University System of Georgia
Redesigning General Education

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Redesigning General Education Committee

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General Education “is over 100 years old, but over those hundred years it has changed, morphed and redefined to the point that it is not clear what it means – or more accurately, it means something different to every institution and educator since it is adapted to every need, set of resources and philosophy.”

Issues with General Education

• Existing requirements:
  • Are dated, incoherent, and inflexible.
  • Do not recognize different institutional missions.
  • Devalue experiential learning.

• There are too many requirements.

• “One Size Fits All” does not work for everyone.

• We have lost a sense of “why” for existing requirements.
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Working Group Input

Stakeholder Engagement:

- Working Group Brainstorming
- 152 responses from USG faculty
- Working Group Response Collation
- RACAA RACSA Meeting Discussion

Other Input:
COLLEGE 2025
LEAP REPORT
Redesigning General Education
Some personal suggestions of what could be done with Gen Ed

Streamline to a genuine core:
Eliminate Areas B and F from General Education. The courses currently in these areas should be considered university-specific requirements. There need be no USG oversight of these courses or guarantee of transferability.

Acknowledge that Transfer Requirements Should be Asymmetrical:
Universities, respecting their missions, should be free to develop a set of general education requirements that apply to their students only. Eventually these may transcend the course-based restrictions of the USG core and become LEAP-certified.

Loosen Regulations to Permit Pursuit of Educational Breadth:
Courses that satisfy pathways other than first major (minors, certificates, second majors, etc.) and that also are approved for general education credit may be double-counted for both purposes.

Respect the Value of 21st Century Skills as Legitimate General Education Objectives:
USG should incorporate the principles of LEAP and of whole-person development into its principles of what courses and learning objectives do and do not count as general education.
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Suggested Design Criteria

- Limit requirements to a minimum – SACSCOC requires 30 units.
- General Education should be relevant to the student.
- Provide flexibility in the way so that requirements are satisfied, with the hope that students will use newly-available time to enhance their education.
- Required courses should have coherence and not be an obstacle to graduation.
- Requirements should be assessed with clear outcomes. Go beyond courses and credits as a metric of performance – focus on outcomes and competencies.
- Reduce bureaucracy.
- Consider the different missions of the various institutions.
- Let decisions be data driven, based on actual data of the various institutions.
- Let whole person education, T-shaped students and lifelong education be fundamental goals.
- Be consistent with the minimal SACSCOC guidelines.
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Working Group Summary

General Education should:

• Serve as a **broad and rigorous foundation** that prepares students to be adaptable and innovative in future coursework, scholarly endeavors and/or career.

• Teach students **how to learn**, not only about knowledge for work but also knowledge for understanding the sociological and psychological demands of the 21st century.

• Prepare students to be **engaged and informed global citizens** who are critical thinkers, problem solvers, and effective communicators.

• Help students find their place and passion with coursework that is **timely, relevant, and interesting**.

• Cultivate an appreciation of and ability to work with diverse populations in an ethical and positive manner.

• Remove barriers and contain **coherent, flexible, and purposeful pathways** to advancing course work.
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Draft General Education Principles from the Group

**Well-Rounded**
Equate students on a core body of knowledge enabling them to be well informed in their discipline and develop competencies for success.

**For All Settings**
Expose students to diverse skill sets, ways of knowing and learning perspectives, preparing them for a lifetime of learning.

**Connections/Coherence**
Inspire students to learn by exploring their passion and purposes and to make connections between a coherent body of knowledge in the core, their chosen professions, and information they may need to know.

**21st Century Skills**
General education should encourage inquisitiveness, self-motivation and critical thinking, and should develop 21st century skills such as data and technology literacy, and working in diverse multi-disciplinary teams.
Redesigning General Education
Draft General Education Principles from the Group

**Workplace/Society/World**
Prepare students to thrive in the workplace, society, and the world.

Prepare students for future employability by providing a broad base of knowledge and skills to succeed in the workforce.

Prepare students to be intellectually-engaged productive citizens, strongly grounded in American history and government, while participating in a diverse and complex global economy.

Teach students to communicate their ideas in a manner that is respectful of civil discourse and diverse perspectives, and to demonstrate those skills in team settings through verbal, written, digital, and multi-modal communication.

**Process**
General education should provide a flexible platform for student success by providing engaging, high quality courses that maintain consistent rigor and facilitate seamless institutional transfer.