

# **Process to Add Courses to the Wisconsin Technical College System List of General Education Courses**

**FINAL – as presented to WTCS General Education Deans 10/26/05**

## **Course criteria and the process to be used to add courses to the WTC System list of General Education Courses -**

### **I. Course Criteria to consider in the selection of courses for development -**

In order to be submitted as an addition to the WTC System List of General Education Courses, a course must meet the following criteria:

1. Be in the 801 (Communications), 804 (Mathematics), 806 (Natural Science), and/or 809 (Social/Behavioral Science) instructional areas with opportunities to expand to other instructional areas as educational and workplace needs demand.  
*For example in the 802 (Foreign Language) instructional area, some colleges are receiving requests from employers for foreign language training in the work force. This subject area also connects to the core abilities/critical life skills identified by most of our technical colleges.*
2. Be offered at aid code 10
3. Typically, award 3 - 5 credits
4. Transfer among all the system technical colleges
5. Demonstrate a documented, significant need by the districts that have the program(s) requiring the course. The following circumstances may result in specific programs requiring particular courses or a particular set of competencies:
  - Unique programs
  - Outside accreditation standards
  - Statewide curriculum
  - Direct transfer agreement
  - Programming needs specific to college transfer institutions
6. May be transferable to accredited private or public two-and four-year colleges
7. May be part of a program where that course has been deemed necessary by business, industry, and labor
8. Be of postsecondary rigor

9. Ought not to duplicate a comparable course already on the System list of General Education Courses.

## **II. Process for Additional General Education Course Development and Approval**

### **Stage 1: Development of the Proposed Course - *Estimated timeline is four weeks, but is dependent on proposing college(s)***

1. Proposing college(s) conducts internal course review process which includes faculty, Dean of General Education, appropriate Occupational Dean(s) and faculty, and VP of Instruction prior to submission outside the college. The General Education Dean(s) at the proposing college will lead the course development effort.
2. Proposing college(s) surveys articulation partners to determine potential transfer and/or documents appropriate business and industry standards met by course.
3. Proposing college(s) prepares documentation for course: instructional area, course title, description, credits, draft competencies, learning objectives; list of appropriate programs that might use it. Course outcome summary is prepared using WIDS software.
4. Proposing college(s) documents need by 25% of WTCS colleges offering the program(s) requiring the course OR documents that it is an exceptional circumstance (see #5 in course criteria list)
5. Proposing college(s) submits course to WTCS Curriculum Bank with any comments or concerns regarding this process and prepares it for review and feedback in the Work in Progress section of Curriculum Bank.

### **Stage 2: Review of and Feedback on Proposed Courses – *Estimated timeline is eight weeks with a minimum of four weeks posting to Curriculum Bank Work in Progress***

1. Proposing college(s) posts course on the Work in Progress Section of Curriculum Bank and notifies WTCS that course has been posted.
2. Notice is sent to all Deans (via WTCS distribution list process) that the course(s) is posted and should be reviewed by appropriate faculty/administration.
3. Proposing college(s) gathers feedback online through threaded discussion forum feature.
4. A faculty/administration review team is created:
  - a. Led by WTCS System Office

- b. Composed of a wide representation of faculty with Deans acting as facilitators from colleges that would offer the course; also, participation of articulation partner faculty and/or business and industry partners is strongly encouraged so evaluation of course for transferability may be accomplished simultaneously
  - c. Ensure the course meets criteria as established in I. Course Criteria, items 1 to 9.
  - d. Exceptions listed in #5 on Course Criteria list would require review by a minimum of 1 – 2 other colleges
5. Review Team examines curriculum bank feedback and discusses course via WisLine conference or face-to-face meetings as appropriate.
  6. Review Team documents and forwards comments to proposing college(s)
  7. Proposing college(s) reviews feedback; makes revisions to course; and prepares final documents.
  8. Vice President of Instruction at proposing college(s) submits final documentation to Associate Vice President of WTCS Office of Instruction. Documentation must include at a minimum (WTCS form follows at end of process:)
    - a. Rationale for requested course based on course criteria list and program and student need
    - b. Course information, in WIDS software
    - c. Summary of feedback from discussion forum and review team
    - d. List of colleges and programs planning to use the course(s)

**Stage 3: Course Approval Process - *Estimated timeline is one to two weeks***

1. WTCS Office of Instruction makes recommendation on further action
2. Letter sent to proposing college(s)
3. If course is not approved, the proposing college(s) may appeal the decision to the WTCS Vice President of the Division of Teaching and Learning.

**Stage 4: Course Implementation upon WTCS Approval – *Estimated timeline is one to two weeks***

1. If course is to be included in system list, a system-wide number is assigned by the WTCS Office
2. WTCS curriculum development/ modification process is implemented at college level to enable programs to include course in their curriculum.
3. WTCS posts final documents to curriculum bank [www.curriculumbank.org](http://www.curriculumbank.org) for use by WTCS faculty and administration

4. WTCS posts final courses to WTCS website for use by 4-year institutions to finalize course transferability; and, for the UW institutions, to post the transfer equivalency on TIS.

**Final Note: The WTC System list of General Education Courses will be updated and released three times a year. While courses will be approved on an ongoing basis, to be included in the update of the list, the additional course information must be submitted within the following timeframe:**

<b>To meet the following Release Date of An Updated System List of General Education Courses on:</b>	<b>Additional Courses must be Submitted to the WTCS Office of Instruction no later than:</b>
<b>February 1</b>	<b>January 15</b>
<b>June 1</b>	<b>May 15</b>
<b>October 1</b>	<b>September 15</b>

**Wisconsin Technical College System Submission of Information  
for Additional Course to be Included in the WTC System List of  
General Education Courses**

<b>Information on Course –</b> Date: Title of Course: Number of Credits: Proposing College(s):
<b>Rationale for course based on course criteria list and program and student need:</b>
<b>Course Information in WIDS Software (please attach a WIDS file):</b>
<b>Summary of Feedback from discussion forums and review team input:</b>
<b>List of colleges and programs planning to use course:</b>
<b>Additional Information if desired:</b>

**ADDENDUM:**

**Background to the Development of the Process for Adding Courses to the  
WTCS List of General Education Courses**

*Charge: On May 26, 2005, the WTCS Instructional Service Administrators charged the WTCS General Education Deans with creating a process and communication protocol for including additional courses on the WTCS System General Education course list.*

Team Members:

Bernie O'Connell - GTC

Dave Gavin - CVTC

Bobbi Laine – MPTC

Jody Thrush Withers – MATC-Madison

Carole Martin – WCTC

Ron Toshner – FVTC

Bill Lindroth – MSTC

Courtney Marlaire – MATC-Milwaukee

Barb Schuler – WTCS

**The following issues were part of our discussion and helped to frame it:**

1. *The addition of courses is not meant to be restrictive to large institutions nor a financial burden to small institutions. Due to limited resources, it is understood that not all colleges will offer all courses.*
2. *Procedures for awarding credit for prior learning from WTCS Institutions will be followed, as stated in the WTCS Credit for Prior Learning Policy 323, revised July 20, 2005.*
  - District guidelines shall affirm the full transferability of similar courses among the Wisconsin technical colleges where appropriate to a student's associate degree or technical diploma program.
  - For a student transferring from one WTCS institution to another, credit awarded for courses designated as fulfilling general education requirements at one WTCS institution shall be honored as fulfilling the same general education requirement at the receiving institution
  - For a student who subsequently transfers to another associate degree or technical diploma program within the technical college or to another WTCS institution after receiving credit from one technical college for prior learning, all credits other than those considered as general education or part of a system-wide curriculum will again be evaluated by the receiving institution to determine if, and how, they will be applied toward completion of the requirements of the student's new educational program. The student may be required by the receiving institution to provide

additional documentation to assist in the evaluation of the prior learning experiences.

- For a student who transfers from a nationally accredited institution of higher education prior to the completion of a degree program at the sending institution, the previously completed coursework will be evaluated to determine the extent to which it will apply to program requirements, general education requirements, or other graduation requirements of the specific educational program in which the student is enrolled.
3. *A course must fit the mission and purpose of general education in the WTCS to be placed on the list.*

### **WTCS General Education Task Force Report, 1990**

A revised definition of general education may be determined by the WTCS colleges; however the definition that the WTCS General Education Task Force (1989/1990) adopted will be used in the interim. That Task Force defined the role of General Education in the Applied Associate Degree as follows:

The role of general studies in a technical college is to provide an educational core of knowledge that is intended to impart common skills, intellectual concepts and attitudes which every educated person should possess. General studies provides explicit instruction in the essential lifelong skills required for success in career, home, community and the larger society. These skills, concepts and attitudes that are regularly identified by employers, employees, and educators are broadly defined by the following eight outcomes – communication; mathematical principles; critical thinking/problem solving; ethics; global awareness; self-determination; social interaction; and science and technology.

### **Higher Learning Commission, 2003**

The Higher Learning Commission states in its 2003 statement on General Education that

“Understanding and appreciating diverse cultures, mastering multiple modes of inquiry, effectively analyzing and communicating information, and recognizing the importance of creativity and values to the human spirit not only allow people to live richer lives but also are a foundation for most careers and for the informed exercise of local, national, and international citizenship. The Commission expects organizations of higher learning to address these important ends, and has embedded this expectation in its Criteria for Accreditation . . . general education is intended to impart common knowledge and intellectual concepts to students and to develop in them the skills and attitudes that an organization's faculty believe every educated person should possess. From an organization's general education, a student acquires a breadth of knowledge in the areas and proficiency in the skills that the organization identifies as hallmarks of being college educated. Moreover, effective general education helps students gain competence in the exercise of independent intellectual inquiry and also stimulates their examination and understanding of personal, social, and civic values.”

## **National Council for Occupational Education, 1999**

The National Council for Occupational Education (NCOE) is an affiliate council of AACC and provides a national forum for administrators and faculty in occupational, vocational, technical, and career education as well as representatives of business' labor, military, and government, to affect and direct the future role of two-year colleges in work-related education. Its primary goal is to promote excellence and growth in occupational education at the post-secondary level.

A 1999 NCOE report recommended that all AAS Degrees ensure that between one-third and one-half of the courses be devoted to general education, that they include strong assessment practices, articulate with both secondary and postsecondary programs and that there be flexibility in offerings that include credit for experience, distance learning, work based learning, modular components and alternative scheduling.

4. *The General Education Approved List of Courses should have depth and breadth, but should remain a manageable size.*
5. *The Colleges will work together to ensure smooth transfer of courses among WTCS colleges.*
6. *Colleges are expected to involve as many faculty, administrators, student services personnel, and other stakeholders in the process as possible to encourage communication and buy-in of the course(s).*