



University  
*of* Idaho

# GENERAL EDUCATION

## NEXT STEPS

Cher Hendricks & Dean Panttaja

# WHY I'M HERE (AT THE U OF I)



## Student Information



### About

The University of Idaho offers students a vertical, multi-year liberal educational experience to complement the course work in each student's major.

Each year's General Education courses and seminars build on the foundations of the previous year, reiterating and interlinking with the other courses and seminars embedded with the [University General Education Learning Outcomes](#).

### Related Links

[UI Learning Outcomes](#) >

[General Catalog](#) >

[General Education Curriculum Requirements](#) > PDF

[Transfer Student Information](#) >  
PDF



### Pathway and Integration

The [ISEM 101 Integrated Seminars](#) are the entry points for first-year students. They instill critical themes and perspectives, including the application of an interdisciplinary humanities and social science approach to an understanding of diverse "human communities." Students develop oral and written communications skills, while being introduced to library research.

The ISEM 101s, in turn, bridge into the [American Diversity](#) and [International](#) courses, as well as the Humanities and Social Sciences courses. [All of these courses and seminars are interwoven](#) with and supported by courses in Communications, Mathematics and the Natural and Applied Sciences (including the option of an innovative Integrated Science (CORS) seminar).

During the student's third-year, the [ISEM 301](#) Great Issues seminars reiterate the fundamental themes, including interdisciplinarity and integration, as applied to a University of Idaho "Signature Event." The General Education key themes are then revisited and culminate into each student's [Senior Experience](#).

Inclusive of ["high-impact, best practices,"](#) the UI General Education is distinguished by its American Diversity and International components, and its Integrative Studies (ISEM 101, ISEM 301 and Senior Experience).

The General Education curriculum is not a stand-alone set of integrated courses, but complementary to and supportive of the student's educational experiences gained through his or her major. A degree from the University of Idaho is more than a major. A General Education is a life-long endeavor.

# DEVELOPMENT OF GENERAL EDUCATION



**General Education Steering Committee  
Recommendations: Building on and Refining the Core Curriculum  
Forwarded to University Committee on General Education  
August 27, 2010**

**Steering Committee Members:** Tom Bitterwolf, Shauna Corry, Ray Dacey, John Foltz, Annette Folwell, Rodney Frey, Jodie Nicotra, Ed Odom, Diane Prorak, Nick Sanyal, Sharon Stoll

## **Process Overview**

Provost Baker charged Deans Kathy Aiken and Scott Wood and Vice Provosts Jeanne Christiansen and Bruce Pitman with developing and implementing a coordinated approach to general education and the first year transitions students experience as they enter the University of Idaho. A review of the core curriculum, strategies to strengthen the first experiences, and attention to student learning in and out of the classroom were included in the charge.

# GENERAL EDUCATION ELEMENTS



## Summary of Recommendations

Using the information gathered within the university and from other colleges and universities, AAC&U, CCAS, and other bodies of knowledge, and best practices, the Steering Committee recommends these changes in general education:

- Replace the term Core Curriculum with General Education
- Require students with less than 14 transcribed college credits to complete the University of Idaho General Education program
- Place emphasis on the vertical integration (years one through four) of knowledge and skills in areas such as critical thinking, writing, communications, international, and diversity across the four years of the degree program
- Year 1
  - Provide a robust, intentionally designed **first-semester experience** with academic, co-curricular, and living community integration to connect students to the university
  - Replace core discovery with a one-semester, three-credit interdisciplinary course that integrates the university learning outcomes and general education goals, meets a humanities or a social science general education requirement, is available fall and spring semesters, and is **staffed primarily by faculty from the College of Letters, Arts, and Social Sciences**
  - Require Comm|101 for all students
- Year 3
  - Add a one-credit Great Issues Seminar, an interdisciplinary course linked with a university signature event (e.g., Bellwood Lecture, Borah Symposium, Runstad Lecture), that integrates the university learning outcomes and general education goals and is **staffed primarily by faculty from the Colleges of Agricultural and Life Sciences, Art and Architecture, Business and Economics, Education, Engineering, and Natural Resources**
- Year 4
  - Fully implement a senior course requirement, minimum of 2 credits, that emphasizes the university learning outcomes and general education goals and integrates general education and the major, offered in the major or the department or college within which the major resides (e.g., required senior course, capstone course)
- Continue the international-designated course requirement

- Add a diversity-designated course requirement (model similar to international course requirement)
- Assess student learning (direct and indirect measures and student interviews) in years 1, 3, and 4, connected to the courses listed above, based on the university learning outcomes and a robust assessment tool and process, and using the data annually to inform recommendations for continuous improvement
- Continue the current communication, humanities, mathematics, social science, and science (including integrated science) requirements, and the upper division and the three discipline requirement in general core studies to fulfill the remainder of general education requirements
- Total credits required for general education remain the same.

The proposal embeds many of the characteristics of effective general education programs. Consistent with the university focus on interdisciplinary, students are engaged in intentionally designed and rigorous interdisciplinary general education courses in years one, three, and four. The general education program extends throughout the four years of the degree program, and there is commitment from the leadership of colleges with undergraduate degrees to staff the year one and three courses as well as the remaining requirements for general education. The recommendations have been developed by a committee of the faculty to be reviewed and acted upon through the university curriculum process.

**The proposal is sustainable in the current fiscal environment.**

**The proposal is sustainable in the current fiscal environment.**

# NEXT STEPS: UCGE



## MEMORANDUM University Committee on General Education

To: Professor Robert Stone, Chair  
University Curriculum Committee  
From: Steve Chandler, Chair  
University Committee on General Education  
Subj.: Proposed revisions to the UI Core Curriculum  
Date: November 15, 2010

This memorandum is forwarded to the University Curriculum Committee as a seconded motion from the University Committee on General Education. Approved by the members of the UCGE November 4, 2010, the motion proposes the changes to section **J-3 Subject Requirements (Core Curriculum)** described below and specified in the accompanying markup of the current catalog language.

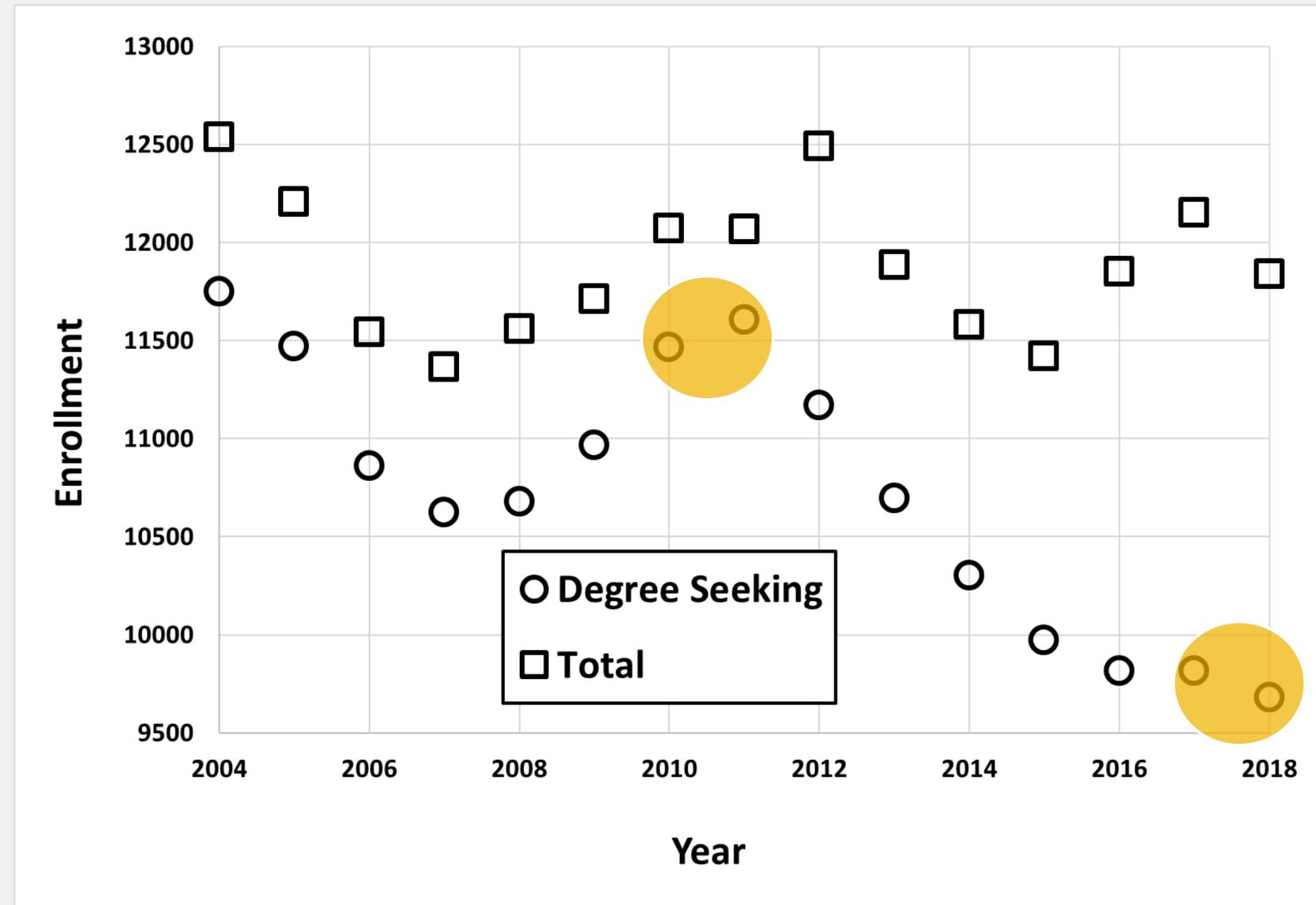
**33  
credit  
hours**

First-Semester Experience (include one course so designated): In the various public forums and in the faculty survey, no other component of the current UI core elicited more lively conversation than the Core Discovery requirement. On one hand, the professional colleges, in particular, have found it especially difficult to advise students into the Core Discovery courses, and all colleges participating in undergraduate education have found it increasingly difficult to fund and staff the fifty-some sections of Core Discovery needed every semester. On the other hand, the introduction to and transition into higher education afforded to first-year students in the Core Discovery courses appear to have played important roles in improving student retention and student satisfaction with their experiences at the University of Idaho (see, for example, the graduating senior surveys for the past two years). Recognizing both the problems associated with the current year-long Core Discovery model and the importance of the first semester of study for students, the committee recommends replacing the mandatory two-semester Core Discovery courses in part with a mandatory first-semester seminar that orients students to academic life at the university, introducing them to college-level academic habits, the academic resources available to them, and to university expectations regarding the quality of thought, expression, and effort shown in their work. Within the proposed core curriculum, this

### Concluding comments

The proposed revisions to the University of Idaho's core curriculum described above embed many of the characteristics of programs recognized as effective by general education scholars. Consistent with the university's renewed focus on interdisciplinarity, students under this proposal will be engaged in intentionally designed and rigorous interdisciplinary general education courses in years one, two, three, and four. Thus, the proposed core not only integrates disciplines horizontally (within a given year) but also extends throughout the four years or more of a degree program. The members of the Steering Committee and the members of the UCGE have the commitments from the leadership of colleges with undergraduate degrees to staff the newly proposed first-year and third-year courses as well as the remaining requirements for general education. Moreover, the proposal appears to be sustainable within the current fiscal environment. **The proposal is sustainable in the current fiscal environment.**

# THE FISCAL ENVIRONMENT



Overall enrollment flat BUT 16.67% decline in degree seeking students since 2011 -> ~\$15 million revenue

# THE COST



## FIRST-YEAR PROFILE

**11,841**

U OF I TOTAL ENROLLMENT

**2,647**

NEW STUDENT ENROLLMENT

**1,434** First-Year Students

**538** Transfer Students

**675** Graduate Students

**38**  
**ISEM 101**  
**sections**

60 (catch-up)

**\$4500**  
**course**

**40**  
**ISEM 301**  
**sections**

**\$270k**

**IS OUR GENERAL EDUCATION PROGRAM  
SUSTAINABLE IN OUR CURRENT FISCAL  
ENVIRONMENT?**



# **WHAT ARE OUR OTHER ISSUES?**

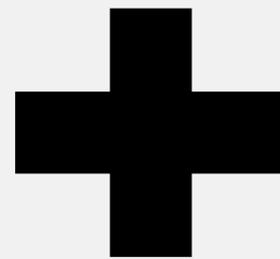
# STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION



## The Idaho State Board of Education (SBOE) requires:

Minimum **30** credits in 6 general education matriculation (GEM) areas:

- Written communication (6 cr)
- Oral communication (2)
- Mathematical ways of knowing (3)
- Scientific ways of knowing (7)
- Humanistic/Artistic ways of knowing (6)
- Social/Behavioral ways of knowing (6)



**36**

**6** Institutionally-Designated Credits

[We have more than that]:

- ISEM 101 (3)
- ISEM 301 (1)
- American Diversity (1 course)
- International (1 course)
- Senior Experience (1 or more credits)

**11**

**41**

# ASSESSMENT



## October 2012 UCGE Assessment Plan

Direct the **assessment efforts** of the **3-point** General Education tiers (ISEM 101, ISEM 301 and Senior Experience), along with **entire** General Education curriculum. Apply the VALUE Rubrics (or modified version, with rating scales and scoring criteria), with course learning activities and “assessment artifacts” to assess competency and proficiency in addressing UI Learning Outcomes. And make recommendations for any adjustments to General Education to the Provost Council, Faculty Senate and UCGE.

## June 2014 General Education Assessment Strategy

Curriculum targets (starting with required curriculum for the 2012-13 first-year students):

1. ISEM 101 (pilot Fall and Spring 2013-14, and continuing every other year there after)
2. ISEM 301 (begin full implementation for Fall and Spring 2014-15, and continuing every other year there after)
3. Senior Experience (begin with Fall and Spring 2015-16, inclusive of both UI and Transfer sets of General Education students, and continuing every other year there after)
4. Expanding assessment to other General Education components, such as American Diversity.
5. Random sample of syllabi from varied General Education components, e.g., courses from Science and Humanities. |

General Education Assessment Committee: Jane Baillargeon (in memory) and Kenton Bird, facilitators.

Fred Barlow, Dan Campbell, Shauna Corry, Sarah Nelson, Diane Prorak, Beth Price, Linda Taylor, Katie Schiffelbein, and Sarah Silflow, members.

1 year

1 attempt

This year with the help of faculty and \$11k in resources, we have assessment data for both ENGL and COMM.

# OTHER ISSUES

We have too many general education offerings. It's confusing to students and advisors.

Faculty don't want to engage in required general education assessment, and it's hard to manage assessment with so many course choices.

ISEMS aren't financially sustainable, and lack of meaningful assessment of these courses means we don't know their value to the student experience.

Some upper division general education courses have pre-requisites or are meant to be taken after students have some knowledge of the discipline.

# LONG TERM GOALS



**1** Create an assessment system for general education and institutionally-designated courses that fulfils SBOE/NWCCU requirements.

**2** Integrate the previous general education goals into programs at the introductory, mid-cycle and capstone levels of the discipline.

**3** Help students better understand the value of general education courses and both the hard and soft-skills associated with them.

# ACHIEVING OUR LONG TERM GOALS



Create a general education task force and charge them to review and revise the general education program

Target:  
Completion  
December  
2019

**IS OUR GENERAL EDUCATION PROGRAM  
SUSTAINABLE IN OUR CURRENT FISCAL  
ENVIRONMENT?**

# SHORT TERM IDEAS



1

Adopt the SBOE GEM core (30 +6) to simplify course offerings, increase transferability of courses, and strengthen assessment.

2

Discontinue ISEM 101 & 301 and shift to the American Diversity & International courses as our 2 institutionally-designated courses.

3

Continue to use Senior Experience and Capstone courses as a university requirement (J-3-g.)

4

Shift ISEM resources to GEM and institutionally-designated courses.

**WHAT HAVEN'T WE THOUGHT ABOUT?**

**WHAT ARE THE CHALLENGES?**

**WHAT MIGHT BE THE  
UNINTENDED CONSEQUENCES?**