Final Deliverables of the Task Forces to Clarify GE Areas  
December 10, 2018

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Area A: Chris Harrison  
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Report compiled by Bey-Ling Sha, Chair, GE Curriculum & Assessment Committee

Background: EO 1100-R sent down by the CSU Chancellor’s Office in August 2017 necessitated the re-alignment of GE categories at San Diego State. The re-alignment generated a four-fold increase in GE proposals submitted in AY 2017-2018, compared to prior years. Furthermore, curriculum proposals and processes that year indicated that originators and reviewers did not always have clear agreement on the differentiations between GE areas and sub-areas. For this reason and as a result of consultations with numerous affected curriculum proposers, the GE Curriculum and Assessment Committee convened task forces to facilitate conversations to clarify GE areas and sub-areas.

Task Forces’ Charge: Produce parameters that clarify specific GE areas and related sub-areas, using the existing CSU Reviewers Guidelines as foundational parameters.

Delimitation: The purpose of these task forces was to clarify the GE areas and sub-areas re-aligned as a result of EO 1100-R. The GE committee expected that, in executing this purpose, task force members may find that clarifications and/or updates are needed in other areas of GE. If so, these identified needs were to be shared with the GE Curriculum and Assessment Committee, as well as with the GE Reform Steering Committee.

Participants and Processes: Task forces were comprised of faculty with self-identified area expertise, who were interested and available to undertake this service to their colleagues. The call for task force members was disseminated on Sept. 21 to chairs of college curriculum committees with cc to college deans, requesting the recruitment of volunteers. Task force volunteers met on Oct. 24 to receive a background briefing and task charge from the GE committee chair, after which task forces self-selected a lead facilitator and self-organized their own separate meetings. Draft deliverables were sent from lead facilitators to the GE committee chair by Nov. 25. On Nov. 26, the GE committee requested that, to better aid proposal originators and reviewers, the task forces align their deliverables, revisions of which were sent to the GE committee chair by Dec. 6. Also on Nov. 26, the draft deliverables were shared with chairs of college curriculum committees, with a request that any feedback on the drafts be provided to the lead facilitators by Dec. 5. On Dec. 10, the GE committee reviewed the revised deliverables and approved them for dissemination. That dissemination is the purpose of this document.

NOTE #1: The original backgrounder (dated Sept. 19, disseminated Sept. 21) for the task forces referred to “EO 1100,” which in fact was not quite accurate, as Executive Order 1100 originally was issued in February 2015. The revised order issued in August 2017 (and to which the September backgrounder document refers) is more accurately referred to as “EO 1100-R,” and hence that convention is used here.

NOTE #2: The task force areas were named using SDSU lettering conventions. Given current and ongoing conversations between SDSU and the CO, however, the present document indicates both SDSU and CSU lettering conventions, in hopes of reducing current and future confusion.
GE Area A (SDSU) / GE Area B (CSU): Natural Sciences

Lead Facilitator: Chris Harrison
Participants: Taylor Hye, Doreen Mattingly, Stephen Schellenberg, Kevin Wood

Natural Sciences (subareas include II.A1, II.A2, IV.A)

Natural Sciences use the scientific process to study nature and represent an approach to the study of the universe and its natural laws and phenomena. Students achieve basic scientific literacy and thereby understand the scientific process including the value of observation, hypothesis testing, and experiments in the advance of science. Thus students require a general understanding of fundamental concepts and knowledge accumulated by the natural sciences. From that understanding, students develop an ability to reason about and follow new developments in the natural sciences, and to think in a scientifically informed manner about social and political issues that involve science and technology.

Goals for GE Courses in the Natural Sciences

● Goal 1: Explain basic concepts and theories of the natural sciences.
● Goal 2: Use logic and scientific methods to analyze the natural world and solve problems.
● Goal 3: Argue from multiple perspectives about issues in natural science that have personal and global relevance.
● Goal 4: Use technology in laboratory and field situations to connect concepts and theories with real-world phenomena.

Courses in Physical and Life Sciences must emphasize experimental methodology, the testing of hypotheses, and the power of systematic questioning, rather than only the recall of facts. Courses that emphasize the interdependency of the sciences are especially appropriate for non-science majors.

Courses in these subareas emphasize the perspectives, concepts, principles, theories, and methodologies of the scientific disciplines. Those that have built-in laboratory activity may also qualify for subarea II.A.3 Laboratory Activity (see next section), so long as the course outline clearly distinguishes the laboratory activity from the lecture.

Special cases exist for the following types of courses and the CSU guiding notes should be consulted for such courses.

● Multi-disciplinary and interdisciplinary science courses.
● Physical anthropology courses.
● Physical geography courses.
● Lower-division major preparation courses.

Laboratory Activity (II.A3)

Courses meeting the requirements of this subarea must be associated with a lecture component, either built into the laboratory section itself or connected as a co-requisite or prerequisite. Stand-alone lab courses are designated II.A3 only, and this can only be done when associated with a lecture component, either built into the laboratory course itself or connected as a co-requisite or prerequisite.
Key guidance for consideration as a GE area II.A3 course:

- The course must be associated with a lecture component, either built into the laboratory course itself or connected as a co-requisite or prerequisite.
- The course outline clearly distinguishes the laboratory activity from the lecture.
- Lab manuals are required, and must be explicitly listed in the course outline.

Mathematics and Quantitative Reasoning, (II.A4)
Quantitative reasoning refers to a range of academic capacities that includes learning from data, communicating quantitatively, analyzing evidence and assertions, and employing quantitative intuition. While quantitative reasoning is essential to sciences, other disciplines require the ability to use and comprehend quantitative language. To do this, students require the ability to analyze and interpret data in both scientific and social contexts. By possessing this set of mathematical and problem solving skills, students will be able to engage effectively in quantitative situations arising in life and work.

Courses approved to fulfill this requirement must focus on quantitative analysis and the ability to use and criticize quantitative arguments. Symbolic Logic, Computer Programming, Mathematics for Teachers and survey courses such as Math in Society, were deemed unacceptable to fulfill the Mathematical Concepts and Quantitative Reasoning requirement.

Goals for GE Courses in Quantitative Reasoning

- Goal 1: Apply appropriate computational skills and use basic mathematical concepts to analyze problems in natural and social sciences.
- Goal 2: Use methods of quantitative reasoning to solve and communicate answers to real-world problems.

Learning outcomes

All courses submitted for subarea II.A4 shall ask students to:

- Interpret and communicate quantitative information and mathematical and statistical concepts using language appropriate to the context and intended audience;
- make sense of problems, develop strategies to find solutions, and persevere in solving them;
- reason, model, draw conclusions, and make decisions with quantitative information about problems arising in everyday life, society, and the workplace;
- construct, critique, and evaluate quantitative arguments that utilize mathematical, statistical, and quantitative information;
- use appropriate tools strategically.

The following types of courses have additional learning outcomes, or limitations to their applicability as GE courses in Quantitative Reasoning and the CSU Guiding notes should be consulted for such cases.

- Statistics
- Elementary Statistics
- Computer Sciences
- Survey Courses
- Additional quantitative reasoning courses (e.g. Math for Liberal Arts, Introduction to Mathematical Modeling, Personal Finance…)
- Courses requiring stronger algebra skills (i.e. finite math, college algebra, precalculus)
- Math courses for elementary school teachers.
GE Area B (SDSU) / GE Area D (CSU): Social and Behavioral Sciences

Lead Facilitator: David Marx
Participants: Brian Adams, Cathie Atkins, Jennifer Cosio, Judy Dye, Yusuf Ozturk, Tom Warschauer

1) Definition of Social and Behavioral Sciences

Social and Behavioral Sciences focus on developing both normative and empirical theories to explain social processes and human behavior, conducting empirical research to assess the accuracy of empirical theories and the feasibility of normative ones. Courses within the Social and Behavioral Sciences employ the scientific method, broadly defined, and utilize both quantitative and qualitative techniques to analyze the diversity and complexity of human experience.

**Essential Course Element:** Explore and recognize basic terms, concepts, and domains of the Social and Behavioral Sciences. This element primarily applies to lower division GEs.

**Essential Course Element:** Comprehend diverse theories and methods of the Social and Behavioral Sciences. This element primarily applies to upper division GEs.

**Essential Course Element:** Problems and issues examined in social contexts and institutions

**Courses May Include:** “Identification of human behavioral patterns across space and time and discuss their interrelatedness and distinctiveness” (SDSU General Catalogue, 2018, p. 94).

**Courses May Include:** “Comparative perspective on both Western and non-Western societies” (see the University of California (UC) and California State University (CSU) Guiding Notes for General Education Course Reviewers).

2) Distinction with Areas A, C, and E

**Distinction from Area A:** Courses within Area A focus on the physical world, whereas courses within Area B focus on human behavior, social institutions, and interpersonal and intergroup relations.

**Distinction from Area C:** As a classification framework, courses within Area B are more oriented toward developing and testing theories of behavior and institutions, whereas courses within Area C are more oriented toward understanding human experience and the in-depth study of primary sources to tell meaningful stories and ask questions—sometimes unanswerable—about the human condition.

**Distinction from Area E:** Courses within Area E may include Area B concepts, methods, and evidence, but will do so from a more personal or applied perspective. Area B courses may include some personal or applied perspectives, but the primary focus of Area B courses is on understanding, rather than on skill development or personal growth.

3) Research Methods as Social and Behavioral Sciences GEs: Moving Beyond Techniques

Research methods courses can count as Social and Behavioral Sciences GEs provided they “rise above technique” and “develop the student’s analytical capacity and understanding of social science”
GE Area C (SDSU) / GE Area C (CSU): Arts and Humanities

Lead Facilitator: Elizabeth Pollard
Participants: Greg Durbin, Pamella Lach, Phillip Serrato, Eric Smigel

C1 (Arts) and C2 (Humanities) Originator and Reviewer Guidelines

This document provides guidelines to help originators and reviewers determine whether a proposed course should carry an Arts (C1) or Humanities (C2) designation. It is not intended to replace the policy, but to identify factors to take into consideration when assessing the appropriate classification. In cases where either an originator or reviewer has difficulty identifying the appropriate designation, it is expected that faculty specialists from the relevant areas in the arts and humanities will be consulted. This document draws on EO 1100\(^1\) and the Guiding Notes for General Education Course Reviewers (October 2018).\(^2\)

1. **Medium** - The course subject does not, in and of itself, determine whether a course should be classified as C1 (Arts) or C2 (Humanities)—the different artistic media (art, dance, film, music, theatre, photography, etc.) may serve as the main content for courses in either designation. Neither GE area (C1 or C2) “owns” a medium as a focus of study and course content.

2. **Analysis** - The primary factor in determining the appropriate designation concerns the *mode of analysis* with which students will approach the subject. How the medium is studied in the course and how the students will engage with the medium determine an Arts (C1) or Humanities (C2) designation. Although different kinds of analysis may be deployed within a single course, the distinction between C1 and C2 courses should be determined by the focus of the learning activities (for which, see section 4 below).
   a. **Arts**: C1 courses focus primarily on the aesthetics of the medium. Generally, C1 designates a course that predominantly examines the stylistic and formal qualities of the artistic medium itself, which includes the development and application of vocabulary associated with the critical discourse of the artistic discipline. Although C1 courses may include references to historical, cultural, social, and/or political aspects to contextualize the artistic practice, the focus will remain on technical and aesthetic aspects of the medium.
   b. **Humanities**: C2 courses focus primarily on the context and content of the medium. Generally, C2 designates a course that predominantly examines how the artistic medium explores, among other things, cultural, social, historical, political, and/or economic contexts, issues, and developments. Although C2 courses may include references to stylistic and formal qualities of the medium, the focus will remain on the context and content of the medium.
   c. Determinations of C1 or C2 consider the weight of the *mode of analysis* (between 2a and 2b, here); Originators and reviewers may look to types of texts assigned in the bibliography (see section 6, below) for clarity on the course’s predominant mode of analysis.

3. **Student Learning Outcomes** - The student learning outcomes will also help to determine whether a course is Arts (C1) or Humanities (C2). Although C1 and C2 learning outcomes may overlap, it is expected that the primary focus will be on the development of critical thinking skills appropriate to the mode of analysis (i.e., do the learning outcomes focus on critical engagement with the artistic medium or on what the medium is purported to express?). Some *examples* of how the same medium might have

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\(^1\)For the original EO1100, see [https://www.calstate.edu/EO/E0-1100-rev-8-23-17.html](https://www.calstate.edu/EO/E0-1100-rev-8-23-17.html); For the EO 1100 Revised FAQ, see [https://www.calstate.edu/app/documents/EO-1100-FAQ-Campus.pdf](https://www.calstate.edu/app/documents/EO-1100-FAQ-Campus.pdf).

learning goals specific to C1 or C2, depending on the mode of analysis and desired student learning outcome include:

a. Comics:
   i. C1: Apply a vocabulary for engaging and analyzing, both objectively and subjectively, comics and their accompanying verbal text.
   ii. C1: Identify formal and stylistic innovations in comics and sequential art over time.
   iii. C2: Employ comics to explore the history of a particular time or place.
   iv. C2: Compare the coverage of a particular topic in comics with that topic in different types of sources (for example: comics, as compared with primary sources such as letters, diaries, and autobiographies).

b. Creative Writing
   i. C1: Describe the distinguishing technical features of different poetic forms.
   ii. C1: Compare the formal and aesthetic techniques used for character development in fiction by different writers.
   iii. C2: Analyze the political, cultural, and critical concerns that distinguish diverse works of literature.
   iv. C2: Assess the mutual impact of social history and literary production.

c. Music
   i. C1: Identify salient features of psychedelic rock using appropriate musical terminology.
   ii. C1: Analyze stylistic and structural elements of different musical recordings through critical listening.
   iii. C2: Interpret how literary features of lyrics in hip hop music express cultural identity.

d. Film
   i. C1: Identify the structural and stylistic choices adopted by the film director (of a specific film) using appropriate critical vocabulary.
   ii. C1: Compare/contrast the formal tactics and strategies employed by different film directors, writers, cinematographers, and sound designers.
   iii. C2: Explain how the film noir movies of the 1940s and 1950s reflect the cultural zeitgeist of post WWII America.
   iv. C2: Describe how American science fiction films of the 1950s encode the values, attitudes and discourse of the cold war.

4. Activities - The activities do not, in and of themselves, determine whether a course should be classified as C1 (Arts) or C2 (Humanities). Types of activities in C1 and C2 can be similar; no instructional activity in General Education courses is particular to either Arts or Humanities. Originators should clarify how the activity advances C1 or C2 learning outcomes and reviewers should evaluate accordingly. Activities for both C1 and C2 might include:
   a. Discussions
   b. Readings
   c. Viewings
   d. Listenings

5. Assessments - The assessments do not, in and of themselves, determine whether a course should be classified as C1 (Arts) or C2 (Humanities). Types of assessments in C1 and C2 can be similar; no form of assessment in General Education courses is particular to either Arts or Humanities. Originators should clarify how the assessment measures skills and competencies specific to C1 or C2, and reviewers should evaluate accordingly. Assessments for both C1 and C2 might include:
a. Papers (in-class and out-of-class)
b. Exams (of all sorts)
c. Source analyses
d. Presentations

6. **Bibliography** - A major distinction between C1 and C2 is the bibliography of assigned readings. The preponderance of assigned texts for a course should be written by recognized authorities in the relevant field: Arts (C1) or Humanities (C2). For example, an Arts (C1) course on film would primarily include readings from journals focused on cinema studies, film studies, media studies, etc.; while a Humanities (C2) course on film would incorporate readings from journals focused on history. Students should develop fluency with the critical discourse appropriate to the community of respected scholars and practitioners within a given area of study.

7. **Differences from other GE Areas** - C1 (Arts) and C2 (Humanities) are not difficult to distinguish from other Areas of GE (A, B, and D).³
   a. **Area A (Communication and Critical Thinking)** - Effective communication (both oral and written) and critical thinking are likely significant components of activities and assessments in Area C1 and C2 courses (via presentations, classroom discussions, written assignments); however, learning the specific techniques of effective communication and critical thinking is *not the explicit purpose* of C1 and C2 courses.
   b. **Area B (Physical and Natural Sciences)** - While C1 and C2 courses might focus on the human experience of the physical and natural world (for example, photography and paintings of, or literary analysis of poems inspired by, nature), the focus of C1 and C2 courses does NOT “emphasize the perspectives, concepts, principles, theories, and methodologies of the scientific disciplines” [CSU Guiding Notes for GE Reviewers (October 2018), p. 15].
   c. **Area D (Social and Behavioral Sciences)** - Courses within C1 and C2 are oriented toward understanding human experience using sources to tell meaningful stories and ask questions—sometimes unanswerable—about the human condition; whereas Area D courses are more oriented toward developing and testing theories of behavior and institutions.
   d. **Area E (Lifelong Learning)** - The core tenets of applied social, psychological, and physiological approaches at multiple points of the human lifespan are NOT a focus of C1 and C2 courses. While Area E courses might exist within departments traditionally associated with Arts (C1) and Humanities (C2), it is the pragmatic, across the lifespan, and explicitly applied social, psychological, and physiological emphases that set Area E courses apart from C1 and C2.

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³ This document (Area C portion) uses the Area designations laid out in the CSU Guiding Notes for GE Reviewers (October 2018), p. 5 in which, contrary to the SDSU GE articulation, Area B is Physical and Natural Sciences and Area D is Social and Behavioral Sciences.)
GE Area E (SDSU) / GE Area E (CSU): Lifelong Learning

Lead Facilitator: Allison Vaughn
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1) Definition of Lifelong Learning and Self-Development: courses that meet the learning objectives of Area E draw on findings from the biological, behavioral, and social sciences to study humans from psychological, sociological, and physiological perspectives. This requirement is designed to equip learners for lifelong understanding and development of themselves as integrated physiological, social, and psychological beings. Physical activity may be included, if it is an integral part of the study elements described herein. Content may include topics such as student success strategies, human behavior, sexuality, nutrition, physical and mental health, stress management, information literacy, social relationships and relationships with the environment, as well as implications of death and dying or avenues for lifelong learning. Courses in this area shall focus on the development of skills, abilities and dispositions (see the University of California (UC) and California State University (CSU) Guiding Notes for General Education Course Reviewers; pp. 30-31).

- **Essential Course Element – all courses:** Lifelong learning: While Area E classes do not have to cover human development cradle to grave, they must cover more than one stage of human development or “more than a few years of a human lifespan.”

- **All courses except Physical Education courses:** All three elements (physiological, social, and psychological) must be covered in the course (except Physical Education – see below), but they do not have to be covered in equal portions. The percentage in each group will depend on the course. Proposers should clearly specify how each element is addressed in the learning outcomes.
  - **Essential Course Element:** Sociological: In this context, the relationships between an individual and broader society.
  - **Essential Course Element:** Physiological: The human body as an integrated organism with systemic functions such as movement, nutrition, growth, reproduction, and aging. *Note:* The class does not require students do something physical (i.e., physical activity) but rather the class must address how the subject matter impacts the physiological aspects of development.
  - **Essential Course Element:** Psychological: The study of the mental processes that create consciousness, behavior, emotions, and intelligence.

- **Physical Educations courses:** Physical Education classes can be included in Area E and these classes do not need to cover all three elements. However, students cannot fulfill their Area E requirement through Physical Education classes alone. So, for instance, a student taking two semesters of badminton must also take at least a one-unit class that does cover all three elements of Area E.

2) Distinctions from Areas A, B, and C

- **Distinctions from Area A (Subareas A1-A4):** Courses within Area A (A1-A4) focus on the natural and physical world and will do so from a scientific perspective. Area A courses *may* include some personal or applied perspective, but the primary focus of Area E courses is on lifelong learning skill development and/or self-development/personal growth rather than on understanding the theories and methods behind the physical and natural science.

- **Distinctions from Area B:** Courses within Area B focus on the social and behavioral sciences and will do so from a scientific perspective. Area B courses *may* include some personal or applied perspectives, but the primary focus of Area E courses is on lifelong learning skill development and/or self-development/personal growth rather than on understanding the theories and methods behind the social and behavioral science.
• **Distinctions from Area C**: Courses within Area C focus on arts and humanities and will focus on the aesthetic experience of products of human imagination. Area C courses *may* include some personal or applied perspectives, but the primary focus of Area E courses is on lifelong learning skill development and/or self-development/personal growth rather than on understanding the human experience and the human condition.

3) **Lifelong Learning and Self-Development Beyond a Single Skill**

- Single skills cannot be included in Area E (or for GE generally). Therefore, a 1-unit class on SPSS, for instance, would not be an Area E class. However, a class on learning how to use statistical programs as a lifelong skill *might* be considered for Area E if framed correctly.
- Personal finance classes are no longer considered Area E.
- Classes do not have to cover broad subject matter to be Area E. The subject matter of a class can have a narrow focus as long as the classes addresses the physiological, social, and psychological areas of lifelong development (assuming it is not Physical Education).
- Evidence of military basic training can meet Area E requirements. The CSU encourages campuses to use evidence of military training to satisfy Area E for their students who enroll without a prior certification in GE. Typically, the evidence is the completion of basic training as listed on the veteran’s discharge papers, Form DD-214. All CSU campuses have elected to honor CSU GE Breadth transfer certifications that clear Area E Lifelong Learning and Self-Development with a DD-214.