Operating Principles for GE Program

As part of the Guiding Principles for GE Reform at CSUB, the Senate and President endorsed a GE program that is “coherent, integrative, and learning focused across the curriculum and throughout the student’s education” and one that “addresses structural issues related to leadership, management, accountability, and resources.” In fall 2013, the Senate and President endorsed the recommendations of the GE Task Force which contained the following specific recommendations regarding GE management:

- Implementation of the General Education program will require university-wide collaboration and consultation.
- The university shall establish dedicated funding for the General Education program.
- The university shall establish a separate unit to administer the General Education program in consultation with the faculty, which shall be responsible for the General Education curriculum and its assessment.
- The university shall make a commitment to the training and support of GE faculty.
- Participation in the General Education program is predicated on meeting the needs of General Education.
- Departments whose faculty teaches in the General Education program shall be reimbursed.

The following additional specific principles for GE funding are derived from these foundations.

General Principles

1. Departments are committed and engaged with the holistic education of all students, including their own majors/minors, service courses for other majors, and participation in general education.
2. A portion of the school funding is dedicated to offering courses (or the FTEF equivalent) earmarked for and dedicated to general education.
3. FTES enrollment will be disaggregated by GE and non-GE courses. Schools will retain all FTES and will be responsible for meeting their major FTES targets. FTES targets will be set by taking into account growth in major FTES and FTES expected from GE courses, scheduled in accordance with the principles described below.
4. GECCo will oversee the quality and assessment of the GE Program. GECCo will work cooperatively with departments and oversee quality and scheduling of GE courses.
5. Allocation of GE resources is overseen by the Provost or designee, in consultation with Deans, GECCo, and the Faculty GE Director.

Program and Course Scheduling Principles

6. The primary consideration for GE course scheduling is to serve the educational needs of students seeking to complete their general education requirements.
7. GE course and faculty availability are determined by the department from among its GE qualified faculty and courses.
8. Early consultation will occur with GECCo and affected departments regarding the proposed GE requirement schedule and equitable methods of assigning courses within that schedule. Such methods shall consider student preference, breadth of opportunity, and department impact.

9. The Faculty GE Director authorizes the GE course schedule—extending the privilege to teach within the GE program to those eligible faculty, only with consent of the department chair and dean.

10. Every effort will be made to ensure that high-demand majors have enough seats available for their students in essential courses.

11. Class size limits will be set to best facilitate the achievement of the established learning outcomes within budget constraints.

12. Capstone courses that are open only to majors will be scheduled and funded by the department to meet the department needs.

13. Past history will be used as a starting point for allotting courses by starting with the average number of GE courses taught by entitled faculty (Tenured, Tenure-Track, and Entitled Lecturers) during the previous three years. This represents an earmarked FTEF floor that will be supplemented, as needed, to meet student demand. These earmarks are subject to the availability of courses, terms, and times that the faculty are eligible to teach within the general education program.

14. The GE Director and GECCo will propose an initial plan for the earmarks necessary to meet student demand and the number of courses allotted to each department within each GE area. This plan will consider the total number of courses offered by each department in the past three years, student preference, breadth of opportunity for students, and prior record of participation in faculty groups and assessment. This initial plan will be proposed to the Provost, School Deans, and AVP-AP to consider resource implications. Any changes suggested by this group would go back to GECCo for its consideration. Subsequent, substantive adjustments would follow the same approval process.

15. The GE Director will meet regularly with the deans for updates and to resolve potential problems. The director will present the deans with an annual report on FTES, assessment results, faculty development activities, and other relevant issues; disaggregated by department and school.

Example Timeline

November/December

Data is gathered to estimate demand for the following academic year in each of the GE designations, disaggregated by location (e.g., main campus, AV, or online), time (e.g., morning, afternoon, or evening), and day (e.g., MWF, MW, or TR). Feedback from GECCo is used to assist in preparation of the preliminary schedule.

An initial plan is presented to the Provost, School Deans, and AVP-AP for their approval.
January

A preliminary GE schedule for the following academic year is prepared where sections/enrollment is scheduled by GE designation, location, time, and day but slots are not yet ascribed to courses. Where there is uncertainty about demand in certain areas, sections are indicated as “ghost” sections to indicate a section that can be offered contingent upon student demand and available funding.

Of those faculty eligible to teach in general education, the departments determine, in consultation with the individual faculty members, the faculty availability for GE. In addition, the department determines the GE course availability.

The GE Faculty Director works with department chairs and deans to equitably distribute the courses among the schedule.

February

The Faculty GE Director authorizes the initial course schedule for the following year (including ghost sections, where appropriate) with faculty names—whenever possible.

April

Students register for fall semester.

May-July

Adjustments are made to the schedule, for example, to open up ghost sections based on unanticipated demand or to adjust instructors due to unforeseen personnel changes. All adjustments are done in a transparent manner through consultation with the deans and department chairs.

August

Fall enrollment begins. Adjustments to spring semester schedule are made as enrollment expectations are revised.

October

The Faculty GE Director, GECCo, and Department Chairs review the enrollment patterns and schedule to determine how well it matched student needs and other factors.

Presented to Academic Deans, December 9, 2014

Presented to Academic Senate Executive Committee January, 13, 2015