General Education Committee

Standing 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.

- *Per D1.0, review general education (GE) courses learning outcomes and assessment.*
- *Audit/review of GE student learning outcomes and courses.*
- *Request that GEC review the results from the General Education Course Audit and make recommendations if appropriate.*

Chair's Summary

The GEC met weekly over Zoom during the 2022-2023 academic year. Meetings were held Fridays at 1PM. Review and discussion of course proposals for General Education status comprised the majority of our business for the year. We also attempt to solve potential conflicts of interest and overlap of disciplinary expertise 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. Immersions are also sent to the Provost's Office and Bulletin for publication. The GEC has maintained minutes or records of each meeting.

GEC Membership
Leah Bradley (Student Learning Outcomes and Assessment designee)
William Brewer, CHST
Beth DeBartolo, KGCOE
Gretchen Wainright, CET (at large)
Josh Goldowitz, CET

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Elizabeth Hane, COS (Faculty Associate for General Education and Provost's designee)
Zhijian Huang, SCB
Tony Jefferson, GCCIS
Kelly Davis, NTID
Lauren Hall, CLA (Dean's designee)
William Middleton, CLA
Joel Gallegos Greenwich, SOIS
Sarah Thompson, CAD, GEC chair
Tamas Wiandt, COS

Recommendations for Future Charges

Contribute to implementation of a course management system for GEC approvals and records.

Rationale: recordkeeping, workflow, maintaining consistency in procedures and policy, curricular flexibility and response time, the perception of RIT's General Education Framework: all of these are adversely affected by our lack of a centralized system for curricular management.

Update course outline form and suggest more detailed instructions for filling out the form.

Rationale: many faculty seem to be confused by sections of the form, and it is not always clear who the audience is for information from the form. There is inconsistency between parts of the form and what can be coded in SIS by the scheduling officers or registrar. We also share a concern with the ICC about repetition and overlap between courses, and a section asking for research and resolution of conflict could be a helpful prompt.

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Previous and Continuing Charges

2020-21 carryover work
The GEC chair and Elizabeth Hane have updated materials about General Education processes and met with RIT's web designers.

The new website has launched: https://www.rit.edu/generaleducation/

2021-22 carryover work
Perspective policy in relation to the last sentence of charge 1 (the rest of the charge was addressed last year):
Explore possible revisions to the Perspective system such as adding Diversity as a Perspective and allowing courses that fulfil the requirements for two Perspectives to count for both Perspectives. Propose modification to Policy D01.4 to Senate.

Current policy wording is found here:
https://www.rit.edu/academicaffairs/policiesmanual/d014

Suggested changes: in Appendix 1, attached.

Reasoning for changes:
- Clarification of expectations for Perspectives courses.
- In policy, the RIT-specific use of General Education as a term should be clarified. NYSED uses "liberal arts and sciences" because courses in liberal arts and science disciplines are what the state requires for undergraduate degrees. General Education, with capital letters, is the term used at RIT to designate the shared curricular path that incorporates NYSED's liberal arts and sciences requirements but also includes additional student learning outcomes. NYSED does not use "general education" for liberal arts and sciences expectations, but instead uses it to refer to broad educational policies, including for K-12 students.

Current AY Charges

Charge # 1

Per D1.0, review general education (GE) courses learning outcomes and assessment.

Committee Findings

Courses Reviewed: 67
Approved: 64
Pending: 1

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Not suitable for GE status: 2

Immersions Reviewed: 11
Approved: 9 (new Immersions in Dance and Analytic and Expressive Communication; revised Immersions in Music, Art History, Womens' and Gender Studies, Queer and Transgender Studies, Gender Art and Media, Gender and STEM Studies, Gender Equity, Social Institutions, and Public Affairs)
Pending: 2 (World Languages; ASL Performance)

See Appendix 2 for current thoughts on the updates for the course outline form, proposed as a charge for next year.

Charge # 2

Audit/review of GE student learning outcomes and courses.

The Office of Educational Effectiveness Assessment coordinated the assessment of the Global and Social Perspectives in Fall 2022. Both benchmarks were met. The Artistic and Ethical perspectives are currently being assessed and results will be available at the end of the spring 2023 semester.

Charge # 3

Request that GEC review the results from the General Education Course Audit and make recommendations if appropriate.

The Office of Educational Effectiveness Assessment completed this audit in 2019 – the audit focused on identifying courses with inconsistencies in their GE documentation. The information from the audit awaits the implementation of a Curriculum Management System.

D01.4 GENERAL EDUCATION FRAMEWORK

I. Overview

The General Education Framework includes aspects that provide breadth and depth of study, and because communication and critical thinking skills are essential to the education of every student at RIT, opportunities for students to demonstrate achievement in these domains will pervade the General Education curriculum.

Breadth in the General Education curriculum is achieved through seven Perspective categories that promote different ways of knowing about the world. Courses in these categories will introduce students to fundamentals of liberal arts and sciences (methods, concepts, and theories) while emphasizing **learning outcomes in communication, critical thinking, and the selected Perspective discipline(s). Courses designated in Perspective categories should bear a minimum of three credits each, and should be broadly open to the student body for enrollment.** 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.

II. Policy Statement on Requirements

In accordance with RIT Policies and Procedures Policy D01.1, courses considered for General Education standing will be evaluated using the criteria set forth by the RIT Student General Education Student Learning Outcomes and the New York State Education Department (NYSED) Office of College and University Evaluation Policy Statement on Liberal Arts and Sciences. In particular, all General Education courses will provide learning experiences designed to achieve at least one student learning outcome in both Communication and Critical Thinking, as described in the General Education Framework.

Because NYSED mandates a different number of liberal arts and sciences credits for different degree types and RIT's General Education Framework encompasses NYSED liberal arts and sciences requirements, each type of degree award at RIT requires a different number of General Education credits. In accordance with NYSED's guidelines, students must complete, at a minimum, the number of credits indicated in each category, as illustrated in Table 1.

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Table 1. The table below is taken from the NYSED policy and shows the minimum number of semester credit hours (sch) required in each category. Details regarding the general education framework can be found on RIT's General Education website.

General Education Framework	BS	BA	AAS	AS	All other baccalaureate degrees (BFA, etc.)
First-Year Writing	3	3	3	3	3
Perspectives	24	24	15	15	15
Immersion	9	9	0	0	9
General Education Electives*	24	24	6	12	3
MINIMUM TOTAL	60	90	24**	30	30

*Elective course credits plus other category credits must equal the minimum required.
**NYSED requires 20; RIT framework exceeds the minimum requirement

Responsible Office:

Faculty Senate and the Office of the Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs.

For inquiries, contact: Faculty Senate - asenate@rit.edu

Office of the Provost - academicaffairs@rit.edu

Effective: May 8, 2014

Policy History:

Approved May 8, 2014

Revision approved by Faculty Senate April 16, 2015

Revised November 16, 2017

Revised April 4, 2019 - Section I, second paragraph

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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	
Required approval	*Approval granted date*
Academic unit curriculum committee	
Department or School chair/director/head	
College curriculum committee	
College dean	

b) This outline is for a:

☐	New course
☐	Revised course
☐	Deactivated course

If revised course, check all that have changed

☐	Course title	☐	Prerequisites	☐	Co-listed
☐	Course number	☐	Mode of delivery	☐	Cross-listed
☐	Credit hour	☐	Course description		
☐	Contact hour	☐	Special designation		
☐	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.

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Check	Optional Designations	Approval date (by GEC, IWC or Honors)***
☐	General Education	
☐	Writing Intensive	
☐	Honors	

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

☐	Repeatable for credit | How many times:
☐	Allow multiple enrollments in a term
☐	Required course | For which programs:
☐	Program elective course | For which programs:

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

☐	Final exam or other education experience scheduled during final exam period
☐	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 (max 100 characters)	
Transcript title (max 30 characters)	
Credit hours	
Prerequisite(s)**	
Co-requisite(s)	

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

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☐	Fall
☐	Spring
☐	Summer
☐	Other *If "Other" is checked, explain:*
☐	Offered biennially

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

(click UNDERLINE HERE for credit hour assignment guidance)

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

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

☐	In-person
☐	Online
☐	Blended

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

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

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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 associated assessment method(s) per row. Click HERE for guidance on developing course learning outcomes and associated assessment techniques. If applying for GE, WI, or Honors status, make sure that the course-level student learning outcomes support the course's GE, WI, or Honors role.

Course student learning outcome	Assessment method

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)

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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

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. If selecting more than one outcome, please bear in mind that the course will be included in RIT's General Education assessment initiatives for all outcomes selected.

☐	Express oneself effectively in common college-level written forms using standard American English
☐	Revise and improve written products
☐	Express oneself effectively in presentations, either in American English or American Sign language
☐	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, citing a course-level learning outcome or outcomes from 6.0, above.

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. If selecting more than one outcome, please bear in mind that the course will be included in RIT's General Education assessment initiatives for all outcomes selected.

☐	Use relevant evidence gathered through accepted scholarly methods and properly acknowledge sources of information
☐	Analyze or construct arguments considering their premises, assumptions, contexts, and conclusions, and anticipating counterarguments
☐	Reach sound conclusions based on logical analysis of evidence
☐	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, citing a course-level learning outcome or outcomes from 6.0, above.

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

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(Check)	GE Perspective	Date Requested	Student Learning Outcome	Date Approved
☐	Artistic		Interpret and evaluate artistic expression considering the cultural context in which it was created	
☐	Ethical		Identify contemporary ethical questions and relevant positions	
☐	Global		Examine connections among the world's populations	
☐	Social		Analyze similarities and differences in human experiences and consequent perspectives	
☐	Natural Science Inquiry		Demonstrate knowledge of basic principles and concepts of one of the natural sciences **AND** Apply methods of scientific inquiry and problem solving to contemporary issues or scientific questions	
☐	Scientific Principles		Select applicable outcome(s): ☐ Demonstrate knowledge of basic principles and concepts of one of the natural sciences **OR** ☐ Apply methods of scientific inquiry and problem solving to contemporary issues or scientific questions	
☐	Mathematical		Comprehend and evaluate mathematical or statistical information **AND** 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, citing a course-level learning outcome or outcomes from 6.0, above.

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APPENDIX B: WRITING INTENSIVE

Preliminary Notes:

The Course Outline itself must include a student learning outcome related to writing (6.0) and a topic related to the discussion and teaching of writing (4.0) to illustrate that the teaching and learning of writing is part of the design of the course. Course outlines that do not already explicitly and clearly include a writing related-outcome in Section 6 and a writing-related teaching topic in Section 4 will need to be revised for approval as a writing intensive course.

This appendix is meant to highlight the facets of a course directly relevant to Writing Intensive (WI) status. The information in the appendix should clearly reflect and elaborate on the writing-related content expressed in sections 4.0 (Topics) and 6.0 (Course-Level Student Learning Outcomes) in the Course Outline above.

Writing Intensive courses must go through Department and College Curriculum Committees before they are submitted to the IWC.

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

I. Course Category: *Check at least one*

First Year Writing	
General Education (WI-GE)	
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 web site (click HERE).

    a. **Writing-Related Course Learning Outcomes.**
List the Course Learning Outcomes related to writing (copied from section 6.0).

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b. Writing-Related Course Discussion Topics
Class topics listed in Section 4.0 of the Course Outline must include instruction on specific writing strategies. List the writing-related topics (copied from section 4.0) and briefly describe the writing strategies discussed.

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

c. Informal and Formal Writing Assignments

1. 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 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).

d. 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

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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).

e. **Writing Portion of Grade**
At least 20% of the overall course grade must be based on writing assignments that demonstrate the student's ability to display writing competency in the revision and editing process of formal writing. What percentage of the overall course grade is based on formal writing?

	<20%
	20% or more

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APPENDIX C: HONORS

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
☐	First Year Seminar	- Must be a General Education course, but cannot be a perspective course - Must run in the fall semester - Must include curriculum of the university's standard first-year seminar
☐	Elective	- Can be an entirely new course - If this is an honors version of an existing course, it must have augmented learning outcomes, or the qualitative experience it provides to students
☐	Research Seminar	A course outline of this nature is typically a template that faculty can customized to their interests and expertise
☐	Senior Seminar	This 1-credit capstone experience helps students to synthesize and critically reflect upon their course work, service learning, and research.

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.

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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.

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