

General Education Task Force

Purpose: Approximately one year ago the UVU Board of Trustees approved new Essential Learning Outcomes (ELOs) for the university. The new ELOs were developed through a year-long process that included input from faculty, staff, students, and administration. In anticipation that the last academic year would be dominated by COVID-19 concerns, the university did not initiate a review of general education to assess its alignment with state requirements, institutional priorities, and the new ELOs. At this time, we are creating a task force to study the issue and make recommendations. The focus of the task force will be a limited scope review of UVU's general education curriculum.

Context: Most of UVU's general education curriculum is set by state policy (R470). These include 30 credit hours of course and distribution requirements applicable to all USHE institutions. Individual universities may require additional hours (up to 9) of general education coursework. The task force will review the current general education requirements, above those required by the state, and make recommendations to the faculty and administration in response to key questions outlined below. The task force will also assess general education's alignment with institutional priorities and the new ELOs.

Goal: To ensure that UVU's general education curriculum meets the needs of UVU students and is consistent with UVU's mission as an open enrollment institution. The general education curriculum should prepare all students for success at UVU and provide opportunities to develop foundational skills will allow UVU graduates to achieve success in their lives and chosen career paths.

Administrative Commitment: Policy 605 outlines curriculum development at UVU and the roles of different stakeholders on campus regarding curriculum. Per policy 605, UVU faculty have "a central role in the design, approval, delivery, revision, periodic review, and deletion of curriculum" (section 4.1). This is consistent with NWCCU Standard 1.C.5, "The institution recognizes the central role of faculty to establish curricula." The office of the President and Provost acknowledge this and remain committed to and support the rights and responsibilities of faculty in this regard. While faculty have a central role in curriculum, there are other groups who play important roles and whose voice and input matters (policy 605 section 5.1.1). Our students, staff (advisors), and administrators have an important role in helping to shape the general education curriculum goals. We are committed to working together and recognize that faculty must take the lead in reviewing and making curricular changes, as necessary, to promote the best interest of our students. We also recognize that the Academic Affairs Council (AAC) is responsible for "evaluating the financial impact and program viability of curriculum proposals and existing curriculum" and ensuring that curriculum reflects "institutional strategic plans and missions" (policy 605 section 5.6.1).

Key Goals of the General Education Curriculum

1. It should provide baseline skills to enhance student success in any course of study.
2. It should be intentional and comprehensible: Students, Faculty and Staff should understand the purpose of the general education curriculum. The general education curriculum must not be seen simply as an arbitrary set of degree requirements that one must "get out of the way" to graduate.
3. It should prepare students to achieve success after graduation, whether that involves graduate and professional education, immediate entry into the workforce, or any other life/career path our students may choose.

4. The curriculum should prepare students with essential skills that employers repeatedly demand. At a minimum, these skills include written and oral communication, critical thinking, and quantitative literacy. It should also help to ensure that our students are prepared for the unique demands of 21st century careers, including such areas as digital and economic and financial literacy.
5. The curriculum should serve to broaden students' intellectual knowledge base.
6. At the foundation of a liberal democracy is an educated populace, the general education curriculum should help prepare students for effective engagement with the range of social, political, and ethical issues (from local to global) that they will encounter in their careers and as citizens.

Charge: To review the current general education curriculum considering the key components outlined above and to bring recommendations for review and approval.

Questions for the task force to consider:

1. Does the current general education curriculum meet our student's educational needs?
2. Does the curriculum help prepare student to address a wide range of social, political, and ethical issues that they may encounter in their personal and professional lives?
3. Is the general education curriculum effectively aligned with UVU's Essential Learning Outcomes?
4. Does the curriculum provide opportunities for students to develop crucial leadership skills?
5. Does the general education curriculum help prepare our students for the demands of the 21st century workforce?
6. What modifications, if any, does the committee believe would enhance the general education experience for our students?

Possible Options: Given the limited scope and timeline of this review, there are 4 possible options the committee may consider:

1. Maintain current requirements, with clear explanation of how this recommendation addresses the central questions outlined in this document.
2. Reduce general education credits to the state 30 hours minimum requirement and expand elective opportunities for all students. (no requirements beyond state minimum)
3. Maintain current general education hours but alter requirements to include different courses or potential course options within categories.
4. Provide a different proposal with a clear explanation of how it addresses the critical question.

Timeline: The target is to have any approved modifications implemented by Fall 2024. General target dates include:

Target	Date	Key Individuals
Establish and Charge Task Force	July 2022	Provost and Faculty Senate
General Communication to Faculty	July 2022	Trish Baker
Cabinet Discussion of GE	July 26	Vaught and Connelly
Cabinet Half Day Retreat	August 16	Vaught, Connelly
Presentation at Faculty Convocation	August 18	President and Provost
Presentation to Faculty Senate ExCo	August 23	Vaught

Kick off Retreat for Task force	August 26	Vaught, Connelly
Presentation to Faculty Senate	August 30	Vaught
Survey Students, Faculty, and Staff	August 30	Trish Baker
Weekly Friday meetings from 2-4pm	August-December	Connelly, Sharp, Baker, GETF
First Town Hall	September	GE Task force
Faculty Senate Update	September 27	Vaught, GE Task force
Faculty Senate Update	October 11	Vaught GE Task force
Second Town Hall	November	GE Task Force
Faculty Senate Update	November 22	Vaught GE task Force
Preliminary TF recommendations	December 9	GE Task Force
Presentation to Cabinet	December 12	GE Task Force
Presentation to Faculty Senate ExCo	January	GE Task Force
Presentation to Faculty Senate	January	GE Task Force
Third Town Hall	January	GE Task Force
Final Recommendations Prepared	February 17	GE Task Force
Presentation to Faculty Senate	February 21	Vaught GE Task Force
Presentation to Cabinet	February 27	Vaught GE Task Force
Review and Vote by Faculty senate	March (2 nd to last meeting)	GE Task Force
Prepare and Coordination as necessary	March -May	Provost Office
Paperwork	Summer 2023	Baker, Sharp
Curricular changes due	August 15	
Curricular Revision Implemented	Fall 2024	