

General Education Program Governance

General Education Mission and Vision

Mission

To support the university's academic mission by developing students' knowledge, skills, and abilities to understand the world, make connections across disciplines, foster their curiosity, and contribute to the solutions of contemporary problems.

Vision

To build characteristics of well-rounded, well-informed, productive individuals through development of

- Oral and written communication
- Quantitative skills
- Skill in critical and ethical evaluation of information and environment
- The ability to locate, evaluate, apply, and acknowledge sources of information
- Social and civic responsibility
- Self-empowerment to excel academically, creatively, and practically
- Understanding of the physical world and its interactions
- Aesthetic appreciation
- Respect for and understanding of diversity in a local and global context
- Awareness of the different aspects of wellness

I. General Education Council

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

A. Composition of the GEC

1. Voting Members

- Terms begin at the end of spring semester (after the last spring semester meeting of the GEC).
- 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 Education

- Three-year staggered terms
- Faculty members finishing a complete three-year term may succeed themselves only once
- One tenured faculty member 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 Education
 - 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, if possible
 - One-year term
 - Terms begin at the end of spring semester (after the last spring semester meeting of the GEC).
 - 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 Education Council will
 - I. Provide a monthly update to the student senate on actions of the General Education Council
 - II. Convey any concerns regarding the General Education Program from the student senate to the General Education Council
 - III. Work with the Director of General Education to solicit and evaluate student nominations for faculty members to be recognized for excellence in teaching General Education courses
- All *Ex Officio* Members
 - Director of General Education (Chair of GEC)
 - 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

- To be included on the agenda course proposals or other items must be received by the Director 8 days prior to the meeting
- The agenda will be approved prior to the meeting via email by Tuesday the week of the GEC 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 plus one of the voting members in attendance
 - 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 GEC (as outlined in I.B.3.) and distributed for campus wide comment for at least two weeks. Changes may then be made by the GEC, and the proposal is forwarded to the Chief Academic Officer for final approval.

II. Duties of GEC

- A. Develop procedures for evaluating GE courses
- B. Approving or rejecting GE course proposals
- C. Assessment of student achievement and other aspects of GE program
- D. Establishing and reviewing GE waiver mechanisms
- E. Regularly reviewing GE 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 GE courses, especially those unique to GE
- H. Developing standards and procedures for recognizing outstanding GE faculty

III. Duties of Director of General Education

- A. Chair of GEC
- B. Coordinating GE offerings with Deans and Chairs in accord with the offering policies established by the GEC
- C. Facilitating development of GE offerings
- D. Facilitating assessment of GE program

- 120 E. Reporting on behalf of GEC to the Chief Academic Officer, Faculty Senate and
121 other interested parties
- 122 F. Provide advance notice to the campus by e-mail of the agendas and to solicit
123 comment on agenda items by interested parties
- 124 G. Reports of GEC actions
- 125 1. Minutes will be kept of all GEC meetings
- 126 2. Copies of minutes will regularly be distributed to the following interested
127 parties:
- 128 ▪ GEC members
- 129 ▪ Chief Academic Officer
- 130 ▪ Faculty Senate
- 131 ▪ University Archives
- 132 H. Work with the student member of the General Education council to solicit and
133 evaluate student nominations for faculty members to be recognized for
134 excellence in teaching General Education courses.
- 135 IV. Student Appeals
- 136 A. The appeals process is intended to be used only for courses that do not have an
137 equivalent transfer course at UNK.
- 138 B. The Registrar's Office determines and verifies whether General Education
139 requirements have been met by individual students.
- 140 C. Students wishing to appeal a decision by the Registrar must submit a written
141 request to the Director of General Education; the Director is empowered by the
142 GEC to make a decision regarding the student appeal.
- 143 1. The request for a review of the Registrar's decision should be
144 accompanied by supportive materials and specific course descriptions
145 that support the student's contention.
- 146 2. The request should be submitted prior to the beginning of the semester
147 in which that student is scheduled to graduate.
- 148 D. The Director of General Education may elect to place the student's appeal on the
149 agenda of the next meeting of the GEC for action, either to approve or deny the
150 request.
- 151 E. The student may appeal the Director's decision by submitting a written request to
152 the Director for a GEC review of the student's appeal request. Upon receipt of
153 the request, the Director will place the appeal on the agenda of the next meeting
154 of the GEC for action, either to approve or deny the request.
- 155 F. The student may appeal the decision of the GEC by submitting a written request
156 to the Chief Academic Officer to review the decision. The Director of General
157 Education will then forward the decision of the Council to the Chief Academic
158 Officer.
- 159 V. Approval of Courses
- 160

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

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

A. Procedure for submitting courses for consideration as new General Education courses, and/or petitioning to alter the category to which an existing GE 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 Education 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 GEC, courses must be submitted through the CIM system for inclusion in the General Education Program.
4. Authors of course proposals must meet with one of their college representatives on the GEC to review the checklist of required elements. The proposed course must then be submitted to the Director of General Education. If a college representative has reviewed the course then it will be included on the Council's agenda.

B. Approval: GEC 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 Education 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 GEC, when it perceives a need, may put out calls for courses in specific areas.

VI. Program Changes

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

- A. The GEC 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 Education Program may be initiated by the Chief Academic Officer, GEC or another academic governing body (College or Faculty Senate). Changes to the General Education Program may be major or minor changes.

1. Examples of major changes include changes to the total program required hours, hours required in any GE category, addition or elimination of any GE category, changes to the composition of the GEC, revisions to the duties of GEC 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 Education 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 GEC (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 GEC 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 GEC (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 will be considered to be by a simple majority of eligible voting faculty in each of the three Colleges. The results of the

248 vote and for recommendation of the proposed major change to the GE
249 program will be sent to the Chief Academic Officer, who makes the final
250 decision

251 C. Procedures for approving minor changes

252 1. Proposals for a minor change must include a detailed written description
253 of the proposed change and a rationale supporting the reason for the
254 change.

- 255 ▪ The proposer must submit the proposal through an appropriate
256 college Council representative(s)
- 257 ▪ The representative(s) will forward the proposal to the Director of
258 General Education who will place the proposal on the agenda of the
259 regularly scheduled meeting

260 Procedures for review and approval described in section V. C2 will be
261 followed.

262 2. If the proposal is approved, then the Council will vote to disseminate the
263 proposal to campus. Upon approval, the Director of General Education
264 disseminates the proposal for campus comments for a minimum of two
265 weeks.

- 266 ▪ The GEC will review the comments and take them into consideration
267 to amend, approve, or reject the proposal.
- 268 ▪ The Council will vote on the proposal at the next regularly scheduled
269 meeting.
- 270 ▪ The Council's decision will be forwarded to the Chief Academic Officer
271 for final approval. Actions are recorded in the minutes and
272 disseminated to the campus.

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

275 VII. College GE Requirements
276

277 A. Colleges may specify courses that their majors must take within the GE program.
278 First Year Seminar courses may not be listed as required or elective courses for
279 any program (major, minor, etc.).

280 B. Colleges are encouraged to accommodate those students who change majors.

281 C. GE Requirements must appear in the catalog.