

# Governors State University

Prepared for the Faculty Senate by the General Education Task Force

General Education Themes

January 2013

Themes will be used at GSU to organize courses and students during the first three semesters of study. These broadly based themes will provide points of connection for courses from across the University. It will allow faculty and students to explore meaningful questions. They will promote cohesiveness between members of the theme. The themes will also provide extra-curricular opportunities through student clubs, service activities, and residence hall events.

The themes will:

- Connect courses where overlap is possible
- Encourage faculty cooperation to find common readings, speakers, and/or assignments
- Unite students into coherent groups with a common interest
- Be flexible and inclusive to all students
- Meet the needs of the student regardless of major
- Help student's achieve the Student Learning Outcomes for General Education
- Guide the content for First Year Seminar courses (humanities credit will be granted)
- Be based on guiding questions determined by the faculty in the courses that may change each semester

The themes will NOT:

- Interfere with the required content in Illinois Articulation Initiative (IAI) courses
- Have different standards that make one theme more difficult or constricting than another
- Require additional student learning outcomes
- Be tied to any specific undergraduate major

The three themes for the 2014-15 Academic Year will be:

**Civic Engagement:** Embedded in the democratic ideals that were used to form the United States, this thematic group will build knowledge about those ideals and principles; develop skills in critical inquiry, deliberation and collaborative decision making; value human dignity, tolerance, justice, ethical integrity and freedom; and display moral discernment, civility, compromise and mutual respect. (A Crucible Moment: College Learning & Democracy's Future, p.4)

**Global Citizenship:** Focus on the interconnectedness of the peoples of planet Earth. This group will investigate the influence of global societal, technological, environmental and other trends that influence the collaboration and conflict within and among the nations of the globe.

**Sustainability:** Concentrating on stewardship, including long-term maintenance and responsibility; this thematic group will examine the responsible management of resource use with environmental, economic, and social implications.

## **Frequently Asked Questions:**

### **Where are the math and science courses? I don't see them in the cohort.**

The science course and math courses were designated to the non-cohort (individual) part of the student's schedule because student preparation and needs vary for these disciplines. In the first fall, students will take 3 courses within the cohort group and 2 courses of their choosing, however ALL students will be expected to select the appropriate math course as one of those "non-cohort" courses. During the fall semester, four levels of math will be offered in adequate numbers to meet the needs of all first year students, based on their placement. Research has shown that taking math early in the college curriculum strengthens skills, therefore it will be strongly recommended for the first term.

Likewise, courses in life science and earth science will be offered that are appropriate for science majors and non-majors during the fall and spring semesters. A science course at the appropriate level will be recommended for the student's individual interests.

### **What does IAI mean for a faculty member?**

All new courses will meet the standards of the Illinois Articulation Initiative (IAI) to allow for full transfer within Illinois institutions. As these courses are developed they will undergo rigorous review at GSU before submission to the appropriate IAI panel. There will be additional information available about this process and key deadlines for completing the course syllabi from the GE Task Force and the Office of the Provost. Please see the IAI website for additional information about each course and expectations for syllabi at [www.itransfer.org](http://www.itransfer.org) and click on the faculty/advisor tab.

### **How many students will be in each course?**

Courses within each cohort group will be restricted to 90 students and may be taught in smaller sections as appropriate. For example, the First Year Seminar in Humanities may be limited to 15-20 students per section to provide adequate supervision. Similarly, written composition courses may be limited to 15 students per section. Course sizes and scheduling will be determined as the courses are developed.

### **What if a student wants (or is required by their major) to take a course that is part of another theme?**

Additional sections of the courses in the cohort will be offered to students outside the cohort to be taken as their independent selection. These may be offered in the same or different terms, so that all students have the opportunity to take the courses they need.

**Proposed Course Sequence by Theme (IAI course title and number included) all are 3 credit hours**

<b>Fall 2014</b>	<b>Civic Engagement</b>	<b>Global Citizenship</b>	<b>Sustainability</b>
Cohort	US History/Civilizations (humanities-H2904)	Cultural Anthropology (social & beh-S1901N)	Geography of the Developing (non-western) World (social & beh-S4902N)
Cohort	First Year Seminar- Interdisciplinary Humanities (HF900)	First Year Seminar- Interdisciplinary Humanities (HF900)	First Year Seminar - Interdisciplinary Humanities (HF900)
Cohort	Written Comp I (C1900)	Written Comp I(C1900)	Written Comp I (C1900)
Non-cohort (individual)	Math-4 levels offered	Math-4 levels offered	Math-4 levels offered
Non-cohort (optional)	Recommend a science course	Recommend a science course	Recommend a science course
<b>Spring 2015</b>	<b>Civic Engagement</b>	<b>Global Citizenship</b>	<b>Sustainability</b>
Cohort	US Government (social & beh-S5900)	General Psychology (social & beh-S6901)	Intro to Philosophy (humanities-H4900)
Cohort	Intro to Visual & Performing Arts (Fine art-F9900)	World Civilizations (humanities-H2906)	Cultural Anthropology (Social & beh-S1901N)
Cohort	Written Comp II (C1900R)	Written Comp II (C1900)	Written Comp II (C1900)
Non-cohort	Individual selection	Individual selection	Individual selection
Non-cohort	Individual selection	Individual selection	Individual selection
<b>Fall 2015</b>	<b>Civic Engagement</b>	<b>Global Citizenship</b>	<b>Sustainability</b>
Cohort	Macroeconomics ( soc & beh- S3901)	Cross Cultural Relationships (Social & beh-S1904)	Intro to Sociology (soc & beh S7900)
Cohort	General Psychology (social & beh-S6901)	Non-Western music (fine arts-F1903N)	Art Appreciation (fine art-F2900)
Cohort	Oral Communications (C2900)	Oral Communications (C2900)	Oral Communications (C2900)
Non-cohort	Individual selection	Individual selection	Individual selection
Non-cohort	Individual selection	Individual selection	Individual selection
<b>GE Requirement Met in Cohort Courses</b>	All 3 Communication including 2 in writing and 1 in oral comm. (9 credit hours)		
	All 3 Humanities and Fine Arts including one in humanities and one in fine arts (9 credit hours)		
	All 3 Social & Behavioral Sciences with courses selected from at least two disciplines (3 credit hours)		
<b>GE Requirements Met Outside the Cohort</b>	1 Life science and 1 Physical science at least one with a lab section (7-8 credit hours)		
	1 Math (3 credit hours)		