New Mexico General Education with a Focus on Essential Skills

Statewide General Education Steering Committee
Daniel Howard, Chair
February 2018
Rationale for Change

- Current model: Variety of content-focused courses
- Need to impart skills essential for adaptability and lifelong learning
- Assessment data indicating that students were not learning essential skills
Goals of General Education Reform

• Ensure that all graduates of New Mexico institutions of higher education have the transferable skills and content knowledge essential for success in the workplace and for lifelong learning

• Development of a streamlined curriculum with greater emphasis on essential skills
Essential Skills

- Communication
- Critical Thinking
- Quantitative Reasoning
- Personal and Social Responsibility
- Information and Digital Literacy
Guiding Principles

- Faculty drive this effort: they are the experts in curriculum, and their contributions to any efforts at education reform are critical.
- Students contribute to the conversation: we need to understand what they are seeking in a college education.
- The Higher Education Department facilitates a statewide discussion: HED has responsibility for general education across New Mexico and it represents the interest of New Mexico and its people.
- Assistance from Chief Academic Officers at every institution of higher education in New Mexico: their assistance is required to ensure that this effort is informed by faculty from all over the state who teach general education.
Guiding Principles

• Skills will be taught within content areas
• All general education courses transfer and if a student has completed the general education requirements at a New Mexico institution of higher education, that completion is honored at all IHEs in the state
Statewide Representation

Central New Mexico College
Clovis Community College
Eastern New Mexico University
Eastern New Mexico University Roswell
Eastern New Mexico University Ruidoso
Higher Education Department
New Mexico Highlands University
New Mexico Junior College
New Mexico Tech
New Mexico Military Institute
New Mexico State University

New Mexico State University Doña Ana Community College
Northern New Mexico College
San Juan College
Santa Fe Community College
Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute
University of New Mexico
University of New Mexico Los Alamos
Western New Mexico University
General Education Model with a focus on Essential Skills

- Principal feature: Skills taught within content areas
- Credits dropped from 35 to 31
- Institutional flexibility preserved
  - 9 credits discretionary
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content Area</th>
<th>Credits</th>
<th>Skills considered to be closely associated with the content area</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Communications</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Communication, Critical Thinking, Information &amp; Digital Literacy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Communication, Critical Thinking, Quantitative Reasoning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Critical Thinking, Personal &amp; Social Responsibility, Quantitative Reasoning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social &amp; Behavioral Sciences</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Creative and Fine Arts</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>22</strong></td>
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In addition to the 22 hours above, each student must complete another 9 credit hours of general education.

Each institution of higher education will have the discretion to determine whether these credit hours come from the content areas above and/or from other content areas such as foreign languages, interdisciplinary studies, business, engineering, information technology, etc.

Each course must be from a different content area and each must focus on three or more essential skills.
Timeline

• SB103, signed March 2017
  • “…not less than fifteen hours for an associate in applied science
degree, thirty hours for an associate degree other than in
applied science and thirty hours for a bachelor degree.”

• Stepwise implementation
  • Catalogs by fall 2019
  • Courses converted by fall 2022

• HED can grant extensions
More information

• Your local Steering Committee Representatives
• Website: https://provost.nmsu.edu/state-wide-gen-ed/
• Friday Session 5-7, 9:00, Alvarado G
  General Education with a Focus on Essential Skills — Implementation and Assessment
• Friday, 1:00–3:00 Workshop 3
  Preparing for Certification of General Education Courses following Statewide GE Reform
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