A faculty team consisting of: Kara Flowers, Clancy Martin, Cindy Pemberton, Linda Plamann and Wayne Vaught attended the AAC&U summer institute on general education in San Jose, California from June 3-8, 2011. The team incorporated information from the conference into the following proposal and recommendation for continuing the process of general education reform at UMKC. The committee met with Provost Hackett who was in agreement with the following recommend the following for the 2011-2013 academic years.

**Composition and Structure of GEOC**

The GEOC will be led by a chair or co-chairs appointed by the provost.

The composition of the committee should be reviewed to ensure appropriate representation. A faculty member from each academic unit should be included on the committee, in addition to three from Arts and Sciences as well as three representatives from the Faculty Senate. The committee should fill vacancies as necessary.

The new Vice Provost for assessment should be included as an ex officio member of the committee.

The committee should be divided into three sub-committees, led by a sub-committee chair.

- **Curriculum Development Sub-Committee**
  - This committee will be charged with to work with university stakeholders to revise and develop the general education curriculum based on the General Education learning outcomes recently approved by the faculty. The committee will be responsible for presenting the proposal(s) to the faculty, guiding it through the faculty senate, and encouraging faculty participation in the process.

- **Assessment Sub-Committee**
  - This committee will work with the newly appointed Vice Provost for assessment to develop assessment strategies based on the recently adopted general education learning outcomes. Examples of possible assessments include e-portfolios, signature assignments, standardized assessments, etc. The committee will also develop policies and procedures for review and approval of courses for the general education program. The committee will establish the standards for continuing review of courses in the general education program.

- **Education/ Faculty Development Sub-Committee**
  - This committee will serve to coordinate communication between the GEOC and university faculty. The committee will develop and execute a communications plan to ensure that all stakeholders have an opportunity to participate in the reform process. Possible options include: Faculty retreat with faculty, staff, students, administrators with targeted specific topics (high impact practices, electronic portfolios, etc.) The subcommittee will work closely with the leadership of FaCET to present workshops and other activities that promote excellence in teaching and learning specifically related to the general education program.
In conjunction with the assessment sub-committee, the committee will also develop an education plan so that faculty members know how to submit courses for inclusion in the general education program.

Proposed Plan Timeline and Strategic Goals

**August 2011.** The General Education Oversight committee will be charged to consider and debate the merits of the model plan for the general education program at UMKC included in this document and to begin to solicit faculty, student and other stakeholder input through a series of campus-wide town hall meetings/focus groups. The committee will use the information gathered during these sessions to revise and provide additional details to the plan for full discussion by faculty in the fall.

In addition to developing a model program, the GEOC will begin conversations with the newly appointed vice provost for assessment to identify assessment tools available to measure the specific student learning outcomes approved by the faculty during the spring semester 2011. The GEOC will develop a plan for integrating the assessment tools into the general education curricular plan. The GEOC will identify at least 2 student-learning outcomes and begin to collect evidence of students learning for purposes of assessment.

The GEOC will develop a communications plan to ensure that all relevant stakeholders are aware of the process and have an opportunity to actively participate in the plan development. These stakeholders should include faculty, students, staff, deans, department chairs, student government, board of trustees, alumni, and relevant community members.

**August – December 2011.** The GEOC will lead a campus wide discussion of its model plan for general education. The GEOC will provide final revisions to the general education plan and present a plan to the faculty senate for review and endorsement. A draft plan should be presented to the faculty senate during its November meeting to be put on a ballot for review and vote by the entire UMKC faculty.

**January 2012.** The committee should strive to have a general education model voted on by the UMKC faculty by January 27th. In the event of a negative vote, this early time frame will allow an opportunity for modifications. Should the program be approved, we notification will be made to all faculty, students, academic advisors, community college partners, and student affairs personnel.

**January- May 2012.** The GEOC will put forward an implementation plan that includes the process for the submission of courses to be considered for inclusion in the general education program. The plan will include the relevant criteria, the committees that will have decisional authority and the process for additional review and appeals if necessary. Our general education proposal entails Level I (university wide) requirements and Level II (unit specific requirements). A university-wide general education committee would review level I proposals and unit specific curriculum committee would review level II proposals. Assessment will be conducted at the university level and the unit level as appropriate.

**May-December 2012.** Courses will be submitted and approved for inclusion in the general education program. Approved course instructors will work with university assessment officers to ensure that the courses are designed to allow for assessment of specific SLOs associated with the general education program.

**Fall 2012.** Approved General education course will be listed in the university catalog and made available for students entering fall semester 2013. Existing courses proposed to meet general education requirements can be approved by the GEOC and indicated as such in the catalog.

**Fall 2013.** New General Education program formally launched. All entering students will be subject to the requirements of the new general education program.
GEOC is given responsibility for oversight of UMKC general education program, which will include course approval and ongoing assessment. After initial approval, course will be reviewed at 3 years and then on 5 year cycles.

Communications Plan

An effective communications plan will be essential to successfully developing and implementing a revised general education curriculum. The communications plan will include the following:

- The committee will develop an educational document that provides basic information about the process, curricular goals, the learning outcomes, the timeline for plan development, etc. This document will be made widely available to all stakeholders.
- All documents related to the committees work in curricular development will be posted to the General Education committee link on the provost’s website.
- Information pertaining to the status of program development and opportunities for participation in the development process will be posted via “UMatters.”
- The committee will contact the provost’s office to request opportunities to be included on the agenda of the dean’s council to provide deans with information about the progress of the committee and to solicit feedback.
- The committee will provide information directly to all department chairs about the status of program development will request that chairs encourage their faculty to participate in the process.
- The committee will ask unit representatives to work with their individual units to ensure that individual faculty members have opportunities to participate in the process. They can direct their home units to send information directly to faculty and staff in those units and to coordinate efforts to encourage participation in university-wide discussions of general education.
- The committee will work with the student affairs office to ensure student participation. The committee will also contact and work with representatives from the SGA to ensure students have an opportunity to participate in the process and provide regular updates to the Chancellor’s direct reports.
- The committee will contact the chair of the UKC trustees to provide updated information about the general education reform process.
- The committee will develop a set of Gen Ed Talking points that will be provided to unit representatives. Representatives will be encouraged to seek opportunities for discussing the general education program with faculty members and unit-wide faculty meetings, department faculty meetings, during annual faculty retreats, and with students.
- The committee will host regular “town hall” type meetings to provide the campus community with opportunities to participate in the discussions. These meetings should be available to both students and faculty. The Provost, deans and department chairs should be alerted to these meeting. They should encourage faculty to attend these meetings and to provide feedback.
- The committee may continue to utilize survey monkey to provide faculty and students an opportunity to provide feedback to the committee.
The committee chair will also have access to the GEOC email address to provide another way for stakeholders to contact the committee with comments.

**Draft Program Components**

UMKC’s general education curriculum is a competency-based program designed to develop student skills around the University's approved Learning Outcomes. The competency-based program of general education will be integrated into each level of the student’s degree program. Accordingly, the general education requirements are not something to “get out of the way,” but are integral to the entire degree program.

The institute team recommends that the GEOC present a single plan to the faculty for discussion. The plan should include several components and provide faculty and students with an opportunity to discuss those components.

**Key Concepts**

The revised U-Wide general education program should include the following:

- **Signature Assignments**
- **Mid-Curriculum Course Experience**
- **Interdisciplinary/Multi-disciplinary perspectives (thetically based)**
- **High Impact Practices (a minimum of one at Level I and one at Level II)**
  - First Year Experiences
  - Learning Communities
  - Service Learning
  - Undergraduate Research
  - Study Abroad
  - Internships
  - Capstone Experiences
  - Common Intellectual Experiences
  - Writing-Intensive Courses

UMKC Degree requirements will be broken into three levels: General Education Requirements, Degree Pre-requisite courses, major courses.

**Definitions:**

- **General Education Requirements.** General education is intended to impart common knowledge and intellectual concepts to students and to develop in them the skills and attitudes that an organization’s faculty believe every educated person should possess. (Higher Learning Commission statement on General Education).

- **GESLO:** General Education Student Learning Outcome

- **Degree Requirements:** In addition to general education requirements, many academic units have requirements necessary for specific degree programs. These may include course pre-requisites, etc.

- **Major Requirements:** These are specific to a student’s major. They include the hour requirements to receive the major, course requirements, etc.

- **Signature Assignments:** Specific Assignments used to demonstrate student achievement of a GESLO
General Education Curriculum: University Core (~30 credit hours)

- The committee will develop a general education program that provides students with an opportunity to meet UMKC approved student learning outcomes by moving through the major cognitive domain levels of knowledge and comprehension (Bloom’s Taxonomy).

- The University Core will provide a series of required and elective courses built around UMKC's GESLOs. The University Core consists of 30 credit hours of coursework which are applicable to every undergraduate academic unit and transferable between any academic program of study. The benefit of this program is that it will more easily allow students to transfer internally from one unit to another without loss of any hours toward their degree.

- During the first semester of coursework, students should complete a program of study which involves the development of the following GESLOs:
  - Communication Skills
  - Interdisciplinary/Multidisciplinary Thinking
  - Information and Technological Literacy

- First Semester Coursework: All students will enroll in a 7-hour block of courses. These courses shall consist of:
  - First Year Experience Course (1-3 hour course)
    - This course will provide students with an introduction to the university and will provide students with an opportunity to develop the academic skills necessary to successfully complete their degrees. Course assignments will be designed to assist students to become successful in their Effective Communications and Interdisciplinary Course.
  - Effective Communications I or II (3 hours)
    - This course focuses on helping students develop effective communication skills. The skills developed will include oral, written, and visual literacies. Student will learn to effectively present information in a variety of formats. Assignments will be linked to content delivered in the Interdisciplinary Course.
  - Interdisciplinary Course (3 hours)
    - Each student will enroll in a 3-hour interdisciplinary course that will be linked to the first year experience and effective communications course. Courses will be designed around a specific theme and will be interdisciplinary in focus.

- All students will be required to successfully complete Effective Communications II. Students with appropriate evidence of academic preparation may enroll directly into Effective Communications II. This will be determined by appropriate scores on ACT or advanced college preparatory classwork. All other students must enroll in Effective Communications I. For the later, a non-thematically linked Effective Communications II course will be offered each semester to be enrolled in after successful completion of Effective Communications I.

- Beyond this required course block, additional coursework will be designed to develop student competencies in Scientific Knowledge (both natural and social sciences), Arts and Humanities, Cultural Diversity, Human Values/Ethical Reasoning, and Civic/Community Engagement. (up to a total of 30 credit hours during the first 2 years of study.)

- Courses approved to meet University Core requirements must be approved through an appropriate governing body to be determined by the GEOC.
University Core: Level II

- Level II includes courses that present learning opportunities and hold students accountable for content in the General Education Learning Outcome areas at the level of application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation (Bloom’s Taxonomy)
- Each academic unit is responsible to ensure that the basic student learning outcomes introduced at Level I are advanced through the Level II aspects of Bloom's Taxonomy – application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation in degree and major specific requirements. Academic units will be required to demonstrate a curricular and assessment plans regarding these SLOs.

Process for submitting General Education Course Proposals

The assessment sub-committee will develop guidelines and policies to review courses for inclusion in the general education program. Course proposals may consist of both new and existing course. Courses approved for inclusion in the general education program must demonstrate how student achievement of SLO is measured and be evaluated on a regular basis. Any given course may be approved to meet a maximum of 2 student-learning outcomes. However, a student may only receive credit for one GESLO per course for courses meeting Level I requirements.

Assessment Plan

In conjunction with the VP for assessment, the committee will develop an assessment plan. Possible options to consider may include:

- Student Letter to self, where do you see yourself, revisited and revised at mid-career and a final revisit/revision at culmination of degree program (possibly as part of capstone requirement)
- Electronic Portfolios... allow students to compile a portfolio based on specific learning outcomes, pulling information from a variety of courses. Students populate the portfolio based on signature assignments from specific courses. The electronic portfolios would include both course and co-curricular activities. The electronic portfolio should be included in a freshman experience.
- The assessment subcommittee should evaluate the VALUE rubric, or other methods, for effectively evaluating student work.
- Existing local and nationally based evaluation instruments.

Potential Barriers and Considerations in Moving Forward

The GEOC must consider a number of potential barriers to successful implementation of a revised general education program.

- Degree specific accreditation requirements
- Transferability of individual course work between academic units
- Modification without increase student credit hour requirements.
- Fiscal Barriers
- Course duplication (ensuring that academic units utilize existing resources and not unnecessarily duplicate resources)
- Effective tracking on non-course requirements
- Ensuring inclusiveness
University Core
The University core provides the foundational experience for UMKC’s General Education Program. The University Core is designed to ensure that all students cover the basic Student Learning Outcomes.

University Core: Level IA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Courses</th>
<th>GESLO</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Freshman Experience</td>
<td>(3CR) Civic/Community Engaging</td>
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<tr>
<td>Effective Communication I</td>
<td>(3CR) Communication/IT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effective Communication II</td>
<td>(3CR) Communication/IT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interdisciplinary Course</td>
<td>(3CR) Interdisciplinary Perspectives</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quantitative Analysis</td>
<td>(3CR) Quantitative Analysis</td>
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Total Credit Hours 15

University Core, Level IB

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<tr>
<td>Natural Science Course</td>
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Total Credit Hours 15

Additional Coursework

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<tr>
<td>Capstone Requirement</td>
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<tr>
<td>Writing Intensive Course</td>
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<td>University Core Minimum</td>
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University Core, Level II

Level II requirements are designated by academic units and are designed to show higher level competencies (According to Blooms’ Taxonomy) of the GESLOs. Academic units must develop assessment plans to demonstrate achievement of the GESLOs.