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**MEMORANDUM**

**To:** Donna E. Shalala, President

**From:** Richard L. Williamson  
Chair, Faculty Senate

**Date:** April 25, 2012

**Subject:** Faculty Senate Legislation #2011-51(D) – Faculty Senate Resolution Concerning  
University Curriculum Committee Review of General Education Requirements

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At its April 18, 2012 meeting, the Faculty Senate adopted by majority with one abstention the following resolution:

The *Faculty Manual* (Section B4.12) requires the University Curriculum Committee (UCC) to conduct a review of the General Education Requirements (GER) at least every five years, and to make any recommendations to the Faculty Senate for changes in those requirements.

Under the outstanding leadership of its Chair, Professor Thomas Goodmann of the Department of English, and following close consultation with the administration, the UCC has prepared a report proposing changes in the University's GER.

The Senate hereby accepts the report of the UCC and adopts its recommendations concerning the extent and nature of proposed new GER standards. In particular, the Senate approves the following:

1. Each undergraduate student must demonstrate competence in three areas of knowledge: Arts & Humanities; People and Society; and Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics.
2. A student may meet this requirement for a given area by the completion of a cognate (as defined below) in that area, subject to the limitations that:
  - o No more than one cognate can be from a single department or interdisciplinary program without the approval of the UCC, which approval shall only be granted in exceptionally well-merited cases.
  - o With the exception of the College of Arts and Sciences, no more than two areas can be fulfilled by cognates in a single school or college without the approval of the UCC and the Senate's Academic Planning Committee.
3. A cognate is any group of three or more courses in a single area as defined in paragraph 1 above, totaling at least 9 credits. Normally, cognates are expected to have a minimum of at least six courses. A cognate can be courses in a single

4. department, or interdisciplinary courses in more than one department or in more than one school.
5. Any Senate-approved major or minor may be used to meet the requirement in paragraph 2 above.

The procedures for advising students and for the approval and termination of cognates shall be developed in greater detail by the UCC early in academic year 2012-2013, drawing on its work to date. Each school or college shall adopt a written bylaw providing for the expeditious approval of proposals for cognates and for some form of faculty approval. It shall be up to each school to determine whether faculty approval is best done by the school's curriculum committee, school council, the whole faculty, or some other means and to specify policies and mechanisms for periodic reviews of cognates. In the event that a school has not adopted a bylaw, approval shall be by the school council. A school's cognate proposal shall be approved by the UCC unless the proposal fails to meet the standards for a cognate or intrudes unreasonably on the work of another school. The UCC shall develop procedures for the approval of cognates that involve more than one school. The Senate will separately consider UCC proposals for standards and procedures allowing student-generated cognates.

The UCC should present the procedures it recommends to the Senate during the Fall of 2012. It requests the administration to assure that the new ERP computer system program can provide students and faculty with ready access to and information concerning all cognates before the new GER requirements go into effect.

Implementation of the new GER for entering Freshmen shall be accomplished by the administration as soon as feasible. In deciding on an implementation date, the administration shall consult with the Senate. In making its decision, the administration shall consider the readiness of the computer network, the state of training of curriculum advisors, whether a sufficient number of cognates have been proposed and approved, and other relevant factors.

Finally, the Senate wishes to express its thanks to the UCC and the administration for the hard work and creativity that went into the new GER program.

This legislation is sent for your information.

RW/rh

cc: Thomas LeBlanc, Executive Vice President and Provost  
William S. Green, Senior Vice Provost, Undergraduate Education  
Thomas Goodmann, Professor, English; Chair, University Curriculum Committee