# Recommendations for General Education Reform: Proposed new learning outcomes, objectives and instructional goals in four areas

General Education Revitalization Committee (GERC)
August 2013

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IMPORTANT NOTE: The recommendations contained in this document could lead to significant changes in the ways that UAF students fulfill their General Education Requirements. Changes *could* include converting certain courses (or groups of courses) now required by the Core Curriculum to options that may be applied to new, broader and more flexible learning outcomes. Among the possible changes would be the replacement of O and W requirements with courses from a broader Communication group that aims for the effective application of written, oral and visual communication, encompassing and reaching beyond the English Composition and Communication requirements currently in place. It will also be noticed that this document does not specify an ethics or world history requirement, rather it subsumes those needs under new, arguably more integrated and inclusive areas such as Civic Engagement and Intercultural Knowledge and Competence. Understandably, these will be matters of great concern to faculty, departments, programs and colleges across the UAF campuses. With that in mind, GERC has purposely left many aspects of this proposal undefined. This document is meant to inspire lively debate and substantive input among all who would be affected by the changes it proposes. Its aim, at this point, is not to provide a precise blueprint for replacing the current Core Curriculum by fiat, but to advance an inclusive and deliberative process for revitalizing general education at UAF.

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[1] See Appendix IV (p. 21 *infra*) for a complete list of GERC members.

## Learning Outcomes, Objectives, Goals and Assessment

*Background*
The General Education Revitalization Committee (GERC) and its predecessor, the Core Revitalization and Assessment Group (CRAG)—with representation for a cross-section of faculty, administrators and staff, and support from the broader UAF faculty—recommended revising the UAF Core Curriculum to incorporate a LEAP-based set of learning outcomes (described further below) tailored to UAF's special qualities and circumstances. During 2011, GERC circulated drafts to academic deans, department chairs, curriculum councils and faculty for comment; and held two faculty forums, followed by a faculty poll and multiple consultations and information sessions with various departments and programs to solicit additional feedback during AY 2012-13. The feedback received supported CRAG/GERC's initial approach with certain additions and reservations. Much of the input GERC received was incorporated into the proposed set of objectives and learning outcomes described herein.

From the outset, the challenge has been to present goals to the faculty that are at once general enough that they do not dictate strategy or tactics, yet concrete enough to be assessable in ways that have sometimes eluded the Core Curriculum. In 2011, GERC proposed to the faculty the learning outcomes summarized below with three disclaimers. First, these learning outcomes do not necessarily correspond to courses; many are explicitly envisioned as being addressed across the entire curriculum. Second, GERC remains uncertain and needs to turn to its colleagues for input on issue related to operationalizing the new outcomes through the selection of appropriate courses, activities, projects, etc. Third, faculty should be fully engaged in and take ownership of all processes related to specifying and implementing the resulting programmatic changes, including:

      1) the objectives and methods for fulfilling the new learning outcomes;
      2) the range of options available to students satisfying the new learning outcomes simultaneously with the General Education Requirements established by the Board of Regents, but without creating any additional burdens of time and expense for students;
      3) assessment of the revitalized general education program as a whole.

*From Concept to Reform*
The purpose of this document is first to summarize and communicate to UAF faculty, students, staff and administrators GERC's work over the last two years, highlighting its recommendations for fulfilling the Learning Outcomes through the reform or replacement of the UAF Core Curriculum while still satisfying UA Board of Regents minima for undergraduate General Education Requirements (Appendix I, page 16, *infra*). This document reflects GERC's ongoing attempts to operationalize a set of educational directives embedded in new learning outcomes that are intended to make general education requirements: 1) more meaningful and accessible to students and instructors, and 2) better aligned with the qualities and skills desired by employers and post-baccalaureate academic and professional programs.

In its work, GERC has been informed by substantial feedback received from faculty through a series of information sessions and a survey, as well as research and training provided by the American Association of Colleges and Universities AAC&U), whose Liberal Education and America's Promise (LEAP) learning outcomes influenced UAF's new Learning Outcomes and the associated performance goals and instructional objectives.

This document also reflects the input of five working groups of formed from the GERC membership to give clearer form to particular sets of outcomes and objectives (pp. 7-11 *infra*). (GERC itself is a sub-committee of the UAF Faculty Senate Curricular Affairs Committee.) The five sets of goals and objectives presented here are meant to provide general guidelines for selection and assessment of courses that can help students achieve these broad outcomes. They reflect the strong preference expressed by faculty for a more flexible program that provides more choice for students, and improves performance by both students and faculty in the development of crucial skills related to effective communication, numeracy, cultural diversity, science, technology, Alaska and northern issues, *inter alia*.

GERC now wishes to engage again with faculty, directly and through their Senators, in order to further our next three goals in the GE revitalization process: 1) determine *how* courses can be identified and evaluated for inclusion in lists approved for each set of instructional objectives; 2) receive preliminary suggestions on which courses (existing or proposed) may be included and 3) revise, if necessary, the outcomes, goals and objectives.

### General Education Reform at UAF

Currently, the UA Board of Regents sets minimum General Education Requirements, expressed as semester credits to be earned in defined disciplinary areas (Appendix I, page 16, *infra*). GERC has approached its work with the goal of remaining true to the GERs currently set in UA Regents' policy while promoting the broader, more synthesizing and cross-disciplinary approaches contained in the UAF Faculty Senate Learning Outcomes.[2]

If a version of GERC's recommendations were put into practice, students will still take a prescribed number of credits in particular disciplinary areas in order to achieve the desired levels of skill and knowledge required by the UA Regents. These will continue to make a major contribution to satisfying Faculty Senate Learning Outcome #2. (For a summary of how coursework may be applied to all four Outcomes (see pp. 4-5, *infra*.). Therefore, the GERC working group recommendations presented below do not mesh perfectly with all learning outcomes. Some concentrate aspects of Outcomes #1 and 3, others on the basic skills and proficiencies described in Outcome #2, which are also taken

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[2] As noted elsewhere in this document, the ability of UAF to apply its new Learning Outcomes to general education reform is somewhat constrained by existing Board of Regents General Education Requirements (BOR/GERs), which are binding on all UA campuses. Additionally, any changes to UAF requirements could affect transferability among UA campuses. Therefore, a group representing the three major UA campuses (UAF, UAA and UAS)—the General Education Learning Outcomes (GELO)—has convened to jointly exam and propose changes to BOR/GERs. Please see Appendix II for additional information.

into account in recommendations for fulfilling the other three Outcomes. At this point, the working groups mainly sought to demonstrate how faculty might guide students in applying and synthesizing the skills and knowledge sought in all four outcomes through a flexible program of coursework in five areas.

It is expected that many skills-related and disciplinary goals for student achievement would remain as they currently are, requiring some prescribed classes as well as classes carrying specific designators (such as those for the social sciences, natural sciences and humanities). For example, the Communication group, as presented here, is not meant to satisfy all skills-related goals for written, oral and visual communication but to revise and expand graduation requirements now satisfied by O and W designator courses. Similarly, the Quantitative Literacy group is not meant to provide all of the training a student might need in mathematics and quantification but to contribute to the process of integrating those skills into broader educational outcomes.

In GERC's discussions with and polling of faculty it was determined that the design of capstone courses and experiences to satisfy Outcome #4 would be best addressed at the department, program or college level and will be the subject of separate processes yet to come.

*Going Forward*
GERC, the Curricular Affairs Committee (CAC) and Faculty Senate will need to decide when and in what form to approve a new model for general education. GERC is committed to a deliberative process with its proposal refined through faculty input. Nevertheless, the process whose progress is summarized in this document is in its third year and should be concluded as soon as possible. Therefore, toward the end of spring semester 2013, GERC proposed the following sequence of actions:

1. Submit a more complete report on GERC findings and recommendations as a discussion item at the first regularly scheduled meeting of the UAF Faculty Senate, fall semester 2013 (i.e., this report).

2. Submit a proposal for a new general education model to the Curricular Affairs Committee to be transmitted to the Faculty Senate for approval at its second regularly scheduled meeting of fall 2013.

3. Organize a series of public meetings and consultations with faculty, cognizant administrators, staff and students on the proposal to receive input on such matters as: defining criteria for the new course "Attributes;" creating a process for reviewing courses; recommending specific courses for inclusion; and revisions of any aspect of the proposal.

4. Submit a revised and more detailed proposal to Faculty Senate in the form of potential catalogue copy for the general education requirements and a process for reviewing courses for inclusion in one of the new Attributes categories.

## UAF Faculty Senate Learning Outcomes and Possible Course/Credit Requirements

The following are suggestions for the numbers of credits and types of classes that may be used to satisfy each Learning Outcome.  In total the courses listed below could replace both the Core and related baccalaureate degree requirements such as Social Science and Humanities electives, Communication and Quantitative Reasoning.

**Outcome #1.** Build knowledge of human institutions, socio-cultural processes, and the physical and the natural world through the study of the natural and social sciences, technologies, mathematics, humanities, histories, languages, and the arts.

Competence will be demonstrated for the foundational information in each subject area, its context and significance, and the methods used in advancing each.

Fulfilled by:
- 4 credits of Natural Sciences
- 3 credits of Mathematics
- 3 credits of Arts
- 6 credits of Social Sciences
- 6 credits of Humanities

**Outcome #2.** Develop intellectual and practical skills across the curriculum, including inquiry and analysis, critical and creative thinking, problem solving, written and oral communication, information literacy, technological competence, and collaborative learning.

Proficiency will be demonstrated across the curriculum through critical analysis of proffered information, well-reasoned solutions to problems or inferences drawn from evidence, effective written and oral communication, and satisfactory outcomes of group projects.

Fulfilled by:
- Writing, including information literacy (6 credits)
- Communication:  written, oral and visual (3 credits)
- Quantitative Literacy (3 credits)

**Outcome #3.** Acquire tools for effective civic engagement in local through global contexts, including ethical reasoning, intercultural competence, and knowledge of Alaska and Alaskan issues.

Facility will be demonstrated through analyses of issues including dimensions of ethics, human and cultural diversity, conflicts and interdependencies, globalization, and sustainability.

Fulfilled by taking one course within each of the following groups (see pages pp.7-11 *infra* for more details*)* at some point before graduation; (these courses may also fulfill other GE, major or minor requirements within limits allowed by current policy):
- Civic Engagement (3 credits)
- Alaska and Arctic Issues (3 credits)
- Intercultural Competence & Diversity (3 credits)

**Outcome #4.** Integrate and apply learning, including synthesis and advanced accomplishment across general and specialized studies, adapting them to new settings, questions, and responsibilities, and forming a foundation for lifelong learning.

Preparation will be demonstrated through production of a creative or scholarly project that requires broad knowledge, appropriate technical proficiency, information collection, synthesis, interpretation, presentation, and reflection.

Fulfilled by:

- A capstone course or experiential learning opportunity (e.g. internship) in student's major

## Challenges and Opportunities:  GERs and Learning Outcomes

BOR General Education Requirements and the new Learning Outcomes (adapted from LEAP outcomes) share a fundamental goal:  to prepare students who are broadly trained and socially and intellectually aware.  But they flow from different philosophies:  GERs pursue breadth through the satisfaction of course requirements in specified disciplinary areas; LEAP outcomes encourage students to integrate, critically evaluate and apply their undergraduate training holistically.  But the two are not incompatible, and while the process of making them work together is complex, the product for the end user (the student) should not be.  The UAF Core Curriculum was an early attempt to accomplish this.  In passing the new Learning Outcomes, the Faculty Senate recognized that LEAP provides an opportunity to take the project to the "next level."

Other complications arise from the different ways in which different universities, within and outside of the UA system, define disciplinary areas and from the way they are defined in BOR policy for general education purposes.  For example, BOR GE-compliant natural science, social science and humanities courses include only a small portion of UAF-designated "n," "s" and "h" classes.  The result is that a class that may satisfy a current UAF requirement for a social science elective, because it carries the "s" designator, will not satisfy a general education requirement unless it is also "a broad survey course[s] which provide[s] the student with exposure to the theory, methods, and data of the social science."  Furthermore, some courses are classified differently at different universities.  For example, at UAA History is a humanities; at UAF it is a social science.

Additionally, there is the question of assessment.  Both GERs and the Core are assessable on a course-by-course basis.  But neither presents a clear opportunity to assess the value to the student of the entire experience or the effect it has had on their abilities to apply the more specialized knowledge they receive through majors, minors and certificates to their post-baccalaureate studies and/or the "real world."  Learning outcomes are better suited to that purpose.  And, although the documents prepared by GERC have not addressed assessment in detail, assessment has been actively considered by GERC in its deliberative processes.  (See Appendix I for additional information.)

The following section summarizes the contributions of the five GERC working groups, each tasked with defining specific learning outcomes, linking them to more specific instructional objectives and suggesting bases for assessment. The most immediate purpose of this section is to provide discussion points for engaging faculty in the process of selecting relevant courses and activities.

<u>**Quantitative Literacy**</u>

**Definition:** Quantitative Literacy (QL) is competency and comfort working with numerical data. Individuals with strong QL skills possess the ability to reason and solve quantitative problems from a wide array of contexts and everyday life situations. They understand and can create sophisticated arguments supported by quantitative evidence, and they can clearly communicate those arguments in a variety of formats, including words, tables, graphs, and mathematical equations, as appropriate.

**Relevant UAF Faculty Senate Approved Learning Outcome:** Quantitative Literacy pertains mainly to UAF General Education Learning Outcome 2 but will also have relevance to Outcomes 3 and 4 as students use quantitative data and mathematical forms of expression to demonstrate their ability to describe and explain complex situations and phenomena.

**Instructional Objectives:**
Upon completing a 'Q' course, students will be able to:
- **Interpret:** provide accurate explanations of information presented in mathematical forms and make appropriate inferences based on that information.
- **Represent:** skillfully convert relevant information into a mathematical portrayal in a way that contributes to further or deeper understanding.
- **Calculate:** complete virtually all calculations successfully and comprehensively in order to solve the problem. Present calculations elegantly (clearly, concisely, etc.).
- **Apply/Analyze/Model:** use the quantitative analysis of data as the basis for thoughtful judgments, drawing carefully qualified conclusions from this work. Explicitly describe assumptions, provide compelling rationale for why each is appropriate, and demonstrate awareness that the final conclusion is limited by the accuracy of the assumptions.
- **Communicate: use** quantitative information in connection with the argument or purpose of the work, present it in an effective format, and explicate it with consistently high quality.

**Minimum criteria for course approval:**
Courses must:
- explicitly address each of the objectives listed above via multiple delivery methods (e.g. lecture, discussion, lab and homework exercises) throughout the semester; and
- employ multiple tools to assess students' progress across the semester.

## Communication:  written, oral and visual

**Definition:**  Communication is the development and expression of ideas in oral, written, and multimodal contexts for specific audiences. Communication involves learning to work in many genres and styles. It can involve working with many different technologies, mixing texts, data, and images. Communication abilities develop through iterative experiences across the curriculum. Communication can be about increasing knowledge, fostering understanding, or promoting change in an audience's attitudes, values, beliefs, or behaviors.

**Relevant UAF Faculty Senate Approved Learning Outcome:**  Communication courses will primarily satisfy Learning Outcome 2, but will also satisfy elements of Learning Outcome 4 as students learn to synthesize communication with other areas of study.

**Instructional objectives:**
- Students will be able to communicate effectively in a variety of rhetorical contexts through the use of multimodal techniques.
- Students will be able to adapt their delivery in response to the audience.
- Students will be able to analyze how genres shape and are shaped by disciplinary communication.
- Students will be able to recognize and articulate the relationships among language, knowledge and power in their field of study.
- Students will be able to tailor communication strategies to collaborate in personal, professional and civic relationships.

**Minimum criteria for course approval:**
- Explicitly address at least two of the outcomes listed above
- Have at least 50% of the graded course material based on the analysis and production of written, oral and visual communication
- Include written, oral and visual communication, which may include but is not limited to any of the following:  short papers, position papers, policy analysis, journal or news articles, playwriting, poetry, in-class presentations, performance, speaking, debate, podcasts, YouTube videos, interviewing, peer review workshops, discussion leading, posters, PowerPoint, and video journalism.
- Address and practice accurate and ethical referencing/citation practices of source material as it pertains to source authority, academic honesty and personal credibility.

## Intercultural Knowledge and Competence

**Definition:** Intercultural knowledge and competence is "a set of cognitive, affective, and behavioral skills and characteristics that support effective and appropriate interaction in a variety of cultural contexts."

**Relevant UAF Faculty Senate Approved Learning Outcome:** Civic engagement is an essential component of Learning Outcome #3.

**Instructional Objectives:**
The goals of fostering intercultural knowledge and competence are that students will be able to:
- Place social justice in historical and political context
- Articulate insights into their own cultural rules and biases
- Demonstrate a complex understanding of the complexity of the history, values, politics, beliefs, and practices of other cultures
- Interpret intercultural experiences from more than one (their own) worldview
- Articulate a complex understanding of cultural differences in verbal and non-verbal communication

Courses in this category may focus on differences among people in the United States and/or on understanding contemporary issues from a global perspective or understanding cultures and societies different from those in the United States.

**In order to be approved for this course designator, a course must:**
- Explicitly address at least one of the learning outcomes listed above.
- Address issues of race, ethnicity, gender, and other markers of cultural difference as a substantial component of the course, not as an "add on."
- Emphasize the cultural interactions between the Western and non-Western worlds, and/or the interplay between various racial, ethnic, or gender groups within the United States.
- Have at least 50% of the readings and assignments of the course devoted to topics relating to diversity and intercultural competence.

## Civic Engagement

**Definition:** Civic engagement is "working to make a difference in the civic life of our communities and developing the combination of knowledge, skills, values and motivation to make that difference. It means promoting the quality of life in a community, through both political and non-political processes."

**Relevant UAF Faculty Senate Approved Learning Outcome:** Civic engagement is an essential component of Learning Outcome #3.

[Please note that other components of this Outcome—including intercultural competence and Alaska and Arctic issues—are addressed separately.]

**Instructional Objectives:** Students demonstrate capabilities in one or more of the following instructional objectives (i.e. measurable, course-related outcomes) through applicable coursework or some combination of courses work and practical application:
- Integrate scholastic, academic knowledge with real world problems in contemporary, socio-political contexts
- Explore how historical contexts and issues and developments shape human conflicts and interdependencies—from local to global—and inform the search for possible solutions to contemporary social problems
- Tailor communication strategies to effectively express, listen, and adapt to others with the goal of establishing relationships that may bridge cultural divides and further civic action
- Identify and/or apply theories and methodologies of sustainability to civic participation.

**Minimum criteria for course approval:** To satisfy the Civic Engagement general education outcome, coursework and/or related experiential learning opportunities should enhance students' ability to serve their communities and reflect on the various meanings and methods of participation. Appropriate coursework should devote the majority of its content to enhancing students' understanding in at least one of the following areas. Experiential learning options (such as internships) should involve community service and require that students report and reflect on that service to enhance and broaden their understanding of at least one of the following:
- Civic identity and commitment
- Civic communication
- Civic action and reflection
- Civic contexts and structures

## Knowledge of Alaska and Arctic Issues

**Definition:**  Knowledge of Alaska and Alaskan issues denotes critical understanding of inter-related elements of Alaska's and the Circumpolar North's history, cultures, values, communication styles, natural systems, politics and/or economy. These may include 1) Alaska/northern ecosystems and/or climate change; 2) indigenous peoples, languages and world views; 3) intercultural relations and politics in Alaska and the Arctic; 4) economic development, industry and their relation to the environment in the north; and 5) natural resources and systems.

**Relevant UAF Faculty Senate Approved Learning Outcome:**
UAF Senate Learning Outcome 3 requires "knowledge of Alaska and Alaskan issues."

**Instructional Objectives:**
The knowledge of Alaska and Alaskan issues component of Outcome 3 could be met through fulfillment of one or more of the following Student Learning Objectives:
- Students will demonstrate understanding of the subject matter in one or more of the five broad subject areas listed above;
- Students will analyze critically questions related to one or more of these fields of study;
- Students will recognize and analyze the interrelatedness of these systems; ☐
- Students will compare and contrast circumpolar north regions in examination of a pertinent topic.

**Minimum criteria for course approval:**
- The primary focus and majority of the content of the course addresses Alaska and the Circumpolar North.
- We would expect to see focus on Alaska not only in the course content, but in the course objectives.

## **Making it All Work: for Students, Programs, Departments and Colleges**

Obviously, a great deal is at stake here. Students will be concerned about a shifting landscape of requirements, the quality of the education they receive, and changes in the time and expense of completing degree requirements. Faculty, deans and other academic officers will be concerned about the intellectual and pedagogical integrity of their programs and fields of studies, and the continued viability of programs due to changing demand for particular classes. The following section provides a first attempt at addressing some of these concerns through responses to questions received and/or anticipated by GERC.

### *GERs and Learning Outcomes*

BOR General Education Requirements and the new Learning Outcomes (adapted from LEAP outcomes) share a fundamental goal: to prepare students who are broadly trained and socially and intellectually aware. But they flow from different philosophies: GERs pursue breadth through the satisfaction of course requirements in specified disciplinary areas; LEAP outcomes encourage students to integrate, critically evaluate and apply their undergraduate training holistically. But the two are not incompatible, and while the process of making them work together is complex, the product for the end user (the student) will not be. The UAF Core Curriculum was an early attempt to accomplish this. In passing the new Learning Outcomes, the Faculty Senate recognized that LEAP provides an opportunity to take the project to the "next level."

The following—using a Q&A format—attempts to:
- Suggest how to optimize the compatibility of GERs and the new Learning Outcomes by applying a new set of "Attributes"[3] to existing, revised and new courses;
- Give examples of how a very wide range of colleges, departments and programs can be directly involved in the delivery of coursework that satisfies both GERs and Learning Outcomes;
- Suggest multiple ways in which students pursuing any BA or BS degree can satisfy both sets of requirements in 39 credits (the number required by the current Core) or less;
- Indicate how and why faculty from all departments and programs should be engaged participants in all aspects of development and implementation.

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[3] "Attributes" is the term currently being used by GERC to describe 5 new tags that may be attached to specific courses that satisfying a new learning outcome. The Attributes—A, C, E, D and Q—would be appended to course numbers in much the same way that O and W now are, to indicate to students that successfully completing this class will help satisfy a general education learning outcome requirement.

## GERs and the New Attributes

**Q₁.  How will students know if they are taking classes that satisfy a new Learning Outcome?**

**A.**  The exact notations are not set in stone,, but for the sake of illustration:  Courses that may be used to satisfy Learning Outcomes 1 and 2, which will also satisfy some of the skills-based GERs, will have numbers ending with X:  for example, English F111X, Communication F141X, Mathematics 103X.  Or they will carry a **C attribute, for Communication** or a **Q attribute for Quantitative Reasoning**.  For Outcome 3 there will be new attributes attached:
> **A--Alaska and Arctic Issues**
> **D--Intercultural Competence & Diversity**
> **E--Civic Engagement**

**Q₂:**  Can students satisfy new requirements and BOR/GERs within the current 39-credit minimum established by the current Core Curriculum?  **Will it be possible to do so in less than 39 credits**?  Will it be possible for AA degree-seeking students to satisfy at least some of the new requirements too?  **Will these changes expand the range of choice available to students**—i.e. can we make them less restrictive than the Core?

**A:**  Yes to all of the above, if **colleges, departments and faculty from all of UAF can identify or modify existing courses and/or are willing to develop new courses that satisfy both BOR GERs and qualify for an A, D or E attribute.**

**Q₃:  What would such courses look like?**

**A:**  They would have to:  1) Have the basic characteristics of required by BOR policy for a category of the Common Core of General Education Requirements (see below) and 2) meet the requirements for carrying a A, D or E attributes as described above.  (And, although less likely, if they are upper division classes they might also qualify for a C attribute.)
> **Hypothetical 1:**  ENGL 217, Themes in Literature, seems like a natural choice to be both a BOR humanities GER and carry a D attribute, providing the description specifies that literature from a variety of cultures is examined from multiple perspectives.
> **Hypothetical 2:**  PS 202, Democracy and Global Society, JUST 110, Introduction to Justice, and NRM 101, Natural Resources Conservation and Policy may already satisfy BOR requirements for a social science GER.  With the addition of a project in which students analyze or contribute to a relevant organization or activity they could merit an E attribute.
> **Hypothetical 3:**  GEOS 212, Geology of Alaska, although not a lab science, seems like a natural choice to carry the A attribute. While GEOS 101X, The Dynamic Earth, and GEOS 120X, Glaciers, Earthquakes and Volcanoes, already qualify as GERs and both contain sufficient Alaska/Arctic content to carry the A attribute as well.

**Hypothetical 4:** (With a little tweaking for some) it is likely that most of the currently offered "X" courses under "Perspectives" would continue to qualify as BOR humanities, arts, or social science GERs *and* could take on a D, E or A attribute.

**Hypothetical 5:** Numerous upper division courses, taken for major and minor requirements or as upper division electives would currently qualify for one or more attribute, or could be revised, if departments and faculty so desired, to carry one. For example, most courses offered by ANS and ANL and many GEOG, ANTH, SOC and PS classes could take on a D attribute. Several GEOS, BIOL and MSL classes could carry the A attribute.

**Q₄: Who would offer such courses?**

**A:** Essentially, that decision rests with the faculty, department heads, deans and directors based on their own assessments of their programs' needs and interests. For courses that would carry an attribute and satisfy BOR requirements for humanities, arts and social sciences most, but not all, of the responsibility falls on the College of Liberal Arts. Courses given by NRM, RD, MIN, MILS, *inter alia* could qualify too.

Faculty will need to receive a clear set of BOR requirements for qualifying courses, and participate in establishing specific requirements for each of the new attributes. Then they will have to decide which courses they would like to submit for the dual distinction of being a BOR/GER and carrying a new attribute. In short, many colleges, departments and programs already offer courses that could do double duty (GER and attribute) and/or would be highly motivated to find ways to create new opportunities to add attributes to their courses.

**Q₅. What about that C attribute? Doesn't that mean that students will no longer get to refine their writing and oral communication skills in their major?**

**A. Not at all.** The C attribute "modernizes" the Os and Ws by retaining the goal of advanced training in written and oral communication while recognizing the multimedia nature of modern professional communication and the need for technological, information and media literacy.

# **APPENDICES**

**R10.04.040. General Education Requirements.**
A.    Categories for the Common Core of General Education Requirements for Baccalaureate Degrees
     1.    Oral Communication Skills
        Courses that fulfill this requirement are those which emphasize the acquisition of English language skills in orally communicating ideas in an organized fashion through instruction accompanied by practice.
     2.    Written Communication Skills
        Courses that fulfill this requirement are those which emphasize the acquisition of English language skills in organizing and communicating
     3.    Quantitative Skills
        Courses that fulfill this requirement are those which emphasize the development and application of quantitative problem-solving skills as well as skills in the manipulation and/or evaluation of quantitative data.
     4.    Natural Sciences
        Courses that fulfill this requirement are those that provide the student with broad exposure and include general introduction to the theory, methods, and disciplines of the natural sciences.
     5.    Humanities
        Courses that fulfill this requirement are those that provide the student with an introduction to the visual arts and performing arts as academic disciplines as opposed to those that emphasize acquisition of skills. General humanities courses introduce the student to the humanistic fields of language, arts, literature, history, and philosophy within the context of their traditions.
     6.    Social Sciences
        Courses that fulfill this requirement are broad survey courses which provide the student with exposure to the theory, methods, and data of the social sciences.

B.    Credit Distribution for the Common Core of the General Education Requirements for Baccalaureate Degrees

| | |
|---|---|
| Written Communication Skills | 6 credits minimum |
| Oral Communication Skills | 3 credits minimum |
| Humanities/Social Sciences | 15 credits minimum |
|     at least 3 credits in the arts | |
|     at least 3 credits in general humanities | |
|     at least 6 credits in the social sciences, from 2<br>       different disciplines | |
| Quantitative Skills/Natural Sciences | 10 credits minimum |
|     at least 3 credits in mathematics | |
|     at least 4 credits in the natural sciences, including a<br>       laboratory | |
| **Total** | **34 credits minimum** |

# Appendix II:  Assessing General Education

Previously, assessing the effectiveness of general education has been difficult.  While individual courses applicable to the Core Curriculum undergo periodic assessment there has been little systematic effort to assess efficacy of broader components of the program (such as Perspectives on the Human Condition), let alone the entire program or the contribution it makes—in concert with majors, minors and other degree requirements—to undergraduate education at UAF.  AAC&U and LEAP provide useful guidance in assessing general education, in three ways.  First, through the capstone courses, projects or experiences developed to implement Outcome #4, UAF faculty and administrators will come to better understand the capacity of students, as they complete their undergraduate education, to use their skills in multi-media communication, quantification and critical thinking to integrate knowledge from a broad array of subject areas and apply it to important and complex tasks.  Second, GERC proposes the adoption of formal but flexible rubrics to assess satisfaction by individual students of each of the other 3 Learning Outcomes.  Third, aggregated data from the student scores will provide new sources of data for overall assessment of the new general education program.

This Appendix contains two rubrics produced by GERC working groups as illustrations of how AAC&U standards may be adapted to assess the new Learning Outcomes and revised general education program.  AAC&U VALUE (Valid Assessment of Learning in Undergraduate Education) rubrics may be accessed at:
http://www.aacu.org/value/index.cfm

| CIVIC ENGAGEMENT[4] VALUE RUBRIC | Capstone 4 | Milestone 3 | Milestone 2 | Benchmark 1 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Civic Identity and Commitment** | Provides evidence of experience in civic-engagement activities and describes what she/he has learned about her or himself as it relates to a reinforced and clarified sense of civic identity and continued commitment to public action. | Provides evidence of experience in civic-engagement activities and describes what she/he has learned about her or himself as it relates to a growing sense of civic identity and commitment. | Evidence suggests involvement in civic-engagement activities is generated from expectations or course requirements rather than from a sense of civic identity. | Provides little evidence of her/his experience in civic-engagement activities and does not connect experiences to civic identity. |
| **Civic Communication** | Tailors communication strategies to effectively express, listen, and adapt to others to establish relationships to further civic action | Effectively communicates in civic context, showing ability to do all of the following: express, listen, and adapt ideas and messages based on others' perspectives. | Communicates in civic context, showing ability to do more than one of the following: express, listen, and adapt ideas and messages based on others' perspectives. | Communicates in civic context, showing ability to do one of the following: express, listen, and adapt ideas and messages based on others' perspectives. |
| **Civic Action and Reflection** | Demonstrates independent experience and *shows initiative in team leadership* of complex or multiple civic engagement activities, accompanied by reflective insights or analysis about the aims and accomplishments of one's actions. | Demonstrates independent experience and *team leadership of* civic action, with reflective insights or analysis about the aims and accomplishments of one's actions. | Has clearly *participated* in civically focused actions and begins to reflect or describe how these actions may benefit individual(s) or communities. | Has *experimented* with some civic activities but shows little internalized under-standing of their aims or effects and little commitment to future action. |
| **Civic Contexts/Structures** | Demonstrates ability and commitment to *collaboratively work across and within* community contexts and structures *to achieve a civic aim.* | Demonstrates ability and commitment to work actively *within* community contexts and structures *to achieve a civic aim.* | Demonstrates experience identifying intentional ways to *participate in* civic contexts and structures. | Experiments with civic contexts and structures, *tries out a few to see what fits.* |

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[4] Adapted from "Civic knowledge and engagement—local and global," AAC&U, available at http://www.aacu.org/value/rubrics/index_p.cfm?CFID=46791212&CFTOKEN=41451744

# ENGAGING DIVERSE PERSPECTIVES AND INTERCULTURAL COMPENTENCE RUBRIC

*Evaluators are encouraged to assign a zero to any work sample or collection of work that does not meet benchmark (cell one) level performance*

| | **4** | **3** | **2** | **1** |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Knowledge** *Cultural self- awareness* | Articulates insights into own cultural rules and biases (e.g. seeking complexity; aware of how her/his experiences have shaped these rules, and how to recognize and respond to cultural biases, resulting in a shift in self-description.) | Recognizes new perspectives about own cultural rules and biases (e.g. not looking for sameness; comfortable with the complexities that new perspectives offer.) | Identifies own cultural rules and biases (e.g. with a strong preference for those rules shared with own cultural group and seeks the same in others.) | Shows minimal awareness of own cultural rules and biases (even those shared with own cultural group(s)) (e.g. uncomfortable with identifying possible cultural differences with others.) |
| **Knowledge** *Knowledge of cultural worldview frameworks* | Demonstrates sophisticated understanding of the complexity of elements important to members of another culture in relation to its history, values, politics, communication styles, economy, or beliefs and practices. | Demonstrates adequate understanding of the complexity of elements important to members of another culture in relation to its history, values, politics, communication styles, economy, or beliefs and practices. | Demonstrates partial understanding of the complexity of elements important to members of another culture in relation to its history, values, politics, communication styles, economy, or beliefs and practices. | Demonstrates surface understanding of the complexity of elements important to members of another culture in relation to its history, values, politics, communication styles, economy, or beliefs and practices. |
| **Skills** *Ability to articulate more than one perspective* | Interprets intercultural experience from the perspectives of own and more than one worldview and demonstrates ability to act in a supportive manner that recognizes the feelings of another cultural group. | Recognizes intellectual and emotional dimensions of more than one worldview and sometimes uses more than one worldview in interactions. | Identifies components of other cultural perspectives but responds in all situations with own worldview. | Views the experience of others but does so through own cultural worldview. |
| **Skills** *Verbal and nonverbal communication* | Articulates a complex understanding of cultural differences in verbal and nonverbal communication (e.g., demonstrates understanding of the degree to which people use physical contact while communicating in different cultures or use direct/indirect and explicit/implicit meanings) and is able to skillfully negotiate a shared understanding based on those differences. | Recognizes and participates in cultural differences in verbal and nonverbal communication and begins to negotiate a shared understanding based on those differences. | Identifies some cultural differences in verbal and nonverbal communication and is aware that misunderstandings can occur based on those differences but is still unable to negotiate a shared understanding. | Has a minimal level of understanding of cultural differences in verbal and nonverbal communication; is unable to negotiate a shared understanding. |

## Appendix III:  General Education Learning Outcomes Committee (GELO):  A System-Wide Effort

General Education requirements for all of the University of Alaska system are governed by UA Board of Regents policies P10.04.040 (General Education Requirements), P10.04.062 (General Education Coursework Transfer) and regulation R10.04.040 (General Education Requirements).  Discussions about the desirability of revisiting and reforming general education began independently at all three major UA campuses (UAF, UAA and UAS).  Of the three, the process is furthest advanced at UAF.  UAA faculty formed a General Education Review Committee that has yet to produce a comprehensive proposal.  At UAS the conversation has been largely *ad hoc*.  Nevertheless—with support and encouragement from Vice President for Academic Affairs, Dana Thomas—representatives of the campuses (including faculty and registrars) convened in Anchorage in January 2013 for an AAC&U workshop on general education reform.

The results of the January meeting included:  1)  general agreement that the time was right for a reappraisal of general education at UA, in part, because of the difficulty in assessing the effectiveness of the programs at each of the three campuses; 2)  a rough consensus on using the LEAP outcomes as the basis for further discussions of general education reform at UA; 3) acknowledgement that UAF was furthest along in the process of general education reform and that the work done by GERC should be given careful consideration in any system-wide efforts that ensue; 4) transferability among UA universities, as required by BOR policy P10.04.062 (General Education Coursework Transfer) is far from seamless and should be a major consideration in general education reform at each of the universities; 5) agreement on the desirability of approaching reform of BOR/GERs on a system-wide basis; and 6) the formation of GELO.

On August 19, 2013 GELO held its first meeting in Anchorage, convened by Faculty Alliance president Robert Boeckmann (UAA), with the participation of three members each from the faculties of UAF, UAA and UAS.  GELO members agreed to:

1.  First, use LEAP outcomes as a "jumping off point" for drafting a proposal to submit to the three Faculty Senates and thereby establish a common set of guidelines by which all three universities of the UA system can establish compatible GE requirements that are also tailored to the specific characteristics of each (with full consideration of assessibility, transferability and flexibility);

2.  Next, focus on analysis and reform of BOR regulation R10.04.040 (General Education Requirements), since:  a) the two governing BOR policies present broad statements of educational goals and philosophy they are not inconsistent with LEAP outcomes or the outcomes passed by the UAF Faculty Senate; b) to change a regulation, requires an executive decision, while policy change requires a vote of the full Board of Regents;

3.  Schedule monthly, virtual GELO meetings to carry out this work.

# Appendix IV: Membership, General Education Revitalization Committee

Armstrong, Anne

Berman, Leah

Burleson, Derick

Eddy, Libby

Ehrlander, Mary

Fitts, Alex

Fowell, Sarah

Goering, Greg

Hapsmith, Linda

Hardy, Cynthia

Layer, Paul

Marx, Bethany

Richey, Jean

Rosenberg, Jonathan

Stanley, Sarah

Strohmaier, Mahla

Thomas, Pauline

Valentine, David

Wildfeuer, Sandra