

# ConnectED Symposium

May 4, 2022

**Session 1: Path to ConnectED**

# The Beginning: GE Task Force

- In January 2016, the General Education Task Force (GETF) was charged by the Provost Hacket
- The charge was to develop a general education curriculum comprised of 30 credit hours
  - which was portable across all undergraduate majors in the university.
  - Governed by a coherent rationale as required by The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC)
  - That allowed participation from all units responsible for undergraduate education at VCU.
- Additionally the taskforce was charged to develop processes for implementing and managing the new GenEd30 curriculum.

**vcuarts**



**VCU**

**Virginia Commonwealth  
University  
School of Social Work  
Social Work**

**Virginia Commonwealth University  
School of Business**



**VCU**

**Virginia Commonwealth University  
College of Humanities and Sciences**

**L. DOUGLAS WILDER SCHOOL OF  
GOVERNMENT AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS**

**Virginia Commonwealth University  
College of Health Professions**

**School of World Studies**

**HONORS COLLEGE**  
DEFINING EXPERIENCE

**School of Nursing**

**College of Engineering**

**Virginia Commonwealth University  
University College**



**VCU**

**Richard T. Robertson School  
of Media and Culture  
College of Humanities and Sciences**

# The Beginning: GE Task Force

## GETF Members

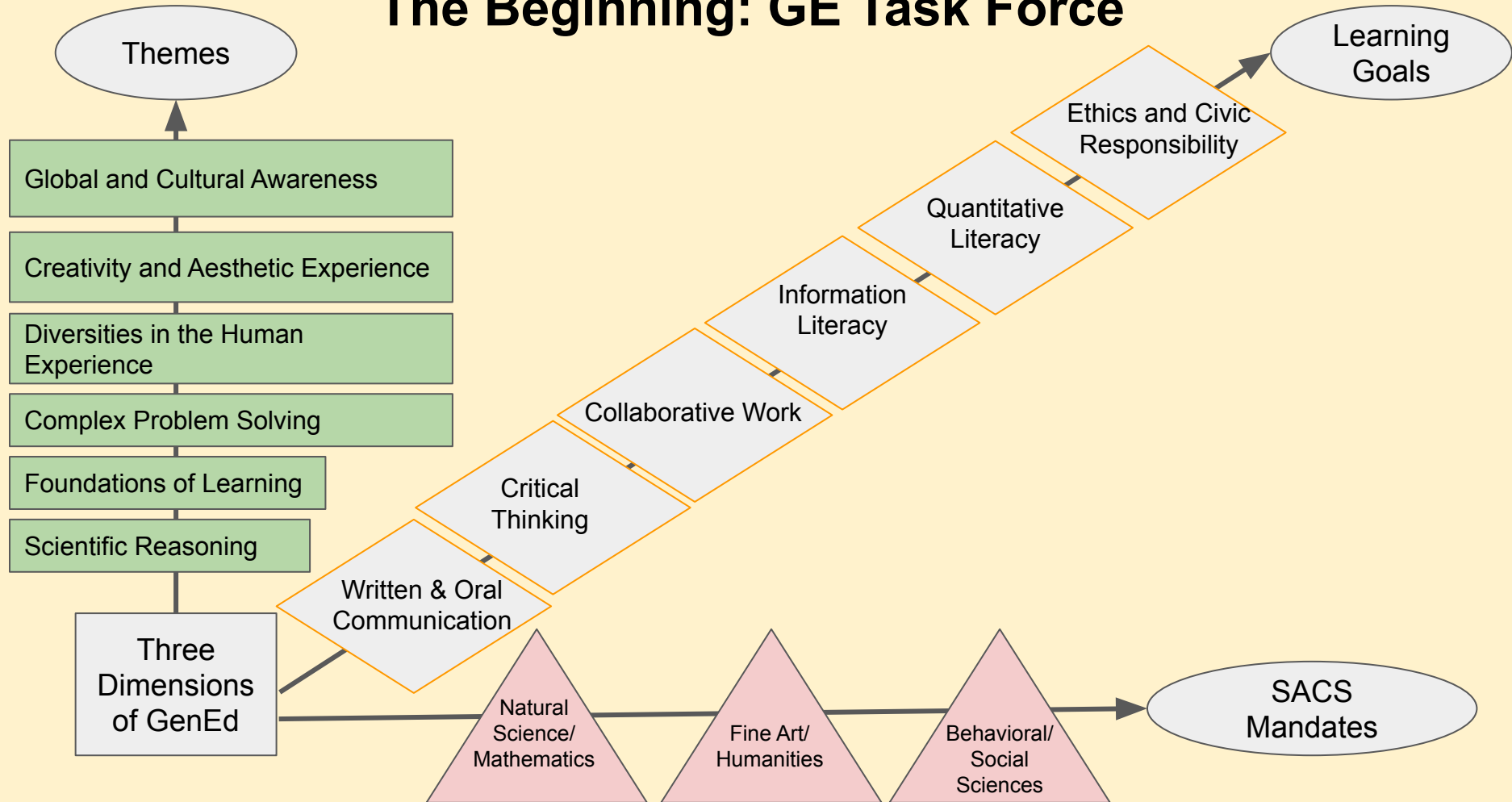
1. Jennifer A. Johnson, Associate Professor & Chair of Sociology, College of Humanities & Sciences- Chair
2. Faye Prichard, Director of Writing, Assessment, and Evaluation, Honors College- Chair
3. Genevieve Beard, Assistant Professor, School of Nursing
4. Leigh Ann Craig, Associate Professor, Department of History, CHS
5. Alen Docef, Associate Professor, School of Engineering
6. Shelli Fowler, Interim Dean for University College, previous representative: Kristin Reed, Associate Professor
7. Nicholas R. Garcia II, Director of Undergraduate Studies, Wilder School of Government and Public Affairs, previous representative: John Mahoney, Associate Professor
8. Robert H. Gowdy, Associate Professor, Department of Physics, CHS
9. Jeffrey S. Legg, Associate Professor, School of Allied Health Professions
10. Sara Wilson McKay, Associate Professor, School of the Arts
11. Joan M. Pellegrini, Associate Professor, School of Dentistry
12. Allison K. Ryals, Assistant Professor in Teaching, School of Social Work
13. Daniel P. Salandro, Associate Professor, School of Business
14. Mikhail J. Valdman, Associate Professor, Department of Philosophy, CHS
15. Joy Whitenack, Associate Professor, Department of Mathematics, CHS, previous representative: Angela Reynolds, Associate Professor

# The Beginning: GE Task Force

## Coherent Rationale:

VCU's General Education Program seeks to provide a diverse student body with a broad base of knowledge and the intellectual skills to participate actively in a changing world. To those ends, the VCU General Education Program challenges students to seek creative answers to complex problems, see connections between disciplines and between ideas, and develop an informed perspective on the varieties of human experience.

# The Beginning: GE Task Force



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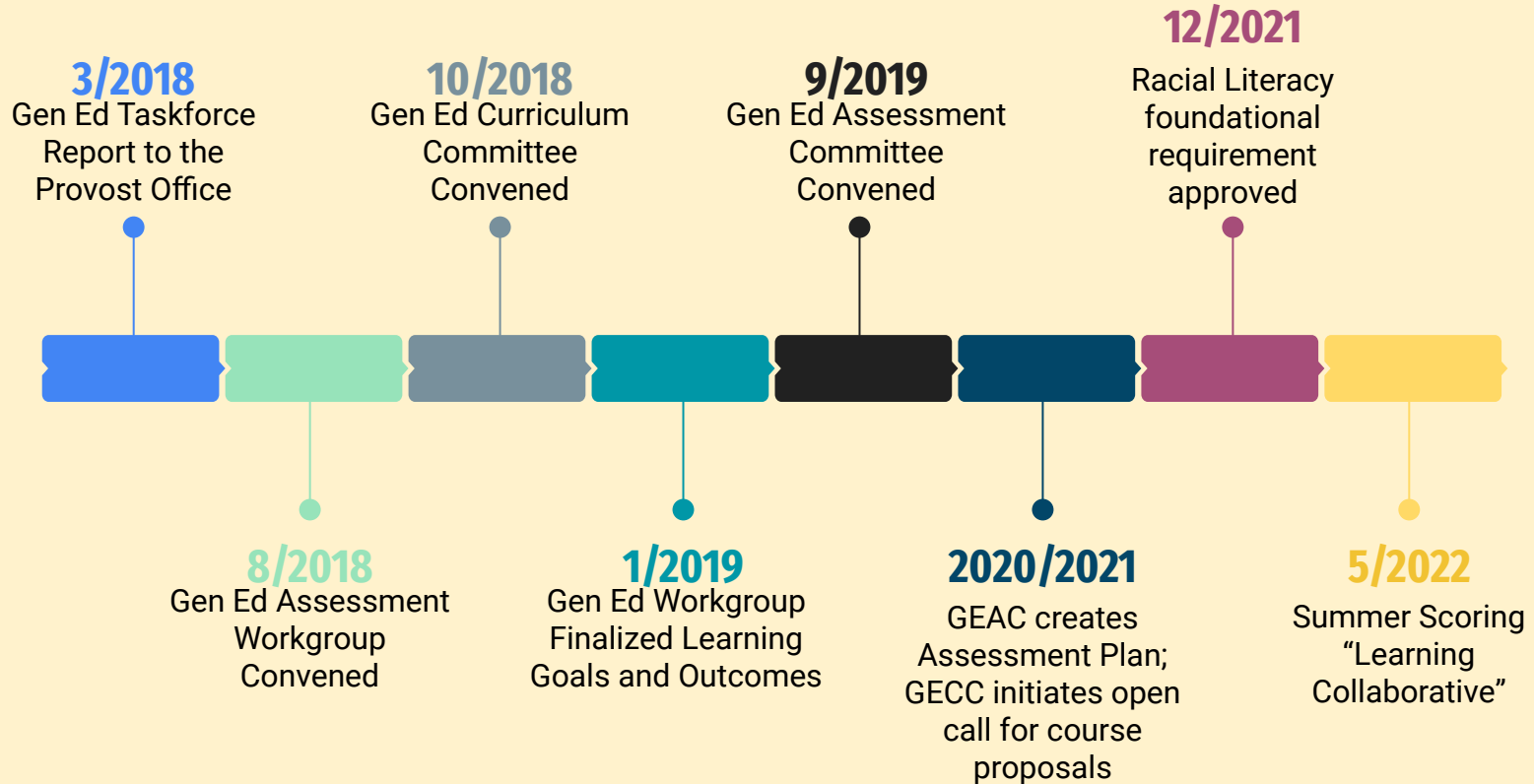
**Foundations:** *Remain the same as previous General Education Requirements:*

- **Univ 111, 112 and 200**
- **Mathematics or Statistics course**

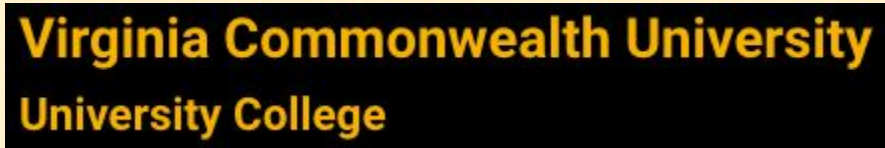
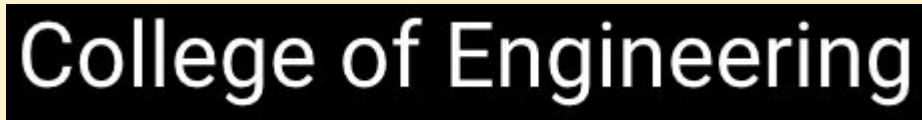
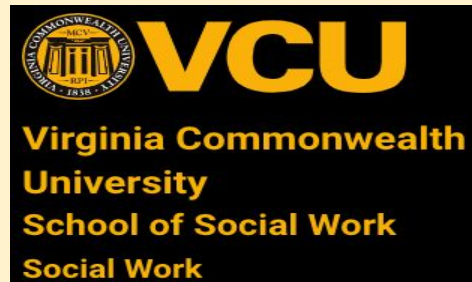
**Areas of Inquiry:** *Developed by the GE Task Force*

- Diversities in the Human Experience
- Creativity, Innovation, and Aesthetic Inquiry
- Global Perspectives
- Scientific and Logical Reasoning

# GECC and GEAC Timeline of Major Events







# First Meeting: August 17, 2018

**After a presentation by the Gen Ed Task Force Leadership, TWO framing questions guided our approach:**

***What kinds of learning is GE30 intended to provide to students? (intellectual and practical skills; a knowledge of many disciplines and modes of inquiry; integration across disciplines; experiential learning; others?)***

***What goals for student learning does the GE30 Final Report state and imply? What can be inferred? For this task, think of a goal as a high level expectation for what students will be know or know how to do because of the GE30 program – or something that they will know or know how to do better because of the GE30 program.***

# Gen Ed Assessment Requirements

## SACSCOC:

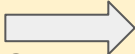
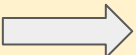
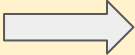
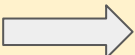
The institution identifies expected outcomes, assesses the extent to which it achieves these outcomes, and provides evidence of seeking improvement based on analysis of the results for student learning outcomes for collegiate-level general education competencies of its undergraduate degree programs.

## SCHEV:

In assessing critical thinking, written communication, quantitative reasoning, and the two additional chosen competencies, institutions shall employ rigorous strategies that rely primarily on **direct measures (i.e., using actual student work or student performance)** and that allow for inferences about the abilities of the general student population. (It is not appropriate, for example, to limit the assessment of quantitative reasoning to students who are majoring in mathematics.) Indirect measures and logical inferences may be used to complement direct assessments.

# SCHEV Competencies

## Four Required:

- Written Communication  Communicative Fluency (including Oral Communication)
- Critical Thinking  Critical and Creative Problem Solving
- Quantitative Reasoning  Quantitative Literacy
- Civic Engagement  Ethical Reasoning

## Two Campus Choices:

- Information Literacy
- Global and Cultural Responsiveness

# First Draft of Learning Goals - November of 2018

## DRAFT - GE 30 Learning Goals - DRAFT

GE 30 Learning Goals	Communicative Fluency	Problem Solving (critical & creative)	Quantitative Literacy	Ethical Reasoning	Global and Cultural Responsiveness/Agility	Information literacy: reading; inquiry; digital mediums
Sources	<p>VALUE-Oral Communication</p> <p>VALUE – Written Communication</p> <p>DQP-Communicative Fluency</p> <p>VCU Core-Writing Proficiency</p> <p>VCU Core-Oral communication</p>	<p>VALUE-Creative Thinking</p> <p>VALUE-Critical Thinking</p> <p>VALUE-Problem Solving</p> <p>SCHEV –Critical Thinking</p>	<p>VALUE-Quantitative Literacy</p> <p>SCHEV-Quantitative Literacy</p> <p>DQP-Quantitative Fluency</p> <p>VCU Core-Quantitative Literacy</p>	<p>VALUE-Ethical Reasoning</p> <p>VALUE-Civic Engagement</p> <p>SCHEV-Civic Engagement</p> <p>DQP-Civic and Global Learning</p> <p>VCU Core-Ethical and Civic Responsibility</p>	<p>VALUE-Intercultural Knowledge and Competence</p> <p>VALUE-Global Learning</p> <p>DQP-Civic and Global Learning</p> <p>DQP-Engaging Diverse Perspectives</p>	<p>VALUE-Information Literacy</p> <p>VCU Core-Information Literacy</p> <p>DQP-Use of Information Sources</p>
SCHEV Competencies	Written Communication	Critical Thinking	Quantitative Reasoning	Civic Engagement	(Campus Choice)	(Campus Choice)

# Spring of 2020 - Official Charge from the Provost's Office

Provost's Charge to the General Education Assessment Committee

## Charge

The General Education Assessment Committee is a standing, advisory committee to the Provost or designee. The committee recommends the assessment approach for general education at the University to ensure the following: 1) faculty engaged in general education teaching and learning have information from general education assessment efforts that will enhance understanding and deepening student learning in general education annually, and 2) the university will have the information necessary to meet external stakeholders' requirements and standards for student learning in general education.

The General Education Assessment Committee is charged with designing, implementing, and administering a plan for assessing VCU's general education goals and outcomes for student learning. The formation and charging of a general education assessment committee fulfills the 2018 General Education Task Force recommendations to the Provost. As it relates to the Task Force recommendations, the parameters for planning assessment of student learning in VCU's general education program includes the following:

# Official Charge Continued:

## Parameters for Planning Assessment of Student Learning in VCU's Redesigned General Education Program (Target Implementation: Fall 2021)

1. **Design** an assessment program to measure the following student learning competencies:

Communicative Fluency  
Ethical Reasoning  
Global and Cultural Responsiveness and Agility  
Information Literacy  
Critical and Creative Problem Solving  
Quantitative Literacy

across the five areas of inquiry comprising VCU's redesigned general education program:

Foundations of Learning  
Diversities in the Human Experience  
Creativity, Innovation, and Aesthetic Inquiry  
Global Perspectives  
Scientific and Logical Reasoning

2. **Implement** an assessment plan in alignment with SCHEV's policy which will:

- include strategies for engagement, communication, and collaboration with faculty and appropriate campus partners;
- describe and document the processes and procedures of the assessment plan;
- document evidence of student learning and how well the competencies have been achieved;
- inform VCU's general education program about students' demonstrated learning;
- recommend benchmarks or targets to measure continued progress towards meeting the general education program's learning competencies.

3. **Recommend** appropriate uses of assessment results to support student learning and to communicate to institutional stakeholders.





2019 General Education and Assessment: Creating a 21st-Century General Education-Responding to Seismic Shifts

2020 General Education, Pedagogy, and Assessment

2021 AAC&U Conference on General Education, Pedagogy, and Assessment

*Embracing the Best Emerging Practices for Quality & Equity*  
February 11-13, 2021

From Reflection  
to  
Reimagination:  
Making  
Excellence the  
“New Normal”

2022 Conference on General Education,  
Pedagogy, and Assessment

FEBRUARY 9 - 12, 2022

Wednesday, February 9, Virtual  
Thursday, February 10-12, In Person  
Sheraton San Diego Hotel & Marina



2020  
**Assessment** Institute  
*Leading Improvements in Higher Education*

**AGLS**  
Association for General and Liberal Studies

***The Confluence of General Education and Liberal  
Studies as the Building Materials for Engaged  
Lifelong Learners***

**Colloquium on Liberal Education at Research Universities**



# Gen Ed Learning Goals Tentative Schedule

<b>Gen Ed Goal</b>	<b>2021-2022</b>	<b>2022-2023</b>	<b>2023-2024</b>
<b>Communicative Fluency</b>	<b>XXX</b>		
<b>Information Literacy</b>	<b>XXX</b>		
<b>Problem Solving</b>	<b>Preparation</b>	<b>XXX</b>	
<b>Ethical Reasoning</b>	<b>Preparation</b>	<b>XXX</b>	
<b>Quantitative Literacy</b>		<b>Preparation</b>	<b>XXX</b>
<b>Global and Cultural Responsiveness</b>		<b>Preparation</b>	<b>XXX</b>

<https://provost.vcu.edu/initiatives/gened/goals/>

# Building the Curriculum: GECC process

- Open call for proposals: **Jan 2020**
- Initial review process
  - **113 proposals** submitted in first call; several more this past year
  - To date, **94 courses** have been approved and added to the ConnectED curriculum
- Number of GenEd courses running in 2021-2022 (excluding Foundations):
  - Fall 2021: 63 courses; 361 sections
  - Spring 2022: 65 courses; 304 sections
  - 73 distinct courses running AY 21-22
  - **22 of these courses were developed specifically for the new GenEd**

# Distribution of Courses: Foundations, AOI & BOK

<i>Area of Inquiry</i>	<i>Breadth of Knowledge</i>				Grand Total
	Humanities/ Fine Arts	Natural Science	Social/ Behavioral Science	None	
Creativity Innovation and Aesthetic Inquiry	14		2	5	21
Diversities in the Human Experience	4		13	5	22
Global Perspectives	2		10	2	14
Scientific & Logical Reasoning	1	13	2	8	24
UNIV Foundations				3	3
Quantitative Foundations				10	10
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>94</b>

# Distribution of Courses: Learning Goals

<i>Area of Inquiry</i>	Communicative Fluency	Ethical Reasoning	Information Literacy	Global and Cultural Responsiveness	Problem Solving (Critical & Creative)	Quantitative Literacy
Creativity Innovation and Aesthetic Inquiry	16	9	7	17	15	0
Diversities in the Human Experience	11	16	13	18	15	3
Global Perspectives	3	9	7	11	13	2
Scientific & Logical Reasoning	10	7	16	6	24	15
Quant Foundations	1	0	0	0	10	9
UNIV Foundations	3	2	3	2	2	2
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>31</b>

# New Curriculum = Revitalized GenEd @ VCU

- ***More unit participation:***
  - Some courses moved out of majors and opened up to general student population
  - Several units offering general education courses for the first time
  - Faculty reps on the committee designing and maintaining the curriculum
- ***Innovative and balanced curriculum:***
  - Creative approaches to teaching disciplines in order to reach broader student audiences
  - Exciting new course offerings
  - A diversity of course options for our students
  - Provides a more well-rounded general education experience

# New course examples

- NURS 103: Culture, Diversity & Communication in Health Care Settings
- ARTH 201: Banned! Art & Controversy
- TEDU 207: Urban Awareness & Urban Education
- DANC 230: Dance in Hollywood
- MHIS 251: American Popular Music
- BNFO 125: Disease and Human Ancestry
- THEA 215: Live Theatre Now
- INNO 210: The Innovation Intersection: Industry & Entrepreneurship
- SPCH 221: Oral Communication & Presentation

# This is ConnectED!

*A general education program where students can...*

- Have a cross-disciplinary general education experience
- Learn from a diverse group of faculty invested in general education
- Connect their education to the world beyond the classroom

“At VCU....general education is an *opportunity*: a chance to expand your horizons both inside and outside the classroom. That’s why we call it ConnectED. We believe your academic work should be a bridge, connecting you to **new passions and interests**, and to **subjects you’ll love** that you might not have found otherwise. A bridge connecting you to **society and the wider world**, and to the skills that will help you make a difference out there in it.”

***connectED.vcu.edu***

# Current courses: Testimonial Videos

- [GenED Highlights Video](#)



 SOCY 250



 NEXT 240



 TEDU 210



# Q&A



 SOCY 250



 NEXT 240



 TEDU 210