



THE UNIVERSITY OF UTAH

GENERAL EDUCATION

THE GENERAL EDUCATION UPDATE 2015-16



The Office of General Education has adopted a new tag line: *"General Education: Where Creative Doers Explore and Connect."* Students in General Education courses have earned Community Engaged Learning credits, made connections to the Office of Undergraduate Research, participated in Justice Sotomayor's visit to campus, and explored a wide range of potential majors. It's been a busy and exciting year.

None of these opportunities would be available to our students if not for the generous contributions of the faculty. The General Education curriculum belongs to the faculty in departments, colleges, and programs across campus. Faculty serving on the General Education Curriculum Committee recommend courses to carry designations. Faculty serving on the Undergraduate Council approve courses and establish policy with regard to General Education.

The Office of General Education manages General Education and Bachelor Degree requirements and the approximately 1,000 classes fulfilling these requirements. These are often the first academic experiences many students have at the University and so set the course and tone for students' entire academic career. We are committed to providing students with intellectually rewarding and engaging experiences that will prepare them for success in the major and beyond the degree.

In this update, you will learn about recent activities of the Office of General Education.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Diversity Requirement Faculty Fellows

For the 2015-16 Academic year, the Office of General Education is supporting four Diversity Requirement Fellows with \$1,000 compensation who will develop a project designed to enhance the quality of teaching and learning in Diversity Requirement courses. These faculty are:

Martine Kei Green-Rogers: Create a web-based manual of interdisciplinary (but theatre based) in-class activities that may be used in order to help facilitate conversations surrounding social justice based sensitive-subject matter in classrooms.

Kim Hackford-Peer: Create a support for graduate students across campus tasked with teaching courses that carry a DV designation through professional development and skill building, as well as developing an intentional intellectual community.

Danielle Endres: Develop a set of curricular materials and other resources for use by Diversity Requirement Instructors about the historical development and contemporary usage of the Utes nickname.

Irene Ota: Implement a training workshop and mentoring program for instructors of Diversity Requirement courses that will include Anti-discrimination Response Training with mentoring/discussion sessions.

General Education Teaching Awards

The Office of Undergraduate Studies administers two teaching awards to recognize excellent and innovative instruction in General Education, with a prize of \$3,000 going to the winners of these awards.

The Faculty Teaching Award for Innovation in General Education recognizes innovative approaches to General Education. This award went to **Juan Carlos Claudio** for his work in Modern Dance. He, "uses all types of active learning, from visual and aural (power point, listening to music and watching videos from diverse cultures), to verbal (students present personal and group research on diverse cultures), to physical (physically presenting movement material from their culture in class), to social (immersing themselves in a culture of choice to better understand diversity), to logical (students experience a series of steps that incorporates rhythms and mathematical practices, as in the case of Flamenco dance)."

The Faculty Teaching Award for Excellence in General Education recognizes teaching that makes a sustained and significant contribution to the U's mission to provide undergraduate students with an exceptional educational experience in General Education. This award went to **Seetha Veeraghanta** for her work with Engineering LEAP and E-LEAP Plus. The person who nominated her said, "I have never been in a classroom that is as student-centered and involved as Dr. Veeraghanta's class. She encourages argument and dissenting opinions in class. She wants students to challenge her lectures. She pushes them to contemplate the very depths of their beliefs and viewpoints. Dr. Veeraghanta does not merely teach a general education class. She teaches each and every one of her students about themselves, and in turn, teaches students how to acquire and expand knowledge."



NEW LEARNING COMMUNITIES

LEAP

The LEAP Learning Communities Program offers fifteen options for students to fulfil three general education requirements in their first two semesters. In this academic year, new LEAP classes will be created for Social and Behavioral Science and Humanities pre-majors. Also, LEAP is planning an Access U course, partnering with Salt Lake Community College, offering a lower division LEAP class at SLCC in 2017. Students in this course will continue at the U the following fall.

BlockU

The BlockU Program has six different areas of interest to choose from. Returning themes include: Arts & Advocacy, Entrepreneurship & Society, Global Citizenship, and Medical Humanities. The two new areas of interest for the coming school year are: Families & Health and Health, Food, & Social Justice. Successful completion of the BlockU Program will waive all of the student's Intellectual Explorations requirements. Many students will be able to complete all of the General Education Requirements in their first year.

Capstone Initiatives

Capstone Initiatives integrate coursework, skills, and experiential learning to synthesize knowledge in real-world applications and provides up to \$1,000 financial support for student capstone projects. The program is especially interested in supporting collaborative, interdisciplinary proposals among students needing to bring expertise from other disciplines to their projects. One recent example of this is a low-cost, recyclable device to support patients using the services of a health care clinic for homeless people. In this project, a transdisciplinary team was formed, consisting of students from five different colleges and departments, including the Colleges of Business, Humanities (Communication), The Honors College, College of Nursing, and College of Behavioral Sciences (Health, Society and Policy), as well as professors in the College of Engineering and the College of Architecture + Planning. With a small, \$1,000 grant from the Capstone Initiative Fund, the project leveraged \$13,000 from the Office of Sponsored Research.



NUTS AND BOLTS

During the 2014-15 academic year, the Office of General Education:

- Approved 80 new designations for courses, denied 10 designation applications, requested changes to 49 designation applications, and removed 113 designations from courses.
- Reviewed and updated the criteria for each of the General Education and Bachelor Degree requirements.
- Participated with the rest of the Utah public universities and nine other states in the Multi-State Collaborative to Advance Learning Outcomes Assessment (MSC) project run by the State Higher Education Executive Officer Association (SHEEO) and the American Association of Colleges and Universities (AAC&U).
- Conducted an assessment of two General Education learning outcomes: Written Communication and Quantitative Literacy. This assessment report will be submitted to the Undergraduate Council in the Fall of 2015.

JOIN US!

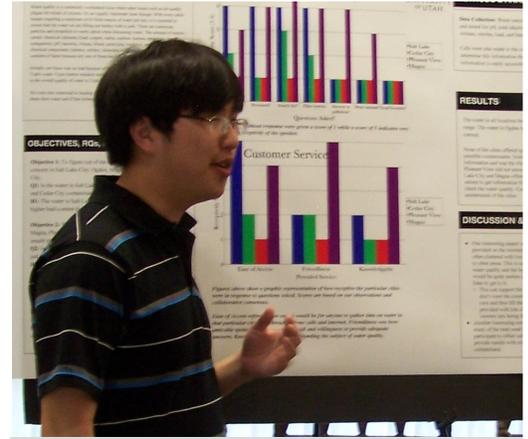
With support from the Center for Teaching & Learning Excellence, we will be hosting two Faculty Learning Communities this Fall and we hope you will consider joining us in these conversations:

- Faculty learning community on integrated learning
- Faculty learning community on learning outcome assessment

Dates and times to be decided.

Also in collaboration with the Center for Teaching and Learning Excellence we will be offering six workshops on General Education Topics:

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| SEP 11 | Faculty Teaching Awards |
| OCT 2 | Program Learning Outcomes Assessment |
| NOV 13 | Diversity Development Fellows Presentations |
| JAN 15 | Humanities & Fine Arts Designations |
| FEB 12 | Science & Social Sciences Designations |
| MAR 11 | Integrated Learning & Portfolios: Student Presentation |



Excellent General Education happens with the engagement and support of faculty in departments, programs, and colleges. We are grateful to have the opportunity to work with you on behalf of our students and look forward to your ideas and feedback.

GENERAL EDUCATION CURRICULUM COMMITTEE

Ann Darling, *Communication*
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Joe Metz, *Languages & Literature*

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