

# ODU<sup>TM</sup>

## GENERAL EDUCATION REFORM



## August 2025 Update

Our AY 25/26 Faculty and Operations Committees have been hard at work all summer on general education reform. We look forward to sharing some exciting developments and possibilities with the campus community this fall during Gen Ed Week!

## GEN ED WEEK EVENTS - OCTOBER 6-9

Join General Education Reform Committee members as we introduce three potential new models for general education at ODU. We look forward to getting input from faculty, staff, administrators, and students that will help us determine the future of our gen ed program.

- **October 6: Gen Ed Forum** - join us as we introduce three potential new models for ODU general education  
*\*12:00-1:00 PM via Zoom*
- **October 7: Model Walk Launch** - come to Webb Center to see the three models and ask us questions  
*\*11:30 AM - 1:30 PM in the Executive Dining Room*
- **October 7-9: Model Walk** - explore the potential new models as we bring them around campus over these two days *\*times/locations will be announced soon*
- **October 9: Gen Ed Town Hall** - a chance share your thoughts on the three potential new models  
*\*12:30-1:30 via Zoom*

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*If you see someone wearing this button or displaying this sign around campus, they can tell you more about general education reform and how to get involved!*



## Faculty Committee Member Spotlight

Suzanne Morrow, Master Lecturer and Chief Departmental Advisor, Psychology

"It has been exciting to be part of the general education revision process. It's truly exhilarating to discover innovative and effective practices and imagine ODU being part of what's right in general education. The end result will be well-educated students that will become innovative problem-solvers bringing us a better tomorrow. I am honored to play a such a crucial role in shaping their future."

## New General Education Programmatic Learning Goals

The Steering Committee developed draft learning goals for general education in AY 24/25 with input from student representatives and collaborative reading and working groups that included representation from all colleges and multiple units across campus. These new learning goals were reviewed by Faculty Senate in April 2025 and refined this summer by the AY 25/26 Gen Ed Reform Faculty and Operational Committees.

1. **Inquiry and Research:** Students will develop meaningful questions and gather, analyze, and apply information to create knowledge.
2. **Reasoning and Problem-Solving:** Students will develop critical reasoning, knowledge, and skills to address problems while considering their implications and the impact of potential solutions.
3. **Civic Engagement and Social Responsibility:** Students will gain insight into political and social systems to participate responsibly in civic life in local, national, or global communities.
4. **Communication and Expression:** Students will communicate in diverse ways to promote active participation in academic, artistic, civic, personal, and professional settings.
5. **Reflection and Integration:** Students will engage in self-discovery, skill-building, and reflection to foster curiosity, self-motivation, lifelong learning, and overall well-being.

## We want to hear from you!

We are seeking input on these new goals from the university community this fall. [Use the feedback form on our website or email GenEd@odu.edu to share your thoughts, questions, or concerns.](#)

If you would like one of our reform committee members to visit your department or office, let us know and we will come to you!



Reform Committee members develop potential new models at the General Education Retreat on August 12.



## Operations Committee Member Spotlight

Kellie Crawford-Sorey, Assistant Vice President for Enrollment Optimization

“Collaborating with my colleagues across the University on our General Education Reform has been a rewarding experience. We are thoughtfully engaged and see the critical role we have in developing a curriculum our students need and deserve as they encounter 21<sup>st</sup> century challenges. I am grateful to be a part of this important work and to hear and learn from the multiple perspectives at the table.”

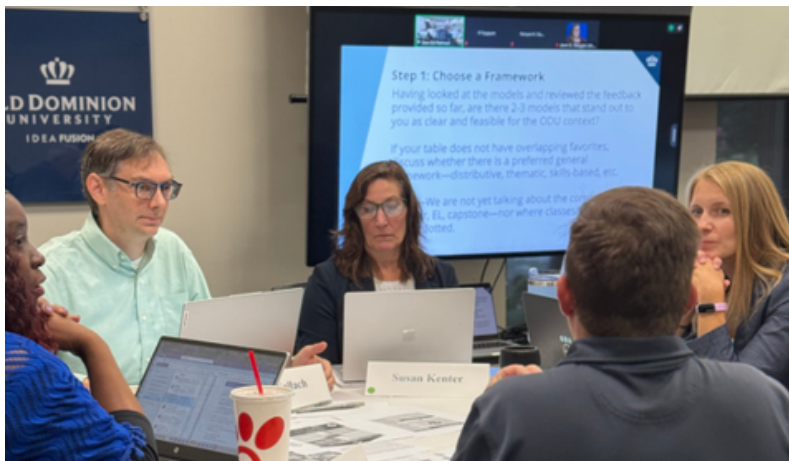


## Student Voices

“This opportunity has been truly enlightening to me as a STEM student. As a freshman beginning my journey at ODU, many of the general education classes felt unnecessary until I found myself enjoying the discourse I engaged in within my humanities classes. After joining the Gen Ed Reform student group last year, I've found even more reason to advocate for more interdisciplinary experiences for students, as the material covered in these classes is used throughout daily life and work, even when it feels arbitrary. These topics give us a chance to observe the world around us and truly become active citizens within our communities, and as a result, better people!”



Epiphany Smith, Junior Electrical Engineering Technology major



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## Summer 2025 Highlights

- **May 12:** New Faculty and Operational Committee members attended an onboarding meeting to get caught up on reform work so far
- **May 15:** The full Reform Committee met for a half-day retreat to set goals
- **June & July:** Team members worked in small groups to develop potential general education models and also formed working groups to discuss:
  - Developing a General Education Mission Statement and Student Learning Outcomes
  - Incorporating First-Year Experiences and High-Impact Practices
  - Planning Communications
- **August 12:** Reform Committee met for a retreat to develop three models to share with the campus community in October for input

## Looking Ahead...

October's Gen Ed Week will be followed by focus groups and visits to program, department, and club meetings. The reform committees will use campus feedback to refine the models for Faculty Senate feedback in the spring.



## Operations Committee Member Spotlight Annette Finley-Croswhite, Professor of History and Director, Center for Faculty Development

"It has been fascinating to have long discussions with colleagues about the multiple ways one can think about general education and its focus on teaching and learning. The collaboration with colleagues across divisions and departments has been warmly embraced. I well remember general education revision in 1996 when as an untenured assistant professor, I was told to 'not say anything.' This current experience has been inviting and invigorating as committee members sat together and respectfully shared ideas, concerns, and potential designs."

"In a world that's moving rapidly and facing a number of desperate crises, we need educated citizens who can approach life in thoughtful, well-informed ways that go well beyond the knowledge and skill sets that any single major can provide."

– Paul Hanstedt, *General Education Essentials*.

## What's possible in general education?

One of the texts the Gen Ed Reform team has read as part of this process is Paul Hanstedt's *General Education Essentials: A Guide for College Faculty*. In it, he outlines several potential models for general education, all of which fall on a continuum from distributive (what we have now) to fully integrative ("a model that makes explicit connections among courses, fields, majors, [and] disciplines.") The models we will share with the campus in October imagine what could be possible at ODU with a goal of helping students make those connections as they move through their general education coursework.



Reform Committee members develop potential new models at the General Education Retreat on August 12.

## General Education Reform Timeline

**Year 1 (AY 23/24):** Planning, External Review

**Year 2 (AY 24/25):** Build Community, Develop and Recommend Program Learning Goals

**Year 3 (AY 25/26): Develop and Recommend Structure & Student Learning Outcomes**

**Year 4 (AY 26/27):** Goal: Pilot, Assess, Refine, and Seek Full Faculty Senate Approval

**Year 5 (AY 27/28):** Goal: Faculty and Course Development, Catalog and Schedule Revisions

***New program to launch with AY 28/29 catalog  
with Faculty Senate approval.***

## Keep Up With Our Progress!

Visit [our website](#) to read more about our AY 24/25 accomplishments and 25/26 goals, explore readings and resources on general education, and learn about upcoming events. You can always email [GenEd@odu.edu](mailto:GenEd@odu.edu) with questions, requests for visits to your program, and to share your ideas.