

Widener University General Education Program

The Faculty Council Academic Affairs Committee believes that the articulation of the general education philosophy, learning objectives/outcomes, and program assessment is the responsibility of the Faculty, and should be accomplished through the Faculty Governance structure. The Academic Affairs Committee should have primary responsibility for proposing a University General Education Program, consistent with its charge (see Section 5.09 of the Faculty Council Bylaws).

Consistent with the Widener University Strategic Plan, the Committee expects to present, before the end of the 2006 Fall semester, a proposal for a University general education program to Faculty Council for consideration. The initial assessment of the general education program should take place during the 2007/2008 academic year.

To assist the Committee in formulating this proposal, the Committee requests that a task force be formed. The purpose for the task force:

To provide a report to the Academic Affairs Committee of Faculty Council that details the philosophy and the learning objectives/outcomes of a proposed general education program, and a recommendation for on-going review and assessment of the structure of the proposed general education program.

The membership of the task force:

- The chair will be currently on and elected by Academic Affairs
Anne Krouse, Penelope (Sue) Greenberg – co-chairs
- One elected representative from CAS, SBA, SHM, SHSP, SOE, SON, Wolfgram Library
Scott Van Bramer (CAS), Karen Leppel (SBA), Charles Nippert (SOE)
Connie Holt (SHM), Marina Barnett (SHSP), Judith Kilpatrick (SON),
Molly Wolf (Wolfgram)
- One faculty representative selected by the dean of University College – Emily Richardson
- The dean of CAS and one other dean elected by the deans – Matthew Poslusny, Fred Akl
- The Director of the Honors Program in General Education – Ilene Lieberman
- One representative from Student Affairs, as recommended by the Provost –Tiffany Kator
- Asst. Provost for Assessment – Brigitte Valesey

The charge of the task force:

- Identify the common characteristics and competencies among the student learning objectives in the various academic programs and extra-curricular programming. Specific considerations should include:
 - Do the distribution requirements, the Undergraduate Writing Program, and the mathematics proficiency requirement meet the various discipline and accreditation expectations for liberal education?
 - Do the goals and objectives of the Honors Program in General Education meet the minimum discipline and accreditation goals for liberal education?
 - What are the educational goals/objectives of the Student Services programming?
- Determine how these shared characteristics align with the mission and institutional objectives of the University.
- Use these shared characteristics
 - to build on the work of the General Education Network to articulate the purpose of general education at Widener; and
 - to articulate measurable learning outcomes for the general education competencies.
- Determine how the current distribution requirement compares with those at other comparable institutions.
- Propose a minimum number of academic credit hours that should be required for the general education program to contribute meaningfully to the development of a generally-educated person
- Propose a minimum number of hours for out-of-class experiences that should be required for the general education program to contribute meaningfully to the development of a generally-educated person, along with a structure to document and assess those experiences.
- Propose an assessment plan to measure the outcomes across the University.
- Propose an appropriate body for the on-going review and assessment of the proposed general education program.
- Present the task force's report to the Chair of the Faculty Council Academic Affairs Committee on or before Friday, 29 September 2006.