

Program Performance Review: Culmination Meeting Memo General Education

The 2021-2022 Program Performance Review (PPR) process for the General Education (GE) program concluded with a culmination meeting on May 15, 2023.

The following people attended the meeting: Amir Dabirian (Provost), Ed Fink (AVP for Undergraduate Academic Programs, AVPUAP), Merri Lynn Casem (incoming AVP for Undergraduate Programs and General Education, AVPUPGE), Yuying Tsong (AVP for Student Success, AVPSS), Elizabeth Boretz (AVP for Academic Affairs, AVPAA, GE Committee member), Steve Stambough (Faculty Advisor, AA), Greg Childers (Faculty, GE Committee Chair), Callie Lewis Chiu (Faculty, GE Committee member), Erika Thomas (Faculty, GE Committee member), Barbara Miller (Faculty, GE Committee member), Zia Salim (Faculty, GE Committee member), and Su Swarat (Senior AVP for Institutional Effectiveness and Planning, SAVPIEP).

The Provost thanked the GE committee and faculty for completing the PPR process, and commended the committee for engaging in this process at a critical time associated with AB928, the Student Transfer Achievement Reform Act of 2021. The following specific accomplishments were highlighted during the PPR process:

- The program uses the support of Faculty Learning Communities in its assessment efforts.
- The program's robust assessment with solid goals and outcomes demonstrates that GE is a program rather than separate courses.
- Despite the swift implementation, which is highly commendable, the program has many Area F course offerings.
- The program has a Cultural Diversity requirement (Overlay Z).
- Study Abroad efficiently tracks GE courses that offer a faculty-led study abroad component and should be continued or expanded.

Major recommendations and issues raised through the PPR process were discussed as follows:

1. Messaging about GE:

- The external reviewers recommended that CSUF should further the narrative of GE as a cohesive program by expanding GE orientation materials, creating major-specific GE recommendations, and having centralized monitoring of student course demand by GE area to meet university-level needs.
- The Provost recommended that we need to have consistent messaging about GE, help students understand the importance of GE, and change the perception that students need to “get GE out of the way”. The GE Committee Chair concurred.
- The faculty added that the University needs to change student perception that “GE are easy ‘A’s”, or that GE is all about “check boxes”.
- The AVPSS reported that incoming students will participate in a Canvas course during orientation and receive advising regarding GE. Both venues will deliver GE information to the students. Additionally, the University Curriculum Committee is working on a syllabus template that serves as the central location to access information about GE requirements.

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- The GE Committee Chair requested an improved website dedicated to GE. The incoming AVPUPGE concurred and stated that marketing materials need to be developed to help students better understand the purpose and details of GE.
2. GE advising:
 - The external reviewers recommended CSUF to improve outreach to students by updating the online advising information and communication methods, including text messages and smartphone apps.
 - The AVPSS agreed and stated that the goal is for *all* advisors to understand and be able to advise GE courses, while the Undeclared and Academic Advising Center (UAAC) remains the main support. The Director of Advising will provide professional development to train all the advisors. The UAAC will also be relocated to the library to provide better access to students.
 3. GE recertification and related staffing issues:
 - The PPR process identified the need for a university committee focused on GE recertification process. Relatedly, it pointed out that appropriate staffing is needed to coordinate the GE efforts on campus.
 - The GE Committee Chair reiterated the need, and added that there is a need for a dedicated Director of GE, who coordinates curriculum, scheduling, syllabi, etc. This position will also provide support for faculty who teach GE to help them develop an understanding of what GE is and why it is important. This position is a common practice across CSU campuses.
 - The GE Committee Chair stated that many of the recommendations emerged from the PPR process should not fall under the current GE Committee, which is focused on policy and course certification. Having a centralized office is the recommended direction.
 - The Provost supported the recommendation, and expressed that the Director of GE position is especially important given AB928.
 4. GE courses with study-abroad components:
 - The external reviewers recommended CSUF to continue web-based tracking of GE courses that offer a faculty-led study abroad component and expand it for other study abroad experiences and GE articulation.
 - The faculty raised the issue that the self-support course enrollment requirement impacts some study-abroad courses and expressed the desire to differentiate the requirement based on study abroad locations for these courses.
 5. GE Faculty Learning Community:
 - The external reviewers commended the use of Faculty Learning Community (FLC) to assess the GE program, and recommended further developing the FLC both as a continuous improvement process and a faculty professional development venue. They recommended that the role of FLC needs to be expanded to help “close the loop” on assessment.
 - The faculty requested continued support for GE Committee members to receive professional development on GE related areas (e.g. attending conferences such as the AACU GE).

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The Provost concluded meeting by thanking the hard work of the GE Committee, and the leadership of both the committee and the Undergraduate Academic Programs.