

# WOU General Education Update

---

*Good teaching is  
more a giving of right  
questions than a  
giving of right  
answers*

*Josef Albers*

---

## **Assessing the General Education Program**

The Goal of Assessment in WOU's General Education is to understand the experiences of students in the program and to evaluate their learning in the program. Holistic assessment emphasizes the effectiveness of the whole program, guiding decision-making regarding program function and targeting program development efforts by identifying program strengths and weaknesses.

As the First Year Seminars are the newest element of the program, our recommendation is to initially focus on FYS experience and outcomes. In the 2019-20 Academic Year, our target assessments are the FYS instruments – a developmental survey, student and faculty course perception surveys, and faculty reflections. General Education will continue to take part in the campus wide PLC process that addresses the Undergraduate Learning Outcomes that intersect with the General Education Learning Outcomes. We anticipate also gathering Institutional Research data on enrollment levels for seminars each term and completion rates of students in the seminars.

In addition to the target data collection on FYS implementation, formative student surveys will be made available to faculty in all General Education courses both to help guide practice and to allow for trial and feedback on the use of these formative surveys.

You can learn more about program assessment of General Education at <http://www.wou.edu/gened/assessment/>.

## **First Year Seminars by the Numbers**

In the 2019-20 Academic Year, students will be able to choose from 52 unique seminar topics. We have seminar offerings from every Academic Division save one and from Student Affairs. One Quantitative-focused seminar will be offered in Salem. The Student Enrichment Program will also be offering a Writing Focused and a Quantitative Focused topic each term.

<b>Term</b>	<b>Writing Focused</b>	<b>Quantitative Focused</b>
<b>Fall 2019</b>	13 sections, 11 topics	14 sections, 14 topics
<b>Winter 2020</b>	13 sections, 12 topics	9 sections, 8 topics
<b>Spring 2020</b>	11 sections, 11 topics	11 sections, 9 topics

---

## Proposal Deadlines

---

To be included in the 2019-20 catalog, course proposals need to be to the General Education Committee by:

*Integrating Knowledge*  
**February 12, 2019**

Course proposals that do not make these deadlines will be invited to propose for General Education inclusion in the 2020-21 AY catalog.

## High Impact Practices

A High Impact Practice is one that has been extensively tested and documented as beneficial for college students across demographic categories. These High Impact Practices, when implemented intentionally and consistently are associated with positive outcomes in student retention and engagement. First Year Seminars are a High Impact Practice built into the General Education program. Additionally, each class within the Integrating Knowledge category must include at least one High Impact Practice. The descriptions of options for Integrating Learning High Impact Practices below are excerpted from the list provided by AACU (<https://www.aacu.org/leap/hips>).

### *Learning Communities*

Students take two or more linked courses as a group and work closely with one another and with their professors. Many learning communities explore a common topic and/or common readings through the lenses of different disciplines

### *Writing-Intensive Courses*

Students are encouraged to produce and revise various forms of writing for different audiences in different disciplines.

### *Collaborative Assignments and Projects*

Collaborative learning combines two key goals: learning to work and solve problems in the company of others, and sharpening one's own understanding by listening seriously to the insights of others, especially those with different backgrounds and life experiences.

### *Undergraduate Research*

Many colleges and universities are now providing research experiences for students in all disciplines. The goal is to involve students with actively contested questions, empirical observation, cutting-edge technologies, and the sense of excitement that comes from working to answer important questions.

### *Service Learning, Community-Based Learning*

Field-based "experiential learning" with community partners is an instructional strategy—and often a required part of the course. The idea is to give students direct experience with issues they are studying in the curriculum and with ongoing efforts to analyze and solve problems in the community. Students have to apply what they are learning in real-world settings and reflect in a classroom setting on their service.

Learn more at <http://www.wou.edu/gened/faculty-resources/high-impact-practices/>

---

As General Education course proposals have been approved and added to the program, we are building our advising materials. The growing list of General Education courses can be found at:

<http://www.wou.edu/gened/general-education-courses/>.

[gened@wou.edu](mailto:gened@wou.edu)

503-838-8348