To provide high quality programs that meet the evolving needs of our students, community, and region, we will develop a coherent and integrated general education program.

Mission, Goals & Strategies

General Education is central to a university education, and should enhance students’ awareness of themselves in a complex universe, drawing upon multiple points of view. As a result of general education experience, students should acquire knowledge of diverse disciplinary and cultural perspectives and skill in comparing, contrasting, applying, and communicating effectively these perspectives in tasks considered appropriate to particular courses.

GE Moratorium
The Academic Senate granted the General Education (GE) Committee a one year moratorium starting Spring 2008. Simultaneously, the GE Committee was asked to complete a Program Performance Review. While the Committee has been active (and completed a review of all GE courses in 2007), the last major review of the GE program was in the mid 1990s.

Campus Survey (May 2008)
To begin the review process, the GE Committee reviewed the SWOT analysis conducted in 1996 and completed another SWOT analysis. From the items identified, and with the assistance of Dolores Vura, Assistant Vice President, Institutional Research and Analytical Studies, the Committee created an electronic survey addressing major areas of interest and concerns. Response rates to the survey were as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Response Rate</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td>5,868</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full-time faculty</td>
<td>560</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part-time faculty</td>
<td>357</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrators and staff</td>
<td>470</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total respondents</td>
<td>7,255</td>
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Of the students, the response rate from the various colleges ranged from 15.9% to 19.8% thus indicating a healthy distribution across the colleges. This is based on the total population, not a sample.

The survey asked respondents to rate how well the campus is doing in particular areas and to agree or disagree on statements about the GE program. The survey consisted of 23 items in four categories (GE Advising and Registration, GE Requirements, Understanding GE, and GE Teaching and Learning) that asked for a response of how well the campus is doing in a particular area (very well, somewhat well, not well, no opinion/don’t know) and to what extent it should be a priority for the GE review (high priority, medium priority, low priority, no opinion/don’t know). Another group of eight questions asked respondents to indicate if they strongly agreed, agreed, disagreed, strongly disagreed or had no opinion/don’t know. Additionally, hundreds of respondents provided comments.
Survey Results
The survey data will soon be available on the new GE Committee website.

The survey indicates that the campus is doing well in the following GE categories:
(Based on respondents stating that the campus is doing “Very Well” or “Somewhat Well” in a GE area. Respondents stating “Don’t Know/No opinion” were excluded.)

GE Advising and Registration

88% of students stated that they have access to quality GE advising.
87% of students think that the on-line TDA is an effective advising tool.
84% of students think that a sufficient number of GE courses are offered in each category.

GE Requirements

89% of students stated that GE requirements are clear and easy to interpret.

Understanding GE

87% of students think that the learning goals of each GE category are clear.
85% of students think that the purpose of GE is clearly defined.
78% of students think that the GE program provides a valuable complement to the major.

Areas demonstrating a need for improvement include:
(Based on respondents stating that the campus is doing “Very Well” or “Somewhat Well” in a GE area. Respondents stating “Don’t Know/No opinion” were excluded.)

GE Advising and Registration

43% of full-time faculty stated that they are not able to advise students easily about GE requirements.

Understanding GE

Almost one-third of students do not think that the academic purpose of the 9-unit upper division GE requirement is clear.

GE Teaching and Learning

Almost one-third of full-time faculty do not think that we’re doing a good job assessing student learning to improve the GE program.
Almost one-third of students do not value the GE program as part of their educational experience.
More than one-third of FT faculty, and more than one-quarter of PT faculty, do not think that the university and their departments promote and reward quality teaching in the GE program.
37% of FT faculty and 24% of PT faculty do not think that they have good access to professional development related to the GE program.
On the scaled items that ranged from strongly agree to strongly disagree:
(Based on all responses):

89% of students stated that the GE program provides them with a well-rounded education.
91% of students, 82% of FT faculty, and 84% of PT faculty agree that CSUF GE categories should match CSU/State GE categories.
74% of students stated that the GE program helps students choose a major.
90% of students think that an important function of the GE program is to introduce them to different fields of study.
91% of students, 78% of FT faculty, and 96% of PT faculty agree that having about 500 GE courses is a strength of the GE program.

Comments

While the survey collected many positive comments about the GE program, many respondents expressed concerns. Some representative comments highlighting areas of concern are presented below.

Students

Students had particular insight into the GE program. Some students felt that their GE experience was meaningful. Others commented that they should be allowed to take GE courses in their own major, and GE requirements interfered with their major requirements. Yet others wanted a richer quality of courses and helpful advisement.

“There needs to be more freedom of GE requirements within a major. If a student knows what major as a freshman, taking the GE outside their major can discourage them and not keep enthusiasm up for their completion of their major.”

“I do not agree with General Education. I don't believe I should have to retake a bunch of classes I already took and passed in high school. It interferes with my major to be forced to take classes that have nothing to do with it.”

“GE courses should focus on the quality of the class and not necessarily providing as many classes as possible. Too many courses provide students a way to find the "easy class" and therefore don't get much out of it.”

“Counselors, teachers, advisers, staff, and other faculty should be able to identify, explain, and help students with GE requirement specifications.”

Faculty

Faculty also had insights regarding GE. Although some were clearly unfamiliar with the content of GE, others had more specific comments as to the use of themes and the overall purpose of GE.
“I am only vaguely familiar with the GE program. Perhaps there should be an orientation for faculty when they are newly hired.”

“It can be very difficult for faculty to advise students on GE course requirements, the requirements are usually not very clear.”

“Our GE program seems too disjointed. I would prefer to see packages of GE courses around themes...”

“To me, the goal of GE should be to create literate well read and culturally diverse students who understand their society and the interrelationships of science, art, music, literature and history in the cultural development of humanity.”