

General Education Proposal Summary

CURRENT		PROPOSED		
1	Writing	2	Inquiry, Expression, and Critical Thinking	EMU ESSENTIALS 5 → 4 courses 15 → 12 credit hours
1	Speech			
1	QR	1	QR and Data Literacy	
1	US	1	Community and Social Responsibility	
1	Global			
2	Nat Sci	1	Nat Sci w/ lab	PERSPECTIVES 8 → 6 courses 24-28 → 19 hrs
2	Soc Sci	1	Soc Sci	
2	Hum	1	Hum	
2	Arts	1	Arts	
		2	Second course in choice of 2 disciplines	
0-1	LBC		(Eliminated)	

Summary timeline:

Fall 2027	Campus feedback, final plan approval, new governance documents drafted
Winter 2027	Implement new transfer standards (MTA = GE complete) Catalog/data systems updates and campus training Eliminate courses from program that haven't been taught in three or more years for AY2027-28
AY 2027-28	Program launch Implement new credit hour requirements Legacy course revision proposals submitted to maintain GE course status Programs propose course revisions and new courses that meet new categories' Student Learning Outcomes
AY 2028-29	Full implementation: selected new courses Campus teams invited to develop themes and connections across courses

General Education (GE) Program Model Draft

October 6, 2026

Key Points from the Charge to the General Education Improvement Committee

What you are about to see speaks to the charge Provost Schecter shared with the campus community on August 20, 2026.

In responding to this charge, the General Education Improvement Committee (GEIC) has created a draft of a model for General Education (GE) that

- Reduces the GE requirement from approximately 41 credit hours to approximately 31 credit hours.
- Allows for substantially reducing the total number of classes offered in the GE program and for better aligning classes with program outcomes, which will make the program easier to navigate for students, faculty advisors, professional advisors, transfer specialists, and other colleagues around campus.
- Is transfer friendly for students of all kinds. The proposed model is designed to permit a transfer process that is more accessible, more accommodating, and more understanding of students' prior course work than in the past.
- Eliminates the LBC requirement in favor of promoting more collaborative, experiential, community-based, and hands-on learning.
- Retains a program/major-based writing-intensive course requirement.
- Includes a draft transition plan for implementing the new GE program.
- Allows for flexible possibilities for when a student completes their GE program, which vary based on students' program requirements (some enable GE to be completed in a student's first two years; others require a distribution of GE classes across a student's undergraduate experience).

The committee will create a GE self-governance document once a model is finalized that includes leadership roles, sub-committees, and guidance for maintaining, assessing, and revising GE policy and procedures in the future.

Key Takeaways from Meetings with Colleges and Programs and from Campus Questionnaires

- Meaningful, coherent, and intentional program – students need to see why GE matters.

- Breadth and exposure.
 - Connections between courses, between GE and majors, etc.
 - Big questions and problem solving.
 - Experiential/hands-on learning.
 - Development of essential skills, including numerical literacy, critical thinking, writing and communication skills, technological literacy, information literacy, data literacy, and ethical reasoning.
 - Flexibility, ease of navigation, and transferability.
 - “General Education should create well-rounded, adaptable graduates.”
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Proposed General Education Model

Proposed/Draft Program-Level Outcomes

- Develop and communicate ideas effectively in written, oral, and multimodal forms for different audiences and purposes, incorporating information and evidence from appropriate sources.
- Apply quantitative reasoning, data-literacy, and problem-solving skills to interpret information and address questions in academic and everyday contexts.
- Examine how individuals, communities, societies, and cultures shape and are shaped by social, environmental, and global issues.
- Analyze fundamental concepts, methods, and evidence used to investigate the natural world.
- Interpret ideas, experiences, and creative works using concepts and methods from the humanities and arts, and other disciplines.
- Develop solutions to timely and urgent problems from multiple disciplinary perspectives.

Program Components

EMU Essentials (12 credit hours)

- Inquiry, Expression, and Critical Thinking (6 credit hours total) – students will take two required foundational classes in which they will develop their writing, communication, and critical thinking skills in preparation for subsequent college course work and their careers. In these foundational courses (e.g., first-year writing, argumentative writing, speech, visual communication), students will

develop their abilities to evaluate and build arguments, to evaluate and incorporate information and evidence from appropriate and diverse sources, and to communicate effectively to an audience to achieve their purpose(s).

- Quantitative Reasoning and Data Literacy (3 credit hours) – courses that meet this requirement will provide foundational mathematical skills that students can apply in subsequent coursework and their everyday lives.
- Social Responsibility and Community Engagement in a Diverse World (3 credit hours) – courses in this category will address a range of topics and issues connected to living in and engaging in/with our contemporary world, at both local and global levels. Experiential, community-based, and collaborative learning will be a significant part of this category (e.g., travel courses, first-year seminars, academic service-learning courses, language courses).

Cross-Disciplinary Perspectives on the World (19 credit hours)*

*The GE program will only require one science class with a lab, though students may select a second science class with a lab to fulfill one of their Complex Issues requirements. On rare occasions, some labs are two credit hours; students are welcome to take these lab courses, over and beyond the required credit hours of the GE program.

Complete the credit hours indicated in each category. All students must take at least one science course with a lab.

- Scientific Inquiry of the Natural World (formerly GEKN) (4 credit hours)*
*Science course with a lab
- Inquiry into Society and Human Behavior (formerly GEKS) (3 credit hours)
- Inquiry into Human Thought and Experience (formerly GEKH) (3 credit hours)
- Creative Inquiry and the Arts (formerly GEKA) (3 credit hours)
- Complex Issues: Approaches & Perspectives [6 credit hours, the two courses must be from different categories – i.e., natural sciences (GEKN), social sciences (GEKS); humanities (GEKH); and arts (GEKA)] - right now, this category streamlines advising and auditing; down the road it will offer opportunities for cross-disciplinary collaboration, GE themes, capstone experiences, badging, and more

Writing-Intensive Course in a Student's Program (or accepted by the program)

- All students will complete a writing-intensive course in or approved by their field of study/major. This is not included in the total credit hours for gen ed since it is generally a program requirement.

TOTAL REQUIRED GE CREDIT HOURS: 31

Notable Features/Potential Opportunities with the GE Model

Connections between Courses

This model is conducive to creating connections between classes and components through learning communities, themes, and/or other curricular coordination.

- Examples include the coordination of EMU Essentials classes and/or joint celebrations of student work along the lines of the current Celebration of Student Writing, but broadened to include other classes.
- Themes could easily be attached to disciplinary courses, especially in the new category, with courses exploring those themes from their varied perspectives.
- We anticipate that opportunities could be created for reflective synthesis, potential microcredentials, and/or badges students could earn.
- Professional learning communities can be created to support faculty in developing such opportunities.

High-impact Practices

- All of the categories provide opportunities to incorporate and highlight high-impact practices such as meaningful writing assignments, community-based learning, collaborative assignments and projects, experiential learning, to name a few.
- If themes are built into the program, they can be overlaid on existing, already approved classes.
- Program features, like themes, will create opportunities for greater integration and connection across courses and for the greater incorporation of high-impact practices.

Flexibility

- This model is versatile and adaptive to student needs. There is no prescribed order for taking courses in the program.
- The program is also flexible for majors that need students to structure their programs of study in particular ways. It is our expectation that programs will act responsibly in this regard so as not to dictate their students' GE or curtail what they might otherwise wish to take.
- The program is also designed to accommodate students' different needs, values, and priorities. For example, while connected classes or themed classes will appeal

to some students, those classes will not appeal to all of our students. There will be ample options for both groups of students.

- The model also accommodates different pathways into EMU, including transfer pathways, recognizing that students entering with a completed MTA will have satisfied EMU's GE requirements.

Transfer

- All students transferring in who have satisfied the MTA will have no additional GE requirements.
 - All other transfer decisions will be made with a firm commitment to honoring the meaningful academic work students have already completed and to smoothing the path to degree completion. In particular,
 - For transfer students coming in with only some classes that would satisfy GE, the GE office will work with the Registrar on having individual courses from other universities automatically counted towards GE.
 - As we develop these processes, we will continue to use the TCA system for individual transfer requests, while as consistently as possible having advisors review student transcripts holistically in conversation with the GE office.
 - Transfer will occur more in relation to the "spirit of" versus "letter of" the law in relation to GE.
 - To ensure smooth transfer processes, the GE program will work with the University Advising Office, colleges, and Faculty Development Center to provide training specific to GE advising to anyone who advises students across the university. All students must be supported and guided to request GE credit in consistent ways.
 - We also will work with the University Registrar to develop systems for automating GE transfer credits. For example, any transfer course approved for GE credit should be entered in Banner so it will count automatically for all future transfer students.
 - Finally, it is our intention to create a transfer subcommittee for GE to focus on GE transfer processes and transfer student support. This subcommittee and its charge will be addressed in the forthcoming GE Governance Document.
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Transition Plan

What follows outlines key milestones and dates for transitioning to the proposed program. There are factors we do not know yet, and precise details will likely change in light of campus feedback and new information.

Key Points for the Transition to the New Program

- **Academic Year 2027-2028** – the new GE program will be launched with existing courses from the previous GE program (minus courses that have not been taught in three or more years–see [list here](#)). These courses will be recategorized according to the new GE categories. This will occur in time for them to be scheduled for Fall 2027.
- **Academic Year 2028-2029** will be the full implementation of the new program. All courses in the new program, whether they have been in the GE program in the past, are revised past courses, or are new courses, will be vetted by the GE Vetting Subcommittee in AY 2027-2028. GE courses will also be re-vetted periodically (details will be outlined in the forthcoming GE Governance Document). The total number of courses in the new program will be significantly fewer in number than in our existing GE program (exact number to be determined in light of campus feedback in Fall 2026).

	Current	AY2027-28	AY2028-29
TOTAL	~275*	~223 [course list here]	TBD from campus feedback from Fall 2026 and forthcoming GE Governance Document
Effective Communication	2	2	This category may contain more than two courses moving forward; however, the total number of courses will remain small.
Quantitative Reasoning	20	16	A much smaller number of courses designed to meet the Student Learning
US Diversity	37	76 (as Social Responsibility and	
Global Awareness	56		

		Community Engagement)	Outcomes of the new categories, for a much more intentionally designed and transparent program.
Natural Science	29	22	
Social Science	30	29	
Humanities	64	48	
Arts	37	30	

* Totals exclude courses that are listed only as LBC in current system

Detailed Transition Timeline

Phase I: AY 2026-2027

October 2026

- Concurrent review of GEIC proposal draft by all relevant stakeholders over a 45-day period.
- Town Halls
 - Oct. 26, 4pm -5:30pm – via Zoom [link forthcoming]
 - Oct. 29, 12pm -1:30pm – McKenny Hall Alumni Room 342

November 2026

- Town Hall
 - Nov. 3, 10am -11:30am – Student Center Room 310A
- Creation of GE Governance Document by a subcommittee from GEIC.
- Feedback window closes. GEIC reconvenes to discuss feedback and consider changes to the proposal draft.

December 2026

- Final GE model and transition plan approved and made public.
- Begin simplifying transfer pathways in anticipation of the new program.

January 2027

- Continuing and revamped GE Subcommittees are fully assembled and begin meeting.
- Advising training in new GE program begins.

- Work begins with Registrar's office on catalog and uAchieve changes for AY27-28, as well as making necessary changes to systems for proposing transfer.
- Workshops and professional development offered to support the new GE.

February 2027

- New SLOs developed and finalized for each GE category by at least one member of GEIC along with a faculty working group; work completed by February 1.
- Workshops and professional development held to support curricular revisions in line with new SLOs.
- Materials to be used at SOAR events developed and approved.

March 2027

- The new GE program (new categories and new credit hour requirements; reduced list of legacy program courses under new categories) will be presented to admitted students at SOAR events.
- Continued advising training on new GE program for all faculty and professional advisors along with workshops and professional development for faculty, staff, and administrators.
- New program (new categories and new credit hour requirements; reduced list of legacy program courses under new categories) submitted for inclusion into 2027-2028 catalog.

Phase II: AY 2027-2028

Fall 2027

- New GE program fully launched with new categories and new credit hour requirements, with legacy program courses temporarily offered under new program categories.
- In early fall, programs propose their GE courses for the new program (old courses, revised courses, and new courses, according to the established maximum number) to the GE Vetting Subcommittee. Revised input processes will be followed.
- Courses will ideally be approved for the new 2028-2029 GE program by December 1, in time for scheduling for Fall 2028.

Winter 2028

- Programs submit Fall 2028 schedules with new, approved GE courses included.

March 2028

- Students begin registering for new GE course offerings for Fall 2028.

Phase III: AY 2028-2029

- Full new GE program, with fully revised course list, up and running.
- Learning communities will be offered to aid faculty in working together to create themed and other cross-disciplinary groupings of courses for AY 2029-2030.
- Workshops and professional development will continue focused on various program attributes (e.g., high-impact practices).
- Assessment of new program will begin; carried out by the GE Subcommittee on Assessment.