

## **General Education Committee Report to Academic Senate, 2019-2020**

### **Membership**

Amanda Bao, CET

Leah Bradley (Student Learning Outcomes and Assessment designee)

Beth DeBartolo, KGCOE

Patricia Diute, COS (at large)

Rebecca Edwards, CLA (Grant Cos served as substitute during fall 2019)

Elizabeth Hane, COS (Faculty Associate for General Education and Provost's designee)

Mike Kane, NTID

Melodie Kolmetz, CHST

Myles Landers, COB (replacing Qian Song; Zhijian Huang served as Myles's substitute in spring 2020)

Michael Laver, CLA (Dean's designee)

Ben Steele, GCCIS (Michael Yacci served as substitute in spring 2020)

Tamas Wiandt, COS

Sarah Thompson, CAD, GEC chair

### **Ongoing Charges**

*The General Education Committee shall study the general education curriculum and general education course proposals from a university-wide perspective and maintain appropriate inter-college relationships with regard to general education matters. The committee will: assure that there is on-going monitoring and assessment of the general education curriculum; assure that there is an on-going review of the general education curriculum to determine any need for modification; consult with the ICC regarding procedures needed to initiate, review and approve a curriculum modification proposal; review proposed courses for inclusion in the general education curriculum; assure the maintenance and up-keep of a data base of courses that are included as general education.*

The GEC met weekly during the 2019-2020 academic year. Meetings were held Tuesdays at 10AM. After campus closure, we held two meetings via Zoom to wrap up business for the spring term. Review and discussion of individual course outlines composed the majority of our business for the year. We attempt to solve potential conflicts of interest by contacting relevant academic units. All decisions have been forwarded to the Registrar's Office and to the respective colleges; courses and immersions are assigned appropriate tags in SIS. The GEC has maintained minutes or records of each meeting.

### **Courses**

Reviewed 71

Approved 68

Did not approve 3

### **Immersion**

Reviewed 15

Approved 15 (Comics Studies; Gender, Art, and Media; Principles of Computing; Climate Change; updates to GIS, Sociology, Communication, English, Environmental Studies, Psychology, STS, Japanese, LA Studies, Philosophy, Spanish)

#### Other issues

We have prepared edits to streamline the GE section of the course outline form, notably by combining the tables for requesting a perspective and the GE perspective outcomes. [Appendix 1, pages 4-15]

**Carryover charge:** *Continue the audit/review of General Education student learning outcomes and courses.*

As of April, all colleges have completed the General Education course audit, providing updated mappings to the Essential Elements (Communication and Critical Thinking) Student Learning Outcomes. Leah Bradley and Elisabeth Hane will report on audit data on May 8.

**New charge 1:** *Propose a policy that clarifies representatives' responsibilities for engaging and reporting to their respective college constituencies.*

The GEC proposes language as follows:

College representatives to the GEC should also be on their respective college curriculum committee. The representative should be the conduit moving course and immersion proposals or changes from the college curriculum committee to the GEC.

College representatives should be able to address faculty at all-college meetings, when needed. If a question or policy issue requires broad faculty input, the representative should be allowed to poll faculty or call for responses via email or surveys.

The GEC also proposes a clarification of the process for course and immersion approval by the committee be made available in written form in one location online. A college's GEC representative should respond to faculty questions about GE course development and the approval process, or direct them to resources via the GEC.

Additionally, the GEC will be proposing changes to the GEC website to clarify our process for reviewing courses and immersions, as we experience significant confusion on these issues. This language is included in Appendix 2, pages 16-20.

**New charge 2:** *Review policy regarding immersions to determine whether the three-course model is sufficient or are there alternatives that should be permitted.*

The policy language describes an Immersion as follows: "Students achieve deeper learning in a focus area by completing an Immersion, consisting of a minimum of three related general education courses in a theme or field totaling at least nine credit hours."

The policy used to say "consisting of three related..." but last year we changed it to "minimum of three related" and "at least nine credit hours" in order to make the policy more flexible. To maintain the spirit of the Immersion by ensuring that students encounter diverse perspectives in the relevant coursework, we do not suggest further changes to the policy language.

**Suggestion for charges, 2020-2021**

Locate outdated references to Gen Ed/Immersion information on the RIT website and contact the owners about updating or removing the content

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah Thompson, GEC chair

**Appendix 1: Updated Course Outline**

# ROCHESTER INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

**NAME OF COLLEGE**  
**NAME OF ACADEMIC UNIT**

**ABC-ABCD-123\***  
**Title of course**

**1.0 Administrative information**

*When pasting information on this form from other documents or from online sources, paste only the text (without the original formatting) and use Ctrl V, then Ctrl, then T*

**a) Proposal and approval**

Course proposed by	
Effective term	
<i>Required approval</i>	<i>Approval granted date</i>
Academic unit curriculum committee	
Department chair/director/head	
College curriculum committee	
College dean	

**b) This outline is for a:**

<input type="checkbox"/>	New course
<input type="checkbox"/>	Revised course
<input type="checkbox"/>	Deactivated course

*If revised course, check all that have changed*

<input type="checkbox"/>	Course title	<input type="checkbox"/>	Prerequisites	<input type="checkbox"/>	Co-listed
<input type="checkbox"/>	Course number	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mode of delivery	<input type="checkbox"/>	Cross-listed
<input type="checkbox"/>	Credit hour	<input type="checkbox"/>	Course description		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Contact hour	<input type="checkbox"/>	Special designation		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (explain briefly):				

**c) Special designations for undergraduate courses (if appropriate)**

*The appropriate Appendix (A, B and/or C) must be completed for each designation requested. Checking this box indicates you are **SEEKING** approval from the appropriate governing committee, not that the course has been approved. The Registrar will not designate the course until the appropriate committee grants approval. **IF YOU ARE NOT SEEKING SPECIAL COURSE DESIGNATION, DELETE THE ATTACHED APPENDICES BEFORE PROCEEDING WITH REVIEW AND APPROVAL PROCESSES.***

Check	Optional Designations	Approval date (by GEC, IWC or Honors)***
<input type="checkbox"/>	General Education	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Writing Intensive	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Honors	

**d) Additional course information** (check all that apply)

<input type="checkbox"/>	Repeatable for credit   How many times:
<input type="checkbox"/>	Allow multiple enrollments in a term
<input type="checkbox"/>	Required course   For which programs:
<input type="checkbox"/>	Program elective course   For which programs:

**e) Identify how this course will meet New York State education requirements for contact hours:**

<input type="checkbox"/>	Final exam or other education experience scheduled during final exam period
<input type="checkbox"/>	Alternative educational experience during semester above and beyond standard scheduled hours.

**If alternative is chosen, please describe:** (NOTE: Per Policy D11.0 any alternative education experience that replaces a scheduled experience during a final exam must be included in the course syllabus and approved by the department chair)

**f) Other relevant scheduling information**

(e.g., special classroom, studio, or lab needs, special scheduling, media requirements)

**2.0 Course information**

**a) Catalog listing** (click [HERE](#) for credit hour assignment guidance)

Long course title (100 characters)	
Transcript title (30 Characters)	
Credit hours	
Prerequisite(s)**	
Co-requisite(s)	

**b) Terms(s) offered** (check at least one)

<input type="checkbox"/>	Fall
<input type="checkbox"/>	Spring
<input type="checkbox"/>	Summer
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other If "Other" is checked, explain:
<input type="checkbox"/>	Offered biennially

**c) Course Delivery Structure (components) and associated contact hours**

(click [HERE](#) for credit hour assignment guidance)

	Contact hours	Maximum students/section
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Lecture		
Lab		
Lecture/Lab		
Seminar		
Studio		
Critique		
Recitation		
Other (please specify, <i>i.e.</i> Clinical, Independent Study, Project, Research, Thesis etc.)		

d) Anticipated Course Delivery Mode(s) (*check all that apply*):

<input type="checkbox"/>	In-person
<input type="checkbox"/>	Online
<input type="checkbox"/>	Blended

**3.0 Course description** (*as it will appear in the bulletin*)

**4.0 Topics** (*should be in an enumerated list or outline format*)

**5.0 Possible resources** (*should be in an enumerated list or outline format*)

**6.0 Course-level student learning outcomes and associated assessment methods**

*Include as many course-specific outcomes as appropriate, one outcome and assessment method per row. Click [HERE](#) for guidance on developing course learning outcomes and associated assessment techniques.*

Course student learning outcome	Assessment method

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**7.0 Program goals or student learning outcomes supported by this course** *(if applicable, as an enumerated list)*

**8.0 Colleges may add additional information here if necessary**  
*(e.g., information required by accrediting bodies)*

## **Endnotes:**

The file that contains this form should be named using the following convention:

### **\* College-Alpha-Number-Name:**

- College is the college offering the course
- Alpha is the department or discipline code (PSYC, BIOL, etc.)
- Number is the course number
- Name is the title of the course no spaces, each word beginning with an upper case letter

\* Note: the suffix '-X' is used for cross-listed courses only and, if appropriate, must appear in this place on the form, but only in this place. The '-X' must be included in the course outline forms for both courses in such cases.

Cross listed courses are listed at both undergraduate and graduate level (typically 500/600).

Co-listed courses appear in more than one department.

\*\* **Prerequisites:** These may be: major, year within major, and/or completion of specific courses. Note that these are system-enforceable prerequisites, and a student will not be able to register for the course without meeting this exact prerequisite course or an equivalent that can be detected by the system. To list course prerequisites, use Course Alpha-Number (as in ISTE-101). If more general skill-based prerequisites are needed, they should be listed at the end of section 2, such as, "Note: One year of programming is helpful" or "Note: One semester of descriptive Statistics is recommended"

\*\*\* **Optional course designation; approval granted date:** This is the date the optional course designation curriculum committee approves a course for the requested optional course designation. The chair of the appropriate optional course designation curriculum committee is responsible to fill in this date.



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# APPENDIX A: GENERAL EDUCATION

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**Preliminary Notes:** This appendix is meant to highlight those facets of a course that are directly relevant to its General Education status, and if applicable, to provide course authors with an opportunity to elaborate on aspects of the course that locate it in one or more of the Perspective categories. The course description, course goals, and course learning outcomes (sections 2, 3, and 4 of the course outline) should clearly reflect the content of this appendix.

## I. Describe how this course fits the definition of general education:

According to the NYSED definition of general education, “the liberal arts and sciences comprise the disciplines of the humanities, natural sciences and mathematics, and social sciences.” The NYSED Policy Statement stipulates that “the required liberal arts core shall not be directed toward specific occupational or professional objectives.” Decisions about the general education status of RIT courses are guided by this definition and the examples of categories provided at the NYSED website ([click HERE](#)). RIT recognizes that a general education course might not fit neatly into any one of these categories. Course authors from all areas are encouraged to read not only the NYSED website, but also the mission statement at RIT’s General Education website ([click HERE](#)).

## II. General Education Essential Outcomes:

The Academic Senate approved the following proposal at the meeting of 16 April, 2015.

*Communication and critical thinking are essential to the general education of every student at RIT. Going forward, every course designated as general education by GEC will provide learning experiences designed to achieve at least one student learning outcome from each of these domains (Communication and Critical Thinking).*

The approved student learning outcomes are listed below.

### a. Communication

**a.1** Check **one** of the following **Communication** student learning outcomes for which: 1) the course content aligns closely with and, 2) the course includes at least one opportunity for students to demonstrate achievement of the selected outcome. When making a selection, please bear in mind that the course will be included in RIT’s General Education assessment initiatives for all outcomes selected. If applicable (e.g., Writing Intensive course), check more than one outcome:

<input type="checkbox"/>	Express oneself effectively in common college-level written forms using standard American English
<input type="checkbox"/>	Revise and improve written products
<input type="checkbox"/>	Express oneself effectively in presentations, either in American English or American Sign language
<input type="checkbox"/>	Demonstrate comprehension of information and ideas accessed through reading

**a.2** In the space below, explain which aspects of this course lend themselves to the Communication outcome(s) indicated above, and how student achievement will be assessed.

**b. Critical Thinking**

**b.1** Check **one** of the following **Critical Thinking** student learning outcomes for which: 1) the course content aligns closely with and, 2) the course includes at least one opportunity for students to demonstrate achievement of the selected outcome. When making a selection, please bear in mind that the course will be included in RIT’s General Education assessment initiatives for all outcomes selected. If applicable, check more than one outcome:

<input type="checkbox"/>	Use relevant evidence gathered through accepted scholarly methods and properly acknowledge sources of information
<input type="checkbox"/>	Analyze or construct arguments considering their premises, assumptions, contexts, and conclusions, and anticipating counterarguments
<input type="checkbox"/>	Reach sound conclusions based on logical analysis of evidence
<input type="checkbox"/>	Demonstrate creative and/or innovative approaches to assignments or projects

**b.2** In the space below, explain which aspects of this course lend themselves to the Critical Thinking outcome(s) indicated above, and how student achievement will be assessed.

**III. Perspectives**

Indicate which Perspectives (if any) this course is intended to fulfill.

*Keep in mind that perspectives courses are meant to be introductory in nature. [Click HERE](#) for descriptions of the General Education Perspectives and their associated student learning outcomes.*

The course will be included in RIT’s General Education assessment initiatives for all approved Perspectives.

Table A.1: Student Learning Outcomes				
(Check)	GE Perspective	Date Requested	Student Learning Outcome	Date Approved
<input type="checkbox"/>	Artistic		#1 Interpret and evaluate artistic expression considering the cultural context in which it was created	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Ethical		# 2 Identify contemporary ethical questions and relevant positions	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Global		#3 Examine connections among the world’s populations	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Social		#4 Analyze similarities and differences in human experiences and consequent perspectives	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Natural Science Inquiry		#5 Demonstrate	

			knowledge of basic principles and concepts of one of the natural sciences <b>AND</b> #6 Apply methods of scientific inquiry and problem solving to contemporary issues or scientific questions	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Scientific Principles		#5 Apply methods of scientific inquiry and problem solving to contemporary issues or scientific questions <b>OR</b> #6 Apply methods of scientific inquiry and problem solving to contemporary issues or scientific questions	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Mathematical		#7 Comprehend and evaluate mathematical or statistical information <b>AND</b> #8 Perform college-level mathematical operations or apply statistical techniques	

**a. Explanation:** In the space below, explain how this course supports the student learning outcomes indicated above.

**b. Assessment:** In the space below, explain how student achievement in the specified student learning outcomes will be assessed.

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# APPENDIX B: WRITING INTENSIVE

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## Preliminary Notes:

This appendix is meant to highlight those facets of a course that are directly relevant to its Writing Intensive (WI) status. The course outline, including course goals and course learning outcomes (sections 3 and 4 of the course outline), should clearly reflect the content of this appendix.

Information provided here will also be used to identify appropriate courses for inclusion in RIT's Writing Outcomes assessment cycle.

## I. Course Category *(check one)*

<input type="checkbox"/>	First Year Writing
<input type="checkbox"/>	General Education (WI-GE)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Program (WI-PR)

*A course can be both WI-GE and WI-PR.*

## II. Nature of the Course:

*Criteria that define Writing Intensive courses at RIT can be found at the Institute Writing Committee website ([click HERE](#)).*

### a. Writing-Related Learning Outcomes

List the writing-related course learning outcomes.

### b. Informal and Formal Writing Assignments

1. Informal writing (commonly described as “writing to learn”) is distributed throughout the course as appropriate to its learning outcomes. Use the space below to describe briefly the informal writing assignments in the course and the distribution of those activities throughout the course.

*Informal writing includes activities such as free/quick-writing, lab notebooks, response/reading journals, and online discussions. For other examples, ([click HERE](#)).*

2. Formal writing assignments (commonly described as “writing in the discipline”) engage students in the work of the discipline/s represented by the course. Use the space below to describe briefly the formal writing assignments taught in the course, and what students will learn by completing the assignment(s).

*Formal writing assignments include genres such as a research/project report, case study, and clinical observation. For more examples, ([click HERE](#)).*

### c. Revision Policy

Students must receive feedback from instructors and have an opportunity to incorporate that feedback into a revision of the written work. Use the space below to describe briefly the kinds of feedback students are provided, and what opportunities students have to improve their writing based on that feedback.

*Feedback can be given in many forms, including margin comments, summative end-comments, a 1-on-1 conference, scoring guides, and rubrics. For more information, ([click HERE](#)).*

**d. Class Discussion**

Class topics include lessons on specific writing strategies. Check which writing strategies are discussed in the course. Use the space below to describe briefly the writing strategies discussed in the course.

*In-class lessons of writing strategies can include discussions of revision strategies, genre conventions, copyediting, concision, and clarity. For more information, ([click HERE](#)).*

**e. Writing Portion of Grade**

At least 20% of the overall course grade must be based on writing assignments. What portion of the course grade is based on the writing students submit?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<20%
<input type="checkbox"/>	20% or more

Use the space below to describe briefly how the writing is evaluated in the course.

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# APPENDIX C: HONORS

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**Preliminary Notes:**

- Honors courses typically have a capacity of at most 20 students.
- Honors courses at RIT are designed to provide broader, deeper, or richer learning than standard courses, and to provide an experience of course content that is qualitatively different than the typical, standard course in a discipline.

**I. Curricular Position:**

Indicate the curricular role of the course by checking the appropriate box below.

(Check)	Course Type	Brief Description
<input type="checkbox"/>	First Year Seminar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Must be a General Education course, but cannot be a perspective course</li> <li>• Must run in the fall semester</li> <li>• Must include curriculum of the university's standard first-year seminar</li> </ul>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Elective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can be an entirely new course</li> <li>• If this is an honors version of an existing course, it must have augmented learning outcomes, or the qualitative experience it provides to students</li> </ul>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Research Seminar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A course outline of this nature is typically a template that faculty can customize to their interests and expertise</li> </ul>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Senior Seminar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This 1-credit capstone experience helps students to synthesize and critically reflect upon their course work, service learning, and research.</li> </ul>

**II. Learning Outcomes:**

Honors courses include at least one communication-related learning outcome and at least one learning outcome in critical thinking, typically located in the upper levels of achievement (often characterized as *analysis, evaluation, or synthesis*).

**a. Communication Outcome(s)**

In the space below, identify at least one learning outcome from the main body of this outline that is related to communication, explain which aspects of the course lend themselves to it, and describe how student achievement will be assessed.

**b. Critical Thinking Outcome(s)**

In the space below, identify at least one learning outcome from the main body of this course outline that is related to critical thinking, explain which aspects of the course lend themselves to it, and describe how student achievement will be assessed.

### III. Honors Experience:

Ideally, an honors course is thoughtfully designed as a rich experience in which students are guided through sophisticated analysis of topics, and led to greater understanding of themselves and the world. Although *academic content* and *student experience* are often intertwined, this document treats them separately.

#### a. Academic Content

Honors courses provide broader, deeper, or more refined learning than standard courses. The list below includes representative examples of ways in which this might be achieved.

- Students address topics with a sophistication beyond what is found in standard courses.
- Students are taught to recognize and explain important nuances.
- Students investigate related conceptual frameworks and the context in which change happened.
- Students are confronted with ambiguity, and equipped to respond in meaningful ways.
- Students are led to understand phenomena at multiple scales or across time.
- Students make connections across subjects or disciplines.

Use the space below to provide a concise but thorough description of the ways that this course provides broader, deeper, or more refined learning than standard courses in this discipline, at this level.

#### b. Student Experience

Honors courses provide an experience of course content that is qualitatively different than standard courses. The list below includes representative examples of ways in which this might be achieved.

- Learning is accomplished through experience and critical reflection, rather than lecture.
- Class time is largely spent in seminar-style discussions of original source material.
- Learning is accomplished principally via guided-discovery experiences, or inquiry-based methods.
- This is a team-taught course that helps students explore the ways in which different disciplines or cultures approach the same problem or phenomenon.
- This course design promotes independent inquiry or creativity beyond standard courses.

Use the space below to provide a concise but thorough description of the ways that this course provides a student experience that is different than standard courses in this discipline, at this level.

## **Appendix 2:** New language for GE website

### **Submitting a Course for General Education Approval**

The General Education Committee welcomes courses from all academic units on campus to be considered for inclusion in the GE curriculum. To be a part of RIT's general education framework, a course must fulfill all of the following criteria:

- Meet NYSED's definition of Liberal Arts and Sciences
- Meet at least one general education student learning outcome in communication
- Meet at least one general education student learning outcome in critical thinking

To qualify as a Perspective course in the RIT general education framework, a course must additionally:

- Meet one or more general education student learning outcomes in the ethical, artistic, global, social, natural science inquiry, scientific principles, or mathematical perspectives
- Be a 100-300 level course
- Not require prerequisites

Assessment information for the general education student learning outcomes may be reviewed [here](#).

### **Course approval process:**

The course must be on a current course outline form with Appendix A filled out. Courses should be approved by the curriculum committee associated with the proposing academic unit(s), and then the college or center where the course is offered. Once those approvals are in place, the course outline should be submitted to the General Education Committee by that college's General Education Committee representative. To find out who your representative is, check [here](#). When the course is reviewed, the chair of the GEC will send feedback to the proposing body and to the academic unit's representative to the GEC. The GEC chair will send approvals to the registrar and will notify the proposing body.

If a course is returned with revisions needed for approval, the college must determine whether the course may simply be revised and resubmitted, or whether the revisions change the course content or outcomes in a way that requires curricular review at the level of the department, school, or college. If a course has minor editing suggested by the GEC, it will be up to the respective college's representative to determine, according to their college's expectations,



whether the edits are minor enough that the course may be immediately edited or whether it needs to return to the college's curriculum committee for review before GEC approval.

If the proposed course is either a First Year Writing Course or a Writing Intensive general education course, the course will also need to be approved by the Institute Writing Committee.

#### **Process for revising or removing GE status:**

Courses approved by the GEC only need to return for GEC review if they are revised in a way that alters the nature of the course or the nature of the general education student learning outcomes.

If an academic unit wishes to change the status of a GEC-approved course, or change the selected general education learning outcomes, the course may be sent to the GEC through the same process as a new course. If an academic unit wishes to remove the status of a GE course, the unit should consider the potential impact on students, on any immersions with which the course may be associated, and on international campuses that may use that course as part of the GE framework before sending the course to the GEC through the same process as a new course.

#### **Approval process for special cases:**

If a course is a special topic, or if it is to be a co-listed or honors version of an existing course already approved for general education status, the course information need only go from the college's GEC representative to the GEC chair and the Faculty Associate to the Provost for General Education. The GEC chair and Faculty Associate to the provost will review the course information and return a decision via email.

#### **Submitting an Immersion for General Education Approval**

Please note that before approval, ALL COURSES within the immersion must have been previously approved for General Education credit. To submit a series of courses for a General Education Immersion, the Immersion Approval Form must first be approved by the curriculum committees associated with the proposing academic unit(s), and then the college(s) or center(s) where the courses are offered. Once these approvals are in place, the Immersion Approval Form should be sent to the Chair of the General Education Committee by the proposing academic unit's GEC representative.

#### **Revising an Immersion:**

Academic units should regularly review immersion curriculum to make sure listings are up to date. To add or remove courses from an existing immersion, the sponsoring academic unit should update the immersion proposal form and send it through the curricular approval process at the college level. If the immersion involves more than one college, then the college or

academic unit listed first on the immersion form should be responsible for updating the immersion. The college's GEC representative should then transmit the amended immersion information to the GEC chair for review by the GEC.

### **Workflow:**

Representatives to the GEC from each college should ideally be members of the college curriculum committee so that they are knowledgeable about their college's courses or immersions requiring decisions from the GEC. The college representative should transmit courses and information from the college curriculum committee to the GEC chair for consideration by the GEC at an upcoming meeting.

The college GEC representative may additionally report to their respective college as needed, and should be willing to be a liaison between faculty or the college curriculum committee and the GEC.

The GEC chair is responsible for transmitting committee decisions to the course creator, academic unit director, college representative to the GEC, and the RIT registrar. Decisions should be transmitted in writing via email. Emails should include the number and title of the course, the status that has been approved, and the effective date, as well as a reminder that the course will be subject to general education assessment according to the outcomes selected by the course designer.

### **FAQ: Course Outline General Education Appendix**

#### **What is meant by "nature of the course"?**

"Nature of the course" means how the course is appropriate for RIT's GE framework. How does it meet New York's definition of liberal arts and sciences? How does it fit RIT's expectations for GE courses? If it is a history course, for example, it is sufficient to note that the state defines history as a discipline within the liberal arts and sciences. It is helpful to include reference to a discipline or disciplines recognized by NYSED as part of the liberal arts and sciences.

#### **My course is interdisciplinary and is not specifically addressed in the NYSED list of subjects, so what do I do?**

Look closely at the state [list of subjects \(scroll down\)](#) and make a case for your course built on its relationship to existing categories. If the course is split over two or more categories, give an idea of how the material is distributed. Note that courses directed to professional, vocational, or technical skills are generally excluded, whereas courses that contextualize or evaluate disciplines are not: a computer science course where students focus on mastering the syntax of a specific computing language would not meet the state definition of liberal arts and sciences, but a course on the history of computing would.

**My course incorporates assignments or projects from disciplines New York says are generally excluded from the liberal arts and sciences. Is this allowable?**

Maybe! You can make a case for it when you fill out the GE appendix. The state of New York categorizes disciplines as acceptable for liberal arts and sciences based on both historical precedent and on relationship to specific professional or vocational goals. So, are your students painting to refine their talents as painters, and will they be evaluated based on the technical skill of the work? Do they need to have developed skills as painters at the time of enrollment in order to succeed in the class? Or are they using painting primarily as a way to apply learning or express ideas? If it's the latter, and the course material they're applying is primarily within the liberal arts and sciences, then the course may be a good choice for the GE framework.

**Every student could potentially benefit from the subject of my course—isn't that what GE means?**

General education is a generic term often used on college campuses to describe a required curriculum intended to serve as a foundation for student learning and a launchpad for exploration. All colleges and universities design their own version of this framework to best fit the needs of their student population and the institution's educational mission. At RIT, this framework is combined with state requirements addressing degree content: 50% of a Bachelor of Science degree, the most common degree earned at RIT, must be in liberal arts and sciences. Because so many of our programs are in disciplines the state specifically excludes from the liberal arts and sciences, such as engineering, computer science, and studio art, all of the courses in RIT's GE framework must be in liberal arts and sciences to ensure that students meet state requirements for degree content. Your course is probably extremely beneficial, but it needs to be in the liberal arts and sciences AND meet a communication outcome AND meet a critical thinking outcome to be included in the GE framework.

**My course could fulfill every outcome for communication or critical thinking. Should I check every box?**

Unless you want to participate in assessment for every outcome, don't check every box. Many classes suitable for inclusion in the GE framework could fulfill most of these things. The boxes are to select an outcome that will be evaluated via campus-wide assessment. Most people only want to choose one in each category. Pick the one that a) is the best fit and b) you can be sure will be done in each iteration of the course—for example, if the course outline doesn't specifically incorporate presentations as part of the course, and you can't guarantee that another instructor for the course would assign presentations, pick a different communication outcome.

**How should I describe the way I will assess the chosen outcome(s)?**

Make sure you are describing a good fit for the outcome you choose, and make sure it is something that is done in each iteration of the class. For example, if you choose the

communication outcome related to presentations, your explanation should describe some expected parameters for how students will present material, how this will demonstrate learning, and how the presentations will be evaluated.

### **What kind of assessment will I be expected to do for a GE course?**

This assessment is distinct from the evaluation of student work for grades. Courses included in RIT's GE framework are assessed by their instructional faculty on the general education student learning outcomes selected for the class. The process typically means identifying an appropriate assignment and scoring students according to the rubric designed for that outcome. All rubrics were developed with faculty whose teaching incorporates that outcome, and are available [here](#).

It is very useful to review the scoring rubrics for a GE learning outcome when designing the course outline, and again when planning for successive iterations for the course. That way, you can identify appropriate assignments in advance, fine tune connections between class assignments and GE learning outcomes, and/or send feedback as to how the assessment process might be improved. Assessment is meant to be meaningful in that we can see how our student population is meeting defined outcomes over time, and also as a reflective process for instructors (What worked? What didn't? Is this a valuable outcome to measure? Is there a better way to make this point or have students demonstrate this outcome?).