

March 5, 2018

Dear Faculty Colleagues,

The General Education Review Committee is pleased to share an update on our work. Following is an executive summary of an interim report with a link to the [full version](#), at 10 pages plus a 100-page appendix. Since we last wrote to the campus community, our committee has met several times, conducted focus and listening groups, and surveyed students. As you'll learn from our report, we're planning a further series of faculty discussions and consultations in the spring. As always, please share questions or comments with any member of our committee.

Winter 2018 Report on General Education at DU

An Interim Report from the General Education Review and Inquiry Committee
March 2, 2018

Chris Coleman, Emergent Digital Practices; Doug Hesse, English and Writing (Chair); Barbekka Hurtt, Biological Sciences; Tonnelt 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

Executive Summary

After a six-month review of history, theory, research, and implementation models for general education programs in American colleges and universities, and after analyzing the Common Curriculum at the University of Denver, the General Education Review and Inquiry Committee (GERI) has reached some initial conclusions. To arrive at them, we studied DU documents, surveyed the faculty, held open faculty listening forums, conducted a targeted student survey, and led student focus groups. In respect to widely-accepted theoretical and structural frameworks for general education, the Common Curriculum has a primary function of serving the individual student good, with a related secondary function of serving the civic good. The CC models a combination of distribution and competencies, the latter including knowledge of and experience with epistemological traditions in the academy ("Ways of Knowing") and development of identified skills. With this context in mind, our work has generated seven working conclusions, which are elaborated in the full report:

A. Whatever the substantive merits of the current DU Common Curriculum, neither students nor faculty understand its logic and purpose to an extent that is desirable.

B. A general education program that clearly manifests integration and purpose is desirable.

C. The learning outcomes in the Common Curriculum do not currently foster coherence and purpose, even though they are well-intentioned.

D. There is a disparity between the DU Undergraduate Learning Outcome for community engagement and the representation of community engagement in the Common Curriculum.

E. Diversity and inclusivity are manifested in the Common Curriculum learning outcomes and requirements much less than they are in the Undergraduate Learning Outcome for Engagement with Human Diversity.

F. Any general education program at DU must leverage the strengths of the university and embody its mission and vision.

G. Whatever revisions are made as a result of the review process, the program clearly will need to be accompanied by a significant communications effort, plus significant ongoing faculty development and learning.

These initial conclusions have opened a number of additional questions for inquiry, and our committee will invite all DU faculty to participate in a number of further conversations before we propose draft revisions of the Common Curriculum in June. Our proposal will be the focus of discussion and revision in fall 2018.

You can download the [entire report](#) or view it on the [GERI Portfolio](#) site.