

General Education Webinar Questions

Nov 21 Webinar

1. A couple of questions from WSU GenEd committee: 1) Many of our programs have set GenEd courses for their students to facilitate students achieving a major in 120 cr. hr (ex Chemistry requirements for a physics major). How are those existing requirements handled within the new framework?

While it is understood that licensure and accreditation and pre-requisite and post-requisite course trajectories will likely provide a reasonable case to require specific GE courses in some majors, the goal is to have as few majors as possible with specific requirements in the general education portion of the degree to ensure that students who complete the general education at one institution and subsequently transfer are not required to take additional courses that are classified in the general education portion of the degree at the receiving institution. Thus, the easiest and most simple route, whenever possible, is to require a specific course requirement in the major portion of the degree rather than in the general education portion of the degree.

If an institution has exhausted all possible scenarios for a major to move a specific course requirement outside of the GE and the institution wishes to continue requiring (and not waive such a GE course) – even when a transfer student completed the systemwide GE or completed the applicable discipline bucket requirement through systemwide transfer coursework – the institution will need to submit a request as detailed below:

https://www.kansasregents.org/academic_affairs/general-education/implementing-systemwide-ge#request-to-continue

KBOR webpage (https://www.kansasregents.org/academic_affairs/general-education/implementing-systemwide-ge) item #8 mentions that a major cannot require a specific Gen Ed course. In Engineering, accreditation (criterion 3 outcomes 2 and 4 here: <https://www.abet.org/accreditation/accreditation-criteria/criteria-for-accrediting-engineering-programs-2022-2023/>) requires that students demonstrate an understanding of ethics and economics principles. For this reason, Engineering programs require these two courses as Gen Ed course requirements. Will KBOR no longer allow Engineering to require these two course subjects as part of Gen Ed? (Or KBOR webpage item #10 override this?)

When answering this question, it should be noted that this is being answered through the lens that there are two components that make up degree requirements. The first is general education portion of the degree and the second is the major portion of the degree. If the course is classified in the general education portion of the degree and the institution does not wish to waive such a GE course requirement for transfer students who completed the GE or completed the respective GE bucket, it will trigger a need to submit a request. Thus, if a transfer student completed the systemwide GE (or completed the arts and humanities and social and behavioral science buckets) – but did not complete the Ethics and Economics courses outlined above – and you wish to continue requiring such courses, it will require a request as detailed below.

https://www.kansasregents.org/academic_affairs/general-education/implementing-systemwide-ge#request-to-continue

If such a requirement is included outside the GE and is included in the major portion of the degree, no such request is required.

2) At WSU we enforce a minimal grade requirement for accepting math, english and communication “foundations” GE courses. Was it considered to enforce a minimal standard in Buckets #1-#3 in the new framework?

There was some limited discussion about having a statewide minimum grading standard for some of the core courses, but most did not favor such a requirement.

Thus it was concluded that:

- 1) An institution can employ a minimum grade standard for these buckets for its native students and transfer students who have not completed the GE; and
- 2) If a transfer student completed the systemwide GE, the GE has been certified as complete and cannot be unpacked. As a result, an institutional minimum grade standard cannot be applied by the receiving institution when the student provided a transcript stating “KS Systemwide General Education Completed.” This was based on the foundational basis that a certified GE is completed and cannot be unpacked.

However, it should be noted that if the student is pursuing a program with a grade standard that is required to meet selective admission criteria or is necessary to meet programmatic accreditation or licensure standards, the student may be required to retake a GE course and ultimately earn a higher grade (e.g., Nursing requires its students to have a “C” or better for admission).

2. Will we receive the slide deck?

Yes.

3. The challenge of math pathways, particularly with a Liberal Arts Math (Quant Reasoning) is the NCAA. The NCAA does really accept it (they are looking at a student athletes transcript and just looking for Comp I, Comp II and College Algebra). To make pathways really work, has the NCAA been engaged?

Board staff will look into this with discussions with the Dana Center, which has assisted many states and systems with Math Pathways work. We don’t anticipate this being a significant issue though based on the high volume of states that have implemented this work over the last 10-15 years.

4. Will math pathways attempt to dictate math courses in a degree program? Asking from an engineering standpoint.

This work is based on the idea that each undergraduate major is aligned with the math course that provides the most applicable math skills needed for that major. The main emphasis behind this is to move away from College Algebra being the default math course for students who are in academic fields that do not ultimately require calculus-

based knowledge because other math courses provide more practical learning opportunities that relate to the academic and often career field that the student is pursuing. I don't anticipate this having any impact on engineering.

5. We are unsure if this is a math development program for high school students or if this has to do with defining curricular math requirements for our degree programs.
At its foundation, math pathways work is based on developing specific general education course requirements for specific undergraduate majors. But there is some potential opportunity for cross-pollination with K-12 too. After the specific math general education pathways are established, there could be some work with K-12 to help design some high school courses to prepare students for the college math pathway courses.
6. As the framework was being developed, what were the discussions surrounding assessment? Were General Education outcomes developed?
There were some discussions about assessment. Concerns were expressed about the idea of developing and integrating a formal state assessment in conjunction with institutional assessment plans. Thus, formal assessment will be determined at the institutional level. Much of the GE will be based on the systemwide transfer courses in which outcomes have already been written. Transfer data will be regularly analyzed and assessed to measure success and there will be a transfer student survey developed to gauge transfer student experiences and identify potential strengths and areas for improvement.

Re-imagining our curriculums to fit the GE framework is a big lift at K-State as our current GE looks significantly different. In our current curriculum approval process at K-State our curriculum proposals need to be launched and moving through workflows in Fall 2023 so they can be to our Faculty Senate Academic Affairs by the first week in February 2024, to hopefully make their way to full senate approval by March 2024 which is the deadline for effective date Fall 2024 curriculum changes. We anticipate up to 350+ of our curriculums will need to submit changes. This means we need to code all of those changes in our degree audits. Not knowing what math classes should be included in our curriculums would be a considerable lift for us to go through edits and approvals for those curriculums again in Fall 2024 (effective Fall 2025). If our curriculums follow the math pathway recommendations, that could also mean significant review and possible updates to pre-requisites of our courses. The timing is concerning. **Thank you for the feedback.**

7. This is an FYI. Fully understand, appreciate and value having a consistent Gen Ed policy in the state. For our Engg programs, we can make buckets 1-6 work. Bucket 7 may be a challenge if this becomes other institutional specified courses. It is important to know that as per ABET accreditation requirements, all engg programs must take 30 hours of math and basic sciences, most of which are GE level (math, physics, chemistry,...) plus another 21 hours of GE courses in buckets 1, 2, 5, 6. Adding 6 hours of other GE content in bucket 7 will reduce the technical content of the programs.
Thank you for laying this out. While the expectation is that the systemwide GE framework will apply throughout the system, is understood that some engineering programs may have challenges implementing the institutionally designated bucket

(bucket 7) based on the more rigid programmatic accreditation requirements prescribed by ABET. As such, if an engineering program has concluded that it will be challenging to implement the institutionally designated bucket (bucket #7) based on ABET, it may seek to be exempted from this bucket by submitting a request to deviate from the systemwide GE: https://www.kansasregents.org/academic_affairs/general-education/implementing-systemwide-ge#request-to-deviate

8. Was an economic impact study conducted to determine the impact of more students attending a community college during their first and/or second year? K-State, KU, and Wichita State are comprehensive four-year universities that rely upon tuition dollars of 1st-year and 2nd-year to maintain revenue with respect to expenses. As more student opt to take classes at community colleges, the capacity of the comprehensive universities will be underutilized and create budget issues with lack of revenue. If the comprehensive universities are force to increase tuition to maintain a balanced budget, this will drive a cost difference between community colleges and the comprehensive universities. In the end it will make the comprehensive universities less affordable. Perhaps this would not matter, but I believe that there are real differences and experiences that are only obtain at a comprehensive university. This could have a significant impact on DEI initiatives. **The states that have implemented systemwide GE have not experienced significant enrollment decreases at universities and increases at community colleges. As such, we are not anticipating a significant enrollment change in Kansas based on this change. To our knowledge, the only significant initiative that has created such a shift (large increase in community/technical colleges and decrease in universities) has occurred in a state that rolled out an all-inclusive, non-income-based, non-capped scholarship program that is exclusively designed for community/technical colleges (sometimes referred to as free community college for all). This type of scholarship allows all students – regardless of income or academic preparation level – to attend community or technical colleges tuition free.**
9. A quality engineering curriculum is not broken down by general education requirements in the first two years and technical content in the last two years, but rather a thoughtful integration of gen ed and technical courses. Students that transfer into engineering programs will likely have a less quality experience and also not as ready to accept engineering internships after their first two years of higher education. Does KBOR recognize that these paths are not equivalent?
Yes. It is understood that some programs will be structured differently. It is also recognized that many engineering students will come directly from high school to college with a specific engineering plan in mind; however, it is also noted that students are on different paths (concurrent enrollment in high school, first-year students unsure of a major, non-traditional community college students who aspire to go to a university in the future but attend a community college first due to a variety of different reasons).

At the very least, there will be many engineering students who have concurrent enrollment and advanced placement (AP) credit that is earned while in high school.

Designing some basic GE structure will help ensure that much of this credit can transfer and apply toward meeting degree requirements.

10. Does KBOR believe, in general, that current engineering curriculums have excess technical hours that are needed for professional practice. If so, what is your evidence? If not, what will be the consequence of removing valuable technical content? Currently, there is strong demand for our engineering graduates, will there be the same demand after implementation of the new gen ed requirements?

More generally, the systemwide GE was designed based on 1) complaints from students that transfer was not working 2) complaints from institutions that transfer is not working 3) legislative feedback that transfer was not working 4) a recognition that there is a wide variation in general education requirements among institutions that that existed (we ranged from 24 to 55 hours for general education requirements) 5) a regional scan of the central US revealed that 14 out of 15 states had some form of a required systemwide GE (Kansas was the only outlier without one) and 6) a Board directive to establish a common GE.

Multiple high-ranking public universities across the country have had all their programs, regardless of whether it was technical or non-technical, participate in a systemwide GE programs for several years. Thus, systemwide GEs have been integrated into highly successful technical-based baccalaureate programs.

The goal is to build system continuity and create clearer paths to complete GE for all majors. While the expectation is that the systemwide GE framework will apply throughout the system, it is understood that some engineering programs may have challenges implementing a specific bucket based on rigid programmatic accreditation requirements. See the response to #8 above for more information.

11. If we have an institutional requirement that all students obtain a minimum grade C in Composition I and II and make that a Degree Requirement, would it still be appropriate to hold transfer students who have completed the System Wide Gen Ed package to the minimum grade, if it is a degree requirement?

A completed systemwide GE cannot be unpacked; thus, if a student completed the systemwide GE and provides a transcript noting "KS Systemwide GE Completed," the GE is considered completed for the purposes of transfer and ultimately meeting graduation requirements.

However, it should be noted that if the student is pursuing a program with a grade standard that is required to meet selective admission criteria or is necessary to meet programmatic accreditation or licensure standards, the student may be required to retake a GE course and ultimately earn a higher grade (e.g., Nursing requires its students to have a "C" or better for admission).

12. what will happen if a student completes the gen Eds in high school

Yes, we anticipate that some students will do this as some are completing an associate degree at the same time in which they graduate high school. The institution where the

student completed the GE will notate "Systemwide General Education Completed" on the official transcript.

13. I like the idea of keeping terminology consistent with language used for systemwide transfer courses. If making this concept more understandable to high schools/families is a priority, nomenclature is important. Clarity is key. Will people know/remember 7-thread GenEd or Sync and Link?

Thanks for the feedback.

14. Can the categories be called something besides "buckets"? If you have additional ideas, please contact Board staff.

15. Do these requirements apply to all Baccalaureate degrees? Even ones with fewer GE requirements currently? Yes, this applies to all baccalaureate degrees.

16. What is timeline if universities/program majors are getting exceptions to GE requirement? The online submission forms will be available soon. Institutions are encouraged to submit these requests as soon as possible. The timing for responses will vary based on volume and other projects.

17. Can a student complete the GE Framework from Institution A without actually completing a degree? What would that do on reflecting general completion data for Institution A? Are you looking at establishing some mechanism of showing completion so it doesn't hurt Institution A?

Yes, some students will complete the systemwide GE without completing a degree. It is anticipated that these will be included in some sort of completion-based metric.

18. I work for a professional program that has its own programmatic and state accreditation. We require sociology and psychology, for example. If a student takes those courses to meet the Core requirement but receives D grades - and we do not - because they are part of the Core at their previous institution, do we HAVE to accept these courses as being satisfactorily completed?

If a higher grade is needed for a major to comply with a programmatic accreditation or licensure requirement, it is understood that the student would need a higher grade.

19. Our institution has significant concerns about the appeal process from major specific GE course requirements. How will the process work, will the submissions be made online directly to KBOR or collected as packages at our institution and be sent on to KBOR? How quickly will this process move, as we have concern about receiving approval in time for curriculum proposal approvals at our own institution? Can you clarify further the courses you are wanting this additional approval for? There is a lot of confusion at our institution on the courses that need to be part of the appeal process as it has been interpreted 3 different ways.

There will be an online submission form for a course requirement that is tied to a specific major, degree, college, or department. While it is understood that licensure and accreditation and pre-requisite and post-requisite course trajectories will likely provide a

reasonable case for specific GE courses in some majors, the goal is to have as few majors as possible with specific requirements in the general education portion of the degree to ensure that students who complete the general education at one institution and subsequently transfer are not required to take additional courses that are classified in the general education portion of the degree at the receiving institution. Thus, the easiest and most simple route is to require a specific course requirement in the major portion of the degree rather than in the in the general education portion of the degree.

If an institution has exhausted all possible scenarios for a major to move a course requirement outside of the GE and the institution wishes to continue requiring (and not waive such a GE course) – even when a transfer student completed the systemwide GE or completed the applicable discipline bucket requirement through systemwide transfer coursework – the institution will need to submit a request as detailed in the instructions below: https://www.kansasregents.org/academic_affairs/general-education/implementing-systemwide-ge#request-to-continue

This would apply in cases in which the institution wishes for a specific major to have a specific course requirement in the English Bucket (Bucket 1), Communications Bucket (Bucket 2), Natural and Physical Sciences Bucket (Bucket 4), Social and Behavioral Sciences Bucket (Bucket 5), or Arts and Humanities Bucket (Bucket 6).

Bucket 3 (the math and statistics bucket) will be defined by the various programs on campus and will not require any exceptions during the inaugural year of systemwide GE in 2024-2025. This is because we are in transition. It did not make sense to include the math and statistics bucket for exceptions in 2024-2025 knowing that the math pathways work will define this bucket shortly thereafter. It is anticipated that the math pathway requirements will take full effect in either 2025-2026 or 2026-2027. Additional guidance regarding a timeline will be addressed later.

Bucket 7 (the institutionally designated bucket) is not included because this is an institutional requirement that is general rather than a program requirement. Students who have completed the systemwide GE at one institution and subsequently transfer should not be required to take any courses in this bucket area.

It is difficult to define a time parameter as this may vary based on the volume of requests, time of year, and other project-based work.

20. How do we support math pathways with dual credit students?

After we define the math pathways for the undergraduate majors, we will engage in discussions with K-12 about how to communicate these requirements and advise students under the math pathways model. We will also likely explore collaborations to develop new high school math courses that will help support and prepare students for these pathways.

21. This specifically pertains to bucket 7: if a student completes the general education and transfers, do the 5-6 hours from bucket 7 have to count towards curricular requirements? It was noted during the GE work that there are certain courses, discipline areas, or focus areas that are not addressed in the framework such as college orientation and/or student success, computer science, agriculture, health and wellness, personal finance, and diversity. There was a desire to have some flexibility to include these types of courses as requirements before certifying a completed GE. Thus, this area was created to provide that type of flexibility. It was not intended to be a program bucket in which each program establishes its own specialized requirements. Thus, this should be designed in such a way that transfer students who completed the systemwide GE at institution A are not required to go back and take any courses from this bucket at institution B.

This bucket could be comprised of 2-3 courses that all students who have not completed the systemwide GE take or it could be a list of courses that all students who have not completed the systemwide GE select from.

22. Many major/programs require students to take certain courses that fall within general education but are not required by the university for completion of general education. Does the program have to apply for an exception? The posted FAQ's #8 and #10 are not clear.
- Whenever possible, an institution is encouraged to include an explicit course requirement in the major portion of the degree rather than in the general education section of the degree. There is nothing required for a major to classify a specific course requirement that may also fall in one of the GE buckets within the major portion (outside the scope of the GE framework) of the degree.

23. Can you please repeat the minimum grade policy for the 7 buckets if the student has completed them and is transferring with KS Statewide gen ed met?
- Institutions can establish general education institutional grading standards for native students and transfer students who do not complete the systemwide GE (provided that transfer students are not treated differently).

When a student provides a transcript stating "KS Systemwide GE Completed" the general education has been certified as completed and therefore it is not subject to course-by-course evaluations and being unpacked to check for general education institutional grading standards.

However, it should be noted that if the student is pursuing a program with a grade standard that is required to meet selective admission criteria or is necessary to meet programmatic accreditation or licensure standards, the student may be required to retake a GE course and ultimately earn a higher grade (e.g., Nursing requires its students to have a "C" or better for admission).

24. What Texas institution are you working with for Math Pathways?

We are working with the Dana Center, which is a non-profit organization that specializes in math education reform. It is located on the campus of the University of Texas at Austin.

25. Can the institutionally designated bucket vary by degree type, like B.A. and B.S. or A.A. and A.S.

It was noted during the GE work that there are certain courses, discipline areas, or focus areas that are not addressed in the framework such as college orientation and/or student success, computer science, agriculture, health and wellness, personal finance, and diversity. There was a desire to have some flexibility to include these types of courses (or others, as determined by the institution) as requirements before certifying a completed GE. Thus, this area was created to provide that type of flexibility. It was not intended to be a bucket with more specialized requirements. Thus, this should be designed in such a way that transfer students who completed the systemwide GE at institution A are not required to go back and take any courses from this bucket at institution B.

This bucket could be comprised of 2-3 courses that all students who have not completed the systemwide GE take or it could be a list of courses that all students who have not completed the systemwide GE select from.

26. Can you give us a preview of what you mean by the expectation for “Degree Maps”? Do you imagine a template across the system? Or will individual institutions have the ability to use their own versions in their catalogs? If the former, do you have a sense of what you want to see? This may be a question for the next webinar, which is fine. **There will be guidance on this in the near future.**

27. This question deals with exceptions. For example for a BS in Chemistry, my institution would need to submit an exception to the degree for Math and Science as the degree requires calculus and Chem I, correct? And we would need to justify why we require CHEM I and Calc, correct, for a Chemistry degree?

Yes, for chemistry. The programs at the institutions can define the math bucket for 2024 without any exception because we are preparing for math GE changes through math pathways work. Either in 2025 or 2026, it is anticipated that the math pathways will take effect, which will establish the math requirements going forward.

28. Is that a continual update concerning courses institutions define in the different buckets or is it an annual basis? **Yes. There will be an annual reporting requirement.**

This will provide an outlet to capture amendments.

29. If each institution is sending a list of the courses in their buckets - does this mean the institution can decide what courses to include?

Yes.

30. From a community college standpoint, this GE framework effects AA, AS and AFA degrees, correct? It does not apply to AGS, correct?

Correct. It also does not apply to the AAS.

31. For Each Bucket - Does every course in a given discipline count for the bucket? Exam. EN 100 counts as does EN 440?

While there is room for some latitude, institutions are strongly encouraged to operate within the freshmen and sophomore parameters as much as possible because most general education courses will be taken during the freshman and sophomore years. According to Board policy, 100 level is freshman level and 200 level is sophomore level. In the case of English, the only English courses that institutions are required to acknowledge as completing the English bucket when a student has not completed the GE are English Comp I and II.

32. Does the institution or KBOR have control over adding a new discipline?

The buckets provide a wide array of subject options for institutions to utilize. So institutions are highly encouraged to operate within the scope of the subjects that fall within each respective bucket. While the intent is to operate within the subjects within each bucket, there is institutional latitude to include additional subjects. These should be limited as much as possible and will be included in a section within the annual reporting requirements. It is also important to recognize that there is the institutionally designated bucket that could also serve as a landing spot for some disciplines that may not fall with the 6-discipline defined buckets.

33. I'm interested to know more about the data regarding math pathways. You stated that 20% of degrees require calculus. Do you also have data regarding the number of graduates each year in degrees that require calculus verses those that don't? I'm interested to see how that compares with the focus on STEM/STEAM.

It is important to note that the 20% figure was based on some national data cited from the Dana Center at the University of Texas at Austin. We do not have the data that was requested in this question. As we dive further into math pathways, we will aim to provide this information.

34. Do programs who for licensure require a minimum grade for buckets 1-3 have to apply for an exception to GE Framework through KBOR?

Provided there are no specific course requirements for a transfer student who either completed the systemwide GE or completed Bucket 1 (English) through the English systemwide transfer and Bucket 2 (Communications) through communications systemwide transfer courses, the answer is no.

Bucket 3 (the math and statistics bucket) will be defined by the various programs on campus and will not require any exceptions during the inaugural year of systemwide GE in 2024-2025. This is because we are in transition. It did not make sense to include the math and statistics bucket for exceptions in 2024-2025 knowing that the math pathways work will define this bucket shortly thereafter. It is anticipated that the math pathway

requirements will take full effect in either 2025-2026 or 2026-2027. Additional guidance regarding 2025 and 2026 will be provided later.

35. When will Math Pathways be implemented? Fall 2024 or earlier?

A timeline is currently being discussed. Institutions will identify the math classes for this bucket in 2024 without any exceptions because this work is in very early stages. Additional guidance regarding 2025 and 2026 will be provided later.

36. Institution Course List for Buckets - Would the list be every course offered in the disciplines found in the bucket?

Yes. This would be an inventory of courses in each respective bucket. While there is room for some latitude, institutions are strongly encouraged to operate within the freshmen and sophomore parameters as much as possible because most general education courses will be taken during the freshman and sophomore years. According to Board policy, 100 level is freshman level and 200 level is sophomore level.