

Report and Recommendations of
The University of Arizona
General Education Review Committee
of 2004-05

*Submitted to the Executive Vice President and Provost,
the Chair of the Faculty, and
the University-wide General Education Committee
September 16, 2005*
by Professor Jerrold E. Hogle,
Vice Provost for Instruction and Review Committee Chair,
with the approval of the full Committee

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History, Process, and Evidence Gathered

The current University of Arizona General Education Program (see <http://teachingteams.arizona.edu/gerc>: “General Education in a Nutshell”) began for students in the Fall of 1998. This change from the last Gen. Ed. scheme followed a series of major transformations: a thorough reassessment of undergraduate education at the UA, which culminated in the *Report of the President’s Task Force on Undergraduate Education* (Professor J. Douglas Canfield, Chair) in May, 1992; deliberation on campus by multiple committees, which finally led to the adoption of the current program plan by the Faculty Senate and its approval by President Pacheco in 1995-96; and a two-year development process, including the establishment of the University-wide General Education Committee (UWGEC) in the Fall of 1996 (Professor Jerrold E. Hogle, initial elected Chair) to work out area goals and acceptable courses for the new Program. In 2003, the UWGEC of that year (Professor Harold P. Larson, Chair) undertook a comprehensive review of the program’s design, implementation, and evidence of strengths and weaknesses. The official result was *A Review of the University of Arizona’s General Education Program, Fall 1998 through Spring 2003* (hereafter “the UWGEC report”). This report was submitted in March 2004 to the current Vice Provost for Instruction (VPI) in the Office of the Provost. The documents just noted are all available on the extensive web site set up by Review Committee member Karen Lutrick in 2005: teachingteams.arizona.edu/gerc – hereafter “website” -- where much of the evidence cited below can also be found (for the documents just noted, click on “Task Force on Undergraduate Education, 1992” and “University-wide General Education Committee, Review Paper” on the website’s home page).

Given the UWGEC report and the general campus pattern of holding Academic Program Reviews (APRs) for instructional programs every seven years, Provost George Davis early in 2004 called for an even fuller review of the current Gen. Ed. program, which has just completed its seventh year, using the UWGEC report as a foundational starting point. Although no external visitors were planned, this process was intended from the start to be analogous to the APR as it is done in every other academic area, with the UWGEC report serving as the “self study” by the area (which is common to all APRs) and the Review Committee serving in the capacity of the more widely representative “Internal/External Review Team” which reports finally to the Provost. The Review Committee was then appointed by the Provost, with the VPI as Chair, in the Spring of 2004 after recommendations were sought from many quarters, including the shared governance groups for faculty, students, and appointed personnel. The membership (see **Appendix A** and website: “Committee members”) has thus been designed to be broadly representative of all the

colleges and constituent groups (including but not limited to UWGEC) involved in General Education and undergraduate instruction more generally or the direct support of these (from Transfer Articulation and financial management to advising and Curriculum and Registration). At its initial meeting (website: “Agenda and Minutes – April 16, 2004”), the Review Committee decided that all its members would have equal voting privileges, although the hope was that findings and recommendations would be decided by Committee consensus, rather than simple majority votes, as often as possible – and that has been the case. The attempt has been to bring knowledgeable representatives from all relevant parts of the University together to consider the current quality of and possible improvements in – as well as the practical consequences of maintaining or changing -- the General Education Program, which serves as the “core” around which all the rest of undergraduate education is built for each UA student.

Early in its deliberations, the Review Committee decided that our role, like that of an APR Review Team, was strictly that of “reviewer” rather than “re-envisioner” or “re-definer” of General Education. We have thus adhered entirely to reviewing the existing Gen. Ed. program starting with, though also augmenting, UWGEC’s careful “self-study,” which has remained central to our process throughout. To that end and prompted by the UWGEC report, we have set out to provide some potential answers to a series of key questions upon which we reached agreement early with input from many others, including Provost Davis (see [Appendix B](#) and website: “Questions for the General Education Review Committee”). We therefore understand our task as arriving at findings and *initial* recommendations about the current Gen. Ed. program based on our understanding of the information we have gathered and the conclusions we have reached as a result of our research and deliberations. Hence, in what follows, we often recommend that certain intensifications or modifications of the program, in areas we think need further examination, be turned into specific proposals, after discussion and vetting, by the UWGEC rather than us. The standing Gen. Ed. Committee, after all, remains the principal shared governance body for General Education goals, policies, and the relation of courses to both, so we have suggested putting the further discussion of several issues back in their hands once we have indicated what the unresolved issues appear to be from our review process. We do not presume here to do what we know UWGEC (or perhaps some subcommittees of it) can do better, although we do encourage that group to pay more attention to several key concerns.

To fulfill our charge in “review” mode, though, we have added to the helpful data provided in the UWGEC report (pp. 12-41) by doing further research, aided by the Office of Institutional Research and Evaluation (OIRE, through Gwen Johnson and Chris Hass) and by Elena Berman on our Committee. Nearly all the results reviewed by the Committee are available on the website by clicking on each individual item (the titles of which are quoted parenthetically below), and this revealing research has been done in these important areas:

- *The designs, requirements, and goals of General Education programs at twelve peer public universities:* Indiana University, Michigan State University, Ohio State University, UCLA, University of Cincinnati, University of Florida, University of Michigan, University of New Mexico, University of Texas at Austin, University of Washington, University of Wisconsin at Madison, and Washington State University (website: “Comparisons with Other Universities’ Gen. Ed. Programs,” where you can click on Gen. Ed. web information for each separate university). We have also considered aspects of the much-publicized General Ed. review now under way at Harvard University (website: “Harvard General Education Review”).
- *Abundant student feedback about Foundations and Gen. Ed. classes at the UA during the years of the current program,* based on official UA Teacher/Course

Evaluations (TCEs) or official student surveys (website: “Research and Assessment” and “Teacher-Course Evaluations”). These results have been aggregated and then broken into various categories to help us see large-scale and representative student views about:

- * overall quality of teaching in approved General Ed. courses
 - * levels of student learning in each separate strand of General Education,
 - * comparisons of course quality between Gen. Ed. & other lower-division courses
 - * the views of recent or post- UA graduates about the value and uses of Gen. Ed.
 - * problem areas in the General Education program as it stands
- *A comparison of best practices and problems at universities at a professional conference on General Education* held in May, 2004, by the American Association of Colleges and University (or AAC&U). A five-member team from this Review Committee (Drs. Hogle, Howell, Johnson, Shockey, and student rep. Karen Lutrick) represented the UA at this high-level conference at Salve Regina University in Newport, RI, with thirty other American universities, during which Gen. Ed. programs and strategies – including assessment methods – were compared and national information was made available for all attendees to bring back to their campuses (and their Gen. Ed. Review Committees).
 - *Compiled observations from a series of UA Focus Groups on Gen. Ed.* conducted for the Review Committee by Elena Berman (website: click on the categories listed below). These representative groups include:
 - * College faculty not primarily teaching Gen. Ed. (to see how Gen. Ed. feeds into what they teach – or not)
 - * College faculty who are frequent Gen. Ed. instructors
 - * Academic advisors from several different colleges (who help students to understand the Gen. Ed. program and to make choices among all the options)
 - * Undergraduate student groups, from the Freshman Council to Residence Hall Associations to College-level student councils
 - *Expert Information on teaching techniques and learning objectives for the general student in the age of the Internet* (website: “Educating the Net Generation” and “Information and Communication Literacy Competencies”)
 - *Graphs and data on the budget for General Education at the UA as it has been pressured over several years before and during the current program* (see **Appendix C**) so that the Review Committee understands and takes clear account of these realities, without foregoing the academic considerations and objectives behind its findings and recommendations.

Unfortunately, since similar kinds of data were usually not gathered under the previous UA Gen. Ed. program, there are not many data-based comparisons possible between the effectiveness of one program compared to that of the other beyond what is offered in the UWGEC report. But the Review Committee has used the extensive information available to it – as well as responses from our many constituent groups to its preliminary findings and recommendations – to arrive at the following conclusions and ideas for the entire UA community to consider.

Findings and Recommendations I: General and Philosophical

1. **We recommend that there continue to be a University-wide General Education program -- which includes Foundations, Tier I, and Tier II classes -- at the University of Arizona, with the same number of units generally being required.**

This Review Committee strongly affirms that the current general objectives of University-wide General Education are very much worth pursuing by and for our students, even if some particular area goals need greater specificity or some modification (see below). These objectives, in the Committee's view, are the best ones (especially when some of them are clarified) for assuring that the General Education Program plays its part effectively within "Focused Excellence Strategic Priority II: Increase Student Engagement, Achievement, Retention, and Graduation Rates" in the UA *Strategic Plan: Extending the Frontiers of Excellence*. As a matter of fact, the current structure can be connected, if not as the sole cause, to a rise in UA graduation rates since 1998. Now students do not have to re-start General Ed., and thus slow their progress, when they shift colleges by changing majors. Moreover, the current Gen. Ed structure, compared to previous ones, has permitted much better advance planning so that course availability can be more assured than in the past based on a reasonably predictable sense of where the "flows" of students are likely to go. Indeed, we find that requiring markedly fewer Gen. Ed. units of most students would make their course-taking outside of majors and minors much more difficult to predict, track, and fund effectively.

In addition, though some of the evidence cited below shows the need for some adjustments in certain Program areas, the problems we have found do not lie primarily at the level of the overall concept or general design and structure of the current Gen. Ed. Program. The soundness of these has been reinforced by what our representatives learned at the AAC&U conference mentioned earlier – where our program design was openly admired -- and what our examination of peer Gen. Ed. programs (again, on the website under "Comparisons with Other Universities' Gen. Ed. Programs") has revealed: that our Program has an admirable degree of *coherence* and *intellectual integrity* in its basic design and progression and is something of a national model in this regard, compared to the less tiered, less interdisciplinary, and less goal-oriented programs at most other public research universities. We have also found no evidence that requiring fewer courses at any Gen. Ed. level would lead to an equal degree of overall learning for most students or help most students meet the objectives of General Education to the same extent.

2. **We recommend that General Education be understood and promulgated, centrally and in all colleges, as so basic to the core mission of the University that ongoing financial support for the Program is *essential* to the accomplishment of that mission and to our goals for all our undergraduates. Indeed, we believe that financial support for General Education, from both central administration and college sources, needs to be understood as a vital consideration bound up with a wide range of investments, from those in student retention and undergraduate education as a whole to the employment of faculty and the training of graduate students. To this end, we ask that the UA policy on the spending of state and tuition dollars under our Net Tuition Revenue model – which totals the funds remaining from tuition after the subtraction of all mandated deductions, including a financial aid set-aside -- be, in general, (a) that *the spending of net tuition collections follow student demand* to the greatest extent possible in Foundations, Tier I, Tier II, and across the curriculum and (b) that this funding overall be permanent, predictable, dependable, and budgeted in advance as much as possible.**

The current practice of funding the present Program with a substantial contribution from the Provost to participating colleges (to go with internal college contributions of faculty time and other instructional funding) has truly helped ensure course availability for students to a workable degree most of the time, though not always, particularly in the face of state-dollar budget cuts since 2001. But the amount of this funding, at both the central and college levels, is still so unpredictable and last-minute at times that planning and hiring are more difficult than they should be for an enterprise so central to the mission of the University. **General Education should be more deliberately seen by the University and all its colleges and departments as fundamental within our priorities. We believe the overriding stance should be that “General Education is essential to all of us, at every level” and that support for it should be equitable within the overarching values of the University.** An immediate corollary to this view should be that “where students enroll, student-based dollars follow” as consistently as possible within considerations of program excellence and centrality to our mission. To be sure, the Review Committee recognizes that some colleges that are substantial Gen. Ed. contributors have multiple instructional demands that are increasing, and we believe that all types of undergraduate education should be well served at the UA. But we also believe that future uses of “Net Tuition Revenues” could help improve the availability of undergraduate education at all levels if those funds are allocated, more than they are now, in the general direction of “where students go, so should the dollars they pay.” Data based on Net Tuition Revenue (Appendix D) show that the amount collected from students just for their Gen. Ed. courses over the last several years greatly exceeds the \$20 million in direct costs spent by the administration and the colleges on staffing and mounting General Education alone (excluding the needed portions of regular faculty salaries). This relatively new information, in our view, should be carefully considered in every future process of deciding on the funding of General Education.

3. **The Committee recommends strongly that the University and all its colleges clearly reaffirm and enforce all relevant provisions of the 1992 Report of the Task Force on Undergraduate Education**, within which this Review Committee believes itself to be operating. In particular, we ask for renewed attention to and ongoing enforcement of these policies recommended there [including the slight additions that we propose, inserted here in brackets]:

- “All members of the professorial faculty should consider it a responsibility – and should be expected – to participate with distinction in classroom teaching at the undergraduate level. . . . This commitment to undergraduate teaching should be understood to involve classes at all levels, including lower-division classes . . .”
- “Teaching [again, at every level] must be fully informed by scholarship and energized by the passion for discovery and creation.”
- “The Provost should establish policies for the allocation of resources to departments so that they can meet the institution’s overall teaching [including General Education] and scholarly responsibilities in the most effective way possible.”
- “The University curriculum and schedule of course offerings should be scrutinized for the purpose of identifying and correcting any existing imbalances between the large numbers of narrowly specialized courses and the necessary broad-based undergraduate courses.”
- “Departments and colleges are expected to establish teaching load guidelines, with the approval of their dean and the Provost.” [These guidelines should factor in General Education as a matter of course. See # 2 under Section IV below.]
- The University “should continue to require courses that stress diversity in culture, race, class, and gender, and wherever possible faculty should integrate into their

courses concerns of diversity.” We concur that this approach remains essential to a “core” liberal arts university education in the twenty-first century.

Evidence we have seen shows us that, in Tier I at least, the involvement of professorial faculty has gone down in all three strands since 1999 (see **Appendix E**). To some degree, that is understandable, given that the number of tenure-track faculty positions has declined University-wide over that time. But we also believe that, if many of the above provisions are fully enacted throughout the institution, more professors would be available for high-quality Gen. Ed. teaching, which has long been designed here – as we believe it should still be, on the whole – to be taught by ranked faculty at all tiers above the Foundations level.

Findings and Recommendations II: Goals and Outcomes

The Review Committee recommends that the UWGEC undertake the following:

- a. Improve the clarity of the expected *overall outcomes* for General Education and Foundations, linking these to the wider “Educational Philosophy” for undergraduate education in the 1992 *Task Force Report*.** In order to make the intellectual coherence and general objectives of our Program clearer to students than they are now (from what student focus groups have told us), we find, more precise and engaging outcomes and aims for students need to be articulated effectively. These should, above all, indicate the crucial relationship between General Education and the enabling of life-long learning.
- b. Ask field groups of faculty experts to reconsider, and/or recommend clarifications of, the expected learning outcomes of each Tier I and Tier II strand.** Some of the existing outcomes have proven too vague, unclear, or unworkable, our research suggests, to ensure consistently high educational quality in courses that count for Gen. Ed., and the “common grounds” among courses in a tier and strand (while they should never be too confining) are not always clear enough now, nor have they all been worded as learning outcomes to the degree they should be. Even more importantly, it is clear from student testimony that the quality, intensity, and “passion” in Gen. Ed. classes now varies too widely across the University. One reason, we believe, is that the intellectual energy of the initial faculty groups who established the parts of the Program starting in 1996 may not be as widespread as it once was, nor has it been conveyed enough to new or established faculty who have been drawn in more recently to Gen. Ed. teaching. ***We urge the reinvigoration of the Program through a new faculty process of re-conceptualization and re-specification of the desired outcomes that has the potential of reinvesting the tenure-track faculty of the UA, among others, more widely and enthusiastically in the University’s most basic educational enterprise.***
- c. Help establish a process for investing new faculty into the purposes and possibilities of the General Education Program.** This process may or may not end up directly connected to the current New Faculty Orientation, but we feel that more senior faculty should positively engage their newer colleagues where appropriate, more than is the case now, in the importance, value, nature, and aims of the General Education at the UA.
- d. Identify *assessable outcome measures* for each Gen. Ed tier and strand – and for Gen. Ed. as a whole -- to enable assessment opportunities in the future.** The North Central Association (or NCA), the UA’s accrediting agency, rightly insists that we undertake sustained outcomes assessment of student learning and instructional

effectiveness in General Education (see more below), as well as our majors and graduate programs. We therefore need to decide on both the learning outcomes and the measures by which General Education's effectiveness for students is periodically assessed.

Among the outcomes or measures so examined should be the ones for composition, math, and information fluency through the University Library, for all of which there are national standards. Indeed, we suggest that a model for this whole effort might well be the proposed national outcomes and measures for literacy listed in *Information Literacy Competency: Standards for Higher Education*, published in 2000 by the Association of College and Research Libraries.

- e. **Ensure that these processes are pursued in ways that encourage faculty creativity in Gen. Ed. instruction.** Difficult as it always is, a renewed balance needs to be struck, we feel, between well-articulated general outcomes that are sought in Gen. Ed. and each of its areas, on the one hand, and encouragement to instructors to employ their special perspectives and knowledge in Gen. Ed. classes that excite and engage them and their students, on the other.

Findings and Recommendations III: Program Implementation

1. **We recommend that better communications be designed to improve the understanding of what Gen. Ed (including its levels and options) is for all those involved: students, faculty, advisors, central administrators, deans, department heads, and members of our wider communities.** Our focus groups among all constituencies and the student evaluations we have reviewed show a broad-based uncertainty about what General Education is and is for – or sometimes *very* different understandings about Gen. Ed. among some members of the same constituency groups. We therefore urge improved public renderings of the program as revised *and* more regular updates about important information and changes, with these going out to all relevant stakeholders, depending on the matter at hand. The following possibilities, then, should at least be considered by the appropriate individuals and/or groups:

- UA colleges should all find ways to explain the value of Gen. Ed. for their majors so that this core program is viewed by all as more integral to every student's total academic experience, rather than a mere obligation to be endured.
- Instructors and advisors should also be asked to help students understand the place and role of each Gen. Ed. course in the overall program and in the entire educational experience of students.
- Adjuncts and graduate assistants, as well as new faculty, becoming involved for the first time in General Education should be able to access an orientation that explains the purposes, design, and centrality of the Program, as well as pedagogical training appropriate to their instructional responsibilities
- The General Education web site should be reworked in the light of all relevant recommendations here, particularly to provide links helpful to all stakeholders for understanding, not just the requirements, but the rationales behind them and the policies connected to them.
- The UWGEC should consider the possible or partial *renaming* of Gen. Ed. (since "general" is – yes -- too general, indistinct, and pro forma) and the *retitling* of one or more study areas within the program, but only if these changes will truly improve student understanding of and interest in the program and its courses.

2. **We recommend that the UWGEC review and clarify the guidelines for appropriate substitutions for Gen. Ed. courses to ensure a balance between students attaining the outcomes of Gen. Ed. sought by the General Faculty and students being able to meet their individual educational needs.** We are concerned, in particular, with the interests of students who must postpone some of their Gen. Ed. courses till late in their college careers because of the number and sequencing of initial course requirements for certain majors and minors. In addition, students who seek and are well prepared for greater challenges in their studies, we think, might benefit from the opportunity to substitute other appropriate classes for some Tier I or II courses. For the sake of campus-wide clarity and to serve such students better, then, we ask that the guidelines for substitutions be revisited, rewritten where necessary, and reissued by the UWGEC, subject to Faculty Senate oversight and the approval of the President (or his designee) if policy changes are involved. We assume these guidelines will then be communicated to, and implemented at, the college level.

3. **We recommend that very large classes be discouraged as much as resources permit to enhance the quality of the Gen. Ed., as well as the overall undergraduate, experience.** Indeed, we urge that the University strive to reduce the total number of Gen. Ed. classes with over 75 students by at least 20% over the next three years. Student data and focus groups show that too many students feel anonymous and overwhelmed if too many of their classes are large lectures only.

4. **We recommend that more be done to allow students to actively *choose* their Tier I and Tier II courses out of genuine interest.** To that end, informative and readily-understood course descriptions (and syllabi, as much as possible) should be easily available to students before they register. The random assigning of Tier I and Tier II courses should also be curtailed, an improvement already under way in the online “Academic Tour” that is part of our revised Orientation program. **In addition, more courses in both tiers should be encouraged, when and where possible, to give students more choice.**

5. **We recommend that the UWGEC, in consultation with the Honors College, the Undergraduate Council, and appropriate other groups – in other words, with broad faculty involvement -- work out a clearly demarcated “Honors Track” in General Education so that our most academically advanced and best prepared students can have an enriched educational experience.** Students at these levels and faculty who work with them are nearly *unanimous* that the current program as presently organized fails to meet the legitimate needs of Honors students. Accordingly, we ask the UWGEC, the Honors College, and others to consider these possibilities among many as they discuss, propose, and then implement an Honors Track in General Education at the UA:

- the appropriate application of AP exam credits to fulfill Gen. Ed. requirements
- greater flexibility in allowing substitutions for – and Honors sections of -- General Education classes that now exist or may come to exist
- qualifications for admission to this Track that may or may not include initial or coterminous admission to the Honors College per se
- the encouragement of Honors or advanced Gen. Ed. offerings designed specifically for juniors and seniors who are in majors that make them delay taking General Education courses for good academic reasons

6. **We recommend that the current Gen. Ed. requirement for at least one course in “Non-Western civilization” or “issues of gender, race, class, ethnicity, and/or sexual**

orientation” (with this last phrase permanently added to this category in all Gen. Ed. publications) continue essentially as it is because of its importance for every student’s education in the modern world. But there should be better communication to students and faculty about what this requirement means and clearer policies from the UWGEC about substitutions for courses listed as counting for this requirement, including guidelines on what constitute legitimate uses of the petition process in connection with this requirement. There should also be UWGEC letters to faculty whose courses might meet this requirement to see if they would apply (each with syllabus) to have those classes listed as counting in this way, provided they meet the criteria.

7. This Review Committee strongly endorses the recent call for a wide-ranging Review of Core Mathematics at the UA in 2005-06 and urges the faculty-based group conducting that Review to include consideration of what the Foundations Math Requirement should be, all in full recognition the many different types of students and majors at the University of Arizona. At present a significant number of students here have trouble with some Gen. Ed. coursework because of problems with competency in mathematics at the level of the current University entrance requirements. We ask, consequently, that these reported problems be among those discussed in the Core Math review:

- Many incoming students arrive not even qualifying for entry-level college math.
- Some Tier I NATS instructors feel constrained by low levels of math preparation among students in those courses. There is a discrepancy between the natural mathematics prerequisites for quality NATS courses and the need for such courses to be available to entering freshmen who may not have those prerequisites.
- Tier II instructors also report difficulties offering some NATS/science options because it cannot be assumed that students possess sufficient college-level mathematics.
- It can be difficult for students, especially incoming freshman, to choose math courses that balance their abilities and their needs to fulfill the Foundations math requirement. Many such students, after all, may need certain kinds of math to pursue particular studies that may be required later in their majors.

We suggest, in fact, that this Core Mathematics committee explore different basic math options for different types of students as an improved approach to the Foundations Math requirement (which we think should remain) in General Education at the UA.

Findings and Recommendations IV: Program Operations

1. **We recommend that an *ad hoc* task force be created for a brief period, reporting to the Vice Provost for Instruction and the UWGEC, to examine and make recommendations about the adequacy and accessibility of academic support services for faculty and students involved in Gen. Ed.,** including how students can find the services most appropriate for their exact needs at a given time. We find that, as things stand, students do not have clear enough avenues, though we do have many, for seeking the right help in connection with their Gen. Ed. classes.

2. **We recommend that, wherever possible, those College recruitment plans that do not now do so should include an account of how the desired combination of past, present, and future faculty hires will ensure, among many other things, enough sufficient and high-quality teaching of General Education,** at least so that each involved College can meet its fair share of student demand for Gen. Ed instruction. We see too little evidence that General

Education is at least considered as a factor in the faculty recruitment plans of colleges and ask that it play a greater, though hardly an exclusive, role – and not be an afterthought – in the future recruitment considerations of all relevant Colleges.

3. **We recommend**, once the UWGEC has arrived at more precise learning outcomes for the levels of Gen. Ed. (see above), **that the UA develop an assessment mechanism for determining if students are or are not meeting the University’s objectives for Foundations, Tier I, and Tier II.** Though the University has made considerable progress since 2000 in the outcomes assessment of student performance in majors and graduate programs, the meaningful assessment of whether General Education is meeting its objectives for students is in a rudimentary state at the present time. Our accrediting agency, the NCA, expects to see much more progress in the assessment of Gen. Ed. by the next University accreditation review in 2009-10.

4. **We recommend that those faculty who make outstanding and continuous contributions to Gen. Ed. and Foundations, both educational and organizational, receive recognition and appreciation beyond incremental and occasional teaching awards.** Perhaps there should be a category (other than University Distinguished Professor, for example) by which such faculty would be honored. More incentives are needed for General Education teaching by professors.

5. **This Review Committee assumes and urges that the future of General Education in every part or extension of the UA always remain controlled and largely delivered by the faculty of the University of Arizona main campus.** This core responsibility of the main campus professoriate and Colleges should not be delegated to any other entity or “farmed off” on a branch campus or any other affiliated entity. Should any such extension of the UA wish or be asked to become involved in the teaching of General Education – which will be far in the future, since Regents policy restricts the offering of lower-division courses to the main campus alone -- that involvement should take place only under the close supervision of the UWGEC and the Faculty Senate and only with the approval of the appropriate department heads and college deans, as well as the Provost or the Provost’s designee for overseeing General Education.

Findings and Recommendations V: Quality Control

1. **We recommend that the UWGEC create a periodic review process for Tier I and Tier II courses as fulfilling established Gen. Ed. requirements.** This system can take many different forms and involve some delegation of labor so that the workload on UWGEC members is not overwhelming. But there should be a systematic way of assessing, perhaps involving a *portion* of the total approved courses at a given time, which classes (as currently designed) do or do not meet the latest Gen. Ed. guidelines for the Tier and area involved. This process will be particularly important considering the recommendations under “Goals and Outcomes” above.

2. **We recommend that TCE evaluation data for both Tier I and Tier II courses be compared to the same data for courses in the same tier and to the same information about non-Gen. Ed. offerings at comparable levels (usually lower division).** The Committee assumes that this totality of information will then – and regularly – be factored into the performance review process for all relevant faculty members.

3. **We recommend that all of the latest syllabi for Tier I and Tier II courses be sent electronically by the colleges where the courses are taught to the Vice Provost for Instruction,** who will arrange for them to be available to students, advisors, faculty, and others as

portions of a General Education web site. This way there will be an online “library” that faculty can consult for examples of approved General Education courses and tested approaches to the high-quality teaching of them.

4. **We recommend that the Office of Instructional Research and Evaluation (OIRE) and the University Teaching Center (UTC) consider other ways to evaluate the quality of Gen. Ed courses and the teaching of them besides TCE reports.** While building on existing surveys – such as the Senior Survey, which should include more pointed questions on Gen. Ed. quality – OIRE and UTC might provide focused questionnaires about Gen Ed. that students could fill out in residence halls or when they seek advising. If feasible, a Gen. Ed survey for students at mid-career might be attached online to the WebReg entry point into the process by which students register for future classes. More needs to be done so that students have a chance to have input into the General Education program *as a whole program* throughout their undergraduate careers.

5. **We recommend that, as soon as the needed technology becomes available, undergraduate records online be flagged so that students cannot register for Tier II classes until they have completed the Tier I counterparts in the study areas of those classes.** This way Tier II classes can truly assume the level of earlier preparation, and thus be taught at the academic level of quality, that was mandated by the current Gen. Ed. program when it was first approved and implemented.

6. **We recommend that pointed questions about the quality and value of Gen. Ed instruction should be added to Alumni Surveys filled out when graduates are more than three years past their Bachelors degrees.** For many students, it is only later in their lives that they can accurately assess the significance of General Education to their full development over several years.

7. **We recommend that the UWGEC, perhaps online, undertake more means of surveying faculty about the experience of teaching General Education classes.** The UA cannot keep improving the Gen. Ed. experience for students *and* faculty unless it has this level of specific testimony from instructors “on the front lines.” Again, for this to work, though, faculty participation in both Gen. Ed. teaching and such surveys should be more overtly supported than it is, as in # 4 under “Operations” above.

Findings and Recommendations VI: Administration and Facilitation

1. **We recommend that the administrative support for the running of the General Education Program out of the office of the Vice Provost for Instruction (VPI) be commensurate with other University-wide programs of comparable size in number of students served.** At present, the VPI’s staff support is not sufficient by itself to carry out all of the above recommendations that are relevant to that office. The Program Coordinator should at least have some temporary assistance from other quarters to undertake such tasks as the revision of the General Education web site in all the areas noted above.

2. Especially to assure the implementation of # 1 c/d under “Goals and Outcomes” and # 4 under “Operations” above, **we recommend that there be a facilitative coordinator of student outcomes assessment who is connected to the General Education Program and works on Gen. Ed. assessment specifically with the VPI, UWGEC, OIRE, and IPASS, as well as colleges and departments.** General Education outcomes assessment, when it is done thoroughly

and well, requires trained expertise and extensive work, which neither the VPI's office or those of OIRE or IPASS currently possess or have the staff to undertake.

3. **We recommend, finally, that the substantially increased work of the UWGEC recommended above should have the staff support commensurate with that level of continuous activity on behalf of an educational mission so central to the mission of the University of Arizona.** Our recommendations ask for an unusual amount of extra work from much of the UWGEC group, as well as groups of faculty divided into interdisciplinary fields, so it will be vital for all these collections of experts to have at least temporary staff assistance in 2006-07 beyond what a single Program Coordinator in the VPI's office can provide, helpful though she has certainly been to this Review of General Education.

In sum: after a thorough review of extensive information (including considerable student, faculty, and advisor input), it is the consensus of this Review Committee that the UA General Education Program should be continued within the same overall structure, but with some particular modifications in the areas noted above. We believe that this Gen. Ed. system remains a national model for a core curriculum at student-centered research universities such as ours and that, with some fine tuning in several key areas and a reenergizing of the faculty towards achieving the desired outcomes of General Education, the Program can be the powerful "liberal arts core" in undergraduate education that we have always intended it to be for our students *and* faculty at the University of Arizona.

APPENDIX A:

The University of Arizona General Education Review Committee

(UWGEC = past or current member of the University-wide General Education Committee)

General Faculty Representatives

Chair: Dr. Jerrold Hogle (Vice Provost, Instruction; University Distinguished Prof.; Gen. Ed. Instructor; past UWGEC Chair)

Dr. Malcolm Compitello (Professor and Department Head, Spanish and Portuguese, COH; Foundations; UWGEC)
Dr. Antonio Estrada (Professor, Program Director, Mexican American Studies, SBS; SPBAC Chair)
Dr. John Hildebrand (Regents' Professor, Director, Neurobiology, COS; Committee of Eleven)
Dr. Wanda Howell (University Distinguished Professor, Nutritional Sciences, CALS; Gen. Ed. Instructor; Faculty Senate)
Dr. Geta LeSeur-Brown (Professor, Africana Studies, COH; Diversity Coalition)
Dr. Patricia MacCorquodale (Dean, Honors College; Gen. Ed. Instructor; Academic Council)
Dr. Daniel Madden (Associate Professor, Mathematics, COS; Foundations coordinator/instructor)
Mr. Paul Melendez (Lecturer, Program Director, Academic and External Relations, Eller College; Undergraduate Advisor)
Dr. Thomas Miller (Director, Writing Program, and Professor, English, COH; Foundations)
Dr. Judith Nantell (Vice Dean, Professor, Spanish and Portuguese, COH; Foundations; UWGEC)
Dr. Kimberly Ogden (Professor, Chemical and Environmental Engineering, COEng)
Dr. Lucinda Rankin (Lecturer, Physiology, COM; Health Sciences)
Dr. Dennis Ray (University Distinguished Professor, Plant Sciences, CALS; UWGEC Chair)
Dr. Robert Robichaux (University Distinguished Professor, Ecology and Evolutionary Biology, COS; former member UWGEC)
Dr. Richard Ruiz (Department Head, Professor, Language, Reading and Culture, COE; alternative learning techniques)
Dr. James Shockey (Associate Dean, Associate Professor, Sociology, SBS; CAAC; UWGEC)
Dr. Daniel Stein (Department Head and Professor, Physics, COS; [undergraduate education award winner])
Dr. Timothy Swindle (Professor, Lunar and Planetary Laboratory, COS; Gen. Ed. Instructor)
Ms. Lynne Tronsdal (Assistant Vice President, Student Retention; UWGEC)
Mr. Jeffrey Warburton (Associate Professor, Theatre Arts, COFA; Department Advisor; Gen. Ed. Instructor, Faculty Fellows)

Student Representatives

Ms. Emily Upstill (UA undergraduate, still taking Gen. Ed. courses, Eller College of Management; ASUA representative)
Ms. Karen Lutrick (recent UA graduate; now Teaching Teams coordinator; UWGEC)
Ms. Holly Mandes (grad. assistant, Foundations; GPSC representative)

Instructional Support Team

Dr. Elena Berman (Outcomes Assessment, Office of the Provost)
Ms. Roxie Catts (UA coordinator, academic advising)
Mr. William Fee (Transfer Articulation; UWGEC)
Mr. Edward Frisch (Financial management, Office of the Provost)
Ms. Louise Greenfield (University Librarian; information literacy specialist; UWGEC)
Dr. Elizabeth Harrison (University Teaching Center; Gen. Ed. Instructor)
Ms. Sheril Hook (University Librarian; information literacy specialist; UWGEC)
Dr. Christopher Johnson (Media Center, ILC; learning technologies and facilities)
Dr. Gwendolyn Johnson (OIRE, Instructional Assessment; UWGEC)
Ms. Patti King (Curriculum and Registration; University Council)
Ms. Deb Kruse (University School; professional advisors; UWGEC)
Mr. David Padgett (Pima Community College articulation and advising)
Ms. Celeste Pardee (Curriculum and Registration; University Council)

Staff

Ms. Anne Marie Jones (Program Coordinator, Senior, Office of the Provost)

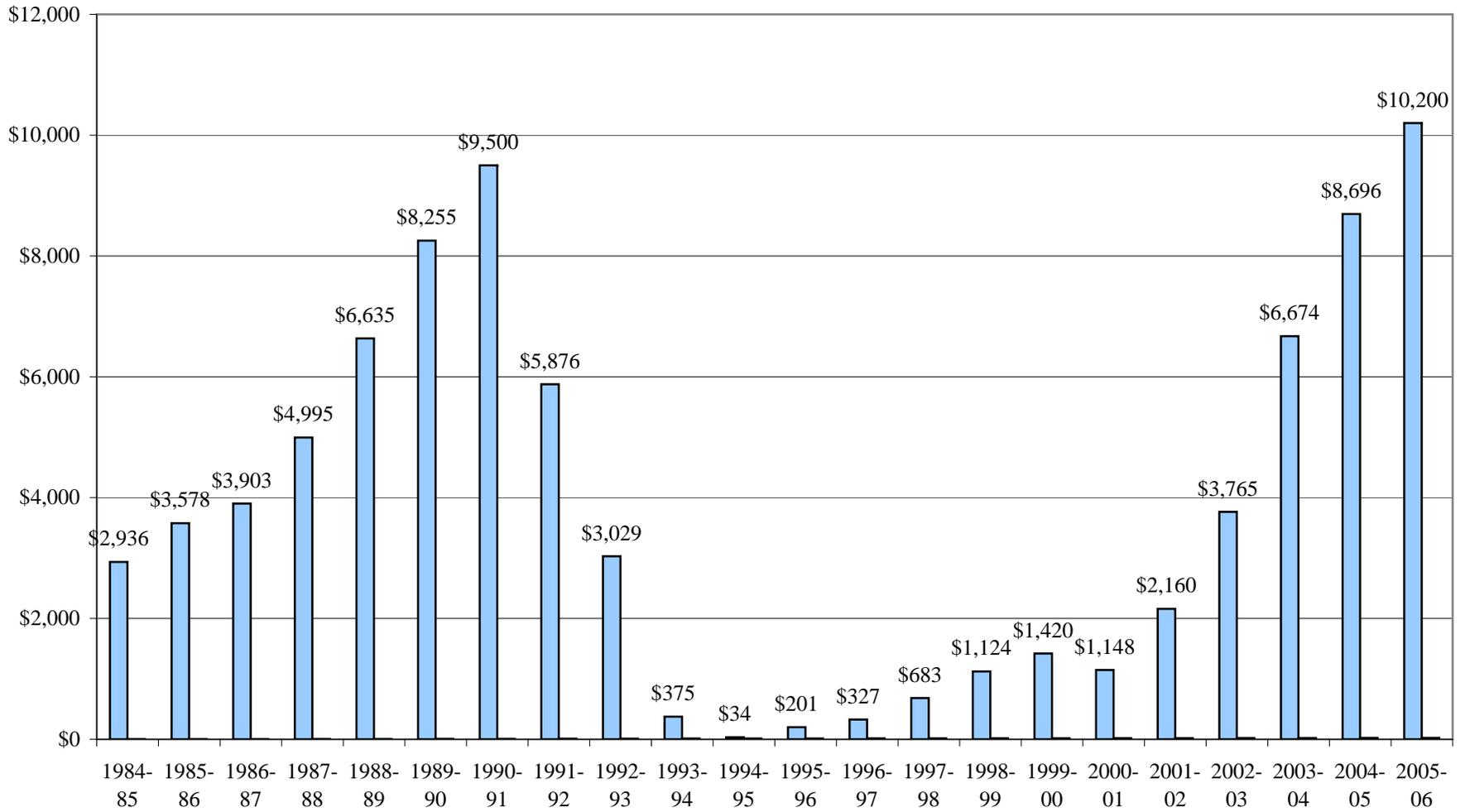
APPENDIX B:

Questions for the UA General Education Review Committee

1. What are the best overall purposes and the proper announced goals of General Educations for the student? Are the ones we have stated sufficient or should they be modified or completely changed? Is the current content of General Education helping students to meet these goals or not? Would changes make those goals more (or at least just as) attainable?
2. What are the main improvements needed in current Gen. Ed. Program (if any) relative to the goals agreed on under number 1 above? Do these suggest a need for selected adjustments – and if so, which – or a major overhaul?
3. What is the proper relationship of Foundations to the rest of Gen. Ed.? Do we need to adjust Gen. Ed./Foundations *sequencing* for students as part of a revision? Should we, for example, require, if it is feasible, that students complete College Algebra or its equivalent before enrolling in NATS course (or versions of them)? Should we go further and require, say, first-semester Composition as a prerequisite for TRAD courses (or versions of them)? Would doing all this positively or adversely affect the first-year experience of students *and* the planning of course offerings for maximum availability?
4. To accomplish the goals under # 1, do we need to have as many required Gen. Ed. courses as we do now? For example, should we stop requiring four Tier II courses (our current practice) to help students reach the goals of the program – or would changing the current pattern prevent the attainment of our Gen. Ed. objectives? Would a “smaller” program be better or worse?
5. How should the General Education Program be adjusted *or* maintained in the context of (a) the financial structure, library resources, and priorities of the University and (b) the entire undergraduate experience (including majors and minors and student support systems)? Can, for example, some Gen. Ed. courses be allowed to count for both majors/minors and General Education and vice-versa? Would such a change prevent a student’s attainment of the goals?
6. What more can be done to ensure *quality control* in General Education offerings without violating such norms as academic freedom and peer review? Should a periodic review of approved Gen. Ed courses be done – and, if so, how and by whom? What more can be done to “incentivize” good Gen. Ed. teaching? *How can a revised Gen. Ed. program be part of “Focused Excellence” here?*

7. In what ways should the administration and central facilitation of Gen. Ed. -- including, but not limited to, the role of the University-wide General Education Committee (UWGEC) -- be modified and even strengthened?
8. Is the instructional support for General Education adequate and effectively deployed, given our need to prioritize the use of resources to address upper-division education and research as well as Gen. Ed.? How effective is the support for educational innovation in all the areas that should affect General Education? How effectively is such support promoted to instructors and students, and how might such programs and promotions be improved?
9. How should the proposed changes in enrollment management (starting in the Fall of 2006) affect General Education, including its use of graduate teaching assistants?
10. How will any changes we might make affect Pima and the other community colleges, as well as the other state universities, in Arizona? Are we – or are we *not* – opening up transfer and articulation issues in any proposed changes? What would these be? Would they be good or bad?
11. How would changes in Gen. Ed. (or no changes) affect students who choose majors that start in the freshman year? How does and should Gen. Ed. relate to the First Year Colloquia that might still be (or *should* they still be) offered for students?
12. How can we do more to build diversity issues effectively into the General Ed. program? Or are we doing enough there already? Can we incentivize the inclusion of diversity into several Gen. Ed areas at once? Or is there a need for a specific requirement, and, if so, what should that be?
13. How can (and does) General Education meet the educational needs of Honors students? How might it *better* meet those needs?
14. Is there a problem of too much Gen. Ed. being “dumbed down”? If so, what can and should be done about that? How can such courses be broad without being too homogenized?
15. What does assessment evidence show us about the effectiveness and value of the General Education program here? What do we see when we compare such evidence with “Gen. Ed.” (or whatever it is called) at selected peer institutions (and which ones should they be)? Should we modify what we do -- and in what ways -- towards “best practices” we see elsewhere?

Appendix D
Gen. Ed. Instruction Funding Levels From the Provost, FY85-FY06
(in Thousands)



Appendix E

Tier 1 Teaching

By Instructor Type

		1999		2000		2001		2002		2003		2004	
		SCH	%										
INDV	Tenured/Tenure Eligible	11,203	63%	7,009	44%	7,376	42%	10,244	58%	6,781	37%	7,720	42%
	Non-Tenured	3,974	22%	6,350	40%	7,808	44%	3,446	20%	8,505	47%	8,365	46%
	GTA	2,736	15%	2,619	16%	2,543	14%	3,870	22%	3,003	16%	2,131	12%
	subtotal	17,913		15,978		17,727		17,560		18,289		18,216	
NATS	Tenured/Tenure Eligible	8,003	68%	7,523	65%	9,433	64%	8,695	60%	6,290	45%	5,457	44%
	Non-Tenured	2,710	23%	2,830	25%	4,091	28%	4,418	30%	7,012	50%	5,809	46%
	GTA	1,011	9%	1,170	10%	1,189	8%	1,391	10%	603	4%	1,252	10%
	subtotal	11,724		11,523		14,712		14,504		13,905		12,519	
TRAD	Tenured/Tenure Eligible	9,971	68%	10,572	63%	11,974	71%	12,230	63%	11,158	56%	10,380	54%
	Non-Tenured	1,690	11%	2,020	12%	1,882	11%	2,590	13%	5,383	27%	5,195	27%
	GTA	3,090	21%	4,142	25%	3,064	18%	4,506	23%	3,217	16%	3,787	20%
	subtotal	14,751		16,734		16,920		19,326		19,758		19,362	

Overall -

Tier 1	Tenured/Tenure Eligible	29,177	66%	25,104	57%	28,783	58%	31,169	61%	24,228	47%	23,557	47%
	Non-Tenured	8,374	19%	11,200	25%	13,781	28%	10,454	20%	20,901	40%	19,370	39%
	GTA	6,837	15%	7,931	18%	6,796	14%	9,767	19%	6,823	13%	7,170	14%
	TOTAL	44,388		44,235		49,359		51,390		51,952		50,097	