

May 10th, 2018

Dear Colleagues,

Here's a brief update from the committee.

We drafted a Mission and Vision statement for general education that became the basis of conversation with 5 groups. Through the deans of colleges with undergraduate majors, we reached out to department chairs in mid-April, inviting them to name 1 to 3 colleagues who might participate in small group conversations. We met with four groups May 2 through May 9, and also with representatives from the Senate Academic Planning Committee.

We'll make small revisions to the mission and vision. Then we'll draft goals developed from the DU undergraduate learning outcomes, our synthesis of previous faculty and student insights, and our analysis of DU and education into the future. With goals established, we will turn to drafting specific curricular and/or policy recommendations.

Mission and Vision Draft Approved for Discussion in Campus Groups, 4/25/18

Mission

The mission of the general education program at DU, emanating from our vision to be a great private university dedicated to the public good, is to foster in each undergraduate the knowledge and abilities that are crucial to informed, responsible, and effective participation in civic, scholarly, and professional lives.

Vision

A successful general education program will be marked by several features:

- **A sense of identity.** Students, faculty, staff and members of the DU community will understand the program as enacting DU's specific values, and aspirations, including as manifested in Impact 2025. The general education program will be one distinctive marker of DU's identity.
- **A sense of purpose.** Students, faculty, staff, and members of the DU community will understand and value how general education contributes uniquely to the vital whole of undergraduates' educations. Rather than simply being, as at some schools, a list of obligations to check off, general education courses at DU will be recognized for providing opportunities for intellectual, social, and personal growth.
- **A sense of coherence.** Students, faculty, staff, and members of the DU community will perceive vital connections among courses in the program; among general education and other courses, particularly in majors; and between academic and other settings. That is, they will experience how information, ideas, approaches, applications, and/or skills travel among different sites, both within and beyond the academy.
- **A sense of intentional design.** Faculty will create and teach courses that are intentionally designed for the general education program, for its purpose, vision, and goals.
- **A commitment to meaningful reflection.** There will be compelling analyses of how the program is working, grounded in the interpretation of artifacts, evidence, and practices and done in such a way that faculty find the process and insights valuable, even engaging.

Likewise, students will reflect, in ways meaningful to them, upon their experience of the program as a whole and its role in their academic, civic, and professional development.

- **A commitment to faculty development.** Faculty teaching general education courses will have resources and opportunities for professional development with colleagues across the program, including on concerns of curriculum and pedagogy that originate with them. Resources will be sufficient to implement pedagogical and curricular innovations

The General Education Review and Inquiry Committee (GERI)

Chris Coleman, Emergent Digital Practices; Doug Hesse, English and Writing (Chair);

Barbekka Hurtt, Biological Sciences; Tonnett Luedtke, Academic Advising;

Kateri McRae, Psychology; Nic Ormes, Mathematics; Matt Rutherford, Computer Science;

Laura Sponsler, Morgridge College of Education; Billy J. Stratton, English;

John Tiedemann, Writing; Cheri Young, Hospitality

Ongoing Background

We've sent periodic reports to the campus since our initial extended letter to the faculty in October 2017. Most important among them is the Interim Report we emailed the faculty in March 2018. It summarized findings and provided reports and data through extended appendices. For broader conceptual framing, you could review the Parameters of General Education report sent to the faculty in December 2017.