General Education Learning Outcomes & Implementation Plan

General Education Revision Steering Committee
Final Report
Definition

General education, according to the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U; http://www.aacu.org/leap/what_is_liberal_education.cfm), is defined as:

...an approach to learning that empowers individuals and prepares them to deal with complexity, diversity, and change. It provides students with broad knowledge of the wider world (e.g. science, culture, and society) as well as in-depth study in a specific area of interest. A liberal education helps students develop a sense of social responsibility, as well as strong and transferable intellectual and practical skills such as communication, analytical and problem-solving skills, and a demonstrated ability to apply knowledge and skills in real-world settings. The broad goals of liberal education have been enduring even as the courses and requirements that comprise a liberal education have changed over the years.

Our Committee’s working definition of General Education is as follows:

General Education provides a common intellectual experience for all university students. It is designed to give students a breadth and depth of knowledge and skills across the disciplines of social science, science, arts, humanities. It is designed to impart valuable skills such as oral and written communication, information literacy, and critical thinking, as well as an understanding of responsible citizenship including such areas as human diversity, economic literacy, personal health, and societal and environmental sustainability. General Education is the foundation of all our degree programs at The University of Akron.

Our Charge: Re-Vision General Education

A committee comprised of disciplinary experts from across the campus was formed in Fall 2011 to: (1) integrate General Education with degree program requirements, (2) consider a reduction of the number of General Education credits in anticipation of the University's move to a minimum of 120 hours for baccalaureate degrees, (3) identify multiple pathways toward General Education course completion, (4) make greater use of minors, certificates and integrated interdisciplinary sequences of courses, as well as service and experiential learning, (5) focus on documentable excellence consistent with Higher Learning Commission expectations for The University of Akron.

General Education Revision Steering Committee Members

Linda Subich, Arts and Sciences (Chair), Janet Bean, Arts and Sciences, Constance Bouchard, Arts and Sciences, Alan Bowdler, Engineering & Board of Trustees, Thomas Calderon, Business, Irina Chernikova, Summit College, Mary Beth Clemons, Undergraduate Student Government, Beth Graham, Arts and Sciences, John Green, Arts and Sciences, Virginia Gunn, Arts and Sciences, Annie Hanson, Engineering, Jennifer Holz, Wayne College, Marlene Huff, Health Professions, Sukanya Kemp, Summit College, Tim Lillie, Education, Elizabeth Mancke, Arts and Sciences, David Perry, Arts and Sciences, Andrew Rancer, Arts and Sciences, Bill Rich, Law, Joe Salem, University Libraries, Linda Saliga, Arts and Sciences, Brooks Toliver, Arts and Sciences, Don Visco, Engineering, and Sheldon Wrice, Summit College.
General Education Learning Outcomes

Context

The proposed general education requirements for undergraduates are defined in terms of learning outcomes. These outcomes are set at the foundational level and their achievement is documented after specific general education courses or specified experiences are completed. More detail regarding these courses and experiences is offered in the proposed Implementation Plan. Institutional documentation of the achievement of these learning outcomes is accomplished via the proposed Assessment Plan.

It is intended that the specified learning outcomes will be expanded and built upon during the remainder of the student’s baccalaureate degree work, including the student’s major. A capstone experience of some type for all bachelor’s degrees is strongly recommended as a culmination of the educational process.

This proposal is a shift in approach for the university’s undergraduate curriculum. It proposes to ensure students have achieved foundational learning outcomes so that instruction in the major can focus on development of subject-specific and higher-order learning outcomes that are extensions of the foundational competencies.

Criteria for Learning Outcomes:

The learning outcomes
1. Must reflect the foundational skills and knowledge that the faculty actually want students to achieve.
2. Must be sufficiently broad to be achievable by a variety of means and disciplines.
3. Must be defined in terms that allow observation, evidence collection and eventually measurement.
4. Must reflect a high standard of expectation.

General Statements of Proposed Learning Outcomes:

Learning Outcome 1: Communication Skills and Information Literacy - Students will demonstrate foundational competency in written communication, oral communication and information literacy.

Learning Outcome 2: Critical Thinking and Complex Reasoning Skills - Students will demonstrate foundational competency in creating and evaluating reasoned arguments, and employing quantitative, qualitative, and normative information in such arguments.

Learning Outcome 3: The Arts, Humanities, Natural Sciences, and Social Sciences - Students will demonstrate foundational competency in knowledge of representative content and methods of inquiry of the arts, humanities, natural sciences, and social sciences.

Learning Outcome 4: Responsible Citizenship in an Interconnected World - Students will demonstrate foundational competency in knowledge and skills that promote personal, social and environmental responsibility. This foundational competency shall include an understanding of diversity, systemic relationships, and collateral effects and consequences within and across systems.
Detailed Statements of Proposed Learning Outcomes

Learning Outcome 1: Communication Skills and Information Literacy - Students will demonstrate foundational competency in written communication, oral communication and information literacy.

a) As writer or speaker, students:
   i) Demonstrate an understanding of context, purpose, and audience.
   ii) Develop content using credible sources, as appropriate to the communication task.
   iii) Organize a presentation coherently and logically.
   iv) Use appropriate conventions.
      (1) Writing: Use style appropriate to genre and discipline.
      (2) Speaking: Use verbal and nonverbal conventions appropriate to audience and purpose of speech.
   v) Use appropriate syntax, grammar, and
      (1) Writing: punctuation and spelling.
      (2) Speaking: pauses, intonation, and pronunciation.

b) As writer, students:
   i) Collaborate with others to improve writing through feedback and revision.
   ii) Use writing for multiple purposes, such as improving learning, critical thinking, and reflection.

c) As speaker, students:
   i) Demonstrate behavioral flexibility in response to unexpected variations in audience or context.
   ii) Employ appropriate nonverbal behavior

d) As reader or listener, students:
   i) Identify a writer’s or a speaker’s purpose(s) and rhetorical technique(s).
   ii) Critically analyze claims, appeals, and evidence in arguments.

e) Students demonstrate information literacy by effectively, ethically, and responsibly using appropriate sources and technologies to accomplish an intended purpose.
   i) Use appropriate tools and technologies to identify, access, analyze, evaluate, and document information.
   ii) Use information effectively and appropriately to accomplish an intended purpose.
   iii) Access and use information responsibly, ethically, and legally in accordance with disciplinary standards.

Learning Outcome 2: Critical Thinking and Complex Reasoning Skills - Students will demonstrate foundational competency in creating and evaluating reasoned arguments, and employing quantitative, qualitative, and normative information in such arguments.

a) Students create reasoned arguments and evaluate the reasonableness of arguments. They
   i) State the nature of controversies as propositions, including fact (i.e., what is), value (i.e., what should be),
      and policy (i.e., what steps can be taken) propositions;
   ii) Recognize and choose the premises, purposes, audiences, and contexts of propositions;
   iii) Recognize and choose the appropriate logic to support propositions, including symbolic, deductive, and
      inductive logic;
   iv) Recognize and choose the appropriate information to support propositions, including the sources,
      authority, and biases of information;
   v) Recognize and be able to argue both sides of a proposition, and employ logic and information to challenge
      opposing propositions.
b) Students employ the appropriate analysis and application of
   i) Quantitative information, such that they:
      (1) Identify the value and limitations of magnitude (i.e., how large) and multitude (i.e., how many) measures;
      (2) Manipulate and express such measures with arithmetic, algebraic, geometric, and statistical methods;
      (3) Manipulate and express such measures with graphs, charts, and tables;
      (4) Manipulate and express such measures to solve practical and multistage problems;
   ii) Qualitative information, such that they:
      (1) Identify the value and limitations of character (i.e., the nature of a thing) and capacity (i.e., what a thing can do) assessments;
      (2) Interpret and express assessments with a contrary structure, such as truth versus falsehood or good versus evil;
      (3) Interpret and express assessments with a relational structure, such as the degree of beauty or the level of success;
      (4) Interpret and express assessments with a unique structure, such as cultural ethos or historical eras;
   iii) Normative information, such that they:
      (1) Identify the value and limitations of prescriptive (i.e., how things should be) and proscriptive (i.e., how things shouldn’t be) claims;
      (2) Acknowledge and express claims concerning personal behavior, such as honesty and virtue;
      (3) Acknowledge and express claims concerning social life, such as pluralism and justice;
      (4) Acknowledge and express claims concerning mental life, such as respect for evidence and open-mindedness;
      (5) Describe how such claims are used to make ethical decisions

Learning Outcome 3: The Arts, Humanities, Natural Sciences, and Social Sciences - Students will demonstrate foundational competency in knowledge of representative content and methods of inquiry of the arts, humanities, natural sciences, and social sciences.

a) Knowledge/Content competency
   i) Demonstrate knowledge of major concepts, findings, and historical perspectives in each disciplinary area
   ii) Find information resources in each disciplinary area and evaluate their reliability.
   iii) Articulate the role of ethics in each disciplinary area.
   iv) Demonstrate an understanding of scientific and technical issues at a functional level and articulate how they impact our society and economy.
   v) Demonstrate a basic knowledge of major cultures/societies of the world including their art, history, and geography

b) Methods of Inquiry competency
   i) Articulate the nature of the scientific method (in the natural and social sciences and humanities), apply it through hands-on laboratory experiments, and critically evaluate applications of the scientific method.
   ii) Solve quantitative and qualitative problems in the natural and social sciences
   iii) Use rhetorical skills in the analysis of creative works (arts and humanities) including their social, political, emotional and psychological components.
   iv) Demonstrate effective written and oral communication appropriate to each disciplinary area.
Learning Outcome 4: Responsible Citizenship in an Interconnected World - Students will demonstrate foundational competency in knowledge and skills that promote personal, social and environmental responsibility. This foundational competency shall include knowledge of diversity, systemic relationships, and collateral effects and consequences within and across systems.

a) Dimensions of US Domestic Diversity (broadly defined to include age, disability, gender, education, ethnicity, nationality, race, sexuality, social class, religion within the US). Students are able to:
   i) Identify multiple perspectives on cultural difference within the United States.
   ii) Articulate how dimensions of diversity such as race, ethnicity, gender and/or national origin are socially constructed.
   iii) Articulate how diversity impacts the creation, acquisition and application of knowledge.
   iv) Use knowledge of diverse perspectives to inform decisions and/or solve problems.
   v) Describe interrelationships of dimensions of diversity.

b) Dimensions of Global Diversity (focus is on global cultural awareness). Students are able to:
   i) Identify diverse perspectives within nations and/or across the globe.
   ii) Articulate how dimensions of diversity such as national origin are socially constructed.
   iii) Articulate how global diversity impacts the creation, acquisition and application of knowledge.
   iv) Use knowledge of diverse global perspectives to inform decisions and/or solve problems.
   v) Demonstrate knowledge of the interconnectedness of global histories, international governance, shifting geographies, and social policies.

c) Complex Systems Affecting Individuals in Society. Students apply an interdisciplinary perspective to the study of a particular social issue (e.g., climate change, relation of personal and societal health, alternative energy strategies, health disparity and healthcare reform, globalization, international trade liberalization, conflict/war, poverty, wealth and economic disparities), and demonstrate that they are able to:
   i) Recognize that complex systemic relationships impact social issues in general, and explain the importance of these systems to resolving the particular social issue.
   ii) Describe the individual and systemic (i.e., organizational and governmental) contributors to the particular social issue, and explain the short and long term impact of each.
   iii) Identify and articulate the social, technical, economic and scientific foundations of the social issue.
   iv) Distinguish the costs and benefits of solutions to the social issue.
General Education Learning Outcomes Implementation Plan

The proposed learning outcomes and the suggested course/credit hour implementation requirements noted below are conceptualized as falling into three distinct tiers. These tiers are foundational to baccalaureate education and are represented in relation to the whole of baccalaureate education in Figure 1. The tiers include:

- Academic Foundation
- Disciplinary Areas
- Tags

The Academic Foundation incorporates broad skills that are essential to success in a baccalaureate program. These are specified in our Learning Outcomes 1 and 2. The Disciplinary Areas represent the broad knowledge that is essential to a liberally educated individual and this knowledge is specified in our Learning Outcome 3. The learning outcomes identified in these two tiers consistently are endorsed by employers (Hart Research Associates, 2013) and faculty (http://www.aacu.org/leap/) as important and desirable for college graduates. The Tags represent knowledge and skills required of responsible citizens and they are specified in Learning Outcomes 2 and 4. Critical thinking, knowledge of US and global diversity, and the ability to apply an interdisciplinary perspective to the study of a particular social issue may be acquired via general coursework or major-specific coursework, but regardless of source are essential to the 21st century citizen.

Implementation Plan

The following distribution of courses is recommended to operationalize the proposed General Education Learning Outcomes for the Academic Foundation and Disciplinary Areas (note that a course was assumed to default to a minimum of 3 credit hours):

- **Academic Foundation**
  - Writing—2 courses (min. 6 hours)
  - Speaking—1 course (min. 3 hours)
  - Quantitative reasoning—1 course (min. 3 hours)

- **Disciplinary Areas**
  - Natural science—2 courses with 1 lab (min. 7 hours)
  - Social science—2 courses (min. 6 hours)
  - Humanities—1 course (min. 3 hours)
  - Arts—1 course (min. 3 hours)
  - Humanities or Arts—1 course (min. 3 hours)

This plan includes a total of 11 courses that comprise a minimum of 34 hours. No restrictions are assumed in terms of overlap of these courses with a student’s major coursework as integration of General Education with majors was a goal of the revision. In the Disciplinary Areas, no constraints were assumed for the distribution of multiple courses in a subject area as flexibility in student choices was intended. Students are encouraged to select courses so as to create a firm foundation for their intended degree program.

The remaining Learning Outcomes are achieved not with freestanding course requirements as is the case for the Academic Foundation and Disciplinary Areas, but through courses taken to fulfill a General Education Disciplinary Area,
requirements of a student’s major or minor, elective coursework, or through experiential learning such as study abroad. These are the Tags, and students are required to obtain at some point in their academic career four “tagged” courses to meet:

1) the critical thinking/reasoning learning outcomes identified in Learning Outcome 2
2) the US/domestic diversity learning outcomes identified in Learning Outcome 4
3) the global diversity learning outcomes identified in Learning Outcome 4
4) the complex systems affecting social issues learning outcomes identified in Learning Outcome 4

A course may receive only one “tag” and it is assumed that many of the “tagged” courses meeting Learning Outcome 4 will be at the 200 level or higher due to the interdisciplinary nature of the knowledge required. These Tags do not represent additional hours for a student as “tagged” courses are expected in most cases to be courses the student uses to meet a Disciplinary Area in the General Education requirements or a major or minor requirement.
Detailed Implementation Process

Preamble

Faculty must be responsible for this implementation (i.e., evaluation of whether a course meets appropriate learning outcomes and necessary assessment component), and more specifically faculty with expertise in the disciplinary areas addressed in General Education Learning Outcomes (LOs).

Special committees should be formed to evaluate courses currently in the University’s catalog that are forwarded for consideration as part of the new general education program. Courses new to the University’s catalog will need to move through the standard curriculum approval system for approval. The membership of the special committees should represent disciplinary expertise as well as the campus constituents for general education. Special curricular committees are recommended as more effective and desirable than moving such a massive curriculum change through the current standard curriculum approval system.

A Special Curriculum Review Process to Implement the General Education Revision

1. The Senate will create at least four “Disciplinary Learning Outcome (DLO) Committees” and four “Tagged” Learning Outcome (TLO) Committees to make recommendations on existing courses to be designated as fulfilling the new general education LOs.
2. The committee membership will be appointed by the Senate Executive Committee as the Senate is the ultimate authority on curriculum and all General Education recommendations must be voted on by the Senate in order to take effect. All necessary committees will be appointed at the outset of the implementation process.
   a. Members of these committees will be appointed from a list of faculty nominated by departments/schools and by college deans. Nominations should be supported with a summary of the faculty member’s credentials relevant to evaluating particular LOs. Then the Senate Executive committee will choose among the nominees to form balanced committees for each of the disciplinary areas noted in #3 and #4.
   b. Consideration (by units, deans and Senate) should be given to ensuring some members from the current General Education Revision Committee are nominated for these committees as these persons have expertise and understanding regarding the intent of the revision proposal.
   c. It is recommended that implementation of curriculum review occur in three phases.
      i. The first phase would be a narrow start (DLO committee for Communication and Quantitative Reasoning) to allow a piloting (and possible tweaking) of the implementation procedures outlined herein. Target launch—Fall 2014
      ii. The second phase would involve simultaneous consideration by the other three DLO committees of courses proposed to meet the LOs for their disciplinary areas. Target launch—Spring 2015
      iii. The third phase would involve simultaneous consideration by the TLO committees of courses proposed to be tagged to meet the LOs for US diversity, global diversity, critical thinking, and complex social problems. This last phase is delayed so as to allow units more time to consider revising or adapting current offerings to meet the LOs as it is desirable for programs to integrate these tagged courses into their curriculum. Target launch—After second phase is complete
d. During the implementation process, it is recommended that ITL work with Faculty Senate and the Disciplinary Learning Outcome Committees to assist faculty to understand and implement the new General Education Learning Outcomes and assessment processes that will be required for General Education courses.

3. Disciplinary Learning Outcome Committees (DLO)—these committees should be kept relatively small (i.e., 7-10 persons) and workable with the following membership:

   a. Communication and Quantitative Reasoning (Phase 1)—A majority of the committee members will be appointed from the BCAS English, Communication and Math faculty, the Summit College English and Math faculty, and the Library faculty (with at least one member from each of these units), and at least one member may be appointed from each of the colleges of Education, Engineering, Business Administration and Health Professions, and Wayne College if they choose to forward nominations.

   b. Disciplinary Courses: Natural Sciences (Phase 2)—A majority of the committee members will be appointed from the BCAS Biology, Chemistry, Geosciences, Physics and the Summit College Natural Sciences faculty (with at least one member from each of these units), and at least one member may be appointed from each of the colleges of Education, Engineering, Business Administration and Health Professions, and Wayne College if they choose to forward nominations.

   c. Disciplinary Courses: Social Sciences (Phase 2)—A majority of the committee members will be appointed from the BCAS Anthropology, Sociology, Political Science, Psychology, Communication, History and Economics faculty, and the Summit College Social Sciences faculty (with at least one member from each of these units), and at least one member may be appointed from each of the colleges of Education, Engineering, Business Administration and Health Professions, and Wayne College if they choose to forward nominations.

   d. Disciplinary Courses: Humanities and Fine Arts (Phase 2)—A majority of the committee members will be appointed from the BCAS English, History, Philosophy, Modern Languages, Art, Music and DTAA faculty (with at least one member from each of these units), and at least one member may be appointed from each of the colleges of Education, Engineering, Business Administration and Health Professions, and Wayne College if they choose to forward nominations.

4. “Tagged” Learning Outcome Committees (TLO)—these committees should be kept relatively small (i.e., 7-10 persons) and workable with the following membership:

   a. Critical Thinking/Reasoning (Phase 3)—Committee members who hold expertise in teaching critical thinking will be appointed to this TLO committee from the following colleges: BCAS, Business Administration, Education, Engineering, Health Professions, Summit and Wayne, if they choose to forward nominations. Committee members who served on any of the Phase 1 or 2 committees would be a desirable addition to these committees, if their expertise is appropriate.

   b. US/Domestic Diversity (Phase 3)—Committee members who hold expertise and/or teach in the academic domain of US/domestic diversity will be appointed to this TLO committee from the following colleges: BCAS, Business Administration, Education, Engineering, Health Professions, Summit and Wayne, if they choose to forward nominations. Committee members who served on any of the Phase 1 or 2 committees would be a desirable addition to these committees, if their expertise is appropriate.

   c. Global Diversity (Phase 3)—Committee members who hold expertise and/or teach in the academic domain of global diversity will be appointed to this TLO committee from the following colleges: BCAS, Business Administration, Education, Engineering, Health Professions, Summit and Wayne, if they choose to forward nominations. Committee members who served on any of the Phase 1 or 2 committees would be a desirable addition to these committees, if their expertise is appropriate.
d. **Complex Systems Affecting Social Issues (Phase 3)**—Committee members who hold expertise in teaching about social issues from an interdisciplinary perspective will be appointed to this TLO committee from the following colleges: BCAS, Business Administration, Education, Engineering, Health Professions, Summit and Wayne, if they choose to forward nominations. Committee members who served on any of the Phase 1 or 2 committees would be a desirable addition to these committees, if their expertise is appropriate.

5. Once appointed, each Disciplinary Learning Outcome (DLO) and “Tagged” Learning Outcome (TLO) committee will **meet and elect a chair from among its members.** The chair will schedule and conduct the committee meetings, report the work conducted during these meetings to the Senate and the university community, and submit curricular recommendations to the Senate.

6. The **chairs** of the Disciplinary Learning Outcome (DLO) and “Tagged” Learning Outcome (TLO) committees will **meet periodically to coordinate implementation** of the new General Education program. They will elect a Chair of the chairs to schedule and conduct these meetings.

7. The DLO and TLO committees will **call for submissions** from departments and schools (not individual faculty members) and will make their recommendations by majority rule. Upon receipt of the recommendations, the Senate will take action on them.

8. The DLO and TLO committees will **conduct their work in open meetings** and communicate that work consistently, effectively, and transparently to the Senate and the university community. Minutes of these meetings will be shared with the Senate and posted for dissemination to the university community.

**Recommended DLO and TLO Committee Procedures for Implementation**

1. All general education courses must require **disciplinary-specific writing and critical thinking.** A minimum of 15% of the work in each general education course must include disciplinary-specific writing. This will ensure the teaching of and student practice in critical thinking, as expected in each general education course, occurs. The disciplinary-specific writing requirement must be designed to support critical thinking.

2. The chairs of the DLO committees will create a **common submission template** so DLO committees can more easily evaluate courses. This template must be designed so course proposals:
   a. Identify the general education requirement the course is intended to meet
   b. Indicate how the general education requirement and all LOs for the requirement are met in the course
   c. Identify the disciplinary-specific assessment artifact to be archived for the course for each student
   d. Demonstrate that minimum disciplinary-specific writing and critical thinking requirements are met
   e. A course syllabus must be submitted to support that the general education requirements are met.

3. Likewise, the chairs of the TLO committees will create at the outset of Phase 3 a **common submission template** so TLO committees can more easily evaluate courses. This template must be designed so course proposals:
   a. Identify the general education requirement the course is intended to meet
   b. Indicate how the general education requirement and all LOs for the requirement are met in the course
   c. Identify the disciplinary-specific assessment artifact to be archived for the course for each student
   d. Demonstrate that minimum disciplinary-specific writing and critical thinking requirements are met
   e. A course syllabus must be submitted to support that the general education requirements are met.

4. Once a template is finalized, the chair of the DLO or TLO committee will transmit the call of the committee for proposals. A **time-limited window for submission** of the template for existing UA courses that are being proposed to meet the specified LOs will be announced and the template will be circulated. Submission of materials by departments or schools will be made to the DLO or TLO committee through the chair who will
disseminate the proposals to all committee members for consideration. The members will meet, discuss and vote on proposals and report their recommendations through the DLO or TLO committee chair to the Senate.

5. The DLO and TLO committees will recommend that existing courses satisfy a general education requirement if a course meets the relevant learning outcomes, the minimum disciplinary-specific writing and critical thinking requirements, and identifies an artifact for assessment. The committees may make modest and reasonable interpretations of the general education learning outcomes.

6. If a course proposal is not accepted to satisfy a specific general education requirement, the unit will receive feedback from the committee and have the opportunity to revise and resubmit the proposal in a timely manner as specified by the committee chair.

7. Curriculum delivered at all University of Akron locations is bound by these standards and procedures.

Recommended Campus Implementation Procedures

1. General Education oversight—In order to ensure the successful functioning and integrity of the new General Education program and to oversee its assessment process, a faculty member should be designated as responsible for the program.
   a. This must be a formal appointment by the provost.
   b. Appropriate resources must be set aside for this position.
   c. Upon completion of Phase 3, GEAC (or its successor) is the Senate body that will be responsible for the broad oversight of the new general education program. It should monitor, evaluate and act on requested revisions (e.g., course additions or deletions), receive analyses and summaries of assessment data, and be responsible for recertification of courses based on assessment data. The faculty member appointed as responsible for General Education will be a member of GEAC (or its successor).
   d. We recommend that Senate consider reconstituting GEAC to include members with the expertise to accomplish the aforementioned tasks, and that some faculty who have served on the DLOs and TLOs be appointed to ensure continuity in the transition process.

2. Transition timeline—the new General Education program will be put into place when the DLO and TLO committees complete their work.
   a. There will need to be a period of overlap in the new and current programs, designated by the provost’s office, to finish students in process at the outset of the new program. Fortunately, many of the requirements are similar in the new and current programs and we anticipate many current courses will be revised to be included in the new program.
   b. In cases where a course that is required is no longer offered, GEAC or its successor should have the authority to approve a suitable substitute for the course.
   c. Students who entered under the current program may choose to follow the new program requirements instead of the old ones. They must, however, formally declare their intent to their academic advisor.

3. Major changers—the university will stipulate that students must not be penalized if they change majors. Fulfillment of general education requirements applies university-wide. Units may not require additional general education courses of students.

4. Implementation liaisons—to facilitate the integration of the new program’s requirements with UA and OBR databases and systems, representatives from the UA Registrar’s office, a UA DARS staff member, representatives from UA advising offices, and staff member from UA Transfer ad Adult Services should be involved as soon as implementation begins, as should our UA liaison to OBR.
a. Consistent interaction with OBR is needed when we have names of courses to propose for new program to ensure articulation goes smoothly.

b. In all deliberations regarding courses, DLO Committees must be cognizant of the Ohio Transfer Module and the importance of ensuring the ability of UA students to transfer easily to other state institutions and of other students to transfer work to UA. Our OBR Liaison is a resource for the DLO Committees as they work.

c. This is a complete renewal of General Education designations on the campus, but all courses may not need to be reported to OBOR depending on how much they are changed and to what requirement they are applied. Again, our OBR Liaison is a resource for the DLO Committees on this issue.

d. If a currently listed General Education course is not proposed for inclusion in the new program, it will be deleted from the campus and OBR General Education list after the overlap period is completed.

5. **Assessment Implementation**—an assessment cycle must be articulated at the outset of the new program’s implementation. We recommend a four year cycle whereby each Learning Outcome (1-4) is evaluated every four years, beginning with LO1 at the end of the first year of the new program. Details of the assessment plan are included in the next section of this report.

a. Assurances are needed of the resources/support to do the archiving of artifacts for assessment and to compensate faculty for summer General Education assessment work with the artifacts and rubrics. This is a university level process.

b. Courses approved for a general education learning outcome will be reviewed based on assessment data every four years. If concerns are raised about a course, the course will be subject to continuous review by GEAC (or its successor) until the concerns are addressed or until the next review cycle occurs. If the concerns persist at the next review cycle the course will be removed from the general education program.
Assessment Plan

Assessment of learning outcomes is an essential component of this proposal for a revision of the General Education program. Assessment refers to the process of using students’ work to verify that learning outcomes desired by the faculty and institution are being achieved and that appropriate action is being taken to assure continuous improvement. Each of the four learning outcomes is demonstrated by means of formal student expression; this may be written, oral, artistic, ASL, or Braille as appropriate.

All students who have completed successfully their general education requirements will be deemed to have the knowledge and skills described in the learning outcomes and able to apply those skills to coursework within the major.

To facilitate institutional level assessment, student products will be kept in a centralized (electronic) university repository. The products submitted to the repository will be identified during the course or “tag” approval process and may be work used by the instructor as part of a grading scheme. The products will be sampled by the institution for institutional level assessment according to a regular schedule. Such assessment will be shared with the campus as a whole to inform subsequent practice.

Implementation of Assessment Plan

• All approved General Education courses will collect predetermined, course embedded learning artifacts. These must be specified and commitment to assessment must be declared at the time a course is reviewed for inclusion as a General Education course or “tag.”

• Samples of artifacts will be evaluated by faculty experts who will use agreed upon rubrics. The General Education Revision Steering Committee has identified potential types of artifacts and created/adapted rubrics for most Learning Outcomes.

• After evaluation of sampled artifacts, a summary of findings will be shared by the faculty review committee with the campus for consideration and action.

• There will be a regular schedule of assessment and feedback for each Learning Outcome. The General Education Revision Steering Committee suggests a four year cycle whereby each Learning Outcome is evaluated every four years. The review cycle should commence a year after implementation of the General Education revision.
Appendix

Summary of College Feedback from Fall 2013 votes

1. At a full college (CHP) meeting on September 25, 2013 the list of ideas and the document as a whole was discussed by the faculty members present (quorum was established). A vote was taken on the following motion: The CHP recommends approval of this document with the following suggestions  
   a. More detailed information about the implementation and the nature of the tagged degree needs to be provided  
   b. Academics who provide advising and who will be involved with the capstone experience be consulted, and preferably included on the committee to insure that the plan is feasible  
   c. This motion carried unanimously.

2. During the Summit College meeting (9/25/13) following issues were brought for discussion and clarification:  
   a. The most challenging part of the proposal is Learning Outcomes 2. It includes Quantitative information part which implies to be covered by General Education Math course/courses. However, a math requirement is not listed in this proposal explicitly and could be hypothetically replaced with other courses which meet the Quantitative information learning outcomes; Students with good math preparation could enter math program requirement at any level, for example at Calculus level (above GenEd). Does this proposal include this situation in consideration? Can courses like this be tagged?  
   b. There was a concern about removing Physical Education course as a part of a set of free-standing GenEd courses.  
   c. Some questions were raised about having mandatory lab natural science GenEd requirement.  
   d. Faculty and colleagues from the Advising office were interested in the process of implementation of the idea of tagging courses with LO 2 and 3.  
   e. Conclusion: Those who attended the meeting unanimously supported the proposal with concerns expressed above.

3. The faculty at Wayne College voted and approved the General Education Learning Outcomes & Implementation Plan. The vote was 20 in favor and 0 against. (10/1/13)

4. On September 26, the General Education ballot was sent to 330 BCAS faculty. A reminder about the ballot was sent on September 30. Voting closed at 5pm on October 1, 2013. 172 votes were received – 78 supported the Committee’s proposed revision of the current General Education program (45%) and 94 did not support (55%). Comments provided by BCAS faculty addressed:  
   a. additional details about implementation needed (44)  
   b. additional details about implementation regarding tag course designation (9)  
   c. concern about role of other colleges (6)  
   d. cannot identify benefits of change (2)  
   e. concern about credit hour requirement distribution across divisions (7)  
   f. concern about lack of resources to accommodate changes (i.e. small class size) (6)  
   g. concern about number of required hours; additional details about implementation needed (7)  
   h. concern about process/decision-making (1)  
   i. concern no foreign language requirement (2)  
   j. support; concern about impact on student (1)  
   k. recommend innovative model (2)  
   l. recommend more sophisticated approach to diversity (1)  
   m. concern about “gaming” the “tag” system (2)

5. The College of Education met on October 11 and voted regarding the General Education revision proposal as follows: 10 – for, 5 – against, 9 – abstained.

6. On October 17th, at a College of Engineering faculty meeting, the College of Engineering unanimously approved the GE LO & Plan, subject to the following stipulations:
a. More detailed information about the implementation and nature of the tagged aspect of the plan needs to be provided.
b. Any approved GE LO & Plan, through the use of the tagged courses, will result in a reduction of at least four credit hours to the current General Education requirements within all College of Engineering curricula.

7. On Nov. 27th the CBA faculty reported their vote on the GE proposal. The vote was 14 for and 16 against. Comments and questions are summarized below:
   a. Concern expressed about the lack of emphasis on math in the outcomes and the proposed curriculum. Laddering from math skills to quantitative reasoning to critical thinking is missing.
   b. What problem are we trying to solve? Increase the number of students graduating and employed? This proposal does not seem to address this goal. UA has one of the highest rates of students taking remedial math courses (34%) in Ohio. Why are we taking math out?
   c. Due to overlapping, the GenEd requirements can be met in less than 22 credits. This is of particular importance - potentially negative - in a professional school. Is the goal to reduce time to degree completion?
   d. How does the proposed GenEd compare to peer schools? How will it impact transfers from 2 year programs, from other 4 year programs?
   e. It would add complexity to an already complex and slow UA ICT process.
   f. Emphasis on learning outcomes in the proposal is consistent with CBA assurance of learning efforts. Seems as if assessment will be done in the GenEd using artifacts within courses. CBA does it differently. Will that be a conflict?
   g. Who will pay for assessment? Does it force us towards e-learning so we can acquire assessment measures?
   h. Tagged courses approach will require an entire university "mapping/alignment" of every course to tag outcomes. That is overwhelming in scope and not sustainable.
   i. We need more macro assessment vs micro assessments. Assessment part of the proposal does not seem "fully baked". It seems similar to the CBA's evolution in assurance of learning.
   j. Seems there should be fewer choices in the GenEd instead of more choices. More choices creates more assessment challenges. How will they get students to complete assessment measures?
   k. Did the committee consider the College Learning Assessment (CLA) as a means of assessment?
   l. Will learning outcomes be included in DARS?
   m. What is the source of the outcome that places specific attention on diversity?
   n. A more parsimonious approach to General Education and assessment is possible.
   o. What about considering the merits of a "deep dive" with a sequence outside one's major?
   p. In the future, would MOOC's, credentialing, etc. provide a means for needed flexibility?
   q. What about course proliferation as an unintended consequence of the TAG approach?
   r. Integrity of the tag approval process is critical.
   s. The incentives in the current system/environment predict massive "TAG crazy behavior".
   t. In current environment of concern for SCH's, the integration of GenEd with majors has highly negative possible behavior by colleges.
   u. Proposal seen by some as giant step backwards as it will be less of a common experience and lacks breadth and depth.
   v. All in all, this seems like it is all "backroom" process. Will there be any noticeable difference in our students? Will they have a different general education experience than they are currently having?
   w. Will employers like this?
   x. Students will not be able to follow the scheme.
   y. The committee needs to provide more compelling and transparent rationale for what they are proposing.