Jerry Kapus, General Education Committee

Below is a proposal for revising the General Education Credit Distribution that I am putting forth as a starting point for our review. I recognize that we would also need to work on category definitions and the GE objectives. Whether we put forth something like this proposal or not, I hope that it provides a constructive start to our review of the General Education program.

Current General Education Credit Distribution

A. Communication Skills		**8 Credits**
326-101	Freshman English -- Composition *or*	
326-111	Freshman English -- Honors I	3
326-102	Freshman English -- Reading and Related Writing *or*	
326-112	Freshman English -- Honors II	3
391-100	Fundamentals of Speech	2
B. Analytic Reasoning		**6 Credits**
Courses must be from areas including math, logic, statistics and computer science.		
C. Health and Physical Education		**2 Credits**
Courses must be from areas of health, physical education or nutrition.		
D. Humanities and the Arts		**9 Credits**
Courses must be from three or more areas including art history, creative arts, history, literature, music appreciation, performing arts, and philosophy.		
E. Social and Behavioral Sciences		**9 Credits**
Courses must be from three or more areas including anthropology, economics, geography, political science, psychology and sociology.		
F. Natural Sciences (with Lab)		**4 Credits**
G. Technology		**2 Credits**
H. Interdisciplinary Studies		**Electives**
I. General Education Electives		**0-6 Credits**
Courses must be from categories A, B, D, E and H.		
Total Credits:		**40-46**

Proposed General Education Credit Distribution

A. Communication Skills		**9 Credits**
326-101	Freshman English -- Composition *or*	
326-111	Freshman English -- Honors I	3

326-102	Freshman English -- Reading and Related Writing *or*	
326-112	Freshman English -- Honors II	3
391-100	Fundamentals of Speech	3

B. Mathematical and Symbolic Reasoning	**6 Credits**

Courses must be from areas including math, logic, statistics and computer science.

C. The Human Experience	**6 Credits**

Courses must be from two or more areas including art history, creative arts, history, literature, music appreciation, performing arts, and philosophy. At least one course must be at the 200 level or above.

D. The Self, Society and the World	**6 Credits**

Courses must be from two or more areas including anthropology, economics, geography, political science, psychology and sociology. At least one course must be at the 200 level or above.

E. Science (with Lab) **and Technology**	**6 Credits**

Courses must be from areas including natural science and technology. At least one course must be a natural science lab course.

F. Interdisciplinary Studies	**6 Credits**

Courses must be from designated interdisciplinary courses or courses that are part of a designated learning community. Participation in a designated learning community earns three interdisciplinary studies credits. Courses in a learning community may also be counted in their other designated general education categories.

G. Social Responsibility and Ethical Reasoning	**3 Credits**

Courses must be selected from the list of approved social responsibility and ethical reasoning courses.

H. Health and Wellness	**2 Credits**

Courses must be from areas of health, physical education or nutrition. No more than one credit of physical education activity courses may be counted in this category.

Total Credits:	**38-44**

Additional General Education Requirements

Writing Emphasis Course: In addition to the communications skills requirement, each student must complete one course designated as a general education writing emphasis course. This course must be at the 200 level or above.

Speech Emphasis Course: In addition to the communications skills requirement, each student must complete one course designated as a general education speech emphasis course. This course must be at the 200 level or above.

Research Experience Courses: Each student must complete two courses designated as research experience courses. These courses must be from two separate general education categories and at least one of the courses must be at the 200 level or above.

Changes from current credit distribution to proposed credit distribution

1. Fundamentals of Speech increased to 3 credits from 2 credits.

2. Humanities and the Arts category reduced to 6 credits from 9 credits, renamed "The Human Experience," and added requirement of at least one course at the 200 level or above.

3. Social and Behavioral Sciences category reduced to 6 credits from 9 credits, renamed "The Self, Society, and the World," and added requirement of at least one course at the 200 level or above.

4. Analytic Reasoning category renamed "Mathematical and Symbolic Reasoning."

5. Increasing Interdisciplinary Studies category to 6 credits from 0 credits. Allowing credits in a learning community to also count in other GE categories.

6. Combining the Science category and the Technology category into a single 6 credits Science and Technology category.

7. Adding a 3 credit Social Responsibility and Ethical Reasoning Category.

8. Health and Physical Education category renamed "Health and Wellness," and a maximum of 1 credit of PE activity courses allowed to count towards this category.

9. Added new requirements for writing emphasis courses, speech emphasis courses, and research experience courses.

Rationale

The proposed changes address several weaknesses in the current GE requirements: the 2 credit speech course, the practical preclusion of opportunities for interdisciplinary courses that foster interdisciplinary learning, a minimal science requirement, a technology requirement that is redundant for students in many programs, a perceived lack of rigor and coherence in the GE program, and a lack of building on basic writing and speech skills learned in the freshman year. The proposed changes strengthen the GE program by addressing these concerns while also recognizing the importance of explicitly incorporating research experiences and ethics related courses into the curriculum. The proposed changes seek to put into practice the idea of liberal education outlined in AACU's LEAP initiative and endorsed by UW-System.