

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.
- There are General Education courses in all colleges and in almost all departments.

Transparency

- The General Education Advisory Committee oversees the program; minutes of meetings are available upon request.
- The General Education Vetting Subcommittee minutes and procedures are available upon request.
- 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 the student learning outcomes that define each General Education requirement; about comparisons with General Education requirements at other universities; and an extensive list of Frequently Asked Questions.
- General, college and departmental advising on General Education requirements is available to all students.
- The General Education Director keeps a detailed list of all exceptions and special cases.
- A procedure has been developed for changes to outcomes and to the program.

Allocation of resources

- The administration supports the General Education mission.
- The university budget includes resources for general education academic outcomes via department and college budgets.
- The annual report for Halle Library shows support for the academic programs in General Education in their vision, mission (p. 4) and allocation of resources (p. 23).

Weaknesses

Transparency

- There is a lack of coordination of services across colleges and communities within EMU.
- Eastern Michigan University does not currently communicate the outcomes of the General Education Program 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. Use of student credit hours (SCH) as a measure of department performance can put pressure on departments to increase General Education offerings.
- 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. Indeed, the computer proficiency item in the 2005 proposal was not funded.

Opportunities

Transparency

- A schedule should be set up for review of the program and its procedures.
- Coordination between Eastern Michigan University and the Community 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 General Education 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.

Transparency

- The Michigan Transfer Agreement allows students to transfer in with a general education program that may be somewhat different from that required of students who start at EMU as freshmen (FTIACs).

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

- There are criteria that are followed by the General Education Vetting Subcommittee that are 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.”
- In the Graduating Senior Survey for 2014, of those who took General Education courses at EMU:
 - 94% said they were satisfied with the variety of courses offered.
 - 89% said they were satisfied with the quality of the courses.
 - 83% said that they found the courses intellectually challenging.

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.

Academic honesty

- Statements on academic honesty appear in the Student Code of Conduct on the university’s website. Over 50% of instructors include statements on academic honesty on their syllabi (based on a random selection of syllabi).
- The university has a subscription to Turn-It-In software so that instructors can combat academic dishonesty.
- The Halle Library Staff have created a Research website along with modules to accompany General Education courses, in order to educate students about the ethical use of information.

Weaknesses

Integrity of scholarship and teaching

- The “program” appears to be a series of courses offered by different departments.
- Since there is currently no ongoing assessment of the program, it is difficult to determine if the General Education Program achieves the desired results.
- According to the faculty survey, it is not clear to everyone exactly who are the instructors that are teaching the general education courses.
- It is not clear to faculty that there are adequate resources to support the general education program.

Academic honesty

- Are the procedures for dealing with academic dishonesty consistently applied?
- Does the TurnItIn 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.
- There is opportunity for department level discussion on how to provide evidence of student learning outcomes in general education.

- The university needs to be able to share information related to the effectiveness of programs and to advertise best practices.
- Is there a way to develop an interdisciplinary assessment of the General Education Program?
- Only about 50% of a sample of syllabi collected for this report include the General Education Rationale, which explains to students how the course fits in to the General Education Program.

Ethical use of information

- 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 of impact on 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 such as these so our students are career-ready responsible citizens?

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.
- Faculty surveys provide a sampling of faculty views on the integrity of the scholarship and teaching in the General Education program. Some concerns were:
 - Lack of effective writing after students complete the Written Communication course.
 - Concern that math requirement is too weak.
 - Concern that General Education courses are not sufficiently rigorous.
 - View of General Education as remediation.
 - Concern about lack of assessment of courses previously approved--quality control after vetting.
 - Concern that students are not being made aware of the benefits of General Education.
 - Overlap between General Education courses and required courses in a major.
 - Perception that the program is a credit hour grab without academic foundation.
 - Faculty are not clear as to the purpose/value of General Education—this includes the purpose/value of the diversity and global awareness requirement.

Academic honesty

- The Internet enables students to find answers to their questions and to locate information with a click. 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 while maintaining the academic integrity of their product?

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

- Jan 7 2015 announcement: Eastern Michigan University earns Carnegie Foundation 2015 Community Engagement Classification.
- The Office of International Students supports global learning.
- There are Learning Beyond the Classroom options that involve community engagement in the *Community Service, Citizenship and Leadership* category, the *Career and Professional Development* category, and the *International and Multicultural Experience* category.

Weaknesses

Curricular development

- There is a perception that there is not enough of an experiential component to the US Diversity and the Global Awareness courses.

Community engagement

- There is a need to formalize and advertise our corporate partnership, service learning, and school partnership networks. There is a need for a clear and accessible path for faculty and students to pursue an ongoing dialogue with entities outside the university.

Opportunities

Curricular development

- The departments that house the General Education courses align their programs with the standards of their professional organizations; therefore, there are opportunities to systematically develop, revise and renovate General Education courses and to create trans-disciplinary courses that engage students in authentic encounters.

Threats

Curricular development

- Curricular discussions generally take place at the departmental level; departments are asked to align programs with content standards, which can be a problem for courses that are required in a program but are also General Education courses.
- We do not have a consistent understanding of what is meant by global and intercultural competencies.

Community engagement

- We don't have a way for faculty to communicate with the organizations that provide our practicum experiences in a way that would enable us to insure that our students are globally competent.