

General Education Reform Progress

May 2023

2030 Problem Statement

UWM's core curriculum has developed to include a complex, confusing maze of University, College, and Program requirements that can be difficult to navigate, impede student progress, and discourage academic collaboration.

Core Principles

- Design GER to focus on student needs such that the value of GER can be clearly articulated to them.
- Focus and structure GER around UW System learning outcomes (LO)
- Make GER consistent across the three campuses
- Ensure seamless transfer of GER if students transfer in or change majors
- Address financial impact of GER reform through central budgeting
- Actively manage GER course array in coordination with faculty governance and instructional units

Recommendation 1

Provide a simplified distribution of 18 credits, six “areas of inquiry”:

- Natural World
- Society and Culture
- Creativity and Aesthetic Innovation
- Global Perspectives and Responsibilities
- Cultural Diversity
- Health and Well-Being

Recommendation 2

Provide clarity on what constitutes a course in General Education

- Course content aligns with the Area of Inquiry and meets the learning outcomes of the relevant Area of Inquiry.
- Assessment mechanisms built into Canvas or another central depository.
- Provides built-in student success support.
- Course size aligned with pedagogical goals (e.g., large, information-based; small, communication-intensive).
- Fits within the overall array of the Area of Inquiry.

Recommendation 3

Provide Support for Faculty and Governance

- Recommend criteria, planning, and policies for the General Education Program;
- Advise colleges, and shared governance units on the consistency of General Education offerings across the university, and on the development of courses and programs related to the General Education Program;
- Provide resources and programming (perhaps in coordination with CETL) on the improvement of delivery modes, technologies, and pedagogies for General Education;
- Coordinate a continuous improvement process for General Education that builds on assessment and other feedback to revise courses, General Education requirements and their place within the UWM undergraduate experience.

Key updates in progress

- Expanding overall rationale for the change, driven by student success data
- Expanding discussion of GER models at other institutions
- Adding significantly more detail on budget implications
- Adding detail on the (likely) size of the proposed course array
- Revising and supplementing “Area of Inquiry” descriptions to standardize scope and
- Expanding discussion of course and array assessment mechanisms
- Aligning administrative support functions with the
- Updating implementation timeline

An aerial photograph of the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee campus. The image shows a dense cluster of buildings, including several tall, modern skyscrapers and older, multi-story structures. The campus is surrounded by lush green trees. In the background, a large body of water is visible under a cloudy sky. The text "Questions & Discussion" is overlaid in the center of the image in a white, sans-serif font.

Questions & Discussion