

# General Education © PSU

**Academic Leadership Forum** 

**February 3, 2017** 



## Context and History

1930's

The idea of a core curriculum/general education to encourage well-roundedness is introduced at Columbia, Chicago, and Dartmouth.

The first Gen Ed committee at PSU secured the adoption of a 37-credit program to develop "a man's knowledge and capacities" as opposed to "training for an occupation."

Baccalaureate Degree
Requirements (BDRs)
approved in a 46-credit
cafeteria that included
skills courses and
knowledge domains.
(Depth and Breadth
distinctions were
abandoned in 1994.)



## Context and History

Diversity added as a required part of the curriculum

1990

3 credits of Diversity Focused (DF) or 12 credits of Diversity Enhanced (DE)

(DE bookkeeping deemed too complex; eliminated in 1994.)

Senate adopted 10 recommendations proposed by the Special Committee on General Education (charged in Feb. 1996)





### **Develop First-Year Seminars**

- small
- discussion-based
- purpose and content defined by college

55% credit hours taught in classes with > 100 students 65% of Gen Ed credit hours taught by full-time faculty





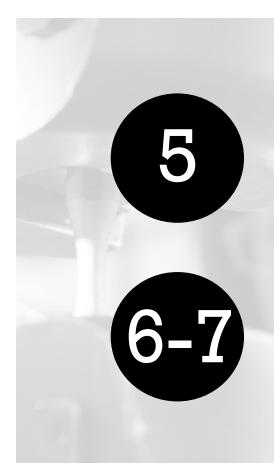


Introduce diagnostic/adaptive placement Identify outcomes for mastery of discipline-specific proficiencies to enhance relevancy

Integrate key competencies and active learning into domain courses

- The Gen Ed curriculum lacked connections to competencies crucial to life and professional career success, so . . .
- Incorporate writing/speaking, quantitative reasoning, teamwork, critica thinking/problem solving,, information gathering, scholarly conduct





Stimulate collaborative/integrative approaches across disciplinary boundaries

Restructure Health Science & Physical Education requirement (4 cr. -> 3 cr.)

Recast Diversity requirement as Intercultural/International Competence emphasizing student engagement (DF->GI)





Allow substitution of 3<sup>rd</sup> level second-language study

Initiate systematic, formative assessment; faculty owned

Provide oversight for implementation

costing report called for \$2M - \$4.5M
 mostly for FYS (#1) and integration of competencies
 and active learning (#4)



### Further refinements

Intercultural/International
competence replaced by
U.S. cultures (U.S.) and
International Cultures (IL)

2008

FYS replaced by
First-year Experience





### The Students' Perspective

Opportunity for exploration/intellectual curiosity

Complementary to the major

Relief from rigor or subject matter of the major

Access to small classes

**Anonymity of a large classes** 

## From the Report of the SCGE

General education is idiosyncratic, tailored to particular institutions and their needs.

Good general education is associated with a culture that values high expectations, recognizes diverse talents and learning styles and emphasizes early engagement.

Good general education promotes coherence and wholeness, interdisciplinary and continuity, integration and synthesis (of instruction, practice, and experience). It encourages active learning and collaboration and a commitment to inquiry beyond the curriculum.

Finally, good general education builds dynamic assessment and improvement into curricular processes.



1997

2012: A University-wide conversation about Gen Ed began

2013-2015: Gen Ed Task Force deliberates models and makes recommendations

Timeline

2015-2016: Faculty
Senate
implementation
reports from faculty
senate

2016-2017: Formation of Office for General Education and innovative course development announced

Summer/Fall 2018: New requirements start for students



# The foremost goal of the Gen Ed revision was to foster opportunities for student learning.









# What needs to be done now?



IMPLEMENTATION OF NEW REQUIREMENTS



**ASSESSMENT** 



RECERTIFICATION OF COURSES BY CURRICULAR AFFAIRS



## GenEd Learning Objectives

#### **EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION**

**KEY LITERACIES** e.g. quantitative, health, intercultural, historical, aesthetic, linguistic, scientific

CRITICAL AND ANALYTICAL THINKING

**INTEGRATIVE THINKING** 

**CREATIVE THINKING** 

**GLOBAL LEARNING** 

SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AND ETHICAL REASONING





### **Foundation Courses**

(15 credits and C or better)
Quantification (GQ)
Writing and Speaking (GWS)

### **Domain Courses**

(30 credits includes 6 Integrative Studies credits)
Arts (GA) – 6 credits
Humanities (GH) – 6 credits
Health and Wellness (GHW) – 3 credits
Natural Sciences (GN) – 9 credits
Social and Behavioral Sciences (GS) – 6 credits



Criteria for each foundation and domain area was reviewed, updated, and to some degree made parallel.

## Integrative Studies Requirement 6 credits

### **Inter-domain Courses**

- 3 credits, students must take 2
- 2 domains represented in each course
- creates 6 credits of exploration in General Education because may count toward both domains

### Linked Courses

- 2 courses that link in some substantial way
- each course used by a student is designated in a different domain
- may be used toward integrative studies requirement or regular domain course requirement if link is not taken



## Everyone has a role





### Gen Ed Faculty Fellows

**16 FELLOWS TOTAL** 

7 FROM UNIVERSITY PARK – ONE PER DOMAIN AND FOUNDATION

**5 FROM CAMPUS COLLEGES** 

4 FROM UNIVERSITY COLLEGE REPRESENTING GEOGRAPHIC GROUPS

PARTIAL SUMMER SUPPORT FOR EFFORT



### General Education @ PSU



SOLID FOUNDATION



TRANSFORMATIVE EXPLORATION



INTEGRATIVE LEARNING

