

Guide for Successful Submission of Gen Ed Courses

What is the mission of the WSU General Education Program?

The General Education Program serves as a foundation for academic achievement and prepares students to participate effectively in a competitive global economy and to contribute as citizens in a diverse and engaged democracy. General Education presents a unique and powerful opportunity to develop the skills necessary for long-term academic success.

What is the General Education Oversight Committee (GEOC)?

The General Education Oversight Committee (GEOC) includes elected faculty members, as well as liaisons from the Academic Senate, the Student Senate, and the Graduate Employees Organizing Committee. The membership of the GEOC is representative of all six undergraduate degree-granting schools and colleges across the University community. The structure, roles, and responsibilities of the GEOC are laid out in a Board of Governors statute, and the committee is supported by the Provost's Office. You can find more information about the GEOC on the Provost's Office [website](#).

What responsibilities do I have as an instructor in the General Education Program?

As an instructor in the General Education Program, you support our students in developing foundational skills and exploring new areas of inquiry that might lie outside their primary fields of study. This work is central to the mission of the General Education Program. To ensure that the courses in our General Education Program are meeting the expectations that we set with students, we ask you to do the following:

- Create syllabi that fulfill the [learning outcomes](#) of any relevant general education categories for which your course has an approved designation.
- Participate in a 3-year cycle of General Education Assessment.

The GEOC is here to support you in these activities. Please visit our website to learn more about resources and opportunities for support.

What do I need to do to get my class approved as a General Education course?

All courses seeking a General Education designation are reviewed for approval by the GEOC. In reviewing Gen Ed course proposals, the GEOC is guided by the following policies and procedures:

- Courses should not be restricted by major.
- Courses should be accessible to any well-prepared first-year student.
- Courses should be 3 credits.
- Courses generally should not carry more than two gen ed designations.
- Courses should not carry a pre-req unless:
 - The course is part of a sequence that involves placement exams.
 - One or more of the courses below it in the sequence also carries the same gen ed designation.

- Courses must be below the 5000 level. General Education is supposed to be a foundational education experience for students, which normally assumes lower level courses (i.e. 3xxx and below). We are aware that course numbering varies by department, however. If you are submitting an upper-level course for a gen ed designation, you should provide an explanation of that reasoning.
- Courses must fulfill the learning outcomes associated with their respective Gen Ed designation. You can find learning outcomes listed in the [Undergraduate Bulletin](#).
 - Your course may have additional learning outcomes in addition to the Gen Ed LO's. The GEOC looks only at Gen Ed LOs, so you will not be penalized for having additional LOs. If you wish to adapt the Gen Ed LOs to LOs that are already part of your course, we encourage you to provide a chart or diagram that shows clearly the correlation between LOs.
 - If you are requesting more than one Gen Ed designations for your course, that course must fulfill all learning outcomes for each of those designations.

How does the GEOC determine whether my course fulfills the learning outcomes?

The GEOC determines whether a course fulfills the learning outcomes for relevant categories by identifying examples of engagement with the learning outcomes found throughout the syllabus. Courses might fulfill learning outcomes through any combination of assignments, course readings, and/or classroom activities.

In submitting your syllabus for approval as a General Education course, you should keep in mind that the GEOC is an interdisciplinary body of faculty and staff. There is no guarantee that someone in your field is on the committee. As a result, examples of engagement with the learning outcomes (including the themes/subjects of course content and assignments) on your syllabus should be obvious to non-experts – both GEOC members and students. You may choose to clearly identify assignments, course readings, and/or classroom activities by explicitly indicating relevant learning outcomes where they occur in the syllabus; however, this is not required.

What are some common issues that the GEOC encounters?

Thanks to proactive review at the college level, many proposals that reach the GEOC fulfill most of the basic requirements. The most common issues that we see that result in proposals being rolled back for revision include:

- Not engaging Gen Ed learning outcomes in the course.
- Not providing enough course content (assignment details, assigned readings, classroom activities) for GEOC members to identify where the learning outcomes are met in the course.

Because all Gen Ed courses ultimately submit assessment data for their relevant Gen Ed designations, we encourage instructors to build assignments that speak directly to the learning outcomes. Designing assignments that address the learning outcomes not only helps the committee determine the eligibility of the course, but it also helps the instructor in the assessment process later.

What happens if my proposal is rejected?

Most of the time, proposals are returned to instructors with requests for revision, rather than outright rejection. The department chair should receive an email with feedback from the GEOC chair. The GEOC chair is happy to discuss revisions and provide support to department chairs and instructors in responding to requests for revision. Where relevant, the GEOC chair may also ask other GEOC members to provide support and feedback.

Requests for revision are often based on the need to clarify where learning outcomes are engaged in the course. Instructors are free to choose not to complete the requested revisions if they do not wish to move forward with the Gen Ed approval process. They are also always welcome to amend their request by shifting to a different Gen Ed category that may work better for their course.

Occasionally, a course may raise a policy question related to the General Education program. In those cases, the GEOC chair will invite instructors or other relevant persons to come to a meeting to address concerns and discuss the issue with the committee. This is a normal part of a dynamic curriculum, and we greatly appreciate the flexibility and generosity of our colleagues who participate in this process.

How does the approval process work?

GEOC course reviews occur after a course has already completed the general course review process. This process differs slightly by school/college and even department, but it typically includes review in the following order:

- Review by Department curriculum committee/Chair
- Review by College Curriculum committee/Dean
- Review by Provost's Office
- Review by GEOC

Course proposals are submitted through the Courseleaf system found on the Provost's Office website: <https://nextbulletins.wayne.edu/courseadmin/> Once you submit your materials through the Courseleaf system, your application moves through the approval process explained above. Any requests for revision at any stage will be communicated back to instructors and/or department chairs. Revision at earlier stages in the approval process are the responsibility of relevant units. Once you have submitted your course, you can see where it is in the approval flow within Courseleaf. After Gen Ed courses are approved by the GEOC, they are added to the University Bulletin.

Where can I go if I need help?

If you have specific questions about the General Education Program, you can either email gened@wayne.edu or contact GEOC co-chair Jennifer Hart (jennifer.hart4@wayne.edu).

If you have questions about the General Education Assessment process, you can email gened@wayne.edu or visit the resources and materials available on our website.

If you have questions about constructing your syllabus or aligning assignments with Gen Ed learning outcomes, you can find workshops on syllabus design on the [OTL website](#) or request an individual consultation with the [OTL](#) or the GEOC Assessment Subcommittee (email: gened@wayne.edu).