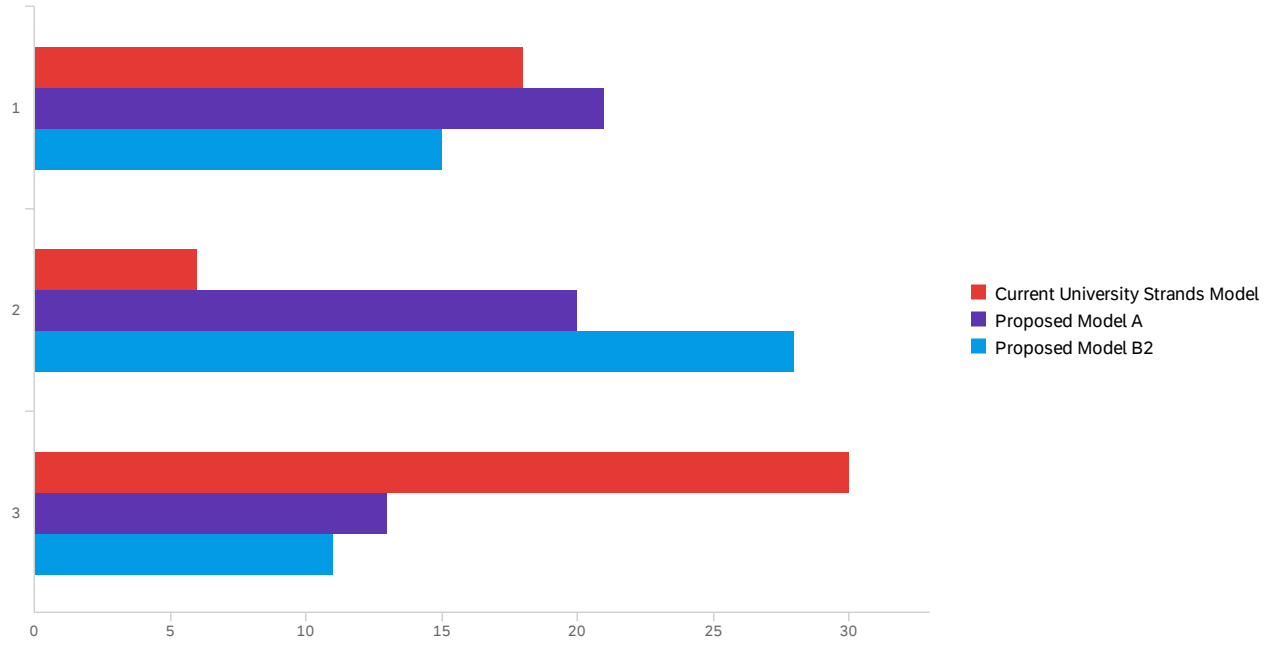
Default Report

Faculty Senate Poll on Gen Ed

May 18, 2021 9:09 PM PDT

Q1 - Which general education model do you prefer for SOU? Please rank your choices.



#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Current University Strands Model	1.00	3.00	2.22	0.92	0.84	54
2	Proposed Model A	1.00	3.00	1.85	0.78	0.61	54
3	Proposed Model B2	1.00	3.00	1.93	0.69	0.48	54

#	Field	1		2		3		Total
1	Current University Strands Model	33.33%	18	11.11%	6	55.56%	30	54
2	Proposed Model A	38.89%	21	37.04%	20	24.07%	13	54
3	Proposed Model B2	27.78%	15	51.85%	28	20.37%	11	54

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Q2 - If you wish, please share any reasons for your choices.

If you wish, please share any reasons for your choices.

It feels like a toss up, and the two proposed models are compromises on competing desires among the various parties. Each has strengths and weakness. In Model A, I like the inclusion/requirement of an ePortfolio to connect on learning experiences throughout the curriculum, but I dislike the limited number of credits for each capacity. I don't like the message it sends to students that these capacities are "one and done"; rather we should be cultivating them across courses and disciplines.

I feel like the UD portfolio for proposed Model A would be in competition of, or somehow influence what students/Departments are currently doing in their capstone courses. I also feel like the MB2 UD requirement of 8 credits, no more than 4 cr in a capacity is a great way for students to potentially continue to get exposure to more of the strands in a meaningful and naturally incorporated manner, rather than skip out out some strands as they work their way to upper division. (That is if they take 3 credit courses rather than 2 four credit courses). I also think the Purposeful living capacity will better serve our students as individuals rather than making all students take the same (most likely) course. We have such a wide variety of students, and I cannot imagine the needs of an 17 year old recent High school graduate (an extreme) to a married, veteran, 40 year old returning to school would have the same needs for purposeful living. I envision that departments could incorporate some of their courses which would have a direct correlation to the major at different points (the mini courses as a freshman, and then as a junior as they start preparing for next steps). I do wish we could have had our current model compared side by side with these two, as it was hard to compare, despite the fact I feel very competent in what we do require. But, is there currently a limit for the number of strands (A - J) which can double dip as part of a major requirement? That was one question that I was left with.

I believe the new models, while they have interesting aspects, are over-complicating GenEd. Students will always put things in buckets to satisfy their degree works requirements. We need to put more resources into attracting a more diverse student body. GenEd is not an attractor - students come for majors, university life (there is none here), faculty connections, etc. I believe our current system works - reduce the total credits if needed, but a massive overhaul is not needed.

I would actually be supportive of Model B2 if it simply added 4 more credits so that students had to take UD classes in 3 areas instead of just 2. As it stands, it allows students to divide into humanities vs. science/math focus, and I think that's a mistake for our gen ed. I'd rather see this changed than give the 4 extra credits of "purposeful living."

Works better

I worry that the proposed decrease of required Gen Ed credits will negatively impact several programs, principally those associated with the liberal arts tradition.

I feel as though we are in very difficult times with a lot of potential changes and retrenchment on the horizon. I feel as though our current model is just fine and that we should be putting our efforts into other more pressing issues. Just keep the model and perhaps trim a few course requirements. Almost everything I teach is general education and so this is extremely daunting. Also - these other models are going to greatly impact and eventually eliminate some faculty members in my opinion.

I don't really have a strong preference, nor have I heard from my colleagues regarding a strong preference between A and B2. A has a bit more flexibility.

Easier to do

It's hard to rank these because my questions about transferability still feel unanswered. I would like to see a system that reduces barriers for transfer students (who transfer to SOU, and who transfer from SOU to another college -- especially students who can not reach a BA/BS and who would benefit from an AA/AS).

Model B2 seems more flexible--credits can be accumulated in a variety of ways and the portfolio is optional. I think staying within a "credits earned" system will be easier to understand, since students know the credits they need to graduate.

If you wish, please share any reasons for your choices.

I am very appreciative of the EDI requirement for both lower and upper division classes in Models A and B2. This is an urgent need for our campus community and our world. However, I think there is a lot of value in requiring students to take classes across disciplinary divisions (e.g., current E, F, and G strands) - that seems a core of liberal arts education, and I would hate to lose that. I also do not think that fewer credits for general education is better - a robust general education program that is properly designed and advised is a strength for our campus (I have ranked B2 above A because B2 requires more general education credits). I would like a model that increases EDI requirements across lower and upper division while still maintaining some of the disciplinary diversity of our current model. I also worry about how any new model may hurt smaller programs.

a proper liberal arts education needs breadth. The proposed plans look like a cafeteria style approach to higher education

Although I think the current model is okay, the effort to come up with something different and to respond to student concerns/reduce credits is why it's in the bottom. I don't have a strong preference for Model A or Model B except that Model A seems easier to explain to students. At this point, the model and actual curricula seems secondary to my main concern which is workload and the timeline for proposing new classes.

While I don't have a clear preference between the overall parameters of A and B, Model B seems more complicated in terms of course design and advising. My main concerns are about the process of proposing courses for the various focus areas. How burdensome a process will this be, how much time will be allocated, will we be able to submit "topics" courses as a sort of 'shell' to which we can add topics in the future without going through the whole application process, etc.

The new models are not an improvement or simplification over the current system. Recategorizing real courses into these imaginary/nebulous categories will be difficult, arbitrary, time consuming, and haphazard...at best.

It appears that Model B2 allows for more flexibility and choice for the student and for the program. I think that allowing specific programs to tailor their programs to meet student's needs/interests is a strength of our University to individualize and serve student interests. I also like that the ePortfolio is not required.

If it ain't broke.... I agree that we can and should continually improve our curriculum. I see what some of the changes are here, but I don't see any evidence that these changes would "enhance success" (SD1) or do the things noted in goal one. The summary comparing the two new proposed models is helpful. It would also be helpful to include the current model to see exactly what the implications for this major shift would be. This could results in a major restructuring of the university but I don't see that that has been considered carefully in the documents presented to us.

Not sure that my ranking stuck—I rank them 2-1-3 in the order listed above.

I believe the underlying premise of ANY general education requiremenisare that students experience a variety of ways at looking at the world. I also believe that, properly constructed and taught, most college courses provide opportunity and value to students. My only concern -- and I think it is largely addressed in the new models -- is that students must be required to take a variety of courses (and not get a bulk of their "general education" reqs met by one discipline -- or even one instructor!).

As long as ePortfolios, or some other institutionally-available metacognition exercises, are completed at the end of their time here at SOU, I am ok with either model A or B2.

I'm not certain that "purpose" should be the guiding prinicple for general education Seems too "self" oriented - outside of EDI courses, there is little emphasis on participation in society or community Possible to complete the new models without any real science, or lab science

Frankly, I am a full professor. I am old. Shifting to a new model makes me wish I was close to retirement. However, I also know that change is good. If we were to shift, which seems inevitable, I prefer Model A because many of our students need pathways that are more obvious. Model 2B seems to work for those highly motivated students that already know where they want to get to. A concern that I have about Model 2B are some of the discussions around courses that are not 4 credits. What scares me is that it is hard enough to teach three 4 credit courses. The idea of having, possibly, additional preps because students want those, scares me.

I'd prefer to see a smaller gen ed than we have but am wary of the organizational stress of making the change now and, between B2 and A, am skeptical of all the credit ranges like 11-14 and so on.

Colleges should require general education. Having a variety of programs on campus is a necessary component of a liberal arts education. Going to the dentist isn't always fun, but it's good for you. General education is also good for you. Except people who like general education (unlike people who like going to the dentist), are actually quite numerous, and not particularly strange. SOU is running itself into the ground.

If you wish, please share any reasons for your choices.

I prefer the lighter credit / course load that Model A requires. Would be nice if courses could double dip with major requirements as well.

Current strand model and utilize existing courses to meet DEI and purpose add 2 more strands.

I do not believe that either model A or model B2 makes our general education system any less complicated than what we have now. Both continue to limit students' gen ed choices. I would prefer a system in which students are free to take any classes they want as long as they take at least classes that represent different approaches to problem solving which are embedded in major schools of humanities, social science and science. These, along with the first year Seminar model and a minimum number of math classes would simplify our university and provide increased service to our students.

Not changing would be the easiest path forward, but then we have two years of our peer's work that we will be ignoring. If the task force is suggesting a change, I trust there research.

Model A is the most simple and legible to the students. It includes a Portfolio that will ask students to reflect upon their General Education learning and make meaning out of it for themselves. It is the smallest number of credit hours for general education, which gives students a feeling of more control over their education and encourages programs to create new curriculum such as certificates and microcredentials.

Cleanest and easiest to understand. It also seems much easier for transfer students to manage both entering and exiting.

I believe we need a lot more time to work on this and consider these changes. I'm not opposed to change but the timing is not great. Many changes have occurred at SOU in the past few years and this process has seemed rushed to me. Please consider taking a year or two more to consider these models and make these changes.

Fixed hours seems fairer and potentially more rigorous.

I think the current model is more than fine. I think the issues that arise from the current model is simply a matter of inadequate advising. The new models won't solve that issue either.

Model B2 - I like the flexibility although it might give too much choice and might be confusing for students. Model A is good. I'm not sure what the e-Portfolio is all about but it seems like this model drops the focus on Purposeful Living, whereas Model B2 keeps it incorporated more explicitly. I really have no idea how these compare to the current model but both seem like they will require lots more work, lots of clarifying or redefining which courses fit under the new domains. Also, it seems like B2 calls for the creation of many more 2-credit classes and other things like internships, in a way that we don't currently have. I also worry about the "unfunded mandate" aspects to any changes at SOU. Who will do all the work and how will they be credited, resourced, paid, etc?

Fewer credits, focuses on 21st Century skills, student centric, responds to student wishlist, easily adapted for transfer, links academic and professional work, appropriate for a small regional state college, aligns with strategic goals, aligns with state mandates, offers opportunities for pedagogical innovation, encourages cooperation across disciplines over territoriality, aligns with national trends and emerging best practices, builds on some of the best of what we are already doing, opens up potential credentialing and course attributes in new ways, puts the focus back on teaching well rather than on students forced to take classes in categories the don’t understand in order to be “well-rounded”

I like the greater flexibility of Model B2 in that it would allow students to take more exploratory, lower-division courses or more challenging, upper-division courses based on their interests, workload, and life circumstances. I also think that it might give greater flexibility in scheduling. Instead of having to offer a certain number of upper and lower division courses in each capacity each year, SOU would simply have to offer a certain number of courses in each capacity each year. Thank you for all of the hard work you've done in redesigning our general education model and helping the faculty shift --- quickly for some, slowly for others ;) --- their thinking re: the weight, roles, and goals of gen ed @ SOU.

A chosen first because of lower credit number. But I believe the amount of course work required here for Gen Eds in ALL models is still too high. Too many requirements leave too little room for students to make their own choices about course work inside or outside their major or minor.

Greater simplicity; less potential confusion.

If you wish, please share any reasons for your choices.

I did not choose any. Both models A and B2 cut general education classes and the present model needs to add more. What will serve students and what employers want are inquisitive students who have a passion for learning, not ones who have learned specific skills. They prefer general skills such as critical thinking, quantitative, and communication skills. In other words, they want general educated students. I believe it is a big mistake to cut general education. What we should be cutting are students that double and triple major. Instead of taking specific courses, they should developing more general education skills.

Our primary focus should be on lowering the credit burden for our students, and providing choice. Unfortunately, both of the new models seem to be very similar to one another and to our current model. I have voted for A primarily because it asks the least # of credits from students/is most affordable. I do not believe the current Strands model is a good model, but I believe Model B2 is overly complicated and does not reduce the credit burden anywhere near enough. I would honestly vote to thank the committee, and excuse them, and to start again with a new committee next fall. I do not believe the options presented represent our "best" options.

We are just coming back from Covid and huge amounts of course prep. I teach 7 gen ed courses and don't have the capacity to do a bunch of work to update courses to fit the new gen eds. If there is no grandfathering of existing gen ed, and we aren't paid for EVERY we have to prep for (none of this cap on payment nonsense), then the university cannot afford to change at this time. And, we have nothing to say that SOU won't pay an adjunct to prep these courses just to circumvent full time faculty. Without implementation plans - including compensation - as part of this proposal, I say HELL NO.

I think Model A is clearer and easier for students to understand, and will be easier to execute in a way that is more equitable for students. Experiential learning is wonderful, but I worry about the process of adjudicating many different possible options in a way that is fair for all students when their experiences may not be equivalent or vetted in the way that a gen ed approved course would be. Additionally, we may or may not currently have instructional capacity or training as faculty to meet the idea of mini-courses on "life" topics (e.g., financial literacy), and Model A does not depend on that.

Neither new proposal succeeds in providing as broad-based and effective a general education as the current model, for all of its issues. I strongly prefer the current model to either new proposal.

I support the simplest possible model, and clearest for advising and communicating with students. I also support the work done on Capacities to update our understanding of what students will take away from Gen Ed.

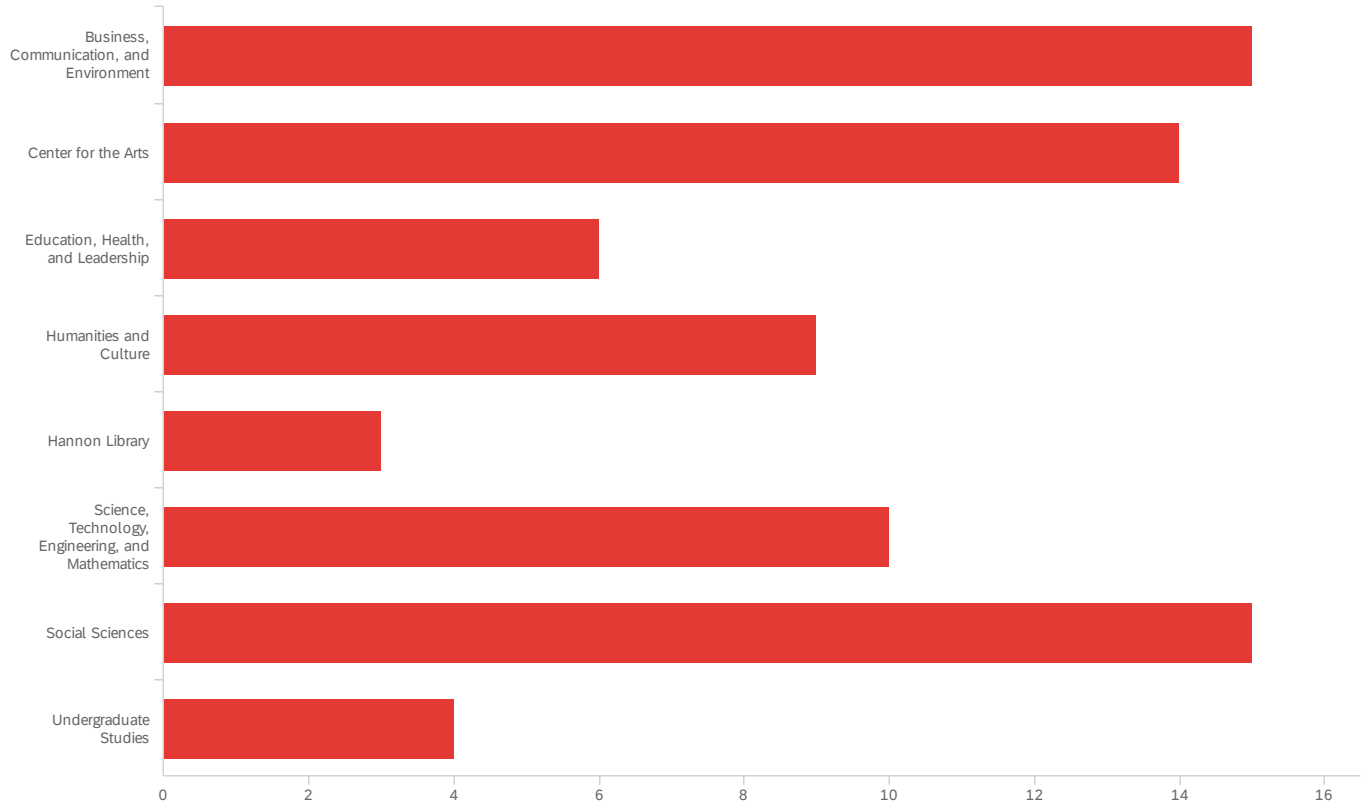
I like the flexibility of Model B2 and the LD purpose courses, which students were a big fan of. I'd be happy with Model A too. I think it would be an enormous missed opportunity to stay with University Studies.

I would be fine with either of the new models, but I prefer B2 slightly since I think it will lead to the creation of exciting new course options for students, and allows students to chart their own course through Gen Ed.

I like the flexibility of Model 2B. Model A is okay as well but looks a bit too much like Strands. And the boat sailed on Strands a long time ago. If faculty wanted to stick with the strands model they should have spoken up at multiple opportunities over the last two year that the committee have been working on this task.

I appreciate all of the work that went into developing these, but feel very strongly that now is not the time to do a massive overhaul. Faculty are incredibly overworked and overwhelmed and this would only contribute to our burden. Given upcoming changes in Administration it also seems prudent to align reforms with new strategic directions.

Q3 - In which Division is your primary assignment?



#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	In which Division is your primary assignment?	1.00	8.00	4.07	2.40	5.77	76

#	Field		Choice Count
1	Business, Communication, and Environment	19.74%	15
2	Center for the Arts	18.42%	14
3	Education, Health, and Leadership	7.89%	6
4	Humanities and Culture	11.84%	9
5	Hannon Library	3.95%	3
6	Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics	13.16%	10
7	Social Sciences	19.74%	15
8	Undergraduate Studies	5.26%	4

#	Field	Choice Count
		76

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End of Report