

Board Meeting
September 8, 2005

APPROVE GENERAL EDUCATION CURRICULUM PROPOSAL, SPRINGFIELD

Action: Approve the General Education Curriculum Proposal, Springfield

Funding: Tuition and Reallocation

The Chancellor at Springfield, with the advice of the Springfield Senate, recommends approval of the proposed general education curriculum.

The proposed general education curriculum was developed with the goals of:

1. developing a set of courses that would be distinctive enough to appeal to a new small cohort of first-year students and flexible enough to work for transfer students, and
2. insuring that the new curriculum fit well with the institutional mission and with the blueprint for the future of the Springfield campus established in the Vision Statement approved by the University of Illinois Board of Trustees in July 1996 and with the draft vision and mission statements being developed under the current strategic planning initiative.

Currently the only comprehensive general education curriculum on campus is the Capital Scholars Program, which has enrolled about 100 students per year since it started in 2001. The current Capital Scholars curriculum will become the curriculum for the honors program at the Springfield campus, while the new proposed general education

curriculum will serve the general education needs of all other Springfield campus undergraduate students.

The curriculum was developed based on two major educational principles. These principles include: (1) the need for basic skills and knowledge for life-long learning; and (2) the importance of an engaged citizenship in its broadest sense. Consistent with these principles, the general education curriculum will include two major components: (1) discipline specific courses that are designed to teach basic skills such as writing, critical thinking, oral communication, quantitative literacy, scientific literacy, information literacy, and others; and (2) an engaged citizenship common experience that is distinctive and institution-specific.

The general education curriculum will include a 42-hour lower division component and an Engaged Citizenship Common Experience (ECCE) that will include both 100 level and 200-400 level courses. The total number of credit hours in both the lower- and upper-division components is 55. The lower division component includes the following:

- 8 hours of English
- 3 hours of oral communication
- 7 hours of life and physical sciences
- 6 hours of mathematics
- 9 hours of humanities
- 9 hours of social sciences

Provisions will be made to accommodate transfer students.

The ECCE is the distinguishing feature of the new curriculum and is designed to help students become aware of their roles in a complex, interdependent set of communities. The ECCE consists of the following categories:

- 100-level Comparative Societies (3 hours each in Humanities and Social Sciences, 6 hours total; these courses can count towards the lower division requirements described above)
- 200-400 level U.S. Communities (3 hours)
Global Awareness (3 hours)
Engagement Experience (3 hours)
ECCE Elective (3 hours)
Speakers Series (1 hour)

The ECCE categories will promote cultural awareness and engagement experiences and help students become cognizant of the relationships between past and present and theory and practice.

Native students, i.e., those who enter the Springfield campus as first-year students, will have to satisfy the requirements in all ECCE categories. All transfer students will have to satisfy the 200-400 level ECCE requirements; however, the number of 100-level ECCE courses required for transfer students will vary depending on the number of hours a student has taken, whether the student has taken a course at another institution that satisfies the Comparative Societies requirement, and whether the student has an Associates degree.

Beginning Fall 2006, the Springfield campus plans to admit classes of 180 students per year under this new curriculum. The additional expenditures associated with the new curriculum will be funded through tuition and reallocation. In the first year they are expected to be approximately \$1,800,000.

The board action recommended in this item complies in all material respects with applicable State and federal laws, University of Illinois *Statutes*,

The General Rules Concerning University Organization and Procedure, and Board of Trustees policies and directives.

The Vice President for Academic Affairs concurs with this recommendation. The University Senates Conference has indicated that no further Senate jurisdiction is involved.

The President of the University recommends approval pending further review by the Illinois Board of Higher Education.