The General Education Program
Montclair State University
Adopted December 1998
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Section 1. Preamble

More than four years ago, the Provost and the University Senate created a committee to conduct a review of the current General Education program (Gen Ed) at Montclair State University. This was initiated in the context of Montclair State's having become a University, and in the context of the University's mission statement. In this report, we present our recommendations for the Gen Ed program. An outline of the recommendations is contained in Section 5. The committee strongly urges you to read the entire document, not just the outline. The recommendations are based on general principles which we have gathered from the entire campus community and which are explained in this report; and moreover, the proposal raises a variety of implementation and other issues.

The Mission Statement of Montclair State University, approved on May 13, 1981 and amended on April 27, 1994, states: "The mission of Montclair State University as a multipurpose public institution is to develop educated persons of inquiring, creative, and disciplined intelligence to be competent in careers that are fulfilling and to be socially responsible contributors to society. This University strives, therefore, to graduate people on the bachelor's and master's level who have had sound education in the arts and sciences and relevant specialized training built upon that base." Relating to Gen Ed, the Mission statement says: "The University aims to provide all its baccalaureate graduates with a fine general education. Its graduates must be competent in the basic intellectual disciplines, be aware of human experience in the arts and in society, and understand the development of scientific theories through objective observation of the way nature works. Its aim is education, not merely training. Its graduates must have developed their affective and intellectual faculties through encounters with the great works of literature, philosophy, and history. Its graduates also must understand foreign cultures and languages in order to be educated beyond the provincialism of time, place, religion, or race to become world citizens."

Gen Ed at Montclair State is a long standing part of the curriculum and has been revised several times, most recently in 1983. Our current Gen Ed has been an inventive and sound program and, at the time of its adoption, was in the vanguard in its stress on multicultural and non-western studies. After 15 years, however, it seemed appropriate to assess its effectiveness and suitability in a rapidly changing world and in the new context of being a university. By now, everyone knows about the extensive consultation we have undergone to review the current Gen Ed, gather the opinions of the entire campus community, and survey programs at other institutions as well as nationwide trends. In Spring '97 we presented five models for faculty consideration. In Spring '98 we
presented our synthesis of your responses. This document has been modified to reflect your comments and suggestions to the report of Spring '98. Responses to your comments are interspersed throughout the document where appropriate. This document is now submitted to you for your final review. A vote will take place December 7, 8, 9, and 10. The vote will be administered by the University Senate; details will be provided by the Senate to those eligible to vote.

In this report, we begin in the next section by identifying the concepts of general education about which there seems to be universal consensus among members of the campus community, and which underlie our recommendations. Section 3 describes in broad terms the elements of our recommended program. It defines in careful terms several new concepts and several new procedures. Any recommendations about Gen Ed carry with them not only educational issues but also implementation issues, and these are discussed in Section 4. There we discuss structures that must be put in place for the viable implementation and continuous evaluation of the Gen Ed program and also various related issues that must be addressed before a Gen Ed program can be put in place.

The success of any curriculum rests jointly on the shoulders of a dedicated, imaginative, and skilled faculty and the support of a resourceful administration.

Section 2. Concept of General Education

Section 2.1 Introduction
The General Education program presented in this document is predicated foremost on what is best for the MSU student. As we approach the 21st century with knowledge and technology increasing at a faster and faster rate, and as we face an ever-more-complex society, we must prepare students with a knowledge base that will enable them to be lifelong learners, information literate, knowledgeable, active and discerning citizens, culturally aware, and self-reflective critical thinkers who must function locally as well in the nation and the global community. Currently it is estimated that people in the workplace will have five or six different jobs, often requiring different skills, during their lifetime. Therefore it is incumbent upon us to prepare students with the knowledge base and skills to adapt to the workplace as well as to function in an increasingly complex society. We are in unanimous agreement that our students are best served by taking a General Education program that combines a strong disciplinary component with an interdisciplinary component that deals with contemporary issues. The interdisciplinary courses will raise the level of awareness of our students as to what it means to be responsible citizens of their community, the USA, and the world. It is also our conviction that a well-developed General Education program that can also create meaningful common experiences for our students will do much to enhance the Montclair Experience.

After spending four years eliciting and evaluating ideas, information, opinions and reactions from the campus community, studying the literature and participating in
conventions and workshops, we formalized conceptually what Gen Ed at MSU should accomplish as well as the parameters under which a Gen Ed program should be developed and implemented. That is, we developed a program that is in our opinion best for the MSU student and which reflects our institutional strengths and priorities. In this final document we present the Gen Ed program, the justification for it, suggestions for further investigation, and the structures that must be put in place for the viable implementation and continuous evaluation of the Gen Ed program. We also discuss various issues that must be addressed before a Gen Ed program can be put in place. (See Section 4.)

Section 2.2  Goals of General Education
Underlying whatever model we might have proposed are the following basic concepts (not in any order of priority) that the campus community agrees should be at the foundation of all Gen Ed courses as well as being infused throughout the curriculum:

- Writing, writing, writing;
- Having a solid knowledge base;
- Developing critical thinking in writing, oral and all other creative processes;
- Developing skills to retrieve and evaluate information;
- Developing problem solving and critical thinking skills across all disciplines;
- Understanding the democratic underpinnings of our society and their relationships to other cultures;
- Understanding world and national issues and their impact on our society;
- Developing and applying multicultural and transnational awareness;
- Demonstrating the multi-, inter- and intra-disciplinarity of subjects and information;
- Understanding the dynamic nature and consequences of such issues as gender, race, disability, diversity, equity, class and ethnicity;
- Understanding and applying ethical standards to personal, national and international decision-making.
Section 2.3 General Principles for the Development of a Gen Ed Program

The goals of general education described in Section 2.2 need to be applied not only to the development of a program of required courses, but also to the development of general, underlying principles and philosophies that transcend particular courses. Three such principles are infusion, innovation, and evaluation.

Infusion is a concept which says that basic educational values and skills (e.g., writing, critical thinking, information retrieval and evaluation skills, research methods, quantitative measurement and analysis, the computer as a tool and a research vehicle) are pursued and applied in any course regardless of the discipline. It is the Committee's feeling that infusion must become a guiding principle in our curriculum. The learning that takes place in the General Education program should not end when the courses are completed, but rather should be incorporated into our curriculum and enhance our major courses as well as all courses that students take. It is obviously impossible to design one specific course around each of the Gen Ed goals listed in Section 2.2. The fundamental educational values and skills we agree to should be infused throughout our curriculum, and especially in the Gen Ed program. In fact we will be recommending that Writing, Computer Science, Communication and Mathematics be taken during the Freshman Year so that basic educational values and skills can be assumed as foundational in all future courses.

The Committee members would also like to express their personal commitment to innovation, in particular to the integration of new teaching methodologies into our Gen Ed program. We have learned much during our four years about exciting modes of instruction, and we trust that the campus community will encourage active student learning, engage in new integrated interdisciplinary courses, foster experiential courses, and explore the applications of technology to teaching. We are not able at this time to suggest the implementation of many of the exciting educational options we have studied because we feel that we must consider incremental change so that we can devote the appropriate time for development. However, we would like to suggest that the University consider the following:

1. The university has already started experimenting with linked courses, different models of which have been tried. It is our sense that there should be a strong effort to continue evaluating the concept of linked courses. Benefits, in terms of retention and improved grades, have been shown at institutions which have implemented linked courses. We strongly encourage the faculty and administration to continue their experiments with linked courses with an eye to incorporating them into the Gen Ed program in the future.

2. We also strongly encourage the university to seriously consider implementing active learning strategies such as experiential education, service learning, co-op education, apprenticeships and externships. These active learning strategies will promote constructive engagement so that faculty can experiment with pedagogies that emphasize knowledge gained through
participation in the human community and which promote the values of cultural pluralism and democracy.

(3) Study abroad, an exciting opportunity for students, should also be considered as an element appropriate to the Gen Ed program.

Ongoing, regular evaluation of Gen Ed is needed. We have become a University; doctoral programs have been approved; we are hiring new faculty to replace many who have been with us for decades. Such new faculty with recent training and different approaches should have an opportunity to develop and contribute to general education in a way meaningful to them and to our students, an ever-changing and increasingly culturally, ethnically and racially diverse group. The curriculum and the methods of delivery at MSU, in particular the Gen Ed program, should not be a static program that is evaluated and modified every fifteen or twenty years. Rather there must be a mechanism for an ongoing, meaningful review and assessment of the structure and the courses chosen for the Gen Ed program. It is also important that a continuous evaluation of new and emerging methods of teaching be integrated into the Gen Ed program. This will be discussed in Section 4.3.a.

Section 2.4 Factors Underlying the Development of MSU’s Gen Ed Program
In developing a Gen Ed program we understood that we were to be guided by the following concerns expressed continuously by the Campus Community.

- Radical change in the "distribution" approach of our Gen Ed program is neither desired nor practical.

- Coherence among Gen Ed offerings is highly desirable and eminently practical.

- The fundamental goals of General Education have changed minimally over the last few decades.

- The number (approximately 400) of courses currently available as Gen Ed courses is excessive and undermines the coherence of the program.

- Truly interdisciplinary courses are an essential and desirable mode of instruction, especially when appropriately supported. (This is addressed in Section 3.2.a.2.)

- There is a need for our students to have some common shared experiences.
• Gen Ed must be presented in such a way that students and the faculty who advise them can understand the program, its components and its underlying principles.

• The Gen Ed program should be spread over most of the undergraduate experience, and not be limited to the first two years.

Section 3. Elements of the Proposal for the BA and BS degree

Section 3.1 Gen Ed Program – Broad Outline
The Gen Ed program we are presenting maintains the strong disciplinary distribution requirements and adds a core of three interdisciplinary courses and a one-credit New Student Seminar, while still keeping the total number of semester hours at a maximum of 57. The interdisciplinary courses and the New Student Seminar will be required of all students. Each interdisciplinary course (Contemporary Issues I, II and III) will be based on a common theme and will be taught by faculty from at least two disciplines. (Details will be discussed in Section 3.3.) We believe that this program not only reflects the strengths of MSU but also emphasizes that our students, citizens of the 21st century, need a strong knowledge base — and that knowledge must and will cross disciplinary boundaries and that students must be prepared to face issues that will confront them. This program also reflects the need for giving students common shared experiences that can be continued outside the classroom.

Section 3.2 The New Components
The proposed Gen Ed program consists of two components: the distribution component and the core component. The new 10-semester-hour core component, consisting of three interdisciplinary courses and the New Student Seminar, will add a unique common learning experience to the Gen Ed program and to MSU. Requiring that students take at least some part of their Gen Ed experience in common will encourage learning outside of the classroom and hopefully foster a stronger sense of the Montclair Community. These courses will be required for all students including transfer students. (Issues dealing with transfer students will be discussed in Section 4.3.) This new component will have the MSU imprint: A unique and common learning experience. We are also proposing that the Gen Ed program become at least a three-year program. In fact, we are proposing that two of the Interdisciplinary courses be taken in the equivalent of the sophomore year and the third one in the junior year.

These courses, founded in disciplines, will deal with contemporary issues from different perspectives. Students will be able to see that disciplines are not self-contained and that their knowledge base transcends strict disciplinary boundaries. Even more, it is anticipated that students will come to understand how different disciplines might approach the same problem while at the same time being exposed to issues a citizen of the 21st Century will have to consider. This aspect of the core component will add a very exciting dimension to the students’ experience at MSU.
Section 3.2.a - Core: Interdisciplinary Component

The interdisciplinary core is comprised of three courses:

**Course I:** Contemporary Issues I: (See explanation and description in Section 6.1.B1.) Perspectives on contemporary scientific issues; taught by a team of at least two members with at least one member from biology, chemistry, environmental sciences, geoscience, molecular biology or physics.

**Course II:** Contemporary Issues II: (See explanation and description in Section 6.1.B2.) Perspectives on contemporary issues in which the primary focus is the USA today; taught by a team of at least two members from different disciplines with a least one member from the social sciences (that is, those disciplines housed in social science departments: anthropology, economics, geography, political science, psychology and sociology).

**Course III:** Contemporary Issues III: (See explanation and description in Section 6.1.B3.) Perspectives on contemporary issues in which the primary focus is the world outside of the USA; taught by a team of at least two members from different disciplines.

Each interdisciplinary course will be taught by representatives from at least two different disciplines (referred to as a team from now on). In order to achieve true interdisciplinarity, both disciplines will be carefully woven together and taught by the involved team. The course is not to be divided into separate distinct segments. Clearly, interdisciplinary instruction is more than having faculty members teaching separate, disconnected segments. The interaction of the different disciplinary views brought to bear on the same issue requires the presence and participation of each member of the team. The administration has assured us that it is committed to supporting truly interdisciplinary instruction in the Gen Ed program and to working with the Union to make it happen. Once the Gen Ed program is approved by a vote of the faculty and librarians, the Administration and Union will enter negotiations to develop an equitable formula for compensating faculty who teach in the interdisciplinary core program.

Section 3.2.a.1 - General Description of the Interdisciplinary Courses

An interdisciplinary course will be developed to deal with an overarching theme. Since every student will be taking this course, there will be multiple sections. The format we are proposing will permit a common shared experience for our students while allowing
each faculty team the flexibility of developing its own individual implementation for the section they are teaching. Specifically, each interdisciplinary course will be designed to present material appropriate to an overarching theme and a set of outcomes (guidelines or goals and objectives) appropriate for the course (theme). The sections will have some common experience such as reading the same book, attending the same lecture, and/or seeing the same film or play. We are not suggesting that the reading lists for all sections of the course be identical, though teams may opt for similar reading lists if they wish. Hopefully the common experience, be it the book, film or play, in conjunction with the common theme, will stimulate discussion about the experience and theme among students. This approach provides a great deal of flexibility. We are also proposing that the themes be changed every two or three years in order to keep the course current and dynamic. Faculty involved in teaching a particular interdisciplinary course would commit to teaching the course for two or three years. Mechanisms for the selection of themes are discussed in Section 4.

Section 3.2.a.2 Core: Interdisciplinary Course Structure
In order to achieve truly interdisciplinary instruction, we are proposing that interdisciplinary courses consist of both large group meetings and small group discussion sessions. Both components will be taught and led by faculty, not graduate assistants. The large group meetings will allow for traditional as well as innovative approaches to teaching in an interdisciplinary setting. Specifically, after discussion with the administration we have come up with the following possible plan: Interdisciplinary courses, taught by a team of at least two members from different disciplines, will meet for two hours of large group sessions and one hour of discussion. Under that plan each member of the team will lead the large session an average of one hour a week, participate actively in the other large session, and lead two discussion sections a week. The presence of all members of the team should enhance the interdisciplinary nature of the course as well as allow the implementation of innovative instruction. As a possible model we originally proposed classes of up to 100 students and discussion sections limited to a maximum of 25 students. Some of our colleagues have expressed concern with this model. However, since the level of compensation for faculty participating in the interdisciplinary core program will be established in negotiations between the Administration and the Union following the approval of this proposal by the faculty, we will not address this issue. Should faculty members choose to be involved in the teaching of interdisciplinary courses by using FSIP, they should be subject to the FSIP guidelines.

Section 3.2.b Core: New Student Seminar
The Report of the New Student Experience Task Force, April 23, 1993, included in its recommendations a Freshman Experience for all students attending Montclair State. A Freshman Experience typically includes activities structured for the purpose of maximizing a student's performance in the first year of college. The recommended Freshman Experience includes a course, the New Student Seminar, designed to enable students to achieve academic success and to adjust successfully to the challenges of collegiate life. Moreover, the literature documents that seventy percent of American colleges and universities offer a New Student Seminar. The goals of such a course may include: learning study skills, the effective use of libraries, information retrieval and evaluation skills, critical thinking, logical problem-solving; promoting positive
adjustment and assimilation into the University; developing respect for diversity and multiculturalism; and introducing students to campus support services. In keeping with the recommendations of the MSU Task Force and national trends, the committee recommends the inclusion of the New Student Seminar in the core component of the Gen Ed program. Special sections of the New Student Seminar for transfer students will be developed. Departments wishing to develop the new student seminar for their own majors may do so. We are confident that the common Seminar will provide students with essential academic survival skills and contribute to retention.

Section 3.3  Distribution Component
Our many interactions with the campus community have made it very clear that that a strong distribution component in Gen Ed is valued. Moreover, the present distribution requirements are working quite well, and the report suggests some minor modifications. Specifically for the BA/BS we are recommending the following changes.

Section 3.3.a  BA/BS

(1) The 3 s.h. non-laboratory science course has been replaced by the 3 s.h. Contemporary Issues I course. This interdisciplinary course deals with contemporary scientific issues; taught by a team with at least one member of the team being from the disciplines of biology, chemistry, environmental sciences, geoscience, molecular biology or physics. (See explanation and description in Section 6.B1.)

(2) The 12 s.h. social science requirement has been modified to 9 s.h. with the other 3 s.h. replaced by the 3 s.h. Contemporary Issues II course. This is an interdisciplinary course dealing with perspectives on contemporary issues in which the primary focus is the USA today; taught by a team of at least two members from different disciplines with a least one member from the social sciences. (See explanation and description in Section 6.B2.)

(3) The current 3 s.h. contemporary issues requirement has been replaced by the 3 s.h. interdisciplinary Contemporary Issues III course. Perspectives on contemporary issues in which the primary focus is the world outside of the USA; taught by a team of at least two members from different disciplines. (See explanation and description in Section 6.B3.)

(4) The 6 s.h. general education elective requirement has been reduced to 3 s.h., replaced in part by the 1 s.h. New Student Seminar.
The computer science requirement has been increased from 2 s.h. to 3 s.h., but we have added the possibility of students placing out of the course (see Section 3.4).

We have added the possibility of students placing out of the language requirement (up to 3 s.h.; see Section 3.4).

With these changes, the total number of s.h. in the Gen Ed program is 57 (it was previously 58), with the possibility of placing out of up to 6 s.h.

Section 3.3.b BFA/BMus

The recommendation for the BFA/BMus is a bit different due to the many major course requirements needed for accreditation. The BFA/BMus Degrees have always had different requirements since they are not BA/BS degrees. Other programs with accreditation and certification issues will be discussed in Section 4.3. Specifically we are recommending that the current BFA/BMus Gen Ed Program be modified in the following way:

1. The 4 s.h. laboratory science course has been replaced by the 3 s.h. Contemporary Issues I course. This interdisciplinary course deals with contemporary scientific issues; taught by a team with at least one member of the team being from the disciplines of biology, chemistry, environmental sciences, geoscience, molecular biology or physics. (See explanation and description in Section 6.1.B1.)

2. The current 3 s.h. contemporary issues requirement has been replaced by the 3 s.h. core interdisciplinary Contemporary Issues II course. Perspectives on contemporary issues in which the primary focus is the USA today; taught by a team of at least two members from different disciplines with a least one member from the social sciences. (See explanation and description in Section 6.1.B2.)

3. We have added a 3 s.h. interdisciplinary Contemporary Issues III course. Perspectives on contemporary issues in which the primary focus is the world outside of the USA; taught by a team of at least two members from different disciplines. (See explanation and description in Section 6.1.B3.)

4. The 6 s.h. social science requirement has been modified to 3 s.h. with the other 3 s.h. replaced by World Literature or a General Humanities course.

5. The 1 s.h. physical education requirement has been dropped

6. The computer science requirement has been increased from 2 s.h. to 3 s.h., but we have added the possibility of students placing out of the course (see Section 3.4)
We have added the possibility of students placing out of the language requirement (up to 3 s.h.; see Section 3.4).

We have added a 1 s.h. New Student Seminar.

With these changes, the total number of s.h. in the BFA/BMus Gen Ed program is 37 (it was previously 36), with the possibility of placing out of up to 6 s.h.

Section 3.4 Concept of “Place-out”
Students will be given the opportunity to “place-out” of the Gen Ed world languages and computer science distribution requirement. A student will “place-out” of a requirement if proficiency in a specific discipline can be demonstrated to an extent that warrants waiver of a course requirement. Students who “place-out” may replace the credits with any course in the University including those in the major. By giving students the opportunity to “place-out” and substitute the requirement with any course, we feel that students will take the placement test seriously and not try to underachieve on it so that they can be placed in a less challenging course. Specific procedures and examinations would be developed by the involved departments. These examinations should be given before the beginning of the student’s first semester on campus.

Section 3.5 Approval of Gen Ed Courses
One of the major concerns expressed repeatedly and continuously by all constituencies of the campus community was the excessive proliferation of (approximately 400) courses available as Gen Ed courses. One must seriously question if all these courses fully reflect the principles of a viable Gen Ed program. Thus it is our recommendation that no existing Gen Ed course automatically become a Gen Ed course under the new Gen Ed program without submission to a standing Gen Ed Committee (see Section 4) for approval. Thus, we make the following proposal, which is an integral part of the whole Gen Ed program:

Due to the over-proliferation of courses currently approved as Gen Ed courses, the new Gen Ed program will begin as a tabula rasa. Courses being considered as a Gen Ed course (distribution or core) must be submitted to the Gen Ed Committee (this will be discussed in Section 4.3.a) for evaluation. Guidelines will be developed to carefully determine qualification in terms of meeting the goals of the Gen Ed program as well as satisfying the criteria of being either a distribution or core Gen Ed course. The infusion of basic Gen Ed principles (see Section 2.2) will also be considered in the approval of Gen Ed courses. Equally important in controlling the proliferation of Gen Ed courses will be the reevaluation of courses by the standing Gen Ed Committee as part of the assessment process. The reevaluation should occur every three years.
Section 3.6 Writing Across the Curriculum
On equal par with the concern expressed about the proliferation of Gen Ed courses was the concern expressed about the ability of students to write effectively. Faculty in every discipline expressed serious concern about students' writing ability. Hand in hand with any efforts to enhance students' writing must come a serious commitment on the part of the entire university to the infusion of writing across the curriculum. Gen Ed courses must satisfy the existing (and perhaps improved) University Writing Requirement.

Section 3.7 Transfer Students
Under the Transfer Articulation Principles for New Jersey Colleges and Universities, students with an AA degree will be given credit for 45 general education credits. Students will have 12 credits of Gen Ed to complete. If students have completed 6 s.h. of a world language, they will complete their Gen Ed requirement by completing the core curriculum. Details will have to be developed. Students who have not completed 6 s.h. of a world language will do so and take 2 of the interdisciplinary core courses (to be determined by their major). Guidelines for students transferring without an AA degree will have to be developed.

Section 4. Implementation Issues

Section 4.1 Introduction
The Gen Ed program we are proposing will require the organization of a standing Gen Ed Committee, charged with various important responsibilities (Section 4.3), and a commitment from the administration to its successful implementation.

Section 4.2 Administrative Support
The implementation of the Gen Ed program being recommended will require the support of the University's Administration. Central to the implementation of the proposed Gen Ed program are the three new interdisciplinary courses that are to be taught by teams of two (or more) faculty members. The Committee, working with the Administration, suggested in Section 3.2.a.2 a possible structure for interdisciplinary teaching. Administration has agreed that once the Gen Ed program is approved, it will undertake discussions with the Union to negotiate for equitable compensation for the teaching of interdisciplinary courses.

Another extremely serious concern expressed by many constituencies in the campus community is the unreasonably high number of Gen Ed courses that are currently taught by adjunct faculty. It is unrealistic to expect all adjuncts to have the same familiarity with the philosophy and goals of the Gen Ed program as full time faculty. Although many give remarkable service to our students, they are by and large a floating population without the same degree of involvement as full time faculty. The University must show that it values and is committed to the goals and principles of the Gen Ed program by making a serious attempt to drastically reduce the number of adjuncts teaching in the Gen Ed program.
At the same time, the University must also support faculty who make a meaningful commitment to Gen Ed. Administration must encourage faculty to become involved in the teaching of Gen Ed courses by recognizing that new or reworked courses (which will be required because all courses will have to be submitted for approval as Gen Ed courses) need time for preparation and that faculty’s need and desire for professional advancement could be hampered by their involvement in Gen Ed. Since involvement of all faculty in the Gen Ed program is important to the success of the program, Administration, at all levels, must demonstrate its support.

Not central to the proposed Gen Ed program but certainly important are the following issues that will require Administrative support: (1) maintenance of reasonable class size (20 to 25 depending on the discipline) in writing-intensive classes, and in computer and science laboratories; (2) maintenance of class size of less than 20 in freshman English classes; (3) the development of a mechanism for administering and grading tests so that students can attempt to “place-out” of language and computer science. Support of the “place-out” process is an issue because this testing should take place before students arrive on campus in September, at a time when faculty are not generally available.

Section 4.3 Gen Ed Committees
The implementation of the Gen Ed program will require the formation of a standing Policy and Implementation Committee with two subcommittees: (1) Gen Ed Course Approval Subcommittee and (2) Gen Ed Core Curriculum Subcommittee. The Gen Ed Committee will be charged with developing policy and specific guidelines for the implementation and the continuous assessment of the Gen Ed program. The Gen Ed Course Approval Subcommittee will evaluate courses for first approval as a Gen Ed course (details given in Section 4.3.b.) The Gen Ed Core Curriculum Subcommittee will be charged with developing, implementing and assessing the core curriculum as well as overseeing the Core Curriculum (details given in Section 4.3.c). The membership and reporting procedures for these committees would be consistent with the guidelines for all University Senate Committees.

Section 4.3.a. Gen Ed Policy and Implementation Committee
The Gen Ed Policy and Implementation Committee, chaired by a faculty member who will receive released time, will be responsible for the Gen Ed program. This committee will have the important responsibility of overseeing the quality of the Gen Ed program and developing the guidelines. Specifically, this committee will:

1. develop policies and guidelines for
   - approving a course as a Gen Ed Course (working with the Gen Ed Course Approval Subcommittee);
• selecting Core Course themes and developing goals and objectives of the courses (working with the Gen Ed Core Curriculum Subcommittee);

• Gen Ed requirements for transfer students;

• the periodic evaluation every three years of approved Gen Ed courses;

• the periodic assessment of the entire Gen Ed program – goals and objectives;

• the implementation and assessment of the University Writing Requirement in Gen Ed courses;

• a program that will educate, update and otherwise inform the entire campus community (students, faculty, librarians, and professional staff) about the Gen Ed program.

(2) have oversight responsibilities to:

• review core and distribution courses;

• evaluate the Gen Ed Program;

• oversee the limited use of adjuncts in the teaching of Gen Ed courses;

• implement the University Writing requirement in Gen Ed courses;

• implement the program that will educate, update and otherwise inform the entire campus community (students, faculty, librarians, and professional staff) about the Gen Ed program.

Careful analysis of current program requirements has made it abundantly clear that two major concerns must be addressed so that this Gen Ed program can be implemented and work with the existing program requirements. Therefore the Gen Ed Committee must develop guidelines and procedures to deal with the following two issues:

(1) Programs must be given the option to request waivers and be allowed to substitute major courses or collateral courses for distribution requirements. This is particularly important for majors requiring a large number of major and collateral courses. Therefore the Gen Ed Committee must develop procedures and guidelines for the waiver process.
Any certification or accreditation programs requiring students to complete more than 128 credits to earn a degree who, as a result of the Gen Ed program, will be required to complete additional credits beyond their current load must be given the option to petition for a reduction in Gen Ed distribution requirements. Such programs would carefully study their requirements and consider which distribution requirement(s) should be considered for possible deletion. Under any circumstance, however, the core courses must be taken by all students. The ultimate approval of such requests must come from the Provost. The Gen Ed Committee must develop procedures and guidelines for this process.

These two issues are of vital importance. Programs that require a large number of courses would incur an unrealistic increase in credit requirements if these options did not exist.

Section 4.3.b. Gen Ed Course Approval Subcommittee
The Gen Ed Course Approval Subcommittee will be responsible for the approval of all courses to be designated as Gen Ed courses (distribution as well as core). Specifically this committee will

- work with the Gen Ed Policy and Implementation Committee to develop the guidelines for a Gen Ed Course;
- work with the Gen Ed Policy and Implementation Committee to develop the guidelines for the waiver process;
- consider all new courses being submitted for first approval as a Gen Ed Course. All such courses must be approved first by curriculum committees at all levels (department, school or college and, if a program change is involved, university);
- reevaluate all existing Gen Ed Courses (see Section 3.5) for approval as Gen Ed Courses;
- evaluate if courses submitted for the waiver process meet the Gen Ed waiver guidelines;
• evaluate (every three years) the extent to which courses are meeting the Gen Ed guidelines.

Section 4.3.c. Gen Ed Core Curriculum Subcommittee
The Gen Ed Core Curriculum Subcommittee will be responsible for the core curriculum, from the selection of themes (submitted by faculty) to the selection of teams and the review of the core curriculum. Specifically the committee will

• develop guidelines for selecting core course themes and teams to teach the interdisciplinary core courses (working with the Gen Ed Policy and Implementation Committee);

• solicit input from the faculty for the themes that will be in effect for three years, using the guidelines developed. The committee will then select a theme and coordinate all aspects of the core (interdisciplinary) curriculum;

• select faculty teams to teach the interdisciplinary courses. Teams will be expected to teach the course for the duration of the theme. The university will make provisions for faculty development and time for teams to develop courses;

• work actively with the faculty teaching courses and serve as a resource in the development of courses and themes.

Core courses in their broad outlines must be approved at all levels by curriculum committees (department, school or college and university). The specific theme will change every three years and must only be approved by the Core Curriculum Subcommittee.

Section 5. The Proposal

Outlines of the Gen Ed Programs: In this section we give a brief outline of the proposed Gen Ed programs for the BA/BS and the BFA/BMUs. Detailed descriptions for each of areas in the core and the distribution are given in Section 6.
Section 5.1 Gen Ed Program BA/BS

Core (10 s.h.)

A. New Student Seminar 1 s.h.
B. Interdisciplinary Courses
   B1. Contemporary Issues I* 3 s.h.
   B2. Contemporary Issues II* 3 s.h.
   B3. Contemporary Issues III* 3 s.h.

Distribution (41 - 47 s.h.)

C. Communication
   C1. Writing/Literature 6 s.h.
   C2. Communication 3 s.h.

D. Fine and Performing Arts 3 s.h.

E. World Languages 3 - 6 s.h.

F. Humanities
   F1. World Literature or General Humanities 3 s.h.
   F2. Philosophy and Religion 3 s.h.

G. Computer Science 0 - 3 s.h.

H. Mathematics 3 s.h.

I. Natural/Physical Science Laboratory 4 s.h.

J. Physical Education 1 s.h.

K. Social Science
   K1. American or European History 3 s.h.
   K2. NonWestern Cultural Perspectives 3 s.h.
   K3. Social Science 3 s.h.

L. General Electives 3 s.h.

Total 51 - 57 s.h.

The Gen Ed Committee recommends the following sequencing of courses:

Freshman Year (0 - 32 s.h.):
   New Student Seminar (1st sem if possible)
   Freshman Writing/Literature
   Computer Science

Communication
World Languages
Mathematics

Sophomore Year (33 - 64 s.h.): (one each semester)
   Contemporary Issues I
   Contemporary Issues II

Junior Year (65 - 96 s.h.)
   Contemporary Issues III

*See Sections 3.2a and 6B
### Section 5.2 Gen Ed Program BFA/BMus

#### Core (10 s.h.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A.</th>
<th>New Student Seminar</th>
<th>1 s.h.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B.</td>
<td>Interdisciplinary Courses</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B1.</td>
<td>Contemporary Issues I*</td>
<td>3 s.h.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B2.</td>
<td>Contemporary Issues II*</td>
<td>3 s.h.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B3.</td>
<td>Contemporary Issues III*</td>
<td>3 s.h.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Distribution (21 - 27 s.h.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>C.</th>
<th>Communication</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C1.</td>
<td>Writing/Literature</td>
<td>6 s.h.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C2.</td>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>0 - 3 s.h.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E.</td>
<td>World Languages</td>
<td>3 - 6 s.h.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F.</td>
<td>Humanities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F1.</td>
<td>World Literature or General Humanities</td>
<td>3 s.h.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F2.</td>
<td>Philosophy and Religion</td>
<td>3 s.h.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G.</td>
<td>Computer Science</td>
<td>0 - 3 s.h.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K.</td>
<td>Social Science</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K1.</td>
<td>American or European History</td>
<td>3 s.h.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total** 31 - 37 s.h.

*See Sections 3.2a and 6B*
Section 6. Area Descriptions

Section 6.1 Core (10 credits)

A. New Student Seminar (1 s.h.)
The New Student Seminar course embodies and expresses the goals of the entire Freshman Year Experience. This course is designed to provide students with strategies and information essential to the enhancement of their academic and social success. This course affords first-year students the opportunity to experience the larger campus community while learning skills for effective study, retrieval and evaluation of information, critical thinking, problem-solving, and the development of life-long learning skills. Departments wishing to develop the new student experience for their own majors may do so.

B. Interdisciplinary Core:
These interdisciplinary courses will raise the level of awareness of our students as to what it means to be responsible citizens of their community, the USA, and the world. The focus of these courses will be developed from scientific, national, and global issues.

B1. Contemporary Issues I (3 s.h)
This course will draw upon basic principles from biological and physical sciences to demonstrate the application of the scientific method, scientific data analysis, reasoning and logic to an examination of selected contemporary issues such as global climate change, nuclear waste disposal, genetic engineering, environmental health risks, dwindling energy resources, planetary exploration, and new developments in medicine. Students completing this course should achieve an understanding of the way multidisciplinary scientific knowledge and methodology is applied to the decision making processes that address the scientific issues and problems facing contemporary society. Students will understand the interconnections between developments in science and the quality of human life as well as comprehend the overall concepts that unify and connect the approaches from various physical and natural disciplines of science. Students in all sections would have at least one common experience which could be reading the same book, hearing the same lecturer, seeing the same play or film or participating in an experiential activity. Note: Course will be taught by at least one member of biology, chemistry, environmental sciences, geoscience, molecular biology or physics.
B2. Contemporary Issues II (3 s.h.)
This course is designed to introduce students at the sophomore level to contemporary issues of importance within the USA today. Although the focus of the course is national, it may of course include discussion of the issue in a comparative vein from an international perspective. A course may also consider – if relevant – the influence of the past and its function in forming contemporary ideas and beliefs. Sample themes might be drawn from concepts of justice, race, ethics, gender, culture, or the self, to name just a few. An overarching theme would be explored by teams of at least two faculty drawing on their disciplinary and methodological training to show students that their disciplines are not self-contained, that different approaches can attack the same problem, and that knowledge is integrative. Students in all sections would have at least one common experience which could be reading the same book, hearing a visiting lecturer, seeing the same play or film or participating in an experiential activity. Note: The course will be taught be at least one member of a social science discipline (that is, those disciplines housed in social science departments: anthropology, economics, geography, political science, psychology and sociology).

B3. Contemporary Issues III (3 s.h.)
This course is designed for students at the junior level to pursue interdisciplinary study of a theme similar to those of Contemporary Issues II, but in which the primary focus is the world outside of the USA. Specialists in different disciplines with expertise in global issues will collaborate to present comparative perspectives on contemporary issues. Of course, comparisons and contrasts will be made with the American experience. Again, as in Contemporary Issues II, the influence of the past on the present is a valid aspect of such a course. The course might deal, for example, with issues such as revolution and artistic expression or with conflicts between secular and/or religious world views. On the other hand, the course might deal with the same issue as Contemporary Issues II only this time it will be approached from a global perspective. In either case, Contemporary Issues II will serve as a prerequisite for Contemporary Issues III. Students in all sections would have at least one common experience which could be reading the same book, hearing a visiting lecturer, seeing the same play or film or participating in an experiential activity. Part of a university-approved study abroad program could satisfy this requirement.
Section 6.2 DISTRIBUTION REQUIREMENTS (38 – 47 s.h.)

C. Communication (9 s.h.)

C1. Writing/Literature (6 s.h.)

Students will take two sequential semesters of intensive writing instruction. This will be accomplished as follows: Freshman Composition will stress the development of student thinking and writing abilities through frequent writing assignments based on critical response to intellectual prose, with significant attention to library research. Introduction to Literature will require frequent writing assignments based on interpretation and appreciation of literary works of various genres.

C2. Communication (3 s.h.)

A course that seeks to introduce students to both the conceptualization and the practice of effective oral communication by developing student understanding and skill in various oral presentation formats. The course emphasizes the complex and dynamic nature of human communication through a focus on the essential and basic elements of public communication, including listening, message design, and delivery skills.

D. Fine and Performing Arts (3 s.h.)

A course that provides an appreciation of the arts (Dance, Music, Theater, Visual Arts*), with insights into cultures, historical events, values and styles. [*includes film]

or

A course that introduces the student to an appreciation of an art form through the process that involves the development of a creative idea and results in the actual work(s) or performance(s), with appropriate treatment of styles, values, backgrounds and technical challenges.
E. World Languages (3 - 6 s.h.)

Students will demonstrate proficiency in a world language by taking a placement examination to establish a minimum proficiency equivalent to completion of the third semester of university level study in the language. Students who do not place at this level must take up to 6 s.h. of further study dependent upon their scores in the placement test (i.e., those who score at the second semester level must take 6 s.h., those who score at the third semester level must take 3 s.h.). Note: the entrance requirement for Montclair State University includes 2 years of a world language. As is the case with the current foreign language requirement, no credit is given for the first semester of study of a language already studied in high school regardless of the placement score. Students who demonstrate proficiency equivalent to completion of the third semester of world language study must take one additional 3 s.h. course at an advanced level in that language or a course in English about a foreign culture or civilization. At a time when Montclair State University is committed to internationalizing the curriculum, and when the public schools of New Jersey are under a state mandate to start world language study in the elementary school, it is important to encourage students to pursue study of world languages.

F. Humanities (6 s.h.)

F1. World Literature or General Humanities (3 s.h.)

World Literature. A course in major works of world literature from both Western and non-Western sources. This course provides students with the opportunity to explore the literary products of the creative imagination of different cultures and enhances the understanding of different cultural concerns. It also develops in students a heightened response and sensitivity to literature.

or

General Humanities. An interdisciplinary course in General Humanities in which students learn about and discuss some of the major questions which have preoccupied humanity through the ages. The course demonstrates the variety of humanistic achievement in several areas of artistic endeavor and creates a deeper understanding of the values of different civilizations.

F2. Philosophy/Religion (3 s.h.)

A course in philosophy or in religion which introduces great philosophical or religious ideas and traditions. This course enables students to understand how such ideas and traditions offer a philosophical and/or religious response to specific questions or issues. It expands students' understanding of fundamental concepts of the human condition.
G. **Computer Science (0 - 3 s.h.)**

The objective of the course in computer science is to develop in students the computing knowledge and skills necessary to understand, evaluate, and use the increasing and changing computer technologies of the twenty-first century. The course will help students understand the milieu of computing: the history and development of computer science as a science, hardware and software interaction, technology and change, and social responsibility and ethics. Students will experience the uses and uniqueness of computer science and computing in problem solving and critical thinking. They will learn to differentiate problem solving in computing from that in other domains; understand the problem they are solving; find and use the best computer tools to solve the problem, and understand the limits of computers and that some problems cannot or should not be attempted mechanically; and communicate the solution. They will acquire the necessary skills to understand, evaluate and use specific software systems in the context of computing environments. The course considers not only current computer skills, for example, competency in "Office 97", but more importantly computer knowledge, that is, fundamental ideas of computing. Since skill obsolescence is inherent in computing, the fundamental ideas of computing that support the learning of unanticipated new skills are essential. Note: Students will be allowed to take an examination to "place-out" of the Computer Science requirement.

H. **Mathematics (3 s.h.)**

This course will introduce students to the application of mathematical methods to the solution of real-world problems. Students completing this course will be able to translate real world problems into mathematical language, interpret mathematical models, and present mathematical information, while recognizing that the methods have limits. The course will develop students’ ability to think logically and precisely, by strengthening their general reasoning powers, developing their problem-solving and critical thinking skills, and emphasizing to them that there is more than one way to solve a problem. Students will be repeatedly immersed in interesting quantitative settings that require drawing inferences, estimating results, assessing risks, and making reasonable guesses. The course will include mathematical content, develop the deductive nature of theoretical mathematics, make use of modern technology to analyze problems and their solutions, and develop students’ ability to use concepts, procedures and intellectual processes.
I. Natural/Physical Science Lab (4 s.h.)

A course which includes a hands-on experience in a laboratory setting and which incorporates the scientific method by involving students with observations, the identification of patterns and regularities, the development of hypotheses and theory and models, and prediction and testing. The scientific method will be applied within the context of a discipline, utilizing a body of knowledge (more than can be given in an interdisciplinary overview course) and examining a variety of equipment, software and other tools students need for observation. Students will develop critical thinking skills as well as understand the open-endedness and limitations of science.

J. Physical Education (1 s.h.)

A course for developing an awareness of the need for a regular program of moderate physical activity to promote health and well-being in the daily lives of students. This course provides for the development of skills and knowledge to engage in lifetime physical pursuits. This includes but is not limited to sports such as tennis, swimming and jogging, human movement activities such as aerobics and dance, and other fitness activities that develop cardiovascular endurance and efficiency.

K. Social Science (9 s.h.)

K1. American or European History (3 s.h.)

The course will provide an understanding of the American or European historical legacy that continues to influence contemporary events. It will provide an understanding of the historical foundations of our political, legal, economic and social culture.

K2. Non-Western Cultures (3 s.h.)

A course in the cultures or civilizations that are identified with the continents of Asia, Africa, or the Americas and are distinguished as evolving from non-European roots and along separate paths of development. The study of non-Western cultures or civilizations will prepare students to participate in an increasingly interdependent global civilization. It will also foster an appreciation of the non-Western sources of our contemporary civilization.
K3. Social Science (3 s.h.)

Social Science (other than History). Students can choose a social science course that applies a particular analytical approach and empirical perspective to issues of importance to the individual and society. The course will provide an intellectual path for understanding the forces that will shape our national and global society.

L. General Education Elective (3 s.h.)

1. Gen Ed approved courses (other than Physical Education)
2. General introductory courses at the 100-level or 200-level in any department in the university.