

From: Joseph Kahne <jkahne@ucr.edu>
Sent: Thursday, December 16, 2021 8:01 AM
To: Cherysa P Cortez <cherysa.cortez@ucr.edu>
Subject: gen ed thoughts

Hi Cherysa,

Below are our thoughts (in response to the Gen Ed Review doc. I hope this is helpful.

As always, thanks! And I hope you have a wonderful and restful break.

Best,

joe

The School of Education's (SOE's) Undergraduate Education Committee has reviewed the Ad Hoc General Education (GE) Review Committee's proposal for a new UCR general education curriculum at their November 23, 2021 and December 7, 2021 meetings. The SOE's Faculty Executive Committee then reviewed and considered the questions and comments generated. The SOE agrees that the review of the GE requirements for UCR undergraduate students are long overdue and are pleased to see that the campus is tackling this task. Particularly in light of the stated mission of the campus to improve educational opportunities and skill offerings so that all students in our community may benefit and thrive on a complex and changing society.

However, the document did generate several questions that we feel should be addressed and included before implementation phase occurs:

SOE Questions:

1. Data: Could the report writers clarify. Were faculty surveyed? Or is this review considered that survey?
2. Goals: What does "effective participation" mean and how will the implementing next joint committee tasked by the campus determine what is "effective"?
3. Thematic Components: Who determines if the subject matter, topics, and skills offered in the GE five themes complement a student's major? Also, are there some subjects (e.g., DEI and social justice related issues; discussion of marginalized groups and their impact on the field, etc.) that should be considered complementary to all majors?

SOE Requests:

1. We request transparency as the next committee designs and implements these GE requirements. We believe that they should check-in regularly during the process as courses are developed with the colleges and programs as formative steps occur.

2. We recommend infrastructure and “tools” to support the actual implementation of the new GE framework be designed along with the courses for advisors and departmental programs to use. We also recommend that the campus dedicate resources toward the staffing and time needed to implement these changes so that it doesn’t overtax advisors and program staff during the transition.

3. We recommend during implementation that the campus consults with UCR campus advisors as well as external advisors (other university advisors who have successfully implemented such potential broad and thematic tracks as are being proposed) during formative steps to gain their perspective on how implementation might best be achieved.

4. We approve of the idea of professional life skills being addressed in the document particularly as both current undergraduates and alumni clearly desire it. However, perhaps this could be also addressed not only student financial skills but also other much-needed areas that have arisen in current times such as mental health and social-emotional skill-building.

5. We recommend a method for regularly assessing the impact of such new system-wide changes.

6. We strongly recommend additional skills based-training for those graduate students who might be teaching the discussions and labs affiliated with the revised GE courses. Particularly as it is unlikely they will have received training or taken these courses under these new themes themselves during the first few years of the revised GE curriculum’s implementation.

7. SOE currently does not participate in any GE requirements because, historically, the School of Education follows CHASS GE breadth requirements. Therefore, School of Education courses do not count toward GE (this is also true for School of Business and School of Public Policy). Due to the recent growth of all three of these Schools, there are 3 UCR colleges that have large undergraduate programs that have no representation in the GE breadth requirements. We request that these 3 colleges be allowed to introduce courses that fulfill breadth requirements.

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Pronouns: he, him, his