

General Studies Program Governance

I. General Studies Council

The General Studies Council (GSC) follows the guiding principle that students' academic interests are foremost in all deliberations and decisions.

A. Composition of the GSC

1. Voting Members

- Terms begin at the end of spring semester (after the last spring semester meeting of the GSC).
- Nominees should make provisions in their schedules to be able to attend Council meetings, which are typically scheduled for 3:30 p.m. on the first Thursday of the months during the academic year.
- Three tenured faculty members each (from different departments) from the College of Education and the College of Business and Technology; six tenured faculty members (from different departments) with a minimum of one faculty member and a maximum of two faculty members from each of the four divisions of the College of Arts and Sciences (the four divisions are: Natural Sciences, Social Sciences, Humanities, and Communication and Fine and Performing Arts)
 - Nomination process determined by the individual Colleges; two nominees from each College, selection made by the Chief Academic Officer in consultation with the Director of General Studies
 - Three-year staggered terms
 - Faculty members finishing a complete three year term may succeed themselves only once
- One faculty member holding the rank of senior lecturer, tenure track, or tenured from the Library
 - Nomination process determined by the Library; two nominees from the Library, selection made by the Chief Academic Officer in consultation with the Director of General Studies
 - Three-year term
 - Faculty members may succeed themselves only once

2. Non-voting Members

- One junior or senior undergraduate student
 - Nominated by Student Senate
 - Rotated among the three Colleges
 - One-year term
 - Terms begin at the end of spring semester (after the last spring semester meeting of the GSC).

- Nominees should make provisions in their schedules to be able to attend Council meetings, which are typically scheduled for 3:30 p.m. on the first Thursday of the months during the academic year.
 - The student representative to the General Studies Council will
 - I. Provide a monthly update to the student senate on actions of the General Studies Council
 - II. Convey any concerns regarding the General Studies Program from the student senate to the General Studies Council
 - III. Work with the Director of General Studies to solicit and evaluate student nominations for faculty members to be recognized for excellence in teaching General Studies courses
 - All *Ex Officio* Members
 - Director of General Studies (Chair of GSC)
 - Registrar or representative of the Registrar's Office
 - Director of Assessment or representative of the Assessment Office
 - Director of Academic Advising and Career Development or representative.
- B. Council Operations
1. Agenda to be published to campus via e-mail one week in advance of the meeting
 2. Quorum is defined as 2/3 of the voting members (9 voting members)
 3. Voting procedures
 - Actions are approved by a simple majority of the voting members in attendance, but the majority must include one vote from CBT, one vote from COE, and one vote each from at least two divisions of CAS
 - The Director or a council member may request a ballot vote. Ballot will be used with consensus of council.
 - Tie votes result in the failure of the motion or action
 4. Roberts Rules of Order
Attendance: only 3 absences per academic year permitted
 5. Proposed changes to this Governance Document are approved by majority vote of the GSC (as outlined in I.B.3.) and distributed for campus wide comment for at least two weeks. Changes may then be made by the GSC, and the proposal is forwarded to the Chief Academic Officer for final approval.

II. Duties of GSC

- A. Develop procedures for evaluating GS courses
- B. Approving or rejecting GS course proposals
- C. Assessment of student achievement and other aspects of GS program
- D. Establishing and reviewing GS waiver mechanisms
- E. Regularly reviewing GS program structure and objectives
- F. Reporting to the Chief Academic Officer and Faculty Senate Academic Affairs Committee
- G. Establishing policies with regard to the scheduling of GS courses, especially those unique to GS
- H. Developing standards and procedures for recognizing outstanding GS faculty

III. Duties of Director of General Studies

- A. Chair of GSC
- B. Coordinating GS offerings with Deans and Chairs in accord with the offering policies established by the GSC
- C. Facilitating development of GS offerings
- D. Facilitating assessment of GS program
- E. Reporting on behalf of GSC to the Chief Academic Officer, Faculty Senate and other interested parties
- F. Provide advance notice to the campus by e-mail of the agendas and to solicit comment on agenda items by interested parties
- G. Reports of GSC actions
 1. Minutes will be kept of all GSC meetings
 2. Copies of minutes will regularly be distributed to the following interested parties:
 - GSC members
 - Chief Academic Officer
 - Faculty Senate
 - University Archives
- H. Work with the student member of the General Studies council to solicit and evaluate student nominations for faculty members to be recognized for excellence in teaching General Studies courses.

IV. Student Appeals

- A. The appeals process is intended to be used only for courses that do not have an equivalent transfer course at UNK.
- B. The Registrar's Office determines and verifies whether General Studies requirements have been met by individual students.

- C. Students wishing to appeal a decision by the Registrar must submit a written request to the Director of General Studies; the Director is empowered by the GSC to make a decision regarding the student appeal.
 - 1. The request for a review of the Registrar's decision should be accompanied by supportive materials and specific course descriptions that support the student's contention.
 - 2. The request should be submitted prior to the beginning of the semester in which that student is scheduled to graduate.
- D. The Director of General Studies may elect to place the student's appeal on the agenda of the next meeting of the GSC for action, either to approve or deny the request.
- E. The student may appeal the Director's decision by submitting a written request to the Director for a GSC review of the student's appeal request. Upon receipt of the request, the Director will place the appeal on the agenda of the next meeting of the GSC for action, either to approve or deny the request.
- F. The student may appeal the decision of the GSC by submitting a written request to the Chief Academic Officer to review the decision. The Director of General Studies will then forward the decision of the Council to the Chief Academic Officer.

V. Approval of Courses

The GSC is the final recommending body prior to final approval by the Chief Academic Officer.

The General Studies Program must respond to changing circumstances yet maintain sufficient stability that students may complete the program without undue confusion. To accommodate change, the GSC will consider the submission of new courses under the following circumstances.

- A. Procedure for submitting courses for consideration as new General Studies courses, and/or petitioning to alter the category to which an existing GS course is assigned
 - 1. The course must be an active UNK offering.
 - 2. The author of the course proposal must provide a written explicit description of the course detailing how it meets the established General Studies criteria at both the program and category level. The proposal must include the following (available on the ORG General Studies for Faculty Canvas page):
 - 1. Part 1: Course Proposal Checklist
 - 2. Part 2: Course Information
 - 3. Part 3: Course Syllabus
 - 3. Simultaneous to submission to the GSC, courses must be submitted through the CIM system for inclusion in the General Studies Program.
 - 4. Authors of course proposals must meet with one of their college representatives on the GSC to review the checklist of required elements.

The proposed course must then be submitted to the Director of General Studies. If a college representative has reviewed the course then it will be included on the Council's agenda.

- B. Approval: GSC Procedure for consideration of course proposal
 - 1. The proposer will be invited to present the course proposal to the Council.
 - 2. If the course meets established criteria, then the Council will vote to disseminate the proposal to campus. Upon approval, the Director of General Studies disseminates the proposal for campus comments for a minimum of two weeks.
 - 3. The Council will vote on the proposal at the next regularly scheduled meeting.
- C. The Council's decision will be forwarded to the Chief Academic Officer for final approval. Actions are recorded in the minutes and disseminated to the campus
- D. Course approvals will go into effect the following fall semester. First Year Seminar courses take effect the next available term if all departments have a previously approved -126 course for the appropriate prefix(es).
- E. The GSC, when it perceives a need, may put out calls for courses in specific areas.

VI. Program Changes

The GSC is the final recommending body prior to final approval by the Chief Academic Officer.

- A. The GSC is responsible for regular review of program structure and objectives, especially in light of assessment data, evolving admission standards, and changing educational philosophies. Recommended changes in the General Studies Program may be initiated by the Chief Academic Officer, GSC or another academic governing body (College or Faculty Senate). Changes to the General Studies Program may be major or minor changes.
 - 1. Examples of major changes include changes to the total program required hours, hours required in any GS category, addition or elimination of any GS category, changes to the composition of the GSC, revisions to the duties of GSC members, or other changes as approved by the council as major changes
 - 2. Examples of minor changes include changes to the learning outcomes, assessment rubrics, , or other changes as approved by the council as minor changes.
- B. Procedures for approving major changes
 - 1. Proposals for a major change must include a detailed written description of the proposed change and a rationale supporting the reason for the change.
 - The proposer must submit the proposal through an appropriate college Council representative(s)

1. The representative(s) will forward the proposal to the Director of General Studies who will place the proposal on the agenda of the regularly scheduled meeting.
2. Procedures for review and approval described in section V. B2 will be followed.
2. Proposals for major changes approved by the GSC (section I. B3) must then be simultaneously forwarded to the college Educational Policy/Academic Affairs committees, the Faculty Senate Academic Affairs committee, and for general campus comments for review and recommendations.
 - Recommendations from the College Educational Policy/Academic Affairs committees and the Faculty Senate Academic Affairs Committee must be made to the GSC within 30 days in order to be considered by the Council. Any proposal not returned by the 30 day deadline will be considered to be an approval by that body.
3. If the proposal for a major change is approved by vote of the GSC (section 1. B3), the proposal will be sent to the relevant College committees to conduct an election within the next two weeks.
 - The relevant College committees will conduct an election by their eligible faculty. Eligibility to vote is determined by the constitution of each College. An affirmative vote by a simple majority of eligible voting faculty in each of the three Colleges for recommendation of the major change to the GS program to the Chief Academic Officer, who makes the final decision.

C. Procedures for approving minor changes

1. Proposals for a minor change must include a detailed written description of the proposed change and a rationale supporting the reason for the change.
 - The proposer must submit the proposal through an appropriate college Council representative(s)
 - The representative(s) will forward the proposal to the Director of General Studies who will place the proposal on the agenda of the regularly scheduled meetingProcedures for review and approval described in section V. C2 will be followed.
2. If the proposal is approved, then the Council will vote to disseminate the proposal to campus. Upon approval, the Director of General Studies disseminates the proposal for campus comments for a minimum of two weeks.
 - The GSC will review the comments and take them into consideration to amend, approve, or reject the proposal.
 - The Council will vote on the proposal at the next regularly scheduled meeting.

- The Council's decision will be forwarded to the Chief Academic Officer for final approval. Actions are recorded in the minutes and disseminated to the campus.

3. Approved changes in the General Studies Program will go into effect for the next catalog year.

VII. College GS Requirements

- A. Colleges may specify courses that their majors must take within the GS program. First Year Seminar courses may not be listed as required or elective courses for any program (major, minor, etc.).
- B. Colleges are encouraged to accommodate those students who change majors.
- C. GS Requirements must appear in the catalog.