

Millersville University

**Academic Program Review Report
(pursuant to Board of Governors Policy 1986-04-A)**

Program Title: General Education

Final Report with Appendices

July 9, 2009

**Prepared by Frederick Foster-Clark, Coordinator of
General Education, on behalf of the General Education
Review Committee**

Millersville University
General Education 2009 Program Review
Final Report

1. Introduction

1.1. The University's mission statement and strategic planning documents place a high emphasis on General Education. According to its mission, "Millersville University recognizes excellence in teaching and learning as its reason for being," "is committed to offering students a high quality, comprehensive university experience of exceptional value," and is "[d]edicated to providing nationally recognized programs that embrace the liberal arts". One of the six strategic directions being pursued by Millersville reads as follows: "We will foster an appreciation of the liberal arts as the foundation of all disciplines and professions and vital for success in today's society." Additional strategic directions involve passion for learning, diversity, and civic responsibility, all of which connect to the revised purpose and objectives of the General Education program. In keeping with the mission and strategic plan of the University, faculty and administrators involved with the General Education program have worked diligently over the past several years to create a revised General Education program that was eventually approved in April 2007 and implemented in fall 2008. They have also continued to refine and assess learning outcomes associated with general education competencies and use this information in curricular and faculty development efforts.

2. Composition of Review Team

2.1. The General Education Review Committee (GERC – members listed below), with the support of the current General Education Coordinator, is the body with primary responsibility for conducting and approving the review and this document. The Final Report was reviewed and approved by a subcommittee of GERC (composed of Drs. Skinner, Lombardi, and Gaudry-Hudson) with input from Dr. Lisa Shibley, Assistant Vice President for Institutional Assessment and Planning, Dr. Thomas Burns, Associate Provost for Academic Administration, and Dr. Beverly Schneller, who will be the incoming General Education Coordinator beginning in fall 2009.

2.2. GERC Membership 2008-2009:

Beverly Skinner, ENGL, Chair
Julie Lombardi, WSSD
Todd Sikora, ESCI
Michelle White, Academic Advisement
Christine Gaudry-Hudson, FORL
Antonia Cardwell, MATH
Shawn Gallagher, PSYC

Changfu Chang, COMM
John Wright, ITEC
Lisa Shibley, Provost's Designee, ex officio
Linda McDowell, FYE Coordinator, ex officio
Fred Foster-Clark, General Education
Coordinator, ex officio

3. Progress since Last Review

3.1. Recommendations for action from the last Program Review covered five areas, which will each be discussed in the following subsections.

3.2. Comprehensive recommendations for General Education revision. At the time of the last Program Review in July 2004, work was well underway on the review and recommendations for revising the General Education program. Continuing to work toward finalization and eventual implementation of changes was an integral part of the Program Review's recommendations. After a two year process of discussion, reformulation, and debate, a revision to the General Education program first proposed by the General Education Task Force in January 2005 was finally approved by Faculty Senate and then a campus-wide faculty referendum in April 2007. The proposal that was passed (a copy of which appears as Appendix A) included a new statement of purpose and objectives for the General Education program, a realignment of the curricular structure to parallel these objectives, and definitions/specifications for new or re-invigorated types of courses. The structural changes included: (1) moving the required Math course to a new Foundations of Critical Thinking block (joining ENGL 110, COMM 100, and the Advanced Writing course); (2) paring requirements for each of the three Liberal Arts areas from four courses to three; (3) creating an Exploration and Connections block that includes the existing Wellness and Perspectives requirements together with the First-Year Inquiry Seminar (UNIV 103) and a free elective; (4) creating a new Cultural Diversity and Community requirement; and (5) re-specifying guidelines for Writing-intensive ("W") courses and Wellness courses. The April 2007 curriculum maintains the same overall credit level (51 credits out of a minimum 120 credit degree) as the previous General Education requirement while offering major programs and students more flexibility for meeting these requirements. (The new and previous General Education Curriculum Sheets can be found in Appendix B.) A new description and policy guidelines for the revised General Education program has been consolidated into the Governance and Policy document that appears as Appendix C. This provides the single best summary of the philosophy, structure, and policies of the revised General Education program.

3.3. First-Year Seminar/Learning Community Initiative. The curricular redesign first proposed in 2005 and eventually adopted in 2007 intended to make the FYS/LC component a cornerstone or a "signature" component of what a Millersville education is all about. This initiative was pilot-tested beginning in fall 2005 (with five sections serving just about 100 Exploratory students) and was expanded to include all incoming Exploratory (undeclared) students in subsequent years (approximately 300 - 350 students per year). The First-Year Inquiry seminar (UNIV 103) officially became part of the General Education curriculum for students entering in fall 2008, but original expectations to expand the program beyond incoming Exploratory students have yet to be realized. Currently, less than 1 in 4 incoming new freshman are part of this initiative, although other types of first-year seminars (e.g., majors-based) and other types of learning communities (e.g., majors-based, Honors College) are employed. Efforts to

expand the program have been hampered by faculty complement concerns and an unwillingness of some schools and departments to trade existing General Education sections for UNIV 103 sections.

- 3.4. Evaluation and re-certification of General Education courses. As part of the redesign of the General Education curriculum, procedures were put into place for the conversion of existing courses into Cultural Diversity and Community (“D”) courses, for the re-certification of all existing Perspectives (“P”) and Writing (“W”) courses, and for the conversion/creation of UNIV 103 First-Year Inquiry (FYI) seminars. Over the preceding two-year implementation period, 23 “D” courses have been approved, 16 FYI courses have been approved, and all existing “W” courses have either been recertified or have elected to no longer carry the “W” label. Existing “P” courses are in the middle of a five-year cycle of re-certification wherein each Department submits its courses for review during its five-year Program Review process. Similarly, all ongoing “W” and “D” courses will join this five-year cycle of re-certification in subsequent years. FYI courses have only a five-year lifespan after which they need to be re-approved in a process similar to new course approvals. Thus, the key elements of the revised General Education curriculum, which had never previously been subject to any re-approval or review process, will now be examined every five-years on a staggered basis.
- 3.5. General Education Coordinator and Office. The position of General Education Coordinator, first instituted in 2001, is now entering its third three-year cycle as a 6-credit reassignment per semester (including summer). The Coordinator’s responsibilities were slightly modified in 2009 (see Appendix D) but are designed to maintain continuity and oversight of the General Education program. Unfortunately, the position continues to be supported by one-time monies rather than being a part of the permanent University budget. After getting its first permanent operating budget for the FY 2009, budget shortfalls led to the voiding of this budget item in late 2008. On a positive note, the General Education Coordinator and General Education program were granted designated office space as recommended in the last Program Review. In 2006 a part-time Graduate Assistant (10 hours per week) to support General Education and FYE initiatives was requested and approved. This position was extended to full-time (20 hours per week) in 2008 to accommodate the increased demand for assessment and the University’s participation in the Wabash National Study. Together with limited student worker hours (about 4-5 hours per week) and occasional support from the Associate Provost’s office, the GA helps to provide at least some clerical and staff support for the General Education office.
- 3.6. Committee Oversight. The previous Program Review made the following recommendation: “Create a University committee with ongoing authority granted by Faculty Senate to oversee the implementation of current plans to improve the General Education Program and to continue the development of a campus culture and curricular structure supportive of the liberal arts education mission of this University.” In 2005, as a result of proposals coming from the General Education Task Force, the

General Education Review Committee (GERC) and Academic Outcomes Assessment Committee (AOAC), which had been temporarily merged, were separated and given slightly revised charges. This change was implemented in fall 2006 and has been in effect since. As a result of this change, the GERC was charged with building upon the work of the Task Force and overseeing the refinement and implementation of a revised General Education program. AOAC's charge was revised to make support of Departmental program assessment secondary and make general education assessment primary. This separation and clarification of functions has worked effectively, although the intended collaboration between these committees needs to be improved.

4. Summary of Relevant Statistics

4.1. Required Institutional Data.

	Insert Appropriate Academic Years Below				
	Year 2003-04	Year 2004-05	Year 2005-06	Year 2006-07	Year 2007-08
Student Enrollment – Annualized FTES ¹	3,067.1	3,127.1	3,101.8	3,158.0	3,134.0
Program Budget/Cost ¹ (personnel, operating, equipment)	\$14,708,822.56	\$14,831,531.76	\$15,611,973.72	\$16,528,113.54	\$16,377,689.80
Program Cost/FTES	\$4,795.68	\$4,742.90	\$5,033.22	\$5,233.79	\$5,225.75
Faculty FTE ¹	170.13804	172.888892	171.59532	169.79924	170.58748
Majors Enrolled – Fall Headcount	6,820	6,821	6,822	6,823	6,824
Program Graduates	N/a	N/a	N/a	N/a	N/a

¹ Based on 40% of University totals

5. Outcome Assessment Information

5.1. Various assessment data relevant to General Education learning outcomes have been gathered as part of previous General Education reports or as part of the Middle States self-study process. The most pertinent data are presented in the subsections that follow.

5.2. National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE). The NSSE Data allows students to self-report on the amount of time spent on or quantity of their activities during a given academic year. The NSSE instrument provides students the opportunity to report on oral communication (2 questions), written communication (6 questions), quantitative problems (1 question), critical reasoning (5 questions), and technology (3 questions). Some of these results, drawn from the analysis of the 2003, 2005, and 2008 surveys, are summarized below:

- Oral Communication
 - Millersville freshmen report giving significantly more presentations in classes than freshmen from selected peer institutions. (Question 1b)
 - Millersville seniors consistently report giving more presentations in classes than Millersville freshmen. (Question 1b)
 - *Millersville students report that MU has contributed to their ability to speak clearly and effectively with mean scores of 3.06 and 3.05 (on a 4-point scale, with 3="Quite a bit") reported in 2005 and 2008 respectively. (Question 11d)*
- Written Communication
 - Millersville freshmen report writing significantly fewer papers with multiple drafts than students at peer institutions. Seniors report numbers roughly equivalent to peer institutions. (Question 1c)
 - Millersville seniors report more instances of integrating various sources into their papers than Millersville freshmen. These values are higher than peer institutions in both 2005 and 2008. (Question 1d)
 - Millersville seniors report writing significantly more papers longer than five pages than seniors at peer institutions. (Questions 3c and 3d)
 - *Millersville students report that MU has contributed to their ability to write clearly and effectively with mean scores of 3.09 and 3.05 (on a 4-point scale, with 3="Quite a bit") reported in both 2005 and 2008. (Question 11c)*
- Quantitative Skills
 - Millersville seniors report that MU has helped them analyze quantitative problems more effectively than Millersville freshmen. (Question 11f)
 - *Millersville students report that MU has contributed to their ability to analyze quantitative problems with mean scores of 3.03 and 3.08 (on a 4-point scale, with 3="Quite a bit") reported in 2005 and 2008 respectively. (Question 11f)*

- Critical Reasoning
 - Millersville seniors consistently report greater opportunities to synthesize, make judgments, and apply theories than Millersville freshmen. (Questions 1i, 2c, 2d, 2e)
 - *Millersville students report that MU has contributed to their ability to think critically and analytically with mean scores of 3.36 and 3.37 (on a 4-point scale, with 3="Quite a bit") reported in 2005 and 2008 respectively. These values are substantially higher than reports in 2003. (Question 11e)*
- Technological Competency
 - Millersville students tend to report greater use of computers in academic work than students at peer institutions (Question 10g)
 - *Millersville seniors report that MU has contributed to their ability to use computing and information technology with mean scores of 3.25 and 3.24 reported in 2005 and 2008 respectively. (Question 11g)*

5.3. The Higher Education Research Institute (HERI) 2007-2008 Faculty Survey. The HERI survey asks faculty about their attitudes towards and activities within the classroom. Many of these questions deal with general education components. Generally, faculty activities corroborate student reports in NSSE:

- Greater than 96% of all faculty report viewing general education goals of critical thinking, writing, and information literacy as very important or essential.
- Greater than 70% of faculty report frequently requiring students to support their arguments, revise papers, and evaluate reliability of information.
- 47% of faculty report requiring classroom presentation
- 41% of faculty report requiring term papers.

NSSE and HERI Surveys effectively report activities regarding five of the major general education goals: oral communication, written communication, critical reasoning, quantitative ability, and technological competency. However, these instruments do not address information literacy or scientific reasoning.

5.4. Library Information Literacy Assessment. As part of their own outcomes assessment process, library faculty chose to assess student's ability to access, evaluate, and put to practical use information attained via the library. Four faculty read 50 ENGL 110 English Composition papers and 38 papers from HIST 313 History of the Middle Ages and scored students competency using a rubric based on, "Criteria for Information Literacy Competency." The eight core competencies are: 1) expresses the ability to define and articulate the need for information 2) identifies a variety of types and formats of potential resources 3) summarizes the main ideas 4) articulates and applies initial criteria for information and its sources 5) synthesizes the main ideas to construct new concepts 6) compares new knowledge with prior knowledge to determine the value added, contradictions, or other unique characteristics of information 7) determines whether new knowledge has an impact on the individual's value system and takes

steps to reconcile differences, and 8) applies new and prior information to the planning and creation of the essay. Results from this survey indicate that:

- Upperclass MU students always show greater competency than students enrolled in ENGL 110.
- However, in only two categories do more than 2/3 of upperclass MU students meet standards for proficiency:
 - 68% proficient in summarizing main ideas
 - 84% proficient in applying new and prior information to the planning and creation of the essay.

Additional assessments of information literacy were undertaken in both 2007 and 2009, but they involved samples of just first-year students.

5.5. General Education Science Syllabi Review. This review, conducted as part of the 2010 Middle States Self-Study, showed that students are required to engage in laboratory study and frequently use appropriate technology and mathematics to solve problems. Fewer course syllabi specifically mention study of the scientific process.

5.6. Other Assessment Activities. The Academic Outcomes Assessment Committee (AOAC) is charged with overseeing the assessment of learning outcomes related to General Education. Over the past few years it has conducted assessment activities related to the seven General Education student learning outcomes enumerated by Middle States. Selected results are presented below:

- After the adequacy of the CAAP Science test to assess Scientific Reasoning among MU students was established based upon a systematic review by faculty, a random sample of 450 native MU juniors and seniors was drawn and invited to participate in the testing. Despite extensive efforts to induce participation, only 61 students agreed to participate and only 47 actually completed the assessment. Scoring by ACT was completed in May 2006. A report on this project can be found in Appendix E.
- Oral Communication assessment was addressed using data gathered as part of ongoing assessment of COMM 100 (as a baseline measure) supplemented by data from more advanced students gathered in selected sections of Perspectives courses. A report on the findings noted flaws in the assessment methods employed and has led to efforts to revise the rubrics as reported elsewhere in this report (see section 9.2.2).
- In the area of Technological Competency, learning outcomes were much less obvious to the Committee and it was decided to survey Departments about their approaches to Technological Competency with the hope of being able to better specify outcomes and means of assessment for the University based upon the results of the Departmental surveys. A summary of the survey results can be found in Appendix F.
- Critical reasoning and analytic writing have been assessed using the Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA) during each of the past two years using cross-sectional

samples of entering first-year students and seniors in order to obtain value-added assessments. In addition, the CAAP Critical Thinking test was employed at the beginning and end of the first college year for a subsample of the Wabash Study participants. Results of these assessments, including an evaluation of the comparative utility of the CLA vs. the CAAP tests of critical reasoning, will be forthcoming in the fall.

6. Criteria for Review of Areas of Focus Selected

6.1. The following three focal questions were developed to help guide both the internal and external review processes:

6.1.1. How do we at Millersville University know that the revised General Education curriculum is working?

6.1.2. How do we put into practice the necessary procedures to ensure that the General Education Program gets reviewed and adjusted periodically as experience and assessment data accumulate?

6.1.3. How do we promote an institutional context supportive of the periodic changes needed to keep the General Education Program vital and responsive to changing needs and ongoing assessment results, including marshaling the resources and administrative support necessary to maintain a strong General Education Program?

7. Department Review of Selected Criteria

7.1. These three focal questions, though newly articulated for this Program Review, have been at least in the background of discussions taking place since the time of the General Education Task Force. With the implementation of the new curriculum this year, they have been thrust onto center stage. The first question obviously relates to assessment about which this report has already had much to say. However, much General Education assessment revolves around larger issues of student learning outcomes that may or may not be targeted sufficiently to inform faculty and administration about practical and actionable questions about the curriculum. Hence, it is vital for GERC to work closely with Faculty Senate, the administration, and with AOAC to make sure that assessment information is gathered that answers the right questions and can lead to practical decisions about the curriculum and General Education program more generally.

The second question derives from the first. Throughout the recent process of review and revision to the General Education program, it has been firmly stated that the revised General Education curriculum needed to be a dynamic one that was subject to regular and ongoing examination and change as needed. Waiting 15-20 years for another major overhaul of General Education was not seen as a viable or appropriate method of operation. How to make this happen has been a topic of concern of the GERC but not one that has been sufficiently debated or resolved. It would be all too easy for the GERC and the Faculty Senate, as the University's ultimate curriculum body, to rest on the laurels of their work in getting the revised curriculum passed and

implemented and not be vigilant about the process of ongoing review and periodic curricular modification.

Again, the last question about institutional context and support derives from the preceding one. The recent General Education revision was about changing the culture to refocus on what students need to learn to be successful as citizen workers in the 21st century, how they need to be taught, and how to assess that learning. But another aspect of the prevailing culture needs to change as well and that involves the capacity for institutional self-reflection and the acceptance of change. A culture of continuous improvement needs to replace an acceptance of the status quo and a resistance to change. These are not easy cultural shifts to make for an institution like Millersville but are necessary to maintain the nimbleness and responsiveness needed in higher education today. A commitment to this shift was certainly voiced as one of the hard lessons learned through our attempts to revise the General Education curriculum. It also seems to be a fundamental tenet of our work on the Middle States Self-Study. But it is a commitment made even more difficult by the challenging financial picture which makes resources to support a changing and dynamic curriculum even harder to muster. Millersville must keep its priorities in focus and find efficient and effective ways to continue the development of a strong General Education program. Funding and other institutional support of a continuous improvement approach to General Education must also be forthcoming to realize this cultural shift.

8. Reports of External Reviewers

8.1. Dr. Catherine Andersen, Associate Provost for Enrollment at Gallaudet University, served as our external reviewer. She visited campus on March 24-25, 2009. Her report is included as Appendix G.

9. Program Weaknesses and Strengths

9.1. Weaknesses. Three areas of challenge for the General Education program emerge as we look toward the next five years. The first lies in implementation and monitoring of the revised General Education curriculum. The second lies in weaknesses that were not fully addressed in the recent revisions to the General Education curriculum. Lastly, despite considerable progress on the assessment front, challenges remain which are enumerated below.

9.1.1. Implementation/Monitoring of Revised General Education Program. As noted earlier in this report, the anticipated expansion of the FYI/LC program has yet to materialize. Uncertainty about the continued administration of the FYE program combined with severe institutional budget reductions make the solutions to this problem hard to visualize. Efforts to better identify and address curriculum needs at the level of Deans' Council (i.e., provosts and deans) are planned for the upcoming summer. Discussions in GERC about ongoing monitoring and assessment of the revised General Education program have occurred but have not yet led to

any concrete actions or specific plans. Hopefully, future efforts at these two levels yield the planning and monitoring capabilities needed to realize the potential of the General Education revisions.

9.1.2. Potential Areas Not Addressed in 2008 Revision. Curricular and policy changes of the scope demanded by a program as large and amorphous as General Education typically involve considerable compromise. As advocated by Dr. Steven Briggs, then Provost of The College of New Jersey who served as the External Consultant in 2004, the change process should be incremental. As such, there are areas of the General Education program that at least some people might have identified as weak spots that were not addressed in the just completed revision. While the GERC has made considerable progress in specifying guidelines for the new or reconfigured parts of the General Education curriculum, there remain areas where adequate guidelines do not exist and processes are not yet in place for any periodic review. Such guidelines are seen as necessary for course approval/re-certification and for program assessment and are needed in the following areas:

- The three liberal arts areas (i.e., Humanities and Fine Arts, Science and Mathematics, and Social Sciences). Since the nine courses required in General Education across these three areas represent more than half the General Education program, addressing this weakness should be a priority for the University.
- The G2 (Science and Mathematics) Lab requirement. This is the only remaining General Education designation that remains unspecified and without periodic review. As was the case for the Wellness requirement which was addressed in the just completed General Education revision, specification of what constitutes a Lab course and what learning outcomes students should be expected to achieve would not be expected to change the nature of the requirement or the courses that satisfy it. Instead, the process of specification will simply make the process of course approval and review more transparent and the assessment of learning outcomes more straightforward.

Two other areas debated and considered for revision as a result of the work of the General Education Task Force but for which no recommendations were adopted are capstone experiences and second-year transition issues. Both of these are areas in the spotlight of contemporary higher education research and policy work and would benefit from ongoing dialogue as Millersville continues its incremental approach to General Education program and curricular development.

9.1.3. General Education Assessment. General Education assessment is an area of both strength and weakness at Millersville. The revised General Education program represented an important step toward the alignment of objectives, learning outcomes, curriculum, and assessment. Recent work by the AOAC has continued

this progress, and this Committee, together with the Assessment and Planning office, has made great strides in specifying and measuring outcomes and organizing the assessment process. As is true of so many institutions of higher learning, the process of synthesizing and applying the assessment results (so called “closing the loop”) has lagged behind. Furthermore, with the recent implementation of a revised General Education program, the assessment process should be more closely calibrated with the outcomes intended by the revisions so that the University community is better equipped to evaluate the revisions and make adjustments where necessary. These efforts would result in a strong continuous improvement process for the General Education program. While we recognize some of the special difficulties inherent in assessing learning outcomes across general education and the liberal arts, assessment activities would also be strengthened by greater emphasis on direct rather than indirect forms of assessment. As discussed below, this is being pursued for some learning outcomes already.

9.2. Strengths. The perceived strengths are summarized below into two general headings: General Education Reform and Assessment.

9.2.1. General Education Reform. After an invigorating and inclusive process of campus dialogue and debate, a proposal for major revision to the General Education program was adopted in 2007 and implemented with the incoming class of undergraduates in fall 2008. This was no small effort and no small accomplishment! While this report has already documented some of the limitations of this work, the following are highlights of what we perceive as the strengths of the revised program:

- **Simplified Objectives.** The General Education Objectives were reduced from 16 to three (and from 39 subparts to 11) and stated in simple, clear language. These changes were intended to facilitate assessment and to help students and others better understand and communicate the purpose and objectives of General Education.
- **Alignment.** The three major objectives are aligned with the three major divisions of the curriculum and all objectives have corresponding curricular components (neither of which was true previously). Furthermore, the revised General Education program was designed to reflect the University’s new Mission statement as well as the strategic directions that now guide the institution’s visioning and planning processes.
- **First Year Inquiry (FYI) Seminars.** The FYI seminars, embedded in living-learning communities, have been integrated into the new curriculum and are seen as vital to initiating students into the intellectual, social, and civic life of the University and laying a foundation for liberal learning. The model that Millersville has adopted for its FYI seminars has a strong conceptual base that

has been positively viewed when presented nationally and internationally at higher education conferences.

- Cultural Diversity and Community Courses. One of the primary curricular gaps plugged by the revised curriculum lies in the area of diversity and intercultural competence. Millersville developed a unique and strong conceptual model for its diversity requirement. As outlined in the relevant section of Appendix C, Cultural Diversity and Community courses must fulfill eight criteria that assure that courses are designed to meet learning outcomes that go far beyond simple exposure to diverse perspectives and instead challenge students to develop true intercultural competence.
- Strengthening and Maintaining Critical Components of the Previous Curriculum. The review of and revision to the General Education curriculum recognized that the previous General Education curriculum had important strengths that should not be lost. One of the critical new components of the 1988 curriculum was Perspectives courses which were viewed as integrative and skill-building courses that would cap off a students' liberal arts coursework. These courses were maintained as part of the revised curriculum with two small changes made to increase their effectiveness. Additionally, new guidelines were written for the Writing intensive courses ("W" courses) to correct some what was perceived to be slippage from their original intentions. Guidelines for these curriculum components are also found in Appendix C.
- Re-Certification. As noted previously, a process for review and re-certification of courses carrying General Education designations has been put into place.

In addition to all the foregoing structural strengths of the revised General Education program, some process components also should be counted as positive features of the revision. First, the process of review, discussion, and decision-making that led to the revised program was generally viewed as inclusive and fair. In its own way, the process of considering change was as important to changing the culture surrounding general education and the liberal arts as the structural changes themselves. Secondly, the cultural shift has been supported by an aggressive program of faculty development over the last two years, especially in the areas of Diversity courses, FYI courses, and Writing courses.

9.2.2. Assessment. As much as several challenges in the area of assessment have been reported above, this area also can be noted for its strength and promise. As mentioned earlier, the AOAC and the Assistant Vice President for Institutional Assessment and Planning have made important strides in developing a framework for assessment that integrates institutional outcomes and General Education objectives to aid in the review, synthesis, and planning of assessment activities regarding General Education learning outcomes. Together with efforts to summarize previous and current assessment activities through Assessment Briefs

(see example in Appendix E), Millersville is better positioned to move forward with both the collection and application of assessment data. Additionally, the following specific strengths have been recognized:

- A strong program of assessment has been in place for several years surrounding first-year seminars and other FYE initiatives. This assessment includes quantitative (e.g., surveys of attitudes and perceptions), qualitative (e.g., open-ended prompts to assess understanding of civic responsibility), and institutional (e.g., second-year retention) data. This assessment program has resulted in several national presentations. (Readers may consult the following website for some of the methodology and results from these assessments: [://www.millersville.edu/gened/fyelinks.php](http://www.millersville.edu/gened/fyelinks.php).)
- In April 2008 Millersville applied to and was eventually accepted into the Wabash National Study of Liberal Arts Education (WNS) and began participation by surveying about 1000 incoming first year students in August 2008. Over 500 students participated in the end-of-first-year follow-up in March – April 2009. The WNS involves over 50 colleges and universities across the country and systematically examines how aspects of institutional practices and policies impact a set of eight outcomes of a liberal arts education (e.g., critical thinking, moral reasoning). This longitudinal study will involve an additional follow-up data collection at the end of the students' fourth year. Reports and data from the WNS will first become available to Millersville in October 2009. Participation in the WNS provides Millersville with excellent opportunities to assess General Education outcomes in a systematic, rigorous, and norm-referenced manner.
- As a complement to the WNS, the College Impact Study is a faculty-student research initiative that is designed to add depth and extend the questions and answers addressed by the larger study. In February 2009 about 40 participants from the WNS cohort were interviewed and given additional tests (including the Emotional Quotient Inventory, EQi-S). These participants represent a subsample of at-risk students and a comparison sample. This Study also intends to conduct follow-up interviews of students who have left Millersville to better assess factors leading to retention and non-retention, especially for at-risk students. Data from these intensive subsample investigations will be integrated with the larger Wabash data set.
- Millersville has participated for two years in the Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA) in an effort to better assess critical reasoning and analytic writing. Through participation in the WNS, which uses the CAAP Critical Thinking Test, Millersville will be in a unique position to do a comparative assessment of the usefulness of the CLA vs. the CAAP as tools to assess critical reasoning, the most essential General Education learning outcome.
- Millersville, through its Communication and Theatre Department, has undertaken an initiative to develop enhanced rubrics for the assessment of oral communication skills which can eventually be used to assess oral

communication across the curriculum and across the students' academic careers. The new rubrics will be pilot-tested in summer or fall 2009.

10. Recommendations

- 10.1. Develop mechanisms to support the ongoing review of the General Education curriculum and the recertification of courses. Solidify links between assessment activities and these two review processes.
- 10.2. Develop and execute a plan for the expansion of the FYI (UNIV 103) offerings. Such a plan should clarify the roles and responsibilities of the FYE Coordinator and of the FYE Steering Committee. As both the external consultant and the General Education Task Force recommended, the FYE Coordinator's release time should be expanded to be commensurate with the increased size and visibility of this component of General Education.
- 10.3. Develop guidelines for General Education course designations (i.e., L, G1, G2, G3) that are currently unspecified in University Governance and Policies and consider policies and procedures for recertification of these courses.
- 10.4. Study the issues of capstone experiences and transition issues for second-year native students and all transfer students to see whether recommendations for continuing changes to the General Education program are warranted and timely.
- 10.5. Develop and execute a plan for facilitating conversations among faculty and between faculty and students about the meaning, purpose, and utility of a liberal arts education. Such a plan should include faculty development in the areas of student advisement and pedagogy to build explicit connections between course, major-based, and General Education objectives and learning outcomes.
- 10.6. Create informational materials (print and web-based) for current and prospective students to educate them on the purpose, objectives, and curricular structure of the General Education Program.
- 10.7. Study the issues involved in transfer students' experiences with the General Education curriculum and develop plans for resolving the unique problems this subpopulation faces.

11. Action Plan including Resource Requests

- 11.1. Form a collaborative working group, drawn from GERC, AOAC, UCPRC, Faculty Senate, and relevant administrators (e.g., Associate Provost for Academic Administration, Assistant VP for Institutional Assessment and Planning), to develop a process for the ongoing review of the revised General Education program and its associated learning outcomes. This would include identifying the assessment data needed to effectively conduct this review. (Initiated by Associate Provost, Assistant VP for Institutional Assessment and Planning, and General Education Coordinator)
- 11.2. Promulgate an action plan for the expansion of the FYS/LC component of the General Education program. (Provost, Associate Provost, FYE Coordinator, and General Education Coordinator)

- 11.3. Form a subcommittee of GERC to develop proposed guidelines for the L, G1, G2, G3 General Education course designations and to develop policies and procedures for recertification of these courses. (GERC in consultation with UCPRC and APC)
- 11.4. Form working groups, drawn from GERC and other interested faculty and/or administrators, to study the issues of capstone experiences and transition issues for second-year native students and all transfer students to see whether recommendations for continuing changes to the General Education program are warranted and timely. (Initiated and supervised by General Education Coordinator)
- 11.5. Work with the Center for Academic Excellence (CAE) and the Office of Academic Advisement to plan and conduct faculty development efforts in the areas of student advisement and pedagogy to better develop student and faculty understanding about the meaning, purpose, and utility of a liberal arts education. Such efforts should lead to both increased awareness of how specific course objectives and specific major-based objectives are linked to general education learning outcomes and increased opportunities for integrative learning. (General Education Coordinator, Directors of CAE and Academic Advisement)
- 11.6. Work with GERC, in consultation with UCM, to create informational materials (print and web-based) for current and prospective students to educate them on the purpose, objectives, and curricular structure of the General Education Program. (Initiated and supervised by General Education Coordinator)
- 11.7. Form a collaborative working group, drawn from GERC and the Offices of the Registrar, Admissions, and Institutional Research, to study the issues involved in transfer students' experiences with the General Education curriculum and develop plans for resolving the unique problems this subpopulation faces. (Initiated by Associate Provost and General Education Coordinator)

Appendices

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Appendix A

Proposal for Revised General Education Curriculum

Presented to Millersville University Faculty Senate

by the General Education Review Committee

January 30, 2007

Amended based on Senate feedback—March 6, 2007

Introduction

This proposal is the culmination of three and a half years of campus dialogue and would be the first significant revision of general education since 1988. The proposed revision of the General Education objectives and curriculum preserves the values of the current system while providing a progressive step forward.

The changes from the current system emphasize greater coherence, flexibility, and preparation for a changing world. Greater coherence comes in part through better alignment of objectives and the curriculum and through opportunities for enhanced connections between general education and studies in the major. The proposal allows up to six credits of electives, providing increased flexibility to both students and programs. The addition of a Cultural Diversity and Community requirement fits with the central value of diversity and community at Millersville University and will better prepare graduates for the increasing diversity of the United States and the growing importance of the international community in all facets of life. Other changes, such as revision of the W requirement, and redefinition of criteria for Wellness courses, do not change current curricular requirements but are clear improvements.

In the view of the General Education Review Committee, this proposal meets the learning needs of our students and is one that Millersville faculty can believe in and teach with passion, commitment, and intentionality¹.

¹Paraphrase of Ann Ferren, June 2002.

Purpose

Consistent with Millersville University's mission to provide a liberal arts-based education, the purpose of General Education is to provide breadth of knowledge as a balance and complement to the depth provided by the major. This is necessary for the holistic development of Millersville graduates as responsible citizens in a diverse and technologically complex, global community.

General Education Objectives

Students, working with advisors, and taking into consideration prior knowledge and experience, purposefully select courses in the General Education curriculum that meld with required courses, co-curricular and extra-curricular activities, and courses in the major to achieve the following objectives:

Foundations for Life-Long Learning

1. Students will think, speak, and write clearly. This is evidenced by:
 - a) the clear presentation of ideas in formal spoken, written, and media forms.
 - b) the use of effective communication for ongoing dialogue.
 - c) the ability to find appropriate sources of information, evaluate that information, and integrate that information into a final product.
 - d) the use of statistical methods and other techniques of mathematics to analyze and solve problems.

Critical Thinking across the Liberal Arts

2. Students will demonstrate foundational knowledge of the important ideas and methods of different ways of knowing as follows:
 - a) in the humanities students will analyze and interpret existing works of literature and the arts.
 - b) in the sciences students will engage in the scientific method, laboratory study, appropriate technology, and mathematics to investigate, evaluate, and apply scientific concepts and theories.
 - c) in social sciences students will develop the necessary tools of critical thinking, inquiry, and diplomacy to participate effectively in our democracy and the increasingly complex global society.

Connections and Exploration

3. Students will connect important ideas and methods of inquiry from different disciplines as a means of becoming holistic and responsible citizens in a diverse and technologically complex, global community. Students will:
 - a) demonstrate civic and social responsibility.
 - b) grow in their engagement with peoples of diverse histories and communities, both inside and outside the United States.
 - c) build the foundation for a lifelong process of understanding, developing, and monitoring healthy lifestyle behaviors in all dimensions of wellness, including physical, social, emotional, intellectual, spiritual, and environmental wellness.

d) gain personal enrichment by developing new interests that can be enjoyed throughout a lifetime.

GENERAL EDUCATION STRUCTURE (Minimum 51 credits)

Foundations for Lifelong Learning

- ENGL 110: English Composition 3 credits
- COMM 100: Fundamentals of Speech 3 credits
- Approved MATH Course 3-4 credits
- ENGL 311, 312, 313, or 316: Advanced Writing 3 credits

Critical Thinking across the Liberal Arts (9 courses – min. 27 credits)

- Three courses (min. 9 credits) each in Humanities and Fine Arts (G1), Science and Mathematics (G2), Social Sciences (G3).
- *Exactly* 2 courses must be taken from one department within G1, G2, and G3.
- In Science and Mathematics, 2 of the 3 courses must come from Biology, Chemistry, Earth Sciences, and/or Physics including one which has a Laboratory (L) component.
- At least 3 courses taken throughout blocks G1, G2 and G3 must be at the 200 level or above.
- Courses in a student's primary major discipline cannot fulfill a Liberal Arts Core requirement; courses from the minor or second major can fulfill a Liberal Arts Core requirement.

Connections and Exploration

- First Year Perspectives course 0-3 credit hours
- Approved Wellness course 3 credit hours
- Perspectives course 3 credit hours
- Elective(s) [outside of primary major] 3 - 6 credit hours
- Cultural Diversity and Community course²: 1 required; may be in General Education, the major, the minor or general electives.
- Writing courses: 4 required; may be in General Education, the major, the minor or general electives.

Additional Stipulations:

- Six courses (18 credit hours) from Required Related course work in student's major may be counted toward any of the Gen Ed requirements above.
- Courses meeting any Gen Ed requirement will be approved according to procedures to be specified in the Governance Manual.
- Junior standing required for Advanced Writing and Perspectives.

¹is intercultural and/or cross-cultural, with culture being a worldview that reflects beliefs, customs, values, politics, and experiences as shaped by race and ethnicity, gender, geography, language, sexual orientation, education, economics, age, nationality, religious affiliation, occupation, and/or physical ability among other factors.

Recommendations for Specific Changes:**1. Encourage incoming students to take a First Year Perspectives (FYP) course which will count as part of a Connections and Exploration block.**

FYP is a component of General Education specifically designed for first semester freshmen and offered in a seminar format, typically linked to a foundations course (either ENGL 110 or COMM 100) as part of a living/learning community. Students will choose from several varieties of FYP courses offered each semester. A major function of these FYP courses is to introduce a process of critical inquiry applied to important social, cultural, scientific, technological, and/or aesthetic problems. Each FYP course will introduce multiple perspectives related to the understanding and resolution of these problems. A second function of these FYP courses is to support students' transition into the college experience academically, socially, and personally. Each FYP course topic will be approved according to guidelines to be specified in the Governance Manual.

Specifically, each FYP course:

- a) involves 3 credit hours at the 100 level.
- b) has a meaningful written and oral component, but may not carry a W label.
- c) requires students to consider multiple perspectives in advancing their understanding of the importance of social, cultural, scientific, technological, and/or aesthetic problems.
- d) enables quality interaction.
- e) provides intellectual richness through its assignments and assessments.
- f) promotes an understanding of the importance of the liberal arts and the General Education program at Millersville.
- g) supports the students' successful transition into college life by fostering connections between and among students, teachers, and the college community.
- h) strengthens students' information literacy.

Rationale:

- Provides coherence and intellectual richness to the General Education program.
- Data collected through student focus groups, faculty interviews, and student surveys during the recent implementation of First Year Perspectives courses (i.e., UNIV 101 and 179) all point to the success of this initiative.

2. Institute clarified guidelines for a required WELLness course.

The WELLness requirement is designed to assist students in making positive lifestyle changes that reduce their health risks, modify their consumer behavior, and enhance their personal well-being and productivity.

Criteria for the General Education WELL requirement are as follows:

- a) must be a 3 credit course.
- b) requires students to participate in a weekly physical or experiential component.
- c) must be a comprehensive approach to wellness employing a variety of cognitive, behavioral, and social learning strategies to encourage and assist students in accepting responsibility for their own wellness.
- d) engages students in critical thinking about wellness.
- e) emphasizes the development of life-long holistic learning.

3. Require students to take at least three credits of Elective courses outside of their primary major. Students who are exempt from the Perspectives requirement and/or did not take or satisfactorily complete a FYP shall take additional Elective credits to satisfy the 12 credit Connections and Exploration block.

Elective courses details:

- a) include any 100-level and higher University courses except the English Composition, Fundamentals of Speech, and Mathematics General Education Foundations courses.
- b) may not include courses in a student's primary major (BSE students may not count required professional education courses).
- c) may be credited toward a second major or minor program.

Rationale:

- Adds flexibility and choice to the curriculum.
- Promotes exploration of and experimentation with subjects of interest.

4. Change from a 4-4-4 distribution to a 3-3-3 distribution in Critical Thinking across the Liberal Arts.

In order to create the flexibility and choice embedded in Recommendations 1, 2, and 3, Critical Thinking across the Liberal Arts is reduced from 12 to 9 courses. All the previous guidelines to structure students' course selection are maintained, including the "2 in 1" department rule, the number of required related courses allowed, the definitions of the G blocks, and the number of required 200-level courses. Note that the required Mathematics course is moved to the Foundations for Lifelong Learning block.

Rationale:

- Provides the ability to add 2 courses to the "Connections and Exploration" block while retaining the current 51 credit load.

- Fulfills Characteristic 6 (i.e. “Simplicity and Flexibility”) of a reformed program.
- Enables programs to meet both the demands of accreditation and State System limits on the total number of credits.
- Provides students a greater range of choice by allowing them to explore new areas of study.
- Provides an avenue for innovative programming, such as FYP courses, to count within the curriculum.

5. Institute stronger guidelines for Writing Intensive (W) courses including a “revised prose” component. Class size limits for W courses should be reset to 25.

This recommendation re-affirms the faculty’s commitment to writing-across-the-curriculum which has been eroded from its original design with increases to class size and the resulting lowering of expectations for writing and revising. The original 1988 guidelines have been updated and made slightly more flexible while maintaining the original spirit of revised prose and the centrality of the writing process to teaching and learning.

Proposed Revised Guidelines:

- 1) Students practice forms of writing typical of the field. Writing assignments are designed to develop their content knowledge and enhance their communication skills.
- 2) Students are required to submit at least 2500 words of graded analytical/persuasive writing (about 10 standard double-spaced pages). Some examples of how this requirement might be met include:
 - (A) a research paper in which the student is required to define a problem, select, organize, and synthesize information around a stated thesis.
 - (B) short analytical essays that explore a topic with reasoned evidence and informed opinion.
 - (C) position papers prepared by students that address pros and cons of controversial topics.
 - (D) microthemes that ask the student to find academic sources, organize ideas, develop a thesis and show evidence, but condense the final paper to a single page or two.
- 3) Because W courses assume that writing is a process, students will be given opportunities to develop and revise papers through more than one draft. Assignments will be structured and sequenced in ways that help students improve their writing through practice and revision. Instructors’ feedback on students’ writing will contribute to effective revision and encourage students to develop effective self-assessment.
- 4) Writing intensive courses work best when they include a combination of informal and formal writing experiences for students. In addition to the 2500 words of

revised graded analytical/persuasive writing, instructors are encouraged to assign expressive, reflective and/or observational writing tasks. The purpose of these assignments is to bring out the student's perceptions informally, and to increase writing practice.

Rationale:

- Provides clear purpose, intentional alignment and coherence to the General Education program.
- Restored rigor of writing and revision will add to students' intellectual experience.

6. Add a Cultural Diversity and Community (D) requirement such that students will be required to take one approved D course as part of their major, minor, or General Education requirements.

To satisfy the Gen Ed Cultural Diversity and Community (D) requirement, all students must successfully complete one approved 3-credit course meeting the D criteria. This course may also count for credit in a student's major or minor program or may satisfy another Gen Ed requirement.

Cultural diversity refers to the differences among people in terms of beliefs, customs, values, politics, and experiences. In essence, culture is a worldview; it is both learned and evolved. The following factors are seen as underlying these differences: Race and ethnicity, gender, geography, language, sexual orientation, education, economics, age, nationality, religious affiliation, occupation and/or physical ability among others.

Specifically, a D course:

- a) involves 3 semester hours at the 100-level or above.
- b) is intercultural and/or cross-cultural, with culture being a worldview that reflects beliefs, customs, values, politics, and experiences as shaped by race and ethnicity, gender, geography, language, sexual orientation, education, economics, age, nationality, religious affiliation, occupation, and/or physical ability among other factors.
- c) examines historical and environmental factors that underlie cultural differences.
- d) examines the potential global, regional, or local socio-economic factors that underlie cultural differences.
- e) helps students to identify, critically analyze, and apply scholarship and experience related to cultural diversity.
- f) provides academic structure in support of students' positive engagement with peoples of diverse histories and communities.
- g) challenges students to evaluate their own personal worldview.
- h) has a meaningful written and oral component.
- i) may also count as part of any additional requirement (major, minor, or Gen Ed) of the Baccalaureate degree.

Rationale:

- Aligns general education curriculum with University mission to foster in students an appreciation for cultural diversity.
- Professional scientific literature supports the value of a structured educational approach rather than simply an experiential approach to exposing students to cultural diversity.
- Students with improved abilities to understand and engage different cultures are more likely to succeed as positive citizens in the increasingly complex local and regional multicultural environment beyond Millersville University.
- Association of American Colleges and Universities in 2000 reported that 62% of all colleges and universities either already had some form of a diversity course requirement or were in the process of developing one.

Appendix B

General Education Curriculum Sheets

MILLERSVILLE UNIVERSITY
General Education Curriculum Guide (Green Sheet)

Student Name: _____

Student I.D. # _____

Critical Thinking Across the Liberal Arts (G1-G3)

General Guidelines:

- Only approved General Education (GenEd) courses may be used.
- Exactly two courses must be taken from at least one department within each G1, G2, and G3 block.
- At least three courses taken throughout blocks G1, G2 &/or G3 must be at the 200 level or above.
- Up to six "Required Related" courses may be counted toward GenEd requirements.
- Courses from the primary major may not fulfill the G1, G2, and G3 blocks; courses from a minor or secondary major may fulfill these blocks.

G1. Humanities and Fine Arts: Three courses minimum totaling at least 9 credit hours.

Select courses from: Art, Communications & Theatre, English, Foreign Language (which includes HUMN courses), Music or Philosophy. Students majoring in a Humanities & Fine Arts department may not count courses from the major department in this block.

<u>Subject/Course#</u>	<u>Course Title</u>	<u>Cr. Hrs.</u>	<u>Grade</u>	<u>✓ 2 from 1 dept.</u>
<u>1.</u>	_____	_____	_____	_____
<u>2.</u>	_____	_____	_____	_____
<u>3.</u>	_____	_____	_____	_____

G2. Science and Mathematics: Three courses minimum totaling at least 9 credit hours.

Select courses from: Biology, Chemistry, Computer Science, Earth Sciences, Mathematics, Nursing or Physics. Students majoring in a Science or Mathematics department may not count courses from the major department in this block.

Additional Guidelines:

- At least two courses must be taken from the "natural sciences": Biology, Chemistry, Earth Sciences and Physics. This can be two courses from any one of these departments **OR** one course from any two of these departments.
- One course taken within the G2 block must be a Lab course.
- A math course in G2 may count along with the math course from Foundations in Lifelong Learning to satisfy the "two courses in one department" requirement for this block.

<u>Subject/Course#</u>	<u>Course Title</u>	<u>Cr. Hrs.</u>	<u>Grade</u>	<u>✓ 2 from 1 dept.</u>	<u>✓ 2 from Natural Sci.</u>	<u>✓ 1 Lab Course</u>
<u>1.</u>	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
<u>2.</u>	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
<u>3.</u>	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

G3. Social Sciences: Three courses minimum totaling at least 9 credit hours.

Select courses from: African-American Studies, Anthropology, Business Administration, Economics, Geography, Government, History, International Studies, Occupational Safety & Environmental Health, Psychology, Sociology, Social Work/Gerontology, or Women's Studies. Students majoring in the Social Sciences areas may not count courses from their major department in this block.

Additional Guidelines:

- Sociology and Anthropology are considered separate in regard to the "2 from 1 department" requirement.

<u>Subject/Course#</u>	<u>Course Title</u>	<u>Cr. Hrs.</u>	<u>Grade</u>	<u>✓ 2 from 1 dept.</u>
<u>1.</u>	_____	_____	_____	_____
<u>2.</u>	_____	_____	_____	_____
<u>3.</u>	_____	_____	_____	_____

Additional General Education Requirements

Foundations for Lifelong Learning (4 courses minimum 12 credit hours)

This category requires: **1. ENGL 110, 2. COMM 100, 3. GenEd (G2) approved Mathematics course (MATH 1XX), and 4. Advanced Writing (AW) course (ENGL 311, 312, 313, or 316).**

Guidelines:

- ENGL 110 must be completed with a grade of C- or better.
- COMM 100 must be completed with a grade of C- or better.
- The upper level writing (AW) course has a prerequisite of ENGL 110 (C- or better) and a minimum of 60 credit hours completed. Many majors recommend or require a specific AW course. Check the catalog for further details.
- G2 Math course must be different from that used towards the G2 block in the Liberal Arts Core.

<u>Subject/Course#</u>	<u>Course Title</u>	<u>Cr. Hrs.</u>	<u>Grade</u>
1. ENGL 110	English Composition	3.0	_____
2. COMM 100	Fundamentals of Speech	3.0	_____
3. MATH	_____	_____	_____
4. ENGL	_____	_____	_____

Connections & Exploration Courses (minimum 12 credit hours)

Guidelines/Prerequisites:

1. **First-Year Inquiry (FYI) Seminar – UNIV 103 (3 credit hours) or Open Elective (3 credit hours)**
 - Open electives (including #4 below) must be 100 level or above and must be taken outside of primary major.
 - For BSE students, required professional education courses **cannot** count as open electives.
2. **Perspectives (P) Course (3 credit hours)**
 - Cannot be used to also fulfill a major requirement.
 - ENGL 110 and COMM 100 completed with grades of C- or better.
 - Minimum of 60 credit hours completed.
3. **Wellness/Health Education course (3 credit hours)**
 - Any WELL 175 course will fulfill this requirement.
 - Elementary Education or Elementary/Special Education major must take WELL 352.
4. **Open Elective (3 credit hours),** see #1 above for more information.

<u>Subject/Course#</u>	<u>Course Title</u>	<u>Cr. Hrs.</u>	<u>Grade</u>
1. _____	_____	_____	_____
2. _____	_____	_____	_____
3. _____	_____	_____	_____
4. _____	_____	_____	_____

Cultural Diversity & Community (D) Course

- May be satisfied with approved courses from the GenEd requirements (including Perspectives), the major, the minor, the required related area, or general electives.

<u>Subject/Course#</u>	<u>Course Title</u>	<u>Cr. Hrs.</u>	<u>Grade</u>
1. _____	_____	_____	_____

Writing Intensive (W) Courses (4 courses)

Guidelines/Prerequisites:

- May be satisfied with approved courses from the GenEd requirements, the major, the minor, the required related area, or general electives.
- ENGL 110 must be completed with a grade of C- or better.

<u>Subject/Course#</u>	<u>Course Title</u>	<u>Cr. Hrs.</u>	<u>Grade</u>
1. _____	_____	_____	_____
2. _____	_____	_____	_____
3. _____	_____	_____	_____
4. _____	_____	_____	_____

Developmental Courses (COMM 010, ELED 090, ENGL 010, MATH 090)

These do not count toward the 120 credit hours required for graduation.

General Education Curriculum Guide (Beige Sheet)

Student Name: _____

Student I.D. # _____

Liberal Arts Core (36 Credit Hours) (G1-G3)

Guidelines:

1. Only courses approved for General Education (GenEd) may be used in the Liberal Arts Core.
2. In Block G2, students must take two courses from the "Natural Sciences" (Biology, Chemistry, Earth Science, and Physics). These two courses *do not* have to come from the same department but one must be a lab science.
3. Students must also take a GenEd Math course that can count in G2.
4. At least **three courses** taken throughout blocks G1, G2 &/or G3 must be **at the 200 level** or above.
5. Up to six "Required Related" courses may be counted toward GenEd requirements.
6. *Exactly* two courses must be taken from one department within G1, G2, and G3. No more than two courses can be taken from one department within G1, G2, or G3, but two courses from two different departments is acceptable.
7. Courses in a student's major discipline can not fulfill a Liberal Arts Core requirement; courses from the minor can fulfill a Liberal Arts Core requirement

G1. Humanities and Fine Arts: Four course minimum totaling at least 12 credit hours.

Select courses from: Art, Communications & Theatre, English, Foreign Language (which includes HUMN courses), Music, or Philosophy. Students majoring in a Humanities & Fine Arts department may not count courses from the major department in this block.

<u>Subject/Course#</u>	<u>Course Title</u>	<u>Cr. Hrs.</u>	<u>Grade</u>	<u>1 dept.</u>
1. _____	_____	_____	_____	_____
2. _____	_____	_____	_____	_____
3. _____	_____	_____	_____	_____
4. _____	_____	_____	_____	_____

✓2 from

G2. Science and Mathematics: Four course minimum totaling at least 12 credit hours.

Select courses from: Biology, Chemistry, Computer Science, Earth Sciences, Mathematics, Nursing or Physics. Students majoring in a Science or Math may not count courses from the major department in this block.

*NOTE: At least two courses must come from the following group: [BIOL, CHEM, ESCI, or PHYS]; this can be two classes from any one of these departments **OR** one class from two of these departments. The "two from one dept." requirement may be fulfilled from any one of the above 7 departments. One G2 course must be a Laboratory course.*

<u>Subject/Course#</u>	<u>Course Title</u>	<u>Cr. Hrs.</u>	<u>Grade</u>	<u>1 dept.</u>	<u>1 dept.</u>
1. MATH*	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
2. _____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
3. _____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
4. _____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

✓2 from

✓2 from

B,C,ES,P

✓
} 1Lab
} □
)

* Except for MATH majors.

G3. Social Sciences: Four course minimum totaling at least 12 credit hours.

Select from: African-American Studies, Anthropology, Business, Economics, Geography, Government, History, International Studies, Occ. Safety & Environmental Health, Psychology, Sociology, Social Work/Gerontology or Women's Studies. Students majoring in one of these subject areas may not count courses from their major department in this block. Sociology and Anthropology are considered separate in regard to the "2 from 1 department" requirement; a student cannot take one course from each of these programs and count them as 2 from one department.

<u>Subject/Course#</u>	<u>Course Title</u>	<u>Cr. Hrs.</u>	<u>Grade</u>	<u>1 dept.</u>
1. _____	_____	_____	_____	_____
2. _____	_____	_____	_____	_____
3. _____	_____	_____	_____	_____
4. _____	_____	_____	_____	_____

✓2 from

Additional University Requirements (15 Credit Hours) (G4)

G4. Additional General Education requirements: Five course minimum totaling at least 15 credit hours.

I. Fundamentals (6 Credit Hours) -- English 110 and Communications 100

ENGL 110 must be completed prior to junior year with a grade of "C-" or better; COMM 100 must be completed prior to graduation with a grade of "C-" or better.

Students with advanced background in these areas should consult the catalog for other options.

	<u>Cr. Hrs.</u>	<u>Grade</u>
1. ENGL 110 Composition	3.0	___
2. COMM 100 Fundamentals of Speech	3.0	___

II. Perspectives (P) Course (3 Credit Hours)

Choose any course from the list of approved Perspectives courses. This course cannot be taken until after completion of ENGL 110 (grade of "C-" or better) and 24 credit hours of the Liberal Arts Core (G1, G2, and G3).

A course used here cannot be used to also fulfill a major requirement.

<u>Subject/Course#</u>	<u>Title of Course</u>	<u>Cr. Hrs.</u>	<u>Grade</u>
1. _____	_____	___	___

III. Writing (W) Requirement (4 courses)

The Writing requirement may be satisfied with approved courses from the Liberal Arts Core, the student's major area, the required related area, or general electives. These courses cannot be taken until ENGL 110 is completed ("C-" or better).

<u>Subject/Course#</u>	<u>Title of Course</u>	<u>Cr. Hrs.</u>	<u>Grade</u>
1. _____	_____	___*	___
2. _____	_____	___*	___
3. _____	_____	___*	___
4. _____	_____	___*	___

*Do not double count credit hours for courses already taken by the student in G1,G2 or G3 or in Major.

IV. Upper Level Writing Requirement (3 Credit Hours)

Choose an upper-level writing course: ENGL 311, 312, 313, or 316. Please note that many majors strongly recommend or require a specific course. Check the catalog for further details.

Prerequisite: ENGL 110 (grade of C- or better) and a minimum of 60 cr. hrs.

<u>Subject/Course#</u>	<u>Title of Course</u>	<u>Cr. Hrs.</u>	<u>Grade</u>
1. ENGL _____	_____	___	___

V. Health /Physical Education Requirement - Dept. of Wellness & Sport Sciences. (3 Credit Hours)

Fulfill this requirement by taking WELL 175. Students repeating this course or have taken

HPED 170 or 175 will not receive an additional 3 credits regardless of topic.

Elem. Ed. & EIEd/SpEd. majors must take WELL 352.

<u>Subject/Course#</u>	<u>Title of Course</u>	<u>Cr. Hrs.</u>	<u>Grade</u>
1. WELL(HPED) _____	_____	___	___

VI. Developmental Courses

These do not count toward the 120 credit hours required for graduation. Developmental courses include COMM 010, ELED 090, ENGL 010 and MATH 090. (See HPED/WELL warning above.)

Appendix C

General Education Section of University Governance and Policies

Effective: June 2008

**Academic Program: Undergraduate Studies
GENERAL EDUCATION PROGRAM**

Approved: October 1997
Revised: April 15, 2008
Deans' Council, Faculty Senate

General Education Curriculum

Definition

General education is a program of study which introduces students to a broad, liberal course of instruction in the major areas of knowledge (the arts and sciences). Its aim is to cultivate the intellect by educating students to reason logically, to think critically, to express themselves clearly, and to foster an understanding of the human condition and the role of value judgments in the human experience. As an integrated educational experience, the general education program helps to provide the foundation for further intellectual growth and holistic development. In addition to giving a sense of the various academic disciplines, and their interrelationships, general education serves as the common element for all degree programs leading to the baccalaureate.

Purpose

Consistent with Millersville University's mission to provide a liberal arts-based education, the purpose of general education is to provide breadth of knowledge as a balance and complement to the depth provided by the major. This is necessary for the holistic development of Millersville graduates as responsible citizens in a diverse and technologically complex, global community.

Interpreted

General education is an integral component of the undergraduate experience, generally constituting one-third to one-half of the course work of the baccalaureate program. It is not intended to address all dimensions of the college experience. General education is the liberal arts foundation for learning at the undergraduate level. To fulfill its function(s) the program must be concise, orderly and rational in its requirements. Its various parts must be interrelated and they must demonstrate that interrelatedness through its structure. General education must be practical in its demands to assure that students can complete other facets of the university experience in a reasonable time period. And, most importantly, general education must be "useful," imparting to the student the skills necessary to do work at the university level. General

education must, in a larger sense, assure that students are prepared to address and solve problems beyond the university environment.

Traditionally, programs in general education are centered in the Liberal Arts (Humanities, Fine Arts, Natural and Social Sciences). This core is to guarantee that students have a base of knowledge from which to address a multiplicity of concerns beyond specific disciplines. The body of knowledge is general only in the sense that it draws from interrelated fields with a shared heritage. Certain areas of inquiry and branches of knowledge are more appropriate to the specific, limited aims of the program than others. Nevertheless, departments not traditionally considered in the mainstream of liberal arts may submit courses for consideration in general education. These courses must comply with the established criteria.

Characteristics of the General Education Program

The program is intended to exhibit an identifiable organization and coherence of course orientation and development. The interrelatedness of the areas of knowledge should be discernible to the students throughout the program, with the academic disciplines represented as interpretations of and contributions to knowledge rather than as self serving entities. Indeed, the program accommodates the design and implementation of course offerings outside the traditional departmental units of the disciplines constituting the arts and sciences.

The liberal arts component of a "general education" program is designed to prepare students to live, not simply to make a living. While a narrowly focused or highly technical program may provide for success in the market place and make competent technicians, the general education program provides broad competence which helps produce complete, mature, responsible leaders and citizens of the world; that is, the program is "practical" in that it helps students prepare for the wide variety of problems with which they must contend in a complex world. Its value resists obsolescence.

The program is meant to reflect the reality of a culturally pluralistic and interdependent world. The common survival of humanity in a world of finite resources demands an unprecedented level of understanding and positive engagement with peoples of diverse histories and communities. Our students must be made aware of the global perspectives which can enhance this understanding.

In a society compelled to emphasize technical specialization, the need for courses in the liberal arts becomes ever more important to assure the development of an educated person who can communicate, reason, and solve problems intelligently.

The General Education Program is intended to be characterized by:

1. Clear Purpose that is well understood by all members of the university community and that is consistent with the MU mission and the specific learning needs of MU students.
2. Intentional Alignment of the objectives, curricular structure, and assessment with the purpose of general education, the mission of Millersville University, and the learning needs of our students.

3. Coherence and connections between Gen Ed and majors.
4. Intellectual Richness, setting appropriately high expectations for students' engagement that develop as students progress through their academic programs.
5. Academic Community Reaching beyond the Classroom, fostering interactions between and among students, faculty, and the larger Millersville University community.
6. Simplicity and flexibility, promoting ease of understanding and greater choice in meeting the Gen Ed requirements.

Furthermore, certain basic principles shape the curriculum of the general education Program. The program is designed to ensure:

1. that the students possess the fundamental competencies:
 - a. Critical reasoning
 - b. Oral and written communication
 - c. Mathematical reasoning
 - d. Scientific reasoning
 - e. Information literacy
 - f. Technology literacy;
2. that there be a significant exposure to the liberal arts;
3. that the liberal arts core be protected from erosion on either side, such as the granting of credit in the liberal arts core for pre-college level work or for work in the student's field of specialization;
4. that the number of 100 level courses students may take for general education be limited; and
5. that some specified courses at the 200 level or above which count for general education credit contain a significant writing component. Writing is central to the academic process; therefore, the general education curriculum should provide opportunity for students to develop the skill of writing throughout their academic careers, both horizontally (across the curriculum) and vertically (at all levels of study).

Objectives of General Education

Students, working with advisors, and taking into consideration prior knowledge and experience, purposefully select courses in the general education curriculum that meld with required courses, co-curricular and extra-curricular activities, and courses in the major to achieve the following objectives:

FOUNDATIONS FOR LIFELONG LEARNING

1. Students will think, speak, and write clearly. This is evidenced by:
 - a. the clear presentation of ideas in formal spoken, written, and media forms.
 - b. the use of effective communication for ongoing dialogue.
 - c. the ability to find appropriate sources of information, evaluate that information, and integrate that information into a final product.
 - d. the use of statistical methods and other techniques of mathematics to analyze and solve problems.

CRITICAL THINKING ACROSS THE LIBERAL ARTS

2. Students will demonstrate foundational knowledge of the important ideas and methods of different ways of knowing as follows:
 - a. in the humanities students will analyze and interpret existing works of literature and the arts.
 - b. in the sciences students will engage in the scientific method, laboratory study, appropriate technology, and mathematics to investigate, evaluate, and apply scientific concepts and theories.
 - c. in social sciences students will develop the necessary tools of critical thinking, inquiry, and diplomacy to participate effectively in our democracy and the increasingly complex global society.

CONNECTIONS AND EXPLORATION

3. Students will connect important ideas and methods of inquiry from different disciplines as a means of becoming holistic and responsible citizens in a diverse and technologically complex, global community. Students will:
 - a. demonstrate civic and social responsibility.
 - b. grow in their engagement with peoples of diverse histories and communities, both inside and outside the United States.
 - c. build the foundation for a lifelong process of understanding, developing, and monitoring healthy lifestyle behaviors in all dimensions of wellness, including physical, social, emotional, intellectual, spiritual, and environmental wellness.
 - d. gain personal enrichment by developing new interests that can be enjoyed throughout a lifetime.

Criteria for General Education Courses

The criteria for evaluating courses to be counted in the Critical Thinking across the Liberal Arts component of general education are:

1. The course must demonstrate how one or more of the general education objectives stated above are satisfied.
2. In each course the major concepts and principles that epitomize the liberal arts discipline must be the primary focus.

3. The process of inquiry and analysis commonly employed in the discipline must be emphasized and applied.
4. The course must not be primarily a technical, professional or career-oriented course.
5. A general education course from a given department may require a maximum of two prerequisites from that same department.

General Education Course Review Procedure

1. Any new or existing course seeking to meet a specific general education requirement shall follow the general course approval procedures that appear in Section 3, Course and Program Modification Policies.
2. Until fall of 2009, existing course seeking to meet Cultural Diversity and Community (D) courses or Writing (W) courses will follow the expedited review procedures that appear in Section 3 Course and Program Modification Policies.
3. Proposers shall complete the appropriate General Education Application form (available from the Faculty Senate website) that addresses all criteria for each course.
4. Once approved, Perspectives (P) courses, Cultural Diversity and Community (D) courses, Writing (W) courses, and First Year Inquiry (FYI) seminars are subject to a five-year recertification process as specified in Section 3, Course and Program Modification Policies.

Structure of the Program

To meet the objectives of General Education, the general education program is organized into a structure with three components: Foundations for Lifelong Learning, Critical Thinking across the Liberal Arts, and Connections and Exploration.

General Education Structure (Minimum 51 credits)

1. *Foundations for Lifelong Learning* (Four courses – minimum 12 credits)¹
 - a. ENGL 110: English Composition - 3 credits
 - b. COMM 100: Fundamentals of Speech - 3 credits
 - c. General Education MATH Course (3-4 credits)
 - d. Advanced Writing (3 credits)
 - i. Must be chosen from ENGL 311, 312, 313, or 316
 - ii. At least 60 credits (Junior standing) required

¹ “*Foundations for Lifelong Learning*” requirements may not double-count for “*Critical Thinking across the Liberal Arts*” or “*Connections and Exploration*” requirements below.

2. *Critical Thinking across the Liberal Arts* (Nine courses – minimum 27 credits)

- a. Humanities and Fine Arts (G1): Three courses totaling a minimum of 9 credits.
- b. Science and Mathematics (G2): Three courses totaling a minimum of 9 credits. At least two of the three courses must come from Biology, Chemistry, Earth Sciences, and/or Physics including one which has a Laboratory (L) component.
- c. Social Sciences (G3): Three courses totaling a minimum of 9 credits.
- d. Exactly 2 courses must be taken from one department within G1, G2, and G3².
- e. At least 3 courses taken throughout blocks G1, G2 and G3 must be at the 200 level or above.
- f. Courses in a student's primary major discipline cannot fulfill the Critical Thinking across the Liberal Arts requirement; courses from a minor, a second major, or up to six courses required for the major from departments outside the major can fulfill this requirement.

3. *Connections and Exploration* (12 credits)

- a. First Year Inquiry seminar - 0 or 3 credits
- b. Approved Wellness course - 3 credits
- c. Perspectives (P) course - 3 credits
 - i. At least 60 credits (Junior standing) required
 - ii. The English Composition and Fundamentals of Speech competency must be satisfied prior to enrollment in "P" courses.
- d. Open Elective(s) [100 level or above courses; must be taken outside of primary major³] - 3 to 6 credits
- e. Cultural Diversity and Community (D) course - 1 course required
 - i. May be in General Education, the major, the minor or general electives.
- f. Writing (W) - 4 courses required
 - i. May be in General Education, the major, the minor or general electives.
 - ii. The English 110 competency must be satisfied prior to enrollment in "W" courses.

² For the purpose of course counting, courses with divisional designations are considered as a separate department but may not be used to fulfill the "two course in one department" rule. Additionally, Anthropology and Sociology are considered separate departments for this rule. A math course in G2 may count along with a math course from "Foundations for Lifelong Learning" to satisfy the "two courses in one department" rule for G2.

³ "Outside of the primary major" means that courses offered by the major department that could count toward the fulfillment of that major cannot be taken for Open Elective credit. Courses offered by the major department that lie outside the requirements for the student's major (e.g., that count toward another major offered by that department) can be taken as Open Electives. BSE students may not count required professional education courses. Open electives do not have to be approved G1, G2, or G3 courses.

Guidelines for General Education Courses

Composition Sequence

All students must successfully complete English 110, or its equivalent (see listing below), preferably during their freshman year. The equivalent includes:

1. Achieving a combined score of 1100 in the verbal portion of the S.A.T. and the CEEB English Composition Achievement Test.
2. Achieving a score of 3 or higher in the Advanced Placement (AP) test in English Composition.
3. Achieving a satisfactory score in the CLEP general examination in English composition.
4. Passing the English Composition Competency Examination administered by the English Department at the beginning of each fall and spring semester.

Students who successfully complete one of the above, demonstrating that they are ready for advanced composition, will take one of the courses described below during their junior or senior years. Individual departments with programs which offer a significant advanced writing course, such as senior thesis or advanced foreign language composition, may petition through the appropriate academic channels to have such a course accepted as an alternate to the upper division writing course in English.⁴

Advanced Composition Courses

English 311: Advanced Composition

English 312: Technical Writing

English 313: Journalism

English 316: Business Writing

Significant Writing Component Guidelines "W"

Rationale: The writing component of general education is designed to ensure that undergraduate students have the opportunity to develop competence and confidence in their writing skills.

Description: The following guidelines apply to all Writing Intensive ("W") courses beginning in fall 2008:

1. Students practice forms of writing typical of the field. Writing assignments are designed to develop their content knowledge and enhance their communication skills.

⁴ Currently, the following alternatives have been approved: History 406 (Senior Seminar) passed with a grade of B or above and Honors Theses in the following Departments (check with Departments for specific rules that may apply): Biology, Elementary Education, Mathematics, and Music. Honors Theses for students in the Honors College also satisfy the Advanced Writing requirement.

2. Students are required to submit at least 2500 words of graded analytical/persuasive writing (about 10 standard double-spaced pages). Some examples of how this requirement might be met include:
 - a. a research paper in which the student is required to define a problem, select, organize, and synthesize information around a stated thesis.
 - b. short analytical essays that explore a topic with reasoned evidence and informed opinion.
 - c. position papers prepared by students that address pros and cons of controversial topics.
 - d. microthemes that ask the student to find academic sources, organize ideas, develop a thesis and show evidence, but condense the final paper to a single page or two.
3. Because W courses assume that writing is a process, students will be given opportunities to develop and revise papers through more than one draft. Assignments will be structured and sequenced in ways that help students improve their writing through practice and revision. Instructors' feedback on students' writing will contribute to effective revision and encourage students to develop effective self-assessment.
4. Writing intensive courses work best when they include a combination of informal and formal writing experiences for students. In addition to the 2500 words of revised graded analytical/persuasive writing, instructors are encouraged to assign expressive, reflective and/or observational writing tasks. The purpose of these assignments is to bring out the student's perceptions informally, and to increase writing practice.

The above guidelines are designed to lead students to more fully appreciate the writing process, a process which includes writing, rewriting, editing, and revision. Courses with a 'W' designation must continue to demonstrate the importance of writing in both individual learning and group communication.

Perspectives

Perspectives is an advanced studies requirement of the Connections and Exploration component of general education. A major function of these courses is to apply analytical and critical thinking abilities in resolving major social, cultural, scientific/technological, and/or aesthetic problems. They are interdisciplinary and/or multi-cultural in content and require a high level of educational maturity, knowledge, and thinking. Perspectives courses encourage undergraduate students to make independent and responsible value judgments and decisions.

Perspectives courses integrate the knowledge acquired throughout the baccalaureate experience. For example, Perspectives courses nurture and extend the basic communications skills developed in the Foundations for Life-Long Learning component of general education. Moreover, Perspectives courses demonstrate how different areas of knowledge gained in the Critical Thinking across the Liberal Arts component of general education are complementary.

Each student must:

1. Satisfactorily complete one 3 credit Perspectives course from a list of approved courses. Students who complete an academic fall or spring semester abroad as part of a baccalaureate degree will be considered to have fulfilled the Perspectives requirement. International students studying at Millersville will also be considered to have fulfilled the Perspectives requirement. This waiver does not cover credit hours. A student employing this waiver will be required to satisfy three credit hours of general education courses in lieu of the waived three credit Perspectives course. This is in addition to any other Open Elective requirements of the student.
2. Prior to enrolling in the Perspectives course, each student must:
 - a. Have satisfied the English Composition and Fundamentals of Speech requirements.
 - b. Have completed at least 60 credits (Junior standing).

Perspectives Course Criteria:

1. Must be 3 credit hours at the 300 level or above.
2. Must have meaningful oral and written communication⁵ components but may not carry a "W" label.
3. Must be interdisciplinary and/or multicultural in content.
4. Requires the students to identify, critically analyze, and resolve complex problems (social, cultural, scientific/technological, and/or aesthetic) that require the application of knowledge from two or more academic disciplines and/or cultures.
5. May not have a narrow technical, professional, or career orientation.
6. Must enable quality interaction.
7. No Perspectives course may have more than two prerequisites from a single department.
8. No Perspectives course may be counted within the Critical Thinking across the Liberal Arts component of general education.

⁵ To have a meaningful oral component, the teaching and learning strategies adopted by the course should involve students in active speaking and listening roles, including such tasks as student oral presentations (individually or in groups), oral exams, debates, and classroom discussions. Students should be in roles that place them in interaction with an audience of their peers so that communication is interactive and reciprocal. The assessment of student learning through these roles should contribute to students' overall course grades.

To have a meaningful writing component, the teaching and learning strategies adopted by the course should involve students in writing activities, such as research papers, analytical essays, position papers, lab reports, personal journals, and the like. The assessment of student learning through these activities should constitute a substantial portion ($\geq 20\%$) of students' overall course grades.

9. No Perspectives course may be required of a student by his/her major and also fulfill that student's general education Perspectives requirement.
10. Perspectives courses must be designed to be accessible to non-majors as well as majors. Appropriately prepared students from outside the major must be capable of benefiting from the course on an equal basis with students from within the major.

Cultural Diversity and Community

Cultural Diversity and Community is a requirement of the Connections and Exploration component of general education. This requirement aligns general education with the University's mission to foster in students an appreciation for cultural diversity. Here, "cultural diversity" refers to the differences among people in terms of beliefs, customs, values, politics, and experiences. In essence, culture is a worldview; it is both learned and evolved. The following factors are seen as underlying these differences: age, economics, education, gender, geography, language, nationality, occupation, physical ability, race and ethnicity, religious affiliation, and/or sexual orientation among others. A Cultural Diversity and Community course is more than a mere survey or exposure of the students to different cultures; rather it teaches students to think critically about the basis for intercultural differences.

Each student must:

1. Satisfactorily complete one 3 credit Cultural Diversity and Community course from a list of approved courses.

Cultural Diversity and Community Course Criteria:

1. Involves 3 credit hours at the 100-level or above.
2. Is intercultural and/or cross-cultural, with culture being a worldview that reflects beliefs, customs, values, politics, and experiences as shaped by age, economics, education, gender, geography, language, nationality, occupation, physical ability, race and ethnicity, religious affiliation, and/or sexual orientation among other factors.
3. Examines historical and environmental (e.g., social and/or physical) factors that underlie cultural differences.
4. Examines the potential global, regional, or local factors that underlie cultural differences.
5. Helps students to identify, critically analyze, and apply scholarship and experience related to cultural diversity.
6. Provides academic structure in support of students' positive engagement with peoples of diverse histories and communities.
7. Challenges students to evaluate their own personal worldview.

8. Has meaningful oral and written communication⁶ components.
9. May also count as part of any additional requirement (major, minor, or Gen Ed) of the Baccalaureate degree.

Wellness Courses

The Wellness requirement is designed to assist students in making positive lifestyle changes that reduce their health risks, modify their consumer behavior, and enhance their personal well-being and productivity.

Criteria for the General Education Wellness requirement are as follows:

1. must be a 3 credit course.
2. requires students to participate in a weekly physical or experiential component.
3. must be a comprehensive approach to wellness employing a variety of cognitive, behavioral, and social learning strategies to encourage and assist students in accepting responsibility for their own wellness.
4. engages students in critical thinking about wellness.
5. emphasizes the development of life-long holistic learning.

First Year Inquiry Seminar (UNIV 103)

Incoming students are encouraged to take a First Year Inquiry (FYI) seminar which will count as part of a Connections and Exploration Component. The FYI seminar is a component of General Education specifically designed for first semester freshmen and offered in a seminar format, typically linked to a foundations course (either ENGL 110 or COMM 100) as part of a living/learning community. Students will choose from a number of FYI topics offered each semester. A major function of these FYI seminars is to introduce a process of critical inquiry applied to important social, cultural, scientific, technological, and/or aesthetic problems. Each FYI seminar will introduce multiple perspectives related to the understanding and resolution of these problems. A second

⁶ To have a meaningful oral component, the teaching and learning strategies adopted by the course should involve students in active speaking and listening roles, including such tasks as student oral presentations (individually or in groups), oral exams, debates, and classroom discussions. Students should be in roles that place them in interaction with an audience of their peers so that communication is interactive and reciprocal. The assessment of student learning through these roles should contribute to students' overall course grades.

To have a meaningful writing component, the teaching and learning strategies adopted by the course should involve students in writing activities, such as research papers, analytical essays, position papers, lab reports, personal journals, and the like. The assessment of student learning through these activities should constitute a substantial portion (≥ 20%) of students' overall course grades.

function of these FYI seminars is to support students' transition into the college experience academically, socially, and personally. Each FYI course topic will be approved according to guidelines specified in University Governance and Policies and will meet the general requirements specified in the generic UNIV 103 Course Proposal.

First Year Inquiry Seminar Criteria:

1. Involves 3 credit hours at the 100-level.
2. Encourages students to consider multiple perspectives in advancing their understanding of the importance of social, cultural, scientific, technological, and/or aesthetic problems.
3. Introduces and supports (i) the development of critical inquiry skills and (ii) the exchange of ideas in a seminar format.
4. Supports the students' successful transition into college life by fostering connections between and among students, teachers, and the college community.
5. Provides intellectual richness through its assignments and assessments.
6. Strengthens students' information literacy.
7. Has meaningful oral and written communication⁷ components, but may not carry a "W" label.
8. Fosters an appreciation of the importance of civic engagement and promotes participation in service learning activities.
9. Promotes an understanding and appreciation of the liberal arts tradition and the General Education program at Millersville.

⁷ To have a meaningful oral component, the teaching and learning strategies adopted by the course should involve students in active speaking and listening roles, including such tasks as student oral presentations (individually or in groups), oral exams, debates, and classroom discussions. Students should be in roles that place them in interaction with an audience of their peers so that communication is interactive and reciprocal. The assessment of student learning through these roles should contribute to students' overall course grades.

To have a meaningful writing component, the teaching and learning strategies adopted by the course should involve students in writing activities, such as research papers, analytical essays, position papers, lab reports, personal journals, and the like. The assessment of student learning through these activities should constitute a substantial portion ($\geq 20\%$) of students' overall course grades.

Appendix D

Formal Position Description

- Position: Coordinator of General Education
Two course release/reassignment for Fall and for Spring Semesters
Summer appointment (up to three credits)
Term: Fall 2009 – Summer 2012
- Description: The Coordinator of General Education at Millersville University will be a member of the faculty who will be given release-time/stipend as specified above to oversee the development, promotion, and assessment of the General Education program. The Coordinator will be the faculty's liaison to the administration concerning general education and will report to the Provost or his designee. He or she will be an advocate for the General Education Program and objectives and will work toward enhancing the program in accordance with Millersville University's mission of "providing nationally recognized programs that embrace the liberal arts." He or she will act with the advice and consent of the Faculty Senate, its appropriate committees, and relevant administrators.

Duties:

1. Provide leadership and direction for curriculum development and ongoing modification of the General Education program.
2. Initiate and coordinate programs to promote understanding of the General Education program by faculty, students, and staff through publications, website development, presentations, and personal contacts.
3. Work with the First Year Experience (FYE) Coordinator to provide program and policy direction for first-year learning communities and seminars to include faculty recruitment and development, and monitoring of FYE assessment program.
4. Coordinate with the Assistant Vice President for Institutional Assessment and Planning on outcomes assessment for the General Education program.
5. Coordinate with the Director of the Center for Academic Excellence and other offices to plan and promote faculty development efforts related to the General Education program.
6. Work with the General Education Review Committee (GERC) to provide oversight to the process of General Education course recertification.
7. Advocate for General Education by reporting periodically to the Faculty Senate and Deans' Council.
8. Attend Faculty Senate meetings in order to listen to and participate in discussions related to General Education.
9. Serve as an ex-officio member of GERC.
10. Advise the Undergraduate Course and Program Review Committee (UCPRC) on the General Education curriculum.

11. Compile and present to Faculty Senate and Deans' Council an annual report on the General Education program.
12. Collaborate with GERC in conducting and writing the five-year General Education Program Review.
13. Attend off-site professional development functions.
14. Conduct major and minor administrative and maintenance functions in support of the General Education Program (e.g., prepare budgets, supervise student staff).

Appendix E

General Education Outcomes Assessment Brief [Science – Revised 11/30/08]**Part I. Executive Summary: (1 to 2 page summary)**

- A. State the general education outcome being assessed.
- B. Provide brief background - few sentences that may include those from the background and justification written for the introduction.
- C. List major findings (2 to 4 pts) in bullet points. May use small graph or table to highlight major findings. Be selective in the graphs or tables used.
- D. Identify conclusions based upon the major findings. Major conclusions highlight suggestions for improvement or briefly identify example of best practice. The major conclusions consist of bullets of key points.

Part II. Assessment Brief**A. Introduction: (One to two paragraphs.)**

1. Background.

To fulfill its mission to “embrace the liberal arts,” the University is steadfastly committed to the proposition that a thorough, broad-based foundation in the arts and sciences is a necessary condition for the development of the whole person. To prepare students to live and work in today’s society, a basic understanding of the concepts, methods, and reasoning processes used in the natural sciences is necessary.

2. General Education Outcomes Statement.

The learning outcomes for General Educations include the following: “students are able to demonstrate effective scientific reasoning appropriate at the bachelor degree level and to any academic discipline.” This outcome is grounded in one of the new objectives for General Education that reads:

“Students will demonstrate foundational knowledge of the important ideas and methods of different ways of knowing as follows:

b) in the sciences students will engage in the scientific method, laboratory study, appropriate technology, and mathematics to investigate, evaluate, and apply scientific concepts and theories.

The CAAP Science test is a general assessment of scientific reasoning. Success on this test requires competency on the very skills enumerated in the stated objective. It was given to a sample of students nearing graduation who had completed their Gen Ed science requirements so as to best assess the attainment of this objective.

3. Justification.

To satisfy General Education requirements, students must take at least two courses in the natural sciences (BIOL, CHEM, ESCI, PHYS) and at least one of these must be a laboratory course. This requirement is designed to engage students in applying the scientific method using technology and mathematics as appropriate for the discipline and level of class. Because this requirement is aligned with the relevant Gen Ed objective and the CAAP Science test seems to be aligned with both of them, it is believed that results from this test will provide a fair assessment of the objective and of Millersville's approach to science education for its Gen Ed students.

B. Information Source: Describe the source(s) of information used. (one or two paragraphs and table, if appropriate)

The CAAP Science Test is a 45-item, 40 minute multiple choice test that “emphasizes scientific knowledge and reasoning skills” (p. 11). A series of eight passages fall into one of three formats: Data Representation (.33), Research Summaries (.54), or Conflicting Viewpoints (.13). The items test three elements: understanding, analyzing, and generalizing. (pp. 11-12). [Source: CAAP Technical Handbook 2006-2007, ACT, Inc.]

We identified a stratified random sample of approximately 300 - 500 students who meet the stipulations of being a junior or senior and having completed the minimum Gen Ed science requirement at Millersville. Stratification was planned to avoid over sampling science and others majors who may have disproportionately completed their G2 Block requirements but was found to be unnecessary. Sampled students were contacted by email and postal mail to solicit their participation. Non-responders to the mailing were phoned to solicit participation and to assign a testing session. If a student's schedule prevented testing during any of the group testing sessions, efforts will be made to schedule the student for individual testing by the Graduate Assistant. Tests were administered in MU classrooms by faculty or Graduate Assistants trained in accordance with ACT guidelines.

A total of 47 students eventually completed the testing (62% female; 91% white/Caucasian). Of those reporting their majors, 15 were in education, 8 were in social sciences, and 5 were in biology.

C. Major Findings:

1. Data Summary for Major Finding
 - MU students had a mean test score of 63.2 (SD=3.9) which exceeded the national norm of 61.4 (SD=4.5).
 - Of the 47 students taking the test at Millersville, 34 scored at or above the national mean, thereby earning a Certificate of Achievement.
2. Interpretation/ Discussion
 - MU faculty who had viewed the test had expected MU students to have difficulty with the test, but in fact, MU students exceeded the national norms.

National norms, however, are derived from testing of college sophomores across the nation over the previous three years. Our sample was largely juniors and seniors, and they were specifically chosen because they had completed their Gen Ed science requirements. Hence, it is hard to judge whether the national norm provides a valid reference point.

3. Conclusion

- The original design of the Science Reasoning assessment also called for a sample of entering students to be tested first as first years and then retested later in their college careers to provide a value added assessment. Given ambiguity in how to interpret our results for our junior/senior sample, the value added assessment may provide more useful data.

Part III. Appendices

A. CAAP Science Test Review – Summary (2/27/07)

CAAP Science Test Review – Summary (2/27/07)

The Academic Outcomes Assessment Committee (AOAC) has proposed the use of the CAAP Science test to assess a sample of juniors later this spring and a sample of incoming first year students next fall to assess Gen Ed objectives related to scientific reasoning. Prior to committing to this plan, science faculty who are especially familiar with teaching Gen Ed science courses and members of AOAC were asked to review the test to assure us that it is an appropriate tool for assessment. A faculty member from each of the four physical and life sciences and three members of AOAC participated in this review.

Each of the science faculty members strongly recommended the use of the CAAP Science test with one individual suggesting that students take only a subset of the test. They felt it was an appropriate test of scientific understanding and reasoning. All thought the test would be difficult for our students and that students at MU would “not do well” or would, at a minimum, be “challenged.” Most of the reviewers felt that good performance would be at least partly dependent upon content familiarity which would not be possessed by many of our students. Students who could read well for comprehension and were good thinkers generally were also seen as having an advantage on this test. They did agree, however, that students with comparable reading and general critical reasoning skills but who differed in exposure to our Gen Ed science curriculum would indeed perform differently, although the size of the difference might not be very large. All AOAC reviewers either “recommended” or “strongly recommended” the test.

Test Description: [Source: CAAP Technical Handbook 2006-2007, ACT, Inc.]

The CAAP Science Test is a 45-item, 40 minute multiple choice test that “emphasizes scientific knowledge and reasoning skills” (p. 11). A series of eight passages fall into one of three formats: Data Representation (.33), Research Summaries (.54), or Conflicting Viewpoints (.13). The items test three elements: understanding, analyzing, and generalizing. (pp. 11-12). The test has good internal consistency reliability (KR-20 = .86). Completion rates are above 90% and the average item difficulties (proportion getting item correct) fall mostly between .4 and .7 (means = .55, .58).

Current Objectives:

Objective 9. Science and Math.

At completion of their general education requirements, MU students will be able to articulate connections between mathematical and scientific principles, technologies, and events affecting our everyday lives.

Objective 10. Science and Math.

At completion of their general education requirements, MU students will be able to explain how we know and why we believe key concepts in the natural sciences, and be able to use:

- a. scientific reasoning;
- b. laboratory methods;
- c. mathematics to solve scientific problems; and
- d. appropriate technology

Proposed New Objective:

Critical Thinking across the Liberal Arts

2. Students will demonstrate foundational knowledge of the important ideas and methods of different ways of knowing as follows:

- b) in the sciences students will engage in the scientific method, laboratory study, appropriate technology, and mathematics to investigate, evaluate, and apply scientific concepts and theories.

Appendix F

AOAC Technology Survey Report**Participation:**

See table below for participating departments. Not Participating:

Education: EDFN, PSYC

Humanities: ART, COMM, FORL, MUSI, PHIL

Social Sciences: HIST, SOWK

Science & Math: NURS

Responses:

Questions	1	2			3	4
	Self-Rating	Basic Software*	Special Software	Non-PC	# of Courses	Assessment
EDUCATION						
ITEC	5	Nothing special mentioned		Y	21+	Accreditation + Others
ELED	2	Y		AV equip.		No
SPED	4				3	In courses
WSSD	0**	Y				No
HUMANITIES						
ENGL	5	Y	Database		1	Required research papers
SOCIAL SCIENCES						
BUAD	3	Y	Web-page, Database		6	Senior survey, Capstone course
ECON	5	Y	Statistics		12	?
GEOG	4	Y	GIS, Statistics	Maps-related	24	No
GOVT	2	Y	Database, Statistics		7	
SOCY	4	Y	Statistics		1	Capstone course essay
ANTH	2	Y		Laser transit	1	
SCIENCES						
BIOL	5	Y	GIS		All Lab courses	
CHEM	5	Y	Lab-specific	Lab, AV	All	In courses
CSCI	5	?	Programming		All	Accreditation
ESCI	5	Y	Visualization Modeling Programming GIS	Y		Senior survey Capstone course Portfolio
MATH	3	Y	Programming Statistics	Graphing calculator	22	No

PHYS	4	Y	Signal processing	Oscillo-scope	6	Lab courses
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* Basic Software includes: word processing, spreadsheet, Internet browser and search engine (including WebQuests and BlackBoard) and PowerPoint.

** The Wellness & Sports Sciences Department, WSSD, does not have a major.

Symptomatic Questions/Issues

No Consistency

- Some departments presumed that "technology" referred to computers when they obviously have other technologies; e.g., BIOL, WSSD
- ITEC was so general and abstract about "technology" that no specific technologies were addressed and no computer skills listed. The list would have undoubtedly been very long.
- Only two departments, CSCI and ITEC, made specific mention of the General Education aspect of their technology offerings.

Most Departments did not take time to list individual courses

- Is this an indication that they didn't "get" the survey's purpose or potential benefit?
- Most Departments appear to have no specific departmental objectives regarding specific technologies or technological literacy.
- Do they know, in general, which courses are connected to which departmental objectives within their programs?
- These ideas probably apply even more strongly to most of the departments that did not reply.

Interesting Responses

- CSCI sees itself, via CSCI 101, as a potential means for university-wide assessment of computer skills (pretesting?), but they do not currently attempt such a task because that course does not count for their majors and their assessment program is focused on maintaining accreditation.
- ITEC has the greatest understanding of the significance of this task. They can visualize the rich variety of technologies and explain how particular skills can transfer between technological settings.

Report compiled by Chuck Geiger, 5/8/07

Appendix G

Report of External Reviewer

General Education Five Year Review
Millersville University
Catherine Andersen, Ph.D. Gallaudet University
June 23, 2009

Introduction

At the request of Dr. Fred Foster-Clark, Coordinator of General Education, I visited Millersville University on March 24 - 25, 2009 to review the General Education Program. Specifically the proposed focus was to address the following three issues:

- *How does Millersville University know that the revised General Education curriculum is working?*
- *How does one put into practice the necessary procedures to ensure that the General Education Program gets reviewed and adjusted periodically as experience and assessment data accumulate?*
- *How does one promote an institutional context supportive of the periodic changes needed to keep the General Education Program vital and responsive to changing needs and ongoing assessment results including marshalling the resources and administrative support necessary to maintain a strong General Education Program.*

In an effort to gather campus information regarding these three issues, meetings were held with General Education Review Committee (GERC), selected faculty, the Deans Council, students, Dr. Christine Gaudry-Hudson and Dr. Linda McDowell, the Coordinator of First-Year Experience (FYE) program. An exit interview was held with the Provost, Dr. Vilas Prabhu, and Associate Provost, Dr. Thomas Burns, and Dr. Frederick Foster-Clark where preliminary observations and recommendations were shared. This report is the summary of these observations and recommendations.

Background Information

Over the past eleven years General Education revision at Millersville has been the focus of review, refinement and thoughtful and systematic implementation. Based on the General Education Timeline presented, it appears that there has been much input campus wide that has proceeded through the appropriate Faculty Senate committees who along with the General Education Review Committee have reviewed and revised the General Education plan and process. Objectives have been approved by the Senate, external reviews and reform surveys have been conducted and a number of phased initiatives have been identified and implemented.

It was clear from the very first meeting with the GERC and confirmed in meetings with others, that there is a strong sense of purpose and high regard for education at Millersville University. There were consistent comments on how much faculty do, how supportive they were of students and generally committed to the new General Education program. Major highlights include:

- Positive regard for the University and each other
- Highly committed and engaged group of individuals who want General Education to succeed.
- A culture of committed faculty who want to “do the right things”
- Strong shared governance
- Support from the administration
- A solid assessment platform
- Good retention and graduation rates
- Great students

The General Education plan and early implementation has followed best practices in General Education as suggested by both Middle States Accreditation (MSCHE) and the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AACU). The General Education Office Annual Report for 2007-08 includes three goals: (1) continue planning for and implementation of the revised General Education curriculum, (2) develop and implement a plan for the assessment of learning outcomes associated with General Education, and (3) refine, assess and expand the First-Year Inquiry (FYI)/ Learning Community initiative as a corner stone of the revised General Education curriculum. The report will address the overall issues involved in implementation and assessment of the General Education as it relates to these three goals.

Meeting with General Education Review Committee (GERC)

The General Education Review Committee is composed of two faculty representatives from each of the four academic units elected by Faculty Senate for overlapping terms of two years, one representative from non-school faculty elected by Senate for two years, and two student representatives elected by Student Senate for overlapping terms of two years. In addition, a chairperson is elected by Faculty Senate from the Faculty Senate membership to serve a three-year term. The Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, the General Education Coordinator, and the First-Year Experience Coordinator are all non-voting, ex officio members of the committee.

The function of this group is to review and evaluate the General Education Program, in consultation with the Academic Outcomes Assessment Committee, and report its recommendations to the Faculty Senate. The Committee may initiate, review, and evaluate proposed changes to the General Education Program and submit its recommendations to Faculty Senate and oversee the implementation of any approved changes to the General Education Program.

An issue identified by the members of the group was the timing of end of the year reports and work needed to be done by the committee. Concentrated and focused work needs to occur as the committee responds to assessment and benchmark data, internal course and program

assessments, and forthcoming data such as that from the Wabash National Study. Since members' terms are two years, ceasing at the end of the academic year, getting new members on board while capitalizing on the wisdom of those whose terms are ending, makes sustained work challenging.

Additional concerns centered on the need for support both in funded positions and a permanent budget for General Education. As the plan to revise and develop General Education proceeds, funding needs to be appropriate and permanent. While the FYI/LC program was to be a centerpiece of the new curriculum, it is floundering. There are not enough course offerings in the fall. The FYE Coordinator only has a one-course release to recruit and train faculty, implement and assess programs as well as provide other policy, program, and faculty development activities for this critical part of General Education. There was discussion about the need to establish a recertification process for General Education courses and the lack of "requirement" to teach in the General Education program or any campus wide objective criteria to reward those who do.

Meeting with Selected Faculty

In a breakfast meeting with a small group of faculty a number of issues regarding the General Education program emerged. Three major themes were obvious that included differences in student experiences, faculty development and advising.

Based on whether or not they declared a major, the intentional focus on Student Learning Outcomes appears to be variable. Students who are undeclared, particularly those in the First-Year Inquiry Seminar, appear to be experiencing more intentional approaches to seeing connections between the General Education outcomes, lifelong learning and future careers than those entering the University who have already declared majors. The literature suggests that most students change majors at least once during their academic careers and many students do not obtain careers in their intended fields. Thus it is critical that the value of liberal arts in General Education and introductory courses be addressed. Courses that are to carry a General Education designation must demonstrate how their course connects with the General Education outcomes. Enforcement of this beyond the curricular approval process has not been addressed and may account for the lack of understanding by some students as to how these outcomes connect to course content even when the outcomes are listed on the syllabi. Given the importance of helping students understand the importance of liberal arts, there is a critical need that all faculty understand how to make student learning outcomes in General Education courses as well as major courses more transparent for students. All faculty should develop skills in how to help students understand and make connections which may be obvious to faculty, but not to students. Thus, a second theme emerged in the meeting with faculty – the need for sustained and focused faculty development.

While the Office of Academic Advisement provides several training opportunities each year to provide faculty with a better understanding of Millersville's General Education program and how best to advise students within the program, there does not appear to be any opportunity when the

entire Millersville faculty is together where the value of general education or the liberal arts is addressed. An opening of the academic year session devoted to student learning as it connects to the liberal arts mission of the institution could be a powerful event. If the entire faculty does not understand the importance of their role(s), the ownership of who teaches the liberal arts is left to a core group of courses and limited faculty members. In a meeting with the deans when one proudly described a group of students who won a national contest, it was clear that Millersville *is* graduating students with the core skills and outcomes. What is not clear is where or how they are learning the skills, as it seems that students are not experiencing exposure to the why's of General Education at the same rate.

It is clear that in the AIM program underprepared students are provided with career exploration and are helped to see connections to General Education and how General Education and the subsequent learning outcomes will lead to their success during college and beyond. This also seems to occur to some degree with most undeclared students. If this is not happening more intentionally and broadly, missed opportunities abound.

Meetings with Students

In attendance were nine students -- five meteorology majors, two communication majors, one history major and one foreign language major. Seven of them were seniors (or 'super' seniors), one was a sophomore and one was a junior. It is also important to mention that one student served as an orientation leader and another was a peer mentor within the FYE program. At first, students were quiet and a number reported that they would have to leave soon. By the end of the meeting the students stayed over time, and expressed their genuine thanks for the opportunity to be heard.

When asked "What is the purpose of the General Education at Millersville University?" students gave various answers such as to provide a well-rounded education and to expose students to subjects which they wouldn't have taken voluntarily. Students stated that the purpose of General Education was never explicitly explained to them, although the orientation leader was quick to point out that he learned about it thanks to a talk given by the Advisement Office. When asked if students in the new General Education program understand General Education more clearly than in previous years, the response was "no" because this talk was for orientation leaders only. The mentor who helped with the FYE seminars pointed out that AIM for Success students are educated about the importance of General Education but it is up to them to process the information provided. Students who have an opportunity to understand the importance of General Education would be FYE participants, students enrolled in ESCI learning communities or through an advisor.

Students complained about the excessive number of General Education courses and felt that it was up to the professor to show how a course can be useful. S/he should ask thought-provoking questions, encourage intuitive responses, encourage more classroom interaction, and heighten creativity. According to them, passion for teaching has been lost in some courses. COMM 100, ENGL 110, and WELL 175 should stress life-skill development. Students felt courses should provide meaningful discussions, allow for debates, and put students in real life situations. Classrooms should be set up to encourage dialogue rather than to deliver boring lectures using

PowerPoint. Some interesting statements were made such as: “General Education courses are important if taught in a correct manner” and “the courses we love the most are worth the least.”

Students were quick to point out that many of the General Education skills can be gained through campus organizations and/or leadership opportunities and could clearly see connections between General Education and out of class opportunities. Finally students were eager to share that there is a campus-wide perception that general education courses are a ‘money making scheme’ to keep students at Millersville longer.

Meeting with FYE coordinator

There are a number of FYE initiatives that makes this program of First-Year Inquiry seminars a model that other universities should strive to emulate. These three-credit seminars are cornerstones of the revised Gen Ed program. There are Living-Learning communities for Exploratory students that integrate Foundations courses (ENGL 110 or COMM 100) with first-year seminars (both FYI and major-based), a successful Common Reading program integrated with the University’s Theme, an ongoing system of faculty development workshops to support instruction of first-year student, and an assessment program that continues to receive national attention.

While this exciting program has great potential, it is doubtful that it can maintain its current excellence as it continues to grow. The General Education Task Force suggested the expansion of the FYE Coordinator to entail a two-course release per semester rather than a one-course release in order to support the expansion of first-year seminars into the General Education curriculum. During the meeting with the FYE coordinator the concern expressed by the GERC about insufficient staffing of the FYI courses for the fall was confirmed. As was stated in the Guiding Principles for the new General Education curriculum “Reform will be accompanied by sufficient faculty, administrative, and resource support.” This must happen for this cornerstone program to succeed.

Meeting with Deans

Administrators shared a number of observations about the new General Education curriculum implementation. There was much positive information provided indicating that the new curriculum was “moving along” and that faculty were willing to “try it.” The new curriculum was described as simplified, creative and flexible, leading to greater coherence. There was discussion about how students “get it” and understand why they benefitted from General Education often after they leave.

When asked how General Education courses are staffed, it appeared to be decided at the department level with some input at a higher level. The registrar and associate provost work closely with the deans to identify the needs of students in General Education. Conversations via the school councils help engage department chairs in discussing the needs for General Education.

There was mention of some resistance to change and the tensions associated with trying to balance a new and old General Education curriculum. There is the challenge in some

departments to meet accreditation standards requirements while balancing what is needed in General Education. Faculty “build schedules” the way they used to and inertia has set in. This summer a course audit will be done to identify which courses should be taught with the understanding that faculty will be expected to offer courses students need rather than what they have always done.

Deans reported that faculty do have General Education outcomes in their course syllabi to help students understand the connections to preparation for work (majors) and lifelong learning.

The new Assistant VP for Assessment and Planning seems most knowledgeable and positioned to support the assessment for General Education.

Revisiting the Focus and Summary and Recommendations

Millersville University, faculty, staff, students and administrators have developed and are in the process of implementing a well defined, thoughtful and intentional General Education program. Individuals are highly committed to the success of the program and are supportive and complimentary of each other. There is a strong sense of purpose and high regard for education at Millersville University. Administrators are supportive of faculty, faculty of students and, while students did focus on some of their perceived shortcomings of General Education, they were quick to point out that the General Education course were among those they loved the most. In addition, there is a solid assessment plan in place that will help to continuously guide the implementation plan. Given this positive environment along with a healthy enrollment there appears to be no compelling need to change.

Universities that have a compelling reason to change (enrollment declines, accreditation challenges, etc.) are often apt to garner support and make the needed change. At Millersville, there are no compelling reasons. Enrollment is strong and accreditation is solid. However, Millersville has a unique opportunity to significantly enhance its core curriculum and become a model program for others. The university administration, faculty and staff should be complimented for their commitment to invest time and resources into large scale change when the university could enjoy a few more years of status quo. And while Millersville University has done an excellent job of developing and implementing this change, a number of themes emerged in many of the meetings and are the basis for recommendations to further develop the program.

- ***How does Millersville University know that the revised General Education curriculum is working?***

There are a number of ways in which to judge whether or not the curriculum is working. Is there an assessment plan? Has it been implemented? What has preliminary student learning evidence shown as well as some additional program indicators?

First, there is an excellent plan in place to assess student learning outcomes. The Academic Outcomes Assessment Committee (AOAC) developed a plan to continue assessment related to the seven General Education student learning outcomes enumerated by Middle States. Three

areas for assessment outcomes were identified during AY 2005-2006 and in the subsequent year a quantitative reasoning test was developed. Also, writing samples were gathered to assess both written communication and literacy objectives. In AY2006-2007 assessment was focused on critical reasoning and analysis, scientific reasoning, oral communication, and technological literacy as well as a pilot for the First Year Seminar which in the subsequent year was expanded. Preliminary evidence indicates that students are meeting the designated outcomes. Millersville University is now at an important juncture where large amounts of data are being gathered and a plan of approach led by the new Assistant Vice President of Assessment and Planning is in process. Identifying the tools and process for assessment is a difficult challenge and is in place and is being tracked. Additional indicators of whether or not the program is working can be measured by some factors such as:

- Are there sufficient faculty available to teach in General Education?
- Are the faculty adequately trained?
- Are students able to recognize learning outcomes in their General Education classes and articulate how they connect to the courses they are taking?

While being cognizant of the data being gathered and collected by a seemingly strong assessment officer, the purpose of this visit was to gather qualitative data that can support these results. There is generally movement towards building a strong curriculum but widespread ownership and student buy in remains a challenge. This may be a natural occurrence of phasing out an old curriculum and implementing a new one, all while trying to balance existing resources.

- ***How does one put into practice the necessary procedures to ensure that the General Education Program gets reviewed and adjusted periodically as experience and assessment data accumulate?***

Given the recent hire of an Assistant Vice President for Assessment and Planning, who seems most aware of what is needed, and the already established Academic Outcomes Assessment Committee (AOAC), a strong plan for assessment is in place. The GERC is in a position to respond to data and make recommendations, if the structure and timeliness of actions occur. Given two year terms and limited time for the group to work at the end of the spring semester and the large amount of information that is being collected, responses to assessment data could be hampered. In addition, without additional support in FYE, where much assessment has already occurred, progress in using data to make change could further be impeded.

- ***How does one promote an institutional context supportive of the periodic changes needed to keep the General Education Program vital and responsive to changing needs and ongoing assessment results including marshalling the resources and administrative support necessary to maintain a strong General Education Program.***

There is strong sense of purpose for General Education by both the faculty who were interviewed and the administration but less so by students. There is sufficient evidence to suggest that this same sense of purpose is not shared by all faculty. There are many excellent initiatives, with strong leadership, that support student learning, particularly the skills and commitment of the First-Year Experience and General Education Coordinators. However, as the new curriculum

becomes more widespread and the old is phased out, if positions and support for the program do not expand or keep pace, the demands may render this good work much less effective. The availability of resources (reallocation) and strong administrative leadership are keys to progress. While the foundation for Millersville University's General Education curriculum is solid and supported by the University, given the operating of two separate curriculums and strained resources, there are challenges. As Dr. Steven Briggs, a previous General Education external reviewer, recognized five years ago, making institutional change of this magnitude requires leadership and investment at the levels of the President and Provost. Support at these levels for the institutional changes in General Education needs to be bolstered in order for progress to be maintained and their potential to be realized.

Considerations and Recommendations.

1. **Develop explicit efforts to help students understand the meaning** of General Education in and out of the classroom and advising. This is as critical for undeclared students as declared, given students often change majors. There is also a need for all students to understand WHY they are taking General Education courses. Students should be making connections in and out of classroom opportunities, including co-op and internship experiences and leadership opportunities on campus.
2. **Be more explicit regarding advisement recommendations and provide training for advisors.** There are many important goals for General Education that are not represented by a specific course. Guidelines are provided encouraging advisors "to help students and faculty make decisions that best meet these goals for each student." There is a long list of specific guidelines but what is missing in this list of suggestions is a specific recommendation that addresses the need to help students make connection between and among courses and to see how General Education courses they are taking support their majors and lifelong learning.
3. **Encourage advisors and instructors to have explicit conversations with students** about courses they are or will be taking and what the learning outcomes in the courses are. This dialogue, along with faculty intentionally reinforcing the learning outcomes in all courses, should help students to develop a clearer understanding of the purpose of General Education - as opposed to in their opinion "a ploy to keep students longer at the university." Progress in this area could be measured by a change in the NSSE questions that asks students if they have had a conversation about future careers with faculty or advisors – or an overall improvement in conversations out of the class with faculty.
4. **Focus faculty development and provide additional training for advisors.** There is no centralized or focus "kick off" to the academic year that helps the faculty or academic community understand the relationship of General Education to lifelong learning and future success. If faculty do not see the connection or the value of a core set of skills as a foundation on which majors can build, how can they help students to understand it? In addition, ongoing enrichment activities could help faculty develop resources in career exploration, within and outside of majors, specifically as it relates to broad student learning outcomes. Also, consider providing training for advisors (both professional and faculty advisors) on how to help students make connections between courses they are taking, how the students learning outcomes will be

addressed in courses, and the importance of having conversations about how these outcomes connect to success in the workplace and specific careers.

5. **Promote dialogue about how departments can connect and use General Education as the foundation for majors and lifelong learning.** Because of possible tensions between and among faculty due to strained resources and competing priorities, administrators must provide ongoing dialogue about this to help everyone understand the common outcomes for the university. “We all have the same goal for our students...to be successful.”
6. **Provide opportunities for administrators to have more day to day understanding of the challenges in implementing a new General Education program.** There is somewhat of a disconnect between what administrators may think is happening and what the faculty and students are experiencing. A number of faculty reported that there are not sufficient resources to staff some of the General Education courses, particularly in the FYI program. There needs to be a clear understanding of course offerings in the new and old General Education curriculum, and a plan to provide guidance in this area (it was reported that an assessment of needed courses will occur this summer). It is critical that this information and expectations be clearly communicated to the faculty. Only when this happens will courses such as those in the First Year Experience program be adequately staffed. In addition, while faculty report including Student Learning Outcomes on their syllabi- does this effectively communicate the purpose to students? Based on what students said – it does not.
7. **Provide adequate support for the First Year Experience program –particularly in what is considered the cornerstone piece.** This program has done incredible work but will not be able to sustain the effort if additional support is not given. It is critical that this program have more sustained support, particularly at the coordinator level to develop and assess the program, as well as recruit and train faculty to teach in it. As suggested by the General Education Task Force, the FYE Coordinator should receive a two-course release per semester rather than a one-course release in order to support the expansion of first-year seminars into the General Education curriculum
8. **Establish clear priorities from the top.** One of the questions that should be asked of most all departments is how are priorities established? Most everyone on campus indicated that people are working beyond their maximum capacities given the increasing demand on faculty. Faculty will have to carefully choose which activities and initiatives are the most important to the goal of student success but this prioritization must be explicitly guided and rewarded. Especially as new initiatives are established, workloads and priorities within departments must be assessed and carefully weighed.
9. **Explore faculty roles and incentives.** There was some question about the need to establish clear roles and incentives for faculty regarding their contribution to the new curriculum. While many faculty may enjoy teaching in the General Education, others may see this as “shooting themselves in the foot” by taking on additional activities that are not explicitly rewarded. This is of particular concern of faculty who are not yet tenured and whose area of research is disciplined based. However the reward system is structured at Millersville, it should

allow for some benefit to consistently contributing to the General Education program and to provide incentives to help increase departmental participation in delivering the General Education program.

It was an honor and a pleasure working with this highly dedicated and professional group of administrators, faculty and staff at Millersville University. Millersville University is a model for a collaborative, thoughtful and intentional process for curricular revision. Each step in the development of this program has involved the campus. Best practices in General Education have been carefully employed and as a result students will greatly benefit from this program. I am confident that not only will student learning be enhanced, but the existing culture of caring and support will continue. I look forward to hearing more of the good work happening in the General Education Program in the future and if I can be of more help I would be happy to do so.