

The University Conversation on General Education 2006 Report

Introduction

In the spring of 2006 the FGCU General Education Council initiated a new concept in university collaboration with the staging of *The University Conversation on General Education*. Members of the community, students, staff, and faculty joined in two forums to share their perceptions of the FGCU General Education Program. Their discussions were guided by the following set of questions:

- What do you believe is the purpose of a General Education Program?
- What types of courses should be included in a General Education Program?
- Should the General Education Program prepare students for their majors? If so, how?
- Should the General Education Program play a role in preparing students to be productive and responsible citizens? If so, how?
- What do employers and other communities external to the university expect from a graduate of FGCU, and what is the role of General Education in meeting these expectations?

The goals of the University Conversation were twofold: (1) to provide an opportunity for all constituents to express their opinions about General Education at Florida Gulf Coast University and (2) to increase the level of input to the General Education Council, thereby improving the Council's ability to make effective and broadly supported recommendations for change

The General Education Council has analyzed the results of the Conversation to identify salient issues, beliefs, and goals expressed by the participants. An explanation of the methodology employed and the results of the Conversation follow.

Methodology

The intent of the University Conversation was to capitalize on the experiences and opinions of key constituents of the general education curriculum. Consequently, a methodology was employed that took full advantage of the individual and collective knowledge and perspectives of participants. Each participant was a representative of at least one group of constituents: students, faculty, staff, administrators, and community members, including employers and volunteer organizations.

Upon arriving, participants received a colored card corresponding to the constituency he/she represented. The seats at each table were also color-coded, guaranteeing that every discussion group included representatives from each constituency. Following brief introductory comments by University leaders, discussion groups engaged in a conversation guided by a facilitator and prompted by the questions delineated above. This process yielded valuable information while also demonstrating the importance of learning in action. Diverse group membership provided a unique opportunity to share multiple perspectives and to process that information in a synergistic manner. The civil exchange of views on general education from diverse constituents provided invaluable information to the General Education Council on both the unique and shared expectations of the General Education Program stakeholders.

Conversation facilitators were selected and trained in advance to insure consistency in the group discussions. Most facilitators participated in both sessions. Notes summarizing the discussion of

the five questions were recorded and submitted by each facilitator. In addition, participants were asked to complete the Participant Feedback Sheet prior to leaving the venue. This sheet gave participants the opportunity to reflect privately on the discussion and to offer additional feedback. Finally, a debriefing session with all facilitators was conducted following both forums.

The University Conversation on General Education used a qualitative approach to obtain descriptive data about the General Education program. A semi-structured interview technique was used to ensure that the same information was covered in all of the focus group interviews. Focus group interviews were used because they are very stimulating and the resulting group synergy has the potential of uncovering ideas and constructs that might be missed in individual interviews. When participants have the opportunity to hear other participants' responses, they then have the opportunity to make additional comments that go beyond their original response. This provides high quality data in a social context where people can consider their own views in context of the views of others.

Participation

The Conversation was described and participation was solicited through the campus-wide distribution of a flyer (Appendix A). In addition, the General Education Director, the General Education Council Chair and representative Council members extended in-person invitations at meetings of the FGCU Faculty Senate, Deans Council, Senate Leadership Team, Advisory Council, Staff Advisory Council, Student Government, Administrative Services, Student Services, Center for Civic Engagement, and the leaderships teams for each of the five Colleges. Campus-wide email invitations were sent through the Office of Academic Affairs. Copies of the forum questions were distributed in advance.

Two separate Conversation forums were held, on March 30 and April 5, 2006. At each forum, there were 8-10 people per table.

March 30: 11 students, 13 faculty members, 10 staff/administration, 2 community members

April 5: 39 students, 14 faculty members, 11 staff/administration, 3 community members

Data and Analysis

The Colaizzi Interpretive Approach, as outlined by Colaizzi (1978), was used for data analysis.¹ The Colaizzi approach involves: 1) reading discussion notes to get a sense of the whole; 2) extracting significant statements from the discussion notes; 3) organizing the significant statements into themes; and 4) abstracting themes to a higher level and sorting them into theme clusters. Each abstracted theme and theme cluster was referred back to the original notes to validate accuracy and fit.

Responses for each of the five questions were summarized to encompass the general flavor of the responses. This resulted in a shorter but more compact list of responses for each question (Appendix B). The individual written responses on the Participant Feedback Sheet were summarized using the same process (Appendix C).

¹ Colaizzi, P. (1978). Psychological research as the phenomenologist views it. In R. Vaile and M. King (Eds.), *Existential phenomenological alternatives for psychology* (pp. 48-71). New York: Oxford University Press.

A second analysis was completed by reviewing both the Composite Facilitator Report and the Summary of Individual Participant Written Feedback. From this summarized grouping of responses, distinct themes were identified and organized into six categories: knowledge base, disciplined behavior, skills/competencies, community involvement/diversity, job preparedness, and faculty expectations and standards (Appendix D).

Findings

The following summaries of each of the six categories reflect the general content of the responses in each of the categories.

Knowledge Base – Participants noted the need to introduce students to the nature of the various academic disciplines as well as interdisciplinary learning. It was emphasized that local, national, and global issues need to be woven into content areas so that students are able to experience concrete and practical applications for their learning.

Disciplined Behavior – Participants indicated that the two years of General Education need to provide opportunities for students to develop effective personal characteristics such as self-discipline, responsibility, respectfulness, open-mindedness, time management, accountability, trustworthiness, and ethical behavior.

Skills/Competencies – Participants strongly supported a General Education Program that is focused more on the development of skills/competencies than on course content. Participant responses indicated that they considered content to be of great importance, but also consistently identified the need for the competencies to be taught across the curriculum, and that the General Education Program should provide an arena in which students develop proficiency in skills or competencies such as writing, reading comprehension, listening, public speaking, mathematics, information retrieval, and use of technology. Also noted in this area is the need for students to develop skills in working with groups, effectively dealing with conflict, and learning to adapt to change. In addition, participants noted that critical thinking and decision making grow out of these competencies and are major expectations for the General Education experience.

Community Involvement/Diversity – Participants strongly endorsed education that provides multi-cultural, global, and ecological perspectives, a clear understanding of one's role in a democracy, and the development of leadership skills and the ability to effect change.

Job Preparedness – Participants linked the information in this category with the behaviors and competencies noted in the previous categories. In order for students to become prepared for the workplace, they need to be exposed to a variety of careers, broadly experience world and community issues, and learn to be productive and responsible community members.

Faculty Expectations and Standards – Participants reported their belief that the development of competencies is imparted more through instructors' expectations/standards than through the content of the curriculum. An open environment for learning and expressing ideas is essential for the educational process.

Conclusions

The participants supported General Education as a university experience that should help students master a well-rounded, basic body of knowledge, skills, and dispositions that will (a) become the foundation for a variety of major academic areas and (b) provide a basis for life-long learning. *The Conversation on General Education* confirmed that General Education is complex, involving much more than the compilation of a list of courses regardless of how carefully and thoughtfully they might be selected. Indeed, a General Education Program is more than the curriculum. It is essentially a culture. Implicit in the development of this culture is the necessity for continued communication among all concerned constituents (students, faculty, staff, administration, the Library, Student services, and the external community) so that a general understanding of both the connectedness among the disciplines and the growth of necessary knowledge, skills, and dispositions can be collectively and purposefully developed in the FGCU General Education Program.

The Conversation Report and Appendices are available in a folder on the FGCU Marlin SHARE drive: Faculty_Governance\Faculty Senate Teams\General Education Council

Appendix A: Flyer for *The Conversation on General Education*

Appendix B: Composite Facilitator Report

Appendix C: Summary of Individual Participant Written Feedback

Appendix D: Emerging Themes Drawn from Appendix B and C

Appendix A – Flyer for *The Conversation on General Education*

[..\General Education Program Review\2009 Program Review\Appendix A - Gen Ed flyer.pdf](#)

Appendix B – Summary of Group Feedback

GENERAL EDUCATION CONVERSATION DATA

Question 1: What do you believe is the purpose of a General Education Program
Transition to College
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Bridge gap between high school and higher education</i> • <i>Expand on high school skills</i> • <i>Learn common academic language</i>
Unique FGCU Culture
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Embody University's values</i> • <i>Reflect FGCU's goal of engaged learning</i> • <i>Reflect FGCU's goal of interdisciplinary learning</i> • <i>Foster camaraderie through required courses</i>
Foundation Skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Provide common knowledge base</i> • <i>Bring students to the same level</i> • <i>Provide listening skills</i> • <i>Provide opportunity to think</i> • <i>Provide leadership skills</i>
Foundation for Specific Disciplines
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Provide introduction to majors</i> • <i>Provide basic skills in preparation for majors</i> • <i>Provide knowledge of subject areas</i> • <i>Offer common prerequisites for majors as required by State</i>
Variety of Courses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Provide breadth of experience</i> • <i>Provide courses other than major area of interest</i> • <i>Offer opportunity for growth where one is weak</i>
Preparation for career/Expectations of Employers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Exposure to different careers</i> • <i>Prepare students for life and career changes</i> • <i>Emphasize importance of disciplined behavior</i>
Lifelong Learning
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Provide well-rounded perspectives</i> • <i>Broaden horizons</i> • <i>Enhance quality of life</i> • <i>Learn how to learn</i> • <i>Learn how to think critically</i> • <i>Learn how to make good choices</i>
Educated Citizenry
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Provide a multicultural perspective</i> • <i>Enhance appreciation of diversity</i> • <i>Provide a global viewpoint</i> • <i>Provide knowledge of social issues</i> • <i>Encourage students to consider becoming stewards of society</i> • <i>Foster good decision-making regarding public policies</i> • <i>Provide experience with civic engagement</i> • <i>Provide leadership skills</i> • <i>Enhance ability to function fully in a democratic society</i> • <i>Demonstrate importance of information literacy with respect to decision-making</i>
Personal Development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Promote ability to challenge one's ideas</i> • <i>Provide exposure to great thinkers</i> • <i>Promote tolerance for ambiguity</i>
Question 2: What types of courses should be included in a General Education Program?
Pedagogy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Clarify the purpose of each General Education course</i> • <i>Integrate service learning/civic engagement</i>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage interaction in class • Provide safe environment for learning and expressing ideas • Integrate components of learning academy • Infuse writing and oral communication throughout the curriculum • Integrate teaching of competencies throughout the curriculum • Provide opportunity for students to work in groups • Avoid providing courses that are strictly remedial • Offer face-to-face rather than distance learning courses • Avoid having faculty teach outside their discipline • Provide faculty development opportunities <p><i>Encourage dialog between General Education faculty and upper division faculty</i></p>	
<p>Structure of General Education Program</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conform to requirements of the State of Florida • Provide tiered level of courses • Eliminate duplication with major courses • Consider that fine tuning of FGCU's General Education program may disadvantage transfer students 	
<p>Courses that Provide/Address</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multicultural perspective • Diversity (in broadest sense) issues • Different points of view • Prejudice and fears • Promote good citizenship • Knowledge of US government • Living in a democratic society • Working with others • Contact with other students • Leadership development • Dealing with conflict • Promoting good citizenship • Broad experience • Components of a learning academy • Safe environment to learn, express ideas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nature of different disciplines • Introduction to majors • Values • Connecting issues with ethics • Social issues • Foreign language studies • Aesthetic appreciation (art, music) • Environmental perspective/activism • Understanding of current issues in science and technology • Science lab experience • Practical application of mathematics • Knowledge of world geography • Interdisciplinary perspective • Historical perspective
<p>Courses that Teach Competencies</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FGCU General Education competencies (written and oral communication, quantitative reasoning, critical thinking) • Listening skills • Professional and technical writing • Public speaking skills • Basic computer skills • Information literacy • Library skills • Lower tier research skills • Reading and comprehension skills 	
<p>Independent Thinking</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make decisions after considering alternatives • Develop and defend one's ideas and beliefs through cogent argument • Develop deep critical thinking skills (philosophy) 	
<p>Personal Development</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop self-confidence • Learn to balance life responsibilities • Appreciate basic fitness (health and wellness) 	
<p>Question 3: Should the General Education Program prepare students for their majors? If so, how?</p>	
<p>Provide Basic Skills Set</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General Education competencies prepare students for majors • Need to acquire basic competency skills to take full membership in the academy • Prepare students to be ready to learn and think on their own • Encourage independent learning • Provide breadth of perspective • Teach speech and listening skills • Teach technology skills • Teach information literacy skills 	

Connection of General Education with Major
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide broad overview for preparation for any major, rather than for specific majors • Keep General Education general – it is a discovery process • Students with focus need a more structured course arrangement that lead to majors • Explore taste for different disciplines • Need good advising • Need collaboration between General Education and major faculty
Assistance with Career Choices
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teach students to make a good living but also to live well • Provide a career exploration course • Infuse career information in courses
Nature of General Education Program
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need coherence among courses • Too many courses reduce core learning • Provide a balance between required and elective courses • Eliminate distance learning courses in first two years since they diminish human interaction • Relate writing assignments to students' subject areas • Provide civic engagement opportunities • General Education is more than a curriculum - need contributions from advising, housing, student services
Question 4: Should the General Education Program play a role in preparing students to be productive and responsible citizens? If so, how?
FGCU Culture
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing responsible and engaged citizens is an FGCU goal, and therefore is also a General Education goal • General Education should contribute to FGCU's culture of civic engagement • The University should be an agent for change – importance of developing community leaders who can make a difference
Curriculum
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a sense of community • The curriculum provides a context that allows students to become involved in the community • Developing responsible citizens should be inherent in the curriculum • Teach students to be effective members of a group • Incorporate local, national, and global issues in classes • Weave ethics into General Education courses • Importance of global communication/links to other universities • Teach tolerance • General Education program needs coherence – faculty should avoid concentrating only on their own areas of interest
Civic Engagement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General Education courses should be tied to service learning goals • Acquaint students with values of service to the community • Exposure to volunteerism is needed for students to become civic-minded after graduation • Engagement with the external community brings awareness of the needs of the disadvantaged • General Education should support the American Democracy Project
Co-curriculum
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General Education exists beyond the classroom • Student services has a role General Education as partner with faculty • Travel is important in the learning process • Student Government has an important role to play in General Education
Courses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Courses that help students become more informed and active voters are valuable • Important to provide courses that present all sides of current civic issues and have service learning components • Provide a course in how democracy works
Skills/Behavior
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide skills needed to become engaged citizens and active voters • Provide knowledge of how local government works • Teach good citizenship skills • Develop agents of change • Learn how to learn • Learn how to find information when needed

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Develop entrepreneurial skills</i> • <i>Learn to adapt to change</i> • <i>Learn to be productive and responsible</i> • <i>Learn importance of civility</i> • <i>Overcome inability to cope with not getting what you want</i> 	
Education vs. Indoctrination	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Education can't force values –need to expose students to them</i> • <i>Educate open-minded people who can use critical thinking skills to influence change</i> • <i>Educate productive citizens rather than indoctrinate them</i> • <i>Explore differences rather than “teach” tolerance and virtue</i> • <i>Learn to articulate one's values and defend them</i> • <i>Train for a job, but educate for life</i> 	
Question 5: What do employers and other communities external to the university expect from a graduate of FGCU, and what is the role of General Education in meeting those expectations?	
Competencies Expected	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>General Education competencies (written and oral communication, quantitative reasoning, critical thinking)</i> • <i>Information literacy – knowledge of how to access, evaluate, and use information</i> • <i>Listening skills</i> • <i>Basic computer skills</i> • <i>Creativity</i> • <i>Leadership skills</i> • <i>“Soft” skills preferable to technical skills, which can be more easily taught on the job</i> 	
Qualities Expected	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Common sense</i> • <i>Lifelong learner</i> • <i>Well-rounded citizen</i> • <i>Team players</i> • <i>Comfortable when not in charge</i> • <i>Punctuality</i> • <i>Accountability</i> • <i>Trustworthiness</i> • <i>Respectfulness</i> • <i>Interpersonal skills</i> • <i>Self-discipline</i> • <i>Responsibility for actions</i> • <i>Self-starter/self-directed</i> • <i>Good work habits/work ethic</i> • <i>Reliability</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Ethical behavior</i> • <i>Alertness</i> • <i>Skepticism</i> • <i>Agent of change</i> • <i>Collaboration</i> • <i>Practical social niceties</i> • <i>Tolerance</i> • <i>Open-mindedness</i> • <i>Flexibility and adaptability</i> • <i>Ability to diffuse difficult situations (conflict management)</i> • <i>Civil discourse</i> • <i>Time management</i> • <i>Willingness to improve</i> • <i>Good comportment</i> • <i>Cooperation</i>
Community/Diversity	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Able to communicate with people from different arenas/backgrounds</i> • <i>Awareness of cultural differences</i> • <i>Interact well with people in the community</i> • <i>Respect for others</i> 	
General Education Culture	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>General Education sets the tone for the entire campus</i> • <i>The “hidden curriculum” is important – teaches integrity, respect, ethics</i> • <i>FGCU is a microcosm of the employment world – it sets behavioral expectations</i> • <i>The General Education program should have coherence and not be a checklist of courses</i> • <i>General Education should require attendance and hold students responsible for their work</i> 	

Appendix C – Summary of Individual Participant Written Feedback

GENERAL EDUCATION CONVERSATION DATA SUMMARY

Culture of FGCU's General Education Program
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FGCU's General Education program should have its own "brand," and stand for something • Conveying values is an important component of a General Education curriculum • Are imparted through instructors' expectations/standards, not through the content of the curriculum • Need to model integrity and respect – leaders, not mission or vision, set the tone •
Competencies/Skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Importance of General Education competencies (written and oral communication, quantitative reasoning, critical thinking) • All General Education courses should stress General Education competencies • Focus on skills sets, not courses • Emphasize good writing – provide practical subjects that students must research • Teach computer skills • Teach public speaking skills • Encourage independent thinking, challenging preconceptions • Need basic research methods/information literacy course for sophomores • Provide mandatory library instruction • Teach leadership skills • Encourage aesthetic experience (music, art) • Teach healthy lifestyle skills • Require ethics with a high level of critical thinking (ethics, gender studies)
Pedagogy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open dialog among faculty, including General Education faculty, for cross-disciplinary communication to see connections across General Education disciplines • Demonstrate connectedness across General Education courses and provide relevant examples from real life Faculty should help students become responsible for making connections among courses • Teach competencies across the curriculum • Problem of faculty teaching out of their disciplines • Provide a mix of learning styles (distance learning and face-to-face) • Problems with distance learning courses – HUM 2510 not valuable as taught • Encourage group work in problem solving
Diversity
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide exposure to different (including foreign) cultures • Require foreign language • Promote global perspective, awareness of world affairs • Provide a variety of content/experiences • Provide skills for living with others – tolerance • Interdisciplinary courses enhance interaction among students from different backgrounds and majors
Civic Engagement/Service Learning
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare for citizenship • Learn how to live in a democratic society • Provides knowledge of how government works • Service learning can support nearly all learning experiences • Lack of clarity regarding how civic engagement fits in to FGCU experience • Need to reduce service learning requirements –include in one three-credit course • Service learning poses transportation problems for students
Preparation for Life/Careers

- Prepare for life of engagement, activity, and choices
- Preparation for daily living – anthropological knowledge
- Prepare students to be productive and responsible
- Provide career exploration course with service learning as internship course
- Include aspects of business in curriculum along with ethics to prepare students for life
- Get feedback from employers regarding what FGCU students should know/embody after graduation

Nature of General Education Program

- General Education is the foundation of FGCU's academic quality
- General Education should be an integrated/coherent program
- Keep General Education "general"
- General Education is the scaffolding on which discipline knowledge and skills are built
- Provide flexibility in curricular offerings
- Expand the number of humanities courses
- General Education embodies more than curriculum
- Seek co-curriculum linkage with Student Affairs
- General Education should be more vigorous
- Need to keep enrollment in General Education courses at appropriate level to educate successfully
- General Education should be completed in the first two years
- Seek to understand thinking of the current generation and pros and cons of current times
- Value of General Education program not appreciated till later in life

Links between General Education and Major

- General Education gives exposure to many subject areas
- Address the conflict between students' interest in early specialization and faculty/administrators' commitment to mastering competencies
- Good advising will help students complete their degree faster

Assessment

- Need to assess whether General Education program meets its goals
- Courses should be evaluated to ensure that they are covering the competencies
- Avoid use of standardized tests

Appendix D – Emerging Themes Drawn from Appendix B and C

GENERAL EDUCATION CONVERSATION DATA SUMMARY

Knowledge Base/ Breadth of Experience

- *Bridge gap between high school and higher education*
- *Expand on high school skills*
- *Learn common academic language/ Provide common knowledge base/ Bring students to the same level*
- *Interdisciplinary learning*
- *Provide introduction to majors/ Provide basic skills in preparation for majors/ Provide knowledge of subject areas*
- *Nature of different disciplines*
- *Introduction to majors*
- *Historical perspective*
- *Knowledge of world geography*
- *Practical application of mathematics*
- *Understanding of current issues in science and technology*
- *Encourage independent learning*
- *Relate writing assignments to students' subject areas*
- *Importance of global communication/links to other universities*
- *Weave ethics into General Education courses*
- *Incorporate local, national, and global issues in classes*
- *Provide breadth of perspective/ Provide breadth of experience*
- *Science lab experience*
- *Aesthetic appreciation (art, music)*
- *Foreign language studies*
- *Broaden horizons*
- *Provide well-rounded perspectives*

Disciplined Behavior

- *Learn to balance life responsibilities*
- *Develop self-confidence*
- *Appreciate basic fitness (health and wellness)*
- *Prepare students to be ready to learn and think on their own*
- *Common sense*
- *Lifelong learner*
- *Well-rounded citizen*
- *Team players*
- *Comfortable when not in charge*
- *Punctuality*
- *Accountability*
- *Trustworthiness*
- *Respectfulness*
- *Interpersonal skills*
- *Self-discipline*
- *Responsibility for actions*
- *Self-starter/self-directed*
- *Good work habits/work ethic*
- *Reliability*
- *Ethical behavior*
- *Alertness*
- *Skepticism*
- *Agent of change*
- *Collaboration*
- *Practical social niceties*
- *Tolerance*
- *Open-mindedness*
- *Flexibility and adaptability*
- *Ability to diffuse difficult situations (conflict management)*

- *Civil discourse*
- *Time management*
- *Willingness to improve*
- *Good comportment*
- *Cooperation*
- *Learn importance of civility*
- *Overcome inability to cope with not getting what you want*
- *Enhance quality of life*
- *Values*

Critical Thinking/Decision Making

- *Provide opportunity to think*
- *Learn how to think critically*
- *Demonstrate importance of information literacy with respect to decision-making*
- *Learn how to make good choices*
- *Promote ability to challenge one's ideas*
- *Provide exposure to great thinkers*
- *Make decisions after considering alternatives*
- *Develop and defend one's ideas and beliefs through cogent argument/Learn to articulate one's values and defend them*
- *Develop deep critical thinking skills (philosophy)*
- *Educate open-minded people who can use critical thinking skills to influence change*

Social Issues/Community Involvement/ Service Learning

- *Provide a multicultural perspective/ Enhance appreciation of diversity/ Diversity (in broadest sense) issues/ Awareness of cultural differences/ Explore differences rather than "teach" tolerance and virtue*
- *Provide a global viewpoint*
- *Provide knowledge of social issues*
- *Encourage students to consider becoming stewards of society*
- *Foster good decision-making regarding public policies*
- *Provide experience with civic engagement*
- *Enhance ability to function fully in a democratic society/ Provide a course in how democracy works*
- *Provide leadership skills*
- *Promote good citizenship/ Provide skills needed to become engaged citizens and active voters/ Courses that help students become more informed and active voters are valuable*
- *Knowledge of US government/Living in a democratic society/ Provide knowledge of how local government works*
- *Environmental perspective/activism*
- *Develop a sense of community*
- *Respect for others*
- *Interact well with people in the community/Able to communicate with people from different arenas/backgrounds*
- *Develop agents of change*
- *Important to provide courses that present all sides of current civic issues and have service learning components*
- *Integrate service learning/civic engagement*
- *General Education courses should be tied to service learning goals*
- *Acquaint students with values of service to the community*
- *Exposure to volunteerism is needed for students to become civic-minded after graduation*
- *Engagement with the external community brings awareness of the needs of the disadvantaged*
- *General Education should support the American Democracy Project*
- *Teach tolerance*

Skills/Competencies

- *Provide listening skills*
- *Provide leadership skills*
- *Learn how to learn*
- *Promote tolerance for ambiguity*

- *Dealing with conflict*
- *Information literacy*
- *Public speaking skills*
- *Basic computer skills*
- *Reading and comprehension skills*
- *Professional and technical writing*
- *Teach technology skills*
- *Learn how to learn*
- *Learn to adapt to change*
- *Teach students to be effective members of a group*
- *Lower tier research skills*

Job Preparedness

- *Exposure to different careers*
- *Prepare students for life and career changes*
- *Emphasize importance of disciplined behavior*
- *Broad experience*
- *Provide a career exploration course*
- *Infuse career information in courses*
- *Train for a job, but educate for life*
- *Develop entrepreneurial skills*
- *Learn to be productive and responsible*

Faculty Expectations

- *General Education sets the tone for the entire campus*
- *The "hidden curriculum" is important – teaches integrity, respect, ethics*
- *FGCU is a microcosm of the employment world – it sets behavioral expectations*
- *The General Education program should have coherence and not be a checklist of courses*
- *General Education is the scaffolding on which discipline knowledge and skills are built*
- *General Education embodies more than curriculum*
- *Are imparted through instructor's expectations/standards, not through the content of the curriculum*