

GENERAL EDUCATION

A developing model...

Historical Look at General Education:

- Current model:
 - Six hours of English Composition (EN 101 and EN 300)
 - Two hours of Lifetime Wellness (KN 198)
 - Three hours of Mathematics (MA 110 or MA 116)
 - Nine, twelve or fifteen hours (depending on the Bachelor's degree) in each of the three general education groups: Humanities, Social Sciences and Natural Sciences/Mathematics to total between 27 and 45 hours. Approved courses are required to emphasize 3 of 9 general education skills.
 - Six hours for Associate's Degree in each of the general education groups: Humanities, Social Sciences and Natural Sciences/Mathematics with courses selected from at least two disciplines in each group.
- Model previous to current model:
 - Specific courses were not identified but were counted within the general education groups
(9/12 Humanities, 9/12 Social Sciences, 9/12 Natural Science/Mathematics) as long as there weren't more than 6 hours in one discipline.

Why Change?

- A periodic review of required courses seems prudent as a part of the strategic planning to ensure our curriculum is timely and reflects our values.
- A review of assessment processes allows us to determine if our students are learning as well as when/how instructional processes may need to be adjusted.
- The Higher Learning Commission is now requiring that Washburn provide evidence annually (starting in 2013) on how students are continually assessed on learning outcomes we value (Pathways accreditation model- both program and general education).

Rationale for Gen Ed Change

- Internal factors: Continuous quality improvement of curriculum and learning at Washburn University.
- External factors: Accreditation agencies and their recommendations are part of:
 - The approval for federal funding (e.g. scholarships, grants, etc.)
 - The public's perception of our educational quality, and
 - Acceptance of credentials of our alumni (e.g. transfer credits, graduate school admissions, etc.)

Definitions:

1. **What are the main components of Washburn's current general education curricular model?**
 - a) The General Education Distribution Grouping Requirement: Helps to ensure a breadth of exposure to the liberal arts disciplines.
 - b) The major areas of knowledge (The world of human ideas, and The world of nature) designed to expose students to the ways of knowing in the traditional disciplines.
 - c) The university-wide Student Learning Skills approved by the faculty to ensure all graduates of Washburn have acquired the skills and knowledge required of principled citizens and to be successful in their professional pursuits. (9 Skills)
 - d) University requirements of all students-EN 101, EN 300, MA 110/116, KN 198

Definitions:

2. What are the main components of Washburn's developing general education curricular model?

- General Education Distribution Grouping ensures breadth of exposure to the liberal arts disciplines (same)
- 5 Student learning outcomes (Replacing previous 9 skills)
- Core and Degree-specific Extended Core (Ensured coverage of all 5 SLOs required of all students), University-specific core would be EN 101, MA 110/116, and WU 101. Unit degree-specific extended core for remaining two SLOs and second writing class (SLO B).
- Expanded assessment used to continuously improve curriculum learning
- Enhanced coverage/assessment of SLOs in Major as appropriate.
- Core courses reviewed on 5-year cycle by Distribution/SLO Committee in same manner as General Distribution courses.

Definitions:

3. What are student learning outcomes (SLOs)?

SLOs are designed with the intent of providing students with the opportunity to acquire skills and knowledge. At the culmination of their Washburn academic experience all students should have demonstrated achievement of learning in the following areas:

a. Communication (e.g. EN 101, EN 208, EN 300)

Communication skills involve the ability to clearly express and understand ideas in written, oral and non-verbal forms. Communication includes the practical exchange of information, which can include the ability to listen, comprehend and respond to others, as well as the creative expression of ideas in the visual, written and performing arts. In oral and written communication, students will demonstrate the ability to shape a central thesis, organize an argument and formally support that argument. Students will be able to understand and interpret creative expression based on knowledge of the forms and principles of various expressive media.

Definitions:

- **What are student learning outcomes (SLOs)?**

- b. Quantitative and Scientific Reasoning and Literacy

(e.g. MA 110/116)

Quantitative reasoning involves the ability to work with numerical data and the higher-order thinking skills required to make and understand mathematical arguments. Scientific literacy involves the acquisition and application of skills and knowledge necessary to understand the nature and content of science, and to evaluate scientific arguments using evidence-based reasoning. Students will be able to understand and develop arguments supported by quantitative evidence, clearly communicate those arguments in a variety of formats (using words, tables, graphs, statistical inference, mathematical equations and functions, etc., as appropriate), and apply mathematical and scientific methods to solve problems from a wide array of contexts and everyday situations.

Definitions:

- **What are student learning outcomes (SLOs)?**

c. Information Literacy and Technology (WU 101)

Information literacy and technology involves the ability to locate, select, use and evaluate information obtained from appropriate electronic and/or printed resources, including a critical analysis of the information and the credibility of the sources of information. It also involves the ability to use technology to research, organize, present and/or communicate information in meaningful ways. Additionally, information literacy and technology includes skills such as the ability to understand the development of technology and its impact on society, the ability to understand and use existing technologies and information to address real world issues, and the ability to recognize emerging technological trends and their possible impact on the future.

Definitions:

- **What are student learning outcomes (SLOs)?**

- d. Critical and Creative Thinking (determined by degree/unit)

Critical thinking is the intellectually disciplined process of assessing and evaluating ideas and forms. It involves clarifying questions, reflecting upon meaning, comparing multiple viewpoints and evaluating evidence to make an informed judgment. Creative thinking involves the production of original ideas, forms or works by making connections, generating alternatives, and elaborating or exploring new applications of accepted practices through innovation and/or invention. Critical and creative thinkers gather information from experience, observation, reasoning, reflection and communication. They explore and synthesize related ideas, connect them to prior knowledge, and apply them to new contexts.

Definitions:

- **What are student learning outcomes (SLOs)?**

- e. Global Citizenship, Ethics and Diversity (determined by degree/unit)

Global citizenship refers to the broad understanding of peoples and cultures in the United States and around the world, and to humankind's place and effects in the world. Global citizenship includes a respect for the commonalities and differences in peoples, including an understanding of values, beliefs and customs. It places an emphasis on the economic, religious, political, geographic, linguistic, historic, environmental and social aspects that define cultures. It places an emphasis on ethics, equality and human rights, an appreciation for diversity, the interconnectedness of societies and cultures, and a commitment to finding solutions to problems that can affect the world.

Definitions:

- **Core (Foundation) Requirements (SLOs A, B and C):**
 - **University requirements established for all students:**
 - The current core is EN 101, EN 300, MA 110/116 and KN 198
 - The proposed core is EN 101, MA 110/116*, WU 101
 - **Extended Core Requirements:**
 - A second writing class (e.g. EN 300 [general], discipline- based courses such as EN 300 [Business; Nursing], or EN 208), 3 hrs Global/Ethics/Diversity and 3 hrs Creative/Critical Thinking – all to be determined by degree/units
 - **Minimum General Distribution Requirements: (Current Distribution minimum does not change)**
 - 9 hrs Natural Science/Math
 - 9 hrs Social Sciences
 - 9 hrs Humanities/Arts

* The Math department is creating a potential course (MA 112) which might serve as a quantitative reasoning course in place of MA 110.

Developing Model

Bachelor's Degrees

5 SLOs

- A. Quantitative/Scientific
- B. Communication
- C. Tech/Information Literacy
- D. Global/Ethics/Diversity
- E. Creative and Critical Thinking

SLO + Assessment

Day 1

Graduation

←	→	
SLOs A-E (Gen Ed Core) 18 hours Minimum	General Distribution 27 hours Minimum	Majors (Required courses and Correlated Courses) <i>Emphasize and Assess at least 3 SLO's</i>
<p>Core: MA 110/116 (SLO A) 3 hours EN 101 (SLO B) 3 hours WU 101 (SLO C) 3 hours</p> <p>Extended Core</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SLO B 2nd writing course 3 hours • SLO D 3 hours • SLO E 3 hours <p>Total: 18 hours</p>	<p>Humanities/Arts 9 hours Social Sciences 9 hours Natural Sciences/Math 9 hours</p> <p><i>SLO B, D and E may be used to satisfy general distribution hours.</i></p> <p>Total: 27 hours (up to 45 hours in some Bachelor programs)</p>	

Developing Model

C or Better

C or Better

SLO Core

General Distribution

Electives

Majors

SLO A: MA 110/116 (3)

SLO B: EN 101 (3)

SLO C:

WU 101 (3)

(Students who transfer with 24 hours AFTER High School and have a 2.5 GPA are EXEMPT from this requirement. However they must complete a different tech/information literacy SLO course to ensure SLO coverage)

Core classes can not be counted as part of the General Distribution minimum.

Developing Model

C or Better

C or Better

SLO Extended Core

General Distribution

Electives

Majors

SLO B:

2nd Writing Course (3)
 (Determined by Degree/Unit;
 Could be from the General Distribution list.)

SLO D:

Global/Ethics/Diversity (3)
 (Determined by Degree/Unit;
 Could be from the General Distribution list.)

SLO E:

Creative and Critical Thinking (3)
 (Determined by Degree/Unit;
 Could be from the General Distribution list.)

SLC (18) + General Distribution (18 [27] -42)* + E (Varies) + M =120 Minimum**

- WU 101 is included in the core.
- *Minimum will vary by degree and choice of Extended Core courses.
- **Minimum of 45 hours at the 300 level or higher. Degree programs can contain more than 120 hours.
- *Every Course in Gen Dist. must address and assess an SLO. Currently approved courses in distribution need to choose SLO and provide assessment plan to committee for approval.*
- Minimum number of distribution hours remains at 9-9-9.
- *Core does not count toward General Distribution.*
- *“Extended core” can count toward the General Distribution if courses chosen approved as meeting General Distribution criteria.*

Gen Ed Task Force:

Unit Representation :

School of Applied Studies

Allied Health

Technology Administration

School Of Business

School of Nursing

College of Arts and Sciences:

Psychology

English

Music

Mathematics

Chemistry

Vice President for Academic Affairs Office

Gen Ed Task Force:

SLOs/Gen Distribution/Major Areas

(Vickie Kelly, Susie Pryor, Nancy Tate)

Course Identification and Approval Process

(Mike Russell, Mary Sheldon, Dan Petersen)

Assessment

(Cathy Hunt, Gillian Gabelmann, Donna LaLonde)

Tracking and Feedback

(Steve Angel, Becky Dodge, Jane Carpenter)

Task Force Summary

- The Task Force met three (3) times during the summer.
- Used the model forwarded by the General Education committee in Spring 2011 as the basis of discussions.
- Reviewed the Summer 2010 Gen Ed Task Force draft report
- Worked in subgroups answering categories of questions:
 - SLO's/General Distribution/Major Areas
 - Course Identification and Approval Process
 - Assessment
 - Tracking and Feedback

Some Effects of the Developing Model:

- Faculty who teach a Gen Ed course will move from having 3 out of 9 skills identified and assessed to 1 out of 5 SLOs.
- Continued collection of assessment data as requested from the General Education Review committee.
- Each department /academic unit will identify the University-level SLOs to be emphasized for each major, the curricular and co-curricular means of emphasizing these SLOs, and the courses/methods for assessment. (These results would be reported as part of the annual assessment report submitted to the Assessment Committee)
- The current General Education committee will continue to approve and review new courses as meeting general education criteria (this is the same process as the current model) but would also approve non-general education courses as meeting SLOs.
- Examples of assessment tools might include common rubrics for each SLO, a rubric that is discipline centered, and/or a combination of course embedded tests and national instruments. (Faculty already complete assessments. For some, there won't be a change while others may need to add a rubric process)

Implementation Process

- As we begin the implementation process, the following steps must be accomplished:
 1. Identify volunteers to work through the SLO and assessment process with members of the assessment committee. (on-going)
 2. The General Education review committee will now become the General Distribution/SLO committee. It is recommended two faculty assessment experts will be added to the committee. The committee will approve new distribution/SLO courses and conduct periodic review. (5 years—same as current)
 3. The Assessment Committee is recommended to change from an elected to an appointed committee since expertise in assessment will be crucial. The Assessment Committee will be charged with reviewing the university-wide and majors assessment data and creating an annual report for the VPAA and university faculty.

Q & A:

1. Can a course address more than 1 SLO?

Yes, but the recommendation is to focus on one. It is recommended that, to be recognized as a course dealing with an SLO, a minimum of 30% of the course activities must deal with that content (e.g. math reasoning) and 30% of the course assessment (i.e. grade) must measure student learning in that area.

For example:

Assessments which weigh in at 30% of overall course grade can be separate assignments/projects or tests with SLO assessment questions embedded or oral presentations with SLO assessment included in evaluation rubric, etc.

Q & A

2. How do the core, extended core and general education distribution requirements relate to transfer students?

MA 110/116

WU course or Transfer equivalent required*

EN 101

WU course or Transfer equivalent required*

WU 101

Transfer any FYE course* or Information Literacy equivalent course**

2nd Comm. Class

WU course or Transfer equivalent/Committee approval required*

SLO 4

WU course or Transfer equivalent/Committee approval required**

SLO 5

WU course or Transfer equivalent/Committee approval required**

9 hours- Humanities

9 hours Natural Science/Mathematics

9 hours Social Science

} WU course or Transfer equivalent/committee approval required**

*Reviewed by Appropriate Department Chair.

**Reviewed by Appropriate Department Chair or by the Distribution/SLO Committee. Once approved, the course is entered into the approved transfer database.

Q & A

3. Who will monitor the assessment process, potential future changes in SLOs and designations of courses (e.g. new course: Forestry 221 course=critical thinking)

- The current General Education Review committee will become the Distribution/Student Learning Outcome Review committee. Two faculty assessment experts will be added to the committee. The committee will approve new distribution/SLO courses and conduct 5-year review.
- The appointed Assessment Committee will annually review the university-wide assessment of SLOs on a staggered calendar basis. Results will be compiled and presented to the VPAA and university faculty annually. Decisions on whether or not students are at the appropriate level of achieving SLOs will lead to further discussion and appropriate changes by university faculty.

Q & A

4. Can Extended Core courses be counted toward the General Distribution hours?

The recommendation is that Core requirements be mutually exclusive from general education distribution hours. However, Extended Core hours (SLO B, D & E) should not be automatically mutually exclusive of general distribution hours.

5. Can 300/400 level courses be part of the extended core distribution requirement or should these be limited to 100 and 200 level courses?

It is recommended the general faculty determine an answer to this question.

6. Does my course have to meet all aspects of the chosen SLO?

(e.g. written, oral and expressive communication)

No. Your course can focus on a specific aspect of the SLO. By completing coursework in the distribution groupings, students should be exposed to multiple aspects of a particular SLO.

What does this mean for me?

- Move from 3 out of 9 skills identified to 1 out of 5 SLOs. Provide assessment data for one SLO rather than for 3 skills. Keep track annually.
- Review course content to determine if 30% of your course content and/or assessments apply to a given SLO. Provide information to the Distribution/SLO committee for approval.
- Work with your departmental colleagues to determine which of the university-wide SLOs will be enhanced and how they will be assessed through the major program. Submit assessment data on these SLOs annually to your assessment liaison.
- As an advisor, ensure that your advisees complete one course in each of the three extended core courses (the SLOs not covered by the core). No change in distribution advising.

Potential Priority Order and Next Steps

- **Fall 2011:**

- Update General Faculty through informational meetings
- Communicate through a variety of venues: Brown Bags, Informational Meetings with each School/College
- Pilot SLOs through
 - a. volunteers who will be reviewing their Gen Ed courses, and
 - b. those who modify their Fall 2011 Courses.
- Departmental review of existing Gen Ed courses to identify potential SLOs and submit to VPAA for dissemination (tentative SLO, not yet approved by committee)

- **Spring 2012:**

- Vote on proposal at General Faculty meeting
- Potential Distribution/SLO courses submitted to committee for approval. Recommend non general education SLO-only course submissions during initial 2 years of implementation. (e.g. Intro to Allied Health as meeting SLO #3 for transfers). Suggested limit is one course per SLO per year in order to balance out review process over time.
- CAS will provide a definition of the Humanities, Social Sciences, and Natural Sciences/Mathematics to Distribution/SLO committee to assist in transfer distribution grouping determinations.

Potential Priority Order and Next Steps

- **May 2012**
 - Review SLO volunteer course assessment updates
- **Fall 2012/Spring 2013**
 - Finalize details and work with University Registrar—online degree audit.
 - Prepare students and faculty/modify catalog for 2013-2014 with upcoming changes
- **Fall 2013**
 - New program in place.



Questions?