Why Revise Gen Ed?

**Problems Ensuring that all PCC Graduates meet all six Core Outcomes**

- All PCC courses are mapped to the six Core Outcomes; however, individual courses are not required to address all six outcomes at a significant level (mapping level 3 or higher).

- CTE degree outcomes are mapped to Core Outcomes; however, there is no requirement that the degree outcomes map to all six PCC Core Outcomes. In practice some CTE degrees map to only three to five PCC Core Outcomes and claim that the remaining outcomes are met by their degree’s Gen Ed requirements.

- LDC degree outcomes are essentially the Core Outcomes. There is no mechanism beyond the Gen Ed distribution requirement to ensure that the specific mix of courses used to meet the LDC degree requirements address all six Core Outcomes in a significant manner.

- The Gen Ed courses approval process does not specifically evaluate how well potential Gen Ed courses meet the Core Outcomes.

- As a result of the above, it is possible, albeit unlikely, that a PCC graduate will have completed a set of courses in which one or more of the Core Outcomes are not addressed to a significant degree.

**Further Concerns**

- Our Gen Ed system lacks a coherent curricular focus on generalizable* knowledge and skills (*useful for student in future studies outside the discipline of the course in other professional and intellectual pursuits). Gen Ed can strive for higher values than just exploration or ensuring that students sample outside of their discipline of choice.

- Assessment evidence suggests that we are not systematically teaching to the Core Outcomes. Accreditation would like us to have an expected level of achievement for each outcome that students would meet, but some of our Core Outcomes are difficult to define across disciplines, so how is this even possible?

- It is not clear we have the correct Core Outcomes. Our Core Outcomes are good, but they have been in place for nearly 20 years, were developed prior to the current expectation that we directly assess them. As we embark on reflection of our Gen Ed program, it seems like a good time to reflect on whether we have the right complement of Core Outcomes.

- Nationally there is criticism that students are confronted with too many choices and not enough guidance when negotiating the community college curriculum, leading to wasted credits and low completion rates. These criticisms are used to justify the guided pathways model for community college reform that typically involves a rebuilding/re-bundling of Gen Ed. While it is unclear whether PCC will adopt a guided pathways model it may be prudent to reexamine Gen Ed in the light of the guided pathways model.

- There is a belief that a Gen Ed designation increases enrollment in courses causing some faculty fear that any restructuring of Gen Ed could lead to lower enrollments in their courses. It is important to evaluate and address this concern.
PCC Gen Ed Practice

➢ Our current Gen Ed program is a **distribution model**, the goal of which is that students have some experience in each of the three defined distribution areas (**Arts & Letters, Social Science, and Science/Math/Computer Science**). This is a traditional and sound approach, but other approaches are possible.

➢ **Current Gen Ed Degree Requirements** (all degrees have a minimum of 90 credits & have wording to ensure distribution across the three distribution areas)
  - AAS Degree: 16 credits – 18% of credit total
  - AGS Degree: 16 credits – 18% of credit total
  - AS Degree: 21 credits – 23% of credit total
  - AAOT Degree: 11 courses (of 3 credits or more) – 49% of credit total (if 4 credits)
  - AAOT BUS Degree: 11 courses (of 3 credits or more) – 49% of credit total (if 4 credits)

➢ **Gen Ed Course Requirements**
  - Must be a 100 or 200 level course
  - Must be 3 or more credits
  - Must be approved by the Curriculum Committee as Gen Ed
    - Must meet the State Gen Ed outcomes specific to each distribution area
    - Must address four of the seven bullets in the PCC Gen Ed Philosophy statement
    - No review of how well the course meets PCC Core Outcomes

➢ **Gen Ed Course Inventory**
  - There are **462 courses on the Gen Ed list**
  - Some disciplines have all their Gen Ed eligible courses on the Gen Ed list (CHN, CHLA, CIS, MTH, PHY, R)
  - Some disciplines have courses that are Gen Ed eligible, but have no courses on the Gen Ed list at all (CJA, ED, ENGR, HE)
  - The disciplines that have *any* courses on the Gen Ed list, have collectively designated **67% of their Gen Ed-eligible courses as Gen Ed**

➢ **PCC Gen Ed Philosophy Statement:** The faculty of Portland Community College affirms that a prime mission of the College is to aid in the development of educated citizens. Ideally, such citizens possess:
  - understanding of their culture and how it relates to other cultures
  - appreciation of history both from a global perspective and from a personal perspective, including an awareness of the role played by gender and by various cultures
  - understanding of themselves and their natural and technological environments
  - ability to reason qualitatively and quantitatively
  - ability to conceptually organize experience and discern its meaning
  - aesthetic and artistic values
  - understanding the ethical and social requirements of responsible citizenship

Such endeavors are a lifelong undertaking. The General Education component of the associate’s degree programs represents a major part of the College’s commitment to that process.

➢ **Oregon State Gen Ed Requirements**
  - [http://www.ode.state.or.us/superintendent/yat/meetings/general-education-outcomes-and-criteria.pdf](http://www.ode.state.or.us/superintendent/yat/meetings/general-education-outcomes-and-criteria.pdf)