

Recommendation for First-Year Programming

As Approved August 8, 2018 and revised October 26, 2018 and November 2, 2018

First-year programming at Sonoma State University requires a common framework and clear articulation of the importance of transitional learning to each program. Current first-year courses/programs have no unifying framework, making them difficult to understand; some programs do not provide students with opportunities to complete General Education requirements; and some options do not comply with EO1100. GERS recommends that all first-year programming at SSU have the following characteristics.

1. **Be available to all entering first-year students** (first-year programs should not be required since some students will not be able to fit one into their schedules).
2. **Meet at least two GE Areas.**
3. **GE content is identifiable on transcripts as meeting 3 units of GE credit for each area addressed by the course.** GE instruction may be blended across the year and among courses offered in a semester, so long as each area is listed on the transcript separately. To offer more than 3 units in a GE area, FLCs must follow the general GE process for seeking exceptions to the 3-unit rule.
4. **Be a year-long program.** Year-long courses should typically be taught by the same faculty with the same cohort of students.
5. **Deliver transitional content.**
 - a. In each semester, students co-enroll in a 1-unit transition course (UNIV 102) .
 - b. The same faculty member should ideally teach the 3-unit GE and 1-unit transition components unless the faculty member strongly prefers a different arrangement. A faculty member who wants to teach the 1-unit transition component may not be prevented from doing so.
 - c. FLC Faculty earn this WTU by teaching transitional curriculum, working with Peer Mentors and serving as the instructor of record for the UNIV 102 course.
 - d. Include and support roles for trained Peer Mentors.

Implementation Issues to be worked out by FLC stakeholders

- Existing programs will need time to align themselves with this framework or to provide a rationale for deviating from it.
- Awarding credit per semester in FLCs with blended content
- Advising of students who fail the first semester
- Possibility of losing so many students at the end of fall semester that the course is under-enrolled in spring

Changelog

November 2, 2018

#3: Explicitly described process for including more than 3 units from a GE area

#5b: Added new item specifying that the same faculty member should teach the GE and transitional components.

#5c: “Supporting transitional education” changed to “Teaching transitional curriculum,” to emphasize active role of faculty member in transition.

October 26, 2018

Language removed: Meet at least two GE Areas, ~~at least one of which is A1, A2, A3, or B4.~~

August 8, 2018: Original version