

Progress Report to Senate: General Education Implementation Committee

- **Committee Members** (as of April 2014):
 - Tom Burkholder, Chemistry
 - Mark Jackson, Biology
 - Stephen Cohen, English
 - Sally Lesik, Math
 - Peter Morano, Physical Education Human Performance
 - James Mulrooney, Biomolecular Sciences
 - Christopher Pudlinski, Communication
 - Brad Waite, Psychological Science
 - Beth Merenstein, Sociology (Chair)
- **Time Frame:**
 - We have been meeting on a regular (average every 3 weeks) basis beginning in May 2013.
 - We expect to hold 3 meetings this summer
 - Plan for final report to Curriculum Committee and Senate by September/October 2014
 - Hold open forums for campus input in September and October 2014

Mission Statement: In conjunction with the depth of knowledge students receive from their chosen major, a university education offers breadth of knowledge and skills to be "broadly educated, culturally and globally aware students who will contribute meaningfully to their communities as engaged professionals and citizens."¹ In completing the general education portion of this undergraduate program, students will be able to:

- Think critically and logically, as well as demonstrate information literacy
 - Because individuals should be able to distinguish between the myriad of conflicting sources of information in the world around them, and be able to articulate their own well-reasoned thoughts and opinions.
- Communicate effectively
 - Because expression of ideas in writing and other media is necessary in both business and social settings.
- Use the skills necessary for quantitative and scientific reasoning and analysis
 - Because individuals need to have comfort with quantitative and scientific data and problems from a variety of real-life contexts.
- Understand historical, natural, and social scientific phenomena
 - Because individuals need to see themselves as members of a world community, with the ability to impact and alter this community.
- Understand and appreciate aesthetic dimensions

¹ CCSU Vision Statement

- Because individuals need to be familiar with the diverse forms of aesthetic expression that can encourage creativity, self-expression, and a critical reflection of ours, and other, cultures.
- Understand and appreciate ethical dimensions
 - Because individuals should be able to recognize and apply standards (e.g., honesty, integrity) for conduct in their everyday lives.
- Based on the above Mission Statement, we have defined the following learning outcomes as essential to a General Education Curriculum:
 - **Learning Outcomes:**
 - i. written and oral communication (with written being both a designated course and embedded)
 - ii. Scientific reasoning
 - iii. Critical thinking (embedded and with a CIS)
 - iv. Information literacy
 - v. Ethics
 - vi. Quantitative reasoning
 - vii. Natural phenomena
 - viii. Social and behavioral phenomena
 - ix. Aesthetic understanding (arts and humanities)
- Based on the above learning outcomes, the **General Education Plan (min. 40 credits)** is as follows:
 - These areas have designated courses and goals. ***Students are required to take 2 courses in each of the following areas (min. 24 credits); no designation can be in more than 2 of the following areas***
 - **Quantitative Reasoning:** Students will be able to interpret, represent, and apply mathematical concepts and evaluate quantitative elements they encounter in various aspects of their life.
 - **Natural phenomena:** Students will gain a broad base of scientific knowledge and methods used to study the natural and physical world. This will enable them to develop scientific literacy and the understanding of scientific concepts and processes essential for informed personal and social decision making.
 - **Social and Behavioral phenomena:** Students will study the interrelatedness of various realms of human experience from multiple and diverse social, behavioral, and historical perspectives. Students will understand how scientific and nonscientific methods are used to examine the relationships between individuals, their communities, and the wider societies.
 - **Arts and Humanities:** Students will acquire the critical tools and concepts to understand, analyze, and value significant artifacts, phenomena, and movements in the visual and performing arts, literature,

and/or philosophy. Students will learn to understand the function of the arts and humanities and develop the cultural literacy and creative, critical, and self-critical skills that are essential to citizenship in a free society.

- These areas have designated courses AND are embedded into other general education courses. ***Students are required to take 1 course in each area (min. 6 credits)***
 - **Written Communication:** All students will be required to take a Freshman Composition class as a foundational course in writing. In addition, to meet Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) requirements, all students will complete mid- and upper-level courses that reinforce skills and develop writing appropriate to their major disciplines; these will not be counted towards general education but are required for graduation.
 - **Critical Thinking:** The required course will be the Critical Inquiry Seminars (CIS) which are designed to emphasize critical thinking.
- **Embedded learning outcomes:** These areas CAN be individual courses (counted towards general education Electives) OR embedded into other general education courses.
 - **Oral communication**
 - **Information Literacy**
 - **Ethics**
- ***Students will complete remaining general education requirements with electives***
- **Foreign Language:** students are required to meet a second semester language exam. For those unable to do so, they will need to use 3-6 of their general education elective credits remaining to meet the foreign language requirement.

Categories	Credits (minimum total 40)
CIS	3
WAC	3
4 Designated areas	24
Electives	10

- **TBD:**
 - Tagged courses
 - Learning outcome rubrics
 - Number of learning outcomes a course must meet
 - Definition of electives
 - CIS content
 - Assessment cycle