

**Annual Report (2023-2024)**  
**General Education Improvement and Assessment Committee**  
*Miranda Kispert, Chair*

**Committee Members**

Miranda Kispert, Chair (Library)	Eric Amsel, Administration
Paul Neiman, AI & EDI Area Chair (SBS)	Gail Niklason, OIE
Michelle Paustenbaugh, PS Area Chair (COS)	Leigh Shaw, Director of Gen Ed
Cora Neal, QL Area Chair (QL)	Carrie Jeffrey, Ex Officio (UCC Chair)
Diego Batista, COMP/HU Area Chair (A&H)	Leslie Park, Ex Officio (Student Success, '23)
Matt Gnagey (B&E)	Sari Byerly, Ex Officio (Student Success, '24)
Katarina Pantic, CA Area Chair (ED)	Courtnee Goodwin, OIE
Matt Crook, LS Area Chair (COS)	Mary Beth Willard, Faculty Senate Liaison
Melinda Russell-Stamp, SS Area Chair (SBS)	Cori Horne, Registrar
Luke Fernandez (EAST)	Nathan McKnight, Student Representative
Seokwoo Song (B&E)	Terri Hughes, Student Representative
Rieneke Holman (HP)	

**Accomplishments of the Committee and objectives yet to be addressed,  
including assigned charges:**

**The Committee had eight charges to address during 2022-2023:**

**Charge 1.** GEIAC will analyze Area Learning Outcomes assessment data of Gen Ed and WSU courses and make recommendations for the improvement of said courses and/or assessments. The Office of Institutional Effectiveness will collect Gen Ed assessment data from Biennial reports submitted in November of each year and provide it to GEIAC, who will review it, give feedback to OIE for the report contributors, and provide a summary report to Faculty Senate sometime during the following academic year. *(Ongoing)*

The Committee reviewed Area Learning Outcome (ALO) assessment data from biennial reports provided by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness (OIE) for 37 general education courses from Child and Family Studies, Dance, Economics, Anthropology, Philosophy, Engineering Tech & Culture, Library Science, Women & Gender Studies, Computer Science, WSU, Theater, Botany, Microbiology, and Management Information Systems.

Feedback was provided to the OIE for department chairs/programs during Spring 2024, including recommendations to departments for the improvement of their assessment processes. Miranda will report at Faculty Senate in Fall '24 on ALO assessment data for '23-'24.

Based on feedback from assessors, Miranda Kispert created a new evaluation form before this year's assessment, and revised it afterward to improve the process for future assessment.

**Charge 2.** GEIAC will support the analysis of General Education Learning Outcomes assessment information from GE and WSU courses. The Office of Institutional Effectiveness will collect Gen Ed assessments from Signature Assignments in Canvas and provide them to the Director of Gen Ed, who will organize them for the Signature Assignment Assessment Workshop, give feedback to Gen Ed instructors, and post a summary report on the Gen Ed website. This report will also be embedded in GEIAC's ALO assessment report to the Faculty Senate during the following academic year. (*Ongoing*)

GEIAC reviewed General Education Learning Outcomes (GELOs) during the Signature Assignment Assessment Workshop organized by Leigh Shaw in January 2024 (see Committee Meetings, Attendance, Sub-committees, & Special Assignments, below). Leigh will publish a report this summer to the Gen Ed website on GELO assessment data for '23'24 (<https://www.weber.edu/GenEd/assessment.html>).

**Charge 3.** GEIAC and University Curriculum Committee will review for approval, and make recommendations for the improvement of new WSU course proposals as well as courses seeking general education (GE) designation, including EDI (Equity, Diversity, & Inclusion) designation, to be taught in the following catalog year. (*Ongoing*)

GEIAC reviewed and approved 2 course proposals requesting general education designations. Suggestions for improvement were given prior to approval as needed:

- ENGL 2500 – Literature Today (HU/EDI)
- MUSC 1036 – Experiencing Latin American Music (CA)

No WSU courses proposals were received or reviewed by GEIAC this year.

Course proposals were slim this year as a result of the ongoing realignment of the Gen Ed program to the new R470 revisions, revised Area Learning Outcomes, potential Institutional Area for Weber State, and new legislation surrounding EDI. This uncertainty is likely to be resolved over the coming months and semesters, and course proposals are expected to pick up again after next year's moratorium on new course proposals expires.

**Charge 4.** GEIAC will review and propose updates (as necessary) to the Gen Ed Program and related policies bearing on the fulfillment of Gen Ed requirements as related to student success, the integrity of the Gen Ed Program and other graduation requirements, and/or issues relating community, state, or accreditation needs. (*Ongoing*)

This year saw many changes to Gen Ed in Utah -- specifically, revisions in in Fall 2023 to R470, the policy that controls Gen Ed in Utah, has reduced the footprint of Gen Ed but

made allowances for institutions to create an additional Gen Ed area (Institutional Area or IA) to address unique concepts or meet institutional needs. The changes were intended to ease transfer between USHE institutions for students and to hold students harmless when institutions have differing requirements, so another change was to give control of which grade would meet a Gen Ed requirement to the sending institution of a transfer student, rather than the receiving institution, so there any fulfilled requirements do not need to be redone at the new institution. GEIAC worked to keep WSU apprised of updates on these issues, discuss options for the future, collect input from the WSU community via extensive meetings and a Qualtrics, and create a plan for moving forward. See Charge 8, below.

In other changes that relate to the integrity of the Gen Ed program, it was discovered in UCC that there was a requirement for Variable Title Gen Ed courses to submit a substantive change form for each variable title change, which was overburdensome for faculty and GEIAC, who already approved the original course. To remove this duplication, the requirement was removed and the Variable Title Course form in Curriculog to include an “is this a Gen Ed course?” box. A “yes” response will trigger prompts to include the Gen Ed Area, outcomes, and brief description of how they will be addressed. These forms will be routed to the GEIAC chair, and then to UCC. A “no” response will skip GEIAC and go straight to UCC.

**Charge 5.** GEIAC and the GE Director will investigate and implement ways to improve Gen Ed assessment in Concurrent Enrollment (CE) courses (work with the Executive Director of Dual Enrollment and Academic Director of High School Dual Enrollment, sponsoring departments, and other stakeholders) (*Ongoing*)

Hal Crimmel (Academic Director for High School Dual Enrollment) was invited to join the Gen Ed Council, comprised of Leigh Shaw (Director of Gen Ed), Eric Amsel, Miranda Kispert (GEIAC Chair), Gail Niklason (OIE), and Mary Beth Willard (Faculty Senate liaison to GEIAC). This enabled ongoing conversations on CE and the development of new initiatives. These includes a Gen Ed Course Fellows program, wherein faculty from programs/departments with CE courses are provided with resources to support CE course development (including Canvas shells) and assessment. This year’s Signature Assignment workshop to assess the GELOs (led by Leigh Shaw) also included Gen Ed Fellows as reviewers, and Signature Assignments from several CE courses, which will be included in the report posted on the Gen Ed Assessment webpage.

**Charge 6.** Ensure that the language of new or updated documents is inclusive. Review those documents to see how they may inadvertently impact particular communities in an adverse manner. As issues are identified, consult with EDI Committee for guidance. (*Ongoing*)

As documents and language were actively reviewed in ’22-’23, no subcommittee was seated for this charge, but new documents, forms, and online materials were constructed with inclusivity and accessibility in mind. These efforts are ongoing.

**Charge 7.** GEIAC will take inventory of Gen Ed courses taught by adjuncts. *(New)*

Gail Niklason (OIE) collected data about adjunct-taught sections at WSU using the WSU dashboard, and GEIAC reviewed and analyzed it. The information analyzed included total Gen Ed sections by Area and course taught in Academic Year 2022-2023, including overload sections, as well as total sections taught by adjuncts by Area and course, and the calculated percentage of sections taught by adjuncts per course, and was presented to Faculty Senate in October 2023 in the report, *Update on GEIAC Charge 7*.

**Charge 8.** Given the changes to the R470 and the Gen Ed revision, GEIAC is charged with a) investigating the merits and drawbacks of adding up to one class (up to three credits) to Weber's general education program and b) developing, as appropriate, positive proposals for such a class. *(New)*

With respect to the changes to Gen Ed in Utah, and particularly with regard to the updates to R470 and the optional Institutional Area (see Charge 4, above), GEIAC worked to disseminate accurate information broadly across campus, solicit input from all stakeholders, and formulate a plan for moving forward. To this end, the Gen Ed Alignment Subcommittee was formed to take positive steps toward future plans, including creating a Qualtrics survey, disseminating it, and reviewing the results, and writing a brief report to share those results and next steps with Faculty Senate and other interested parties, *Gen Ed Alignment: Updates, Takeaways, and Next Steps* (April 2024). Members of the subcommittee included Miranda Kispert, Michelle Paustenbaugh, Cora Neal, Rieneke Holman, Mary Beth Willard, and Leigh Shaw.

While no positive proposals have been made yet regarding adapting to the new USHE requirements for Gen Ed, as GEIAC did not want to rush such an important decision, GEIAC does have a plan for the coming academic year to build on the work done by the committee, the Gen Ed Alignment Subcommittee, and the Gen Ed Council this year. GEIAC will build on the survey data collected by the subcommittee to continue conversations about what outcomes a potential IA could or should address, define a mission for a potential IA, and ultimately propose to Faculty Senate the options of (a) no IA or (b) an IA with a skeletal or defined set of outcomes, structure, and/or mission. Faculty Senate will then choose WSU's direction.

## Committee Meetings & Attendance, Subcommittees, and Other Accomplishments

### Meetings & Attendance

GEIAC met virtually 11 times between September 13, 2023 and April 10, 2024:

- Meetings were generally well attended, while Committee members who could not attend typically reached out ahead of time and sent proxies as needed. Complete attendance data is available for [Fall and Spring semesters](#).
- Ex Officio members, student representatives, Gen Ed Council members, administration, and others were frequently in attendance as well, while Miranda Kispert, Eric Amsel and Leigh Shaw (Director of General Education) represented Weber State at monthly USHE General Education Task Force meetings.
- Miranda Kispert regularly represented GEIAC at Curriculum Committee meetings as an ex officio member.
- Miranda Kispert attended Executive Committee and Faculty Senate as needed to present reports from GEIAC.
- While all members generally attended meetings regularly, several stand out as being particularly involved:
  - Michelle Paustenbaugh sat on the Gen Ed Alignment Subcommittee, and was very vocal in discussions
  - Rieneke Holman sat on the on the Gen Ed Alignment Subcommittee and was vocal in discussions
  - Paul Neiman reached out to relevant departments in his role as the EDI Area Chair to solicit feedback on the proposed course, ENGL 2500, and participated in the Signature Assignment Assessment Workshop
  - Cora Neal sat on the Inclusive Language subcommittee and was vocal in discussions, and took on the role of incoming committee chair
  - Diego Batista reached out to relevant departments in his role as the HU Area Chair to solicit feedback on the proposed course, ENGL 2500
  - Katarina Pantic reached out to relevant departments in her role as the CA Area Chair to solicit feedback on the proposed course, MUSC 1036

### Subcommittees and Other Accomplishments

**Gen Ed Alignment Subcommittee (Charges 4 & 8)** – Michelle Paustenbaugh, Cora Neal, Rieneke Holman, Miranda Kispert, Mary Beth Willard, Leigh Shaw (SP 24)

This subcommittee met to plan and execute mechanisms for soliciting input regarding the Gen Ed alignment to the new R470. A Qualtrics survey was initiated by Rieneke and workshopped by the group; Miranda sent the survey out to college deans, associates, and administrative assistants for further dissemination. The subcommittee worked together to review survey results and write the report, *Gen Ed Alignment: Updates, Takeaways, and Next Steps*, to share the results and next steps with Faculty Senate and other interested

parties. This work also paves the way for next year's GEIAC to develop positive proposals regarding WSU's path forward with a new Gen Ed program structure.

**Area Committees** – See membership list above for area chair assignments.

When course proposals needed to be reviewed for area learning outcomes or other questions arose, Area Committee Chairs reached out to relevant departments for information or feedback. There were only two new course proposals this year, nevertheless several GEIAC members collected feedback, and every GEIAC member who was assigned to collect and report data on courses fulfilled their responsibilities well.

### **Signature Assignment Assessment Workshop**

Leigh Shaw organized and ran the Signature Assignment Assessment Workshop in collaboration with Gail Niklason and Courtnee Goodwin (OIE) and Eric Amsel in January 2024 to assess Signature Assignments from 2023 for evidence of student achievement of GELOs. Two members of GEIAC participated in the workshop (Paul Neiman and Miranda Kispert), as well as several Gen Ed Course Fellows. Leigh wrote letters to all instructors and their chairs with feedback, including kudos and suggestions for improvement. Leigh will publish a report on the Gen Ed website.

## **Charges: Ongoing, Revisions, & Suggestions for New Directions**

**Charges 1-6** should be carried forward, with the caveat that there is a one-year moratorium on new Gen Ed course proposals for the '24-'25 academic year (**Charge 3**). **Charge 4** should cover the changes to the Gen Ed program as a result of legislative policy changes (e.g., R470), but if specific goals are desired, they should be carried over with **Charge 8** or made explicit in a new charge.

**Charge 7** was completed, but if different or more robust analysis is desired, it can be revised and continued, although the Assessment Committee or another committee (not Gen Ed) may be a better fit for this work, as a full picture of adjunct work must include non-Gen Ed courses.