

# Guide for Successful Submission of Gen Ed Courses

This guide provides context and recommendations for faculty and administrators preparing to request approval for a course to be included in the General Education (Gen Ed) program.

The review process includes the following steps:



1. After reading this guide, a faculty member, chair, or director submits the required documentation (the course syllabus and a justification for how the course satisfies the Gen Ed requirement) in CourseLeaf.



2. The General Education Oversight Committee (GEOC) reviews the documentation to evaluate the degree to which the course materials and assignments teach and assess all learning outcomes for the requested Gen Ed designation(s) .



3. A GEOC representative contacts the requester with the GEOC's decision: approve as is, request revisions, or reject.

## ABOUT THE GENERAL EDUCATION PROGRAM

### What is the mission of the WSU General Education Program?

The General Education Program serves as a foundation for academic achievement and prepares students to participate effectively in a competitive global economy and to contribute as citizens in a diverse and engaged democracy. General Education presents a unique and powerful opportunity to develop the skills necessary for long-term academic success and to explore academic areas students may not otherwise be exposed to in their major.

## What is the General Education Oversight Committee (GEOC)?

The General Education Oversight Committee (GEOC) includes appointed faculty members as well as liaisons from the Academic Senate, the Student Senate, and the Graduate Employees Organizing Committee. The GEOC includes representatives from all six-undergraduate degree-granting schools and colleges across the University community. The structure, roles, and responsibilities of the GEOC are laid out in a Board of Governors statute, and the committee is supported by the Provost's Office. You can find more information about the GEOC on our [website](#).

## What responsibilities do Gen Ed instructors have?

Instructors in the General Education Program support our students in developing foundational skills and exploring new areas of inquiry that might lie outside their primary fields of study. This work is central to the mission of the General Education Program. To ensure that the courses in our General Education Program are meeting the expectations that we set with students, we ask instructors to do the following:

- Create syllabi that fulfill the [learning outcomes](#) (LOs) of any relevant general education designation (i.e., category) for which the course has been approved.
- Participate in a [4-year cycle](#) of General Education Assessment.

The GEOC is here to support you in these activities. Please visit our website to learn more about resources and opportunities for support.

## GEN ED COURSE REVIEW PROCESS

### How does the Gen Ed approval process work?

GEOC course proposal reviews occur after a course has already completed the general course review process. This process differs slightly by school/college and even department, but it typically includes review in the following order:

- Review by Department curriculum committee/Chair
- Review by College Curriculum committee/Dean
- Review by Provost's Office
- Review by GEOC

Course proposals are submitted through the CourseLeaf system:

<https://nextbulletins.wayne.edu/courseadmin/>. Once you submit your materials through CourseLeaf, your application moves through the approval process explained above.

Any requests for revision at any stage will be communicated back to instructors and/or department chairs. Revision at earlier stages in the approval process are the responsibility of relevant units. Once you have submitted your course, you can see where it is in the approval flow within CourseLeaf. After Gen Ed courses are approved by the GEOC, they are added to the University Bulletin.

## What does the GEOC look for when it reviews course proposals?

All courses seeking a General Education designation are reviewed for approval by the GEOC. In reviewing Gen Ed course proposals, the GEOC is guided by the following policies:

- Courses should not be restricted by major.
- Courses should be accessible to any first-year student.
- Courses should be 3 credits.
- Courses generally should not carry more than two Gen Ed designations.
- Courses should not carry a pre-requisite unless:
  - The course is part of a sequence that involves placement exams.
  - One or more of the courses below it in the sequence also carries the same Gen Ed designation.
- Courses must be below the 5000 level. General Education is meant to be a foundational education experience for students, which normally assumes lower-level courses (i.e., 3xxx and below). We are aware that course numbering varies by department, however. If you are submitting an upper-level course for a Gen Ed designation, you should provide an explanation of that reasoning.
- Courses must fulfill the learning outcomes associated with their respective Gen Ed designation. You can find learning outcomes listed in the [Undergraduate Bulletin](#).
  - Your course may have additional learning outcomes in addition to the Gen Ed LOs. The GEOC looks only at Gen Ed LOs, so you will not be penalized for having additional LOs.
  - If you are requesting more than one Gen Ed designation for your course, that course must fulfill all learning outcomes for each of those designations.

## What information should be included in the course syllabus?

In reviewing courses for a General Education designation, the GEOC looks for the following on the course syllabus (not only in the application for a Gen Ed designation):

1. The learning outcomes associated with the Gen Ed designation being requested should be listed verbatim on the course syllabus.
  - If more than one designation is being requested, then learning outcomes for each designation should be listed verbatim on the course syllabus.

2. If you have additional learning outcomes specific to your course, there should be an explicit presentation of which course LOs align with each Gen Ed LOs. Such a presentation is easily provided as a table or diagram that clearly shows the correlation between the two sets of LOs:

Gen Ed Learning Outcome	Course Learning Outcome
GE LO #1	LO #2 LO #4
GE LO #2	LO #1
GE LO #3	LO #3 LO #5 LO #6

3. There should be easily identifiable examples of student engagement with the learning outcomes found throughout the syllabus. Courses might fulfill learning outcomes through any combination of assignments, course readings, and/or classroom activities. Assignments and activities do not need to be described in great detail, but the type of assignment and its explicit role in assessing students' engagement with the Gen Ed learning outcomes should be evident. We encourage instructors to provide a chart, table, or annotations that directly associate assignments with the Gen Ed learning outcome(s) they will assess.
4. The Gen Ed LOs should be integrated throughout a significant portion of the course rather than a single class period or small subset of class periods.

Please keep in mind that the GEOC is an interdisciplinary body of faculty and staff. There is no guarantee that someone in your field is on the committee. As a result, examples of engagement with the learning outcomes (including the themes/subjects of course content and assignments) on your syllabus should be obvious to non-experts – both GEOC members and students.

## What are some common issues that the GEOC encounters?

Thanks to proactive review at the college level, many proposals that reach the GEOC fulfill most of the basic requirements. The most common issues that result in proposals being returned for revision or being rejected include:

- Not explicitly teaching and/or assessing the Gen Ed learning outcomes in a significant portion of the course.
- Not providing enough information about course content (assignment details, assigned readings, classroom activities) for GEOC members to identify where the learning outcomes are met in the course. This information should be explicit in the syllabus; very often instructors will put this information in the Courseleaf application without putting it into the syllabus.

Because all Gen Ed courses ultimately submit assessment data for their relevant Gen Ed designations, we encourage instructors to include assignments that directly incorporate the learning outcomes. Designing assignments that address the learning outcomes not only helps the committee determine the eligibility of the course, but it also helps the instructor in the assessment process later.

## What happens if my proposal is rejected?

Most of the time, proposals are returned with requests for revision rather than rejected outright. The department chair should receive an email with feedback from a GEOC co-chair at [gened@wayne.edu](mailto:gened@wayne.edu). The GEOC co-chairs are happy to discuss revisions and provide support to department chairs and instructors in responding to requests for revision. Where relevant, the GEOC co-chairs may also ask other GEOC members to provide support and feedback.

Requests for revision are often based on the need to clarify where learning outcomes are addressed in the course. Instructors are free to choose not to complete the requested revisions if they do not wish to move forward with the Gen Ed approval process. They are also always welcome to amend their request by shifting to a different Gen Ed category that may work better for their course.

Occasionally, a course may raise a policy question related to the General Education program. In those cases, the GEOC chair will invite instructors or other relevant persons to come to a meeting to address concerns and discuss the issue with the committee. This is a normal part of a dynamic curriculum, and we greatly appreciate the flexibility and generosity of our colleagues who participate in this process.

## Where can I go if I need help?

If you have specific questions about the General Education Program, or Gen Ed assessment, you can email [gened@wayne.edu](mailto:gened@wayne.edu) to contact the Gen Ed Faculty Coordinator and GEOC co-chair, Dan Kashian, or use the resources and materials available on our website:

<https://provost.wayne.edu/gen-ed-assessment>

If you have questions about constructing your syllabus or aligning assignments with Gen Ed learning outcomes, you can find workshops on syllabus design on the [OTL website](#) or request an individual consultation with the [OTL](#) or the GEOC Assessment Subcommittee (email: [gened@wayne.edu](mailto:gened@wayne.edu)).