

**Oakland University
General Education Committee
Annual Report
2024-2025**

Submitted by:

Adina Schneeweis, Ph.D, Professor and Program Director of Journalism
Elizabeth Shesko, Ph.D., Associate Professor of History
and Program Director of International Studies
and
Linda Gamage, General Education Coordinator

Co-Chairs

Adina Schneeweis (CAS)
Elizabeth Shesko (CAS)

Faculty Members

Lauren Childs (SEHS)
Addington Coppin (SBA)
Mary Craig (CAS)
Timothy Donahue (CAS)
Thomas Discenna (CAS)
Debatosh Debnath (SECS)
Priscilla Everett (SON)
Katie Greer (UL)
Yan Ling (SBA)
Stephanie Mabry (SHS)
Kesava Mandalaneni (SOM)

Staff Advising Member

Jade Dang (PAC-FYAC)

Student, Staff, and Ex-Officio Appointments

Marion Brumer (Student Congress)
Cynthia Carver (Co-Chair from GEAC-CAS)
Lauren Fillmore (Registrar Designee)
Linda Gamage (General Education Coordinator)
Kristin Landis-Piwowar (Associate Provost)

Review Work

From April 30, 2024, until April 29, 2025, the committee reviewed and finalized:

- 95 Petitions of Exception
- 6 Course Proposals for 9 attributes
- 46 Transfer Course Reviews
- 1 Non-Student Initiated Transfer Course Reviews

In addition, there were 43 automatic approvals of Petitions of Exception, 19 Petitions of Exception, and 27 Transfer Course Reviews received and finalized without being sent to the committee for review.

In the fall of 2024, the Graphic Design program was revised. DES 2230 added the Writing Intensive in the Major requirements and the course that previously satisfied the Writing Intensive in the Major requirement, DES 4999, was removed from the program. As a result, 7 students who had already taken DES 2230, but hadn't yet taken DES 4999 or met the WIM requirement, were identified and the committee voted to automatically approve petitions for those students.

Courses Approved for the 2025-26 Catalog:

- COM 3302 - DIV
- EC 4950 - CAP
- CDS 4400 - CAP and WIM
- BIO 4974 - CAP and WIM
- PHY 4997 - CAP and WIM
- ML 1100 - GP

Committee Functioning

- The General Education Committee (GEC) held 11 meetings.
- As co-chairs of the GEAC and liaisons to GEC, Jacob Cayanus attended the GEC meetings in fall of 2024 and Cynthia Carver attended in winter of 2025. The co-chairs and coordinators met 9/25/2024 to refine the course proposal review process and determined that the meeting minutes for each committee would be exchanged by sharing them to the Senate Shared Drive Committee Folders ([GEC folder](#), [GEAC folder](#)). The co-chairs and coordinators met again on 4/2/25 to provide updates and review the assessment process for Diversity, Knowledge Applications, and Writing Intensive courses.
- Tom Discenna served as the liaison between the University Committee on Undergraduate Instruction (UCUI) and GEC, attending the UCUI meetings.
- Adina Schneeweis and Linda Gamage attended the General Education Program Revision Ad Hoc Committee (GEPRHC) meetings throughout the year, including the weeklong

work session during the summer of 2024. They provided updates regarding the work, needs, and events between the committees.

- The GEC Handbook, housed on espace, was updated with current processes and helpful links. The chairs and coordinator also worked with CETL to update the Faculty Handbook.
- Adina Schneeweis, Elizabeth Shesko, and Linda Gamage attended the April 16, 2024, PAC meeting. They reviewed POE and TCR processes, presented the updated Automatic Approvals List for POEs, shared updates that will be posted to the website, and provided updated guidelines regarding petitions for the Language and Culture requirement.
- The GEC updated the General Education Requirement section in the catalog in order to be more concise and consistent with the updated webpage.
- Elizabeth Shesko will continue as co-chair of GEC. Tim Donahue was appointed as co-chair beginning winter of 2026.

Committee Communication

- The GEC worked with University Communications and Marketing to add a link to the General Education webpage for the General Education Program Revision Ad Hoc Committee (GEPRHAC) site.
- A subcommittee of Addington Coppin, Jade Dang, Katie Greer, and Renee Ligeski was formed to recommend updated webpage verbiage in an effort to assist students in submitting more complete and robust Petitions of Exception. The GEC approved the recommendation and will update the webpage over the summer.
- The co-chairs sent a letter to the Deans and Chairs summarizing the work of the committee for the academic year 2024-2025.

Policy and Practice Updates

- The committee reviewed and approved an updated Automatic Approval List for POEs:

General Education Petition of Exception Automatic Approvals

Updated and Approved by General Education Committee 9/11/2024

1. Substitution of an upper level OU course not approved for the requirement when it is a continuation of a lower level course that does meet the requirement.
Example: CHM 1450 - General Chemistry II has a prerequisite of CHM 1440 General Chemistry I which satisfies NSTN. If a student takes CHM 1450 without taking CHM 1440, (perhaps transfers Chemistry I, or tests out), a petition to satisfy NSTN would be automatically approved.
2. Adviser or Records error with documentation.

3. Course taken prior to approval for the GE requirement with verification of no substantive content change.
Example: COM 1500 was approved to satisfy LG in the 2020-21 catalog. If a student took the course prior to the catalog, but submitted a POE with a syllabus that is substantively similar to the syllabus approved, the POE will be approved.
 4. ME 4998 and ECE 4998 (Senior Project) for CAP and WIM with verification of the CAP learning outcomes, 8 WI criteria, and Department Approval.
 5. Math courses at a higher level than MTH 1554 (Calculus 1) for FR.
- The Senate Disability Awareness and Literacy Committee requested consideration of adding “disability” to the U.S. Diversity learning outcomes. In Winter 2024, the General Education Committee approved updating the learning outcomes; they were presented to Senate Steering on 10/10/25 and to Senate on 10/17/2025 as an informational item. The learning outcomes have been updated in the catalog and on the website as follows:
 - Knowledge of how diverse value systems and societal structures are influenced by at least two of the following: race, gender, ethnicity, or disability
 - Major challenges and issues these raise in society
 - The University Learning Outcomes (ULOs) were created in 2005 as Cross-Cutting Capacities to be present in all General Education Courses. The GEAC updated the definitions and title to ULOs in 2019. They reside only on the General Education catalog and webpages, are required as part of the General Education Course Proposals, and are used in assessment for a small number of courses. GEPRHAC is considering the use of the ULOs moving forward, and asked GEC who is responsible for updating them. The GEC discussed this and determined that, with revision coming, further updates to the ULOs should be handled by GEPRHAC and moved through the Senate.
 - A subcommittee of Timothy Donahue, Elizabeth Shesko, and Adina Schneeweis worked to provide updated guidelines in order to streamline the process for considering exceptions to the Language and Culture requirement. They met with the Modern Languages and Literatures department to better understand the discipline’s considerations for proficiency and standardized testing. The guidelines were refined after many discussions in committee and continued input from the MLL department. The following was approved by the committee:

Procedures for Testing and Petitions of Exception for the Language and Culture General Education Requirement
(An addition to the “For Students” section of the general education page.)

Students who grew up in a multilingual environment and/or have extensive experience with a non-English language and culture may be able to meet the Language and Culture General Education Requirement through testing, transcripts, a Petition of Exception (POE), or a combination thereof.

Speakers of Spanish, French, or German should take the [relevant CLEP exam](#) and have the results reported to OU's Registrar. Students who have previously taken a different standardized test scored on the ACTFL (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages) scale should follow the procedures below.

For speakers of other languages, a POE with supporting documentation should be submitted at least two semesters prior to graduation to ensure timely evaluation and allow the student to make adjustments to their schedule if necessary. Once the committee has the POE and appropriate documentation, it will review and finalize a decision within eight weeks.

- The preferred documentation is a standardized test scored on the ACTFL (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages) scale.
- Students who attended school abroad in a non-English language through the seventh-grade level or higher can submit transcripts instead of a test.
- Include the following documentation with the POE:
 - Proof of their test scores or transcripts
 - A short explanation of their experience with the language and culture

Suggested Tests:

- When no CLEP test is available, take the Avant STAMP 4S exam, currently available for languages including Arabic, Hebrew, Hindi, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Mandarin, Polish, Portuguese, and Russian.
- For other languages not tested by the CLEP or Avant STAMP 4S exams, contact the General Education coordinator (gened@oakland.edu).

For additional guidance on the Language and Culture Petition of Exception process, please contact the General Education Program Coordinator (gened@oakland.edu).

Guidelines Relating to Testing and Petitions of Exception to the Gen Ed LG Requirement

(These guidelines will not be available on the student-facing webpage but will guide Gen Ed Committee decisions. Once these guidelines are approved, we will work on a list of languages and tests for the coordinator to use.)

The General Education Committee, in consultation with existing OU policies and with the Department of Modern Languages and Literatures, has determined that the following scores are sufficient to meet the General Education Language and Culture requirement through testing:

- OU currently considers students with a [CLEP score of 50](#) or an [AP score of 3](#) to have satisfied the General Education Language and Culture requirement.

- A CLEP score of 50 and an AP score of 3 are considered by experts on language instruction to be equivalent to a score of Intermediate-Mid on the commonly-used American Council of Teachers of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) scale. On Avant's STAMP 4S exam, [a score of 5 corresponds to the ACTFL Intermediate-Mid level](#). For that reason, students with a score of 5 on the Avant STAMP 4S exam are considered as having satisfied the General Education Language and Culture requirement.

For students who need a test in a language not tested by CLEP and AVANT 4S exams, testing options are:

- The [Avant WS](#) exam (covering writing and speaking but not reading and listening). STAMP WS scores are reported on the ACTFL scale, so students should be testing at an Intermediate-Mid level for their petition to be considered.
- The Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) and the Writing Proficiency Test (WPT) offered by [Language Testing International](#) (covering writing, speaking, and listening). OPI and WPT scores are reported on the ACTFL scale, so students should be testing at an Intermediate-Mid level for their petition to be considered.
- The [Avant SuperLanguage Test](#) is available in less common languages by prompting students in English and then sending the responses out to experts in the language. They also offer to develop a test for languages not currently listed. The committee anticipates that these tests will be able to accommodate most languages that students would petition, but the committee will work with the student to find an appropriate alternative if needed.

The webpage, ERN, and background documentation for the committee will be updated accordingly.

- As an effort to bring stop out students back to complete their degrees, in 2021, the GEC approved a blanket POE for students meeting specific criteria to use the previous General Education Requirements. One of the criteria was that the students took courses between 2000 and 2020. Paul Battle requested an update to the criteria to allow students who matriculated prior to 2000. The committee approved the following:

Students who have matriculated prior to 2000 can use the General Education requirements that were in place prior to 2005 for degree completion.

This applies to the following student population:

- Admitted to Oakland University prior to the fall of 2005
- Achieved senior status by completing 90 credits before winter of 2021

- Satisfied at least 6 of the 9 previous general education requirements:
 - ART
 - LIT
 - LG
 - WCIV
 - IS (or GP if still needed)
 - SS ○ MLCS (or FR if still needed)
 - NST (or NSTN if still needed)
 - ETH (or DIV if still needed)