General Education Update

Academic Senate

Thursday, May 12, 2011

Functions of the GEC

- To ensure the general education curriculum is established, monitored, reviewed, and assessed

- To oversee General Education Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Plan

- To determine which undergraduate courses qualify for general education credit

- To maintain the official catalog of RIT's General Education Curriculum and associated courses

Activities AY-2011/2012

- Developed and advocated for new General Education framework
- Developed a workflow for General Education course approval
  - Approved 210 courses so far
- Met with IWC to develop workflow
- Met with FYS subcommittee; review of FYS report
- Review/approval of General Education Assessment Report

Plans for Summer/Next Year

- Elect a new Chair
- Develop transition plan for General Education program
- Design and implement website as clearinghouse for GE information
- Develop guidelines for Immersion (LAS concentrations)
- Approval of LAS elective courses & concentrations

How does a course get approved for General Education?

D.1.G.3 Criteria and Guidelines for General Education Course Proposal Review

a.   The GEC will review and evaluate all new proposals for courses that are to be considered appropriate for general education credit. Courses will be evaluated using the criteria set forth by the State of New York Liberal Arts and Sciences Guidelines (http://www.highered.nysed.gov/ocue/lrp/liberalarts.htm) and the RIT Student General Education Student Learning Outcomes (http://www.rit.edu/outcomes/).

b.   Review process: A college wishing to have a course considered for General Education credit shall have the curriculum committee of that college submit their request to the General Education Committee with the following documentation:

    i. A cover memo affirming that the proposal has been reviewed by all appropriate college curriculum committees and written documentation of the process. This will be completed in an effort to avoid redundancy and conflict.

    ii. An outline for the course being reviewed in the ICC New/Revised Course Outline format.

    iii. A brief narrative justifying how the course being considered for general education approval is satisfying the above outlined criteria.

c. GEC will review the proposed course and forward their recommendation to the Chief Academic Officer/Provost for the final decision. The Chief Academic Officer/Provost will have the final approval of all requests.

d. The GEC will inform the ICC of their recommendations and the RIT community of the final decision regarding the course proposal
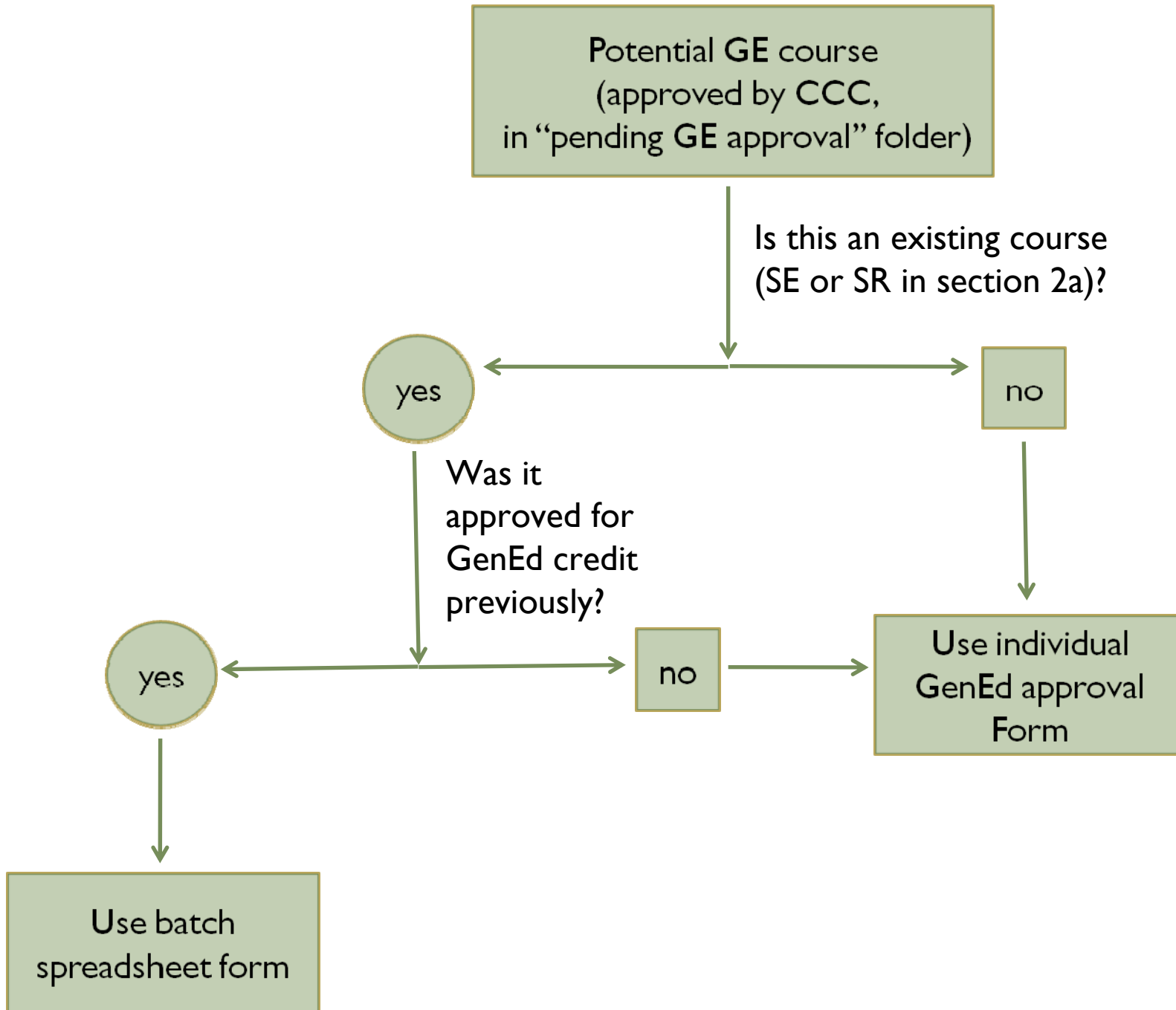
Key Components of NYSED definition of Liberal Arts & Sciences

- The liberal arts and sciences comprise the disciplines of the humanities, natural sciences and mathematics, and social sciences.

- The required liberal arts core shall not be directed toward specific occupational or professional objectives.

Course Approval Workflow

- Once courses are approved by the College Curriculum Committee, they are moved into "pending GE approval" folder

- Then….

Potential **GE** course
(approved by **CCC**,
in "pending **GE** approval" folder)

Is this an existing course
(SE or SR in section 2a)?

yes

no

Was it
approved for
GenEd credit
previously?

yes

no

Use individual
GenEd approval
Form

Use batch
spreadsheet form

Does the course fit the NYSED definition of Liberal Arts & Sciences?

Does the course meet at least one of the RIT Student Learning Outcomes?

Vote

yes

no

"Perspective" approval requested?

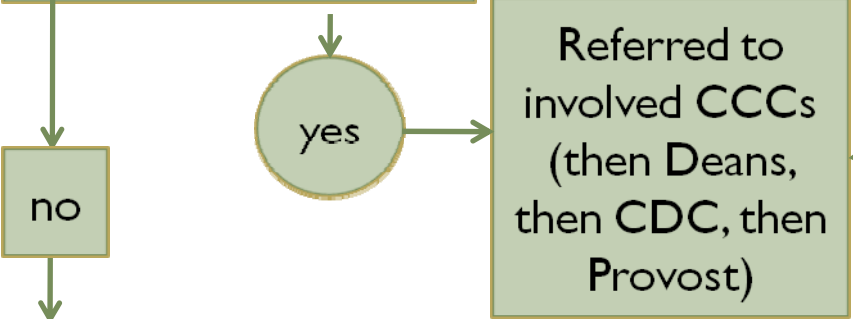Rejected or Revise/Resubmit (memo sent to CCC)

Yes

no

Was the vote unanimous?

yes

no

Is there an "overlap" issue with regard to course content?

Course forwarded to Provost for final review

Referred to involved CCCs (then Deans, then CDC, then Provost)

yes

no

Approved as General Education elective

Does the course meet the required **RIT** Student Learning Outcome(s) for that perspective?Does the course fit the written description of that perspective category? Does the course fit the **GE** framework's definition of a perspectives course?

Vote

yes

no
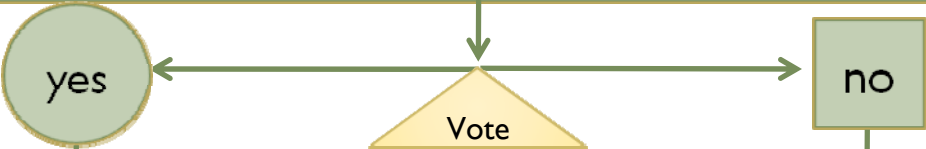
Was the vote unanimous?

Was the vote unanimous?

yes

no

yes

no

Is there an "overlap" issue with regard to course content?

Course forwarded to Provost for final review

Course forwarded to Provost for final review

yes

Referred to involved **CCCs** (then Deans, then **CDC**, then Provost)

yes

Is there an "overlap" issue with regard to course content?

no

no

Approved as "Perspective" course

Approved as General Education Elective Rejected or Revise/Resubmit as perspective (memo sent to **CCC**)

Once a course is approved…

- Listed in master spreadsheet
  - Course number (old & new)
  - Course name
  - Perspective categories
- Updated frequently
- Posted on conversion website and sent to ICC
- Writing Intensive courses will be sent to the IWC
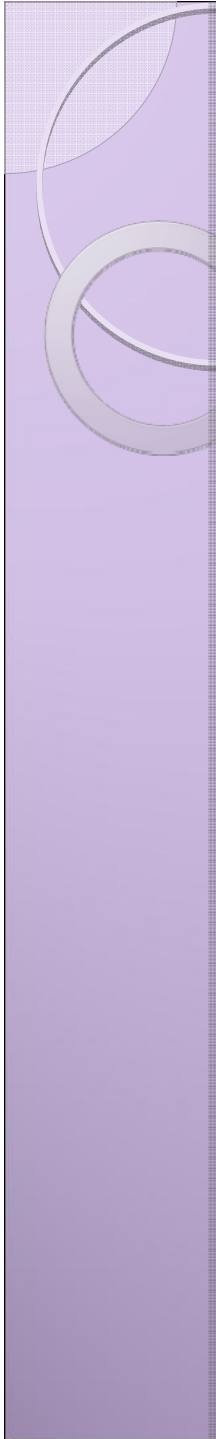
FYS Report

Charges from GEC included:

- Develop additional student learning outcomes
- Explore relationship between FYS and First Year Writing
- Consider roles of faculty, student affairs, and peer mentors
- Investigate other models of First-Year Seminar and consider emulating best practice
- Communicate with constituent groups to get input and feedback about the structure and content of FYS
- Using information gathered from constituent groups, propose guidelines for FYS at RIT

Guidance from provost included:

- Develop skeletal system of FYS
  - Including a couple models with budgets for student affairs, faculty and administrators to consider
- Simple and clear articulation of General Education and student development outcomes
- Resolve questions about timing of offering (Fall only or Fall & spring)
- Explore synergies between FYS and First Year Writing

General Education Outcomes

- *Express themselves effectively in presentations, either in spoken standard American English or sign language (American Sign Language or English-based Signing)*
- *Comprehend information accessed through reading and discussion*
- *Describe the potential and the limitations of technology*

Student Success Proposed Outcomes

- *Utilize RIT resources and processes*
- *Comprehend RIT expectations in regard to university life (e.g. community ethics, personal responsibility, communication, and self advocacy)*
- *Comprehend RIT expectations in regard to academic success (e.g. time management, goal setting, working in teams, project management and study skills)*
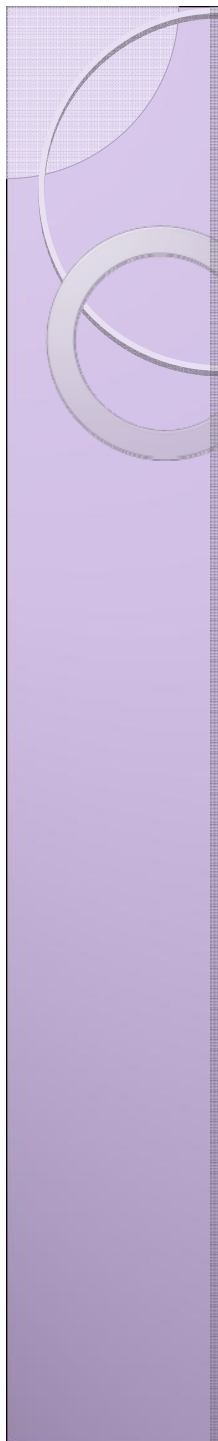- *Develop a relationship with at least one RIT professional*

Feedback from
College Curriculum Committees

- <u>Commonalities</u>:
- This course should be taught by permanent faculty (lecturers, tenured or tenure-track faculty).
- The class size should be structured to facilitate relationships between faculty and students and to allow for meaningful class discussion (one of the outcomes associated with this course). Class sizes suggested were 18-25 students.
- The course needs to be taught by faculty who want to teach it, and have received training/development to be successful at teaching it. There will need to be incentives and support.
- There is deep and widespread concern about resources and how this course will be delivered.

Feedback from College Curriculum Committees

- <u>Areas of disagreement</u>:
- Interestingly, there was disagreement <u>within</u> nearly every curriculum committee about whether this course should be college- or department-based or institute-wide. Most committees could see that there were advantages and disadvantages to both models.
- Some colleges felt it was possible to integrate Student Affairs professionals and outcomes into a faculty-led course, but others felt that a model that separated the Student Affairs component into a separate course would be preferable. There was disagreement both within and among colleges on this issue.

Title	Description	Implications/Issues
Plan A	Some combination of larger lecture with smaller discussion/recitation sections. Larger lectures could be focused on a common book, theme, or inter-disciplinary area. Instructional team, including faculty and SA professionals responsible for delivering outcomes.	Would the experience be too fragmented for students?
Plan B	Traditional seminar lecture/discussion with smaller class size. Instructional team, including faculty and SA professionals responsible for delivering outcomes.	Resource intensive.
Plan C	Interdisciplinary teams of students working to solve a specific problem. Examples: Imaging Science First-Year Project; Greening of RIT Instructional team, including faculty and SA professionals responsible for delivering outcomes.	Frequently a very powerful experience for students. Must be General Education, so some kinds of problems aren't appropriate Time intensive for faculty – may not feasible on a large scale.
Plan D	Specific courses developed for needs of students in specific programs. Examples: Technical Writing, Reading Scientific Literature, etc. Instructional team, including faculty and SA professionals responsible for delivering outcomes.	Would need to avoid having the course become a professional course instead of GenEd.
Plan E	Other ideas/models?	
Plan F	Decouple FYE and FYS. Provide a focused FYE course/experience to address student success/transitional issues which students would take in the fall. Provide FYS course following one of plans above, which students could take in the fall or spring.	Would not require that all FYS sections are taught in the fall. Students could possibly choose among different FYE alternatives.

Next Steps

New/Expanded FYS committee for next year??

◦ Identify and involve faculty and staff who want to teach it and be involved in the planning

◦ Pilot/prototype and assess several models for 2012?

◦ Develop full plan for 2013 and beyond?