



UNIVERSITY OF GUAM
Unibetsedat Guahan
Faculty Senate
GENERAL EDUCATION REVIEW COMMITTEE



**AY 2015-2016
MEMBERS**

Michael Clement
mclement@triton.uog.edu

Nelson Franco
francon@triton.uog.edu

Leila Kabigting
kabigtingl@triton.uog.edu

Arline Leon Guerrero
Secretary
arlineleg@triton.uog.edu

Daniel P. Lindstrom
dlindstrom@triton.uog.edu

Joseph D. Rouse
rousej@triton.uog.edu

Michelle Santos
Chair
msantos@triton.uog.edu

**AY 2014-2015
MEMBERS**

Michael B. Ehlert
Chair
mbehlert@uguam.uog.edu

Elizabeth E. Foma
efoma@uguam.uog.edu

Nelson Franco
nfranco@uguam.uog.edu

Arline Leon Guerrero
arlineleg@uguam.uog.edu

Daniel P. Lindstrom
dlindstrom@uguamlive.uog.edu

Joe Rouse
jdrouse@uguam.uog.edu

Michelle Santos
Secretary
uogseed@gmail.com

**AY 2013-2014
MEMBER**

Zoltan Szekely
zszekely@uguam.uog.edu

**The UOG General Education Framework:
Building programs through a solid foundation**

Ina, Diskubre, Setbe,
To Enlighten, to Discover, to Serve

A primary mission of the University of Guam is to prepare students for life by providing educational opportunities to increase knowledge, develop skills, and strengthen values essential to living in our rapidly evolving world. General Education is commonly seen as providing the foundation for programs to fulfill their specific responsibilities. Recent reports indicate that the most successful institutions incorporate general education goals throughout all years of study even within major programs. Integrating the goals of general education across all years also meets Standard 2 of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC).

A Three Tiered Structure

After extensive reviews and discussion the UOG Faculty Senate General Education Review Committee (GERC) recommends a three-tiered framework to the General Education curriculum. Tier I (called *Core Foundation*) provides a foundation of the five WASC core competencies. Tier II (called *Breadth through Diversity and Direction*) provides the breadth needed for successful and healthy living as well as direction toward and into a major. Tier III (called *Capstone Experience*) fosters mastery of the core competencies embedded within program objectives enhanced by the values of modern academia (creativity, innovation, diversity, ethical and civic responsibility, and civic engagement¹). The three tiers work together to meet the aspirations of academia while fulfilling the mission of the University of Guam and satisfying WASC expectations.

Tier I: Core Foundation

Components

The WASC core competencies include written and oral communication, quantitative skills, information literacy, and critical thinking. The proposal associates each competency with a required course. All students beginning college at UOG complete the same (or equivalent) core courses.

Rationale

The core competencies component provides a unifying foundation university wide by establishing common learning expectancies that can be satisfied by successful completion of select courses. It eases initial student learning assessment and fosters attaining the institutional learning outcomes. Program faculty can be confident that incoming majors have basic skills thereby facilitating course sequencing and planning. All campus units would have interest in student

success in the core component because it firms the foundation for the major course of study. Because Core Foundation courses are required for all students, they are excluded from major requirements (i.e., cannot fulfill general education and major; no double counting of core courses).

Practice

One course serves as the foundation for each core competency. A Core Foundation course explicitly addresses one core competency at a college foundation level via at least three student learning outcomes (SLOs). The SLOs are explicitly addressed and integrated through the course. The SLOs are assessed each semester with an annual report to the University Assessment Committee and the General Education Review Committee. The university and college/school provides sufficient administrative support to meet the assessment expectation. Advanced Placement (AP) exams may fulfill the foundation course requirement when expected competencies are demonstrated. Placement exams for math may allow for a higher-level course to fulfill this requirement.

Students enroll in at least two of these courses each semester until completing the requirement, and all courses must be completed with a 'C' or better by the end of their second year. Students may enroll in 300-level courses or higher after successfully satisfying all Core Foundation requirements.

Tier II: Breadth through Diversity & Direction

Components

Tier II of a UOG general education establishes the breadth of knowledge available at UOG by exposing students to diverse fields of study and providing direction toward a major. The diversity component (called *Diversity Foundation*) exposes students to the primary ways of being in our world and how that affects them personally while complimenting their major program of study. The Uniquely UOG component is composed of courses with local relevance drawn from diverse disciplines. The directional component (called *Direction Building*) guides students into a major program of study by reinforcing the Diversity Foundation and develops the skills of an educated person. All three components strengthen the core competencies developed in the primary level while satisfying foundational elements for major programs (i.e., program learning outcomes).

Rationale

The university is a cumulative repository of human learning and experience. A quality university education, instantiated by WASC Standard 2, enlightens students to the diversity of human knowledge, defined broadly as the humanities and the sciences, while providing pathways to discovering how they may improve themselves, serve their communities, and build humanity. Given our increasingly interconnected world, a solid understanding of both these perspectives is vital for the quality of all life on earth.

Practice

Tier II has two objectives. The first is to establish a diverse foundation exposing students to the various ways humans know and understand our world and ourselves. The second is to provide direction toward a major field of study. Both objectives work together preparing students

for productive and fulfilling lives, thus meeting the primary goals of adult education and WASC expectations.

Diversity Foundation

The Diversity Foundation is made up of five themes. The themes are based on the broad groupings of the humanities and sciences as structured by the National Endowment for the Humanitiesⁱⁱ and the National Science Foundationⁱⁱⁱ. The humanities themes are the *creative & expressive arts, human systems & organizations, and cultural perspectives*. The STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) themes are *science & math* and *human science*. Broadly conceived, these five themes include the knowledge base and related skills essential to thriving in a modern world.

Students satisfy the Diversity Foundation component by successfully completing one course from each theme. These courses may count toward general education and program majors (i.e., double counting encouraged). GERC works with programs to finalize specific courses based on the relationship of SLOs to the identified thematic statement, the assessment plan, and extant evidence of student learning. The SLOs of approved courses reinforce the Tier I core competencies. Programs offering these courses report assessment outcomes for targeted course SLOs in the Annual Assessment Inventory with evidence included in the program self-study. Most will be 100-level courses and focus on building foundational skills. The Diversity Foundation thematic statements are as follows:

STEM

Science & Math

Demonstrate basic scientific methods by employing appropriate technological, mathematical, analytical, experimental and other tools commonly accepted in the scientific community. Reason and solve problems from a wide array of contexts; create logical arguments supported by quantitative evidence; and communicate those arguments in a variety of formats (e.g., words, tables, and mathematical equations) as appropriate.

Human Science

Investigate and interpret aspects of human life and activities in a systematic way that validates sensory and psychological experiences. Such inquiries can be subject to experimentation and includes quantitative scientific methodologies in its interpretation. These fields include, but are not limited to, biology, human nutrition and behavior, psychology, and agriculture.

HUMANITIES

Creative and Expressive Arts

Engage in creative expression through artistic activity and/or identify and analyze the impact of cultural and historical factors on the creation and reception of written or artistic works.

Human Systems and Organizations

Evaluate human systems and organizations from diverse viewpoints including cultural, ethical, political, economic, social and historical perspectives while explaining individual and/or institutional behavior and change.

Cultural Perspective

Create awareness of diverse cultural perspectives, intercultural diversity, including its ethical components, and the significance of tolerance, both regionally and globally.

Uniquely UOG

Students satisfy the Uniquely UOG by completing two courses, one of which must be a language other than English. This component is composed of courses with local relevance drawn from diverse disciplines. The thematic statement for this component is: Identify the unique cultural, linguistic, historical, political, and/or geographic features and discuss contemporary issues related to Guam and the region in order to recognize the importance of contributing their knowledge and skills to the local and/or regional community.

Direction Building

The Direction Building component provides options for students guided by program requirements. Students satisfy this component by taking three courses, each from a different Diversity Foundation theme. One of the three courses must have a Core Foundation, Diversity Foundation, or Uniquely UOG course as a prerequisite. This allows students to explore interests sparked in the foundation component while going deeper into a theme. However, students who have declared their major prior to completing this component may take two of the three courses within their major program. SLOs for the Direction Building component are closely related to PLOs that reinforce the Core and Diversity Foundation SLOs.

Tier III: Capstone Experience

Components

Tier III of the General Education framework is embedded wholly within program requirements. Programs keep full autonomy over the courses, but identify specific program/course SLOs that assist the goals of general education. Programs likely would fulfill this requirement by using one or more high impact practice (HIP; i.e., capstone, thematic, research, etc.) to enhance the major experience and better prepare students for life after graduation, be it the workplace or graduate school. Most programs use some version of HIPs presently. Tier III formalizes the relationship between specific PLOs and General Education as defined by the major program.

Rationale

WASC standards assign programs the primary responsibility for student learning. The best general education curricula assist programs to more effectively fulfill their program goals. Programs have responsibility to assure that their graduates are prepared for life after graduation by, among other things, developing mastery-level skills of key program learning outcomes. Most PLOs embed within or are based on one or more of the core competencies. The Capstone Experience requirement formalizes fulfillment of WASC expectations for higher-order learning and the university's institutional learning outcomes. It also provides a vehicle to advance and assess the core competencies at advanced levels.

Practice

Programs identify a course or a few courses that address at least two Core Foundation and one educational value (i.e., foster diversity, civic responsibility, the ability to work with others, and the capability to engage in lifelong learning,” see WASC 2.2.a.). The Core Foundation SLOs are benchmarked at the undergraduate mastery level from the perspective of the major program. All credit hours fulfill major program requirements. Programs include assessment activity of the identified PLOs in the Annual Assessment Inventory (submitted to UAC) with evidence included in the program self study.

The Credit Hour Computation

Tier I

Core Foundations Component: five courses; **15 credit hours**

Tier II

Diversity Foundation Component: five courses, one with lab; **16 credit hours** Uniquely UOG: two courses, one must be a language. **7 credit hours**

Direction Building Component: three courses **9 credit hours**^{iv}

Tier III

Program identified SLOs; **0 credit hours** for General Education requirements

Total

Total: Up to 47 credit hours^v

ⁱ WASC Standard 2

ⁱⁱ "The term 'humanities' includes, but is not limited to, the study and interpretation of the following: language, both modern and classical; linguistics; literature; history; jurisprudence; philosophy; archaeology; comparative religion; ethics; the history, criticism and theory of the arts; those aspects of social sciences which have humanistic content and employ humanistic methods; and the study and application of the humanities to the human environment with particular attention to reflecting our diverse heritage, traditions, and history and to the relevance of the humanities to the current conditions of national life."--National Foundation on the Arts and the Humanities Act, 1965, as amended. (<http://www.neh.gov/about>)

ⁱⁱⁱ <http://www.nsf.gov>

^{iv} Courses that require a laboratory could add up to two additional credit hours.

^v Courses that require a laboratory could add up to two additional credit hours.