

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> • <i>Encourage interaction in class</i> • <i>Provide safe environment for learning and expressing ideas</i> • <i>Integrate components of learning academy</i> • <i>Infuse writing and oral communication throughout the curriculum</i>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 • Encourage dialog between General Education faculty and upper division faculty 	
Structure of General Education Program	
<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 	
Courses that Provide/Address	
<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
Courses that Teach Competencies	
<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 	
Independent Thinking	
<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) 	
Personal Development	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop self-confidence • Learn to balance life responsibilities • Appreciate basic fitness (health and wellness) 	
Question 3: Should the General Education Program prepare students for their majors? If so, how?	
Provide Basic Skills Set	
<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"> • <i>Teach students to make a good living but also to live well</i> • <i>Provide a career exploration course</i> • <i>Infuse career information in courses</i>
Nature of General Education Program
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Need coherence among courses</i> • <i>Too many courses reduce core learning</i> • <i>Provide a balance between required and elective courses</i> • <i>Eliminate distance learning courses in first two years since they diminish human interaction</i> • <i>Relate writing assignments to students' subject areas</i> • <i>Provide civic engagement opportunities</i> • <i>General Education is more than a curriculum - need contributions from advising, housing, student services</i>
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"> • <i>Developing responsible and engaged citizens is an FGCU goal, and therefore is also a General Education goal</i> • <i>General Education should contribute to FGCU's culture of civic engagement</i> • <i>The University should be an agent for change – importance of developing community leaders who can make a difference</i>
Curriculum
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Develop a sense of community</i> • <i>The curriculum provides a context that allows students to become involved in the community</i> • <i>Developing responsible citizens should be inherent in the curriculum</i> • <i>Teach students to be effective members of a group</i> • <i>Incorporate local, national, and global issues in classes</i> • <i>Weave ethics into General Education courses</i> • <i>Importance of global communication/links to other universities</i> • <i>Teach tolerance</i> • <i>General Education program needs coherence – faculty should avoid concentrating only on their own areas of interest</i>
Civic Engagement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>General Education courses should be tied to service learning goals</i> • <i>Acquaint students with values of service to the community</i> • <i>Exposure to volunteerism is needed for students to become civic-minded after graduation</i> • <i>Engagement with the external community brings awareness of the needs of the disadvantaged</i> • <i>General Education should support the American Democracy Project</i>
Co-curriculum
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>General Education exists beyond the classroom</i> • <i>Student services has a role General Education as partner with faculty</i> • <i>Travel is important in the learning process</i> • <i>Student Government has an important role to play in General Education</i>
Courses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Courses that help students become more informed and active voters are valuable</i> • <i>Important to provide courses that present all sides of current civic issues and have service learning components</i> • <i>Provide a course in how democracy works</i>
Skills/Behavior
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Provide skills needed to become engaged citizens and active voters</i> • <i>Provide knowledge of how local government works</i> • <i>Teach good citizenship skills</i> • <i>Develop agents of change</i> • <i>Learn how to learn</i> • <i>Learn how to find information when needed</i> • <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>

- *Learn to articulate one's values and defend them*
- *Train for a job, but educate for life*

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

- *General Education competencies (written and oral communication, quantitative reasoning, critical thinking)*
- *Information literacy – knowledge of how to access, evaluate, and use information*
- *Listening skills*
- *Basic computer skills*
- *Creativity*
- *Leadership skills*
- *“Soft” skills preferable to technical skills, which can be more easily taught on the job*

Qualities Expected

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| <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 compartment</i> • <i>Cooperation</i> |
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Community/Diversity

- *Able to communicate with people from different arenas/backgrounds*
- *Awareness of cultural differences*
- *Interact well with people in the community*
- *Respect for others*

General Education Culture

- *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 should require attendance and hold students responsible for their work*