

**UNLV Faculty Senate
General Education Committee**

**Report to the Faculty Senate Chair on Committee
Activities in the 2022-2023 Academic Year**

May 12, 2023

The UNLV Faculty Senate General Education Committee (FSGEC) had a productive 2022-2023 academic year. The committee performed its normal duties throughout the year, holding well-attended monthly meetings, and considered a number of student and course petitions. The committee completed their normal set of annual charges, and continued to perform extra research on the state of General Education at UNLV in conjunction with the Office General Education.

COMMITTEE CHARGES FOR 2022-2023

While the Faculty Senate General Education Committee did not receive formal charges from the Faculty Senate for the 2022-2023 AY, the FSGEC Chair did communicate with the Chair of the Faculty Senate to outline goals for the committee:

To begin, as always, the primary charges for this committee are, as detailed in the Faculty Senate Bylaws:

6.8 . . . shall periodically review policy regarding general education, recommending revisions in current policy whenever desirable. It shall also be responsible for:

6.8.1 - Ruling on exceptions to the general education requirements and if necessary, granting modifications in the core requirements sufficient to restore previously existing graduation requirements in programs, departments or colleges.

6.8.2 - Reviewing content areas in the general education core, adding or deleting courses or content as necessary.

6.8.3 - Monitoring the general education program to ensure appropriate implementation.

Additionally, for 2022-23, the committee was charged to:

- 1)** Analyze the inventory of milestone courses and culminating experience courses, and review/revise current general education criteria for milestone courses and culminating experience courses.
- 2)** Discuss options for creating a possible follow-up survey of general education for faculty, in particular, based on the findings from an initial survey distributed during the Spring 2023 semester.
- 3)** Begin developing a recertification process by building on the criteria developed last year from our inventory of approved general education courses.
- 4)** Conduct an election for chair of the committee for the 2023-24 academic year no later than March 15, 2023.
- 5)** Generate a report on all activities, including record of committee meetings and attendance, delivered to the Chair of the Faculty Senate no later than May 12, 2023.

In the rest of the report, we provide the details of the work that we performed.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS/ATTENDANCE 2022-2023

During the 2022-2023 AY, the committee met as was necessary to complete committee business in a timely manner. We officially scheduled eight different FSGEC meetings on Fridays on the following dates:

- September 16, 2022
- October 14, 2022
- November 18, 2022
- December 9, 2022
- February 17, 2023
- March 3, 2023
- April 7, 2023
- May 5, 2023

Two scheduled committee meetings were canceled (December 9, 2022 and March 3, 2023) since we had no course or student petitions, and the research and other committee work could be performed electronically without a formal meeting of the entire committee.

Committee meetings were well attended and we easily achieved a quorum at every meeting. Committee membership in 2022-2023 was as follows:

- Chair: Ed Nagelhout, Term expires June 30, 2023
- Associate Chair and College of Hospitality: Cass Shum, Term expires June 30, 2024
- School of Business: Bill Robinson, Term expires June 30, 2024
- College of Education: Shaoan Zhang, Term expires June 30, 2023
- College of Engineering: Melissa Morris, Term expires June 30, 2023
- College of Fine Arts: Dolly Kelepecz, Term expires June 30, 2023
- Division of Health Sciences: Chad Hensley, Term expires June 30, 2024
- Honors College: Michael Chin, Term expires June 30, 2023
- College of Liberal Arts: Carlos Dimas, Term expires June 30, 2023
- College of Sciences: George Buch, Term expires June 30, 2023
- College of Urban Affairs: Laura Martinez, Term expires June 30, 2024
- University Libraries: Brittany Fiedler, Term expires June 30, 2023
- Undergraduate Education, Jacob Thompson, Ex-Officio
- Undergraduate Student Representative (2022-23): Zachary Billot, COLA

Meeting attendance by elected voting members and Ex-Officio members of the committee in 2022-2023 was as follows:

Mtg Date	9/16	10/14	11/18	2/17	4/07	5/05
<i>Nagelhout</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X
<i>Shum</i>	X	X	X	P (BR)	X	X
<i>Buch</i>	X	X	X	X	P (MM)	X
<i>Chin</i>	P (MM)	X	X	X	X	X
<i>Dimas</i>	X	P (GB)	X	X	P (LM)	X
<i>Fiedler</i>	X	X	X	P (CD)	X	P (SZ)
<i>Hensley</i>	N/A	N/A	X	X	X	X
<i>Kelepecz</i>	X	X	P (BR)	X	X	X
<i>Martinez</i>	X	X	X	P (MC)	X	X
<i>Morris</i>	X	X	X	X	X	P (DK)
<i>Robinson</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X
<i>Zhang</i>	X	X	P (CS)	X	X	X
<i>Thompson</i>	X	X	X	X	X	O
<i>Billot</i>	X	X	O	X	O	X

X = Present; P = Proxy; O = Absent

COMMITTEE WORK/ACCOMPLISHMENTS 2022-2023

Committee business during our meetings normally consisted of student General Education petitions and General Education course petitions. For this academic year, we also completed work associated with our charges and performed research in concert with the Director of General Education and Undergraduate Programs, Dr. Jacob Thompson, to determine new procedures and address certain structural features of General Education. All of this research was conducted by subcommittees outside of committee meeting times, but we did discuss all of this work as a whole committee regularly at our meetings.

STUDENT AND COURSE PETITIONS - TOTALS

During the 2022-2023 AY, the committee considered and voted on nineteen student petitions, approving fourteen, denying three, and tabling two so that the committee could get more information from the student's records to make an informed decision.

At this same time, the committee also considered and voted on eight course petitions, approving seven and denying one.

This record of approval/disapproval for both student and course petitions is a marked improvement over last year, primarily because of the presence of the Director of General Education and Undergraduate Programs, who is an invaluable resource to colleges and departments submitting course petitions. With his guidance, the number of course petitions tabled or sent back to departments/colleges for revision was eliminated completely this year. Moreover,

the new, permanent student routing form, which goes through the Office of General Education, streamlines the process and makes the work of the committee much more straightforward and manageable (see below for a more complete discussion of the **Permanent Student Routing Form and Process**).

ADDITIONAL COMMITTEE CHARGES

As noted above, the committee was also charged with five additional tasks for the 2022-2023 AY: 1) analyzing all milestone and culminating experience courses and reviewing/revising current criteria for each; 2) determining a need for a follow-up faculty survey on General Education; 3) developing a recertification process for all general education courses; 4) conducting an election for chair of the committee for 2023-2024 AY; and 5) generating a report on all activities.

1) Analyzing Milestone and Culminating Experience Courses

The first of the research projects that a subcommittee conducted this year had two goals. 1) A complete analysis of the inventory of milestone courses and culminating experience courses. The goal for this part of the project was to get a better understanding of what different majors are doing across campus. This list was provided by the Director of General Education and Undergraduate Programs.

2) The subcommittee reviewed and revised the current general education criteria for milestone courses and culminating experience courses. The goal for this part of the project was to try to develop a sense of consistency and to make sure that these courses are meeting certain expectations for quality (i.e., including high impact practices, for example).

This subcommittee presented a final draft of a set of descriptions for both the Milestone Experience and the Culminating Experience at the November 18 meeting. The committee unanimously approved the document (see attached as part of this report).

This subcommittee will continue this work next year, beginning the long process for analyzing all current ME and CE courses and making sure that all majors on campus are in compliance with this General Education requirement.

2) Determining Need for Follow-Up Faculty Survey on General Education

The second research project conducted by a subcommittee was to determine if the committee needed to create a possible follow-up survey of general education for faculty, in particular, based on the findings from an initial survey distributed during the Spring 2023 semester, which showed that most people on campus do not really know much about General Education.

The whole committee discussed this topic with the subcommittee at numerous meetings, and decided that the first thing needed was a short 1-page primer on General Education. The Director of General Education and Undergraduate Programs offered to draft a new, more complete, summary, which he shared with the committee at our February 17 meeting (see attached as part of this report). The committee fully supported this draft.

The discussion generated by this draft saw the committee swinging between revising and resubmitting a survey to faculty that included the summary, on the one hand, or using the summary as a springboard for a series of workshops or other training activities to educate faculty on General Education. In the end, the committee was torn on the value of sending out another survey or planning an educational campaign. For now, the subcommittee decided they needed more input and discussion before planning the next steps. In any case, this topic has been tabled to next year.

3) Developing a Recertification Process for All General Education Courses

The third research project conducted by a subcommittee was to begin developing a recertification process for General Education. This work grew out of a set of criteria and an inventory of approved General Education courses started by a subcommittee in 2021-2022.

This subcommittee reviewed the progress for recertification and prepared a recertification letter (see attached draft as part of this report) to brief program directors on the recertification process. They recommended the initial recertification plan begin by grouping current General Education courses into three groups: a) Automatic Recertification, which involves courses with maximum enrollment, regular offerings, and minimal prerequisites; b) Automatic Denials, which involves courses that have not been offered for a number of years, have low enrollment, and/or are designed for advanced students; c) the middle, which involves courses that do not fit the other two categories and require a closer review.

The subcommittee recommended that future FSGEC committees (or subcommittees) formalize a set of precise criteria for reviewing all courses and establish a set of procedures for the recertification of all General Education courses. While the committee believes that departments and faculty should know that recertification originates with the FSGEC, we also believe that the original email and recertification letter should be sent through the Office of General Education as a way to centralize the process in the long term.

4) Conducting a Chair Election for the 2023-24 AY

At our meeting on April 7, we held an election for chair of the committee for the 2023-2024 AY. Since current Chair Ed Nagelhout is stepping down and rotating off of the committee, Dr. Cass Shum, the current FSGEC Associate Chair, stood

for election. No one else chose to run, so after a motion and a second, **the committee voted 12-0 for Dr. Shum to serve as Chair** for the following year.

After the vote, the committee discussed the value of an Associate Chair on the committee, to aid with the workload and to guarantee a smooth transition when a new Chair takes over.

Overall, the committee felt that it didn't need a permanent Associate Chair but, instead, would elect an Associate Chair the year before a Chair rolls off of the committee. The committee also agreed to incorporate this language into the bylaws early next year.

5) Generating a Report on All Committee Activities

The current Chair of the Committee has chosen to provide drafts of the committee annual report for committee review and feedback. The committee received a first draft of this report on May 1 and were asked to offer any comments/revisions/edits at our final meeting on May 5. Based on all feedback, the Chair of the Committee did a first revision/edit of the report. The committee then received a revised, and fully complete, draft on May 8 for final comments/revisions/edits. The final version of the annual report was submitted on May 12.

OTHER COMMITTEE DISCUSSIONS AND CONSIDERATIONS

The committee considered a variety of relevant topics at its meetings beyond its charges. These included the following:

Permanent Student Routing Form and Process

The Director of General Education and Undergraduate Programs shared the new, permanent student routing form and process with the committee at the November 18 meeting. The student petition form (see attached as part of this report) was given special attention since it is a form used by all students and should be very sensitive to accessibility requirements. This document went through numerous revisions and edits based on feedback from multiple accessibility teams until it was accurate and fully accessible. In the end, the form is streamlined and more precise, which will provide more information for the committee at the outset.

The new process begins with the Office of General Education first, rather than the Faculty Senate office. This both streamlines and adds an initial layer of review prior to arriving for review by the Chair of FSGEC.

The new form and process was unanimously approved by the committee.

Committee Work during the Summer

The committee discussed formalizing a procedure for doing committee work over the summer. The amount of work in the summer is normally minimal, and this task was left to the Chair primarily in the past, but after discussion the committee agreed that we should have a volunteer subcommittee of 3-5 members who will meet to resolve any business that comes up during the summer.

A volunteer subcommittee was assigned for Summer 2023 at our final meeting. The committee will use this summer as a test, then formalize the procedure in the committee bylaws in the Fall.

ESL Courses as General Education International Requirement

The committee had an initial discussion about whether all ESL courses should fulfill the General Education International requirement, since taking an ESL course demonstrates fluency in a non-English language. The question came up since World Language courses similarly satisfy the International requirement.

The description for the International Requirement states that the primary purpose of these courses is to examine existing peoples and societies outside of the United States. As such, content may include, but is not limited to: current language, institutions, and culture. To be accepted, the course must demonstrate substantial content in both quality and quantity regarding at least one or more of these attributes.

A number of questions were raised by the committee, such as the following:

- What is the purpose of ESL? Does it meet the expectations (above) for the International Requirement?
- Would students be allowed to take ESL if they are born and raised in US?
- Would students need to take a course in their native language? Or take an exam to show competency in a language?

Since this was just an initial discussion, the topic may be explored in more detail next year.

Presentation of the First-Year Experience Learning Outcomes Report

The Director of General Education and Undergraduate Programs shared an example of the Learning Outcomes Survey Report for the First-Year Experience courses with the committee. The Office of General Education has plans to create a similar survey for the Second-Year Experience course in the coming year. The goal for all of the surveys is to improve the rate of return by asking teachers to make the survey a part of the course, thereby normalizing the practice to further promote its value and improve the response rate.

FINAL NOTE

The committee maintained its commitment to committee transparency and to committee record preservation by distributing all committee documents electronically, and by preserving all committee documents—most importantly meeting agendas, meeting minutes, all meeting presentation files, and student and course petitions—on a shared electronic drive.

This report is respectfully submitted to Dr. Rhonda Montgomery, the outgoing Faculty Senate Chair, Dr. William Robinson, the incoming Faculty Senate Chair, and Dr. Jacob Thompson, the Director of General Education and Undergraduate Programs, on May 12, 2023.

Dr. Ed Nagelhout
Chair, Faculty Senate General Education Committee