



## Final report of $\Delta$ GenEd Task Force on General Education

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## Executive Summary

The Content Area structure of our current General Education curriculum is more than 30 years old. The  $\Delta$ GenEd working group formed in Fall 2017 to consider the structure of the University Gen Ed curriculum. The group's discussions have revolved around three main questions:

*1) What problems need to be solved?* The  $\Delta$ GenEd Task Force reviewed evidence from the National Survey of Student Engagement that UConn students are less engaged with their education, relative to peer institutions, and that this may be symptomatic of an outdated curriculum that offers students little sense of agency or purpose. An earlier (2015-2016) Task Force on General Education had similarly emphasized the need for clearer mapping of curricular components to goals, better communication of the value of General Education, and further discussion of the curriculum's structure, which students and advisors regard as inflexible.

*2) How can the curriculum be modernized?* The  $\Delta$ GenEd Task Force reviewed data on best practices in higher education and found that the curriculum could be updated by a) including more opportunities for integration, such as multidisciplinary coursework and courses that connect with extracurricular and co-curricular activities; b) flexibility, facilitating course selection according to student interests while preserving breadth of learning experiences; c) a refocus on approaches, i.e. ways of knowing, rather than on the disciplines that are currently the basis for Content Areas.

*3) How can changes help to generate a sense of purpose and excitement?* The  $\Delta$ GenEd Task Force reviewed frameworks of goals and learning outcomes that are being adopted nationwide, and considered how best to articulate the value of General Education to students, faculty and staff.

A new model for General Education is proposed that enhances opportunity to integrate learning, confers more flexibility, is built on components that are thematic rather than disciplinary, incorporates practices that have been proven to positively affect student engagement, maintains an insistence on breadth of subject area, and imposes no change to the minimum number of credits required. The proposed model distributes some of the General Education coursework among Topics of Inquiry rather than discipline-centric Content Areas. The proposed Topics are Science Theory & Empirical Inquiry; Design, Innovation, & Creative Expression; Individual Values & Social Institutions; Environmental Literacy; Cultural Foundations; Diversity, Equity, & Social Justice. The model preserves breadth of content by maintaining a representation of six subject areas across the Topics; the model promotes depth of understanding wherein students complete at least three courses in one Topic. Other components in our model are an Integrative Experience and Core Competencies. Because courses can have multiple designations, the curriculum can be completed in the same number of credits as the current model. A set of goals and learning outcomes for the curriculum as a whole and its components accompanies the proposal.

To gauge attitudes towards the current curriculum and the proposed model, surveys were developed and distributed to faculty, staff and students. Support for the current General Education curriculum is seemingly more positive than indicated by the results of the previous Task Force and more recent discussions. Nonetheless, the proposed curriculum is regarded as an improvement on the current structure.

All courses that are presently included in the General Education curriculum are likely to find a home in the proposed model, and as such the proposed model does not require substantial alterations to existing courses. To be fully realized, some of the proposed Topics will need innovative new courses. Should the model be approved in principle, analyses must be conducted of how the proposed model would change enrollment patterns and the extent to which programs have the capacity to deliver the courses needed, particularly at the regional campuses.

## Recent history of UConn's General Education curriculum

The Content Area structure of our current General Education curriculum is more than 30 years old. In the early 1980s, the curriculum comprised three subject area groups: sciences, social sciences, arts and humanities. By the mid-1980s, greater complexity had been incorporated: there was a separate second language competency, a Q competency (one of which had to be a computer course), a writing requirement, and a philosophy/ethics requirement. Students were required to take one each of arts and humanities. The total number of credits required increased at that time up to a minimum of 54. Some areas, particularly in arts and humanities, did not have the capacity to deliver enough courses to meet the need.

A task force on the curriculum in 2000 was dealing with what it saw as a diffuse curriculum. Substitutions to General Education were routinely offered, the courses contributing to the curriculum were seen as excessive (500 with skill codes, 190 what we would regard now as content area courses). Associated problems included that 'requirements [were seen] to be gotten out of the way', partly because too many credits are required, 'disparate and disconnected courses', 'localized responsibility for skill code courses'. Content area courses were often playing dual roles in providing General Education and also as first courses in sequence for majors; schools and colleges restricted course choices for their students, creating 'barriers to student progress towards degree'; the curriculum lacked management.

The current General Education curriculum was implemented in the 2005-2006 academic year. A history of Senate actions pertaining to the current curriculum are listed in Table 1. The Senate approved an update of its By-Laws, Rules and Regulations that reflected the new curriculum and its oversight on 11 December 2006. Following the implementation of the new curriculum, several relatively minor changes were approved, including changes to the Quantitative competency (on 12/11/2006), the addition of performance courses to Content Area One Arts & Humanities (on 11/11/2013), and an increase to three in the number of content areas for which a single course could be listed (on 3/1/2010). A revised definition of, and guidelines for courses within, Content Area One Arts & Humanities, was approved on 11/11/2013. There has been one major change to the curriculum, adding an Environmental Literacy component (approved in fall of 2018). Other technical changes that were approved by the Senate included changes in the composition of the General Education Oversight Committee (GEOC; 4/4/2005), specifying exemptions and adjustments to the requirements (12/11/2006). In the 2009-2010 and 2010-2011 academic years, a task force that reviewed the Writing Competency recommended no change (4/25/2011). A comprehensive revision to the By-Laws, Rules and Regulations was approved in early 2019 (2/4/2019) and was itself slightly revised in the subsequent meeting (3/4/2019).

Reconsideration of the General Education curriculum as a whole began in 2015-2016, when a General Education Task Force conducted focus groups, surveys and reviews of the curricula of peer institutions. The Task Force's recommendations were first presented to the Senate in the spring of 2016 and were approved on December 5, 2016. The Senate charged the Curricula and Courses Committee (and implicitly GEOC) to act on the report's recommendations by:

- a. Doing a better job of communicating the values and the importance of general education to all constituencies involved, including students, faculty and advisors;
- b. Developing a single landing site webpage devoted to general education;
- c. Restating the broad goals of general education with clearer and more forceful language;
- d. Investigating further the possibility of changing the general education requirements;
- e. Seeking ways to address students' desire for training in life skills, while clearly distinguishing such training from the mission of general education.

It further urged the University to:

- a. Establish a governing body for assessment at the university level;
- b. Provide additional support to faculty who teach general education courses, including TA support for large lectures and resources on how to teach general education courses.

Action began immediately. The newly-appointed chair of GEOC<sup>1</sup> began an initiative to communicate with multiple audiences about the value of General Education and the concerns of students, faculty and staff (Table 2). It became clear that curriculum leaders who could potentially act on these recommendations needed greater familiarity with best practices in General Education. A team of seven<sup>2</sup> accordingly applied to attend the Association of American Colleges and University's 2017 Institute on General Education and Assessment (31 May-3 June, Loyola University Chicago). The following goals were described in the application, which was accepted:

Participation in the Institute will facilitate our efforts to implement recommendations of the task force. We will: prepare models for revision of the general education curriculum, developing ways to include new elements such as civility in discourse, environmental literacy, and life skills; articulate assessable goals for the gen ed curriculum, including a greater emphasis on integration of content areas and competencies; craft a plan to communicate the goals of general education to all members of the university community.

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<sup>1</sup> Schultz

<sup>2</sup> Bedore, Blanchard, Burkey, Freake, Meacham, Schultz, Yahn

Drawing up an action plan was a requirement of Institute attendance. The plan was developed during the final days of the Institute, was refined over the following weeks, and was briefly presented to the Senate on 2 October 2017. The plan (provided in full in Appendix A) comprised six actions, which are presented in a different order here: 1) propose cross-cutting themes towards a more integrative General Education curriculum; 2) increase opportunities for integration within the curriculum to progress towards a GE program in which students are more intentional about course selection and make explicit connections among experiences; 3) increase opportunities for student reflection to promote student awareness of the role that GE plays in their education and development as lifelong learners; 4) modify goals to clarify the purpose of the General Education curriculum; 5) identify and align learning outcomes and rubrics to close the gap between the stated goals of GE and the outcomes we expect from the General Education curriculum; 6) promote communication of goals and learning outcomes to underscore the value of General Education to students and faculty. Note that the first three actions relate to the structure of the curriculum and the remaining three relate to communicating its purpose.

At the 2 October meeting, the Senate approved a motion to create a  $\Delta$ GenEd working group “to consider the structure of the University Gen Ed curriculum. The working group will consider, but not be limited to, several specific proposals: 1) a model in which students take courses in multiple content areas that share cross-cutting themes 1a) Diversity & Multiculturalism, 1b) Environment & Sustainability, and/or 1c) Civility & Ethics; 2) addition of a Fine Arts content area and elimination of the Diversity & Multiculturalism content area. The working group will be attentive to the need to build the curriculum based on clearly stated goals for General Education. Deliberations will include analysis of enrollment consequences.”

### Proceedings of the $\Delta$ GenEd Task Force

The  $\Delta$ GenEd (referred to henceforth as ‘we’) met six times in Fall 2017. We selected a chair, reviewed guiding documents, and recruited additional members to provide the broadest possible representation of units on campus. We started initial consideration of how existing content area courses would fit into cross-cutting themes (whether the themes are a required part of the curriculum--“strands” or are an optional way of completing the curriculum-- “pathways”) and reviewed information on other large institutions that have developed General Education curricula with strands or pathways. Other curricular changes were discussed, such as identifying a separate Fine Arts content area and inclusion of an Environmental Literacy theme.

We met four times in Spring 2018. The pace of meetings was slower because the energies of several members were diverted towards a related but separate order of business: the General Education Environmental Literacy Task Force had been charged by the Senate with developing a

definition and implementation plan for a new component to the curriculum. We formed three subgroups (structure, goals & assessment, communication & outreach), which met informally between meetings. We discussed an expanded set of curriculum models, considering how the structure and goals reflect the values of General Education. Work began on a general mission statement for General Education, and there was discussion of the potential for comprehensive assessment of whatever goals are developed. We heard about the role of service learning as a high impact practice. Several members reported on the insights they gained in attending AAC&U's 2018 conference on General Education and Assessment (15-17 February, Philadelphia PA).

A retreat in June 2018 included others who are closely involved in the curriculum (Table 2). Participants in the retreat included undergraduate students, advisors, members of GEOC, members of the Senate Curricula and Courses Committee, and other interested faculty. The retreat, which was professionally moderated by an outside party, featured several presentations including one from the Center for Career Development, as well as discussions on models being considered for curriculum structure and the goals being developed.

We met six times in the fall of 2018, and several of these meetings were 'trilateral meetings' that included members of GEOC and Senate C&CC. Over the course of these meetings, interest coalesced around a general approach to the curriculum and the approach was then refined into a specific proposal; work continued to align the goals and learning outcomes with curricular components. A comprehensive review of the curricula of 38 peer and aspirant institutions was prepared and discussed. We reviewed reports of discussions with groups of faculty and staff in various units across campus, as efforts to consult with stakeholders intensified (Table 2).

Over three meetings in spring of 2019, we prepared our proposal. The first meeting was a final trilateral meeting with GEOC and the Senate C&CC. At our second meeting, discussion focused on finalizing surveys of faculty & staff, and students. Our third meeting was devoted to reviewing this report. As in the previous year, several members attended AAC&U's Conference on General Education and Assessment (14-16 February, San Francisco CA) and prepared reports of their findings.

## Rationale for proposing changes to the structure and goals of the General Education curriculum

Throughout our tenure, we have considered whether there is a need to revise the curriculum. These discussions have revolved around three main questions: 1) What problems need to be solved? 2) How can the curriculum be modernized? 3) How can changes help to generate a sense of purpose and excitement? We sought resolutions of current issues in a way that incorporates



best practices and makes plain the value of the curriculum, engaging students more fully as agents in their education.

Problems we are striving to address

Student disengagement is a perennial and national challenge. The General Education Task Force reports in 2000 and 2016 indicate that too many students regard this portion of their studies as a set of somewhat arbitrary requirements that must be completed in order to get a degree. The 2016 Task Force identified “forces” that contribute to a perception that General Education courses are a “chore”. These contributors are pedagogical (“quality of teaching”, “nature of instruction”), are related to student services (“advising”), are related to clarity of purpose (“communication of goals”), and are curricular (“course availability”, “selection of courses”, “large number of requirements”). This has clearly been a long-term concern at the University, and it is pervasive in the US, judging from interactions with other attendees at conferences on General Education. It may be exacerbated by increasing anxiety among students and their families about economic security and the increasing cost of education, heightened concerns about post-graduation employability, and the growing tendency to graduate with second majors and one or more minors.

Students at the University of Connecticut are poorly engaged, even after normalizing for these national trends. The National Survey of Student Engagement (<http://nsse.indiana.edu/>) provides its participating institutions with a report featuring student engagement indicators, each representing aggregations of responses to multiple survey prompts. Individual institutional results are referenced to the distribution of results for all institutions in a comparison group, which in UConn’s case was custom-selected from NSSE participants representing “designated peers and aspirants, as well as public AAU members<sup>3</sup>.” In these statistical comparisons, UConn’s performance is disappointing: results from NSSE 2016 and NSSE 2018 indicate that our students are on average significantly lower than our comparison group mean in half of the engagement indicators (Fig. 1). Some of the deficiencies can potentially be ameliorated with curriculum changes. In particular, the surveys show that UConn students are consistently less engaged with Higher-Order Learning and Reflective and Integrative Learning Indicator (see Appendix B for the survey items that comprise these Indicators and the survey results for each).

Some of the problems identified by the 2016 Task Force appear related to inflexibility or rigidity of the curriculum. Discussions with students and advisors support the 2016 report’s suggestion that students have a limited ability to “formulate meaningful goals for themselves” and instead

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<sup>3</sup> Georgia Institute of Technology; Indiana University Bloomington; Stony Brook University; University at Buffalo; University of Arizona; University of Colorado Boulder; University of Delaware; University of Georgia; University of Kansas; University of Kentucky; University of Oregon; University of Utah; University of Wisconsin-Madison

find that a primary criterion for course selection is schedule compatibility. The distributional requirements of the University's General Education curriculum are supplemented in some schools and colleges by additional distributional requirements. We considered whether the University curriculum could be made more flexible or simpler, perhaps leading to similar relaxations at the school and college level.

We feel that a reappraisal of the goals is needed. The current language on the purpose of general education<sup>4</sup> originates from 1984-1985. The 2015-2016 Task Force polled students, alumni and faculty concerning each element of the statement and concluded that "The general education system at UConn could benefit from making the connections between goals and requirements more transparent. This applies equally to any changes that might be recommended to the goals and requirements." We conclude that the current curriculum lacks a basis in learning outcomes, without which it has been impossible to determine whether courses promoted the kind of learning for which a curriculum is designed. Students appreciate the value of (for instance) being articulate having critical judgment and moral sensitivity, but do not see how the structure of the curriculum reflects these goals.

Ways that the curriculum could be modernized to build a sense of purpose and excitement

The General Education curriculum could better foreground outcomes that NSSE data suggest are lacking at UConn. The Higher-Order Learning Indicator "captures how much students' coursework emphasizes challenging cognitive tasks such as application, analysis, judgment, and synthesis."<sup>5</sup> These tasks have well-established loci in Bloom's taxonomy of learning and could be emphasized in nearly all courses, but should certainly be expected to play a foreground role in the General Education curriculum. The relatively low score for this indicator suggests that the promotion of critical thinking is not being fully realized and that we should be attentive to ways that it can be better inculcated.

Integrative curricular models make "deliberate attempts to create explicit connections among courses, fields, majors, disciplines, and traditionally academic and nonacademic areas or, even better, [are] designed to create the opportunities for students to draw these links."<sup>6</sup> Similarly, "Instructors emphasizing reflective and integrative learning motivate students to make

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<sup>4</sup> The purpose of General Education is to ensure that all University of Connecticut undergraduate students become articulate and acquire intellectual breadth and versatility, critical judgment, moral sensitivity, awareness of their era and society, consciousness of the diversity of human culture and experience, and a working understanding of the processes by which they can continue to acquire and use knowledge. It is vital to the accomplishment of the University's mission that a balance between professional and general education be established and maintained in which each is complementary to and compatible with the other.

<sup>5</sup> [http://nsse.indiana.edu/html/engagement\\_indicators.cfm](http://nsse.indiana.edu/html/engagement_indicators.cfm)

<sup>6</sup> Hanstedt 2012 General Education Essentials. Jossey-Bass, San Francisco.

connections between their learning and the world around them, reexamining their own beliefs and considering issues and ideas from others' perspectives.”<sup>7</sup> Greater emphasis on integrative learning in the curriculum can better prepare students for the workplace and for citizenship, argues Hanstedt (2012), and he finds that most (85%) of the curricula in the US incorporate at least some integrative elements. It is not clear whether UConn would represent one of these institutions in the majority, or would be one of the minority whose curriculum is built on a strictly credit distribution model. It does seem clear from the NSSE data that UConn should work to more intentionally build integrative learning into its curriculum.

High-impact practices (HIPs) are a set of experiences that have been shown to benefit a broad diversity of college students.<sup>8</sup> Several of these (full list in Appendix C) are well-developed here at UConn: the list of 10 HIPs includes First-year Seminars and Experiences, Learning Communities, and Writing-Intensive Courses. Indeed, student participation in HIPs at UConn compares favorably to that of our NSSE comparison group (Fig. 2). We considered that more deliberate incorporation of HIPs into the General Education Curriculum would be a positive step.

For a better understanding of goals for General Education that befits current educational challenges and that would better align to a curriculum, we draw on a source of expertise that is having a broad positive impact on General Education in the US. Liberal Education and America's Promise (LEAP; <https://www.aacu.org/leap><sup>9</sup>) is a national public advocacy and campus action initiative, directed by the AAC&U, that promotes “higher levels of learning and knowledge as well as strong intellectual and practical skills to navigate [a] more demanding environment successfully and responsibly.” One of the products of LEAP's work is a set of Essential Learning Outcomes that provide a framework of goals for curricula. Furthermore, rubrics have been developed for many of the Essential Learning Outcomes, so that success in achieving the goals can be measured.

The discipline-based structure of the current curriculum contributes to the difficulty of defining goals. Disciplines such as ‘Arts’, ‘Humanities’, ‘Social Sciences’ and ‘Science and Technology’ are not conducive to descriptions of learning outcomes. Some students that we met with remarked that these disciplinary categories have little meaning for them. What is learned in a studio art class is quite distant from what is learned in an art history class. Although ‘the disciplines’ are a traditional frame for organizing knowledge, an increasing number of interdisciplinary majors and minors cut across the arts, humanities, sciences, and social sciences,

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<sup>7</sup> [http://nsse.indiana.edu/html/engagement\\_indicators.cfm](http://nsse.indiana.edu/html/engagement_indicators.cfm)

<sup>8</sup> E.g., George Kuh, Ken O'Donnell & Carol Geary Schneider (2017) HIPs at Ten. *Change: The Magazine of Higher Learning*, 49:5, 8-16

<sup>9</sup> See also LEAP 2008 College Learning for the New Global Century (Executive Summary), available at [https://secure.aacu.org/AACU/PDF/GlobalCentury\\_ExecSum\\_3.pdf](https://secure.aacu.org/AACU/PDF/GlobalCentury_ExecSum_3.pdf)

thus suggesting that a General Education curriculum could be better grounded in ‘ways of knowing’ and other more thematic divisions. The Diversity & Multiculturalism content area and Environmental Literacy are closer to this notion than Content Areas 1, 2 and 3.

## Our Proposal

Taking into account the action plan from the summer institute, the charge from the Senate, and the aforementioned points of rationale, we developed multiple new models for the General Education that to varying degrees: 1) increased flexibility in how the curriculum is completed; 2) minimized complexity of rules governing course selection; 3) emphasized integrative learning; 4) used components that were thematic rather than disciplinary; 5) incorporated High-Impact Practices; 6) maintained an insistence on breadth of subject area; 7) imposed no change to the minimum number of credits required. Our various models were variants on a modification of the Content Areas portion of the curriculum. Rather than prescribing two courses in each of the categories, the models offered “Breadth and Depth”, meaning that there was coursework in each category but also the selection of one category for additional coursework.

Our proposal includes a draft goals statement or value proposition that is intended for a student audience and Essential Learning Outcomes for the curriculum as a whole (Box 1). The name of the curriculum is generic at this time; consultations are beginning to evaluate names that better communicate a sense of purpose and excitement.

## Box 1. Goals of the General Education Curriculum.

The Curriculum prepares you to tackle 21st-century challenges by allowing you to combine coursework in a variety of disciplines to expand your worldview, enhance your range of skills, and develop you to be a more critical, creative, emotionally intelligent, and interdisciplinary thinker. The program also allows you to dive deeper into an discipline of interest to you outside your major. You will learn about topics in our natural and social worlds that enable you to then launch your own explorations into ways to approach your career path from a different angle.

The Curriculum is designed to help you learn how to learn. It teaches you to:

- Be versatile in a rapidly changing world;
- Combine knowledge in innovative ways;
- Apply learning strategies to new contexts, including your major;
- See local and global patterns and the interconnectedness of our intellectual work; and,
- Appreciate how we need each other to tackle today's challenges.

UConn is committed to supporting your full potential. Problem solving and teamwork in a variety of disciplines develops your ability to work with different people and ideas. Leaders are people who can see bigger pictures, who can communicate across fields of study, and who can assemble diverse teams to create and apply knowledge in new ways. offers you transferable skills that you can use in the workplace, in your community, and across your life.

After completing The Curriculum, students should be able to:

- Demonstrate creation of novel intellectual output as an individual and/or as a member of a creative team;
- Articulate and demonstrate the experiences, knowledge, and skills needed to address local and global environmental challenges and to be stewards of the land;
- Investigate the diversity of human experience within the United States and appreciate the contributions of different social groups, along with articulating the effects the past has had on present day circumstances, perceptions, and disparities;
- Examine the variety of perspectives in the global community and distinguish their own cultural patterns and respond flexibly to multiple worldviews;
- Develop and apply knowledge of social responsibility and ethical behavior;
- Demonstrate the relationship of self to world through investigation of the influence of social, cultural, economic, and political institutions in shaping human thought, value, and behavior;
- Design an experiment suitable for scientific investigation to test a scientific hypothesis and interpret the results;
- Solve problems described verbally, graphically, symbolically, or numerically;
- Think critically and independently about the world through the breadth, diversity, and creativity of human experience;
- Collaborate with students and faculty of other disciplines as well as potential external partners to analyze and combine information from different areas within or across disciplines to approach and explain existing questions and problems from new perspectives; to pose new questions; and to generate new ideas.

In our proposed model, some of the General Education coursework is distributed among ‘Topics of Inquiry’ rather than Content Areas (Box 2). We have provisionally identified Essential Learning Outcomes associated with each topic (Appendix D), and how outcomes are shared among topics in ways that suggest multiple designations for courses. We anticipate that the descriptions and learning outcomes will be refined upon further consultation with faculty. The rules governing the distribution among Topics courses in our proposal are: students take at least seven courses, comprising one course in each topic and at least three courses in one topic; selected courses represent at least 6 subject areas; Scientific Theory & Empirical inquiry topic

Box 2. Proposed Topics of Inquiry.

**Science Theory and Empirical Inquiry.** Courses in this topic help students to understand how scientific theories are constructed and are tested against data collected in the natural world and in social systems. Students will understand knowledge production as an interplay of data, hypotheses, and principles through direct application of the scientific method in the classroom, the lab, or the community.

**Design, Innovation, and Creative Expression.** Design thinking involves developing one or more solutions to a well-defined problem. It represents one form of creativity, which can also involve expression in the form of fine arts or many forms of writing. Courses in this topic require higher-level thought processes that imagine new possibilities. Through the application of imaginative thought and activity, novel ideas, mechanisms, and products are conceived and/or produced.

**Individual Values and Social Institutions.** Informed citizenship and leadership call on an appreciation of how society is organized on multiple scales, from individual values and actions to social institutions and economic systems. Courses in this topic include studies of ethics, epistemology, psychology, social systems, and economics.

**Environmental Literacy.** This topic has recently been defined at UConn as “the ability to understand, and articulate perspectives on, the interactions between human society and the natural world, as well as the challenges of environmental stewardship.” Courses in this topic examine how human activities and policies impact the natural world, and conversely how the natural world affects human well-being; they also examine how human-environment interactions are represented culturally and artistically.

**Cultural Foundations.** Human cultures are sets of customs and artistic expressions shaped by history. Courses in this topic promote understanding of a culture through examination of its literary and artistic expressions, its achievements, and its past.

**Diversity, Equity and Social Justice.** Participating in society means acquiring knowledge and understanding of the world beyond our immediate experience and culture, showing consideration and understanding for human and cultural diversity, and examining our own lives in a global context. These courses present diverse identities and perspectives and critically examine how social dynamics shape a range of life experiences. Students will engage with difference, consider how social agents construct pathways to equity and inclusion, and apply theory to local, national, and/or global contexts.

must include at least one lab course except for students who have taken a lab course in Biological or Physical Sciences. We considered two rules that represent an effort to distinguish more clearly between courses that are General Education and those that are preparatory for major-oriented coursework: topics courses have no prerequisites that are not Gen Ed topics courses; no more than one course that is required for the major may be counted. We have removed these rules from the model because they would disqualify a substantial number of current General Education courses.

Other components in our model are an Integrative Experience and Core Competencies (learning outcomes are provided in Appendix C). The integrative experience is a course that highlights connections among disciplines, and/or a service-learning course, internship, education abroad, or a capstone. The Core Competencies are Reasoning, Quantitative, Second Language, Composition, and Information and Digital Literacy. The Integrative Experience and Core Competency courses (perhaps excepting the Second Language courses) could also be Topics courses.

A plan of study sheet for the proposed model is presented in Appendix D.

### Survey of Faculty, Staff and Students regarding proposed curriculum model

Two surveys were developed and distributed via Qualtrics to the University community. One survey was developed for faculty and staff (Appendix F), and its availability was announced in the Faculty/Staff Daily Digest, through curriculum committees, and various listservs (e.g. CLAS faculty, department heads, regional campuses). Another survey was developed for undergraduate students (Appendix G) and its availability was announced through student listservs on Student Daily Digest on March 4th, 6th and 8th. An incentive was offered for completion of the student survey (those who completed the survey were entered into a raffle for one of five gift cards). The content of the surveys was substantially similar. We received 180 responses from staff and 635 from faculty; 396 students in 101 different majors responded. Roughly 75% of the respondents to the faculty/staff survey work on the Storrs campus, and 77% of the student respondents were at Storrs.

Attitudes of the faculty, staff and students towards the current General Education curriculum are more positive than we anticipated from the results of the previous Task Force and our more recent discussions. About  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the goals of the curriculum are clear and that the definition and purpose of the Content Areas are clear (Table 3). Nearly as many faculty and staff agreed that the General Education curriculum prepared students for their careers and role in society, and a majority of faculty and staff felt that students were

able to choose courses based on their interests. Students showed less agreement than faculty and staff with respect to these points but still were more positive than they were neutral or negative.

As described, the proposed Topics of Inquiry are generally understandable and are regarded as important contributors to General Education (Table 4). Faculty and staff most positively regard the definition and purpose of the Environmental Literacy topic. Students also showed strong support for the definition and purpose of the Environmental Literacy topic but slightly stronger support for the definition and purpose of Cultural Foundations. The definition and purpose of Design, Innovation and Creative Expression are least clear for faculty and staff, and those of Individual Values & Social Institutions are least clear for students. Faculty, staff and students expressed the strongest agreement that the Science, Theory & Empirical Inquiry topic represent an important contribution to the General Education curriculum. Faculty and staff are least sure that Design, Innovation and Creative Expression represents an important contribution to the curriculum, while students are least sure about Diversity, Equity, & Social Justice. Note that even in cases where support is weakest, a majority of the respondents agree or strongly agree.

A majority of respondents feel that the proposed curriculum is an improvement over the current curriculum in all respects that were included in the survey (Table 5). Faculty, staff and students generally agree that the proposed curriculum offers greater opportunity for breadth of knowledge, depth of understanding, diversity of approaches, and greater student autonomy. Similarly, respondents feel that students would have more opportunity to explore a topic of interest. The integrative experience component is viewed as a valuable addition, and there is strong support for the inclusion of multidisciplinary courses, capstone courses, internships, service learning or education abroad courses.

Interpretation of these results should have some limitations. Whether because the surveys were available for a limited time, offered little or no compensation, and/or were advertised in an increasingly distraction-rich environment, response rates were lower than hoped, particularly among students. There has so far been time only for first-order analysis of results, so that is not possible yet to partition response results by campus, nor separate faculty and staff results. Open-ended text responses were collected along with the scores, and these are being collated for a more nuanced picture of opinions.

### Instructional resources

All courses that are presently included in the General Education curriculum are likely to find a home in the proposed model. Courses that are presently designated as Content Areas 1-4 will naturally fall into one or more of the proposed Topics of Inquiry. Courses in Content Areas 2 and 3 will populate the Topics of Science Theory & Empirical Inquiry and Individual Values &



Social Institutions. Courses in Content Area 1 will populate the Topics of Design, Innovation, & Creative Expression, and Cultural Foundations. Courses in Content Area 4 will populate Diversity, Equity & Social Justice. Environmental Literacy is incorporated in an unaltered form in the current proposal, and will be populated by courses that are presently being approved for this designation. The Quantitative, Second Language and Writing competencies are also unaltered in our proposal.

While the Topics and other components in our proposal are innovative in their scope, their vision can almost entirely be realized with existing courses. Of course, we hope that re-envisioning the curriculum stimulates innovation in new and revised courses. Nonetheless, based on an informal ‘binning’ of existing courses, it appears possible to implement the curriculum with courses that are already in the catalog. Among the Topics, the Design, Innovation, & Creative Expression may most need creative course proposals.

Should our proposal be approved in concept, a detailed analysis of instructional resources available to deliver the proposed curriculum must follow. Ideally there will be an equitable number of seats available in courses in all of the Topics. Demand for seats may vary, and advance work will be needed to anticipate how many students are likely to be interested in ‘going deep’ in each Topic. Analysis of enrollment capacity in the new Environmental Literacy component is underway and will be part of GEOC’s 2018-2019 Annual Report. We have conducted a preliminary analysis of needs for the Integrative Experience component. Of 118 majors, 75 programs and 88 total courses appear to be capstone courses, only 19 of which are specifically for Honors students. We have not analyzed enrollment capacity or realized enrollment in these courses. With respect to service learning, there are almost 40 undergrad courses every year with this designation, offering more than 1000 seats (although actual enrollment in many was lower). Regarding internships, in every year of the last three, at least 190 internship courses have been offered and at least 900 students have been enrolled. Global Affairs reports that more than 1000 student participate annually in Education Abroad. Hence, setting aside capstone and multidisciplinary courses, there appears to be capacity for 3000 enrollments per year in a course that can provisionally be defined as an integrative experience. More than 85% of UConn seniors reported in NSSE 2018 that they participated in one or more of these experiences (Fig. 2).

## Implementation

Irrespective of the fate of this proposal, work will continue on some portions of the vision outlined in this report. In particular, the purpose and goals of the General Education curriculum must be better articulated and communicated, regardless of the curriculum’s structure. We

anticipate that effort in upcoming semesters will be expended on refining the ‘value proposition’ that expresses the purpose of General Education to students and their families, faculty, staff and other audiences. To better communicate its purpose and engender a sense of excitement about the learning opportunities offered by the curriculum, we have contacted experts to help us develop a communications and marketing strategy.

Should this report be approved, considerable work remains to implement its recommendations. The descriptions of Topics in this report are preliminary, to be refined in discussions with faculty who are likely to contribute to them. The learning outcomes that accompany each Topic must also be refined, perhaps reduced in number, and organized in such a way as to facilitate review of courses that are proposed for each designation. A more detailed analysis of instructional capacity to provide each component must be undertaken, with attention to any disparities in capacity between Storrs and regional campuses. Departments and programs should be encouraged to work together to develop sets or sequences of courses, possibly in the form of interdisciplinary minors, that would complement each other and facilitate completion of the curriculum. We recommend that the Provost's office encourage these efforts with internal grant opportunities for curriculum development.

We feel that the challenges of our time are best met by adapting in forward-thinking ways. We have accordingly sought to incorporate in our recommendations a set of best practices in higher education that befit the University of Connecticut. Recognizing that programs across the University are straining to accomplish core tasks amidst declining allocations, we hope that we will continue nonetheless to innovate in and improve upon our shared undergraduate curriculum.

## Tables and Figures

Table 1. A history of University Senate motions and reports on General Education, leading up to and subsequent to the implementation of the current curriculum. Links are provided to excerpts of Senate minutes.

<b>Senate Meeting Date</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Documentation (excerpt of Senate minutes)</b>
April 4, 2005	Motion approved to require GEOC approval for offering General Education course in intensive session.	excerpt 2005_04_04
April 4, 2005	Motion approved to include directors of W Center, Q Center and Senate C&CC Chair as non-voting members of, and include a graduate student representative to, GEOC	excerpt 2005_04_04
December 11, 2006	Motion approved to revise Q competency, changing the MATH course that is recommended for students whose quantitative skills require strengthening.	excerpt 2006_12_11
December 11, 2006	Motion approved to clarify conditions under which a student with a Bachelor's degree is exempt from the General Education Requirements	excerpt 2006_12_11
December 11, 2006	Motion approved to amend Senate Bylaws, Rules and Regulations to reflect Senate-approved General Education requirements as approved on May 12 2003 and amended on three occasions subsequently	excerpt 2006_12_11
December 11, 2006	Motion approved for University of Connecticut Policy on Academic Adjustments for General Education Competencies: Quantitative Reasoning and/or Second Language.	excerpt 2006_12_11
April 6, 2009	Motion to eliminate the W competency discussed. Motion to refer the matter to the Senate C&CC amended and approved.	excerpt 2009_04_06
March 1, 2010	Motion approved to amend Senate Bylaws, Rules and Regulations to permit multi-content area general education courses	excerpt 2010_03_01
March 1, 2010	Report presented of the W Course Task Force	excerpt 2010_03_01
April 25, 2011	Motion approved to accept recommendations of the W Course Task Force.	excerpt 2011_04_25; report of task force omitted from this excerpt, see excerpt 2010_03_01
February 25, 2013	Motion approved to amend Senate Bylaws, Rules and Regulations to permit one credit performance courses in general education	excerpt 2013_02_25
April 6, 2009	Motion to eliminate the W competency discussed. Motion to refer the matter to the Senate C&CC amended and approved.	excerpt 2009_04_06
March 1, 2010	Motion approved to amend Senate Bylaws, Rules and Regulations to permit multi-content area general education courses	excerpt 2010_03_01
March 1, 2010	Report presented of the W Course Task Force	excerpt 2010_03_01

Table 1 (cont'd)

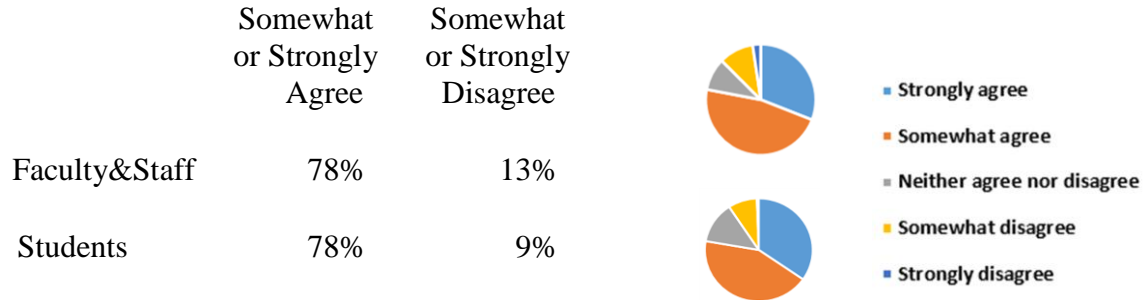
April 25, 2011	Motion approved to accept recommendations of the W Course Task Force.	excerpt 2011_04_25; report of task force omitted from this excerpt, see excerpt 2010_03_01
February 25, 2013	Motion approved to amend Senate Bylaws, Rules and Regulations to permit one credit performance courses in general education	excerpt 2013_02_25
November 11, 2013	Motion approved to revise the Definition and Criteria of Group One – Arts and Humanities in the General Education Guidelines	excerpt 2013_11_11
April 4, 2016	General Education Task Force report summarized	excerpt 2016_04_04
December 5, 2016	Motion approved to accept recommendations of the General Education Task Force	excerpt 2016_12_05
December 5, 2016	Motion approved to add Environmental Literacy to General Education Requirements discussed and referred to Curricula and Courses Committee	excerpt 2016_12_05
October 2, 2017	Progress report on General Education Task Force and motion on Working group on changes to the General Education curriculum (aka ΔGE)	excerpt 2017_10_02
February 5, 2018	Motion approved to add Environmental Literacy to General Education Requirements	excerpt 2018_2_05
April 30, 2018	Reports from GEOC, General Education Environmental Literacy Task Force and ΔGE	excerpt 2018_4_30
September 17, 2018	Motion approved to define Environmental Literacy for General Education	excerpt 2018_9_17
November 5, 2018	Motion approved to Implement Environmental Literacy in General Education	excerpt 2018_11_5
February 4, 2019	Motion approved to substantially amend the By-Laws, Rules and Regulations of the University Senate II.C.2 (General Education)	excerpt 2019_2_4
March 4, 2019	Motion approved to restore language about compensation of GEOC Chair to the By-Laws, Rules and Regulations of the University Senate II.C.2 (General Education)	pending

Table 2. Meetings to discuss General Education with prospective students and their families, current students, faculty, and staff. Some meetings, particularly in 2016, were devoted to the CAR system or alignment, but also offered opportunity to exchange views on General Education curriculum. Not included are meetings of  $\Delta$ GenEd itself and individual meetings.

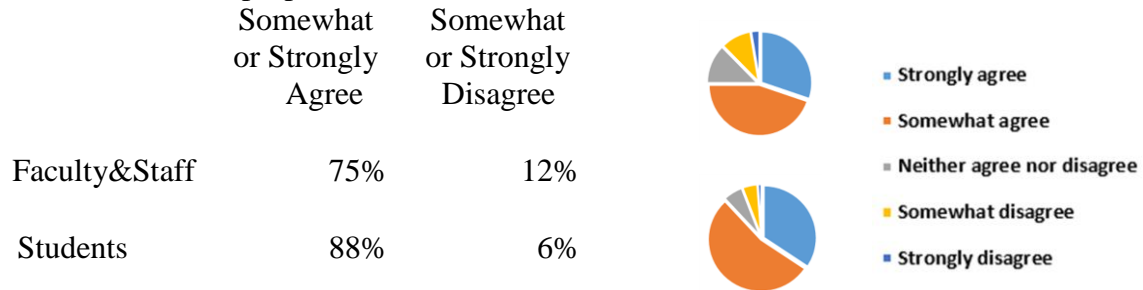
	Students or prospective students	Curriculum committees	Departments	Advisors	Faculty	Campuses
2016		CLAS, Neag, SFA, Engineering, Business	Statistics, Civil and Environmental Engineering, Computer Science and Engineering, Allied Health			
2017	USG Academic Affairs, Ecohusky (5 meetings); Learning communities (3); Open Houses, 2	CLAS C&CC (2)				
2018	USG Academic Affairs; Open Houses, 2; $\Delta$ GenEd retreat and subsequent combined meetings	CLAS; Engineering, Neag; SoN; $\Delta$ GenEd retreat and subsequent combined meetings	Department heads	Advising workshop; Advising Council; $\Delta$ GenEd retreat and subsequent combined meetings	Advising workshop; Teaching and advising workshop; SoN; New faculty orientation	
2019	USG Academic Affairs	CLAS, SFA, Nursing	CAHNR, department heads; EEB; LCL			Regional Campus Forum; Hartford campus; Stamford campus; Waterbury campus

Table 3. Responses to survey questions about the current General Education curriculum. For presentation purposes, tabulated response categories are aggregated (somewhat agree and strongly agree; somewhat disagree and strongly disagree), and one response category (neither agree nor disagree) is omitted. Pie charts to the right represent the distribution of all response categories (upper: faculty and staff; lower: students). The categories begin as ‘strongly agree’ in the 12:00 position and proceed clockwise.

The goals of General Education are familiar and easy to understand



The definition and purpose of the content areas is clear



The General Education curriculum, along with courses in the major, prepares students for their careers and role in society

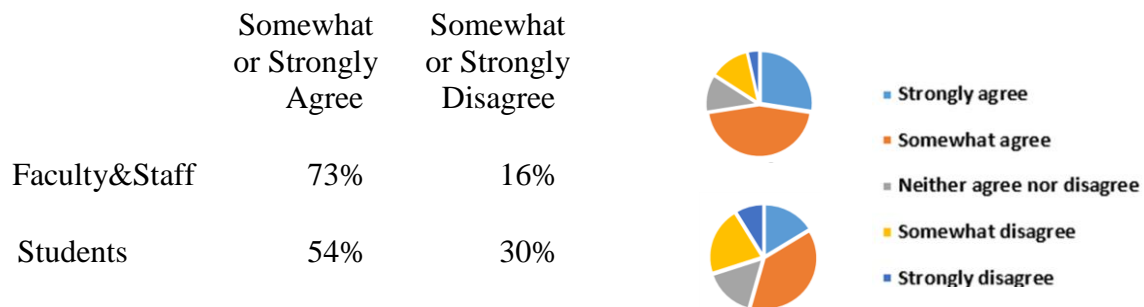


Table 3 (cont'd)

Students are able to take courses within each area based on their interests

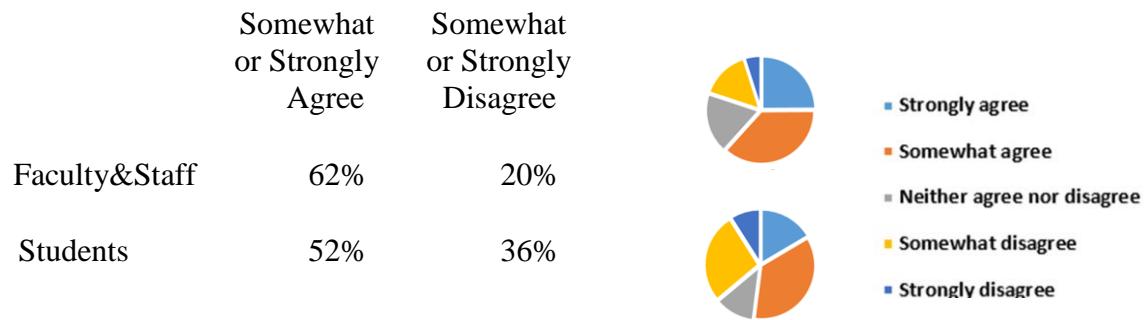
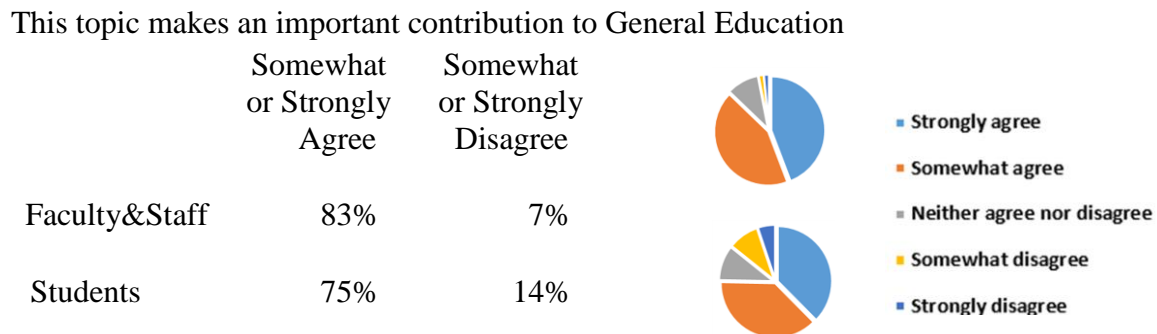
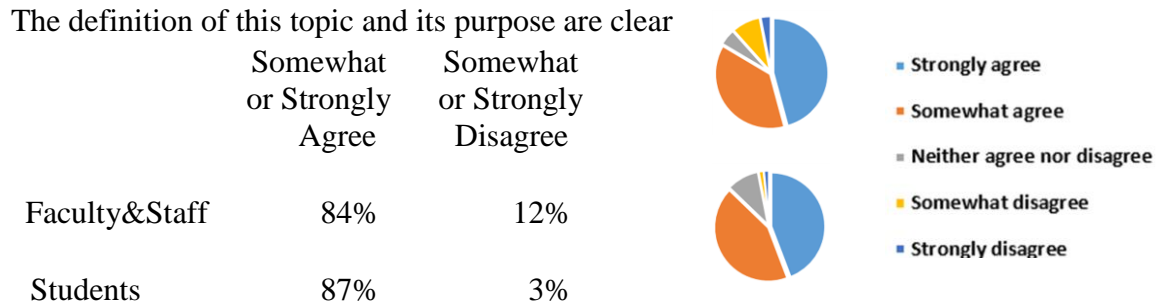


Table 4. Responses to survey questions about the proposed Topics of Inquiry. For presentation purposes, tabulated response categories are aggregated (somewhat agree and strongly agree; somewhat disagree and strongly disagree), and one response category (neither agree nor disagree) is omitted. Pie charts represent the distribution of all response categories (upper: faculty and staff; lower: students). The categories begin as ‘strongly agree’ in the 12:00 position and proceed clockwise.

Science, Theory, and Empirical Inquiry



Design, Innovation, & Creative Expression

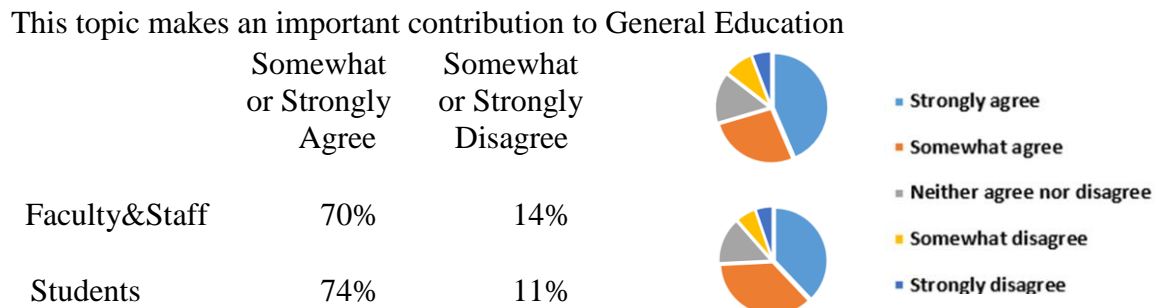
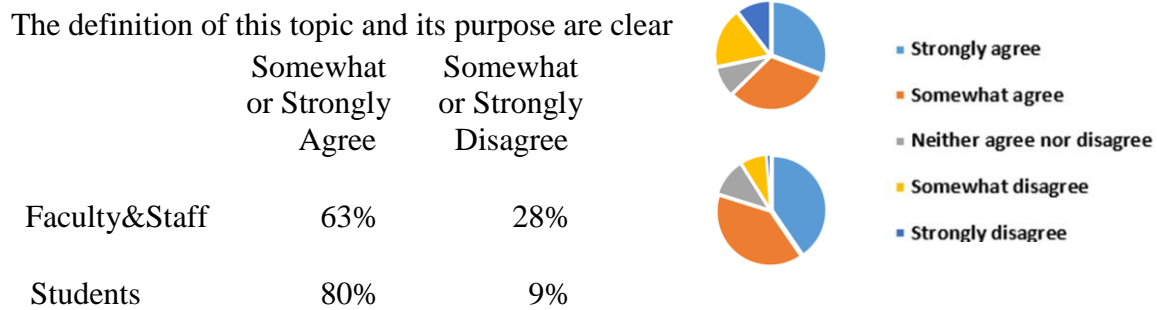
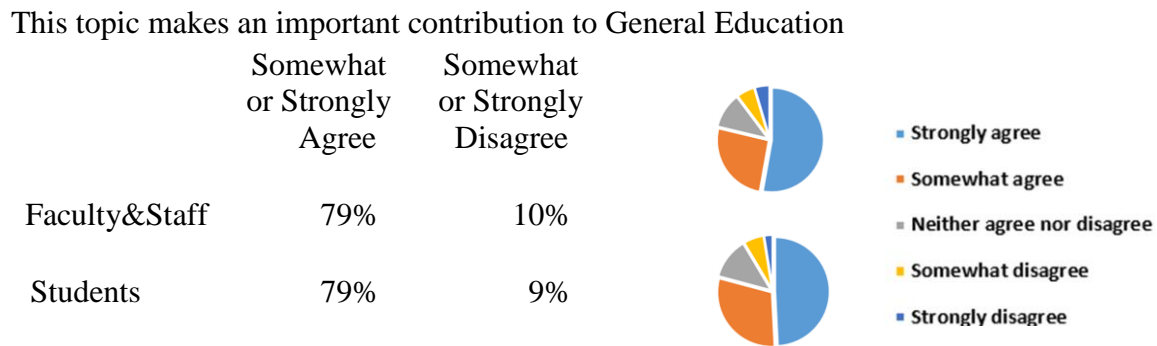
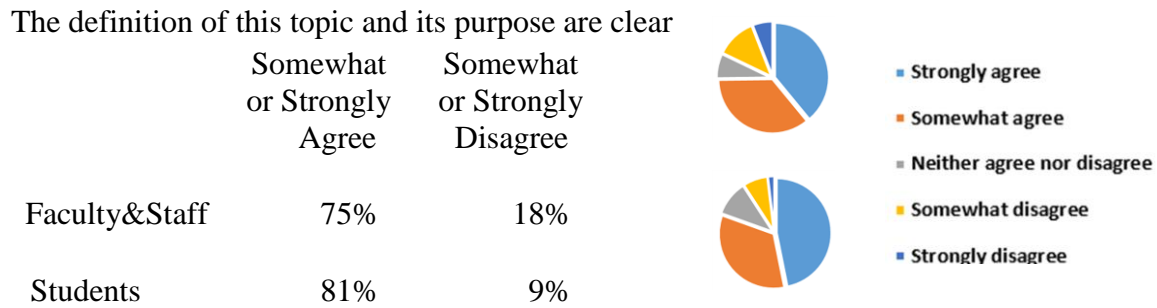




Table 4 (cont'd)

Individual Values & Social Institutions



Environmental Literacy

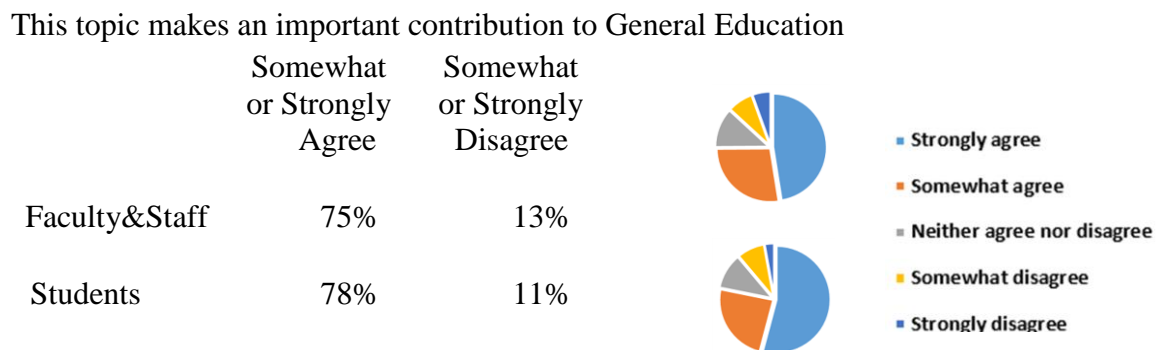
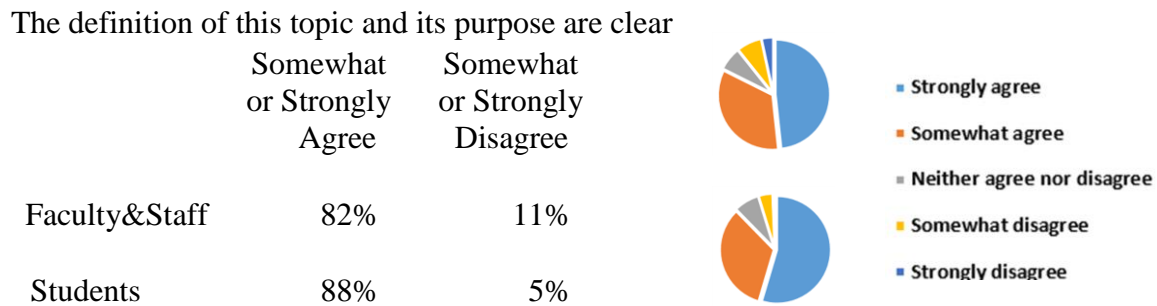






Table 4 (cont'd)

Cultural Foundations

The definition of this topic and its purpose are clear



	Somewhat or Strongly Agree	Somewhat or Strongly Disagree		
Faculty&Staff	79%	13%		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Strongly agree</li> <li>■ Somewhat agree</li> <li>■ Neither agree nor disagree</li> <li>■ Somewhat disagree</li> <li>■ Strongly disagree</li> </ul>
Students	88%	4%		

This topic makes an important contribution to General Education

	Somewhat or Strongly Agree	Somewhat or Strongly Disagree		
Faculty&Staff	79%	10%		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Strongly agree</li> <li>■ Somewhat agree</li> <li>■ Neither agree nor disagree</li> <li>■ Somewhat disagree</li> <li>■ Strongly disagree</li> </ul>
Students	76%	13%		

Diversity, Equity, & Social Justice

The definition of this topic and its purpose are clear

	Somewhat or Strongly Agree	Somewhat or Strongly Disagree		
Faculty&Staff	74%	17%		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Strongly agree</li> <li>■ Somewhat agree</li> <li>■ Neither agree nor disagree</li> <li>■ Somewhat disagree</li> <li>■ Strongly disagree</li> </ul>
Students	85%	5%		

This topic makes an important contribution to General Education



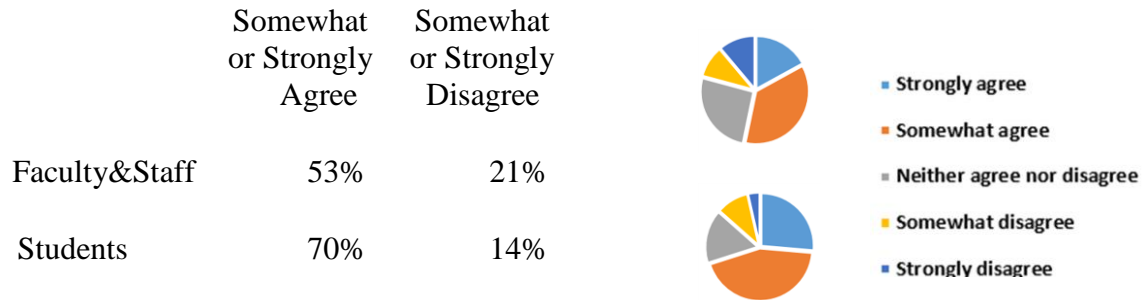
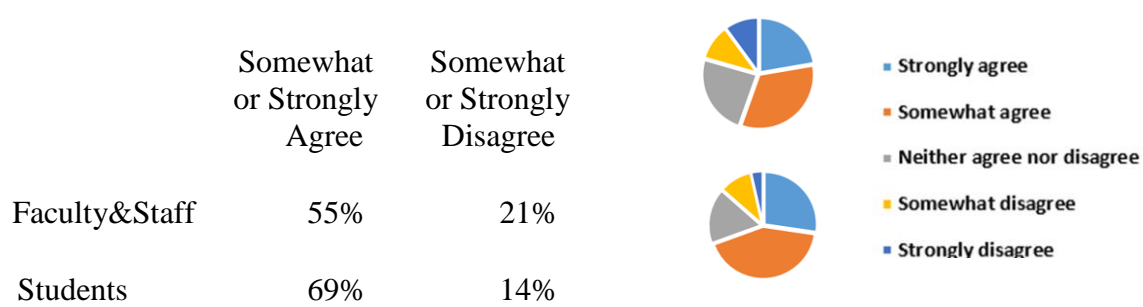
	Somewhat or Strongly Agree	Somewhat or Strongly Disagree		
Faculty&Staff	74%	14%		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Strongly agree</li> <li>■ Somewhat agree</li> <li>■ Neither agree nor disagree</li> <li>■ Somewhat disagree</li> <li>■ Strongly disagree</li> </ul>
Students	76%	13%		

Table 5. Responses to other survey questions regarding the proposed General Education curriculum. For presentation purposes, tabulated response categories are aggregated (somewhat agree and strongly agree; somewhat disagree and strongly disagree), and one response category (neither agree nor disagree) is omitted. Pie charts represent the distribution of all response categories (upper: faculty and staff; lower: students). The categories begin as ‘strongly agree’ in the 12:00 position and proceed clockwise.

[The proposed curriculum] is a better way to encourage breadth of knowledge



[The proposed curriculum] is a better way to encourage depth of understanding and diversity of approaches



[The proposed curriculum] is a better way to give students more autonomy in their educational development

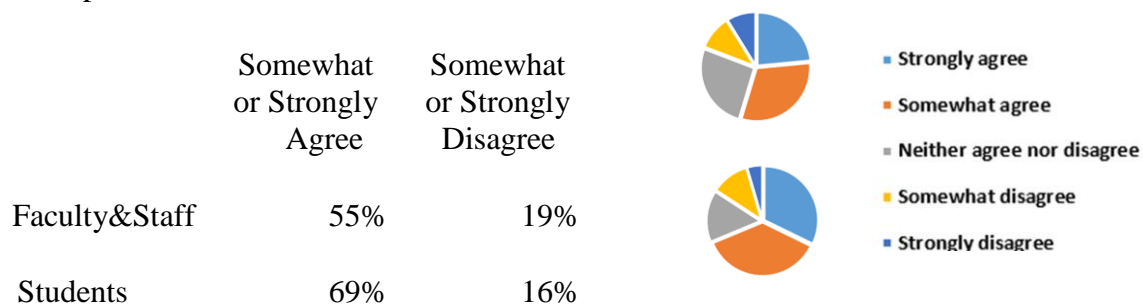
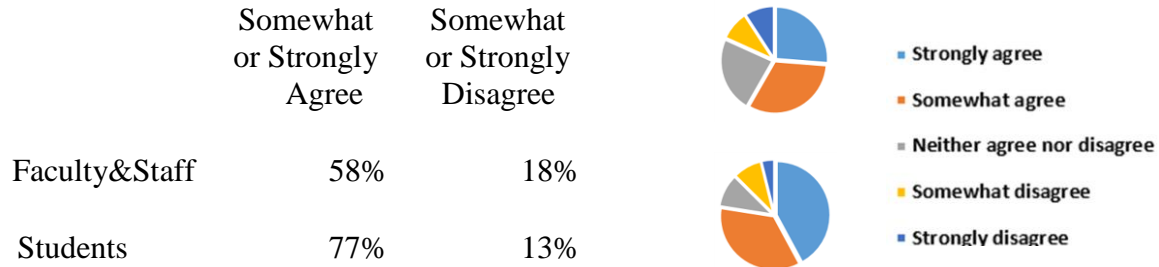
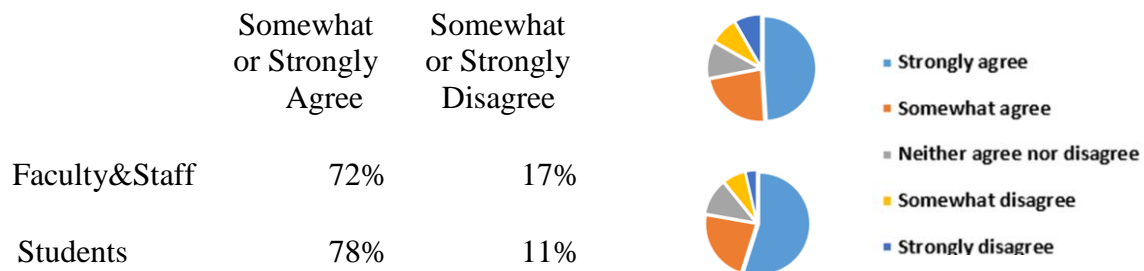


Table 5 (cont'd)

[The proposed curriculum] is a better way to give students more flexibility to explore a topic of interest than the current Content Areas structure



An integrative experience is a valuable addition to the General Education curriculum



Requiring a multidisciplinary course, capstone course, internship, service learning or education abroad course is a good way to promote integrative experience in the curriculum

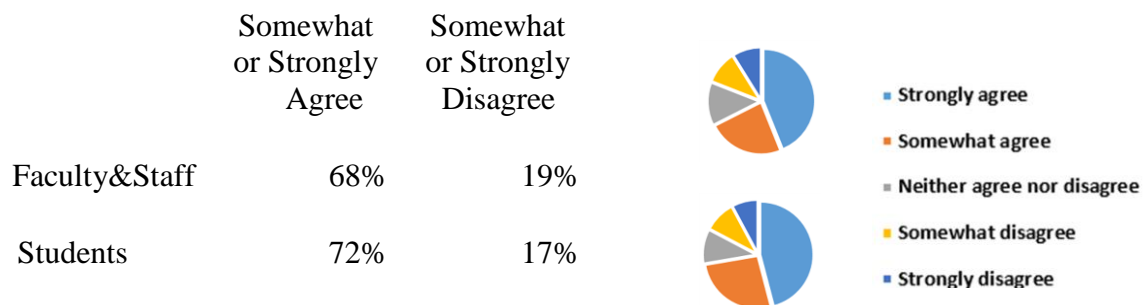


Fig. 1. A portion of UConn’s results from NSSE 2016 and 2018, comparing engagement indicators with those of peer and aspirants. See also Appendix B.

A) NSSE 2016

<b>Engagement Indicators</b>		Your students compared with Carnegie Doctoral	
Theme	Engagement Indicator	First-year	Senior
Academic Challenge	Higher-Order Learning	▽	▽
	Reflective & Integrative Learning	▽	▽
	Learning Strategies	--	▽
Learning with Peers	Quantitative Reasoning	--	--
	Collaborative Learning	--	▽
	Discussions with Diverse Others	--	▽
Experiences with Faculty	Student-Faculty Interaction	▽	--
	Effective Teaching Practices	▽	▽
Campus Environment	Quality of Interactions	--	▽
	Supportive Environment	--	--

**Key:**

- ▲ Your students’ average was significantly higher ( $p < .05$ ) with an effect size at least .3 in magnitude.
- △ Your students’ average was significantly higher ( $p < .05$ ) with an effect size less than .3 in magnitude.
- No significant difference.
- ▽ Your students’ average was significantly lower ( $p < .05$ ) with an effect size less than .3 in magnitude.
- ▼ Your students’ average was significantly lower ( $p < .05$ ) with an effect size at least .3 in magnitude.

B) NSSE 2018

<b>Engagement Indicators</b>		Your students compared with Peers-Aspirants-AAU	
Theme	Engagement Indicator	First-year	Senior
Academic Challenge	Higher-Order Learning	▽	▽
	Reflective & Integrative Learning	▽	▽
	Learning Strategies	--	--
Learning with Peers	Quantitative Reasoning	--	▽
	Collaborative Learning	▽	--
	Discussions with Diverse Others	--	--
Experiences with Faculty	Student-Faculty Interaction	▽	--
	Effective Teaching Practices	▽	▽
Campus Environment	Quality of Interactions	--	▽
	Supportive Environment	--	--

**Key:**

- ▲ Your students’ average was significantly higher ( $p < .05$ ) with an effect size at least .3 in magnitude.
- △ Your students’ average was significantly higher ( $p < .05$ ) with an effect size less than .3 in magnitude.
- No significant difference.
- ▽ Your students’ average was significantly lower ( $p < .05$ ) with an effect size less than .3 in magnitude.
- ▼ Your students’ average was significantly lower ( $p < .05$ ) with an effect size at least .3 in magnitude.

Fig. 2. NSSE 2018 data on UConn student involvement in High Impact Practices.



## Appendices

### Appendix A. Action plan for changes to General Education at the University of Connecticut, 2017

A set of six actions are included in this action plan. For each action, we have specified a group responsible for promoting the action, a timeline, likely sources of support, and an outcome. These were developed by a team of seven individuals attending IGEA 2017, a summer institute on general education and assessment organized by the Association of American Colleges & Universities.

#### **Action: Propose cross-cutting themes**

*Purpose:* The purpose of this action is to take a step towards a more integrative General Education (GE) curriculum.

*Details:* The University Senate approved a recommendation of the 2015-2016 General Education Task Force that "...the possibility of changing the general education requirements [should be further investigated]." We propose a change from an entirely one-dimensional credit distribution structure to a framework comprising disciplines that are woven with cross-cutting themes. Currently we have four content areas (Arts and Humanities, Social Sciences, Natural Sciences, Diversity and Multiculturalism). We propose that Fine Arts be separated from Humanities into its own disciplinary area, resulting in four disciplinary areas including Social Sciences and Natural Sciences. We propose three cross-cutting themes that will enable students to integrate across these areas: Diversity & Multiculturalism, Environment & Sustainability, and Ethics & Civility. Aside from courses that solely offer the W and/or Q competency, GE courses will each contribute to one disciplinary area and one or more themes.

*When:* Discussions with stakeholders begin Fall Semester 2017.

*Who:* Senate charges an steering committee for GE changes. The steering committee will empanel working groups, each of which will be devoted to specific tasks. One of the working groups will focus on articulating the new framework for the GE curriculum. The steering committee maintains close communication with standing committees, especially GEOC, SCCC, and SSSC.

*Obstacles/Challenges:* Some college C&Cs (e.g. CLAS) may object to identification of Fine Arts as a distinct disciplinary area. Similarly, departments with substantial GE course offerings in the Diversity & Multiculturalism content area may feel their courses will have less visibility (and perhaps lower enrollment) if moved from the content areas to cross-cutting themes. Another consequence of the proposed change is that some courses may be deleted from the GE curriculum because they do not offer content consistent with a thematic area. These courses are mostly those whose prime function is to be foundational for a major. Students

in those majors may have to take additional courses to meet GE requirements. The changes may also complicate fulfillment of GE requirements by transfer students.

*Allies:* The students and faculty involved in the grassroots effort to add a sustainability requirement will be delighted with the proposal although they may wish for speedier implementation than we envision. The Senate, which charged GEOC to consider the requirement, will likely be supportive (with the possible exception of faculty with concerns mentioned in Obstacles/Challenges). Similarly, those calling for increased curricular attention to issues of Civility may find the new thematic area in Ethics and Civility an excellent addition. The School of Fine Arts will welcome increased attention for its courses. The Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning will support changes that reflect best practices.

*Outcomes:* The plan offers a redesigned GE curricular structure that updates, rather than replaces, the previous substantial revision of the mid-2000s. The redesign preserves representation of major disciplinary areas, restores Fine Arts as a disciplinary area in its own right, and leaves the GE competencies in their current form. The proposed changes bring the University into better company with respect to best practices in liberal education. Only 16% of US institutions of higher education retain a pure credit-distribution model for its GE curriculum; the remainder have curricula that provide more opportunity for among-course connections.

### **Action: Modify goals**

*Purpose:* This action is designed to clarify the purpose of GE.

*Details:* The University Senate approved a recommendation of the 2015-2016 General Education Task Force that “the broad goals of general education [be restated] with clearer and more forceful language.” Some of the stated goals of the GE curriculum lack clarity (e.g., 'acquire moral sensitivity'). The goals will be reviewed and revised where necessary.

*When:* Discussions with stakeholders will begin Fall Semester 2017.

*Who:* A working group focused on GE goals, learning outcomes, and assessment will be empaneled by the steering committee.

*Obstacles/Challenges:* No obstacles are envisaged for this action.

*Allies:* GEOC, CETL, advisors and others with an interest in curricular clarity will support this action.

*Outcomes:* GE goals will be articulated with greater meaning and clarity.

### **Action: Identify and align learning outcomes and rubrics.**

*Purpose:* The purpose of this action is to close the gap between the stated goals of GE and the outcomes we expect from the GE curriculum.



*Details:* The curriculum currently lacks assessable learning outcomes that are clearly connected to the general goals of GE. Without such learning outcomes and a regular program for assessment, there is no way to determine whether the curriculum is achieving its goals and there is no possibility for deliberate processes of improvement. We propose that a limited number of essential learning outcomes and a rubric for each outcome be developed for each goal, drawing where appropriate from resources developed by the Association of American Colleges & Universities. In particular, their [LEAP initiative](#) promotes a set of essential learning outcomes, and rubrics have been developed as part of their [VALUE](#) assessment approach. This may result in the addition of a Digital Literacy competency or theme.

*When:* Discussions with stakeholders will begin Spring Semester 2018.

*Who:* A working group focused on GE goals, learning outcomes, and assessment will be empaneled by the steering committee.

*Obstacles/Challenges:* This task is, by its nature, a challenging one that will require input from many stakeholders (including some with expertise in assessment). We might expect some faculty resistance in incorporating GE outcomes in their courses, especially if their current GE offerings do not seem to meet these outcomes.

*Allies:* GEOC, CETL, Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness, and the Center for Career Development will support this action.

*Outcomes:* GE learning outcomes will be clear and assessable, and will be clearly linked to the broader goals of GE.

**Action: Promote communication of goals, learning outcomes**

*Purpose:* The purpose of this action is to underscore the value of GE to students and faculty.

*Details:* The University Senate approved a recommendation of the 2015-2016 General Education Task Force that "...the values and the importance of general education [should be better communicated] to all constituencies involved, including students, faculty and advisors." Actions described above are important steps in this direction: the value of GE as a whole can only be recognized when its goals are clear. Additional steps must be taken to better identify the ways that individual courses contribute to the GE curriculum, which at present is often articulated only when the course is proposed. Several means of promoting recognition of and reflection on the roles that courses play in the curriculum will be proposed, such as adding a 'G' (e.g. ANTH 1000G) to the number of a course that contributed to a disciplinary area within GE, ensuring that GE goals and learning outcomes are included in the syllabus, and identifying the ways that assessment in the courses are aligned with GE learning outcomes. A communication plan that highlights the meaning and value of the program will be developed and implemented, for

instance by designing a website that effectively represents GE to students and faculty, while also providing a centralized location for GE course descriptions, thematic tie-ins, and requirements to be curated.

*When:* This action will begin in Fall 2017.

*Who:* A working group focused on communication will be empaneled by the steering committee.

*Obstacles/Challenges:* Creating and implementing a comprehensive communication plan will require considerable time. The primary obstacle to accomplishing this action is likely to be limited faculty time and funds to incentivize the effort.

*Allies:* CETL, Regional Campuses, Advisors, First Year Programs, Learning Communities, Academic Services Center will support this action.

*Outcomes:* GE will be communicated to multiple internal and external audiences.

### **Action: Increase opportunities for integration within the curriculum**

*Purpose:* The purpose of this action is to progress towards a GE program in which students are more intentional about course selection and make explicit connections among experiences.

*Details:* To reduce the degree to which completion of the GE curriculum represents burdensome box-checking, and to offset somewhat the introduction of new components to the curriculum, we propose interweaving disciplinary areas with thematic topics such as Diversity and Multiculturalism to enable more integration. We will seek innovation that explicitly promotes this integration. As one possibility, we will seek partners to create or modify minor programs of study that incorporate general education courses and include high impact practices such as capstone experiences and/or service learning.

*When:* After implementation of the redesigned GE curriculum (i.e., Fall 2019), revised minors can be proposed.

*Who:* A working group focused on high impact practices will be empaneled by the steering committee.

*Obstacles/Challenges:* It is uncertain how much faculty will be willing to innovate by developing these new minors. Funds for innovation such as the Provost Competition may provide some incentive for these developments.

*Allies:* Learning communities will be naturally supportive of innovations that support their topic areas.

*Outcomes:* Students will have greater understanding of the value of the GE curriculum, and innovative minors that incorporate GE courses will be developed.

**Action: Increase opportunities for student reflection.**

*Purpose:* The purpose of this action is to promote student awareness of the role that GE plays in their education and development as lifelong learners.

*Details:* We will investigate the use of e-portfolios and other high impact practices for GE courses.

*When:* Pilot studies will be conducted in the 2018-2019 academic year.

*Who:* A working group focused on high impact practices will be empaneled by the steering committee.

*Obstacles/Challenges:* Those who have implemented e-portfolios have indicated that platform selection, cost, and faculty willingness to adopt them are significant (but not insurmountable) challenges.

*Allies:* Groups dedicated to high impact best practices who will support this action include CETL, GEOC, OIRE, and FYP.

*Outcomes:* Students will reflect deeply on their GE learning, using tools such as e-portfolios.

Appendix B. NSSE items comprising Higher-Order Learning and Reflective & Integrative Learning Engagement Indicators.

NSSE 2016, First-year students. There were 730 respondents (557 full completions, 173 partial completions).

<b>Performance on Indicator Items</b>				
The table below displays how your students responded to each EI item, and the difference, in percentage points, between your students and those of your comparison group. Blue bars indicate how much <b>higher</b> your institution's percentage is from that of the comparison group. Orange bars indicate how much <b>lower</b> your institution's percentage is from that of the comparison group.				
Higher-Order Learning	UConn	Percentage point difference <sup>a</sup> between your FY students and		
		Carnegie Doctoral	AAU Public	Carnegie CompDocMed
<i>Percentage responding "Very much" or "Quite a bit" about how much coursework emphasized...</i>				
4b. Applying facts, theories, or methods to practical problems or new situations	74	-1	-0	-1
4c. Analyzing an idea, experience, or line of reasoning in depth by examining its parts	69	-3	-3	-4
4d. Evaluating a point of view, decision, or information source	61	-4	-3	-6
4e. Forming a new idea or understanding from various pieces of information	62	-4	-4	-6
<b>Reflective &amp; Integrative Learning</b>				
<i>Percentage of students who responded that they "Very often" or "Often"...</i>				
2a. Combined ideas from different courses when completing assignments	56	+1	-0	+1
2b. Connected your learning to societal problems or issues	49	-2	-2	-3
2c. Included diverse perspectives (political, religious, racial/ethnic, gender, etc.) in course discussions or assignments	44	-2	-3	-5
2d. Examined the strengths and weaknesses of your own views on a topic or issue	52	-8	-8	-9
2e. Tried to better understand someone else's views by imagining how an issue looks from his or her perspective	63	-3	-2	-3
2f. Learned something that changed the way you understand an issue or concept	64	-1	-0	-1
2g. Connected ideas from your courses to your prior experiences and knowledge	76	-0	-0	-0

NSSE 2016, Seniors. There were 1010 respondents (746 full completions, 264 partial completions).

<b>Performance on Indicator Items</b>		<i>Percentage point difference<sup>a</sup> between your seniors and</i>			
		<b>UConn</b>	<b>Carnegie Doctoral</b>	<b>AAU Public</b>	<b>Carnegie CompDocMed</b>
<b>Higher-Order Learning</b>					
<i>Percentage responding "Very much" or "Quite a bit" about how much coursework emphasized...</i>					
	%				
4b.	Applying facts, theories, or methods to practical problems or new situations	73	-4	-3	-5
4c.	Analyzing an idea, experience, or line of reasoning in depth by examining its parts	65	-9	-8	-9
4d.	Evaluating a point of view, decision, or information source	57	-7	-6	-8
4e.	Forming a new idea or understanding from various pieces of information	60	-7	-6	-8
<b>Reflective &amp; Integrative Learning</b>					
<i>Percentage of students who responded that they "Very often" or "Often"...</i>					
2a.	Combined ideas from different courses when completing assignments	71	-1	-0	-2
2b.	Connected your learning to societal problems or issues	57	-1	-0	-2
2c.	Included diverse perspectives (political, religious, racial/ethnic, gender, etc.) in course discussions or assignments	47	-1	-1	-2
2d.	Examined the strengths and weaknesses of your own views on a topic or issue	58	-4	-4	-5
2e.	Tried to better understand someone else's views by imagining how an issue looks from his or her perspective	63	-3	-3	-4
2f.	Learned something that changed the way you understand an issue or concept	67	-1	-1	-1
2g.	Connected ideas from your courses to your prior experiences and knowledge	78	-4	-3	-4

NSSE 2018, First-year students. There were 312 respondents (185 full completions, 127 partial completions).

**Performance on Indicator Items**

The table below displays how your students responded to each EI item, and the difference, in percentage points, between your students and those of your comparison group. Blue bars indicate how much higher your institution's percentage is from that of the comparison group. Dark red bars indicate how much lower your institution's percentage is from that of the comparison group.

	UConn	Percentage point difference <sup>a</sup> between your FY students and		
		Peers-Aspirants-AAU	US News Top Publics	Carnegie Class
<b>Higher-Order Learning</b>				
<i>Percentage responding "Very much" or "Quite a bit" about how much coursework emphasized...</i>				
	%			
4b. Applying facts, theories, or methods to practical problems or new situations	72	-4	-4	-2
4c. Analyzing an idea, experience, or line of reasoning in depth by examining its parts	66	-6	-6	-5
4d. Evaluating a point of view, decision, or information source	55	-11	-10	-11
4e. Forming a new idea or understanding from various pieces of information	59	-8	-7	-8
<b>Reflective &amp; Integrative Learning</b>				
<i>Percentage of students who responded that they "Very often" or "Often"...</i>				
2a. Combined ideas from different courses when completing assignments	49	-5	-4	-3
2b. Connected your learning to societal problems or issues	45	-8	-7	-6
2c. Included diverse perspectives (political, religious, racial/ethnic, gender, etc.) in course discussions or assignments	48	-3	-2	-2
2d. Examined the strengths and weaknesses of your own views on a topic or issue	56	-8	-7	-7
2e. Tried to better understand someone else's views by imagining how an issue looks from his or her perspective	66	-4	-3	-3
2f. Learned something that changed the way you understand an issue or concept	60	-8	-7	-7
2g. Connected ideas from your courses to your prior experiences and knowledge	74	-5	-5	-3



NSSE 2018, Seniors. There were 412 respondents (268 full completions, 144 partial completions)

**Performance on Indicator Items**

The table below displays how your students responded to each EI item, and the difference, in percentage points, between your students and those of your comparison group. Blue bars indicate how much higher your institution's percentage is from that of the comparison group. Dark red bars indicate how much lower your institution's percentage is from that of the comparison group.

	UConn	Percentage point difference <sup>a</sup> between your seniors and		
		Peers-Aspirants-AAU	US News Top Publics	Carnegie Class
<b>Higher-Order Learning</b>				
<i>Percentage responding "Very much" or "Quite a bit" about how much coursework emphasized...</i>				
	%			
4b. Applying facts, theories, or methods to practical problems or new situations	75	-3	-3	-2
4c. Analyzing an idea, experience, or line of reasoning in depth by examining its parts	63	-10	-10	-10
4d. Evaluating a point of view, decision, or information source	54	-9	-9	-11
4e. Forming a new idea or understanding from various pieces of information	58	-9	-8	-10
<b>Reflective &amp; Integrative Learning</b>				
<i>Percentage of students who responded that they "Very often" or "Often" ...</i>				
2a. Combined ideas from different courses when completing assignments	67	-3	-3	-1
2b. Connected your learning to societal problems or issues	53	-5	-5	-4
2c. Included diverse perspectives (political, religious, racial/ethnic, gender, etc.) in course discussions or assignments	45	-3	-3	-3
2d. Examined the strengths and weaknesses of your own views on a topic or issue	57	-7	-7	-7
2e. Tried to better understand someone else's views by imagining how an issue looks from his or her perspective	67	-4	-4	-4
2f. Learned something that changed the way you understand an issue or concept	67	-4	-4	-3
2g. Connected ideas from your courses to your prior experiences and knowledge	77	-6	-6	-5

## Appendix C. High-Impact Practices

### First-Year Seminars and Experiences

Many schools now build into the curriculum first-year seminars or other programs that bring small groups of students together with faculty or staff on a regular basis. The highest-quality first-year experiences place a strong emphasis on critical inquiry, frequent writing, information literacy, collaborative learning, and other skills that develop students' intellectual and practical competencies. First-year seminars can also involve students with cutting-edge questions in scholarship and with faculty members' own research.

### Common Intellectual Experiences

The older idea of a "core" curriculum has evolved into a variety of modern forms, such as a set of required common courses or a vertically organized general education program that includes advanced integrative studies and/or required participation in a learning community (see below). These programs often combine broad themes—e.g., technology and society, global interdependence—with a variety of curricular and cocurricular options for students.

### Learning Communities

The key goals for learning communities are to encourage integration of learning across courses and to involve students with "big questions" that matter beyond the classroom. Students take two or more linked courses as a group and work closely with one another and with their professors. Many learning communities explore a common topic and/or common readings through the lenses of different disciplines. Some deliberately link "liberal arts" and "professional courses"; others feature service learning.

### Writing-Intensive Courses

These courses emphasize writing at all levels of instruction and across the curriculum, including final-year projects. Students are encouraged to produce and revise various forms of writing for different audiences in different disciplines. The effectiveness of this repeated practice "across the curriculum" has led to parallel efforts in such areas as quantitative reasoning, oral communication, information literacy, and, on some campuses, ethical inquiry.

### Collaborative Assignments and Projects

Collaborative learning combines two key goals: learning to work and solve problems in the company of others, and sharpening one's own understanding by listening seriously to the insights of others, especially those with different backgrounds and life experiences. Approaches range from study groups within a course, to team-based assignments and writing, to cooperative projects and research.

### Undergraduate Research

Many colleges and universities are now providing research experiences for students in all disciplines. Undergraduate research, however, has been most prominently used in science disciplines. With strong support from the National Science Foundation and the research community, scientists are reshaping their courses to connect key concepts and questions with students' early and active involvement in systematic investigation and research. The goal is to involve students with actively contested questions, empirical observation, cutting-edge technologies, and the sense of excitement that comes from working to answer important questions.

### Diversity/Global Learning

Many colleges and universities now emphasize courses and programs that help students explore cultures, life experiences, and worldviews different from their own. These studies—which may address U.S. diversity, world cultures, or both—often explore "difficult differences" such as racial, ethnic, and gender inequality, or continuing struggles around the globe for human rights, freedom, and power. Frequently, intercultural studies are augmented by experiential learning in the community and/or by study abroad.

### ePortfolios

ePortfolios are the latest addition to AAC&U's list of high-impact educational practices, and higher education has developed a range of ways to implement them for teaching and learning, programmatic assessment, and career development. ePortfolios enable students to electronically collect their work over time, reflect upon their personal and academic growth, and then share selected items with others, such as professors, advisors, and potential employers. Because collection over time is a key element of the ePortfolio process, employing ePortfolios in collaboration with other high-impact practices provides opportunities for students to make connections between various educational experiences.

### Service Learning, Community-Based Learning

In these programs, field-based "experiential learning" with community partners is an instructional strategy—and often a required part of the course. The idea is to give students direct experience with issues they are studying in the curriculum and with ongoing efforts to analyze and solve problems in the community. A key element in these programs is the opportunity students have to both apply what they are learning in real-world settings and reflect in a classroom setting on their service experiences. These programs model the idea that giving something back to the community is an important college outcome, and that working with community partners is good preparation for citizenship, work, and life.

### Internships

Internships are another increasingly common form of experiential learning. The idea is to provide students with direct experience in a work setting—usually related to their career interests—and to give them the benefit of supervision and coaching from professionals in the field. If the internship is taken for course credit, students complete a project or paper that is approved by a faculty member.

### Capstone Courses and Projects

Whether they're called "senior capstones" or some other name, these culminating experiences require students nearing the end of their college years to create a project of some sort that integrates and applies what they've learned. The project might be a research paper, a performance, a portfolio of "best work," or an exhibit of artwork. Capstones are offered both in departmental programs and, increasingly, in general education as well.





Table 1

**Relationships between Selected High-Impact Activities, Deep Learning, and Self-Reported Gains**

	Deep Learning	Gains: General	Gains: Personal	Gains: Practical
<i>First-Year</i>				
Learning Communities	+++	++	++	++
Service Learning	+++	++	+++	+++
<i>Senior</i>				
Study Abroad	++	+	+	++
Student-Faculty Research	+++	++	++	++
Internships	++	++	++	++
Service Learning	+++	++	+++	+++
Senior Culminating Experience	+++	++	++	++

+ p<0.001, ++ p<0.001 & Unstd B > 0.10, +++ p<0.001 & Unstd B > 0.30

Table 2

**Relationships between Selected High-Impact Activities and Clusters of Effective Educational Practices**

	Level of Academic Challenge	Active and Collaborative Learning	Student-Faculty Interaction	Supportive Campus Environment
<i>First-Year</i>				
Learning Communities	+++	+++	+++	++
Service Learning	+++	+++	+++	+++
<i>Senior</i>				
Study Abroad	++	++	++	++
Student-Faculty Research	+++	+++	+++	++
Internships	++	+++	+++	++
Service Learning	+++	+++	+++	+++
Senior Culminating Experience	++	+++	+++	++

+ p<0.001, ++ p<0.001 & Unstd B > 0.10, +++ p<0.001 & Unstd B > 0.30

Source: *Ensuring Quality & Taking High-Impact Practices to Scale* by George D. Kuh and Ken O'Donnell, with Case Studies by Sally Reed. (Washington, DC: AAC&U, 2013). For information and more resources and research from LEAP, see [www.aacu.org/leap](http://www.aacu.org/leap).

## Appendix D. Essential Learning Outcomes for Topics of Inquiry, Integrative Experience, and Competencies

### Science Theory and Empirical Inquiry

*Courses in this topic help students to understand how scientific theories are constructed and are tested against data collected in the natural world and in social systems. Students will understand knowledge production as an interplay of data, hypotheses, and principles through direct application of the scientific method in the classroom, the lab, or the community.*

Learning goal 1: Students will be able to design an experiment suitable for scientific investigation to test a scientific hypothesis and interpret the results. For example:

- Utilize the basic language of science;
- Identify the unifying principles of science and demonstrate the application of them to contemporary issues of science, technology, and society;
- Understand and describe the scientific process;
- Appropriately handle and utilize instruments, glassware, or other laboratory tools;
- Understand the sequential nature of science and technology;
- Design and conduct scientific experiments, followed by analysis of results; or
- Logically derive and state valid conclusions from analyzed experimental data.

Learning goal 2: Students will be able to solve problems described verbally, graphically, symbolically, or numerically. For example:

- Utilize formulas, graphs, and tables for interpretation;
- Differentiate between scientific and non-scientific explanations;
- Distinguish between cause and effect;
- Examine information for alternative explanations and possible implications;
- Identify, analyze, and evaluate arguments;
- Analyze hypothetical or real scenarios to discern integrity of scientific claim;
- Recognize, use and appreciate scientific or technological thinking for solving problems that are part of everyday life; or
- Retrieve, organize, and analyze data associated with a scientific or technological model.
- Discuss and compare theories and methods of social scientific inquiry as they apply to the study of individuals and groups, the distribution of human and economic resources, and their importance in social problem solving and policy making
- Evaluate the role of geographic factors in shaping today's world

### Design, Innovation, and Creative Expression

*Design thinking involves developing one or more solutions to a well-defined problem. It represents one form of creativity, which can also involve expression in the form of fine arts or many forms of writing. Courses in this topic require higher-level thought processes that imagine new possibilities. Through the application of imaginative thought and activity, novel ideas, mechanisms, and products are conceived and/or produced.*

Learning outcome 1: Students will be able to demonstrate creation of novel intellectual output as an individual and/or as a member of a creative team. For example:

- Discuss the importance of creativity and ideation to individuals, organizations, society, and/or a field of study; and the role they play in problem-solving, communication, representation, and knowledge construction;

- Discuss creativity and ideation as behaviors;
- Discuss impediments to creativity and ideation;
- Assess aesthetic production as a way of knowing and representing lived experience;
- Evaluate within a conceptual framework, within a set of externally defined constraints, and/or within a creative process methodology;
- Receive and respond to criticism and other external review to generate meaningful, defensible revisions;
- Evaluate how the interpretation of works of art may be influenced by the social and cultural environment and change through time;
- Create an intellectual output in the form of a literary, performative, visual, entrepreneurial, artistic and/or technical design output; or
- Demonstrate an appreciation of how the fine arts enriches lives, and incorporate creative and imaginative endeavors in their daily practices.
- Make informed judgments about art forms from various including their own culture;
- Critically appreciate historical and contemporary fine art forms as they relate to individual and social needs and values;
- Apply knowledge of historical, social, and cultural influences to understanding a work of art;
- Interpret expressions and artifacts based on the cultural, intellectual, and historical contexts;
- Develop arguments, ideas, and opinions about forms of human expression;
- Create or interpret artistic works;
- Explain and assess the changing perspectives on the meanings of arts and humanities traditions;
- Explore one's own identity within prior and current intellectual, aesthetic, and cultural frameworks.

### Individual Values and Social Institutions

*Informed citizenship and leadership call on an appreciation of how society is organized on multiple scales, from individual values and actions to social institutions and economic systems. Courses in this topic include studies of ethics, epistemology, psychology, social systems, and economics.*

Learning outcome 1: Students will be able to develop and apply knowledge of social responsibility and ethical behavior. For example:

- Demonstrate sensitivity, openness to competing ideas and perspectives, and the use of objective reasoning, independent thinking, critical analysis, and reasoned inquiry to support group decision-making, policy adoption, or conflict resolution in approaching ethical problems;
- Differentiate between moral and other kinds of problems and how values are formed, transmitted, and modified;
- Apply ethical and philosophical decision-making processes and theories;
- Explain the historical and philosophical bases of ethical decision-making and social responsibility;
- Demonstrate the ability to make personal and professional decisions by applying knowledge and skills obtained from the study of ethics and theories of social responsibility; and

- Articulate how a personal ethical framework and knowledge of social responsibility shape personal actions.
- Recognize themselves as participants in a particular culture and see how this affects their experiences and values;
- Discuss the origins, organization, and/or operation of the political and/or governmental functions of the United States of America;
- Evaluate the origins and processes of political, social, and/or economic institutions in the context of a dynamic global community;
- Critically examine how individuals are influenced by current and previous political, social, economic, and/or family institutions; including how society constructs race, class, gender, sexuality and ability;
- Discuss and compare theories and methods of social scientific inquiry as they apply to the study of individuals and groups, the distribution of human and economic resources, and their importance in social problem solving and policy making.
- Compare the formation and durability of political, economic, and social organizing principles and their differences and similarities across contexts;
- Explain the political, economic, and social trade-offs reflected in individual decisions and societal policymaking and enforcement and their similarities and differences across contexts.
- Explain the political, economic, and social trade-offs reflected in individual decisions and societal policymaking and enforcement and their similarities and differences across contexts.

### Environmental Literacy

*This topic has recently been defined at UConn as “the ability to understand, and articulate perspectives on, the interactions between human society and the natural world, as well as the challenges of environmental stewardship.” Courses in this topic examine how human activities and policies impact the natural world, and conversely how the natural world affects human well-being; they also examine how human-environment interactions are represented culturally and artistically.*

Learning outcome 1: Students will be able to articulate and demonstrate the experiences, knowledge, and skills needed to address local and global environmental challenges and to be stewards of the land. For example:

- Demonstrate a holistic understanding of the interactions between natural and cultural systems within the global environment;
- Use academic tools to measure human impact on the environment;
- Apply academic knowledge through independent or collaborative projects that foster stewardship;
- Demonstrate proficiency in the writing, speaking, and critical thinking skills needed to assess environmental issues and proposed solutions; or
- Demonstrate a commitment to environmental stewardship.
- Demonstrate an understanding of comprehensive systemic analysis across both physical and behavioral dimensions involving society, the environment, and the economy;
- Define basic sustainability concepts such as homeostasis, carrying-capacity, cradle-to-grave recycling, evolutionary processes, inter-generational debt, socio-political

adaptation, climate change, ecosystem services, and environmental justice—and articulate the relationships between them;

- Assess the ways that sustainability topics are approached by a diversity of academic disciplines;
- Identify how globalized processes impact socioecological systems;
- Analyze the role of environmental sustainability in the promotion of comprehensive justice and equity;
- Create sustainable solutions and build resilient communities;
- Utilize the appropriate methodological tools to analyze and address specific research questions; or
- Articulate a comprehensive worldview that integrates diverse approaches to sustainability.
- Evaluate the origins and processes of political, social, and/or economic institutions in the context of a dynamic global community;
- Evaluate the role of geographic factors in shaping today’s world;
- Discuss and compare theories and methods of social scientific inquiry as they apply to the study of individuals and groups, the distribution of human and economic resources, and their importance in social problem solving and policy making.
- Compare the formation and durability of political, economic, and social organizing principles and their differences and similarities across contexts;
- Explain the political, economic, and social trade-offs reflected in individual decisions and societal policymaking and enforcement and their similarities and differences across contexts.

### Cultural Foundations

*Human cultures are sets of customs and artistic expressions shaped by history. Courses in this topic promote understanding of a culture through examination of its literary and artistic expressions, its achievements, and its past.*

Learning outcome 1: Students will be able to analyze cultural artifacts and achievements of a given society in their historical and socio-political context through an understanding of a broad array of historical actors, cultures and beliefs. For example:

- Explain how social, political, cultural and historical contexts affect individual and group lives and experiences.
- Describe the influence of past events, political, religious, and/or cultural movements on the current state of affairs in U.S. society.
- Identify a wide range of viewpoints, experiences, values, and ways of knowing, including their own indigenous cultural perspective, while also recognizing commonality in the human experience
- Apply the study of culture through empirical methods and the development of theory; articulate interpretive systems and/or social constructions as cultural constructs.
- Critically evaluate at least one major period in history by explaining the factors (such as political, demographic, geographic, social, cultural, and/or technological) that influenced the thoughts and/or actions of citizens, immigrants, and indigenous people.
- Compare and contrast the meaning of major texts from both Western or non-Western cultures.

- Recognize themselves as participants in a particular culture and see how this affects their experiences and values. Explore one's own identity within prior and current intellectual, aesthetic, and cultural frameworks.
- Make informed judgments about art forms from various cultures, including their own.
- Critically appreciate historical and contemporary fine art forms as they relate to individual and social needs and values.
- Apply knowledge of historical, social, and cultural influences to understanding works of art.
- Critically examine how individuals are influenced by current and previous political, social, economic, and/or family institutions; including how society constructs race, class, gender, sexuality and ability;
- Evaluate the role of geographic factors in shaping cultural expression.
- Compare native cultural constructs such as systems of power, to those of other countries or communities.
- Develop arguments, ideas, and opinions about forms of human expression.
- Evaluate the origins and processes of political, social, and/or economic institutions in the context of a dynamic global community;

### Diversity, Equity and Social Justice

*Participating in society means acquiring knowledge and understanding of the world beyond our immediate experience and culture, showing consideration and understanding for human and cultural diversity, and examining our own lives in a global context. These courses present diverse identities and perspectives and critically examine how social dynamics, including those of power and privilege, shape a range of life experiences. Students will engage with difference, consider how social agents construct pathways to equity and inclusion, and apply theory to local, national, and/or global contexts.*

Learning outcome 1: Students will be able to investigate the diversity of human experience *within the United States*, considering, for example, age, culture, disability, ethnicity, gender, language, race, religion, sexual orientation, and social class, and appreciate the contributions of different social groups, along with articulating the effects the past has had on present day circumstances, perceptions, and disparities. For example:

- Discuss the diversity of U.S. human experience through an examination of human cultures and/or artifacts;
- Critically review pertinent information and assertions for relevance, bias, stereotyping, manipulation and thoroughness;
- Discuss and compare theories of the U.S. human condition and ethics, as well as moral, religious, and/or political beliefs;
- Articulate differences between personal, social, and institutional bias and discrimination.
- Consider a range of strategies, approaches and rationales for creating environments of equity and inclusion.
- Identify issues of human or civil rights, and dynamics of social, political and/or economic power within rights struggles. Identify important actors in those struggles.
- Identify contributions that minoritized groups have made to the greater good of the nation.

- Explore one's own identity within prior and current intellectual, aesthetic, social, and cultural frameworks.
- Explore the ethics, impact and history of activism and social justice work, when organized to address inequities the treatment of people based on race, gender, ethnicity, class, sexuality, ability, etc.
- Articulate histories of legal and extralegal exclusion and social stratification, the dynamics of privilege that these afford, and disparities that these create.
- Discuss and compare theories and methods of social scientific inquiry as they apply to the study of individuals and groups, the distribution of human and economic resources, and their importance in social problem solving and policy making.
- Explain the political, economic, and social trade-offs reflected in societal policymaking and enforcement and their similarities and differences across contexts.

**Learning outcome 2:** Students will be able to examine the variety of perspectives *in the global community*, distinguish their own cultural patterns, and respond flexibly to multiple worldviews. For example:

- Discuss the diversity of global human experience through an examination of human cultures and/or artifacts;
- Analyze global cultural artifacts and achievements in their historical and socio-political context through an understanding of a broad array of actors, cultures and beliefs;
- Identify a wide range of viewpoints, experiences, values, and ways of knowing, including students' own indigenous cultural perspective, while also recognizing commonality in the human experience;
- Compare constructions of race, ethnicity, class, gender, sexuality and ability from cultures abroad, with those of the U.S.
- Describe international collaborations to address global human rights concerns; consider why global inequalities persist and what interventions are warranted.
- Critically review pertinent information and assertions for relevance, bias, stereotyping, manipulation and thoroughness;
- Explain how social, political, cultural and historical contexts affect individual and group lives and experiences;
- Evaluate current global cultural, political, religious and societal activities in light of their historical roots;
- Discuss and compare theories of the global human condition and ethics, as well as moral, religious, and/or political beliefs;
- Critically examine how individuals are influenced by current and previous political, social, economic, and/or family institutions; including how society constructs race, class, gender, sexuality and ability;
- Discuss and compare theories and methods of social scientific inquiry as they apply to the study of individuals and groups, the distribution of human and economic resources, and their importance in social problem solving and policy making
- Explain the political, economic, and social trade-offs reflected in individual decisions and societal policymaking and enforcement and their similarities and differences across contexts

Integrative experience

Students will participate in an integrative experience. This may be a multidisciplinary course, a capstone course in the major or alternative integrative experience, such as service learning, internship, or education abroad. The integrative experience allows a student to reflect on their education and synthesize the knowledge and skills gained through The Curriculum courses and major. The integrative experience promotes thinking within or across disciplines to generate original ideas and to find new ways to perception and expression. With such capabilities, students can produce new knowledge that promotes innovation in societal and industrial practices. Inherent in this goal is establishing integration across multiple courses and experiences. Through the integrative experience, students will:

- connect previous knowledge to new content areas and modes of inquiry,
- experience learning both in and out of the classroom, and
- assess how their learning has evolved and developed.



Appendix E. Draft Plan of Study sheet for proposed model.

Topics of inquiry:

Students take at least seven courses, comprising one course in each topic and at least three courses in one topic

Selected courses represent at least 6 subject areas

Scientific Theory & Empirical inquiry topic must include one lab course except for students who have taken a lab course in Biological or Physical Sciences

Subject	Course #	Science, Theory, and Empirical Inquiry	Design, Innovation and Creativity	Individual Values & Social Institutions	Environmental Literacy	Cultural Foundations	Diversity Inclusion, & Social Justice

Integrative experience:

Three credits in a course that highlights connections among disciplines, and/or a service-learning course, internship, education abroad, or a capstone course.

Subject	Course #

Reasoning:

Three credits in a course, which may be a Topics course, that emphasizes logic and/or critical thinking.

Subject	Course #

Quantitative Competency:

Two Q courses, at least one in MATH or STAT, may be Topics courses

Subject	Course #	MATH or STAT

Second Language Competency:

If no single language completed through at least third year in high school, pass second semester of first-year sequence

Subject	Course #

Composition:

Two W courses, at least one in the major; may be Topics courses.

Subject	Course #	In major	W

Information and Digital Literacy:

One course, may be combined with any other component.

Subject	Course #

Appendix F. Survey distributed to faculty and staff.

# UConn General Education Survey (Staff/Faculty)

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The General Education Redesign Committee would like your opinion as we prepare a proposal to update UConn's General Education curriculum so as to better prepare students for the 21st century. The survey should take approximately 5 minutes of your time. Your responses will be confidential and anonymous, and the the data will be securely stored in digital format and password protected. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact [eric.schultz@uconn.edu](mailto:eric.schultz@uconn.edu).

Please indicate whether you are:

- Staff (1)
  - Faculty (2)
- 

Please indicate your primary department **or** program.

---

Please indicate your primary campus.

- Avery Point (1)
  - Hartford (2)
  - Stamford (3)
  - Storrs (4)
  - Waterbury (5)
  - Other (6)
-

In our current Gen Ed curriculum, all students who get bachelor's degrees take courses in these categories:

**Content Areas:**

- Content Area 1 **Arts & Humanities** (definition is at <https://geoc.uconn.edu/group-one-arts-and-humanities/>)
- Content Area 2 **Social Sciences** (definition is at <https://geoc.uconn.edu/group-two-social-sciences/>)
- Content Area 3 **Science and Technology** (definition is at <https://geoc.uconn.edu/group-three-science-and-technology/>)
- Content Area 4 **Diversity and Multiculturalism** (definition is at <https://geoc.uconn.edu/group-four-diversity-and-multiculturalism/>)

**Competencies:**

- **Writing** competency (<https://geoc.uconn.edu/writing-competency/>)
- **Quantitative** competency (<https://geoc.uconn.edu/quantitative-competency/>)
- **Second Language** competency (<https://geoc.uconn.edu/second-language-competency/>)
- **Information Literacy** (<https://geoc.uconn.edu/info-literacy-assessment-and-outcomes/>)
- **Environmental Literacy** (For all students following the Fall 2019 catalog requirements)(<https://geoc.uconn.edu/https-geoc-uconn-edu-criteria-environmental-literacy/>).

---

With the following statements, please give us your opinion about our current Gen Ed curriculum.

---

The goals of General Education (see <https://geoc.uconn.edu/criteria/>) are familiar and easy to understand.

- Strongly agree (5)
  - Somewhat agree (4)
  - Neither agree nor disagree (3)
  - Somewhat disagree (2)
  - Strongly disagree (1)
-

The General Education curriculum, along with courses in the major, prepares students for their careers and role in society.

- Strongly agree (5)
  - Somewhat agree (4)
  - Neither agree nor disagree (3)
  - Somewhat disagree (2)
  - Strongly disagree (1)
- 

The definition and purpose of the content areas are clear.

- Strongly agree (5)
  - Somewhat agree (4)
  - Neither agree nor disagree (3)
  - Somewhat disagree (2)
  - Strongly disagree (1)
- 

Students are able to take courses within each requirement based on their interests.

- Strongly agree (5)
  - Somewhat agree (4)
  - Neither agree nor disagree (3)
  - Somewhat disagree (2)
  - Strongly disagree (1)
-

**We are planning to propose a curriculum structure based on themes that we call Topics of Inquiry. Some topics are similar to our current structure and some are new. There is overlap among topics. Please read the descriptions of each topic and respond.**

---

**Topic 1:**

Science, Theory, and Empirical Inquiry: Courses in this topic help students to understand how scientific theories are constructed and are tested against data collected in the natural world and in social systems. Students will understand knowledge production as an interplay of data, hypothesis, and principles through direct application of the scientific method in the classroom, the lab, or the community. This topic must include one lab course except for those students who have taken a lab course in Biological or Physical Sciences.

---

The definition of this topic and its purpose are clear.

- Strongly agree (5)
  - Somewhat agree (4)
  - Neither agree nor disagree (3)
  - Somewhat disagree (2)
  - Strongly disagree (1)
- 

This topic makes an important contribution to General Education.

- Strongly agree (1)
  - Somewhat agree (2)
  - Neither agree nor disagree (3)
  - Strongly disagree (5)
  - Somewhat disagree (4)
-

## Topic 2:

**Design, Innovation, and Creative Expression:** Design thinking involves developing one or more solutions to a well-defined problem. It represents one form of creativity, which can also involve expression in the form of fine arts or many forms of writing. Courses in this topic require higher-level thought processes that imagine new possibilities. Through the application of imaginative thought and activity, novel ideas, mechanisms, and products are conceived and/or produced.

---

The definition of this topic and its purpose are clear.

- Strongly agree (5)
  - Somewhat agree (4)
  - Neither agree nor disagree (3)
  - Somewhat disagree (2)
  - Strongly disagree (1)
- 

This topic makes an important contribution to General Education.

- Strongly agree (5)
  - Somewhat agree (4)
  - Neither agree nor disagree (3)
  - Somewhat disagree (2)
  - Strongly disagree (1)
- 

## Topic 3:

**Individual Values and Social Institutions:** Informed citizenship and leadership call on an appreciation of how society is organized on multiple scales, from individual values



and actions to social institutions and economic systems. Courses in this topic include studies of ethics, epistemology, psychology, social systems, and economics.

---

The definition of this topic and its purpose are clear.

- Strongly agree (5)
  - Somewhat agree (4)
  - Neither agree nor disagree (3)
  - Somewhat disagree (2)
  - Strongly disagree (1)
- 

This topic makes an important contribution to General Education.

- Strongly agree (5)
  - Somewhat agree (4)
  - Neither agree nor disagree (3)
  - Somewhat disagree (2)
  - Strongly disagree (1)
- 

#### **Topic 4:**

**Environmental Literacy:** This topic has recently been defined at UConn as “the ability to understand, and articulate perspectives on the interactions between human society and the natural world as well as the challenges of environmental stewardship.” Courses in this topic examine how human activities and policies impact the natural world, and conversely how the natural world affects human well-being; they also examine how human-environment interactions are represented culturally and artistically.

The definition of this topic and its purpose are clear.

- Strongly agree (5)
  - Somewhat agree (4)
  - Neither agree nor disagree (3)
  - Somewhat disagree (2)
  - Strongly disagree (1)
- 

This topic makes an important contribution to General Education.

- Strongly agree (5)
  - Somewhat agree (4)
  - Neither agree nor disagree (3)
  - Somewhat disagree (2)
  - Strongly disagree (1)
- 

**Topic 5:**

**Cultural Foundations:** Human cultures are sets of customs and artistic expressions shaped by history. Courses in this topic promote an understanding of culture through examination of its literary and artistic expressions, its achievements, and its past.

---

The definition of this topic and its purpose are clear.

- Strongly agree (5)
  - Somewhat agree (4)
  - Neither agree nor disagree (3)
  - Somewhat disagree (2)
  - Strongly disagree (1)
- 

This topic makes an important contribution to General Education.

- Strongly agree (5)
  - Somewhat agree (4)
  - Neither agree nor disagree (3)
  - Somewhat disagree (2)
  - Strongly disagree (1)
- 

**Topic 6:**

**Diversity, Equity and Social Justice:** These courses present diverse identities and perspectives and critically examine how social dynamics shape a range of life experiences. Students will engage with difference, consider how social agents construct pathways to equity and inclusion, and apply theory to local, national, and/or global contexts.

---

The definition of this topic and its purpose are clear.

- Strongly agree (5)
  - Somewhat agree (4)
  - Neither agree nor disagree (3)
  - Somewhat disagree (2)
  - Strongly disagree (1)
- 

This topic makes an important contribution to General Education.

- Strongly agree (5)
  - Somewhat agree (4)
  - Neither agree nor disagree (3)
  - Somewhat disagree (2)
  - Strongly disagree (1)
- 

### **Questions about the structure of the proposed curriculum**

Presently students can complete the Content Area and Environmental Literacy part of the General Education curriculum in as few as seven courses for a total of 21 credits. We propose that students cover the above-mentioned topics in as few as seven courses for a total of 21 credits in this way:

- At least one course in each topic (going broad)
- At least three courses in one topic (going deep)

This could be accomplished in seven courses because courses can be designated for more than one topic.

The seven courses should represent least six different subject areas (e.g. ENGL, BIOL)

The table below is an example of the topics proposed for the new Gen Ed curriculum.

---

## Proposed New Gen Ed Curriculum Template

Course	Scientific Theory and Empiricism	Design, Innovation and Creativity	Individuals and Institutions	Environmental Literacy	Cultural Foundations	Diversity, Equity and Social Justice

---

This is a better way to encourage breadth of knowledge.

- Strongly agree (5)
- Somewhat agree (4)
- Neither agree nor disagree (3)
- Somewhat disagree (2)
- Strongly disagree (1)

---

This is a better way to encourage depth of understanding and diversity of approaches

- Strongly agree (5)
  - Somewhat agree (4)
  - Neither agree nor disagree (3)
  - Somewhat disagree (2)
  - Strongly disagree (1)
-

This is a better way to give students more autonomy in their educational development.

- Strongly agree (5)
  - Somewhat agree (4)
  - Neither agree nor disagree (3)
  - Somewhat disagree (2)
  - Strongly disagree (1)
- 

This is a better way to give students more flexibility to explore a topic of interest than the current Content Areas structure.

- Strongly agree (5)
- Somewhat agree (4)
- Neither agree nor disagree (3)
- Somewhat disagree (2)
- Strongly disagree (1)

**We propose that the curriculum includes one Integrative Experience, defined as an opportunity to make connections among subjects (via a multidisciplinary course or a capstone course), or to make connections between curricular, co-curricular or extracurricular activities (via an internship, service learning, or education abroad course).**

---

An integrative experience is a valuable addition to the General Education curriculum.

- Strongly agree (5)
  - Somewhat agree (4)
  - Neither agree nor disagree (3)
  - Somewhat disagree (2)
  - Strongly disagree (1)
- 

Requiring a multidisciplinary course, capstone course, internship, service learning or education abroad course is a good way to promote integrative experience in the curriculum.

- Strongly agree (5)
  - Somewhat agree (4)
  - Neither agree nor disagree (3)
  - Somewhat disagree (2)
  - Strongly disagree (1)
- 

Please feel free to share any additional comments or ideas you have about General Education at UConn.

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If you would like to be involved in the development of a new general education model at UConn, please provide your name and email.

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## Appendix G. Survey distributed to students



## General Education Survey (Students)

The General Education Redesign Committee would like your opinion as we prepare a proposal to update UConn's General Education curriculum so as to better prepare students for the 21st century. Respondents who wish to do so, will be entered into a raffle to win one of five \$50 Amazon gift cards. The survey should take approximately 5 minutes of your time. Your responses will be confidential and anonymous, and the data will be securely stored in digital format and password protected. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact [eric.schultz@uconn.edu](mailto:eric.schultz@uconn.edu).

Please indicate your primary department **or** your major.

---

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Please indicate your primary campus.

- Avery Point
  - Hartford
  - Stamford
  - Storrs
  - Waterbury
  - Other
-

In our **current** Gen Ed curriculum all students who get bachelor's degrees take courses in these categories:

Content Areas:

- Content Area 1: **Arts & Humanities** ([Click here for definition](#))
- Content Area 2: **Social Sciences** ([Click here for definition](#))
- Content Area 3: **Science and Technology** ([Click here for definition](#))
- Content Area 4: **Diversity and Multiculturalism** ([Click here for definition](#))

Competencies:

- **Writing** Competency ([Click here for definition](#))
- **Quantitative** Competency ([Click here for definition](#))
- **Second Language** Competency ([Click here for definition](#))
- **Information Literacy** Competency ([Click here for definition](#))
- **Environmental Literacy** (for students coming to UConn beginning Fall 2019 students) ([Click here for definition](#))

---

The purpose of general education is to ensure that all University of Connecticut undergraduate students:

- Become articulate
- Acquire intellectual breadth and versatility
- Acquire critical judgment
- Acquire moral sensitivity
- Acquire awareness of their era and society
- Acquire consciousness of the diversity of human culture and experience
- Acquire a working understanding of the processes by which they can continue to acquire and use knowledge

**With the following statements, please give us your opinion about our current Gen Ed curriculum.**

---

The [definition and purpose](#) of the content areas is clear.

- Strongly agree
  - Somewhat agree
  - Neither agree nor disagree
  - Somewhat disagree
  - Strongly disagree
- 

The goals of General Education are familiar and easy to understand.

- Strongly agree
  - Somewhat agree
  - Neither agree nor disagree
  - Somewhat disagree
  - Strongly disagree
- 

Students are able to take courses within each area based on their interests.

- Strongly agree
  - Somewhat agree
  - Neither agree nor disagree
  - Somewhat disagree
  - Strongly disagree
-

The General Education curriculum, along with courses in the major, prepares students for their careers and role in society.

- Strongly agree
  - Somewhat agree
  - Neither agree nor disagree
  - Somewhat disagree
  - Strongly disagree
- 

**We are planning to propose a curriculum structure based on themes that we call Topics of Inquiry. Please read the descriptions of each topic and let us know your thoughts.**

---

**Topic 1:**

**Science, Theory, and Empirical Inquiry:** Courses in this topic will help students to understand how scientific theories are constructed and tested in the classroom, the lab, or the community.

---

The definition of this topic and its purpose are clear.

- Strongly agree
  - Somewhat agree
  - Neither agree nor disagree
  - Somewhat disagree
  - Strongly disagree
-

This topic makes an important contribution to General Education.

- Strongly agree
  - Somewhat agree
  - Neither agree nor disagree
  - Somewhat disagree
  - Strongly disagree
- 

**Topic 2:**

**Design, Innovation, and Creative Expression:** Courses in this topic will focus on forms of creativity that can be expressed through the application of imaginative thought, ideas and activity which lead to the creation of new mechanisms or products.

---

The definition of this topic and its purpose are clear.

- Strongly agree
  - Somewhat agree
  - Neither agree nor disagree
  - Somewhat disagree
  - Strongly disagree
-

This topic makes an important contribution to General Education.

- Strongly agree
  - Somewhat agree
  - Neither agree nor disagree
  - Somewhat disagree
  - Strongly disagree
- 

**Topic 3:**

**Individual Values and Social Institutions:** Courses in this topic will focus on how society is organized and the role of its citizenry, from individual values and actions to social institutions and economic systems.

---

The definition of this topic and its purpose are clear.

- Strongly agree
  - Somewhat agree
  - Neither agree nor disagree
  - Somewhat disagree
  - Strongly disagree
-

This topic makes an important contribution to General Education.

- Strongly agree
  - Somewhat agree
  - Neither agree nor disagree
  - Somewhat disagree
  - Strongly disagree
- 

**Topic 4:**

**Environmental Literacy:** Courses in this topic will examine the impact of human activities and policies on the natural world, and how the natural world affects human well-being. They will also examine how human-environment interactions are represented culturally and artistically.

---

The definition of this topic and its purpose are clear.

- Strongly agree
  - Somewhat agree
  - Neither agree nor disagree
  - Somewhat disagree
  - Strongly disagree
-

This topic makes an important contribution to General Education.

- Strongly agree
  - Somewhat agree
  - Neither agree nor disagree
  - Somewhat disagree
  - Strongly disagree
- 

**Topic 5:**

**Cultural Foundations:** Courses in this topic will look at human cultures, including their customs and artistic expressions, as they have been shaped by history.

---

The definition of this topic and its purpose are clear.

- Strongly agree
  - Somewhat agree
  - Neither agree nor disagree
  - Somewhat disagree
  - Strongly disagree
-



This topic makes an important contribution to General Education.

- Strongly agree
  - Somewhat agree
  - Neither agree nor disagree
  - Somewhat disagree
  - Strongly disagree
- 

**Topic 6:**

**Diversity, Equity and Social Justice:** These courses will focus on diverse identities and perspectives, and examine how social dynamics shape a range of life experiences. Students will engage with difference, consider how social agents construct pathways to equity and inclusion, and apply theory to local, national, and/or global contexts.

---

The definition of this topic and its purpose are clear.

- Strongly agree
  - Somewhat agree
  - Neither agree nor disagree
  - Somewhat disagree
  - Strongly disagree
-

This topic makes an important contribution to General Education.

- Strongly agree
  - Somewhat agree
  - Neither agree nor disagree
  - Somewhat disagree
  - Strongly disagree
- 

### **Questions about the structure of the proposed curriculum**

Presently students can complete the Content Area and Environmental Literacy part of the General Education curriculum in as few as seven courses totalling 21 total credits. We propose that students cover the above-mentioned topics in as few as seven courses totaling 21 total credits in this way:

- At least one course in each topic (going broad)
- At least three courses in one topic (going deep)

This could be accomplished in seven courses because courses can be designated for more than one topic. The seven courses should represent least six different subject areas (e.g. ENGL, BIOL). The table below is an example of the topics proposed for the new Gen Ed curriculum.

---

## Proposed New Gen Ed Curriculum Template

Course	Scientific Theory and Empiricism	Design, Innovation and Creativity	Individuals and Institutions	Environmental Literacy	Cultural Foundations	Diversity, Equity and Social Justice

---

This is a better way to encourage breadth of knowledge.

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Strongly disagree

---

This is a better way to encourage depth of understanding and diversity of approaches.

- Strongly agree
  - Somewhat agree
  - Neither agree nor disagree
  - Somewhat disagree
  - Strongly disagree
-

This is a better way to give students more autonomy in their educational development.

- Strongly agree
  - Somewhat agree
  - Neither agree nor disagree
  - Somewhat disagree
  - Strongly disagree
- 

This is a better way to give students more flexibility to explore a topic of interest than the current Content Areas structure.

- Strongly agree
  - Somewhat agree
  - Neither agree nor disagree
  - Somewhat disagree
  - Strongly disagree
- 

We propose that the curriculum includes one **Integrative Experience** which can be fulfilled by taking a multidisciplinary course, a capstone course, or through a co-curricular activity such as an [internship](#), a [service learning](#) course or an [Education Abroad](#) experience.

---

An integrative experience is a valuable addition to the General Education curriculum.

- Strongly agree
  - Somewhat agree
  - Neither agree nor disagree
  - Somewhat disagree
  - Strongly disagree
- 

Requiring a multidisciplinary course, capstone course, internship, service learning or education abroad course is a good way to promote integrative experience in the curriculum.

- Strongly agree
  - Somewhat agree
  - Neither agree nor disagree
  - Somewhat disagree
  - Strongly disagree
- 

Please feel free to share any additional comments or ideas you may have about General Education at UConn.

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If you would like to be involved in the development of a new general education model at UConn, please provide your name and email.

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If you would like to be entered into the raffle for the Amazon \$50 gift card, please provide your name and email.

---

## Appendix H. Faculty and staff responses to 'Please feel free to share any additional comments or ideas you have about General Education at UConn'

(1) I do not think the "three courses in one topic" requirement will adequately encourage or provide depth of study into the topic. I see two scenarios as more likely reactions from students: (1a) A student covers 3+ course in a topic that are already required by their major (such as a biology student taking several biology classes). In this scenario, no extra depth is promoted. (1b) A student takes three introductory courses that cover a topic (such as taking one chemistry, biology, and physics course). In my opinion, this is still more "breadth" than "depth" as the students will never see more than an introductory approach to any given topic. Suggestion: Require the "depth" topic to be different from the student's major. Additionally, it would be nice to require one "sequel" or "non-introductory" course in the "depth" topic, to ensure the students really are seeing something deeper than an introduction. (2) Encouraging flexibility, the ability to take courses that students are interested in, and multidisciplinary courses really depends on the availability of courses that qualify for a Gen Ed requirement or multidisciplinary requirement. For example, will every biology class count towards topic 3? Or just certain classes? As for multidisciplinary courses, I am not very familiar with how many such courses currently exist. It sounds great, but for all I know the students will be forced to choose between only two such courses being run that semester, neither of which may interest the student. Suggestion: Provide more guidelines about what kind of courses qualify for which topic, and especially for which courses qualify as multidisciplinary. A multidisciplinary requirement would only be a good thing if the students have a good number of options to choose from.

1) The definition of "cultural" in the Cultural Foundations topic seems to reflect a 19th century definition in which humans could be slotted into distinct (and perhaps internally monolithic) cultural groupings. This understanding fails to align with the much more nuanced definition of culture that now prevails in the social sciences and humanities. According to anthropologists, for instance, culture is defined not only in terms of history and cultural products but also the many layers of political, economic, social, ideological, etc. context that shape human experience. Moreover, humans are part of multiple, concurrent cultural dynamics. 2) The Individual Values and Social Institutions topic is very weird to me. If the goal were to look at how individual values and social institutions influence one another, that would be quite relevant and useful. But I don't think that's what's intended here? And if politics (at least in the sense of political behavior) were included along with economics and psychology, that would make sense. But including economics and psychology but excluding politics just confuses me. What exactly is this all about? I can't tell. 3) I'm also perplexed by the Design/Innovation/Creativity topic. What fits? What doesn't? What's the core here? And will this component eliminate the expectation that students will be competent writers when they graduate? That's not something that should be sacrificed under any circumstances -- and some students already struggle with this. (This semester, for instance, I'm teaching several seniors who cannot write competently.) 4) The interdisciplinary course/capstone/synthesize your extracurriculars bit is also confusing. What's the crux of this piece? And, crucially: who will supervise it?

1. Most of the social sciences could fit under the description of the Science, Inquiry and Technology one. It is really wrong to exempt human sciences from the idea that there are ongoing dialogues amongst theory, data, hypotheses, methods. So, I was surprised to read the bio and physics labs are the only kind of lab required under that topic. That does not seem fair to other depts who can also teach labs, nor does it seem accurate as a way to conceptualize scientists who study aspects of people. It also does not make clear what category many scientists fit in: natural or social. E.g., forensic anthropologists, bio-mechanical engineers, health psychologists, neuroscientists, psychopharmacologists. Those categories need a major rethink. I think they are retaining something of the prior Content Area structure in a way that subverts the Topics idea. 2. Though personally I am VERY progressive, the Diversity & social justice theme smacks of teaching students certain values rather than ways of thinking and content. That feeds right into the right-wing criticisms of higher education. More importantly, I think the approach is vague and outdated. By now, for heaven's sakes, ALL the social sciences and humanities gen ed courses should incorporate diversity and understanding power critically no matter what their subject matter (and upper level courses too). It's normal. If we keep relegating it to special courses, "diversity" keeps looking like "Oh, mainly we don't bother teaching about X people, but now let's talk about "them." Why don't we just require all the gen eds within those topic areas to explain to GEOC how they address those topics? -- If we want people to think ethically, then for heavens sakes let's have a course in ethics, or have each major say how they address ethics (worse). Being able to articulate one's basic assumptions and own values should be a capability education develops in our students. I am sorry, but I really think "Diversity" is nearly never defined, and "Social Justice" connotes group equality, which is a particular value (and I study it). This creates generations who learn they are "supposed to" say certain things and not others, but they don't understand why, can't argue with a smart person who opposes them. I also think students

should understand the consequences of when particular values are enacted in the world. What, factually, happens when societies open markets or float their currency? What happens when some countries say they will recognize human rights, and don't, and other countries don't think the way the West/UN define human rights is sufficient and won't sign on? Who gets to decide the life priorities by which self-driving vehicles make decisions? Who owns the information in DNA? How much influence should companies have over safety standards? We could have some very fun courses that address the new ethical problems confronting us that include facts from engineering and many other disciplines, that would create much more sophisticated and articulate and deep-thinking citizens. 3. The Environmental Literacy proposal is as Frankenstein-ish as when it was proposed. It is unclear what that is meant to do other than be a political statement, and it is not even a good political statement. I am all for ecological education. Indeed, I would argue that every college graduate should understand the basics of ecological thinking, understand that humans have a complex relation to the natural world (including ways we have radically changed it), that humans have complex relationships to each other in ways such as where we get our food, migration, dynamics of economics (e.g., when Americans all think they need gluten-free food, quinoa becomes unaffordable for people in the Andes for whom it is their basic food), and dynamics of politics. (I do not oppose the arts, and know they could express this, but I think it is silly to think that an arts class fulfills the educational agenda here. A different class in arts should be required.) I would propose that the U develop a class like this with this theme, with units taught by people in different depts and colleges, but who coordinate to make an integrative course featuring much of the expertise we have. Having all students take this would be a unifying experience for them and it would expose them to lots of depts (I think 3-4). A good course in environmental literacy HAS to have both natural and some social sciences, and could also include humanities (e.g., history, ethics, international law). I don't think courses that are solely in those depts would fulfill the purpose. Also, PLEASE rewrite that awful thing. 4. It seems to me that the Creativity and Problem-Solving Topic is nice -- it engages students in helping them recognize themselves as people whose education and efforts can create and solve problems. (I went to CMU where that was normative; I don't think it is among UConn undergrads. I would put Engineering in there. I did not see them mentioned. Given that CLAS teaches all their students, perhaps engineering can offer something to all the students in this arena (as can many arts). 5. Where is math?? Maybe that should be under Creativity and Problem-Solving 6. I don't mean to sound nasty by the above thoughts. I think this Topic approach seems more modern and clearly has taken some good thinking and discussions. Innovation that is not window-dressing! Yay! I encourage you to keep on. Nice for you to ask for input. Thank you. (Why do staff get any???)

1. The proposal has too many Gen Ed courses required. Students need even more flexibility. The Gen Ed should be 3 to 5 courses. No more. 2. Lab courses should not be required. There are many ways to teach lessons about the scientific method that do not require a lab course. We have too much congestion in labs already and non science students do not appreciate being forced into this experience.

A change should be attempted only when there are clear benefits that can be measured and evaluated or there is strong evidence that the new setting will overcome existing and widely recognized problems.

A greater emphasis needs to be placed on students' skills and abilities for writing a standardized academic essay, one that combines content knowledge, applied research, creative expression, and expressive language.

A lot of these courses just seem to be tailored to satisfy some mis-guided agenda of the course proposers. This is like taking courses in those lovely ethics/ compliance-trainings we have to do, rather than teaching the students something useful. This will swamp undergraduates with unnecessary requirements that serve no purpose than to make the administration feel better about themselves! Why not let the students choose what they want to learn instead of inciting they take one credit each from batch A, B, C, etc ... What really is the point of these requirements? Better citizens? Look at our current administration in DC!

a. Who, aside from Claudia Kraemer, is qualified to teach environmental literacy courses on the Stamford campus? How will enough of these courses be offered so that our students can both take courses they're interested in and graduate on time? b. Science, Theory, and Empirical Inquiry: Courses in this topic help students to understand how scientific theories are constructed and are tested against data collected in the natural world and in social systems. Students will understand knowledge production as an interplay of data, hypothesis, and principles through direct application of the scientific method in the classroom, the lab, or the community. This topic must include one lab course except for those students who have taken a lab course in Biological or Physical Sciences. --Why science (defined as biology, physics, chemistry) only? Why not social sciences and humanities? Also, shouldn't students need to understand that all knowledge (including knowledge produced in the "hard" sciences) is socially constructed? (Thomas Kuhn, Robert Merton, Cordelia Fine, others...) c. Design, Innovation, and Creative Expression: Design thinking involves developing one or more solutions to a well-defined problem. It represents one form of creativity, which can also involve expression in the form of fine arts or many forms of writing. Courses in



this topic require higher-level thought processes that imagine new possibilities. Through the application of imaginative thought and activity, novel ideas, mechanisms, and products are conceived and/or produced --Products are conceived and/or produced? Why are students being required to learn about how products are conceived and/or produced? Has UConn signed a contract with a large manufacturing company along with the contract with Synchrony? d. Diversity, Equity and Social Justice: These courses present diverse identities and perspectives and critically examine how social dynamics shape a range of life experiences. Students will engage with difference, consider how social agents construct pathways to equity and inclusion, and apply theory to local, national, and/or global contexts. --This description is awful. Was anyone from WGSS or the Institutes consulted? e. Questions about the structure of the proposed curriculum Presently students can complete the Content Area and Environmental Literacy part of the General Education curriculum in as few as seven courses for a total of 21 credits. We propose that students cover the above-mentioned topics in as few as seven courses for a total of 21 credits in this way: At least one course in each topic (going broad) At least three courses in one topic (going deep) This could be accomplished in seven courses because courses can be designated for more than one topic. The seven courses should represent least six different subject areas (e.g. ENGL, BIOL) The table below is an example of the topics proposed for the new Gen Ed curriculum. --I don't understand this. Does this new rubric allow for more flexibility and more course choices than the current one? I support more flexibility in general education requirements. Advanced courses in Languages and Literatures should count toward Gen Ed requirements, either under the category of diversity or culture (or anything else that may fit.). Many students who do not have a language requirement, do not have time to take language courses because they have so many other required courses in which they have no interest. There needs to be more flexibility in allowing language courses to be used to fulfill requirements.

Advise students as early as possible so that they can find the Gen Ed courses that best support their intended major. Too many student wait until very late to decide what they want to take.

All of the content area descriptions should include the range of relevant course subject matters (like the one that says that topic will cover courses in psychology etc)

Although I have limited knowledge of the current curriculum, this approach makes sense. I'm sure there would be a list of "acceptable" courses for students to choose from. Right now I am a little confused as to which courses would fulfill these requirements

Although the definitions seem clear enough they also seem to value and use STEM language over the language of other disciplines. The definitions as a whole seem to link all the major learning goals to STEM experiences and devalue the other ways that students reach these goals by putting them into the format of "and another example of this is..."

Although the stated goals of the general education program at UCONN are lofty, I am concerned that academic politics could be influencing the reform process. The faculty in departments that are hurting for enrollment are likely to favor changes to the general education standards that would favor their areas. I'd like to see this potential conflict of interest addressed explicitly in the process of reform. I am particularly concerned that is issue could be at play in the new environment standard.

Although this approach will give the student more choice in course offerings, it may disadvantage students at the branches where they may not have the same breadth of choice in each area. My subject is Nutrition and these courses (Nutrition Fundamentals and Society, Food & Culture) are necessary for many of the allied health programs. These students must commit early to their major to complete all of the competencies required by their accreditation body. Therefore, some modification of this approach should be planned for pre-professional majors. Centralized planning at the Storrs' campus must consider the reality of the branch programming.

An integrated experience needs to be incorporated into the curriculum, especially if a student is required to do an internship - being paid/unpaid is a big factor for many students when considering internships. The science&tech replacement wording is a bit vague- could a student complete a degree without a real Quantitative requirement? Are there any statistical foundations tying outcomes to curricular approaches?

As a faculty advisor for students in STEM, I have found that many students are just trying to take the least number of (and easiest) courses when fulfilling their Gen Eds. I don't think that this new model will change that. And since the column headings are unclear, I think this will just cause more push to double dip and look for the easiest ways out instead of taking courses students are interested in. Also, most of the general heading lend themselves to humanities courses. This means students in STEM majors will be required to take many more humanities classes then students in humanities will be required to take STEM classes. If the Gen Ed requirements are there to encourage students to have a great breadth of study, I think they should include requirements that students take more STEM focused classes.

As a first-year-writing instructor teaching ENGL1010, I propose that UConn put the the entire catalog of all W intensive writing courses with descriptions every year. I do not know if we can access it somewhere online, and if there is no such catalog, we suggest we create one. I believe this way students can know what they will learn after they have taken ENGL1010 or ENGL1011. And a catalog of all W courses will also offer some insight for us when we design our ENGL1010/11 courses. Thank you!

As a political moderate\*, I am strongly concerned that proposed Topic 6 (though clearly stated and seemingly objective on the surface) feeds the conservative narrative that Universities are a bastion of liberal dogma - a training ground to raise the next generation of Social Justice Warriors, and where expressing views that oppose some elements of Affirmative Action, mass immigration, others' cultural practices, etc., are not tolerated. Are we so broken at UConn that we must dig a deeper partisan trench? Can you guarantee that intellectual, respectful, evidence-based arguments, and 'good-faith' debate from the right will not be censored, or self-censored, in the classrooms that would satisfy this Gen Ed topic requirement? \* If simply self-reporting my position on the political spectrum is insufficient, a summary of my views are: pro-science & environment, pro-social service, anti-theocracy, anti-national debt, anti-PC & call-out/virtue signaling culture. P.S. On a technical note, all questions in this survey were posed in the same direction as, "How high do you value or how good do you rate our proposed changes?" Psychologically, this primes the respondent over time to answer more affirmatively than if occasionally asked to rank how how negatively they disagree with a change.

As an academic, I very much share an interest in cultivating just about all of the emphases intended here. However, I don't think the proposed areas will be any more effective than the existing system. We presently do not do a good enough job at getting across why area requirements are more than just a group of "required courses." We keep making the mistake that OUR interests and what WE see as important for students are readily appreciated by the students. As a long-time faculty member, I can say for sure that something is lost in translation. Indeed, the new system (again, I very much appreciate the thoughtful categories, but I am an academic!) will only obfuscate and not address the issue I am raising. (Do our students really know what "epistemology" is? And that is only one egregious example of academic jargon in the write-ups; there were others, after all, most were written from our top-down perspective). So my fear is that we will just be substituting more confusing groupings without any emphasis on communicating the overall intent, purpose and importance of these areas to our students. We need to concentrate more on communicating what it is we think a 21st century student should get out of a liberal arts education and figure out how the students can buy into it. Otherwise, the courses taken will remain simply "requirements" to get out of the way, which is what they are now. So, let's not reinvent the wheel thinking that it is going to provide a better, more meaningful academic ride, when in reality, only the driver (that would be the faculty), ends up thinking so.

As described, this is just renaming the content areas (and possibly re-categorizing some classes) and I'm not sure that is the best use of our time. I also do not understand the line in the science literacy area about students who have already taken a lab class. Does this mean they have to take additional courses outside of what is required for their major? I do not think that is a good use of their time.

As someone who has taught W courses for many years, I have serious concerns about our students. Many of them write poorly even as seniors, and don't apply the principles of good writing. In addition, they seem unfamiliar with PLAIN LANGUAGE principles (as do people who wrote several sections of this survey). We need to focus on some basics, like writing in active voice and writing chronologically. This is not a direction that is mutually exclusive of the lofty ideas resented here, but a fact.

As students often pick classes based on the content areas, there needs to be a clearer way to "set" a content area for a particular course and have it count in that space. There should be a relatively easy way for faculty to assign a content area to a course that they are teaching; at the moment I do not know how I would go about, for instance, making a topics course that focuses on environmental literature count as that particular topic area. If we are going to change the way that the topics are constructed, we should seriously consider changing the way that topics are assigned; class-specific topic assignments are easy from an administrative point of view but rather limiting from a class-design point of view. This really should accompany a revision of the way that instructors determine their course content/general education "fit" and students perceive their options.

Assume that the first category on scientific theory will incorporate theory and research in the social and behavioral sciences as well as the physical sciences. Will the W and Q requirements remain?

Bad idea. Reeks of an agenda as proposed.

Basic financial literacy at UConn is sorely lacking. Not having Gen Ed requirements that develop basic life skills is a disservice to our students and community.

Because of the generations of teach to the test in primary and secondary schools, the area in which the student body is most lacking is in it's ability to independently seek information, to analyze data, to form questions on their own, to

innovate without seeking the "one right answer". While the course content is likely not that different from the previous model, the new framework and wording feeds excellently into an independent learning mindset and I think encourages a pro-active approach to one's education. I also think it would be great to incorporate even more interdisciplinary project requirements. Green House Studios might be a good platform for this. This would likely require the hiring of additional faculty to run these courses beyond the course loads needed to support individual majors. However, I think it would elevate UConn's educational structure to be even more a place of innovation and independent thinking.

Can General Education students find jobs when they graduate? It is irresponsible to graduate students who are not employable with the education they paid for.

Capstone course should include routine interaction with people in professional life (especially UConn alumni in key content areas) and students should complete a capstone project that reflects their professional aims and abilities.

'-Capstone experiences should be part of the major, not dictated by GEOC. -The topics are rather vague. A similar proposal was made a number of years ago, and it did not get anywhere. -These is no statement outlining what is wrong with the current system, thus, it is impossible to evaluate why there should be a change and why the new system would fix perceived current problems. -If courses can satisfy different topics, why have the different topics? Also, how can they properly address both topics. -What would be the criterion for inclusion in each topic? -The "one in each topic and three in one topic" necessitates having courses satisfying different topics. This will either be a bottleneck or blur the distinctions between the different topics. -Overall, a bad idea.

convoluted over reach

Coordinating these requirements will be very difficult. Hi his will increase burden of academic advisors.

courses taught at UConn are not equally distributed across the new structure.

Creativity in design should be included in General Education.

Current GEOC webpage is TOO wordy! Why does the 3rd proposed area (which I've now forgotten) include a list of departments offering courses, when none of the other proposed areas do? I actually thought the Intro Psych courses would fall in the first theory/data area, although could see how they'd also cross-list in the 3rd area. I wonder if students might get rather confused with courses double-counting across the areas?

Currently some departments jockey to insure they have a gen ed requirement thinking more of their own interests than that of the students. The idea of gen ed requirements, while noble, can result in too many 5 year BS/BA degrees. Gen ed, however implemented, should allow students to explore diverse fields with more autonomy without being penalized or feeling compelled to fill-in boxes. Allow for more deep and perhaps less broad.

Design Thinking is going to put date very quickly and should be avoided. Ours has been and continues to be an intensely Visual culture. Even google search can now be performed with images instead of texts. UConn Students are not adequately prepared to identify, analyze, and assess images in their world, including online and in the public sphere. Visual Studies would be a better substitute for and possibly include the trendy but notional Design Thinking. Visual Studies is well represented across programs in the SFA and CLAS, including social sciences, film in CLCS, and in the Institutes. Generally speaking, there are few if any of the proposed areas my own courses would not fit into. But to what end, exactly? The proposed breadth vs depth model threatens to undo the very preparation that the proposed divisions seek to redress.

Design, Innovation and Creation needs to include fine and PERFORMING arts as well as many forms of writing.

My concern is that new "categories" with the same courses just reassigned does not make substantial changes to the current model. These categories should require professors to think about teaching and learning in innovative ways with topics that have relevance to 21st century students.

focus on the labor market needs, we have a huge need for data analysts (and medical care professionals)

For now I feel that you covered everything that needs to be revised.

For these subject areas to work there needs be an open mind on the types of courses and subject matter than can address them. More important, for any course to be a general ed course, it needs to provide a common experience and body of knowledge to all students who take it. At the end of a semester students should have equal skills (eg as they would get in a language or math class).

Get rid of the W course requirements. While the idea of students learning how to write is reasonable, the current implementation is overly prescriptive and puts too much of a burden on the departments who may or may not have the necessary skills to offer such courses. Additionally, getting into W courses (for students) is difficult, so they often end up taking any available W course whether or not it fits their interests or aligns with their degree programs. Good work on this proposal.

Greater emphasis should be placed on leadership-building skills and problem-solving within the curriculum in order to encourage high-quality stewardship in various contexts.

Humanities. Humanity. The reduction in English courses and the increase in business and economic courses detracts from the very concept of "University." Dollar signs do not communicate ...or do not communicate happiness and intellectual fulfillment. A university must not merely "REquire." It ought also "INspire." Reducing the number of humanities courses and particularly soul-reaching literature does a disservice to the student. And to the world.

I have concerns about the loss of a liberal arts education and requiring students to learn outside of their area of interest and be exposed to a broader array of topics and approaches. I also have concerns about whether the interactive component could be successfully accomplished and would be equitable across campus as in terms of what might be offered for those students who choose to complete their four year degree is not at Storrs.

I am a scientist, words such as "Design Thinking" mean nothing to me. I did not understand at all what you were asking related to the "New Gen Ed Curriculum Template" table. I don't understand those columns. This must have been done by someone not in the physical sciences. The committee that is looking to change this should include more scientists.

I am concerned that requiring only one course in the first Topic, as well as requiring a lab course within this topic, means that non-lab sciences and social sciences will be diminished. I would also like to see by the end of this process a clear description of the type of student learning, products, outcomes, etc. that should happen within each of the Topics. I know that existing courses will need to be grandfathered in, but this + some routine reaccreditation could have a real effect on undergraduate education as well as allow for some assessment of general education effectiveness.

I am not, never have been, a believer in the notion that ANY selection of courses can EVER optimize a student's General Education Experience. The Integrative Experience is a great addition. But this critically important component of formal education would be ever so much better IF the students (with input / feedback fro the advisor) (1) chose the entire set of courses based upon an advisor-approved General Education proposal - that met the topic requirements of course but in addition had integrated meaning to the student that the student explained / defended in the proposal; and (2) completed the General Education Experience with a report - deemed acceptable by the advisor or some review group TBD - that summarized the student's self-assessed addressing of the approved proposal, its value for a meaningful post-graduation life, and what in hindsight would have made the General Education Experience better. IMO, the importance of General Education could be emphasized and made clearer by selecting, from submitted nominations, a student and a faculty member for excellence in General Education effort annually. I am totally in favor of a system overhaul, and I REALLY like the basic structure that has been put forward here. However, I have local questions and some concerns about the category names. None of these are deal breakers for me, but I hope the committee will consider them: 1. "This topic must include one lab course except for those students who have taken a lab course in Biological or Physical Sciences." I don't understand the implications of this. 2. "Integrative experience." I don't understand what this means. It sounds jargony, and if the point is to clarify the structure of the curriculum, jargon ought to be avoided. 3. I don't like the way that the "Social Justice, Equity" category is bracketed off from the other topics, as if "Cultural Foundations" or "Design" or "Empirical Inquiry" or "Environmental Literacy" doesn't treat such issues head on. 4. I have issues with the word "Innovation" as it is used in the categories insofar as a) it's a neoliberal buzzword that typically refers to entrepreneurial activity, which is arguably beyond the remit of a Liberal Arts college and b) its over usage in contexts just like this one is already something of a joke (though there are MANY serious critical indictments of the term's ideological role in the constitution of a precariat class and in promoting change at the expense of thought):

<https://entertainment.theonion.com/word-innovate-said-650-000-times-at-sxsw-so-far-1819574674> 5. While I really like the pivot to "Cultural Foundations" I would also ask the committee to consider the word "Interpretation" here.

I am very interested in the new EL general education requirement. I teach physics and am active in debunking climate science denial myths in the public arena. My future plans include integrating more climate science content into my courses. Perhaps they'll someday be cross listed as meeting an EL requirement.

I appreciate the hard work that has gone into this. It is somewhat difficult at first glance to truly understand what the difference is between the current and proposed system. Obviously, there are organizational differences, but one could cynically view it as a repackaging. It may be helpful to show the matrix with sample courses against a current list of GA requirements to demonstrate how this better achieves breadth and depth.

I appreciate the shift from multiculturalism to social justice. I think this is a move in the right direction. I find it very problematic that the description for Creative, Design, and Imagination (?? can't recall exact name) starts off with a definition of "design thinking," as if this is the only method or definition of creative thought out there. This seems to me to deeply privilege the USE of creativity or design thinking for non-artistic ends (i.e. the Silicon Valley version) at the expense of other applications of creative thought. In other words, the description makes the arts seem like an unwanted stepchild in this area. I find the description of "Individual Values and Social ???" somewhat

confusing. I assume the goal of the topic is to investigate the how systems such as family, society, peer group, etc. impact development, thought formation, and value systems. Is this the area where students would explore such things as the sociology of the internet, how group-think works, how to be better at evaluating online information? This seems important, and somehow not covered in information literacy. What good is information literacy actually doing us? I don't know a single department that addresses this clearly and comprehensively. And now more than ever, in the age of "does truth matter," we probably should be prioritizing this!

I as an adult have zero interest in ANY environmental subjects. Why would/should we subject our students if they, also do not? It does not make a well-rounded student, just a student who can be a parrot for the course.

I believe a courses in well-being and life skills are important. We need our students now only to be the tops in their area of student but also be the best overall candidate for a position. If students can mange their stress and overall wellbeing, and have tangible work place skills they will be set-up for a more successful future.

I believe a missing subject in the proposed curriculum is financial literacy. Personal finance has become very complex as individuals have to manage more financial matters such as retirement savings, which were taken care of by most employers in the past. Managing student loans and credit cards poorly can and do ruin the lives of many people. For example, many people carry credit cards balances that charge as much as 24% not realizing they can get a bank loan for significantly less cost. These are few example of how every university graduate regardless of her/his major can benefit from a financial literacy course.

I believe that I was asked to complete this survey because I teach a W course. From the information provided in the survey about the planned revisions to the requirements, it was not clear to me whether writing (or a second language) would remain part of the requirements. I believe that competency in writing and in a second language are essential for UConn students to develop, so I would hope that the details of the new model of general education specify some form of requirement for both.

I believe that restructuring is needed. However, if GEN ED's are to be restructured then the courses listed that fulfill the requirements must be offered. Currently there are to many classes that can fulfill a requirement however, they are seldom or never offered.

I believe the time for Liberal Arts Education is long past, especially as related to Science and Engineering majors. Times have changed since the last 2 centuries when Liberal Arts Ed. was in its heyday. No other country in the world. as far as I know, loads their STEM undergrad students down with so many gen. ed. requirements at the expense of science, math and engineering courses that the STEM students need to succeed. As a result, US STEM students who have gone through liberal arts undergrad programs, are poorly prepared for graduate school or a STEM career. I have done a number of years of research in England and Ireland where the approach is more toward immersion in the STEM major, and the students I have worked with there are much better informed about their STEM major at an earlier age. they do not suffer from a lack of a broader education, and many also play music, are poets or policical/environmental activists.

I believe there should be a number of core courses that all students in all majors must take in order to receive an education worthy of the label; otherwise we leave the door open to a "work force oriented" , utilitarian and limited idea of what constitutes an education. At a time when we bemoan the absence of civility and consensus, the need for a civilized space in which members of an educated population can exchange ideas is crucial. I don't know to what extent the following is integrated into the general education model presented in this survey, but it seems a sine qua non of an education worthy of the name: providing the tools with which students themselves can questionâ€ in an informed manner â€ the very institution and people providing the education. Perhaps the requirement concerning the way in which scientific knowledge is produced comes closest to this idea.

I can't quite grasp ideas behind each topic without examples of actual classes fitting in the topics. Then looking at classes and figuring out which topic each might fit into. Requiring a multidisciplinary course, capstone course, internship, service learning or education abroad course would result in economically disadvantaged students likely participating in the first two types of learning experiences and less likely participating in the last three, thus depriving them of the full spectrum of integrative experiences. I would approve of this requirement if sufficient scholarship opportunities become available to economically disadvantaged students. I get where the Diversity, Equity and Social Justice requirement is coming from. It's the University's prerogative to have such a requirement but the university has to have a convincing argument that resonates with students, parents and the state that funds the university. Furthermore, the concept of diversity, equity and social justice won't take root unless the university makes it core to the university culture by practicing it with all the university's constituents including administration and staff and not just faculty and students.

I do not agree with these changes. If it ain't broke, don't fix it, comes to mind. The current Gen Ed requirements and guidance from an advisor is more than sufficient.

I do not like this new way of getting students to take gen eds. I don't think that this will enhance a student's ability to go deeper. I instead think this will pull students toward the courses that will get them through the gen eds the quickest. It will still come down to determining which courses satisfy which categories and from a particular category, picking one - preferable one that also satisfies another category. This to me will amount to the same thing as we currently have. I don't see this as better, only different - so I don't see the point outside of PR. And we're supposed to be teaching students how to cut through the PR - this does not do that.

I don't think widening the areas required in general education would help, I think deepening the study of a relatively narrow sets of topics would help. An interdisciplinary course with lots of scattered information from many different disciplines I do not see as being enriching. But a study abroad or internship definitely would clear the ideas of the student about self exploration and about what he/she wants to do in the future.

I don't know if this is a better way b/c I don't fully understand the "old" way.

I don't see how these topics are all that different from the content area. I find that the topics are written in a narrow disciplinary manner for the sciences but incredibly broad and vague for the humanities, so that it favors the sciences just like the current content areas do. What's the difference? I'm not in favor an interdisciplinary requirement, and having courses "double up" on covering requirements just pressures professors to fill out lots of forms. Why not just reduce requirements rather than making things more complicated by doubling up? Also, this survey was weirdly designed by combining way too many elements into a single question, so that there was no way to express agreement with one part of the question and disagreement with another.

I don't see information literacy included in the new curriculum. These skills are needed by students now, more than ever, to navigate finding and evaluating information across the curriculum.

I don't think the part about the Integrative Course is as clear as the rest of the proposal. If a student took a capstone course in their major, that wouldn't necessarily integrate what they have learned across the new topics, and the same could be said for other kinds of courses. Would such courses need to be structured differently from the way they are now?

I especially appreciate capstone active learning project requirement. This is a place in which I think I and my my EHS team might be especially helpful in supporting faculty in planning for student safety.

I feel like this would take more of a conversation than what I can put into writing. Examples of how current courses (gen ed or otherwise) fit into each category would be the most helpful.

I feel this over-complicates an already complicated set of requirements. I appreciate the effort to clarify the general education requirements, as many students don't see the rationale behind them, but I do not feel Without knowing which courses would fall into these categories, it is difficult to rate a good portion of this proposal. I gave poor ratings to a number of the questions, mainly because I did not have enough information. I worry that these broadly-defined areas will lead to subjectivity, as what one person deems as "creative" could vary greatly from another's. As it stands now, many of our students don't think the general education courses make sense. For instance, if a student takes "The History of Math", it won't satisfy their history requirement, or if they take "Irish Literature" their literature requirement isn't satisfied. I believe the general education requirements do need to be defined more clearly, but I think that the current model proposed muddies the water even more.

I hate the term "General Education". Better to call them Distribution requirements, Breadth requirements, University-wide requirements, Non-major requirements, or anything else. "General Education" seems to devalue it, to me.

I have 4 children that attended UConn; 2 are alumni, 1 is a current undergrad, and one switched out of UConn. They attended because of tuition waivers but none of them have "loved" the UConn experience. The better of the experiences (Class size, faculty relationships ...) was at a regional campus that offers a major that can be completed there. Neither of my graduated students completed in 4 years due to the confusion and inflexibility of required coursework, the inability to register for required coursework when needed, conflicting class times for required gen eds and major requirements, and instructional deficiencies. When rethinking gen eds, please also consider revising to the Universal Design of Learning (UDL). Updating course options is a start but not all learn or can represent their knowledge in the same manner. Please research UDL for higher ed. It is a great gamble to improve retention and graduation rates. [http://udloncampus.cast.org/page/udl\\_landing#.XIEmyChKj-g](http://udloncampus.cast.org/page/udl_landing#.XIEmyChKj-g)

I like many of the categories here (especially the diversity and social justice and cultural foundations). I also very much like the idea of an integrated multidisciplinary Gen Ed structure. I'm not wedded to the current system, and I think you guys are generally on the right track. My main sticking point is the framing of literature and the arts as "innovation," "creativity," and "leadership," which to adopt a completely neoliberal managerial framework for reading the arts and humanities (and will also appear dated once corporate America adopts new jargon). That aspect of the proposed structure is a deal-killer for me. If that was changed, I would support this whole-heartedly. I like the capstone idea, but to require it seems to be too burdensome for many students.

I like the focus on inquiry. It sets up these different clusters as areas the students are going to explore rather than just areas in which subject knowledge will be transmitted to them. It also underscores the importance of curiosity, a crucial habit of mind for students to cultivate. The interdisciplinary and other kinds of activities described in the survey to create a more integrative learning experience are exciting, too. Of course, the success of such a change depends largely on what happens in the classroom. It would be nice to see some pedagogy workshops or something along those lines that help instructors imagine how they can revise their courses in order to support the values implicit in this new gen ed curriculum.

I like this proposal, but I think it is important to engage CETL in this process, and work to align course content and pedagogy to the objectives outlined in this proposal. I think the task of students achieving border and more valuable creative connections cannot be achieved in revision of the general education requirements alone.

I love topics 1 and 2. I think the last four topics could be merged into a fewer number of topics.

I mentioned this point on an earlier survey, but I feel strongly that financial literacy should be a key component of a general education curriculum. By financial literacy, I mean an understanding primarily of personal finance-- budgeting, saving, banking, investing, purchasing a home, saving for college and for retirement, and so on. How personal finance intersects with larger issues (e.g., stock market ups-and-downs, divesting from oil and/or firearms) is also important.

I really like this fresh approach. However, for some students I think they will need guidance to navigate. Once they find an area of interest (of which many do not know) I think it will open new worlds and students will have a much more enriched experience.

I really think these new Gen Ed requirements are awful. There is too many of them and a lot of them are not particularly practical. They seem to have been written by people who like big concepts and big words. For instance, there are very few lab experiences where students get to make hypotheses and test them out especially at the lower levels. How then can you have a gen ed requirement for an entire university that requires that they do that? If you make the requirements high ideas but the courses to meet the requirements don't actually match the description, then the value isn't there. Better to make groupings of departments and have students take a course from each group. I strongly disagree with the proposed change. I think disassociating the general education requirements with the disciplines (Science, Social Science, Humanities etc) will be a set back to the goal of a general education. Rather than spend time on the tinkering of which course goes where, the University should be evaluating where it is investing its financial resources -- administration v line faculty, academics v athletics. Students become well rounded and gain a high quality education when the university invests in high quality faculty and provides them with time and support to develop effective pedagogies. CETL is an excellent example of an investment that promotes general education goals. Instead of focusing on this, UConn has chosen to pack the administration with highly paid bodies who meet endlessly to talk, while ignoring inequalities in workload, institutional support, and faculty salaries. At the same time, faculty members have been required to work harder and harder every year. Morale among the faculty (at the Stamford Campus) is very low due in part to these trends, and in part to the administration view (at the Stamford Campus) that faculty governance is just a nuisance. This approach is not the way to improve quality of education.

I support more emphasis in study abroad.

I suspect that the names and descriptions of the new proposed Gen Ed content areas would not be very straightforward or intuitive for current students, particularly incoming freshmen. The categories also seem to be grouped around topics that are very popular themes in higher-ed now, but the wording may seem dated in the future ("innovation and creativity," "social justice"). Requiring integrative experiences would be worthwhile, as long as they don't add any additional financial burden on students.

I taught BIOL 1107 for 5 semesters at the UConn Storrs campus. BIOL 1107 should either be a 6 credit course, or the lecture and lab should be separated into two separate three credit courses. Dr. Chris Malinoski could be the professor of the lab course. In most respects, aside from title, he already is. Lectures are already pre-recorded for students to view online before lab. Dr. Malinoski would continue to look over the teaching assistants just like the professors of Organic Chemistry Lab. The lecture and lab already teach such distinct skills. Taught together, they hold each other back. The lecture wants to expand into more recent research literature review & discussion, whereas the lab is poised to start training students more rigorously in scientific writing and analytical techniques. Neither of these goals can reach their full potential while BIOL 1107 remains a unified, 4-credit course. It'd be too much work for students; it's already too much work for students. That said, the solution is not to decrease the workload and keep it a 4-credit course because both the lab and lecture are teaching valuable lessons. I strongly urge you instead to make it two separate courses. The lab portion could fulfill lab requirements independent of the lecture, and lecture could fulfill science requirements independent of the lab. It's also possible that certain programs at UConn would only require their students to take the lecture or lab portion. Pre-med students will still likely need both, but health

administration students may only need the lecture, whereas mechanical engineers may only need the lab portion. It would provide students and departments with more autonomy.

I teach English. In the past fifteen years, thanks to the depredations of other media, like video games, television, smart phones, etc., I see increasing evidence of what I would call an acquired deficit in reading and writing, especially what I would label deep reading, i.e., making meaningful or insightful connections between different components in a text or with the real world, such as drawing practical conclusions or extracting principles, lessons in life or arriving at some sort of synthesis or broader epiphany. Only a long-term immersion in a series of challenging texts can counter this deficit. We ought to be doing something akin to what New Zealand does, namely, for the first five or six years of education, making reading, not other subjects, the main priority. The tinkering you are proposing is far too late.

I think it will be more confusing to figure out how to complete the 7 different courses, and it will difficult to make distinctions between some of these categories (which, in psyc at least, OFTEN would go hand in hand). I also worry about how the multidisc/capstone/integrative will screw up the way our majors are set up. E.g., can "field experience" in psyc still be offered pass/fail? That is really important to at least my regional campus students. Given how very very big of a course Psyc 2100WQ (our capstone Psyc course in a sense), how will psyc majors incorporate both that (4 credit, deeply intensive course) and a multidisciplinary capstone course? How will crossdisciplinary courses simply "emerge" from the dust, particularly given how high of a teaching load our external reviewers noted we have in psyc. (look how very many majors we have...at Storrs that is.)

I think requiring an integrative experience could pose problems for students. They already have opportunities for these on their own, and in some cases within their major so I am not sure having this required at the GenEd level is beneficial. I do believe they are valuable as the questions asked on the previous page, however, my problem lies with it being "required" and at the GenEd level. I would imagine that Study Abroad is prohibitive financially for a lot of students, internships can be hard to fit into a full time course load, especially if you don't have a car on campus, and an additional capstone course or other course should come at the major level, not GenEd. Additionally, if this were required for every single student, then more competition is going to be created for spots in internships and even in courses where we are already a tight fit capacity wise. There may not be enough internships to go around and if Study Abroad is prohibitive financially, you will effectively create a bottleneck of resources. While I value this type of experience, I think it should be student choice and not required, and if it is required, it should be at the major level, not GenEd.

I think that simplifying the general education requirements should be a goal; currently, it seems as though students randomly take courses to fulfill the requirements and often these courses are not aligned with their interests or career goals. I think the first goal, in the sciences, is too focused on the physical sciences by requiring a lab course. Research courses in the social science disciplines could be included to ensure the broad spectrum of the "sciences" are represented in this goal.

I think that this is better than the current system, but it's still too complicated (the mention of "template" is a giveaway). It also bears the unmistakable signs of people lobbying for their favorite topics and perspectives to be included, which is how the current system got to be so complicated. There are a lot of things that are good to know, and there's no way to make sure that all students cover them all in their 4-5 years as undergraduates. I think that General Education requirements should be kept few and general. If we're doing a good job, students will leave with the desire to keep filling in the gaps in their knowledge.

I think the overall concept is strong, but the descriptions tend to be couched in jargon that students will find it hard to understand. In principle I like the broad/deep model, but I found it difficult to tell how it would work in practice. This is hard work; thank you for doing it!

I think there should be a financial literacy course as a general education requirement. I have a concern about whether such a course would fit into the proposed framework.

I think these categories are poorly defined and unmotivated, and I feel uncomfortable with the fact that no specific courses are listed for any category. Where does Mathematics fit into any of this? I feel like the entirety of STEM being condensed to one column is an unfair treatment to the thousands upon thousands of STEM majors at this university; if a student is not a STEM major, nothing appears to be changing much here at all for them except possibly not requiring them to take as many STEM courses, which is highly detrimental in my opinion. We live in a time where people ignore science, empirical results, and facts, and if anything, students should be mandated to take just as much STEM coursework, if not more. For the STEM majors, it feels like this new model is forcing them to take a larger number of non-STEM courses, which feels discriminatory. I also think that "Social Justice" as part of the category name is a terrible idea, and it appears to be pushing an agenda that many will not take kindly to in the general public (it only serves to fulfill the existing narrative that public universities push liberal agendas). Overall I think that the design is significantly flawed and is actually a downgrade and more confusing than the current Gen Ed



model. I envision students and advisors struggling to understand what this is and how it works, and as I mentioned, how do courses even fit into this? An actual model with outlined coursework that various majors could choose from to complete would speak volumes to this proposal, but as it stands, I see a lot more potential harm than help.

I think this is exactly the right direction and I'm impressed that you are moving forward.

I think this is just another way to promote a curriculum that is already in place. It sounds like it is just a new label on courses that are already being taught. How does this make it a better way to give students more autonomy?

I think this new approach is very interesting. My major concerns are in how this gets implemented. In particular, most GEOC classes lean towards being large classes and some of these goals are tricky to implement in a large classroom. To do this well, existing general education classes would need some revamping and resources are needed to do that, particularly in instructor time that is already a commodity in short supply. I hope the Large Course Redesign Grants and General Education Enhancement grants will be well supported through the transition process if this change goes through. Another difficulty I see is in the very laudable goal of a multi-disciplinary/integrative/capstone experience. I think students need this view of how things connect, but this is best done in smaller classes at the end of an academic career and those tend to move toward capstone experiences within a department that drills deeper rather than broadening to think about context. On the flip side, interdisciplinary classes (UNIV, INTD, etc.) are not well supported by the University and departments don't tend to appreciate their faculty putting time into classes for other programs. The University needs to put some resources behind truly interdisciplinary classes by providing course buyouts, supporting both members of a team in team-taught classes, etc.

I think this sounds really quite exciting!! Change is scary, so good luck.

I think universal recommendations to the integrated experiences, such as a capstone, would be well-received by most. I would love to see some aspect of health and wellness demonstrated in the general education content, given the current unfortunate state of our society in terms of physical inactivity, obesity, specialized healthcare.

I think we are encouraging things that are "trendy" currently: social justice, environmental policy, etc. instead of focusing on the core competencies that students need to adequately study these fields that are a bit more time-invariant (e.g., philosophy, EEB). For example, there is a big push for more "data analytics" skills. Instead of creating more data analytics course, students should be encouraged to take more stats, computer science, and scientific methods courses instead of trying to water down these topics into a single course. Similarly, right now I am current teaching masters levels students who cannot write a memo. One student who did his undergrad at UConn said he's never been asked to write a memo. I think this is shameful. I think we need to up the number of w courses required on campus to at least 5.

I think what is lacking in the proposed approach is a education about the key impacts of technology and its potential use in most of these areas. Easy to make the connection with the environment and cultural impacts. Perhaps harder in the case of "scientific theory and empiricism" but even there, with new wearable technologies to collect data, there are impacts there as well. Innovative uses of technology could easily be folded into the "innovative design" component. There are good or bad uses/impacts of technology that can be considered in each case. This goes well beyond information literacy. Which then raises the question of what is being proposed for the competencies. Leave as is? Some could perhaps be folded in as well. In any case, I think the multi-level approach to fulfilling the GE requirements will be very meaningful and much more motivating to students than the current system, but these gains are with some loss of breadth. Nonetheless, the gains seem to outweigh losses to me. The impact of these changes on existing GE courses and staffing, courses that many programs have invested a lot to develop, is unclear to me. I would think the impact would be negative if there is not sufficient advance notice and time for departments and programs to plan accordingly. With the exception of the innovation/design component, it seems possible that many generic introductory courses could fulfill GE requirements under this proposed new system without requiring major changes to these courses. Happy to discuss further. Thanks for the hard work, --- Rob Henning (on sabbatical leave)

I understand that this has taken much time and work on the part of the committee--although I don't understand where the mandate of the committee came from, nor do I know how the committee was composed--so I want to start by thanking you for that time and effort. That said, I am not in agreement with the broad generalities of these categories or the business-speak naming practices; I do not think the current disciplinary-focused categories inhibit student learning, choice, or integrative knowledge development and creativity, rather it provides a clear foundation and map and a place from which to innovate. The students will be more confused than enabled by the proposed framework -- as will faculty and leadership -- and I have no doubt that students will select gen ed courses with far less range of information and learning outside their comfort zones than they do now. In practice, I believe this solution will make the perceived problem far, far worse. Finally, in this moment of major transition across the executive leadership of UConn and the largest college, CLAS (when a new academic plan is no doubt on the horizon), such a massive change in the institution's academic structure is not only ill-advised but appears to be a frontal attack on

administrators and executive leaders who have yet to step into their roles. This is a VERY bad and inappropriate time for a change of this magnitude.

I was involved in construction and implementation of the last round of Gen Ed revision (and the creation of GEOC). I understand how much work is entailed with this sort of revision and do think the "depth" idea (several courses deep) is a potentially good idea. But I do not see that the revision of the \*categories\* (or the renaming of them into "topics," which frankly, seems arbitrary) is an improvement. We have really weakened Gen Ed when we got rid of actual requirements (e.g., philosophy, history)

I worry that faculty, at least as much as students, should take gen-ed courses. Narrowness of faculty seems to be increasing in the ever-increasing age of specialization, and faculty sometimes betray the narrowness of their own "broad education" in lectures or conversations with students. How to remedy this is unclear. But it's at least as pressing a problem as having a viable (let alone exemplary) gen-ed profile at UConn.

I would consider combining the "Diversity Equity and Social Justice" area with "Individuals and Institutions:" to me their topics overlap. Scientific Theory and Empiricism should include a historical and literary component: history of scientific thought and metaphors. Literary studies could contribute substantially to this part: From history of medicine or astronomy to the birth of empiricism (Leonardo, Galileo etc). Same goes with "Environmental Literacy:" putting concepts into a historical perspective is key. Romanticism and the birth of the idea of environment. The notion of "cultural foundations" is very conservative. I would consider combining it with the "Creative" area. Working of literary or anthropological topics should be conducive to critical thinking, creativity and problem solving. Creativity shouldn't be too strictly focused on definite tasks and problem solving: 'openendedness' of the creative process is something students may also want to experience. Sometimes they lack curiosity

I would like to see certain immersive, integrative experiences, such as UConn@COP qualify as an "integrative experience" under the proposed definition

I would like to see more of the intended outcomes articulated for some of the topic areas - the first couple of topic areas are more thoroughly articulated than the later ones. Otherwise I am excited about this direction for general education.

I would not support a GenEd structure that does not include assured exposure to global issues. Two recent U.S. President's who have (and are) generating new and ignoring old problems on the planet too well illustrate the woeful state of U.S. education, including ethics and global literacy. Also, I believe that some of the new titles are misleading and/or unclear, e.g., "design" may have too many meanings in English to serve within a title, and I prefer something like "Informed Citizenship" in place of the respectively proposed name. The hugely varying, actual expectations (including almost exclusively A and B grades) and very low student class attendance (my experience and what I hear reported) within current GenEd courses, appear to raise questions about what is actually being learned in them. They generate lots of tuition money, but upper division undergrad students are on average the least well educated I have experienced in over 40 years.

I. "Diversity, Equity and Social Justice: These courses present diverse identities and perspectives and critically examine how social dynamics shape a range of life experiences. Students will engage with difference, consider how social agents construct pathways to equity and inclusion, and apply theory to local, national, and/or global contexts." "Students will engage with difference"?? What does that even mean, other than straight, white, cis, able-bodied folks will get to hang out with the "others"? Are you kidding? Seriously? Students of color, LGBTQ, and differently abled students engage with "difference" all the time on this campus. Also, "diversity" is a smokescreen for "sure, we have plenty of international students.". You can't offer "diversity" on this campus without a structural investment.

"Diverse identities"? We're gonna bean-count, now? This is ridiculous. "Equity" is equally horrendous for similar reasons. Drop both of these and re-write for social justice. II. We propose that the curriculum includes one Integrative Experience, defined as an opportunity to make connections among subjects (via a multidisciplinary course or a capstone course), or to make connections between curricular, co-curricular or extracurricular activities (via an internship, service learning, or education abroad course). This would be great if we actually supported interdisciplinary work at UConn. BTW, the word you need here is 'INTERDISCIPLINARY', not multidisciplinary. Further, how are students making connections among subjects at an internship, which UConn doesn't supervise? Does extracurricular include sports? Cuz I'm all about the sports, but not sure how they're making connections among subjects out on the ice or the court. Also, Most majors already have some sort of capstone. This reads very much like y'all just wanted to clear the path for internships and study abroad and didn't quite figure out why other than money. Again: structural investment. III. and finally: "This is a better way to give students more flexibility to explore a topic of interest than the current Content Areas structure." please keep in mind that while we all want them to be happy, and we're obviously building our entire university around STEM and Business, sometimes students don't know what will interest them or serve them until they step out of a comfort zone. THAT is the point of higher ed; otherwise we can send em to a tech school where they won't go tens of thousands of dollars into debt.

If it ain't broke, don't fix it.

If this is replacing the existing 4 Group model, I think it is an improvement, as one could argue that Group One "Arts and Humanities, Group Two "Social Sciences, and Group Four "Diversity and Multiculturalism have a lot of potential redundancy, as currently defined. Although I'm not sure if the expanded 6 categories will reduce that redundancy. I think that science, empiricism and objective critical thinking are critical today, and am not sure that only requiring 1/6th of the Gen Ed experience (non-science majors) to reflect this is sufficient. For example, for one to critically appreciate Environmental Stewardship etc, actual scientific concepts that illustrate the why behind policy prescriptions, as opposed to just passing on prescriptions, may be more important than simply being taught the prescriptions. Understanding toxicity and ecology in a meaningful way today requires some basic concepts of chemistry, biology and genetics. I think we should have higher Gen Ed expectations for non-science majors, as our fundamental understanding is so established and well grounded today, there is no excuse not to be able to share that with upcoming generations.

I'm not sure that anything's "broken" in our current GE requirement (and if so, whether such an extensive set of "fixes" is needed). The disciplinary exemplars seem rather constrained as well. Moreover, these proposals don't directly relate to a key mega-trend to which those requirements could be realigned: how our life is being changed by emerging modalities surrounding the emerging digital economy.

In category 1, lab should not be narrowly defined as falling with the traditional sciences. Other disciplines can offer lab experiences

In general, I like to give students more autonomy in the courses they choose than less. It does not seem to me that the new proposal makes students any more autonomous. Another important goal is simplicity. I want students to be spending their time on their course material (whatever material they choose) as opposed to figuring out requirements. I also would hate for a student to take a course they are not really interested in because of a requirement as opposed to a course in their field that they would really like to take and would be helpful for their careers.

In general, the goals that are listed seem worthy. The application of them is always the part that becomes suspect. Nearly all students find ways to take the easiest course possible to fulfill the requirements. What mechanism will exist to make sure the goals are actually met? One suggestion for courses throughout the university: each Department should offer a course in the history of their discipline. How and why did the ideas behind that discipline develop? What were they a response to? Why does the discipline exist? Taken together, all of these courses add up to a "history of ideas" and an overview of how culture develops in the first place.

In my experience the problem with the existing gen ed structure is not so much the categories and labels as the advising that goes with it. I see some merit in the breadth and depth approach to allow students to follow an interest in a specific area, but I do not see how these changes address the core problem: students, and to some extent advisers, see gen ed as a box-checking exercise. They do not read material given to them on how to use gen-ed as a tool for developing their interests or satisfying their curiosities outside their major, much less as a way to determine a good choice of major, and overall they are not investing their choices of gen ed courses with the thought that would make them worthwhile. I find the new categories awkward, in that the labels are not self-explanatory and even the descriptions are a bit vague. The advantage of the old labels was that people at least thought they knew what they meant. I am willing to bet that just as under the old system many students would choose a "group 2" from a list without really thinking about what the point was in taking courses from "group 2" they will do the same for "EL" or "IIV" or whatever these will be called. As to the "integrative experience", I think that the merits or otherwise of such a course or experience are discipline-specific and it should be left to departments to determine whether they want this in their major. There are disciplines (mine is one) where this is not a natural thing to suggest doing, and where the implementation is likely to be either resource-prohibitive or pro-forma, and in the current funding environment, I practically guarantee the latter. FWIW, I know of some small liberal arts colleges that do this in math, but I have never seen a serious university do it.

In no particular order: 1) Internships are often offered in various departments anyway and doing a business/work internship is more about training the student to be an employee with certain marketable skills, not about broadening their education. Obviously, I am a huge proponent of experiential education such as field classes, methodology classes, etc. but If I had my say, I would explicitly exclude internships from the Gen Ed category! 2) Additionally, I feel the themes of cultural diversity are dwarfed by the other categories and education about other people's cultures, beliefs, histories, etc. is as important as courses that interrogate racism power, etc. I am ultimately concerned that students manage to get through the Gen Ed system without being exposed to other cultures, peoples, etc. and worry that this system could be exploited to minimize a student's gen ed experience. 3) I may have missed it but does the diversity description specifically mention gender and sexuality? If not, isn't that a glaring omission? 4) An

important goal for Gen Ed in the 21st century is to truly teach empathy and compassion toward other human beings. This is why I feel Gen Ed courses exploring cultural/ethnic/religious/racial/gender/sexual/socioeconomic differences are critical. As critical as global climate change especially since this new wave of violent extremism has percolated up in the USA over the last few years. 5) The scientific literacy is good but make sure to allow room for "soft science" as well as "hard science" (it was mentioned but could be more specific). If it were up to me I would expand this category or make a new one about "information literacy" as we have slipped into a world of "fake news", rumor, conspiracy theories, etc. 6) I teach primarily Gen Ed classes and every semester I am inundated with over-enrollment requests because of an apparent lack of available courses. I am regrettably an adjunct and are therefore limited to 2 courses a semester. I would gladly work full-time non-tenured to teach twice as many courses. I suspect you will have a major issue, especially at regional campuses, of students waiting for courses they want to take. In principle, the proposed new categories in the Gen Eds are creative and excellent, but the categories from 15 years ago were most acceptable. Still, to reconfigure the envelopes and add selection flexibility is a good thing, especially if the competition is doing it, but Gen Eds, at least at the 1000 level, will still be things to get through in order to access the content courses of the major. Encouraging innovation in product design or web design or poetry is a good thing too but not for everyone. Some who just wish to be well trained for a profession, on top of their broad exposure given by the gen eds, may find it distracting. Likewise, critical thinking is certainly important, but one needs to know all sides of an issue and a lot of context well in order to do it at all. Bottom line, I like the (perceived) flexibility and the less rigid categories and the emphasis on internships, service learning, interdisciplinary projects is all in the right direction. It's more hands on, more 1 to 1 interaction with the faculty, which will require smaller classes and probably a lot of face time. If we can pull it off, it will be a good thing. But maybe like the three W course requirement, we'll have to adjust as necessary.

Individuals and institutions category consists of two very distinct topics. It should be split.

Integrative Experience proposal changes my answers to some previous questions: it WILL encourage greater depth and autonomy. One concern: how do we achieve a more COMMON BREADTH of knowledge among the students -- something increasingly difficult to do, given today's hyper-specialization. Thus, how broad would the 1000-level courses be in each of these areas? How much breadth is even possible? Topic 3 looks fuzzier than the others. It does mention "informed citizenship and leadership," which, I hope, will include study of government systems, including ours. Do Topics 3 and 6 include the study of civil societal institutions? Our democracy is in peril, but so far, our civil society is strong and is pushing back hard against nascent authoritarianism. Students need to study this. Is there educational research to support these changes? It seems like a change of this magnitude should be accompanied with a clear definition of what counts as success, and evidence for greater success with this model over previous or other models. I assume that exists, but it was not presented here.

Isn't going in-depth what the major is about, why add another layer of requirements for students who are already burdened with gen ed and major requirements? Also the gen ed classes tend to be large and I do not think that is the best way to learn. Why not provide students with more opportunities to be in small classes?

It feels like there's overlap across several of the categories. Folks in the social sciences will understand the distinction being made between "individuals and institutions" and "cultural foundations" -- but for those not in those or related fields, there's a lot of overlap in intent. Also, although I'm a strong advocate of environmental literacy, it's bizarre that it stands out alone. Everything else is generic...then suddenly one field is singled out. It just doesn't make sense. Why not tuck Environmental Literacy under one of the other topics--and require that "depth" include at least one course that touches on env. lit.? Otherwise, it feels we're placing this topic above all others (don't get me wrong: I'm sympathetic. But structurally, it's bizarre.)

It is exciting that this is being reviewed as I think it was certainly necessary.

It is important for us to get professional advisors and faculty advisors, as well as departments on board with the changes. With a change like this that has not occurred in some time, we need to ensure that all the pieces are in place prior to jumping into this.

It seems like this model would allow students to load up in their area of interest very heavily and use a very few double dipping courses to cover the other aspects. In particular it seems to lump math and physical sciences together allowing students to really avoid some aspects of math and science that they don't like.

it was not clear from the survey is the going deep+going broad are alternatives or go together so my responses on the subsequent questions were dubious

It was not clear if the new categories will just have the same courses listed as before, but with new descriptive titles. I appreciate the efforts to make the topics more enticing than "Content Area", but it does not appear to add any new courses. Also, if the idea is to give students more flexibility/freedom in choosing, they are still restricted by course availability and scheduling conflicts. Many students pick Gen Eds because they are "easy", fit their schedule, or the only class left open. I think it is important to evaluate the resources needed to meet these new requirements. Faculty

are already teaching too many classes and space is limited in classrooms. How will these be impacted. Lastly, I do like the new structure and descriptions, but I believe this appears rushed and feedback is asked in a very short period.

It would be good to add the term "international" or "global" to one of the areas of inquiry.

It would be more beneficial to focus on the skills and knowledge that employers need in their employees and those that students will need to survive, adapt, and thrive in the future. Employers increasingly indicate that students are not prepared for employment. They are also not prepared for their life following graduation and the many decisions they will need to address. The plan provided does not address these important concerns.

It would be really nice to know the rationale for these proposed changes. I would be curious, for example, to know why every student - no matter their interests or goals - needs to take a lab course.

It's a great school!

It's working well as is. This is another instance of academia trying to fix something that is not broken at all. No need to fiddle.

Keep politics out of it.

Main complaint with current GenED: Courses that would seem to fit a content area do not because department has not gone through the relevant processes. Hence a student who wants to take that course to fulfill the content area cannot do so. Re current scheme, I would like to see a more explicit international focus.

Making a bad system worse. I imagine chaos in c&c

Many of my introductory astronomy classes (a Q course for liberal arts majors) cannot do the MOST RUDIMENTARY arithmetic. They can't figure out "Eight times one and a half". I had a student who didn't know what ten times ten is. (I said, "Do you know how many dimes are in a dollar?" and she said, "No.") So I can't get all excited about your "breadth of knowledge" initiatives when I have students who cannot even multiply and are going to be ripped off by every mortgage broker and car salesman for the rest of their lives...

Many of the suggestions in the new proposal ought to be handled within a major. The committee would do well to establish a clearer separation between what is general education and what is a major.

Much of this is framed in a way that is clear to faculty members, but not at all clear to incoming students. The biggest issue with core curricula is getting students to buy in to the vital areas being taught, rather than seeing it as just courses to be checked off with as little engagement as possible. This doesn't seem to address that at all, and seems to disguise a lot of the best things core curricula do.

My biggest comment about existing content areas and the proposed changes is the grouping of courses into areas and the double counting of courses results in too many rules to keep track of. It is hard for the students to understand. As an advisor, I find myself constantly explaining this to students. It is not intuitive. For example, why are CA4 and CA4-International not simply labeled as two different CA? I see the chart, the wording about multiple listing for courses, and the wording about how students should be able to satisfy the requirements in as few as 7 courses. It sounds like we may be on our way to similarly complex rules. Options are good for students to tailor learning, but I think the explanation of this and the groupings need to be very carefully thought out so that the process of fulfilling these requirements (and explaining them to our students) is simplified. While I agree that an internship, multidisciplinary, or capstone course would be beneficial to students, I must question how that would be evaluated by the University. Many majors already have these in place. Will we be expected to add new requirements to our courses to make them fit this expectation? What happens if we are not able to do that well?

My only comment would be on topic 1: science, theory, and empirical inquiry. I firmly believe that all students need quantitative learning, currently in the Q classes, and need to understand how a scientific method of inquiry works and produces knowledge. But I do not want students to leave UConn with the idea that knowledge can only be produced with Q classes and/or quantitative inquiry (e.g., the hypothesis testing in the description). That knowledge in social inquiry is subject to interpretation, that there may never be a "right" answer, etc. seems increasingly important for students to understand, given the current political and social environment. I am a firm supporter of general education, and enjoy teaching my general education course. But I worry about the direction of this subject area as it currently is written.

My only major concern about the change is that it adds more complexity that will compete with the purpose of the curriculum. Often, with the current requirements, students struggle to find a course that meets their interests. Many students often settle for anything that fits their schedule. If we want this new approach to work, we have to be able to give students options. This will require significant investment in order to offer multiple sections of some courses.

My primary concern is that adding extra requirements does not improve student choice or options--instead it will limit them. Also, study abroad, extracurricular, and service learning opportunities are wonderful, but not within reach of all students in terms of finances or available time. Most programs already have a capstone as well.

Therefore mandating something in this category will seem to make little difference in student behavior/selections and instead just create administrative burden to track this.

Nice that creativity's a theme; too bad all resources for creativity scholarship at UConn has been stripped away. None of this addresses the central problem of higher education in our time: lack of motivation. Students want to learn to get a job. They mostly regard the administrative and faculty structure as standing in their way. Real reforms are absolutely necessary if UConn is to survive the coming demographic collapse among college age students in the US (this is discussed widely but see *The Chronicle*, etc.). First: eliminate grades. They are manipulative and objectively damaging to students--and most universities in the world throughout most of their history have got along just fine without them. (Look at the research on what happens when you eliminate grades: student motivation goes up 40%; faculty assessment of the quality of student work goes up 35%, and on and on. Second, structure the curriculum based on the needs that the students themselves RECOGNIZE. Teach them to be good citizens, not with some arcane imposition, but through basic engagement on big issues. Show them that all these disciplines MATTER for building a better world. You think they already know that, but they mostly do not. Third, and finally, involve the students directly in curriculum planning. (I know. Wild!) But they are the ones who are paying us; so they should have some say in what they get out of it. In particular, what will happen when you do this is that conversation will begin about the value of these disciplines and what they contribute, and then we will be able to make things make sense to the students (instead of just imposing things on them, as we do now).

not a good proposal

not sure why these changes are necessary

Of course, resources are always an issue for implementing the last idea for an integrative experience.

Ok. Not all is great right now. The gen ed needs to be revised and updated. Yet, I do not see why a complete overhaul is needed. Isn't the title of the group "delta"? (small incremental change in math lingo). Titles and topics look very nice, and there are some very good ideas, but in all earnest the details are too important to ignore here. For example, my department cannot support a capstone course without additional funding (brutal fact), and as no resources to help with the integrative experience (note a similar requirement or "engagement in the major" by the honors program which is very hard for us to satisfy). Beyond logistics, it seems that the new proposal allows for almost any combination, lacking structure many students need in order to get the best out of their tuition. There is much much more. This is not a discussion for a five-minute survey (took me much more, design is pretty problematic - we are asking about a major change without asking about the present system directly), or for a small committee.

once the new gen eds requirements are finalized, we need to make sure that students are aware of these changes and why. We also need to allow ample time for the entire academic community to get on board and fully grasp how to ensure students meet the new requirements. We need to provide training and workshops for advisors to be able to learn the new model and then identify best practices for how to work with students on completing the requirements. If internships are now a required component, we need to ensure that departments that offer internship credit are prepared for the potential increase in students seeking credit for the internship. If study abroad is now a potential part of the gen eds, we need to have adequate representation from that office to help plan and implement the potential increases in student requests. etc etc.

One of my concerns with this framework is that individual majors may "undo" the breadth intention by assigning specific courses for many of these 21 credits. This limits the transferability of students into those majors after their first year, when they may have already "spent" their general education courses. What measures are being proposed to keep departments from limiting their students' exposure to true breadth of knowledge by requiring specifics?

One of the issues is that as good as these content areas sound and as good as a course may sound if it is badly taught then none of the rest matters. I would like to see more emphasis on engaged pedagogy . that address what is outlined in something like this workshop *Creating a Positive Classroom Environment* Maintaining a positive attitude Making students feel welcome and showing you care Encouraging student participation and active learning Giving choices and engaging student passion Celebrating both success and failure Using humor to make and/or emphasize a point I'd also like to see a way students could take such classes as pass/fail and not have them count into their GPA. As someone who almost didn't graduate from college because of a math requirement, I would've liked more flexibility in merely enjoying math, rather than pretending that i was be able to do it. For all these Gen Eds our goals should be for students to learn / to grow and to appreciate the perspective they are being exposed to - not to hate them as they cause grade stress / boredom / frustration and resentment ...

Overall, I'm enthusiastic about this change to the general education curriculum requirements. It should provide additional flexibility and customization that will afford more individualized majors (which will make UConn a stronger institution given the likelihood of career changes/skill specializations to increase going forward).

Overall, no strong objections. My frustration with UConn students is that they are all trying to do too much and we are only making it worse by demanding a large variety of courses. Many, many students are no longer learning anything in depth. There are simply too many activities and too many alternatives to staying focused. A curriculum that requires 4 to 6 courses per semester only makes it worse - whatever structural umbrella we construct. To me, fewer, more focused courses is a better teaching/learning environment for the future. The proposal for UConn should increase the normal credit per course from 3 to 4. Yes, this is major and radical, but it's not unusual nor out-of-sync with other successful program in higher education. For decades, we have also short-changed the "lab" part of many science courses by relegating them as 1-credit add-ons. Labs can be and often are the core of the particular course and often areas of team building and integration - often more so than a separate "multidisciplinary" course. What do we mean by "multidisciplinary by the way? My two cents...

Personally, I think that the existing system is fine and that the main challenge is to communicate to students the purposes and goals of gen ed (not for lack of trying!). But I do think that the existing system could be improved, and that the ideas in this proposal are valuable. A couple of comments on specific topics/areas: Topic 1. The definition sounds like a Philosophy of Science course would be ideal: "how scientific theories are constructed and are tested against data collected in the natural world and in social systems" is what Phil sci is all about. Topic 2 (design, etc) sounds like an ill-defined grab-bag, though I like the idea. Topics 3 and 6 strongly overlap. Justice is an individual value as well as a social/political value. Thank you!Â

Placing existing courses into new categories is a pretty straight-forward process, but the proposed changes to the Gen Ed requirements would really benefit from systematic revision of key courses that fulfill these goals. I think this is an excellent opportunity to ask each department to begin identifying which courses (existing or newly developed) can meet the goals of the new Gen Ed program and to work with CETL to revise course activities and assessments such that they provide the interdisciplinary opportunities that are integral to the student success outlined here.

Please clarify whether topic 5 is limited to history and literature, or whether anthropology, ethnic and cultural studies would also be included. For topic 3, please include human development in the last sentence. questions about the table in the last part are all unclear because the question says "better" but does not indicate "better than what?" Presumably the current structure but without a side by side comparison of how a student's coursework would look in both scenario's it is impossible to judge.

Regarding the last question, while I support integration, I do not think that education abroad courses necessarily serve that function.

Regional campuses lack the capacity to offer enough courses to fulfill the new vision. The new Gen Ed structure may be successful only at Storrs. Hire more full time faculty at the regional campuses.

Requiring 6 different subject areas in 7 courses seems a bit much. Simplify, do not complicate things.

Social Justice is a loaded term: don't use it. Many, many students feel this term divides instead of unites because largely they grew up in a post-racial society, unlike their instructors. Our students rarely voice this "because they know they will be labeled as a racist. It is our current generation of college professors who feel entitled to impose a focus on racial/cultural/gender identification characteristics as a mirror or metric for all education. We do this because many of us feel we know better and are more valuable people than most others in our society. Try something truly new: focus on what unites the student body, our society, instead of clinging to division. We say we want to make the world a better place, but increasingly the parents of our students see us as a force to counter. Parents feel their children are being indoctrinated to one point of view, but lacking other options, they send their children to us and hope they don't come out 4 years later hating their new skewed view of their family's beliefs. For example: ask yourselves this: would Kyle Kashuv, a Parkland survivor with an alternate viewpoint, EVER be invited to the university to speak at UConn's spring 2019 Metanoia, Youth for Change. or to any venue at UConn? Yet David Hogg is embraced, celebrated and will be introduced by a prominent elected official. Consider this as well: we have whole departments assisting undocumented students, but we make minimal effort to support our veterans or future veteran (ROTC). Want UConn to stand out nationally? Want to actually be innovative? Then, have the courage to champion viewpoint-diversity. Have the courage to teach students to think instead of focusing on indoctrination dressed up as teaching. Allow them to be exposed to non-liberal ideology. Let them decide what they believe.

Social Justice is a politically charged phrase and is inappropriate as a header for the general curriculum. Some Gen Ed classes such as calculus, algebra, have no real life value unless students become specialized in that area in graduate studies. Why do we require them? On the other hand, managing personal finances and relationships

are not required/taught. The high debt and divorce rates point to the deficiency of our education system. However, we are not changing. Another major issue is the current "anti-enlightenment" movements. Misinformation circulates in social media and people don't know what is right and what is wrong. An everyday biotechnology course should be required. We are living and will be living with many new forms of biotechnologies that people should know at least what they are and what benefits they bring.

Some minimum amount of breadth needs to be encouraged, but students should be able to pursue their interests and avoid topics they really wish to avoid. I encourage the depth approach, perhaps students can take 3 courses in one area while covering a minimum of 4 out of 7 areas.

Some of the descriptions and purposes were phrased in such a way as to be rather vague. That makes it difficult to agree or disagree as the point for the inclusion is unclear. In relation to certain topics, they seem to be using terminology that is currently "hot," but which also has some negative connotations for certain populations due to a lack of understanding of the definitions, which might be off-putting to students. Dare I say that some faculty also use the terms incorrectly, which continues to foster the disconnect and potential discomfort when hearing the terms used. I would recommend avoiding those terms in favor of more general terminology that avoids causing discomfort or discontent to the diverse populations served at the university.

Some of the descriptions were clear to me but I am not sure the language would be as clear to students. The "depth" focus is positive but I worry if students will be able to select an area to "go deep" at some of the regional campuses, where course options are more limited.

Some of the proposals on how to revamp general education requirements seem useful, but it's difficult to make a real determination without a better sense of what courses would be included in each content area and how a student might move through the general education requirements. For example, your cluster on design thinking is laden with so many empty words and phrases that it's difficult to assess its form or purpose. My guess is that the emphasis will be on disciplines that tend to produce significant revenue for the university, despite the fact that any number of disciplines require thinking about systematic design (designing a research program for example), produce innovative forms of knowledge, and involve creativity. Similarly, some disciplines seem to be all too easily left out of this schema. The only topic cluster that includes explicit mention of history is the one on culture, yet historical thinking applies to all of them. Again, it's difficult to judge the proposal without knowing how different courses could be combined, but it seems like there is an uneasy relationship between topic and method. One approach that could be effective would be to let students develop a general education program that allows them to pursue a topic of interest to them from different disciplinary perspectives. Combining depth and breadth are important but depth and breadth of what? Topic? Method? Subject knowledge? It might be useful to clarify what it is you want students to get from the general education requirement. An attempt to break out of the western division of academic departments seems a worthwhile project, but not if it simply substitutes those divisions for equally arbitrary ones.

Some of these descriptions of course groups are clear and some are very vague. Courses should describe what you want students to be able to do as a result of completing the course, rather than what you want them to know or understand. When you look at it this way, it might be easier to align what students will be able to do with their career path. Drop the degree requirements to three years (90 credits), instead of four - like they do in Europe and let students focus on courses primary to their degree, or allow them to choose an interdisciplinary path.

Some of these things are good but some are very abstract and make it at least as difficult on the student. I think we should make it easier for the student and have less requirements.

Some students feel that general education courses are a waste of time. I think this approach will help students appreciate the value of these courses in developing a well-rounded skill set.

Some topics to consider are: Appreciating diverse behaviors associated with age and demographics. Basic math with data analysis basic statistics and data presentation literacy.

Stop this crazy approach that is so difficult it requires UConn to now hire many professional advisors to keep kids from getting lost. Simplify, simplify, simplify and allow students to explore their interests. Some students may need a broad selection of classes to find their interests. Others may know exactly what they want and are handicapped by your arcane rules. Get out of their way! You lose me as soon as your start double counting classes for different purposes. Put students first and let them decide within clear, simple guidelines.

Students already feel very limited in offerings for Gen Ed courses as many of the courses currently are not offered on a regular basis or courses in certain areas are extremely limited, to begin with (eg. CA 1D). While I can appreciate the idealistic nature of the "breadth and depth" model, I fear that it will limit students even further by having to select their courses to make sure that they have enough courses that take them 3 deep and across 6 areas. Feedback on gen eds can be negative already, and while I personally understand the value of them, it can be really hard as is to get students interested/excited about them. I fear that this new model is going to make things more complicated in terms of completing these requirements for students. I am also confused about the new, proposed,



science requirement. It says that students have to complete a lab course if they haven't taken a Biological Science or Physical Sciences lab course. Why not just say that all students need to complete 1 lab science course? I would also be interested in seeing what this structure would look like for CLAS students as their requirements are structured differently from the rest of the university.

Students may have difficulty navigating the requirement of three courses in a single area. Requiring students to complete a minor would be far simpler in putting together a plan of study. However, I don't know why depth is a part of general education given that students will already be completing majors. In addition, the requirement that the courses be from six different subject areas seems like an unnecessary layer of complexity with no clear purpose. Presumably, the courses would be vetted for inclusion in each of the different topics, so their content would be diverse in that regard. Besides, in the case of the many courses that are cross-listed, the distinction of subject code would be meaningless.

Students often pick a course that fits with their preferred schedule instead of a course that may truly enhance their education in one of the seven topical areas. It might be a good idea for undergraduate student advisors to ensure that if a student lacks a foundation course in a specific topical area (because s/he did not take any classes on that topic in high school), s/he will be strongly encouraged to take that particular foundation course.

Technological literacy is missing from the scope of the Gen Ed requirements -- it needs to be more sharply defined and integrated.

Thanks for all the work the committee put into developing this revised Gen Ed structure.

The diversity requirement needs to be carefully considered. It should not be a requirement for students to agree with feminist and multicultural theory. Diversity defined as anything without the participation of straight white males should be avoided. I've really cringed reading through some of the required texts.

The future of education must get away from test based assessments. Students should develop the skills to critically think and develop projects that demonstrate creativity, critical thinking, and building confidence in their ability to engage the world. The days of memorization and testing must come to an end.

The Gen Ed courses do not offer enough opportunities for students to improve grades. Many students struggle with courses that are completely unrelated to their final career path and thus GPA is negatively affected. A student who may need a high GPA to get into graduate school may not have this opportunity due to a less than ideal grade in a course such as geography.

The idea of interdisciplinary courses suggests a need to develop new courses. The idea of a capstone general education course suggests a need for increased faculty teaching load.

The integrative aspects are a good notion, but only a notion, as there are very few, if any, UConn faculty sufficiently well versed to lead such courses. The 'silo' specialization in academia makes these narrow experts ill-disposed to offer this level of integration. Moreover, my view is that UConn is a particularly balkanized institution, with only lip service paid to interdisciplinary work, so there is little potential for present faculty (and little likelihood of attracting such faculty) to have the appropriate expertise. The entire GEOC approach is well-intentioned but crashing under its own weight of combinatorial complexity, which the proposed approaches significantly exacerbate. The approach is wrong -- pare down to a few broad objectives and requirements and let students pick from existing, academically credible courses within disciplines to meet those minimal requirements. The menu complexity is astounding and counterproductive!! Much more will be gained by minimizing requirements, encouraging freedom, creativity and experimentation rather than needing to fill an exhaustive list of confusing requirements. Minimize, promote freedom -- exactly the opposite of the approach proposed.

The key to making the general education requirements work with students is the way they are explained (or marketed, if you prefer that term).

The more exposure to real world experiences better prepares students to excel in life.

The new course structure is confusing and the gen.ed. themes are nebulous. There seems to be no justification for changing the current course structure.

The new General Education scheme has lofty goals, but the specifications way too amorphous to be put into practice. It will be very difficult for GEOC and its subcommittees to determine whether courses match the goals set or to provide meaningful oversight. Trying to create serious interdisciplinary courses is a great deal of work, and not something that UConn has traditionally rewarded. The result is that most students will find themselves in courses that pay lip-service to the GenEd requirements rather than actually meeting them. It's clear that this will create a lot of work for faculty to try to retrofit their old courses to meet the new model, but unclear that students will seriously benefit. The current GenEd system is far from perfect, but it functions and could be improved incrementally. This kind of wholesale change is likely to create quite a bit of (unnecessary and unproductive) chaos.

The new groupings overlap significantly and can be confusing. For example, the scientific inquiry crosses several categories, including epistemology. It isn't obviously clear what distinctions are being made. Why not go simple: 7 courses, at least one in each area, across humanities, social science, physical/life sciences, and fine arts? This leaves it wide open for students to select courses that interest them.

The new groupings present more opportunities for interdisciplinary courses. Will faculty be given incentives to create new courses under these designations through team-teaching opportunities? Team-teaching goes on at many other universities, but is quite rare at UConn as far as I know.

The new proposal sounds unnecessarily complicated and some of the categories sound very similar to each other. The overlap between the topics is a minor problem. Shouldn't science courses also include a creative element? How about deductive reasoning and logic - is this covered under "principles"? Having distinct topics, even with some courses double listed, furthers a silo-based way of thinking. The bigger problem is how these topics are implemented - same as for the current CA requirements. Rumor has it that some of the larger courses that are fulfilling general education requirements would have very low enrollment because of course content and quality of instruction, were it not for the general education requirement. Because of the limited course offerings students cannot vote with their feet, and even mediocre courses remain in the catalog. The general education oversight committee should make sure that this rumor is not based on fact :). One way could be for GEOC to also consider student evaluations, especially for courses that have been offered for many, many years.

The professional schools include some of these topics in their required curriculum. A package of University wide gen-ed requirements imposed on all schools and colleges crowds out course selection of "broadening" courses more appropriate for the profession.

The proposal looks well thought out, but it's very hard to tell what effects it will have on the options available to students prior to knowing how courses will be redistributed. And I think we should focus chiefly on the consequences for students, rather than on aligning our category descriptions with those of institutions we aspire to compete with. I imagine that hardly anyone chooses a college based on the structure of the general education requirements.

The proposed model has new words but is just a massage of what is. The notion of breadth defies depth when they must take the breadth first. A general education should be liberally acquired and focused on essentials of citizenship and what it means to be educated. These forced topics do not achieve that aim. Liberally acquired is about autonomy and not forced choice. Essentials of citizenship are about understanding, acceptance, diversity and justice. While I agree that science is important, obviously, is it general education. One could create an entire GE around environment and/or health...I would favor that rather than these six relabeled topics. The overlap between them is startling and while Dr. Schultz suggests we 'celebrate' the overlap, it will confound it from a practical standard. The competencies were not addressed in this survey but they are simply OUT OF DATE. The new design smacks of dumbing down rather than elevating.

The proposed new ideas do not seem better or worse than current Gen Eds

The proposed topics seem more confusing than the current General Education Content Areas. I teach two Gen Ed courses and I am not sure which topic they can fit within the proposed descriptions. In addition, this new change will probably confuse students and will require redesigning and re-approving many existing courses in the Gen Ed curriculum, which will put substantial burden on faculty and administrators.

The redesign is a good start but then we need to look at the actual content of the courses and the pedagogy of the instructors. One of my concerns in my own major is with the quality of instruction, which I think is incredibly varied. There are some exceptional teachers and then there is some truly lamentable teaching occurring.

The separation of cultural values from individual difference or diversity is not clear to me. Individuals are raised, live, operate and interact within cultural contexts.

The students have always felt forced to take the classes and limited to take classes they do not want to take because of their schedules. I don't see more flexibility added to the system just name changes and less clarity. I am also worried that the general requirements are being geared towards leaning the students towards a more liberal point of view and ethics rather than allowing the students to freely choose topics they are naturally curious about that will expose them to other subject that are not their chosen majors. In my opinion general ed should allow students to take classes on subjects outside their major that spike their interest and enrich them. At this point is just about checking the boxes so they can get to the classes they really want to take.

The students need to learn leadership. I am a leadership consultant and have proposed to run such a seminar or workshop on campus, but getting feedback on that idea is next to impossible. Students cannot enter the workforce if they cannot exhibit leadership or teamwork skills. The kids need to know how to write and they need to learn how to think outside of the world of their instagram feeds. They need to THINK, not to memorize. Whatever changes the university can make to force learning rather than reiteration would be excellent.

The template is non-discipline based which is ok with me but I imagine it will simply reconstitute the existing courses into different groups. In addition, multiple groups seem to incline toward social science which has at least some limitations in terms of how non-quantitative cultural or social experience is expressed. I am not inclined to support something that alienates us from what we currently call literature for example.

The topics of inquiry that I scored lower didn't read the same as the previous ones. The first few that I read included what students would be producing as part of their inquiry in these topics. The latter ones covered the idea of the topic and a definition, but it did not as clearly explicate what forms of knowledge would be produced by students as a result of exploration in this area. I think it's important that each of these topics have a similar structure in their definition (broad idea, subject areas included and definition, what students will learn/produce as a result of exploration of this topic). Otherwise, it unconsciously "preferences" the topics where definitions where the information is more complete than others. Students tell me that they feel that there is a "preference" for STEM majors/areas on campus already, so I would want our General Education to ensure that all of these topics are held as equally important in terms of what skills they teach and what knowledge students will produce as a result of exploration of them. All in all, though, I like the interdisciplinary approach and the capstone or experiential learning elements very much. This model fits with High Impact Practices very nicely and should help students see more clearly why these courses are valuable to their overall education while also providing them with more flexibility and freedom across the curriculum.

The use of "lab" is indefinite esp when it's partly defined by being met thru bio/physics (i think those were the examples). "Lab" seems to be syn with the "hard" sciences - where do soci/psych "labs" fit in? There's a big difference in meeting any new curriculum goals by "giving autonomy" versus the students accepting it (and becoming active participants in their course planning). I don't (yet, or i missed it) see how these new categories or philosophies of GenEd are any better at getting student acceptance/buy in as opposed to having to check a different set of boxes from the current CA. Certainly it's time to update/revisit goals of CA, but it's hard to see those goals met absent some idea of implementation.

There are several vague definitions that don't clarify the intent nor the execution necessary to make a significant difference in the way we approach GenEd requirements at UCONN. This is a great opportunity to make a difference. Dr. Schult has been doing incredible work and I am a bit surprised if these definitions are actually endorsed by Dr. Schult.

There are too many categories in the general requirements. Many of them can be combined into one category. So students have more freedom in selection.

There is a need to help students understand that GenEd courses are more than a tedious course that they have to take. More needs to be done to promote these course as important to both a student's general education but also to their future careers.

There is too much to read for me to make an entirely informative decision. The process would take several hours for me to understand every section. Nevertheless, my thoughts might be useful. I did not see any quantitative section for the General Education table. Was this under scientific reasoning? I don't quite think that fits well. Every student should be expected to have a basic understanding of mathematical competency and logic. For example, a student should be able to understand investing, risk, interest, managing income and expenses, exchange rates, taxes, etc. If somebody is trying to hustle them, they should be able to have the quantitative ability to recognize this immediately. I never learned this in school. I was only taught things like "Oh, here is the formula for the interest rate. Just plug these numbers in." And by the way, a lot of the Q courses in the math department are taught this way even though one of the criteria mentioned states: "Merely feeding numerical data into a program on a computer or a calculator to obtain a numerical result does not satisfy this requirement." Students need to learn to think for themselves and leave UConn being able to critically analyze situations in their lives and have the ability to confidently tackle problems. I have seen many courses taught with the goal of covering a set syllabus of topics rather than providing students with tools to solve actual problems they may face outside of class. For example, imagine you're a baker and are ordered to make ten fruit cakes, one hundred chocolate chip cookies, forty cupcakes, etc., and you know how many ingredients are required to make one cake, twenty-four cookies, twelve cupcakes, etc. All of the ingredients you buy come in specific sizes, the bigger, the more you save. But don't forget: fruits spoil faster than flour so you can't buy too many fruits. You also can't over-spend because you have a budget for the week. How will you optimize your costs? Everyone should leave school having the ability to solve a problem like this. I'm not saying that you should know how to solve this right now, but you should be able to think about it, sketch out a plan of attack, look up some math book you threw out when you were in college or high school, flip through it and find the relevant section, and work out a solution for yourself. Courses need to be goal-based rather than topic-based and students need to be aware of this all the time. Students must also be taught to (respectfully) question everything. They need to ask "Who gives a damn?" in every context (I am not joking---everything taught in a class should be meaningful).

Furthermore, a professor is not the ultimate authority on the matter---everybody makes mistakes. Students need to be taught to be leaders and not followers. This includes science, mathematics, political, and liberal arts courses. Professors need to be as unbiased as possible to allow for people of diverse opinions to not feel isolated and shunned. This includes political and societal views. Professors need to be role models exhibiting logic. This is not to say that opinions and emotions have no place in the classroom. I only mean that these opinions and emotions should not be forced onto students. Students need to be taught that there may be more than one solution to a given problem (almost all students I have met seem to not know this). Students need to understand that there isn't always just one solution. Why do they think this? It's probably because in many of the classes they have taken, they have been told they were wrong without knowing why. They should express their thought process and a professor should have the ability to identify any moment in the logic that is flawed (if it is flawed). Integrative and interdisciplinary opportunities is an excellent idea and is one of the only two ideas I strongly agree with. Getting students more involved with research (over all disciplines) is another good option to increase interdisciplinary skills. But to truly accomplish this goal, a complete revolution in the US must take place regarding department segregation. Perhaps UConn can be a model for this? Yes, it might be easier to manage departments, but our current system is not conducive to interdisciplinary studies (at least not the sciences). How easy is it to get a joint appointment across two departments? How shall such a professor be paid? It's a lot to deal with, and most universities will instead hire somebody who is more "focused." And who are the professors who get joint appointments? These are mostly professors who have a well established research agenda with dozens of years of experience. Do we welcome young and enthusiastic interdisciplinary researchers who will truly shape the future? In my opinion, absolutely not. If UConn wants to have more interdisciplinary opportunities for its students, it also needs to have more interdisciplinary possibilities for its current and prospective faculty. Environmental awareness as a required course is also an idea I agree with, but the way it was formulated here was unexpected. I think a course on unbiased facts and potential solutions to the environmental problems our society faces is important for our future. I wasn't sure where artistic and cultural interpretation came from (I can't remember the precise wording) nor am I sure of its usefulness in environmental awareness. However, this is a serious topic that our current and future generations must face. At the very least, all students should understand the importance of recycling, reusing, and the environmental impact of our individual actions. And while I'm on the subject, the use of whiteboards and plastic markers (as opposed to blackboards and chalk) at UConn is one of the topics that should be analyzed in further detail. What is the negative environmental impact of UConn and are we doing all we can to minimize it? In addition, we are living in the technology age. I probably missed this if you included it, but everybody should also leave UConn with an awareness of this. I remember learning html in high school and regret that I didn't go further with this or any other programming language in college because it was not required (at least I've gained the confidence to teach myself!). In the example of the baker mentioned earlier, once the baker sets up the optimization problem, they would be able to obtain a solution much faster if they are experienced with computers, especially if they're making thirty or so different types of cakes and baked goods. Everybody should learn the basics of some computer programming language (or at the very least some form of Excel). There should be a course that teaches students through realistic examples for a more general audience (perhaps this is already done at UConn---I'm not sure). Anyway, I hope not all of my rant was useless. Good luck with this Curriculum thing. This is an area that is far too complex for me to even comprehend.

There seems to be little focus on the social sciences. And arts are mentioned quite often. Seems a bit skewed. Also the competency about science should include critical thinking - being able to distinguish between facts and "fake news".

There seems to be too much overlap between different topics. I teach PHIL1104, Philosophy and Social Ethics. But this fits into both the "individual and social values" topic as well as the topic on "social justice", and arguably fits into the "culture" topic as well. At the least, I don't see a principled distinction between the "individual and social values" topic and the topic on "social justice". Also, the Environment topic seems like it is the odd fish here, being extremely narrow compared to the other topics and I think it should just be part of the science topic. I think fashion is driving this, as courses on world poverty or human rights, for example, might be of equal value and importance. If I were a student, I would resent being forced to take a course on the environment.

There seems to me to be a lot of overlap between three of the categories--individual and institution, cultures, and diversity, and especially the last two. To me the category of cultures is best fitted to pull these common areas together.

There should be a "Technology" competency added. There is too much overlap in Topic Area definitions (especially in the last four) I would recommend a careful review of the General Education topics with the goal of critically determining which are actually "Educational" and which are "Political."

These new ideas are new age mamby pamby suggestions. Fundamentals are fundamentals.

These new requirements would allow a student to complete "Liberal Arts" degree without ever taking literature, history, art, social science, or many other areas that are critical to creating a well-rounded citizen. I find it very telling that of course STEM fields are represented as a requirement through scientific theory, inquiry, and a lab course. I don't disagree with that, but it completely sweeps everything else under the rug in favor of vague skill sets, rather than content areas, which are still critically important.

This "redesign" is confusing and unnecessary. The current content areas are clear and cover a wide breadth and give students to opportunity to receive a broad, liberal arts education. The new redesign seems to be packaged in a way that allows them to cherry pick and specialize (what they do in MAJORS) rather than hit across all the content areas that we currently have. Secondly, these new areas are confusing and strange and seem to convey some obsession with science and innovation to the detriment of the goals of a liberal arts education, which are to expose students to a vast array of topics and opportunities for learning critical thinking. I do like the environmental literacy addition. Why can't we just add that to the current content areas? This redesign is terrible in my opinion and makes me feel far less invested in UConn.

This is a too complicated proposal that will make UConn weaker. It will be very difficult to implement, and will unnecessary drain our resources. No substantial change of the current Gen Ed is needed.

This is an excellent plan. Thank you for sharing.

This is long overdue.

This is not the way to improve quality of education. Students will not become well rounded through a general education algorithm. They will become well rounded and gain a high quality education when the university invests in high quality faculty and provides them with time and support to develop effective pedagogies. Instead of focusing on this, UConn has chosen to pack the administration with highly paid bodies who meet endlessly while ignoring inequalities in workload, institutional support, and faculty salaries. At the same time, faculty members have been required to work harder and harder every year. Morale among the faculty is very low due to these trends. This is not the way to improve quality of education.

This new plan looks terrible. The topic areas are poorly described. Many of the aims outlined ought to be accomplished within a major, as major requirements, rather than through extraneous courses. The insistence on six subject areas seems to be a way of imposing breadth between traditional fields of study on students, through the back door, in the guise of 'general education' -- what if they want to pursue a subject in depth through courses in a particular field? I worry that requirements such as service learning will adversely impact commuting students who are working their way through college. I also worry that a cumbersome, poorly articulated structure like this one will be incomprehensible to both students and faculty, and prevent students from pursuing focused interests in a given major or double major or dual degree program. The current system has clearly defined specific goals that can be accomplished in a variety of ways. Imposing a bunch of 'topics' that don't really describe university education or its goals will not be an improvement. I want students to learn some numeric literacy and a second language.

Information literacy is important too but should be accomplished within their major. And it would be good if they learned to write and speak with greater expertise and opened their minds to other points of view and other cultural experiences than their own. I don't care if they take a topic course on 'design', whatever the f that might mean, especially when its goals are so poorly described. A final note: Being 'articulate' is widely decried as a racist, classist measure of competence in language use and I want to see it removed from any description of any of our curricula.

This new proposal seems very difficult to understand. It's next to impossible to evaluate without considering what courses would fall under each of the new proposed topics. The topic titles are also confusing and seem to say very little while being on the lengthy side.

This proposed approach seems poorly thought out. The individual themes are so broad that it is difficult to see what courses are supposed to satisfy them. For example, will Theme 1 require science courses, or can courses about science be used to fulfill it? I have no idea what Theme 2 is about. It seems to me that every course I have taught requires "developing one or more solutions to a well-defined problem" and "higher level thought processes that imagine new possibilities." I'm not sure what a course would look like that didn't require these things. I also dislike the interdisciplinary/capstone/service learning requirement. I have been involved in these types of courses and activities, and I am in favor of developing more of them. But, they are not an appropriate requirement for all students. I am not pedagogically (or otherwise) conservative, but our current approach to general education requirements based on traditional academic disciplines (history, literature, fine arts, etc.) seems vastly superior to the proposed new system.

This sounds like a great opportunity to introduce students to big picture thinking in STEM. Even when you have engineers take ethics, their engagement can be kind of shallow. Giving them philosophy of science or epistemology alongside their other classes is a great way to get them thinking about the significance of their other courses. There's a persistent myth in popular culture that science proceeds via the application of "The Scientific Method" by

individual heroic scientists in the observation of new capital-F Facts. But that's not how modern science works at all. Not all scientific work happens via experiments in a lab; almost all of it is carried out by huge teams; and the world doesn't cleave itself neatly into pre-theoretic Facts. This is all part of a myth that constrains the popular imagination, resulting in bad public appraisals of scientific work, and bad expectations in students about what their classes will be like. I'd say the same about things about the importance of teaching epistemology, which is one of my fields. (Okay, rant over.)

This survey didn't say whether the new scheme would involve competencies like the current requirements (or else I missed it). It isn't yet clear to me that the new scheme will make a substantial difference in students' education. Do the data show that students tend to have deficits in their education under the old scheme? If yes, how would the new scheme address these particular deficits? I think I would need information like this to judge between them.

This survey is extremely problematic. We're being asked to think about clarity and usefulness of new items BEFORE being given a holistic view of how the parts go together. I would be wary of the results.

This will add to too many un-funded mandates on the faculty without ANY benefit to the students. The committee deciding on this consists mostly of administrators who do not seem to have any idea on how we teach now. All these vague descriptions will lead to more confusion than clarification. What a waste of time and resources!

Too constrictive of students, giving them less scope for following their own career objectives, expanding on their own major and so on. This, like the present system, takes liberal arts education in a too complicated direction.

Too much dictating to students what they have to take, according to categories I don't think they will resonate with. Current system allows choices. Has this proposal been discussed with student groups?

Two of the topics - environmental literacy and diversity - should be subsumed by the science and culture areas, respectively. Otherwise you waste students' time to achieve your own goals, not theirs.

UConn educates its undergraduates with too much emphasis on rote memorization. Even grading in upper level courses in most disciplines are based on multiple choice tests. This is far different from other research universities and liberal arts colleges that graduate more proficient and creative students overall. At those institutions students in lower levels of every discipline are required in discussion sessions actually to discuss, write and present in settings based on seminars. Those students thereby show the ability not only to memorize facts but also to analyze and apply those facts in real scenarios. That is the biggest problem with UConn's education of undergraduates. Resolving it will involve a deeper commitment to personalized undergraduate education, including a complete restructuring of the current campus TA system.

UConn's GenEd program is great for students, and I have been glad to teach extensively in large lecture courses and in W courses in my field, because they help open areas and interests to students who might not otherwise get them.

My only concerns about the proposals are about some vagueness of the language of some of the new proposals, and also that students may feel that there are more requirements upon them and less choice of things they want to pursue.

We know the value of the current and proposed studies, but the complaint I often hear when I ask students what they like most and least about college is, in the latter category, the multiple requirements upon them. Perhaps I misread in my haste here however; for instance there could be a new capstone requirement? In some ways the whole college experience requires integration which the students do themselves? In any case, thank you for everything, including the messages of thanks that you send at the beginning of the terms of study.

Undergraduate pursuit of a diverse and inclusive liberal arts curriculum will allow UConn students to become more competitive as they enter increasingly multi-lingual, multi-ethnic, multicultural academic environments as well as professional marketplace midst the fast-changing landscape of American society of the 21st C.

Until the University comes together to define the role of General Education and truly support that, we will continue to live somewhere in between requirements that expand breath and knowledge and courses students feel they just have to take before major courses and to get to 120 credits. This makes the it hard to weigh in on what is really important and impactful. From either side, I would recommend loosening some restrictions that depend on department and overlap with major. If we truly believe a course fulfills the intent of a content area, then discipline should be somewhat irrelevant. This would allow students more flexibility in studying courses they are interested in as well as assist advisors into placing students into classes.

URBN courses or curriculum similar to that of URBN 2000 would be a great addition to General Education Requirements. URBN 2000 in particular dives deep into socioeconomic topics of discussion likely relevant to the majority of the student body here at UCONN. Our world is drastically increasing in urban landscapes and the future generations have a chance to alter the relationship we currently have with these spaces--to include the rural-urban interaction, human health, environmental health, and human interpersonal/intercultural interactions and policies. Valuable... But it always ends up being convoluted and confusing for some reason.

Very few students will willingly do more than the bare minimum. As such, they will need very clear maps of which courses double-count in which topics, laying out how they can complete these requirements in only 7 courses. There will need to be several possible maps because the courses in them will fill quickly. Advisors will thank you.

Very good approach. Thank you!

We can overhaul or improve the courses and pathways all we want. We need to hire more tenure-track faculty available to be in contact with the students. The university cannot lean on and load up on adjuncts and APIRs and grad students to cover all the needed Gen Eds. Compare the number of tenure track faculty at our important university with the # of students with years 1980, 1990, 2010, projected 2020.

We need a gen-ed course on biotechnology, and something food related. I also feel that general education courses introduce students to topics they might not otherwise explore, and sometimes this leads them to new opportunities.

We need to ensure that issues of diversity are included in other topics as well, e.g., environmental racism or the ways in which design is gendered and from particular perspectives as is culture and some of the other topics.

What a strange "survey". In reality its meant to be a teaching tool to acquaint us with this new proposed model. But since it provides no context for understanding what is wrong with the current system and how this new model will fix those problems, its almost impossible to assess this new model as presented in this survey. Is it OK relative to some abstract notion and under-specified idea of general education? Sure, I guess so... Is it better than what we already have? Maybe, but I don't know what the issues are with the current model... So ultimately I don't understand why we need this new model or what was wrong with what we've got. I don't mind this as a learning tool per se, but presenting it as a "survey" is pretty disingenuous. And personally I'm a bit leery on this whole "depth" thing since I thought that was the point of the majors. GenEds are the only time anyone is going to get breadth outside their majors so chucking that for more general depth seems like a bad move to me.

What I am most opposed to is the incredible amount of nonsense busywork time we will be expending to put forward our courses again through a process of CARs. Could we not devise a way in which diversity courses that have already jumped through the hoops, be allowed to remain? This is my biggest issue with a new environmental outlook, I think it is a given that authors in Africa, India and Latin America are concerned with the way human beings interact with the natural world, it is implicit in these lives and literatures. But now we must justify how each film, novel or poem produced in these critical arenas of the world are partaking of these ideas. Again, an unnecessary burden on those of us who are conducting most of the advising to those critical groups that we would like to find represented among those courses. I also frankly object to all international experience giving a sense of diversity. Don't we diffuse the ideals of diversity when we do this. I think that the international experience is important to artistic appreciation and to understand the way other peoples think, but going to Czech Republic is not going to teach me about the concerns of Afro-Europeans or other minorities in the larger European context. Let's be honest to call a spade a spade. In all though I do ask the committee to consider a fast track where the burden on the professor is diminished.

When you offer courses that are "two for one" or double dip yet very few students can enroll due to class size/space it is a problem. To hear that the only solution is to take two different courses rather than class X. It does not really benefit anyone by doing this to the student.

Where is the list of actual courses?? You are asking for opinions on a substantial change to the undergraduate program while not showing us what courses belong to these areas. I am very reluctant to agree something is a good idea when I can't see how the current slate of courses would be distributed in these areas. For example, I can't find a list of environmental literacy courses anywhere. I don't know if there are now 20 such courses or 4 such courses, and in what departments these courses are being taught. The Design, Innovation, and Creativity subject does not seem well thought out. Rereading its description, I'd say there are "one or more solutions to a well-defined problem" in courses all over the university, kind of like every department claiming to promote "critical thinking" (no department would say they don't!). So it seems rather meaningless. I see a reference to fine arts in the description. I'd have thought work in fine arts is not addressing a "solution to a well-defined problem". Is there usually a well-defined problem that is "solved" by creating a musical score or a sculpture? The description also says "Courses in this topic require higher-level thought processes that imagine new possibilities". That's as vapid as "critical thinking". No department would say "We don't require higher-level thought processes". Artistic work imagines new possibilities and scientific work does as well: it's what research is often all about. I want to see the intended courses for this topic so I get a clearer idea of what it is actually about (unclear from the official description we are offered). You ask in this survey if we think the current Gen. Ed. format has a clear definition and purpose and is easy to understand. I wish I could say that about this new proposal, but I can't since it is sorely lacking in the details of how it would be accomplished. One of your questions in the survey is asking us if we think "This is a better way to encourage breadth of knowledge". Since you don't give us a way to reasonably judge this, I have a suspicion that you hope to get negative responses about the current Gen. Ed. system and/or positive responses about the proposed

new one (while giving us almost no details to make such decisions) in order that you can say this new one will be better. The claim that students can meet the proposed new Gen. Ed. requirements in 7 courses because some courses can be in more than one topic can't be judged properly because we don't see the courses for the different topics or how much double-dipping is going to be feasible. I have no idea if there is a genuinely large number of such courses or just 3 or 4 such courses that all students will be scrambling to try to take. I would be happier if you did NOT design a new system that sets students up to be trying actively to double-dip. Cut one of the topics or merge some of them into a single topic so that double-dipping is not needed to get through the Gen. Ed. requirements in a reasonable amount of time! Requiring an "integrative experience" as a part of General Education seems misguided. If a department wants to require their majors to do an internship or capstone project as \*part of the major\* then let them. And if not, so be it. It doesn't seem to me to be what General Education should be focusing on. I especially don't like making extra-curricular activities a part of the General Education requirement. The credits for General Education should be focused on credits earned from actual courses. I didn't see an explanation of what needs changing about the current Gen. Ed. requirements that could not be addressed by some adjustments to those requirements in its current format instead of completely rethinking what Gen. Ed. means. For example, where do the writing requirement or second language requirement fit in, or are those being abandoned? Since I am being asked for feedback on a Gen. Ed. plan that has no courses included with it, my main request is to please SLOW DOWN. I don't think this committee has done a good job until now of communicating with the faculty at large (or the students?) about what it has been doing and why. Provide a tentative list of actual courses for different topics so faculty can see how the proposal is supposed to work in practice. Here is a comparison. This past fall UConn Transportation unveiled a brand new bus route system that had almost no feedback in its development and was harshly criticized by its users when it was rolled out. After a few weeks the routes were adjusted. For something like Gen. Ed., I don't think it will be as simple or forgiving to start changing parts of it on the fly if there turn out to be major problems in the implementation phase. Communicate more clearly why it really has to be changed so much and take into account the concerns that are brought to your attention. To start, show us how currently taught courses would fill out the different topics.

where would a social science course that does fieldwork and teaches data collection, forming an hypothesis, discussing findings and relating to previous research find a place in any of these topics, especially since there is no lab involved?

While I believe the Integrative Experience is an exceptional idea (and quite valuable), I can see a potential issue with it being time and logistics. For example, student-athletes, might have trouble making this work - as well as people who work, etc. However, I think if there is enough flexibility with it, it could be a great addition.

While I have value for the general education model I would prefer one that assures students can complete the work in a 7-credit structure. Striking the balance between breadth and depth in an increasingly technical world poses challenges against a backdrop of rising costs and student debt. Boil the curriculum to 5 themes and ask that students complete 3 courses in one. Extreme caution is advised with regards to internships, capstone experiences etc. Very labor insensitive to support and manage in a meaningful manner. Valuable but can a quality experience be assured for all?

Who put this lame survey together? It violates principles of survey research, one being to ensure those surveyed understand the purpose of the questions they are asked --totally missing in the beginning of this instrument --and that all questions are phrased in substantive rather than the sing-song repetitive ways here. You can't conclude anything from this thing. Maybe that's the point... The suggestions for curriculum change seem to lean toward exerting more control over student choices through bureaucratized categorization. This is already a complicated requirement-heavy curriculum. The changes would make things worse. They would also require extensive reorganization of teaching within departments just to deliver Gen Ed courses that qualify as "broad or deep." Who will teach the majors? I assume the model recommends faculty pay increases in recognition of the time it will take to create or rejig teaching. Gen Ed is ok as it is.

Without seeing how the lists of courses are arranged, I'm worried that students will find the worksheet confusing. wording is much more succinct/clear than current - moving in a good direction

You need to clarify the purposes of GenEd. Is there supposed to be a relationship between GenEd and students' abilities to get a job? Or does GenEd serve another purpose, or both? In what ways--\*specifically\*--does the present program fail? Thinking about the "categories" of GenEd, you should think \*specifically\* about what courses more or less fit into which categories--or can you imagine whole new courses that would significantly improve the program.

Your description of the classes they would take and how it would be distributed is not very clear.



## Appendix I. Student responses to ‘Please feel free to share any additional comments or ideas you have about General Education at UConn’

A new curriculum can already complicate a system that is already hard to understand for many students. Keeping the current system would be more beneficial as it already serves a good purpose.

Adding an environmental class requirement would be beneficial on all levels.

Adding requirements of an integrative course of an internship or study abroad polarizes the students into more of an achieving class or the underachievers. This would also require enough intern or study abroad opportunities where the cost of transportation or the trip is covered by aid, and enough spaces on each trip and each internship for every student interested.

Although, as a student, it was difficult to understand why these courses could be valuable while taking them. I do appreciate the general education courses, even elective, that I have taken during my time here. I think that giving students the ability to connect them more to personal interests will be even more beneficial.

An integrative experience is a good idea, but only if UConn provides well thought out options instead of forcing students to seek them out.

CLAS requires four semesters of a language if you did not complete three years of a second language in high school. College level language is much more difficult than high school level language and two semesters would make much more sense than four. Requiring students to take sixteen credits, an entire semesters worth, of a second language is ludicrous.

Currently General education offers students little to no autonomy in choosing their courses furthermore these classes, to accumulate large demands, have rigid grading structures and are not taught in ways that encourage and reinforce the gen ed goals. Many of these classes are seen as “weed out “ courses and are tough simply because of which department they are in and end up hurting students in the long run. Encouraging a change in this environment in gen ed classes will further enhance a students learning in this area of their study.

Do this please

Environmental Literacy; I do not see enough of this being talked about within classes that can potentially emphasize this. It is not something focused on enough within classes like law and society, there are huge consequences when not paying attention to the way humans interact and thus act against nature.

Fewer general education classes at UConn lead to students having more autonomy when it comes to education. This is because students have more opportunity to try new classes outside of their major that do not necessarily fall into the requirements of general education if there are less guidelines. While general education is important to push students to explore academic areas that they would not explore otherwise, this new system appears to be adding to the general education curriculum, which ultimately takes away the autonomy of choosing classes that fall into the students’ interests rather than increases it.

For the proposed new "content areas" I'm confused on how many classes students will need to take for each one. I think it's already difficult for a lot of majors (like engineering) to do all of their content areas as well as their core courses. I just want to make sure students will not be overwhelmed and can get the classes done in a timely fashion. Gen Ed requirements for dual degree students are overkill (I'm CLAS and Engineering) and that needs to change. Gen Ed right now is great. Maybe it is good idea to advertise more about reason why we have Gen Ed would help get rid of the negative connotation.

Gen Ed’s are useless as it stands. Forcing students to take basic 1000 level courses in absurd breadth of topics will teach them nothing. Students do not attend these lectures, much less learn from them. If a student genuinely wanted to increase their breadth of knowledge, it should be optional or it should be that they can explore whichever classes they’re interested in. I’m a student in engineering, and I wanted to try taking a new language and I also wanted to take a music class and COMM class, so I did all three and really enjoyed them. However, why do I have to take chemistry, WGSS, and whatever? The amount of information that I actually retained is minuscule. I hope that the survey reflects this opinion, because from my experience, this is what most college kids think. Gen Ed’s are a way to boost the GPA easily and not care about the classes/learn about them. Waste of time

General education as a whole is a waste of time, money, and mental capacity. Students should only be required to take courses required by their major and general education courses should be left as optional for those who are interested in more. By further dividing the general education system, you are pigeon holing students further and forcing them to be diverse when they have no interest in doing so.

General Education courses should be chosen by the students in a wide variety of subjects to adhere to their career path

General education requirements seem to be perfect, offering students a first class education.

General education requirements sometimes serve as an obstacle for students who want to focus on other courses, specifically STEM courses. Those who are pre med, engineering, etc have significantly less time to do work for their major required courses because of how demanding General requirements are. Moreover, some aspects of general education requirements such as culture/diversity may not be as useful for someone who is a math major for example compared to one who is majoring in social work or history. What I'm trying to say is that although the intentions of gen eds are beneficial, it's in reality harming student performance on courses that matter for their major as they also have to focus on gen eds. Ultimately for some, gen eds wastes time and energy that one could be using to improve on the class that will be critical for further education such as grad school.

General education would not be necessary if our secondary school system was actually effective in teaching students these basic concepts before entering college, where the focus should be on a major and building skills for an actual career.

Great ideas

Great new plan

I believe the integrative idea expressed in the last part of the survey may prove to be a hindrance to students who are passionate about integrating themselves. For example the increase in competition for a favored abroad program due to the required section may take away from a student who would have taken the initiative themselves originally, and instead give it to a student who is not as enthusiastic. Furthermore, college is to educate but also provide a basis for how to survive in the real world. There is an educational aspect but also a social aspect to college that is important. Thus, I believe students should be left to pursue these initiatives by themselves as it prepares them to do so in life. However, if anything more than guidance, in this case having it as a requirement along with the furthering of requirements in gen ed's, takes away from a student's autonomy. If they are interested in the environment they should have the option to study it but by no means should any student be required to take such a specified topic if they have no interest and say are a math major etc.

I believe there should be more options of courses in which we could choose from. I wish there was more flexibility in which we could choose these from. I do believe this committee should really consider making it a requirement for students to take a course that is multidisciplinary or has an internship component to it because I think it is more relevant and we'll be able to apply those skills we build in our future careers.

I currently feel that while some General Education courses are valuable, across the numerous content and subject areas required for the CLAS Gen-Eds, there are some categories in which I am not interested in the courses that would fulfill the requirement. Sometimes, Gen-Ed requirements force students to select a random course that they have no interest in or desire to take. I believe that Gen-Ed requirements should be broader and allow students to explore topics that they are actually passionate about or want to learn more about that may not align with their major, as opposed to forcing students to take courses they do not care about. Gen-Eds should still have some sort of structure, to encourage students to challenge themselves with classes outside of their comfort zone, but the current offerings are far too restrictive.

I definitely like the improvement to general education because it will allow students to be more involved in their roles as individual and member in society by giving them more background in these topic areas

I enjoy the current options for overlap of general education courses (for example, fulfills both CA 1 and 4) and I agree that general education is important. I think the idea of an environmental awareness/education being added to general education is a great move, as it is relevant to today's topical issues

I feel as if most General Education courses regarding history are Eurocentric, which decreases a student's exposure to "diversity" classes that are already included in other General Education courses, such as political theories and American history (which articulate America's history with European nations). In attempts to resolve this issue, UConn offers diversity classes, but are also problematic in itself as it focuses on a particular minority... As a result, other cultures are left out of required classes, such as Asian American experiences and LatinX communities.

I feel like we could mix courses for gen Eds because not everyone has enough time in their schedules to do separate courses and some courses could easily be integrated together

I feel that lab sciences shouldn't be required for majors not in the STEM field because it doesn't pertain to our careers and we already took multiple lab sciences throughout middle and high school.

I hate general education requirements in general. I believe in promoting electives, but I never understood the gen ed requirements. We go through these requirements in high school. For example, I took 4 years of science in high school. I come to college now as a business administration major and I have to take science again? And unfortunately it is my weakest subject. Now I have to stress taking a science course all over again and passing it when my energy could be put into courses related to my major.

I have found that in my friend group and other peers there has been confusion about the writing course requirements and what exactly a W course is. I think it would be useful to inform people that way when they take a course with a lot of writing (but not necessarily an edit and revision element) they are not confused to why it is not a W.

I have personally encountered difficulty when it comes to fulfilling the current content area 1A, the Arts and Humanities. I understand that Gen Ed's are designed to cover a breadth of knowledge, and I will admit that in the fall semester, I took an Urban Studies course that I learned a lot from to fulfill another Gen Ed requirement.

However, when it comes to the Arts, there is not an adequate selection of courses that I feel could add to my future career in science/medicine. I feel as though some requirements take away from possibilities like double majoring, in which all the course space is crucial. Therefore, it is frustrating when I have to sacrifice a class I truly want to enroll in, that would benefit me in the future, for a course that I do not want to take and that I know will not contribute much to my future, which is what I am really focused on at the moment. I think there should be a system that allows you to take courses in a requirement area that correlated to your interests more. For me, I have no interest in taking a film class, a dance class, a music class, or even an art history class. Although I understand that students should not pigeon hole themselves, we are paying a lot of money for our education, and for that money to be going to a course that has no relevance whatsoever to our future careers and aspirations, it is quite frustrating to have to make that accommodation. All in all, there should be some type of middle ground, perhaps a selection of section requirements that would allow students to "filter out" content areas or categories. For me, that could mean that if given the choice, I may take a philosophy course in Content Area 1, section D, as opposed to an arts course in Content Area 1, section A.

I hope these courses will be of similar difficulty to other gen ed courses that we have now.

I like the option to "go deep" I feel though the integrative experience is placing too much on students and sometimes student don't have the time or ability to travel abroad, etc. Having names for the topics is also much easier because it is difficult to remember or understand what class would be in what content area which makes it harder to explore classes. The gen Ed's currently are slightly pointless and the requirement that all the courses be from different topics limits the students ability to actually deeply pursue another topic of interest. It also prevents students from easily obtaining minors with having a ton of extra coursework. I feel that now the gen Ed's are "easy a's" for the most part. I

I like the setup with six categories and the width and depth requirement setup better than UConn's current setup. However, requiring an Integrated Experience seems like it could be a lot of extra work on students that would become really difficult with some degrees. I'm majoring in mechanical engineering and even now there's almost no flexibility for most students in their schedules, and I know it's the same for a lot of other majors. I think the Integrated Experience requirement seems like a great idea in theory, but in reality would make it hard for some students to graduate in eight semesters.

I like this new idea so much better than the current content course structure. It is so much more clear.

I love this. This is way better than the current one. It still gives students a broad exposure, however there is more room for choice and room for personal gain.

I personally felt that Gen Eds, such as Anthropology, Geography, and Philosophy, are not relevant to my field of study as a Finance major. I can't say that I've ever used any of the information learned in these classes again. Especially in Philosophy, where you regurgitate information about dead philosophers on controversial topics, such as abortion, death, and more. The grading in these classes are also done by the TAs and assignments are graded quite harsh in my opinion, since the professors and TAs don't want to make these courses an "easy A".

I really like the general education because there are many choices.

I really like the idea of Environmental Literacy requirements and I wish that they were a requirement for me so that I would be forced to fit a class like this in my schedule. I really like the option of going broad in a subject you are not too sure about and the option of going deep in a field that you are very interested in. Additionally, I very much would appreciate being "forced" to study abroad or go on a service trip! I think that these would be very beneficial changes to UConn's Gen Ed curriculum!

I strongly agree with the very last section on integration of study abroad or internship/co-op would be extremely beneficial for students.

I structurally like the proposed Gen ed requirements as opposed to the current ones because it has more clarity than the current "CA" system in my opinion

I think an interdisciplinary course should not be required because some students have a very complex plan of study and having to organize an internship or position like that would be very stressful.

I think environmental literacy is the most important addition that could be made.

I think General Education courses are a great way for students to explore interests and expand breadth. My complaints about General Education courses is sometimes they feel like they get in the way of courses you actually

want to take and are appropriate for your major. In some instances I felt forced to take a class that I did not feel I needed to take. For me, high school was basically general education and coming into college and realizing I have to take the same classes I took in high school was frustrating. If I took a history or science in high school, I should not have to take it again. However, not all general education requirements felt like this to me. For example, my climate change class I took was one of the most interesting and life-changing classes I have ever taken, and I think everyone deserves the chance to explore classes such as these. I don't want students to feel like they are forced to take certain classes, even if they have no interest in them. I do find the internship, service learning, study abroad portion of this plan quite a neat idea and I think this could be great as long as enough opportunities are provided for students to accomplish this. UConn should definitely increase these kinds of alternative learning styles because employers and society needs students with experience and background.

I think General Education is really important and I enjoyed the courses I took for my General Education requirements. As long as the process of picking them isn't so burdensome, it will be great!

I think it is important for students to be well rounded, however I think it is repetitive to force science majors to enroll in courses such as History when it is far from their major. I think cultural and social awareness is important so there should be a range of courses for students to take, but not REQUIRED.

I think that double dipping is a good idea. I just wish that there were more options for certain content areas.

I think that it would be beneficial to have a requirement to take a course that falls under a wellness category.

Students could choose from topics such as self-care, mediation and yoga, the impact of interaction with the natural world on stress, the implications of chronic stress on health, communication within relationships, sexual health, how to support yourself and others struggling with their mental health, the underlying factors in relationship violence, using your voice to feel empowered, etc.

I think the difference between the B.A. and B.S. requirements in CLAS should be addressed when looking at the new changes. Someone with a B.A. can finish their gen ed requirements in as little as 9 courses. On the other hand, someone with a B.S. (not B.S. Econ) can finish their gen ed requirements in as little as 13 classes. However, those getting a B.S. already have higher course requirements and likely have little to no overlap between the major coursework and the the current gen eds offered.

I think the general education requirement is very important and I enjoy it. it makes us all well rounded students who are prepared for anything!

I think the most important thing is creating a community of students that are open to learning about things not in their major. If the students learn why this is important, the success of gen ed requirements will follow. Also i think the addition of environmental literacy course is a GREAT ADDITION AND SHPULD NOT BE TAKEN OUT OF THE CURRICULUM.

I think the way Gen Eds are now are fine and people just complain about things because maybe they're not fun, but I didn't hate the Gen Eds. Science labs for non science majors are very hard and don't make you want to take the class. I think In an ideal world it would be good to require an internship or experience for a class, but I always enjoyed my time on campus at UConn and I think it would be hard to always be driving to some internship or class. Not to mention, group work would be nearly impossible and not everyone would go. I found a summer internship on my own time so that I would be able to spend as much time on campus as possible.

I think this gives students more autonomy in their choices regarding which class they want to take. When students can enroll in classes aligned with their interests and passions, it creates a better learning environment-- one that they are truly invested in. I wish this was the format during my years here!

I think this will give students more freedom in the classes that they take. When students want to learn in the class, they'll want to do better. Isn't that what UConn should want for us?

I think we should have more room to explore specific classes. Even if that means having the seven courses only have to be in 5 of the 7 different content areas. I also think that requiring a multidisciplinary integrative experience definitely has it benefits but I feel as though it will be harder for students to achieve this on their own. Especially if it's through internships or education abroad. Not saying it isn't possible, i just think making it a substitute for something over a requirement would be best for the initial introduction of the program. Perhaps students could claim that they want to go that route over a different, more standard path?

If I'm majoring in English I shouldn't have to take more Q courses just because I'm in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.

In general, more choice of what can fulfill requirements would be good, because often students have to take classes they are not happy with because they are the only ones which fit in their schedule

In the past, at least through my experience, there has been a problem with the sheer scope of general education classes. There are so many of them, many of which do not connect topics together to show people the value of topic diversity, that most students end up absorbing and then dumping the information. Learning about environmental

impact and getting people out to participate in internships would be phenomenal, but if you try to hit everything you are essentially overloading students and preventing them from truly absorbing content. Why not have multi subject courses that have topics that cover things such as environmentalism and integrate culture and economics into it? I don't know, perhaps it's just me but I find that really getting a student to feel connected and actually apart of the world/work they do seems like a better way to help students keep their sanity and their interests. Quantity does not equal quality. Coursework multitude does not pin an ivy league badge on UConn, it only burns students out. When designing General Education, make it count. Make it engaging. And make student get out into the real world. Internships and education abroad are difficult for many students to secure, and requiring all tens of thousands of students here to do it sounds like much too big of an undertaking. Also, some of the definitions literally seem geared towards turning out mechanized workers and not well rounded, educated citizens; not everything has to revolve around production. It's more than just good enough to have students who can think for themselves and have a broad background in many subjects.

It could be more focused around the students intended major. The student should be able to take classes geared towards their major for every class if they want. There should not be as many requirements that do not relate much to the major of the student. It is understandable that the goal is to make the student well rounded. However, maybe lessening these requirements would be beneficial as students often already take a variety of classes in high school. It might be confusing to people since there are so many categories.

It's very annoying how credits may not transfer over if you can't test out - if the education is what you value, then that shouldn't be the case.

Less gen ed courses or more related to each major

Less math! We hate math!

Looks good. I think that using these terminologies rather than simply "content areas" will be much more beneficial and motivating.

Make sure when you revamp the template that you also purge through and revamp the catalog. The one on student admin as well as the one posted online are both outdated and some courses cannot be found as a course being offered. These should be terminated. Also do not exclude arts, make sure there is a lot of representation for arts and its expression throughout many fields not just musical.

Many general education courses are not related to many majors and therefore not a positive contribution to students who already know what they want to study. General education courses feel like a wasted time when you have a major and main focus for a future career.

More general ed courses should be available, especially for freshman.

more hands-on experience is better

My hesitation about some form of a capstone experience are the following: - For students such as first generation and/or low income (more likely less connections than rich people), how will such opportunities be ensured? Better opportunities can be limited to those of higher income or better connections, especially if it's one that requires background experience that is difficult to obtain. Such as going abroad, that might be an excellent method for some people but can cause conflicts with aid and/or unsure how to navigate. I HIGHLY recommend exploring options like Mount Holyoke College's Laurel Fellowship and the process behind it, which ensures funding and provides guidance for all. I believe some form of physical education might be beneficial too, such as 2 quarter semesters of something. Especially since physical activity helps general and mental well-being. This would demonstrate UCONN taking a pro-active stance on the well-being of their students. There could be ways to waive the requirement, but I think is good in the same way the first year dorm requirements will be. It would also be more active use of the new gym + help negate the backlash on the fee.

N/a

Some of the courses taken abroad are much more influential on a student's growth and education, but they do not count towards gen-eds. This is very disappointing and may stop students from going abroad.

take calculus and physics off of requirements for biology related majors because its a pain and useless

-taking history THAT ISN'T US should be required -should have to take Intro levels to South America, Africa, Australia (eh not that valuable), or Asia. Not everything is eurocentric -for business, there is only one international course that fulfills Business Arts and Humanities

The current curriculum forces many students to take classes that have no connection to their respective majors and thus hurt the students more than benefit. If a student who is currently pursuing a STEM degree, they should have more freedom to choose general Ed classes from their concentration

The current Gen-Ed system is good because it allows for a diverse area of courses for each student without too many restrictions, so long as they meet requirements. The new system would force students into choosing classes based on

the curricular theme and required work, which could limit students from choosing courses that most interest them due to being in the same category without fulfilling the required one class per.

The current General Education at UConn is too strict in terms of ensuring that students obtain knowledge from each content area. However, by doing so, it doesn't allow students to register in classes that spark their interests more within the same content area if they are already completed that content area. For this reason, I like how the proposal for a change in the General Education requirements allow for more autonomy. In addition, it may be beneficial if students are allowed to take more general education courses that align with their major, but also offers new diverse knowledge that may not be taught within their major courses.

The current general education system does a good job of promoting breadth of knowledge across different content areas. Wanting students to go into depth in an area of interest is understandable and commendable; however, that is one of the points of having majors. I'm not sure requiring depth both in one's major and in a content area will be attractive to all students. For students such as myself who have multiple strong interests, I feel it may be beneficial and give us a chance to further explore those multiple interests (as an alternative to completing a minor).

The current general education system is unproductive as it forces students to retake classes/concepts they have taken in high school. In addition, there is little to no flexibility to take courses that interest the student, especially at the regional campuses

The foreign language requirement is a bit much especially for older non traditional students. Technology can help me translate any language in the world. I think Learning about different cultures and traditions is more important to understand than the actual language.

The General Education course offerings are currently not great. There are not many options, and the good options are quick to fill up.

The internship is a wonderful idea

the last page with the internship idea is great. Reminds me of co-ops which are a really attractive feature of some other schools

The list of classes that can fulfill each requirement should be updated and expanded to include many more courses. Currently, many students do not get to choose a class they are interested in and instead wind up taking whichever of the few classes open each semester that fits best with their schedule. Also, student admin should have an easier way to search for general education classes.

The old gen ed was perfectly fine, but I appreciate requiring interdisciplinary/ extracurricular/ enrichment

The only reason to take General Education is because the regional school doesn't offer the major you want. UConn should focus less on what makes up General Education and instead focus on getting students into the major they actually want.

There should be more general education courses offered at regional campuses as some are limited.

These new General Education requirements will not help students at UConn. By adding these additional requirements it will not allow students to have room in their schedule to take the classes they are interested in taking or want/need to take for additional majors/minors.

This is a wonderful program! It's great to be back...

This survey and email notification have many spelling mistakes.

Too liberal

What pretentious person wrote the descriptions of the gen ed classes? They are muddled, some have poor punctuation, and some don't state a purpose at all.

While I agree that requiring an integrative component (like an internship) should be necessary and can have many benefits, this may not be doable for everyone. Realistically, many people don't have reliable transportation, time, or many other factors to successfully complete an internship or something outside of school time. So requiring this component is not feasible for everyone, and could put a lot of stress on some students. That being said, it does push students who don't want to do an internship or are scared to do one into having to do it in order to graduate. Tough decision, both sides are very compelling.

While I think that the integrative piece would be a very beneficial experience to all students, I wonder what the logistics of this experience would be. I have a friend who attends Endicott College, where internships are mandatory to complete, but the college ensures that every student receives the internships they need. Would this internship take place during the school year? Endicott's take place outside of the normal school time, which is detrimental to many students in my opinion because many students cannot take an entire summer at an unpaid internship simply for their requirement. I think that if this experience occurred during the school year and UConn ensured that all students were assigned to an internship, then this program could be very beneficial to students.

Will this affect me? I'm a sophomore.

With the service learning piece, I really believe that making it a requirement will actually deter students from pursuing future volunteering and service related activities. I have participated in service learning in classes I have taken in the past and for me the most valuable experiences came from voluntary opportunities.