GENERAL EDUCATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE (GEOC) ANNUAL REPORT OF ACTIVITIES, JULY 2009- JUNE 2010

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INTRODUCTION

The Academic Year 2009-2010 is the fifth of operation since UConn implemented its current General Education program in 2005. A large number of new Gen Ed courses weew proposed and approved in the initial years. Now, the appropriate number of Gen Ed offerings has more or less been reached while their composition will change with students' changing educational needs. The Provost's General Education Course Enhancement Grant Competition will be one of the factors ensuring that the program will remain vibrant and of excellent quality. In order to find out how well this Gen Ed program is working, UConn's General Education Oversight Committee (GEOC) has conducted program assessment for the past three years in the areas of Writing, Information Literacy, Content Area 2 (Social Sciences), Content Area 3 (Science and Technology), and Content Area 4 (Diversity and Multiculturalism/International). This year, GEOC has furthermore developed the concept and mechanics for a staggered sample recertification of Gen Ed courses.

The GEOC is a hard working group of Senate-appointed faculty from across UConn schools/colleges. It represents a variety of opinions which leads to lively discussions and productive work. The GEOC includes chairs and co-chairs of each of the ten GEOC Subcommittees—Content Areas 1 (Arts & Humanities), 2 (Social Sciences), 3 (Science & Technology), 4 (Diversity and Multiculturalism/Intl); Competencies: W, Q, Second Language, Information Literacy, Computer Technology); and Assessment—and three ex-officio members (the directors of the W and Q Centers and a representative of the Senate C&CC) two of which have also served as subcommittee co-chairs. The GEOC is functioning well and represents faculty governance of this critical part of undergraduate education.

Despite the significant budget cuts of the last years which have translated into larger Gen Ed courses in many departments, the General Education program has tried to maintain its very high quality.

This report summarizes both operation of the program and activities of the GEOC.

GENERAL EDUCATION COURSE APPROVALS

The GEOC has continued to review proposals to add new courses to, and revise existing courses in, the General Education curriculum. In the AY 2009-2010, 38 proposals were reviewed, resulting in the addition of 15 new courses to the curriculum; 7 existing courses being revised; and 3 courses dropped from the curriculum. Some of the 38 proposals are still in the review process and some GEOC-approved courses have not yet reached review by the Senate. The overall program, as approved by the Senate, now contains **339 Content Area courses** and **484 Competency (skill codes Q or W) courses**. The breakdown of the total figures is given in Table 1. Since many courses are included in more than one category, the **totals are significantly less than the sum of the individual categories**. The considerably larger number of Content Area courses compared to last year (284) does not reflect an actual increase. Rather, some Content Area courses that are also approved as W courses are now counted as both W and non-W courses. In fact, this year's totals represent a relatively small increase compared to last year. This indicates that, currently, the overall demand pertaining to the size of the Gen Ed program has more or less been met. However, UConn's Gen Ed program needs to remain rigorous and innovative, incorporate changing pedagogy and use of technology, and continue to adjust to the constantly changing needs of students and society. Therefore, new or revised Gen Ed courses will be proposed for years to come while some of the current Gen Ed courses may rarely be offered or will be dropped from the Gen Ed program altogether. Furthermore, compared to UConn's former Gen Ed program, the "new" program's course criteria encourage faculty to bring more of their disciplinary expertise into their Gen Ed courses. As a result, current Gen Ed courses often overlap with major courses and are therefore more numerous than they used to be prior to UConn's Gen Ed reform of 2005. 148 of the total of 339 Content Area and 412 of the total 484 Competency courses, many of the latter are writing-in-the-major courses, are offered at the 2000+ levels. Both the variety and depth of the General Education program represents a richness that benefits our students.

Table 1. *Numbers of* ***courses now approved*** *for the General Education curriculum*

Content Area/Competency	1000-level courses	2000-level courses	Total number of courses
CA1 Arts and Humanities	86	63	149
CA2 Social Sciences	45	15	60
CA3 Science and Technology	52	4	56
CA4 Diversity & Multiculturalism	67	96	163
Total content area courses *	**191**	**148**	**339**
Quantitative	46	34	80
Writing	26	380	406
Total skill courses **	**72**	**412**	**484**

* totals are less than the sum of content area courses as 89 (1000-level= 59; 2000+level=30) CA4 courses are also CA1, 2 or 3. 74 (1000-level= 7; 2000+level= 67) CA4 courses are ONLY CA4.

** totals are less than the sum of skill courses as 2 (2000+level) courses are Q and W.

Overall total of courses in the gen ed curriculum are less than the sum of the CA/skill categories as many Content Area courses are also skill courses.

Note re: comparison to last year's total of CA and Comp courses: there is a marked increase in total CA courses because some courses GEOC approved as CA+W are now listed by the Registrar with both W and non-W variants. The totals of CA courses now reflect these non-W variants.

In addition, the GEOC reviewed five proposals to offer existing General Education courses in intensive sessions (4 weeks or less). The breakdown of these reviews since 2005 is given in Table 2. Courses are approved either fully or provisionally, depending on the measure of assurance GEOC has that the Gen Ed objectives of a given course can be maintained in the shortened course format. GEOC has collected faculty reports on provisionally approved intersession courses but proper assessment of effectiveness of these courses must await the development of measures of course effectiveness as a whole. Future assessment of intersession courses will also have to include intensive study abroad courses of four weeks or less.

Table 2. *Total General Education courses reviewed* ***for intensive session teaching 2005-10***.

Course disposition	
Approved	35
Provisionally approved	17
Rejected	6

GENERAL EDUCATION PROGRAM OPERATION

The number of General Education course offerings on all UConn campuses has remained relatively stable: 2087 courses (1034+1053) in Fall and Spring 2008-09, and 2073 (1015+1058) in Fall and Spring 2009-10 (see numbers at the bottom right in Tables 6a and 6b). The slight decrease in courses may be explained through increases in Gen Ed course size. Tables 3 (F 2009) and 4 (S 2010) show the breakdown of course sections and enrollments by General Education category and campus. While Tables 6a and 6b count *courses*, Tables 3 and 4 count individual *sections* of Gen Ed courses which explains the higher numbers of 2452 + 2263 **(=4715) course sections** compared to **2073 courses** for Fall and Spring 2009-10. Furthermore, since some Gen Ed courses are included in more than one Content Area, the actual total of Content Area offerings is actually lower than the number shown in Tables 3 and 4. The same goes for the actual total of the overall Gen Ed offerings since some Content Area courses are also listed as W or Q courses.

While the tables show an annual total enrollment of 116,475 (60,444+56,031), some of the courses and respective enrollment were counted for two Content Areas, if one was CA4, and also for a Competency (Q or W). The actual physical **seats taken in AY 2009-10 were 90,780** (47,374 in Fall 2009 and 43,406 in Spring 2010). Like in previous years, the offerings in CA 1 and 2 significantly exceed those in CA 3 and 4. Overall, the capacity of offerings in all categories seems adequate to meet the needs of our undergraduate population (annual admissions of approximately 3200+ students at the freshman level).

***Table** 3. General Education **courses (sections) offered (C) and enrollment (E)** by campus and category. Fall 2009 (Individual sections of courses (discussion sections, labs, etc.) are counted as separate courses. Courses with zero enrollment have not been counted.)*

Note: Actual physical seats taken were 47,374. The higher figure of 60,444 is due to courses that have multiple gen ed attributes.

Campus	Avery Point		Hartford		Stamford		Storrs		Torrington		Waterbury		All campuses	
GenEd category	C	E	C	E	C	E	C	E	C	E	C	E	C	E
Arts and Hum	18	427	30	834	23	667	267	9190	9	164	22	633	369	11915
Social Sciences	20	545	31	1022	24	772	244	8752	6	149	19	609	344	11849
Sci and Tech	7	184	7	271	7	245	105	2951	1	39	3	170	130	3860
Sci and Tech Lab	17	282	50	490	12	254	274	4703	4	67	12	269	369	6065
Div and Multi	9	136	13	308	11	231	87	2468	1	15	8	181	129	3339
Div and Multi Int	10	268	11	343	9	311	127	5027	2	61	9	277	168	6287
Total Cont Area	**81**	**1842**	**142**	**3268**	**86**	**2480**	**1104**	**33091**	**23**	**495**	**73**	**2139**	**1509**	**43315**
Quantitative	**28**	**509**	**60**	**953**	**25**	**646**	**468**	**9803**	**9**	**158**	**21**	**564**	**611**	**12633**
Writ 1000- lev	4	64	7	128	1	17	9	169	0	0	2	37	23	415
Writ 2000+ lev	5	61	10	119	13	210	270	3534	6	73	5	84	309	4081
Total Writing	**9**	**125**	**17**	**247**	**14**	**227**	**279**	**3703**	**6**	**73**	**7**	**121**	**332**	**4496**
Total GenEd	**118**	**2476**	**219**	**4468**	**125**	**3353**	**1851**	**46597**	**38**	**726**	**101**	**2824**	**2452**	**60444**

***Table 4**. General Education **courses (sections) offered (C) and enrollment (E)** by campus and category. Spring 2010 (Individual sections of courses (discussion sections, labs, etc.) are counted as separate courses. Courses with zero enrollment have not been counted)*

Note: Actual physical seats taken were 43,406. The higher figure of 56,031 is due to courses that have multiple gen ed attributes.

Campus	Avery Point		Hartford		Stamford		Storrs		Torrington		Waterbury		All campuses	
GenEd category	C	E	C	E	C	E	C	E	C	E	C	E	C	E
Arts and Hum	16	449	32	800	19	564	260	8695	9	122	24	602	360	11232
Social Sciences	15	469	31	999	20	641	210	8722	7	154	19	622	302	11607
Sci and Tech	3	87	4	155	2	87	47	2232	1	26	3	111	60	2698
Sci and Tech Lab	13	204	42	417	13	259	230	4034	5	90	13	248	316	5252
Div and Multi	6	143	9	180	9	182	85	2680	9	96	10	198	128	3479
Div and Multi Int	7	208	11	364	10	322	124	4744	2	37	12	334	166	6009
Total Cont Area	**60**	**1560**	**129**	**2915**	**73**	**2055**	**956**	**31107**	**33**	**525**	**81**	**2115**	**1332**	**40277**
Quantitative	**23**	**396**	**53**	**828**	**24**	**568**	**393**	**8141**	**7**	**113**	**20**	**433**	**520**	**10479**
Writ 1000- lev	7	125	7	129	2	38	20	381	2	33	4	73	42	779
Writ 2000+ lev	6	73	13	171	15	252	319	3783	4	45	12	172	369	4496
Total Writing	**13**	**198**	**20**	**300**	**17**	**290**	**339**	**4164**	**6**	**78**	**16**	**245**	**411**	**5275**
Total GenEd	**96**	**2154**	**202**	**4043**	**114**	**2913**	**1688**	**43412**	**46**	**716**	**117**	**2793**	**2263**	**56031**

The enrollment data also allow the calculation of average enrollment in General Education courses in each category. The averages have barely changed since last year. In Table 5, individual sections of a course are counted as separate classes. Courses that were listed in the Schedule of Classes but then had zero enrollment are not counted. The average of 2000+ level W courses is distorted by the fact that independent study and senior thesis W courses (often having an enrollment of only 1-3 students as opposed to the usual enrollment of 19 per W section) are included in the course count. Thus, the actual enrollment numbers for Gen Ed courses are higher than the ones listed in Table 5. Traditionally, larger lectures are more likely to be found in Storrs than at the regional campuses. CA 4 (Diversity and Multiculturalism) courses in the international category have been the largest each year. Enrollment statistics for each semester further indicate that W-sections tend to fill up to but rarely exceed the cap of 19 students. With very few exceptions, departments and instructors have respected this cap.

Table 5. ***Average class size*** *for General Education classes, 2009-2010*
*(**Note:** Individual sections of courses (discussion sections, labs, etc.) are counted as separate classes. Courses with zero enrollment have not been counted. The average of 2000+ level W courses is distorted by the fact that independent study and senior theses W courses are included in the course count.)*

Campus	Storrs	All Regionals	All Campuses
GenEd category			
Arts and Hum	34	26	32
Social Sciences	38	31	36
Sci and Tech	34	36	35
Sci and Tech Lab	17	14	17
Div and Multi	30	20	27
Div and Multi Intl	39	30	37
Total Cont Area	**31**	**25**	**29**
Quantitative	**21**	**19**	**20**
Writing 1000-lev	19	18	18
Writing 2000+ lev	12	14	13
Total Writing	**13**	**15**	**13**
Total GenEd	**25**	**23**	**25**

The Senate-approved *General Education Guidelines* recommend that most General Education courses be taught by full-time faculty. In AY 2009-2010, this was true for approximately 53-56 % (depending on the semester) of all Gen Ed courses (see Tables 6a and 6b). This is an improvement compared to last year when only 46-52 % of Gen Ed courses where taught by full-time faculty. Still, at the regional campuses only approximately one third, and at the Storrs campus only about two thirds, of the Gen Ed courses were taught by full-time faculty. Furthermore, the category of full-time faculty includes non-tenured and non-tenure-track lecturers and Assistant Professors in Residence (APiRs). The latter are hired on short-term contracts for up to three years and are often quite overwhelmed by their teaching loads of seven courses per year.

In addition to those non-tenured and non-tenure-track full-time faculty, approximately 43-46% of all Gen Ed courses at all campuses were offered by adjuncts, Teaching Assistants, and other part-time professionals. Courses taught by adjuncts could be found significantly more often at the regional campuses (approximately 52-54%) than at Storrs (approx. 7-8%). In turn, at Storrs significantly more Gen Ed courses were taught by Teaching Assistants (20-24% depending on the semester) than at the regional campuses (around 10 %). To be sure, adjuncts, TAs, and other professionals are often excellent and involved teachers. Yet, they are likely to be less integrated into the overall teaching mission of the university and less familiar with the *General Education Guidelines*; they require and deserve support and supervision to ensure the maintenance of teaching standards and fulfillment of General Education course objectives.

The maintenance of the Gen Ed objectives creates a particular challenge whenever a course is passed on from the original proposer of a course to other instructors, independent of their rank and contract. Supported by the Registrar's office, GEOC has therefore set up a system that automatically contacts by email all instructors scheduled to teach a General Education course in the following semester and reminds them of the criteria for courses in the individual Gen Ed Content Areas and/or Competencies.

Table 6a. *General Education* ***classes by instructor rank*** *at each campus Fall 2009 (% of total)*
(Note: only the credit bearing portion of courses is counted for the figures below.)

Campus	Asst Prof	Assoc Prof	Prof	Instructor /Lecturer	Total full-t. faculty	Adjunct	GA	Other	Total part-t. faculty	Total Courses
Avery Point	12.3	6.2	11.1	0.0	29.6	56.8	7.4	6.2	70.4	81
Hartford	9.3	11.9	5.9	0.0	27.1	58.5	13.6	0.8	72.9	118
Stamford	6.2	33.0	5.2	2.1	46.4	45.4	7.2	1.0	53.6	97
Torrington	10	3.3	0.0	16.7	30.0	70.0	0.0	0.0	70.0	30
Waterbury	12.9	11.4	2.9	8.6	35.7	50.0	14.3	0.0	64.3	70
All Regionals (avg)	**9.8**	**15.2**	**5.8**	**3.3**	**34.1**	**54.3**	**9.8**	**1.8**	**66.0**	**396**
Storrs	**24.1**	**16.6**	**22.9**	**2.9**	**66.1**	**7.4**	**24.4**	**2.1**	**33.9**	**619**
All campuses	**18.2**	**16.1**	**16.3**	**3.1**	**53.6**	**25.7**	**18.7**	**2.0**	**46.4**	**1015**

Table 6b. *General Education* ***classes by instructor rank*** *at each campus Spring 2010 (% of total)*
(Note: only the credit bearing portion of courses is counted for the figures below.)

Campus	Asst Prof	Assoc Prof	Prof	Instructor /Lecturer	Total full-t. faculty	Adjunct	GA	Other	Total part-t. faculty	Total Courses
Avery Point	7.6	7.6	12.1	0.0	27.3	56.1	10.6	6.1	72.7	66
Hartford	7.2	9.0	6.3	1.8	24.3	59.5	15.3	0.9	75.7	111
Stamford	3.4	33.0	10.2	4.5	51.1	39.8	6.8	2.3	48.9	88
Torrington	5.7	2.9	0.0	14.3	22.9	77.1	0.0	0.0	77.1	35
Waterbury	13.6	14.8	1.2	12.3	42.0	43.2	14.8	0.0	58.0	81
All Regionals (avg)	**7.6**	**15.0**	**6.6**	**5.5**	**34.6**	**52.5**	**11.0**	**18.4**	**65.4**	**381**
Storrs	**21.9**	**21.3**	**22.3**	**3.4**	**68.8**	**8.4**	**20.1**	**2.7**	**31.2**	**677**
All campuses	**16.7**	**19.0**	**16.6**	**4.2**	**56.5**	**24.3**	**16.8**	**2.4**	**43.5**	**1058**

Class size and credit load vary and full-time faculty (including lecturers and Assistant Professors in Residence) tend to teach larger courses. As Tables 7a and 7b indicate, full-time faculty produce approximately one third of Gen Ed credit hours at the regional campuses and nearly three quarters at the Storrs campus. Overall, full-time faculty teach nearly two thirds of student contact hours in UConn's General Education program. This represents a significant improvement compared to last year. However, the changing percentages may result from hiring more APiRs and may simply mean that full-time faculty are teaching larger courses.

Table 7a. *General Education* ***credit hour production by instructor rank*** *at each campus Fall 2009 (% of total)*

Campus	Asst Prof	Assoc Prof	Prof	Instructor /Lecturer	Total full-t. faculty	Adjunct	GA	Other	Total part-t. fac.	Total Credit Hours
Avery Point	13.5	4.3	13.2	0.0	31.0	55.8	8.2	5.1	69.0	6053
Hartford	9.5	14.3	6.4	0.0	30.1	58.3	11.0	0.5	69.9	11161
Stamford	8.0	29.6	6.8	2.0	46.6	45.0	7.6	0.9	53.4	8672
Torrington	7.6	3.8	0.0	21.4	32.7	67.3	0.0	0.0	67.3	1904
Waterbury	14.5	13.9	5.7	10.9	45.0	42.9	12.1	0.0	55.0	7105
All Regionals (avg)	**10.6**	**13.2**	**6.4**	**6.9**	**37.1**	**53.9**	**7.8**	**1.3**	**62.9**	**6979**
Storrs	**27.1**	**15.6**	**25.4**	**6.4**	**74.5**	**10.0**	**14.0**	**1.4**	**25.5**	**118224**
All campuses	**23.3**	**15.6**	**21.2**	**5.9**	**66.1**	**19.6**	**13.0**	**1.4**	**33.9**	**153119**

***Table 7b**. General Education **credit hour production by instructor rank** at each campus Spring 2010 (% of total)*

Campus	Asst Prof	Assoc Prof	Prof	Instructor /Lecturer	Total full-t. faculty	Adjunct	GA	Other	Total part-t. faculty	Total Credit Hours
Avery Point	4.2	3.3	13.2	0.0	20.7	58.3	15.5	5.6	79.3	5184
Hartford	8.7	8.8	8.0	1.4	26.9	56.3	15.7	1.0	73.1	9938
Stamford	3.4	30.4	9.6	4.2	47.6	42.1	8.5	1.8	52.4	7412
Torrington	3.6	2.7	0.0	15.3	21.6	78.4	0.0	0.0	78.4	1767
Waterbury	15.0	14.4	3.8	15.7	48.8	37.3	13.8	0.0	51.2	6884
All Regionals (avg)	**7.0**	**11.9**	**6.9**	**7.3**	**33.1**	**54.5**	**10.7**	**1.7**	**66.9**	**6237**
Storrs	**24.3**	**19.2**	**22.5**	**6.6**	**72.5**	**10.2**	**15.3**	**2.0**	**27.5**	**108474**
All campuses	**20.6**	**18.0**	**19.2**	**6.4**	**64.2**	**19.2**	**14.7**	**1.9**	**35.8**	**139659**

SUBSITUTIONS

According to the *General Education Guidelines*, schools and colleges have the explicit authority to make substitutions to the requirements for individual students admitted to the respective school or college. The Registrar's office kindly supplies GEOC with a list of all substitutions made in a given AY. A total of 345 substitutions were made in AY 2009-10 (Table 8); this number is slightly higher than last year's (330), but drastically lower than the one in 2007-08 (418) or even that of 2006-07 (778).

Like in previous years, CLAS being the largest college shows the bulk of substitutions. However, this reflects only a very small percentage of CLAS graduates. As anticipated in previous years' Annual GEOC Reports, the substitutions made by the former College of Continuing Studies, now Center for Continuing Education (CTED), for BGS students have dropped to an acceptable level. The CTED numbers include courses recommended for substitution by the GEOC. Moderately high percentages of substitutions in the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources (CANR) reflect the needs of the transfer students served by this college.

Overall, the need for substitutions has significantly decreased with the increasing establishment of the "new" General Education program implemented in 2005.

Table 8. Substitutions** to the General Education Requirements **by School or College
(official graduate information available in August/September 2010)

	# subs	# grads	subs/grad
ACES	4		
CANR	51		
BUSN	27		
CLAS	148		
CTED	41		
EDUC	14		
EGBU	1		
ENGR	19		
FNAR	10		
NURS	18		
PHAR	12		
Total	**345**		

Approximately one third of all substitutions were made to the CA4 (Diversity and Multiculturalism/International) requirement (Table 9). This percentage has remained relatively stable since last year and represents a decrease from approximately 40 % in the years prior. This relatively high number of substitutions partially reflects the relative newness of this category and the fact that, unlike other Content Areas, no automatic substitutions are given to transfer students for Diversity and Multiculturalism courses taken at other institutions unless they transfer in as the equivalent to a specific UConn CA4 course.

As in previous years, the fewest substitutions were made for the Q and, as a distant second, Second Language requirements. Based on the Senate-approved policy to govern substitutions in these areas, the Academic Adjustments Committee, of which the Chair of GEOC is a member, is meeting regularly to consider petitions from students requesting alternate ways of meeting the Second Language or Q requirements, on the basis of learning disabilities.

Table 9. Substitutions** to the **General Education Requirements by Category

Category	Substitutions granted
CA1	42
CA2	27
CA3	67
CA4	143
Q	8
W	31
Second Language	27
Total	**345**

Traditionally, the need for substitutions has been higher at the regional campuses where 2000+-level Gen Ed courses are not easily available in all Content Areas, especially in Content Area 2 (Social Sciences). Particularly, BGS students enter the university with many 1000-level course credits and then need to find 2000+-level courses including 2000+-level Gen Ed courses in order to complete their degree in a timely manner. In order to make sure that *appropriate* courses are selected as Gen Ed course substitutions, GEOC is happy to recommend a number of substitutions but declines to endorse a list of "shadow Gen Ed courses" which would mean a GEOC pre-approved list of courses that are, however, not officially approved as meeting the Senate-approved Gen Ed course criteria. Taking Senate- and GEOC–approved Gen Ed courses should remain the rule and substituting them by non-Gen Ed courses should be the exception.

In AY 2008-09, the following has been agreed upon in collaboration with Ernie Zirakzadeh, the Associate Dean of CLAS who is in charge of CLAS matters at the regional campuses: Over the course of 2009-10 and 2010-11, CLAS will develop a number of CA2 courses to be offered at the regional campuses; in 2008-09 GEOC assembled a short-list of non-Gen Ed courses that GEOC considers appropriate for CA2 substitution. GEOC still considers this list appropriate. It has to be updated regularly.

PROVOST'S GENERAL EDUCATION COURSE ENHANCEMENT GRANT COMPETITION

The annual General Education Course Enhancement Grant Competition is designed to promote the ongoing enhancement, innovation, improvement, and academic rigor of the content and teaching of UConn's General Education curriculum. Since 2004, this grant program has tremendously enriched UConn's General Education program and simultaneously the overall undergraduate program. It has proven to provide an additional incentive for faculty to develop innovative General Education courses that, in many cases, connect faculty's scholarly expertise in a given field with the goals of UConn's Gen Ed program. Since 2004, seventy Gen Ed course development or enhancement grants have been funded including seven in 2010. Between 2004 and 2009, 54 winners added new courses to the curriculum and nine revised existing courses. In recent years the substantial course enhancements of existing courses have outnumbered the developments of new courses.

In Spring 2010, the Provost's General Education Course Enhancement Grant Competition was held for the seventh time. Due to the impact of the budget crisis on our university**,** the Office of the Provost dramatically reduced the overall level of this year's competition, yet the amount for individual awards was raised to its previous amount of a maximum of $10,000. GEOC, furthermore, set up the foci of this year's competition in a way that is geared toward helping academic departments and faculty meet some of the current and future challenges, namely, having to offer Gen Ed courses as large lectures, often with limited GA support, but some technical equipment**.** Applications that focused on the following (overlapping) areas were favored**:** *Modification and enhancement of existing courses or development of new courses*

- to be *offered as large classes.*
- to *use technology efficiently and creatively to keep students actively engaged.*
- to *address creatively information literacy.*
- *to challenge students' creativity across disciplinary boundaries.*
- *To address and/or make use of recommendations made in recent years' General Education Assessment Reports, see* http://geoc.uconn.edu/Assessment.htm.

All proposals require department head or program director approval; the offering of all substantially revised or new Gen Ed courses is pending approval by the respective departments, college C&CCs, GEOC, Senate C&CC, and Senate; receiving a Provost's General Education Course Enhancement Grant does not in itself constitute approval of the proposed course for the respective content area(s) and/or competency; successful grant proposals still have to submit a Curricular Action Request form to the GEOC for approval and must altogether follow the official approval sequence: http://www.geoc.uconn.edu/Approval_Sequence_Chart_06-09.pdf .

A pre-competition workshop run by the Chair of GEOC, the Director of the Institute of Teaching and Learning (ITL), and the Director of Instructional Design and Development (IDD) familiarized interested faculty with the goals of UConn's Gen Ed program and the procedures of this competition. The review panel consisted of past competition winners, members of the ITL and IDD, GEOC members, and the Chair of GEOC. Seven proposals were selected to be funded, all of them in part this year and in part next year. In most cases, the full amount (up to a total of $10,000 including fringe benefits) of the proposed budget has been approved for items such as course-related supplies, summer salaries, and summer stipends. This year's winners represent course proposals in seven programs (Music, Drama, Nursing, Computer Sciences and Engineering, Philosophy, History, and Mathematics from four colleges/schools (CLAS, Engineering, Fine Arts, and Nursing). The winning proposals cover all of UConn's Gen Ed Content Areas except CA2 and both Competencies Writing and Quantitative Reasoning. Among the seven winning proposals were five proposing substantial revisions of existing courses and two proposing the development of new courses. The announcement of this year's winners was followed by a festive ceremony hosted by Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education Doug Cooper. At this event, the winners' brief presentations of their projects inspired a lively discussion about shared challenges and innovative and solid solutions. The enthusiasm of all winners about both their areas of expertise and teaching Gen Ed was evident.

Final Reports (for two years) of the winners of the 2008 Competition are due in June 2010 and will then be evaluated. All winners of the 2009 competition submitted their Year One Reports and participated in a two-hour workshop moderated by the Chair of GEOC and the Directors of the ITL and IDD. Brief presentations by each winning team were followed by a rich exchange about the thrills and challenges of preparing the proposed

Gen Ed courses which, in some cases, have already been taught in their enhanced format and are now being revised, and in other cases, will be taught for the first time in AY 2010-11. All winners clearly showed excitement about their projects and several praised the ITL and IDD for their insightful, expert support. Practically all of them named the lack of sufficient TA-support as a serious challenge that negatively impacted their teaching. While many of the winners have developed very innovative applications of technology, this is no substitute for students' contact with human instructors. In some cases, winners still struggled with the concept of student learning outcomes and assessment (as opposed to project goals and project assessment): what can a student actually *do* after taking my course or a portion thereof and how can I measure if they have actually *learned* what I think I have taught them?" as opposed to "What and how do I want to *teach*?" This is a paradigm shift in pedagogy and a difficult step to take even for pedagogically experienced and highly motivated faculty.

UConn's General Education program and thus the overall undergraduate offerings have benefited tremendously from the Provost's General Education Course Enhancement Grant Competition. It has helped Gen Ed to move away from a "check list" mentality vis-à-vis an at times only moderately interesting set of courses to a stimulating set of offerings that makes use of faculty's scholarly expertise and passion. It encourages faculty to enrich the Gen Ed curriculum by topics and research that excite them as disciplinary experts and to solicit the immensely valuable and forthcoming input of the ITL and IDD that help them enhance the overall quality of their General Education courses. Faculty's enthusiasm enriches UConn's multifaceted Gen Ed program that preserves academic rigor while being open to change as ever new topics and methodologies become relevant in today's society and research.

Table 10. *Courses developed through the* ***support of the Provost's Competition*** *by Gen Ed category*

Category	Grants Funded 2004-2009	2010 Winners
CA1	23	4
CA2	13	0
CA3	8	1
CA4	30	3
Q	7	1
W	17	1
Sec Lang	1	0
Totals	63	7

Note: the "Totals" row figures represent individual grant projects funded. These totals are less than the sum of each category as many courses have multiple gen ed attributes.

OVERSIGHT, INNOVATIONS, and REVISIONS

Assessment

As mentioned above, the University of Connecticut's current set of General Education Requirements was implemented in 2005. By now, one full generation of students has experienced this program. Over the course of the past three Academic Years, the GEOC, guided by its Assessment Subcommittee, has started an evaluation process to determine the extent to which the General Education program is meeting its goals. In consultation with faculty teaching the respective Gen Ed courses, GEOC Subcommittees have translated the original criteria for the approval of courses in each Content Area into sets of student learning outcomes. Assessment documents including these student learning outcomes have been approved by GEOC for the Content Areas 2, 3, and 4 and are available on the GEOC website http://www.geoc.uconn.edu/Assessment.htm. More subcommittees are currently working on such documents.

With respect to the actual assessment of Gen Ed Content Areas and Competencies, GEOC's Assessment Subcommittee, with GEOC's approval, has elected a focused approach that concentrates on limited numbers of students in restricted areas of the curriculum. Data gathering has focused and will continue to focus on approaches sufficient in depth and complexity and on samples of instructors and students sufficient in number to allow for valid conclusions and meaningful recommendations for the improvement and strengthening of the Gen Ed program. Given the size and complexity of UConn's General Education program (nearly 5,000 course sections and 90,000+ seats per year), the assessment efforts – perceived as a cycle including developing student learning outcomes, data gathering, data analysis, recommendations for improvements, dissemination of the recommendations, implementation of improvements, and eventually new data gathering – will take several years.

Please find the Reports of the previous years' Assessment Reports on GEOC's website:

Writing:

- 2008 HDFS, ARTH, POLS: http://www.geoc.uconn.edu/Assessment%20Documents/W-Assessment-Report_AY0708.pdf
- 2009 NURS: http://www.geoc.uconn.edu/Assessment%20Documents/W-Assessment-August2009.pdf
- 2009 Freshman English: http://www.geoc.uconn.edu/Assessment%20Documents/Final_FE_Assess_Rpt_0909.pdf

Information Literacy:

- 2008 SAILS Report: http://www.geoc.uconn.edu/Assessment%20Documents/UConn_SAILS_Fall_2007_Administration.pdf
- 2008 Executive Summery: http://www.geoc.uconn.edu/Assessment%20Documents/InfoLit-Executive Sumary_12-08.pdf

Content Area 3:

- 2008 Faculty Interviews: http://www.geoc.uconn.edu/Assessment%20Documents/Final_CA3_Assessment_Report_7-21-08.pdf
- 2009 Student Self-Assessment and Dissemination: http://www.geoc.uconn.edu/Assessment%20Documents/CA3-Assmt-Rpt-Final-June09.pdf

Content Area 4:

- 2009 Faculty Interviews: http://www.geoc.uconn.edu/Assessment%20Documents/CA4-Report-Final-6-15-09_noAPIV.pdf

Based on the abovementioned student learning outcomes, the GEOC Assessment Subcommittee developed an assessment plan for 2009-10 which was put into place by faculty coordinators:

- *Writing in the major*: Electrical and Computer Engineering and Mechanical Engineering (Faculty Coordinator: Tom Deans, ENGL, CLAS, and director of the Writing Center, Storrs)
- *Content Area 3 (Science and Technology), Phase III* (Faculty Coordinator: Annelie Skoog, Marine Science, CLAS, Avery Point)

- *Content Area 4 (Diversity and Multiculturalism), Phase IIa* (Faculty Coordinator: Mary-Ellen Junda, Music, SFA, Storrs, assisted by Yuhang Rong, Dean's Office, Neag School of Education, Storrs)
- *Content Area 2 (Social Sciences), Phase I* (Faculty Coordinator: Felicia Pratto, Psychology, CLAS, Storrs)

➢ *Assessment of Writing (W)*

In order to understand this year's assessment of parts of UConn's Writing program, one needs to first look at the writing assessment Tom Deans, ENGL, Director of the Writing Center, conducted in the Springs/Summers of 2008 and 2009 of writing-in-the-major courses (final versions of last papers) in the departments of Art History, Human Development Family Studies, Political Science, and the School of Nursing, and at the writing assessment Scott Campbell conducted in Spring/Summer of 2009 in the large Freshman English (FE) program at all campuses. The latter confirms the rigor of writing in the FE program and makes excellent recommendations, among others, regarding effective writing assignments; the first has established rubrics for discipline-specific writing in several departments each year and has helped the faculty in these departments substantially improve their discipline-specific writing courses. Please see respective W Assessment Reports:

- 2008 HDFS, ARTH, POLS: http://www.geoc.uconn.edu/Assessment%20Documents/W-Assessment-Report_AY0708.pdf
- 2009 NURS: http://www.geoc.uconn.edu/Assessment%20Documents/W-Assessment-August2009.pdf
- 2009 Freshman English: http://www.geoc.uconn.edu/Assessment%20Documents/Final_FE_Assess_Rpt_0909.pdf

Overall, the writing assessment has been designed as discipline-specific projects. While some rubrics are common to writing in general, writing in, for example, the Fine Arts is simply different than writing in the sciences. Therefore writing courses in each discipline have to emphasize different items. Tom Deans has been working with several departments each year which has resulted in a learning process for the faculty and graduate assistants involved in the actual scoring, and has, through dissemination meetings, helped the writing instructors of the respective departments rethink and improve the design of their courses and writing assignments.

What follows is based on the Preliminary Progress Report authored by Tom Deans and dated May 11, 2009:

2010 Writing Assessment Project:
Writing in Mechanical Engineering and Electrical and Computer Engineering

W assessment is on pace with 2010 plans to evaluate student writing in Mechanical Engineering (ME) and Electrical and Computer Engineering (ECE) in early summer of 2010. While both departments are in the School of Engineering, the writing assessment will be based on different student artifacts in each case: in ECE, lower-division lab reports will be evaluated and in ME senior design projects.

In early April the departmental Writing Assessment Teams administered, in collaboration with Tom Deans, informed consent forms and self-efficacy questionnaires to ECE sophomores and ME seniors, and in early May they collected approximately 100 ECE lab reports from eight lab sections of the same parent course and approximately 30 ME senior design team projects. Faculty coordinators John Ayers (ECE) and Thomas Barber (ME) have worked with their home departments to construct discipline-specific rubrics to score the student writing; they have also recruited graduate students Robert Croce, Ernesto Suarez, and Stephen Stagon, and assistant professor in residence Yen Lin Han, to serve as scorers for the project. Scheduled are all-day sessions from May 17-28 to conduct the rubric scoring; perform intensive qualitative evaluations of a random subset of the writing; read samples of UConn student writing from previous W assessment projects in Freshman English, Art History, HDFS and Nursing to compare them to what they are seeing in ME and ECE; and discuss the implications of our findings for designing and teaching future W courses in ME and ECE. Tom Deans and

the two faculty coordinators will compose the final project report over the summer and plan how to present and disseminate findings to ME and ECE faculties in Fall 2010.

The Final Report on this year's Writing assessment will be available on the GEOC website.

➢ *Assessment in the Content Areas*

Using the model developed for the CA3 assessment by Hedley Freake (2007-08) and Annelie Skoog (2008-09), the GEOC Assessment Subcommittee has recommended that assessment in the other Content Areas follow a similarly staggered and sample approach which in each case needs to be adjusted to the given Content Area and specific findings and recommendations:

- *Phase I*: Inquiry into the extent to which courses *address* and *assess* student learning outcomes as specified for the given Content Area; identification of key courses; interviews with instructors; analysis of course materials; evaluation of resulting data and sharing of results with participating faculty; recommendations to GEOC about how to proceed.
- *Phase II:* Depending on the recommendations resulting from Phase I:
    - *Phase IIa*: Revisiting and revising student learning outcomes based on faculty input gathered at faculty forums and/or in focus groups; recommendations to the GEOC.

    Or:
    - *Phase IIb:* Development, application, and evaluation of an appropriate student self-efficacy instrument, student surveys, and/or student focus groups pertaining to the given Content Area; dissemination of results of Phase I and II in panels or workshops; preparation of the assessment of actual student learning in the given Content Area.
- *Phase III*:
    - Development, application, and evaluation of direct assessment tools that are embedded in writing assignments, exams, reports, or alike;
    - Measuring student learning based on actual student artifacts;
    - Recommendations to instructors and GEOC how to improve student learning based on the results of the data collection and their evaluation;
    - further dissemination (e.g., written or in workshops or panels) of the results of Phase I, II, and III.
- *Phase IV+*:
    - Development, application, and evaluation of direct assessment tool templates, e.g., question structures to be used in the respective CA courses and to be distributed through HuskyCT;
    - If needed, refining of the student self-efficacy instrument and new application;
    - If needed, specific assessment foci, e.g., lab courses, TA-led discussion sections, or alike
    - Recommendations of improvements in teaching courses in the CA in question;
    - Dissemination of assessment results to CA-specific instructors and GEOC.

➢ *Assessment of Content Area 3 (Science and Technology) (Phase III)*

As with the Writing assessment, the current year's CA3 assessment (Phase III)builds on the previous years' CA3 assessment coordinated by Hedley Freake, Nutritional Sciences, College of Agriculture and Natural Resources, Storrs, and by Annelie Skook, Marine Sciences, CLAS, Avery Point. See CA3 Assessment Reports:

- 2008 Faculty Interviews (Phase I): http://www.geoc.uconn.edu/Assessment%20Documents/Final_CA3_Assessment_Report_7-21-08.pdf
- 2009 Student Self-Assessment (Phase IIb): http://www.geoc.uconn.edu/Assessment%20Documents/CA3-Assmt-Rpt-Final-June09.pdf

What follows is the Preliminary Progress Report on Spring/Summer 2010 CA3 Assessment authored by Annelie Skoog and dated May 19 2009:

"Preliminary Report on Assessment of CA3 courses, Spring 2010
prepared by Annelie Skoog, May 19, 2010

Background:

During academic year 07/08, Hedley Freake and Elisabeth Kloeblen carried out a survey of how nine Gen Ed CA3 courses covered CA3 leaning goals and Scott Brown also put together a student self-efficacy instrument. With slight modifications by Scott Brown and Annelie Skoog in 2009, the student self-efficacy instrument was administered pre- and post-course in Spring 2009 as an on-line quiz. A very large data set was collected, which could only partially be analyzed during Spring/early Summer 2009.

The conclusions and recommendations from the Spring 2009 assessment report (http://www.geoc.uconn.edu/Assessment%20Documents/CA3-Assmt-Rpt-Final-June09.pdf) included recommended changes to the self-efficacy instrument, a more in-depth study of negative student responses to CA3 laboratory sections, implementation of assessment of student learning during Spring 2010 and reporting of the results from the survey during a workshop.

Activities in Spring 2010:

Two main topics were addressed in the Spring 2010 assessment work: further evaluation of the large data set on student self-efficacy from Spring 2009 and implementation of assessment of actual student learning. At the time of writing, the data on actual student learning and the final conclusions from the self-efficacy instrument still needs to be collated.

Further evaluation of student self-efficacy results:

The data set from Spring 2009 will be mined to address as many as possible (limited only by available man-hours) of the following hypotheses:

- Low-enrollment courses give larger sense of improvement in average science self-efficacy than high-enrollment courses.
- Female students in low-enrollment courses show a larger sense of improvement in average self-efficacy results than male students in low-enrollment courses.
- Students with high GPA have higher average self-efficacy results than students with low GPA.
- Students with low GPA show a larger sense of improvement in average self-efficacy results than students with high GPA.
- Students with low GPA in a low-enrollment course show a larger sense of improvement in average self-efficacy results than students with low GPA in a high-enrollment course.
- Science majors have higher average self-efficacy results than non-science majors.
- Non-science majors show a larger sense of improvement in science self-efficacy results than science majors after taking a CA3 course.

Implementation of the assessment of actual student learning:

The focus group for the request to participate in the 2010 survey was the same group of faculty participating in the self-efficacy assessment in 2009. The assessment of actual student-learning was met with enthusiasm when it was first brought up in Spring 2009. However, the actual participation in the assessment of student learning in 2010 was very low, and it is not quite clear why.

The assessment was proposed to be part of the final exam as questions written by each faculty member and geared towards their specific topic. It is possible that the faculty found the actual writing of these questions to be an obstacle. A potential solution is to write a set of example template questions that could be disseminated to the faculty. These template questions could be based on questions written by faculty who participated in this year's CA3 assessment effort.

However, it would be reasonable to actually ask these faculty members why they chose not to participate before attempting a solution, so I will send out e-mail inquiries to all faculty members who were asked to participate.

A workshop will be held in fall 2010 as part of the dissemination phase of the Spring 2010 work. The workshop will present the limited amount of data from the student-learning assessment, with a focus on an interactive discussion on how to more effectively carry out future assessment of student learning. Exam-embedded assessment and assessment carried out on HuskyCT course sites should be explores as possible formats. It is possible that the workshop could also discuss modifications to and/or clarifications of the existing CA3 learning goals and student learning outcomes.

Recommendations to date:

An inquiry as to why faculty chose not to participate in the assessment of actual student learning will be sent out. Depending on the responses from the non-participating CA3 faculty in the group contacted in Spring 2010, question templates may be designed. These templates could be designed during the Fall 2010 workshop in a collaborative effort. Ideally, the HuskyCT format should be used also for these templates, to make possible running the assessment completely online. This format would make it possible to retrieve data without faculty involvement and would make it easier for already hardworking faculty to participate.

If the template design works, a second attempt at assessing student learning should be carried out during the coming academic year.

Further, the refined student self-efficacy on-line quiz should be implemented pre- and post-course during Spring 2011. Again, the course target-group will be CA 3 courses with developed HuskyCT websites. It is especially important to address the student's impressions of the effectiveness of laboratory components."

The Final Report on this year's CA3 assessment effort will follow by July 1, 2010 and will be available on the GEOC website.

- *Assessment of Content Area 4 (Diversity and Multiculturalism/International) (Phase IIa)*

Assessment of the Diversity and Multiculturalism Content Area (CA4) is complex. The nature of this area, which involves not just knowledge and skills but also attitudes and behaviors, makes it very difficult to assess. Courses within the area are required to meet one out of five possible criteria, allowing for a wide range of subject matter and approaches. It is also the Gen Ed Content Area with the greatest number of courses: 163. At the same time the assessment in CA4 is of paramount importance. Diversity and global learning are two key components of the Academic Plan for the university and CA4 is the one curricular area where all students will be exposed to these concepts. The addition of this Content Area was one of the principal changes associated with the implementation of the "new" Gen Ed requirements in 2005.

The CA4 assessment effort of Spring 2010 (Phase IIa), coordinated by Mary Ellen Junda, Music, SFA, assisted by Yuhang Rong,Dean's Office, Neag School of Education, is following the recommendations that have resulted from the CA4 assessment effort (Phase I) in Spring 2009, coordinated by David Moss, Curriculum and Instruction, Neag School of Education, who was assisted by Helen Marx. Based on the input of faculty Moss and Marx interviewed about their addressing and assessing the CA4 learning goals and student learning outcomes in their CA4 courses, Moss and Marx recommended that the CA4 learning goals and student learning outcomes be revisited and revised with the help of faculty who teach CA4 courses.

What follows is the Preliminary Progress Report authored by Mary Ellen Junda and Yuhang Rong with Leah Brown, dated May 13, 2010:

"Redefine CA4 Learning Goals and Student Learning Outcomes
for Effective Assessments.
Preliminary Report, May 13, 2010
Submitted by Mary Ellen Junda and Yuhang Rong with Leah Brown

Background:

The June 2009 *Report on the Alignment and Assessment of CA4 Diversity and Multicultural Learning Objectives of the General Education Curriculum* was completed by Helen Marx and David Moss. Faculty members participating in this study indicated that the current CA4 Learning Goals and Student Learning Outcomes lacked scope and depth and expressed an interest in developing a more "comprehensive, unified, and well articulated set of outcomes for this program" (pg.17). In October 2009, Vice President Veronica Makowsky approved changing the faculty coordinator's role to that of a facilitator who would take charge of revisiting, redefining, rewriting CA4 learning goals and student learning outcomes to be used for future CA4 assessment of student learning. This report satisfies that stipulation.

Procedures:

At the GEOC Assessment Committee meeting on February 9, 2010, the members agreed that a series of faculty forums be held during the Spring 2010 semester to elicit recommendations and revisions for CA4 Learning Goals and Objectives/Student Learning Outcomes from CA4 instructors. The twenty-one CA4 courses/instructors used in the Marx & Moss study (2009) served as the representative sample for this project, which was expanded to include CA4 instructors who worked with the Institute of Teaching and Learning on CA4 course development. Four Faculty Forums were held on March 18th, March 25th, April 1st and April 8th. Participants in the Faculty Forums represented six departments and three schools with class capacity ranging in size from 19 to 200. Each forum lasted approximately 1.45 hours. Before the last forum, revised goals and student outcomes were emailed to the Heads of the African American, Puerto Rican and Latino, Asian American and Women's Studies Institutes and the Departments of Anthropology and Sociology to share with their faculty members. The goal was to solicit input from a sampling of areas that service large numbers of students, offering a broad cross-section of courses in CA4 and to encourage faculty attendance to the final forum. Instructor recommendations and data were presented to the CA4 Subcommittee to review on April 21st. and the GEOC Assessment Committee on April 27th.

Discussion Results:

The CA4 instructors that participated in the Faculty Forums stated that their CA4 courses addressed at least one goal and student outcome as required; however, they also agreed that some revisions were necessary. Recommendations were reviewed at each of the forums to ensure that revised or additional student outcomes could be assessed using varied modes. The revisions included a broader range of student outcomes that address cultural understanding and aligned the outcomes directly to specific learning goals. A few faculty members voiced some concerns via email about the revisions; however, they included no recommendations. Participants in the forums also shared ways that departments, the Institute of Teaching and Learning and the Provost's Office could provide support for CA4 instructors in terms of curriculum development and teaching assistance.

The CA4 Subcommittee reviewed the recommendations and concerns voiced by faculty at the forums and via email and prepared a final draft of the changes for review by the GEOC Assessment Committee. The revised learning goals and student learning outcomes are included on the following pages.

Recommendations:

The CA4 Subcommittee and GEOC Assessment Committee recommend that courses proposed for CA4 must meet at least one of the five CA4 criteria (approved by the Senate in 2003, see *Gen Ed Guidelines* (http://www.geoc.uconn.edu/geocguidelines.htm) in order for the course to be approved for CA4. Accordingly, they should meet at least one corresponding learning goal with the cluster of *all* of the associated student learning outcomes for that learning goal. The revised CA4 Learning Goals and Student Learning Outcomes should be disseminated to all CA4 instructors so that they can plan their CA4 courses accordingly. It is recommended that all proposed CA4 courses teach toward at least one cluster of CA4 student learning outcomes, corresponding to the approval criteria (see below) and provide evidence on how the outcomes will be assessed.

The following recommendations are a result of the Faculty Forums:

- Instructors who are novices at teaching from a diversity/multicultural/social justice perspective would benefit from working with the Institute for Teaching and Learning (ITL) in developing CA4-specific course activities and assessments.
- ITL should provide a means for CA4 instructors to share specific tests, tools and activities that facilitate assessment initiatives.
- Priority should be given to Teaching Assistant support in CA4 courses, with a particular emphasis on large lecture classes, to enable a variety of activities and modes of assessment to be implemented.
- Department Heads should initiate conversations among CA4 faculty members within their department to ensure they are teaching towards CA4 learning goals and student learning outcomes and share best practices.

Revised CA4 Learning Goals and Student Learning Outcomes:

The purpose of CA4 instruction is to inform, educate and initiate culturally conversant citizens who have a greater level of comfort with and the ability to navigate cultural differences.

ORIGINAL STATEMENT OF LEARNING GOALS:

Students should be aware of and sensitive to different cultural perspectives of groups that traditionally have been underrepresented. They should be able to understand and articulate in some measurable manner, with respect to "race," ethnicity, gender, sexual identity, political system, religious tradition, or of disability, at least one of the following:

REVISED:

Students are aware of and sensitive to different cultural perspectives and representations of groups that traditionally have been misrepresented and/or underrepresented in mainstream media, education and other cultural systems. They will understand and articulate in some measurable manner, with respect to race, ethnicity, gender, sexual identity, political system, religious tradition, or of disability, at least one of the following:

Original Learning Goals	Revised Learning Goals
1) the varieties of human experiences, perceptions, thoughts, values, and/or modes of creativity	1) the varieties of human experiences, perceptions, thoughts, values, and/or modes of creativity *including those of their own indigenous cultural viewpoint*
2) interpretive systems and/or social structures as cultural creations	2) *perspectives that determine political, social, cultural and economic constructions*
3) the similarities that may exist among diverse groups	3*) the differences and similarities among human groups*
4) issues involving human rights and migration	4) issues involving human rights and migration
5) the dynamics of social, political, and/or economic power	*5*) the dynamics of social, *cultural*, political, and/or economic power

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES**:** Students should be able to carry out, in a reflective manner that is theoretically informed and illustrated with specific examples, with respect to "race," ethnicity, gender, sexual identity, political system, religious tradition, or of disability, at least one of the following:	
REVISED: *Students will demonstrate at least one of the following clusters of student learning outcomes in a reflective manner that is theoretically informed with specific examples:*	
Original Student Outcomes	Revised Student Outcomes
1-1: Differentiate varieties of human experiences, thoughts, values, and/or modes of creativity	1-1: Differentiate varieties, *their own and others,* of human experiences, modesof thinking, values, and/or modes of creativity
	1-2: *Analyze problems or issues showing an understanding of cultural diversity, including his/her own cultural perspective*
	1-3: *Critically review pertinent information and assertions for relevance, bias, stereotyping, manipulation and thoroughness*
2-1: Analyze interpretive systems, political systems, or social structures as cultural/social constructions	2-1: Analyze interpretive systems, political systems, or social structures as cultural/social constructions
2-2: Explain perspectives on effects of various cultural, social, or political systems on groups of individuals	2-2: *Explain how social, political, cultural and historical contexts affect individual and group lives and experiences*
	2-3: *Explain the effects of external changes on local and indigenous institutions*
3-1: Describe the interrelatedness of various cultures or peoples	3-1: *Identify points of comparison and contrast between various cultures or peoples*
	3-2: *Articulate the competence of all human cultures as functioning ways of life*
4-1: Contrast definitions of human rights that are derived from at least two different legal, cultural, or values systems	4-1: Contrast definitions of human rights that are derived from at least two different legal, cultural, or values systems
4-2: Explain the causes and consequences of human migration	4-2: Explain the causes and consequences of human migration
5-1: Discuss social, political, and/or economic power	5-1: *Compare and contrast the institutional forms of different systems of power*
	5-2: *Describe the consequences of social, cultural, political and economic inequality*

The Final Report on this year's CA4 assessment effort will follow by July 1, 2010 and will be available on the GEOC website.

- *Assessment of Content Area 2 (Social Sciences) (Phase 1)*

This year's assessment effort in CA2 represents the very beginning of assessment in this Content Area. It follows the model of Phase I: identification of key courses; interviews with instructors; analysis of course materials; evaluation of resulting data and sharing of results with participating faculty; recommendations to GEOC about how to proceed.

What follows is the Preliminary Progress Report authored by Felicia Pratto, Psychology, CLAS, Storrs, and Melissa John, dated May 11, 2010:

"Assessing Content Area 2: Phase I
Preliminary Report
Submitted by Felicia Pratto & Melissa John, Department of Psychology, May 11, 2010

The Learning Goals and Objectives for Content Area 2 (Social Sciences, hereafter, CA2) were set out by a subcommittee of faculty members who are social scientists in 2007. The goals of the Phase I CA2 assessment were to

1) document who teaches CA2 courses and their knowledge of the CA2 Learning Objectives and Criteria,
2) have instructors assess how well their courses measure student learning of CA2 criteria,
3) corroborate instructor ratings of measurement of student learning,
4) learn from instructors whether the learning goals and objectives as set out by the GEOC CA2 subcommittee are appropriate and useful, and
5) gather instructor insights about the need for faculty development, instructional resources, or redefinition of the Learning Objectives, Learning Goals, or Criteria.

The Phase I assessment of CA2 was comprised of three sources of information:

1) Data from the Office for Instructional Research about the enrollments by section and instructor of all CA2 courses at all 6 campuses for the previous three semesters,
2) interviews and discussions with nine Storrs instructors of large-enrollment CA2 departments (those with over 1000 student enrollments in the past three semesters),
3) independent assessments of how these same instructors assess student learning of the Criteria, based on syllabi, examinations, and other assignments provided to us by the instructors.

Results showed that at the regional campuses, CA2 courses are most commonly taught by adjuncts and instructors in residence (70% of sections), but class sizes are relatively small (20-40 students). We suspect this enables very different kinds of assessment of student learning than do large-enrollment classes, and recommend that this be documented in the next phase of assessment. Fewer than 10% of CA2 course sections at the regional campuses are taught by tenured or tenure-track faculty members. At the Storrs campus, many CA2 courses are taught by tenured or tenure-track faculty members with enrollments of 200-300 students per course, with smaller sections often led by graduate students under the supervision of faculty members. However, in several Storrs departments, large-enrollment courses are also taught by Assistant Professors in Residence (APiR) and Graduate Assistants, who receive more supervision and training in instruction from some departments than from others. Given that the General Education Guidelines, approved by the University Senate in 2003, unambiguously state that one of the four principles of General Education is that "General education courses should be delivered by faculty members" (General Education Guidelines, 3. Other Operating Principles, a.) and that the results of this assessment show that this is in terms of tenured or tenure-track full-time faculty more rare than common, the university should consider whether these staffing practices are appropriate. We did not evaluate teaching because that is not the purpose of assessment, but we noted considerable devotion and skill among the non-tenured and non-tenure-track instructors. Nevertheless, this Gen Ed guideline is not being carried out in practice, and the university, including administrators, department heads, and faculty members should determine whether this is the best allocation of available instructional resources, and whether this indicates the need for faculty hiring. The fact of the matter is that regional campus CA2 courses are rarely

taught by tenured or tenure-track faculty members and CA2 courses at Storrs are only sometimes taught by tenured or tenure-track faculty members.

Interviews with instructors revealed that some of the Learning Goals and Learning Objectives should be respecified, and also that the University Senate may wish to reconsider some of the course approval criteria for CA2 courses. For example, at present, Criterion 2 states that CA2 courses should introduce students to "ethical problems social scientists face," and the CA2 learning objective say that "students should be familiar with some methods used in the social sciences including the ethical considerations of their use" (http://www.geoc.uconn.edu/Assessment%20Documents/CA2_Assessment_2-5-07.html), that means ethics should be discussed as a research methods issue. The interviewed CA2 instructors discussed many ways that they teach about ethics relevant to their disciplines, but these are not always with reference to research methods or even how research is used. Further, linking ethics to research rather than to substance seems to overlook much of the contribution that CA2 courses make to students' development, particularly to the overall purposes of general education as stated in the following items in the General Education Guidelines (http://www.geoc.uconn.edu/geocguidelines.htm):

2. acquire intellectual breadth and versatility,
3. acquire critical judgment,
4. acquire moral sensitivity,
5. acquire awareness of their era and society,
6. acquire consciousness of the diversity of human culture and experience

Our Final Report will detail other insights and concerns about the appropriateness of the current learning objectives and goals and criteria.

Instructors were uniformly enthusiastic about the opportunity to teach general education courses and showed versatility and creativity in how they taught their courses. In particular, instructors were skilled at contrasting students' implicit assumptions against the contents of disciplines as a means to make students more self-aware and versatile. Most, but not all instructors were familiar with the CA2 criteria and rated their delivery and assessment of the criteria and most learning objectives highly. With very few exceptions, the independent raters concurred with the instructors' judgments. An incomplete sampling of the theories, concepts, ethical issues, and research methods taught in the CA2 courses surveyed showed very little overlap between courses, and that there is not a uniform body of theories, concepts, ethical issues or research methods that constitutes a core curriculum for CA2. This is reflected in the abstract quality of the CA2 criteria and in the implicit agreement that courses accept whatever is considered a "theory" within particular disciplines (which might sometimes be called meta-theories or approaches or hypotheses).

Recommendations by this year's CA2 Assessment Coordinator: Staffing practices should be considered by the administration and deans, as well as by department heads. The Final Report will make suggestions for investigating how CA2 is delivered at the regional campuses given that the staffing and class sizes are markedly different than Storrs. This Phase I of assessment research on CA2 courses revealed that there is a need to modify the student learning goals and objectives, and possibly also the approval criteria for CA2 courses before assessing student learning based on actual student artifacts would be appropriate. Given that one of the CA2 provisos is not to take resources away from other important missions, and another states that student assessment must be course specific, we also suggest methods of assessing student learning that are relatively low-cost for faculty and students. But more detailed research may be needed to prepare for that project. Direct assessment of student learning would be conducted differently at regional campuses than at Storrs, and more than one means of doing assessment of student learning is warranted."

The Final Report on this year's CA2 assessment effort will follow by July 1, 2010 and will be available on the GEOC website.

➢ *Plans for Further Assessment, Evaluations, and Recommendations for Improvements*

As mentioned above, the GEOC Assessment Subcommittee recommends that assessment in all Content Areas follow the staggered and sample approach modeled by CA3 assessment effort over the past three years. This approach needs to be adjusted to the given Content Area and specific findings and recommendations.

The Assessment Subcommittee furthermore recommends that the successful discipline-specific assessment of writing in the major be continued to benefit more departments and thus more instructors and students. The overall assessment of writing in the major needs to be connected with the writing assessment in Freshman English and with writing in the "second" writing courses that are not in the students' majors. In AY 2010-11, a science department should be among the next units participating in this discipline-specific writing assessment.

Proposed is therefore for the AY 2010-2011:

- Continued assessment, evaluation, and dissemination of the data gathered in
  - Writing in the major (two more departments)
  - Content Area 2 (Social Sciences), Phase IIa (or III)
  - Content Area 4 (Diversity and Multiculturalism/International), Phase IIb
  - Content Area 3 (Science and Technology), Phase IV
- Completion of the Assessment Document (student learning outcomes) in Content Area 1 (Arts and Humanities)

Recertification of General Education Courses

Part of GEOC's mandate from the Senate is "monitoring periodically courses that satisfy General Education requirements to ensure that they continue to meet the criteria adopted by the Senate" (*General Education Guidelines*). In AY 2009-10, GEOC has brought its two-year discussion about the purpose, process, and mechanics of course recertification to a close. The intent of recertification is to ensure that current Gen Ed course delivery still meets the criteria of the respective Gen Ed Content Areas and/or Competencies; to remind instructors of the original course design which was approved as meeting the respective Gen Ed criteria; to stimulate departmental conversations about their Gen Ed courses; and to overall ensure and improve the high quality of teaching and learning in UConn's General Education program.

Initially in 2008, GEOC contemplated a two-tiered system of recertification involving for most courses a brief, and for selected courses an in-depth, recertification form; this was to be filed for all courses after a certain number of years since their initial approval. In light of the current budget crisis and the fact that departments and faculty are overburdened as is, GEOC now hesitates to add work to department heads' and faculty's workloads and has therefore abandoned the initial idea of an elaborate and time-consuming recertification of all General Education courses.

Instead, GEOC has developed a smaller-scale recertification plan and opted for a staggered and sample approach that would still allow monitoring the quality of the Gen Ed program and help stimulate departmental conversations about the purpose and quality of their Gen Ed offerings. Thus, a sampling of courses - rather than all Gen Ed courses - will need to be recertified in an overall recertification process that is spread over a five-year cycle. That means that each department/academic unit will have to submit recertification information once every five years for a limited number of those Gen Ed courses that have been approved five or more years prior. This makes recertification concise and manageable for departments. GEOC subcommittees will receive recertification submissions from all academic units over a five year period and get an impression of how the Gen Ed program is working, yet they will have to process only a 20% load of course recertification submissions each year. This makes this process doable for both academic units and GEOC Subcommittees. In the distribution of departments/academic units over the five year cycle, GEOC will ensure a reasonable spread across Content Areas and Competencies each year. GEOC Administrator Anabel Perez will develop the respective logistics over the summer of 2010. The following process is envisioned and should be tested before it is fully implemented:

- Once every five years, a department/academic unit will be asked to recertify at least ONE course from EACH Content Area (CA 1, 2, 3, 4) and Competency (Q, W) in which they offer courses, with a maximum number of seven courses to be recertified. It is highly unlikely that any academic unit offers courses in each Content Area and Competency. Thus, in most cases the number of sample courses to be recertified will be significantly below seven.
    - If a course is intended by the department/academic unit to be dropped from the Gen Ed menu, it need not be recertified. The department should inform the GEOC Office and start the curricular action request to have it dropped.
- GEOC will randomly preselect two of a given dept's courses for each CA or Competency in which they have courses (if they number more than two). Course selection should be at random whenever possible. However,
    - Each department's *highest-enrolled course* (large lecture with or without discussion sections OR course with the same course number and multiple sections with or without the same syllabus; including those at the regional campuses; offered in the *Fall* or *Spring* [not Summer] *of the most recent academic year*) must be included in the maximum of seven courses.
    - at least one course of each academic unit's sample of courses to be recertified must be from a *regional campus* (if available).
    - One of the two GEOC-preselected W courses (if two are available) should be a *W-in-the-major* course listed in the *program's/department's Information Literacy Plan*.
    - One of the two GEOC-preselected *CA4* courses should be in the *international* category.
    - One of the two GEOC-preselected *CA3* courses should be a *lab course.*

  The "most recent academic year" criterion is only valid for a department's largest course. All other selected courses would be recertified based on information from when the course was last taught.
- Departments/academic units will then select ONE of the two GEOC-preselected courses in each CA or Competency to submit for recertification.
    - If a department or academic unit offers only one course in a given CA or Competency, they will need to provide recertification documentation only for that course.
    - Included in the courses to be recertified must be
        - Each department's/academic unit's *highest-enrolled course* (large lecture with or without discussion sections OR course with the same course number and multiple sections with or without the same syllabus, including those at the regional campuses) offered in the *Fall* or *Spring* [not Summer] *of the most recent academic year*.
        - One Gen Ed course offered at a *regional campus* (if available)
    - The following kinds of GEOC-preselected courses may or may eventually not end up being selected by the given department/academic unit out of the pool of GEOC-preselected courses:
        - a *W-in-the-major* course listed in the *program's/department's Information Literacy Plan*.
        - A *CA4* course in the *international* category.
        - a *CA3 lab course.*
- In cases where a department wishes to have a particular course recertified that has not been pre-selected by GEOC, the department should be granted this additional option (not substituting, however, one of the courses selected by GEOC).

GEOC intends to contact department heads in Fall 2010 to inform them about the purpose and process of this staggered approach to sample Gen Ed course recertification.

At this point, GEOC has completed the plan for the recertification process and the structure. The challenge is now to obtain funding for technical support in developing an appropriate recertification form. This form has to be as short, concise and easy to use as possible, should present a minimal burden on departments and faculty, and should easily be processed by the GEOC Administrator and GEOC Subcommittees. Yet, it should provide valuable insights into the quality of individual courses and the overall General Education program. GEOC has completed developing the content of this form and is currently waiting to receive funding for its technical development. Over the summer of 2010, the GEOC Administrator will develop a database that

will allow GEOC to identify which departments and which courses (approved five or more years ago) in which Content Areas and Competencies will be eligible for recertification in which of the upcoming five years.

Recommendations of the 2009-10 Writing Taskforce Report

Background: At the December 2008 Senate meeting, Senator Robert Thorson brought unexpectedly forth a motion to discuss the abolishment of UConn's Writing requirement. In the subsequent months, this motion was much discussed on campus and in GEOC. According to opinions around campus, there seemed to be a certain not so much about discipline-specific writing courses as about the "second" writing courses that students take supposedly wherever they find an open seat and that often does not directly complement their interest or career preparation. The overall challenge seems to be to provide students with writing opportunities that are educationally meaningful, successful, and affordable. In March 2009, the Senate voted in favor of charging the Senate Courses and Curriculum Committee with investigating UConn's Writing program and providing a report at the February 2010 Senate meeting.

In February 2010, the W Course Taskforce, chaired by Tom Long, School of Nursing, submitted this report. What follows is an excerpt from the Executive Summary of this report entitled "Writing to Learn While Learning to Write: The W Course in the General Education Curriculum of the University of Connecticut, prepared by the W Course Taskforce for the Senate Curricula and Courses Committee and University Senate, in February 2010"

"Recommendations

1. The W Course Taskforce recommends the continuation of the UConn General Education W Course requirements, with the following refinements and further research.
2. We recommend that criteria for W courses should be qualitatively as well as quantitatively measurable, and should be more specific about what students should be able to accomplish or perform with writing as a consequence of taking a W course that they couldn't do or do as proficiently before.
3. We recommend enhancements to the GEOC Web site, which provides guidelines for teaching W courses, including:
   - Identifying some specific target goals in competency for students to attain.
   - Providing Web resources to enable students to better understand the competencies and how to attain them.
   - Providing faculty with specific examples of teaching strategies to meet various competencies, adapted to general disciplinary areas (physical sciences, social sciences, liberal arts) or to particular disciplines.
4. We recommend wider replication of the UConn W Course Assessment project reported by Deans (2008) that used departmental-specific rubrics to evaluate the writing in W courses in specific disciplines and that used a professional development model with faculty and graduate student participants who scored students' papers prepared for blind review. W course instructors in those disciplines should be urged to read the report and adapt applicable portions to their own teaching. Replicating that study will engage conversations among faculty concerning writing in the discipline and writing-intensive course pedagogies.
5. We recommend that the Senate review the apparently discrepant policies of departments, divisions, colleges, and schools concerning whether the 2nd W is required to be in subjects outside the major.
6. We recommend that W courses be exempted from the current mandatory final exam policy. For many W courses, a final paper will be a better learning and assessment tool than a final exam.

Further Research

Limitations of time prevented our administering two surveys for which considerable preliminary planning and drafting had occurred: a survey of faculty and a survey of students. In addition, the

limitations of time prevented our conducting focus groups of the same populations, which might have provided useful qualitative data. Both forms of data gathering would be beneficial for future discussions of the general education writing curriculum, and no substantive decisions about W courses should be made without them.

In concert with comprehensive assessment of general education, further assessment of general-education writing outcomes should also be undertaken."

GEOC discussed the W Taskforce Report and its recommendations. Most importantly, the report recommends the continuation of the current Gen Ed requirement of two W courses, one of which must be taken in the student's major. Furthermore, the Report proves the myth that students supposedly cannot find seats in writing-intensive courses to be incorrect. While the occasional student may frantically try to find a seat in a W course shortly before graduation, the Report clearly confirms that most students take their writing-intensive courses in a timely manner and do find seats. GEOC is collaborating with Tom Deans, Director of the Writing Center, to improve the information for faculty and students on writing on the GEOC website. GEOC has also continued to support the excellent undergraduate Writing Assessment projects carried out at UConn over the past few years and involving faculty and teaching assistants in numerous departments, and schools and colleges. The W Assessment projects have helped faculty and students in these departments to improve the teaching and learning of writing in general and discipline-specific writing in particular.

Approved Multi-Content Area General Education Courses

After approximately two years of discussions in GEOC and with various constituencies, GEOC approved and forwarded to the Senate C&CC in November 2009 a proposal to introduce *optional* Multi-Content Area General Education courses. It was proposed that departments be allowed to propose and students have the option to take courses that would satisfy the criteria and requirements of two out of Content Areas 1, 2, and 3, in addition to Content Area 4. This proposal marked a change in the University By-Laws and thus had to be approved by the Senate C&CC and Senate.

The GEOC Chair discussed the technical implications of such a change in requirements in PeopleSoft with the Registrar Jeff von Munkwitz-Smith, presented the proposal first to the Senate Courses & Curriculum Committee where it was approved as further amended in January 2010 and then to the Senate where it was approved in March 2010.

Background:

- Up to now, the *General Education Guidelines* approved by the Senate permit the approval of courses that fulfill the criteria for any of the four Content Areas in combination with a Competency such as Q or W. A course may also fulfill the criteria for Content Area 1, 2, or 3 in combination with Content Area 4. But combinations across the Content Areas 1, 2, or 3 were currently prohibited.
- In recent years, GEOC has received more and more interdisciplinary course proposals that could not easily be placed in one single CA 1, 2, or 3. Lacking a clear policy that would allow for bridges across two of the CAs 1, 2, or 3 (combinations with CA4 have been permitted all along), such course proposals would occasionally fall "in between the cracks" and be rejected. Faculty repeatedly complained about the hurdles UConn's curricular approval system provides for interdisciplinary courses in general and proposals to the Gen Ed program in particular. Most importantly, today's and tomorrow's global challenges, e.g., in healthcare, the environment, trade, and politics, will have to be solved in interdisciplinary teams. Many of our students will work in such interdisciplinary teams. Therefore, they need training in problem-based multidisciplinary thinking. Some Gen Ed courses could provide models for connecting the knowledge traditionally taught in disciplinary "silos." While no student should be required to take multi-content area Gen Ed courses, it makes sense for the Gen Ed program to provide them with this option. Experiencing one or several multi-content area Gen Ed courses may inspire

students to seek out further connections between their majors and other areas of knowledge and may facilitate an altogether enriched educational experience at UConn.

- GEOC had intense discussions about the advantages and disadvantages of courses connecting any two of the three Content Areas 1, 2, and 3. Such connections would affect both faculty course design and students' choice of courses that fulfill the Gen Ed requirements. Under discussion were not INTD courses which may not automatically bridge Content Areas, nor merely interdisciplinary courses which in many cases may stay within a single Content Area. Under discussion were courses that would bridge two of the Content Areas 1, 2, and 3, e.g., Social Sciences and Arts/Humanities, or Sciences and Social Sciences, or Sciences and Art/Humanities. Concerns revolved mostly around two items: one, that this option may allow students to take Gen Ed courses mostly in their area of expertise and interest while neglecting other areas; second, that a Gen Ed science course may become diluted if it also met the criteria of other content areas. The first concern was put to rest by the so-called six-department rule referring to the spread of Gen Ed courses students have to take: "The courses fulfilling the Content Areas One, Two, and Three requirements must be drawn from at least six different subjects as designated by the subject letter code (e.g. ANTH or PVS). The courses within each of these content areas must be from two different subjects" (*General Education Guidelines*). Regarding the second concern, it is GEOC's explicit goal to *preserve the integrity of each Content Area* (as opposed to dilution) and yet allow for *connections across Content Areas*. The GEOC Content Area subcommittees will serve as a filter guaranteeing that the criteria of each Content Area in question will be met in full whenever a multi-content area course will be proposed.

Inserted here is the revised text in the *Gen Ed Guidelines* which corresponds to the respective passage in the Senate By-Laws. Changes are oted in ~~strike-out~~ and *red italicized* font.

"A) In PART A: The General Education Requirements; PART A.1. Content Areas:

"There are four content Areas**:**
Group One - Arts and Humanities. Six credits.
Group Two - Social Sciences. Six credits.
Group Three - Science and Technology. Six to seven credits.
Group Four - Diversity and Multiculturalism. Six credits.

Content Area Operating Principles:

a. The courses fulfilling the Content Areas One, Two, and Three requirements must be drawn from at least six different subjects as designated by the subject letter code (e.g., ANTH or PVS). The courses within each of these Content Areas must be from two different subjects. Content Area courses may be counted toward the major.
b. Normally, the six credits required as a minimum for each Content Area will be met by two three-credit courses. However, in Group One, one-credit performance courses may be included. Students may use no more than three credits of such courses to meet the requirement.
c. In Group Three, one of the courses must be a laboratory course of four or more credits. However, this laboratory requirement is waived for students who have passed a hands-on laboratory science course in the biological and/or physical sciences.
d. In Group Four, at least three credits shall address issues of diversity and/or multiculturalism outside of the United States.
~~e. One, and only one, Group Four course may also serve as a Group One, Group Two, or Group Three requirement.~~
~~f~~*e*. For *all Groups*, ~~Content Area One, Two and Three, there will be no~~ *there can be* multiple designations. An individual course ~~will be approved for inclusion in only one of these Content Areas~~ *may be approved for and may count for one Group, two Groups, or three Groups if one of the three is Group 4*.

f. Students must pass at least seven content area courses with at least three credits each (with the exception noted in A.1.b. above), amounting to a total of at least 21 credits.

g. Interdisciplinary (INTD*= interdepartmental*) courses *are not necessarily multi-content area courses nor are multi-content area courses necessarily INTD courses. INTD courses* may be proposed for inclusion in General Education. ~~Each such INTD course must be approved by the General Education Oversight Committee (GEOC) and must be placed in only one of the first three Content Areas.~~ No more than six credits with the INTD prefix may be elected by any student to meet the General Education Requirements.

h. General Education courses, whenever possible, should include elements of diversity."

B) In PART C: Criteria for Specific Content Areas and Competencies

" […] In order for any course to be included in Content Area Groups One, Two, Three or Four, it should be oriented toward these overarching goals. ~~In addition, specific criteria for the four Content Areas and five Competency Areas are given below.~~

A General Education course may fulfill more than one Content Area. A course that fulfills the criteria of two or three (if one of the three is CA4) Content Areas constitutes a multiple-content area General Education course and will be listed under each Content Area. A multiple content area general education course must satisfy the criteria of each of its Content Areas. Note: For rules regarding how students meet the General Education requirements in different Content Areas, see "Content Area Operating Principles" in PART A."

Specific criteria for the four Content Areas and five Competency Areas are given below."

This change will take effect in Fall 2011, but multi-content area Gen Ed (MCAGE) courses can be proposed immediately. Next steps to prepare faculty, advisors, and students for this new option in the General Education Requirements:

- Contact Marianne Buck to make sure the MCAGE option will be in catalog in Fall 2011
- Informing faculty (courses can already be proposed in AY 2010-11):
  - Website publicity: devote webpage to MCAGE course option with more details. Venn diagram.
  - Flyer/brochure. Venn diagram.
  - Potential model courses on website?
  - Target potential GE course proposers:
    - Competition winners
    - Email to instructors of gen ed courses
  - Information to all faculty via the Faculty-Listserv
  - GEOC reps to present MCAGE course option to school/college C&CCs
  - Presentations at faculty meetings
  - Presentations at school/college meetings of department heads
  - If any flyer/brochure mailings are to be sent, they should go to departmental administrators
  - Information to chairs of C&CC of all undergraduate schools/colleges
  - *UConn Today* website
- Workshops or meetings with ACES
- Workshops or meetings with school/college advising centers
- February/March 2011 (before Fall 2011 registration) and August 2011: promotional push, (if courses are available).
- *Daily Campus*
- Include MCAGE option in Freshman Orientation Leader workshop on Gen Ed (March 2011)

- MCAGE courses as one of the foci of Provost's Gen Ed Course Enhancement Competition (announcement in Nov/December 2010, deadline around February 1, 2011)

Second Language Requirements at the Top 30 Public Institutions

Upon the request of GEOC, Brian Boecherer, member of the GEOC Second Language Subcommittee and Associate Director of UConn Early College Experience, assembled a very valuable overview of Second Language Entry and Exit Requirements at the top 30 public institutions of higher education, UConn currently being #26. Most of our peer and aspirant institutions have, like UConn, an exit requirement of two semesters of a foreign language. A number of them have higher exit requirements and very few have lower ones. That means UConn is in good company. However, some of the best institutions, among them several of the University of California system, U Virginia, U Wisconsin/Madison, U of Illinois/Chicago, Penn State, U Iowa, have a university-wide exit requirement of three or even four semesters of a second language. As part of the ongoing university internationalization, UConn may eventually want to consider following the model of these universities.

Further Revisions in the *General Education Guidelines*

The GEOC, the Senate Courses & Curriculum Committee, and the Senate approved the following changes in the *General Education Guidelines*:

- The course numbers listed were adjusted to the 4-digit numbering system.
- The Center formerly called "Q Center" is now called "Quantitative Learning Center."
- The six-department rule which had been approved previously for inclusion in the catalog is now officially approved for inclusion in the *General Education Guidelines* and the Senate By-Laws.

Support for Faculty Teaching Large Lectures

Many departments are forced to offer formerly smaller Gen Ed courses in a significantly larger format but are unable to fund an appropriate number of TAs to support the large lecture courses, existing ones as well as new ones. This posits challenges to instructors, many of which may decide to revert to a strict lecture format (without TA-led discussion sections) and multiple choice tests rather than more in-depth and creative ways of engaging students and examining student learning. This development would represent an impoverishment of teaching and learning at the University of Connecticut.

One of the ways, the Provost's Office and GEOC have tried to help out faculty faced with teaching larger Gen Ed courses has been to make innovations in large classes once again one of the favored foci of this year's Provost's General Education Course Enhancement Grant Competition. Nearly all winning proposals responded to this particular focus.

The Institute of Teaching and Learning also offered numerous workshops to help faculty cope with teaching large lectures. For example, Catherine Ross offered several one-week tutorials on "Public Speaking in Large Lectures" during Summer 2009. In addition the ITL's all-day Winter Teaching Institute on January 15, 2010 focused on "Teaching, Learning, Innovation and (Even) Enjoyment in Large Classes!" Many of the participants were Gen Ed instructors. In each workshop, many of the participants were instructors of Gen Ed courses.

GENERAL EDUCATION RELATED CROSS-CAMPUS INITIATIVES

Curricular Action Request (CAR) Form

Background: In Fall 2008, the then new Curricular Action Request (CAR) form that had been developed by UITS during 2007-08 became available to be used by faculty in their dealings with GEOC and the Senate C&CC. The idea behind introducing this potentially unifying CAR form was to help streamline the currently multilayered course approval process. It is cumbersome for faculty and departments to use one form to get their courses approved by their schools' or colleges' C&CCs and another to obtain the approval of GEOC, the Senate C&CC, and the Senate. This occasionally results in the failure of a course to move expeditiously through the system. Since all levels of course approval require some of the same information, it makes sense to use one single form for approval of new, or revision of existing, courses at the university. Ideally, faculty would fill out a single form that would then be routed automatically through the levels of approval required for the requested action. The relevant copy would then be available to the Registrar's office staff for inclusion in the catalog and course schedule.

To date, neither funding nor sufficient UITS manpower has been available for all eight schools and colleges (CANR, CLAS, BUS, PHAR, NURS, ENGR, SFA, Neag) to inspect the new CAR form, include the alterations necessary for it to work for their school's or college's C&CC, and discuss the cost involved in UITS implementing these adjustments. The College of Agriculture and Natural Resources' C&CC, chaired by Michael Darre, volunteered to act as "guinea pig": they identified the (relatively few) changes needed to adjust the CAR form to CANR needs and met with UITS to discuss the technical and financial implications of the needed alterations. Yet, funding for the alterations was not available. This pilot project by CANR would present a sense of the technical challenges and costs involved in adjusting the CAR form to each of the participating schools and colleges. It is likely that some or all of the other schools' and colleges' C&CCs would follow the path taken by the CANR C&CC in order to make the course approval process as easy as possible for their faculty and departments. Adopting a version of the "one" CAR form would, of courses, be voluntary.

To date, funding for the intended adjustment of the CAR form to individual schools and colleges has not been made available. The development of this valuable and practical tool has therefore been on hold.

Global Learning

The work of the Global Citizenship Curriculum Committee (GCCC) is not per se linked to the GEOC, even if the current GEOC Chair happens to also chair the GCCC. However, in some areas GEOC's responsibility and the university's, and thus the GCCC's, agenda to enhance student preparation for global citizenship and offer an expanded and better organized global curriculum clearly overlap, specifically when it comes to providing students with second language competency, cross-cultural proficiency, and the areas of knowledge covered by courses in the international category of Content Area 4 (Diversity and Multiculturalism/International).

The inventory of 566 undergraduate "global" courses across all schools and colleges that was created in Spring 2009 includes many Gen Ed courses from a variety of Gen Ed Content Areas and Competencies, all CA4 (Diversity and Multiculturalism) courses of the international category, and all elementary Second Language courses. This inventory is now available on the newly created (Fall 2009) and central Global Citizenship and Curriculum Website. A search function allows searching the global courses by Gen Ed category.

For connections regarding the Second Language requirement, please see the section about "Second Language Requirements at the Top 30 Public Institutions of Higher Education" earlier in this report (p. 29).

General Education and the Honors Core Program

The expansion of the Honors Program creates a significant need for additional Honors Core courses that simultaneously satisfy General Education requirements. The Honors program has developed numerous ways for courses to connect the honors requirement with Gen Ed requirements. Most of them find wide-spread approval, except for those Gen Ed courses reserved for honors students only. Upon complaints by faculty, GEOC discussed the questions, if "honors only" Gen Ed courses violate the principles of universality and accessibility outlined in the *General Education Guidelines*.

- **"Universality**. All students at the University of Connecticut should have the same University General Education Requirements irrespective of their major, School or College. Schools and Colleges may not restrict the courses that students are allowed to use in fulfilling the University General Education requirements.
- **Accessibility**. All students at the University of Connecticut should have timely access to General Education courses and support services."

GEOC members agreed unanimously that the accessibility principle was not violated by "honors only" Gen Ed courses. While most GEOC members agreed that a certain violation of the universality principle is the case, a majority, albeit a small majority, leaned towards allowing the relatively small number of "honors only" Gen Ed courses to exist, considering that a strong Honors program is a benefit to the university.

Since then, numerous meetings have taken place between the GEOC Chair, members of the clearly more opposed Senate Courses & Curriculum Committee, the Chair of the Senate Courses & Curriculum Committee and the Director of the Honors Program, Associate Vice Provost Lynne Goodstein and Senior Associate Director of Honors Margaret Lamb in order to find a viable solution.

Second Languages and Cultures Center at the Homer Babbidge Library

Since the beginning of AY 2007-08 and in alignment with the Provost's Office's initiative to internationalize the campus, the Homer Babbidge Library's Learning Commons Development Team, the Chair of GEOC, and representatives of the Department of Modern and Classical Languages including the Department Head and Director of the Multimedia Language Lab have discussed plans for the development of a Second Languages and Cultures Learning Center. Currently, UConn's library provides services supporting four of the five General Education Competencies: the Q (Quantitative) Center, the W (Writing) Center, the Learning Resources Center (Information Literacy) and Information Technology support (Computer Technology) as part of the library's Commons on the second floor. What's missing is support for students' second language and culture learning in a Second Languages and Cultures Center.

The space for the Second Languages and Cultures Center has already been determined. It would be centrally located on the same floor as the other four centers. The purpose of this center would be to support student learning in the fifth Gen Ed Competency, namely to stimulate and support second language learning and cross-cultural proficiency. In the long run, this center could develop into a "happening" Languages/Cultures (LC) Center providing easy access to digital and non-digital reference materials, computer programs on the server to be accessed through many ports for laptops, and TV channels in many languages from around the world; tutoring in many languages; and a stimulating "hangout" decorated with international flags where students would meet, converse in second (or third and fourth) languages, communicate with students from other countries and domestic speakers of other languages, prepare for or report on their study abroad experience, and alike. Depending on decisions to be made in the Department of Modern and Classical Languages, part of the Multimedia Lab could theoretically be moved to the future Second Languages and Cultures Center.

In Fall 2009, the Head of the Modern and Classical Languages (MCL), Norma Bouchard, discussed an ambitious proposal for the implementation of the Second Languages and Cultures Center with former Vice Provost Makowsky. The proposal for an elaborate center was not accepted, but resubmission of a financially more moderate proposal was encouraged. Negotiations between the now outgoing Head of MCL and the Provost's Office as well as Brinley Franklin, Vice Provost for University Libraries, have been on hold. Further

development of the Second Languages and Cultures Center will depend on funding by the Provost's Office, the Library, and the approach of the incoming Head of the Modern and Classical Languages, Rosa Helena Chinchilla.

General Education Courses Online

In April 2009, the then Co-Chairs of UConn's Online Education Initiative Desmond McCaffrey, Director of Institutional Design and Development, and Doug Cooper, Professor of Chemical Engineering, now Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education, Regional Campus Administration, and Public Engagement, met with GEOC to discuss possible connections between the General Education curriculum and the Online Education Initiative. Since 2007, GEOC has discussed amongst its members and with the Senate Courses and Curriculum Committee the question, if online Gen Ed course offerings that by definition constitute a change in course delivery should be scrutinized in a similar way as Gen Ed courses that are proposed for delivery in intensive sessions of four weeks or less. Discussions in 2007, 2009, and 2010 concluded that, at this point, GEOC lacks the expertise in online methodologies and no clear criteria to evaluate online course offerings have been developed at UConn. GEOC is waiting for the appropriate committees to provide such criteria. In the meantime, GEOC has not asked for special approval for existing Gen Ed courses when their delivery is to be changed from face-to-face to online. This is, however, not a permanent GEOC policy, but has been a case-by-case response to those who inquired. In line with its mandate to oversee the Gen Ed curriculum, it is GEOC's main concern that the approved criteria for course inclusion in specific Gen Ed Content Areas and/or Competencies will be met regardless of the format of course delivery. GEOC and the colleagues from Instructional Design and Development (IDD) and the Institute of Teaching and Learning (ITL) continue their ongoing dialog about questions of online delivery of Gen Ed courses and their approval.

GENERAL EDUCATION WORKSHOPS AND PRESENTATIONS

Workshops and Presentations at UConn

It is one of GEOC's tasks to facilitate understanding of the General Education requirements among students, advisors, and faculty, help faculty cope with the challenges of teaching Gen Ed courses, and disseminate the results of GEOC-sponsored assessment efforts. Therefore, GEOC, ITL, and the Writing Center organized and/or sponsored several workshops on campus revolving around the purpose, teaching, learning, and assessment of General Education at UConn:

- GEOC: Teaching General Education Courses in Science and Technology (Dissemination of CA2 Assessment in Spring 2010), Felicia Prato, Faculty Coordinator of 2009-10 CA2 Assessment, May 14, 2010.
- GEOC: "Year One Workshop for the Provost's Gen Ed Course Enhancement Grant Competition Winners of 2009," Katharina von Hammerstein, Keith Barker, and Desmond McCaffrey, May 10, 2010.
- GEOC: "General Education Workshop for Freshman Orientation Leaders," Kim Chambers and Katharina von Hammerstein, March 25, 2010.
- Senate C&CC, GEOC, GCCC: Presentation to the Academic Affairs Committee of the Board of Trustees, "Enriching the Undergraduate Curriculum: Cultural Diversity in courses and Programs, Eric Schultz and Katharina von Hammerstein, March 23, 2010
- GEOC: "Workshop in Preparation of the Provost's General Education Course Enhancement Grant Competition," Katharina von Hammerstein, Keith Barker, Desmond McCaffrey, February 2, 2010.
- ITL: Winter Teaching Institute: Teaching, Learning, Innovation and (Even) Enjoyment in Large Classes! January 15, 2010 (all day). Many of the participants were Gen Ed instructors.
- GEOC: "Why Gen Ed?", guest lecture by Katharina von Hammerstein in the Honors FYE, INTD 1784-005 "This I Believe" – Developing Your Personal Approach to undergraduate Education (Dr. Margaret Lamb), Oct 21, 2009.
- ITL: In Fall 2009, Catherine Ross ran a book discussion group reading Louis Menand's *Marketplace of Ideas* about the history and place of Gen Ed in the U.S. This faculty group also read *Exploring Signature Pedagogies* to look at how or if disciplines vary in their signature pedagogies and what might be the implications for Gen Ed given these commonalities or differences among disciplines.
- GEOC/NURS/W-Center: Report on Writing in NURS at NURS faculty retreat, August 28, 2009
- GEOC/ENGL: Report on Writing in Freshman English at Freshman English instructors' meeting on August 31, 2009.
- ITL: Catherine Ross ran two five-day workshops on public speaking in large lectures. May 18-22 2009, June 29-July 2, 2009. Each time, many of the participants were Gen Ed instructors.
- ITL: Over the course of AY 2009-10, The Institute of Teaching and Learning offered additional workshops to help faculty design large lectures and face the pedagogical challenges of transitioning from small courses to large lectures. This included faculty teaching and preparing to teach large Gen Ed courses.

In addition, the Writing Center offered the Fall 2009 Mini-Seminars on Teaching Writing-Intensive Courses Across the Disciplines

- Responding to Student Writing: Are There Better Ways To Grade?
  Tues, Sept. 22, 12:30-1:30pm, CUE 318
  Tom Deans, Associate Professor of English and Director, University Writing Center
  Responding to student writing is among the most important and time-consuming things we do in W courses. In this session we will review experience-tested ways of responding effectively. We will discuss how to streamline responses by having students do self-assessments, how (and how much) to comment on drafts, when (and when not) to grade drafts, and how to encourage students to take more responsibility for their own revising and editing.
- Freshman English and General Education: What Assessment Reveals

Monday, Sept. 28, Noon-1pm, CUE 318
Scott Campbell, Assistant Professor of English, and Members of the Assessment Team

In an assessment project completed in summer 2009, faculty and graduate student readers looked closely at samples of student writing from Freshman English courses at all six UConn campuses. In this presentation, members of this assessment team will describe the study, discuss its implications for UConn students and faculty, and offer a few targeted thoughts about the relationship of Freshman English to students' general education, including W courses. Questions and response are welcome.

- Designing More Effective Writing Assignments [played a big part in the W/FE report]
  Thursday, Oct. 8 12:30-2, CUE 318
  Edward White, University of Arizona

  One of the country's leading experts on teaching and assessing writing, Edward White, will visit UConn to present a workshop on designing writing assignments. Complimentary copies of one of White's books, Assigning, Responding, Evaluating: A Writing Teacher's Guide, will be available to the first 20 attendees. For more on the presenter, please see his webpage: http://www.u.arizona.edu/~emwhite/
- Enriching W Courses by Focusing on Reading
  Friday, Oct. 16, 1pm-2pm, CUE 318
  Ellen Carillo, Assistant Professor of English

  Careful reading—writing's counterpart in the process by which we make meaning—is a crucial means by which students come to understand their fields of study and the conventions that govern them. This session will introduce ways of foregrounding the connections between critical reading and critical writing, and share in-class and take-home assignments that compel students to explore these connections.
- Looking Ahead: Designing Your Next W Course
  Monday, Dec. 21, 1-2pm, CUE 318
  Tom Deans and Kathleen Tonry, University Writing Center

  This mini-seminar is customized for those preparing to teach a writing-intensive course in the coming semester. We will address several questions: What are university-wide expectations for W courses? How do most people integrate content coverage and writing instruction? How can we design robust but still manageable revising processes for our courses?

Presentations at National Conferences

Tom Deans, Professor of English, Director of the Writing Center, and Coordinator of UConn's Writing Assessment efforts for the past three years, and Annelie Skoog, Professor of Marine Science and Coordinator of UConn's CA3 Assessment efforts for the past two years have been encouraged to submit proposals to the American Association of Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) conference to present on their excellent and groundbreaking assessment projects and findings. This would continue the tradition started by Hedley Freake and Katharina von Hammerstein's presentations about UConn assessment at the same conference in 2008 and 2009.

STAFFING

Anabel Perez is the Administrator of and permanent staff person for GEOC. She splits her time 50:50 between GEOC and the Individualized Major/Interdisciplinary Studies Program. Her constant presence, while GEOC Chairs come and go, ensures continuity and is essential to the successful operation of GEOC. Anabel Perez represents GEOC's memory. She is an extremely well organized, independently thinking, and hard working Administrator who ensures the smooth running of all GEOC operations, the reliable collection of relevant data, updating of the GEOC website, and meeting of all deadlines. She furthermore regularly solves all challenges the complicated and changing payroll processes present (relevant when hiring faculty assessment coordinators and graduate assistants). Her performance this past year has been excellent! She provides crucial support for GEOC's Chair, GEOC's Subcommittees, and all inquiries by faculty, students, advisors, and administrators.

GEOC COMMITTEE MEMBERS, ACADEMIC YEAR 2009-2010

von Hammerstein, Katharina (‘10), GEOC Chair	MCL
Ayers, John (’12)	ECE
Capshaw, Katharine	ENGL
Chinchilla, Rosa Helena (‘11)	MCL
Cromley, Robert (‘10)	GEOG
Deibler, Cora Lynn (until early Spring ‘10)	ART
Deans, Thomas (W Center Director)	ENGL
Dutta, Niloy (‘10)	PHYS
Finger, Anke (‘11)	MCL
Gogarten, Peter (‘10) (Spring 2010)	MCB
Goldman, Jane (‘10)	HDFS
Jockusch, Elizabeth (‘12) (on leave)	EEB
Kaminsky, Peter (’12)	MUSI
Kaufman, Douglas (’11)	Curriculum & Instruction
Lott, William (‘10)	ECON
Roby, Thomas (Q Center Director)	MATH
Reyes, Xae Alicia (‘11)	EDCI
Sewall, Murphy (will continue as GEOC Chair ‘13)	MKTG
Schultz, Eric (Senate Curricula & Courses Committee)	EEB
Shvartsman, Alexander (’11)	CSE
Stephens, Robert (’11)	MUSI
Winter, Sarah (’11)	ENGL
Young, Michael (‘12)	EDPSYC
Lori Gupta (Undergraduate Student Representative)	
Kelleher, Brenna (Graduate Student Representative)	

Perez, Anabel, GEOC Administrator

Many thanks to Kate Capshaw, Cora Lynn Deibler, Niloy Dutta, Peter Gogarten, Jane Goldman, Bill Lott who provided immensely valuable input to GEOC and are now rotating off of this committee.

GEOC SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS, ACADEMIC YEAR 2009-2010

Arts and Humanities
*Cora Lynn Deibler (Fall 09)
* Katherine Capshaw Smith
* Peter Kaminsky (Spring 10)
Gustavo Nanclares

Social Sciences
*Robert Cromley
*Jane Goldman
David Atkin
Linda Lee
Jeremy Pressman
Charles Venator

Science and Technology
*Niloy Dutta
*John Ayers
Elizabeth Jockusch (on leave)
Adam Fry
Tom Meyer

Diversity and Multiculturalism
*Anke Finger
*Robert Stephens
Alexinia Baldwin
Mary Ellen Junda
Tsa Shelton (student)

* co-chairs

Computer Technology
*William Lott
*Murphy Sewall
Kim Chambers
Andrew DePalma
Stephen Park
Katherine Sorrentino

Information Literacy
* Sarah Winter
* Michael Young (Spring 09)
Francine DeFranco
Andrea Hubbard
Carolyn Lin
Susanna Cowan

Second Language
*Xae Alicia Reyes
*Rosa Helena Chinchilla
Brian Boecherer
Rajeev Bansal
Kenneth Fuchsman
Catherine Ross
Barbara Lindsey

Quantitative
*Peter Gogarten
*Thomas Roby (Fall 10)
*Alexander Shvartsman (Spring 10)
Bernard Grela
James Cole
David Gross
Brianna Hennessey (student)

Writing
*Thomas Deans
*Douglas Kaufman
Kathleen Tonry
Janice Clark
Mark Brand
Samantha Jones (student)

Assessment
*Katharina von Hammerstein
Tom Deans
Desmond McCaffrey
H. Jane Rogers
Felicia Pratto
Eric Soulsby