



TEMPLE UNIVERSITY General Education Program

Self-Study 2012-2013

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General Education Program
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Faculty Committees Assisting in the Self-Study Process

General Education Executive Committee (GEEC)

Istvan Varkonyi, Director
 Julie Phillips, Associate Director
 Annabelle Jellinek, Office & Finance Coordinator

Patricia Boateng, Political Science, undergraduate (Temple Student Government)
 Cynthia Folio, Music Studies/Music Theory, Boyer College of Music and Dance
 Mary Anne Gaffney, Accounting, Fox School of Business
 Eli Goldblatt, English, College of Liberal Arts
 Peshe Kuriloff, Teaching and Learning, College of Education
 Vallorie Peridier, Mechanical Engineering, College of Engineering
 Michael Puppolo, Chemistry, graduate student
 Rickie Sanders, Geography and Urban Studies, College of Liberal Arts
 Matthew Schillizzi, Music, Honors undergraduate
 Deborah Stull, Biology, College of Science and Technology
 Jill Swavely, Teaching and Learning, College of Education
 Thomas Wright, Strategic Communication, School of Media and Communication

General Education Area Coordinators (GAC)

Alistair Howard, Political Science, College of Liberal Arts (World Society)
 Anthony Hughes, Computer Information Science, College of Science & Technology (Quantitative Literacy/Technology)
 Tricia Jones, Psychological, Organizational and Leadership Studies, College of Education (Human Behavior/Race & Diversity)
 Edward Latham, Music Studies/Music Theory, Boyer College of Music and Dance (Arts)
 Terry Rey, Religion, College of Liberal Arts (Intellectual Heritage/Mosaic)
 Susan Varnum, Chemistry, College of Science & Technology (Science)
 Ralph Young, History, College of Liberal Arts (US Society)

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COMMUNICATING THE IMPORTANCE OF GENERAL EDUCATION

Introduction

Prior to 2007, Temple University had “course distribution requirements” for its students which were collectively called the “Core curriculum”. The principal intention of the Core was to expose students to a variety of disciplines outside of the student's major. However, even ten years ago, it had become apparent that the vast array of course options which had accrued to satisfy the Core requirements were quite uneven in both scope and difficulty. It was generally conceded that the Core curriculum lacked a unified, well-defined set of objectives.

The first serious call to revamp the general education program was issued by Temple University President David Adamany (2004, Policy 02.10.02). This policy opens with a summary statement of his vision:

“The General Education Program at Temple University should be designed to enable students to become knowledgeable and active citizens, equipped to judge critically aspects of the world and of themselves, as they make decisions about their lives and their communities. This is especially important in this time of ever-increasing globalization, with its many local, national, and international consequences.”

In this same policy, Adamany articulated two overriding goals: (i) an emphasis on diverse knowledge-acquisition skills over course content, and (ii) a common, core educational experience for every Temple graduate. To this end he proposed a fairly specific curriculum consisting of three “foundation courses” and five “breadth courses” (with five to eight options in each category). Adamany further envisaged lectures taught in small sections by full-time faculty with large, common final exams.

Although this original and rather inflexible vision of the General Education program failed to gain traction with the faculty,¹ the Temple community ultimately implemented a more expansive “GenEd” curriculum, in part due to the new leadership of President Hart, who stated (2007, Policy 02.10.03):

¹ An account of how Temple evaded a stillborn delivery of its new General Education program is amusingly and insightfully described in: C. Dennis, T. Halbert, and J. Phillips: “Change a curricular physics: leadership in the process of reforming general education:”, chapter 3 in *A Process to General Education Reform* (2010) Atwood Publishing, pg. 59-84.

"The success of a university-wide general education program depends on a partnership of faculty, administrators, and students. This partnership includes a balance between the trust in the professional judgment of the participants and a willingness to challenge each other to meet the emerging needs of students, disciplines, and the greater society"

The importance President Hart placed on a trust-based partnership pushed the program out of its stalled state and became central to the program's development. The University community largely embraced Adamany's vision of preparing Temple University's undergraduates with the competencies for active citizenship in a globalized world, and they wanted to be active contributors rather than passive participants. Thus, the General Education program's implementation has been broad-based and iterative, with shared responsibility among faculty, staff, administrators and students.

Purpose and Organization

This self-study chronicles the successes, developments and primary practices that have emerged since the program launched in Fall 2008. It focuses on the distinct and intentional process that governs decision-making, professional development and assessment efforts cultivated within the program of General Education.

To facilitate understanding we have organized the report into five sections. Section I provides a structural framework for Temple University's General Education program. Section II highlights the infrastructure developed to support, implement and oversee the program. Section III illustrates key principles governing the program's approach in three primary areas:

- student learning and success,
- review and assessment,
- involvement and governance

Section IV addresses the development of connections, both within and outside of the university. The final section, Section V, provides a synopsis of challenges to sustaining the program and presents promising and emergent practices on four fronts:

- maintaining continuity and momentum,
- aligning standards of excellence,
- communicating General Education to multiple audiences, and
- allocating resources within the changing University landscape.

SECTION I: Temple University's GenEd Framework

Presidents Adamany and Hart articulated two overarching goals for General Education: (1) preparing students for active engagement in public life and (2) providing a competencies-based approach to knowledge acquisition, dissemination and use.

These views were largely shaped by national discussions about changes in college attendance and performance, which include: decreases in persistence and graduation rates in light of increasing tuitions, the ever-changing nature of knowledge, best practices for student learning and development, and employers' expressed concerns of the requisite skill sets for the 21st century.

Pedagogical Rationale

The goals of GenEd loosely emerged from the Presidents' statements on the program as well as a request for proposals (RFP) issued to the university community. To develop a greater understanding of the University's understanding of these broad statements, the GenEd Assessment Team (GAT) and the Area Coordinators (GACs) convened a series of open faculty meetings to describe key goals, exercises and activities in the GenEd program and in specific courses prior to the program's launch.

From these discussions and policy documents, we articulated the program's learning objectives and area-specific learning goals. With programmatic and area-specific goals, we created a curriculum map showing the interplay of the program competencies with the area-specific learning goals.

A second series of open meetings solicited feedback on draft definitions for each of the competencies. Revised definitions for each competency were compiled and distributed to the faculty for feedback. The definitions developed through this recursive process have become the foundation for the assessment of student learning in GenEd. General Education now refers to these programmatic objectives as the GenEd competencies:

1. Critical thinking
2. Oral and written communications
3. Information literacy
4. Contextualized thinking
5. Interdisciplinary thinking
6. Scientific and quantitative reasoning

7. Civic engagement
8. Lifelong learning

These competencies are introduced and reinforced throughout the entirety of the curriculum. By design, courses included in the program's inventory must demonstrate assignments that require students to exercise critical thinking, communication and information literacy skills. Thus, each student develops these skills in a variety of contexts and assignments throughout her/his GenEd curriculum. The remaining competencies are reinforced at various places throughout the program and appear more prominently in the relevant or appropriate GenEd areas.

Basic Structure

In GenEd, students complete 11 required courses across nine areas. The curriculum has Foundation courses and Breadth courses. Those abilities deemed essential for future academic and professional success—reading, writing and critical and quantitative thinking—provide the basis of Foundation while Breadth courses focus more on developing competencies. Breadth courses provide students with repeated opportunities to hone skills and abilities as related to different phenomenon, contexts and disciplines.

Foundation	Breadth
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Analytical Reading & Writing (GW) 1 course, 4 credit hours	<input type="checkbox"/> Arts (GA) 1 course, 3 or 4 credit hours
<input type="checkbox"/> Quantitative Literacy (GQ) 1 course, 4 credit hours	<input type="checkbox"/> Human Behavior (GB) 1 course, 3 credit hours
<input type="checkbox"/> Mosaic I (GY) 1 course, 3 credit hours	<input type="checkbox"/> Race & Diversity (GD) 1 course, 3 credit hours
<input type="checkbox"/> Mosaic II (GZ) 1 course, 3 credit hours	<input type="checkbox"/> World Society (GG) 1 course, 3 credit hours
	<input type="checkbox"/> Science & Technology (GS) 2 courses, 3 credit hours
	<input type="checkbox"/> U.S. Society (GU) 1 course, 3 credit hours

Four courses constitute the Foundation for General Education: Analytical Reading & Writing (GW), Mosaic I (GY) and Mosaic II (GZ)—a two-course

sequence in the Humanities that stresses reading, interpretation and analysis of great ideas in human history—and Quantitative Literacy (GQ).

With the exception of the GQ inventory, the remaining Foundation areas consist of a single course that students must successfully complete with a C- or better in order to fulfill the requirement. Students must complete the requirement within three attempts or face dismissal from the University. By limiting the number of options a student may choose from within the Foundation areas, the curriculum design insures that all students have a true foundation in critical competencies and a common educational experience.

The table below illustrates the number of unique courses in each of the GenEd Breadth areas:

GenEd Area	Unique Courses in Inventory
GenEd Arts (GA)	20
GenEd Human Behavior (GB)	18
GenEd Race & Diversity (GD)	15
GenEd World Society (GG)	22
GenEd Science & Technology (GS)	18
GenEd U.S. Society (GU)	21

Peer/Aspirant Comparisons

In reviewing general education programs at other universities, we looked closely at a sample of peer and aspirant institutions for commonalities and differences.² All of the general education programs studied require undergraduates to

² Those institutions included: George Mason University, Virginia Commonwealth University, West Virginia University, Penn State University, University of Pittsburgh, Portland State University, Arizona State University, Michigan State University, University of California—Los Angeles and Washington State University.

complete a set of requirements. The greatest differences are apparent in the variety of program structures.

In terms of total number of credits required, peer and aspirant schools range from requiring a minimum of 21 credits (Virginia Commonwealth) to a maximum of 48 credits (Michigan State University). Temple's requirement of 35-36 credits falls squarely within this range.

All of the peer and aspirant universities divided their general education offerings into something akin to "Foundational" and "Breadth." Other universities make a distinction between "Skills" and "Knowledge" or "Foundation" and "Core/Integrative" essentially referencing the same learning domains. As with Temple, all of the peer and aspirant universities emphasize critical thinking, written and spoken communication.

In the following table we present the learning domains which students are required to complete at the select peer and aspirant institutions. The table also indicates how these various domains relate to Temple's GenEd areas.

Peer & Aspirant Domain Areas	GenEd Areas
American Culture	GenEd U.S. Society
Art and Artistic Expression	GenEd Arts
Behavioral and Social Sciences	GenEd Human Behavior or GenEd Race & Diversity
Humanities	GenEd Mosaic I and GenEd Mosaic II
Individual & Society	GenEd Human Behavior
Information Technology	GenEd Science & Technology
International or Global Studies	GenEd World Society
Natural Sciences	GenEd Science & Technology
Quantitative Literacy	GenEd Quantitative Literacy
Scientific Literacy	GenEd Science & Technology

With the exception of Portland State whose program is organized along grade levels, all programs require some form of quantitative reasoning/literacy while West Virginia University requires students to complete 4 to 5 courses in quantitative literacy. At Temple, students are required to complete one course from a limited number of options; a requirement similar to most peer and aspirant universities.

To our credit, we are the only university that explicitly calls for learning in race and diversity. Our commitment to race and diversity reflects the reality of our student body and our world. Temple University houses more than 27,000

undergraduate students from across North America and the world who are registered for GenEd courses at our Main campus in Philadelphia, our domestic campuses in Ambler or Harrisburg or on our international campuses in Tokyo, and Rome.

Section II: General Education Infrastructure and Support

The planning and implementation of General Education benefitted from the widespread support and collaboration of the university administration and the faculty. Our accomplishments reflect the university's collective commitment to undergraduate education and we cannot overstate our appreciation for the individual and collective contributions to GenEd.

This section provides an overview of the program's formal support infrastructure, including the various committee's roles and responsibilities and the financial resources allocated to General Education. There are concerns with the university's commitment in terms of personnel and financial resources.

Formal Infrastructure

The university created an Office of General Education in 2007 to oversee the program's administration. Currently, the office consists of a full-time faculty director, a full-time associate director and a part-time finance administrator who oversee day-to-day operations.

Temple University possesses a rich infrastructure for supporting the program's work. The table below provides a description of those committees formed to help implement, oversee and assess General Education. In addition to providing funds for the General Education Executive Committee (GEEC) members, the university also committed to financially support Area Coordinators (GACs) who shepherd courses through the process from the first idea through the course approval process and then onward.

General Education Committees

Committee Name	Function	Membership
General Education Executive Committee (GEEC)	Provide oversight GenEd including course approval, policy creation, and assessment	Director of GenEd, 9 faculty members, 2 undergraduates, and 1 graduate student
General Education Implementation Group (GIG)	Discuss implementation of policies and procedures, academic advising issues, and scheduling matters	Administration and staff
General Education Area Coordinators (GAC)	Provide technical assistance and guidance in the course development process; communicate general and area-specific messages; provide guidance to faculty teaching in a given area, especially regarding courses taught in multiple sections	Faculty: 1 per area
General Education Assessment Team (GAT)	Work with the program leadership, executive committee, and area coordinators to plan, implement, and review the assessment of GenEd: the program, areas, and courses	Director of GenEd, Office of the Provost, Teaching and Learning Center
Ad hoc General Education Budget Task Force	Worked with the other GenEd committees on financial matters and implementation issues	Director of GenEd and representatives from the schools and colleges, the Office of the Provost, the Office of Management and Budget, the Office of Enrollment Management and Institutional Research

The program benefits from a number of internal consultants in addition to the formal committees or program support structures. Questions, situation and circumstances that bubble up sometimes exceed the knowledge or range of expertise of the standing committees and in those cases GenEd seeks out

experts in the Office of the Senior Vice Provost for Undergraduate Studies for assistance.

Financial Support

In part, GenEd was able to establish a robust infrastructure because the university dedicated financial resources to the effort as suggested by the Budget Task Force.

The university initially established three types of funding to support t of support for GenEd—1) Operations, 2) Enhancement and 3) Reserve.

The chart below provides synopsis of the funds in the years since originally allocated:

Resourcing General Education			
	Operating	Enhancement	Reserve
FY2013	\$483,121	\$0	\$1,619,827
FY2012	\$555,638	\$106,000	\$1,619,827
FY2011	\$576,361	\$1,103,000	\$1,548,827
FY2010	\$840,775	\$1,103,000	\$1,835,000
FY2009	\$900,930	\$1,103,000	\$1,661,000
FY2008	\$999,000	\$0	\$1,622,000

BUDGET ADJUSTMENTS:			
FY2009 - OPERATING - Budget Reduction			
FY1010 - OPERATING - Loss of an administrative salary line			
FY2011 - OPERATING - Loss of administrative salary lines			
FY2012 - OPERATING - Budget Reduction			
FY2012 - ENHANCEMENT- Enhancement budget to support class size was removed from GenEd by Provost. PEX remained.			
FY2013 - OPERATING - Budget Reduction, PEX is now supported in Operating			

Operations

The overall budget for GenEd has included an operating budget of approximately \$1 million in 2008 and again in 2009 to cover the full-time staff and administration as well to support faculty and GenEd theme development.

The General Education program largely has invested in various professional development activities, particularly with regard to course development. Funds expended here recognized the important work of creating new courses. We also provided incentives for faculty members to create a broad repository of course materials and thus, funded faculty members who submitted course portfolios that

roughly were described as “everything another faculty member would need to teach the course effectively.”

Funding priorities have shifted as the program has matured and the monies allocated to the General Education program have decreased. While course development has dropped dramatically, the program has invested more heavily in faculty development opportunities, including the Mosaic Summer Institutes, the faculty learning communities co-sponsored with the Teaching & Learning Center, Project Embracing Diversity through Inclusive Teaching (EDIT), and others.

The second highest cost is support for functioning of the office’s operations including: the General Education Executive Committee (GEECs) members, General Education Area Coordinators (GACs), the full-time Associate Director and the part-time office/financial administrator. The Director’s salary is a line item in the Provost’s budget.

General Education has been forced to make significant cuts to accommodate the decrease in appropriations from the state. We have been gradually reducing stipends for GEECs and GACs and have consolidated the number of area coordinators to offset some of the reductions. Other programmatic cuts include the reduction in the number of GenEd Peer Teaching program participants, the eradication of stipends for faculty peer mentors, the elimination of Team Teaching awards and the elimination of interdisciplinary course development funds.

The cuts have contributed to the postponement of much discussed initiatives such as a visiting scholars program and a fellowship program for graduate teaching in General Education.

Enhancement

Aside from Operations, GenEd received approximately \$1.1 million per year in an enhancement fund, which helped maintain small class size and support the Foundation areas, of Analytical Reading and Writing, Mosaics and quantitative literacy.

With the help of the “Enhancement” funds, General Education was largely successful in negotiating with the College of Liberal Arts (CLA) to maintain course caps on select sections. Approximately \$750,000 supplemented the funds the college generated through the traditional credit-hour generation model.

Targeted courses included Analytical Reading & Writing, Mosaic I and Mosaic II. The course caps of 18 in Analytical Reading and Writing and 25 in Mosaics provided some guarantee of preserving small, seminar-style classes that focused on developing foundational skills in critical thinking, communication and

information literacy. Additionally, even smaller course caps were established for the same courses serving English as a Second Language (ESL) students.

The remaining \$275,000 was used to support sections of Quantitative Literacy courses. The first year General Education distributed the funds in direct proportion to the number of registrants per host department given the timing of the university's allocations. The remaining years, approximately \$220,000 was used to support those courses with the largest enrollments by providing for teaching assistantships who also assisted in the Math and Science Resource Center (MSRC). The remaining funds were used for the development of instructional materials for use in the MSRC and for the continued training and support of undergraduate student peer teachers in the MSRC.

In fiscal year 2012, the University re-allocated the monies from the General Education budget and CLA received \$750,000 and the College of Science and Technology (CST) received \$250,000. The models of delivery are fairly consistent in the Quantitative Literacy courses offered by the CST; however, the MSRC lost a considerable amount of support for both its graduate and undergraduate student peer tutors.

Course caps in Analytical Reading and Writing and the Mosaic courses have been slowly creeping upwards as the college is forced to make tough decisions in the face of the State's decreasing appropriations to Temple University.

The remaining monies in the Enhancement budget line were earmarked for supporting Philadelphia Experience (PEX) initiatives, including the Passport, PEX assignment development and partnership creation.

Reserve

Finally, a one-time reserve fund of approximately \$2.1 million was given to GenEd to support the transition from Core to GenEd. The "Reserve" fund was established from balances in the Operations and Enhancement funds at the urging of schools and colleges who feared the new curriculum and its implementation would cause drastic changes in revenues generated by credit hours.

In consultation with the General Education Implementation Group (GIG), the Reserve fund established two guiding principles—to encourage innovation by "fronting" schools and colleges funds in advance for instructional and teaching resources, particularly those schools which had played a more subdued role in the Core curriculum and to "hold harmless" any school that lost money due to documented changes in their overall credit hour generation

The program did not tap into the Reserve fund; however, the General Education program did uphold its commitments. Through prudent oversight, the program

was able to support innovation in schools and colleges that actively pursued a greater role in the GenEd curriculum than the Core curriculum and for those schools able to demonstrate a loss in credit hours. This support came from funds originally allocated to the “Operating” budget.

Section III: Student-Centered Focus

General Education’s goal developing students’ competencies and abilities rather than focusing on mastery of a particular body of knowledge was innovative. The change was motivated by two principal developments that impacted higher education. First, the shift from content to ability reflected a larger transformation in the scholarship of teaching and learning which repeatedly cited the effectiveness of student-centered pedagogy on student learning practices. Second, the information technology evolution of the 21st century made the ability to find, use and evaluate information more critical than mastering a set of facts.

Based in research proven practice of effective teaching practices, supported by years of teaching and feedback from students about the core curriculum, GenEd adopted a student-centered approach to the curriculum that positively impacts students on three intertwined fronts—the academic, the personal and the professional.

Academic Success

In thinking about student’s academic success and preparation for advanced disciplinary work, we carefully considered where and how we could have the most impact on developing competencies, particularly critical thinking, communication and information literacy. We focused attention on the Foundations and ensuring small, intimate classrooms in which students in the earliest stages of their academic careers would find seminar-style classrooms with personal attention and powerful individual feedback. This has been true for the three-course sequence formed by Analytical Reading & Writing, Mosaic I and Mosaic II.

The focus on future academic success also led GenEd to adopt an extraordinary policy that prohibits GenEd courses from serving multiple curricular purposes. General Education courses are approved to fulfill a single area and may not be required as pre- or co-requisites for any major, minor or certificate program. Under Core, a single course could satisfy multiple Core requirements and even major requirements. For this reason, criticism of the Core argued courses had lost their original emphases and the focus had shifted away from general education to disciplinary readiness. GenEd courses are approved to satisfy a particular requirement and thus, do not suffer the same kind of push-pull that courses serving multiple purposes may have experienced.

GenEd remains committed to Temple University's diverse undergraduate body and has collaborated with the Departments of English and Mathematics to provide all students with additional support based on their demonstrated ability on placement exams in each subject. All first-time students well as transfer students who do not bring equivalent coursework to Temple University are required to take placement tests for composition and math. The placement exams are used for placing students into the appropriate courses.

Placement rates into GenEd Quantitative Literacy (GQ) courses or waiver courses occur for approximately 90% of test takers while between 11% and 5% are placed in a 700-level course.³ The vast majority of students test directly into a GenEd GQ and a portion of the student body test directly into the university's Calculus sequence.

While students may be exempted from GenEd Analytical Reading and Writing (GW) on the basis of placement exam scores, all students must complete the Quantitative Literacy requirement. Around 10% percent of our incoming first-year students are exempted from Analytical Reading & Writing, while another 18 to 22% are placed into a 700-level course prior to registering for the GW course.

A longitudinal assessment followed students through the four-course sequence formed by Introduction to Academic Discourse (English 0701/0711) into General Education's Analytical Reading and Writing (English 0802/0812) and into Mosaic I (IH 0851/0951) and Mosaic II (IH 0852/0952) and then into upper-division writing courses required by the majors. Results of the study demonstrated students who completed the upper-division writing intensive course performed moderately better than those students who did not move through the four-course sequence as advised.

Other measures adopted in Analytical Reading and Writing and Mosaics offers English as a Second Language (ESL) students the option of registering for specially designated sections. The sections require special authorization to enroll and provide ESL participants with smaller, more intimate classrooms and with faculty versed in the unique educational needs of non-native speakers.

General Education also modified the curriculum to meet the needs of academically advanced students. We have done this is two ways.

First, GenEd in partnership with the Honors Program has sought to develop a full complement of General Education course specifically for its students. GenEd restricts courses at the 0900-level to members of the Honors Program with faculty hand-selected by the Director of the Honors Program, and the courses

³ In 2008, 11% of students placed into a developmental Math course and in 2012 slightly more than 5% of students placed into a developmental Math course. In the intervening years, the placement test went from a monitored examination to an online exam.

are restricted to 20 students each to guarantee a more personal attention and development. Honors students must complete the Analytical Reading & Writing (if not exempted) and Mosaics I and II at the Honors level.

Second, General Education recognizes the high degree of specialized training and/or professional licensure requirements that extend far beyond the intended learning goals in some General Educations areas. GenEd adopted a limited number of waivers or approved course substitutions that allow students to complete General Education through alternative means. Degree-granting programs or colleges typically request a waiver for a specific area and name a course or sequence of courses that students must complete with a C- or better to satisfy the GenEd requirement. The majority of waivers provide credit relief for heavily sequenced majors in science technology, engineering, mathematics and education and apply to the GenEd Science & Technology and Quantitative Literacy areas.

Personal Success

Roughly 70% of Temple University students change majors from the time they complete an admissions application to the time they submit a graduation application. We recognize the potential for change and adopted several policies to encourage student exploration through their curricular choices.

First, GenEd adopted a policy requiring students to explore multiple disciplines by placing a limit on the number of courses s/he could take from any one department. This policy encourages students to step out of her/his comfort zone and register for courses outside of her/his major. In addition to courses from Anthropology, Chemistry and History, students may find courses of interest in Community and Regional Planning, Computer and Information Sciences and Strategic Communication. All courses included in the GenEd inventory have been created specifically with the academic explorer in mind and do not require specialized knowledge or experience.

Second, we expanded Breadth course inventories from the original cap of eight. We now have approximately 20 courses in each area and have adopted three thematic tracks which assist students in connecting seemingly unrelated courses into a coherent understanding of issues related to sustainability, globalization and community-based learning.

Our focus on student's personal success recognized the importance of time to graduation. The University has facilitated a decrease in time to graduation through a number of initiatives including clear and navigable paths through degree-granting programs. Temple began by requiring any degree-granting program that wished to advertise itself as a four-year program to limit its curriculum to 124 credit hours or fewer and to develop an 8-semester advising matrix that demonstrated paths to graduation in four years.

General Education offers advice on course sequencing and structure. Students are advised to take the three-semester sequence formed by Analytical Reading & Writing, Mosaic I and Mosaic II as possible after entering Temple in order and in successive semesters.

A review of the Undergraduate Bulletin demonstrated all degree programs suggest students complete the Foundation courses by the end of the second year. The school and college recommendations complement the advice provided by General Education regarding course sequencing. Our analysis of course-taking behavior in GenEd suggests that the vast majority of student required to complete the three courses do so as suggested.

While the 8-semester matrices provide students with recommendations on navigating their course registration from semester to semester, the Degree Audit Report (DARs) system enables students to see how completed and in-progress coursework satisfies degree requirements. General Education collaborated with both the DARs programmers and individual schools and colleges to provide students with comprehensive and up-to-date accurate information about GenEd, degree and collegiate requirements.

A third and critical initiative to improve time-to-graduation concerns the decision to develop an inventory of courses exclusive to General Education. As mentioned earlier, GenEd courses may not serve multiple courses nor may the courses serve as pre- or co-requisites for courses in the major or minor. The policy serves to keep GenEd courses focused on the program's learning goals as well as the area-specific learning goals, and it provides for more timely degree completion compared to its predecessor (Core).

Under the previous curriculum, many degree programs identified specific Core courses required in the major and/or specific Core courses as pre- or co-requisites, and if a student changed her/his major, the degree requirements often changed. Consequently, with Core students who changed majors often found themselves completing university requirements for a second time in order to satisfy a new program's requirements. With Core, the student chased the curriculum based on her/his major whereas GenEd follows the student. Once s/he has completed a GenEd course with a C- or better, the student is finished with that GenEd requirement for good.

The initiatives to provide clear and navigable paths through degree programs in four years appear to be successful on a number of fronts. According to the Temple University College Portrait on collegeportraits.org, a little more than one third (41%) of new first-year students graduate from Temple in four years. These numbers are supported by the IR Factbook and Common Data Set prepared by Temple's Department of Institutional Research which demonstrates that the percentage of first-year students graduating in 4- and 5-years has been increasing gradually.

Certainly, the gains made in retention and 4-year graduation rates represent a significant achievement and one of which we should be proud of. GenEd cannot claim sole responsibility for these gains; however, we can take pride in our role as a contributor. First, our analysis of student course-taking behavior suggests that the vast majority of first-year students complete between two to three GenEd courses in their first semester and two to three in their second semester. Taken together, nearly 50% of a first-year student's curriculum is within the General Education program and thus, it is reasonable to assume that experience plays a significant role in matriculated students' decision to remain at Temple.

Professional Success

A longitudinal exploration of employers' thoughts on the preparation of potential employees by the Association of American Colleges and Universities reveals Temple University's General Education program and its emphasis on learning outcomes is consistent with employers' beliefs about professional success.

The AACU also queried employers on key learning outcomes that the respondents believe critical for professional and personal success in today's global economy. The following table provides an ordered list of the top ten outcomes that employers believe schools and colleges should emphasize and the proportion of respondents who agreed.

Top 10 Outcomes Employers Believe Schools and Colleges Should Emphasize More	
Learning Outcome	%
The ability to effectively communicate orally and in writing	89
Critical thinking and analytical reasoning	81
The ability to apply knowledge and skills to real-world settings through internships or other hands-on experiences	79
The ability to analyze and solve complex problems	75
The ability to connect choices and actions to ethical decisions	75
Teamwork skills and the ability to collaborate with others in diverse group settings	71
The ability to be innovative and creative	70
Concepts and new developments in science and technology	70
The ability to locate, organize and evaluate information from multiple sources	68
The ability to understand the global context of situations and decisions	67

It is hard not to notice these employer-identified expectations of college-educated students match, by-and-large, the pedagogical goals of the GenEd program. GenEd matches the college experience that employers believe will enhance the effectiveness of future employees and their enterprise.

Further, in collaboration with the Temple University Career Center, General Education joined a select group of our Employer Partners to discuss the program, its goals and objectives and our partners' views of its effectiveness in the Fall 2011. Partner responses indicated that the program was well on track to developing graduates with a desirable skill set and emphasized that the learning goals be reiterate their importance throughout a student's life at Temple University.

Advising

In the year before General Education launched we worked closely with Temple University's professional advising personnel.

Each school, college, and campus of Temple University has its own cohort of academic advisors, while departments and programs each appoint additional faculty or staff advisors to work closely with student majors. At the college, school, and campus levels, all advisors have gone through training that covers topics pertaining to GenEd and received copies of the 2009-2010 GenEd Handbook for Academic Advisors.

The Handbook details the overarching rationale and objectives of the GenEd Program and its curricular organization and requirements. To supplement the Handbook, GenEd developed PowerPoint presentations specifically for advisors to highlight reasons for Temple's transition from a Core to a GenEd undergraduate curriculum, and to cover policies and provide contact information for the GenEd staff. The presentations also addressed department responsibilities, mechanisms pertaining to transfer students, and other pertinent information for effectively advising students about GenEd.

While GenEd's working relationship with Advising has been successful, concerns have been raised about advising that takes place at the department level, where students are sometimes not accurately or adequately informed about the idiosyncrasies of completing their GenEd requirements. Turnover among professional advising staff suggests we should consider scheduling training for new advisors and condensed, refresher trainings for veteran advisors. These trainings may also be a way to reach interested faculty who, in addition to teaching, advise students.

The previous section outlines the General Education program's student-centered focus hinted at evidence and findings we have amassed since the program

launched. The following section provides a more thorough account of what we know and how we know.

Continual Review & Assessment

The General Education Executive Committee (GEEC), a body consisting of faculty appointed by the Faculty Senate to oversee and govern GenEd, regularly reviews data collected on the program and takes action to ensure fidelity to the stated objectives of the program and maximum effectiveness.

From the beginning, the General Education Program has attempted to cultivate a culture of inquiry focused on three important aspects of the program: overall program effectiveness, course coherence and continuity, and student learning. Assessment activities tend to cluster in those three areas.

Program Effectiveness

The General Education inventory largely is comprised of newly developed courses. All courses adopted as part of the inventory have submitted to an intense course proposal process at the collegiate- and university levels.

A request for proposals (RFP) and development monies were made available to support the development of courses for the new program beginning in 2006. The original request for proposals and the standing request require faculty developers to respond to a series of questions about the proposed course, including its design, instructional support, content, goals and assessments.

In particular, all proposed courses must address how the course develops students' critical thinking, communication, and information literacy abilities through embedded assignments and/or related exercises. The course proposal also must include a proposed syllabus as well as a potential reading list or textbook used for the course.

The original process, when General Education was established as an independent entity, did not require collegiate curriculum committee approval; however, after a period of trial and error, all courses must now indicate appropriate departmental and/or collegiate support for the course prior to General Education evaluating the course for inclusion.

Course Re-Certification

Consistent with the rules governing GenEd when it started, each approved course is scheduled for a recertification review every five years. This measure responds to a concern that the Core curriculum did not have a process for evaluating a course's fit with program and area goals after the initial approval.

We also see course recertification as a means of ensuring a degree of consistency across courses taught in multiple sections in the same department or multiple departments across colleges. The GenEd curriculum places great emphasis on interdisciplinary course development teams and encouraged intra-collegiate collaboration in the course development process. As a result, we have a number of courses that are offered by multiple departments, sometimes within the same college sometimes in multiple colleges. It is critical that these courses, which carry the same course number and title, bear a strong resemblance as we treat the cognates as equal and interchangeable.

Our research has yet to reveal another institution with a built-in cycle for re-evaluating courses in the GenEd inventory, and we relied heavily upon faculty teaching within the program to develop a process that would permit GenEd the opportunity to assess how a single course continued to meet GenEd learning goals and maintained consistency across multiple sections.

The process has just begun for the first group of courses to come up for review. A pilot group of 17 courses submitted portfolios, including:

- syllabi for all versions and all sections of the course being offered
- descriptions of major assignments
- student work samples.

The instructions for recertification require a faculty member teaching each course to write a narrative history of the course, describing any changes made since the course was approved and explaining how it either continues to meet the program's expectations or how it will be adjusted if the course has drifted or the multiple sections lack consistency.

Members of the GEEC, the body responsible for recertification, reviewed the courses in the pilot session over this past summer and made suggestions for a recertification rubric. Once the assessment is complete, courses will either "pass," "pass with distinction," or be put on probation. Probation status will require departments and course instructors to make changes in the course to ensure that it meets the goals of GenEd and the stated goals in the original approved course proposal.

This important process is designed to ensure fidelity to the goals of the program over time along with demonstrated student learning outcomes. It ensures ongoing faculty commitment to and oversight of a program in which the university has significantly invested. As members of the GEEC review courses, they learn important details about each course and develop a meta-view of the program that will enable them to make wise decisions about program adjustments as we move forward.

Assessment of Student Learning

GenEd's five-year assessment plan for 2008-13 included assessment of student learning for at least two competencies per year, assessment projects designed within the areas, and various course or classroom initiatives. The five-year plan also included this comprehensive program review for the 2012-13 year. Please see the GenEd Review Resource Room on Temple's Blackboard site to access full length reports on various assessment projects.

To date, assessment has focused on the curriculum's ability to enhance students' development of a number of key competencies, including critical thinking, written and oral communication, and information literacy. Several studies involving assessment of student work samples voluntarily provided by GenEd instructors have contributed to that effort.

The assessment plan outlines various direct and indirect measures to assess student learning (along with measures of program effectiveness). Examples of completed and ongoing assessment activities include:

- Survey of student and faculty perceptions of the course units in Mosaic I and II
- Study of students' ability to use text in Analytical Reading and Writing (a stated competency)
- Development and use of rubrics to assess students' critical thinking
- Development and use of rubrics to assess students' contextual thinking
- Development and use of rubrics to assess students' civic engagement
- Student survey on Philadelphia Experience course component
- Assessment of course-embedded information literacy assignments (in collaboration with University librarians).

Program & Faculty Driven Assessments

In addition to the GenEd-sponsored assessment activities of the curriculum, many General Education faculty actively pursue course-specific assessment projects. Two recent examples emerge from the Science & Technology area in Mechanical Engineering's *Bionic Human* and *Tech Transformations* and Earth and Environmental Science's *Evolutions & Extinctions*.

Mechanical Engineering faculty chronicle their early teaching experiences in *Engineering a General Education Program: Designing Mechanical Engineering General Education Courses* (2012). The article describes how the teams shifted from performing calculations to emphasis on explaining calculation components and the subsequent effect on student learning.

The *Evolutions & Extinctions* team experimented with instructional technology to increase classroom discussion and engagement with the lecture and the impact

on student learning. Initial findings suggested a positive impact on student learning when clickers were integrated in the classroom. Team members recreated the intervention with a larger population and currently are analyzing results.

Externally-Developed Assessments

The College Portrait program conducts a direct assessment of student learning in two key areas. The Proficiency Profile or PP evaluates critical thinking and writing abilities of entering freshman and seniors to determine whether significant gains in these skills have been achieved.

In both areas, critical thinking and writing, Temple University seniors have performed either at expected or above expected levels. In critical thinking the seniors were above expected. In writing, the seniors performed at expected. Additionally, the PP indicated Temple University students performed better than 60% of students at participating institutions on writing skills and higher than 70% of participating students in critical thinking. The timing of the PP is such that the students who completed the exam had completed several GenEd courses.

Attitudinal Data

In addition to the direct evidence of student learning, we can identify a variety of datasets that suggest we are moving in the right direction. We can point to student self-report data from the National Survey of Student Engagement, Temple Student Government Survey as well as direct evidence from internal assessment projects and findings from externally developed assessments.

Indirect evidence, in the form of student self-report data, also suggests the program and its focus on active and experiential learning to develop intellectual competencies are central to students' perceptions of their educational experience at Temple University.

For example, student response rates from the latest administration (2011) of the National Survey of Student Engagement indicate first-year students and seniors report increasingly higher levels than respondents in previous years (2009, 2007, 2005) for activities central to GenEd competencies.

National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) Mean Comparisons over Time

Mental Activity or Competency		2011	2009	2007	2005
	Class				
	<i>During the course of the year, how much has your coursework emphasized the following mental activities? 1=Very little, 2=Some, 3=Quite a bit, 4=Very much</i>				
Analyzing the basic elements of an idea experience or theory, such as examining a particular case or situation in depth and considering its components	FY	3.31	3.30	3.19	3.13
	SR	3.36	3.33	3.30	3.29
Synthesizing and organizing ideas, information, or experiences into new, more complex interpretations and relationships	FY	3.09	3.10	2.98	2.92
	SR	3.17	3.12	3.11	3.07
Making judgments about the value of info., arguments or method, such as examining how others gathered and interpreted data and assessing the soundness of their conclusions	FY	3.06	3.09	2.93	2.90
	SR	3.11	3.07	3.07	3.00
Applying theories or concepts practical problems or new situations	FY	3.15	3.13	3.07	2.98
	SR	3.26	3.19	3.22	3.18

Respondents from Temple University also report engaging in these mental activities at significantly higher frequencies than their counterparts at our urban peer institutes, other mid-Atlantic area public universities, and schools within the same Carnegie classification.

In addition to student self-report data from the NSSE, the Temple Student Government Survey on perceptions of and attitudes toward General Education indicates students feel as though the program develops all of the competencies. The table below indicates the percentage of respondents who agreed GenEd “definitely achieved” or “somewhat achieved” the articulated learning goals.

Temple Student Government Survey Responses

Percentage of Student Agreement Competency Achieved

Please indicate the degree to which you believe the GenEd Program achieves or fails to achieve these goals. 4=Definitely achieve, 3= Somewhat achieve, 2=Somewhat fails, 1=Definitely fails

Competency

To teach students to think critically	74.7%
To help students understand contemporary and historical issues in context.	77.7%
To teach students to understand and apply knowledge in and across academic disciplines.	70.9%
To teach students how to communicate effectively through speech and writing.	67.0%
To develop students' scientific and reasoning abilities.	54.7%
To equip students with the intellectual tools necessary to function as engaged citizens in our diverse and globalized world.	65.0%
To develop students' research abilities by instructing them how to identify, access and evaluate sources of information.	65.5%
To inspire students with a passion for lifelong learning that extends beyond the completion of their undergraduate degrees.	51.7%

Our assessment efforts so far have yielded positive results for student learning; yet, we have many competencies left to investigate and a need for a more streamlined and sustainable effort, especially considering the ongoing evaluation of courses in the inventory and the increasing demands for new and different kinds of evidence of student learning.

Other Measures to Gauge the Overall Health of the Program

In addition to the assessment of student learning of core competencies and the course recertification process, we review additional indicators of program health and effectiveness to complement the direct assessment of student work, some of those indicators include:

- Syllabi review for goals and objectives,

- Faculty continuity measures,
- Course registration and completion rates,
- Grade distributions and
- Student Feedback Forms.

An earlier section of the self-study referred to the General Education program's broad-based iterative approach to developing the program, its curriculum, the policies and assessments practices. The successes, to date, only hint at the levels of cooperation, collaboration and support over the program's lifespan.

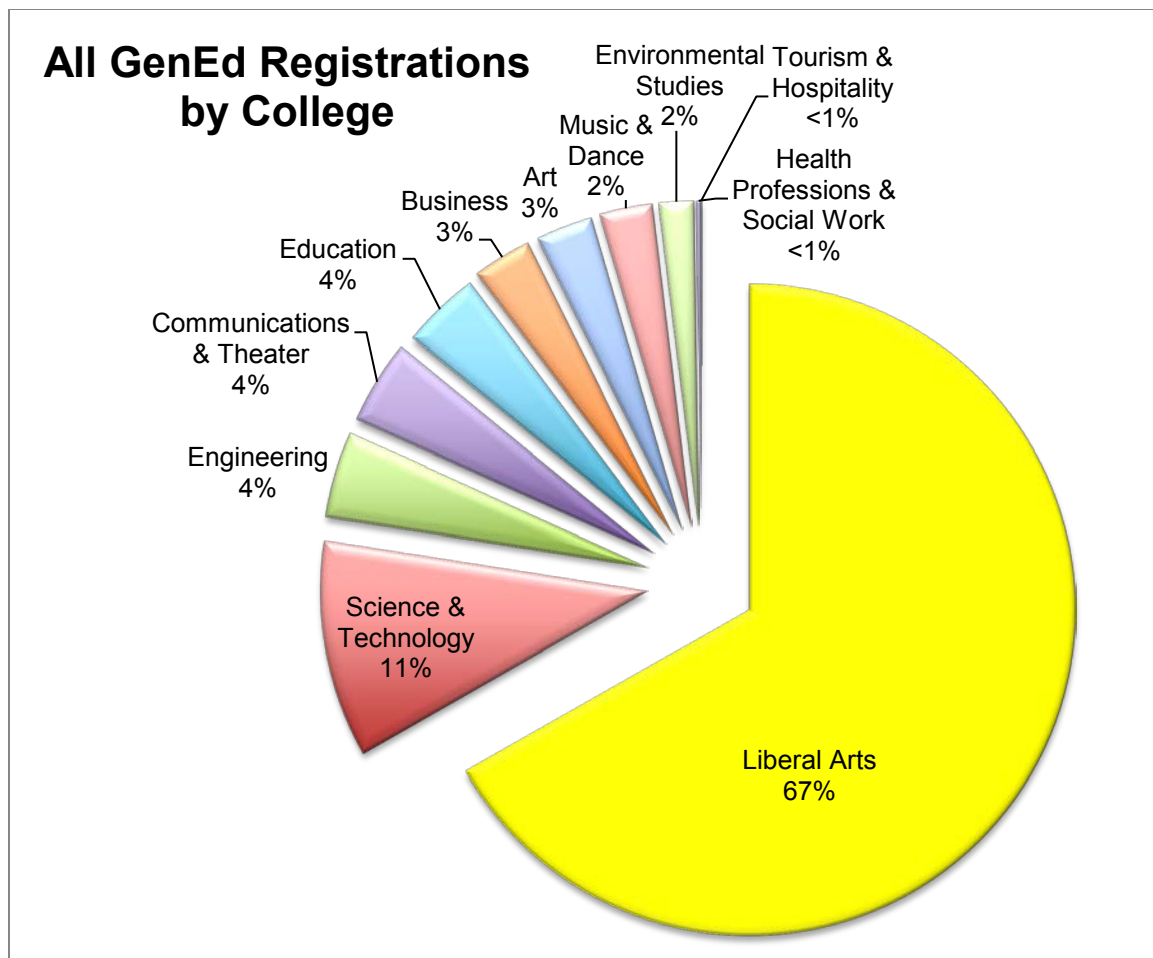
The following section briefly describes the breadth and depth of involvement and development through the program and strategies used to encourage participation.

Section IV: Connecting Communities

The implementation of such a far-reaching curriculum change clearly required the commitment of a large number of dedicated faculty members and other instructors of all ranks from across the university and the student-centered pedagogy marked a departure from the more conventional/practiced, sage on the stage approach to teaching. Thus, General Education invested heavily in professional development for teaching in the program.

Depth & Breadth of School and College Connections

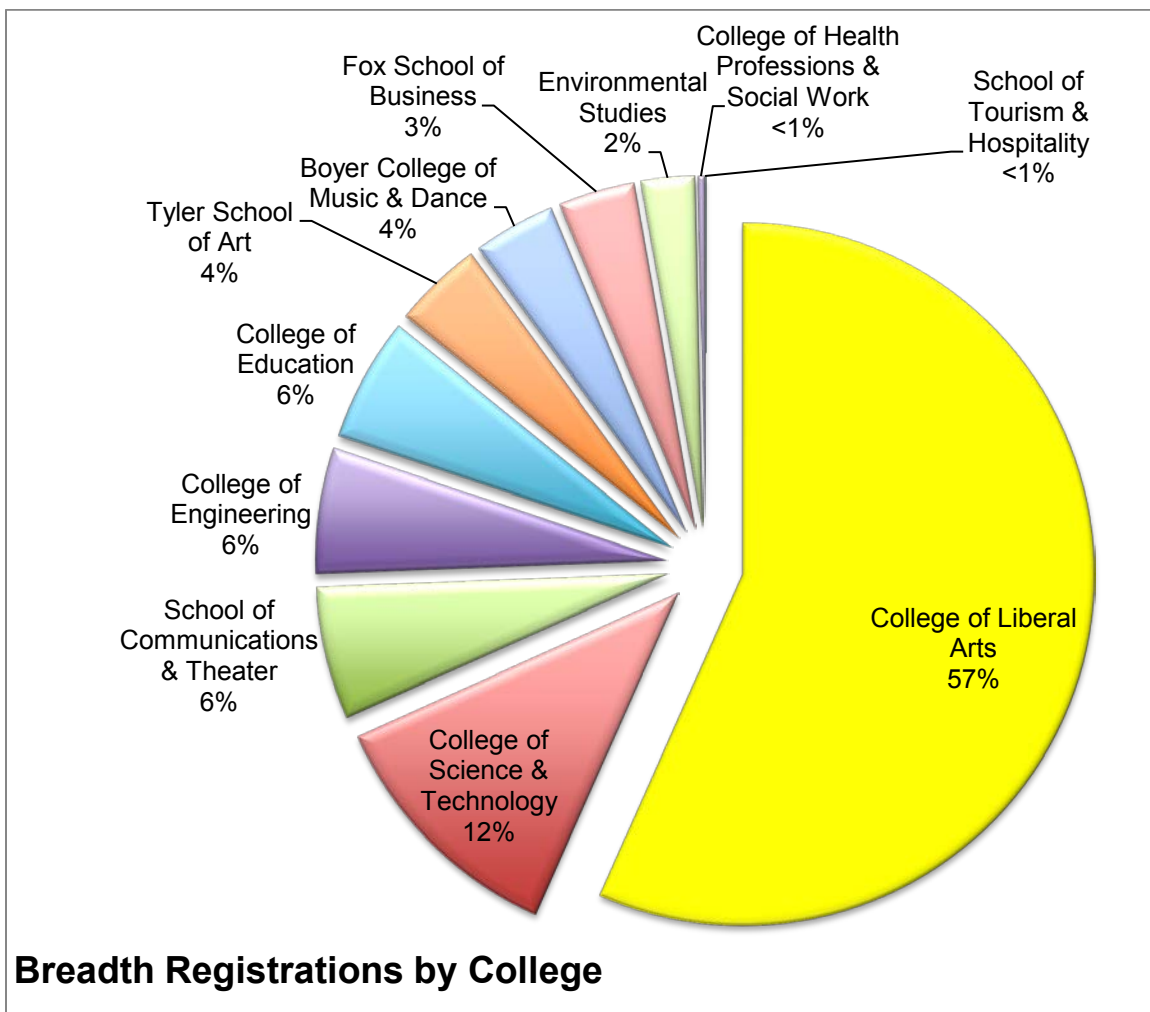
As evidence of our claim of widespread involvement, we direct you to the General Education course inventory. All of the schools and colleges that grant undergraduate degrees participate in General Education and 68 unique departments offer at least one General Education class. The widespread involvement of schools and colleges is something of which we are quite proud and trust the course inventory demonstrates the program's breadth.



The bulk of the teaching of GenEd courses (about 2/3) has historically been done in the College of Liberal Arts (CLA). The Foundation courses play a pivotal role in the CLA's contributions. Three of the four Foundation courses are offered exclusively by the college.

Housing both programs within a single college and even single departments provides additional benefits when considering consistency and coherency of instruction. Both programs actively provide on-going professional development opportunities, and in the case of Analytical Reading & Writing, specific events to introduce first-year instructors into the program.

When we remove the Foundation courses from the analysis, we observe a greater degree of participation among the schools and colleges. We think the concentration of Foundation courses and more diffuse offerings in the Breadth areas speaks to the original intent of the program as this division both facilitates a common intellectual experience as well as the opportunity to explore individual academic interests.



The College of Science and Technology (CST) provides the second largest contribution to the inventory. Other schools and colleges that have contributed substantially, but to a lesser degree are (in decreasing order): School of Communications & Theater, Fox School of Business, College of Engineering, College of Education, and the Boyer College of Music & Dance.

Connecting Faculty through Professional Development

Professional development opportunities for faculty often have focused on strategies to maximize student learning, particularly involving the key competencies. All programming and development workshops were made available to anyone teaching in General Education.

Many of the programs facilitated by General Education provided participants with small stipends in recognition of the instructors' time and included such things as the Mosaic Summer Institute first held in Summer 2008 between the end of the

Spring session and into the beginning of the first summer term. The first Institute lasted eight days and featured multiple sessions daily to help the 75 faculty teaching in Mosaics develop a greater understanding of and facility with a thematic approach rather than a chronological approach to the great ideas of human history. The sessions also drew attention to techniques necessary to help develop critical abilities within the courses. The Institute became such a success that the IH Program held its fifth Summer Institute in May 2012.

Area coordinators also play a key role in connecting with faculty on a one-to-one basis teaching GenEd courses. They meet regularly both with newly assigned faculty as well as veteran instructors to discuss the pedagogical and curricular requirements in the program, as well as the need to collect student artifacts for assessment purposes.

Listed below are additional professional faculty development opportunities with stipends and are made available on an annual basis:

- Information Literacy Cross-Teams (ILCTS)
- Interdisciplinary Team Teaching Awards
- PEX Assignment Awards
- PEX Partnership Awards
- Project EDIT II: Embracing Diversity through Inclusive Teaching
- Summer Reading Assessment Project Grants

These initiatives leveraged the entirety of the University's resources by developing partnerships with key academic-support units, including the Teaching & Learning Center, the Office of Distance Learning and University Libraries.

Connecting Administrative Units

TLC

The Teaching & Learning Center played a prominent role in the General Education Assessment Team (GAT) that helped identify and articulate the GenEd competencies prior to the programs launch.

The TLC also sponsored several workshops and programs promoting student centered-learning and assessment, including:

- Can We Talk: Teaching about Race and Diversity 2009-2013 (2 Occurrences in Fall 2009; 4 in Spring 2010; 5 in Fall 2010; 6 in Spring 2011; 3 in Fall 2011; 7 in Spring 2012 and 4 in Fall 2012)
- Achieving Information Literacy and Critical Thinking in GenEd Classes: What Works and What Doesn't (2011, 2012)
- Going PEX: Meeting GenEd Pedagogical Objectives with the Passport (2010)

- Focus on GenEd Competencies: Designing Assignments for Critical Thinking (October 27, 2010)
- TLC Peer Review Program for GEEC (September 25, 2008).

The Teaching & Learning Center, in partnership with the GenEd Program, also has supported several 'teaching circles' that include competitively selected faculty. Many of these communities were organized to develop the thematic themes connecting the program's curricular efforts. In addition, the various learning communities' discussions about emerging issues have informed decisions at both the program and university-wide levels.

These groups generally included 8 to 10 members, met monthly, and were facilitated by senior TLC staff. They carried a faculty stipend and their products were presented at various Temple-wide events.

These include:

- The Globalization Teaching Circle 2008-2013 (ongoing) (now known as the Marco Polo Collaborative). Initially intended as a one-year commitment with monthly meetings, but has continued to move forward towards completion of the Marco Polo Collaborative website which will support World Society courses, especially.
- The Sustainability Teaching Circle 2008-2009. This group met throughout fall 2008-spring 2009 to develop criteria for identifying courses appropriate for a sustainability track.

Office of Distance Learning

Two collaborations with the TLC called on the expertise of the Office of Distance Learning to develop knowledge and expertise in distance-learning strategies and technologies—the Virtual Teaching Circle and the Online Course Development Grants.

The Virtual Teaching Circle provides faculty participants with a stipend and an iPad for the year-long series dedicated to best pedagogical practices in a virtual environment. Upon completion of the learning community participants provide sample assignments, exercises and modules that demonstrate best practices.

The On-Line Course Development Grants provide faculty a modest stipend to support online coursework in GenEd course and carries two expectations:

- 1) the faculty member will complete a 20-hour virtual technology training program developed by the Office of Distance Learning and
- 2) the faculty will apply this knowledge as s/he reformulates an existing brick and mortar course for a virtual environment.

Libraries

A third and frequent partner in our collaborations is the University Libraries. Reference librarians and specialists assist with classroom instruction, professional development and co-curricular programming.

In terms of classroom instruction, library personnel regularly respond to instructors' requests to conduct in-class workshops on information literacy skills. Sections of Analytical Reading & Writing provide students with an orientation to the library's resources and information literacy instruction in the library's classroom facilities.

GenEd and University Libraries have developed the Information Literacy Cross Team (ILCT) stipends in addition to providing classroom instruction for all our students and faculty, ILCTs are competitive grants that consist of a GenEd faculty member, a library specialist and a student to create and deploy a course embedded information literacy assignment. Initially, the teams also included technical support but this element was dropped after it became apparent this was not necessary. ILCT team members are required to share the assignment and its observed impact upon implementation in the course.

The extensive effort to make connections in and across the university echoes efforts to assist the faculty and students make connections within greater Philadelphia. We have connected the university through our co-curricular programming, the Collaborative Learning Network (CLN) and the Philadelphia Experience (PEX) Passport.

Connecting to the Community

The Community Learning Network (CLN) coordinates the university's community-based learning opportunities for students, faculty and local organizations to partner through courses, internships and research. Funded, in part, through funds from the GenEd Reserve Fund, the CLN has created a mechanism for identifying community-based learning course. A CBL-designation indicate the course section requires a minimum of 10 hours spent engaged with a community partner outside of the classroom. Community-based learning course designations often are specific to the instructor and we generally have several GenEd sections a semester that are tagged with a CBL identifier.

Philadelphia Experience

The emergence of community-based learning in the curriculum developed organically. Many of the courses developed in response to the call for proposals made significant use of Philadelphia's urban environment. Assignments included excursions to the city's police archives, a trip to a green roof and the opportunity to experience live theater. A greater and greater number of faculty expressed an

interest in community-based learning opportunities, and the General Education office was overwhelmed with requests to buy admissions tickets and provide funds for field trips and other co-curricular activities. These activities were referred to as “Philadelphia Experiences” which then become known as “PEX.”

In response to the growing interest, GenEd explored fiscally responsible and sustainable strategies for facilitating faculty interest and student access. Two faculty members with extensive connections in the arts, cultural and historical communities were engaged to assist with the initiative’s development.

The PEX Passport emerged as the first effort to create a sustainable solution for encouraging faculty to use the greater Philadelphia learning landscape. The PEX Passport is a collection of vouchers for that provides free and/or reduced access to a number of historical, cultural, ethnic, performing arts and other educational venues throughout the region for undergraduate students.

Faculty largely use the PEX Passport teaching in the GenEd Arts area to make attendance at live concerts, performances and exhibits more accessible to students. In addition to widespread use by faculty and students in GenEd Arts, faculty across all of GenEd encourage the Passport’s use, including Science & Technology (The Franklin Institute), Human Behavior (Eastern State Penitentiary), U.S. Society (National Constitution Center), Race & Diversity (Mural Arts Program) and World Society (International House).

Two additional efforts target faculty who may need assistance with developing a course-embedded assignment capitalizing on the city as classroom (PEX Award) or identifying a community partner for sustained collaboration (PEX Partnership Stipend).

In addition to developing the PEX Passport, General Education has developed a number of initiatives to develop place-based or community-based learning within the curriculum. These activities include:

- PEX Speed-Dating events in Spring 2010, 2011 and 2012. Modeled after speed-dating, the event brings PEX Cultural Partners and faculty members together with the hopes of creating an opportunity for collaboration.
- PEX Partnership Stipends. These stipends are competitively awarded annually since to faculty members to design a course-embedded exercise or activity with a local arts, cultural or historical institution over the course’s lifetime.

Connecting Students to the City

General Education has attempted to involve students helping make sense of the curriculum through a number of co-curricular activities to encourage students to make the connections for themselves.

Grit & Beauty

We have promoted student participation in place-based learning by sponsoring a blog contest since 2008. We recognize that students must first be comfortable with their environment in order to take advantage of the opportunities offered by living in the greater Philadelphia area and to that end we have developed The “Grit & Beauty” blog contest. The annual event encourages students to explore Philadelphia and to post to the GenEd blog digital representations and/or prose of the combination of grit and beauty they find. GenEd publicized this contest during Orientation and through the semester. An awards subcommittee then chooses 10 winners, who each receive a cash prize of \$100.

Events

We have organized an annual event, typically in the spring, to highlight a specific GenEd area and its learning goals or a larger programmatic learning goal. Events are designed to be both informative and participatory in nature.

Invited guests have included:

- Juan Williams, author of *Enough: The Phony Leaders, Dead-End Movements, and Culture of Failure That Are Undermining Black America—and What We Can Do About It* (Race & Diversity)
- Dr. Roald Hoffman, a Nobel Laureate in Chemistry and poet (Science & Technology, Arts)
- Abigail Disney, documentary producer, *Pray the Devil Back to Hell* (2008) and *Women, War and Peace* (2011) (World Society)

We had a place-based participatory dance performance commissioned of the Leah Stein Dance Company (Arts), as well as a panel discussion concerning Philadelphia and urban planning with Witold Rybczynski, author of many books on metropolitan areas and faculty member at University of Pennsylvania (US Society, Mosaic II).

Connecting Students and Faculty

Two programs bring faculty and students together for extracurricular academic experiences and provide early opportunities for mentoring and scholarly work. Initiated in the program’s first year, General Education set aside resources for 15 undergraduate GenEd peer teachers to participate in the university’s Diamond Peer Teaching Program.

The Diamond Peer Teachers Program is a competitive program providing undergraduates the opportunity to experience the challenges and rewards of college-level teaching, to develop their own pedagogical skills by working closely with their faculty mentors, and to provide supplemental instruction in lower-level and GenEd courses. Peer mentors may assist with lecture preparation, locating

appropriate and relevant course material, assignment design, assignment feedback, test preparation and/or lecture.

The General Education Academic and Creative Student award was initiated in Spring 2011 as a way of recognizing and publicizing the quality of academic accomplishments produced in General Education coursework.

Faculty members nominate students who have demonstrated superior scholarly or creative achievement through the production of a notable term paper, research project, creative or artistic endeavor, in any of the Breadth areas or the Foundation areas of the GenEd curriculum. Criteria used for evaluating student submissions include, but are not limited to, the work's demonstration of the learning goals of a particular GenEd area and its reflection of the academic/intellectual spirit of the GenEd Program.

Connecting with the Global Community

General Education also has adopted several strategies for making global connections, those strategies and initiatives include policy decisions, course offerings, and on-going collaborations with various university entities.

Taking a cue from documented high-impact practices (HIP) on student learning, General Education strongly encourages its students to take advantage of the study abroad programs, especially given our international presence.

The Temple University—Japan offers a full complement of General Education courses, and a student could complete any or all of her/his requirements while studying in Tokyo. Temple University—Rome offers a GenEd Arts course specifically created for students studying at Temple University—Rome. Additionally, students who successfully complete coursework with a C- or better in Tokyo, Rome or another study abroad program, are waived of the GenEd World Society (GG) requirement.

For faculty involvement, we partially support a faculty learning community dedicated to teaching with and about global issues. The learning group began meeting in Fall 2008 and continues to function under the name, The Marco Polo Initiative and functions as an *ad hoc* committee focused on developing resources and materials to support instruction in and all aspects of globalization.

GenEd also has sponsored Global Temple for the last two years. Global Temple has become an annual symposium celebrating and exploring Temple University's international work. Students (undergraduate and graduate) and faculty join together for a day of paper presentations, panel discussions, performances and exhibits.

Section V: Challenges & Promising Practices

General Education curriculum reform is fraught with competing pressures and potholes. As we think about the program's development over the next three years, we see three pressing issues. We should note that these concerns are not unique to Temple University nor are they strictly a concern of the General Education Program—our concerns broadly speak to concerns present in many, if not all, institutions of higher education: 1) aligning standards of excellence and success; 2) the changing landscape of higher education; and 3) communicating the importance of General Education to our multiple and varied constituencies.

Aligning Standards of Excellence and Success

All parties—students, faculty, staff and administrators—at the university are focused on student success and excellence; however, we possess different, sometimes complementary, sometimes clashing definitions of success and excellence. Problems emerge when a single definition of excellence dominates to the exclusion of other measures of success. The conversation about education and its purpose often has been framed as a binary rather than a continuum.

Completion and Quality

A more concrete example of a false binary invoked in higher education is that of completion. Increased calls by critics of higher education have begun to advance the completion agenda or the goal to increase the number of college graduates who carry a lower student-debt ratio upon receipt of the baccalaureate.

A much-needed wake-up call for colleges and universities, the completion conversation must be tempered by a focus on quality. Preparing students for life and employment in the 21st century cannot be solely focused on time to graduation. We must also focus on the skills, abilities, and qualification of degree recipients.

Those experiences demonstrated to increase retention and persistence such as intensive writing instruction, learning communities, undergraduate research and peer mentoring programs, produce quality learning outcomes for students. And, these interventions take time and effort to cultivate. The conversation must shift to address both quality and completion and the complex interaction between the two rather than one or the other.

Temple University and GenEd have adopted several practices aimed at increasing student retention and persistence and early indicators suggest those practices are increasing both retention and four-year graduation rates. Efforts addressed elsewhere include, the eight-semester matrices, up-to-date degree

progress information in the Degree Audit Report systems (DARs) and policies adopted for Temple's large transfer student population.

Other efforts under development to facilitate student's persistence and timely graduation rates include the Critical Paths project and early intervention efforts for at-risk students. The Critical Paths projects is currently identifying key points in a student's career and anchoring those milestones with GenEd requirements.

The intervention for at-risk students takes a broader approach and joins the Office of the Senior Vice Provost for Undergraduate Studies, faculty, advisors and student peer mentors for a multi-pronged approach. Temple is in the process of developing a system by which academic advisors communicate with students identified as at-risk for stopping out at multiple points throughout the semester. Key courses in GenEd as well as within the major have been identified as critical indicators of student success, and discussions have just been initiated about providing peer tutors and mentors to support students and faculty in these courses.

GenEd and the Major

Coherency of general education curricula and its alignment with major programs is a challenge for institutions. A survey of chief academic officers in American Association of Colleges and Universities member schools revealed, respondents revealed that only 35% of administrators report that their general education programs possess a coherent sequence of courses (Hart, 2009).

Similar to other AAC&U member institutions, our program can improve in articulating how general education learning goals assist and extend students' upper-division coursework. Our experience mirrors that of many other AACU member institutions. More than half (53%) of administrators perceive their institution's general education program lacking integration with students' major requirements (Hart, 2009).

Some of our peer and aspirant institutions have introduced capstones or mid-career progress assessments or courses in order to limit this disconnect and provide students with a structural means for connecting general education requirements with upper-division coursework. Other institutions have employed student portfolios as a means for tracking student progress and providing students with a means for reflecting on their educational experiences.

The time has come to engage in a university-wide discussion about undergraduate education and how the GenEd competencies connect with the learning goals in upper-division coursework. This conversation opens the door to respective understanding about student achievement in GenEd and upper-division courses and the relationship between two primary elements of the student's degree. Then, with this shared understanding, we may begin to

evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of students' learning across their lifetime at Temple University

Most recently, General Education has teamed with the Teaching & Learning Center, the Faculty Senate and the Educational Programs and Policies Committee (EPPC) to host two discussions about undergraduate education at Temple University in an attempt to elicit the faculty's priorities for strengthening undergraduate education and possibly, developing a shared understanding of what the faculty mean by excellence and success. Scheduled for late-April and early-May two moderated discussions will highlight shared priorities and suggest possible strategies for implementing those priorities.

The Changing Landscape of Higher Education

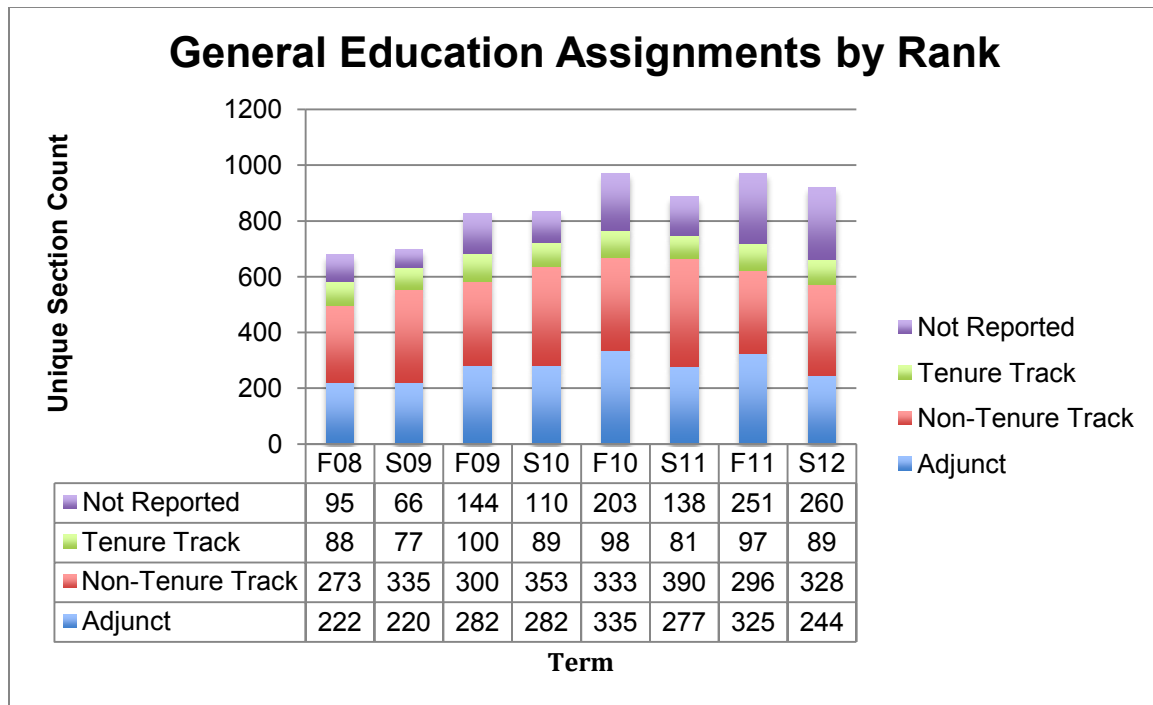
Three inter-related trends in the changing landscape of higher education pose significant challenges for the General Education curriculum's continued success, including increased calls for accountability of student learning and success (discussed in the previous section), the changing professoriate and changes in higher education funding models.

The Changing Professoriate

Another challenge in higher education is the changing professoriate and the increased reliance upon contingent faculty. Tenured faculty and tenure-track positions are rapidly declining and full-time, short-term and part-time faculty carry more responsibility for teaching and service without the security or recognition of their disappearing counterparts. The landscape of Temple University's professoriate is no different from the national landscape.

As originally conceived, the GenEd program was to "the fullest extent feasible be taught by the university's full-time faculty". The policy does not suggest those full-time faculty members be tenure-track or tenured faculty members, and historically these ranks are the most underrepresented in the program. However, faculty ranks assigned to teach in the program are shifting to include more part-time and contingent faculty.

During the course-design and piloting period, members of the full-time faculty were widely assigned to teach GenEd courses, many voluntarily, as they had invested much time and energy in the courses and wanted to ensure that they were launched effectively. Over time, however, many such professors saw undergraduate students in their departments struggling to get into advanced courses that were required for their major, so they have increasingly chosen to teach department-specific courses instead of GenEd courses.



Closer inspection of the aggregate reveals that the percentage of tenure-track faculty assigned to teach in GenEd has remained fairly constant but that the greatest shift is with those faculty whose rank is not identified. Closer evaluation indicates that some of the instructors whose rank was not reported were actually graduate students who may have been teaching as part of a graduate student assistantship or were teaching as adjuncts. Others in this category do not have a faculty member identified, even at the semester's end.

Tenure-track faculty members who are in GenEd classrooms are often in large enrollment courses. Our enthusiasm about an increase in tenured faculty teaching in GenEd has been tempered by these trends as well as by the impact on class size. It would make sense that as faculty with higher ranks are assigned to GenEd that we would observe (and indeed, do) an increase in section size given the university's budget model. However, we also see a trend whereby part-time faculty (the most economical instructional personnel) are assigned to increasingly larger courses.

Two practices adopted by the Department of Religion (College of Liberal Arts) and in the College of Education show promise for communicating the importance of General Education and for improving continuity of instruction, regardless of rank.

First, the Department of Religion has altered its approach to communicate the shared importance of university service and departmental service in the way it assigns faculty workloads. The Department of Religion now makes it a

requirement of all full-time tenure-track and non-tenure-track members of the faculty to teach at least one GenEd course per academic year. This practice communicates a commitment to the university and the department and encourages all full-time faculty to be involved with students at all levels of understanding and interest. The practice also encourages a greater shared understanding of how GenEd courses related to work in the upper-division and the shared commitment to student learning at both levels.

Second, the College of Education has adopted a promising strategy for introducing new faculty members, primarily graduate students, to its GenEd courses. For its courses the College has an appointed course coordinator who works closely with instructors, regardless of rank, to ensure the requisite learning outcomes as well as the consistency of the content covered throughout the courses.

The benefit of assigning senior faculty to work with graduate students or junior faculty again communicate the importance of General Education and its role within the university while also providing an opportunity to mentor and be mentored in a new pedagogical environment. Those faculty, particularly graduate student instructors, benefit from the expertise and experience of a faculty member with an interest in teaching and in developing teachers. Thus, the College of Education has established a community of faculty with shared goals and perspectives on student learning which then enhances course continuity as teaching assignments shift and change.

Changes in Higher Education Funding

A greater and greater number of universities are dependent upon tuition as the primary revenue source. Temple University has weathered a series of double-digit reductions to its State appropriations over the last several years, and those budget decreases have been shared by the colleges and academic-support units.

The university responded by tightening its belt and reducing costs in a myriad of ways. Three of the cost containment measures directly affect teaching within General Education.

First, the university has demonstrated an increased reliance upon adjunct faculty which previously was discussed within the context of a changing professoriate. Second, the university has reduced instructional costs by amending course delivery models. Finally, faculty workloads have been amended or changed so that many full-time, non-tenure faculty are responsible for teaching a 4-4 load, as outlined in the TAUP (faculty union) contract.

Delivery modes and section size vary from course to course and department to department, and variance in class size mode was expected and is desired as we

hope to accommodate a variety of teaching techniques and learning modes. However, as the budget continues to tighten and as funding is more closely tied to credit hours generated by colleges, GenEd foresees a pronounced shift in the delivery models.

Many departments have eliminated course breakout or recitation sections. Examples of such changes include Philadelphia Arts and Culture (GenEd Arts) and Chemistry of Wine (GenEd Science & Technology). In both cases, the courses were proposed to be large lectures with smaller, more intimate breakout sessions led by graduate student teaching assistants. Room availability and difficulties in student scheduling eventually led the departments to phase out the recitation sections.

Some courses, originally proposed as small- to mid-sized courses, have increased registrations to eliminate the costs of running two mid-sized lectures. Examples fitting this scenario include Gender in America (GenEd U.S. Society) and Politics of Identity (GenEd Race & Diversity). Many more sections are offered as mid-sized classes (greater than 30 and fewer than 75), and of these, a number were originally proposed at this level. Examples of classes that have always existed at the mid-range include Shakespeare in the Movies (GenEd Arts), African-American and the Law (GenEd Race & Diversity), Religion in the World (GenEd World Society) Contemporary American Social Movements (GenEd U.S. Society) and Green vs. Gray: Improving & Sustaining the Urban Ecosystem (Science & Technology). However, allowing for growth from the initial GenEd pilot, many mid-sized courses have been expanding and are at the upper limit or have moved into the large-lecture category.

A number of courses in the Breadth areas continue to be offered in smaller, more intimate environments of 25 or fewer, examples include Creative Acts (GenEd Arts), Identity & Crisis (GenEd Human Behavior), and Honors GenEd course.

It is particularly critical to keep class size down in the Analytical Reading and Writing course and the Foundation courses in general, as well as in the Mosaic seminars in the Intellectual Heritage Program, although even here the enrollment caps were raised in the fall semester of 2012 from 25 to 29. For the typical Mosaics faculty member, four students have been added to each of her/his sections which amounts to an additional 16 students a semester or 32 students a year—the equivalent of one additional course. It is clear that this trend is directly related to budgetary concerns, though this explanation does not make the effects for Temple students any less deleterious.

Course recertification afforded General Education the opportunity to examine the impact of changing course delivery models on the course and from the faculty's perspective. In general, as class size increased, the opportunities for students to develop critical thinking, communication and information literacy skills decreased, particularly in the absence of instructional support.

Again, General Education understands the imperative to contain costs and thus, tuition for our students, but we are concerned about the implications for the student learning experience, particularly if the more complex and robust written assignments are phased out in favor of more exams and are waiting to see the impact of a decentralized budget model on teaching assignments, course loads, and course delivery models.

Communicating the Importance of General Education

Our struggles with communication in the face of turnover and information overload are chronic issues that we have attempted to address through multiple means.

Although the GenEd Program has a fair number of interrelated components, Temple University does a good job of explaining both the learning objectives and specific curriculum requirements to students. The information is available in a variety of formats, including: (i) the GenEd handbook, (ii) the University GenEd website, (iii) the University Undergraduate Bulletin, and (iv) the pamphlet "Get Connected with Temple GenEd", which is given to all incoming students. The information is consistent across these formats. Furthermore, new students at Temple attend presentations concerning the GenEd program, and GenEd faculty are urged to enumerate and emphasize relevant GenEd goals in their syllabi.

It is helpful to consider who GenEd's stakeholders are and how GenEd communicates with them. The direct stakeholders in GenEd are the students, the faculty that teach GenEd courses, the entire faculty of the university, the department chairs, the Dean's offices and the administration.

To a different extent, there are also indirect stakeholders, such as the student advisors and parents. The faculty and staff that direct the GenEd program use multiple communication mediums and technological platforms to communicate its goals, policies, and procedures to these different groups. The most common of these include face-to-face interaction, presentations, email, the GenEd website and written communication (either in the form of pamphlets, fliers, or letters).

Examples of GenEd's communication continuing efforts include, but are not limited to:

- Students, faculty, and staff have access to GenEd's policies and procedures on the GenEd website, where they can review the Undergraduate Bulletin or read the GenEd pamphlet "Get Connected with Temple GenEd."
- Each faculty member teaching a GenEd class includes the area goals on the course syllabus.

- Program chairs are sent emails reviewing the GenEd re-certification procedures.
- Members of the GenEd Executive Committee are asked to speak in their department meetings about the role of GenEd and to answer any questions.
- GenEd Area Coordinators communicate regularly via email with faculty teaching in their areas.
- GenEd has established a liaison committee with Faculty Senate.

While the members of the GenEd community have been largely successful in communicating the program's policies and procedures, there is room for improvement. GenEd needs to more consistently and clearly communicate its overall goals and learning outcomes to "mid-level" decision makers.

University administrators and the faculty that teach GenEd courses have some understanding of the role that GenEd plays in the university, however, Deans and Department Chairs often do not. Since these decision makers are ultimately responsible for approving and staffing GenEd classes, their lack of knowledge concerning GenEd is problematic. In addition, while every effort is made to communicate with students, some portion of the student population is either under-informed or misinformed about the GenEd program and its goals.

In conclusion, the General Education Program has established a strong basis for further developing undergraduate skills through newly designed courses in its five years of existence, as well as connecting student course work to both local and global communities. We have also been successful in establishing a strong governance infrastructure, which remains in the hands of the university faculty. These elements are paramount to the further success and growth of the program. The challenges the General Education Program will face in the coming two years and perhaps beyond will largely emerge from the changing financial landscape of the university, and the unforeseen changes to higher education at large. The question remains open as to how best anticipate these challenges?