

# Bylaws of the General Education Curriculum Committee

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## Overview

The General Education Curriculum Committee (GECC) is responsible for implementing and maintaining the general education curriculum for the university. The GECC meets at least once per month during the academic year and reviews, approves or denies proposals for courses requesting admission into the general education curriculum of VCU. It is also responsible for reviewing current general education courses to ensure that they are still meeting the expected goals of the [General education curriculum](#).

## A. Membership

The committee will consist of representatives from all major undergraduate units across the university, with the following distribution specifications:

### **Section 1: Voting Members**

- College of Humanities and Sciences, 4 members representing the humanities, social sciences, natural sciences, and mathematical sciences, respectively
- University College, 2 members
- Honors College, 1 member
- VCU Health Sciences, 1 member
- School of Education, 1 member
- College of Engineering, 1 member
- Wilder School of Government and Public Affairs, 1 member
- School of Business, 1 member
- Life Sciences, 1 member
- School of the Arts, 1 member
- School of Social Work, 1 member

### **Additional considerations for voting members:**

- a. The above representation is intended to reflect both the size of units and their participation in general education curricula. The committee is empowered to alter the balance of this representation by their own vote as needed in the future.
- b. One voting member of the standing General Education Committee will serve as a non-voting delegate to UUCC.

- c. In order to ensure equity in faculty representation, the committee should strive to maintain a balance of both term and tenured faculty in its membership.
- d. The role of the General Education Curriculum of VCU is to provide our students with a strong liberal arts foundation. This goal is possible given the areas of inquiry and the wide diversity of courses approved by the GECC to fulfill these areas. Similarly, the composition of the GECC is best served by a diversity of representatives of Voting and Non-Voting members, including but not limited to sex, gender, gender identity, race, ethnicities, sexual orientations, etc. As such, units selecting representatives for this committee should consider the diversity of their constituents and the current composition of the GECC when selecting new members for this committee. Chairs, or their designated GECC representative, should communicate this expectation to each unit.

### **Section 2: Non-Voting members**

The committee will also include one (1) representative from each of the following units, who will serve in a consultative capacity:

- Representative for the Provost
- General Education Assessment Committee
- UUCC representative
- University Academic Advising Board
- Transfer Office
- Strategic Enrollment
- Student Rep from SGA
- Faculty Senate

### **Section 3: Committee Chairs**

To ensure continuity of leadership, the committee will have one acting Chair and one Chair-elect at all times. Any voting member who has served on the committee for at least one academic year is eligible to be a candidate for Chair.

- a. Elections and term length:
  - i. Chairs will be elected by the committee in the spring of each academic year.
  - ii. Elected Chairs will serve for two years: in the first year, the individual will shadow the acting Chair as Chair-elect; in the second, the individual will serve as the acting Chair.
  - iii. Acting Chairs are eligible to serve for one additional term, for a maximum of two consecutive terms, or four years.
  - iv. Committee chairs are permitted to serve beyond the term limits for voting members if elected during their last year of regular service on the committee.
- b. Responsibilities of the Chair:
  - Develop a regular schedule of meetings
  - Set the committee agenda
  - Provide administrative support to the GECC
  - Maintain records and documentation of GECC activities and decisions

- Circulate GECC agendas and minutes to the committee
- Ensure full representation of all voting and non-voting members of the committee
- Represent the GECC to the Provost
- Communicate proposal feedback with units across the university
- In the case of a tie, the acting Chair will cast the tie-breaking vote

#### **Section 4: Selection of committee**

- a. Voting members will be chosen by faculty vote within their respective units. The criteria and qualifications for voting committee members are:
  - i. Full time, term or tenure-track faculty.
  - ii. At least two years of undergraduate instructional experience within the last five years.
  - iii. Experience or an interest in departmental or school level curriculum planning.
- b. Non-voting members will be selected by their units.

#### **Section 5: Length of terms**

##### **a. Voting members**

- i. Committee members with voting rights will serve staggered three-year terms. (In order to achieve appropriately staggered terms, members of the GECC beginning in the academic year 2020-21 will be alternately designated with terms of either one, two or three years.)
- ii. Membership is renewable for one additional term, for a maximum of two consecutive terms, or 6 years.
- iii. Members are eligible to return to service after sitting off the committee for one full academic year.
- iv. A term of less than one-half of an academic year will not be considered a full term; a term of more than one-half of an academic year will be considered full term.

##### **b. Non-voting members**

- i. The Provost's representative will serve indefinitely until such time as the Provost appoints a new representative.
- ii. The Faculty Senate representative will serve for one term renewable for up to three consecutive years.
- iii. All other non-voting members will serve for a length of term determined by their unit.
- iv. Members are eligible to return to the committee after sitting off the committee for one full academic year.

##### **c. Student members**

- i. Student members are selected by the Student Government Association. An alternate can also be provided to ensure consistent attendance by a student representative at GECC meetings.
- ii. Student members shall serve on the GECC for a one-year term and are eligible for re-appointment.

- iii. No student may serve on the committee for more than three consecutive years while in the same academic program.
- iv. There is no limitation on the number of successive terms a student may serve as an alternate.

## **B. Quorum and Votes**

General business can be conducted at any regularly scheduled meeting. However, in order to conduct a vote, a quorum of two-thirds of the voting members must be present.

### **Section 1: Business that requires a vote**

- Changes to bulletin copy
- Changes to the overall structure of the curriculum
- Changes to the requirements for course eligibility
- Changes to the committee bylaws
- Approval of specific courses to fulfill a general education requirement
- Duties and recommendations of subcommittees

### **Section 2: Attendance**

- a. Members are expected to attend all GECC meetings. The Chairs will take attendance at each meeting. If a member is absent and not represented by an alternate for two (2) consecutive regularly scheduled meetings or three (3) regularly scheduled meetings in one academic year, the Chairs shall inform that member's appointing or electing constituency.
- b. If a position remains vacant, the Chairs are empowered to notify individual units so that they can provide a replacement.

## **C. Committee Charge**

Through the collaborative work of the members of the committee, the GECC is charged with the oversight and ongoing implementation of the general education curriculum for the entire university.

Specifically, duties of the committee include:

- Sending out periodic calls for new general education course proposals.
- Reviewing proposals for new general education courses and determining their suitability for the general education curriculum.
- Ensuring that the Areas of Inquiry in the general education curriculum are adequately populated with courses and that a diversity of course offerings is available for students.
- Encouraging new/innovative course offerings from units across the university.
- Providing guidance to units as needed for the development and submission of appropriate general education courses.

- Periodic review of current general education courses to ensure that they are still meeting the goals of the general education curriculum.
- Creating and updating VCU bulletin copy for the general education curriculum.
- Informing units of any changes to the general education curriculum.
- Communicating regularly with the General Education Assessment Committee.
- Applying assessment data provided by the General Education Assessment Committee to the curation of courses in the curriculum.

## **D. Amendment and Periodic Review of Bylaws**

These bylaws may be amended at any regular meeting of the GECC by a two-thirds vote provided that the amendment has been submitted in writing at the previous regular meeting. Such amendments will not become effective until approved by the Provost.

A review of these bylaws will occur at least once every five (5) years.

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Approved by GECC, March 26, 2021

Approved by the office of the Provost, May 2021