TO: Faculty and Staff

FROM: Dennis L. Hefner  
Interim President  

SUBJECT: Current Status of General Education Program Recommendations

The General Education Committee met a little more than a week ago, and after considering the input provided during the campus forums, made one change to the proposal. As a result, the current status of the draft General Education program includes five changes that reduce our General Education program from 50 credits to 34 credits.

The five changes are:

1. **Writing Intensive and Speaking Intensive.** Move these two requirements out of the General Education program and make them campus Graduation Requirements to be completed within the major. Currently, most Writing Intensive and Speaking Intensive requirements are fulfilled within the major, so any disruption will be minimal. This recommendation reduces the size of the GE program by six credits, while still maintaining these two important requirements.

2. **American History and Western Civilization.** Combine these two separate History requirements into a single Historical Inquiry requirement. The 1999 SUNY Board of Trustees’ resolution required all SUNY GE programs to offer two separate courses, but four years ago this requirement was relaxed. This recommendation reduces the size of the current GE program by three credits, while still maintaining a Historical Inquiry requirement.

3. **Freshman Speaking.** Approximately half of current Freshman Speaking requirements for students are completed as a 1 credit add-on to a GE course. The recommendation is to expand this practice by listing Freshman Speaking as a 1 credit add-on to either a GE course or to any non-GE course that has received a Freshman Speaking designation. This recommendation reduces the size of the current GE program by two credits, while still maintaining a Freshman Speaking requirement.

4. **Freshman Critical Thinking.** Currently, a large proportion of Freshman Critical Thinking requirements are fulfilled by taking another GE course that simultaneously fulfills Freshman Critical Thinking. The recommendation is to make fulfillment of this requirement only through double-counting with appropriately designated GE courses. Please note this recommendation is a recent change by the GE Committee based upon input from the campus forums. The earlier recommendation had been to combine this requirement with the Philosophical Inquiry requirement. SUNY has agreed that this revised requirement will be counted as zero credits on
the SUNY electronic spreadsheet. As a result, this recommendation reduces our GE program by three credits, while maintaining a Critical Thinking requirement.

5. **Physical Education/Health and Wellness.** The recommendation is to eliminate this requirement from the General Education program. The committee has no recommendation beyond elimination from General Education, but I would suggest that the Faculty Senate consider amending campus policy to allow students the option of applying a maximum of two PE/H&W credits towards fulfillment of their baccalaureate graduation requirement. This recommendation reduces our GE program by two credits.

These five changes, which maintain coverage of all six of the current skills requirements and provide coverage of 9 of the 11 content areas (Historical Inquiry substituted for American History and Western Civilization, PE/H&W eliminated), result in a GE program that SUNY will list as 34 credits.

Attached is a summary list of the current 50 credit GE program and the proposed 34 credit GE program. Additionally, a description of how the revised GE program would be implemented has been prepared by Academic Affairs and is attached for your review.

I want to thank the General Education Committee members for their hard work. Within the next 10 days, the General Education Committee will have a meeting with Provost Madden, who then will be forwarding the final proposal to the Faculty Senate for their advice and counsel.

Attachments: General Education Program Comparison
Implementation of General Education