

THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA

GENERAL EDUCATION REFRESH

A presentation of curriculum, rollout, instructor support, and policies pertinent to the General Education Refresh





Table of Contents

This presentation is meant to provide an overview of the General Education curriculum and implementation.

SECTION	DESCRIPTION
<u>Curriculum</u>	Includes visualizations of the new curriculum and brief descriptions of its basic elements.
<u>Rollout</u>	Covers current plans for implementing the new curriculum, especially the soft rollout for Spring 2022 matriculants.
<u>Instructor Support</u>	Provides important information about the Office of General Education and resources for instructors and staff.
<u>Parameters & Policies</u>	Contains overviews of select parameters and policies.

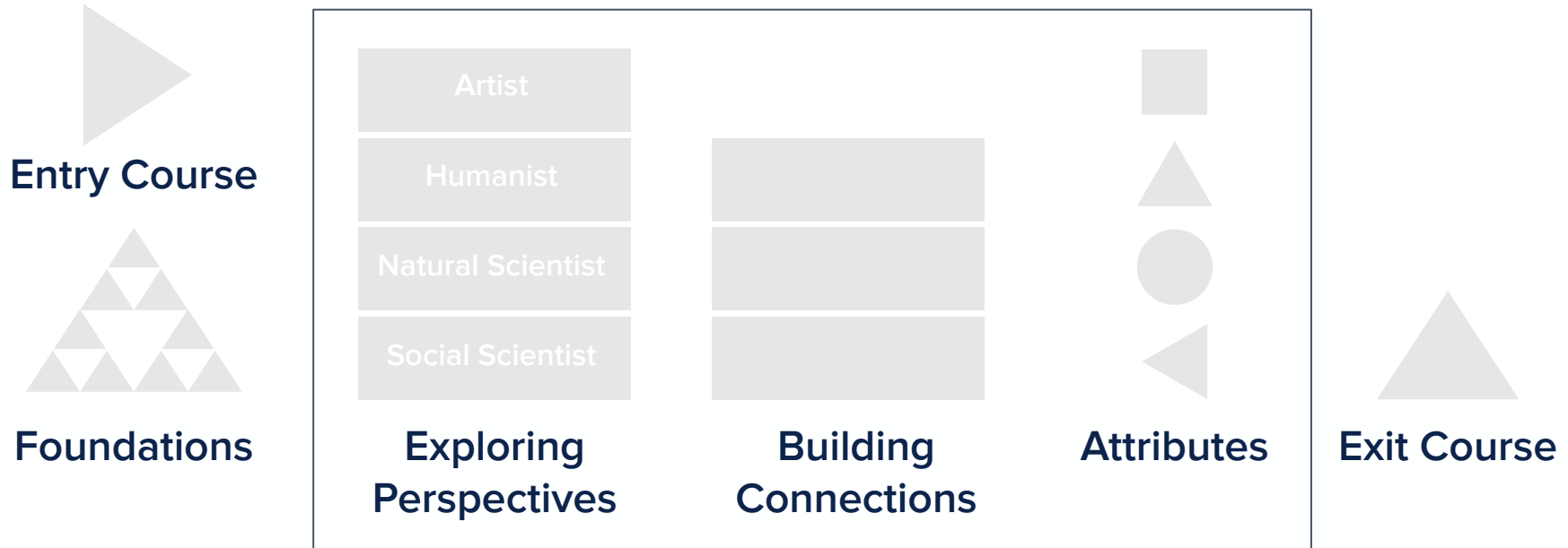
CURRICULUM





Curriculum “Big Picture”

Below is a visualization of the Gen Ed Refresh Curriculum. Elements inside the rectangle are part of the Core Courses (Exploring Perspectives, Building Connections, and the Attributes).





GE Program Scaffolding

Our new Gen Ed Program, composed of Entry, Core, and Exit courses, fulfills our vision of providing students with a meaningful and customized General Education experience.

Entry Courses



Intro to Gen Ed Experience

1 unit



Foundations

9 units (variable)

Core Courses



Exploring Perspectives

12 units



Building Connections

9 units

Exit Course



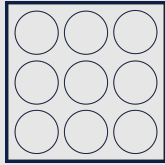
Gen Ed Portfolio

1 unit

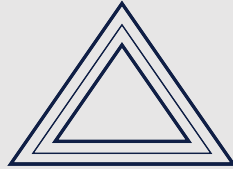


Gen Ed Attributes in Core Courses

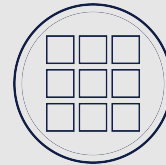
Attributes are attached to Core Courses, enabling students to pursue academic and professional interests while also gaining a significant breadth of disciplinary and interdisciplinary perspectives.



Diversity & Equity



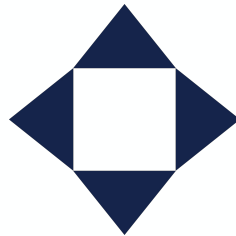
Quantitative Reasoning



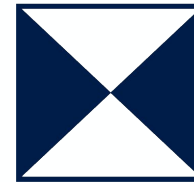
World Cultures
& Societies



Writing



Exploring Perspectives



Building Connections



What's Driving the Gen Ed Program Design?

General Education has not been substantially revisited at UArizona since 1998. The Gen Ed Refresh initiative has been designed around the following priorities:

- ❖ Courses in the new Gen Ed initiative facilitate **engaged learning**, **perspective-taking**, and **reflection on learning**;
- ❖ The new Gen Ed initiative increases **relevance** and **transferability** of the students' experience at UArizona;
- ❖ Students **build connections** between courses and their professional and academic goals;
- ❖ The Gen Ed initiative should afford more **autonomy** to students.



New Entry & Exit Courses

*The new Gen Ed curriculum introduces and develops **interdisciplinary thinking, perspective-taking, and reflection**. Students begin with an introduction to GE and end with development of an ePortfolio to showcase their learning.*

Introduction to the General Education Experience

1 unit. A course introducing students to General Education & its conceptual foundations (interdisciplinary thinking, perspective-taking, reflection on learning).

General Education Portfolio

1 unit. A course designed to help students reflect upon and make meaning of the General Education experience through the refinement of their ePortfolio.



Core Courses

Core Courses shift learning goals from just acquiring disciplinary knowledge (what we know) to practicing perspective-taking (how we think, know, and do) within and across various disciplines. Core Courses can be taken in any order.

Exploring Perspectives (EP)

12 units, 4 courses. EP courses introduce students to ways of thinking, knowing, and doing in different disciplines. Students must take one course each that introduces the **Artist, Humanist, Natural Scientist, and Social Scientist** perspectives.

Building Connections (BC)

9 units, 3 courses. BC courses **bring together modes of thinking from two or more disciplines and/or perspectives** in order to foster more comprehensive understanding of questions, ideas, challenges, and/or problems.



Attributes

The Gen Ed Refresh adds Attributes to core courses that emphasize one or more skills, methodologies, and/or contexts that frame the course content.

Diversity & Equity (D&E)

6 units, 2 courses. The D&E Attribute explores issues of equality, power, and social justice for marginalized populations. One course must focus on U.S. contexts.

World Cultures & Societies (WCS)

3 units, 1 course. The WCS Attribute explores the perspectives, impact, interactions and change within one or more cultures outside U.S. contexts.

Quantitative Reasoning

6 units, 2 courses. The QR Attribute challenges students to generate, analyze, and/or interpret quantitative information to construct coherent and evidence-based arguments.

Writing

6 units, 2 courses. The Writing Attribute incorporates meaningful writing opportunities, building on students' ability to respond to a range of writing situations.



Signature Assignments

A Signature Assignment is an assignment that demonstrates at least one key learning outcome from a Gen Ed Refresh course. These assignments emphasize students' meaning-making and connect their learning to perspective-taking and interdisciplinary thinking. These assignments will also be included in the learning ePortfolio. Instructors should keep in mind the following:

- ❖ All courses must carry at least one Signature Assignment for both BC and/or EP learning outcomes and attribute learning outcomes as appropriate;
- ❖ The Signature Assignment should emphasize diversity, equity, and inclusion through accessibility, universal design, and the representation of diverse voices.



Signature Assignment Examples

Instructors are free to shape Signature Assignments and should note that they will become part of students' Gen Ed ePortfolios to represent their engagement in the curriculum. Examples may include (but are not limited to):

- ❖ Reflections (written, oral, artistic, multimedia);
- ❖ Presentations (oral, visual, musical, artistic);
- ❖ Compositions;
- ❖ Research projects;
- ❖ Service learning projects;
- ❖ Social, economic, or environmental justice projects;
- ❖ Creative endeavors (artistic, design, technological, problem solving).



ePortfolios

*The General Education ePortfolio is a **learning portfolio**. According to the Association of American Colleges & Universities, learning ePortfolios are a high-impact practice that enhances the demonstration and assessment of student learning. Students will collect work throughout their General Education experience in order to:*

- ❖ Reflect on their learning;
- ❖ Form connections between courses and their majors;
- ❖ Develop digital literacy skills.



General Education Program Learning Outcomes

❖ **Communicate effectively**

- Interpret and clearly present information in varied formats, such as graphs, charts, and multimedia projects.
- Compose correct and clear written material in multiple formats such as research logs, researched reports, exam answers, and reflective essays.
- Improve written and visual documents in response to feedback.

❖ **Use information effectively and ethically**

- Access and evaluate the reliability of information from varied sources, such as internet and library resources.
- Use information sources ethically and responsibly.

❖ **Think critically**

- Exercise synthetic, analytic and/or computational/quantitative reasoning as needed to solve problems.
- Raise salient questions about the evidence, inferences, and conclusions of inquiries, including one's own inquiries.
- Infer and assess the ambiguities, assumptions, values, and purposes at issue in inquiries, including one's own work.

❖ **Understand and value differences**

- Assess how different modes of inquiry and expression are appropriate in varied cultural and disciplinary contexts.
- Exercise flexible habits of mind when exposed to diverse opinions, new ideas, and complex societal problems.
- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the nature of interpersonal, intragroup and intergroup dynamics, and skills.



Core Courses Learning Outcomes

Students will demonstrate what they have learned in Exploring Perspectives and Building Connections courses by assessment of the following student learning outcomes:

Exploring Perspectives

Students will identify the approaches and methodologies of each perspective, use evidence to critically analyze questions and arguments, and describe contributions of this perspective to finding solutions to global and/or local challenges.

Building Connections

Students will demonstrate the ability to utilize multiple perspectives and make meaningful connections across disciplines and social positions, think conceptually and critically, and solve problems.



Attributes Learning Outcomes

Diversity & Equity

Students will demonstrate knowledge of how historical and contemporary populations* have experienced inequality, considering diversity, power, and equity through disciplinary perspectives to reflect upon how various communities experience privilege and/or oppression/marginalization and theorize how to create a more equitable society.

World Cultures & Societies

Describe, from one or multiple perspectives, the values, practices, and/or cultural products of at least one non-US culture/society; relate how these values, practices and/or cultural products have shaped their social, historical, political, environmental and/or geographic contexts; and reflect on how the student's own background has influenced their perceptions of other societies and their sense of place in the global community.

Quantitative Reasoning

Students will demonstrate competency in working with numerical information by critically analyzing quantitative information, generating ideas that are supported by quantitative evidence, assessing the relevance of data and its associated implications in a variety of contexts, and communicating those ideas and/or associated interpretations using various formats (graphs, data tables, equations, oral presentations, or written reflections).

Writing

Students will demonstrate rhetorical awareness and writing proficiency by writing for a variety of contexts and executing disciplinary genre conventions of organization, design, style, mechanics and citation format while reflecting on their writing development.



Wilma Scenario

Wilma arrives to the University of Arizona with an interest in the natural sciences, particularly physics. She hopes to become a Physics Major but has not decided on a Minor.





Wilma Core Courses

To satisfy the requirements of the GE Refresh, Wilma will have to take Foundations courses, four EP courses, three BC courses, and satisfy the four Attributes. She'll also take the Entry and Exit Courses.

Foundations

Composition I and II
Foundations Writing

Calculus and Analytic
Geometry
Foundations Math

Foundations Language
met by exam (0 credits)

Exploring Perspectives

Perspective: Artist
Course: The Art of China's Minorities
Attributes: WCS; DE

Perspective: Humanist
Course: Haunted Houses in Am Literature
Attributes: W; DE

Perspective: Natural Scientist
Course: Desert Ecology
Attributes: QR; W

Perspective: Social Scientist
Course: Introduction to Economics
Attributes: DE; QR

Building Connections

Perspective: Interdisciplinary
Course: Data, Privacy, and Freedom
Attributes: QR; WCS

Perspective: Interdisciplinary
Course: The Challenges of Climate Change
Attributes: QR; WCS

Perspective: Interdisciplinary
Course: Science & Practice of Happiness
Attributes: W



A Selection of Wilma's Learning

The new Core Courses section of the GE Refresh aligns with ABOR Knowledge Areas, preparing students for a dynamic world.

ABOR Knowledge Areas

Composition, communication, and rhetoric

Mathematics and quantitative reasoning

Literature, fine arts, humanities, natural sciences, social and behavioral sciences

American Institutions

Relevant Core Courses

5 Courses: Composition I and II (Foundations), Haunted Houses in American Literature, Desert Ecology, and Science and Practice of Happiness

5 Courses: Calculus and Analytic Geometry (Foundations), Desert Ecology, Introduction to Linguistics, Data, Privacy, and Freedom; Climate Change

7 courses: Art of China's Minorities; Intro to Linguistics; Desert Ecology; Haunted Houses in Am. Literature;; Data, Privacy, & Freedom; Climate Change, Happiness

Introduction to GE (First-Year civics assessment with recommendations); Composition II; Introduction to Economics; Data, Privacy, and Freedom.



Wilma Graduates

Wilma majors in Physics and has decided to Minor in Economics because of her experiences in General Education, which introduced her to the role of the discipline in solving grand problems.



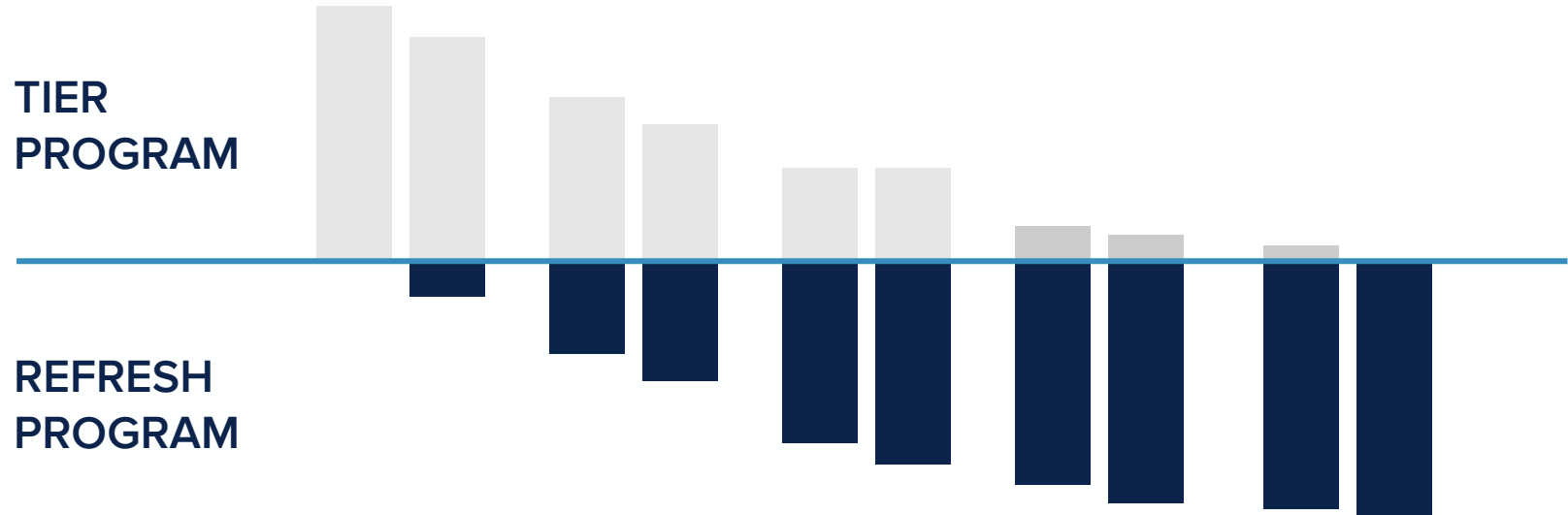
ROLLOUT





A Tale of Two Gen Eds

*The Gen Ed Refresh will rollout **in Spring 2022 for Spring matriculants only**. The current Gen Ed curriculum (Tiers) will continue to operate in parallel with the Refresh for at least five years before phasing out. Below is a visualization of anticipated enrollment* in the respective programs.*



*This graph is based on anticipated trends and not on official projections.



Gen Ed Course Demand Spring 2021

Spring matriculants present different demand levels for General Education courses than Fall matriculants. Below is an example from Spring 2021

- ❖ Spring freshmen matriculants took an average of **2.39** General Education courses their first semester.
- ❖ Spring Transfer matriculants took an average of **1.87** General Education courses their first semester.
- ❖ Spring Freshmen matriculants occupied **307** total General Education course seats, of which the majority were **T1 INDIV (133)** and **T1 TRAD (119)**.
- ❖ Spring Transfer matriculants occupied **713** total General Education course seats, of which the majority were **T1 TRADS (152)**, **T2 INDIV (147)**, and **T1 NATS (109)**.



Which Spring 2022 Core Courses and Why?

The GE Refresh team estimates that seats will need to be reserved in 25 courses that can satisfy learning outcomes in both curricula (Tiered and Refresh). Several of these 25 courses should:

- ❖ Be in **online modalities** to serve a large proportion of transfer students, a majority of whom will be enrolling through UA Online (see “Enrollment” section of this presentation);
- ❖ Be **Upper-Division Courses** to assist Transfer students who may not satisfy the Upper-Division Requirement through their respective majors;
- ❖ Be diverse in their offerings, affording **choices in Exploring Perspectives and Building Connections categories** as well as **a robust offering of Attributes**.



Soft Rollout in Spring 2022

To facilitate a soft rollout of the Gen Ed Refresh for Spring 2022 matriculants, the Office of General Education will work with colleges across UArizona campuses to organize potential courses into three different groups (A, B, and C). For the Spring 2022 Gen Ed Refresh courses, administrators and instructors are encouraged to keep the following in mind for Group A courses:

- ❖ Only courses that can fulfill the learning outcomes of both Tiers and Refresh systems will be offered in Spring 2022 as no new courses will be offered in the Gen Ed Refresh in Spring 2022;
- ❖ Only Group A courses will be considered for Spring 2022;
- ❖ Group A courses will not be required to follow local and college-level approval; instead, these courses will be reviewed by UWGEC for consistency with both General Education systems.



Group Distinctions

The table below presents the different Groups for the Gen Ed Refresh Rollout. Only Group A courses will be candidates for the Spring 2022 Soft Rollout. Group B and Group C courses will be candidates for the Fall 2022 catalog.

TASKS / CHANGES	GROUP A	GROUP B	GROUP C
Revisions to meet Refresh requirements comprise less than 25% of course	X		
Revisions comprise more than 25% of course but not renumbering		X	
Course requires renumbering			X
Course has been approved for Tiers curriculum	X		
Course has been approved for catalog but not for Gen Ed		X	
Course is new			X



Soft Rollout Timeline

The following represented important upcoming dates in for Group A courses submitting course proposals for the Spring 2022 soft rollout:

DATE	EVENT
April 2021	Group A courses identified by colleges for Spring 2022 rollout
April 6, 2021	Instructional support events launch: Registration here
April and May 2021	Group A instructors invited to complete Quick Start Live-Online
May 7, 2021	Course Proposal Form for Group A course candidates due
May 2021	UWGEC reviews Group A course candidates
June 1, 2021	Registrar has received all approved Group A courses for catalog
Spring 2022	Gen Ed Refresh available to Spring matriculants



UWGEC Course Approval Process

*This graphic represents the **six steps for an instructor of a Group A course** and the general steps necessary for approval. NOTE: This visualization assumes no changes to the course.*

STEP ONE

Instructor
completes Quick
Start intro to GE

STEP TWO

Instructor submits
Course Proposal Form
(CPF)

STEP THREE

CPF directed to GE
Office and Faculty
Coordinators

STEP FOUR*

CPF sent to UWGEC
sub-committee for
feedback/consensus

STEP FIVE*

CPF on consent
agenda for next
UWGEC meeting

STEP SIX

Recommendation
forwarded to Office of
the Registrar

*See next slide for additional details.



UWGEC Course Approval Process in Detail

The text below elaborates Steps Four and Five.

GE Faculty Coordinators and Graduate Assistants forward proposals to UWGEC subcommittees for review.

A subcommittee member will be assigned as a lead for each proposal.

The proposal lead will gather and summarize feedback from other subcommittee members and organize for the Faculty Coordinator using the UWGEC Course Proposal Rubric.

The Faculty Coordinator will communicate with the individual who submitted the course proposal to solicit any necessary modifications or further information (if necessary).

When there is unanimous agreement within a subcommittee (and the Faculty Coordinator) about a course proposal, the recommendation will be put on a consent agenda for the next UWGEC meeting.

When there are disagreements within a subcommittee about a course proposal, it will be added to the next UWGEC agenda for full committee review.

Any instructors who are assigned to teach an approved GE course must submit their syllabus to the GE office every semester using the GE Syllabus Collection Form.

INSTRUCTOR SUPPORT





The Office of General Education

The Office of General Education does the following:

- ❖ Advocate for student agency & exploration
- ❖ Connect and scaffold student learning across the curriculum
- ❖ Design curriculum that is relevant to & flexible for a changing world
- ❖ Communicate General Education principles and practices across the campus
- ❖ Collaborate across disciplines
- ❖ Facilitate high quality teaching & engaged learning
- ❖ Design holistic assessment & periodic review of courses
- ❖ Honor diversities of perspectives and ways of knowing



The Gen Ed Office Staff

As part of the Gen Ed Refresh initiative, a new office has been created to support instructors, students, and assessment.

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Tom Murray, M.A.	First Year Course Coordinator	tam@arizona.edu
Devon Thomas, Ph.D.	Portfolio Course Coordinator	devonthomas@arizona.edu



Curriculum Coordinators

Building Connections, Exploring Perspectives, and the four Attributes are overseen by dedicated Curriculum Coordinators.

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Matt Ostermeyer, Ph.D.	Building Connections Coordinator	ostermeyer@arizona.edu
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Nolan L. Cabrera, Ph.D.	Diversity & Equity Attribute Coordinator	ncabrera@email.arizona.edu
Jessica Kapp, Ph.D.	Quantitative Reasoning Attribute Coordinator	jkapp@arizona.edu
Maha Nassar, Ph.D.	World Cultures & Societies Attribute Coordinator	mtnassar@email.arizona.edu
Aimee Mapes, Ph.D.	Writing Attribute Coordinator	acmapes@arizona.edu



Instructor Support At A Glance

As part of its mission to facilitate high-quality teaching, the Office of General Education will be offering a variety of different instructor support programs and presentations to assist instructors, including:

- ❖ **Quick Start:** An online, course orienting instructors to the new curriculum, both a Live-Online and asynchronous version will be available;
- ❖ **Deep Dive Sessions:** Webinars and workshops devoted to university-wide best practices in teaching, course design, and ePortfolios, as well as the new curriculum;
- ❖ **Office Hours:** A drop-in Zoom space for colleagues to come and ask questions of the instructors and staff of the Office of General Education.



Quick Start

At the completion of the module-based, self-paced course, participants will be able to:

- ❖ Recognize the key elements of the General Education Refresh vision, curriculum, and major features.
- ❖ Align course components with Gen Ed curriculum components according to fit.
- ❖ Articulate components of courses that align with Gen Ed requirements and those that may need re-tooling or additional support.
- ❖ Identify key elements of the signature assignment and reflect on ways to meaningfully incorporate it into course structure.
- ❖ Recommend aligned and necessary elements of a new course approval process, infrastructure, and instructor-feedback process moving forward.



Quick Start Live-Online

The Quick Start Live-Online is an intensive week-long course that will enable instructors to rapidly adapt their courses to two Gen Ed curricula. Instructors who choose to sign-up for a Quick Start Live-Online Session can expect to commit to the following timeline:

- ❖ **Week-long commitment:** The Quick Start Live-Online will involve a full week commitment (Monday through Friday);
- ❖ **~1 hour asynchronous work per day**, which could technically be done before the week of the Live Online sessions (working through the Quick Start Modules);
- ❖ **1-2 hours synchronous sessions per day.**



Live Online Quick Start First “Cohort” Sessions

Initially, the Live Online Quick Start will serve Group A instructors proposing courses in Spring 2022. To best assist Group A instructors, the Office of General Education will be offering Live Online sessions to two cohorts of instructors. These cohort sessions and subsequent review periods are provided below:

Live Online Cohort Session	UWGEC Approval Period
First Cohort: April 26-30	UWGEC First Cohort Review: May 3-7
Second Cohort: May 3-7	UWGEC Second Cohort Review: May 10-14



Deep Dive Sessions

The Offices of General Education and Instruction & Assessment are excited to collaborate on topics related to teaching excellence. Registration is required for participation. Upcoming dates and topics:

DATE	TIME	TOPIC
TBD	TBD	Course Proposal and Process for the New Program
April 12	2-3PM	Building Connections
April 15	2-3PM	Exploring Perspectives
April 19	1-2PM	Reframing Diversity in General Education
April 20	1-2PM	The Writing Attribute
April 22	2-3PM	Quantitative Reasoning
TBD*	TBD	Entry / Exit Courses and the Gen Ed Student Experience

*Specific dates and times coming soon



Office Hours

The Office of General Education will be hosting open Office Hours in April and May 2021. Office Hours are a drop-in space for anyone to come and ask questions of the faculty and staff of the Office of General Education.

- ❖ While intended for instructors transitioning their courses to the new GE curriculum, anyone with questions about the GE program can stop by.
- ❖ Tuesday-Friday 10am-3pm. **Fill out a Google Form for the link to the Zoom meeting**

PARAMETERS & POLICIES





Parameters & Policies At-A-Glance

The Office of General Education is continuing to work closely with constituencies across campus to ensure that the Gen Ed Refresh does not increase student expenses and time toward graduation. Please note that this list and the breakout slides are meant to provide an overview, not to be exhaustive:

- ❖ Entry / Exit Courses
- ❖ Attributes
- ❖ Double dipping
- ❖ Transfer credit



Entry / Exit Courses Parameters & Policies

The Gen Ed Refresh creates two 1-unit courses bookending the General Education curriculum. Importantly:

- ❖ **These courses do not increase student unit load:** The Gen Ed Refresh is 32 units, including the Entry and Exit courses, a 4 unit reduction from the total requirement of the current Tiers curriculum (36 units total);
- ❖ **Transfer students are not required to take the Entry/Exit courses;** however, these courses are available to transfer students who believe that the courses will be a good fit;
- ❖ **The Office of General Education is currently working on models for instruction for the Entry and Exit courses** and will work with the Provost's Office to identify a sustainable approach to instruction.



Attribute Parameters & Policies

The Gen Ed Refresh requires that all Exploring Perspectives and Building Connections courses carry an Attribute. Importantly:

- ❖ **Core Courses must carry at least one Attribute and no more than two Attributes;**
- ❖ **Attributes will not be counted toward Graduation credit until Fall 2024**, providing time for the Office of General Education to assess whether or not Attribute requirements by type are necessary (e.g. 2 Diversity & Equity, 2 Quantitative Reasoning, etc.) to satisfy institutional and statewide learning outcomes.



Double-Dipping Parameters & Policies

The Office of General Education is committed to ensuring that students are able to use their General Education experience toward discovering new interests. To honor this commitment, the Office is proposing:

- ❖ A university-wide policy allowing students to **double-dip up to 9 units from Exploring Perspectives or Building Connections courses** for their Major and / or Minor;
- ❖ Neither the Entry / Exit courses nor Foundations courses will be included in the double-dipping policy.



Transfer Credit Parameters & Policies

The Gen Ed Refresh is an innovative curriculum that foregrounds perspective-taking and interdisciplinary thinking, presenting unique challenges for transfer credit articulation. As the Office of General Education continues to work with colleagues across campus to develop transfer policies and guidelines, the following principles are guiding our work:

- ❖ Transfer credit policies and guidelines must not create additional barriers toward graduation (time, units, or expenses);
- ❖ Transfer credit policies and guidelines should be conversant with existing policies and guidelines for the Tiers curriculum whenever possible;
- ❖ Transfer credit policies and guidelines should be flexible while also reflective of the integrity of the curriculum.

Rollout & Course Approval

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THANK YOU

