Feature #01:
Include Lower Division Threads or "Learning Communities" to provide coherence?

Design Team Summary 1-3: *Preservation of a student's ability to explore freely without an imposition of a particular path was emphasized in a number of conversations. Secondly, any required path for a student could face the difficulties inherent in the current UDT model. Though support for threads is mixed, with particular concern expressed for preserving a variety of courses, there is overwhelming support for interdisciplinary minors that could be the result of threads. The team therefore recommends establishing a hybrid mode with limited number of threads, without requiring a particular path for any student in order to allow exploration with sufficient numbers of courses offered, so that students can make progress toward degree. At the same time, students who *do* want a focus and a path can obtain an interdisciplinary minor.*

CMST Good ideas, while main concerns are (1) do freshman really have the ability to make good "thread" choices, perhaps differentiate fresh seminars vs. soph threads (2) there needs to be choice & variety.

ANTH
No, this detracts from capital investment in already existing GE classes; detracts from diversity of options for students; keep it simple, do not require new courses.

FLL
The Department expressed its concerns that establishing "threads/connections" will not in fact achieve the goals of coherence for which they are designed. First, because 50% of Chico State graduates, arriving as transfers, will not have followed any of them, and second, because if students are permitted to change freely from thread to thread then any hope of coherence is lost. There were also questions raised about how these threads were to avoid the problems that plague the upper-division themes: the difficulty of keeping courses offered regularly, the frequent lack of communication between responsible faculty members and the corresponding lack of any real coherence within them. Finally, there was a strongly felt sentiment that structuring the GE program too much, making it more like a quasi-major, defeats its real purpose which is to allow students to explore subjects and disciplines according to their own interests.

THEA
If it doesn't work for upper, why do this to lower? There is a concern over majors and transfers who have large unit requirements.

ECC
Concept is a great idea, but UD Themes currently have little coherence, practically may not be fulfilled.

ENGL
When Lori Beth Way and Troy Berry came to the English Department to discuss GE redesign, several of us expressed our desire to see writing instruction linked purposefully to content areas in GE. While students undoubtedly learn about writing in standalone courses like ENGL 130, research indicates they could learn more and practice more useful kinds of writing with discipline-specific instruction that was integrated into various themes, threads, or "intensives."

FNMK
The enhanced coherence would be beneficial to students.

HIST
There are concerns that establishing "threads/connections" will not in fact achieve the goals of coherence for which they are designed. First, because 50% of Chico State graduates, arriving as transfers, will not have followed any of them, and second, because if students are permitted to change freely from thread to thread then any hope of coherence is lost. There were also questions raised about how these threads

were to avoid the problems that plague the upper-division themes: the difficulty of keeping courses offered regularly, the frequent lack of communication between responsible faculty members and the corresponding lack of any real coherence within them. Many in the Department recalled the “cluster” idea of around ten years ago and the enormous waste of time and energy that went into this ill-conceived project, which ended up going nowhere. Finally, there was a strongly felt sentiment that structuring the GE program too much, making it more like a quasi-major, defeats its real purpose which is to allow students to explore subjects and disciplines according to their own interests.

Regarding setting up suggested (not required) paths through lower division GE courses, the Department will be sending to the GE Design Team additional suggested paths which reflect the goals and values of an education in the humanities.

AGR
We feel this step may add value for some students, but if there is a thread, each course must build on the next and there must be a set of Student Learner Outcomes to help provide guidance in developing the ‘thread’.

Resident Advisors
If it applies to a major, good. A thread should apply toward something. It also is good because a student can explore interests.

GEOG
No, threads limited exposure. (Vote: 2 to 1)

RELS
No. Lower division "threads" unnecessarily replicate work that is already going on in upper-division GE, as well as working against one of the primary benefits of GE, which is to allow students to select from a broad menu of classes as they try to make longer-term decisions about what they want to do in their broader college career. "Coherence" should not be a concern at the lower level; they achieve coherence through upper-division GE themes and through majors and minors. What lower-level GE should be about is teaching essential skills and exposing students to a wide range of disciplinary perspectives so they can make informed choices about majors and minors.

Most of the new models being proposed place a great deal of emphasis on lower division themes, clusters, or links. In so doing they seem to assume that general education should amount to something like an interdisciplinary major to accompany a student’s disciplinary major. I think this is an overly narrow view of GE. It seems to me that a GE program should strike a balance between 1) development of core skills and knowledge and exposure to a breadth of disciplinary perspectives in lower division courses and 2) thematic focus and coherence in upper division theme courses. In lower level GE I think there should be maximum flexibility for students to pursue their own interests within the context of distribution requirements between courses in the natural sciences, social and behavioral sciences, and the humanities and fine arts.

I do think the idea of creating learning communities isn't a bad one, and perhaps we should be doing more with linked courses for freshmen, but I am wary of writing that into GE requirements without experimenting with it on a larger scale. (More than what we already do--perhaps for 2 years we should establish that all entering freshmen have at least two linked courses, rather like the current program on a more global scale, and then get some data about whether that improves their experience or not, before we make it a required part of GE).

I question an assumption that seems to be shared by several of the models that it is good for students to proceed through their courses together in a “community” with the same group of students. I know there is research that seems to support this, and I agree that it is good for students to have friendships with others in their classes and to know who they are going to school with. But my own observations and conversations that I’ve had with several students who are proceeding together with their cohorts in the Liberal Studies Integrated Teacher Core and Honors programs on this campus lead me to believe that these students would benefit from exposure to a more diverse range of fellow students in their courses.

A minority view considered linked courses to be appropriate.

PHIL CHAIR (comments for 1, 2, and 4)
Yes, where this can be done effectively. Crucial to the success of learning communities in any form is the coherent design of the integrated curriculum by faculty committed to the project. It is this design that makes the shared set of concepts, issues, and earning goals central to each course that creates the basis for the learning community. The special educational advantage of multiple disciplines included in the same Theme, Thread, Community is the engagement students receive in approaching this common set from different disciplinary standpoints. Continued communication among faculty involved in a Thread, etc. will enhance the continued development of the design but should not be taken as a substitute for the coherence as designed into the curriculum from the outset.

Though learning communities can benefit from simultaneous enrollment (e.g., to borrow the enrollment structure of Course Link), linking enrollments compounds potential enrollment choices by students and course assignments and scheduling for departments. Designing Threads along the model of current Upper Division Themes could prove more feasibly managed by both students, faculty and units.

Feature #02:
Include Upper Division Threads or "Communities" to provide coherence?

CMST
Good ideas, while main concerns are (1) will students be able to change from lower division thread to an upper division thread if their interests change, as is often the case

FLL
The Department endorsed the idea of setting up suggested (not required) paths through lower division GE courses. The faculty are more practiced in this kind of endeavor

POLS
If feature #2 is about upper division themes, then faculty would like to express support of this. We find value in the coherence of the current upper division theme structure.

THEA
Maybe if developed for coherence. See number 1 response. Students find their own coherence. Suggest restructuring the advising structure instead.

ECC
Concept is a great idea, but UD Themes currently have little coherence, practically may not be fulfilled. (Fix issue first.)

FNMK
Yes, same as #1 above.

GEOG
Yes (Vote 2 to 1). We already do. Once students have chosen a focus it makes sense.

RELS
YES. Admittedly, faculty who are teaching in many of our current upper division themes are not in sufficient communication with one another nor are they always as self-conscious as they should be about linking their courses to other courses in the theme. But when such communication and linkage does take place, these themes can provide powerful GE experiences for students from otherwise diverse educational backgrounds. I hold up Theme D: Environmental Issues as a model in this regard. If we want to increase focus, coherence, inquiry, and engagement in GE, I think it would be more practical and

efficient to begin with a reinvigoration of our current upper division themes than to reinvent the program out of whole cloth.

AGR
Upper division themes are a good thing, but currently there are too many which dilutes enrollment in some courses.

ANTH
No, allow faculty to focus their upper division efforts on the major; keep it simple, autonomous; allow choices based on course reputation

Feature #03:
Include Foundation Courses (math, writing, critical thinking, etc.) within Threads?

CMST
The degree of fit seems to depend on the Foundations. Some will fit better than others.

FLL
To include basic math, writing, critical thinking within a Thread appears to have the same disadvantages as #1. The scale of the project defies implementation.

MATH
Not sure what this means, but we think a core (small) of courses that students take is a good idea.

THEA
Not clear what you consider Foundation courses. This question implies acceptance of the whole Thread idea, which we do not advocate.

ECC
Same comment – Possible (likely) too restrictive for our majors

FNMK
Yes, this will help students see the relevance to a greater extent, and retain the learning better.

GEOG
Not clear. Require smaller classes. Placing these in large sections will not succeed.

RELS
Most agree this is a very good idea, as long as individual courses devoted to these topics are not removed from the program

PHIL CHAIR
Where that can be done, sure, why not? Part of the challenge of teaching Area A subjects is to connect to topics of relevance to students. If inclusion of one or more of these subjects can gain traction in the learning program by latching on to content connected to other courses in the thread, this can easily amplify the learning all around. It is, however, much more difficult to design than one might imagine. One needs to have faculty in the possibly threaded subjects spend some time together discussing how connections could be made and made fruitful.

AGR

GE courses should reinforce writing and critical thinking skills. Math skills would not be appropriate for all GE courses, but where, then certainly, building on math skills would be helpful

ANTH
No, incorporate these into already existing courses; no extra layers of non-discipline courses, include only normal departmental courses disciplinary courses that meet GE standard; this will provide assurance of enrollment for some courses in particular departments but has the disadvantage of deciding what subjects of study are more important than others; teach foundational skills in courses with specific disciplinary content, critical thinking and writing are best learned by reading books and writing

Feature #04:
Establish required linked courses? **(e.g.,World & U.S. in Global Compass Model)**

Design Team Summary #4: *Although required links could build learning communities, most departments found the logistics of large-scale links that are required for all students problematic. We recommend abandoning this item as the way to provide coherence for students. At the same time, faculty suggested links of content courses with foundational courses in Writing, Critical Thinking, Math and Oral Communications as pedagogically sound practice.*

CMST
Experience with EOP, working and students commuting from Redding has proven the Linked courses problematic due to their personal schedules, linked courses are not for everyone. This is a good idea ONLY IF LINKS ARE OPTIONAL.

Anthro
No, too restrictive; not convinced model is effective or applicable to student body; allow choice based on course reputation; narrow and scope and what is justification that the model works for students?

FLL
As an option only

THEA
This is like the GST model which never worked for our students (because major requirements that needed to happen in freshman year conflicted with GST classes).

ECC
Value of linking is based on building community, which will be difficult to maintain with large classes.

FNMK
Desirable if the operational details can be worked out, which could be potentially problematic.

Resident Advisors
Course link is enjoyable because it builds relationships with other students and helps with group projects. It makes for an easier transition to college. The budget cuts have hurt students who do not join a link.

GEOG
Depends on what is linked.

RELS
No. See above comments (1) on linked courses

Feature #05:
Ask majors to design appropriate upper-level themes/threads that complement their majors

Design Team Summary of #5: *Feedback varied depending on whether departments understood "majors" to indicate students or faculty. Although a recommended path for a particular major would enhance a student's ability to connect GE and the major, there is some concern that some majors could be ghettoized, and that such recommendations should be achieved through advising. The Design Team recommends that the campus and particular majors consider how the advising component fits GE with the major as we continue the design process.*

CMST
Good idea, if resources are available.

FLL
If students were to design their own upper-division theme in conjunction with their major, it would be necessary to declare a major by the 4th semester of study. Then would distribution requirements for upper-division themes be waived?

BIOL
Potentially positive, provided there was a serious review of current upper-division GE course offerings. There were concerns about the process for accomplishing such a review.

THEA
Yes, if viable. Others -- Maybe: what is this "ask" part? Is it the department who designs these? If so, what is our part of the responsibility for advising GE?

GEOS
There was not a clear response to this item, but some department members felt upper-division courses should include students from a variety of majors to provide differing perspectives on the content.

ECC
We want majors to have broadening experience, but also want double counting to continue as we face unit reductions.

FNMK
Absolutely! It is highly desirable that students be able to "see" the connections better. Most students major in an area because it interests them, and this relationship would help enhance majors.

GEOG
Good alternative to self-designed major. (Vote 2 to 1)

RELS
No. All agree we should NOT ask majors to design appropriate themes; there is little feeling that they would do such a good job at this

PHIL CHAIR
To a large extent, this is already happening – there are dominant enrollments by students in particular majors for some themes. One assumes this phenomenon is a result of advising and also student to student communication among those with a common major. There are two ways of making a theme or thread important to a student: as a complement to the student's choices in major and minor concentration, or as something entirely different from that. That's a choice that best lies in the context of individual advisor-advisee conversation.

ANTH

No, assumes students can make better decisions about GE Design than faculty; keep it simple, allow choice; provides too much latitude, leads to poor decision making, and lacks coherence; faculty are the experts and should be able to decide what works.

Feature #06:
Limit the # of potential GE courses offered for threads or communities to increase coherence and insure courses needed are offered?

Design Team Summary #6: *Not all departments saw a connection between coherence and the number of courses, but recognized that reduction was necessary as it connects to progress toward degree. The Design Team recommends a carefully considered limit to the number of courses in GE.*

CMST
Anything to increase coherence is going to be better. Having too many courses listed, but not offered regularly is frustrating for students and advisers.

FLL
Reducing the number of options may help students progress more toward their degree. However, be very careful about creating bottlenecks by reducing the types of courses in each section of GE. Furthermore, there should be no arbitrary limits on the number of GE courses in departments. Please be judicious.

Other comments: Integrate the career center more into major advising. Incorporate recommended courses from other disciplines for a given major. Will students be locked into a choice of theme? How will departments fit into these themes?

PHYS
There will be in fact little if any coherence if the number of courses offered in most areas remains at the levels currently in effect. The number of courses offered must be reduced if any increase in coherence is to be realized.

NFSC
The size of the current GE program is a concern: it is too big; there are too many choices (different courses that satisfy an area); students get lost in GE. On the other hand, there was support for giving students choices in GE… just less choice than they currently have.

MATH
Absolutely! This is one of our top three items!

THEA
Two opposite things here. Do limit the number of potential GE courses. But how does that increase coherence? Are we really talking about budget reduction and fewer classes? Please don't add another layer of administration. Variety of scheduling is still important. You should do one introductory course for every department and that should be it.

ECC
Yes (No comment)

FNMK
Absolutely! One of the biggest concerns with the current GE program is lack of coherence.

AGR
Upper division themes are a good thing, but currently there are too many which dilutes enrollment in some courses. (Is in favor of limiting the number of courses but not to one or two.)

ANTHRO
No, perhaps enrollment and SETS would provide a good starting point for discussion about which courses to eliminate; keep simple, allow choice; with 250+ GE courses, it is obvious that consolidation is needed, use enrollment as main criterion for retention or elimination of courses; model is so limiting and lacks dynamism to adapt to future developments and changes

GEOG
No. Fewer choices - is this a good thing?

RELS
Maybe, but not too much. Some agree with limiting number of potential GE courses; others wonder whether this gives an appearance of coherence. All disagree in limiting the choices to 1 course in a given area.

PHIL CHAIR
This doesn't make a lick of sense. How well any one course fits into a coherent thread won't be a function of how many courses there are in that thread. There are management issues in how many courses, threads, themes, etc. that the university can manage to support in GE, and these issues will get sorted out in their own way. Some Upper Division Themes have been abandoned in recent years because the enrollment flows weren't strong enough for the units involved to sustain them. That will be a management decision, not a curricular decision.

Feature #07:
Integrate Oral/Written Comm in a 2-semester sequence. Shifting emphasis in first and second semester to insure transferability?

Design Team Summary of #7: *While some thought that written and oral communication are connected outside the university, the disciplinary expertise of faculty and need to focus on one area at a time were paramount concerns. The Design Team recommends considered integration of skills in the major and other non-foundational GE courses.*

CMST
While there are some curricular elements these areas share, there are also distinct and often opposing skills that need separation (speaking is not writing, visa versa). Also, faculty feel strongly about the need for focus and time to develop sufficient skill levels. If there was a way to identify a common "curricular" ground to reinforce in each course, but then still keep separate, that would/might be productive. Faculty are not comfortable assuming personnel from each discipline can teach the "other" discipline and/or would be comfortable doing so. Upon questioning the GE consultant, she had no model of reference for such an approach, no indication that it's being done successfully elsewhere, which was concerning.

FLL
Integration #s 7-10) The Department endorses both the maintenance of basic courses and the integration of basic skills into other courses. Please do not adopt the 8 week mini course model.

MATH
We weren't sure what this meant.

THEA
Not clear. If you are requiring a year of oral and written in a sequence, then we are okay with this. But not the way the courses are currently taught. Oral communication needs vast reworking. Our Vocal production course should be a part of this oral communication area for our major. Plus any combination or

integration which limits their scheduling ability for progress in the major is a huge problem. Linking issues abound.

ECC
Don't see great benefit – should be practiced in majors

FNMK
Once school is over nobody really distinguishes between written and oral – they are concerned with overall communication (including written and oral). A combined approach would help students envision it in its totality, even though we may teach it separate from each other.

HIST
By and large the Department favored stand-alone courses in these fields, thinking it best that subjects like critical thinking be taught by experts (i.e. philosophers) rather than say, professors of English or even HIST. A vocal minority disagreed, arguing that both writing and thinking skills should be taught by individual disciplines.

RELS
Seems like a good idea

PHIL CHAIR
It's difficult off hand to see how advantages to this will outweigh the complexities it will pose to students and units managing their respective schedules. Do these two parts of Area A need to be combined?

AG
Good idea, but don't stop with only two GE courses to improve oral and written communication skills, incorporate throughout all GE courses (also needs to be emphasized in major courses).

ANTH
No, too much bureaucracy, conformity, and conflict; "thread" jargon too vague; concern is that some departments/programs will monopolize at expense of other departments, ride wave of bandwagons; what if students fail part one of a course?

Feature #08:
Eliminate Critical Thinking as a stand-alone course and integrate (e.g. with other content courses)?

Design Team Summary of #8: *Although feedback was very mixed, disciplinary expertise was again emphasized. At the same time, each discipline teaches and should teach critical thinking with all content. The Design Team recommends keeping a stand-alone course and establishing a more overt connection between the content of this course and other GE and major courses.*

CMST
Teaching logic and reasoning deserves a separate course with qualified instructors. There is doubt among our faculty that this can be properly divided into other courses. As it is, many of our courses, both GE and major address critical thinking and the idea that a student would have less than one full course, plus what we already cover in the area is a concern.

NFSC
There was some concern about whether faculty are able to properly assess CT across the curriculum.

ANTH

No, most courses likely emphasize critical thinking (as opposed to uncritical thinking!), is a separate course really necessary?; no separate course, disciplinary courses only; teach critical thinking in courses within a specific disciplinary context.

THEA
If you integrate it, the content will be lost. But the idea of eliminating is attractive. Eliminate the Upper Division courses!)

GEOS
CT should be incorporated into the disciplines. We all train students how to think in our fields.

ECC
Maybe (No comments)

FNMK
Yes! Critical thinking in isolation has little value – content can provide perspective. This should be done in the majors as well as other courses in GE.

Resident Advisors
This is potentially a great idea. The teaching of critical thinking depends on class size and also the attitude of the teacher.

GEOG
No (Vote 5 to 1)

RELS
NO. Most seem to agree that we should not eliminate Critical Thinking as a stand alone because it is so important to teach this kind of thing directly and make sure they get it. There is agreement that Critical Thinking SLOs could be addressed in a second course dealing with another topic.

PHIL CHAIR
This could only be the thought of someone not readily informed about the goals and content of critical thinking. Most faculty indeed have little conception of what critical thinking is, since it has emerged as a nationally standard element of General Education curriculum only in recent decades, and thus since that time when many faculty completed their baccalaureate education. Integrating critical thinking in other subjects means not bothering to teach critical thinking.

Feature #09:
Include integrated (oral, written communication, CT) 8-week freshman sophomore intensives (see Communities of Practice model)?

Design Team Summary #9: *Although some recognized the potential of this idea, most saw it as logistically and pedagogically problematic. The Design Team does not recommend this idea.*

CMST
The concern is that it takes time to learn to speak and write well, time is needed for the necessary research and practice in both areas. Several of our faculty members have taught intensive summer sessions which are intense and often overwhelming for freshman. While the idea of the Communities of Practice is interesting with a lot of potential, there are strong concerns about this idea.

FLL
(NO, SEE ABOVE)

ANTH
No, stick with normal semester; is this a quarter system?, will lead to imbalances in student and faculty workload;

POLS
Faculty expressed opposition to any feature that would reduce POLS 155 content to anything less than a full 16 week semester.

THEA
Better 7 than 9. Too much administration, too little simplification

ECC
No way.

FNMK
Difficult to implement on our campus given our resources base and CSU "SCU counting" practices.

RELS
Maybe. An integrated 8-week intensive (9) is probably a good idea if it can provide students with these basic skills. Many wonder whether this is feasible economically.

PHIL CHAIR
I believe this is an interesting and imaginative idea, but probably way too complex and a bit too hierarchical to implement effectively.

Feature #10:
Integrate Critical Thinking and Life Long Learning (Area E) in content courses at freshman and senior levels?

Design Team Summary of #10: *Although CT was emphasized as important in #8 above, many thought that these areas, especially LLL, could be integrated throughout the major. The Design Team recommends investigating the latter possibility further.*

CMST
This idea has potential, but the concern is that it not replace the stand alone critical thinking course, which should lay the foundation for future courses.

THEA
This is a rephrasing of 8.

ECC
We think this has merit.

FNMK
Absolutely!

GEOG
3 Yes, 1 No, 1 Maybe. Teaching critical thinking is skills is time consuming and difficult.

RELS
No to CT, Yes to Area E. See response to 8 above. Lifelong Learning should be integrated and deleted from the GE program if possible under California law, most seem to agree.

PHIL CHAIR
Critical Thinking and Life-Long Learning are the two areas of GE that are broadly misconstrued by faculty, and also clearly by some members of the Design Team. Integrating any of the Area A subjects within themes or threads is promising, though it will be a matter to be sorted out by the relevant faculty (see comments above). Devising threads or integrated links to bolster engagement in the first-year experience is a very good thing to try to accomplish. Likewise, finding a way to include a capstone experience/project/thesis is likewise very promising. But these desiderata need no be predicated upon abandoning important existing GE goals. The proposed combination of A3 and E amounts to just that. To venture upon that sort of change, one needs first to show how those goals aren't important

AG
Not just limit this skills to freshman and senior, integrate throughout all levels.

ANTHRO
No, it is probably already there in most courses; remove these as separate courses, just teach good disciplinary courses

Feature #11:
Include Code (American Inst) Requirements in GE?

Design Team Summary of #11: *In general, this item was supported in the consultations. The American Institution Requirements were interpreted as appropriate courses for GE and incorporation of these efficiently offered courses could allow students more choice. There is, however, strong opposition articulated in the minority opinion that incorporating the "code" course in GE would violate the intent of the legislature and reduce breadth in GE. Given the extensive consultation on this matter, the Design Team recommends incorporating the American Institution Requirements in GE to fulfill one course each in Area C and D breadth and without increasing the total number of GE units required. At the same, time we recognize the disciplinary expertise of Political Science and HIST and recommend that these departments continue to determine with GEAC approval (as in past practice) which courses are suitable to fulfill the American Institutions requirement, such as HIST 130 and Political Science 155. We further recommend that policy not allow the increase of major requirements in mid to high unit majors in order to insure that students can take advantage of the choice offered through the reduction of required GE courses.*

CMST
It's always been a bit odd to have the separate from the rest of GE. We are unaware of what the downsides are to doing this.

FLL
We see no impediment to including the American institutions requirements in GE

NFSC
Universal agreement that code courses should count as GE.

MATH
Absolutely! This is one of our top three features!

ANTH
No/not enough information to comment; where is the justification for this?

THEA
Please!!!!!!

GEOS
The department was firmly in favor of incorporating code requirements into GE for science majors. Having code requirements outside of GE increases time to graduation for science majors and weakens their degree by using units that could be better spent on electives. It was noted that some courses that meet the diversity requirement are not GE; all such courses should be GE.

Both themes and code requirements create an additional problem for students attempting to complete pre-credential requirements. A theme or a waiver for pre-credential students would help.

ECC
We do now.

FNMK
These courses are truly "general education" courses and as such should be part of General Education. This will also allow students to pick other courses, perhaps from the same departments, but courses that provide the best educational value to them.

HIST
Department faculty members opposed unanimously the inclusion of the code courses within GE. The arguments against this have been summarized at length in documents sent to the GE Design Team. Briefly: including these courses within GE is 1) a clear violation of the intent of the legislature, 2) an ill-conceived effort to save an indeterminate and quite possibly insignificant amount of money, and 3) a violation of the principles of GE itself.

AGR
We feel strongly that all disciplines should be able to do this, and be sure that these courses add value to a four-year degree program.

POLS
Our department voted unanimously (26-0) to oppose feature #11. In addition to the legal and educational concerns we noted in our earlier memorandum, faculty expressed grave concern over the devaluation of Areas C and D as part of a student's liberal arts education. We also encourage the Team to avoid looking at responses to this item as a mere "popularity contest," as mere self-interest—as opposed to concern over quality liberal arts education—may lead a large number of departments/colleges to favor incorporation of the code courses into GE. We also encourage the Team to avoid using the rationale of "that's the way they do it on other campuses," as this clearly does not imply that code must be included in GE here.

Faculty expressed a strong preference for the term "code courses" rather than "code requirements." In addition to the legal reasoning expressed in our earlier communication, we believe the code courses are among the most efficiently and expertly delivered courses on campus. Any model that diluted the content of these courses would result in a weaker educational experience.

RELS
Yes, but not if they take the place of area C-3 courses; they should take the place of area D courses, where they belong; but advanced area D courses should be allowed to substitute for the extremely elementary code courses.

PHIL CHAIR
Not a good idea. The upshot for the university will be to replace 6.0 units of the least expensive courses of instruction (GE and Code) with 6.0 units of the most expensive courses of instruction (upper division courses in the major). Students in high-unit majors already have this exemption. That this might be unfair that to other students capitulates that GE isn't of inherent value. We need to give all students – so far as possible – the best liberal arts component to the baccalaureate. It isn't better that they get less of that education.

Feature #12:
Reduce Labs to 1 (Area B)

GE Design Summary of #12: *This idea received little support—from students on campus and from a few departments, who nevertheless questioned if this was best pedagogically. We recommend dropping the proposal.*

CMST
It would appear science is in need of more attention, not less. Perhaps limit the hours for the labs, as opposed to the amount of labs?

BIOL
Firmly opposed, pointing out the importance of hands-on learning in the sciences and suggesting that it would be preferable to eliminate the lecture component.

PHYS
Area B1 and B2 courses should each have a laboratory component. All expert literature points to active, hands-on environments – labs- as being the most effective learning environments. Eliminating a lab in one of these areas is perverse, against our mission and values, and would make President's Zingg pledge to become a STEAM (yes STEAM) campus a sham.

NFSC
No. The American population is scientifically illiterate, and students learn by doing.

MATH
No. The one very solid piece of research on learning in the sciences is the value of hands-on learning. If we asked our alumni about this, they would be shocked. (The same holds for the idea of going with virtual labs.)

ANTH
Labs represent high impact learning environments; opportunities for student-faculty interaction; labs are crucial settings for applied knowledge;

THEA
Not sure what the implications would be. Can lectures accommodate enough in the second class without a lab? And does this allow for the variance of experience?

GEOS
Many of our students take only two science courses; in order to even begin to understand college-level science, our students need the hands-on learning that happens in the lab and they need more than just one such experience. There was a review of the HIST of diminishing resources in the sciences and the consequences on instruction:

- from small to large lectures (which was manageable because there was still a lab component);
- from 3-hour labs to 2-hour activities (resulting in loss of options for the hands-on component… e.g., some field trips are no longer possible);
- from labs staffed by tenured/tenure-track faculty to labs staffed by TAs.
- Isn't environmental sustainability a campus priority? Science drives policy. One of our strengths, areas of distinction, is our students' opportunities to do science, rather than just talking/hearing about science.

ECC
No (No comments)

FNMK
Maybe (No comments)

AGR
Science concepts/principles must be reinforced with 'hands-on' laboratory exercises

Resident Advisors
Like this idea. Some labs are hands-on and some are not useful and are really an add-on. The lab needs to be purposeful, applicable and useful.

RELS
No comment.

PHIL CHAIR
If that's feasible in delivering GE science instruction, yes.

Feature #13:
Include Media/Visual Literacy as: a) Additional 3-unit foundational requirement?; b) b) Learning outcome of foundational courses?; c) Breadth?

Design Team Summary of #13: *In general, the campus noted that this was an area that they were less informed about. Most saw the importance of Media/Visual Literacy, but only as a Learning Outcome. The Design Team recommends the articulation of such an outcome.*

CMST
Making room for this seems the main concern, while it appears there are numerous ways this can be built into other areas more easily, so options (b) and (c) are more appealing. We are unaware of how a stand-alone course would be superior to integration.

FLL
Take media/visual literacy as an outcome out of all other GE courses and put in a single course

NFSC
Such a requirement should be incorporated into other GE courses. There is no need for a separate course, but this could be one of the learning outcomes. Could media/visual literacy be paired with critical thinking?

THEA
The students may have the understanding of the tools, but don't necessarily know how to use them. They have a lack of articulation of the craft. Yes.

ECC
No additional course
Maybe - learning outcomes

FNMK
(b) Include as a learning outcome for GE as a whole (foundational courses).

GEOG
Perhaps. Generally students are media/visual savvy.

RELS

Yes as SLO. No as course. Some think we should have visual literacy (13) because we live in a visual world that is becoming more so each year so it is very important for students to understand how to negotiate this. Others suggest that visual literacy should not be created as a new course but only a new SLO.

PHIL CHAIR
This idea is stated too vaguely to evaluate. There are easily a thousand courses offered by this university that any student could benefit from, but that fact in itself isn't sufficient reason to make any of these courses mandatory in GE. So far as I have been able to discover, Visual literacy has found a place in K-12 education. How it is to be defined in terms of learning goals, how those goals can be worked into a GE program, and how well the national trends and literature on GE articulate this element is, so far as I've been able to discern, yet forthcoming. It might make sense for someone to propose a course along these lines for an existing area of Breadth GE – C1 perhaps.

ANTH
No, teach basic breadth courses well and with rigor; just focus on regular literacy; just teach discipline classes well, no separate course needed;

Feature #14:
Require freshman Seminars for exploration of majors and attract senior faculty into frosh classroom?

(See SJ State http://www.sjsu.edu/muse/, University of Pacific, http://web.pacific.edu/x9302.xml IUPUI http://uc.iupui.edu/uploadedFiles/Learning_Communities/LC%20Template.pdf)

Design Team Summary of #14: *The idea was supported, but with many caveats: 1) financial reality, 2) no additional requirements, and 3) inappropriateness at a state university. The Design Team is concerned about the financial viability of this suggestion. Although it represents a High Impact Practice, it would only reach native students, those who started Chico State as freshman. We tentatively recommend rejecting this idea.*

CMST
While this is an appealing idea to all, especially if some of the models listed are really followed and these are low-enrollment courses. One concern, some freshman know what they want when they arrive, so would this be a necessary requirement for them?

THEA
Great idea but no machine to enforce this. Would this replace the Freshman Experience, or just add another GE requirement?

ECC
Don't add another required class, maybe optional within clusters of majors. (Like ECC specific intro)

FNMK
Could work great *if* financially feasible.

Resident Advisors
This could be an option for undeclared, but leaning, majors. Some upper division faculty members do not take first-year students as seriously as their majors.

HIST
Regarding both the freshman seminar and GE capstone proposals, the Department is strongly opposed. These seem to be ideas taken from the repertoire of small, expensive liberal arts colleges and slapped on a comprehensive state university in budgetary free fall. How does this university, which is raising caps

dramatically in nearly every course, imagine it can expend faculty resources on creating small freshman seminars? They would have to be small to be any kind of seminar—what would happen to the caps on all other courses to make up for the loss of FTES? The same arguments apply to the proposed GE capstone course. Who would guarantee that this course would be capped at a level that would make it a meaningful, writing intensive course? Would the pressure to keep it capped at a reasonable level mean that the caps on each major's own, writing intensive, capstone courses, which are already under threat, could not be maintained? Even if proper caps could be maintained on both how can we expect our seniors to face two capstone courses in their senior year? The capstone course within the major should receive top priority. A GE capstone course seems financially unaffordable and intellectually incoherent.

AGR
This may be a good idea, but should not be a "careers in x discipline" focus. If seminars are to be effective, they must present substantive material and encourage intellectual curiosity on the part of the student.

RELS
Many are in favor of this idea, particularly if it allows for team teaching and experimentation in content. Some even like it if it is not under 30 students and is rather in a larger format.
Freshman seminars are a nice idea, but given current budget constraints and FTE requirements, they would ironically probably mean that freshmen would end up in more larger classes for the majority of their classroom time to compensate for one smaller intensive class. (And calling something with 100 students a "freshman seminar" is just ridiculous). The freshperson seminars (14) is a good idea but I sincerely doubt that it would work and it would probably muddle up the other courses as we try to get FTE. I do feel strongly about the Freshman seminar, but it must truly be a seminar (under 30).

PHILCHAIR
The best models for Freshman Seminars nationally are those that indeed bring permanent faculty -- senior and also junior – into seminars topically designed to attract the intellectual interests of first-year students. Just how to do this is another issue. Any solution will need to be amenable to the management of the units and colleges involved, productive within the workload management of the faculty involved, and also designed to be effective education for first-year students.

ANTH
No, can be completed through advising; skeptical of extra bureaucracy and detraction from departmental offerings; it would seem that GE already accomplishes this

FLL
What do you really mean here? Even an examination of the models does not reveal exactly what is meant. Will freshman seminars be volunteered time on the part of faculty? I.e. faculty would go into a seminar and give a guest lecture in a course based on broad topics? We would be willing to provide lectures on languages, literatures, and cultures.

Feature #15:
Create GE Capstone w/possible connection to major, potentially including a course from the major?

(See Indiana State http://www1.indstate.edu/gened/capstonerequirements.htm)

Design Team Summary of #15: *Once again, the idea was generally supported with several caveats. Many felt that capstones were more appropriate to the major, but some thought that the university could not support a "small" capstone course. Recognizing the value of such an experience for all students, the Design Team recommends a hybrid solution. Capstone courses fulfilling general education could come from a variety of sources. Not all majors have a capstone, and students could take capstones proposed through college or professional disciplinary areas. These could potentially be larger courses for those*

departments and disciplines who cannot support an ongoing capstone for financial reasons. However, major capstones could also fulfill the GE capstone requirement.

CMST
Very appealing idea. Only concern was if there would be any flexibility, would all seniors in a major have to take this capstone course, or would it depend on their "threads"?

BIOL
Values the idea of a capstone experience, but their students already have a capstone experience in the majors, the research poster presentations that are a component of several courses. Their major programs provide the scaffolding necessary for students to succeed in these capstone experiences.

FLL
The Department is strongly opposed to the GE capstone proposal. These seem to be ideas taken from the repertoire of small, expensive liberal arts colleges and slapped on a comprehensive state university in budgetary free fall. How does this university, which is raising caps dramatically in nearly every course, imagine it can expend faculty resources on creating small freshman seminars? They would have to be small to be any kind of seminar—what would happen to the caps on all other courses to make up for the loss of FTES? The same arguments apply to the proposed GE capstone course. Who would guarantee that this course would be capped at a level that would make it a meaningful, writing intensive course? Would the pressure to keep it capped at a reasonable level mean that the caps on each major's own, writing intensive, capstone courses, which are already under threat, could not be maintained? Even if proper caps could be maintained on both how can we expect our seniors to face two capstone courses in their senior year? The capstone course within the major should receive top priority. A GE capstone course seems financially unaffordable and intellectually incoherent.

THEA
If this can be linked with a required major class which is also the Capstone for the major, this might work. Like the WP...

GEOS
GEOS students already have capstone experiences in their major; an additional GE capstone would not be helpful. There was some discussion about whether the current GE program supports the capstone in the major. There was agreement that science majors need more focused composition instruction and experience in technical writing.

ECC
We can do this… within context of existing major capstones.

FNMK
Should link this to #5 above.

HIST
Regarding both the freshman seminar and GE capstone proposals, the Department is strongly opposed. These seem to be ideas taken from the repertoire of small, expensive liberal arts colleges and slapped on a comprehensive state university in budgetary free fall. How does this university, which is raising caps dramatically in nearly every course, imagine it can expend faculty resources on creating small freshman seminars? They would have to be small to be any kind of seminar—what would happen to the caps on all other courses to make up for the loss of FTES? The same arguments apply to the proposed GE capstone course. Who would guarantee that this course would be capped at a level that would make it a meaningful, writing intensive course? Would the pressure to keep it capped at a reasonable level mean that the caps on each major's own, writing intensive, capstone courses, which are already under threat, could not be maintained? Even if proper caps could be maintained on both how can we expect our seniors to face two capstone courses in their senior year? The capstone course within the major should receive top priority. A GE capstone course seems financially unaffordable and intellectually incoherent.

Resident Advisors
This is good in a major, but not for general education because it would add another stress. This would be an unnecessary hoop.

ANTH
No, keep in majors, not GE; separate non-disciplinary GE courses are not necessary

RELS
Some feel a capstone is a good idea because it helps to provide closure and perspective on the issues; others wonder if this is economical.

PHILCHAIR
Very interesting idea – but the vagaries of the many different B.A., B.S., B.F.A programs may suggest a much more flexible approach to the educational advantage of a culminating project. This might work better as a university graduation requirement (something like the Cultural Diversity) requirement. There could be ways for meeting the requirement in GE, and also ways of meeting it within some majors.

AG
We felt that this concept is better in the major where the student builds on 4 years of courses rather than just two courses.

Feature #16:
Require/Integrate Team Work as a learning outcome? **(see LEAP)**

Design Team Summary of #16: *The notion of "team work" and its importance for post graduate success is understood differently by different disciplines. This perhaps explains the varied input on this item, ranging from "no," to "in the major," and "both in GE and major." Because "team work" as a learning outcome has been adopted by the CSU system through its adoption of LEAP goals, the Design Team recommends that the campus address this issue and collectively define "team work" in a productive and reasonable way that works for our campus.*

CMST
Unanimous agreement as to the importance of this as a life skill that is highly expected and needed.

FLL
The Department opposes strongly requiring "Team Work" as a learning outcome.
No more learning outcomes please!!!

NFSC
Teamwork is important in their major, and students get lots of experience. It is also an important GE outcome.

THEA
Our department already fulfills this in most classes. So we believe in the concept wholeheartedly. Teamwork is a critical skill for all. As an assessed outcome this is difficult to do in large lecture classes. Perhaps delegate this to the major. (THEA is a good example of this process.)

ECC
Integrate in major courses

FNMK
Yes (No comment)

HIST
The Department opposes strongly requiring "Team Work" as a learning outcome.

PHIL CHAIR
Good idea – but not likely practical for every GE course or requirement. This could among the special traits that could be realized in threads, themes, links, etc. but thus comprise a segment of a student's GE education and not all of it. That separation of premium values into just a part of the program can relieve the delivery of the rest of the program from general GE goals, and thus facilitate more efficiency in the delivery, which allows for the greater resource needs of the premium part.

AG Anything we can do to encourage team work will be valuable for students once they leave the university.

ANTH
No, this is not appropriate for all or even most GE courses; allow department and professor autonomy; requirement seems to infringe on academic freedom;

Feature #17:
Replace current "word count" GE writing requirement with designated "Writing Intensive" courses in which writing instruction is emphasized?

Design Team Summary of #17: *All departments recognized the importance of writing, and many that "word count" is not a measure of teaching writing. One or two writing intensive courses would not be sufficient, and writing intensive courses would need to be "capped" at lower numbers. The potential increase in other courses received a mixed reaction. Given the general support for a few intensive courses (4), the Design Team recommends pursuing this idea. We recommend deleting the "word count" as this is not a measure of good writing, but maintaining the notion that general education is responsible for the teaching of writing.*

CMST
Faculty agree students need intensive writing and time to develop skills, the emphasis on writing is needed across all GE but the "word count" may not be the best mechanism to achieve that.

FLL
We endorse writing intensive courses. However, does the team really believe that this feature will be achieved in a class of 45? Students do need to process and integrate knowledge through writing AND oral communication. There should be no GE courses where students do not have to think. We predict that financial exigency will dictate some kind of mechanized approach to this idea.

PHYS
Students need to write more than they do now, and they need to write across the disciplines more. The idea of writing intensive courses is fine, IF it augments already existing writing requirements. It is a bad idea if it replaces writing in other GE courses.

NFSC
Could the WEST test come back? Our students lack even the most basic writing skills. If we create writing intensive courses, we'd need such courses in the freshman year and the courses would need an enrollment cap… 30 students would work. Acknowledged the likelihood that enrollments in other GE courses would increase to support the enrollment caps in writing intensive courses.

THEA
Yes

ECC
No, Needs to be practical.

FNMK
Yes (No comment)

HIST
The Department is concerned about the creation of Writing Intensive GE courses because 1) it is opposed to raising caps on all other courses even more drastically to accommodate a few small courses and 2) it deplores the use of undergraduates students in either breakout sessions or as instructors teaching stand-alone writing courses and fears that this will be the outcome of concentrating writing in a few courses.

AGR
Increase emphasis in writing proficiency skills, but do not limit to one or two courses. And a 'word count' requirement does not equal writing proficiency. Develop a common rubric to be uses across disciplines and class level.

GEOG
Yes. Word count should be at discretion of instructor. It is not possible to teach 45 students how to write.

RELS
YES. Many like this idea a lot. Replacing GE writing requirement with designated writing courses may be useful in allowing for larger courses that don't have writing so we can test with multiple choice and increase FTE this way, while ensuring that they get proper writing practice in other courses.

PHIL CHAIR
Good idea. Likewise for some other goals within the long list inherited currently by every GE course. Similarly, GE courses beyond other Area A subjects can be designated as Critical Thinking Intensive, Oral Communication Intensive, Quantitative Reasoning Intensive, and thus compound learning and retention in these areas by building upon the foundational work in the Area A subjects.

ANTH
No, writing should be an important component of all courses whether GE or not

Feature #18:
Incorporate Values (from Mission and Values) explicitly, e.g. Chico Commons?

Design Team Summary of #18: *The campus did not seem to understand what the intent of this feature was. The GE Design Team will continue to develop the Misison and Values as they pertain to the overall proposed GE program. The values will not be explicity incorporated with all values addressed in every course, but the Design Team feels that all GE courses should be consistent with at least one of the proposed values.*

CMST
Unanimous agreement that this is a good idea.

FLL
The Department opposes strongly insisting that the Mission Values be incorporated explicitly within each GE course (Chico Commons). How will we determine if these values are being met? In the syllabus, learning outcomes? How will we evaluate them

NFSC
Seen as a positive, as a way of providing commonality among courses in threads. To avoid repetition, not all values need to be addressed in every course.

THEA
Not clear.

ECC
No (No comment)

FNMK
Yes (No comment)

HIST
The Department opposes strongly insisting that the Mission Values be incorporated explicitly within each GE course (Chico Commons).

ANTH
No, trust instructors to incorporate values; trust professors to incorporate a coherent set of values into their teaching;

Feature #19:
Require / Encourage Foreign Language through GE?

Design Team Summary of #19: *Given the support for foreign language, the Design Team will determine with the assistance of the campus the best way to "encourage" the development of these skills in GE.*

CMST
Faculty would prefer to strongly "encourage" this, rather than "require." What happens in high school really impacts what a student can accomplish with language in college.

NFSC
Foreign language acquisition is great.

MATH
Maybe, but don't require it.

THEA
Very important.

ECC
Encourage not require

FNMK
Foreign Languages are very important. However possible, the new GE curriculum should encourage their inclusion in a students course of study.

HIST
The Department supports encouraging the study of foreign languages and study abroad.

Resident Advisors

Yes. This could also apply to the art of other cultures

RELS
YES. Almost all in the department would require this. A minority view is that some don't have the aptitude for language.

PHIL CHAIR
There are imaginative ways to do this, such as have been proposed in the past. The upshot is that students will need to take a course in literature and a course in foreign language rather than one or the other. I think that would be terrific, and, personally, more for the sake of guaranteeing that studying literature will be part of the baccalaureate than for the sake of foreign language. Crucial here, however, is how to manage that augmentation of goals both for the sake of delivery of the program by the colleges and units and also for the sake of students managing to meet requirements. It's not impossible – but it will take imagination.

ANTH
No, does not need to be part of GE; integrate with study abroad; do not add extra requirements; let students choose whether they want foreign language, but not through GE requirement

FLL
The Department strongly supports encouraging the study of foreign languages and study abroad. We suggest a new subcategory within GE which will focus on proficiency and content goals consistent with the study of foreign languages. We suggest category L. In order to encourage and facilitate study abroad, we might consider what CSU San Marcos does: all students pay a percentage of their fees to study abroad in order to fund scholarships and offer this opportunity to more students. There should be a prerequisite of one semester of language preparation at the university prior to study abroad.

Feature #20:
Require / Encourage Study Abroad through GE?

Design Team Summary of #20: *The campus does not support a requirement for study abroad, but again, with the assistance of the campus will explore how to provide "encouragement."*

FLL
Yes, see above.

CMST
Faculty would prefer to strongly "encourage" this, rather than "require." This non-traditional students, economic realities, family obligations must be considered.

NFSC
Faculty already encourage students interested in study abroad programs. However, study abroad should not be required of all students; NFSC students have difficulty finding curriculum appropriate for their major at other institutions.

MATH
Maybe, but don't require it.

THEA
Put back the London exchange semester. You can't require study abroad in current economic situations.

ECC
Encourage not require

FNMK
Strongly encourage. Should not be required.

HIST
The Department supports encouraging the study of foreign languages and study abroad.

Resident Advisors
Yes. There is a need to help students to plan early so the year or semester abroad will fit into the degree plan.

RELS
Yes, many in department support this.

PHIL CHAIR
Well, encourage it at any rate. We could look for GE equivalences in coursework abroad or at other universities, if we're not already doing that. HFA managed two programs of semester abroad in the past, and as Upper Division Themes. The sense of theme integration was sketchy at best, but perhaps that's an ok payoff for what is an important contribution to an undergraduate experience. But those programs eventually became fiscally unfeasible.

ANTH
No, encourage but do not require; not all students want this experience

Feature #21:
Include Personal/Ethical Development as Learning Outcome?
(see LEAP)

Design Team Summary of #21: *As with "team work," different disciplines on campus may be interpreting "personal development" and "ethics" very differently although most emphasize that familiarity with "ethical issues" surrounding content areas is a description that better fits an academic approach. A common concern is how such a learning outcome could be assessed. As with "team work," the Design Team recommends that the campus use the GE Design process to define its approach to "ethical issues." (The LEAP outcomes adopted by CSU in July 2008 have led to some important links to assessment tools.)*

CMST
Both our AREA A courses address Ethics, and more would be better, should be standard throughout curriculum.

FLL
The Department is deeply opposed to including "Personal/Ethical Development" as learning outcomes. Again, please no more learning outcomes! How could faculty possibly be responsible for monitoring and assessing this outcome?

BIOL
GE could help address a (BIOL program) deficit in ethics and communicating/explaining ethical issues.

THEA
Hard to do without your personal agenda. The survey of religions fulfills this. But as a learning outcome this is unwieldy.

ECC
No (No comment)

FNMK
Yes (No comment)

HIST
The Department is deeply opposed to including "Personal/Ethical Development" as learning outcomes. Who, we ask, is going to assess this in any meaningful way?

RELS
Ethical development as an outcome (21) seems like a very difficult thing to measure and a bit nebulous. I think it would be tricky to include this in our SLOs -how would you measure it?

PHIL CHAIR
This is something easily misconstrued. The advice of applied ethics faculty would be very helpful in defining what can be reasonably formulated for a GE goal. As a starter, one doesn't contribute to ethical development by instructing students in what is right and wrong. One prepares them for the real-world complexities of moral and social issues by exploring first how there are distinct but internally coherent foundations for moral thinking, by which one can derive responses to ethical issues, and then exploring real issues from these different foundational vantage points. The goal ought to be to dispel the easy escape into relativism, dogmatism, quietism, or cynicism – which are the usual responses to complex ethical or social issues.

AG
Developing a sense and understanding of ethics that isn't left in the classroom will be helpful in the business world.

ANTH
No, GE may not be the best place to develop these skills; very subjective and difficult to assess; focus on academic goals

Feature #22:
Create Interdisciplinary Minors, associated with GE threads / communities?

Design Team Summary of #22: *The idea received a great deal of support from the campus because it "added value" to GE for students. Such value added is contingent upon creating interdisciplinary threads, and two departments noted opposition therefore. Another department approved, but only if 9 units were from one disciplinary area. The Design Team agrees that details for this proposal need to be worked out, that coordination of any proposed minors will be necessary through the Dean of Undergraduate Education, and that it may be desirable to require a small amount of additional upper-level course work to obtain the minor. We recommend pursuing this idea.*

CMST
Interesting, potentially attractive and resource-wise a good idea. Key issues would be coordination, upholding curricular agreements, implementation, etc. The former Leadership minor was an excellent model of the success and potential in this idea.

NFSC
The idea of interdisciplinary GE minors was supported as a way to help students see the value of GE. Another positive aspect of minors is that students would still be able to take several "random" GE courses outside of the minor. The department would not want to direct NFSC majors to particular GE minors.

THEA
Not a viable skill for the resume builder. What are we talking about? Again, this assumes a hearty yes for the first ten questions.

ECC
Yes. (No comment)

FNMK
Should be relatively easy to do, and should be encouraged, though not required.

HIST
The Department supports the idea of interdisciplinary minors (following the suggested paths model) and allowing majors to designate appropriate areas of GE completed based on coursework for the major.

Resident Advisors
Yes. This is good for students who have separate fields and wish to merge these fields for a purpose.

AGR
Yes, can be a good thing, but be sure it makes sense and adds value to the student's educational goals.

RELS
Interdisciplinary minors as described by the plan are not supported by the department; rather, they would be supported if at least 3 courses in the minor were to be in a single discipline, and the remaining 3 or 4 consisted of GE courses from a variety of disciplines. A minority view is that anything interdisciplinary is good and should therefore be encouraged

ANTHRO
No, let students focus on their majors without more administrative hoops; difficult to implement, may reduce diversity of experience; no extra bureaucracy beyond minimum necessary; maximize departmental autonomy

PHIL CHAIR
Sure, why not? Good idea! Actually, this already happens. Once one has new threads, themes, etc., there can be some exploration of how each of those structures could provide the core of an aggregate of courses.

FLL
The Department supports the idea of interdisciplinary minors (following the suggested paths model) and allowing majors to designate appropriate areas of GE completed based on coursework for the major

Feature #23:
Allow majors to designate appropriate areas of GE completed based on coursework for major?
(e.g., BIOL 151 is not a GE course, but could count as fulfilling GE Area B2 for biology majors.)

Design Team Summary of #23: *Given the positive support for this item, the Design Team recommends moving forward with it. This has been successful at other institutions, who have developed models for working with students who change majors.*

FLL
Yes, see above.

CMST
Sounded like a good idea to everyone.

BIOL
Courses such as BIOL 103 and 104 are clearly not GE, but the Area B2 requirement should be waived for students successfully completing such courses.

NFSC
Desirable.

MATH
Absolutely! This is one of our top three features.

THEA
We would like to be able to determine and advise our students into appropriate GE courses. In addition, we like the idea of counting appropriate C1 courses for our major for our students. For example, one of our courses (Voice for Performance) would be a good fit for the Communication. But this could be a slippery slope..... Who decides this for other majors? How do they change majors and retain GE completion?

ECC
This is a good idea.

FNMK
Given the dire budgetary situation that is likely in the next several years we should allow students as much flexibility as possible.

GEOS
A waiver system is much "cleaner" than having courses in GE that are not really GE.

HIST
The Department supports the idea of interdisciplinary minors (following the suggested paths model) and allowing majors to designate appropriate areas of GE completed based on coursework for the major.

AGR
Yes, some GE courses should be designated by the discipline w/ the appropriate justification.

PHIL CHAIR
This already happens, and broadly. There is hardly any major concentration for which this isn't already the case – one way or another.

ANTH
Maybe, needs more discussion and clarification; may lead to too much double-dipping and avoidance of work; may reduce diversity of experience

Mission and Values

AGR
This is a comprehensive Univ., not a liberal arts or small private and our mission and values do not reflect that, including phrasing in Mission to reference this.
Science is not reflected in the values…three is some value to having an understand science literacy.

General Comments

PHYS
Requirement of keeping additional assessment reporting and bureaucratic structure to an ABSOLUTE minimum is essential to this enterprise. There is too much “oversight” by managers already, and if faculty are to “oversee” themselves – by yet more assessment reporting – this will take away from time needed to create quality instruction. Assessment reporting addiction is counter-productive.

Areas of GE subject matter, e.g. critical thinking, mathematical analysis (quantitative reasoning IS mathematical analysis), must be taught by faculty with deep knowledge in those areas. While it is certainly important to see these types of thinking throughout GE, to not require that it be grounded in courses taught by those appropriate faculty is a mistake. This bad idea is similar to the bad idea concerning writing: augment don’t substitute.

If sufficient funds are not invested in GE, and if faculty do not receive appropriate Range Elevation or RTP consideration for its instruction, then GE will not improve.

NFSC
Some campuses (e.g., Shasta College) have courses that satisfy more than one area of GE. For example, a basic nutrition course might satisfy both areas B2 and E. The availability of such courses would provide more flexibility for students.

One potential negative aspect of threads is that a collection of related courses doesn’t provide the same breadth that totally unrelated courses might provide.

The NFSC program is quite interdisciplinary and students would be able to make connections with at least several of the suggested threads.

MATH
Don't make too many threads.

ANTH
A number of Anthropology faculty support a vision of a robust and excellent GE program characterized by simplicity, choice, breadth, and disciplinary specificity. This vision sees informed student choice from among categories composed of strong departmental offerings as the best way to realize the values of the GE program, including coherence and relevance of curriculum chosen. This vision notes the quality, refinement, and subject matter expertise of existing departmental GE courses, and of those to be proposed in future by departments themselves.

In general this vision questions the value of the restriction of student choice through packaged 'themes' or 'threads'; the requirement of non-disciplinary, interdisciplinary, or non-departmental courses; and additional staff or regulation attempting to manage such requirements. At this time of reduced budgets and understaffed classrooms, it sees departments as the best judges and engineers of their own GE offerings, seeks to minimize destruction of existing curricular value and to prevent wasteful 'turf wars' for GE course designation, and is concerned about possible inefficiencies, dilution of content, and structural weakness that could be brought by extensive management of GE courses through campus-wide entities.

ENGL
1. The acquisition of academic literacy (both reading and writing) is a developmental process that continues throughout a student's academic career, and requires ongoing, explicit instruction from expert readers and writers.

2. There is no single “good” writing because writing practices, including rules and conventions, vary from one context to another. (Thus, “good” writing in English may not constitute “good” writing in business, biology, nursing, computer science, or construction management.)

3. Literacy practices are situated. Students learn to write by practicing writing in a particular context, or situation, repeatedly over time. (First-year Composition teaches students to write in First-year Composition; writing in biology teaches students to write in biology. The concept of universally good writing is problematic, and the transfer of writing skills from one course to another requires students and teachers to understand that writing practices are context- and discipline-specific.)

4. Students learn to write by writing, not by hearing a lecture on how to write.

5. Students do not learn the "basics" of grammar, punctuation, and mechanics before they can write in a particular context. Rather, they learn sentence-level rules and conventions by practicing meaningful writing—for a real purpose to a real audience in a real form—repeatedly over time.

6. Students learn to write by writing like professionals in their fields, by doing real writing in the genres—or forms—used by a particular community of experts.

7. Informal and peer-to-peer writing is an effective way to learn course content. Teachers need not choose writing over content or vice versa.

8. In a pedagogical setting, writing is meaningful when it accomplishes some goal or objective important to the writer, as in professional, personal, or public writing. When writing is meaningful, students find it engaging. When writing is engaging, students learn.

9. If students don't know, we must teach them. Telling students that they should have learned "X" in high school or First-Year Composition does not help them develop as readers or writers.

10. Not all evidence of learning shows up in a single semester; rather writing development occurs slowly over extended time.

11. Expecting non-native speakers of English to write without an accent is unrealistic; penalizing them for their status as language learners is unjust.

Effective writing instruction needs to consider the structure and size of the course. Teaching writing with more than 25 students is exceedingly difficult unless other intentional structures are implemented (such as the use of small groups led by peer mentors) in order to maintain close peer-to-peer contact.

POLS

Faculty expressed concern about the redesign process. In particular:

We would like a better sense of the results of the GE Design Team's year-long process. Can the report to the Provost be placed on the website? How about a summary of the feedback you've received? We are very much interested in seeing these. It strikes some of us as un-collegial to solicit our input and then not share a summary of that input or the way in which it was received/used. This lack of quid pro quo strikes us as an unnecessary lack of transparency.

We would like to know when we will have an opportunity to comment on the model the Team decides on. In the interest of a transparent process, we would like to request that the Team's recommendations be made public now rather than waiting until the fall.

The process seems disaggregated. We are not clear on the way in which the Team is incorporating feedback. There needs to be a clearly defined methodology for examining data and it is not clear what approach the Team is taking.

Faculty expressed concern over the way in which the GE debate has been framed. We seem to be starting with the question "which changes should we make?" rather than "is the status quo unsatisfactory?" We believe the ultimate question should be "is the proposed alternative better than the current GE?" We do not feel like there has been a realistic option for supporting the status quo or that it was ever made clear to faculty what is flawed about the current GE program. This has resulted in a process that feels too fast and that is forcing change without a clearly articulated need for it.

Faculty expressed concern over the composition and role of the Design Team. There are too few full-professor/non-administrators/non-staff-members on the Team. There should be a committee that is answerable to the faculty rather than the Provost.

Faculty find the argument that this is a bottom-up process dubious given that it was sparked by an administrator responding to a directive from the Chancellor's Office.

Faculty are concerned that the bottom line in the process will be budgetary, that GE rill be revised in a way that emphasizes cost savings over quality education.

Faculty expressed discomfort in voting on some items on the checklist because they were not described clearly enough or in enough detail (e.g., "learning communities," "integrated") to make a vote on them unambiguous.

AGR
Because of the extremely heavy workload at this time of year, it is difficult to understand all

of the details of the proposal. Although the committee has been transparent, time has precluded full participation of the faculty. Trying to digest the entire proposal is unrealistic…..This proposal should include some time during the summer in order to achieve meaningful feedback.

Need SLO's for GE courses before we can look at the overall structure.

Hard to focus on strategies because they are very broad. We need SLOs that we can count on.

They want to focus on SLOs and then they can provide feedback on a structure.

For instance, how would coherence benefit our students?

Want to see GE be more efficient, especially with respect to administration and assessment.

Threads names:
Health and food
"Leadership" is important as part
Science literacy and society
What does "Identity and Community" mean? Clarify for a broader audience

CMST
Others: Leadership
While Good ideas/themes, two key concerns (1) coordination and resources, how productive these will be will depend on design and implementation and (2) degree to which relevancy to the students in their own lives is demonstrated.

PHIL CHAIR
Threads proposed by campus:
Science and Society
International Perspectives
Environmental Stewardship
The Diverse U.S.
Technology, Media and Society
Identity and Community

Sure, those are good ideas. Most important, though, is that ideas for threads come from faculty who want to be involved and who find connection with colleagues in other sectors of the university. It's the enthusiasm and commitment of these faculty to the learning community that will be most crucial in the educational success of learning communities, and not whether somehow the topic is deemed important.

RELS
Opposes threads, but if there are threads, wants Western Civ and Asian Civ as threads.