

**PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE GENERAL EDUCATION REPORT
(LAST UPDATED: 4/7/10 @ 2:00PM)**

AMENDMENT #1

Proposed by: Michael Scholten, Graduate Student Senator from CMPS
Page#: 9 & 15-16

Paragraph: Last paragraph on page 9; Last paragraph on page 15/First paragraph on page 16;

Original Text:

The Task Force therefore proposes removing the exemption based on SAT score from English 101-Academic Writing.

Removing the SAT [Scholastic Aptitude Test] exemption from the Mathematics Requirement (current wording of exemption: "SAT Math score 600 or above"). The Scholastic Aptitude Test is a test, specifically a predictor of how well a student will do in college ("indicator of college success" according to the College Board), not a test of competency in a course of study or a body of knowledge. Thus, it is not relevant as a course substitute at an institution of higher learning. In contrast, exemptions for AP or CLEP scores are tests based on syllabi for particular courses, and thus are suitable exemptions.

Proposed (Amendment):

Remove both of these paragraphs, and keep the existing SAT exemptions.

Exemption from the Academic Writing Requirement:

- SAT verbal score 670 or above

Exemptions from the Mathematics Requirement:

- SAT Math score 600 or above;

Rationale:

The proposed policy would function to limit students' freedom to take upper level courses outside of their major by requiring them to take additional entry-level courses.

In order to justify the proposed policy, the committee should produce data that shows students who have received the current SAT exemptions are less competent in writing/mathematics than their peers who take the English/Math core classes.

AMENDMENT #2

Proposed by: Jordan Goodman, Physics, CMPS

Page#: 35

Paragraph: 3

Original Text: (addition, no change to original text)

Proposed (Amendment):

If approved, a plan for implementation of the various aspects of the new program will be reviewed by an appropriate Senate committee. Once the program is fully implemented, the program will be presented to the Senate for possible amendments and adjustment.

Rationale:

While some aspects of the plan are clear and the resource implications are understood, others, such as the Oral Communication requirement, the Cultural Competency portion of the Diversity requirement, and the Experiential Learning option need further study prior to being fully implemented. It would be appropriate for the Senate to review these components once they have been better developed.

AMENDMENT #3

Proposed by: Thomas Cohen, Faculty, CMPS

Page#: p. 34

Paragraph: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROPOSED PLAN FOR GENERAL EDUCATION – After Paragraph two

Original Text: N/A

Proposed (Amendment):

In addition to the implementation committee, a committee shall be appointed to develop a separate set of general education requirements for the Honors College and to consider implementation details for such a plan.

This plan will be presented to the Senate for approval within one year of approval of the overall General Education Plan. This committee shall have strong representation from the Honors College and be chaired by a faculty representative of the Honors College. Until such a plan is approved, Honors students may choose to satisfy the old Core requirements rather than the new General Education requirement.

Rationale:

The new requirements proposed by the General Education Task Force (along with the elimination of exemptions of old requirements) could increase the number of required courses outside of University Honors, Gemstone, Honors Humanities, Digital Cultures, Entrepreneurship & Innovation or through advanced courses quite substantially. This may well act to undermine the strength of the Honors College.

To preserve the strength of the Honors College, it is essential that Honors students continue to be able to fulfill the vast majority of their general education requirements through courses in University Honors, Gemstone, Honors Humanities, Digital Cultures or Entrepreneurship & Innovation, or through advanced course of intellectual interest to the student. Simply adding honors versions of oral communications, academic writing and the like will not solve this problem: such courses could still act to displace the very courses which make the Honors program special.

The new set of requirements should not require a typical Honors student to take any more courses outside of courses in University Honors, Gemstone, Honors Humanities, or the new programs in Digital Cultures and Entrepreneurship & Innovation, or through advanced level courses of strong intellectual interest to the students than is presently required.

AMENDMENT #4

Proposed by: Thomas Cohen, Faculty, CMPS

Page#: p. 18

Paragraph: MATHEMATICS REQUIREMENT – At the end of the section entitled Proposal for Fundamental Studies: Analytical Reasoning

Original Text: N/A

Proposed (Amendment):

A course with Math 111, Math 112, Math 113, Math 115, or Stat 100 as a prerequisite shall be deemed as satisfying both the Mathematics and Analytic Reasoning requirements. Similarly a student with a score of 4 or above on either the Calculus (AB or BC) or the Statistics AP tests shall be deemed to have satisfied both the Mathematics and Analytic Reasoning requirements.

Rationale:

There is a possible ambiguity in the Mathematics and Analytic Reasoning requirements. The report of the Task Force does not address the question of whether a single course with Math 111, Math 112, Math 113, Math 115, or Stat 100 as a requirement simultaneously fulfills both the Mathematics requirement (Math 111, Math 112, Math 113, Math 115, or Stat 100 or any MATH or STAT course for which any of the courses listed above is a prerequisite) and the Analytic Reasoning requirement (which includes higher-level mathematics).

AMENDMENT #5

Proposed by: Thomas Cohen, Faculty, CMPS

Page#: p. 10

Paragraph: Proposal for Fundamental Studies: Writing Section – At the end of the section entitled *The Existing Exemption Structure*

Original Text: N/A

Proposed (Amendment):

Departments and other academic units *may* choose to develop a series of courses certified as “writing intensive. “ A student who takes and passes two such courses in his or her major shall be exempted from the Professional Writing requirement.

Rationale:

In recommending the continuation of the Academic and Professional writing requirements and eliminating various exemptions to these, the General Education Task Force quotes a faculty member as saying that “the only way to learn to write is to write.” The Senate concurs with this. However, this does not necessarily mean that the best way for students to improve their writing is in writing classes centered in the English department. An alternative approach is to have “writing intensive” courses in departments throughout the University. There are clear advantages of such an approach. Students may well take “writing intensive” courses in a field of interest to them far more seriously than a pure writing course. Moreover, students have the benefit of learning about a subject of their interest while working on their writing. Finally, in many fields the development of writing in the context of the subject is critical to success in the field.

It is noteworthy that leading universities from the University of Virginia to MIT have writing requirements that can be fulfilled either in whole or in part by some variation of “writing intensive” courses in academic departments outside of English.

AMENDMENT #6

Proposed by: Thomas Cohen, Faculty, CMPS

Page#: p. 13

Paragraph: Proposal for Fundamental Studies: Oral Communication – fifth bullet

Original Text:

The Task Force expects that other departments might mount courses in oral communication that could also satisfy the requirement.

Proposed (Amendment):

Students in majors that are in a college that has developed an Oral Communications course shall have the option of satisfying the requirement within the college.

Rationale:

The General Education Task Force has recommended a required one-semester course in Oral Communications. In implementing this requirement, the differences between the various disciplines needs to be taken into account; the nature of oral communications differs from field to field. Accordingly, colleges across the campus may choose to develop their own Oral Communications courses.

AMENDMENT #7

Proposed by: Thomas Cohen, Faculty, CMPS

Page#: p. 13

Paragraph: Proposal for Fundamental Studies: Oral Communication – fifth bullet

Original Text: N/A

Proposed (Amendment):

Departments and other academic units may choose to develop a series of courses certified as “oral communications intensive.” A student who takes and passes two such courses in his or her major shall be exempted from the Oral Communications course requirement.

Rationale:

The General Education Task Force has recommended a required one-semester course in Oral Communications. The premise underlying that requirement is that oral communications skills are important and that students would benefit from stronger oral communications skills. This is clearly correct. However, the General Education Task Force has not made a compelling case for a required course devoted entirely to oral communications. An alternative model to improve oral communications skills of our students is to develop oral communication across the curriculum and particularly within a student’s major.

AMENDMENT #8

Proposed by: Thomas Cohen, Faculty, CMPS

Page#: p. 20

Paragraph: II. THE SIGNATURE OF GENERAL EDUCATION: THE "I" SERIES - *Implementation of the Signature Courses; Second paragraph*

Original Text:

The new General Education plan incorporates "I" courses into Distributive studies under the appropriate categories (see "Distributive Studies" below). It mandates that all University of Maryland students, including transfer students, be required to take at least two "I" courses, which would represent roughly one fourth of Distributive Studies requirements. Meeting that goal will require the campus to mount some eighty "I" courses per semester. This number might be enlarged over time, but the Task Force believes that a minimum of two "I" courses per student would make the "I" series an intellectual signature for the new General Education program.

Proposed (Amendment):

The new General Education plan does not require students to take any fixed number of "I" courses. It does mandate that a substantial number of "I" series courses be offered and that students will have the option of satisfying some or all of their Distributive Studies requirements with "I" courses.

Rationale:

The General Education Task Force has recommended that students be required to take at least two "I" series courses. The "I" series as described in the report is very exciting and should provide important and meaningful educational experiences for many of our undergraduates. However, many of the advantages of the "I" series program appear to exist regardless of whether the courses are required or merely offered. Moreover there is an obvious disadvantage in requiring such courses: the flexibility of the General Education program is reduced. In some cases this could limit the ability of students to take course of greater educational value to them than any of the courses in the "I" series. Thus, the requirement that students take "I" series courses should be imposed only on the basis of a compelling educational rationale. However, the report of the Task Force does not articulate any meaningful educational or intellectual justification for a requirement that all of our undergraduates must take courses in the "I" series.

The central rationale given for this requirement in the report of the General Education Task Force is a desire for a signature or brand for the General Education program. However, the "I"-series can be a distinctive signature or brand of the Maryland General Education program without being a requirement. If the I-series is as intellectually vigorous as is planned, even without a requirement students will take "I"-series courses in large numbers and the "I" series will come to define our program.

AMENDMENT #9

Proposed by: Thomas Cohen, Faculty, CMPS

Page#: p. 23 & p. 24

Paragraph: Distributive Studies – Beginning with the section entitled Overview & Distributive Studies – bullets at the bottom of page 24

Original Text:

In brief, the new Distributive Studies program (1) adds a fourth area, Scholarship in Practice, (2) reduces the number of courses required in each area from three to two, (3) eliminates subcategories in each of the areas, (4) requires that two of the courses fulfilling Distributive Studies be I-courses, and (5) incorporates enrichment features that help equip students to engage in an ever-changing global environment.

- Students must complete two courses in each area for a total of eight courses in Distributive Studies. One of the courses in the Natural Sciences must include a laboratory experience.
- Two of the eight courses must be “I” series courses. AP credit may not be used to satisfy “I” courses.
- Advanced Placement credit for distributive studies is limited to six of the eight courses. At least two of the courses must be taken at the University of Maryland, College Park.
- Coursework within one's major area is permitted to satisfy the major and General Education requirements.
- Students may take a two-course series in one discipline.
- Distributive Studies courses do not necessarily have to be at the 100-200 levels, but they should have no prerequisites outside Distributive Studies to satisfy General Education requirements.
- A Diversity requirement may be fulfilled by a course that is approved for both a Diversity category and for a Distributive Studies category (see below).
- Distributive Studies courses that include an internship, research or service-learning project may be used to meet any Distributive Studies requirement.

Proposed (Amendment):

The Distributive Studies requirement shall consist of a 25 credit, eight-course requirement. This will include two courses (6 credits) in the Arts, Humanities and Literature, two courses in the Natural Sciences (7 credits) and two courses in the History and the Social Sciences (6 credits). An additional two courses (6 credits) outside the distributional area of a student's major also are required. (For example a student majoring in the social sciences must take 2 courses chosen from the Natural Sciences and Arts, Humanities and Literature. There is no requirement that students take “Scholarship in Practice” classes. However, the participation of applied disciplines such as Business and Management or

Engineering in the Distributive Studies program is strongly encouraged. To accommodate such fields, Engineering will be considered a natural science for the purposes of distributive studies, Education or Business and Management will be considered a social science and so on. Up to two courses used to satisfy the distribution requirement may be in the “Scholarship in Practice” category (as defined in the report of the Task Force on General Education).

And

Omit first two bullet items.

Rationale:

The General Education Task Force has recommended a “Scholarship in Practice” requirement as part of distributive studies.

In justifying the new requirement the Task Force report states, “The new fourth area thus reinforces and enhances the foundational portions in the arts and humanities, natural sciences, and social sciences with courses that put these areas of learning into practice.” However, the inclusion of the “Scholarship in Practice” requirement in the General Education plan also acts to undercut the foundational portions of the General Education plan by displacing classes in the arts and humanities, natural sciences, and social sciences.

The “Scholarship in Practice” should be dropped as requirement from the General Education Plan for the reason articulated above. However, courses in the “Scholarship in Practice” should be allowed as a means to fulfill part of the Distributive Studies requirement.

AMENDMENT #10

Proposed by: Clififornia Royals-Howard (Non-Exempt Staff), Women's Studies, Arts and Humanities

Page#: Page 27

Paragraph: Understanding Plural Societies

Original Text:

(The bold text are the suggested revisions to be made)

Bullet #2 - Original language:

Investigate the processes that create (or fail to create) just, productive, equalitarian, and harmonious societies.

Bullet #2: Change existing language to:

Investigate the processes that create or fail to create (omit parenthesis around 'fail to create') just, productive, and **egalitarian** societies, **including the struggles of specific constituencies for social justice.**

Discussion of bullet #2:

The major change is to omit "harmonious," often an ideal not compatible with ongoing struggles for justice, and to add a phrase intended to recapture some of the language in the description of the requirement about the "gritty and not always successful on-the-ground struggles through which plural societies are established and maintained."

Bullet #5 – Original Language:

Study, within a comparative framework, the experiences, cultures, and relations of two or more social groups or constituencies within a single society or across societies, and within a single historical time frame or across historical time via intersectional analyses of dimensions of difference.

Bullet #5: Change existing language to:

Study within a comparative, intersectional, **or relational** framework the experiences, cultures, and/or histories of social groups or constituencies within a single society or across societies, and within a single historical time frame or across historical time.

Discussion of Bullet #5:

While we have been assured that the current language would accommodate the study of such topics as African American Women's History, or Lesbian Communities, we think that the proposed amendment will make the inclusion of such courses clearer to those implementing the proposal. Rather than making the study of relations between groups the target of study (which means, for

example, that a women's studies course that doesn't include the explicit study of MEN would not be approved), we incorporate it as a possible framework, noting that relations of power are crucial in the study of diversity. We do not think that "intersectional analysis" should be a requirement, but it might certainly be one of the acceptable analytic frameworks.