

Gen Ed 2.0 questions from Senators
Provost Bichelmeyer and UMKC Faculty Senate
October 15, 2019

1. Is the launch coming too quickly. Will we be ready?

Provost hopes so and thinks so. It's been three years of work—two robust groups working hard. Collecting data and stress testing behind the scenes. Two years of panel and groups working on classes. But now we're getting to it thinking this is really real. We're well on our way. Faculty and students want as seamless implementation as we can provide, and that's the goal.

2. Will we have enough course offerings to retain our students?

This is why we carved out dollars – so we can get the right people in there----and we won't have an overly large number of offerings next year because we want to develop this carefully.

3. Many programs are meeting their current Gen Ed and major requirements with 'double dipping'. How can we accommodate that without either adding more credit hours to a degree or cutting the major requirements? Will discipline-specific courses be allowed to substitute for UMKC Essential courses? Some degrees will swell to 137 hours in order to retain accreditation.

It is anticipated that by not allowing 'double dipping' between Gen Ed and early major courses, faculty loads will be impacted because the students will be taking other courses in UMKC Essentials. This may result in a drop of up to 12 hours in a major, and will impact faculty loads. How are we to redistribute faculty loads when these courses that doubled as Gen Ed and early major are compromised?

There are two kinds of double dipping—horizontal and vertical. Horizontal example is using the math requirement for an Essential Questions requirement. That is not allowed. You can't truncate the breadth we are creating for the students by taking one class and having it meet a lot of Essential Questions areas. Vertical double dipping is allowed—a policy document coming end of October will clarify this---

Provost and Gen Ed Task Force have no right to tell what the disciplinary faculty in a major can do beyond Gen Ed. That is their expertise. Gen Ed is a foundation on which you align the disciplinary requirements. If units want to vertically double-dip, more power to you. That's how SCE, Conservatory, Nursing are going to get through. The SCE consultant showed a path of how it works---there is flexibility in that program as long they meet standards for Gen Ed courses. Academic units must align their courses to Gen Ed SLO's and signature assignments if they want to be approved for vertical double-dipping. They cannot change the SLOs or the signature 'way of knowing' that came out of the Gen Ed design. An example of vertical double dipping example for SCE might be where the Gen Ed math requirement can meet an SCE Calculus requirement ---that can be double dipping and can count for both Gen Ed and SCE requirements. Another example might be statistics for Nursing: math department can develop a course in statistics for nurses, and it can meet the Gen Ed requirement as well as the Nursing requirement. Academic units cannot ignore Gen Ed requirements —although there may be a few exceptions. SCE consultant indicates we can address concerns—as there are at least 9 credit hours for SCE at play to use for Gen Ed. Another example: the requirement of the Civic &

Urban Engagement Course—there are SLOs to master and a signature assignment. If Engineering wants to develop or have someone develop a course where Engineering students go out and solve a sustainability problem or sell an entrepreneur on an idea they got and that's what their standard is—they can do that and then it will meet both the Civic Engagement requirement and Engineering program requirement. [there was a question that was about requiring a student major to take a specific course in the Essential Questions and the response was that wasn't worked out yet and she didn't want to answer it just yet]. The challenge is with heavily scripted programs.

Gen Ed is the only time in the student's academic career where they are going to get outside of their discipline and think broadly and experience different perspectives. They will see another student think differently than they think. And that's what's so important about breadth in this mix. The fundamental thing they are trying to accomplish in Gen Ed is to provide the students with different ways of thinking, which then allow them to see diversity in thinking. Higher Ed talks about diversity in terms of race and ethnicity and demographics, but we have to think about diversity of thought. We have to think about diversity as having a different opinion that can be legitimate and that deserves to be considered. Gen Ed is a key place where this can happen for our undergrads, and it's one of the first experiences we're trying to give to them before they move into their disciplinary areas. There will be a time we may waive Gen Ed requirements, but better that this be the exception than the rule.

4. How will UMKC Essentials accommodate students with AP or IB credits when entering UMKC?

YES they can bring in these credit hours to UMKC Essentials, and they have the transfer articulation tables already created. Faculty decide which AP and IB courses count for which UMKC credits. The principle is that we won't create any unnecessary barriers for students when we know they are bringing in quality academic experiences. More importantly than counting it for Core 42 is counting it for UMKC Essentials and meeting the requirements we have, because about 50% of our students are transfer students and we have to have articulation tables that apply to our UMKC Essentials program, which our native students go through.

Can transfer and high school students with 24 credit hours have the option of choosing the Core 42 requirements instead of UMKC Essentials?

They could do that, but we have a program better for them than Core 42. They have to bring in 42 credit hours to meet the statewide requirement, but our program has 30 hours. They can gain a whole lot more flexibility with 12 hours of electives if we are articulating whatever they are bringing in into UMKC Essentials instead of Core 42. And we will use that to our advantage to encourage students to take Gen Ed at UMKC and then transfer wherever they want to because—the whole point of statewide Core 42 was to create a transferable package so that when a student completes the core at one institution, they get a stackable credential — a checkmark on their transcript that says 'completed Gen Ed.' Then *no institution* where they transfer can require them to take any course for Gen Ed again. The student is done with General Education. So for UMKC—we are the only institution in the State that was

grandfathered in for a 30-hr Gen Ed curriculum. So if students can transfer AB or IP or Duel Credit into our program, they are going to have a lot less requirements and a lot more flexibility in their 120 credit hours. If a UMKC student transfers out to another school, other institutions will have to take our 30-hr Gen Ed. Our students get a degree of freedom with 12 credit hours that no other student in Missouri gets. The trick is they have to *finish* the Gen Ed to get that checkbox---if they don't, it goes back to being a course by course articulation

Can faculty declare that their majors must implement Core 42 instead of UMKC Essentials?

No, they cannot. A group of UMKC faculty designed the program and brought to Senate for a vote. The Senate vote affirmed the Gen Ed program that will be required for all UMKC students --- so faculty cannot opt out.

5. Is there a way of using the new Fall 2019 admitted students as a 'stress test' to determine how many of these students would have entered with (1) No Impact, (2) can graduate on time but no electives and (3) student is negatively impacted by the new program? Real data for a reality check.

This has been completed. 15-30% of our students enter with at least one course in each 100-level Essentials Questions focus area.

ALSO: Can a side-by-side-by-side comparison of the gen ed. programs be developed and shown, with the year-to-year implementation?

This was done in 2018 for planning purposes and academic units identified where their anticipated challenges are, and that's what they are working through. They have created very cool color-coded spreadsheets that address this.

6. Critical Thinking courses may need as many as 11 sections this Fall 2020. How many of those sections will be taught by regular faculty who also have responsibilities for teaching in the major? Will these be new, NTT-taught courses?

For UMKC Essentials, we are carving out 10% in the revenue model to cover cost of instruction. That didn't happen in Gen Ed 1.0 and created problems. If a department has a student/faculty ratio of 9/1 or 10/1, they are going to get pushed a little bit to use faculty at a ratio closer to peers. We also have a lot of sections with empty seats in them so we need units to be using faculty we have as effectively as we can, to get better section sizes, better fill rate, better workload, better student/faculty ratio---there aren't a lot of units in this situation, but there are a few. Conversely, some units have a 45/1 student/faculty ratio. These numbers have also been looked at against tenured/tenure-track faculty and NTTs and adjuncts. One of the areas which the provost will challenge units on is when the senior-most tenured faculty put the heaviest load on the tenure-track faculty who are trying to do their research to get ahead.

We also don't want to hire a bunch of new adjuncts or NTTs. In discussions with CAS to get some of our best faculty, experts in their field, who love teaching, and are willing to teach Gen Ed courses - this will draw majors from Gen Ed into CAS programs.

7. The MISSOURI CONSTITUTION requirement remains unsettled. Will this be a 3-hr course and where does it show up? Must departments drop 3-hrs from their majors to accommodate this requirement or will it be cutting into student elective courses?

This is still an unsettled issue. The requirement says we have to offer this---it doesn't say students have to take it. There are multiple answers here. An AP or IP political science course probably works—we could make it urban engagement---we could make it a 1hr course---we continue to push the idea around as to how we meet this requirement---and we expect to provide multiple ways for students to meet this requirement- students in some highly scripted programs will have a greater challenge with meeting the requirement. UMKC tried to push the envelope on this with the state, saying we wanted to simply administer the Department of Immigration Citizenship Test—if the student can pass that, it should be good enough---they came back wanting some kind of curricular experience, but what kind is still up in the air—so still working this through, but there will be multiple ways for this requirement to be met. No idea when this will be settled—it's the Missouri Dept of Higher Education agreeing with State Legislature—and it impacts all schools --- regardless, we'll have to figure out how students pass this requirement because we won't be able to award a degree without it. Students may attempt to pass this requirement in several different ways—and we want students to meet the baseline, but the way they meet the baseline should be up to us. We want to have it embedded in a lot of ways—if they have to pass a test---maybe a 1hr course as a choice, and maybe a 3hr course with more information ---we'll have guidance out as to the number of choices. DEPARTMENTS DON'T HAVE TO DROP A CLASS IN THE MAJORS TO ACCOMMODATE THIS REQUIREMENT---but it could cut into students electives.

8. The new curriculum has not been entered into Courseleaf (prefilled) yet, and there is no estimate on when it would happen. It is very difficult for faculty who have never used Courseleaf before to try to navigate major program and degree changes when the template isn't even correct. When will this be ready?

They have been working on this with a consultant. Engineering, Education, Nursing, Conservatory are the programs that have challenges. Working on getting clear answers for these units. Shooting for Oct 30 to finalize policies and paths for these programs. Will start loading information into Courseleaf well before Thanksgiving..

9. Can Calculus be allowed as satisfying the math pathway, instead of only statistics?

Any math course that has a prerequisite or quantitative math score requirement can contribute 3 credit hours to the UMKC Essentials or Core 42, so some flexibility and fluidity there.

10. Will UMKC always have two Gen Ed paths from here forward---- UMKC Essentials and Core 42? (*isn't this very expensive?!*)

We have that now---but we don't really have two Gen Eds. What we have is tables in our degree audit system, and if a student brings something in, we'll count it for something---even if they haven't finished their Gen Ed and the courses aren't articulated. We have to do something for them as we're phasing out Gen Ed 1.0.

The State has a Core 42 but we have UMKC Essentials, and we use transfer equivalency tables to fit Core 42 into our Gen Ed.

Can a department require their majors to choose a specific Gen Ed path?

Can you say categorically that “introductory courses *cannot* be counted as both a UMKC Essential course and towards the major. *But if* a student transfers in as a MOTR-42 student, *then* introductory courses from *other* institutions *can* be used to count toward Gen Ed requirements to graduate from UMKC. A native UMKC student *could* use an introductory course as a Gen Ed and towards the major if they choose MOTR-42 when they start college at UMKC.”

11. Can the two writing courses in Gen Ed 2.0 be taught by more disciplines than English? Can teachers (perhaps GT's who go through the same training as English MA's currently go through? Perhaps iPhD students?) from other disciplines be added, like History, Theatre, Sociology, Anthropology, Economics, or Music History? Support Grad programs; reduce dependence on Adjunct faculty and NTT's.

This is being discussed with leadership in CAS. (1) whatever gets taught has to meet the SLO's. (2) whoever teaches has to have the appropriate credential by HLC requirement—have to have expertise in that discipline at the level above the undergraduate level—and she thinks 18 credit hours or above or a Masters degree is required. (3) she's pretty sure there will definitely be an allowance for that as an exception. An example worked on with consultant is to allow technical writing. Other opportunities would be either by exception or with input from the English faculty—as panel reviewers and with focus on meeting SLOs. We must make sure we are using our own faculty as best we can and avoid having to hire more people---or change loads inappropriately for the faculty we have in their expertise.

12. There is a fear that the lack of Intro classes will negatively impact majors. Many students choose their majors based upon having been exposed through an Intro course.

About 70% of students come here and change majors. That's on top of the fact that about 45% of our students are transfer students. They generally change majors within a mega-major area, like from one social science to another, or one natural science to another, or one humanities to another. The First Semester Experience is set up to help students understand the key Mega-major areas, and the framing is helped in the 100-level Essential Questions courses. In discussions with College faculty, they see that holding some learning outcomes and a signature assignment constant, and letting the content vary in and out of that—they can actually sell what's cool about History, etc. and show a student why they would want to major in it. Historically we have always focused on the requirements of the major first, and only considered Gen Ed as an afterthought or not at all. This new program is designed to make Gen Ed a primary experience for students by identifying critical ways of thinking that come out in the distribution areas --an obvious one in natural sciences is the Scientific Method, obvious one in English is rhetoric / how to write an argument, for arts a way of thinking is the process of creativity. So what the SLOs do is to highlight the ways of thinking we are teaching to our students. Then, the signature assignment requires the student to codify that way of thinking as a penultimate experience in the course. We are imposing some learning outcomes and

signature experience that ensure students demonstrate intellectual skills as opposed to simply answering a multiple-choice test or a regurgitating a lot of subject matter. If a discipline can deliver a course that matches the SLO's and signature assignment, then there will be a natural alignment and a link between the Gen Ed program and the disciplinary subject matter. General education provides a foundation that has some breadth to it and that focuses on intellectual skills upon which academic units will layer disciplinary expectations, requirements, electives—but students still have to address the signature learning outcomes that we want each student to demonstrate, such as foundational skills in mass communications and English, and foundational skills in what we're calling the Essential Questions areas, which look a lot like traditional disciplinary areas. The beauty of this is academic units get a lot of flexibility to what content they use to teach these fundamental cognitive skills. We hope people teach about sustainability, about Kansas City, and about really relevant topics that students need to be informed citizens and active problem solvers in the 21st Century. But academic units have to address these subjects in a way that meets SLOs and ensures the student has an engaging assignment that confirms the student knows how to think in a structured way. You can put whatever you want into the course as long as it meets the learning outcomes and has the signature experience that demonstrates they thought in a structured way.

[This was part of answer in Question 3 but jumped to 12]: Right now, the Intro courses are textbook heavy and many students ask 'how is this relevant to me?' Our goal is to make traditional intro courses more relevant and engaging by flipping the model so that, instead of dumping a whole bunch of subject matter on students, we are making it clear to students how powerful structured ways of thinking such as rhetoric and the scientific method and processes of creativity are. If we can make these processes transparent to students and emphasize these cognitive skills while we allow the content to vary a bit and be constantly fresh, our students will absolutely see the relevance of each discipline. As I listen to College of Arts & Sciences faculty talk about the possibilities, I hear their enthusiasm for taking on the goal of making the Gen Ed courses relevant and exciting to students so perhaps they will then want to major in their discipline.

[Other notes]:

Only 50 % of our students come to UMKC with nothing to transfer in.

Retention is up---thank you! But now we need to talk about Completion---that went down a bit.

[Additional questions]:

About governance panels--- we've been working for two years. Some faculty have been invited to participate in designing the SLOs and template syllabus---this rolled out 1 ½ years ago and has been refined. Looks good. Then we had showcases. Have been collecting names and have about 46 people to draw on now. It's also about getting our faculty development program going. We're trying to help faculty develop new skills by teaching them the process of reverse designing courses---starting with learning outcomes, then building engaging experiences, and then building out the rest of the syllabus—which is best practice. As we roll new courses out and faculty bring new ideas and content in, we want faculty leaders to help teach others this

process of design --we want to have a cadre or stable of faculty in each of these areas who can partner up as we start to develop mentorship opportunities for faculty, so we grow the skills of faculty to develop engaging courses. We are creating organic groups of faculty who are talking to each other about teaching and learning. It's exciting to see the leadership we have growing into greater numbers of faculty who have these skills.

MEGA-MAJORS: We need to understand from the lens of career-development what types of learning and approaches will help students focus on the long term—while at the same time we want to show the comprehensive curriculum of the university. We have four mega-major areas:

- 1) Numbers/Functions/Technology
- 2) Health-Life Sciences in our World
- 3) Human Culture and Expression
- 4) Human Behavior.