

Millersville University
UCAPC - Meeting Minutes
09/02/2025

The meeting was called to order at 4:30pm. All departments were in attendance except Educational Foundations (EDFN), History & Philosophy (HSPL), and Interdisciplinary Studies (IDST).

Also in attendance: Dr. Gail Gasparich (Provost), Dr. Rachel Finley-Bowman (Associate Provost), Dr. Ollie Dreon (APSCUF-MU President), Dr. Nicole Pfannenstiel (GCPRC Chair), Dr. Kim McCollum-Clark (General Education Coordinator), Alison Hutchinson (Registrar), Tevon Kerr-Hornbaker (SGA President), Dr. Abdulsalami Ibrahim (Chair CEHS CCC), Dr. Brian Trout (LCOB CCC Chair), Dr. Ethan Frost (SCTE CCC Chair), Dr. Caleb Corkery (AHSS CCC Chair)

I. Welcome and introductions of representatives and other guests

II. Minutes of the Faculty Senate

- Minutes from the 4/15/2025 meeting were approved via a Granruth/Boyle motion without dissent.

III. Report of the UCAPC Chairperson (Dr. Aileen Hower, EMEE):

- Aileen noted that documents for upcoming UCAPC meetings would be included in the Calendar invites.
- She noted that there are still a number of open seats on UCAPC committees, especially APC and GEOAC. UCAPC Secretary Antonia Cardwell asked that, as long as there were no objections from the body, she be permitted to seat faculty members on the committees in one-year at-large seats as they volunteer. There were no objections. Interested faculty members should contact Antonia Cardwell.
- There was a reminder about dates for submission of course proposals based on first offering.
- The current policy for Latin Honors states that a graduate must have completed a minimum of 60 credits at MU, which can prevent a transfer student from qualifying. The motion (which was presented and discussed elsewhere) did not pass. Some concerns were what would be an appropriate number of credits instead of 60, and issues of fairness.
- There was a reminder that, as programs are changed to accommodate the Gateway General Education Program, these changes must be submitted through CourseDog. It is not enough to just post the new 4-year plans on department websites.

IV. General Education Update (Dr. Kim McCollum-Clark, General Education Coordinator):

- Kim shared the "Summer 2025 Interim Report on General Education" (see attached). She emphasized that the report is not a "5-year study report", but it

was considered necessary to summarize the work over the last 4 years. It should be thought of as a “historical document”. The report can also be found on Teams, as can assessment data from FYEX courses for Fall and Spring semesters.

- After 9/15, Kim and Rachel will be planning/designing training for advising as we transition to the Gateway program. She asked if departments can identify “special sets” of problems and let them know? Kim would also be willing to visit departments to discuss advising.

V. Proposed Curricular Frameworks for endorsement

- None

VI. Proposed Courses and Programs

- Consent agenda – *The following new and changed courses and programs were approved without dissent.*
 - Undergraduate Proposals (Chairpersons: Dr. Susannah Boyle, Prof. Krista Higham, Dr. Betty-Jo Bowers):
 - [HIST359](#)
 - [WSSD452](#)
 - Graduate Proposals (Chairperson: Dr. A. Nicole Pfannenstiel) – none

VII. APSCUF Updates (Dr. Ollie Dreon):

- Ollie thanked Kim for creating the document capturing the journey so far in General Education.
- He shared that the MU APSCUF office has moved to Lyle Hall, and mentioned that part of the new space is a small conference room that can be reserved.

VIII. Report of the Student Government Association (Tevon Kerr-Hornbaker, SGA President)

- A Majors Fair will be held again this year on 9/23/25 from 11am – 2pm on the Ville Courts. It will have the same format as last year’s, and they have also reached out to local high schools to encourage attendance.
- A flyer has been created to advertise the available student positions on the UCAPC Standing Committees.
- He noted that this incoming group of students has already shown themselves to be very interested in getting involved on campus.

IX. Report of the Graduate Student Association

- There will be graduate student representation on GCPRC this year.

X. Report of the Administrative Officers

- Dr. Gail Gasparich (Provost):
 - Gail also thanked Kim for the creation of the interim report on General Education.
 - She noted that faculty and staff have also noticed that the incoming group of students is more sociable and involved.

- Dr. Rachel Finley-Bowman (Associate Provost):
 - Rachel echoed Gail's comments.
- Alison Hutchinson (Registrar):
 - Alison noted that Add/Drop ends tonight at midnight. The numbers are up 1.5% from last year, almost entirely due to graduate student numbers. The undergraduate enrollment is largely unchanged, with approximately 2/3 of full time students enrolled in 15 credits or above. Also of note: approximately 20% of students considered high-level part-time students last year have registered for a full-time load this semester.
 - There was a question as to whether the administration has started having a look at what will happen to graduate student enrollment if student loans become less available. Gail acknowledged that we will need to be looking at this.

XI. Announcement of new courses, programs, or changes to existing courses/program

- None

XII. Reports of the Faculty Senate Standing Committees

- Academic Standards Committee (ASC) Chairperson: Dr. Maja Klosinska, BIOL:
 - The next meetings will be on Jan 7-8, 2026.
- Cooperative Education Chairperson: Dr. Ankur Nandedkar, MGMK
 - Ankur shared that the committee will next be meeting on 9/18, and asked that you please share if you have any input on things that would improve the internship experience.
- General Education Review Committee (GERC) Chairperson: Prof. Krista Higham, LIBR
 - Early-semester drop-ins with GEOAC are:
 - Sept. 2, 11 a.m.–12 p.m. – CAE Conf. Rm., Lyle 141
 - Sept. 5, 1–2 p.m. – McNairy 104
 - Sept. 9, 12–1 p.m. – CAE Conf. Rm., Lyle 141
 - She is hoping to see more proposals come in, especially for Gateway proposals.
 - She asked those present to recruit colleagues to serve on GEOAC – those interested should contact Antonia and Krista.
 - She also reminded faculty that if a course is going to be offered in Fall 26 it needs to be approved by the department by mid-September of this year.
- University Honors College Committee Chairperson: Dr. Aileen Hower, EME
 - Aileen noted that there will be a lot of work for the committee this year as the Honors College is going through its 5-year review.

XIII. New Business

- To get an idea of what is already out there, Aileen asked representatives to indicate if their department already offers/requires a Capstone

experience (not counting Student Teaching) and asked for a brief description. The following departments discussed their Capstone experiences: ARTD, MUSI, GOVT, ECON, PHYS, ENGL, and PSYC (some departments offer multiple options). ESCI indicated that they have a Capstone in development.

XIV. **Adjournment**

- Meeting adjourned at 5:29pm via a Hower/Saunders motion that was approved without dissent.

Respectfully Submitted,
Antonia Cardwell
UCAPC Secretary

Meeting Summary 09/02/25:

Minutes Approved:
4/15/2025

- Approved courses and programs:
 - Undergraduate Proposals:
 - [HIST359](#)
 - [WSSD452](#)
- Approved policies:
 - None

Millersville University



Interim Report on General Education

Summer 2025

Introduction

Millersville University of Pennsylvania is guided by a mission to remain "a community dedicated to high quality education at an exceptional value" and a vision to "inspire leaders to change the world." Among its strategic directions laid out in its 2020-2025 strategic plan, Millersville University administration, faculty, and staff emphasized the need to "transform student experiences and foster innovation," including providing innovative learning opportunities, meeting workforce needs, and enhancing community and student well-being (Strategic Direction 2).

A key component of a Millersville student's experiential learning on campus is the General Education program that complements the learning experienced in students' major programs. For the last fifteen years, self-study reviews of Millersville's General Education program have called for substantial changes as students and faculty confront the imperatives of the future.¹ In direct response to these reports, in the last five years Millersville University has undertaken an extensive, collaborative, faculty-driven process to transform its General Education program. In 2023, faculty voted to select the Gateway General Education program among three choices offered to become the new General Education program for future Millersville University students.

It is the purpose of this report to:

- summarize the findings of the last General Education self study,
- summarize the actions taken, based on its recommendations,
- present a timeline and rationale for the actions that initiated the current transformation, and
- describe the new Gateway General Education model and its constituent elements,

For the sake of clarity, in the report that follows, the earlier Gen Ed curriculum (last revised in 2019) will be referred to as the "Legacy" Gen Ed curriculum. The new version will be referred to as the Gateway General Education program.

This report was compiled by Faculty Coordinator for General Education and the First Year Experience, Dr. Kim McCollum-Clark.

¹ Self-study reports reviewed in preparation for this review include the 2008, 2014, and 2021 reports from campus committees, and when applicable, external reviewer reports that accompanied them.

General Education in Administrative and Faculty Structures

In the University structure, General Education in 2025 is under the purview of the Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs, Dr. Gail Gasparich, via the Division of Academic Affairs. This Division includes the Academic Colleges and Graduate Studies and is responsible for the administrative aspect of Academic Programs and Curriculum Development. Additionally, the creation of a new academic college, University College, in 2022 allowed for many departments and services dedicated to supporting student success, including Curriculum Development, to find a common home under the leadership of Dr. Rachel Finley-Bowman, Associate Provost for Student Success and Dean of the University College.

In January 2024, the Provost appointed a Faculty Coordinator of General Education and the First-Year Experience to a three-year term, after a short hiatus during which the position went unfilled. The Coordinator reports directly to Dr. Finley-Bowman to ensure close collaboration and support of the Division of Academic Affairs, the Provost and with the Assistant VP for Institutional Research and Assessment, Dr. Carol Runge.

Among the responsibilities of this position², the General Education Coordinator:

- Works with the college deans and department chairs to assist in the coordination of the General Education program, including scheduling, assessment, course recertification, and program facilitation. This includes coordination of FYEX scheduling.
- Attends meetings of the general education curriculum committees (GERC and AOAC) and provides reports to UCAPC (Faculty Senate)
- In collaboration with the AP for Student Success and AVP of Institutional Assessment and Planning, reviews assessment data with college deans and department chairs for GE program improvement.
- Plans, coordinates, and executes targeted programming for FY, SY, and upper-class students on understanding the Gateway curriculum.
- Plans, coordinates, and executes programming for faculty on the Gateway curriculum and best practices in GE advising.

The Coordinator represents the faculty in General Education curriculum development and is an ex-officio member of both the General Education Review Committee (GERC) and the Academic Outcomes Assessment Committee (AOAC), both committees of the

² The following responsibilities are drawn from the job description for the Faculty Coordinator for General Education and the First Year Experience.

University Curriculum and Academic Policies Committee (UCAPC, formerly Faculty Senate). UCAPC is a representative body of faculty, reflecting "the professional judgment of faculty," which recommends policy in writing to the University President.³

Starting in Fall 2025, in accordance with a local agreement (December 2024, included in the appendices), GERC and AOAC are to become a combined UCAPC committee known as GEOAC.

Overview of the "Legacy" General Education program

Originally adopted in 1997, the Legacy General Education program is comprised of four distinct components.

- 1) Foundations of Lifelong Learning (12 credits)
- 2) Critical Thinking Across the Liberal Arts (27 credits)
- 3) Connections and Explorations (9 credits)
- 4) Cultural Diversity and Community (3 credits)

Comprising between 45 and 60 credits, the Legacy curriculum was based on a distribution model popular in the 1990s that emphasized "coverage" in diverse fields of study. Among the required elements stated above, as many as 15 credits were permitted to "cross-count" in students' major programs of study.

The Legacy GE was revised in mostly minor ways six times since its origin, the most recent revision taking place in 2019.

2020 Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE) Review

As a member of MSCHE, Millersville must renew its accreditation every eight years per the current Middle States Commission on Higher Education's current policy. (The cycle used to be ten years). Millersville University participated in its most recent accreditation visit and report from Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE) in 2020. The self-study, review team visit (conducted via Zoom due to the Covid-19 pandemic emergency), and subsequent report remain important contexts for understanding the recent reform in General Education.

In August, 2020, the MSCHE review team conducted a virtual site visit, as the University was following protocols related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Their report was

³ Millersville University Governance and Policies, "Faculty Senate," revised, 2018.

released in September, 2020. Findings from this review related to general education are quoted from the report here:

- "Given that a minority of students complete the course, the role of UNIV 103/ First-Year Inquiry in the General Education curriculum should be reconsidered" (page 12).
- "Program student learning outcomes should be clearly posted on department websites" (page 12).
- "When possible, the institution should consistently disaggregate and compare assessment data based on teaching modality, as some departments already do. For example, if a General Education course is taught both online and face-to-face, compare the assessment data to determine the potential impact of modality on student learning" (page 12).
- "College Annual Reports and Department "cut-sheets" should be uniformly posted to each College/Department web page. This is an excellent recruitment tool and a source of information for current students" (page 19).
- "Given the growing importance of online programs, the Team suggest that the institution take steps to assure some uniformity or standard of training for faculty who engage in online teaching. This is particularly important for programs without external accreditation" (page 19).
- "The institution should provide further evidence of clearly-stated institutional and program-level goals which are aligned with each other and with the institution's mission be posted on the website" (page 19).

In summary, the MSCHE team described Millersville's accomplishments in establishing innovative academic programs and advised or recommended increased attention to online programming and more public recounting of assessment data in most areas of University endeavors.

PASSHE Policy Changes Regarding General Education

As one of the post-secondary institutions governed by the PA State System of Higher Education (PASSHE), Millersville University must comply with PASSHE policies, including its policies on General Education. Policy 1993-01-A, on General Education at State System of Higher Education Universities, has been amended three times in the current period of review (in 2021, 2023, and 2024) so that PASSHE policy remains compliant with PA Public School Code, the PA Statewide Transfer Credit Framework, and MSCHE responsibilities.

Recent revisions to this policy relevant to Millersville's General Education transformation include:

- a minimum of 40 credits and a maximum of 48 General Education credits in baccalaureate degrees;
- the recognition that students matriculating with Associate's degrees have largely met the MU General Education requirements, with the exception of a "signature GE course, if applicable";
- the requirement of student learning outcomes that include technological competence, a General Education outcome previously not present in the Legacy GE curriculum;

Additionally, PASSHE policy on General Education reiterates MSCHE imperatives to establish "organized and documented assessments conducted by faculty and/or other appropriate professionals that:

- define meaningful curricular goals with defensible standards for evaluating whether students are achieving those goals;
- articulate how they prepare students in a manner consistent with their mission for successful careers, meaningful lives and where appropriate, further education. They should collect and provide data on the extent to which they are meeting these goals;
- support and sustain assessment of student achievement and communicate the results of this assessment to stakeholders and will use assessment results for improvement of educational effectiveness.

(1993-01-A, page 3).

PASSHE policy guidelines continue to inform the ongoing work to create the new Gateway General Education in the period under review.

2021 General Education Review

In AY 2020-21, a faculty committee chaired by Dr. Carrie Smith (CSAN) conducted a periodic review of the General Education curriculum. Their thorough report highlights the considerable efforts of Dr. Lynn Marquez (ESCI), the General Education Coordinator (2013-2019), to address the many "incongruities" in the Legacy curriculum, strengthen both GE advisement and assessment, support the "living-learning communities" across campus, among many other critical tasks.

In evaluating patterns of student and faculty experience with the Legacy GE curriculum, the review authors pointed to the lack of consistent alignment between GE offerings in the four curricular components and competencies or learning outcomes expected within them. Competencies could not be mapped consistently across departments or curricular components. Courses were placed in the "G" blocs within Critical Thinking Across the Liberal Arts because of their disciplinary home, not because of congruities in student outcomes. "How might we know if a G1 course is meeting those curricular objectives?" the authors ask. The answer was "we could not."

Committee members went to considerable lengths to find data that might point the University community toward a robust review of the Legacy GE curriculum by conducting their own audit of the way GE courses were labeled, collecting grade distribution data for common GE courses, and convening focus groups to collect student views of the Legacy GE experience. The committee proposed proposed four action items at the end of their extensive report: these are summarized and shared in Table x, below.

External Review Summary and Recommendations

The 2020-21 self-study was concluded by a visit from external reviewer Dr. Paul Hanstedt of Washington and Lee University, a nationally-renowned author of several books about general education and its value to contemporary students. His full report is available in the appendices.

In his report, Dr. Hanstedt agreed with the MU self-study team that the Legacy GE curriculum lacked "structural integrity" in that the GE components were not related to common student outcomes, as they prioritized departmental alignments or disciplinary "lanes" instead. This "distribution model" was a common one across US higher education in decades past. Additionally, he noted that while the MU students he met often enjoyed their GE courses, they did not seem to understand their value more broadly. He highlighted that students and faculty recognized that the quality of teaching and advising in the GE program was mixed, often due to structural factors, like a paucity of offerings or courses with mixed populations of students. "Key here," he noted, "are the subtle (and not so subtle) institutional messages about what matters and what does not matter" (Hanstedt report, pg. 4). His extensive recommendations are also shared in Table A, below.

The submission of the 2020-21 Self Study Report, including the External Reviewer's report, brings us to the current period of review. The chart below summarizes how the Millersville community responded to the 2021 Report's and External Reviewer's recommendations, lest they be lost in the timeline and descriptions that follow.

Table A: Progress Review of 2021 Action Plan

2020-21 Self Study Recommendations	Actions Taken
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • convene a General Education Task Force to conduct a holistic evaluation of the GE curriculum with the goal of recommending possible changes 	<p>General Education Reform Task Force convened in Fall 2022 and presented three options (two new models or retaining "Legacy") for the new GE curriculum to the University community for a vote in Spring 2023.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • establish a more centralized and systematic plan for General Education 	<p>Both new models offered by GE Reform Task Force were outcomes-based.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • collect and analyze data from students and faculty about their views and experiences of the GE curriculum 	<p>The GE Task Force created multiple forums for faculty and students in Fall 2023 and utilized focus group data from the Self-Study in their work.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provide professional development opportunities for faculty to encourage deeper engagement with the GE curriculum 	<p>The GenEd Coordinator and chairs of GERC and AOAC have hosted over ten working sessions for faculty planning course proposals and assessment plans since January 2024. More PD opportunities are planned through and after full implementation of Gateway in Fall 2026.</p>
2022 External Reviewer Recommendations	Actions Taken
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • appoint a director of General Education, possible at the Dean level, who can support high-impact educational practices (HIEP) as well as general education 	<p>A new Faculty Coordinator for General Education and FYEX was appointed January 2024 for a three year term, after a brief hiatus in the position.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • create a map of HIEP in GE courses with high enrollment to increase student access to HIEPs 	<p>Focus on high impact educational practices has been concentrated with the launch of FYEX 100 for all first-year students.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • shift to a competency-based model for GE 	<p>General Education Reform Task Force (2022-2023) presented two models, both based on outcomes, not distribution of courses.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensure UNIV 103 for all students 	<p>FYEX 100 is offered to all first-year students in Fall 2024 for the first time at Millersville University.</p>

2020-21 Self Study Recommendations	Actions Taken
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • improve messaging across the community regarding the value of GE in general and in every feature of university programs 	<p>Focus since 2023 has been on creating an operational new General Education model, including approvals of definition and student-learning outcomes; and the launch of the required FYEX program in Fall 2024. Full implementation of Gateway in Fall 2026 will provide a critical opportunity for this messaging.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • prioritize and amplify student agency in registration and advisement 	<p>FYEX 100 students without major-reserved courses chose their FYEX starting in Fall 2024. In summer 2025, new first year students will select their sections (if not major-reserved) during the Summer Welcome orientation event.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • limit enrollment in writing-intensive classes 	<p>Writing-intensive courses are not part of the new Gateway General Education model.</p>

Fall 2022: General Education Reform Task Force

Pursuant to the first recommendation of the 2021 Report, Dr. Rachel Finley-Bowman convened a faculty task force in Fall 2022. Members included Dr. Abdul Ibrahim (EDFN), Dr. David DiRusso (MGMK), Dr. Lynn Marquez (ESCI and former GE coordinator), Prof. Michele Santamaria (LIBR), Dr. Nivedita Bagchi (GOVT), Dr. Oliver Dreon (EDFN), and Dr. Steven Kennedy (CHEM). They reviewed and discussed prior self-study reports, recommendations from GERC and AOAC, the 2020 Middle States Commission on Higher Education Team Report, MU retention data, and other internal documents to guide their work, which culminated in two new models to share with faculty.

In the end, two new models were generated by members of the Task Force and were shared with faculty in Fall 2023. The two models, named the "EPPIIC Journey" and the "EPPIIC Gateway" models, were based on student-learning outcomes (SLOs), not the disciplinary "distribution" model of the Legacy General Education. Both were designed to meet the new policy requirements from PASSHE policies 1993-01-A and 1990-06-A and recommendations from MSCHE. The documents comparing the Gateway and Journey models are available for review in the Appendices.

External reviewer Paul Hanstedt's 2021 report offered some recommendations for the curricular revision process, including the creation of a transparent process, the emphasis on collaboration in developing new GE learning outcomes, multiple methods for allowing all voices to be heard, including anonymously, and bringing more than one model to the conversation. Dr. Finley-Bowman and the Task Force followed all these recommendations closely.

- Committee members created documents, including a comparison document of the two new programs being compared, for faculty review.
- An intra-net website for faculty was created to share the models and related material supporting them.
- The Task Force held numerous public meetings in diverse settings to answer questions and develop faculty understanding of the models
- Surveys that allowed faculty to provide anonymous feedback were created, and the feedback gathered there was shared broadly.
- Faculty and students provided extensive feedback in a variety of methods, and both models were revised and shared again.

An initial all-faculty vote to choose a model also included the option to retain the Legacy General Education model, giving faculty three options. Results of this vote were as follows:

Adopt New Gateway Model	87 votes	43.9%
Adopt New Journey Model	56 votes	28.3%
Retain Existing GE Model	55 votes	27.8%

Because no option garnered 50 percent of the vote, a second vote was planned.

Spring 2023: Gateway General Education is selected

A second round of voting in Spring 2023 resulted in the selection of the Gateway General Education Model. Results of the second round of voting were:

Adopt New Gateway Model	117 votes
Adopt New Journey Model	68 votes

To continue the momentum for transforming the General Education, Millersville administration convened two task forces for summer employment, the "General Education Implementation Task Force," charged with drafting the SLOs for the Gateway stages and designing the processes and procedures for implementing

Gateway in Fall 2024, and the second, the "First Year Seminar Task Force" to focus on the required inclusion of the First Year Seminar (now known as FYEX) for all students in the Gateway General Education model. APSCUF-MU asked for faculty nominations and approved membership on both committees by faculty vote in advance of their summer work.

The General Education Implementation Task Force was chaired by Prof. Krista Higham (LIBR). The First Year Seminar Task Force was chaired by Dr. Kim McCollum-Clark (ENWL). Both groups presented their findings in respective reports to UCAPC and faculty in early Fall 2023. Both reports are shared in the appendices,

Fall 2023: Gateway Plan Reviewed and Revised

The reports from the Summer Task Forces provided the basis for the University approach to both the new General Education curriculum and its required inclusion of FYEX for all first-year students.

Using the recommendations of the GE Implementation Task Force Report, the General Education Review Committee began its work to share and receive feedback on each Gateway Stage, definitions, and individual SLOs for each course at that time. Consistent with the Gen Ed Reform Task Force, GERC offered various in-person opportunities for discussion, critique, and questioning as well as online, anonymous feedback for all stages. GERC members, led by chair Dr. Jeff Wimer (WSSD), used this data to revise these original materials. These were presented to UCAPC for approval throughout 2023-24. The tables below shares the timeline of approvals by faculty representatives at UCAPC.

CORNERSTONE STAGE

	Individual Labels	UCAPC approved
Cornerstone Stage	Introductory Writing (IW)	definition, label SLOs, and course approved, March 2024
	Oral Communication (OC)	definition, label SLOs, and course approved, March 2024
	First Year Experience (FYEX)	definition, label SLOs, and course approved, March 2024
	Quantitative Literacy (QL)	definition, label SLOs approved 8 QL courses approved Fall 2024 4 QL courses approved Spring 2025

Assessment Plan	a plan and method to present assessment plans for all four labels was devised by AOAC	approved January 2024.
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IW, OC, QL

Definitions and SLOs for the Cornerstone stage and its four constituent course elements were approved at UCAPC in Spring 2024. Proposals for courses in Cornerstone quickly followed, as faculty expected the full Gateway General Education model to begin the next Fall (2024). Two existing courses were proposed for Cornerstone labels: English 110: Introduction to College Writing as an Introductory Writing (IW) label, and COMM 100: Speech as an Oral Communication (OC) label. These were fully approved in Spring 2024. The Department of Mathematics proposed 12 unique courses to serve the diverse needs of many different majors and departments to receive the Quantitative Literacy (QL) label: all these courses were approved for the new label in Fall 2024.

FYEX

Additionally, a new course was proposed for the Cornerstone phase, for the new First Year Experience (FYEX) course to be required of all first-year students. The inclusion of a required FYEX course for all students had long been sought in the past three cycles of General Education self-study and was one of the recommendations of the 2021 Report. A summer Task Force (Summer 2023) comprised of faculty, staff, and Dr. Finley-Bowman reviewed the history of the first-year experience (known as UNIV) on Millersville's campus, current research about the use of First-Year Seminars in student retention efforts, and the conclusions of a 2019 MU Task Force on the topic to describe their recommendations for a new programmatic FYEX for all FY students. This report was presented in Fall 2023, and its recommendations were reviewed and revised in UCAPC. The report is included in the Appendices to this document, and the new FYEX program will be summarized below.

One recommendation of the FYEX Task Force did cause debate, and in the end, resulted in a program revision, during its period of review. The report authors recommended that all FYEX students should freely select their FYEX course based on their interest in the unique topic or "academic centerpiece" in order to increase student engagement with the required course. Many departments had adopted earlier first-year courses as an opportunity to create cohorts of students in their majors under the UNIV label; they argued that they should continue this practice by permitting "major-

reserved" FYEX courses. This revision to the original recommendation was approved at UCAPC in Fall 2023.

In Fall 2023, UCAPC approved the FYEX new course/label definition, SLOs, and common, programmatic elements (with one revision), and the original FYEX course was proposed and approved in March 2023. At the time of its proposal, faculty understood that the proposal would stand in for all sections of the course that would follow. This understanding was revised by the April 12, 2024 Local Agreement between APSCUF and MU administration, requiring faculty to receive full approval through curricular channels after they have taught their unique sections once.

GATEWAY STAGE

	Individual Labels	UCAPC approved
Gateway Stage		
	Creative Exploration (CE)	definition and label SLOs approved September 2024
	Ethical Action and Citizenship (EAC)	definition and label SLOs approved September 2024
	Information Literacies (IL)	definition and label SLOs approved September 2024
	Investigations in Scientific Reasoning (SCI)	definition and label SLOs approved September 2024
	Personal Wellness (PWEL)	definition and label SLOs approved September 2024
	Problem-Solving (PB)	definition and label SLOs approved September 2024
	Technological Competency (TC)	definition and label SLOs approved September 2024
Assessment Plan	a common template for assessment plans was proposed by AOAC and approved by UCAPC	Approved September 2024

KEYSTONE and CAPSTONE STAGES

	Individual Labels	UCAPC approved
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Keystone Stage	Advanced Writing (AW)	definition and label SLOs approved, November 2024
	Diverse Cultural Contexts (DCC)	definition and label SLOs approved, November 2024
Capstone Stage	Capstone (CAP)	definition and label SLOs approved, December 2024
Assessment Plans		approved, February 2025

	Certificate Guidelines	UCAPC approved
Gateway Certificates		definition, label SLOs, and guidelines approved, February 2025
Assessment Plans		under review, March 2025

At the time of this report, the only aspect of the Gateway General Education structure yet to be approved is the assessment plan template for the optional, Gateway certificates.

Spring 2024: New Faculty Coordinator Appointed and Course Approvals Begin

In January 2024, Provost and Senior Vice-President for Academic Affairs Dr. Gail Gasparich appointed a new Faculty Coordinator for General Education and the First-Year Experience. Dr. Kim McCollum-Clark (ENWL) accepted the position for a three-year period. As a member and later chairperson of the FYEX Task Force in Summer 2023, she began work on the first Cornerstone proposals, notably FYEX 100 and English 110: Introduction to College Writing for the IW label. Much of her efforts in Spring 2024 involved professional development and planning for the new FYEX program.

During this semester, members of Academic Outcomes and Assessment Committee (AOAC), chaired by Dr. Betty-Jo Bowers (AEST), created a template for assessment plans that would accompany all Gateway proposals. They created a template to provide a standard for what should be included in General Education program assessment. Their plan was approved by UCAPC just prior to the submission of the first Cornerstone course proposals. AOAC has followed this trajectory in the completion of similar assessment plan templates for subsequent GE stages, including

Gateway, Keystone, and Capstone. An assessment plan for the optional Gateway certificates is under review at the time of this writing.

APSCUF-MU and Administration Local Agreements

Although the Cornerstone and Gateway labels and assessment plans were finalized and approved by Spring 2024, many of the operational details regarding the new Gateway General Education program remained uncertain, and the challenges to implementing the new curriculum in Fall 2024 became existential. Because the Gateway is a truly new construct, not an incremental revision to the existing curriculum, faculty were daily encountering all the ways the new curriculum created issues with standard operating procedures across University sectors. For example, new transfer students (in the middle of the Spring semester) were met with uncertainty regarding how (or whether) their courses being transferred would meet new Gateway requirements.

While curricular bodies (AOAC, GERC, Faculty Senate/UCAPC) were working quickly to establish protocols for efficient proposals and accompanying assessment plans, it became apparent that a new timetable for implementation was required. At "Meet and Discuss," representatives from APSCUF-MU and Millersville University administration agreed to a new local agreement on April 19, 2024 to move the full-implementation of the Gateway General Education to Fall 2025 semester, in addition to some other changes to streamline the proposal workflow. This original agreement (April, 2024) was further revised in December, 2024) to extend the launch to Fall 2026. The final, edited local agreement is shared as an appendix.

The local agreement also changed some curricular review procedures to streamline the review of new General Education proposals needed to begin Gateway by Fall 2026. Among these, the former separate committees of GERC and AOAC were combined into GEOAC, a new UCAPC committee that would review both proposals and assessment plans for courses seeking the new Gateway labels. This new committee begins its work in Fall 2025.

Fall 2024: FYEX 100 begins for all FY Students

In Fall 2024, the one of the key recommendations of three cycles of General Education reports (15 years) was realized in the launch of a new, programmatic First Year Experience class for all Millersville first-year students. In the 1990s, Millersville had

been an early leader in the new movement to create courses to address the needs of new college students. Over time, a one-credit UNIV 101 became a three-credit UNIV 103, but only a minority of MU first-year students had access to this course, despite program data showing clear benefits in retention and student success for UNIV course completers. Both MU internal Gen Ed reviews and the 2020 MSCHE report pointed to this inconsistency, with MSCHE recommending that "Given that a minority of students complete the course, the role of UNIV 103/ First-Year Inquiry in the General Education curriculum should be reconsidered" (MSCHE report, page 12).

Despite historical challenges, both faculty and administration demonstrated strong support for "FYEX for everyone" as an essential element of the new General Education curriculum. Faculty-led task forces in 2019 and in 2023 presented plans to develop this critical course as a resource for all first-year students. The years post-pandemic made plain that new college students need guidance in making the transition both academically and socially to the new realities of life on a college campus (Tribble et al., 2022).

In Fall 2024, over one-thousand first-year students experienced the new FYEX programmatic approach in 49 sections. In Spring 2025, four additional sections were offered. All sections share common SLOs, collect data in two common assessments each semester, and offer students exposure and exploration in a set of common "transition elements" that introduce students to the MU community, its services, and its professionals across the University College and Student Affairs.

Each FYEX section is comprised of a unique topic/question/focus, sometimes called the academic centerpiece, selected by its instructor. The academic aspect of FYEX, about 70% of class time and activities, is designed to provide students with the opportunity to practice and acclimate themselves to academic practices of effective communication, critical thinking, and information literacies with high levels of instructor support and student reflection. Students explore how academic disciplines are implied in real-world settings and problems.

The remaining third permits the faculty member, student mentor, and students to explore the other departments, services, and people who are on campus to support the student experience in academics and beyond. Known as the "transition topics/elements," this part of the course introduces students' to required topics shared here.

Stress management and mental health awareness
Money management and financial literacy
Time management and study skills

Understanding academic life
Academic advisement
Campus safety and Title IX
The University College and student support services
Diversity and Inclusive Excellence

Working with transition partners in University College, Student Affairs, and beyond, FYEX instructors choose from an array of in-person events (both in individual course and in external events) and online, asynchronous resources to bring awareness to students of the many offices and services devoted to their academic success and social-emotional wellbeing.

FYEX Common Assessments

Two common assessments designed to collect data on the common FYEX SLOs were field-tested in both Fall 2024 and Spring 2025. The first assessment (CA 1) is a student survey to collect student perceptions of the required "transition elements" events, speakers, and online modules. Developed by FYEX faculty and our "transition partners" in the University College and delivered in the last week of classes via Qualtrics, this survey is connected to SLOs 2 and 4.

The first iteration of the CA 1 was delivered to FYEX students' emails between December 2 and 13. 509 students completed at least one question, resulting in a response rate of 43.4%. In Spring 2025, four sections of FYEX 100 were offered to transfer students and students who needed to retake the course. 42 students from that cohort completed the survey.

Initial outcomes from this survey indicate that students largely recognize and value the FYEX efforts to connect them strongly to the broader university community and its many outstanding people and services.

The table below shares some of the pertinent findings for Year 1 (both Fall 2024 and Spring 2025) data.

	% Strongly Agree	% Agree	% Neutral-Disagree-Strongly Disagree
Q1 - I can identify resources at Millersville (resources are defined as people, services, departments, and offices) to support my personal and academic success	43	45	11

	% Strongly Agree	% Agree	% Neutral-Disagree-Strongly Disagree
Q4- I can identify resources at Millersville to support the planning of my academic goals.	38	49	14
Q7 - I can identify resources at Millersville that support my understanding of diverse perspectives.	29	49	22
Q9 - The transition topics provided valuable information about academic expectations and skills relevant to my personal student journey, including navigating syllabi and general education course requirements	40	53	7
Q10 - The transition topics effectively addressed the role of the academic advisor and the academic advising process at MU, like course registration, MarAUDIT, and class scheduling.	45	50	6
Q13 - The transition topics effectively addressed available academic resources and supports at MU, such as library services, tutoring, mentoring, success coaching, or classroom accommodations.	45	51	4
Q16 - The transition topics encouraged discussions and reflections on my own personal goals, aspirations, and possible career paths	40	54	6
Q17 - Overall, how helpful were the offered transition topics in fostering an understanding of academic expectations and social life at Millersville?	36	45	18

The full array of data from CA 1 for AY 2024-2025 is available as an appendix.

The second common assessment (**CA 2**), aligned with SLO 1, is connected to goal setting and planning as a project to enhance student self-regulation and agency. In this assessment, FYEX instructors choose a unique goal-setting task relevant to their academic focus and use a common assessment tool to collect evidence of student growth in three domains: initial goal setting, goal planning and implementation, and increasing student agency.

22 faculty members reported their data based on 723 students' performances related to the goal setting/planning tasks in their unique courses, using the common assessment tool at the end of the Fall semester. The table below indicates the aggregated scores in this assessment.

Domains		% of participants
Initial Goal Setting	Successfully selected a goal	98.6

Domains		% of participants
	Included SMART elements in their goal statement (Specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and timely/ time-bound)	94.6
Pathway or Implementation Plan		
	Included implementation plan to achieve goal	95.3
	Plan included internal or personal attributes or supports needed to achieve goal	89.3
	Plan included external or community-based supports to achieve goal	82.4
Increasing Agency		
	Reflection on goal setting included possible challenges to their goal	91.7
	Reflection includes plans to address challenges	82.8
	Reflection demonstrates ownership over goal process	94.3

This initial data review from the first academic year with the new programmatic FYEX suggests that upcoming FYEX faculty professional development should include supports for including external or community-based supports in goal planning, as this integration of the offices, services, and supports of the University community is one of the prime directives of the FYEX course. Additionally, the FYEX coordinator will work to increase the amount of instructors participating in both required common assessments.

Spring 2025: Gateway Course Proposals

Full implementation for new MU students begins in Fall 2026. Students who matriculate in Fall 2025 may adopt the Gateway requirements or continue under the Legacy General Education model after its full implementation, if they desire.

To date, all elements of the Gateway General Education model have been approved at University Curriculum and Academic Policies Committee (UCAPC) with one exception: the Gateway Certificate assessment plan, while drafted, has not been sent UCAPC at

this time. All other SLOs, definitions, assessment plans and some "super-rules" have been fully approved. All approved definitions, SLOs, and links to the live assessment plans are located in the MU Gateway General Education Teams files and are thus available to faculty proposers, assessment chairpersons, and department chairpersons.

On May 9, 2025, GERC chairperson Prof. Krista Higham and Gen Ed coordinator Dr. Kim McCollum-Clark made a report to faculty to provide updates and critical reminders of the progress toward the Gateway General Education curriculum. Their report is excerpted in the sections below.

Course Proposals as of May 2025

The chart below outlines the progress regarding course proposals and approvals for the full Gateway Gen Ed as of May 2025.

"Proposed and Planned Matrix": Working with the other Deans and department chairs, Dr. Rachel Finley-Bowman created a matrix or spreadsheet that reports both departmental submissions and plans for submission of existing courses with the new Gen Ed labels. This information may be useful to departments as they plan Gateway offerings and revise existing programs in light of the Gen Ed changes.

Some important reminders about this matrix:

- It is available in the first subfolder in the MU Gateway Gen Ed teams, in a read-only setting. [Gateway GE Program Courses - Plans, Pipeline, and Approval List.xlsx](#)
- Use the tabs at the bottom of the sheet to switch between labels.
- Courses in bold have been fully approved.
- Dr. Finley-Bowman updates the matrix based on frequency of proposal submissions.
- Faculty have continuous access to a matrix or spreadsheet of intended, in-process, and completed proposals sorted by Gateway stages and labels.

The chart below is drawn from this spreadsheet on 8 May 2025.

** It is important to note that courses may have more than one label: if so, they counted in each category that pertains.

Stage	Label	Courses Proposed	Courses Approved
Cornerstone			
	First Year Experience (FYEX)	2	25
	Introductory Writing (IW)	0	1
	Oral Communication (OC)	0	1
	Quantitative Literacy (QL)	0	11
Gateway			
	Creative Exploration (CE)	87	4
	Ethical Action and Citizenship (EAC)	79	5
	Information Literacies (IL)	60	8
	Investigations in Scientific Reasoning (SCI)	18	7
	Personal Wellness (PWEL)	17	7
	Problem Solving (PS)	62	11
	Technological Competence (TC)	23	7
Keystone			
	Advanced Writing (AW)	0	0
	Diverse Cultural Contexts (DCC)	14	2
Capstone	CAP	10	1

Other Curricular Changes

Expedited Coursedog for New Labels Only: In order to streamline faculty work with proposals, faculty and IT staff worked with Dr. Finley-Bowman to create an expedited workflow for proposals that ONLY seek to append a new Gateway Gen Ed label for an already approved course. Faculty seeking this change may use the new, expedited form in Coursedog to seek this change.

(Any other changes, including changes to the "DL," course name, or any other feature means faculty cannot use this expedited form.). The screenshot below indicates the selection faculty should make in Coursedog if they are ONLY requesting a new Gen Ed label.

Coursedog will be "paused" for Summer: Coursedog will be "open" to new proposals for faculty who wish to submit them over summer, but the "clock" will be paused, and no proposals will be reviewed or approved until the return in Fall 2025. Continue to submit as you see fit with the knowledge that the timetable is paused until then.

Gen Ed Coordinator is available this summer: Dr. McCollum-Clark is employed in the coordinator role during summers and is available by appointment to meet with individuals or groups, to review proposals and assessment plans, or for any other Gen Ed purpose.

Policy Updates from GERC

The faculty Gen Ed report also reminded faculty of recent decisions by the General Education Review Committee (GERC) on a number of questions related to the Gateway curriculum. They are explained here.

1. Number of Labels within Stages

In March 2025, GERC submitted a policy clarification to UCAPC regarding the number of labels a course may bear in the new Gateway model. They submitted the following clarification.

GERC Statement on Number of Labels in the General Education Gateway Program

The General Education Gateway Program includes four (4) stages: Cornerstone Stage, Gateway Stage, Keystone Stage, and Capstone Stage. Each of these four stages carry course labels, specific to each stage.

GERC is recommending the following in the interest of meaningful curricular development and design:

1. No course may carry labels from more than one Stage in the General Education Gateway Program.
2. A course may not carry more than one label at the Cornerstone Stage. Cornerstone Stage labels are as follows:
 - First Year Experience (FYEX)

- Introductory Writing (IW)
 - Oral Communication (OC)
 - Quantitative Literacy (QL)
3. A course may carry a maximum of two labels at the Gateway Stage. Gateway Stage labels are as follows:
- Creative Explorations (CE)
 - Ethical Action and Citizenship (EAC)
 - Information Literacy (IL)
 - Investigations into Scientific Reasoning (SCI)
 - Personal Wellness (PWEL)
 - Problem Solving (PS)
 - Technological Competency (TC)
4. A course may not carry more than one label at the Keystone Stage. Keystone Stage labels are as follows:
- Diverse Cultural Contexts (DCC)
 - Advanced Writing (AW)

This language was approved by UCAPC, April 2025.

2. Number of Credits for Capstone Courses

Additionally, in April 2025, in response to queries from departments and major-based programs hoping to use existing major/program capstones as the Gateway General Education Capstone course, GERC shared a clarification of its Capstone definition, expanding the credit numbers to include larger capstones. The new definition is included below:

"The Capstone is one course at the 300-level or above with 3 or 4.5 credit hours. Departmental (major) capstones, including student teaching, practicums, internships, co-op experiences, exhibitions, Honors and departmental theses, portfolio courses, and the like may also serve as General Education Capstones if they meet the defined student learning outcomes."

This language was approved April 12, 2025.

Assessment Updates

With the exception of the optional Gateway General Education certificates, assessment plan templates have been approved for all required stages. Faculty may find the links to assessment plans for Cornerstone, Gateway, Keystone, and Capstone on MU Gateway Gen Ed Teams--> files--> [3 Assessment Material and Samples](#)

Assessment plans using the MS Form for the relevant General Education stage are required for each proposal. If a completed MS Form PDF is not attached, the General Education Outcomes Assessment Committee (GEOAC) will ask faculty submitters to submit the approved PDF before the committee can fully consider and approve the proposal.

All proposals approved to date have included assessment plans that were approved separately by AOAC. This is an important milestone to note, as we move toward stronger assessment practices across campus.

Faculty Reminders for Summer and Fall 2025

AOAC and GERC become GEOAC: The [December 2024 local agreement](#) between APSCUF-MU and Millersville administration directed that these two curricular bodies be combined to create a more efficient workflow during the shift to Gateway. This change will be accomplished in Fall 2025 with a combined roster of members. Professor Krista Higham was elected its chair, and Dr. Josh Rea was elected as the vice-chair for assessment.

The following timeline has been shared in the UCAPC minutes and agenda since December 2024 and should direct your departmental intentions regarding the new curriculum approvals. It takes roughly one year to see a course through all the approvals to making it to the schedule efficiently.

Courses ready to be offered in:	Final Submission Deadline after department approval:	Time for Full Approval	Due on Deans' initial schedules by:
Fall 2026	Mid-September, 2025	Mid November, 2025	Early December, 2025
Spring 2027	End of January, 2006	Early May, 2026	Mid-May, 2026
Fall 2027	Mid-September, 2026	Mid November, 2026	Early December, 2026

Spring 2028	End of January, 2027	Early May, 2027	Mid-May, 2027
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Revising Major Programs: In addition to the work to bring existing General Education courses into the new Gateway model, faculty also must turn our attention to revising major programs of study to align with the new Gen Ed model. These program revision proposals will be submitted in Coursedog and reviewed through the traditional process, via UCPRC.

Conclusion

In January 2025, the World Economic Forum shared its *Future of Jobs Report (2025)*. The authors remind us that in the near future, "workers can expect that two-fifths (39%) of their existing skills sets will be transformed or become outdated" (p. 6). They lay out in detail dozens of factors for increased "turbulence" in labor markets that make it difficult to predict how jobs will change. They also share the most sought-after "core skills" employers continue to find essential. It will come as no surprise that, in a time of potentially cataclysmic change, employers are calling out the very skills that require synthesis and practice across the general education curriculum, notably analytical thinking (the most sought-after core skill, with seven out of 10 companies naming this as "essential"), followed by "resilience, flexibility, agility" (67%), "leadership and social influence" (61%) and creative thinking (57%), among others (p. 35).

Three cycles of Millersville University's general education self-study (2008, 2014, and 2021) have pointed out the needs for true transformation to the University's approach to supporting these core skills, needs that have become more acute over the decades. In the last four years, building on these earlier works, the Millersville University community carved out a truly new approach, working from the bottom up to create a model aligned to best practice, rooted in assessment of student learning outcomes, with pointed attention to student success both in their university study.

This document, serving as an interim report, tracks this transformation and takes stock of the complex timeline and process that has brought MU to the threshold of a new general education model after more than 30 years. While much work remains in the coming year, we celebrate the progress of the past four years. As Table A on pages 8–9 demonstrates, Millersville's faculty, staff, and administrative leaders meaningfully addressed recommendations made by the previous self-study team and its external reviewer. Their efforts laid a new foundation for student-outcome-aligned curricular development within general education. This foundational change facilitated a robust cultural shift in campus assessment practices—marked by increased faculty ownership and direct engagement in general education assessment. We answered the imperatives of our accrediting bodies, including PASSHE and MSCHE, most notably through the design of new opportunities, like the Gateway certificates, to strengthen curricular connections, enhance content relevance, and highlight emerging career pathways in response to evolving workforce demands.

Works Cited

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Appendices

The list that follows is ordered by first mention of the appended document in the report itself.

Each entry is linked to the full document. These are also available in the MU Gateway General Education Teams folder --> General Education Report 2025--> Appendices to the Report.

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FYEX Common Assessment 2: Goal pathway report data from AY 2024–25. (2025, May). Available at: FYEX CA 2 data chart 2024-25.pdf

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