

Oakland University
General Education Program Revision Ad-Hoc Committee (GEPRAHC)
Annual Report
2025-2026

Co-Chairs

Laila Guessous (SECS)
Maria Paino (CAS)

Voting Members

Yongjin Lu (CAS)
Lori Ostergaard (CAS)
Timothy Donahue (CAS)
Elizabeth Shesko (CAS)
Michelle Hammond (SBA)
Tracey Chan (SON)
Amanda Lynch (SHS)
Cynthia Carver (SEHS)
Anthony Guest (MTD)
Amanda Hess (UL)

Non-Voting Members

Zachary Barclay (PAC-FYAC)
Jason Taylor (CAS Advising)
Kurtis Kirkpatrick (SECS Advising)
Paul Battle (Registrar)
Elaine Carey (Dean, CAS)
Dawn Aubry (Vice President of Enrollment Mgmt)
Kristin Landis-Piwowar (EVPAA)
Susanne Condron (OIRADA)
Linda Gamage (GEC Coordinator)
Elizabeth Kattner (CAS/SMTD)
Adolfo Campoy-Cubillo (CAS)
Adina Schneeweis (CAS)
Kathy Battles (Faculty Fellow)

The GEPRHAC committee was set up by the OU Senate to investigate options and propose recommendations for a revision of the General Education Program at Oakland University.

This year the committee made meaningful progress towards a revised program. We want to share what we've learned and accomplished, and what the next steps are. We remain grateful for

the broad engagement of the campus community in the revision process and look forward to continued collaboration. Over the course of the academic year, we routinely met as a committee (i.e., at *least* twice a month, but often every week) and regularly shared our work with units (i.e., assemblies, deans, chairs, department meetings). Transparency remains a key feature of our committee's mission.

From Three to Two Models

During the fall, the committee presented two revised models to the OU community, developed from the extensive feedback gathered on the three potential models in 2025-2026. We visited assembly meetings across the Schools and Colleges, met with Department groups and campus organizations, and consulted Professional Advisory Boards about what employers value in graduates with a strong general education. Through the winter semester, we gathered the feedback from faculty, students and staff, then spent considerable time organizing and analyzing what we heard. We also welcomed Kate McConnell from the AAC&U to campus, whose experience and insights further enriched committee discussions.

Where There is Real Consensus

The survey revealed areas of genuine, substantial agreement, representing significant forward movement. They represent a shared vision for what kinds of experiences we want for our undergraduate students.

- A First Year Experience that combines student success components and academic learning was enthusiastically embraced across campus.
- The new category of Human Communication and Connection also found broad support as the campus recognized the value of explicitly teaching how to communicate and collaborate.
- The strong support for Writing as a cornerstone to General Education continued, including support for a new Writing Enhanced course designation.
- Thematic based course groupings resonated widely as a way to meet student interest while building genuinely multidisciplinary perspectives.

The Work Continues

We acknowledge that there is still work to be done where agreement has not yet emerged. Two other points represented more substantial points of contention

- The shape of the First Year Experience is still being negotiated. While everyone agrees on the value of a First Year Experience, faculty more strongly favor a text-based version, while students staff favor an experiential approach. This is a meaningful difference that deserves a meaningful resolution
- Theme based clusters were supported by faculty, students, and staff, but there were differences in both how those should be structured and over the potential themes. The committee is working to navigate these findings while balancing the demands of curriculum coherence and student choice.
- The inclusion of modern language as a stand-alone requirement does not have clear consensus. The committee continues to work on this substantive question.

- There is disagreement about the program size. The total number of courses and credits in the program continues to be a point of significant disagreement, particularly for high-credit programs where added requirements can have real consequences for students.

During her visit, Kate McConnell reminded the campus community that these kinds of disagreements are not failures of the process, but rather result from a commitment to build something that the campus can genuinely support. Curriculum revision at the scale of general education can reveal real differences in values and priorities that require thoughtful consideration to create a program that serves the needs of many.

Moving Forward

The committee is moving forward on two fronts this summer:

- **FYE Pilot:** We are launching a small pilot of the experiential First Year Experience course while also engaging in exploratory palling for a possible second-year text-based course. Running both approaches will give us real evidence to inform the final decision.
- Pilots will be focused on student success components, but they will also include things related to our proposed FYE (e.g., an experiential learning project) and Transformative Text (e.g., TT specific assignments) courses. Pilots are existing general education courses, so first-year students will get GE credit.

Piloters for FYE: George Sanders (SOC), Matthew May (SOC), Nicholas DiPucchio (HST), and Christine Stover (COM)

Piloters for TT: Jennifer Law-Sullivan (LIT) and Timothy Donahue (ENG)

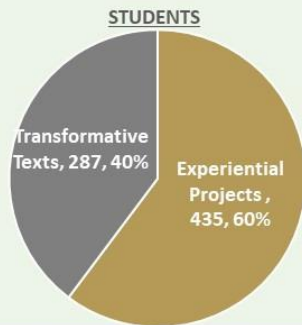
Summer Sub-Committee: Anthony Guest, Amanda Hess, Adina Schneeweis, Cynthia Carver, and Maria Paino. Kathy Battles, Laila Guessous, Susanne Condron, and Kurtis Kirkpatrick are also participating.

- **Student Success Components:** Work is underway to develop the student success elements of the FYE to integrate what skills and knowledge students most desire as they begin their college experience.

Survey Data

The following Graphic was created by Susanne Condron and depicts data from faculty and students regarding the FYE, student success components, and themes of interest for the integrative portion of the revised general education program.

Which version of the First Year Experience (FYE) course do you prefer?



Which topics do you think are the most important to include in the student success portion of the FYE? (Student responses)



Study skills



Time management



Career readiness



Student organizations



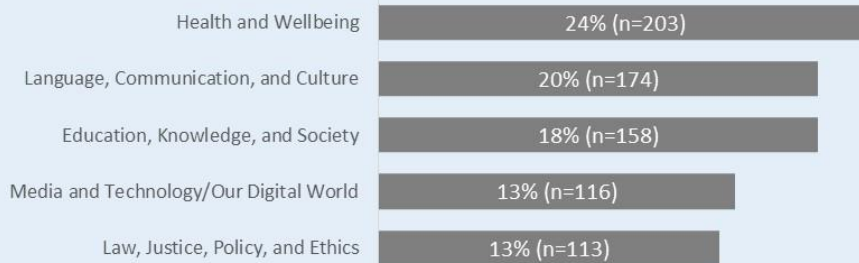
Using Technology (Moodle, etc.)



Connecting with Faculty

Which themes do you find exciting or appealing for creating integrative experiences and organizing interdisciplinary coursework?

Top Themes Identified by **STUDENTS** (n=864)



Top Themes Identified by **FACULTY** (n=172)

