

Educational Stewardship Committee

Charge to the ESC Subcommittee on General Education and Unit Requirements

November 8, 2018

Background

Significant progress has been made in recent years to establish a General Education program at UVM, currently comprised of four University-wide undergraduate requirements (15 credits) plus unit-specific core requirements that in total approximate forty or more credits in all baccalaureate degree programs (see table). However, through the self-study process for reaccreditation with our institutional accreditor, NECHE (formerly NEASC), we have realized there is variation in both subject coverage and terminology across the units' core requirements. As a result, General Education is not as coherent or consistent as it could be. This subcommittee of the ESC has been formed to do groundwork that can lead to a proposal for a re-envisioned system of General Education at UVM that fulfills our accreditor's firm requirement of 40 credits of general education for all Bachelor's degree programs.

The Charge

The subcommittee is charged to:

- 1) Develop and propose a coherent set of subject categories across the core requirements of all the undergraduate schools and colleges (i.e. those offering the B.S. or B.A. degree).
- 2) Create a clear, easily understood framework for liberal education foundations that could supplement the four current General Education requirements, thereby effecting a plan for a comprehensive General Education program that can be considered by the academic units and the Faculty Senate.

The Subcommittee is not expected to address all matters of infrastructure, but should keep in mind the following end-requirements:

- In accordance with NECHE standard 4.16, the General Education framework should embody UVM's vision of an educated person. It should also reflect UVM's aspirations for all graduates, and the distinctive aspects of a UVM education
- Per NECHE Standard 4.17, the General Education framework must demonstrate "a balanced regard for what are traditionally referred to as the arts and humanities, the sciences including mathematics, and the social sciences"; and the relationships among these subjects and their methodologies.
- The framework, in combination with the four current General Education requirements must represent the equivalent of at least 40 credit hours, per NECHE standard 4.18.
- The framework must be executable in all of the University's baccalaureate programs in a distributed or other model.
- The framework must provide for internal transferability of fulfilled General Education requirements for students who change their academic major.
- The General Education outcomes must be subject to cyclical, closed loop assessment that informs curricular revision.