MEMORANDUM

To: Curriculum Committee
From: General Education Committee
Date: 15 October, 2010
Subject: GENERAL EDUCATION RESTRUCTURING

The purpose of this memo is to recommend structural changes to the General Education program at DSC.

Issue 1: Complying with Board of Regents Policy

BOR policy R470-3.2 (see Attachment A) states that “in addition to completing all core requirements described in 3.1, students will be required to complete 18 to 27 credits beyond the General Education core.” Currently, our AS and BS students are required to complete only 15 BREADTH/DEPTH credits beyond the General Education core. We recommend a multifaceted approach to solve this shortcoming.

Recommendation:

1. Add a 2 credit minimum Global and Cultural Perspectives requirement (GLOCUP) to the Breadth/Depth. Where individual courses achieve both GLOCUP status and GE status in another area (Humanities, Social Sciences etc....) the course will satisfy only one of the two requirements.

2. Add a 3 credit exploration requirement to the Breadth/Depth. The course taken to satisfy this requirement could not have the same prefix as any other GE course taken.

3. Require that every student be required to take at least one Physical or Natural Science course accompanied by a 1 credit lab.

4. Eliminate CIS as a core GE requirement. Instead we believe that technical training in CIS skills should be an institutional requirement associated with elective credit or considered as developmental education. Further, we would recommend a set of competency tests that act as a first gateway to earning elective credit for CIL1200. The course could be available for elective or developmental credit for those who do not attempt, or who fail to pass, the competency tests.

5. We recommend that LIB 1010 be retained as a GE requirement. However, we believe that the credit earned should be elective rather than GE. We recommend a set of competency tests that act as a first gateway to earning the credit for LIB 1010. The course as it exists would be available for those who do not attempt, or who fail to pass, the competency tests.

If adopted, these recommendations would bring us in to compliance with BOR policy R470-3. More importantly, we believe that adopting these recommendations would provide our students with a more comprehensive yet focused General Education program that will move them closer to the citizen-scholar ideal, both capable of, and inspired toward, the pursuit of life-long learning.

We believe that our recommended use of the 6 new BREADTH/DEPTH credits is mission driven and reasonable. Obviously, the exploration option gives students significant flexibility. The GLOCUP requirement, on the other hand, is consistent with our institutional commitment to global perspectives and diversity (for more detail regarding the GLOCUP recommendation, see Attachment B).
Finally, if these recommendations are adopted, the minimum number of GE credits required would go from 31 to 33. We have considered the difficult position many four-year program directors face regarding student credit requirements for graduation. Therefore we understand the desire to limit the number of required GE credits to the bare minimum of 30.

Nevertheless, we believe that that our recommendations should be adopted because they would significantly enhance liberal arts and science education at DSC (the foundation of general education) and allow us to more effectively achieve our GE mission and learning goals.

**Issue 2: Fine Arts Area**

Fine Arts is a Board of Regents mandated BREADTH/DEPTH area. We consider the study of the Fine Arts to be an indispensable component of a liberal arts education that belongs in any comprehensive general education program. However, under our current structure, students at DSC can graduate having never taken a single fine arts course. The reason for this is that several communications courses are offered for GE credit in our “Fine Arts/Communication” area. We believe this practice exposes a soft-spot in our General Education program that puts the integrity of the program at risk. We also believe this practice violates the clear intent of the BOR policy, which is to require that all students take a Fine Arts course.

**Recommendation:** Rename “Fine Arts/Communications” “Fine Arts.” Further, the GE committee will recommend that the Communications Department review those Communications courses currently granted GE Fine Arts/Communications status and make recommendations for their continued inclusion in the GE program (whatever their BREADTH/DEPTH area; e.g. social sciences, humanities).

**Issue 3: Social and Behavioral Sciences**

In our GE program the Social and Behavioral Sciences area is referred to as “Social Sciences.”

**Recommendation:** Rename this area “Social and Behavioral Sciences” to be consistent with other institutions of higher education in the state and with BOR naming conventions.

**Attachments**

- Attachment A: Board of Regents General Education Policy
- Attachment B: Proposed Global and Cultural Perspectives Requirement
3.1. General Education Credit and Core Requirements: To assure full value and reciprocity among all USHE institutions, the number of credits required in General Education for each institution shall range from at least 30 to 39 semester credits, including credits required in the core areas of composition, quantitative literacy, and American institutions. Institutions are encouraged to allow students who demonstrate competencies by other means to satisfy General Education requirements, such as through Advanced Placement tests.

Students must satisfy all of the following General Education core requirements, which will be included at all institutions:

3.1.1. Composition: Students shall be required to complete English 1010, Introduction to Writing (3 credits), and English 2010, Intermediate Writing (3 credits).

3.1.2. Quantitative Literacy: Students may satisfy this requirement by completing Mathematics 1030, Quantitative Literacy (3 credits), or Mathematics 1040, Statistics (3 credits), which have prerequisites of high school intermediate algebra or 2 years of high school algebra. Students may also satisfy the requirement by completing at least one institutionally approved mathematics course at the level of college algebra or which requires college algebra as a prerequisite.

3.1.3. American Institutions: Students may satisfy this requirement by completing one of the following courses: Economics 1740, United States Economic History, (3 credits); Political Science 1100, American Political Institutions (3 credits); or History 1700, American Civilization (3 credits). An interdisciplinary integrated course that satisfies comparable competencies may also satisfy the requirement. Some institutions may require a two course sequence in the areas of economics, political science, or history which satisfy comparable competencies.

3.2. General Education Breadth Requirements beyond the Core: In addition to completing all core requirements described in 3.1, students will be required to complete 18 to 27 credits beyond the General Education core. These courses shall be in the areas of fine arts, humanities, social and behavioral sciences, life sciences, physical sciences, and other areas deemed appropriate at individual USHE institutions. Outside the core requirements, USHE institutions are encouraged to establish unique course requirements, which reflect emphases of the institutions, strengths of faculties, and the varying interests of students. Institutional General Education requirements may be accessed through the www.utahsbr.edu Website.
Attachment B: Proposed Global and Cultural Perspectives Requirement (GLOCUP)

One of our GE learning goals is associated with cultural diversity and globalization. Specifically:

Diversity and Globalization

Students will:

a. Identify cultural differences and examine how these differences influence cross-cultural understanding and conflict.

b. Recognize and evaluate the implications of various social structures and the ways people are grouped by such characteristics as status, race, ethnicity, gender, and sexual orientation.

c. Identify and analyze sources of cultural bias and prejudice in our everyday life and develop ways to reduce these and other forms of biases and prejudices.

d. Describe and analyze the concepts of globalization and transnationalism in order to evaluate the interdependent nature of the world we live in.

It is the recommendation of the GE committee to establish a stand-alone Global and Cultural Perspectives (GCP) GE Breadth requirement designed to directly address this learning goal. It is our recommendation that all students be required to take at least one course (2 credits minimum) to fulfill this requirement. It is also our recommendation that courses meeting more than one GE requirement (e.g. both GCP and Humanities) satisfy only one of the two (no double-dipping).

Determination of Global and Cultural Perspectives GE Status

GCP GE status would be determined, in part, by reviewing the extent to which courses meet the following proposed objectives (courses must meet at least 4 of the following 8 objectives):

Global Perspectives

1. Examine and critique information and argument related to substantive problems that have a global dimension.

2. Learn how to evaluate sources from a variety of perspectives and use those sources to inform their critique of problems in the global community.

3. Demonstrate the ability to develop informed judgments about global issues.

4. Synthesize and balance information in developing appropriate evidence-based conclusions about global issues.

Cultural Perspectives

5. Examine theoretical and methodological approaches to cultural differences specific to a disciplinary tradition.

6. Demonstrate an ability to analyze differences and similarities within (or) across cultures.

7. Examine the role of social factors, e.g., race, gender, ethnicity, class, sexual orientation, religion, etc., in shaping social interaction, cultural worldviews, and individual identity.

8. Demonstrate an understanding of the interconnectedness of society, culture and individual identity.