

CALIFORNIA STATE POLYTECHNIC UNIVERSITY, POMONA

ACADEMIC SENATE

GENERAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE

REPORT TO

THE ACADEMIC SENATE

GE-001-190

The Meaning and Purpose of General Education
at Cal Poly Pomona

General Education Committee

Date: 08/29/2019

Executive Committee
Received and Forwarded

Date: 10/09/2019

Academic Senate

Date: 10/23/2019
First Reading

TITLE OF REFERRAL: The Purpose and Meaning of General Education at Cal Poly Pomona

BACKGROUND:

This referral is a request by Provost Sylvia Alva and AVP Laura Massa to formally adopt the following statement of Meaning and Purpose of General Education at Cal Poly Pomona:

Meaning and Purpose of General Education at Cal Poly Pomona

The GE experience asks that students and faculty in our inclusive polytechnic community engage a breadth of subjects to encourage intellectual flexibility, empathy, creativity, curiosity, and rigor. The learning that takes place in GE supplements and complements the academic major. GE brings together diverse ways of knowing and doing to strengthen foundational skills, drive innovation, and adapt to new opportunities. Furthermore, it enables us to develop a deep understanding of one's self and respect for the complex identities of others, and to face the critical and ethical decisions we encounter throughout our lives.

This statement was drafted by a university-wide Ad Hoc Committee formed by the Academic Senate at the request of the Provost and in accordance with the new Strategic Plan which calls for CPP to "Revitalize the General Education program by reimagining the integration of the liberal arts and sciences within the context of our polytechnic identity" (Strategic Initiative 1, Goal 4). The Provost tasked the Dean of CLASS and the AVP of Academic Programs with leading CPP through the first-year goal of this process: a statement of the meaning and purpose of General Education (GE) at an inclusive polytechnic university.

In preparation, several members of the committee attended the AAC&U General Education Conference. The Committee also reviewed literature on the concept and history of general education and researched similar types of statements from across the United States. The Committee met every other week during the Spring semester to engage in robust discussions and to draft an initial statement. A draft statement was circulated amongst students, faculty, associate deans and deans, inviting feedback via personal communication, a display in the library and through an online survey. The Committee used the feedback to refine and finalize the above statement.

RESOURCES CONSULTED:

All Faculty

DISCUSSION:

Currently, the GE program does not have a statement of meaning and purpose. The statement on the meaning and purpose of GE will serve as a foundation for CPP's approach to GE according to the Strategic Plan. Therefore, the statement may provide guidance to how we determine which courses to include in GE. It may provide a framework for how to incorporate changes to the GE program that come from the Chancellor's Office.

Once adopted, this statement will be added to the Catalog description of GE. In addition, plans for broadly sharing and utilizing this statement include: Asking the GE Committee to consider how this statement may be incorporated into the consideration of new course proposal evaluation, as well as consideration of future GE models; Meeting with Deans and Department Chairs to promote the meaning and purpose of GE; and encouraging faculty who teach GE courses to include the statement in their syllabi to better help students understand the importance of GE. Finally, the GE Assessment Committee should consider whether the GE Student Learning Outcomes may need to be updated to capture the ideas in the statement.

The GE Committee thought to provide one last chance for feedback. Each member of the GE Committee contacted the faculty and leadership of a college or two. We did not receive any comment or criticism that may require the GE Committee to suggest any other modification to the statement.

RECOMMENDATION:

The GE Committee recommends approval of GE-001-190 The Meaning and Purpose of General Education at Cal Poly Pomona "The GE experience asks that students and faculty in our inclusive polytechnic community engage a breadth of subjects to encourage intellectual flexibility, empathy, creativity, curiosity, and rigor. The learning that takes place in GE supplements and complements the academic major. GE brings together diverse ways of knowing and doing to strengthen foundational skills, drive innovation, and adapt to new opportunities. Furthermore, it enables us to develop a deep understanding of one's self and respect for the complex identities of others, and to face the critical and ethical decisions we encounter throughout our lives."