored in Mathematics, Computing, and Natural Sciences ~Complex Problems anchored in Arts and Humanities ~Complex Problems anchored in Social and Health Sciences ~Advanced Rhetoric and Inquiry
Active Learning	Active learning methods encompass many different classroom activities where students engage in thinking, discussing, investigating, and creating rather than passively absorbing information. For example Undergraduate Research engaging in the arts or creative practice are both active learning.	~Inquiry into the Natural World (where there is a lab requirement) ~Creative Arts Practice ~Complex Problems anchored in Mathematics, Computing, and Natural Sciences ~Complex Problems anchored in Arts and Humanities ~Complex Problems anchored in Social and Health Sciences
Collaborative	Collaborative learning combines two key goals:	~Complex Problems anchored in Mathematics,

HIP	Definition	Where in Model
Learning	learning to work and solve problems in the company of others and sharpening one's own understanding by listening seriously to the insights of others, especially those with different backgrounds and life experiences. Approaches range from study groups within a course, to team-based assignments and writing, to cooperative projects and research.	Computing, and Natural Sciences ~Complex Problems anchored in Arts and Humanities ~Complex Problems anchored in Social and Health Sciences + <i>while not required in other courses, it is anticipated many courses will incorporate this practice</i>

## Required Components Fulfilled as part of the Major

Mirroring the research nationally, a survey of WSU students found most students do not understand the purpose of our current core curriculum and only consider major classes as imparting important skills. Research shows students are more likely to persist to degree completion when they experience meaningful learning and personal growth that they can relate to their current and future development.<sup>1</sup> How can WSU create a general education that students recognize as connected to their majors and valuable to their goals? Like other institutions with successful general education curricula, we can construct visible bridges between general education and the major by implementing university-wide requirements. Other campuses have employed multiple approaches to build these bridges such as a capstone, study abroad, service learning, internship, or a portfolio requirement, SCORE recommends Westfield State also takes steps towards sewing general education and the major together by taking two manageable steps that align with our university's capacity and goals: first, we recommend students are required to take an upper-level writing course (sophomore year or later) and second, all students should be provided an opportunity to integrate general education with the major.

### Advanced Rhetoric and Inquiry as a General Education Requirement

WSU can achieve its goal of creating a coherent curriculum that provides students with opportunities to bridge general education with their major by making visible and fostering already existing links between general education and the major, such as the link between English 101 and writing in the major courses. When English Composition II was eliminated as a core requirement, all majors/programs decided upon their own approaches to providing discipline specific writing instruction. Currently, 19 out of 25 departments offer a writing in the major course or require students to take English 204 and 2 departments are in the process of developing an upper-level writing course. Two departments require no writing, and 2 did not respond. SCORE anticipates these

<sup>1</sup>Green, M. F. (2021). In Search of Curricular Coherence. *International Journal of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education*, 33(1), 100–109.

Kuh, G., Kinzie, J., Buckley, J., Bridges, B., & Hayek, J. (2006.). *What Matters to Student Success: A Review of the Literature*. National Postsecondary Education Cooperative.

approaches would not change; however, SCORE recommends departments now formalize those requirements by submitting them to governance. By codifying the requirement for *Advanced Rhetoric and Inquiry*, we reinforce an existing bridge between gen ed and the major, we fulfill our commitment to teaching students to communicate effectively (see gen ed statement and BLGs), and we take a step towards catching up to peer institutions (Appendix F depicts upper level writing requirements at peer institutions).

### Integrative Experience as a General Education Requirement

General education teaches foundational skills such as critical thinking and communication, that support majors which are more specialized. But students need training in transferring skills and knowledge from general education to their major. An *Integrative Experience within the Major* provides that training.

SCORE recommends majors/programs provide students a place within their major to pause and consider how they acquire knowledge and to explore the connections between general education and their major. SCORE recommends the *Integrative Experience* be a component in a major class that already exists, with the addition of a new expectation that students in the major have the opportunity to pause and engage in this reflection (ideally this will occur shortly after completing their general education requirements). For some departments this might occur in a junior level class, for others it may occur in a senior level or capstone style class, and for some, it may even occur in the same class that satisfies the *Advanced Rhetoric and Inquiry* requirement. These decisions should be made by departments; however, SCORE recommends departments now document this requirement by submitting it to governance.

When SCORE submitted Progress Report 3 it included *Advanced Rhetoric and Inquiry* and *Integrative Experience* as components that would be satisfied within a student's major, but at that time SCORE did not request endorsement of those components since the committee had not solicited feedback specifically about those requirements from academic departments. Since then, SCORE collected feedback at 4 School Chair Meetings where chairs discussed the requirements and were also asked to solicit feedback from their departments. After that the requirements were discussed at 2 Faculty Working Group Meetings. At all meetings there were questions about how the requirements might be implemented, but the overwhelming majority of feedback about whether or not the requirements should be included was supportive. Although there are still details that need to be resolved, mostly surrounding students in the Liberal Studies major, SCORE is working with these individual programs to identify realistic resolutions. **Thus, SCORE is now requesting endorsement of the major requirements as part of the General Education Model that includes University curriculum requirements.**

Each major/program would determine the nature of the requirement, including the credits and learning outcomes. SCORE is calling these “university requirements” because they would be housed within majors/programs, and unlike general education requirements the offerings would likely be major restricted, and may have major specific prerequisites. As university curriculum requirements, departments would be asked to submit their proposals through governance indicating how they will address these requirements in a manner aligned with the area descriptions (see Appendix G: General Education Area Descriptions and Learning Outcomes).

#### Size of General Education if Major Components Required

AUC’s charge dictated SCORE should “*Develop a framework for a general education program that students will complete as part of their (undergraduate) degree requirements, with a goal of no more than 40 credit hours.*” [emphasis added] (see Appendix A). The NECHE Standards for Accreditation state that “*The institution ensures that all undergraduate students complete at least the equivalent of 40 semester credits in a bachelor’s degree program... in general education.*” Furthermore, some majors at WSU require up to 72 credits. Therefore SCORE sought to keep general education as close as possible to 40 credits to balance having a comprehensive, valid, and effective general education curriculum, with the need to accommodate large majors and students wishing to double major. The model endorsed previously through governance included 41 required credits with additional credits required as part of a major.

When General Education (or university) requirements are also required as part of a major there can be questions about where the credits “count” and whether or not such requirements make general education too large. When SCORE Co-Chairs discussed this at School Chairs meetings, department chairs expressed the sentiment – *it does not matter*. Because the credits would be part of existing major requirements the actual number of required credits for students would not change, and therefore would not increase the size of general education. **Thus, SCORE views this as an interesting intellectual question, but one that does not have practical implications for students, and therefore SCORE adopts the perspective that the model with the inclusion of the major requirements is aligned with both the AUC charge and NECHE requirement.**

#### Cost of General Education

Computing the actual cost of WSU’s current core or the cost of the new model are beyond the abilities of SCORE. However, there are several factors impacting cost that SCORE has considered in the development of the model, including the number of credits in the new program, the cost of implementing HIPs, course caps, and the faculty and departments needed to teach in the new general education compared to the existing core.

### Credits in Core, Temporary Core, and SCORE's Model of General Education

Table 5: Historical Credits in Core Curriculum

	Required Credits	Actual Credits	Reasons for Difference
Pre 1996 Old Old Core	40	40-41	Option to take 3-4 Credits in Mathematics
1996-2021 Old Core	49-52 (58) + 6 of 300 level coursework (never implemented)	39-52	Option to take 3-4 Credits in Mathematics and/or Science. Courses can satisfy multiple areas
2021- Present Temp Core	38-41	29-41	Option to take 3-4 Credits in Mathematics and/or Science. Courses can satisfy multiple areas
Gen Ed	41	41	<i>All students complete same number of credits</i>

Between Fall 1996 and Spring 2022 WSU's core curriculum (the old core) was 49-52 credits (with 6 additional upper level credits that were never implemented which would have made it 55-58 credits). A range existed because the core curriculum included the option of taking 3 or 4 credits in multiple areas. Additionally, in practice it was possible for students to take as low as 39 credits since there were courses in the core curriculum that applied to two areas of the core (i.e., they "double-dipped"), so the actual range of possible credits students could take was 39-52; therefore, in practice there was large variation in actual credits.

The current "temporary core curriculum" (began 2021-2022) is 38-41 credits. Again, there is a range because students can complete 3 or 4 credits in multiple areas, and with the inclusion of double-dippers the actual range of possible credits students could take is 29-41. While one might think most students therefore take 29 credits, in reality taking as low as 29 credits is almost never possible for three reasons; not all double-dipping courses are offered regularly, courses that double-dip fill quickly so many students cannot take advantage of them, and some majors require specific core classes leaving students in those majors both unable to take advantage of double-dippers and sometimes completing more core classes than required so they satisfy major requirements.

A related issue is that in the Old Core and Temp Core there are "major restricted" courses so some courses listed as being offered in the core curriculum can only be taken by students in a specific major (which raises the theoretical question, are those core courses or major courses?).

The new general education model will require 41 credits of coursework for all students. There is no range, and the actual number of courses taken will not vary across students. SCORE recommends no double-dipping where one course could satisfy multiple areas of general education (see Appendix H for Preliminary Guidelines for General Education). Thus, it is expected the average number of credits actually completed by students completing the new general education curriculum will be lower than the average taken by students completing the old core curriculum and very close to average of those completing the temporary core. So the overall “cost” in terms of credits will remain the same.

### HIPs as an Expense

Admittedly, some HIPs identified by the AAC&U are expensive to implement, but many are no more costly than what is being done in the existing core. Thus, the HIPs infused in our new model of general education can be incorporated in a way that the new model of general education is expected to “cost” about the same as the existing core curriculum in that the.

SCORE discussed HIPs such as travel abroad, service learning, co-teaching, and learning communities, but did not embed these in the model due to the cost of sustaining them. However, the model is also flexible so they could easily be incorporated at a later time.

The HIPs embedded in the model: First Year Journey, Diversity/Global Learning, and Active learning Approaches such as Collaborative Projects and Undergraduate Research, are either already being done in core courses, or do not bring with them any additional expense. The exception being courses we have identified as First Year Seminars (see Table 4), and Writing Intensive classes which require lower course caps (and are discussed below).

### Course Sizes

SCORE recommends the **average course cap for the new program of general education remains the same as it is for our existing core offerings**. SCORE recommends course caps for the First Year Journey (16), and the writing intensive or writing infused courses; Rhetoric and Inquiry (16), Complex Problems (18), Advanced Rhetoric and Inquiry (16). Thus, to maintain the same overall average as is currently offered, there may need to be adjustments made to some course caps, particularly in humanities and social science courses that are currently designated First Year Only (a designation SCORE believes could be eliminated upon the implementation of the new model). However, SCORE is confident the average course sizes students currently experience does not need to change once the new program of general education is implemented.



## Faculty and Department Representation in Current Core versus New Gen Ed

SCORE's first responsibility was to create a program of general education founded on evidence of practices that provide the most benefit to our students. But, at every point in this process SCORE's work was also guided by the process principle *"RESPONSIBILITY: Move the process forward with careful consideration of the impact of general education on the campus community."*

Some components to the new general education program do not currently exist in WSU's core curriculum, such as the *First Year Journey*, and *Wellness* requirements. SCORE made sure the expertise necessary to teach in these areas already exists on campus, so new hires of adjuncts or tenure track lines are not expected to emerge as a result of new general education requirements.

SCORE also deliberately worked to ensure departments currently represented in the core curriculum would continue to be represented in the new general education model, and the faculty currently teaching in the core curriculum would continue to have a place to teach in the new general education program. This was approached in several ways. First, we analyzed current core offerings so SCORE could have a realistic understanding of what departments teach in the core and in what areas, so as the model was developed SCORE regularly reviewed where departments might land in the new offerings. SCORE also had frequent input from faculty and department chairs, especially during the development of the Learning Outcomes which will guide the courses that can be taught in each area.

## General Education Area Descriptions and Learning Outcomes

### Purpose of Learning Outcomes

Learning outcomes were developed to define the purpose, values, and goals of each area in general education. Explicitly-stated learning goals can also serve a variety of other purposes: they provide a common language, are helpful in advising, serve as a framework for faculty to develop courses, provide a framework for curriculum planning, and finally, they provide a map for assessment at the classroom level, assessment of general education, and for accreditation.

### Development of WSU's Gen Ed Learning Outcomes

Learning outcomes were developed via multiple means of conversation. The first formal event was when faculty from across campus got together to brainstorm possible outcomes at 2 World Cafe events where faculty were asked: *"Broadly, what skills, habits, and ways of knowing are essential no matter who is teaching a course in this area."* The results from those events were refined during 2 campus wide zoom working meetings. Further revision was done by SCORE members in collaboration with individual department representatives. Concurrently, SCORE received feedback via email on open documents containing the draft learning outcomes. The revised

outcomes were shared with department chairs, and then again SCORE held a Domain Specific Week where there were 3 different meetings for individuals from related disciplines (Math and Science, Humanities and Arts, Social Science and Health) to work together to contribute to the learning outcomes. And throughout the process SCORE members reached out to individual department chairs or faculty members if it appeared a department was not active during any of these steps of the process. This outreach was done in particular for departments that currently teach in general education.

SCORE decided to conclude this process when numerous faculty shared that they were satisfied with where the learning outcomes landed and could not suggest additional revisions. The proposed general education area descriptions and learning outcomes are in Appendix G. **At this time SCORE is asking for endorsement of the Area Descriptions and Learning Outcomes as “Ready to Pilot.”**

#### Key Learning Outcomes: Communication, Critical Analysis of Information, and Culture and Diversity

Several learning outcomes are reinforced throughout the model as evidenced by the fact that the same or similar learning outcomes appear in multiple areas and reflect the language of the BLGs (see Table 6). Analysis of information appears as a learning outcome in 8 (out of 13) areas, disciplinary concepts and exploration is in 6 areas, and other key outcomes are communication (5 areas), culture and diversity (4 areas), critical thinking (4 areas), creativity (4 areas), global learning (3 areas), and lifelong learning (2 areas).

Table 6: Learning Outcomes Common to Multiple Areas

	Learning Outcomes	Areas
<b>Critical Analysis and Use of Information</b> (8 areas)	<b>Reflective Discovery and Analysis of Information:</b> Students locate, generate, identify, interpret, and critically evaluate information, evidence, arguments and ideas, recognizing that authority is constructed and contextual. Students analyze their own and others' assumptions and incorporate reliable and valid information effectively and ethically for an intended purpose.	~First Year Journey: Academic Inquiry ~Inquiry into Patterns, Data and Reasoning ~Inquiry into the Natural Sciences ~Complex Problems anchored in Mathematics, Computing, and Natural Sciences ~Complex Problems anchored in Arts and Humanities ~Complex Problems anchored in Social and Health Sciences ~Individuals in Context
	<b>Using Sources Responsibly:</b> Students responsibly extrapolate from specific data sets, texts, projections, and documents to build a broader understanding about peoples, societies, aesthetics, environments, historical periods and/or cultures.	~Social Groups and Culture

	Learning Outcomes	Areas
<b>Discipline Exploration and Concepts</b> (6 areas)	<b>Disciplinary Concepts:</b> Students describe the major concepts, language, and theories of a discipline, and use disciplinary concepts and models to explain human behavior	~Individuals in Context ~Social Groups and Culture
	<b>Disciplinary Concepts:</b> Students describe the major concepts, methods, and theories of the discipline, make connections among concepts, and use disciplinary concepts and models to explain natural phenomena.	~Inquiry into the Natural Sciences
	<b>Discipline Exploration:</b> Students utilize the practices of different disciplines and integrate knowledge and apply this knowledge across disciplinary boundaries, with a disciplinary center or focus from the fields; of Mathematics, Computing or Natural Sciences; Arts and Humanities; Social and Health Sciences	~Complex Problems anchored in Mathematics, Computing, and Natural Sciences ~Complex Problems anchored in Arts and Humanities ~Complex Problems anchored in Social and Health Sciences
<b>Communication</b> (5 areas)	<b>Writing Process:</b> Students learn and practice the various stages of the writing process, including brainstorming prewriting; posing effective research questions; researching; drafting; providing, receiving, and implementing feedback; enacting substantial revision; editing; and proofreading.	~Rhetoric and Inquiry
	<b>Communication:</b> Students develop and apply skills for communicating effectively in order to disseminate knowledge, reach a broader audience, and foster understanding across people and cultures.	~Inquiry into the Natural Sciences ~Complex Problems anchored in Mathematics, Computing, and Natural Sciences ~Complex Problems anchored in Arts and Humanities ~Complex Problems anchored in Social and Health Sciences
<b>Culture and Diversity</b> (4 areas)	<b>Culture and Diversity:</b> Students critically analyze how different cultural, intellectual, economic, and/or aesthetic frameworks shape individuals and societies and create power structures and inequalities.	~Individuals in Context ~Social Groups and Culture ~Civic Learning ~Power and Perspectives
<b>Critical Thinking</b> (4 areas)	<b>Critical Thinking:</b> Students identify problems, questions and beliefs; create and gather relevant information, data and evidence; use inquiry, observation and innovation to generate solutions, arguments and explanations which provide meaningful conclusions, decisions and evaluations which are based on logical, causal, inferential or other appropriate forms of reasoning.	~Inquiry into Patterns, Data and Reasoning ~Complex Problems anchored in Mathematics, Computing, and Natural Sciences ~Complex Problems anchored in Arts and Humanities ~Complex Problems anchored in Social and Health Sciences

	Learning Outcomes	Areas
<b>Creativity</b> (4 areas)	<b>Creativity:</b> Students demonstrate innovative thought, and imagine new or alternative concepts and expressions in original ways	~Creative Arts Practice ~Complex Problems anchored in Mathematics, Computing, and Natural Sciences ~Complex Problems anchored in Arts and Humanities ~Complex Problems anchored in Social and Health Sciences
<b>Global Learning</b> (3 areas)	<b>Global Learning:</b> Students critically analyze contrasting viewpoints on people, societies, aesthetics, environments, historical periods, and cultures through engagement with diverse stories, issues, and perspectives that transcend cultures and national borders.	~Individuals in Context ~Social Groups and Culture ~Power and Perspectives
<b>Lifelong Learning</b> (2 areas)	<b>Lifelong Learning:</b> Students practice skills and attitudes central to lifelong learning; including developing a growth mindset viewpoint that encompasses self-reflection, flexibility, intellectual curiosity, and considers broad perspectives and diversity of thought	~First Year Journey: Academic Inquiry ~Wellness: Caring for the Holistic Self

### Assessment and Learning Outcomes

Appendix E contains the guiding principles on assessment which will form the foundation of SCORE's approach toward general education assessment. A first and important step in the assessment process is to develop learning outcomes. A close reader of the proposed learning outcomes will notice overlap between the language in our learning outcomes and that found in the AAC&U Value rubrics. The VALUE rubrics are open educational resources (OER) that are a reliable and valid approach used to evaluate student performance across sixteen broad learning outcomes, some of which overlap with our learning outcomes. Multiple individuals from WSU have been trained on these rubrics. The value rubrics are in the process of being updated by AAC&U and will continue to guide SCORE's work. At this time SCORE does not plan to adopt the Value Rubrics completely, but where there are overlaps between the values of our campus, and the work of the AAC&U, it makes sense to capitalize on this OER.

Now that preliminary learning outcomes have been developed by faculty, the next step will be to determine how faculty teaching in each area would like the courses in that area to be assessed. Currently SCORE is beginning this process on a small scale. A group of 32 faculty are working on a *First Year Journey Construction Crew* to begin course development in the area of the *First Year Journey: Academic Inquiry*. These faculty are exploring how the learning outcomes will translate into courses, and will then work with SCORE to determine how this could translate to assessment. **It is**

**anticipated this working crew will be the model for the development of the assessment plan for each area.**

#### A Living Document and Piloting Learning Outcomes

As a full assessment plan is developed, learning outcomes may need revision. Thus **SCORE recommends the proposed general education area descriptions and learning outcomes are viewed as a “work-in-progress” for the duration of the time it takes to fully implement a new program of general education. And then they should be piloted for a period of 2 years after implementation to determine if they are working as anticipated.**

#### Preliminary Guidelines About General Education

SCORE gets frequent questions about rules or guidelines around the general education model: such as *Can a course double-dip? Can a general education course be for only one major?* At this time SCORE does not have definitive answers to these questions, but Appendix H includes a list of *Preliminary Guidelines about General Education*. These guidelines emerged from discussions with faculty, and were developed based on SCORE’s research and experience, but have not been vetted by the campus community. They are being included in this document to share the work that is progressing in this area and to get preliminary feedback (see Appendix H).

#### Timeline

The timeline for rolling out a new program of general education has largely remained the same, but we are at a critical juncture and adhering to the original timeline is precarious for many reasons.

This Spring semester (2023) and throughout the summer SCORE will continue to host Professional Development opportunities for faculty to begin the process of course development. SCORE will also conduct extensive work on developing an assessment plan. Thankfully SCORE was granted a Davis Education Foundation Grant that allows SCORE to compensate faculty for this work. However, this process only works if faculty continue to participate in these paid workshop opportunities. Additionally, it is important to have governance endorsement of both the model and the learning outcomes in order for this work to continue.

Also in the Spring of 2023, SCORE and UCC formed a subcommittee to work together to consider implementation, and develop strategies for efficient implementation.

During Fall 2023, and Spring 2024 the campus community, with the support of SCORE, will be called upon to populate the general education curriculum and course proposals will begin to go through governance. Again, this will depend on the

willingness of campus faculty to dedicate their time toward this important work, and on the ability of the AUC and UCC to process numerous proposals.

The original timeline proposed the first cohort of students would experience WSU's new general education program in the fall of 2024. This remains possible, but again, there are many important things that can impact this timeline.

### Leadership of WSU's General Education

A weakness of our current core curriculum is that there is no position in charge of managing and maintaining the core. The consequences of this lack in leadership for the core are many: the current core has never been assessed despite serious efforts to do so; there are courses currently listed in the core that have not been offered for years; the core curriculum that was approved through governance in 1998 was supposed to have additional requirements that were never implemented because there was nobody to push for their implementation; transferring courses in for core credit can be incredibly confusing since there is no one office students should go to; it is difficult for chairs to know the number of core offerings needed and consequently chairs rely on the registrar to make these decisions; nobody is responsible for professional development related to teaching in the core (although we are fortunate that this has historically been done by the Writing Across the Curriculum Coordinator and the Faculty Center Coordinator).

Exploration of what is done on other campuses to sustain a robust program of general education that is assessed yielded an extremely long list of responsibilities. Thus, **in May of 2022 SCORE submitted a request to Academic Affairs for 2 positions, a Director of General Education Administration, and a Program Area Chair of General Education.**

#### Director of General Education

SCORE requested a Director of General Education Administration be hired to be responsible for the administration of general education. This position would require year-round work with stakeholders on campus and 2- and 4-year institutions in the region. This position would coordinate the use, training and oversight of the assessment platform for general education instructors including the generation of related reports. The General Education Director would participate in enrollment initiatives including the development, implementation, and oversight of a General Education website, handbook for advisors, and the general education email. Additionally, the General Education Director would manage the budget, assist in academic scheduling tasks, and serve as a key champion for general education on the WSU campus. The Director of General Education Administration would also collaborate closely with the Program Area Chair of General Education Program and High Impact Process and the SCORE (or a General Education Committee) to support general education initiatives at Westfield State University.

### Program Area Chair of General Education and High Impact Practices

In addition to a Director, SCORE requested a Program Area Chair of General Education and High Impact Practices to enhance the success of our new general education program. The Program Area Chair requested would be a full-time tenured or tenure-track faculty member who will work with instructors of general education courses, collaborate with the Director of General Education Administration, and serve as the chief steward of the curricular aspects of general education. The Program Area Chair should also teach courses in the new general education program. As indicated in the MSCA contract, the Program Area Chair would serve for one year with the possibility of an extension to a second year if all parties are in agreement and receive (6) credits per semester of Alternate Professional Responsibilities (APR), as well as a stipend for summer work. The Program Area chair would be expected to work during the (15) designated chair work dates over the summer. The program area chair would report to the Dean of Assessment and Accreditation.

### Current Status of Leadership Requests

Both positions were requested by SCORE in May of 2022. The call for a Program Area Chair of General Education was announced on campus in March 2023, to begin Fall 2023.

Because the 2018 NECHE Interim report indicated WSU's core curriculum, and assessment were areas of concern, and because WSU's existing Strategic Plan has a General Education Director listed in it, SCORE anticipated the Director position would be posted quickly and a search would have been undertaken in the summer of 2022 so the new Director could work with SCORE. That did not happen. No position has been posted as of the writing of this report.

## Conclusion

This document contains many components related to general education and SCORE welcomes feedback about any of them; however, **the *General Education Area Descriptions and Learning Outcomes*, and the complete *General Education Model* are the components SCORE is asking to be endorsed as "Ready to Pilot."** This designation would signify to the campus that the model and learning outcomes are approved to be rolled out on campus, keeping in mind that they are also living documents that should be reviewed and revised on a regular basis.

Progress Report 4 is Respectfully Submitted by  
The Special Committee for Reforming General Education (SCORE)

Lynn Shelley, SCORE Co-Chair, *Psychology*  
Megan Kennedy, SCORE Co-Chair, *Academic Affairs*  
Shirley Acquah, *Communication*  
Heidi Bohler, *Sports Medicine and Human Performance*  
Corinne Ebbs, *Library*  
Emily Gibbings, *Admissions*  
Alina Gross, *Geography, Planning, and Sustainability*  
Brian Jennings, *Academic Affairs*  
Kristie Knotts, *Banacos Center*  
Ruth Kurniawati, *Computer and Information Science*  
Brooke Orr, *History*  
Tim Parshall, *Environmental Science*  
Jamie Rivera, *Nursing*  
Catherine Savini, *Reading and Writing Center, Writing Across the Curriculum, English*  
Kimberly Sherman, *Business and Management, Faculty Center*  
Elizabeth Starr, *English*  
Nicole West, *Academic Affairs*  
Emily Fluet, *Student Government Association Representative*  
Christopher Lannan. *Student Government Association Representative*



## Appendix A: SCORE's Charge

### Proposal: Special Committee On Reforming General Education (SCORE)

**Charge:** The Special Committee On Reforming General Education (SCORE) will be responsible for reimagining and redesigning general education at Westfield State University. SCORE is charged with establishing a process for their work that is collaborative and inclusive, and any recommendation from the committee will be submitted to the All University Committee for full consideration by the governance process. When appropriate, SCORE will consult with the leadership of the University Efficiency Analysis Advisory Committee and will take their recommendations into account. SCORE is established as a Special Committee under the provisions of the Collective Bargaining Agreement. SCORE's tasks are focused on making recommendations on a new general education program.

#### SCORE will:

Develop a framework for a general education program that students will complete as part of their (undergraduate) degree requirements, with a goal of no more than 40 credit hours.

Develop a guide, with collaboration with the campus community, for the assessment of what we want our students to learn in their general education coursework.

Recommend a process and timeline for populating the new general education program with existing and new courses.

Recommend a structure for how the new general education program will be coordinated and assessed.

#### Committee Structure:

- 12 MSCA members (broad representation from different domains of knowledge as stipulated by New England Commission of Higher Education (NECHE), and at least 1 MSCA Librarian)
- 5 Presidential appointees from Academic Affairs with at least 2 being APA members.
- 2 students

## Appendix B: SCORE Membership

### Academic Departments

Shirley Acquah, Associate Professor of Communication (Spring 2021-present)  
 Heidi Bohler, Professor of Sports Medicine and Human Performance (Fall 2023-present)  
 Alina Gross, Program Area Chair Liberal Studies, Assistant Professor Geography, Planning and Sustainability (Spring 2021-present)  
 Ruth Kurniawati, Assistant Professor of Computer and Information Science (Fall 2022-present)  
 Brooke Orr, Professor of History (Spring 2021-present)  
 Tim Parshall, Chair of Environmental Science (Spring 2021-present)  
 Jamie Rivera, Associate Professor of Nursing (Spring 2022-present)  
 Lynn Shelley, Professor Psychology, SCORE Co-chair (Spring 2021-present)  
 Kimberly Sherman, Chair of Management and Marketing, Faculty Center Coordinator (Spring 2022-present)  
 Elizabeth Starr, Professor of English (Spring 2021-present)

### Student Representatives

Emily Fluet, Student Government Vice President for Academic Life  
 Christopher Lannan, Student Government

Past Members: Lyric Lamagdelaine '22 Cameron Kelleher '21

### Academic Affairs

Brian Jennings, Assessment and Accreditation (Spring 2021-present)  
 Megan Kennedy, Educator Preparation, Accreditation and Outreach, SCORE Co-Chair (Spring 2021-present)

### Center for Student Success and Engagement

Kristie Knotts, Assistant Director of the Banacos Academic Center (Spring 2021-present)  
 Nicole West, Director, Course Achievement, Retention, & Engagement Center (Spring 2021-present)  
 Catherine Savini, Reading and Writing Center and Writing Across the Curriculum Coordinator, Professor of English (Spring 2021-present)

### Library

Corinne Ebbs, Librarian, Head Education Resource Center (Spring 2021-present)

### Enrollment Management

Emily Gibbings, Associate Director of Admissions (Spring 2022-present)



### Past Members:

Enrique Morales-Diaz, Tom Raffensperger, Andy Bonacci, Christopher Masi (Spring 2021)  
 Margot Hennessy, (Spring 2021-Fall 2021)  
 Jennifer Hanselman, Susanne Chuku (Spring 2021-Fall 2022)

### Appendix C: SCORE's Process Principles

STUDENTS: Prioritize students, first and always.

ENGAGEMENT: Engage and collaborate with all relevant stakeholders, including historically marginalized groups. Listen genuinely.

COMMUNICATION: Ensure open, straightforward, and frequent communication throughout the process.

CULTURE: Build a campus wide culture that values general education and generates excitement about general education.

RESPONSIBILITY: Move the process forward with careful consideration of the impact of general education on the campus community.

RESOURCES: Advocate for resources to support general education in the short and long term.

ASSESSMENT: Support the development of meaningful ongoing gen ed assessment.

ALIGNMENT: Align work with WSU mission, vision, and values.

EQUITY: Prioritize equity in all that we do.

TIMELINE: Establish a timeline for the development and implementation of the general education program.

RESEARCH: Support recommendations with research and data.

SUSTAINABILITY: Establish mechanisms and structures for a sustainable, innovative, and adaptive general education program.

## Appendix D: SCORE's General Education Design Principles

Our general education will:

- **Prioritize Justice, Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Accessibility:** These values will inform the general education design.
- **Value Clarity in Design and Purpose:** General education will be easily navigable, straightforward to all constituencies, and convey a clear sense of purpose.
- **Generate Excitement:** General education will promote recruitment, retention, and include classes students are excited about taking and faculty are excited to teach.
- **Integrate Flexible and Responsive General Education Assessment:** We will make our goals for general education clear and use assessment to take action to improve student learning, ensuring a healthy campus culture of assessment.
- **Promote Integrative Learning:** An effective general education curriculum creates opportunities for students to reflect on their learning, make connections, and to practice solving complex problems using disparate concepts, knowledge, and skills from multiple disciplines.
- **Provide Opportunities for Varied Ways of Understanding and Solving Problems:** The general education curriculum will provide students with opportunities to practice various modes of inquiry that span disciplines, to define and tackle complex problems, and to create new knowledge and solutions.
- **Be relevant and structured purposefully:** general education should be relevant to students' majors and future beyond college and students should practice complex skills and proficiencies throughout their undergraduate career.

## Appendix E: Guiding Principles on General Education Assessment

**The purpose of general education assessment at Westfield State University is to gather information that will inform the actions we take to support faculty in their work to improve teaching and learning in general education. In stating the following guiding principles, we recognize that general education assessment is one component of WSU's broader assessment processes.**

Effective assessment of teaching and learning in general education requires that our practices are guided by the following **principles**:

- Assessment will always be faculty driven, building on faculty experience and expertise, as well as the work that faculty, departments, and programs already do to assess student learning in general education.
- Our work will be informed by scholarship on assessment and teaching and learning within and across disciplines.
- Assessment will clearly connect to the mission of our institution and the goals we hold for student learning in our general education program.
- The methods of assessment we use will be flexible enough to incorporate different approaches disciplines take in gathering information about student learning.
- We will use assessment to build community in order to support faculty development and teaching. Information will be presented in the aggregate so that no individual faculty or courses can be identified, to keep the focus on our shared responsibility for improving student learning in general education.
- We will support assessment by providing adequate resources, time, and professional development for participating adjunct and tenure-track faculty and staff; by facilitating reflection and conversation across disciplines; and by recognizing assessment as a scholarly activity.
- We will regularly review and adapt our assessment structures as needed to ensure that they are actually helping us improve student learning.
- General education assessment will work within governance structures as outlined in the MSCA/BHE Agreement and coordinate with the Curriculum Committee as they conduct university-wide studies of the overall academic program and consider and propose major changes in the curriculum design.

In support of these principles, we will use our general education reform process **to lay the groundwork for our general education assessment practices** as we:

- Initiate conversations about what we want for our students, working across disciplines to define clear goals for our general education program and general education courses.
- Consider a variety of methods of general education assessment (eg., course-based, program-level, portfolios, student surveys, etc...) and engage with faculty, staff, and students across campus to make decisions about the methods that will work best for Westfield State University.
- Put in place clear, manageable, structural incentives to ensure that we are actively conducting assessment of student learning in general education.

## Appendix F: Upper Level Composition Requirements at Peer Institutions

Peer institutions	Composition requirement In Core	Gen Ed writing intensive requirement and/or writing in major
<b>Westfield State</b>	1 (4 credit) ENGL 101 English Composition I	Officially none Departments were asked to create or assign a course in their major or require students take English 204; this is currently not a requirement.
<b>Bridgewater State</b>	2 (6 credits)	2 PLUS upper-level Writing Designated in the Major (CWRM) requirement. Plus spoken comm.
<b>Salem State</b>	1 (3 credits) ENL 110: Foundations of Writing	2 (one at 200/300 level that may or may not be in major and one at 400 level that must be in major)
<b>Fitchburg State</b>	2 (6 credits)	Critical and Creative Thinking across the Disciplines courses must have a particular skill designation which includes a W
<b>UMass Amherst</b>	1 (3 credits)	Junior year writing course in major
<b>UNH</b>	1 (3 credits)	3 WI A Writing Intensive (WI) Course in the Major A Writing Intensive (WI) Course at the 600 Level or Above A Writing Intensive (WI) Course (any other)

## Appendix G: General Education Area Descriptions and Learning Outcomes

### Westfield State Journey

**DESCRIPTION OF COURSES IN THIS COLUMN:** Through these courses students develop a foundation for academic, social, educational and personal success. Students acquire the skills and knowledge necessary to navigate academic inquiry and grow as healthy, self-aware, creative, curious and confident individuals. These courses include self-reflective practices as well as how to practice learning alongside an engaged community of learners.

### First Year Journey: Academic Inquiry

**DESCRIPTION OF COURSES IN THIS AREA:** Courses in this area expose students to an intellectual passion that they can get excited about. Students collaborate with their professor and peers to examine a particular specialization, creative interest, question or topic in depth and from multiple points of view in order to develop college-level academic skills. Students are supported as they develop the skills needed to engage deeply and critically with complex materials; to take risks; to grow as a leader and collaborator; to reflect on strengths, passions and goals; and to begin to develop a vision for their journey through Westfield State University.

#### BY THE END OF TAKING A COURSE IN THIS AREA:

- **Lifelong Learning:** Students practice skills and attitudes central to lifelong learning; including developing a growth mindset viewpoint that encompasses self-reflection, flexibility, intellectual curiosity, and considers broad perspectives and diversity of thought.
- **Reflective Discovery and Analysis of Information:** Students locate, generate, identify, interpret, and critically evaluate information, evidence, arguments and ideas, recognizing that authority is constructed and contextual. Students analyze their own and others' assumptions and incorporate reliable and valid information effectively and ethically for an intended purpose.
- **Developing a Sense of Place/Community:** Students collaborate with others in the Westfield community while exploring a new or existing intellectual passion.
- **Academic Life:** Students develop college-level academic skills and identify resources to support their practice of intellectual discovery and creative accomplishment that model multiple modes of representation, engagement, and action and expression.
- **University Life:** Students identify resources and develop skills to support their ability to navigate college life and exercise the personal initiative steps that will help them to persist to graduation. Change Correction made 9/15/23)

**OTHER NOTES ABOUT this area:** Possibly Required: ePortfolio. Recommended for inclusion are collaborative projects and Transparent Assignment Design

### Wellbeing: Caring for the Holistic Self

**DESCRIPTION OF COURSES IN THIS AREA:** This will be a 1.5 credit course that focuses on the body, mind and spirit. Courses in this area equip students with skills that foster wellbeing

and resilience, help students to react positively to life's challenges, and enhance mental, social, emotional, physical, and academic success. Courses include reflective, metacognitive, and kinesthetic practices that support physical, mental and/or social-emotional well-being; The skills learned will foster attitudes and behaviors that enhance confidence for life-long self-care, such as self-management, self-awareness, responsible decision-making, relationships skills, social awareness, and positive self-care. Courses will be anchored in active learning.

*Courses may address topics such as physical, mental and spiritual health, stress management, nutrition, human sexuality, identity, social relationships, relationships with the environment, fiscal literacy, and avenues for lifelong learning.*

#### **BY THE END OF TAKING A COURSE IN THIS AREA:**

- **Lifelong Learning:** Students practice skills and attitudes central to lifelong learning; including a growth mindset that encompasses self-reflection, flexibility, intellectual curiosity, and considers broad perspectives and diversity of thought.
- **Metacognitive Reflection and Application:** Students reflect on their own wellbeing in the context of the course topic and develop metacognitive reflection abilities that work to promote transfer of wellness behaviors and skills.
- ~~**Assessing Wellness Tools:** Students develop tools for improving their physical, social, and/or mental/emotional health and overall college experience.~~
- ~~**Social Emotional Skills:** Students identify personal social, emotional, and cognitive skills to be practiced and developed; including self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, responsible decision-making, relationship skills, and communication skills.~~
- **Assessing Wellness Tools:** Students develop tools for improving their physical, social, and/or mental/emotional health and overall college experience, including skills such as self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, responsible decision making, relationship skills, and communication skills. Change Correction made 9/15/23)

#### **OTHER NOTES ABOUT this area:**

Diverse cultural perspectives will be included in the offerings in this area.

Courses in this area are encouraged to include kinesthetic outcomes and or pedagogies. These should be identified if included. Kinesthetic and tactile requires physical and bodily movement and/or manipulation of objects/touch to learn

### **Integrative Experience**

(credits and learning outcomes determined by major)

**DESCRIPTION OF COURSES IN THIS AREA:** Students complete a course in or outside of their major where they have a structured opportunity to reflect on what they learned in general education courses and consciously integrate and apply that learning within the context of their major. By completing an integrative experience, students will have the opportunity to address the question, "What has my learning in the General Education Curriculum contributed to my education and how is that learning related to my major and other learning experiences?"

#### **OTHER NOTES ABOUT this area:**

*\*This can be part of an existing course or a new stand-alone major course.*



*\* Liberal Studies students will be permitted to take an integrative experience within one of their concentrations or prepare an artifact addressing this question and submit it to the Program Area Chair of Liberal Studies for approval.*

As a general education requirement, this will appear on students' degree audit.

Departments will submit a major course or courses to satisfy this area (minimum of 1 credit). It is expected the course will also fulfill a major requirement.

## Analysis, Practice, and Inquiry

**DESCRIPTION OF COURSES INCLUDED IN THIS COLUMN:** By taking courses in this area students learn to explore specific approaches to critical and creative thinking. They use varied tools and methodologies as ways of knowing, evaluate sources of information to draw conclusions and communicate effectively, and engage in arts practice.

## Rhetoric and Inquiry

**DESCRIPTION OF COURSES IN THIS AREA:** This area introduces students to writing as a process-based approach to producing texts for different rhetorical occasions that emerge in academic and public contexts. Students learn to situate an original argument within the framework of other speakers, practice critical inquiry, and understand conventions associated with a range of genres. A major goal of this area is to help students understand how their prior writing knowledge informs their work and how to transfer the writing knowledge and skills they've learned to future writing projects.

### BY THE END OF TAKING A COURSE IN THIS AREA:

- **Writing Process:** Students ~~learn and~~ practice the various stages of the writing process, including brainstorming prewriting; posing effective research questions; researching; drafting; providing, receiving, and implementing feedback; enacting substantial revision; editing; and proofreading. Change Correction made 9/15/23)
- 
- **Rhetorical Occasion:** Students develop an understanding of rhetorical occasions both as readers and creators of texts and practice composing for a variety of purposes, in a variety of genres and modes, while appealing to a variety of audiences.
- **Metacognitive Reflection:** Students develop metacognitive reflection abilities that work to promote transfer of writing knowledge, skills, and the process of producing and accessing information.
- **Reflective Discovery and Analysis of Information:** Students locate, generate, identify, interpret, and critically evaluate information, evidence, arguments and ideas, recognizing that authority is constructed and contextual. Students analyze their own and others' assumptions and incorporate reliable and valid information effectively and ethically for an intended purpose.

**OTHER NOTES ABOUT this area:** Possibly Required: ePortfolio

## Inquiry into Patterns, Data and Reasoning

**DESCRIPTION OF COURSES IN THIS AREA:** Students will discover how and why logical, mathematical, and computational ideas, concepts, and reasoning empower them to use and understand pattern, structure, data, shape and form in the world around us.

**BY THE END OF TAKING A COURSE IN THIS AREA:**

- ~~Reflective Discovery and Analysis of Information:~~ Students locate, generate, identify, interpret, and critically evaluate information, evidence, arguments and ideas, recognizing that authority is constructed and contextual. Students analyze their own and others' assumptions and incorporate reliable and valid information effectively and ethically for an intended purpose. (Delete! Correction made 9/13/23)
- **Active Sense-Making:** Students (a) demonstrate the mathematical skills and abilities to solve problems, collect and analyze data, model, compute, reason, and (b) explain why the tools, methods and ways of thinking they use make sense.
- **Critical Thinking:** *Students identify problems, questions and beliefs; create and gather relevant information, data and evidence; use inquiry, observation and innovation to generate solutions, arguments and explanations which provide meaningful conclusions, decisions and evaluations which are based on logical, causal, inferential or other appropriate forms of reasoning.* (Keep! Correction made 9/13/23)
- **Mathematical Structures:** Students (a) use mathematical methods of inquiry and analysis; (b) structure logical, mathematical, and/or computational arguments and proofs; and, (c) build, test, and evaluate mathematical models.
- **Perceptions:** Students reflect on mathematics' role in society, its place in their educational programs and its potential to provide them with access and agency in their personal, professional, financial, creative and/or civic lives.
- **Communication:** *Students disseminate knowledge and share results using effective and appropriate communication, technical, qualitative, and quantitative skills.* (ADD! CORRECTION IN RED MADE IN UCC S23 – order of LO was also changed Sept 14, 2023)

## Creative Arts Practice

**DESCRIPTION OF COURSES IN THIS AREA:** Students will engage in the arts and the practice of creative arts with the goals of understanding the discipline, developing their unique voice, and becoming active citizens of the arts community on campus and beyond. Through course selection students will have the opportunity to select from the many ways to participate in an artistic experience.

### BY THE END OF TAKING A COURSE IN THIS AREA:

- ~~**Creativity:** Students demonstrate innovative thought, and imagine new or alternative concepts and expressions in original ways.~~
- **Creativity and Grappling with Complexity:** Students demonstrate innovative thought, and imagine new or alternative concepts and expressions in original ways. They pose questions, pursue answers, and persist through ambiguity about the multiple dimensions of a complex problem. (Change Correction made 9/15/23)
- **Engagement:** Students engage in arts or creative practice, drawing on models from the discipline and/or historical and genre contexts.
- **Critique:** Students critically evaluate artistic and creative expressions, learn to look with attention to study the connections between the creative process and the creation of a piece of artwork, and learn to professionally give and receive feedback.
- **Artistic Process:** Students practice the technical skill, process, and improvement involved in the generation of creative work.
- **Creative Expression:** Students engage with others in the arts/creative expression through group endeavors, audience participation, public presentations and/or exchange of feedback on work in development.

**OTHER NOTES ABOUT this area:** Possibly Required: ePortfolio, Additional Suggestions: Collaborative Projects, Undergraduate Research/Public Performance

## Inquiry into the Natural Sciences

**DESCRIPTION OF COURSES IN THIS AREA:** Students will explore scientific inquiry as a way of knowing the natural world, which includes physics, biology, chemistry, ecology, geology, **astronomy**, and their interrelationships. (Change Correction made 6/1/23)

### BY THE END OF TAKING A COURSE IN THIS AREA:

- **Process of Science:** Students use the methods employed by scientists to explore natural phenomena. They make observations, develop hypotheses, propose experiments, measure and collect data, and evaluate evidence.
- **Disciplinary Concepts:** Students describe the major concepts, methods, and theories of the discipline, make connections among concepts, and use disciplinary concepts and models to explain natural phenomena.
- **Roles of Science in Society:** Students examine the potential contributions and limits of scientific endeavors in human society, critique science-related content in popular discourse and daily life, and evaluate the influence of society on science.
- **Reflective Discovery and Analysis of Information:** Students locate, generate, identify, interpret, and critically evaluate information, evidence, arguments and ideas, recognizing that authority is constructed and contextual. Students analyze their own and others' assumptions and incorporate reliable and valid information effectively and ethically for an intended purpose.

- **Communication:** Students disseminate knowledge and share results using effective and appropriate communication, technical, qualitative, and quantitative skills.

**OTHER NOTES ABOUT this area:**

A lab/field/simulation experience is required, and course-based undergraduate research experiences are encouraged.

## Advanced Rhetoric and Inquiry

(credits and learning outcomes determined by major)

**DESCRIPTION OF COURSES IN THIS AREA:** Students complete a course in or outside of their major that promotes critical inquiry that builds upon the process-based, rhetorically-grounded foundation of *Rhetoric and Inquiry* and that further develops students' abilities to write and read non-fiction texts. Students learn strategies to locate, analyze, synthesize and generate research in rhetorically effective, genre- or discipline-specific ways.

**OTHER NOTES ABOUT this area:**

\*This can be part of an existing course in the major that provides writing instruction or a course such as the current ENGL 204: Composition II

As a general education requirement, this will appear on students' degree audit.

Departments will submit a major course or courses to satisfy this area. It is expected the course will also fulfill a major requirement. If a department does not offer such a course its students can complete ENGL 204: Composition II to fulfill the requirement.

## Complex Problems

**DESCRIPTION OF COURSES IN THIS COLUMN:** These courses build on the skills and ways of knowing introduced in the *First Year Journey*. Students explore and tackle complex, authentic problems drawing on diverse perspectives and theories, modes of inquiry, and domains of knowledge. Students acquire the ability to describe the multiple dimensions of a complex problem and to pose fruitful questions. In the pursuit of answers, they critically evaluate sources of information and apply logical reasoning, critical thinking, and appropriate methodology to draw conclusions. **These courses focus on process and are writing and/or speaking and information literacy infused.**

**BY THE END OF TAKING A COURSE IN THIS AREA:**

- **Critical Thinking:** Students identify problems, questions and beliefs; create and gather relevant information, data and evidence; use inquiry, observation and innovation to generate solutions, arguments and explanations which provide meaningful conclusions, decisions and evaluations which are based on logical, causal, inferential or other appropriate forms of reasoning.
- **Reflective Discovery and Analysis of Information:** Students locate, generate, identify, interpret, and critically evaluate information, evidence, arguments and ideas, recognizing that authority is constructed and contextual. Students analyze their own and others'

assumptions and incorporate reliable and valid information effectively and ethically for an intended purpose.

- **Communication:** Students develop and apply skills for communicating effectively in order to disseminate knowledge, reach a broader audience, and foster understanding across people and cultures.
- ~~**Creativity:** Students demonstrate innovative thought, and imagine new or alternative concepts and expressions in original ways~~
- ~~**Grappling with Complexity:** Students pose questions, pursue answers, and persist through ambiguity about the multiple dimensions of a complex problem.~~
- **Creativity and Grappling with Complexity:** Students demonstrate innovative thought, and imagine new or alternative concepts and expressions in original ways. They pose questions, pursue answers, and persist through ambiguity about the multiple dimensions of a complex problem.
- **Writing Process:** Students learn and practice the various stages of the writing process, including brainstorming prewriting; posing effective research questions; researching; drafting; providing, receiving, and implementing feedback; enacting substantial revision; editing; and proofreading. (Change Correction made 9/15/23)
- 

## **Complex Problems Anchored in Mathematics, Computing, and Natural Sciences**

- **Discipline Exploration:** Students utilize the practices of different disciplines and integrate knowledge and apply this knowledge across disciplinary boundaries, with a disciplinary center or focus from the field of Mathematics, Computing or Natural Sciences.

## **Complex Problems Anchored in Arts and Humanities**

- **Discipline Exploration:** Students utilize the practices of different disciplines and integrate knowledge and apply this knowledge across disciplinary boundaries, with a disciplinary center or focus from the Arts or Humanities.

## **Complex Problems Anchored in the Social and Health Sciences**

- **Discipline Exploration:** Students utilize the practices of different disciplines and integrate knowledge and apply this knowledge across disciplinary boundaries, with a disciplinary center or focus from the Social or Health Sciences.

**OTHER NOTES ABOUT this area:** Possibly Required: ePortfolio, Additional Suggestions: Collaborative Projects, Undergraduate Research, Transparent Assignment Design

## **Perspectives**

**DESCRIPTION OF COURSES IN THIS COLUMN:** In these courses students develop cultural humility and an understanding of civic democracy in order to effectively collaborate, communicate, and participate within and across diverse local and global communities. Students

acquire skills to critically analyze social structures and contrasting viewpoints, explore how to act and communicate as conscientious, ethical, and responsible community members who are concerned about social justice, and care for others and the environment.

## Individuals in Context

**DESCRIPTION OF COURSES IN THIS AREA:** Courses in this area help students to acquire a broad understanding of the social, environmental, and historical influences that shape us as individuals and affect how we interact with other persons and groups.

### BY THE END OF TAKING A COURSE IN THIS AREA:

- **Culture and Diversity:** Students critically analyze how different cultural, intellectual, economic, and/or aesthetic frameworks shape individuals and societies and create power structures and inequalities.
- **Global Learning:** Students critically analyze contrasting viewpoints on people, societies, aesthetics, environments, historical periods, and cultures through engagement with diverse stories, issues, and perspectives that transcend cultures and national borders.
- **Reflective Discovery and Analysis of Information:** Students locate, generate, identify, interpret, and critically evaluate information, evidence, arguments and ideas, recognizing that authority is constructed and contextual. Students analyze their own and others' assumptions and incorporate reliable and valid information effectively and ethically for an intended purpose.
- **Disciplinary Concepts:** Students describe the major concepts, language, and theories of a discipline, and use disciplinary concepts and models to explain human behavior

## Social Groups and Culture

**DESCRIPTION OF COURSES IN THIS AREA:** Students will acquire the skills necessary to critically analyze social structures and contrasting viewpoints on people, societies, aesthetics, environments, historical periods, and cultures.

### BY THE END OF TAKING A COURSE IN THIS AREA:

- **Culture and Diversity:** Students critically analyze how different cultural, intellectual, economic, and/or aesthetic frameworks shape individuals and societies, create power structures and inequalities, and offer opportunities for creative and cultural agency.
- **Global Learning:** Students critically analyze contrasting viewpoints on people, societies, aesthetics, environments, historical periods, and cultures through engagement with diverse stories, issues, and perspectives that transcend cultures and national borders.
- **Cultural Products and Social Structures:** Students critically analyze cultural products and social structures to question how values, concepts, norms, biases, forms of expression are created, made use of, and revised.
- **Group Identity:** Students identify, critically examine, and recognize the implications of their own and other groups' values, beliefs, norms, biases, narratives, and forms of representation.

- **Disciplinary Concepts:** Students describe the major concepts, language, and theories of a discipline, and use disciplinary concepts and models to explain human behavior
- **Using Sources Responsibly:** Students responsibly extrapolate from specific data sets, texts, projections, and documents to build a broader understanding about peoples, societies, aesthetics, environments, historical periods and/or cultures.

**OTHER NOTES ABOUT this area:**

Students understand how they fit in the local, nation and global community, and can use global perspectives on objects of study

## Civic Learning

**DESCRIPTION OF COURSES IN THIS AREA:** Provide civics education in order to promote civic service and civic knowledge—and to prepare students for the duties and responsibilities of citizenship.

**BY THE END OF TAKING A COURSE IN THIS AREA:**

- **Democratic Process:** Students develop the skills and knowledge necessary to engage meaningfully in the democratic process and to become informed and active society members, capable of working effectively with others to address local, national, and/or global issues, and capable of meaningful engagement in the democratic process.
- **Contextual Background:** Students develop a historical and contextual understanding of the United States, including its complex history and civic institutions.
- **Values of Citizenship:** Students develop a critical understanding of the social and political values associated with democratic and civic institutions
- **Civic Life:** Students understand the diverse ideologies (e.g., cultural, historical, economic, religious, sociological) that shape political systems and civic life.
- **Culture and Diversity:** Students critically analyze how different cultural, intellectual, economic, and/or aesthetic frameworks shape individuals and societies, create power structures and inequalities, and offer opportunities for creative and cultural agency.

**OTHER NOTES ABOUT this area:**

## Power and Perspectives

**DESCRIPTION OF COURSES IN THIS AREA:** Prepares students to critically analyze and engage in social justice issues. Prejudice reduction and collective action are emphasized.

**BY THE END OF TAKING A COURSE IN THIS AREA:**

- **Culture and Diversity:** Students critically analyze how different cultural, intellectual, economic, and/or aesthetic frameworks shape individuals and societies and create power structures and inequalities.

- **Global Learning:** Students critically analyze contrasting viewpoints on people, societies, aesthetics, environments, historical periods, and cultures through engagement with diverse stories, issues, and perspectives that transcend cultures and national borders.
- **Systemic Structures:** Students demonstrate a shared understanding of their role in relation to power structures such as institutional and systemic racism, sexism, ableism, heterosexism, classism, linguisticism, and ageism.
- **Systems of Oppression:** Students develop the ability to recognize and critique systems of oppression (i.e. racism, sexism, ableism, colonialism, prejudices, bias, stereotypes) and movements that challenge them, in historical and modern context, as well as in a national and transnational context.
- **Social Justice:** Students transfer knowledge and understanding into action, exploring how to meaningfully enact social change and social justice.

**OTHER NOTES ABOUT this area:**



## Appendix H: Preliminary Guidelines for General Education<sup>2</sup>

**PREREQUISITES:** With only 1 exception, general education courses will not have prerequisites. The exception is that *Complex Problems* courses will have the prerequisite of *First Year Journey*. The general education requirements for *Advanced Rhetoric and Inquiry* and *Integrative Experience* will be managed by major departments, and those departments can determine if they have prerequisites.

**MAJOR RESTRICTED:** General education courses will not be “major restricted.” Seats can be reserved for designated departments, but courses designated as general education should be open to all students, and appropriate for any student. The exception to this would be the major specific *Advanced Rhetoric and Inquiry* and *Integrative Experience* requirements which will be managed by major departments, and those departments can determine if there are major restrictions.

**FY JOURNEY OPEN TO ALL:** The purpose of the *First Year Journey* course is to intentionally integrate students into the campus community and connect students around an academic interest. Therefore, *First Year Journey* courses can not be exclusive to a department nor program.

**FY JOURNEY TAUGHT BY FULL-TIME:** The intention of the *First-Year Journey* is to ensure students new to the university have the opportunity to form a lasting relationship with a faculty member; therefore, *First Year Journey* courses will only be taught by full time faculty.

**DOUBLE-DIPPING:** General education courses cannot count in more than one area of the general education curriculum. General education courses can count toward major requirements as determined by major departments.

**TRANSFERRING COURSES:** Just as Department Chairs can approve major substitutions, the Program Area Chair of General Education and the Director of General Education will have the authority to substitute or “count” a course taken outside of WSU as an “area substitution.” Thus to count toward general education requirements a transfer course would not have to be “equivalent” as one offered here, it would only have to address the learning outcomes in the area.

---

<sup>2</sup> *These guidelines emerged from discussions with faculty, and were developed based on SCORE’s research and experience, but have not been vetted by the campus community. They are being included in this document to share the work that is progressing in this area and to get preliminary feedback.*

**COURSE EQUIVALENCIES:** The Program Area Chair of General Education and the Director of General Education will be responsible for maintaining General Education Course Equivalency lists with state institutions, and determining which courses can transfer in for General Education Credit. Department chairs will continue to determine course equivalencies, but where there are no direct equivalencies, the Director of General Education will review transfer courses to determine if they meet the learning outcomes for areas in the new general education model.

**ASSESSMENT OF GENERAL EDUCATION:** Ongoing coordination of assessment will be the responsibility of Director of General Education in collaboration with the Program Area Chair of General Education (see Guiding Principles on Assessment) based on the assessment practices developed by faculty at WSU.

**PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT:** The Director of General Education, Program Area Chair of General Education, and General Education Committee will be responsible for ongoing faculty professional development. There will not be “required” training for faculty who are teaching in Gen Ed, although opportunities for professional development will be available.

**COURSE CAPS:** In order to maintain the high-impact of a first year experience and first year seminar, recommended course caps are: First Year Journey (16); Rhetoric and Inquiry (16), Complex Problems (18), Advanced Rhetoric and Inquiry (16).

**SUNSETS:** Once courses are approved by governance as fulfilling general education requirements, SCORE will recommend a sunset, based on the determination of decisions made in conjunction with UCC.

**ASSIGNMENT OF FACULTY TO GEN ED COURSES:** Once approved by governance, courses designated as fulfilling requirements for general education can be staffed by faculty as determined by the chair of the department offering the course as long as the learning outcomes and assessment practices approved by governance are met.