

Comments on Important Issues for Discussion – Civic Learning (as of Oct 17, 2024)

Included in this file are a variety of comments that have been submitted to me as chair of UWGEC (or in some cases compiled by me), mostly so far in response to the various implementation models or the timeline for implementation.

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Advantages and Disadvantages of Different Implementation Models for Civic Learning

Compiled by UWGEC Chair, Jeremy Vetter, Version 3, October 7, 2024

The list below makes no attempt to weigh or prioritize the advantages or disadvantages of these models, but merely lists distinct ideas and suggestions that I have heard expressed so far. A previous version of this document has already been shared with multiple shared governance bodies, including UWGEC, the Curriculum and Policies Subcommittee of the Undergraduate Council, the General Faculty General Education Committee, and now also the Faculty Senate. I have tried to incorporate any additional advantages or disadvantages suggested by anyone from these shared governance bodies, or others across campus, and will continue to update the file with any distinct new points that are offered, until it is superseded by other documents to accompany the movement of policy revisions through shared governance.

Two-Course (Breadth & Depth) Model

Pros: Students experience a threshold level of broad coverage of all 7 areas through a comprehensive course while being able to exercise student agency and autonomy by choosing one area to study in greater depth, thereby increasing student engagement and motivation; Supports scaffolded learning, especially if students take the comprehensive course first; Allows participation in teaching these courses much more widely across the University by including both faculty who want to teach all 7 areas and those who just want to go in depth in 1 area (many more faculty and academic units for the latter) with a more specific thematic focus for their course related to any area of history, economics, civic engagement, Constitution, founding documents, governance, or courts, which could be related to many disciplines or fields of study

Cons: Students will not gain equally deep exposure to all areas; Comprehensive course would have to cover all 7 areas in one course; Compared to one-course model, students would have to take 2 of their GE courses in this area, which could be seen as disadvantage since this would leave only 5 of 7 courses to be taken in other areas of Gen Ed for BC & EP credit; Compared to Foundations and A/B models, faculty interested in teaching multiple attribute outcomes, but not all of them, would have to offer their courses in the depth category along with many other courses that are just focused in-depth on one outcome; Developing a sufficient number of comprehensive courses may be challenging on a short timetable after the implementation model is adopted; Would require existing EP courses that could fit the comprehensive description to switch to BC

Two-Course (A&B) Model

Pros: While courses on each A and B list would still cover multiple areas, they would only have to cover some of them (either set A or set B), rather than all 7, so there would be more time available to spend on each area of study, compared to a single course model or a comprehensive course in a breadth and depth model; Students would receive a more consistent level of exposure to each of the 7 areas that could be approximately twice as much time on each outcome as in a single or comprehensive course; Allows participation in teaching these courses by faculty who would like to teach multiple, but not all, of the 7 areas of the attribute

Cons: Compared to one-course model, students would have to take 2 of their GE courses in this area, which some may view as a disadvantage since this would leave only 5 of 7 courses to be taken in other areas of Gen Ed for BC & EP credit, unless additional units are added to the GE curriculum; If both are required to be Building Connections courses, or replace them in the curriculum, this would leave only 1 out of 3 current courses in BC; Students would not have the opportunity to go in depth into one area of their own choosing; Only faculty who are interested in teaching all the outcomes covered on either the A or B list (although this is fewer than all 7 outcomes) would be able to participate; It may prove challenging to designate fixed A and B groupings of the 7 outcomes that align with faculty interests or expertise if the preferred groupings vary too much

One-Course Model

Pros: Students address all 7 areas through a single comprehensive course in Building Connections, thereby leaving 6 out of the 7 EP & BC courses to be taken in other areas so that students are able to choose more widely from across the entire GE curriculum; Could be simpler for advising and student progress perspective, since it only involves a single course, which should make administrative tracking easier; From a department and college perspective, since all students would address the attribute in a single course, there is less effect on enrollments in other GE courses across the University

Cons: Students will not gain in-depth exposure to any of the 7 areas, since the entire attribute is covered in a single course; Not as many faculty across the University are able to participate in the attribute, because only courses that address all 7 outcomes will count for the attribute; Taking only one course for this requirement means students would have less course work, and less scaffolding, than for other ABOR assessed areas; Developing a

sufficient number of courses addressing all 7 areas may be challenging on a short timeline;
Would require existing EP courses that could fit this category to switch to BC

Foundations Model

Pros: The Civic Learning requirement would receive greater emphasis in the GE curriculum by elevating it to the same status as other Foundations areas; Courses meeting this requirement would not compete directly with other courses in the EP & BC part of the GE curriculum since they would be in their own category; Designated combinations of 1-3 course groupings that meet the requirement would give students a relatively limited menu of options that might be easier to navigate than another complex attribute layered onto the existing EP & BC array of courses

Cons: Students would have to take 3+ more units total for General Education, unless there are reductions in other parts of the GE curriculum to compensate, such as in Building Connections, which would result in less demand for courses in those categories and students not receiving the learning benefits of taking those courses; Could complicate the first year for some majors that have very tight requirements because of accreditation; Lists of options that are manageable for a relatively small number of courses could become unwieldy if the number of options that meet a Foundations requirement expands greatly, in which case an attribute model could be easier for students and advisors to navigate; Would potentially require the course(s) to be at the 100-level, or at the most, 200-level

Susan Miller-Cochran comments on some notable features, including some advantages and disadvantages, of different implementation models, 17 September 2024:

Breadth/Depth Model

- Does not increase the overall number of credits for General Education (still 32)
- Gives students significant autonomy to select in-depth courses that are of interest to them (the comprehensive courses would be much more limited)
- Provides a path for a range of departments and colleges to participate in offering in-depth courses, although the comprehensive courses would likely fall to a limited number of departments
- Supports scaffolded learning, especially if students take the comprehensive course first
- Was supported by ABOR when presented in January 2023
- Would require existing EP courses that could fit the comprehensive description to switch to BC
- Requires tracking additional attributes when the attributes become graduation requirements in Fall 2026 (making GE a bit more complicated)

A/B Model

- Does not increase the overall number of credits in General Education if the two courses replace BC courses (yet this reduces the BC course requirement to one, which will require revisiting the overall number of BC courses offered at a time)
- Provides potential for a range of departments and colleges to participate in offering courses (the courses would need to cover 3-4 areas within the defined categories)
- Does not add any new attributes to the General Education requirements¹
- Gives students some autonomy to select courses of interest to them
- Requires tracking which courses students have taken and which ones would complete the requirement

¹ JV note: Another version of the A/B model is possible, in which the Civic Learning-A and Civic Learning-B are attributes attached to BC courses that also meet the requirements for BC (and possibly another attribute)

- Requires significant coordination of which courses are offered in which terms/years so that students can fully complete the requirement (right now, OGE has no authority to require the offering of any department courses)

One-Course Model

- Does not require any additional credits for General Education (the CLCK course would be one of the three required BC courses)
- Would require existing EP courses that could fit this category to switch to BC
- Would still offer some autonomy in selecting which course to take, but the options will be more limited than the Breadth + Depth or A/B models
- Follows the model ASU and NAU have adopted for this area of General Education
- Does not support scaffolded learning within GE (although this could be supported through coordination of civic learning components in other courses across the curriculum)
- *Might* feel like a repeat of the US Government requirement in high schools, although that completely depends on the approach of the course

Foundations Model:

- Does not increase the overall number of credits for General Education (if the Foundations course replaces a BC course)
- Would require the comprehensive course(s) to be at the 100-level (or at the most, 200-level, but Foundations courses really should be offered as foundational to everything else in the curriculum)
- Could complicate the first year for some majors that have very tight requirements because of accreditation (e.g., Engineering, Architecture)
- Could potentially place a significant burden on a department or college if there is only one course that can meet the requirement (neither ASU nor NAU have one course that is the only option to meet the requirement)

To: Faculty Senate
Cc: UWGEC, Undergraduate Council, Office of General Education
From: Mark Stegeman (Chair, ad hoc faculty committee on General Education)
Date: October 8, 2024¹

The Office of General Education has proposed a tight timeline for the adoption and implementation of a university-wide Gen. Ed. Civics curriculum. For the following reasons, the ad hoc Committee believes that this timeline is unrealistic and inadvisable and has adopted, by a 13-1 vote on October 7, the following statement, which explains its position in detail. (Two members, who did not vote and have not been engaged with the issue, are excluded from this count.)

**ASSESSMENTS, CONCLUSIONS, and CONSIDERATIONS for the FACULTY SENATE
concerning further revision of the Refreshed General Education Program**

ASSESSMENTS

A) A careful and successful implementation of Civics will take more time than is allowed by imposing new course requirements, with sufficient seats, for students entering in Fall, 2026.

We admire the work done to date, including the enormous work done to solicit, support, and approve proposals for at least 550 courses within the Refreshed General Education program.

It takes nothing away from this admiration to point out that the university's challenging recent circumstances have slowed the Civics implementation work to the point that previous targets for a quality implementation are unrealistic.

We offer nine reasons to support this assessment. Different committee members rank the importance of the nine points differently, but by an overwhelming vote we believe that, taken together, they support delay.

1) *The views of the incoming permanent provost are unknown.* The new provost may disagree with the approved program and pause or reconsider its implementation, leading to confusion, delays, ill feeling, and wasted effort. Instead of trying to rush one concept forward, this year provides an excellent interval to turn current or new proposal concepts into detailed plans that can be assessed and compared through a university-wide process that includes many stakeholders.

Moreover, it seems *unreasonable to impose on a new provost the immediate burden of implementing a major curricular change, into which they had no input or opportunity for review, followed by immediate accountability for unanticipated issues, complaints, delays, and mid-course corrections.*

¹ This revision corrects an error in what is now fn. 4.

- 2) *The funding model is unknown.* It imposes considerable risk on the colleges to proceed with a major curricular change, when it is hard for them to know how to respond to or plan for proposals having unknown revenue implications.
- 3) *The faculty and other stakeholders are exhausted and stressed* from several years of controversy, leadership changes, and ongoing budget cuts. Other issues currently have more immediate impact and press harder for rapid resolution.
- 4) *Any material change to the General Education program is a massive curricular event for the entire university, which deserves serious Senate engagement and review.* It will almost immediately affect tens of millions of dollars of resource allocation and tens of thousands of students. Big curricular changes are exactly the domain over which the Faculty Senate and other internal stakeholders should be exercising early and thorough, not cursory, oversight.
- 5) *The discussion of Civics has had too little representation reflecting UA's status as an HSI, in a state situated on vast areas of native lands.* This could be remedied, at least in part, by additional appointments to the ad hoc committee.
- 6) *The currently posted alternative Civics implementation models, helpfully presented by OGE and UWGEC for consideration, lack too many details to be meaningfully assessed and compared.* Aside from the uncertain budget implications already mentioned (point (2)), the proposals lack key details:
- a) *Scope of the American Institutions curriculum.* Inside and outside of the committee's anonymous survey of last year, UA faculty have suggested additions to ABOR's required topics, including comparative systems of government and (particularly relevant for Arizona) governance of the Native Nations. Such topics could strengthen the program pedagogically, increase student interest, and allow more academic units to participate, but they do not yet appear in any of the models. Adding content topics will take time (who sets the curricular standard?) and presumably affect the comparison of implementation models.
 - b) *Incorporation of ABOR's required civic skills.* NAU covers civil discourse through three mini-attributes, one of which must be incorporated into each major course, across the university; ASU covers civil discourse and civic engagement in a separate course: Governance and Civic Engagement.
The implementation models posted for UA are vaguer, stating simply that any curriculum model must incorporate civil discourse and civic engagement. Information and data literacy, critical competencies that ABOR mentions explicitly, are barely mentioned.
 - c) *Staffing.* The ad hoc committee's faculty survey (drawing about 500 responses) showed that staffing any Civics program with enough faculty who are qualified and interested in teaching the wide range of topics required by ABOR will be a challenge for any implementation model. Unsurprisingly, the challenge increases as the scope of topics covered in a single course increases.² How to maximize student exposure to content area experts already scattered across the various colleges, when budgets for new hiring are tightly constrained, is a substantial question. It should play a significant role in the assessment of models.
 - d) *Granting (incoming and outgoing) transfer credit.* Some implementation models may make this easier than others.

² The committee's February report to the Faculty Senate summarizes some of the findings from the faculty survey.

7) *Civics implementation is inherently connected to other possible changes in the Refresh program. Constraints on the total size (in credits) of the General Education curriculum imply that the consideration of alternative implementations of Civics is hard to separate from other possible changes (e.g., in UNIV 101 and 301, the Natural Science component, the Building Connections component, and the currently scheduled imposition of the four extant Attributes). Adding Civics curricula to a program that was not originally designed to accommodate it complicates implementation, and the committee’s anonymous faculty and advisor surveys both show that complexity for students and advisors is a pressing concern.*

Dozens of responses to the advisors’ survey offered very negative comments about the planned imposition of mandatory Attributes in Fall, 2026 (e.g. “dreading,” “nightmare,” “[will] confuse students immensely,” “WAY TOO CONFUSING,” “PLEASE DO NOT INSTITUTE THE ATTRIBUTES.”).

Separately, respondents to the advisors’ survey offered sharply negative assessments of students’ perceptions of UNIV 101 and UNIV 301: over 85% of advisors who responded said that their impression of overall student opinion of the value of these courses was either 1 (mostly) or 2 on a scale of 1-5. Many advisors added written free responses about students’ reactions to 101 or 301, which were overwhelmingly negative (e.g. “waste of time,” “busywork,” “pointless”); only one of those free responses reported mixed student opinions. Someone who has taught 101 wrote “we... spend 16 weeks repeating very similar content which could be covered in 2.”³

The point is that many issues deserve discussion, even if no changes are ultimately made.

In addition to the structural connections between various possible changes, the confusion caused by piecemeal changes (e.g. advisor comments such as “Can we just get through 4 years without a change?” or “Another change, really?”) is a second reason to group any changes together into a single package. Considering packages of changes complicates the assessment of options for implementing Civics.

8) *After an implementation model is approved internally and by ABOR, actual implementation will require resolution of various other issues.*

a) *ABOR’s American Institutions requirement emphasizes content rather than methods of thought, which is the deliberate emphasis of the Perspectives and Building Connections courses in the current Refresh. This difference may affect the relative roles of colleges and departments, OGE, and UWGEC in setting and enforcing the curricular standards for Civics and reviewing proposals.*

b) *How many courses will be offered, and will that number be limited (unlike in the current Refresh)?*

c) *What process will promote viewpoint and content diversity in Civics offerings? Many responses to the committee’s faculty survey last Spring expressed concerns related to free speech, viewpoint diversity, and outside interference in content. It also seems important to engage student interest by offering courses having different disciplinary or philosophical orientations.*

d) *Considering the above issues, what will be the process for inviting proposals? How much time will faculty have to prepare them? And how long will it take to review them?*

e) *What process will ensure that enough seats are offered, in-person and online, in any semester, in a variety of time slots? Preliminary data from the committee’s recent survey of undergraduate advisors show that the availability of seats for various Refresh categories, in-person and online, is a surprisingly acute issue. More than 40% of advisors reported that, over the course of three recent semesters, they took exceptional steps at least twice, because they could “only address a student’s [General Education] needs by reaching out*

³ Reported data from the advisors’ survey are preliminary, because a small number of late responses are not included. The committee’s next formal report to the Senate will report complete data from that survey.

to colleges or departments to expand available seats or make other special accommodations.”⁴

f) *What will be the sources of funding for the development of new curricula or co-taught courses?*

9) *There is considerable sentiment among the faculty, outside of the inner core of persons most engaged with the implementation, that outreach on the Refresh and especially the Civics mandate has been thin.* Reasonable or not, this shows up clearly in the ad hoc committee’s anonymous surveys of the teaching faculty and the undergraduate advisors.

When asked whether the G.E. Refresh process (development and implementation), over the past 4-5 years, included “adequate opportunities for input from the academic advising community,” 13% said that opportunities were “adequate” or “excellent,” while 70% said “minimal” or “not enough” (the rest were unsure).

December’s faculty survey on Civics had a response rate of 20%, presumably with over-representation of persons who had some awareness of the requirement, due to self-selection. Even so, 65% of persons who self-identified as coming from outside SBS had “never heard of” ABOR’s mandate to teach American Institutions. Another 23% “knew little about its specific requirements.” (The percentages including respondents from SBS were slightly lower.)⁵

NAU conducted a long and thorough process for collecting faculty, staff and student input on its new General Education program, including Civics. We summarize this process from materials that NAU has submitted to ABOR, with direct excerpts from its 2021 proposal package in quotes.

AY 2019-2021 [two years]

NAU’s Liberal Studies Task Force met biweekly for a year to develop a General Education proposal, response to ABOR’s new General Education policy. During the second year: “Following an extensive feedback and revision cycle (two full cycles of review and feedback by all academic committees and colleges, and the student governing body),” the proposal was unanimously recommended by three shared governance committees and presented to the Faculty Senate in March. The Senate cast a 91% approval vote in April, with the requirement that NAU “conduct capacity and implementation modeling.” ABOR approved the proposal in September 2021.

AY 2021-2025 [four years]

Since initial ABOR approval, NAU is spending four years preparing for implementation, including one change in the curriculum that was made at ABOR’s request in response to negative media coverage of the new program. NAU adopted this extended implementation period even though it pre-approved all its previous Gen. Ed. Courses for the new program, eliminating a major process from UA’s implementation model.

AY 2025-2026

The new General Education program will be required for entering students.

⁴ The survey indicates that seat shortages are slightly more acute for in-person sections, especially for the Arts and Humanities Perspectives. Among online courses, the relative shortages are in Foundations courses, especially Math Foundations, and the Arts Perspective. Some advisors expressed concern that implementing the Attributes requirements may exacerbate shortages.

⁵ These data were previously reported in the committee’s February report to the Faculty Senate.

UA's official faculty input process for the implementation of a Civics curriculum began with the creation of the Civics Task Force in Spring, 2022.⁶ This group met for about a year and developed draft learning outcomes, which as far as we know never entered a comment, revision and approval process. After a year-long gap, we applaud the recent creation of the Civic Learning and Civic Knowledge group, which has met once. Presumably due to the recent string of events affecting UA's management, the activity of these two groups does not compare to NAU's vigorous process in 2019-2021.

If we roughly align UA's current progress to NAU's situation sometime in 2020, then from that point five more years will have elapsed before NAU requires entering students to take Civics courses. This may be slower than necessary, but it suggests that OGE's current target of full implementation in less than two years is impractical. Nothing to date, in UA's implementation of the Refresh curriculum, suggests to us that this target is realistic.

B) There is no apparent need to implement Civics on such a fast timetable.

Against the advantages of slowing the process down, we see minimal disadvantages, from the institutional viewpoint.

10) *An obvious way to avoid a confusing sequence of changes to the General Education curriculum is to postpone the Attributes rollout (rather than to accelerate the Civics rollout), to allow any changes to occur together.* The Regents probably share our understanding of UA's changed circumstances, and there is precedent. ABOR allowed UA to postpone the original Spring 2022 rollout of the Attributes without formal approval but without apparent protest.

11) *The curriculum rollout is already, in practice, chronologically detached from the tri-university Civics assessment.* The timing of the assessment, which is on schedule due in part to excellent work by OGE, no longer seems relevant for decisions about the timing of the implementation of the Civics curriculum.

CONCLUSIONS

The committee applauds the excellent work done to date, but we believe that NAU's process suggests that much more collaborative work, feedback from the campus community, and possibly revision, would be appropriate and useful before taking a thoroughly vetted proposal to ABOR. Building a higher degree of consensus seems especially important at this time and could lead to a much smoother Faculty Senate approval process than the controversial and highly contentious Senate meeting that occurred in 2021, surrounding UA's original Refresh proposal to ABOR.

Moreover, things done quickly are often not done well. If the institution assigns high priority to the pedagogical quality of the General Education program, then this argues against haste.

For its part, the ad hoc committee plans to work this semester on points (6) and (7), to advance the development and assessment of alternative proposals for the implementation of Civics. Processing input from a wide range of stakeholders could lead to the best model being “none of the above.” In short, we believe that much progress can occur during this academic year, without trying to accelerate the process beyond what is prudent or reasonably possible.

We will also work to build a rough alternative timeline, which will display a hypothetical sequence of steps toward a well-vetted revision of the Refresh, including implementation of Civics. This may help to guide planning and to clarify the rationale for amending the Fall, 2026 target.

CONSIDERATIONS for the FACULTY SENATE

- A) The Senate may wish to consider endorsing parts or all of this assessment, partly as a signal to other decision-makers.

- B) The Senate may wish to ask the ad hoc committee to work with faculty leadership to set up a Senate study session devoted to General Education, with no action items permitted, to allow meaningful engagement and input from all interested Senators. The committee would suggest that this be done when more data and more complete proposals are available, to facilitate a productive discussion.

Affirming members

Michelle Halla	(Libraries)
Tania Leal	(Humanities)
Matthew Mugmon	(Fine Arts)
Tarnia Newton	(Nursing)
Anna O’Leary	(SBS)
Ethan Orr	(CALES)
Kelly Potter	(Engineering)
Jennifer Ravia	(CALES)
Kirssa Rickman	(SBS)
Joellen Russell	(Science)
Mae Smith	(Education, emeritus)
Mark Stegeman	(Management)
Keith Swisher	(Law)

⁶ The ad hoc Committee Chair was a member of this task force.

UWGEC Chair Comments on the General Faculty General Education Committee Statement to Faculty Senate, October 7, 2024

As a member who joined the General Faculty General Education Committee last spring, in my capacity as UWGEC Chair, I have been part of its recent full committee meetings. It appears that the Committee's bylaws do not allow minority reports from dissenting members of the Committee, so I submit the following comments here, to convey both my agreement and disagreement with various parts of the Committee's majority statement.

The comments below my introductory comments have, in large part, already been shared by email on Saturday morning with the rest of the committee, following the reveal of a draft of the statement at our meeting on Friday afternoon, which I had not seen until then. I will try to adjust these comments below for any final changes made to the Committee's majority statement, but my apologies in advance if there is any confusion because some issues I address below were updated in the document in response to feedback by me and others. The final version was not sent to me until just after 9am today (Monday), so I am adjusting what I can. I appreciate the rephrasing or removal of some statements for clarity or accuracy in response to my feedback, even though I'm not part of the majority. I would also like to offer to include minority or dissenting statements by others on the Committee as part of the UWGEC report to the Senate in the future as well, even if I am in the majority, since I believe that the most open discussion of all perspectives is the lifeblood of a vigorous, thoughtful, and deliberative Faculty Senate.

I sympathize very much with the concerns raised by other committee members who firmly believe in the value of a delay in implementing the Civic Learning requirement, and those who are somewhere in the middle but lean towards slowing things down for more study and consultation. It is a worthwhile approach, especially in faculty shared governance, to want to consider all ramifications of proposed changes, and to ensure the widest possible input across campus. I very much support these things too, which is why I have been pushing for so long to get the discussion of a policy revision for implementing Civic Learning on the agendas for vigorous deliberation as soon as possible at all shared governance bodies, including UWGEC, Undergraduate Council, Faculty Senate, and also UCAAC.

Some context: The faculty task force on Civic Education met in 2022-23 to develop draft learning outcomes and begin discussion of implementation models. Some preliminary discussion has taken place at shared governance bodies since then, especially at UWGEC and the UGC, and on the ad hoc faculty committee on General Education, but it is important now to involve more voices across campus, including Faculty Senate, in open

discussion. The Office of General Education also convened open faculty forums last February, which revealed a variety of important issues and perspectives, for which we have recorded summaries of input, on learning outcomes, implementation/rollout including alternative models, and inclusion. Following this, a CLCK (Civic Learning-Civic Knowledge) advisory group was convened, which is meeting again this Wednesday to offer input and guidance on the multiple proposals for implementing Civic Learning.

What would “delay” even mean at this point? On the current timeline, there should be numerous opportunities for shared governance consultation in the next several months, to consider all these issues and more, and this is exactly the intent of the timeline proposed by the Office of General Education, which I have supported as UWGEC Chair. Any discovered need for extended deliberation at UWGEC, UGC, or UCAAC may extend that timeline, but in no scenario would any policy revision proposal reach Faculty Senate until sometime next spring. This gives us ample time for Faculty Senate to hold open forums and discussions involving a wide range of voices, and also for the ad hoc committee on Gen Ed to continue its important work in analyzing survey data, as well as deliberating and sharing ideas with the official shared governance bodies.

Recognizing that the ad hoc Gen Ed committee is advisory to Senate and is not in the approval chain for policy proposals, I tried to make sure that all proposals and documents were shared with the rest of the committee for early substantive input last month, around the same time as these documents were shared with UWGEC itself to get input from their constituencies around campus. And I have advocated strenuously before both of the Committee’s last two meetings to add this to our agendas, in order to provide this early feedback even before the CLCK advisory group. While I was disappointed that this was not put on either of the Committee's agendas, I have received some thoughtful individual feedback from some of the members, in response to the documents I circulated, and I am looking forward to incorporating more of the Committee’s feedback all along the way for shared governance bodies, in order to be as open and transparent as possible about the range of views and concerns of faculty across campus.

Some of us had hoped to bring formal proposals into the deliberation process for shared governance already last academic year (2023-24), following the work by the faculty task force on Civic Education to draft learning outcomes in 2022-23. It seemed clear to all of us, I think, that the implications for fitting this into the rest of General Education would require a wider range of voices than the more disciplinarily focused group of content area experts who were on the task force. Although the different ways for implementing Civic Learning have not changed all that much since then, we delayed already for about a year so that the ad hoc Gen Ed committee could conduct a survey and refine its own input on various

implementation proposals. This did generate some useful data and responses from faculty, and some of the alternative implementation models have been refined over the past year, including some more details on one of the models from the chair of the ad hoc committee.

But at this point, it seems to me, it is time to move forward with more deliberation and input from other governance bodies across campus, including the Faculty Senate.

While I do not support a delay in moving forward, especially when it is so indefinite, I do see a lot of points of common ground in the document, and things I agree with, including:

- Institution-wide significance of this Civic Learning implementation discussion, and therefore also the importance for Faculty Senate to have open discussion in advance of its coming to the Senate agenda.
- Challenges of proceeding without a university-wide budget/funding model in place, though as others have pointed out, this also offers the opportunity for making a decision in the best interest of student learning without the direct SCH concerns that overshadowed everything in AIB.
- Faculty are exhausted from other on-campus crises unrelated to GE.
- Importance of making sure HSI and border issues are incorporated.
- Importance of considering how we could include native/Indigenous governance, information literacy, and international comparisons as part of the Civic Learning requirement, which could be another way, perhaps even better, for handling the faculty survey concern about US-centricity than the idea I put in the “important issues for discussion file” which was to add a second WCS attribute course, a solution which could complicate student progress toward graduation.
- Challenge of scaling up for staffing, which is actually the main concern that I think could ultimately necessitate a delay, and I would emphasize especially the time that will be needed for faculty and academic units across campus to prepare course proposals in alignment with the implementation model that is adopted and for UWGEC to review the proposals in time. As UWGEC chair this is something that certainly concerns me, although I know OGE has wisely proposed that we prioritize review of courses for Civic Learning, and I think it is just barely possible, but it will be tight! If anything, though, this challenge should prompt us to proceed into in the shared governance process as vigorously and openly as possible this fall, with discussions across UWGEC, Undergraduate Council, UCAAC, Faculty Senate, the General Faculty Committee on General Education and elsewhere on campus.

- I fully concur with the suggestion of a Faculty Senate study session on General Education. Prior to the Committee's meeting to discuss this report, I had already favorably discussed the same idea with the Executive Director of General Education, Susan Miller-Cochran, and I believe this should take place this fall, and again later if necessary, so that Faculty Senate can discuss and deliberate meaningfully about implementing the Civic Learning requirement during this semester, before it comes formally to the Faculty Senate, and can communicate concerns and ideas back to other shared governance bodies that are earlier in the approval pipeline. I am ready to help make this a reality and look forward to engaging with the Senate, along with voices from the Office of General Education, the ad hoc General Faculty Committee on General Education, and others across with perspectives to share.

I respect the majority view of the committee in support of delay, even though I do not agree this is the best way to approach the valid concerns that have been raised. However:

- I find myself in some disagreement with the committee on whether it is desirable for a faculty-driven process to defer to a future Provost's preferences. I am concerned about the assumption that the Senate should defer what ought to be a faculty-driven shared governance decision – our Gen Ed curriculum – to the preferences of a future senior administrator. Obviously, the future Provost will have to be involved once or whenever they arrive, but I for one am uncomfortable with the reasoning that we need to defer taking up deliberation at shared governance bodies while awaiting the approval of a future Provost, especially one who will have newly arrived.
- At one point in the statement, the assertion is made there aren't enough details for the various models for implementing Civic Learning. There are some significant, provisional details available for multiple models, and have been since at least December 2023, if not before. The draft learning outcomes and especially the interpretive notes from the 2022-23 faculty task force, which I would be happy to share whenever the Senate wants to see them, are also fairly detailed, even if these will need some revisions in response to campus wide input. Also, it is important, I would think, to maintain some flexibility and open-endedness in descriptions of all these models, so wouldn't it actually be a bad thing if the details were too highly specified in advance, before deliberation? More details will be ironed out during the lengthy approval process, and through the input of shared governance bodies.
- I fully agree that added complexity for students and advisors has been a key concern all along the way, and this is something that has been included, and should continue to be included, as a key point of discussion on the relative merits of different models. At least one model that was discussed early on -- a sub-attribute

model with distinct tracking of each of the seven parts of the ABOR requirement for American Institutions -- no longer seems to be advocated by anyone, as far as I can tell, and one of the major reasons that has been cited is the excessive complexity in advising and student progress toward degree completion that it would entail. Concern about potential complexity furnishes a reason to proceed with deliberation sooner rather than later, so that this added complexity can be discussed and balanced with other factors and considerations.

- The NAU comparison is helpful, but to me it does not support the idea of a longer timetable. It appears that NAU did the whole faculty deliberation part of the process over just 2 academic years, starting with a task force the first year, and concluding with shared governance the second year. This is an even faster timetable than we are on here, just for the Civic Learning requirement! (Indeed, it appears that their faculty senate final vote was in spring of the second year!) We had a faculty task force in 2022-23, then deliberation in 2023-24, and now 2024-25. So, to me, NAU's was not obviously a "longer but also more intensive process" but is in fact very similar, or even shorter than what we are doing, at least on the faculty deliberation side. The additional years at NAU were, it seems, reserved for implementation, including individual course reviews, which to my mind is the part to be most concerned about for having enough time to complete for Civic Learning. But we are eating into that time if we do not start having vigorous and open debates at all shared governance venues as soon as possible, from the CLCK advisory group convened by the Office of General Education, to UWGEC, to UGC, UCAAC, and Senate. Let's focus on greater open discussion at Faculty Senate, and at all other shared governance bodies in the chain of approvals, the sooner the better!
- I understand the importance of having open discussions about possible needed changes to other parts of the Refresh curriculum. However, I do not believe it is remotely realistic to believe that such consultation can be completed for any more extensive reform proposal (plus the very tight timeline for course proposal approval, as noted above) on a short timetable, if we are going to ensure broad consultation across campus. UA took several years to do this leading up to 2021, and so did NAU as noted in the statement. This would be an ongoing and even a multi-year discussion. How long would it take? One more year? Two more years? 3-4 years? I am very concerned about holding up Civic Learning and preventing this from being implemented for a long time, when it can be implemented within the system we have, both to adhere to ABOR policy and benefit students.

- On a more specific point, I disagree with the statement that the Office of General Education is trying to “accelerate the civics rollout.” This implies that OGE is proposing a plan to accelerate Civic Learning implementation, when in fact they are simply trying to follow the exact Fall 2026 deadline that was approved through shared faculty governance in conjunction with the delay of tracking the attributes as graduation requirements, as the main rationale for setting Fall 2026 as the expected deadline (at the top of the policy document that did this). Thus all shared faculty governance bodies have already agreed to a document that indicates this as the timetable we are aiming for. This does not mean, of course, that it cannot be delayed, but it should not be described as an “acceleration” when this is right on schedule for what was approved by UWGEC, UGC, UCAAC, Senate, and ABOR.

I look forward to continued vigorous and open discussion of the Civic Learning requirement and other General Education issues, with shared governance bodies and across campus.

Faculty Interest in Teaching Areas of American Institutions / Civic Learning

from General Faculty General Education Committee survey data, early 2024:

(compiled in written notes by JV, Feb 2024, then typed up in Sep 2024)

As part of the survey, faculty were asked to indicate their current or future interest in teaching each of the 7 areas identified by ABOR as part of American Institutions, which shall be designated below by the numbers I-VII, corresponding to the following ABOR areas (for convenience in distinguishing them and consistency with past usage, I use Roman numerals to designate the specific 7 areas):

- (I) how the history of the United States continues to shape the present
- (II) the basic principles of American constitutional democracy and how they are applied under a republican form of government;
- (III) the United States Constitution and major American constitutional debates and developments;
- (IV) the essential founding documents and how they have shaped the nature and functions of American Institutions of self-governance;
- (V) landmark Supreme Court cases that have shaped law and society;
- (VI) the civic actions necessary for effective citizenship and civic participation in a self-governing society – for example, civil dialog and civil disagreement;
- (VII) basic economic knowledge to critically assess public policy options and to inform professional and personal decisions.

I manually went through all the responses from faculty and tallied up how many faculty indicated a current or future interest in each combination of areas (i.e. which specific areas of the 1-7 above they indicated a self-declared interest in teaching). Although not all potential instructors likely chose to fill out the survey, I believe it provides us with a good sense of what combinations might be most feasible for faculty teaching. Obviously faculty can be incentivized to add further areas they were not initially contemplating an interest in teaching and, on the other hand, some faculty may be interested in teaching multiple areas but not have a single course that currently does all of these things together. So the responses have limitations. But I think they are still illuminating.

How many of the 7 areas do faculty respondents have current or future interest in teaching?

1 area – 44 faculty

5 areas – 9 faculty

2 areas – 23 faculty

6 areas – 8 faculty

3 areas – 10 faculty

7 areas – 9 faculty

4 areas – 13 faculty

So it is clear that there are far more faculty who currently or in future want to teach in 1-2 areas (67 total) than teach in 5-7 areas (26 total faculty). But, notably, the number who teach in 3-4 areas is not that high either, totaling only 23 faculty. So it seems clear that the greatest participation across campus in offering courses would be for faculty offering depth courses in 1 area, or 2 areas at most.

What are the specific combinations of areas favored by those who teach in 3-4 areas, and do they align in a discernible pattern?

Here are the combinations of areas that faculty with interest in 3-4 areas listed:

I-V-VI-VII

I-II-IV-VI

I-IV-V-VII

II-III-IV-V

I-II-V-VI (two respondents)

I-IV-V-VI

I-IV-VI-VII (three respondents)

II-IV-VI-VII

III-V-VI-VII

V-VI-VII

I-IV-VI

I-V-VII (two respondents)

I-VI-VII (four respondents)

I-IV-VII

II-V-VII

Thus it seems the alignments of 3-4 areas are widely dispersed, which complicates any attempt to divide the 7 areas into two groupings. It is also notable that the specific areas that are included in more of these combinations are highly uneven, such that the more open-ended areas (I, VI, and VII) tend to be included in many more combinations, while the other four more specific areas (II, III, IV, and V) are less likely to be included, especially Areas II and III, the latter of which only showed up in

one (!) of the combinations across the entire data set of faculty with interest in 3-4 areas. This will further complicate attempts to potentially divide the areas into two lists, since it means that the “bottleneck” in the less frequently mentioned areas will not likely be much mitigated by reducing the number of areas covered by 7 to only 3-4 areas. I have tabulated these below for faculty who indicated a current or future interest in either 3 or 4 of the 7 areas:

	Faculty with 4 Areas	Faculty with 3 Areas	Total
Area I	8	8	16
Area II	5	1	6
Area III	1	0	1
Area IV	8	2	10
Area V	7	4	11
Area VI	10	6	16
Area VII	7	9	16

I look forward to further discussions about these data and how they can inform our deliberations about implementation models. I apologize in advance if I made any errors in my manual tabulation of the data above, since I did this by hand, but any minor errors seem unlikely to affect the overall results, which are quite striking.