

## **General Education Reform FAQ:**

### **Where can I find information on the MSU General Education reform process?**

Visit the [General Education Reform](#) website. There you will find the membership, agendas, minutes, and reports of the Faculty General Education Advisory Council (FGEAC) and the General Education Steering Committee (GESC), as well as useful links to General Education related resources.

### **What is General Education Reform at MSU?**

General Education Reform at MSU is the critical reflection on the current [General Education Program](#) at Morehead State University. It is intended to identify the major strengths and weaknesses of our current general education program and suggest revisions when and where needed.

### **Why do we need to reform Gen Ed?**

The current MSU Gen Ed program is anchored by goals (see [Essential and Important Goals](#) of the current General Education Program), rather than measurable learner outcomes, and the present Gen Ed distribution of courses are not aligned with these goals in such a way as to insure student exposure to the goals (students can avoid 6 out of 9 goals and “successfully” graduate).

The current program (beyond the core) consists of a cafeteria-style list of course choices distributed over various academic disciplines. It lacks coherency and fails to articulate a clear vision of a general education.

There is no systematic plan for continuous assessment and improvement at the program level and the assessment at the course level is varied and not generally used for continuous improvement initiatives beyond the efforts of an individual instructor.

The limited assessment data that has been collected at a program level is cross-sectional rather than longitudinal in nature, and hence is of little use in determining the “value added” by the MSU Gen Ed program. However, that data does not indicate that MSU students demonstrate acceptable proficiencies in those skills essential for 21st century.

Best practices such as integrative learning, diversity initiatives, community-based learning/service learning, learning communities, first year programs, and faculty development for improved General Education teaching and learning are not integrated into our present General Education curriculum.

### **How have other institutions addressed similar General Education problems?**

The FGEAC has identified other institutions that have met the challenges of General Education reform in innovative and effective ways. Our [Gen Ed Reform Models Resource Page](#)—available both in hard copy and on the website—provides brief descriptions and web links for selected schools in the areas of learner outcomes, assessment, first year programs, and administrative structure.

### **What is our timeline for General Education reform?**

The revised timeline calls for trial offerings of core General Education courses in Fall of 2010, with the full implementation of the new General Education program by Fall 2011. See the [General Education Reform Timeline](#).

### **Who is working on General Education reform and how can you contact them?**

The [Faculty General Education Advisory Council](#) (FGEAC) is comprised of 22 elected representatives; one from each department. They have been charged with organizing and providing oversight for development of a redesigned General Education program, including criteria for course proposals and committee structure for the review of course proposals and a General Education framework that includes defined learner outcomes and assessment strategies.

On May 7, 2008, the Provost determined that the work of this advisory body would obviate the need for a formal vote on the new General Education program: "Given the time, energy, and resources that have been committed to this effort, President Andrews and I have agreed that faculty approval should be secured continually as the process moves forward, rather than in a single vote. Faculty, through their representatives to the FGEAC and in department meetings slated for the Fall 2008 semester will have such opportunities." See the [Provost's full statement](#).

The [General Education Steering Committee](#) (GESC) was formed, initially, as a team with representatives from the department chairs, the University General Education Committee, the Faculty Senate, and the President's Leadership Academy. They were charged with attending the [AACU](#) General Education institute to identify successful models of General Education reform and to determine the components of a 21st century liberal education (including appropriate student learning outcomes, assessment, and transferability). Their report, [Pathway to Success](#), provides a history of General Education reform at MSU and outlines their recommendations. This team was then constituted as the GESC with the additional membership of the Provost, the Chair of the FGEAC, and assistants to the Provost and the President, and was charged with organizing and initiating the General Education reform process. Yvonne Baldwin, member of the GESC, has been designated as Special Assistant to the Provost for General Education.

You may contact your departmental representatives or the [Gen Ed e-mail](#) with your questions and concerns.

### **What steps have been taken towards General Education reform?**

A campus-wide electronic survey, “[Developing Learner Outcomes](#),” was launched in Fall of 2007 and analyzed by the FGEAC in January of 2008. A draft document of learner outcomes was developed from the survey information.

Focus groups were held February 8-14, 2008 to present the new learner outcomes and to solicit further information from the campus community on General Education reform. See [Focus Groups Summary](#).

### **What decisions regarding General Education reform have already been made?**

The total hours now required for a baccalaureate degree by the [CPE](#) (Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education) is 120. MSU will reduce its minimum required hours from 128 to 120 in the interest of affordability to students, student academic success, and retention.

[SACS](#) (Southern Association of Colleges and Schools) requires that General Education be at least 30 credit hours for a baccalaureate degree and that credit hours include at least one course from each of the following: humanities/fine arts; social/behavioral sciences; and natural science/mathematics.

The GESC has recommended reducing MSU General Education hours from 48 to 36 (33 hours plus the 3 hour capstone). (See [Pathway to Success](#).) Within the 33 hours, there would be a 15 hour core that is to be taken within the first three semesters of enrollment.

### **How can you contribute to the General Education reform process?**

Review the information provided on the General Education website. Visit the links to models for General Education reform. Discuss General Education with your colleagues, students, and community members. Convey your suggestions and concerns to your department’s FGEAC representative and/or to the [Gen Ed e-mail](#).