

General Education Alignment

GEIAC & Gen Ed Council

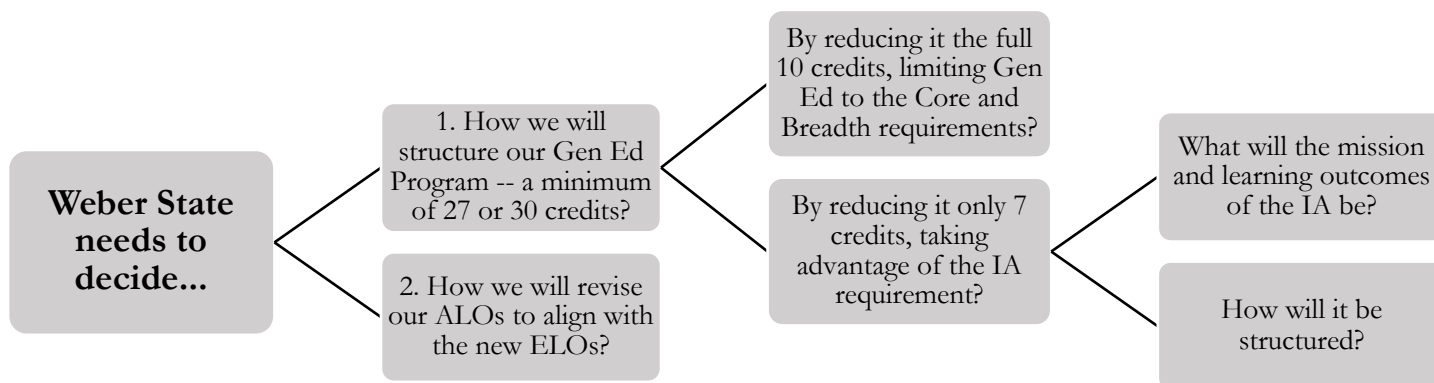
Why do we need to change our Gen Ed Program?

Weber State's Gen Ed Program needs to align to Board Policy R470, General Education, which was recently revised and approved by the Utah Board of Higher Education (see Background & Details). The R470 policy updates are significant and include a new minimum credit requirement, new essential learning outcomes, and newly engaged Area Working Groups to involve representatives from all USHE institutions in revising essential learning outcomes (ELOs) for each Gen Ed area. These ELOs are the guide for Weber State's core and breadth area learning outcomes.

R470 now constrains the number of required Gen Ed courses (of 3 or more credits each) to two in Composition, one in American Institutions, and one in Quantitative Literacy, for a minimum of 12 credits in the Core, and one each in Life Science, Physical Science, Creative Arts, Humanities, and Social Science, for a minimum of 15 credits in the Breadth and a total minimum of 27 credits. In addition, institutions can require up to **3 credits in an optional "Institutional Area" (IA) requirement**.

What are the implications for Weber State?

WSU's Gen Ed program currently requires at least **37 credits (13 core, 24 breadth)**. Thus, we have to reduce Gen Ed by **10 credits** (1 in core and 9 in breadth, for the minimum of 27 credits) or **7 credits** (if we use the IA requirement, for the minimum of 30), and align our Gen Ed ALOs with new R470 ELOs.



Timeline

- **Spring 2024:** Discuss possibilities and preferences (see Gen Ed Credit Options).
- **Fall 2024 – Spring 2025:** Propose and approve Gen Ed Program credit requirement.
- **2025-2026 Catalog Year:** Implement approved Gen Ed program at 27- or 30-credits.
 - If 30-credits, AY 25-26 will be used to determine and approve the IA mission and learning outcomes, and to review and approve courses for that requirement.

Feedback

Please share your thoughts with Gen Ed Council or your GEIAC representative, come to a GEIAC meeting, contribute to working groups across campus, & follow developments shared in email or other announcements from your Faculty Senate and campus leadership.



GEIAC Reps

How will decisions be made at Weber State?

Our Gen Ed program's minimum credit requirement, followed by consideration of the IA and ALO revision, are the vital questions; it should be noted that the number of credits required to earn a Bachelor's or Associate's degree has not changed. Conversations about these issues are ongoing and open for ideas and feedback, and Weber State's faculty governance procedures will guide the process.

Gen Ed Credit Options:

- Faculty Senate Executive has charged GEIAC to discuss opportunities and challenges regarding the 27- and 30-credit options, and to explore options for the 3-credit Institutional Area and its learning outcomes as aligned to R470.
- GEIAC is the Faculty Senate committee responsible for proposing changes to Gen Ed and for having those proposals reviewed and approved by the University Curriculum Committee, Faculty Senate Executive Committee, and Faculty Senate. Because it is a programmatic change, President's Council and WSU Trustees also will review and approve the proposal.
- GEIAC will need to decide how and when to implement a course renewal process in the core and breadth areas to ensure that all Gen Ed courses are aligned with the new learning outcomes.

Area Learning Outcomes:

- Statewide Area Working Groups (with WSU representatives) are revising the core and breadth R470 ELOs, which will be approved by the Statewide Gen Ed Task Force in an updated appendix to the R470.
- Weber State's reps to the Area Working Groups will work with WSU programs, and eventually GEIAC, to ensure that our ALOs are aligned to the revised R470 ELOs.

Background & Details

What is R470?

R470 is the USHE policy document that outlines Gen Ed guidelines for Utah, creating consistency among, and transferability between, the eight USHE institutions. This includes both the structure of Gen Ed programs and the ELOs for Gen Ed classes.

Why and how was it revised?

The R470 policy is regularly revised. The prior revision was complete in 2017, and the current revision was approved by the Board of Higher Education in December 2023.

The revision arose due to the October 2022 [Performance Audit of Utah's System of Higher Education Governance](#) that called out the lack of seamless transfer articulation and alignment of general education requirements across USHE institutions (see p. 24 of the Audit report), and subsequent requests from the Office of the Commissioner and the Board Transfer Council to improve transfer articulation and alignment.

The USHE Gen Ed Task Force was charged with proposing an agreed-upon minimum credit requirement and ELOs, using the framework of the annual "What Is an Educated Person?" statewide general education conference to advance the work with representatives from all USHE institutions. Finally, Core and Breadth Area Working Groups are completing the work on the R470 ELOs with input from all USHE institutions.