

DRAFT Structure and Curriculum Mapping Subcommittee Report DRAFT

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Subcommittee Membership:

Alycia Hund, Psychology (Chair, Council for General Education)
Krista Jackson, Registrar's Office (Illinois Articulation Initiative coordinator)
Sally Parry (Co-chair), CAS (Director of General Education)
Jonathan Rosenthal, EMAS (Past Director of General Education)
Paul Walker, Agriculture (Member of original General Education Pilot Implementation Committee)
Wendi Whitman (Co-chair), University College (Planning for demand and student flow)

I. Program Structure

Guiding Questions:

The Subcommittee on Structure and Curriculum Mapping met regularly throughout fall 2011 to address Provost Everts' charge. The committee first discussed key questions relating to program structure:

“Is the structure of the current general education program (distribution of courses across the three cores) functioning well? That is, does the current structure best meet the needs of students today? Would the current curriculum structure adequately lead students to any newly revised general education goals and outcomes? Would it contribute to a newly articulated vision for the program? If not, how should the general education program be restructured?”

Observations and Process:

Illinois State's General Education program was originally designed with a three-tier structure enforced by course prerequisites. From the outset, because of available instructional resources and other logistical issues, compromises on that structure had to be made to ensure that students had full schedules of meaningful coursework. This meant that new freshmen would frequently take middle- and selected outer-core courses in their first semester.

Studies of grades given in representative General Education classes indicate that students who did not have the prerequisites initially required by the program received, on average, grades equal to students who had the prerequisites. This fact led the subcommittee to the conclusion that a simplification of the General Education structure was warranted.

The subcommittee compared Illinois State's General Education program to the Illinois Articulation Initiative (IAI) "General Education Common Core," (GECC), a statewide transferrable Gen Ed program. Removing the prerequisite structure from Illinois State's General Education program allowed it to be mapped with few exceptions directly onto the IAI GECC, as indicated in Table 1 below. GECC was selected as a comparator since transfer students represent almost half of undergraduate degree recipients at Illinois State, and many transfer students use Illinois State's General Education coursework to complete GECC after transfer.

In both programs, there are basic “literacy courses” in composition, oral communication, and mathematics with distribution requirements in the three traditional areas: Humanities and Fine Arts, Social Sciences, and Sciences.

**Table 1
Comparison of General Education with IAI GECC**

General Education			IAI	
Course	Level	Hours	Category	Hours
IC-ENG	IC	3 hrs	Writing Course 1	1 course, 3 hours
IC-COM	IC	3 hrs	Oral Communication	1 course, 3 hours
IC-M	IC	3 hrs	Mathematics	1 course, 3 hours
IC-NS or NSA	IC	3 hrs	Physical Sciences and Life Sciences	2 courses 7 hours
IC-NS or NSA	IC	3 hrs	Physical Sciences and Life Sciences	2 courses 7 hours
MC-UST	MC	3 hrs	Social and Behavioral Science	3 courses, 9 hours
MC-ICL	MC	3 hrs	Social and Behavioral Science	3 courses, 9 hours
MC-IS	MC	3 hrs	-	
MC-LH	MC	3 hrs	Humanities and Fine Arts	3 courses, 9 hours
MC-QR	MC	3 hrs	-	
OC-SS	OC	3 hrs	Social and Behavioral Science	3 courses, 9 hours
OC-H	OC	3 hrs	Humanities and Fine Arts	3 courses, 9 hours
OC-FA	OC	3 hrs	Humanities and Fine Arts	3 courses, 9 hours
OC-SMT	OC	3 hrs	-	
-			Writing Course 2	1 course, 3 hours
14 courses, 42 hours*				12 courses, 37 hours

*The vast majority of students have an exemption from one course based on their major.

Notable differences between Gen Ed and IAI GECC are:

- Gen Ed requires two math courses and one composition course, while IAI GECC requires two composition courses and one math course.
- Gen Ed requires one additional course (2 additional hours) in the sciences beyond IAI GECC.
- Gen Ed as currently structured requires one additional course in the social sciences beyond IAI GECC.

On the last difference, the subcommittee noted that freshmen are very frequently placed in Middle Core Individuals and Society (MC-IS) and Outer Core Social Science (OC-SS). Psychology 110, not originally intended to be part of General Education, accounts for the great majority of seats in MC-IS (75% of all MC-IS seats in fall of 2011).

Recommendations to the Provost:

The subcommittee's analysis leads to the conclusion that Illinois State's General Education structure can be simplified from three "cores" to two tiers, maintaining a set of courses that are particularly suited to first-year students—an important "signature" of Illinois State's original approach to General Education and sound pedagogical practice. First-year courses/categories would include the following (core designations would be dropped): Composition as Critical Inquiry (ENG 101), Communication as Critical Inquiry (COM 110), Inner Core Mathematics, Inner Core Natural Science (two courses required), Middle Core United States Traditions, Middle Core Individuals and Civic Life, and selected courses from Humanities and Fine Arts. In practice, these changes have already been implemented for logistical reasons (instructional staffing and student scheduling) with little effect on student achievement, at least as measured by grades. Remaining courses/ categories would have prerequisites as appropriate and might be taken later in a student's academic career.

Additionally, the subcommittee recommends that MC-IS and OC-SS be merged into a single category, reducing the total number of hours required in General Education by three. This brings parity to the distributional requirements in the program: Three science courses, three humanities/fine arts courses and three social science courses (as opposed to the current four). The fact that many social science courses are taught in relatively large lecture format would mitigate staffing dislocations to some extent. An issue that needs further investigation and thought is the extent to which Middle Core United States Traditions might fit either into social science or humanities categories.

The absence of a second writing course is perceived by many as a lacuna in the current program. The committee recommends that (beyond the current Middle Core Language in the Humanities, a "writing-intensive" course) additional coursework be required in the major that would meet criteria to be determined to improve student writing. Such suggestions are under consideration by the Writing Across the Curriculum subcommittee.

The Middle Core Quantitative Reasoning category is part of the major requirements of a great number of programs. The committee recommends that it continue in its current form with the addition of a "financial literacy" option that is increasingly part of General Education programs on many other campuses. Both the Department of Economics and College of Business have expressed interest in offering such a course. (LAN 115 would continue to be substituted for MC-QR for BA degree candidates.)

At least one Humanities and one Fine Arts course would continue to be required in the revised structure. This is consistent with the current program as well as IAI GECC.

The subcommittee's recommendations will require considerable discussion with colleges, departments and schools to ensure that appropriate prerequisites / levels are established for courses under the revised structure. The subcommittee does not recommend that any course be disestablished as part of the new structure, although some may no longer have as robust enrollment and some may require some reworking. The subcommittee also recommends that courses currently offered for IAI GECC credit be considered for General Education credit in addition to other suitable courses that may be proposed

by departments and schools. Proposals for new, modified, or reclassified courses would be handled through the current Council for General Education process (<http://gened.illinoisstate.edu/council/>).

The current global studies requirement, a graduation requirement that is most frequently satisfied through a General Education course, is, in fact, a non-Western studies requirement. It should either be renamed or broadened in scope to match its current name. There is broad agreement in the subcommittee and the task force as a whole that we need to find ways to meaningfully increase intercultural competencies and knowledge of non-US cultures in our graduates.

Finally, the subcommittee recommends that an ongoing program of faculty development be established to maintain the integrity of the General Education program over time.

The revised structure is summarized in Table 2 and in a more fully annotated format in Table 2a.

**Table 2
Current General Education and Proposed Program Structures Compared**

Current General Education Structure Distributed over Three Cores (14 courses)		
<u>Inner Core</u>	<u>Middle Core</u>	<u>Outer Core</u>
English 101	United States Traditions	Sciences, Math, and Technology
Communication 110	Individuals in Civic Life	Social Sciences
Math	Individuals and Societies	Fine Arts
Natural Science or NS Alternative	Language in the Humanities	Humanities
Natural Science or NS Alternative	Quantitative Reasoning	

Proposed Two-Tier Structure (13 courses)	
<u>First Year – Core</u>	<u>Additional Courses that may require prerequisite</u>
English 101	Language in the Humanities
Communication 110	Humanities and Fine Arts (adapted from current)
Math	Quantitative Reasoning
Natural Science or NS Alternative	Science, Math and Technology
Natural Science or NS Alternative	OC-SS and MC-IS Combined Category
United State Traditions	
Individuals and Civic Life	
Humanities and Fine Arts (adapted from current)	

Table 2a
Proposal for Revised General Education Structure

Current GE Category	Proposed Simplified Structure	Notes	Prerequisite
IC-ENG	Comp. as Cr. Inq.		-
IC-COM	Com. as Cr. Inq.		-
IC-M	Math		COMPASS placement
IC-NS or NSA	Science		-
IC-NS or NSA	Science		-
MC-UST	Social Science	(1)	-
MC-ICL	Social Science	(1)	-
OC-FA	Humanities/FA	(5, 6)	-
MC-LH	Humanities/FA	(2, 6, 9)	ENG 101
MC-QR	Quantitative Reasoning	(3)	Math 1
OC-SS	Social Science	(1, 4)	various
OC-H	Humanities/FA	(2, 5, 6)	various
OC-SMT	Science		various
MC-IS	-		-
Global Studies requirement		(8)	

Courses in Red=The ISU First- Year Core

(1) Part of 3-course social science requirement with one course from current MC-UST and one from MC-UST required. Merges MC-IS and OC-SS into a single category.

(2) Category could also include ENG 145 and ENG 145.13

(3) Category could be broadened to include financial/economic literacy

(4) This is a combination of MC-IS and OC-SS. Some courses (eg. PSY 110) will not have prerequisites and will be available to first-semester students.

(5) Will require evaluation of which current courses are appropriate for—or could be modified for—first-semester students.

(6) At least one Humanities and one Fine Arts course will be required.

(7) Retain the current category exemptions by major. New structure will require dep't review for some.

(8) Consider broadening "global studies" graduation requirement definition beyond non-Western. Could also be satisfied by study abroad rather than a course.

(9) Consider requiring a writing-in-the-discipline requirement for graduation.

II. Curriculum Mapping

Guiding Questions:

“Do the general education courses offered in support of the last revision of the general education program best meet student needs today? Would they adequately lead students to any newly revised general education goals and outcomes? Would they contribute to a newly articulated vision for the program? If not, what courses need to be added, deleted, revised? Specifically, what courses will contribute to each goal and outcome of the revised program?”

Observations and Process:

Based on our knowledge of curriculum in the current General Education program, the committee mapped the proposed program goals and outcomes on the course categories as they are proposed in the revised program structure. That map is included as Table 3 with goals enumerated in Table 4.

The subcommittee notes that the LEAP goals adapted for our General Education program were drafted through the AAC&U process as the basis for measuring outcomes of a four-year undergraduate education, not a General Education program alone. That said, the goals are pertinent and outcomes are generally measurable. This subcommittee realizes the challenges faced by the Assessment Subcommittee and appreciates the fact that program assessment will have to be selective and spread over multiple years.

Table 3
Curriculum Map

Proposed Simplified Structure	Outcome mapping
Comp. as Cr. Inq.	II a, b, c, f; III (c), d; IV a, c
Com. as Cr. Inq.	II a, b, d, f; III a, (c); IV a, b, c
Math	I b; II a, e; III d
Science	I a, b, c; II e; (III c; IV a, c)
Science	I a, b, c; II e; (III c; IV a, c)
Social Science	I a, d; II a, c, f; III a; IV b
Social Science	I a, e; II a, f; III a, c, d; IV b
Humanities/FA	I a, e; II a, b, c; III b, d; IV b
Humanities/FA	I a, d, e; II a, b, c, f; III b, c, d; IV c
Quantitative Reasoning	I b; II a, e; III d; IV a, b; For BA only: I a, e; II c, d; III b; IV b, c
Social Science	I a, d; II a, f; III a, c, d; IV (a), b
Humanities/FA	I a, e; II a, b, (c, d), f; III (b), c, d; IV b, (c)
Science	I a, b, c; II a, e, f; III c, d; IV a, b, (c)
Global Studies requirement	I a, e; II a; III b, d; IV b
Co-curriculum	III a, b, d; IV a, b, c

Goals in parentheses are secondary and may not be addressed in all courses.

Table 4
Program Goals and Outcomes

Upon the successful completion of the General Education Program, students will have gained:

I. knowledge of diverse human cultures and the physical and natural world, allowing them to

- a. engage with some of the big ideas, both contemporary and enduring, that shape our understanding of diverse cultures and the physical and natural world (*no rubric; ISU 1, 10, 11*)
- b. describe principal scientific and mathematical concepts used to understand the natural world and the technologies that modify it (ISU)
- c. illustrate the relevance of science and technology to problems connected with the quality of life for individuals and communities (ISU)
- d. identify and critically reflect upon the major institutions, movements, ideas and values that characterize the past and present culture within the United States and other world cultures (ISU)
- e. recognize and describe cross-cultural issues, including human nature, human rights, gender race and religion globally (ISU)

II. intellectual and practical skills, allowing them to

- a. explore issues, events, or works; extract, analyze, and synthesize arguments to make informed judgments (*critical thinking*)
- b. think and react in imaginative ways that involve innovation, divergent thinking, and risk-taking (*creative thinking; ISU6*)
- c. read critically and write appropriately and well in a variety of genres, contexts, and disciplines (*written communication; ISU2*)
- d. prepare purposeful presentations designed to increase knowledge, foster understanding, or promote change in listener's attitudes, values, beliefs, or behaviors (*oral communication; ISU2, 4*)
- e. competently and comfortably work with numerical data to solve authentic problems and create sophisticated arguments supported by quantitative evidence (*quantitative literacy; ISU2*)
- f. recognize the need for information, then identify, locate, evaluate, use, and share information effectively and responsibly (*information fluency*)

III. personal and social responsibility, allowing them to

- a. participate in activities that are both individually life-enriching and socially beneficial to a diverse community (*civic knowledge and engagement; ISU7*)
- b. interact appropriately in a variety of cultural contexts (*intercultural knowledge*)
- c. describe and analyze positions on ethical issues and practice ethical decision-making skills (*ethical reasoning; ISU 5*)
- d. demonstrate the curiosity, initiative, independence, ability to transfer knowledge, and ability to think reflectively that provide the foundation for life-long learning (foundations & skills for life-long learning; *ISU3, 8,9,12*)

IV. integrative and applied learning, allowing them to

- a. design, evaluate, and implement strategies to answer open-ended questions or achieve desired goals (*problem solving*)
- b. make connections among ideas and experiences, synthesize ideas and experiences, and transfer learning to new situations within and beyond the campus (*integrative learning; ISU3, 8, 9, 12*)
- c. work effectively in teams by contributing effectively to the work of the team and interacting effectively with members of the team (*team work*)

III. Resources consulted:

- [Provost's Charge](#)
- [Gen Ed Context - PowerPoint \(first meeting\)](#)
- [Task Force Assignment](#)

ISU Resources

- [Educating Illinois](#)
- [General Education Program](#)
- [Approved Illinois Articulation Initiative \(IAI\) Courses](#)

State of Illinois Resources

- [Illinois Articulation Initiative \(IAI\)](#)
- [Illinois Public Agenda for College and Career Success](#)
- [Complete College America \(Illinois is a signatory\)](#)
- [Illinois K-12 standards \(what we might expect as preparation\)](#)

Gen Ed Resources

- [AAC&U Resources for General Education](#)
- [Liberal Education and America's Promise \(LEAP\) Essential Learning Outcomes](#)
- [General Education Profiles of Other Colleges and Universities](#)
- [General Education](#)