



BOARD OF REGENTS

SUMMARY OF ITEM FOR ACTION, INFORMATION OR DISCUSSION

TOPIC: Report on General Education at Frostburg State University

COMMITTEE: Education Policy

DATE OF COMMITTEE MEETING: September 21, 2011

SUMMARY: Today, the Committee will hear from Dr. Steve Simpson, provost of Frostburg State University, about that institution's General Education Program, which was lauded in FSU's 2006 Middle States' decennial review for its emphases on interdisciplinarity, diversity, disciplinary capstones, and capacity for assessment. This presentation represents a continuation of the series of presentations on general education that began last academic year when the Committee heard from UMCP, TU, and UB. The USM Strategic Plan and the System and state focus on competitiveness and workforce development demand that the governing board take responsibility for understanding general education requirements in the state and at the different USM institutions to ensure that the USM has in place high-quality educational programs to meet statewide needs. There will be additional presentations during the 2011-2012 academic year.

In addition to the overview provided with the agenda materials, Dr. Simpson will be pleased to provide upon request a list of all interdisciplinary colloquia offered as part of FSU's General Education Program.

ALTERNATIVE(S): This is an information item only.

FISCAL IMPACT: This is an information item only.

CHANCELLOR'S RECOMMENDATION: This is an information item only.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

DATE:

BOARD ACTION:

DATE:

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FROSTBURG STATE UNIVERSITY
Report on FSU's General Education Program

I. TIMELINE

FSU's "Undergraduate Education Initiative" (UEI) was announced in May, 2002.

- The UEI launched a two-year review of undergraduate education with widespread engagement by faculty, staff, and students.
- Recommendations of the UEI Task Force were reviewed and adopted by the Faculty Senate and incorporated into undergraduate catalogs of 2005-2007 and 2007-2009.
- Specific course syllabi and proposals are reviewed for consistency with learning goals by the Faculty Senate Subcommittee on University Undergraduate Curriculum Review.

II. KEY FEATURES OF THE UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION INITIATIVE

- The core principle of FSU's General Education Program (GEP) is that students learn more completely and more deeply when components of general education and the major are interwoven to offer multiple opportunities to develop connections between disciplines, theories, and ideas.
- Among the special features of FSU's undergraduate program are emphases on:
 - Freshman learning communities and senior capstone courses that provide students with a focused introduction and conclusion to major programs;
 - Lifelong learning skills, including technological and information literacy;
 - An appreciation for cultural identities, including a required course in "Identity and Difference;"
 - Interdisciplinary colloquia, encouraging students to synthesize and integrate knowledge across disciplinary lines through a required freshman FSU Colloquium and an elective upper-level FSU Colloquium; and
 - Specific outcomes framed in a manner that can be assessed.
- Frostburg State University's Goals for General Education reflect the mission of the University and its Undergraduate Institutional Learning Goals through a focus on four specific areas of learning.
 - CORE SKILLS. Students must become proficient in reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills necessary for effective communication. They will also develop quantitative literacy, technology literacy, and information literacy.
 - LIBERAL KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS OF INQUIRY, CRITICAL THINKING, AND SYNTHESIS. Students will develop the foundational skills necessary to acquire knowledge in the humanities, the natural sciences, the social sciences, and the arts, which collectively embody the human cultural heritage. Students will be introduced to critical thinking.

- VALUES AND SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY. Students will develop the foundational skills necessary to critically explore, evaluate, and define their values and become responsible citizens in a complex and changing society.
- APPRECIATION OF CULTURAL IDENTITIES. Students will gain insight into the ways cultural identities and experiences shape individual perspectives of the world and influence interactions with people from different backgrounds.

III. MIDDLE STATES' REVIEW

By the time FSU's decennial Middle States' accreditation visit occurred in 2006, the new GEP was well on its way to implementation. According to the Middle States' team report, FSU's general education reform effort modeled "some of the best practices of first-phase curriculum development: widespread faculty participation, energetic administrative leadership, and purposeful faculty/administrative cooperation." In addition, they noted that "the UEI shows strength and boldness in its commitment to interdisciplinary learning in what has the potential to be a genuinely distinctive general education program."

IV. PRELIMINARY ASSESSMENT RESULTS

- The Assistant Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences is charged with developing and applying criteria to assess the performance of GEP coursework in meeting FSU's learning goals. Systematic assessment began in 2009-2010; we expect all courses to be reviewed by 2011-2012. Nearly 95% of courses reviewed in 2009-2010 met (38%) or exceeded (56%) standards in the first round of reviews.
- Courses approved more recently by the University Undergraduate Curriculum Review Committee (UUCR), including interdisciplinary colloquia, were best at fulfilling university learning goals; those reviewed earlier, especially distribution courses, did not fare as well.
- The Middle States' reviewers' draft response to the Periodic Review Report for 2011 cites FSU for making "good progress" in GEP assessment.

V. THE FUTURE

- FSU's GEP readily supports the USM mission, core values, and strategic planning goals, especially the value of the intellectual development of students, including the principles, values, and balanced perspective inherent in a well-rounded, liberal education; and the goals of producing graduates knowledgeable of and sensitive to the cultural, environmental, and technological issues facing a global economy, who understand the importance of and responsibilities inherent in citizenship.
- FSU's newly revised mission statement places increased emphasis on experiential learning. We anticipate changes in undergraduate education that place increased emphasis on experiential activities.

GENERAL EDUCATION PROGRAM (GEP)

General Education Program (GEP) *Minimum of 40 credit hours required of all students***CORE SKILLS** - *Minimum of 9 credit hours of coursework or credit by exam*

1. Introductory Composition (3 hours) ENGL 101/111* Freshman Composition	3 hours	3. Mathematics: <i>One of the following (3-4 hours each):</i> MATH 104 Intro to Mathematical Problem Solving MATH 102 College Algebra MATH 120 Pre-Calculus MATH 209/219* Elements of Applied Probability & Statistics MATH 236 Calculus I	3-4 hours
2. Advanced Writing: <i>One of the following (3 hours each):</i> ENGL 308/309/310/312* Advanced Composition ENGL 300 Critical Writing about Literature ENGL 330 Business Writing ENGL 338 Technical Writing ENGL 339 Scientific Writing	3 hours		
			Total hours: minimum of 9

MODES OF INQUIRY - *Totalling 31-32 credit hours*

● You may not count more than one course or option where there are alternatives listed (as designated by OR) to meet Modes of Inquiry requirements in Groups A,B,C,D and E.

A. The Fine and Performing Arts: *At least one of the following (3 hours each)* **3 hours**

Art	ART 100/111* Art Appreciation or ART 110 Visual Imagery
Dance	DANC 110 Dance Appreciation
Music	MUSC 110 Intro. to World Music or MUSC 117 Music of Africa, Asia & the Americas
Theatre	THEA 106 Intro. to Theatre or THEA 107 Introduction to Theatrical Vision

B. The Humanities: *At least two of the following (3 hours each)* **6 hours**

History	HIST 100/111* The Contemporary World in Historical Perspective
Languages	FREN 250 Overview of French Language & Culture or SPAN 250 Overview of Spanish Language & Culture
Literature	ENGL 150/250* or ENGL 221 Intro. to Literature/Intermed. Composition
Philosophy	PHIL 101/111* Intro. to Philosophy or PHIL 102 Contemporary Ethical Problems

C. The Natural Sciences: *At least two of the following (3-4 hours each)* **7-8 hours**

Biology	BIOL 109 Human Biology and the Environment or BIOL 149 General Biology I
Chemistry	CHEM 100/113* Chemistry and Society or CHEM 201 General Chemistry I
Geography	GEOG 103/113* Physical Geography
Physical Science	PHSC 100 Cosmic Concepts (3cr) and PHSC 101 Measurement (1cr) or PHSC 203 Physical Science or PHYS 215 General Physics I or PHYS 261 Principles of Physics I: Mechanics
Interdisciplinary	IDIS 160 Science, Technology, and Society (3cr)

D. The Social Sciences: *At least two of the following (3 hours each)* **6 hours**

Economics	ECON 200 Basic Economics or ECON 201/211* Principles of Economics (Macro)
Geography	GEOG 104/GEOG 114* Human Geography or GEOG 110 World Regional Geography: Cultural Diversity
Political Science	POSC 110/112* Intro. to American Politics or POSC 113/114* Intro. to World Politics or POSC 131 Introduction to Comparative Politics
Psychology	PSYC 150/151* General Psychology
Sociology	SOCI 100/111* Introduction to Sociology

E. The FSU Colloquia: *Two courses (3-4 hours each)* **6 hours**

IDIS 150/151* First-Year FSU Colloquium **or** IDIS/SUST 155 Intro. to Sustainability Studies (*required*)[†]
and select one course from:
IDIS 350/351* Advanced FSU Colloquium[‡] **or** one additional Modes of Inquiry course from Groups A-D.

F. Identity and Difference: *One of the following (3 hours each)* **3 hours**

You must meet all prerequisites listed for the course you select.

AAST 200 Intro. to African American Studies	MDFL 301 Latin American Women's Issues
AAST 400 Africans of the Diaspora	MUSC 117 Music of Africa, Asia & the Americas
ART 301 Artistic Traditions: Asia	MUSC 250 Women in Music
ART 302 Artistic Traditions: Africa & the Americas	PHIL 308 Political Philosophy
GEOG 104/114* Human Geography	PHIL 311 Asian and African Philosophy
GEOG 110 World Regional Geography: Cultural Diversity	PHIL 409 Philosophy and Women
GEOG 427 Geography of Languages and Religions	POSC 131 Introduction to Comparative Politics
HIST 100/111* The Contemporary World in Historical Perspective	PSYC 220 Psychology of Women
HIST 418 Native Peoples of the Americas	PSYC 325 African American Psychology
HIST 436 Women's Issues in World History	RECR 100 Leisure & Diverse American Culture
HLTH 125 Health and Culture	SOCI 224 Cultural Anthropology
INST 150 Introduction to World Religions	SOCI 305/SOWK 305 Racial & Cultural Minorities
INST 200 Intro. to International Studies	WMST 201 Introduction to Women's Studies
MDFL 111 Intercultural Understanding	

Total hours: minimum of 31

● A particular course may be counted to meet only one General Education requirement.

^{*}Honors course equivalent

[†]Complete prior to earning 45 credit hours or soon after transfer, if applicable.

[‡]Complete after earning 45 credit hours.