

Recommendations from General Education Vision Committee for the General Education Investigation/Planning Committee:

The following recommendations were compiled from data gathered from students, faculty, staff, and administration via Town Hall Open Forums and a Qualtrics Survey:

- Suggested Vision: **Tech is Tomorrow.** Through our general education curriculum, Tennessee Tech provides a pathway to tomorrow's opportunities. We envision a future where our students, empowered by a foundation of critical thinking, cultural awareness, and creativity are prepared to navigate and shape the challenges and innovations of tomorrow. Tennessee Tech's general education program is the cornerstone of a future where our graduates lead with confidence, adaptability, and a commitment to lifelong learning.
 - *Rationale:* Points toward future but allows all colleges to participate.
- Rename the current categories/buckets for General Education courses such that no name is the same as a department/unit on campus.
 - *Rationale:* Categories whose names mirror those of departments (e.g., Mathematics, History, Communication) may convey a message that only those departments can offer courses within that category/bucket. More inclusive category/bucket names should make it clearer that any department can propose courses within a bucket (provided that the proposed course is aligned to the Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) aligned with that category/bucket).
- Provide more choices in the various General Education categories/buckets.
 - *Rationale:* Some of the current categories/buckets (e.g., Communication; History; the Humanities/Fine Arts literature requirement, etc.) require students to choose from among only two or three courses. Providing more choices within these categories/buckets would allow students more flexibility in schedules and more "ownership" in how they fulfill the general education requirements. It would also allow departments more flexibility in scheduling and allocation of faculty/resources since more "boutique"/specialized courses could be offered (for example, History of American Innovation could be appealing to STEM majors and count for general education credit).
- Investigate the possibility of a course meeting the requirements of multiple General Education categories/buckets (provided the alignment with the appropriate SLOs are documented/evidenced).
 - *Rationale:* Faculty could collaborate to co-teach a course that could count within two general education categories/buckets.
- Create a mechanism such that "one-off" courses can be offered for general education credit, like the mechanism used currently for Honors courses. Could a course be proposed and offered in only one semester but count for general education credit?

- *Rationale:* Faculty could offer more innovative and immediately relevant general education courses but not be committed to a permanent addition to their course load. Faculty from departments not traditionally associated with general education course offerings would have more opportunities to participate.
- Investigate how faculty/departments/colleges can share/distribute SCH/load when faculty from different units collaborate to create/deliver general education course.
 - *Rationale:* Faculty could collaborate to co-teach courses and equitably share/distribute the SCH/load.
- Consider ways to incorporate Career Exploration, Financial Literacy, ideas of Global Citizenship, and Digital/Technological Literacy (Artificial Intelligence) into general education. Some options might be “embedded strands/threads” within/across general education categories/buckets and/or new categories/buckets that allow for the inclusion of these ideas. Micro-credentials or certificates/badges could be considered here.
 - *Rationale:* Students have asked for these in general education and many institutions incorporate these concepts in their general education offerings.

Additional Recommendations (based on findings of committee outside the scope of Town Halls/Surveys):

- Move the General Education website to a more visible location (perhaps Academic Affairs) rather than housed within the College of Arts & Sciences (CAS).
 - *Rationale:* General education courses are offered by various schools/colleges across campus and the general education requirements should stand out in the catalog and on the University website.
- Move the university faculty teaching award for general education to Academic Affairs where all other faculty excellence awards are housed. [Note: The award would come through a committee convened by Academic Affairs that is representative of faculty across colleges/units.]
 - *Rationale:* General education courses are taught by faculty in various schools/colleges across campus.
- Make the General Education Committee (that reviews course proposals, transfer credits, etc.) a university standing committee that reports to Academic Affairs with a regular rotation of faculty representatives (like all other university standing committees). A new policy would be needed to address issues such as appeal processes if a proposed course is denied, terms of service for committee members, etc.
 - *Rationale:* The General Education Committee is currently a subcommittee of the University Curriculum Committee. Elevation to a standing University Committee would emphasize the importance of general education to the University mission.