

Rhode Island College
Annual Report of the Committee on General Education
May 12, 2023

COGE Overview 2022-23

- COGE had a busy and productive year in its ongoing effort to administer the current state of the college's General Education program while supporting the General Education Task Force's mission to review and revise General Education.

COGE Membership

J. Zornado, (chair) Literature
S. Costa, Mathematics
M. Reddy, FYS Coordinator
B. Caouette, First Year Writing
W. Martin, Arts—Visual and Performing
E. Miller, History
Paul Jacques School of Business
S. Oliveira, Modern Languages
K. Almeida, Natural Science
D. Gill, Adams Library
R. Krauss, Education
Jennifer Fearon-Lynch/S. Ross, Nursing
J. Capece, BSW
P. Gullapali, Social and Behavioral Sciences
E. Simson, Dean, FAS
J. Dagle, FAS ex officio
C. Masters, Interim Provost/VPAA
E. Robbins, student representative

COGE Schedule

- COGE met monthly throughout the academic year on the first Friday of the month at 9am via Zoom. It was an active and productive year.

COGE Committee Developments

- The current chair of COGE will be stepping back from the Committee after three years in the position. A new member of COGE, Suchandra Basu representing the School of Business has been appointed as the next chair of COGE. Quenby Hughes will be representing FAS as the new dean. W. Martin has completed his term, still looking for a replacement. Ricardo Quintana Vallejo will represent Literature. Jill Harrison will represent Social and Behavioral Sciences. M. Reddy will be replaced by the new coordinator of FYS, Leslie Schuster. The appointment of J. Zornado as Presidential Faculty Fellow in September of 2022 exacerbated concerns that the chair of COGE should not also serve as co-chair of the Task Force having been appointed to both by then Provost Helen Tate. Some members expressed concerns there was an administrative agenda to gut General Education of liberal arts and sciences, and especially the Humanities.

COGE Business for 2022-23

- COGE's plan to pilot a new assessment process was put on hold until a set of revised (assessable) learning outcomes are established. The plan to assess already established, core learning outcomes—in this case, Critical and Creative Thinking as the central learning outcome of the current program proved untenable. Given the ongoing work of the Gen Ed Task Force on learning outcomes, it seemed prudent to wait.
- Even so, regular business moved forward through the academic year:
- COGE received monthly updates from the chair of the Gen Ed Task Force, K. Almeida.
- Bachelor of Professional Studies adjustments to gen ed language re: requirements
 - There have been growing pains as expected, but the BPS is poised for growth and is a real and tangible way the college is working to expand enrollments. Programs like the BPS are aimed at older adults with some college earned.
- COGE discussed the need for administrative action to support transfer students and urged the administration to tend to dysfunctional administrative systems that serve as significant barriers to transfer students even as COGE discussed ways to bring the current program down to 40 credits even as the Task Force considered larger revisions. COGE agreed that the college needed some sort of Transfer Coordinator who could take responsibility for the various ways Transfer information is shared, updated, and aligned with websites from the state, CCRI, and URI. COGE agree that this should also be included in our mid-semester report to the administration.
- COGE is encouraged with the work of Mathematical Sciences as they revised ways for students to meet the Mathematics milestone.
- COGE took up the question of the current Second Language requirement. With the Chair of UCC, proposed to discontinue the universal second language requirement. After a well-attended COGE meeting, some 65 faculty participating via Zoom, the proposal was withdrawn. Some faculty who spoke were upset by the process by which the proposal was handled, and wanted a larger process that engaged faculty beyond one COGE meeting. Having heard from various stakeholders at the end of the fall term, 2022, the chair of COGE stepped down as co-chair of the Task Force on General Education to avoid any further confusion as to methods and motives.
- History created two new General Education History courses, History 110 and 111
- Communication 256 SB proposal unanimously passed
- Political Science 269 Connections proposal unanimously passed
- Social Work 200 SB proposal unanimously passed
- Communication 245 SB revised proposal: unanimously passed
- Proposal to edit writing course options for Gen Ed in Bachelor of Professional Studies program: passed, 9 in favor, 2 against. 1 abstention
- Physical Science UCC proposals to discontinue Math Competency pre-requisite for some CHEM 105 and the Physical Science courses: Passed, 10 in favor, 3 abstentions
- The chair forwarded a proposal to create a COGE Executive Committee without the committee's support.
- English 264 Connections proposal was unanimously approved
- Econ 235 SB was approved (with one abstention)

- BPS proposal to amend program language regarding Math requirements was passed 10 in favor, 2 against, and 1 abstention.

COGE New Business

The committee ended the academic year noting that the library has lost another reference librarian (Tish Brennan) to retirement. This means the library has only two reference librarians, down from four. COGE drafted and endorsed the following statement to be sent the Provost/VPAA:

“COGE believes that current staffing levels in the library put at risk the library’s ability to deliver on its educational mission to support students and faculty in FYS, FYW and nearly all other courses in General Education. COGE urges the administration to address this problem by hiring one or more reference librarians as soon as possible.”

It should also be said that the library engages in delivering countless educational services to faculty and students that go well beyond general education.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve.

Respectfully Submitted,

J. Zornado, Chair COGE
Presidential Faculty Fellow
Chair, Committee on General Education
Professor of English
Rhode Island College
He/him/his