Highlights of the Enhanced Core GE Program

• As with all proposed GE models, the Enhanced Core adheres to the overall outlines of the mandated (by EO 1033) GE Program of the CSU: 49 units, 39 lower division, 9 upper division with various areal distributions, the inclusion of a laboratory science, etc.

• The Enhanced Core model strives for a common experience for Chico State students through a common set of Foundation Courses as well as a set of multi-disciplinary courses in the three main areas of study in GE: Arts and Humanities, Natural Sciences and Social Sciences.

• Foundation Courses include the same areas of study currently found in “Area A” on our campus: Writing, Critical Thinking, Quantitative Reasoning and Oral Communication. In the proposed model, Critical Thinking is “folded into” the Writing Course, which becomes a 5-unit Critical Reading, Writing and Thinking course, and the Quantitative Reasoning course which becomes a 4-unit course focused on numeracy – the use of numeric data to analyze and assess critical issues facing today’s society. Oral communication remains a 3-unit stand-alone course.

• The advantage of the proposed integration is that it provides a context for doing critical thinking, rather than isolating CT as a “skill.”
• The disadvantage of the proposed model is that 10-15% of our entering students place out of Academic Writing with AP English tests each year. Would we require them to take this course anyway? Or develop two such courses? Likewise, particular majors have specific math requirements, e.g. Finite Math for Business or Calculus. Do we waive this CT quantitative reasoning course for these students or have them take this course, plus additional math?

• The Lower Division Core courses are multi-disciplinary courses where faculty from a variety of disciplines would rotate through providing varied disciplinary perspectives on common issues. While that nature of these courses would be decided by faculty, an example might be a Humanities course that provided varied perspectives on an issue such as Virtue, or Freedom, or Rights. An Arts focused course might explore expression from a variety of perspectives; performing arts, visual arts, plastic arts, etc.
• The advantage of these courses would be broad exposure to a variety of disciplinary perspectives, integration of knowledge across disciplines (after all, the world does not come “packaged” in disciplinary boxes) and a common experience for all students.
• The disadvantage of this approach is the need for major specific courses (the Natural Sciences majors already opt out of the existing NSCI 101, 102 courses). Also, some might see breadth being sacrificed for depth of exposure to a given discipline.
• Lower Division GE is completed by some 9 units of free choices for major exploration and flexibility.
• Upper Division GE is completed by Upper Division Themes, much like the existing program.

NOTE: This model is silent about including Code requirements in GE.
Enhanced Core GE Program -- Draft

Upper Division Themes (9 units)
Retain concept of UDTs. Sunset old themes and call for new ones? Limit numbers to facilitate coordination? Capstone?

Lower Division “Breadth” Electives (9 units)
Area C, D, E ... Departments allowed no more than two courses outside Core in LD Breadth.
“Traditional” GE to permit major exploration.

Lower Division Core (18 units)
Social Science 101, 102
Arts & Humanities 101, 102
Natural Sciences 101, 102 (1 lab)
Multi-disciplinary, team-taught courses with common learning objectives. Use Social Sciences as site for Town Hall meeting, service-learning? Waive one of these courses for majors: e.g. BSS majors take one of Social Science courses, CNS majors take one NSCI, HFA majors one A&H.

Foundation Courses (12 units)
Retain Area A emphases: Oral Communications, Writing, Critical Thinking, Quantitative Reasoning ...
Integrate Critical Thinking and Academic Writing in Critical Thinking, Reading and Writing (5 units), and Critical Thinking with Quantitative Reasoning in Critical Quantitative Reasoning (4 units). Oral Comm remains 3 units.