

The University Senate of Michigan Technological University
Proposal 15-12 (REVISED and posted March 22, 2012)
(Voting Units: Academic)

“PROPOSAL TO REVISE GENERAL EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS”

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This proposal, calls for changes in the General Education program that was implemented in 2000. The program retains a core of 4 courses, along with required credits in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) and HASS (Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences). The change in core courses involves the removing of Perspectives (UN1001) and Institutions (UN2002) as required courses, moving Composition (UN2001) to the first year, revising World Cultures (UN1002) into a 3-credit course focused more specifically on contemporary Global Issues, requiring one of a short list of 2000-level introductory courses in Social & Behavioral Sciences (SBS) and requiring one of a short list of 2000-level introductory courses in Humanities & Fine Arts (HFA). Additionally, this revision would reduce the number of required credits in the core + HASS from 28 to 24, while removing the option of academic units to specify one HASS elective course.

The General Education Council has also explored ways in which the university learning goals can be more effectively addressed. The Council is interested in considering 1) how to better embed communication in the curriculum, including in HASS electives and majors; 2) how to support Global Learning beyond the introductory Global Issues course; and 3) whether Capstone course in all degree programs would improve student integration of knowledge.

1. GENERAL DESCRIPTION AND CHARACTERISTICS OF PROGRAM

The General Education Council has devoted three years to a review of the General Education Program and course requirements, considering effectiveness of the current structure, resource needs of the program, student learning goals, the university’s strategic plan, and changing needs of the university and of our students. The proposed changes in this proposal are designed to 1) provide increased emphasis upon communication for all students by moving UN2001 Composition to the first year; 2) more fully develop students’ global learning by revising World Cultures to focus on Global Issues; and 3) insure that all students develop basic understanding of the subject matter, intellectual approaches, and insights of the social and behavioral sciences and of the humanities and fine arts. To accomplish these ends, the revised General Education Program will remove Institutions and require Perspectives only for CSA majors and perhaps for Honors students, while adding a 2000-level Social and Behavioral Science requirement and a Humanities and Fine Arts requirement.

For details, see pp. 2-4 “Description of Proposed Changes.”

2. RATIONALE

The current General Education Program went into effect in Fall, 2000. The General Education Council is charged with oversight and evaluation of that program. The council initiated a review of the program in 2008 and, in Fall, 2010, was asked by the Provost to develop specific recommendations for change that would address concerns about student writing and investigate how the university might more fully incorporate global education into the undergraduate curriculum. He asked that we utilize the framework for general education established by the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) through their Liberal Education and America's Promise (LEAP) initiative. LEAP identifies a set of key student outcomes that should be achieved by all undergraduate students; it is now the basis for the general education goals of hundreds of institutions of higher learning throughout the country.

The General Education Council established five working groups to consider possible changes in general education requirements—Communication; Global Literacy; Sustainability; STEM; and Civic Engagement. A broad range of faculty from across the university participated in these groups. The discussions within the Communication and Global Literacy working groups were particularly important to the development of this proposal.

Additionally, the Dean of the College of Sciences & Arts convened a working group consisting of himself, the Associate Provost, the Director of General Education, the chairs of the departments of Humanities, Social Sciences, and Visual & Performing Arts, and Charles Wallace, a member of the Senate Academic Policy Committee. That committee was asked to examine the four core courses within the general education program and to consider if changes in those requirements would improve student learning and better utilize faculty and fiscal resources. This group supported the importance of moving communication instruction to the first year, which left no room for Perspectives in most students' schedules. They also expressed concern about the degree to which the core courses, in particular Perspectives and Institutions, are taught by part-time faculty. They indicated a preference to place more reliance upon full-time lecturers who would have stronger intellectual connections to departments and their teaching programs.

University Student Learning Goals

1. Disciplinary Knowledge.
2. Knowledge of human cultures and the physical and natural world.
3. Global Literacy.
4. Critical and Creative Thinking.
5. Communication.
6. Information Literacy.
7. Technology.
8. Values and Civic Engagement.

Finally, during the past 18 months, university [learning goals](http://www.mtu.edu/provost/office/vice-president/university-learning/) (<http://www.mtu.edu/provost/office/vice-president/university-learning/>), developed by the Assessment Council and the General Education Council, have been connected to the General Education program. Seven of the 8 University Student Learning Goals are addressed at least in part by courses within the general education program. The General Education Council has identified student learning goals for each of the core courses (<http://www.gened.mtu.edu/gened/Core Course Goals.pdf>) and has aligned all components of general education with the university's learning goals, the LEAP Essential Learning Outcomes, and Michigan Tech's Goals and Strategic Plan. This proposal has been developed with particular attention to those learning goals, particularly Communication and Global Literacy.

Most components of the proposed program have been under discussion within the General Education Council and among department chairs in the College of Sciences and Arts for several years. The specific recommendations were discussed extensively by the General Education Council and were approved by that body on March 19, 2012.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED CHANGES

1. Communication.

- a. Move UN2001 (Composition) to the First Year and renumber as UN1xxx.
Justification: provide early instruction in written and oral communication.
Student Learning Goal: Communication; Information Literacy

2. Global Learning.

- a. Increase the number of sections of UN1002 (World Cultures), rename and renumber course as UN1xxx "Global Issues," and decrease section size. The goal is to reduce average section size from 220 to approximately 80-100 and to offer equal numbers of sections each semester. Current goals of [World Cultures](#) emphasize understanding of cultural awareness, globalization, and global complexity. The course will place greater emphasis on contemporary digital data/information and on global forces of change (see course description in section 7).
Justification: Extremely large section sizes have proven unwieldy and do not advance student learning; smaller section sizes will be more accessible to first-year students.
Learning Goal: Global Literacy; Information Literacy
- b. Focus all sections of World Cultures/Global Issues on contemporary world issues.
Justification: Achieves intellectual consistency and coherence across sections, and creates greater likelihood of consistent course expectations.
Learning Goals: Global Literacy
- c. Decrease credits in World Cultures/Global Issues to 3. Course will be renumbered at 1000 level.
Justification: Simplifies transfer credit issues; simplifies scheduling, which currently requires 2 hours per class, 3 days per week; 4th contact hour of activities was not successfully integrated into all sections of UN1002.
Learning Goal: Global Literacy
- d. Allow one semester of 3000-level modern language or higher to substitute for World Cultures; eliminate UN1003.
Justification: Under the current system, students who take UN1003 (1 cr) and one year of language meet the World Cultures requirement. Many students meet this requirement by taking a single year of language, which does not provide adequate foundational background in the study of culture. In addition, UN1003 has been poorly integrated with World Cultures. This proposal will eliminate UN1003 and require students to take one language course at the 3000-level or higher, during which they will gain greater cultural insights. The modern language faculty fully support of this change, as it will significantly increase students' language skills. They are already planning to modify the language minors to minimize the role of first-year languages and increase the expected level of language competency.
Learning Goal: Global Literacy

3. Strengthen core social and behavioral sciences, humanities, and fine arts.

- a. Create a Social and Behavioral Science Requirement (SBS). 3 credits will be selected from a list of 6-10 2000-level, introductory courses. These courses will also remain on the HASS list.
Justification: The Social and Behavioral Science requirement effectively replaces the Institutions requirement with introductions to the various social science disciplines. Study of the social sciences is a foundational component of general education.
Learning Goals: Knowledge of Human Cultures; Values and Civic Engagement

- b. Create a Humanities and Fine Arts Requirement (HFA). 3 credits will be selected from a list of 6-10 2000-level, introductory courses. These courses will also remain on the HASS list.

Justification: Study of the arts and humanities is a foundational component of general education. Under the current requirements, many students can graduate without any introduction to these central academic fields.

Learning Goals: Critical & Creative Thinking; Values and Civic Engagement

4. Other Changes

- a. Reduce credits required in Core + HASS from 28 to 24; Eliminate the ability of academic programs to specify a course to meet the HASS requirement

Justification: Specification of a course by programs confuses students and creates unnecessary overlap between general education and major requirements. 24 credits is a common number of credits in core + HASS in our peer institutions.

- b. Eliminate UN1001 (Perspectives) for all students. The course will probably be renumbered to minimize confusion. However, the course may still be specified for individual programs, schools or colleges, as well as by the Honors Program.

Justification: The program remains anchored by four core areas, with those courses to be taken in the first two years at the university. Programs that wish to retain Perspectives are encouraged to do so. CSA expects to adopt this course as a degree requirement within its majors.

- c. Eliminate UN2002 (Institutions).

Justification: The intent of this requirement can be better met with the SBS requirement.

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

Courses proposed to satisfy the Social and Behavioral Sciences (SBS) requirement and the Humanities and Fine Arts (HFA) requirement will be evaluated by the Distribution Committee of the General Education Council. Existing 2000-level courses that have been tentatively suggested to meet these requirements include those listed below. The Department of Visual and Performing Arts has suggested 3 possible new offerings (see Section 7).

Social and Behavioral Science

EC 2001	Principles of Economics
PSY 2000	Principles of Psychology
SS 2100	World Peoples and Environments
SS 2200	Prehistory and Archaeology
SS 2400	Introduction to Human Geography
SS 2500	The American Experience
SS 2550	Themes in Western Civilization
SS 2600	American Government and Politics
SS 2700	Introduction to Sociology

EC 2001 - Principles of Economics

An introduction to economics. The microeconomics portion covers consumer choice, the firm, value and price theory, and distribution theory. The macroeconomics portion covers national income analysis, fiscal policy, money and monetary policy, the commercial banking system, and the Federal Reserve System.

PSY 2000 - Introduction to Psychology

Introduction to the scientific study of psychological structures and processes involved in individual and group behavior. Explores theoretical accounts of the foundations of human behavior and examines

empirical support. Topics may include personality, disorders, therapy, development, and social psychology, perception, learning, cognition, emotion, and states of consciousness.

SS 2100 - World Peoples & Environments

Introduction to two major disciplines, anthropology and geography, that focus on human diversity and the human relationship to environment and resources. Emphasizes patterns of culture and nature at different scales of human organization.

SS 2200 - Prehistory and Archaeology

Introduction to the methods of archaeology and the contributions of the discipline to understanding of world prehistory. Topics include the ways archaeologists discover and excavate sites, the analysis of archaeological artifacts and features, human evolution, and the patterns of world prehistory.

SS 2400 - Introduction to Human Geography

This course introduces students to concepts, problems, and case studies that make up the study of human geography: the spatial differentiation and organization of human activity, environmental sustainability, and the role of space and place in our everyday lives.

SS 2500 - The American Experience

Covers selected topics related to historical development of American culture and society. Topics include American Revolution, slavery and Civil War, Jacksonian democracy, the West, urbanization and immigration, technology, work, Progressives and expertise, World War I, wealth and leisure, Americans and politics, mass communications and media, and the Great Depression. Credits: 3.0

SS 2550 - Themes in Western Civilization

Overview of the evolution of Western civilization. Reviews the major themes and movements that have influenced Western civilization, the factors that have contributed to its distinctiveness, and its impact on other civilizations.

SS 2600 - American Government & Politics

Outlines the principles and logic of American Government and politics and explores contemporary issues in national and state government.

SS 2700 - Introduction to Sociology

Introduces students to the way that sociologists think about different components of society. Topics include the family, religion, markets, organizations, political systems, and educational systems. Also covers the source of individual values, beliefs, and attitudes.

Humanities and Fine Arts

FA 2xxx	Understanding Music
FA 2xxx	Understanding Theater and Film
FA 2xxx	Understanding Visual Arts
HU 2324	Introduction to Film
HU 2400	Introduction to Diversity in the United States
HU 2501	American Experience in Literature
HU 2505	Science, Technology and Humanities
HU 2520	Cultural Diversity in American Literature
HU 2538	British Experience in Literature
HU 2700	Introduction to Philosophy

HU 2324: Introduction to Film

Focuses on film narration and style within social cultural, and historical contexts. Emphasizes critical engagement with film through discussion, presentations, and written analysis.

HU 2400 - Introduction to Diversity Studies in the United States

This course provides students with a better understanding of underrepresented populations within the United States by examining the social, cultural, and personal consequences of gender, race, ethnicity, class, sexual orientation, (dis)ability, and other significant identities.

HU 2501: The American Experience in Literature

A survey of writings and the oral tradition from the earliest explorers, Native Americans and African-Americans to about 1850. Readings in such genres as histories, diaries, sermons poetry, and short stories.

HU 2505 - Science, Technology, and Humanities

A survey using literary texts, narrative history, documentary evidence, film, music, and cross-cultural references to contextualize the emergence of scientific, technological, and humanistic developments in the modern era.

HU 2520 - Cultural Diversity in American Literature

Study of literature by authors from historically under-represented groups within the United States. May be supplemented by literature from across the Americas, films, and essays on theories and approaches to difference in the American context.

HU 2538 - British Experience in Literature

A survey of selected works of British literature from its origins to the present. Focuses on historical trends in the development of the English language and the cultures of Great Britain.

HU 2700: Introduction to Philosophy

A study of thought representing various traditions such as classical and contemporary philosophy. Eastern and Western religion, and issues in recent science. Some basic concepts of logic are also examined. Emphasizes moral philosophy, utilitarianism, and Kantian ethics.

3. DISCUSSION OF RELATED PROGRAMS

Not Applicable.

4. PROJECTED ENROLLMENT

All undergraduate students.

5. SCHEDULING PLANS

Not applicable.

6. CURRICULUM DESIGN

Current Program:

Year	Courses	Credits
1	Perspectives (UN1001)	3
	World Cultures (UN1002) or ML Option (2 sem + UN1003)	4
2	Composition (formerly Revisions) (UN2001)	3
	Institutions (UN2002)	3
3 and 4	HASS Electives (3 cr. may be specified by program; 6 cr. must be upper division)	15
1-4	STEM requirement	16
	1 laboratory science course	
	1 mathematics course	
	STEM electives	
	Co-curricular requirement = 3 units	3 units
Total Credits	Core = 13; HASS = 15; STEM = 16	44

Proposed Program:

Year	Courses	Comments	Credits
1	Composition	Both courses offered both semesters	3
	Global Issues or ML Option (3rd sem)		3
2	Social/Behavioral Science core list	Courses on these lists may also appear on the HASS list	3
	Humanities/Fine Arts core list		3
3 and 4	12 cr. HASS electives		12
1-4	STEM requirement		16
	1 laboratory science course		
	1 mathematics course		
	STEM electives		
	Co-curricular requirement = 3 units		3 units
Total Credits	(Core = 12; HASS = 12; STEM = 16)		40

Under the revised program, as under the current requirements, transfer equivalencies will have to be identified that account for credits earned at another institution and credits acquired through Advanced Placement courses.

7. NEW COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

FA 2xxx Understanding the Visual Arts

Using cross cultural examples from around the world and through time, students will examine and apply the body of knowledge concerning visual ascetics, explore the psychology/physiology of artistic creativity and viewer perception, and come to understand the uses and value of Visual Arts in Human Culture. Exhibition and Museum visits required; reflection papers based on course content are a major means of evaluation.

FA 2xxx Understanding Music

Using cross-cultural examples from around the world and through time, students will examine and apply the body of knowledge concerning musical aesthetics, explore the psychology/physiology of musical creativity and listener perception and come to understand the uses and value of the Musical Art in Human Culture. Listen to live and recorded music; reflection papers based on course content are a major means of evaluation.

FA 2xxx Understanding Theatre and Film

Using cross cultural examples from around the world and through time, students will examine and apply the body of knowledge concerning aesthetics of theatre and film, explore the psychology/physiology of theatrical creativity and audience perception and come to understand the uses and value of the Theatrical Art in Human Culture. Attendance at theatre and film performances is required; reflection papers based on course content are a major means of evaluation.

UN 1xxx. Composition

Same catalog text as UN2001.

UN 1xxx. Global Issues

Study of contemporary global issues, their origins and impacts. Particular attention to comparative processes of globalization, migration and urbanization, economic and social development, political movements and conflicts, environmental impacts, and human rights. Emphasis on access to and use of digital information and data.

8. LIBRARY AND OTHER LEARNING RESOURCES

Not applicable.

9. COMPUTING ACCESS FEE

Not applicable.

10. FACULTY RESUMES

Not applicable.

11. DESCRIPTION OF EQUIPMENT

Not applicable.

12. PROGRAM COSTS

Changes in core course requirements will result in some additional costs associated with section size, course enrollment changes, increased use of lecturers and decreased use of part-time temporary faculty.

Added Costs

1. Composition. Moving this required course from the second year to the first year will result in an enrollment increase of approximately 300 students. Annual enrollment in UN2001 Composition is approximately 900, while enrollment in UN1001 Perspectives is approximately 1200. The difference is the result of student attrition between years 1 and 2, and because some students choose to enroll in courses during the summer that transfer in as Composition.

Composition is taught entirely by TAs in the Humanities Department in sections of 20 students. An additional 300 students will require 15 more sections. Six of these sections can be taught by TAs currently assigned to other courses; nine sections will need to be taught by additional TAs. This will result in added expense for 3 TAs. Total = ca. \$75,000.

2. Global Issues. Currently six sections of World Cultures are offered annually, with total enrollment of approximately 1000. To reduce section size below 100 students per section will require an additional 6 sections of the course. This will be met by creating one lecturer position. Total = \$65,000 (salary, including fringes).

3. Sophomore Year Requirements.

Humanities and Fine Arts Requirement. Anticipated enrollment in these courses is 900 students, as the requirement is designed to be completed during the sophomore year. Assuming section sizes of 60 students, this requires 15 sections of 2000-level courses in Humanities and Visual and Performing Arts. Current courses likely to meet this requirement have the capacity to accommodate an additional 145 students. The remaining 755 seats will require 14 additional sections. Eleven of these sections can be assigned to faculty currently teaching Perspectives. The remaining 3 sections will be assigned to a lecturer.

Social and Behavioral Sciences Requirement. Anticipated enrollment in these courses is 900 students. Current courses likely to meet this requirement have the capacity to accommodate an additional 285 students. The remaining 615 seats will require 13 additional sections, including some for courses that are currently taught only once each year. Three of these sections can be assigned to faculty currently teaching Institutions. The remaining 10 sections will be assigned to lecturers.

Added need is for 13 sections, requiring an additional 1.5 lecturers. Total = \$97,500 (salary, including fringes).

Total added cost = \$237,500

Resources Available

Some savings will be realized from the proposed changes.

1. Elimination of 20 sections of Perspectives will save the General Education budget \$80,000.
2. Elimination of Institutions will save \$42,000 in salary and fringes for part-time temporary faculty.

Total savings = \$122,000

Net added, ongoing costs = \$115,500

One-time costs

Additional costs for implementing the program changes include:

1. Re-design of World Cultures into “Global Issues.” The General Education program, utilizing existing resources, will provide professional development for faculty engaged in re-designing this course.
2. Additional costs associated with teaching Composition to two cohorts of students during the 2013-14 academic year. This will require an additional 40 sections of the course. The Humanities Department will substantially increase the number of sections available during summer, 2013, and summer 2014, to decrease this burden. An added 15 summer sections will generate sufficient summer revenue to the Humanities Department to enable them to offer the remaining 25 sections during the 2013-14 academic year.

13. SPACE

Not applicable.

14. POLICIES, REGULATIONS AND RULES

The General Education Program is overseen by the General Education Council, which is responsible for interpretation and continuous improvement of the curriculum. The Council evaluates all proposed revisions to the General Education curriculum for consistency with the philosophy and goals of general education.

The Council includes a Distribution Committee that is responsible for monitoring the HASS and STEM requirements. The Distribution Committee reviews all proposals for courses to satisfy the HASS and STEM requirements; it makes recommendations on the distribution requirements to General Education Council. The Distribution Committee will be responsible for evaluating courses to satisfy the SBS and HFA requirements.

Proposal Review. Courses proposed to satisfy the SBS and HFA requirements will be reviewed by the Distribution Committee.

- a. Each proposal will include a course description and syllabus that demonstrates how the course will meet the University Student Learning Goal(s) relevant to the General Education requirement (see p. 2-5). The committee will evaluate the applications and make recommendations to the General Education Council.

- b. The Distribution Committee will review assessment results from courses on a regular and timely basis to assure they are meeting the University Student Learning Goals and continue to satisfy the General Education requirements.
- c. The Distribution Committee will regularly review offerings to assure that a sufficient number of courses are offered on a timely basis to meet SBS and HFA enrollment demands, and will consult with departments about currency of offerings.
- d. Courses which are not offered on a regular basis or whose assessment results over time do not demonstrate that the course is meeting its learning goals may be removed from the approved list of General Education courses.

15. ACCREDITATION REQUIREMENTS

Not applicable.

16. IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS AND PLANNED IMPLEMENTATION DATE

HASS Requirement, including Social & Behavioral Science and Humanities & Fine Arts.

The Social and Behavioral Sciences and the Humanities and Fine Arts are central disciplinary areas of general education. The Distribution Committee will clarify the meaning of social and behavioral sciences, humanities and fine arts; identify minimum requirements for SBS and HFA courses; provide information (including rubrics) to faculty regarding assessment of the relevant student learning goals, and develop a procedure for approval of SBS and HFA courses. It is expected that these will be 3-credit, 2000-level courses offered in sections of 50-100 students. There must be enough sections of approved Social & Behavioral Science and Humanities & Fine Arts courses to accommodate at least 1000 students per academic year, balanced between the semesters. The Distribution Committee will continue to evaluate courses for inclusion on the list of HASS and STEM electives.

Proposal evaluation for SBS and HFA courses will take place during fall semester, 2012, in conjunction with the Binder Process.

Transition Issues. Some current students may have issues related to completing program requirements. Students who are utilizing the modern language option to World Cultures will still be able to take UN1003 (1 credit) in 2012-13 and 2013-14. Institutions (UN2002) will be taught during 2012-13. In subsequent years, courses will be identified that will satisfy the Institutions requirement for students in the current general education program. The current HASS list will continue to be the relevant document for current students who have not yet completed their 15 credits of HASS electives. This is quite similar to the process used when we implemented the current HASS requirement in fall, 2008, but many students were still operating under the previous distribution requirement.

Schedule of Implementation:

March-May, 2012	Distribution Committee defines and describes key elements of SBS and HFA courses, creates evaluation form for courses, disseminates information to faculty regarding requirements for courses to meet the requirement
September-October, 2012	Faculty develop and submit SBS and HFA course proposals Academic programs revise degree schedules for binder process

October 26, 2012	Course Binder due (approximate date) Distribution Committee begins examining course proposals
December 1, 2012	All course proposals are vetted and course lists are created
January 31, 2013	All changes completed
January-April, 2013	Workshops for faculty on developing Global Issues course

The Distribution Committee will complete the last of their work by the end of Fall Semester, 2012. When the distribution list was last revised, in the 2007-08 academic year, most course proposals were not received until early December, 2007. This still gave the Distribution Committee sufficient time to evaluate the proposals by mid-January and for the new HASS and STEM lists to be finalized by January 30, 2008, for implementation in fall, 2008. It is anticipated that the SBS and HFA lists can easily be finalized within the time frame above. This program is designed to be implemented for students entering Michigan Tech in Fall, 2013.

17. INTERNAL STATUS OF THE PROPOSAL

This proposal was discussed at length by the General Education Council prior to approval. The College of Sciences and Arts College Council has been kept aware of the discussions and is familiar with the changes being proposed. There have been ongoing discussions with the modern language faculty, with faculty in Social Sciences, Humanities, and Visual & Performing Arts, and with the chairs of those units. The Provost has been briefed periodically on the status of the proposal.

Approved by General Education Council	March 19, 2012
Reviewed by Deans Council	March 14, 2012
Reviewed by Provost	March 14, 2012
Reviewed by Senate Curricular Policy Committee	March 20, 2012
Reviewed by Senate Finance Committee	_____
Approved by Michigan Tech Senate	_____