



Achievement-Centered Education

UNL's General Education Reform Initiative

ACE FAQs #4

8 October 2007

Why are we voting again on Proposal 1? Will we be voting again on Proposal 3 and 4? Are these forthcoming votes just another round of dry runs?

When Proposals 1 and 2 were submitted to the colleges last year, GEAC did not intend for that round of voting to be a dry run. What GEAC discovered, however, was that the general education reform effort was in some ways “unreal” for many faculty until they were faced with a ballot or a motion on the floor of an all-college meeting. In the course of their discussions and voting, issues were raised that had not been raised before. GEAC believes that the modified version of Proposal 1—which is based on that new feedback—is better for students and more viable than is the previous version. Because it has been changed, GEAC is again seeking approval from the colleges.

GEAC also believes that the situation has changed since that first round of voting. Campus engagement in the reform effort has increased substantially. Committees from several colleges have provided significant input—as have individuals—strongly shaping the proposals that will come before the colleges. These are the final versions of the ACE proposals.

Why require a unanimous vote from the initial ACE committee and from the eventual UCC ACE sub-committee?

This levels the field for the undergraduate colleges, offering each college the same authority and responsibility. Without that, some colleges were calling for proportional representation based on the percentage of all ACE-certified courses which came from each college. Such a system would create a real imbalance of power, giving as much as 70% or more of the seats to one college and as few as no seats—or perhaps 1 seat—to other colleges.

Has the Committee discussed waivers and exceptions to the ACE Learning Outcomes? Will colleges be able to waive Learning Outcome requirements or substitute courses for particular outcomes?

ACE guidelines do not allow colleges to waive any of the Learning Outcomes or to substitute courses. If a student were to be granted a waiver or an exception by one college, that college would have bound other colleges to accept that waiver or exception if the student were to subsequently transfer. GEAC does understand that in rare instances a student may need an alternative means for satisfying an ACE Learning Outcome, a means outside the

ACE-certified courses or a co-curricular experience. In such rare cases, the student—with assistance from an advisor—may petition the ACE committee for approval to satisfy the Outcome through alternative means.

Will faculty involved in the initial review of courses receive release time or compensation? Given the large number of courses that could be submitted for certification as ACE courses, our college committee felt that compensation/release time would be required to get high-quality faculty representation on the review committee.

Yes. Members of the initial ACE Committee will be offered compensation, perhaps in the way of a summer stipend.

Our curriculum committee feels that the language allowing ACE credit for co-curricular activities is too broad and could result in a deluge of student requests for ACE credit for these activities. As a college with a relatively small number of full-time faculty and a large undergraduate enrollment, we are concerned that faculty may become overburdened by requests for faculty sponsorship.

Each faculty member is empowered to determine whether and when s/he will agree to sponsor a student in a co-curricular activity.

How will the ACE committees decide whether to certify a proposed course?

GEAC has begun developing draft guidelines for the review of ACE Course Certification Requests. Samples follow. The ACE Committee will need to refine these guidelines and communicate them to the campus.

Draft Guidelines for Review of ACE Course Certification Requests

Learning Outcome #1. Write texts, in various forms, with an identified purpose, that respond to specific audience needs, incorporate research or existing knowledge, and use applicable documentation and appropriate conventions of format and structure.

	Yes	No	Notes
Does the course clearly address Learning Outcome 1?			
Is the teaching of writing the main purpose of the course?			
Does the course provide students with opportunities to write multiple texts, in various forms, that respond to specific audience needs, etc.?			
Does the course provide opportunities for students to receive ongoing and constructive feedback on their writing?			
Does the course provide students with opportunities to revise their writing so that they can learn how to make increasingly sophisticated and informed choices in their writing?			
Does the course provide students with opportunities to develop a language/terminology for understanding their writing processes?			
Does the course provide students with opportunities to develop an understanding of how to assess their and others' writing?			
Does the course reinforce at least one of the following as appropriate for the discipline and as identified by the department offering the course: Writing, Oral Communication, Visual Literacy, Historical Perspectives, Math and Statistics, Critical Thinking, Teamwork, Problem Solving, Ethics, Civics, Social Responsibility, Global Awareness, and Human Diversity?			
Have the hosting department/unit and the instructor(s) agreed to follow through with their responsibilities as outlined in the ACE Course Certification Request Form?			
Does the course meet the expectations for certification for Outcome 1? (If no, offer clear language why not.)			

Draft Guidelines for Review of ACE Course Certification Requests

Learning Outcome #2. Demonstrate communication competence in one or more of the following ways: (a) by making oral presentations with supporting materials, (b) by leading and participating in problem-solving teams, (c) by employing a repertoire of communication skills for developing and maintaining professional and personal relationships, or (d) by creating and interpreting visual information.

	Yes	No	Notes
Does the course clearly address Learning Outcome 2?			
Does the course clearly teach one or more of the outcomes in a through d rather than simply use them as tools for learning?			
Does the course provide students with opportunities to develop the knowledge/skills necessary for successful achievement of Learning Outcome 2?			
Does the course provide students with opportunities to demonstrate achievement of Learning Outcome 2?			
Does the course reinforce at least one of the following as appropriate for the discipline and as identified by the department offering the course: Writing, Oral Communication, Visual Literacy, Historical Perspectives, Math and Statistics, Critical Thinking, Teamwork, Problem Solving, Ethics, Civics, Social Responsibility, Global Awareness, and Human Diversity?			
Have the hosting department/unit and the instructor(s) agreed to follow through with their responsibilities as outlined in the ACE Course Certification Request Form?			
Does the course meet the expectations for certification for Outcome 2? (If no, offer clear language why not.)			

Draft Guidelines for Review of ACE Course Certification Requests

Learning Outcome #3. Use mathematical, computational, statistical, or formal reasoning (including reasoning based on principles of logic) to solve problems, draw inferences, and determine reasonableness.

	Yes	No	Notes
Does the course clearly address Learning Outcome 3?			
Does the course clearly teach mathematical, computational, statistical, or formal reasoning rather than simply using them as tools for learning?			
Does the course provide students with opportunities to develop the knowledge/skills necessary for successful achievement of Learning Outcome 3?			
Does the course provide students with opportunities to demonstrate achievement of Learning Outcome 3?			
Does the course reinforce at least one of the following as appropriate for the discipline and as identified by the department offering the course: Writing, Oral Communication, Visual Literacy, Historical Perspectives, Math and Statistics, Critical Thinking, Teamwork, Problem Solving, Ethics, Civics, Social Responsibility, Global Awareness, and Human Diversity?			
Have the hosting department/unit and the instructor(s) agreed to follow through with their responsibilities as outlined in the ACE Course Certification Request Form?			
Does the course meet the expectations for certification for Outcome 3? (If no, offer clear language why not.)			

Draft Guidelines for Review of ACE Course Certification Requests

Learning Outcome #4. Use scientific methods and knowledge of the natural and physical world to address problems through inquiry, interpretation, analysis, and the making of inferences from data, to determine whether conclusions or solutions are reasonable.

	Yes	No	Notes
Does the course clearly address Learning Outcome 4?			
Does the course provide students with opportunities to develop the knowledge/skills necessary for successful achievement of Learning Outcome 4?			
Does the course provide students with opportunities to demonstrate achievement of Learning Outcome 4?			
Does the course reinforce at least one of the following as appropriate for the discipline and as identified by the department offering the course: Writing, Oral Communication, Visual Literacy, Historical Perspectives, Math and Statistics, Critical Thinking, Teamwork, Problem Solving, Ethics, Civics, Social Responsibility, Global Awareness, and Human Diversity?			
Have the hosting department/unit and the instructor(s) agreed to follow through with their responsibilities as outlined in the ACE Course Certification Request Form?			
Does the course meet the expectations for certification for Outcome 4? (If no, offer clear language why not.)			

Draft Guidelines for Review of ACE Course Certification Requests

Learning Outcome #5. Use knowledge, historical perspectives, analysis, interpretation, critical evaluation, and the standards of evidence appropriate to the humanities to address problems and issues.

	Yes	No	Notes
Does the course clearly address Learning Outcome 5? (Note: The phrase “appropriate to the humanities” is intended to acknowledge that in some humanities courses not every item listed in “knowledge, historical perspectives, analysis, interpretation, critical evaluation, and the standards of evidence” is appropriate.)			
Does the course provide students with opportunities to develop the knowledge/skills necessary for successful achievement of Learning Outcome 5?			
Does the course provide students with opportunities to demonstrate achievement of Learning Outcome 5?			
Does the course reinforce at least one of the following as appropriate for the discipline and as identified by the department offering the course: Writing, Oral Communication, Visual Literacy, Historical Perspectives, Math and Statistics, Critical Thinking, Teamwork, Problem Solving, Ethics, Civics, Social Responsibility, Global Awareness, and Human Diversity?			
Have the hosting department/unit and the instructor(s) agreed to follow through with their responsibilities as outlined in the ACE Course Certification Request Form?			
Does the course meet the expectations for certification for Outcome 5? (If no, offer clear language why not.)			

Draft Guidelines for Review of ACE Course Certification Requests

Learning Outcome #6. Use knowledge, theories, methods, and historical perspectives appropriate to the social sciences to understand and evaluate human behavior.

	Yes	No	Notes
<p>Does the course clearly address Learning Outcome 6? (Note: The phrase “appropriate to the social sciences” is intended to acknowledge that in some social science courses not every item listed in “knowledge, theories, methods, and historical perspectives” is appropriate.)</p>			
<p>Does the course provide students with opportunities to develop the knowledge/skills necessary for successful achievement of Learning Outcome 6?</p>			
<p>Does the course provide students with opportunities to demonstrate achievement of Learning Outcome 6?</p>			
<p>Does the course reinforce at least one of the following as appropriate for the discipline and as identified by the department offering the course: Writing, Oral Communication, Visual Literacy, Historical Perspectives, Math and Statistics, Critical Thinking, Teamwork, Problem Solving, Ethics, Civics, Social Responsibility, Global Awareness, and Human Diversity?</p>			
<p>Have the hosting department/unit and the instructor(s) agreed to follow through with their responsibilities as outlined in the ACE Course Certification Request Form?</p>			
<p>Does the course meet the expectations for certification for Outcome 6? (If no, offer clear language why not.)</p>			

Draft Guidelines for Review of ACE Course Certification Requests

Learning Outcome #7. Use knowledge, theories, or methods appropriate to the arts to understand their context and significance.

	Yes	No	Notes
Does the course clearly address Learning Outcome 7?			
Does the course provide students with opportunities to develop the knowledge/skills necessary for successful achievement of Learning Outcome 7?			
Does the course provide students with opportunities to demonstrate achievement of Learning Outcome 7?			
Does the course reinforce at least one of the following as appropriate for the discipline and as identified by the department offering the course: Writing, Oral Communication, Visual Literacy, Historical Perspectives, Math and Statistics, Critical Thinking, Teamwork, Problem Solving, Ethics, Civics, Social Responsibility, Global Awareness, and Human Diversity?			
Have the hosting department/unit and the instructor(s) agreed to follow through with their responsibilities as outlined in the ACE Course Certification Request Form?			
Does the course meet the expectations for certification for Outcome 7? (If no, offer clear language why not.)			

Draft Guidelines for Review of ACE Course Certification Requests

Learning Outcome #8. Explain ethical principles, civics, and stewardship, and their importance to society.

	Yes	No	Notes
Does the course clearly address Learning Outcome 8?			
Does the course provide students with opportunities to develop the knowledge/skills necessary for successful achievement of Learning Outcome 8?			
Does the course provide students with opportunities to demonstrate achievement of Learning Outcome 8?			
Does the course reinforce at least one of the following as appropriate for the discipline and as identified by the department offering the course: Writing, Oral Communication, Visual Literacy, Historical Perspectives, Math and Statistics, Critical Thinking, Teamwork, Problem Solving, Ethics, Civics, Social Responsibility, Global Awareness, and Human Diversity?			
Have the hosting department/unit and the instructor(s) agreed to follow through with their responsibilities as outlined in the ACE Course Certification Request Form?			
Does the course meet the expectations for certification for Outcome 8? (If no, offer clear language why not.)			

Draft Guidelines for Review of ACE Course Certification Requests

Learning Outcome #9. Exhibit global awareness or knowledge of human diversity through analysis of an issue.

	Yes	No	Notes
Does the course clearly address Learning Outcome 9?			
Does the course provide students with opportunities to develop the knowledge/skills necessary for successful achievement of Learning Outcome 9?			
Does the course provide students with opportunities to demonstrate achievement of Learning Outcome 9?			
Does the course reinforce at least one of the following as appropriate for the discipline and as identified by the department offering the course: Writing, Oral Communication, Visual Literacy, Historical Perspectives, Math and Statistics, Critical Thinking, Teamwork, Problem Solving, Ethics, Civics, Social Responsibility, Global Awareness, and Human Diversity?			
Have the hosting department/unit and the instructor(s) agreed to follow through with their responsibilities as outlined in the ACE Course Certification Request Form?			
Does the course meet the expectations for certification for Outcome 9? (If no, offer clear language why not.)			

Draft Guidelines for Review of ACE Course Certification Requests

Learning Outcome #10. Generate a creative or scholarly product that requires broad knowledge, appropriate technical proficiency, information collection, synthesis, interpretation, presentation, and reflection.

	Yes	No	Notes
Does the course clearly address Learning Outcome 10?			
Does the course provide an opportunity for students to draw together the knowledge/skills developed in the ACE program with those developed in their major?			
Does the course provide students with opportunities to develop the knowledge/skills necessary for successful achievement of Learning Outcome 10?			
Does the course provide students with opportunities to demonstrate achievement of Learning Outcome 10?			
Does the course reinforce at least one of the following as appropriate for the discipline and as identified by the department offering the course: Writing, Oral Communication, Visual Literacy, Historical Perspectives, Math and Statistics, Critical Thinking, Teamwork, Problem Solving, Ethics, Civics, Social Responsibility, Global Awareness, and Human Diversity?			
Have the hosting department/unit and the instructor(s) agreed to follow through with their responsibilities as outlined in the ACE Course Certification Request Form?			
Does the course meet the expectations for certification for Outcome 10? (If no, offer clear language why not.)			