

REPORT OF THE GENERAL EDUCATION TASK FORCE



Kansas State University

15 June 2007

Contents

Section 1: Summary of Recommendations	5
Section 2: The Task Force and Its Work	6
Charge	
Membership	
Background	
Process	
Section 3: Recommendations for a General Education Plan	10
1. Building on the Strengths of the Current UGE Plan	
1.1 The Purpose of "General Education"	
1.2 The Importance of Pedagogy	
2. Providing for Breadth of Knowledge and Proficiency in Skills	
2.1 General Education Goals: Ensuring a Foundation for a Breadth of Knowledge	
Aesthetic Experience and Interpretive Understanding	
Empirical and Quantitative Reasoning	
Ethical Reasoning and Social Engagement/Responsibility	
Global Community	
Human Diversity in the U.S.	
Individuals within Social Systems	
The Natural and Physical World	
The Past and the Future	
2.2 General Education Goals: Proficiency in Communication and Critical Thinking	

2.3 The University SLOs and General Education	
2.4 Searchable Course Database/General Education Course Menu	
3. Creating a Common First-Year Experience	
3.1. First-Year Seminars	
The Challenges of Implementing First-Year Seminars	
3.2 Sophomore Seminars	
4. Assessing General Education: Student Learning Outcomes	
Learning to be Assessed	
SLO Assessment Committees	
An Assessment Approach	
Section 4: Recommendations Regarding Implementation	34
The Implementation Process	
Leadership	
Teaching Loads and Resources	
Other Considerations Prior to Implementation	
Selected Works Cited and Consulted	38
Appendices	40

REPORT OF THE GENERAL EDUCATION TASK FORCE

Kansas State University
15 June 2007

This report of the General Education Task Force is presented in four sections. Section 1 presents a summary of the Task Force's recommendations. Section 2 provides a review of the Task Force's work during the past three semesters. Section 3 explains the details of the new plan of general education proposed by the Task Force. Section 4 offers recommendations related to the implementation of the proposed plan.

Section 1: Summary of Recommendations

The Task Force on General Education proposes a new plan for general education at Kansas State University.

1. K-State should build on the strengths of the current UGE system, specifically its understanding of the purpose of general education and its commitment to effective student learning and pedagogy.

2. K-State should design a new system of general education to ensure that every student "acquires a breadth of knowledge in the areas and proficiency in the skills that [are the] hallmarks of being college educated." (HLC Statement on General Education)

A. Foundation for Breadth. The University should adopt a university-wide general education goal to guide students toward the building of foundation for a breadth of knowledge through courses and/or experiences in eight areas. At least six of these eight requirements (or roughly eighteen credit hours) must have course numbers that are outside of the department or program responsible for the student's undergraduate major.

- Aesthetic Experience and Interpretive Understanding
- Empirical and Quantitative Reasoning
- Ethical Reasoning and Social Engagement/Responsibility
- Global Community
- Human Diversity in the U.S.
- Individuals within Social Systems
- The Natural and Physical World
- The Past and the Future

B. Communication and Critical Thinking. All undergraduate majors should offer students numerous opportunities to develop competencies in communication skills and critical thinking. All K-State undergraduates should purposefully seek courses and experiences that will challenge them to become proficient in these skills.

3. K-State should implement as part of a larger, common first-year experience a set of three-credit-hour first-year seminars.

4. K-State must develop an assessment program for general education. The Task Force strongly recommends a program focused on the University's undergraduate SLOs. The assessment program would have two primary parts: 1) initial assessment in the first-year seminar and 2) assessment of integration of learning in the capstone course in the major.

Section 2: The Task Force and Its Work

Charge

In December of 2005 Provost Nellis charged the General Education Task Force to do the following.

- (1) Review the work of a previous committee that surveyed K-State faculty and students about general education and solicited ideas from faculty about a redesign.
- (2) Consider the recommendation of the Higher Learning Commission regarding the assessment of general education and its alignment with K-State's undergraduate student learning outcomes.
- (3) Become familiar with the Higher Learning Commission's criteria for accreditation that address general education.
- (4) Develop a recommendation for a general education plan for K-State.

Membership

Membership on the Task Force (listed below) was determined in consultation with the Faculty Senate President and the college Deans. Representation was sought from across the campuses. Selected representatives were faculty, professional staff, and students who would be thoughtful and visionary as they consider the future of general education at K-State.

Vicki Clegg, Center for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning (Ex Officio)
 Greg Eiselein, English (Chair, 2006-07)
 Rick Forsyth, Landscape Architecture/Regional and Community Planning
 Jim Goddard, Architectural Engineering and Construction Science (Chair, Spring 2006)
 Joe Hancock, Animal Sciences and Industry (2007)
 Leslie Hannah, Arts, Science, and Business
 Scott Jones, Greek Affairs
 Sara Kearns, Hale Library
 Kerri Day Keller, Career and Employment Services
 Melody LeHew, Apparel, Textiles and Interior Design
 Lucas Maddy, Student Body President
 Kim Morgan, Sociology, Anthropology and Social Work
 Karen-Myers Bowman, Family Studies and Human Services (Vice Chair)
 Dave Nichols, Animal Sciences and Industry (2006)
 Marcelo Sabates, Philosophy
 Fred Smith, Accounting
 Be Stoney, Secondary Education
 Cia Verschelden, Office of Assessment (Ex Officio)
 Peter Wong, Biology

Background

One of our priorities at K-State is to continue to improve the learning environment for our students and more effectively link our student learning outcomes with our general education curriculum. At an initial meeting on December 7, 2005, Provost Duane Nellis charged the new K-State General Education Task Force to review general education at K-State and make recommendations.

K-State currently has a unique model of general education that emphasizes breadth of study in the UGE programs designed by the colleges and is based on courses and experiences explicitly designed to provide instruction and learning and evaluation activities that incorporate the ideas of active learning, experiential context, and making connections. These teaching and learning strategies are central to the national discussions about general education. The goal of the Task Force is to build on the positive aspects of our current model to envision our future general education plan.

Despite these strengths, many faculty, advisors, and students at K-State believe that the current UGE system is "too vague"—in the sense that K-State students can graduate without the kind of breadth expected by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC). Many also find the current UGE system "too restrictive"—in the sense that we appear to require more upper-level [300+] credit hours than we can supply, and thus students report difficulty with finding the courses they need to graduate, not to mention the courses that might be most appropriate for particular students (UGE Brainstorming Group 4/23/2003). A related problem is that the current UGE system is often perceived by students and by faculty and by advisors to be overly complex, cumbersome, and unnecessarily confusing.

Process

The Task Force met on a bi-weekly basis from March 3 to May 12, 2006. Before and between meetings, the members of the Task Force read and reviewed documents, including the original 1994 UGE proposal, the work of previous general education committees, results of faculty and student surveys about the future of general education at K-State, sections from the North Central Association of Colleges and School's accreditation report, the Higher Learning Commission's *Handbook of Accreditation*, the Higher Learning Commission's Statement on General Education, documents describing and explaining the current UGE system, several other documents summarizing and describing general education at K-State, as well as a number of related articles and monographs (articles from *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, a NSSE Survey, a number of AAC&U documents, *Students in the Balance*, and more). The Task Force discussed these documents, current attitudes and perspectives on UGE at K-State, and the Higher Learning Commission's criteria for accreditation.

The members of the Task Force then researched a variety of successful general education programs at colleges and universities across the nation (UCLA, James Madison, Indiana State, Iowa State, Oregon State, American, Indiana, among others.) Some components that were most carefully considered were clarity of design, excitement about the program, presentation to the

public, structure, assessment of learning outcomes, and definitions of the purposes of general education.

During the summer of 2006, five members of the Task Force (Drs. Clegg, Eiselein, Hannah, LeHew, and Verschelden) attended the 2006 AAC&U Institute on General Education in Washington, D.C. This group of five met frequently before, during and after the Institute—in Manhattan, Washington, and Salina—to discuss preparation and plans, the Institute's reading assignments, and ideas for general education reform at K-State. This group's report is included as Appendix A.

The Task Force was also represented at the March 2006 AAC&U Conference on General Education by Cia Verschelden. Her report is attached as Appendix B. Sara Kearns attended the Transforming the Culture: Undergraduate Education and the Multiple Functions of the Research University conference in November 2006. Her report is attached as Appendix C.

During the fall of 2006, the Task Force devoted itself to developing specific recommendations about general education at K-State. The Task Force met on a biweekly basis from September 7th to November 30th to work on these recommendations. Reading assignments for the Task Force continued and included a variety of documents such as Dr. Clegg's summary of Derek Bok's *Our Underachieving Colleges*, a white paper prepared by a group of K-State faculty members on global learning, AAC&U documents and reports, and more.

Between Task Force meetings, sub-committees met to consider the major recommendations and issues that had emerged during the spring and over the summer. These various smaller groups focused on issues of integration and general education objectives, a searchable course database, assessment, capstones, first-year seminars, sophomore-year experience, service learning, honors, international/global studies, and activity-based/problem-based research courses. These subcommittees produced reports, presentations, and proposals that were considered, discussed, and incorporated into this Task Force Report. A written summary of the various major ideas was prepared, presented, and discussed in October, and a draft of the report was written and prepared and then revised and discussed.

On December 14, 2006, the Task Force met with Provost Nellis to discuss the preliminary report. At that meeting, the Provost and the members of the Task Force decided on three goals for the future work of the Task Force:

- (1) Do additional research and gather additional information about a proposed general education plan for K-State.
- (2) Meet with groups of people from all around campus to gather feedback, ideas, suggestions, and direction for the Task Force's work; these meetings would also be an opportunity for the Task Force to address concerns and provide information about our charge, work, and goals.
- (3) Refine, clarify, and specify the draft report, developing it into a final report to deliver to the Provost.

During the spring semester and early summer of 2007, the Task Force pursued these goals. The Task Force itself met on a bi-weekly basis from January to June.

We continued to read and consider information and research from numerous sources: articles on general education by scholars and intellectuals such as Jerry Gaff, David Foster Wallace, and Cathy Small; work on assessment from the Association of American Colleges and Universities [AAC&U] and the New Mexico Higher Education Department; articles on general education in the press; reports on general education from Harvard University, The National Leadership Council for Liberal Education and America's Promise, Peter D. Hart Research Associates, the AAC&U, and the Carnegie Foundation; and more. We also read and considered information and reports produced internally here at K-State from the K-State First-Year Experience Task Force, the Office of Assessment, and The Center for Teaching and Learning, among others.

Members of the Task Force in groups of three to five also met with representatives from the eight undergraduate Colleges and with other persons and groups from all over campus engaged with general education. In these focus groups or listening meetings, we discussed a range of questions and ideas that included perspectives of K-State's current system of UGE, the goals of general education, ways of improving general education at K-State, ideas for a new general education plan, the first-year experience, assessment, and more.

The Task Force conducted meetings with each of the following groups or representatives from the following units in the spring of 2007:

- Academic Affairs Committee of Faculty Senate (Feb 20)
- College of Engineering Executive Committee (Feb 22)
- College of Agriculture Teaching Coordinators (Feb 23)
- UGE Council (Mar 1)
- College of Technology and Aviation (Mar 6)
- Leadership Studies (Mar 12)
- Center for Engagement and Community Development (Mar 12)
- College of Human Ecology Faculty Council Meeting (Apr 2)
- College of Business Administration (Apr 2)
- College of Arts and Sciences Dean and Associate Dean (Apr 4)
- College of Architecture, Planning, and Design (Apr 10)
- College of Education (Apr 16)
- Library Leadership Council (Apr 17)
- University Honors Program (Apr 23)
- UGE Inter-College Coordination Panel (May 9)

The members of the Task Force also worked on the development and specification of this report throughout the spring semester and early summer. Members worked individually and in sub-committees on discrete sections of the report. The Task Force as a whole discussed this work and made recommendations. A complete final draft was assembled and sent to the Task Force in late May and discussed at the June 1 Task Force meeting. Final revisions were made in early June, and the report readied for the Provost for delivery on June 15.

Section 3: Recommendations for a General Education Plan

1. Building on the Strengths of the Current UGE Plan

K-State should build on the important strengths of the current UGE system, specifically its understanding of the purpose of general education and its commitment to effective student learning and pedagogy.

1.1 The Purpose of "General Education"

The General Education Task Force believes that the statement of purpose set forth in KSU's 1994 University General Education Proposal continues to serve as a significant guiding vision for the development of a new program for general education at Kansas State University.

[G]eneral education at Kansas State University should expand the experiences and vision our undergraduates carry forward in the conduct of their lives and should help students develop the interest and capacity for improving and enriching life. This purpose of general education can be addressed by targeting learning outcomes that characterize a preferred state of mind and habits of mind for Kansas State graduates. We envision graduates disposed to appreciate differing viewpoints, to consider openly new and divergent thinking, to weigh ideas with careful skepticism, to challenge conventional wisdom, and to explore for more accurate and more useful knowledge. We would expect K-State graduates to exercise educated habits, which include, at least, critical and analytical thinking, careful and thoughtful reading, writing and speech, an inclination to wonder, a penchant for questioning, and a desire to solve puzzles and problems. When that occurs, an undergraduate degree signals more than specialized competence for a career. (i)

Throughout our work on this Task Force, we have defined "general education" as *that part of university learning shared by all students. It is intended to provide broad exposure to multiple disciplines and to form the basis for developing important intellectual and social competencies. It is the cultivation of knowledge, skills, and attitudes important to learning throughout life.*

We have continued to hold to this definition and the guiding vision set out in 1994 because they clearly represent general education as a means or as a beginning, not as an end in itself, and because they reflect the same set of comprehensive goals framed by K-State's university-wide student learning outcomes.

Undergraduate student learning outcomes

Kansas State University strives to create an atmosphere of intellectual curiosity and growth, one in which academic freedom, breadth of thought and action, and individual empowerment are valued and flourish. We endeavor to prepare citizens

who will continue to learn and will contribute to the societies in which they live and work.

Students share in the responsibility for a successful university educational experience. Upon completion of their degree, all undergraduates are expected to demonstrate ability in at least five essential areas.

Knowledge. Students will demonstrate a depth of knowledge and apply the methods of inquiry in a discipline of their choosing, and they will demonstrate a breadth of knowledge across their choice of varied disciplines.

Critical Thinking. Students will demonstrate the ability to access and interpret information, respond and adapt to changing situations, make complex decisions, solve problems, and evaluate actions.

Communication. Students will demonstrate the ability to communicate clearly and effectively.

Diversity. Students will demonstrate awareness and understanding of the skills necessary to live and work in a diverse world.

Academic and Professional Integrity. Students will demonstrate awareness and understanding of the ethical standards of their academic discipline and/or profession.

In light of these essential student learning outcomes (SLOs) and the stated purpose of general education, we propose adopting a new plan that will ensure broad exposure to many disciplines, develop proficiencies in communication and critical thinking, and permit a more systematic assessment of general education. Thus, ***we recommend that the new general education plan (outlined more specifically in the recommendations to follow) be founded upon the university undergraduate SLOs and the understanding of general education set forth in 1994.***

1.2 The Importance of Pedagogy

The Task Force would like to reaffirm the importance of effective pedagogy to general education. The current UGE system is defined in part by a unique commitment to student learning and pedagogies that emphasize active learning, experiential context, integrative learning, and developing advanced writing skills. The Task Force believes that such approaches to teaching and learning constitute one of the great strengths of UGE.

The teaching and learning principles that currently define UGE are not, however, specifically "general education" pedagogies. They are simply effective pedagogies. Attention to assessment, outstanding teaching faculty, and the development of programs for teaching improvement (The Faculty Exchange for Teaching Excellence, The Peer Review of Teaching Project, etc.) have contributed to this innovation and improvement in teaching at K-State. Indeed, as the recent

pedagogical innovation at K-State demonstrates, these practices are slowly permeating the entire teaching and learning enterprise.

Thus, *while we recommend putting aside the current UGE emphasis on pedagogy as a defining element of what is considered to be general education*, we would like to see these innovative pedagogical principles and best practices continued throughout all K-State curricula.

2. Providing for Breadth of Knowledge and Proficiency in Skills

K-State should design a new system of general education to ensure that every student "acquires a breadth of knowledge in the areas and proficiency in the skills that [are the] hallmarks of being college educated" (HLC Statement on General Education). Such a system should have a set of specific goals and a clear curricular structure to ensure that those goals are attained.

2.1 General Education Goals: Ensuring a Foundation for Breadth of Knowledge

We recommend that the University adopt a university-wide general education goal to guide students toward the building of a foundation for a breadth of knowledge to include the human experience, the natural world, and social responsibility through courses and experiences in eight specific areas.

The Task Force has created a plan of general education at K-State that encourages students to be intellectual explorers. By requiring students to take a mix of classes to experience the academic learning reflected in K-State's undergraduate student learning outcomes, we expect students will begin to develop a diverse set of "literacies" that reflect a breadth of general knowledge. This broad exposure aims to awaken and ignite students' interest in varying disciplines, while also teaching the knowledge and skills expected of college-educated individuals.

Students and faculty would review and plan programs of study to include exposure to a breadth of learning, with at least one three-credit hour course (or some equivalent) in each of the eight areas. At least six of the areas must be covered with courses outside the student's major. Courses in the eight areas cannot substitute for the credit hours in the Common Degree Requirements: Expository Writing (six credit hours) and Public Speaking (two credits).

Thus, in terms of credit hours, all K-State undergraduates will take at least 24 hours of general education. Six of these hours may count toward students' major (for example, a three-credit-hour capstone course and one other three-credit course in the major), but at least 18 of these hours will be taken outside the major. Six of these 24 hours may be taken as first-year seminars (see recommendation 3.1 below).

The eight specific areas are each described in more detail on the following pages. A brief description is provided, along with a rationale for considering the area as important to build a foundation for breadth of knowledge. Finally, there is a short list of learning outcomes that exemplify the learning likely to be facilitated by courses and experiences in the area

To reiterate, the phrase "building a foundation for a breadth of knowledge" was carefully chosen by the Task Force. There is no expectation that students will do more than begin the process of creating their own structures for a breadth of knowledge. However, by exploring these eight areas, students will establish a foundation on which to build throughout a lifetime of learning.

Aesthetic Experience and Interpretive Understanding

Rationale: General education aims at preparing students for a lifetime of civic and cultural engagement, an understanding of artistic and cultural traditions is an important component of such engagement. Yet the arts also provide students with something more than knowledge of traditions, beliefs, and forms of expression; they also teach us to observe carefully, to reflect, to appreciate, to wonder, and to see objects and interactions with new eyes. In a world filled with complex and ambiguous signs, skill in reading and interpreting such signs not only enriches one's emotional and intellectual life but also enables one to fathom meanings that might be crucial to how one leads life. Artistic works can heighten one's curiosity, intensify one's aesthetic and observational capacities, and sharpen one's ability to make sense of a range of texts from sacred texts to contemporary popular music, from ancient architecture to television and film.

Description: Artistic expressions—the visual arts, theatre, music, dance, literature—carry meaning and invite interpretation. Understanding the challenges of various forms of artistic expression and the ability to interpret such texts can expand the observers' perceptions and enrich individual lives. Courses and experiences in this area will provide students with the opportunity to develop their interpretive skills and heighten their aesthetic responses to literature, the performing arts, and the visual arts.

Courses and experiences in this area should facilitate students learning to:

- analyze, interpret, and aesthetically respond to literary texts, artistic performances, and works of art by drawing on differing historical, cultural, or theoretical perspectives;
- develop their critical skills, including their ability to reflect on, speculate about and describe the meaning of artistic works, performances, and texts; and
- identify and evaluate the role of literature and the arts in society; understand how artistic expressions reflect, interact, and influence society, history, and culture.

Empirical and Quantitative Reasoning

Rationale: All individuals are faced with the inevitable task of evaluating available information every day in order to make decisions. These may range from choices that seem mundane (e.g., what to have for lunch or how much to spend on a purchase) to those that are paramount (e.g., whether or not to undergo particular medical treatments or how to prepare for retirement). However, it is clear that everyday decisions influence potential long-term consequences. In the examples provided, everyday meal choices may impact long-term health and, therefore, what medical treatments may be necessary; and everyday-spending choices will have an impact on long-term investment and savings opportunities. The ability to examine and describe relationships among concepts and ideas using logical reasoning (based on observed, intuitive, scientific, theoretical and other forms of data) allows individuals to solve problems across a variety of situations.

Description: Empirical and quantitative reasoning includes the use of scientific and mathematical skills to observe, measure, compare, and describe information and data. Students explore how to make decisions and draw conclusions based on empirical data. They learn how to gather and evaluate information, weigh alternative evidence, understand the likelihood of particular outcomes, and recognize when particular conclusions cannot be drawn based on available evidence. These methods will be applied to define and solve problems using methods of inductive and deductive reasoning.

Courses and experiences in this area should facilitate students learning to:

- understand and describe the importance of logical and empirical methods to determine and express relationships between properties or concepts;
- solve complex, real-world problems through the application of appropriate strategies and the use of logical reasoning skills; and
- apply basic skills and knowledge using appropriate methods for gathering, analyzing and displaying data to draw conclusions about hypotheses.

Ethical Reasoning and Social Engagement/Responsibility

Rationale: Students must be exposed to a variety of ethical perspectives and multiple ways of resolving ethical dilemmas in order to be socially responsible. Citizens and human beings face a variety of decisions in their lives regarding right conduct within society: For which candidate should I vote? Which policy is best? How should I react to discrimination when I encounter it? How can I resolve this family dilemma? Courses and experiences in ethical reasoning and social engagement should assist students in learning how to think through such dilemmas and make sound decisions when facing real-life situations. Because humans exist within social groups, ethical reasoning must include consideration of others. Therefore, social engagement/responsibility is the context in which ethical reasoning occurs. Attention and service to the broader society (ultimately the entire world) is a characteristic of a well-educated, socially accountable individual.

Description: Ethics refers to the study of the standards by which human behavior and interactions can be considered right or wrong—defining the concepts of right and wrong, good and bad, and how we make these determinations. One considers many related questions when examining ethical decision-making: Which plays a bigger role in determining right from wrong—self-interest or the interests of others? Are there specific laws or principles that can be universally applied to assist in these decisions? Who decides what is ethical and what is unethical? What is the proper role of skepticism in ethical decision-making? Social engagement and responsibility include the ability to apply ethical skills and knowledge for the advancement of society. Courses and experiences in this area will introduce students to a diversity of strategies to promote knowledge, skills and behaviors that encourage responsible social engagement.

Courses and experiences in this area should facilitate students learning to:

- exhibit basic awareness and understanding of ethical dilemmas and standards for resolution;
- apply emerging skills to assess and evaluate ethical dilemmas using sound strategies and principles; and
- recognize and articulate the importance of social engagement as an essential component of ethical reasoning.

Global Community

Rationale: The United States is part of an emerging global community. Because the United States is considered to be a "super-power" (economically, culturally, politically, scientifically and militarily influential around the world), U.S. citizens must build an understanding of how U.S. policies and actions affect all global citizens. Current global challenges are issues of great importance that affect all individuals and nations, such as:

- economic globalization,
- rapidly developing technology and its resulting opportunities as well as challenges,
- immigration and migration policies and consequences,
- global health priorities and resolutions,
- environmental crises and solutions,
- ethnic and cultural identity—including those of minority status or mixed-group identity,
- and international matters of conflict resolution, justice and equality.

This global perspective is imperative for K-State graduates who will live and work within this global community throughout their adult lives.

Description: Courses and experiences in the Global Community area will introduce students to values, perspectives, beliefs, behaviors and customs of cultures different from their own. Students will examine the place of the U.S. within the global community. Emphasis should be placed on the interdependence of nations, and even individuals, across the globe to encourage students to be informed and responsible global citizens.

Courses and experiences in this area should facilitate students learning to:

- examine their own cultures using a global and comparative context;
- exhibit an understanding of global issues, trends, processes and systems; and
- think critically about issues of identity, race, ethnicity, globalization, multiculturalism, difference, prejudice and discrimination within a global context.

Human Diversity in the U.S.

Rationale: Students must be prepared to live and work in U.S. society—which is diverse and heterogeneous. Every human being is a unique individual. Each person has distinctive characteristics, capabilities, perspectives and experiences. On the other hand, humans are social beings; we develop relationships and live in community with each other. Human development, health and well-being are enhanced and strengthened through positive interactions with others. Within the diverse and pluralistic U.S. society, through interactions with each other, individuals often categorize people in terms of inclusion in or exclusion from particular groups. This can lead to oppressive behaviors of one group toward another, especially when individuals are unfamiliar with those who are different from themselves. To reduce false or unsubstantiated opinions or assumptions they have of "others" and of themselves, students must examine the many patterned differences that characterize human groupings in U.S. culture—for example, those based on gender, race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion, political affiliation, (dis)ability, and socioeconomic class.

Description: Human diversity and interconnectedness in the U.S. includes developing an awareness of oneself and others within U.S. culture through scholarly study, research, and personal interaction. Students should be exposed to multiple perspectives about U.S. society and how group affiliation affects people's perceptions and experiences.

Courses and experiences in this area should facilitate students learning to:

- identify and discuss diverse perspectives and experiences as they examine U.S. institutions, practices and influences, from a contemporary and/or historical perspective;
- exhibit knowledge and understanding of a variety of cultures in the U.S., including dominant and non-dominant groups, and their interconnectedness within U.S. society; and
- think critically about issues of identity, race, ethnicity, nationality, multiculturalism, difference, prejudice and discrimination within a U.S. social and cultural context.

Individuals within Social Systems

Rationale: Every day in contemporary society we encounter experiences and situations that make us wonder what influences individuals to behave in particular ways. For example, why do some people resolve conflicts using violence while others employ nonviolent strategies? What motivates some employees to exceed expectations while others do not demonstrate even a minimal level of commitment? Within what circumstances do some adults' spending habits exceed their income while others meticulously save a substantial percentage of their available resources? Why do some people excel at athletics while others are accomplished in music? Students need to understand that human conduct and behavior are subject to scientific inquiry. Educated individuals can identify the difference between rigorous and systematic thinking and uncritical thinking about social phenomena. The reciprocal relationships between human behavior and social environments must be examined in order to responsibly encourage behaviors that will maintain and/or achieve health and well-being for individuals, families, groups, societies, nations and the global community.

Description: Courses and experiences examining the individual within social systems emphasize how individuals, families, groups, institutions, and societies behave and influence one another and the natural environment. Students must be exposed to appropriate methods used to analyze and understand interactions of the various social factors that influence behavior at multiple levels: individual, familial, cultural, societal, national, and/or international.

Courses and experiences in this area should facilitate students learning to:

- explore ways in which individuals, groups, institutions and/or societies behave and influence one another;
- exhibit an understanding of influences of the various social factors on behavior at multiple levels (individual, familial, cultural, societal, national, and/or international); and
- identify and describe appropriate systematic and scientific strategies to examine current social issues and problems.

The Natural and Physical World

Rationale: Scientific advances affect all our lives in powerful ways, from the development of medical advances that extend the quality and length of human life to the creation of new energy sources that reduce pollution and carbon emissions. Students should understand that views of the natural and physical world change with developments in science and experimental technologies. Students must learn to question the current understanding of the natural and physical world and intelligently consider competing explanations. An undergraduate education should offer opportunities for students to examine the relationship of science to society, to historical developments, to our understanding of truth, to ethical dilemmas, to creativity and innovation, and to broader understandings of the meaning of life and the cosmos.

Description: The college-educated person has an appreciation for and a broad understanding of the natural and physical world in which we all live. Courses and experiences that examine the natural and physical world teach students the central facts, ideas and theories related to the study of living systems and the physical universe.

Courses and experiences in this area should facilitate students learning to:

- understand and describe major concepts and facts related to the study of living systems and the physical universe;
- apply scientific facts and ideas to real-world problems; and
- develop a beginning understanding of social, practical, or moral significance of scientific knowledge and theory.

The Past and the Future

Rationale: The college-educated person realizes that the world in which we live is never the same from one day to the next, and that what we do in our daily and professional roles contributes to the knowledge and events of the future. Being able to trace current knowledge to its sources provides insight into what we know and how we came to know it. A sense of history enables us to use the lessons of the past as touchstones against which we compare our own accomplishments, as milestones against which we can measure the distances we have come, and as collective cultural experiences that may help direct us away from danger and harm and toward constructive engagement with others. Appreciating that knowledge is constantly evolving means that an individual can prepare for the future, develop contingencies, be alert to trends, understand their origins, and acquire the skills and resources required to redirect or modify those trends rather than merely stand aside and be completely at their mercy.

Description: An understanding of the past and thoughtful consideration of the future permits students to contextualize current knowledge, to glimpse how it may continue to develop, and to estimate what role they might play in that development. Learning that what we know now is the result of the trials and errors that came before allows students to begin to understand that knowledge is provisional and constantly evolving.

Courses and experiences in this area should facilitate students learning to:

- develop and present educated guesses as to how individuals, events, or theories in the present may affect the future;
- understand that knowledge is not fixed and that human agents influence or affect future events and ways of knowing; and
- articulate an understanding of the recursive nature of knowledge.

2.2 General Education Goals: Proficiency in Communication and Critical Thinking

According to AAC&U guidelines on "The Essential Learning Outcomes," these two intellectual and practical skills ought to be "practiced extensively, across the curriculum." This Task Force concurs, and thus *we recommend that communication and critical thinking be taught, fostered, and repeatedly practiced in courses throughout the undergraduate curriculum, including courses taken as part of students' general education.*

Communication

Communication is how individuals exchange ideas or feelings through a common system of sounds, symbols, signs or behaviors. Interpersonal behavior is the process of sending *and* receiving information: speaking and listening, writing and reading, signing and seeing. The college-educated person will recognize that how he or she communicates and interprets others' communication necessarily varies according to context, interlocutor, audience, and medium. Scholars in psychology may communicate research studies via articles published in specific journals, a marketer may develop an ad campaign around an eye-catching graphic, and an engineer may effectively illustrate concerns regarding a proposed bridge using structural plans.

Effective communication helps maintain a sense of community and provides a means for crafting, if not consensus, then understanding, in a diverse and complex world. Students who learn multiple, effective modes of communication will strengthen the substance of their message by selecting the appropriate manner to communicate it. They will gain a more complete understanding of the communications they receive by recognizing the conventions used by the transmitter.

Critical Thinking

Critical thinking occurs when a person probes beyond the surface to evaluate the information provided. A college-educated person understands that greater knowledge can be found by having a purpose, raising relevant questions, seeking information, making inferences, using concepts, making assumptions, generating implications and developing conclusions. The process of critical thinking varies dependent on situations, fields and bodies of knowledge: a student may learn one set of critical thinking methods in a grain science laboratory, another in the library, and yet others in theatrical productions or a field experience in Costa Rica. While the methods may differ, college-educated students will recognize that they are capable of inquiry to answer simple and complex questions.

Critical thinking does not ensure that we will find truth or reach the "right" answer. Critical thinking helps provide the college-educated person with the ability to question various perspectives, opinions, and received truths and arrive at her or his own informed answers, either through existing information or the research process that critical thinking naturally initiates.

2.3 The University Undergraduate SLOs and General Education

The eight essential areas of general education and the proficiencies in communication and critical are being recommended with the University undergraduate student learning outcomes in mind.

All eight areas deal explicitly with the *knowledge* SLO, with an emphasis on building a foundation for a breadth of knowledge—a process that all K-State students should have well underway when they complete an undergraduate degree.

We explicitly address the *integrity* and *diversity* SLOs in the areas covering Ethical Reasoning and Social Engagement/Responsibility, The Global Community, and Human Diversity in the U.S.

We affirm the *communication* and *critical thinking* SLOs as essential learning outcomes that should be prominently addressed throughout every student's undergraduate curriculum—in the major and in general education electives.

All six of the following SLO statements are purposeful intentions of the undergraduate educational experience at Kansas State University. The first outcome focuses on learning in the student's chosen major. The remaining five are goals both for general education and for study in the major.

K-State undergraduates will:

Knowledge [Major]	Demonstrate a depth of knowledge and apply the methods of inquiry in the discipline of their choosing.
Knowledge [Gen Ed/Major]	Demonstrate the foundation for a breadth of knowledge—gather, integrate, and appropriately apply their learning from many different sources and from many different fields of inquiry. [Carol Geary Schneider, AAC&U]
Critical Thinking [Gen Ed/Major]	Think critically—access and interpret information, respond and adapt to changing situations, make complex decisions, solve problems, and evaluate actions.
Communication [Gen Ed/Major]	Communicate clearly and effectively.
Diversity [Gen Ed/Major]	Demonstrate awareness and understanding of the skills necessary to live and work in a diverse world.
Integrity [Gen Ed/Major]	Demonstrate emerging skills to assess and evaluate ethical dilemmas within the ethical standards of their academic discipline and/or profession.

2.4 Searchable Course Database/General Education Course Menu

We recommend the development of a searchable course database to help students and advisors develop undergraduate programs of study that meet the university-wide general education goal for building a foundation for breadth. (More detailed information on this idea is presented in Appendices D and E.)

The searchable course database should comprise the traditional course information offered in the Undergraduate Catalog at Kansas State University—course number, course title, credit hours, semesters offered, course description (perhaps including designated keywords), delivery structure, prerequisites.

Within such a database, K-State courses could be tagged according to the ways in which they would help students meet the general education goal for building a foundation for breadth. It would also be necessary to link the course database with the current semester course schedule so that students could identify specific sections that would fit in their programs of study for a given semester. An example of such a search form is provided in Appendix D.

Having such a searchable, descriptive course database would allow students to track progress toward the university-wide general education goals and could also help students track progress within the major. One example of such a cumulative tracking process is provided in Appendix E. If all courses were tagged appropriately, the database and the tracking system would serve as the foundation for the development of flexible curriculum maps for individual students. Such tools (a searchable course database and the development of curriculum maps) would enable students and advisors to design programs of study that ensure that every student has met K-State's basic and university-wide general education goals.

Kansas State University does not currently have such a searchable course database. *Until it is available, we recommend that K-State develop a general education "menu" that describes the general education areas for breadth, explains the expectations for each area, and lists the specific K-State courses or experiences that would fulfill each of those areas.*

The development of a searchable course database or a general education menu might be the occasion for two significant problems: 1) tactical abuse (for example, tagging courses so as to ensure not a broad liberal education but ease of movement through a degree program) and 2) cumbersome course approval bureaucracy. Both problems must be avoided.

To avoid these problems, the process of tagging might begin by asking Departments to identify courses they offer that could genuinely be considered as potential offerings for students' general education. Oversight for the process should be bureaucratically minimal and might be the shared responsibility of Faculty Senate and an administrator charged to oversee undergraduate education.

3. Creating a Common First-Year Experience

3.1 First-Year Seminars

K-State should create as part of a larger, common first-year experience a set of first-year–academic, general education courses taught by K-State faculty.

These seminars would be for students during the whole of their first year at K-State, both first-year and new (undergraduate) transfer students. Students would take one three-credit-hour seminar each semester, for a total of six general education credit hours during the first year.

In its Report dated February 2007, the First-Year Task Force designated as its highest priority the creation of a common first-year classroom experience for credit. The General Education Task Force strongly endorses the work and recommendations of the First-Year Task Force.

Both the First-Year Task Force report and the AAC&U's *Greater Expectations: A New Vision for Learning as a Nation Goes to College* report draw attention to the fact that increasing numbers of students are arriving "underprepared for college work" (*Greater Expectations*). Moreover, K-State's lower than average retention and graduation rates (cited in "K-State First-Year Experience Task Force Report") suggest that our University needs to be more effective in helping underprepared students make the transition to college-level work. The recommendations of this Task Force and the First-Year Task Force are attempts to address these problems, improve retention of first-year students, and increase student degree attainment.

With these aims in mind, these first-year seminars would serve as students' academic introduction to K-State and general education at K-State and as the foundation of their education at K-State. The seminars would be designed to strengthen the first-year students' intellectual skills of communication and critical thinking, to set and explain the academic standards of college-level work, and to introduce students to the University's undergraduate learning outcomes.

The specific content for each of these first-year general education seminars would differ. For example, an entomology professor could make the "topic" for her seminar the cultural and economic impact of insects on society, whereas the architecture professor might focus the first-year seminar on ancient architecture's enduring influence on contemporary architecture; an English professor might build her syllabus around the representation of nature in literature, and an engineering professor might create a class about the impact of information systems on globalization. And so on. Moreover, K-State will want to consider offering different kinds of first-year seminars to meet the needs of different kinds of students (transfer students, honors students, students at the Salina campus, distance education students, non-traditional-aged students, students with particular kinds of academic interests and/or learning styles or needs, etc.). Such differences might productively become the basis for certain kinds of first-year learning communities. Departments might design specific seminars for this program or modify existing courses. Either way, the departments and the faculty teaching each seminar would be responsible for the specific content of the seminars.

Despite the topic variation among the sections, the specific content of each seminar or the specific student learning outcomes for each class would be 1) focused on a coherent, distinctive, college-level academic subject and 2) designed with the general education of first-year, non-major students in mind.

These first-year seminars would be structured in a meaningful and direct way around K-State's essential undergraduate SLOs. The University SLOs would be introduced to students in the seminars as a way for them to understand what will be expected of them in college, as a way to enable them to take a proactive or intentional approach to their own college education, and as a way for them to understand the course goals for their specific seminars and the connections between those course goals and the university education before them.

The teaching of these seminars would be a campus-wide responsibility. We would like to see K-State's strongest and most dedicated teachers become active instructors within the first-year seminars. Faculty who teach in the program would become part of a team of first-year seminar instructors who would probably need some special orientation or training to prepare them to teach within a program that is coordinated at the university-level and interfaced with a universal learning content organized at the university level. These seminars would make use of a pedagogy that emphasizes active and integrative learning, experiential context, and writing—the type of pedagogy currently at the heart of the UGE system. Given such an instructor-intensive pedagogy and the learning outcomes for the seminars, the classes would have to be relatively small (twenty students per seminar, for example). We think that these seminars might also be a place to experiment with team teaching or other pedagogical approaches in which responsibility for the course is shared among faculty members.

These seminars also would become the venue for the initial phase of the assessment of general education at K-State (which is described in more detail in recommendation 4 in this section [see below]).

The Challenges of Implementing First-Year Seminars

In our discussions with various members of the K-State community, no idea seemed to generate more enthusiasm or more trepidation than the proposal for small, first-year seminars for all first-year students at K-State.

The enthusiasm came from the strong belief that such seminars were the pedagogically sound recommendation to make. Such seminars would lay the foundation for the rest of a student's learning experience at K-State. They would set academically rigorous, college-level expectations for student learning at the start of a student's career here at K-State, and they would be critical to the kind and quality of student learning throughout the rest of the university experience, including the general education courses. By design, they would encourage intentional learning and student ownership of learning.

There were other reasons for excitement about the seminars as well. The seminars would help foster a greater sense of community, not only among the incoming students, but the K-State

community as a whole, including the instructors who would become an integral part of the first-year program and thus less distant from the lives, experiences, and concerns of incoming students.

The seminars would guarantee that all incoming students (even those who had satisfied their composition requirement by some means other than Expository Writing I and II here at K-State) would have at least one small class during their first year at K-State, a class in which the instructor and students actually knew each other, a class in which students spoke with and interacted with the instructor and other students during each class period. The research done by this Task Force and the First-Year Task Force revealed clearly that first-year experiences are most effective in their retention, learning, and degree attainment goals, when they emphasize individualized and small-group experiences.

Importantly, from the perspective of assessment, the seminars would provide an ideal opportunity to assess students' level of general education as they started their university experience and to introduce students to the process of assessment and their role in it.

Despite this reasoned support for the seminars, the Task Force encountered expressions of concern, even or perhaps especially from those who strongly supported the proposal. Those concerns, which were never related to the intellectual validity or pedagogical rationale of the seminars idea, were consistently the same: How will students fit these six credit hours into their already tight programs of study? How will the University encourage faculty to teach these seminars? Who will coordinate the first-year seminars, scheduling perhaps 200 sections of the first-year seminar each semester and keeping the class sizes small? Will the University be able to afford to fund small sections for first-year students?

The members of the Task Force took these concerns very seriously, thinking about, researching, and discussing these questions at length. Though the answers, especially to the final question, are not yet adequate, the Task Force thought it important to address each one in this report.

How will students fit these six credit hours into already tight programs of study?

These seminars should add no hours to a student's program of study. When properly designed, the seminars should count toward areas in the development of a foundation for a breadth of knowledge discussed in the previous section.

How will the University encourage faculty to teach these seminars?

By asking faculty to teach a significant part of the seminar with distinctive content from their areas of specialization, the seminars will allow faculty to teach the topics that most interest them, the topics that they most want first-year students to learn and know. Our discussions revealed that faculty are much more likely to be interested in teaching a first-year seminar if it focuses on a coherent, specific, college-level academic subject in which they are knowledgeable. They are less likely to be interested in teaching a more broadly conceived "study skills" course or first-year socialization colloquium.

Faculty would also be reluctant to teach the first-year seminar on an "overload" basis, even if it paid \$1,000 or \$2,000 per section. It seems unlikely that faculty will participate enthusiastically or in large numbers if the teaching of these seminars is handled in such a manner. Thus, the Task Force recommends that the teaching of the first-year seminar become a regular part of a participating faculty member's usual course load.

Who will coordinate the first-year seminars, scheduling perhaps 200 sections of the first-year seminar each semester and keeping the class sizes small?

The Task Force recognizes that the creation of first-year seminars will create a huge planning, scheduling, and coordination job not only to ensure that there are an adequate number of sections for incoming students but also to oversee the curriculum and to coordinate the faculty who teach within the program. Thus the program would clearly need an effective and dynamic leader.

We imagine that the leadership needed for such a program would have to come from a member of the faculty for whom the care and enhancement of the program would be a primary responsibility.

We believe that a Dean of Undergraduate Studies would be ideally positioned to provide such leadership. If the creation of such a position were not economically feasible or politically possible, then, at a minimum, the University would need to create a Director of General Education (and a Director of the First-Year Experience) to provide this critical leadership.

Will the University be able to afford to fund small sections for first-year students?

The cost of this program is clearly an important and daunting factor to be considered. A look at the F2005 and F2006 enrollment data suggests that somewhere between 125 and 250 sections of the first-year seminar would be needed to meet student demand (see Appendix F, "First-Year Seminars: Considerations"). This demand might be met in various ways (again, see Appendix F), though the Task Force highly recommends the use of K-State's regular teaching faculty. Such a scenario will likely require the university to hire additional faculty to meet the needs created by these added courses.

Nevertheless, the cost of running individual courses should be considered in the context of larger issues involving matriculation rates, retention and overall student satisfaction. The Task Force has reason to think that savings and not-yet utilized efficiencies may help provide some of the resources needed to fund the first-year program. For example, we believe that the First-Year Experience will improve student success and student retention, which will save money in lost tuition, recruitment costs, and other costs. We believe that a first-year program will help set higher expectations for student learning, and higher expectations will help improve student productivity and efficiency, thus saving important university resources. Some of the Task Force's reading and research has suggested that improvements in student productivity and curriculum management—changes that might emerge as a part of reforms to general education at K-State and the creation of a First-Year Experience at K-State—may provide the resources needed to fund the small class sizes needed for the first-year seminars (see Ferren and Kinch, Ferren and Slavings).

The seminars might also be made more feasible by phasing them in. The University might begin with a pilot program, then offer one first-year seminar for all incoming students in the first year, then extend the first-year seminar program to cover both semesters, and then, finally, create a set of sophomore seminars.

3.2 Sophomore Seminars

If the first-year seminars achieve their goals and prove to be successful, the Task Force recommends for serious consideration the creation of a set of sophomore-year seminars.

Our Task Force research indicates that sophomores are in some respects even more of a retention problem than first-year students. K-State's retention problems and below-average retention rates during the first year appear to continue into the second year. The "Big Twelve Longitudinal Retention Survey" (Appendix G) shows first-year retention rates at K-State that range from 75-81% and sophomore-year retention rates that range from 67-72% over the past decade. These numbers fall below the average for doctoral/ research extensive institutions.

Although the reasons for these sophomore retention rates may be complex, it seems clear that sophomores receive the least attention of any class. They move from a more structured first-year to a less structured second year, which creates in the words of Lemon and Richards a "period of developmental confusion." As Sara Lipka explains:

Woe are the sophomores, higher education's middle children. Their freshman frolic has given way to daunting challenges. They are anxious and confused. They must declare majors, take weed-out classes, and decide whether to study abroad. They feel pressure to plan for internships and careers, and to figure out who they are and where they are going.

The most successful intervention strategies at other institutions are: sophomore experience classes, retreats, effective mentoring and advising, and multi-year programs that address retention, progression, and graduation.

Thus the Task Force recommends the development of a sophomore-year experience, *following the successful implementation of a first-year experience structured around general education goals*, that would build upon the first-year experience, address the unique challenges facing sophomores, and provide students with a progressively more challenging general education learning experience.

4. Assessing General Education: Student Learning Outcomes

K-State must develop an assessment program for general education.

One of the central charges of this Task Force is to "consider the recommendation of the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) regarding the assessment of general education and its alignment with K-State's undergraduate student learning outcomes." Moreover, it is clear from the 2005 HLC "focused visit" that K-State needs to develop a general education assessment program and clearly define the locus of responsibility for assessment at each stage.

Therefore, after due consideration, ***the Task Force strongly recommends the development of a program of general education assessment focused on Kansas State University's undergraduate SLOs. This assessment program would have two parts: 1) initial assessment in the first-year seminar and 2) assessment of integration of learning in a capstone course or experience in the major.***

Learning to be Assessed

Undergraduate Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of their degree and regardless of disciplinary major, K-State undergraduates are expected to demonstrate ability in at least five essential areas—knowledge, critical thinking, communication, diversity, and integrity. The SLOs to be assessed are listed below. The last five are related to general education.

Knowledge	Demonstrate a depth of knowledge and apply the methods of inquiry in the discipline of their choosing.
Knowledge	Demonstrate the foundation for a breadth of knowledge—gather, integrate, and appropriately apply their learning from many different sources and from many different fields of inquiry. [Carol Geary Schneider, AAC&U]
Critical Thinking	Think critically—access and interpret information, respond and adapt to changing situations, make complex decisions, solve problems, and evaluate actions.
Communication	Communicate clearly and effectively.
Diversity	Demonstrate awareness and understanding of the skills necessary to live and work in a diverse world.
Integrity	Demonstrate emerging skills to assess and evaluate ethical dilemmas within the ethical standards of their academic discipline and/or profession.

SLO Assessment Committees

We recommend that faculty committees (4-6 members) be formed for each of the five student learning outcomes noted above that would apply to students' general education. The first SLO obviously applies only to the study in the major. The charge of each of these committees would be to clarify and perhaps expand on the student learning inherent in each SLO and to develop assessment strategies that to be used in the first-year seminar and in the integrative capstone assessment.

An Assessment Approach

The first-year seminars could have some type of common assessment procedure in which faculty assess the learning that has happened in the seminars. (Students might, for example, assemble portfolios of work done for the course; those portfolios would then be evaluated by faculty in the first-year program as a way to assess the learning in the first-year seminars.) In a common first-year experience, students could also take, in essence, some "pre-tests" in the areas of, for instance, diversity/multicultural competency, ethics/integrity, and information literacy. These seminars might also be the venue in which students would develop general education programs of study in which they would intentionally design their own curricula for their time at K-State.

The responsibility for general education assessment at this stage would rest with faculty and administrative leadership within the First-Year Experience program. The results of the assessment would then be reported to the Office of Assessment, similarly to what is required of degree programs.

These outcomes could then be assessed again in capstone courses within majors. (For some general education outcomes, these may be "post-tests" of the instruments that were administered in the 1st-year seminars.) It is the recommendation of the Task Force that each degree program include a final, culminating capstone experience, tailored to its curriculum and discipline or profession. A capstone experience might be offered in the form of a course, a project within a course, or an independent study. It might be concurrent with an internship or a project conducted in the work world. A primary requirement of the capstone is that students draw upon aspects of their general education to successfully complete it.

The Task Force strongly believes that insulated thinking will not be most effective in understanding and solving the problems of today's world. While capstone courses and experiences will most likely focus on problems and issues critical to the major field of study, students should also seek the perspectives and use the tools of multiple disciplines to understand the issues and to resolve the problems. Students should expand their scope of thinking beyond the specialization of the major. They should be challenged to perceive and examine issues through multiple lenses. They should attempt to reconcile conflicting ideas. They should seek the relationships and connections between their specific discipline and the greater realm of knowledge.

Thus, following the specific recommendations from the AAC&U report on Liberal Education Outcomes and the more general trend in higher education in which institutions are seeing general

education and the specialized education in the major as connected, complementary, and synergistic, we suggest that complex senior projects or capstone assignments would be an ideal forum for the assessment of Kansas State University's student learning outcomes, which include learning outcomes of both the major and general education.

Capstone experiences are already a part of the curriculum of many degree programs. According to a prior survey conducted by the Office of Assessment, forty-two departments in six colleges already have courses, internships and/or experiences that their faculty identified as capstones. However, whether within a capstone experience or not, all programs will develop methods of assessing how well their students "gather integrate, and appropriately apply their learning from many different sources and from many different fields of inquiry." Methods might include portfolios, exit exams, senior theses, or a system of continual assessment throughout the degree program.

Section 4: Recommendations Regarding Implementation

The Implementation Process

The Task Force recommends that the general education reform process at K-State work closely and carefully with the colleges and departments to integrate general education into the degree programs in ways that best serve students.

While the Task Force has addressed issues of breadth, definitions and learning outcomes, there are practicalities that must be considered in the implementation of a general education program at Kansas State University. We believe that this report provides an overarching plan for a new system of general education at K-State, but the work of coordinating with colleges and departments to establish which courses will be tagged with which area designations, of creating and staffing first-year seminars, and of establishing an assessment program remains to be done.

The implementation of the new general education plan will most certainly face a variety of obstacles and challenges. There may be opposition to and concerns about some aspects of the new proposed program. The Task Force identified the various groups that will have direct inputs to the implementation process. The Task Force met with these groups to explain the progress and the goals and objectives of the program and to receive input to the creation of the newly proposed general education program.

One of the predominant concerns was that a number of K-State degree programs have tightly structured curricula that permit students to take relatively few courses not directly related to the major. Any general education proposal that is perceived (by the faculty or students in those programs) as simply adding "extra" or non-relevant "requirements" to an already demanding degree program will encounter significant resistance. This is particularly true of programs in education, engineering, architecture, and other professional programs.

The AAC&U recommends that "liberal education outcomes ... reach their highest level of cultivation in the context of the student's area of specialization or major field(s)" (*Our Student's Best Work* 7). And one of the emerging trends in higher education appears to be a move away from opposing general education to study in the major and corresponding moves toward understanding how general education and the major connect to and complement each other, how significant and specific types of general education happen within the major, and how connections within and across disciplines are essential to learning in all majors (Gaff, Schneider).

Indeed, the HLC, academic programs at K-State, their accrediting bodies, and the organizations that employ college graduates seem to be in agreement that a broad education that includes work across the sciences, social sciences, mathematics, humanities, and arts plays an essential role in preparing students for the challenges of a diverse, globally-interdependent (or "flat"), and "knowledge-fueled" world. As one commentator put it, clients do not want to hire students who are "locked into a single frame of reference" (Schneider).

Even though most faculty and many students at the University seem to acknowledge, at least on a theoretical level, the necessary and interconnected roles of general education and the major, there may be nevertheless a continuing perception that what we call general education is somehow "opposed to" or "less essential to" the education that happens in the major. For a robust and exciting general education program to succeed at K-State, this sense of conflict (that general education does not happen in the major or that general education is a distraction or detraction from work in the major) probably needs to be transformed into a more constructive understanding of how the two complement each other and how they are, in fact, necessary to and inseparable from one another.

In some instances, colleges and departments might want to acknowledge the ways in which their upper-level courses for majors include significant, higher-level general education objectives and outcomes. Colleges and departments might also identify with clarity and specificity the kinds of general education that they feel their students are most often missing in their current programs of study.

By identifying both the strengths and weaknesses in the current general education of students on a degree-program by degree-program basis, colleges and departments will be better equipped to help shape and guide the general education reform process at K-State. Such reform would, of course, benefit enormously from the constructive feedback of the various units. And we will all be better prepared to advise students and to help them see how and why all of their coursework connects and matters.

Leadership

We recommend that the university consider the creation of a Dean of Undergraduate Studies, someone who would lead and administer several common university undergraduate programs such as general education, a first-year experience, a sophomore-year experience, and so on.

The reforms proposed in Section 3 will require a significant amount of coordination, recruitment of faculty to teach the courses, leadership, training, and vision. Someone must be in charge of the program, someone who is not already overwhelmed with administrative responsibilities or other university responsibilities. Thus it would not be wise to give the direct oversight of the program to any already busy administrator, or to a full-time faculty member who would simply be the head of an oversight committee, or simply to staff.

Instead, we imagine that the leadership needed for such a program would have to come from a member of the faculty for whom the care and enhancement of the program would be the primary responsibility.

Due to the scope and inter-disciplinary nature of general education, we recommend that K-State consider the creation of a Dean of Undergraduate Studies (equivalent to Dean of Graduate Studies). The appointment should be at 100% and not part-time or in addition to other duties. Responsibilities could include oversight for general education, honors program, first year experience, second year experience and other inter-disciplinary programs. A position of Director

of Undergraduate Studies or Director of General Education might be acceptable but, in the Task Force's view, much less desirable.

Teaching Loads and Resources

The Task Force recommends that the teaching of the first-year seminars, as well as all other general education courses, become part of a participating faculty member's usual course load.

It seems unlikely that faculty will participate enthusiastically or in large numbers if the teaching of these seminars is done on an overload basis. Likewise, we imagine significant political problems if the responsibility for assigning these courses is simply shifted to department heads without significant additional resources. Departments should be compensated with additional faculty to ensure that existing courses can continue to be taught in addition to First-Year Experience seminars.

Teaching general education should be part of a participating faculty member's usual course load; keeping in mind that the faculty must not be assigned a larger than normal teaching load. We realize that shifting a significant number of faculty members from around campus into teaching small, first-year and second-year courses would create resource challenges, especially if these courses are integrated into the regular teaching schedules of full-time faculty members and not simply taught as an overload. Indeed, even though many faculty members already teach general education courses of various sizes, the university will need to hire additional faculty members to meet the needs created by these smaller sections.

We recommend that Kansas State University ensure that departments are provided with the resources to support general education without detracting from their existing courses or programs.

Kansas State University must be willing to commit resources to general education in order for it to succeed. It cannot be an unfunded mandate that will cannibalize resources from colleges and departments, particularly for academic programs that continue to grow and have their own increasing faculty and facility resource needs.

We recommend that resources be provided to fund the necessary positions and to support and house the office of a Dean of Undergraduate Education.

The positions of Dean of Undergraduate Education and support staff will need to be filled. Office spaces must be found and the office established for a functioning program to work.

Other Considerations Prior to Implementation

The Task Force also identified the following items as crucial factors that must be addressed prior to the implementation of the program.

- The next task force must work with the academic colleges, the Inter-College Coordination Panel, and Honors Program to ensure that general education is streamlined into all academic programs and not as an additional credit hour requirement for them.
- Students must be involved from implementation through the determination of their educational plans. Students must have a sense of ownership of their education, so that they don't believe it is something they receive from the university, but something they learn and use throughout their lives.
- The entire K-State community of faculty, administrators and staff must be educated about the goals and objectives of the new general education program to understand how it differs from the current UGE program; how many existing courses in their academic programs will fit (or could fit); and how the new program might positively affect student learning and retention.
- The general education program must encourage ownership from all colleges and academic departments. Historically, Arts and Sciences has been perceived as "owning" general education courses. However, Art and Sciences expressed no desire to be the sole owner of general education. In the same respect, other colleges have expressed a desire to be full partners in general education, both to ensure that their students receive a truly general education and because they see a value their programs could have for students from other colleges.
- Coordination with community colleges and other feeder institutions must be planned jointly and must be seamless so that transfer students are not burdened with two sets of general education requirements. Acceptance of transfer credits as a part of the student's individual general education plan is essential.
- Finally, in a more specific and detailed way, the University needs to consider how to include co-curricular activities into the general education plan—activities such as community engagement, study abroad, internships, and other similar educational pursuits.

Selected Works Cited and Consulted

Books, Articles, Handouts, and Talks

Bok, Derek. *Our Underachieving Colleges: A Candid Look at How Much Students Learn and Why They Should Be Learning More*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006.

College Learning for the New Global Century: A Report from the National Leadership Council for Liberal Education and America's Promise. Washington, D.C.: AAC&U, 2007.

Ferren, Ann S. and Rick Slavings. *Investing in Quality: Tools for Improving Curricular Efficiency*. Washington, D.C.: AAC&U, 2000.

Ferren, Ann S. and Ashby Kinch. "The Dollars and Sense Behind General Education Reform." *Peer Review* (Summer 2003): 8-11.

Gaff, Jerry G. "Avoiding the Potholes: Strategies for Reforming General Education." *Educational Record* 50 (1980): 50-59.

---. "Handout on General Education Trends." AAC&U Institute on General Education. Washington, D.C. 11 June 2006.

Information Literacy Competency Standard for Higher Education. Chicago: American Library Association, 2000.

Lemons, L. J. and Dr. R. Richmond. "A Developmental Perspective Of Sophomore Slump." *NASPA Journal* 24.3 (1987): 15-19.

Leskes, Andrea and Ross Miller. *Purposeful Pathways: Helping Students Achieve Key Student Learning Outcomes*. Washington, D.C.: AAC&U, 2006.

Lipka, Sara. "After The Freshman Bubble Pops. *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, 8 September 2006.

Peter D. Hart Research Associates, Inc. "How Should Colleges Prepare Students to Succeed in Today's Global Economy? Washington, D.C.: Peter D. Hart Research Associates, Inc, 2006.

Rodgers, Lawrence et al. "K-State First-Year Experience Task Force Report." 9 February 2007.

Schneider, Carol Geary. "Helping Students Connect: General Education, Liberal Education, and Greater Expectations." AAC&U Institute on General Education. Washington, D.C. 10 June 2006.

Small, Cathy, "My Year as a Freshman: Connections to the Path Ahead." *Phi Kappa Phi Forum* 87 (2007): 3-7.

Vance, Erik, "Colleges Should Teach Broader Skills to Prepare Students for Work Force, Report Says." *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, 11 Jan 2007.

Wallace, David Foster. "Commencement Address." Kenyon College, 21 May 2005.

Websites, Reports, and Monographs Available Online

Greater Expectations: A New Vision for Learning as a Nation Goes to College.
<http://www.greaterexpectations.org/>

Integrative Learning: Mapping the Terrain.
<http://carnegiefoundation.org/dynamic/publications/mapping-terrain.pdf>

"Integrative Learning: Putting the Pieces Together Again."
<http://www.carnegiefoundation.org/perspectives/>

Our Students' Best Work: A Framework for Accountability Worthy of Our Mission.
<http://www.aacu.org/publications/pdfs/StudentsBestReport.pdf>

Liberal Education Outcomes: A Preliminary Report on Student Achievement in College.
http://www.aacu.org/advocacy/pdfs/LEAP_Report_FINAL.pdf

"Report of the Task Force on General Education" (Harvard University).
http://www.fas.harvard.edu/~secfas/General_Education_Final_Report.pdf

Students in the Balance: General Education in the Research University.
<http://www.psu.edu/dus/StudentsintheBalance.pdf>

"Final Report" (MIT Task Force on the Undergraduate Educational Commons).
http://web.mit.edu/committees/edcommons/documents/task_force_report.html

UCLA General Education
<http://www.college.ucla.edu/ge/main.htm>

Appendices

- A. Report on the AAC&U Institute on General Education (June 2006)
- B. AAC&U General Education Conference Report (March 2006)
- C. Report on the Transforming the Culture: Undergraduate Education and the Multiple Functions of the Research University conference (November 2006)
- D. Sample Search Form for Proposed Searchable Course Database
- E. Progress Charts: Building a Foundation for Breadth: An Individual Student Example
- F. First-Year Seminars: Considerations
- G. Big Twelve Longitudinal Retention Survey

APPENDIX A. Report on the AAC&U Institute on General Education (June 2006)

Kansas State University Educational Reform as Prairie Fire

"Fire has always been a partner with healthy prairies. During each burn, non-native plants are removed, allowing prairie plants more nutrients and room to grow. Prairie plants can survive fires since they have deep roots and grow from a point underground. A prescribed burn is a crucial component in prairie restoration."

From *Prairie Restoration: Fire and Prairie Partnerships*

At the AAC&U Institute on General Education, the team from Kansas State University has come to realize that much of our current approach to general education is both appropriate to our university mission and aligned with the national conversations on liberal education. We have learned that the strongest elements of K-State's current general education experience are 1) the clarity and appropriateness of our university student learning outcomes for all degree programs and 2) an emphasis on effective pedagogy – active learning, experiential context, and opportunity for students to make connections across knowledge. We intend to retain these strengths.

Nevertheless, K-State continues to face key challenges in the delivery of liberal education. Some of these include a current system (UGE) that is perceived as having a confusing design, faculty criticism about the UGE system, a lack of upper-division courses to satisfy Faculty Senate mandated UGE requirements, and a lack of assessment of general education learning outcomes. There is also concern on the part of many stakeholders (faculty, employers, and students) that students may graduate from our institution with less liberal learning than our institution proclaims they will have. We don't know whether this is real or not, but investigating the issue will be critical to the reforms we make at Kansas State University.

We are beginning to envision students' liberal education embedded as a seamless component in the total undergraduate educational experience and not designed as a separate, stand-alone curriculum. Our consensus is that some components that would make sense for educational reform at K-State are the following:

- a meaningful, common first-year experience for all undergraduates (freshmen and transfer students),
- a culminating capstone experience in each degree program, and
- an approach to liberal education that will be the result of each degree program intentionally designing the curriculum to focus on the existing university learning outcomes.

We acknowledge the critical benefit of ongoing assessment programs to provide feedback for students and faculty members and to provide accountability data at the program and institutional levels. To that end we would likely propose student learning assessments as the responsibility of those teaching the courses, program assessments as the responsibility of the faculty planning the degree curricula, and university-wide assessment efforts led by the Office of Assessment and the Center for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning that will ideally occur following the first-year experience, mid-way during the undergraduate experience, and following the capstone experience. What form these assessments will take is not yet clear ... and we are okay with that for now.

When we return to our campus we have our work cut out for us to share the knowledge, insights, and expertise we have gained at the Institute. And we do not intend to do this alone! We are a subset of the General Education Task Force. Our first action will probably be to bring our Task Force colleagues on board with us.

Next we need to begin the process of conversations with our provost, academic deans, department heads, and faculty leaders. After talking with key leaders on campus, we do want to expand the conversation out among all faculty colleagues who are interested and willing to participate in the discussions and decisions. Eventually, we would like to engage the entire university community, including students, in this conversation.

As a final comment, we will always remember that – like the prairie fires of today – this must be a controlled effort. We must move slowly and carefully, always cognizant of our intent to preserve the strengths of what we now have and to restore our educational program through collaborative efforts that focus on learning.

Submitted by: Vicki Clegg, Greg Eiselein, Les Hannah, Melody Lehew, and Cia Verschelden

APPENDIX B. AAC&U General Education Conference Report (March 2006)

APPENDIX C. Report on the Transforming the Culture: Undergraduate Education and the Multiple Functions of the Research University conference (November 2006)

Reinvention Center
Transforming the Culture: Undergraduate Education and the Multiple Functions of the Research University
 November 9-10, Washington, DC

Sara K. Kearns, Conference Report (skearns@ksu.edu, 532-7446).

CASE STUDIES

University of California Berkeley: received grants from the Mellon Foundation to fund Mellon Library Faculty Fellowships for Undergraduate Research (Mellon Fellows) program (<http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/mellon/index.html>.)

Mellon Fellows are selected annually based on applications requiring them to submit proposals to redesign or develop undergraduate courses with an emphasis on research, including incorporation of library resources. Fellows participate in a two-week, intensive seminar during which they develop pedagogies. Throughout the rest of the year, they work in teams that include "librarians, instructional technology experts, pedagogy experts, and other academic support units" (http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/mellon/publicity/2005_mellon_factsheet.pdf, p. 2).

Also, throughout the year, Fellows are active in listservs, attend "Salons" and one significant outcome is that, while up to only 14 faculty/lecturers are accepted per year (<http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/mellon/institute/instituteintro.html>), the pedagogies and approaches to undergraduate education learned by the Fellows has spread to become a part of the Berkeley culture.

All Fellows receive stipends and can apply for additional stipends to support their redesigned courses.

According to the applications, faculty working with high enrollment, undergraduate courses receive preference in the program.

Relevance to General Education at K-State:

Class size—we've been concerned about First Year experience classes and the logistics of having enough excellent faculty to work with 4000 students. Berkeley demonstrates that, with financial and academic services support, it is possible to design large courses that still meet our pedagogical concerns.

University of Virginia: Edward Ayers and the Southern History Database

(<http://www.vcdh.virginia.edu/SHD/>)

Questions:

- How to bring the value of a seminar class to a large class?
- How do you involve library resources into a large (180 student) class? (Library—special collections/manuscripts, "Like a lab sitting there being unused.")
- What can technologies do? What efficiencies can technologies bring?
- How can students be held accountable?
- How to eliminate the energy and time sink of research papers?

Answer:

Edward Ayers teaches a history course, The Rise and Fall of the Slave South, which is open to majors and non-majors. Ayers divided the 19th century into 6 month periods and assigned each student a time period. They were required to search for events that may have been overlooked by history books, but still informative about the history of the period. The class lectures provided the framework. The students wrote 1 ½ page papers on each event. These papers were read and evaluated by Ayers and/or GTAs (three were assigned to the class). Those papers receiving a C or above were included in a searchable database of the south, The Southern History Database. This project is being taken to a nationwide level with five other institutions developing regional history databases.

The project required extraordinary participation and time from Ayers, the GTA's, librarians and technology departments.

Relevance to General Education at K-State:

Another example of innovative pedagogy that incorporates critical thinking and research skills in a large class. UVA also has an online course catalog that may be useful:

http://www.virginia.edu/history/courses/course_list.php (specifically history) or
<http://etg08.its.virginia.edu/cod/pages/20071/cod.html> (UVA's.)

UNC Chapel Hill: General College

All undergraduates at UNC Chapel Hill spend first two years in the General College to ensure that all students have a solid general education. Chapel Hill recently revised their general education curriculum (<http://www.unc.edu/depts/uc/>) in response to dissatisfaction and perception by students that the general education was disconnected (<http://www.unc.edu/depts/uc/06implementation.html>.) UNC had an existing First Year Seminars, Summer Reading program and an office of Undergraduate Research.

According to the description of the new curriculum, the General Education requirements that apply to all UNC undergraduates can be outlined as follows:

- Foundations: the skills needed to communicate effectively both in English and another language; to apply quantitative reasoning skills in context; and to develop habits that will lead to a healthy life.

- Approaches: a broad experience with the methods and results of the most widely employed approaches to knowledge.
- Connections: a sense of how to integrate foundational skills and disciplinary perspectives in ways that encourage linkages between discrete areas of knowledge, on the one hand, and differing geographic, social, conceptual, and practical contexts (local, national, global, academic, professional), on the other hand. (<http://www.unc.edu/depts/uc/06description.html>)

UNC Chapel Hill will be assessing the program by "enticing" 400 students to create learning portfolios reflecting their undergraduate years at UNC Chapel Hill and two years post-graduation.

Relevance to General Education: UNC Chapel Hill's General Education program is very large and structured. However, we may be able to incorporate some into our program such as the First Year Seminars (<http://www.unc.edu/depts/fys/index.html>) and their proposed assessment.

Georgia Tech

Georgia Tech has redefined itself in a plan to produce the engineers and professionals of the future. They did so in response to several things, including a very low retention rate.

Georgia Tech's Strategic Plan <http://www.gatech.edu/president/strategic-plan.html>

"Successful universities of the future will be defined by their ability to build learning and research communities that are multidisciplinary, multi-institutional, and that emphasize lifelong learning. They will extend the involvement of their graduates with the university throughout their lifetimes. These institutions will cross their own traditional boundaries as well as those among industry, government, and academia throughout the world."

The multi-disciplinary approach is strongly emphasized at all levels. Engineers are encouraged to take music and art classes to enhance creativity and to provide artistic outlets. A new major, the M.S. in Music Technology has been created (2006 Georgia Tech "State of the Institute" <http://www.gatech.edu/president/soi/index.php>.)

Faculty are encouraged and supported to collaborate outside of their departments with the theory that, "Since research in the future will assume the ability to interact across traditional disciplinary boundaries," (Georgia Tech's Strategic Plan <http://www.gatech.edu/president/strategic-plan.html>, "Goal 3: An Enhanced Research Enterprise").

Georgia Tech is including building design in their efforts to support cross-disciplinary interactions: breakout spaces where students and/or faculty can meet or continue class discussions are incorporated into classroom buildings.

A recent survey of graduates who are five years out of Georgia Tech reveals that, for the first time, students believe that experiences at Georgia Tech affected their careers.

Relevance to General Education at K-State:

Georgia Tech's experience provides evidence that even historically structured programs can integrate a broader education and thrive.

General Themes and Trends:

Many universities were represented by or had deans or vice-provosts of undergraduate programs and/or directors of undergraduate research.

Many of the most successful projects detailed relied heavily on the libraries. The collections were incorporated into research projects, librarians became involved in planning courses to optimize use of the collections and understanding the library research process, and even the buildings became part of cross-disciplinary interactions through the development of flexible and collaborative learning spaces.

Technology and technology support at all levels is integral – classroom technology, learning technologies, storage space, and collaborative technologies.

Teaching enhances research.

APPENDIX D. Sample Search Form for Proposed Searchable Course Database

The searchable course database should comprise the traditional course information offered in the Undergraduate Catalog at Kansas State University – course number, course title, credit hours, semesters offered, course description (perhaps including designated keywords), delivery structure, prerequisites.

Within such a database, K-State courses could be tagged according to the ways in which they would help students meet the general education goal for building a foundation for breadth. It would also be necessary to link the course database with the current semester course schedule so that students could identify specific sections that would fit in their programs of study for a given semester. An example of such a search form is provided below.

K-State Course Search: Fall 2007

Search Options

☒ Classes With Available Seats
 ☐ All Classes

Session:

Subject:

Catalog:

Units:

Title (search by key words):

Days: ☐ M ☐ T ☐ W ☐ TH ☐ F ☐ S ☐ SU
☐ ALL

Start Time:

Location:

Instructor: Last Name First Name

Gen Ed & Core Requirements:

Other Course Attributes:

Sort Options

☒ Subject, Catalog #,
Section
 ☐ Title
 ☐ Location
 ☐ Meeting Time

Session:

- Full semester
- 8-week
- Intersession

Subject:

- All
- [list by department/program]

Gen Ed & Core Requirements:

- GE Aesthetic Experience and Interpretive Understanding
- GE Empirical and Quantitative Reasoning
- GE Ethical Reasoning and Social Engagement/Responsibility
- GE The Global Community
- GE Human Diversity in the U.S.
- GE The Individual within Social Systems
- GE The Natural and Physical World
- GE The Past and the Future
- CR Expository Writing 1
- CR Expository Writing 2
- CR Speech

Other Course Attributes:

- Honors
- Online
- Engagement Learning
- Interdisciplinary

With a searchable course database, students and advisors could design individual programs of study to ensure the breadth of knowledge and the development of critical thinking and communication skills. For instance, *BIOL 198 Principles of Biology* might be tagged as "The

Natural and Physical World." Thus a student needing a course in that area of breadth would know that *BIOL 198* could be an option. If a student needed a course in "The Global Community," then the relevant tag for *WOMST 380 Women and Global Social Change* would indicate that course as an option.

In certain cases, a course might be assigned two tags. *ENGL 385 American Ethnic Literature* might be tagged as "Aesthetic Experience and Interpretive Understanding" and as "Human Diversity in the U.S." In such an instance, students could use the course to count toward just one of the two areas. Some students might use it as an "Aesthetic" course; others as a "Diversity" course. In no instance would one course satisfy the expectations for two areas, though the process of tagging would permit students to know about the broader scope of the course.

No courses would have more than two general education tags. The tags would be the same for all sections of a course regardless of the instructor. Although the majority of K-State courses could be designated with one of these eight general education tags, it is not expected that all courses would necessarily be tagged. Departments would assign tags, with oversight by Faculty Senate and an administrator, a Dean of Undergraduate Studies, for example, charged to oversee undergraduate education.

Departments would be encouraged to tag all appropriate courses as a way to provide their own majors with general education credit for courses within the major and as a way to identify appropriate general education courses for non-majors. To prevent non-majors from taking tagged courses designed for majors or advanced students, Departments would use the usual course management strategies such as prerequisites and course enrollment caps. To direct non-majors to the most appropriate courses, the ones most clearly designed with non-majors in mind, the course database would also allow programs to highlight the courses that might be most appropriate to non-majors looking for general education courses. Using input from the various units and oversight from an administrator charged to oversee undergraduate education, the database would generate a quick list of highly recommended general education classes for each of the eight areas.

Having such a searchable, descriptive course database would allow students to track progress toward the university-wide general education goals and could also help students track progress within the major. One example of such a cumulative tracking process is provided in Appendix D. If all courses were tagged appropriately, the database and the tracking system would serve as the foundation for the development of flexible curriculum maps for individual students. Such tools (a searchable course database and the development of curriculum maps) would enable students and advisors to design programs of study that ensure that every student has met K-State's basic skills and university-wide general education goals.

APPENDIX E. Progress Charts: Building a Foundation for Breadth

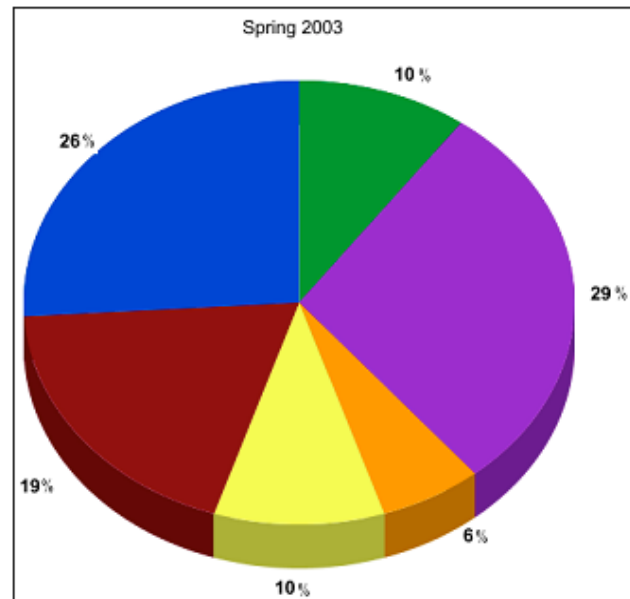
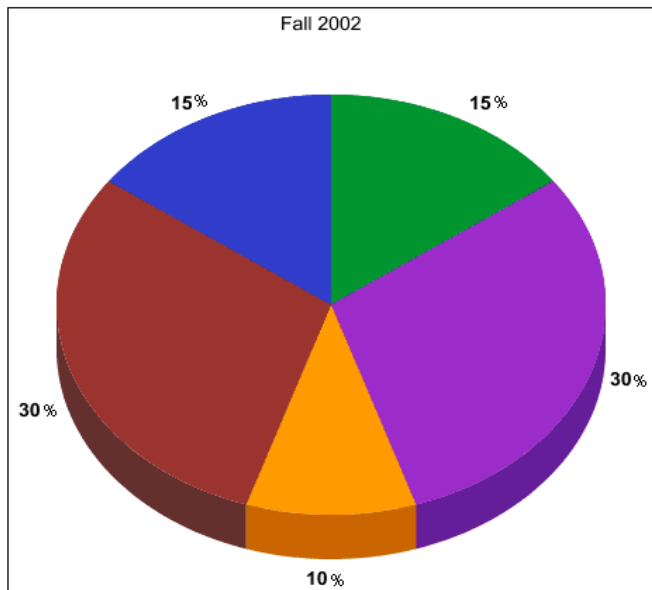
An Individual Student Example

Color representations:

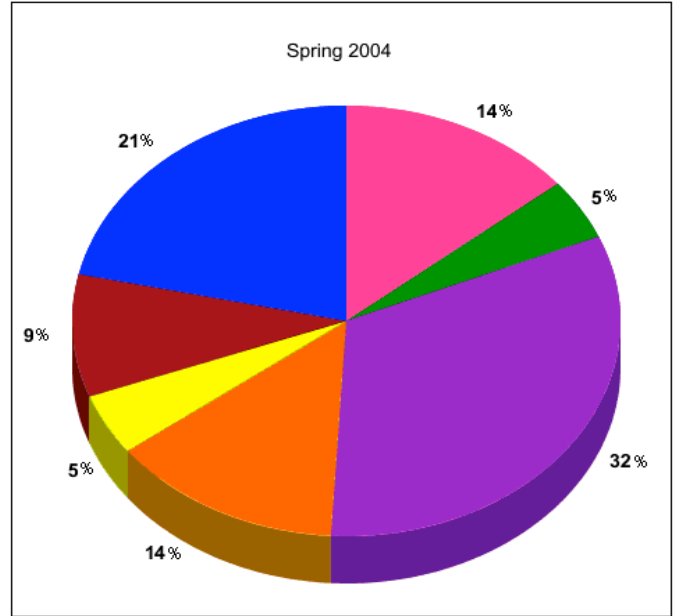
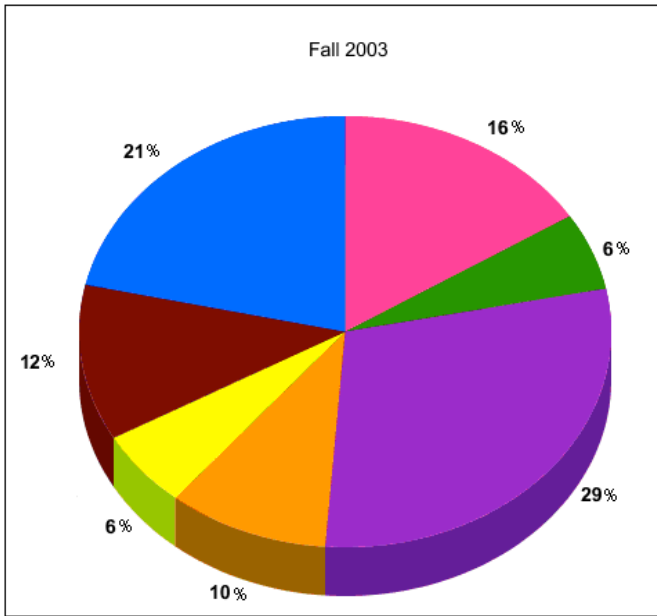
- 0. UNTAGGED
- 1. AEIU
- 2. EQR
- 3. ERSER
- 4. GC
- 5. HDUS
- 6. ISS
- 7. NPW
- 8. PF

Progress Charts: Cumulative by Semester:

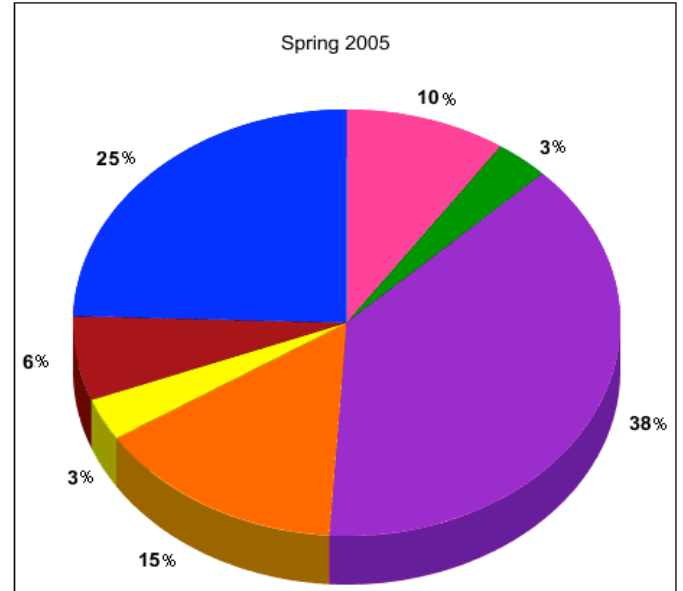
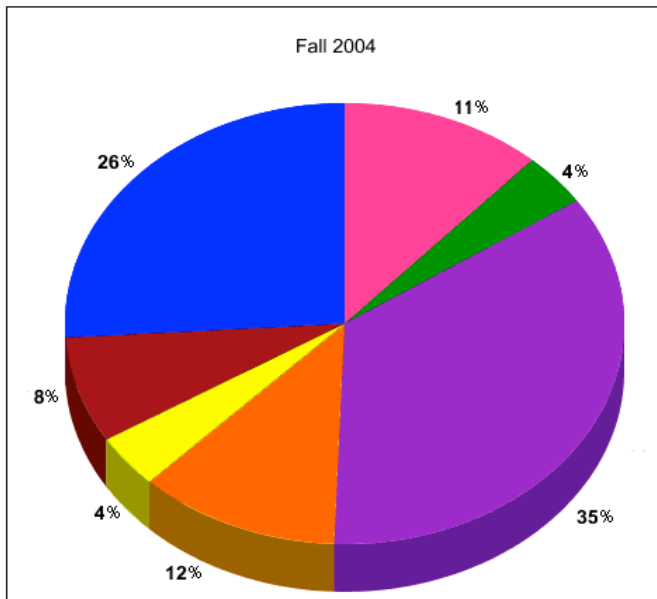
Year 1



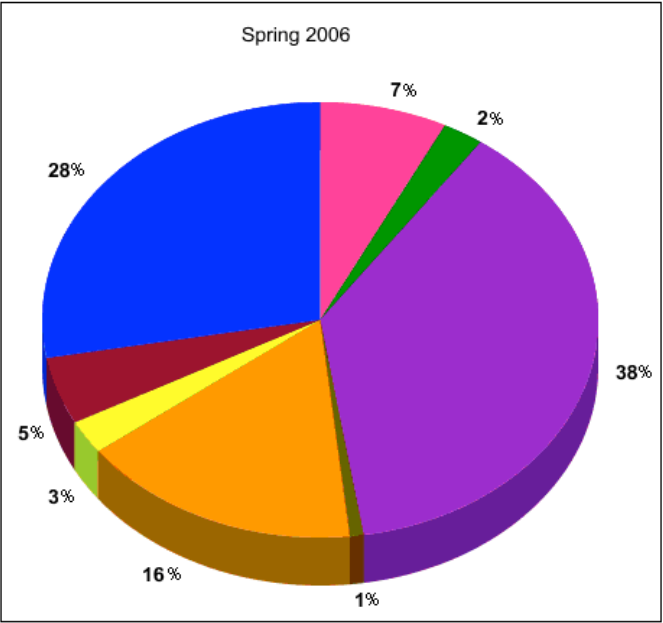
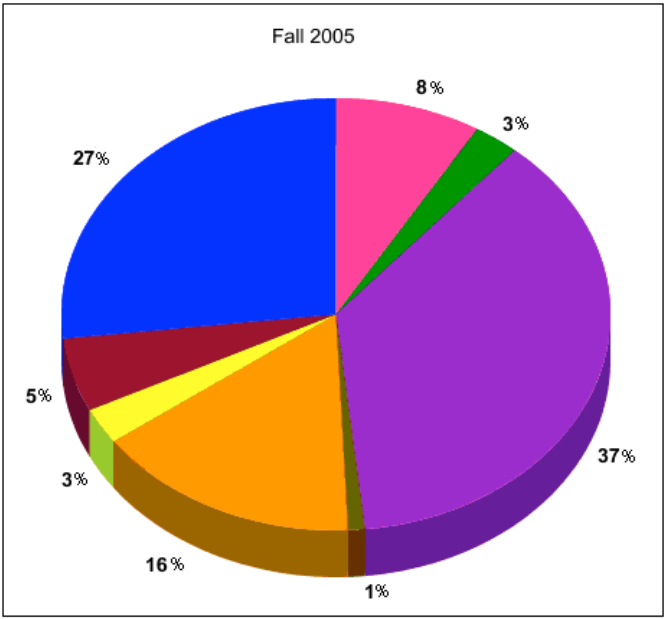
Year 2



Year 3



Year 4



APPENDIX F. First-Year Seminars: Considerations (May 2007)

First-Year Seminars: Considerations

Vicki Clegg 5-14-07

Approximate numbers based on F2005 and F2006 data [may not have included Salina??]

- ~3300 first-time, first-year freshmen (includes college credits earned in high school)
- ~ 500 freshmen transfers
- ~ 550 sophomore transfers
- ~ 500 junior transfers
- ~ 250 senior transfers

3800 freshmen:

<u>N / seminar size</u>
3800 / 20 = 190 classes
3800 / 25 = 152 classes
3800 / 30 = 127 classes

4300 Fresh and Soph:

<u>N / seminar size</u>
4300 / 20 = 215 classes
4300 / 25 = 172 classes
4300 / 30 = 144 classes

5000 first year students:

<u>N / seminar size</u>
5000 / 20 = 250 classes
5000 / 25 = 200 classes
5000 / 30 = 167 classes

One Plan: Hire full-time instructors to teach all first-year seminars (only freshmen)

<u>Seminars / load</u>	<u>Seminars / load</u>
190 / 4 = 48 instructors	190 / 5 = 38 instructors
152 / 4 = 38 instructors	152 / 5 = 31 instructors
127 / 4 = 32 instructors	127 / 5 = 26 instructors

Costs: 9 months @ \$30K = \$780,000 - \$1,440,000
 [+ benefits, +office space]

Another Plan: Have *tenured* faculty members teach the seminars (only freshmen). This work assignment must be acknowledged and rewarded as part of the "normal" teaching load for each faculty member – not as an overload. Not likely that any faculty member would teach more than 2 of the seminars in a semester; more likely to be 1 seminar per semester or 1 seminar per year.

K-State has about 500 tenured teaching faculty in the eight undergraduate colleges:
 AG – 37, APD – 40, A&S – 250, BA – 20, ED – 34, ENG – 71, HE – 28, AandT - 20

<u>1 seminar per year</u>	<u>1 seminar per semester</u>	<u>2 seminars per semester</u>
380 (76%)	190 (38%)	95 (19%)
304 (61%)	152 (30%)	76 (15%)
254 (51%)	127 (25%)	64 (13%)

Costs: Current teaching or other assignments would have to be covered by other personnel in the department.

Yet Another Plan: Begin with just one first-year seminar requirement for all freshmen. Half could enroll during the fall and half during the spring, which would ease the classroom and teacher resource issue. See numbers at right below.

3800 freshmen:

N / seminar size
 3800 / 20 = 190 classes
 3800 / 25 = 152 classes
 3800 / 30 = 127 classes

1900 freshmen:

N / seminar size
 1900 / 20 = 95 classes
 1900 / 25 = 76 classes
 1900 / 30 = 64 classes

The objectives of the required seminar would be:

- To familiarize students with the eight areas of emphasis for building a foundation for breadth of knowledge and
- To incorporate activities that will begin to enhance students' intellectual skills of communication and critical thinking.

Lectures (fully supported with appropriate media) on each of the eight areas could be presented by selected (8-16) faculty members in McCain Auditorium, with focused, interactive seminar discussions to follow in smaller class sizes. A general template for all seminar activities could be designed. The assessment strategies could be the same for all seminars. But each teacher or each teaching cohort (see below) would have the freedom to plan instructional activities appropriate to the interests and abilities of their 20 students.

Numbers below based on 95 classes of 20 freshmen; seminars taught by faculty members (F), graduate students (G), and undergraduate students (UG) in collaborative cohorts

F	G	UG	Cohorts	.
10	20	65	1F / 2G / 6-7 UG	[9-10]
10	30	55	1F / 3G / 5-6 UG	[9-10]
15	30	50	1F / 2G / 3-4 UG	[6- 7]
20	20	55	1F / 1G / 2-3 UG	[4- 5]
20	40	35	1F / 2G / 1-2 UG	[4- 5]
30	15	45	1F / 0-1G / 1-2 UG	[3- 4]
30	30	35	1F / 1G / 1-2 UG	[3- 4]

Again, **faculty members' work** must be rewarded as part of their normal assignment – not as an overload. In this plan, the faculty members would not only teach one of the seminars, they would supervise a cohort of graduate students and perhaps undergraduate students who also would teach the seminars.

Graduate students would be selected from those working toward a formal teaching certificate program offered through the Graduate School. [Note: No such program currently exists.] They would *not* be paid but would earn credit toward the certificate and would not have to pay for the credits earned for this experience.

Undergraduates would be selected by faculty and would earn credit toward their own general education requirements by enrolling in a "free" 3-credit hour class, i.e., they would not pay the tuition for the class. Perhaps the class would be credit/no credit rather than graded. There might also be some kind of "certification" noted for the undergraduates as well. [Resumé builder]

A program like this would be **directed and coordinated and sustained by the person "in charge" of general education or undergraduate studies** at Kansas State University.

APPENDIX G. Big Twelve Longitudinal Retention Survey (2006)

BIG TWELVE LONGITUDINAL RETENTION SURVEY											
Institution: Kansas State University											
First-Time Freshmen: <u>Total</u>		-Includes part-time: Yes _____ No <u>X</u> If Yes, % part-time: _____									
GROUP: <u>University</u>											
-----Retention Rate (%)-----											
Fall	First-Time Freshmen	No. Tested	ACT Comp.	Beginning of Second Year	Beginning of Third Year	Beginning of Fifth Year Graduated	Beginning of Fifth Year Continued	Beginning of Sixth Year Graduated	Beginning of Sixth Year Continued	Beginning of Seventh Year Graduated	Beginning of Seventh Year Continued
1996	2670	2500	23.4	77.19	67.87 ¹	22.10	39.96	49.48	10.71	55.36	4.14
1997	2906	2736	23.7	78.46	68.62 ²	22.13	40.26	50.28	11.15	56.47	4.09
1998	3092	2914	23.8	78.56	70.21 ³	24.42	41.17	52.85	10.54	59.25	3.69
1999	3280	3034	23.5	75.15	66.65 ⁴	22.04	39.97	49.05	11.34	55.73	4.12
2000	3399	3183	23.3	79.32	71.08 ⁵	24.39	40.75	52.43	10.83	58.99	4.12
2001	3358	3087	23.6	79.30	70.40 ⁶	24.90	39.34	51.91	10.42		
2002	3338	3055	23.5	78.97	70.43 ⁷	24.84	39.25				
2003	3271	2991	23.8	80.46	72.09 ⁸						
2004	3282	2953	23.7	80.96 ⁹	72.00 ¹⁰						
2005	3105	2748	23.7	79.03 ¹¹							
2006	3140	2806	23.7								

¹contains 14 graduations, .52%²contains 16 graduations, .55%³contains 22 graduations, .71%⁴contains 13 graduations, .40%⁵contains 10 graduations, .29%⁶contains 11 graduations, .33%⁷contains 8 graduations, .24%⁸contains 7 graduations, .21%⁹contains 1 graduations, .03%¹⁰contains 6 graduations, .18%¹¹contains 2 graduations, .06%

242907.52 217098.596 75506.64 127297.64 163412.2 32589.68 183201 11409.48

246492 218625.12 72291.2 131101.6 160884 37195.2 182794.4 13513.6

269608.68 241617.915 82901.61 138509.25 178209.57 36811.17 200507.01 14003.88

266289.4 236423.348 83614.2 132103.72 174313.78 34990.36 0 0

263601.86 235118.706 82915.92 131016.5 0 0 0 0

263184.66 235832.558 0 0 0 0 0 0

265740.258 236307.282 0 0 0 0 0 0

78.96717541 70.41805061 17.25584579 28.67196829 29.40137055 6.150582537 24.60914031 1.691006082

24.12276492 40.08190381 51.55149288 10.78424937