Criterion Two. Integrity: ethical and responsible conduct

1. How does the General Education Program fit within the university? Does the administration of the program insure fairness, transparency and proper allocation of resources?

Strengths

Fairness
- The General Education Vetting Subcommittee, made up of faculty from all Colleges, uses agreed upon criteria for vetting proposed General Education courses.
- The Vetting Subcommittee works with faculty in any department to help them improve a proposal.
- Of the 210 currently approved General Education courses, 139 or 66% are either required or are electives in a major program.
- There are Gen Ed courses in all colleges and in almost all departments (*****)

Transparency
- The General Education Advisory Committee oversees the program; minutes of meetings are available on request (******on Gen Ed website?)
- The General Education Vetting Subcommittee minutes and procedures are available to anyone who asks.
- All General Education requirements, together with information about advising, course substitution and waiver policies, transfer student requirements, and Learning Beyond the Classroom requirements, are published online in the university catalog.
- The General Education website provides information about ******
- General, college and departmental advising on General Education requirements is available to all students.
- University Assessment Committee minutes indicate that there is coordination and transparency in the process that the assessment committee is taking as we consider the input from NSSE and move toward student centered learning outcomes. (******?)

Allocation of resources
- The administration supports the General Education mission and vision. (?vision?)
- The university budget includes resources for general education academic outcomes.
- There is a governing board of the institution that makes decisions about the best interests of programs and the institution. (???)
- The use and finance budget focuses on improving buildings and the wireless services.
- The annual reports for Halle Library support the academic programs in General Education in their vision, mission (p. 4) and allocation of resources (p. 23).

Weaknesses

Fairness
- Lack of process for assessing the General Education Program.
- There’s no mechanism for people who teach courses in the General Education Program in the various colleges and Learning Beyond the Classroom contexts to discuss issues of fairness in offering courses within a department.
• The general education program was designed to enable students to explore programs. If 66% of the courses are required or elective courses in some major, then there is not much exploration?

Transparency
• Need to communicate with all contingencies about the rationale for the budget and finance of programs and to discuss coordination of services across colleges and communities.
• Eastern Michigan University does not currently communicate General Education requirements to a broad audience of stakeholders.
• General Education Vetting Subcommittee minutes and procedures are not currently easy to access—they will be moved to Canvas by Fall 2015.

Allocation of Resources
• Resources are allocated essentially by student demand.
• While there are trends toward supporting the IT infrastructure on campus, there is no clear indication that there are sufficient resources in the budget to achieve 21st Century technology and learning outcomes within the General Education Program.
• Use of student credit hours (SCH) as a measure of department performance can put pressure on departments to increase General Education offerings.
• The computer proficiency item in the 2005 proposal was not funded.

Opportunities

Transparency
• Coordination between Eastern Michigan University and the colleges that serve as feeders to the university can provide for better advising and coordination of student programs of study.

Allocation of Resources
• There may be opportunities to coordinate with stakeholders outside of the university both nationally and internationally to build the networks and to provide expertise and technical assistance needed to empower faculty and students to communicate, coordinate, and work collaboratively through the Internet to achieve 21st century outcomes.

Threats

Fairness
• Some Gen Ed courses are required by many majors, such as Math 120 (required by 31 majors), SPGN 251 (required by 28 majors) and Chem 121/122 (required by 26 majors). This may mean that some courses will always make adequate enrollment simply because they are required, and that other courses that are not required may not make adequate enrollment. Is that fair to students?

Allocation of Resources
• We continue to do general education in ways that are traditionally-valued and traditionally understood, while more entities outside of the university get funding and assistance, e.g., community colleges, online “universities.”
2. Are there procedures and processes in place that pursue integrity of scholarship and teaching, ethical use of information and academic honesty within the General Education Program?

Strengths

Integrity of scholarship and teaching
- Regents and Administration's support for general education program.
- There are criteria that are followed by the General Education Vetting Subcommittee and used to select courses for inclusion in the General Education Program.
- There are incentives through the Faculty Development Center to do “scholarship of teaching and learning.”
- 94% of the students who took general education courses and replied to a survey were satisfied with the variety of courses offered.
- 89% of students who took the survey are satisfied with the quality of general education courses.
- 83% of the students who responded to the survey find the general education courses intellectually challenging.
- 93% of syllabi collected include the General Education Rationale, explaining to students how the course fits into the General Education Program.
- **See if any specific outcomes are relevant here.
- The General Education Director keeps a detailed list of all exceptions and special cases.
- A procedure has been developed for changes to outcomes and the program.

Ethical use of information
- The University informs Department Heads and faculty about FERPA and ethical use of student information.
- The University has published standards of conduct for students available on the university website.
- Enrollment and Grading Data is available in aggregate form for use by the General Education Review Committee.
- The Halle Library Staff have created a Research website and modules to accompany General Education courses to educate students about the ethical use of information.

Academic honesty
- Statements on academic honesty appear in the Student Code of Conduct on the university’s website.
- Many instructors include statements on academic honesty on their syllabi. (*****)
- The university has a subscription to Turn-It-In software so that instructors can combat academic dishonesty.

Weaknesses

Integrity of scholarship and teaching
- The “program” appears to be a series of courses offered by different Departments.
- There is currently no ongoing assessment of the program, nor is there any way for people who teach courses in the General Education Program in the various Colleges and Learning Beyond the Classroom contexts to determine if the “Program” achieves desired results.
- According to the faculty survey, it is not clear to everyone who is teaching the general education courses.
- It is not clear to faculty that there are adequate resources to support the general education program.
- There is a shift of focus from content outcomes to a focus on providing evidence of student learning outcome. Perhaps there is a need to consider how to provide evidence of student learning assessment.

Ethical use of information
- Information about FERPA is interpreted differently in different Colleges. For some, FERPA involves confidential data like names, grades, etc. For others, it is illegal to share any information at all.
- Need to align general education program outcomes data (number of sections, number of students earning a grade of A, B, C etc.) with student learning outcomes data
- Need to know if students are transferring what they learn in General Education courses (100 level) to majors, and if they use the library modules

Academic honesty
- Are procedures for cases related to academic dishonesty clearly communicated?
- Are the procedures consistently applied?
- Does the software assist faculty and students in actually learning how to come up with original questions, take notes, and paraphrase and synthesize information?

Opportunities

Integrity of scholarship and teaching
- Perhaps there are more ways to bring faculty who teach in the General Education Program together to share research and teaching strategies that support student achievement of the General Education outcomes and to do some focused research on the interdisciplinary outcomes of the “General Education Program.”
- What would happen if the Gen Ed course outcomes in a particular discipline were evaluated by members of the Department, using the Gen Ed outcomes as criteria?
- Opportunity for department level discussion of how to provide evidence of student learning outcomes in general education and in the majors.

Ethical use of information
- The university needs to be able to share information related to the effectiveness of programs and to advertise best practices.
- Working with faculty, students and practicum supervisors, we need to continue to remove barriers, whether actual or imagined so that we can use information, such as Conference presentations by national experts and exemplary presentations at faculty, undergraduate and graduate Symposiums, and student presentations at conferences as evidence of excellence and impact of Eastern Michigan University’s faculty and students.

Academic honesty
- New applications like endnote, citation machine, etc. enable students to conduct inquiries, take notes, cite sources, and make transparent their inquiry, research and thinking processes.
- How can we support the use of new technologies and applications in general and all educational programs so our students are career ready responsible citizens?
• There is a need to see if the courses are being implemented in a way that was approved, and if they have been revised to see if they still meet the stated content outcomes.

Threats

Integrity of scholarship and teaching

• Faculty are stretched thin with a 4+4 teaching load, service, research, and program review demands within their disciplines and colleges.
• What would be the incentive for developing an interdisciplinary “Program” review?
• Faculty surveys provide a sampling of faculty views on the integrity of the scholarship and teaching in the General Education program:
  o Lack of effective writing after students complete the Written Communication course.
  o Concern that math requirement is too weak.
  o Concern about assessment of courses previously approved. Quality control after vetting.
  o General Education courses are not sufficiently rigorous.
  o Too many General Education courses, but also praise for the variety of choices.
  o Perception that the program is a credit hour grab without academic foundation.
  o Students not being made aware of benefits of General Education.
  o Overlap between General Education courses and required courses in a major.
  o View of General Education as remediation.
  o Purpose/value of General Education. Includes diversity and global awareness.

Academic honesty

• The Internet enables students to find answers to their questions and to locate information with a click. The new applications enable them to cut and paste, remix, recycle and reuse information. New practices are emerging. How do we help students navigate the various practices?

3. How are we engaging with the world outside of the university to insure that our students and faculty are networked to resources that will enable them to be responsible and global citizens?

Strengths

Curricular development

• The departments that house the General Education courses work with programs in other Colleges to determine which courses should be offered to which audiences and for which purposes, making revisions to the courses based on student performance outcomes and changing requirements.
• Many courses have been developed specifically for the US Diversity and Global Awareness requirement, in addition to the many already existing courses that fit this category.

Community engagement

• Capital plan, excellence of p. 10
• Jan 7 2015 announcement: Eastern Michigan University earns Carnegie Foundation 2015 Community Engagement Classification
• Office of International Students, Student Center supports global learning
• Excellence of students who graduated from COE earning Milikin Award for teaching after graduation, p. 12
• Minority Achievement and Urban School Connections, p. 12
• Career and Professional Development Outcomes
• International and Multicultural Experiences Outcomes
• There are Learning Beyond the Classroom options that involve community engagement

Weaknesses

Curricular development
• Most of the General Education courses are 100 level courses that once approved are not reevaluated
• The current focus is on course outcomes... The average grades for students are evidence of student learning.
• Some universities are moving toward Interdisciplinary courses and outcomes...

Community engagement
• Need to formalize and advertise our corporate partnership, service learning, and school partnership networks
• Need for clear and accessible path for faculty and students to access sites and to coordinate to provide ongoing tertiary or workplace and academic dialogue

Opportunities

Curricular development
• The Departments that house the General Education courses align their programs with the Standards of the Professional Organizations; therefore, there are opportunities to systematically develop, revise and renovate the General Education courses

Threats

Curricular development
• Curricular discussions generally take place during Program Review and at the Departmental Level. Departments are asked to align programs with Content Standards.
• Student learning outcomes are aligned with performance outcomes, which involve creating rubrics that demonstrate that students have achieved proficiency.
• Competency-based education is labor and time intensive, as well.

Community engagement
• Private universities and the departments of education in many states are working together to map the region’s entrepreneurial activity and to develop support systems and action plans for connecting the university to regional and national educational networks.