

## Faculty Senate Forum - 2/20/19

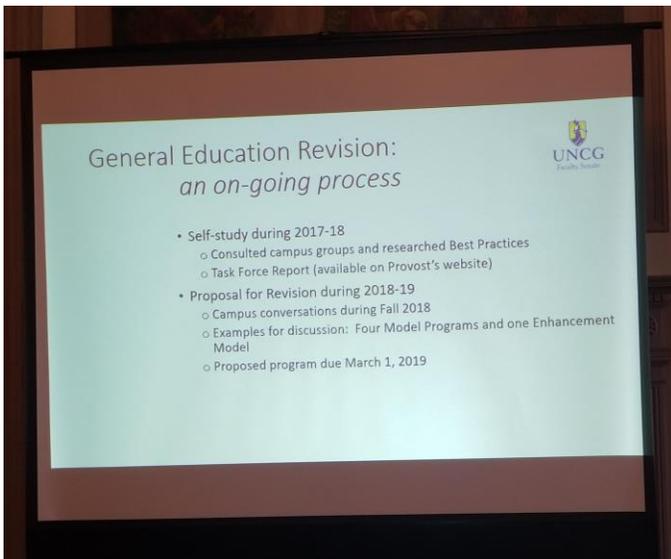
Andrea Hunter - Chair, of the General Faculty and Faculty Senate opened the meeting, thanking everyone for the great turn-out as there was a larger crowd present today.

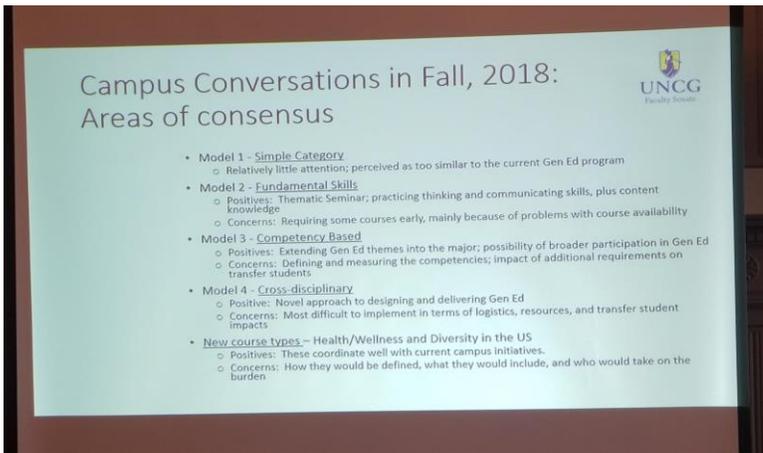
She described today's topic "this is one of the large 'jumbo jet initiatives' that's coming in for a landing.

Alice Haddy and Chuck Bolton – co-chairs General Education Revision Task Force Membership

Alice Haddy: presentation on the GEC revision task force working model (that was shared 2 weeks ago), see attachment.

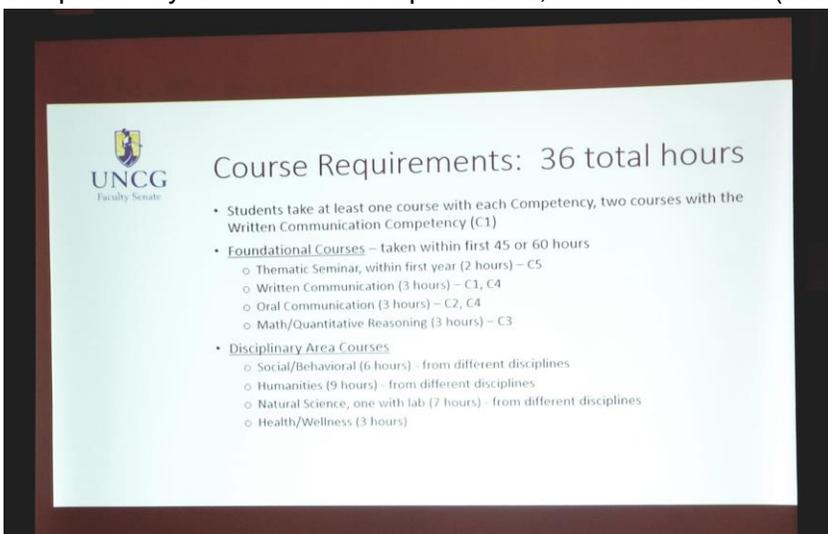
(see pictures of the process)





Category vs Marker, and more connections between Gen Ed and regular curriculum.

Considered several model programs, ranging from simple to interdisciplinary. These were shared around campus last year in different departments, and various fora (see picture).



**Working Draft: General Education Plan (subject to revision)**  
General Education Revision Task Force, February 2019

**The proposed General Education Plan is competency based. All Gen Ed courses must address two or three of the following seven Competencies.** Working drafts of the Competencies and other additional information are provided in a separate document. SLOs for each Competency would be developed later by appropriate groups of faculty.

- C1. Written Communication
- C2. Oral Communication
- C3. Quantitative Reasoning
- C4. Critical and Creative Thinking
- C5. Information Literacy
- C6. Intercultural Knowledge and Engagement
- C7. Diversity and Equity

...for organizing the General Education around Competencies: 1) Current best practices in ... explain the purpose of the General Education Program ...

## 2 **Disciplinary Area Courses**

for breadth of perspective

8 courses (25 student credit hours)

**Social/Behavioral Science (6 hours)**

**Humanities (9 hours)**

including Arts

**Natural Science (7 hours)**

including one lab course

**Health & Wellness (3 hours)**

broadly defined, e.g., physical, emotional, financial

**Goal: Develop seven core competencies**, cutting across disciplines and  
integrating multiple subjects and levels – including upper-level major

### **The Competencies**

C1: Written Communication

C2: Oral Communication

C3: Quantitative Reasoning

C4: Critical & Creative Thinking

C5: Information Literacy

C6: Intercultural Knowledge &  
Engagement

C7: Diversity & Equity

Students **encounter**  
in three different

**Counter the competencies repeatedly,**  
in different settings:

### 1

### **Foundational Courses**

to build skills for academic success

4 courses (11 student credit hours)

taken within first 45 or 60 hours at UNCG

**Thematic Seminar (2 hours) – C5**

during first year; small sections, varied topical themes

**Written Communication (3 hours) – C1+C4**

**Oral Communication (3 hours) – C2+C4**

**Math/Quantitative Reasoning (3 hours) – C3**

Disciplinary areas are **defined**

Best practices value rubrics for many competencies. We focused on 7 competencies (see pic below). See handout attached. These have SLOs associated with each.

10 of 16 other schools in the UNC system have a health and wellness course, which helps transfer students. Thematic seminar is not listed in the articulation agreement.

Q: We have gone from 36 to 33 hours, which impacts professional schools, and now we are cutting one more. Competencies only make sense within disciplines. We have tried to make these changes every 5 years.

A: The revision of the program is removing marker courses that have an unknown number of credits. These marker courses may be independent of the category system and adding hours to students' curricula. The proposed revisions may be accommodated by professional schools. GEC hours average are 39 to 40 across the system. 36 hours of GEC leaves more than 80 hours for the curriculum. It's a little more than the bare minimum. Curricula expand with certification needs.

Q: Thanked the committee. How will the thematic seminar map onto the existing curriculum? Are those sections an increase over current offerings and how will that impact staffing? Will it create problem of time to degree? What about DEI? Are there enough seats in those DEI classes? Who is offering those?

A: these are practical questions that will be addressed by planning. Thematic seminars is intended as a high impact practice. Small classes, resource heavy. Students should engage with each competency at least once, but for written it should be twice.

Each competency should map into a course in the system. E.g. Thematic Seminar maps Diversity. There are many courses that touch on diversity, and faculty can self-designate, and after the initial home department is designated.

Q: Vigorous discussion on definition of diversity. No consensus. The competency definition is offered in the document. This is a real challenge, but this is a chance in Gen Ed to show our students our values and learning goals. We must proceed very carefully in planning and definitions. We've done a content analyses of courses on campus. We have many scholars. We can figure out a structure to promote that expertise in Gen Ed.

Q: Disciplinary courses and definitions. Will the Depts such as Anthropology designate which courses are designated in social sciences, and which are natural sciences?

A: yes

Q: You can't require students to take a specific gen Ed course, if a course in the Dept meets the requirement.

A: A Gen Ed course can satisfy both Gen Ed and Major requirements. If Units require additional Gen Ed, units deal with that. Units must re visit

Q: Question about C-6. Global. Are you taking local out of that definition?

A: There are global related communities that are in our neighborhoods, so this is related to DEI. But we are revisiting that.

Q: Thanks for the committee's hard work. The goal is for students to engage with each competency at least once, Writing twice. But, a student can get through without engaging with some of them.

A: yes, but we don't want that. So, hoping to engage students in a disciplinary course. Goal is to minimize tracking, it will show up in students' transcripts.

Q: Why is 'critical and creative thinking' paired? Suggest separating those. How about substituting the word 'original' for creative? Or 'creative or critical thinking'. E.g. this would allow a course in Logic to be included. Vigorous debate ensued, various task force members responded.

May be a difference in differences in understanding of concepts and simplify and communicate better.

A: We will attempt to clarify.

Humanities requirements are reduced to 9 hours to balance various requirements. The committee looked at other universities and we are “over the top” in the humanities compared to the other universities. There is understanding of why those in humanities see this as a loss.

Comment- There has been a lot of discussion about additions and modifications. We as senators shouldn't vote until these edits are finalized, including SLOs.

Answer - SLOs are not a responsibility of this committee.

Q: Why are the requirements being mapped into existing requirements?

A: it's a practical step, what do we have now that can map into future requirements, to ease the transition. The biggest change is to introduce a competency model, without starting from scratch, and introduce new features.

Q: where did GHP go?

A: It's the new features.

Q: there are too many flaws and complicated in this presentation. We are defending the arts and humanities as core of the University identity. Those 3 hours are going to health and wellness that are not associated with any discipline. Why not emphasize arts? Reducing humanities doesn't make sense and collapsing them into arts or global doesn't make sense.

A: This is a proposal for the entire campus, the core of Gen Ed, so students will experience some of everything. Units can make up the lacunae in their programs. I assure you we have been very thoughtful, though we have flaws.

Q: Timeline. Are we voting on this in a couple of weeks? Colleagues are wanting to see the final product before they vote

A: We have to vote by the end of the semester. The proposal will go to the Senate on March 1st, 2 weeks in advance of the meeting.

Q: Social and Behavioral are remaining the same but others are being cut. This is troubling.

Thematic seminar is for freshmen and transfer students.

This additional course may delay time to degree. Another option is: a clause that this can be waived if you have enough credits. The task force recommends doing thematic seminar for all students as it helps students find their identity here.

Q: From the handout sheet: Students don't need to track competencies. How will this look on Genie? Will there still be markers / categories on Genie?

A: C6 and C7 not need to track. C1 yes, students will need to look at it. In the model, every course in the program will have 2 categories (as compared to marker system where marker courses are not category courses). As students take the category courses they will automatically meet requirements.

Discussion: how the category courses can fit into disciplinary courses.

The decrease in humanities hours is concerning.

Q: Specific courses carry SLOs, not specific instructors.

A: Correct. This is another difference from the marker system.

Q: Some competencies are written narrowly: Diversity and Equity focusing on the US. Can these be broadened? Connections with global and historical issues.

A: this is to highlight people's community experiences so it's intentional.

Q: To assess global competency we have to view students in a global situation and assess their interactions and dispositions.

A: We will take that into consideration.

Q: Disciplinary areas description of humanities focuses on the US, while the humanities focus on global.

A: It's not to exclude the global perspective, but it's to put C6 and C7 together. We want the global perspective. We want our students to get situated in the local context, and then connect to the global. Will follow up with the questioner on that.

Q: Talking about C6. I teach global courses: middle ages. I can't teach modern things in that class. C6 should not be called global. C1 can apply to any course on this campus.

A: The writing competencies is intended to apply to any discipline, similar to WI. The written communication is not necessarily meant to be any old thing. It's meant to be a writing course. We are having definitions for the areas and the competencies.

Q: Tracking C6 and C7 is not more difficult than tracking courses in disciplines.

A: the idea would be to set up C6 and C7 so that it gets fulfilled by a course that a student would take any way. We are creating a matrix of competencies by discipline.

Comment: Implications for advising.

Comment: 5 out of 7 competencies are skills based. Less of knowledge and dispositions. Less recognition of 'global' issues, and the contexts from which immigrants and refugees come. Can health and wellness be recast as competencies and put the 3 hours back in humanities?

#3 requirements in the major: Depts must address competencies in the major .... How does that connect with the Gen Ed program? What's the scaffolding? This is more a competency than a skill area. Lifetime skills are lost.

Is there an intellectual defense for the proposal? Communication with students is key.

Response to the intellectual concern, we did a lot of research before going to a Competency-Based model. Some want more hours and others want fewer, so there are compromises to be made. Also, we want to promote General Education for the students.

There has been some defending of territorial areas.

Comments on the importance of health and wellness. Freshmen gain 20 to 40 lbs. We need an intervention for the students for them to manage their lives.

A: Students have asked for a health and wellness, especially mental health. It's not a traditional liberal arts field. It speaks to a strength on our campus.

Q. Is there a connection between the Thematic Experience and Health and Wellness?

A. What we have here is more analogous to the Freshman Seminar.

A. Andrea Hunter speaking - the faculty senate has compiled a committee of stakeholders to examine the Freshman Seminar and we will report to the Provost by the end of May. There might be a link, but it is too early to say.

Q. Could Health and Wellness be a competency instead of a Gen Ed. Could it be co-curricular? Could we do this in a more impactful way, woven into the day-to-day lives of our students. Perhaps we think outside the box and figure out how to feed in credit hours elsewhere.

Q. What is the rationale for the Thematic seminar being only two hours.

A. There was a thought that all Gen Eds be 3 credit hours, but not all departments have exclusively 3-credit hour courses, so this does not feel unusual to some, but this can be considered. There is a lot of thought that we need to fit in.

Comment, response to Health and Wellness discipline. One of my concerns is in the realm of assessment. It could be subjective to assess.

Response - Health is what you need to be well, so do the students have the knowledge to improve their wellness wherever they are. We are imparting knowledge. We have to put this in context.

Arts not the same as Humanities, need to be cognizant of that.

**Andrea Hunter comment. We need to realize that we are a University and we might not understand all of the other components of the University outside of our own. It is important to be respectful and not dismissive of any majors.**

Alice and Chuck say thank you and let us know that there will be a link sent out for us to make comments.

Please read and post comments at the following link:

<http://go.uncg.edu/genedocuments>

Provost's web site also has a place for comments.

Please note that all of your HHS senators were present at this meeting representing our school. Laurie Allen, Allan Goldfarb and Bill Karper as well as .....

Sudha Shreeniwas and Kathryn Aldridge who respectfully submit these notes.

It was known that this Faculty Forum had the potential to be a doozy. It did not disappoint in the doozy-department. We did the best we could with these notes, but there were times when more than one person was talking or spoke without being called on, etc. Generally, there was a LOT of talking. Enjoy!