General Education Oversight Committee (GEOC) Standing Rules

Section 1. GEOC Position/Mission Statement[1]

Purpose

The General Education program is designed to foster the personal, intellectual, and social development of the Salisbury University student. Salisbury University provides an institutional environment and academic curriculum that supports interconnected learning and experiences, which signify an ability to analyze and make connections between ideas, concepts, and experiences- both on and off campus.

Program Principles

The General Education Program advances the University Mission to empower our students with the knowledge, skills and core values that contribute to active citizenship, gainful employment and life-long learning in a democratic society and interdependent world by:

- Providing a coherent integrated curriculum that speaks largely to student learning goals. Coherence is the interconnectedness of the curriculum within courses, across disciplines and throughout the undergraduate experience.
- Encouraging the developmental progression of student knowledge, skills and dispositions throughout the undergraduate experience.
- Providing a broad range of learning opportunities in courses, in co-curricular activities and in settings outside the University
- Fostering an academic community that is guided by the University's core values of excellence, student centeredness, learning, civic engagement and diversity through student-to-student, faculty-to-student and faculty-to-faculty collaborative opportunities. Collaboration may occur in linked courses, interdisciplinary courses, undergraduate research, learning communities, community projects and other venues.
- Incorporating ongoing and comprehensive review of the General Education curriculum and assessment of student progress toward learning goals. This review and assessment will be used for the continuous improvement of General Education to achieve institutional goals and vision.

Section 2. Student Learning Goals and Objectives[2]

The principles and goals, which follow, represent the concepts embedded in the Mission Statement and the Attributes Document accepted by the faculty. These principles and goals will help guide the development of the General Education program at Salisbury University.

[1] The Purpose and Program Principles were taken directly from the Curriculum Approval Guide, revised 7/30/2021, Section 6.

[2] Student Learning Goals and Outcomes approved by Faculty Senate 3/6/2018 and modified 2/15/2022; source: Undergraduate & Graduate Catalog, Appendix C.

Learning Principles

The General Education program is designed to foster the personal, intellectual and social development of the Salisbury University student and is based on the following set of principles. The liberally educated person:

- communicates effectively in diverse situations,
- uses multiple strategies, resources and technologies for inquiry and problem solving,
- demonstrates qualities related to personal, social and professional integrity,
- integrates knowledge from the humanities, social sciences and natural sciences to broaden perspectives,
- reasons quantitatively and qualitatively,
- demonstrates global awareness in order to function responsibly in an interdependent world.

These principles are expressed in the following set of student learning goals.

Student Learning Outcomes

The following broad categories organize the student learning goals and outcomes that align with the purpose of General Education. Previously acknowledged Student Learning Goals are aligned with the proposed Student Learning Outcomes listed below.

Essential Competencies

Essential Competencies are the intellectual habits and skills that students progressively develop in order to succeed as undergraduates and as members of a rapidly changing and globally interconnected society. Upon completion of their studies at SU, students will demonstrate effective reading and communication, critical thinking and reasoning, quantitative reasoning, scientific reasoning, information literacy as the means by which to solve problems.

- Critical Thinking & Reasoning: Students will be able to comprehensively analyze evidence before they create, critique, or accept an opinion, conclusion, or determine a need for further investigation.
- Effective Reading: Students will be able to extract and construct meaning by interacting with written language.
- Information Literacy: Students will be able to determine the extent of information needed; access information effectively and efficiently; evaluate information and its sources critically; use information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose; and use information ethically.
- Oral Communication: Students will be able to prepare, deliver, and reflect upon purposeful oral communication appropriate to the audience, purpose, and context.
- Quantitative Reasoning: Students will be able to interpret models and solve quantitative problems from different contexts with real-world relevance; understand and create reasonable arguments supported by quantitative evidence; and clearly communicate those arguments in effective formats (e.g., using words, tables, graphs, and mathematical equations).

- Scientific Reasoning: Students will be able to identify and use empirical evidence to describe, explain, and predict natural phenomena through application of the scientific method; and use scientific principles to design, evaluate, and implement strategies to answer open-ended questions.
- Understanding the Human World: Students will explore methods that will enable them to recognize and interpret evidence of human thought, action, expression, and experience, using contexts and narratives to understand humanity's change over time.
- Written Communication: Students will be able to develop and clearly express ideas through writing, in appropriate styles, by incorporating evidence when warranted.

Foundational Knowledge

Foundational Knowledge describes the breadth of information and experiences needed to succeed in a globally interconnected world, and it achieved through the study of the arts, humanities, mathematics, natural sciences, and social sciences. Upon completion of their studies at SU, students will demonstrate knowledge of the human experience, the physical world, and ways of knowing.

- Knowledge of the Human Experience: Students will be able to describe and compare the development and impact of various artistic, cultural, economic, historical, intellectual, linguistic, political, social, or spiritual systems; and recognize common questions and concerns humans confront and the diverse strategies for resolving those concerns.
- Knowledge of the Physical World: Students will be able to describe some of the major concepts in science to explain natural phenomena; and evaluate the quality of scientific information on the basis of methods used to generate it.

Personal, Social and Cultural Responsibility

Personal, Social, and Cultural Responsibility integrates the knowledge, skills, and core values that allow students to learn, live, and lead effectively as scholars, employees, and active citizens. Upon completion of their studies at SU, students will show evidence of civic and community engagement, knowledge of emerging and global issues, a commitment to and knowledge of environmental sustainability, ethical reasoning, respect for inclusion and diversity, intellectual curiosity, intercultural competence, as well as be aware of issues of personal health and wellness.

- Civic & Community Engagement: Students will demonstrate knowledge and skills necessary to participate actively in civic and community life and identify issues underlying public policy.
- Emerging & Enduring Global Issues: Students will be informed, responsible, and able to consider and discuss emerging and enduring global issues, attentive to diversity across the spectrum of differences; understand how their actions affect both local and global communities; and address the world's most pressing and enduring issues collaboratively and equitably.

- Environmental Sustainability: Students will be able to trace the ways in which individual actions are linked to interconnected natural and social systems and the sustainability thereof.
- Ethical Reasoning: Students will be able to reason about right and wrong human conduct; assess their own ethical values and the social context of problems; recognize ethical issues in a variety of settings; think about how different ethical perspectives might be applied; and consider the ramifications of alternate actions.
- Diversity & Inclusion: Students will demonstrate an openness to the pluralistic nature of local, national, and global institutions, societies, and cultures as well as develop characteristics of respect, connection, and involvement among people with different experiences and perspectives.
- Intellectual Curiosity: Students will explore a range of topics; be open minded to new ideas and ways of thinking; and be able to ask relevant questions or develop original thoughts.
- Intercultural Competence: Students will be able to demonstrate the necessary knowledge, self-awareness, and behaviors to support effective and appropriate interactions in a variety of cultural and linguistic contexts that build and enhance relationships.
- Personal Health & Wellness: Students will be able to demonstrate knowledge of skills and habits to promote personal lifelong health and wellness, including emotional, financial, and physical.

Section 3. General Education Model and Requirements[3]

In April 2021, SU faculty voted to adopt General Education requirements for all undergraduate students. The following outlines the requirements.

SU Signature Outcomes: Students must complete at least 3 credits in each of the following areas:

- Civic and Community Engagement
- Diversity and Inclusion
- Environmental Sustainability

First Year Seminar: Academic preparation, skills and expectations for educational and professional success through exploration of a topic or issue.
SLOs: Critical Thinking and Reasoning, Effective Reading, Information Literacy, Oral Communication, Written Communication, Intellectual Curiosity

Communicating through Writing: Effective reading, writing, and information usage.
SLOs: Effective Reading, Information Literacy, Written Communication

Quantitative Analysis: Numerical, analytical, statistical, and problem-solving skills.
SLOs: Quantitative Reasoning

Human Expression: Exploration of the different ways individuals and societies have and continue to express themselves and communicate the human experience.

[3] General Education Model approved by Faculty 4/28/2021

SLOs: Knowledge of Human Experience, Intellectual Curiosity, Ethical Reasoning

Humanity in Context: Critical and comparative analysis of humanity, emphasizing the role of history, culture, and/or language in human issues.
SLOs: Critical Thinking and Reasoning, Understanding the Human World, Effective Reading, Knowledge of Human Experience, Intercultural Competence

Social Configurations: Quantitative and/or qualitative analysis of human behavior and/or societies.
SLOs: Understanding the Human World, Knowledge of Human Experience, Emerging and Enduring Global Issues, Intercultural Competence

Social Issues: Applied social science, with an emphasis on understanding and solving problems in the social or behavioral sciences.
SLOs: Quantitative Reasoning, Knowledge of Human Experience, Emerging and Enduring Global Issues, Ethical Reasoning

Hands-on Science: Experiential laboratory-based science.
SLOs: Quantitative Reasoning, Scientific Reasoning, Knowledge of the Physical World

Solutions through Science: Applied science, with an emphasis on understanding and solving problems in the natural, physical, and technological sciences (may or may not include a lab).
SLOs: Critical Thinking and Reasoning, Quantitative Reasoning, Scientific Reasoning

Personal Wellness: Interconnected dimensions of wellness, including physical, emotional, and financial, to live a healthy, successful life.
SLOs: Personal Health and Wellness

Experiential Learning: Apply knowledge and competencies from General Education through internship, study abroad/away, research, senior project, or other relevant experience.
SLOs: Critical Thinking and Reasoning, Information Literacy, Oral Communication, Written Communication, Ethical Reasoning, Intellectual Curiosity

Section 4. Structure of the GEOC and Subcommittees

Membership[4]

The purposes of the committee shall be to:

A. Create, regularly review, and update guidelines and processes to be used for approving General Education courses;
B. Approve the alignment of undergraduate courses with specific General Education requirements;

[4] GEOC and Subcommittees Structure was taken from the Faculty Senate Bylaws https://www.salisbury.edu/administration/campus-governance/faculty-senate/_files/bylaws-changes-geoc-fs-and-faculty.pdf

Red text indicates recommended changes to the Faculty Senate Bylaws.

C. Coordinate with all academic units to ensure appropriate distribution and offerings of General Education courses;
D. Evaluate, in coordination with the University Academic Assessment Committee, the General Education program's effectiveness. Results shall be reported to the Senate annually;
E. Recommend modifications to the General Education program and its Student Learning Outcomes to the Senate. Recommendations must consider input from Faculty and the Office of Academic Affairs, and report on impact studies; and
F. Recommend modifications to its own Advisory Subcommittees to the Senate.

The committee shall have seven voting members: one Faculty member elected by and from each Unit and one Faculty member elected at-large. Ex officio members: the Provost; the Registrar; and the Director of University Analysis, Reporting, and Assessment. The committee shall be supported by Advisory Subcommittees associated with specific General Education requirements. The number, structure, and composition of these subcommittees shall be explicitly described in the General Education Oversight Committee's standing rules.

The purposes of these subcommittees shall be to:

A. Recommend guidelines for the alignment of courses with their assigned General Education requirements to the General Education Oversight Committee;
B. Recommend the approval of specific courses for those requirements to the General Education Oversight Committee and, where courses are not recommended for approval, provide faculty with actionable advice for how they might be brought into alignment; and
C. Provide support for evaluation and faculty development associated with those requirements as needed.

Appeals to GEOC decisions from GEOC Advisory Subcommittees will be delivered to the Designated Senator, who shall present these requests to the Faculty Senate at the earliest possible Faculty Senate meeting.[5]

Section 5. GEOC Meeting Dates

The GEOC meets every other Friday from 1:00 – 2:00PM during the fall and spring semesters beginning the second week of the semester, unless otherwise specified. The GEOC Chair, or Designated Senator if the GEOC Chair position is vacant, establishes the date for the first GEOC meeting of the Fall semester.

[5] This red text statement is herein proposed as an addendum to the Faculty Senate Bylaws section on the GEOC.

Section 6. GEOC Advisory Subcommittees[6]

[The GEOC Advisory] subcommittees shall be filled by eligible Faculty for three-year terms through elections run by the Membership and Elections Committee, following the same process as for other Senate committees. In addition, the Membership and Elections Committee will require candidates for these positions to submit a statement of no more than 150 words explaining their qualifications and professional engagement with the relevant subject matter and SLOs; these statements must be submitted as instructed by the Membership and Elections Committee during the nomination process by the nomination deadline. After this deadline, GEOC will communicate to the Membership and Elections Committee the names of Faculty members who have submitted their statement. Any Faculty member who fails to submit their statement by the deadline will have their nomination invalidated. GEOC will ensure that the statements of eligible nominees are made available ~~will be distributed~~ to the Faculty at the time of the election.

A Faculty member may serve concurrently as a voting member of up to two Advisory Subcommittees of the General Education Oversight Committee. However, this number decreases by one for each voting position the Faculty member has on the Senate and on Senate Standing Committees. Participation on Senate Special Purpose Committees does not affect this limit. Voting members of the General Education Oversight Committee may not serve on an Advisory Subcommittee. No more than one Faculty member from any one academic discipline may serve at the same time on a given Advisory Subcommittee, and no Faculty member may serve on a given Advisory Subcommittee for more than six out of any seven consecutive academic years.

If a member of an Advisory Subcommittee becomes ineligible through election to the Senate and/or to a Senate Standing Committee in excess of the limit stated above, or through election to the General Education Oversight Committee, they shall vacate one or both of their position(s) on the Advisory Subcommittee(s) as required to come into compliance with the eligibility criteria. In the event of a choice of which Advisory Subcommittee position to vacate, the Faculty member shall decide which position to vacate and communicate their decision to the GEOC within two weeks of the end of the election which necessitated vacating the position. If a Faculty member does not communicate their choice by this deadline, then the GEOC shall decide which Advisory Subcommittee position is vacated.

The advisory subcommittees shall be the following:

-Civic and Community Engagement
-Diversity and Inclusion
-Environmental Sustainability
-Human Expression, Humanity in Context and Communicating Through Writing
-Hands-on Science, Solutions Through Science and Quantitative Analysis
-Social Configurations and Social Issues
-First Year Seminar and Experiential Learning

[6] GEOC Advisory Subcommittees description and structure was taken from the Faculty Senate Bylaws revision: geoc-subcommittee-motion-passed-11-9-21.pdf. The red text statement is herein proposed as an addendum to the Faculty Senate Bylaws section on the GEOC Advisory Subcommittees.

-Personal Wellness

The membership of these advisory subcommittees shall be as follows:

Subcommittees will consist of five Faculty members, all elected at large by the Faculty. No more than 3 members may be from the same Unit. Subcommittees may request that the GEOC modify their membership to a number between 3 and 7; the GEOC will approve this request if it considers the subcommittee's workload warrants this change.

If any of these seats go unfilled by the end of a given semester's election process, it is the responsibility of the GEOC to ask the Membership and Elections Committee to send out a call for volunteer(s) to temporarily fill the position for a semester and appoint a replacement. The Membership and Elections Committee will continue to call for nominations for the vacant position at each normal election time (fall and spring) until a candidate is found. In such an event, the term of office will be reduced by the amount of time that the position was vacant to keep the rotation of membership off the committee constant.

The GEOC may alter its subcommittee structure and membership with the consent of the Faculty Senate.

Section 7. GEOC Curriculum Approval Guide

The vetting process for potential General Education courses uses Curriculog, SU's online curriculum management tool. That includes:

- current courses that were not previously a part of General Education
- current General Education courses that are seeking a new General Education criteria designation
- new courses to the University's curriculum.

Course proposals will be routed through the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee (UCC) only if they are new or substantially modified courses. All courses will be vetted by the appropriate GEOC Advisory Subcommittees and will then be sent to the GEOC for approval. In addition to demonstrating how the course will meet all required SLOs (for the General Education requirement category), the appropriate GEOC Advisory Subcommittee will determine what is required for a course to be approved. The requirements will vary among different General Education categories. Details of evaluation criteria and rubrics for each General Education requirement are found in the Appendices to these Standing Rules.

Curriculog

Curriculog serves as the University's main tool in guiding curriculum through the approval process. Faculty/Staff may access Curriculog by using the following link: https://salisbury.curriculog.com and signing on by using their Duo-Protected SU username and password.

General Education Curriculum Review Process

1. Originator launches proposal in Curriculog
2. Department Curriculum Committee, if applicable (1-2 weeks)
3. Academic Chair (1 week)
4. School/College Committee (1-4 weeks)
5. Dean (1 week)
6. SCED/P12 and/or TEC, if applicable (for new courses and substantive changes to existing courses) (1-4 weeks for each)
7. Undergraduate Curriculum Committee, if applicable (for new courses and substantive changes to existing courses) (1-4 weeks)
8. GEOC Subcommittee based on General Education category (1-4 weeks) **
9. GEOC (1-4 weeks) ***
10. Provost Office (1-2 weeks)
11. Provost (1-2 weeks)
12. University Editor (1 week)
13. Registrar's Office (2 weeks – 2 months*)
14. Appears in Academic Catalog (September 15 for spring changes; February 15 for fall changes)

*Time varies depending on date of offerings and complexity of change.

** For courses requesting multiple General Education categories, the faculty course originator will create multiple Course Proposals in Curriculog, one for each General Education category. A course may only have multiple General Education category tags if one tag is for an SU Signature Outcome (Civic and Community Engagement, Diversity and Inclusion, or Environmental Sustainability). These multiple Course Proposals will all be considered through Steps 2-7 as one course. Once the course moves to Step 8, each Course Proposal for the specific General Education category will be routed to the appropriate GEOC Advisory Subcommittee from whence it will move on to Step 9 as each Subcommittee completes its review and recommends the Course Proposal for approval. This process allows a course to be simultaneously considered for multiple General Education categories, as appropriate, and streamlines the timeline for approval. It also enables a course to be approved for inclusion in the Academic Catalog regardless of whether it is approved for all proposed General Education categories.

*** Process and timeline for rebuttals of GEOC or GEOC Advisory Subcommittee negative decision: Each GEOC Advisory Subcommittee will provide actionable feedback to proposing faculty for any course proposal that they reject. Proposing faculty can then reapply for a given General Education designation, after addressing the requested modifications. There are no limits to the number of times a course may be re-proposed for a given General Education category. In the event that a proposing faculty member believes that they are at an impasse with a given GEOC Advisory Subcommittee, they may petition the GEOC for a review of their proposal. To make an appeal, proposing faculty should write a detailed

response to the GEOC Advisory Subcommittee feedback, and explain why they cannot or will not make the requested modifications.

Please note that the evaluation criteria and rubrics have been approved by the GEOC and the Faculty Senate. Any appeal must state whether, in the applicant's view:

- criteria are being applied improperly, or
- criteria are unfair, inappropriate, or otherwise should be revised.

Any such assertion should be well-supported within the appeal document and must be accompanied with the specific remedies requested.

A copy of the appeal must be sent to the relevant subcommittee, who will be given the opportunity to write their own response to the appeal, for the use of the GEOC in their review.

The GEOC will consider this appeal within four weeks and report its decision and rationale to the applicant within one additional week. If these timelines cannot be met by the committee, a notification with the reason and an expected timeline will be made to the applicant. The GEOC is the final recourse for appeal.

Minimum Required Materials for GEOC Review

1. Cover Letter/Rationale/Justification
    A. Rationale must include sound justification as to why this course meets the requirements for the requested General Education category. The originator must demonstrate how the course will teach to and assess the Student Learning Outcomes assigned to the designated General Education category. In the event the originator wants a course to count for more than one General Education category, they will need to write a specific rationale for each category application in Curriculog.[7]
    B. Refer to each requested General Education category-specific list of criteria and evaluation rubric for category-specific requirements.
2. Course Syllabus
3. Example Assignment(s)
4. Example Assessment(s)

Expectations for Courses to Meet General Education Category Requirements

Criteria and rubrics developed by GEOC Advisory Subcommittees – Spring 2022 – included in Appendices as follows:

A. Civic and Community Engagement
B. Diversity and Inclusion

[7] UCC Curriculum Guide, p7

C. Environmental Sustainability
D. First Year Seminar
E. Communicating through Writing
F. Quantitative Analysis
G. Human Expression
H. Humanity in Context
I. Social Configurations
J. Social Issues
K. Hands-on Science
L. Solutions through Science
M. Personal Wellness
N. Experiential Learning

Minimum Rubric Evaluation Criteria for Student Learning Outcomes

Diversity & Inclusion	critically examine their own personal beliefs, attitudes, and biases about marginalization of people and cultures in the United States and/or across the world
	critically examine the practices that lead to that marginalization

Environmental Sustainability	connect individual actions to natural systems as they relate to environmental sustainability
	connect individual actions to social systems as they relate to environmental sustainability
	integrate environmental sustainability, aligned with the goal to improve ecological integrity, human well-being, and social equity

Critical Thinking & Reasoning	analyze evidence to create or critique or accept an opinion or conclusion or determine a need for further investigation

Effective Reading	extrapolate ideas from writing
	apply reading strategies to different learning purposes

Emerging & Enduring Global Issues	demonstrate attentiveness to diversity (across the spectrum of difference with respect to those issues)
	explicate how their actions affect global and/or local communities
	collaborate to address pressing and enduring issues equitably
	consider and discuss emerging and/or enduring issues

Ethical Reasoning	critically reflect on their own core beliefs and values

	recognize ethical issues and their social context in a variety of settings
	evaluate different perspectives on ethical issues, guided by ethical principles and theories
	develop their own ethical outlook that is supported with cogent reasons

Information Literacy	decide the range and scope of needed information
	access information effectively
	evaluate information critically and ethically
	use information effectively to accomplish specific purposes
	use information ethically

Intellectual Curiosity	demonstrate an awareness of intellectual connections across a range of disciplines, professions, and/or enduring questions
	formulate questions that support sustained inquiry, research, and/or creative production
	foster increased intellectual humility, respect for intellectual difference, and an openness to exploring new ideas or perspectives
	reflect critically on one's own course of study

Intercultural Competence	demonstrate knowledge of effective and appropriate interactions that build and enhance relationships in a variety of cultural and/or linguistic contexts
	demonstrate self-awareness of effective and appropriate interactions that build and enhance relationships in a variety of cultural and/or linguistic contexts
	demonstrate behaviors to support effective and appropriate interactions that build and enhance relationships in a variety of cultural and/or linguistic contexts

Knowledge of the Human Experience	describe and compare the development of various systems (artistic, cultural, economic, historical, intellectual, linguistic, political, social, or spiritual)
	describe and compare the impact of various systems (artistic, cultural, economic, historical, intellectual, linguistic, political, social, or spiritual)
	recognize common questions/concerns humans confront
	recognize diverse strategies for resolving those concerns

Knowledge of the Physical World	describe some of the major concepts in science to explain natural phenomena
	evaluate the quality of scientific information on the basis of methods used to generate it

Oral Communication	prepare purposeful oral communication appropriate to the audience, purpose, and context
	deliver purposeful oral communication appropriate to the audience, purpose, and context
	reflect upon purposeful oral communication appropriate to the audience, purpose, and context

Personal Health & Wellness	demonstrate knowledge of emotional health and wellbeing
	identify common sources of stress
	develop strategies to improve emotional wellness outcomes
	demonstrate knowledge of personal finances necessary to promote lifelong financial wellness
	demonstrate financial literacy necessary to promote lifelong financial wellness
	demonstrate knowledge of physical health and wellbeing
	demonstrate knowledge of risk factors for chronic disease
	identify the impact of proper dietary and exercise practices in (infectious and/or chronic) disease prevention and management

Quantitative Reasoning	interpret models from different contexts with real-world relevance
	solve quantitative problems from different contexts with real-world relevance
	create reasonable arguments supported by quantitative evidence
	communicate reasonable arguments supported by quantitative evidence in effective formats

Scientific Reasoning	identify and use empirical evidence to describe natural phenomena through application of the scientific method
	identify and use empirical evidence to explain natural phenomena through application of the scientific method
	identify and use empirical evidence to predict natural phenomena through application of the scientific method
	use scientific principles to design strategies to answer open-ended questions
	use scientific principles to evaluate strategies to answer open-ended questions
	use scientific principles to implement strategies to answer open-ended questions

Understanding the Human World	explore humanity’s change over time
	apply method(s) of interpretation for understanding the human world
	evaluate human experience through narratives and context

Written Communication	express themselves through writing appropriate for different purposes, audiences, and situations
	compare and understand different styles of writing
	connect evidence to claims in multiple writing assignments
	effectively apply strategies to revise and improve writing

General Education Assessment

GEOC requests additional time to draft specific standing rules for General Education Assessment and therefore has left this section as a placeholder only. General Education Assessment details and timeline will be shared with all faculty for comment and be submitted for Faculty Senate approval once the more time-sensitive work of establishing the course proposal and approval process has been completed.