

# Report of the 2019 Summer Workgroup on General Education Curriculum Redesign

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## Section 1: Our task and roster

### *Task:*

To develop a reasonable variety of models for the redesign of the general education curriculum at Gallaudet. Our need to redesign general education derives from the age and adaptations made to our current General Studies Requirements (GSR) which has become unwieldy and ineffective in delivering what is needed for 21st century Deaf and hard of hearing learners in higher education. The goal is to identify models for a new general education curriculum for consideration by the Gallaudet community. Forums and feedback mechanisms will be set up in the Fall Semester to view and discuss the models. Input will be collected and incorporated into the models. At the end of the academic year of 2019-2020, we will know which model, along with its workings, to implement. The implementation will require cooperation between Faculty Governance, including the Council on Undergraduate Education, and Administration.

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## Section 2: Our work process and findings

We convened for our organizing meeting on May 22 holding an all day retreat to begin to clarify our task, identify areas we needed to research, and agree upon a workflow. Three subgroups were formed to gather additional data and research on the following areas; Data Analysis, Programming and Curricula, and Institutional Support. The three groups gathered data and ideas from a variety of sources including the GSR Self-Study, the reports from independent reviewers of the GSR program, data from student focus groups on GSR, the Gallaudet Internationalization (IZN) Committee report, a draft proposal for a Deaf Democracy in America program, articles and information on general education programs and the traits and attributes employers are looking for, and examples of general education design from a variety of other institutions of higher education. [See resource links at the end of this report.]

The committee as a whole reconvened on June 10 for a four hour meeting to share our findings and discuss possible models for general education based on our findings. As our scheduled block of time was not enough to complete our task, we established an online telework meeting via ZOOM on June 12 to finish our discussion and identify three models to develop; the Adaptation Model, the Hybrid Model, and the Pathways Model, described in depth in Section 3 below. These groups worked independently toward presenting and refining the models over two four hour working meetings on June 24 and 26. Each team was charged with developing a graphical representation of the model, a narrative, and a 'proof of concept' to show how the

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model achieves the aims and outcomes identified and how the model is grounded in our findings of general education design and student experience and need.

The co-facilitators, with the assistance of collaboration from the group, then developed this report.

The work group referred to *General Education Maps and Markers: Designing Meaningful Pathways to Student Achievement*<sup>1</sup> by AAC&U<sup>2</sup> as it did the summer work. It adhered to the General Education Maps (GEMs) design principles for general education. A summary of each principle is included, although the fuller explanation is on page 3 in the booklet along with extensive questions to consider while designing General Education in pages 13-22.

- A. Proficiency: The desired learning outcomes need to be articulated clearly.
- B. Agency and Self-Direction: Student need support throughout the years to successfully acquire the skills needed.
- C. Integrative Learning: Students need to be able to draw upon different disciplines in their learning.
- D. Equity: The curriculum needs to be inclusive.
- E. Transparency and Assessment: All involved, faculty and students, need to be able to explain the proficiencies can manifest themselves through academic products, including portfolios.

In summary, we found a wealth of ideas and emerging trends in General Education that have influenced our varied thoughts as we developed the models presented later in this report. Many institutions are branching further and further into the AAC&U GEMs in their curriculum design with several different ways of building out integrated learning. What Gallaudet University did in 2007 in creating an entire standalone integrated learning curriculum remains somewhat rare, although many institutions are doing more and more standalone integrated course building as a component of their general education. The rarity of a fully integrated, entirely standalone curriculum at other institutions seems to be borne of some resistance from faculty at various institutions to break out of disciplinary silos to create such courses. Here at Gallaudet, we've done a fair job of getting more and more faculty involved in interdisciplinary and integrated teaching and learning; our barrier seems to be the sustainability of building an entire curriculum around such courses. Looking at other institutions in our size range, we found a mixture of integrated learning courses, often at the First Year Seminar level and capstone courses or projects, and requirements that have been distributed as a menu of disciplinary courses from departments. Even in cases where general education curriculum courses were distributed, they were done so with care to communicate the purpose and intent of the selections in ways that reflect integrative student learning outcomes rather than simply requiring introductory courses in a variety of fields. Another trend we noticed was a growth in the need for students to have

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<sup>1</sup> Please contact Co-facilitator Kirk VanGilder for a copy.

<sup>2</sup> Association of American Colleges & Universities (<https://www.aacu.org/>)

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proficiencies in data management and analysis as well as technology use. These outcomes were often achieved through courses that engaged with STM field and social sciences.

All of these trends are driven by a shift to student-centered approaches to learning grounded in studies of 21st century college students and their way of viewing, engaging, and connecting varied information about the world around them. The Chronicle of Higher Education report on generational trends<sup>3</sup> contains a number of observations that can be readily recognized in our student body at Gallaudet. Students are quick to question if the educational experience they are getting is worth the investment of their time and money. They are keenly aware of the financial debt and resources they are putting into their education and looking for clear communication about what they are getting in return. Growing up in the information age, students are accustomed to having a wealth of varied information at their fingertips and looking for ways to connect and integrate that information into applications for life. Entrepreneurship and innovation are very attractive modes of learning and action for this generation. Social justice issues and the link between learning and action are also vital. In short, students are not interested in a banking model of education where information is fed to them; indeed, they are looking for ways to learn that are grounded in engagement with problems and dilemmas and lead to solutions. These trends can be observed in our own student population here at Gallaudet, both in feedback from the student forum roundtables and in looking at the student led actions in the past few academic years arising from both student organizations and students taking courses incorporating service learning and action planning. The number of town halls led by students on a variety of social justice issues, campus safety and quality of life concerns, and the quality of their educational experience are a clarion call to re-designing our curriculum in ways that harness student passions, build their skill sets, and incorporate wisdom, critical thinking, and knowledge generation into their use of information.

What's in a name? We have also reviewed a strong need to better communicate the purpose and design of general education. The AAC&U has an informative article on the issue of naming general education programs.<sup>4</sup> According to independent reviewers who made a site visit for the GSR program, one of the issues with our current GSR program is that you can ask a dozen people what it is and get a dozen different answers. While we have common SLOs to point toward, and can explain that these courses are aimed at these SLOs, we lack a strong sense of the overall purpose of general education and communicate little connection between the varied courses students take in the program. Thus, for many students, the experience devolves into 'checking the boxes to graduate' rather than selecting courses to get particular types of knowledge and skills that benefit their goals for education and beyond. We note a number of institutions describe their general education as a 'core curriculum' or a 'pathway' through their college experience rather than a set of requirements.

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<sup>3</sup> [https://drive.google.com/file/d/1vndtHzmDIWPmqNbe9HMm4yoVypWD-j\\_M/view](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1vndtHzmDIWPmqNbe9HMm4yoVypWD-j_M/view)

<sup>4</sup>

<https://www.aacu.org/publications-research/periodicals/reality-check-whats-name-persistence-general-education>

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We have a number of ideas for renaming our general education and are open to others. A new name that the entire community feels they can own is an important first step in communication of the purpose of a general education curriculum. However, it is only the first step. As a model is refined into a curriculum and delivered, careful communication, in both ASL and English, will be a crucial part of ensuring the success of a curriculum. Such care will generate enthusiasm, participation, and ease in explanation for students, faculty, staff, and administration from the recruitment phase to post-graduation job searches. Ideally, a feedback process on models and design will also have a section on naming to build community ownership and participation. However we brand and name our new curriculum, it needs to communicate to prospective and current students that these courses and skills are the foundations that will lead them to graduation. Their purpose and intent need to be communicated in a way that makes the centrality of these courses apparent.

Possible names:

- The Bison Curriculum (BC)
- The Global Village Curriculum (GVC)
- Core Curriculum (CC)
- Global Core Knowledge (GCK)
- Global Core Curriculum (GCC)
- Gallaudet Scholars Path
- Gallaudet Global Scholars Curriculum
- Bison Discovery Tracks
- Bison Footprints Foundation (BFF)
- Gallaudet Scholar Shape (GSS)
- Bison Scholar Choice (BSC)
- Bison Collaboration/Interaction (BCI)
- Bison Emerging Exploration (BEE)
- Survive2Thrive
- The Bison Core Curriculum (BCC)

## Section 3: The models

### Overview

The workgroup has developed three models for consideration. Each model is a prototype intended to present the conceptual structure of the curriculum design and what makes it unique. All the models would require further development and refinement as they are implemented. While each model is unique in its approach, they pursue roughly similar aims and outcomes derived from our research and discussions. The exact wording of the aims, outcomes, and

graduation competencies can be finessed in ways that borrow from other models as we narrow down what sort of approach the Gallaudet community prefers.

The *Adaptation Model* uses our current GSR structure and Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) as a starting point to adjust the SLOs and redesign the delivery of the curriculum. The *Hybrid Model* seeks to integrate General Education with departmental curricula, while maintaining integrated learning across disciplines, to better connect students' general educational curriculum with their major and minor fields of study. The *Pathways Model* sees to use the academic profiles of students at their starting point and seeks to create multiple pathways to the same competencies upon graduation.

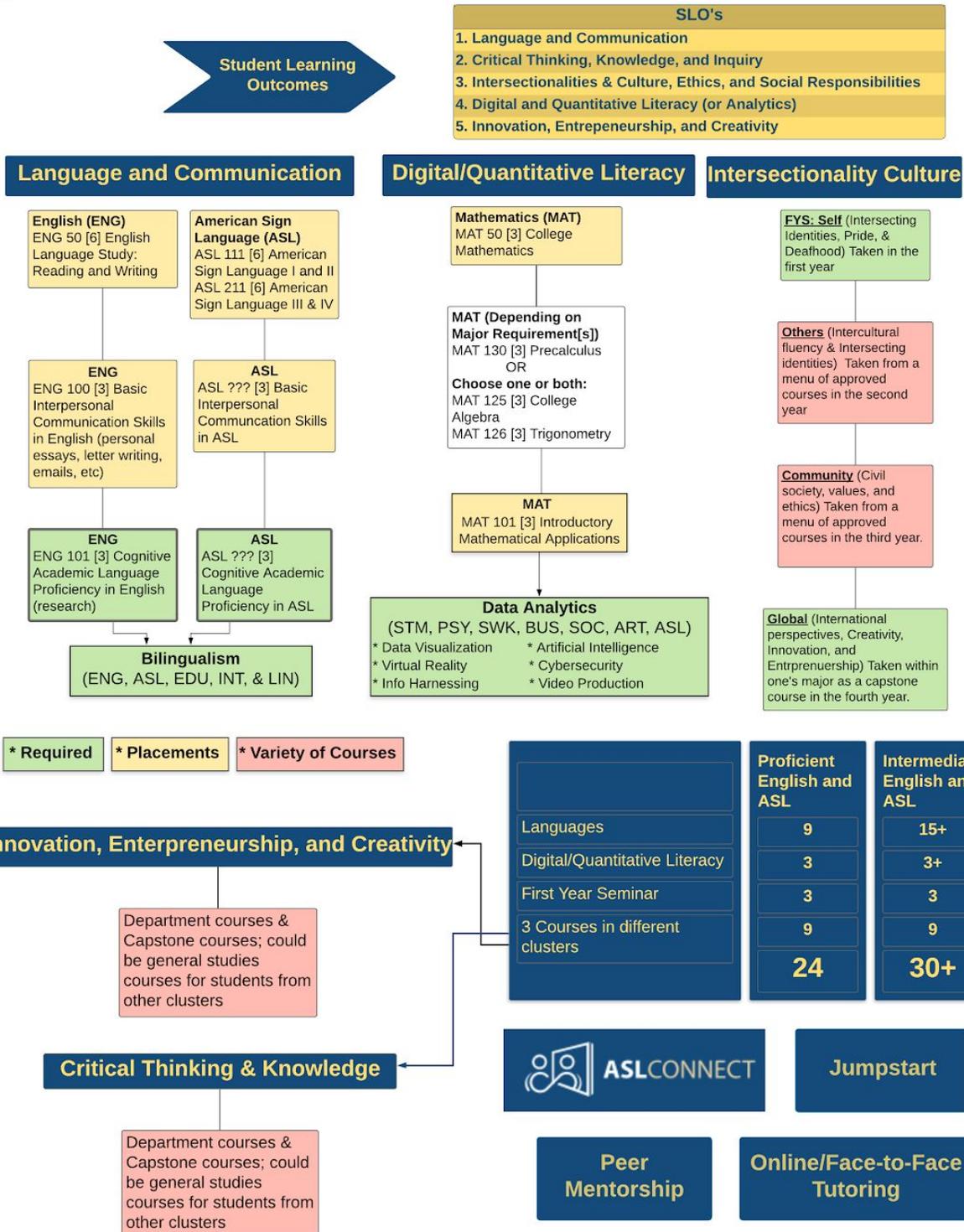
## A: Adaptation Model

The Adaptation Model approach begins with our current GSR Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) and adapts them to take advantage of area overlaps in how they have been taught and delivered in the past twelve years. Two new SLOs, Digital and Quantitative Literacy, and Creativity, Innovation, Entrepreneurship are proposed to fill in current gaps in our curriculum and keep up with current skills desired by employers. From this set of revised SLOs, course requirements are built out to achieve foundational skills plus exposure to disciplines outside of students' major and minor areas of study. Distinctive elements of this model include; continuity with our current SLOs while reorienting our curriculum to emerging curriculum aims, distribution of courses to departments and programs, and an overall reduction of required credit hours aimed at allowing students taking high credit hour majors more flexibility in choosing electives, taking a minor, or taking a double major. SLOs need not be met only through courses taken as part of the General Education courses designed to expose students to courses from disciplines other than their major, course for the major can also satisfy these outcomes should they be approved as meeting the needs for General Education. Thus an instructor might find their classroom with some students taking this course for their major and others taking the course as part of their General Education outside of their major--all of whom share common course SLOs deemed to cover the requirements for General Education outcomes. Lastly, this model removes the "one course for each stated outcome" assumption of our current GSR structure. A course may, in some instances, satisfy more than one General Education outcome. (Proceed to the next page.)

## Global Bison Curriculum

### Mission

The Global Bison Curriculum (GBC) prepares students for successful learning in a complex world where traditional academic disciplines are interrelating, merging and overlapping. Instead of focusing on one subject or content area at a time, the GBC challenges students and faculty members to grapple with the complexities of an interdisciplinary academic setting that mirrors and prepares graduates for the complex world we live in—a world where technology provides instant access to an ever-growing body of information that weaves together the arts, sciences, and humanities.



**Aims/outcomes/student competencies upon completion**

**1. Bilingual Language and Communication**

***Possible title: Stages of American Sign Language and written English***

Students will use American Sign Language (ASL) and written English to communicate effectively with diverse audiences who have differing cultural backgrounds, for a variety of purposes, and in different settings. Students will develop awareness as bilingual individuals.

**2. Critical Thinking, Knowledge and Inquiry**

***Possible title: Modes of knowledge and inquiry to solve critical problems***

Students will apply knowledge and modes of inquiry to summarize, synthesize, and critically analyze ideas from multiple sources and disciplines in order to draw well-supported conclusions and solve challenges.

**3. Identity and Culture, Ethics and Social Responsibility, Global Learning**

***Possible title: Social, ethical and cultural journey: From the Self to the Global Community***

Students will understand themselves, complex social identities, including deaf identities, and the interrelations within and among diverse cultures and groups.

Students will make well-reasoned ethical judgments, while showing awareness of multiple value systems and taking responsibility for the consequences of their actions. These students will apply these judgments, using collaboration and leadership skills, to promote social justice in their local, national, and global communities.

**4. Digital and Quantitative Literacy**

***Possible title: Competency in working with digital and numerical data using technology tools***

(text taken from Greater Washington Partnership<sup>5</sup>) Students will manipulate (analyze), describe, and visualize data to communicate effectively with diverse audiences, for a

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<sup>5</sup> <http://www.greaterwashingtonpartnership.com>

variety of purposes, and in a variety of different settings. Students will demonstrate ethical and appropriate use of data analyses and conclusions.

## **5. Creativity, Innovation, Entrepreneurship & Career Readiness**

### ***Possible title: Career Pathways through creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship***

Students will build a foundation in creative thinking through the examination of innovation across academia, the arts, community, and business settings including self-employment. Students will develop effective creative projects that provide an innovative solution to real-world problems or challenges through class discussion, critical analysis, integrative collaboration, observing, technology, creative communication and the arts, community resources, and project-based learning opportunities.

### **Pathing through the curriculum model**

The first year aims to use a variety of placement options to tailor student course work in building ASL, English, and Math foundations. These skill building courses now culminate in selecting a Bilingualism course from a number of options offered by various departments to integrate basic skills in both languages and develop them for life long use. Similarly, quantitative reasoning skills culminate in a Data Analytics requirement that can be met through the selection of a course from various disciplines.

The remaining pathway of courses addresses the SLO's related to Identity and Culture, Ethics and Social Responsibility, Global Learning, Creativity, Innovation, Entrepreneurship & Career Readiness, and Critical Thinking, Knowledge and Inquiry. As mentioned above, these SLOs may be met in this sequence of courses, or they may be met in courses taken within a student's major, minor, or general electives. An academic advising checklist would need to be generated and maintained with a listing of courses approved for satisfying these SLOs so students can be sure to have them completed prior to graduation.

Within this model's General Education pathing, four courses are structured through their four years to achieve various levels of student awareness of self and others. The fourth year is a capstone course within their major field of study. This would require departments to ensure their capstone/thesis courses include elements that satisfy the aims of global learning.

1. **Year 1** Learning about the self - this should happen in the FYS course.
2. **Year 2:** Learning about others - this could be met by departmental or general studies courses offered by clusters that have that designation.
3. **Year 3:** Learning about one's place in their community - this could be met by departmental or general studies courses offered by clusters that have that designation.

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4. **Year 4:** Learning about one's place in the world (e.g. global learning). This should happen in all major capstone courses within their majors. This also invests departments in connecting their capstone courses to integrating students' general education experience.

ASL Connect, Jumpstart, Peer Mentoring, and a variety of tutoring options for English, Math, and ASL are all retained and reinvested in as supports for students along their path to completion.

### **Advantages and Risks of this Model**

One advantage to this model is to further reduce the number of credits required as part of General Education. This would allow for more flexibility in student pathways to graduation allowing for time to take supplemental foundational courses, elective courses in topics they are curious about, additional majors or minors, and still graduating in a reasonable amount of time. This model also builds on the successes of the current GSR curriculum by retaining areas that are working and tapping into resources within departments in a more intentional way than the ad hoc cross-listing of courses with GSR sections is doing right now. With oversight for approval toward common SLOs, departmental courses can be adapted to serve multiple goals in ways that offer more in depth relevance to student majors when taken to fulfill general education aims. This model also commits our general education more fully to the University's bilingual mission statement. It also commits us to the globalization goals in our strategic plan.

This model would require significant resources to ensure departments responsible for the oversight of the general pathways for language and communication have adequate staffing to put their best teachers in those classrooms. Similarly, quantitative analysis and data analytics pathways would also need to be adequately supported. In all foundational skills, adequate staffing and resource support for departments to create innovative support for tutoring and development of these skills is also needed. Another challenge this model may present is to ensure that we have adequate resources and mechanisms in place to evaluate students upon admission for placement into various pathways for their foundational skills. One suggestion seeks to require an ASL essay for applicants for admission who submit an ACT Reading score less of 14 or less. These essays can be used for screening language and communication competencies in a more bilingual manner to ensure that we're not overlooking the college readiness in areas of critical thinking, content understanding, and other critical skills for students whose first language is ASL. In addition, this would assist with placement along the ASL branch of language and communication pathways.

Lastly a process needs to be established for certifying courses for General Education needs. This could be folded into the Council on Undergraduate Education (CUE) but might be better served by a larger body with representation across clusters of disciplines. Such a council can also identify emerging trends and needs for faculty training, development, and resources for course design, development and pedagogical delivery.

## B. Hybrid Model

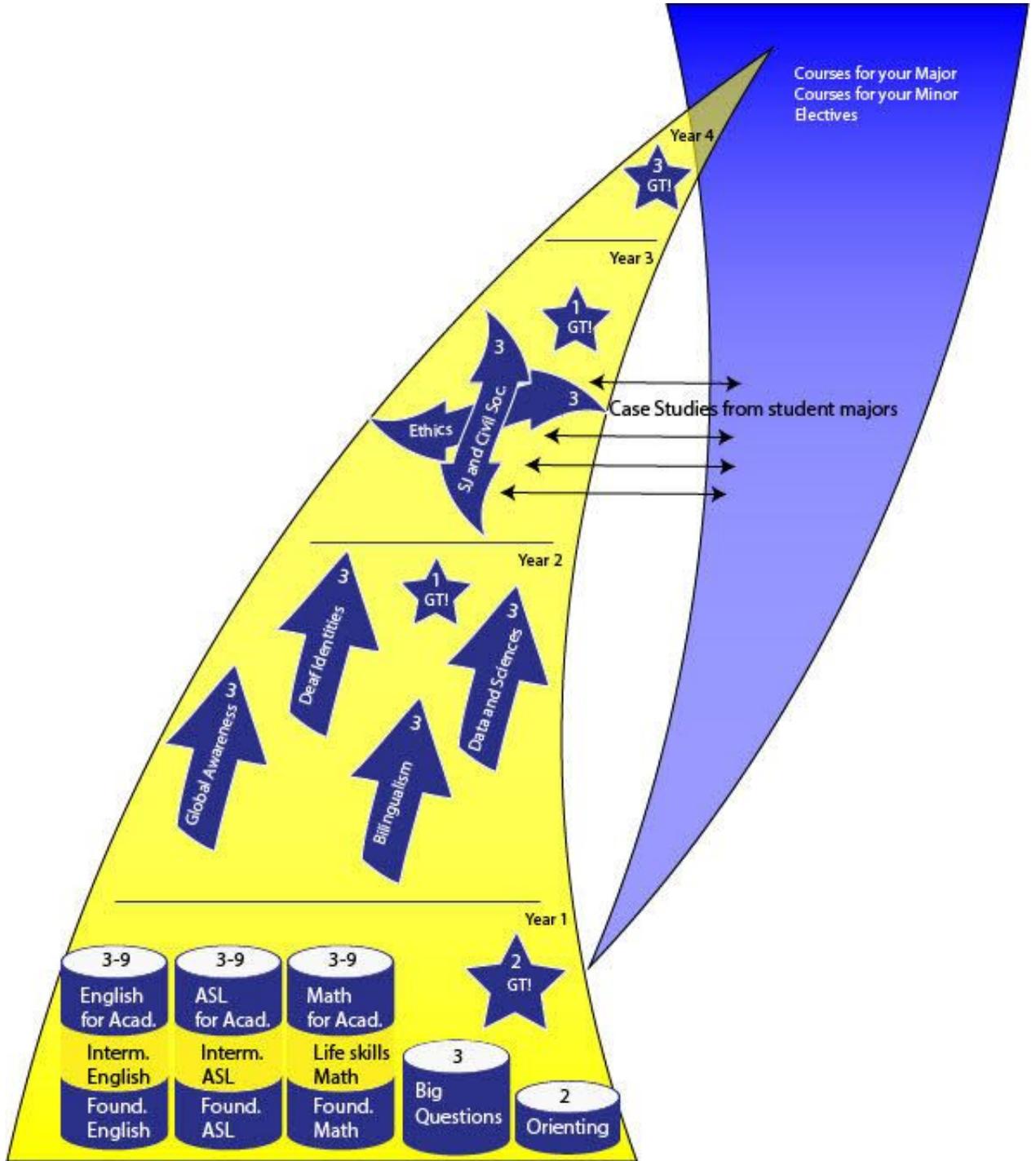
The hybrid model conceptualizes General Education as both a foundation and complement to a student's major and minor fields of study. One naturally takes more courses in General Education in the first years of their undergraduate education and fewer in their last years. Conversely, courses in one's major and minor fields of study should begin as soon as one decides and ultimately become the focus of one's course work in latter years. This model presents an approach that seeks to be both structured and flexible in covering the aims and outcomes of General Education and therefore presents a possible slight increase in the number of credit hours for General Education in comparison to our current GSR model.

Aims/outcomes/student competencies upon completion (note; these aims would need to be articulated and perhaps grouped as measurable student learning outcomes)

- ASL and Written English competencies
- Global Awareness
- Ethics and Values
- Teamwork and Innovation
- Deaf Identities and Culture
- Quantitative Reasoning
- Effective Use of Technology and Data
- Social Justice and Civil Society
- Sciences and the Natural World
- Lifelong Learning Skills
- Integration of Knowledge Across Academic Disciplines

(Proceed to the next page.)

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### **Course Paths Through the Model:**

*The first year: (25 credits)*

*Fall semester (14 credits):* The Orienting class is an online, self paced 2 credit module that students can begin anytime from their admission (in the summer) to the midterm week of the fall semester. This timing allows students to ‘buy in’ and invest in their education immediately upon receiving acceptance to Gallaudet University while also providing flexibility for students who maybe late commits for admission due to financial considerations, health considerations, or other options available to them. Content will include ASL and English presentations, quizzes, etc. to orient students to services on campus and how to use them for their success. Financial aid, DPS, Academic Advising, TIP, Student Success, CAPS, Campus Activities, how to use Faculty office hours, how to read a syllabus, how to set up your calendar to remind you of deadlines, etc. Using a variety of faculty and staff from around the University to create this course will visually introduce incoming students to people and places on campus so when they arrive, they’re seeing familiar faces.

Placement exams will determine whether foundational/developmental courses are needed in Math, English, and ASL before beginning the intermediate classes.

The intermediate level is where we anticipate most students in the current GSR 100 level courses to be placed. These courses would build upon grammar and style skills in writing, ASL production, and application of math to life experiences as a means of teaching intermediate math skills. This creates an expectation that the typical Gallaudet students will take two courses in each area to develop stronger skills in their first year.

Students placing with advanced skills in English, ASL, and Math may be waived from intermediate courses and begin with the Advanced courses focusing on academic writing, ASL presentations, synthesis of sources, citation systems and strategies, and mathematics foundations for use in academic subjects. The Honors Program may wish to set up Honors sections for these courses.

The Big Questions course functions as a sampler of liberal arts and sciences fields. Students will be placed or self-select into a section centered around a ‘big question’ confronting our world (e.g. How does human diversity form a pluralistic society where differences are both understood and valued? Or, What changes to society might be necessary to ensure a sustainable future in the face of climate change?) Four sections would form around each question. Four faculty from different fields would be the “home base” instructor for a section around each question. The first two weeks, faculty work to build group dynamics and familiarity with understanding the role of liberal arts inquiry in addressing such questions. Then each faculty instructor teaches a three week unit on that question from their field of study. Assignments within this module require students to document in written English and ASL what they are learning from this field about the question. Every three weeks, faculty rotate to a different section on the same question, exposing

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all students on that question to four viewpoints from four disciplines. The remainder of the semester, faculty are back with their “home base” section and students synthesize what they have learned from four viewpoints on this question in both written English and ASL. The four faculty would share and coordinate their three week units together in order to be able to demonstrate how integration across their fields of study occurs and build student skill in integrated learning.

### *Spring Semester (11 credits):*

Students continue with Math, English, and ASL skill building with advanced courses. Students with advanced placement who may have already completed those courses have a great deal more flexibility in beginning elective courses, starting their majors and minors, or starting the next tier of general education courses.

All students should have room for at least one additional elective course in their second semester.

Gallaudet That! (GT!) courses also begin in the second semester. Gallaudet That! Courses teach specific skills for career preparation, portfolio building, and synthesis of general education courses to one another and one’s goals. The first year course is roughly equivalent to our current GSR 110 and focuses on being ready to apply for employment and internships. This course can be waived for students who already have demonstrable skills in this area, upon completion of a self paced online module that includes information pertinent to developing one’s electronic portfolio of general education assignments.

*The Second Year (13 credits spread across two semesters):* Students should be taking more courses in their major or minor area of study in their second year, and/or exploring electives that can apply to majors and minors. General education courses for this year focus on four areas and can be fulfilled by a menu of approved courses supplied by departments that have been certified for the following aims:

Bilingualism - Examining the intersection of ASL and English in one’s own usage and developing skills to continue growth and development in each.

Deaf Identities and Cultures - Explorations of Deaf experience and identity formation, history, and community.

Global Awareness - Understanding the global nature of the world, awareness of languages (both signed and written) other than ASL and English, and their attendant cultures.

Data and Sciences - Developing statistics literacy, data management skills, use of technologies, and advanced research skills.

Gallaudet That! 2 is a 1 credit online based course of assignments to ensure students enter their primary work from the above four courses into their electronic portfolio and reflect upon synthesis of what they’ve learned in these courses to their life, their major/minor and goals.

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### *The Third Year: (7 credits)*

Two required courses function as integrative learning “plug in” topics across disciplines. They may be taken concurrently or sequentially in either order. Students should be taking courses with others from a variety of majors courses should require each student to develop and supply a case study from their major/minor field of study for the entire class to work with as well as provide methods relevant to the focus of the course for analyzing and addressing the case studies. One course will focus on Ethics and Values to develop students’ ability to employ moral reasoning to the case studies they develop. One course will focus on Social Justice and Civil Society to develop students’ ability to understand and address injustices across polarizing issues.

Gallaudet That! 3 - should be taken concurrent with or after the last course from this tier. Again, it is a 1 credit online based course of assignments to ensure students enter their primary work from the above four courses into their electronic portfolio and reflect upon synthesis of what they’ve learned in these courses to their life, their major/minor and goals.

Note: the Second and Third year courses do not depend upon one another sequentially. We might also design these two years to be taken in whatever order a student wishes. However, the Third Year integrative courses presume that students have declared a major and taken some courses in that area in order to develop a case study from their major field. Therefore some means of ensuring that (i.e. a prerequisite of having completed two courses in their major) should be established. If we allow for non-sequential enrollment between these two years, the Gallaudet That! courses should still occur in the Spring Semester of each year in order to capture their coursework assignments in the portfolio and the reflective/integrative assignments for courses taken during that academic year.

*The Fourth Year (3 credits):* Students will take a single course as a capstone/signature project with the Gallaudet That! Sequence. This course will focus on innovation, teamwork, problem solving based learning, and social entrepreneurship. Students will develop projects relevant to their major fields of study, but in groups that bring together different majors in creative ways to address the problems they wish to examine. This course may be taken either semester.

### **Alignment of Course Pathing with the Aims of this Model**

*ASL and Written English competencies* - These goals are largely grounded in the first year courses but carried through in practice in latter courses. Resources should be made available to train faculty to provide detailed feedback on at least one writing and one ASL assignment in courses taken in Years 2 and 3.

*Integration of Knowledge Across Academic Disciplines* - Integration of knowledge occurs in several places through the hybrid model. In the First year, the Big Questions course provides

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students with exposure to a variety of liberal arts disciplines. In the Third year, the two courses are aimed at bringing together students from a variety of major fields of studies and developing case studies from those fields. Faculty teaching these courses should be prepared to highlight various differences and connections that the case studies bring to the methods of ethical reasoning and questions of social justice and civil society. Throughout the model, the Gallaudet That! courses include not only documentation tasks for their portfolio, but integrative questions asking students to reflect upon how these courses shape their understanding of their major and minor as well as their goals for post-graduation.

*Deaf Identities and Culture* - These goals are given in depth treatment in the second year where an exploration of identities and deaf experiences are encountered through an elective from a menu of classes focused on these areas. Also, the menu of courses students may select from for the bilingualism requirement will engage them in critical thinking and experiential learning regarding how to understand and present themselves as a bilingual person.

*Quantitative Reasoning*- The first year math courses are aimed at providing a variety of levels of math skills including foundational math, life applications of mathematics, and preparation to use math in academic settings. This will carry into the second year course on Data and the Sciences as well.

*Effective Use of Technology and Data* - First year math classes should be introducing the mathematics behind data management that will be foundational for the Second year data and sciences courses. Gallaudet That! courses will also engage students in electronic portfolio building and the capstone course will feature use of technology in innovation and collaboration.

*Sciences and the Natural World* - Big questions courses may have a component from STM fields. Second year courses on Data and Sciences will provide a deeper dive into research methodologies, data literacy, and scientific worldviews.

*Global Awareness* - First year Big Questions courses may feature global awareness topics. Second year global awareness courses will build student awareness of the interconnected nature of our campus and world across cultural, linguistic, and political boundaries.

*Social Justice and Civil Society* - With a dedicated course, this aim is met in a manner that seeks to be explicitly interdisciplinary with case studies developed from students' own majors and minors. Methodologies, strategies, and practical experiential learning are brought by the faculty to enhance student understanding of how to work toward justice across polarizing discourses in society.

*Ethics and Values* - This aim is also met through a dedicated course. It too seeks to be explicitly interdisciplinary with case studies developed from students' own majors and minors. Methodologies, strategies, and practical experiential learning are brought by the faculty to

enhance student understanding of how moral reasoning can be done from a variety of viewpoints.

*Lifelong Learning Skills* - Gallaudet That! courses are aimed at learning how to present and promote what you've learned in everything from employment in one's career to framing future questions for one's next phase of learning.

*Teamwork and Innovation* - The Gallaudet That! capstone seeks to bring students from various backgrounds together to identify problems, design solutions, and practice carrying out plans. These projects should dovetail with the ideas skills they are learning in their majors and minors.

### **Advantages and Risks**

This model seeks to provide a comprehensive range of skills and exposure to liberal arts in a consistent manner for students across departments. No matter where a student ends up in their major or minor, they should have the foundations and wide range of exposure to a variety of approaches to understanding questions and formulating answers. The placement tiers of foundational courses may lead to more credit hours in General Education than our current model, but they are likely 'well spent' hours in developing solid skills for employment and lifelong learning.

One risk of a more structured approach to General Education such as this model is that it will require careful integration with certain majors with a higher number of credits required. However, beyond the first year, the model remains fairly flexible and students can begin taking courses in their major as soon as the second semester in most cases and definitely by their third semester. Even for majors requiring 60 credit hours, the total number of credits that General Education adds remains manageable for inclusion of a minor and general electives.

### **Resources needed for implementation**

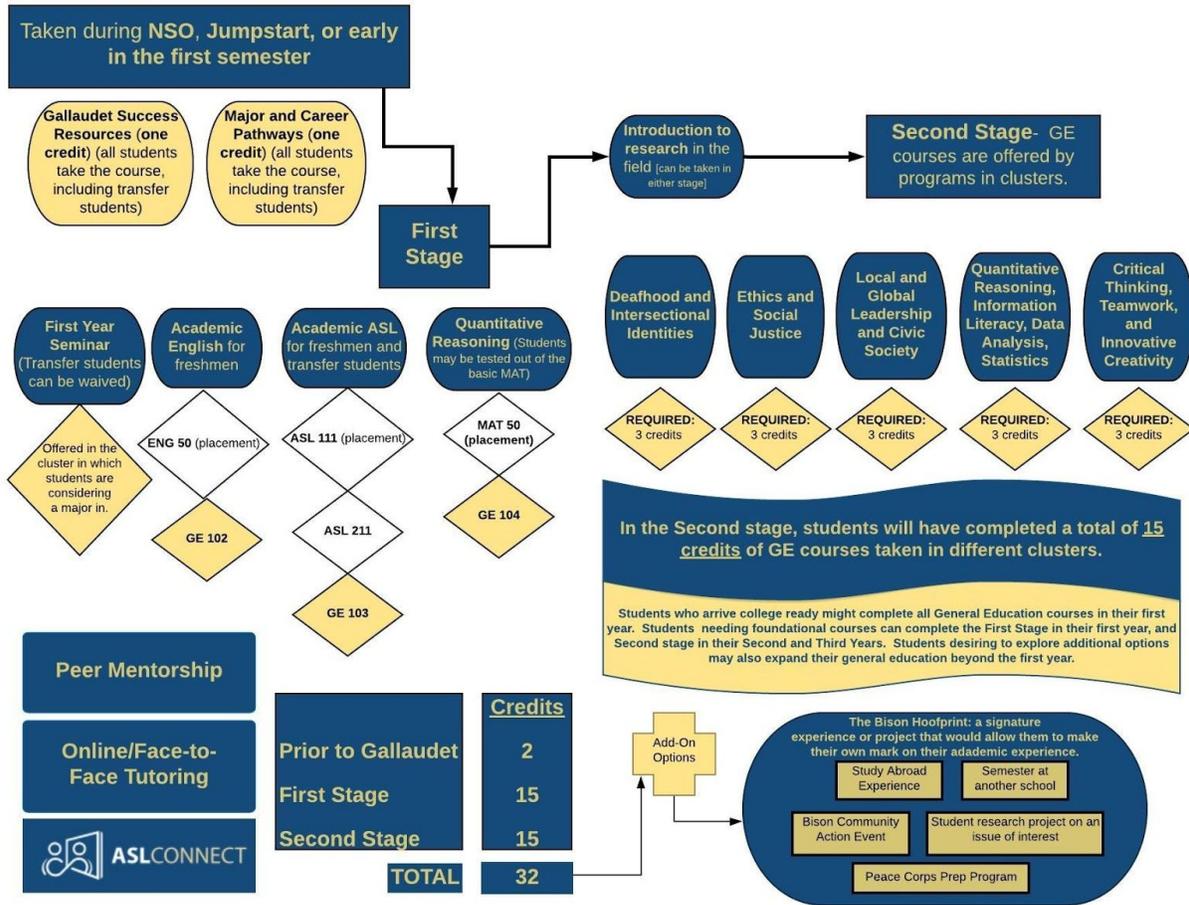
- Director and administrative support to manage details of curriculum delivery.
- Council for establishing criteria and requirements and continued review of departmental courses, development of integrated learning courses, communicating and promoting general education within their department, and preparing the necessary proposal forms for the CUE. (one person per department in the current structure or two people per cluster in a future structure)
- Faculty training to widen the pool of qualified teachers for various aspects of the curriculum.
- Faculty support (time and facilitation) for building the Big Questions, Ethics, and Social Justice/Civil Society courses.
- Continued support and reinvestment in Tutoring, Jumpstart, ASL support, Peer mentoring and other co-curricular programs for Student Success.

## C. Pathways Model

The Pathways model is conceived around an effort to be able to meet students where their skill levels are upon admission and build them toward common graduation competencies through a variety of curricular and co-curricular means that are tailored to what they need. The university determines the competencies that a student must demonstrate in order to graduate. These competencies should be assessed and evaluated upon entrance through placement tests or other means such as life experience credits. Students strengths should be identified and finessed in their pathway. Such refinement of their strengths may be finessed through their major field of study as well as general education. Students' needs and areas of challenge should be identified and then a pathway is built to develop their competencies in these areas. These areas should be assessed on a regular basis, through a rubric and use of an e-portfolio to demonstrate development of the competencies and to determine improvement and achievement of these competencies (i.e. students who need to develop English writing competencies will start in an identified English class and be assessed at each level until they achieve the level of competency needed for graduation.)

Data tracking used to identify student interests, assessment, and placement testing would be maintained, through rubrics and an e-portfolio in order to advise students as they design their course and co-curricular supports to achieve the graduation competencies. In its most developed form, this concept for General Education relies on data tracking and adaptive teaching strategies that Gallaudet is only beginning to develop. As presented in this report, the Pathways model seeks to be a more implementable curriculum that could be adjusted to become even more tailored and accurate as Gallaudet commits to investment in adaptive learning and savvy in how we use data and technology to understand our students and their development. Ideally, the university would commit resources to developing adaptive learning technology and pedagogy, intensive tailored courses, and other innovative ways to develop student competencies as we learn more about how our students learn. (Proceed to the next page.)

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## Paths through the Model

The two rectangles at the top represent two stages in the pathing that, for some, may be a single Academic year, and for others, may represent additional semesters depending on their placement and needs. Beneath each rectangle a series of rounded boxes and diamonds identify the courses within this stage and the sequence in which they are taken.

Ideally, incoming students take the Gallaudet Success Resources course (such as a required 1-credit Orientation that could be offered both online and face-to-face) and Major and Career Pathways courses. Each is a one credit course taken prior to beginning their first semester. Thus, a typical student arrives for their first semester having earned two credits and having some preparation and exposure to learning. In some cases, students may need to take the courses early in the semester. If that is the case, they may postpone taking their course, introduction to Research in the Field. The first semester courses then typically include FYS, ASL, English, quantitative reasoning and introduction to research in the field. FYS and introduction to Research in the Field would be offered within all disciplinary clusters and could be tailored to specifically focus on success and research in the disciplines of that cluster.

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Students considering declaring a major in a cluster would take the courses in that cluster to allow them an early start in their discipline of interest.

In the subsequent semesters, students are to take a 3-credit course in each of the five areas, Deafhood and Intersectional Identities; Ethics and Social Justice; Local and Global Leadership and Civic Society; Quantitative Reasoning, Information Literacy, Data Analysis, and Statistics; and Critical Thinking, Teamwork, and Innovative Creativity. These courses are also offered as courses from within their academic clusters. They can be taken alongside with major-level courses. Ideally, we can structure these course requirements to also have students take a certain number of these courses from options that exist from clusters other than where their major resides.

At the end of GE courses, students will have taken a total of 32 credits in General Education. This excludes the additional (pre-college) credits earned in the ASL 111 track, MAT 40, 45, 55, and ENG 50 that may be necessary for some students' pathways. Alternatively, we might consider developing Summer Bridge programs prior to their entry to Gallaudet or a specifically designed summer "third semester" after their first year to boost students needing additional instruction. Upon implementation, the Pathways model can use our existing support systems for bringing students with developmental placement needs in specific areas such as English, ASL, and Math. However, the university should and must continue to monitor student assessment data to develop new and more effective ways to achieve competencies for our students. For example, in the graph above, the Math pathway differs from the developmental math options that lead to GSR 104. Similarly we would want to revisit the English and ASL pathways that currently exist and adjust them for effectiveness as we explore more creative means to generate multiple pathways to these competencies.

Students will be required to take one or two additional add-on opportunities shown in the bubble on the bottom right of the pathway model. In the spirit of AAC&U High Impact Educational Practices,<sup>6</sup> the Bison Hoofprint is included to afford students additional learning experience of students' choosing. The Bison Hoofprint -- a 'stamp' or signature work on one's educational choices that a student selects to make a personal mark on their pathway. Hoofprint/Signature options can include:

- A Study Abroad experience
- A semester as a visiting student at another institution
- Undertaking Bison Community Action Event involving the planning and hosting an awareness-raising event or events for the Gallaudet community
- Collaborating with a selected faculty person to undergo research that explores an issue of personal interest
- Pursuing the Peace Corps Preparation certificate program (Diversity/Global Learning).

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<sup>6</sup> <https://www.aacu.org/leap/hips>

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Some examples: 1) a student who is passionate about social justice majoring in government and education may plan and host a Bison Community Action Event to raise awareness about asylum seekers at US borders and missed opportunities for education for children in these situations. 2) a student who is passionate about working in National Parks and Preserves may seek a study abroad internship with a Park service in another country. 3) a student who is passionate about climate change may work with a faculty member to create a selection of courses and specialized research into the history, sociology, and science of climate justice. The Bison Footprint is designed to stimulate innovation and initiative and expanded horizons. The Gallaudet Innovation and Entrepreneurship Institute (GIEI) may be actively involved in helping students design their own Bison Hoofprint, which will be reviewed and approved by the General Education council (see below for more on the role of this council.)

To ensure satisfactory enrollment number and range of options for students, the GE courses offered in stage two and offered by disciplinary clusters should be open to majors as electives or as advised by their major AAs. This model may require that professional advisors and major advisors work in partnership within the clusters at the start of the student academic journey, not just once the student declares a major. This might be achieved through structuring Academic Advising and Career Counseling to be more closely aligned with departments and clusters.

A GE Council would be established consisting of a representative from each cluster to monitor the GE offerings housed in the clusters. The council will also monitor students' progress through the curriculum, and review and approve proposals for additional credits. The honors council could serve as a model in terms of establishing standards for rigor and assessment. The new GE director will lead the council.

The focus of this model (and ideally any model that is ultimately selected) is infusing career readiness competencies into a liberal education learning framework. Career readiness is critical for college graduates regardless of the focus of the institutions teaching and learning approach. The National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE)<sup>7</sup> defines career readiness as “the attainment and demonstration of requisite competencies that broadly prepare college graduates for successful transition into the workplace.”<sup>8</sup> Given the critical need for ensuring career readiness, we have a responsibility to develop a model that not only ensures readiness but that also ensures that our students are competitive in the career pathway of their choosing. This is particularly critical given that our students are Deaf and Hard of Hearing and must be able to market their strengths and competencies in a predominantly hearing workforce.

### **Advantages and Risks**

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<sup>7</sup> <https://community.nacweb.org/home>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.nacweb.org/career-readiness/competencies/career-readiness-defined/>

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The idea of the pathway model is to create flexibility for students to design their plan of study according to their interests as well as to their level of competence and readiness. For instance, students who are college ready may take college English, mathematics, and introduction to research. If students are in their first year, then they also take the first year seminar. Transfer students beginning their first semester may or may not take the FYS course, depending on their transcript and experience history. They however will be required to take the one-credit course perhaps as an Orientation course requirement where they will learn about the resources at Gallaudet as well as identifying their pathways. All students will be assigned academic advisors (AAs) who work closely with the cluster of students' choosing. The AAs will work with the students and identify their competencies and readiness and develop a plan of study. The Academic Advising and Career Services are undergoing a program review this year and one of the goals is to implement a career pathway approach in the student advising experience starting with their first year at Gallaudet. They may work with the students also with identifying internship plans that align with their interests.

Because Gallaudet has students from all walks academically, a good number of students will need to take at least one developmental or foundations course in the first year. While the aim is to bring all students up to competencies by graduation by having multiple ways to arrive at that goal and equalize the amount of time to graduation, in the interim, the more developmental courses students need to take, the more time they will need to complete their undergraduate studies. As Gallaudet develops alternative pathways such as Summer Bridge programs, intensive winter break courses, "third semester" options during the summer term, and adaptive learning technologies, the need for additional time to graduate should diminish. Students will also need continuous support in language development throughout their undergraduate years; this model will need to consider innovative approaches to supporting students language development beyond the status quo remedial/developmental approach that has been practiced (rather unsuccessfully) in the past. This will require resources beyond the GE program. Transfer students should be assigned academic advisors affiliated with the clusters the students are in and develop a plan of study and internship. They may begin the studies in stage two immediately and take the GE courses along with the major-level courses. They may also pursue the additional credits options of the Bison Hoofprint.

Students will satisfy the GE student learning outcomes in stage 1 (and in stage 2, if appropriate) as listed. Students may also have additional development and pathways to these outcomes through courses and co-curricular opportunities in their majors and minors.

### I. College Readiness and College Support

Students will identify their academic success needs and engage necessary GU campus resources and staff/faculty to meet their needs.

### II. ASL/English Bilingualism and Deaf Culture and Communities:

Students will apply and describe academic English and ASL as they relate to dialects of both and the communities, identities, and cultures from where they came.

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Adapted From NACE: **ASL/Written Communications:** Students will articulate thoughts and ideas clearly and effectively in written English and ASL to persons inside and outside of the organization. The student has public presentation skills; is able to express ideas to others; and can write/edit memos, letters, and complex technical reports clearly and effectively.<sup>9</sup>

### III. Information, Data, Media, Technology Literacy and Application:

Students will locate, evaluate, and integrate into their work a wide variety of scholarly and authoritative resources.

Adapted from NACE: **Critical Thinking/Problem Solving:** Students will exercise sound reasoning to analyze issues, make decisions, and address problems. The student is able to obtain, interpret, and use knowledge, facts, and data (jl note: information literacy!) in this process, and may demonstrate originality and inventiveness (jl note: innovation and creativity!).

Adapted from NACE: **Digital Technology:** Students will be proficient in leveraging existing digital technologies ethically and efficiently to solve problems, complete tasks, and accomplish goals. The student demonstrates effective adaptability to new and emerging technologies.

Rewriting to combine the above two: Students will exercise sound reasoning to analyze issues, make decisions and address problems while leveraging existing digital technologies ethically and efficiently. The student demonstrates effective adaptability to new and emerging technologies to obtain, interpret, and use knowledge, facts, and data in this process and may demonstrate originality and inventiveness.

### IV. Identity, Intersectionality and Social Justice

Students will explore and study multiple social and intergroup identities, identify what social identities impact and influence their lived experiences; engage with campus individuals and units to better explore and understand these identities and others; and identify campus and other resources related to diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Adapted from NACE: **Teamwork/Collaboration:** Students will build collaborative relationships with colleagues and classmates representing diverse cultures, races, ages, genders, religions, lifestyles, and viewpoints. The student is able to work within a team structure, and can negotiate and manage conflict.

### V. Health, Wellness, Self-Care, and Safety:

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<sup>9</sup> The competences summarized in this GE student learning outcomes are derived from this site: <https://www.naceweb.org/career-readiness/competencies/career-readiness-defined/>

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Students will increase knowledge about health topics; examine their own beliefs and behaviors; identify campus and other resources related to health and wellness, and establish strategies to improve health and safety while socializing.

### VI. Liberal Education, Majors, and Career Readiness:

Students will discuss the value of liberal education and the importance of inter/multidisciplinary academic pathways while building course schedules, major, and career plans.

### VI. Local and Global Participation, Leadership, Citizenship:

Students will become engaged with local and global places, develop initiative to take lead, and to become aware of their place in the world as citizens.

Adapted from NACE: Global/Intercultural Fluency: Students will value, respect, and learn from diverse cultures, races, ages, genders, sexual orientations, and religions. The student demonstrates openness, inclusiveness, sensitivity, and the ability to interact respectfully with all people and understand individual differences.

Adapted from NACE: Leadership: Students will leverage the strengths of others to achieve common goals and use interpersonal skills to coach and develop others. The individual is able to assess and manage their emotions and those of others; use empathetic skills to guide and motivate; and organize, prioritize, and delegate work.

### VII. Career Readiness:

Students will become career ready as they develop mastery in ASL, English, and as they acquire the skills necessary for their future professions.

Adapted from NACE: Career Management: Students will identify and articulate one's skills, strengths, knowledge and experiences relevant to the position desired and career goals and identify areas necessary for personal growth and learning. The student is able to navigate and explore job options, understands and takes the steps necessary to pursue job opportunities, and understands how to self-advocate for opportunities as a Deaf individual in the workplace.

**From NACE: Professionalism/Work Ethic:** Student demonstrate personal accountability and effective work habits, e.g., punctuality, working productively with others, and time workload management, and understand the impact of non-verbal communication on professional work image. The individual demonstrates integrity and ethical behavior, acts responsibly with the interests of the larger community in mind, and is able to learn from his/her mistakes.

### **General Education Components and Aims:**

All GU Undergrads, upon completion of their GEN ED program will have:

**Portfolio.** Have a portfolio of work and career-related videos, documents, links, etc. in the form of a Website, Adobe Creative Cloud, Google Site, or another digital format.

**Technology.** Have the appropriate technology to succeed as a major in their chosen career, including the right laptop, mobile devices, apps, and subscriptions.

**Intersectionality and Social Justice Focus.** Be aware that there are identities that have privileges and some with inequities--and that at GU undergraduates we will not only recognize this fact but will work towards a more equitable campus and beyond in all that we do, sign, say, and work on.

**IZN Experience.** Have at least one international experience, e.g., a volunteer-ship, internship, study abroad, or other opportunities to broaden horizons and get ready for global workplaces.

**Knowledge, Critical and Creative Thinking, Innovation.** Have multiple opportunities to participate in classes, events, organizations, offices that promote deep and creative thinking.  
**Data and Information Literacy for Citizenship:** Do and critically engage with data and information to form opinions and plan actions and solutions to problems.

### **Pros/Cons/Trade Offs**

#### **Pros:**

1. Students have the option of tailoring their educational plan, including the Bison Hoofprint option.
2. Clusters have control of the GE courses, which promotes accountability and engagement from the faculty.
3. GE courses offered in stage two can be taken as electives for majors.
4. Students have steady contact with faculty in their clusters of choice starting in the first year.
5. Students have support from their clusters from the beginning.
6. Students have easy transition from stage one to stage two.
7. Students can begin their major studies in their first year.
8. The boundary between GE and degree-bearing clusters is almost nonexistent.
9. This model is transfer-friendly.
10. The courses are from 1 to 3 credits.
11. The General Education Council (GEC) promote cross-cluster collaboration as it oversees standards for rigor and assessment.

#### **Cons:**

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1. This model depends on the successful implementation of the Academic Affairs Restructuring.
2. GE courses offered in stage two would need to be set up at least a year in advance with course descriptions.
3. GEC will need to review the proposals for GE courses before they are scheduled. This process may become bureaucratic.
4. Instructors will need support for new course development.
5. The devil may be in the details as the GE council figures out the number of GE courses offered in the clusters and assessment work.
6. The Bison Hoofprint option may require more resources than anticipated, compromising the success of the program.
7. The model lacks a plan for students in developmental courses in the second year (for example, students in ENG 50 for the third time would not have any other courses to sign up for, unless prerequisites involving GSR 102 is removed).

### **Trade Offs:**

1. Freedom that comes with the flexibility in designing a plan of study and internship.
2. The boundary between GE and clusters fades.
3. The educational experience would be much more holistic than segmented.
4. Much more cross-unit and -cluster collaboration.
5. Personalized attention and contact between students and faculty in the clusters.
6. Students are more likely to see relevancy and value in GE.

### **Resources needed for implementation:**

1. Through collaboration between the faculty government and administration, the restructuring will need to occur for this model to launch.
2. The newly formed clusters will need to discuss their GE courses.
3. CUE will need to approve new courses.
4. The UG catalog will need to be revised to reflect the new curriculum.
5. Faculty scheduled to teach GE courses need support for course development. The support may include template syllabus and regular meetings among faculty members in clusters.
6. A GE council will need to be formed and regular meetings will need to occur.
7. Professional development plans will need to include best practices for developing and teaching GE courses, syllabus development, language support (ASL and English) in all GE courses.

## Section 4: Other conversations regarding institutional direction in curriculum, structure, and communication of our mission

The workgroup also had several lively conversations that impact the work of developing a General Education curriculum but are also larger institutional conversations.

### **Administrative support and funding**

Many of the issues with our current GSR model are not from its original design but rather from changes made in response to funding drawdowns and administrative moves to contain costs. As the GSR self-study and independent reviewers all note, the GSR model, as originally conceived, was groundbreaking and innovative, but ultimately not sustainable by the amount of resources and funding allocated toward it. This became a frequent refrain in our conversations as we attempted to imagine General Education opportunities and high impact practices that would enrich student learning, but not make a model overly reliant upon such elements out of a concern that funding and support would not be sustained. Some high impact practices that could be run alongside course offerings and co-curricular opportunities include:

- A. required study abroad/domestic immersion experiences accompanied by appropriate cultural and language learning preparation in advance and integrative reflection upon return..
- B. a sustained series of lectures tied to “Big Question” courses that rotates among 3-4 departments each year for selection of speakers
- C. a student elected “faculty speaker” who would be awarded the opportunity to give a lecture on their research interests to the entire community during a Board of Trustees meeting period
- D. a common reading program where a book is selected and used in one of the First Year course and departmental courses where appropriate and culminating in an author visit
- E. 1 credit intensive seminar courses that would use a three day weekend schedule or the January gap between semesters to immerse students in site visits and discussions with community activists and organizers on contemporary issues (i.e. poverty, climate change, racial justice and policing, human trafficking, border and migration, etc.)

### **Department and Unit Buy-in and Investment**

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Another frequent theme as we discussed both our current GSR model and ideas about future models was awkward relationship our current model has with academic departments. Currently, an academic department is expected to supply an instructor to the GSR programs, that instructor then develops a course to meet the aims of a particular part of the GSR curriculum. Often, this course does dovetail with the instructor's area of expertise, but also offers the opportunity to branch out into other interests and passions. While there are advantages for the instructor in being free to create innovative courses, the relationship of those courses to their home department is unclear. In some cases, instructors may use GSR course to pilot courses that then become offered within a major or minor. Conversely, they may devolve a more complicated treatment of a topic into a GSR course offering. In some cases, the GSR course becomes a pipeline to recruiting majors and minors. But in all these instances, it happens haphazardly and nearly always at the effort of the instructor rather than an organic systemic connection to the curriculum and aims of a department program.

What the models above seek to do in distributing General Education credits among departmental courses is NOT to simply offer 101 courses in a variety of disciplines, as the curriculum that preceded GSR did, but rather ask departments to supply a course to General Education (rather than merely an instructor). The difference here being that the course now fits multiple aims for multiple students depending on if they're taking it for their major or for their general education. This may involve the development of new courses for General Education, as our current GSR model does, but unlike the current GSR model, the course development should occur within the department as a whole in relation to the aims of the discipline and department alongside the aims and outcomes of general education. Another pathway to course integration would be to modify existing courses to ensure that General Education aims are being met. These modifications may be minor in some cases or extensive in others where a course may be ready for an overhaul to make it more relevant to 21st century students. In this way, academic departments are invested in developing elements of General Education alongside their departmental offerings rather than finding them in competition due to a demand to "staff GSR sections."

A third area of discussion that came in this vein was the potential for creative collaboration across and between academic departments and student service units. Imagine an STM course that collaborates with Health and Wellness programs to use Chemistry and Biology to teach the importance of proper nutrition by exploring what happens within the body to food and drink. Imagine a collaboration between the Gallaudet Innovation and Entrepreneurship Institute (GIEI) and a Business course that actually sets up a student run business for ordering t-shirts and printed swag for awareness campaigns and events for student organizations and academic departments where everything from supply chains to budgeting and accounting is learned. Imagine an Art or Theater course that teaches public art and produces collaborative art projects and events outside our gates with area businesses and homeowners looking to make their neighborhoods more interesting and engaging. Again, some of these high impact practices may

require a significant amount of resources and funding, but lower scale ideals might be achievable in the interim as funding is budgeted and sought out.

### **The Unique impact of K-12 Deaf Education on our Institution**

Our workgroup was continually challenged by the reality that Gallaudet does and should receive students from a wide range of K-12 educational experiences. The diversity of deaf schools, mainstream, combined, and home schooled experiences that our students encounter prior to arriving at Gallaudet is staggering. As a result, we get students with widely varied readiness for college level education. As an institution, Gallaudet has invested in research and practice aimed at addressing some of the issues of K-12 education for Deaf and hard of hearing learners. Things like VL2, BL2, and ASLConnect are vital in these efforts. Yet, in the interim, we continue to be confronted by the impact of language deprivation, social and psychological trauma, and other issues that accompany being Deaf or hard of hearing, alongside other intersectional identities of race, gender, socioeconomic class, sexual orientation, and abilities entail. While General Education can aim to meet students where they are and work to bring them up to speed, there is only so much that can be done in the 4-6 year window that one's undergraduate years entail. Maintaining equity in a curriculum becomes absolutely crucial but infinitely complex while getting students prepared for career, life, and continued learning upon graduation.

### **Student Self Advocacy Development**

Similar to our conversation regarding academic readiness in relation to academic skills, we also discussed the degree to which students arrive struggling to frame and unpack their personal experience. In some manner, this is not unique to Gallaudet as the traditional age range of college undergraduates is a developmental stage where one is beginning to understand and articulate one's own identity, goals, and find ways to accomplish them. What may be unique is the complexity of our students' personal journeys as they arrive at Gallaudet. Making sense of a varied range of experiences of growing up as a Deaf or hard of hearing person vis a vis the discovery that others "like me" may have grown up differently and had vastly different options and resources can be bewildering. It also has an impact on student ability to connect with others. While General Education is about exposure to liberal arts fields of study, the historical aim of liberal arts to build well rounded people should not be lost. The role of the humanities must be sustained as questions about what it means to be a person and what it means to have had my experience, in this time, in these places should be part of the mission of our institution as a whole.

Another area that is absolutely critical for us to develop in our students is self advocacy skills in relation to their careers and professional futures. One of the advantages of attending Gallaudet is coming to an institution where direct communication in ASL is a community norm and an understanding of communication needs and strategies is baked into our campus climate. These are not the social norms outside of our campus and our graduates must have the skills needed to navigate the workplace and advanced educational environments as Deaf and hard of hearing

scholars. Knowing oneself, one's assets, one's needs for accommodation, and how to assert and assist other people in understanding these things are critical skills for both further graduate study and career success.

### **Structural Change in Academic Affairs and Implementation**

A careful reading of the models above will reveal a variety of references to other conversations happening on campus with regard to structural changes. Some models will explicitly name clusters, presuming that we are moving toward a model of disciplinary clusters. Some aspects of those models presume that students might be organized into cohorts within their clusters for some courses and then required to take courses outside of their clusters as part of their General Education experience. Other models make no reference to clusters or attempt to remain agnostic to various configurations of how departments and programs might organize themselves. In any case, how departments and programs organize and how General Education is structured will naturally be mutually influential to one another. In an ideal situation, they grow from one another organically in response to how departments are invested in General Education development and how General Education prepares students for departmental majors and minors. In reality, it's probably going to be messy as most gardening is before things grow together organically! The workgroup is sensitive to this and calls for all involved, from the Board of Trustees to administrators to faculty to staff to students to work in collaboration with an understanding that vast changes across many areas of the institution have many moving parts and patience and communication are vital in making sure we balance doing it "right" with doing it "right now." Ideally, a General Education curriculum *should* be designed with flexibility to adapt to changing times and with a pre-set process to both assess how to support its evolution and when to begin to its sunset and build the next design.

Of these models, some are more ambitious than others in making changes. We might take an approach to adopt a model with less radical change for a 5 year implementation window while investing and developing what we need as an institution to go for more radical changes that fit our student needs down the road. Alternatively, our current GSR model has a good deal of flexibility in the actual course descriptions and 'envelopes' of the structure. We could make strategic changes to the content of these envelopes and their delivery and rebrand our marketing and communication about the aim of the current model while focusing on developing more extensive change for the future. At any rate, student, faculty, and reviewer feedback is fairly clear, we must do something very soon to change how we structure and deliver General Education, at the same time, we should be looking further down the road than passing this curriculum change and creating institutional mechanisms, support, and a climate that looks for what the curriculum after this change will need to be and anticipates how we get to those changes. Acting as though one curriculum reform will settle the issues for all time is naive and assuming that each curriculum reform is discrete from what precedes and follows it is dangerous.

### **The University Mission and Student Learning Outcomes**

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One of our earliest conversations centered on the discovery in the GSR self-study that was reiterated in several reviewers about the disconnection between our University Mission statement and the GSR curriculum, particularly in how we state and structure our student learning outcomes (SLOs). In some cases, the current mission statement makes clear our bilingual mission, but the curriculum was vague about how it brings bilingual awareness and competencies to bear on student learning. In some regard, this was a product of the aspirational nature of the mission statement at the time and the 12 years of conversation and work that has culminated in the recent Bilingual Framework Taskforce. Many of our conversations continually returned to aspects of how we recognize bilingual competencies and work to equity between ASL and English as we experience them in learning both in and outside of classrooms.

Alternatively, we could note a lack of aspirational language in the University Mission statement with recognition to diversity, equity, and inclusion with regard to race, gender, socioeconomic class, sexual orientation, and abilities. This shortcoming is echoed with the formal language of our current University and GSR SLOs but does appear in a number of frequently offered GSR topics. Being explicit and intentional in stating our commitment to equity and inclusion and engaging with the complexity of intersectional identities and simultaneously experienced identity factors is something the entire institution needs to work toward.

Lastly, we discovered a quandary with regard to changing the GSR SLOs and the question of whether that also changes the University SLOs. Many of the other institutions we looked at had University wide SLOs that were more general than departmental and program SLOs but provided a strong foundation from which disciplines could articulate their specific outcomes. In that vein, their General Education programs often articulated outcomes specific to the task of General Education that were *separate* from these foundational institution wide SLOs. This allowed general education the flexibility to adapt to student needs without revisiting language that would alter the entire institution while, at the same time, since it is the general education aims, will naturally influence how wider institutional goals are articulated and carried out.

The models above seek to offer SLOs and/or general aims that will shape General Education for our institutions future. While these should eventually trigger a view of institution wide SLOs that then filters down to departmental program SLOs, it need not do so immediately, and it need not be a process of simple adoption as a whole.

Similarly, a revisitation of the University Mission Statement, Vision Statement, and Credo would be in order. The current Mission Statement was written at the same time the GSR curriculum was designed. However, these were two separate groups and little was done since their adoption to harmonize and synthesize the two to create a coherent and consistent message of our institutional identity and aspirations.

### **Conclusion**

In *The new Generation of Students: How colleges can recruit, teach, and serve Gen Z*<sup>10</sup> published by The Chronicle of Higher Education, Jeffrey J. Selingo writes extensively about the new generation of college students, Gen Z. Selingo demonstrates that the new generation has expressed desire for colleges with good value for their degrees, as Gen Z is debt-adverse and is desirous of securing a good job after graduation. They are drawn to vocational-type majors, including those in STM. They are less likely to declare a major in humanities, including English, History, and World Language, to name a few instances. They also look for colleges with stellar support service, including tutoring, career counseling, and more. They are a lot less interested in frills, including fancy dorm rooms and facilities. “Because Gen Z is frugal, with an eye for value, today’s students tend to be less enamored of the facilities and amenities of last decade’s building boom. ‘They don’t care about the rock-climbing walls built for millennials and boomer parents,” says Jeff Kallay, chief executive officer of Render Experiences, a firm that consults with colleges on campus visits. ‘Services are the new amenities’” (p.21). In the past, colleges marketed the facilities as well as offerings and number of alumni with jobs or in graduate programs. The marketing strategies have evolved into promoting the support services and offerings, and sharing the exact number of alumni with jobs or in graduate programs, broken into majors. Selingo lists the type of support services Gen Z seek: “The services Gen Zers want range from career development to tutoring to mental health - and on terms that are convenient to them. Often that means on-demand virtual services available on mobile devices, in much the same way that students can download a book in seconds or stream a movie whenever they want. But the physical environment also could better appeal to today’s students, with more ‘one-stop shops’ that consolidate services like financial aid and the registrar, as well as more flexible spaces to study, eat, and hang out” (p. 22).

As Gallaudet looks to admit Gen Z students, the university needs to look at the support service and figure out how to work the support service into the new GE program as well as into the future clusters. Possibilities include building tutoring support into clusters. Tutoring support could include coaching in ASL, writing, basic technological knowledge, data analysis, and other areas of emphasis depending on the students’ major. The support should be continuous from the first year to graduation. It may involve hiring professional academic coaches. One example of this today is the ASL coach in the department of interpretation and translation. It may be advisable to review and discuss support services program along with the discussion of the models next year.

## Section 5: Resource Links

GSR Self- Study [https://drive.google.com/open?id=1i47jSwMDK7EWIDDK72OIN5\\_ftXgXkeUK](https://drive.google.com/open?id=1i47jSwMDK7EWIDDK72OIN5_ftXgXkeUK)

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<sup>10</sup> A copy of this booklet can be requested through the library.

## Report of the Summer 2019 Workgroup on General Education

Proctor-Walden GSR Review Report

[https://drive.google.com/open?id=1yL\\_tAE3UjC5kQ6b9llsV\\_2tuXlyWYWIJ](https://drive.google.com/open?id=1yL_tAE3UjC5kQ6b9llsV_2tuXlyWYWIJ)

Miller GSR Review Report

<https://drive.google.com/open?id=1-RHikGYJIQH9vycZmkrbkb-nftBoOZVg>

Rein GSR Review Report

<https://drive.google.com/open?id=1LndhfGqFjHdjoEXGnCHM9MPWyBKwnP9a>

Who are Our Students? A report from Gallaudet SSAQ office Spring 2019

[https://drive.google.com/open?id=1MWIkQd\\_zrb9PmA4wqBBcqSd8maVEIxK4](https://drive.google.com/open?id=1MWIkQd_zrb9PmA4wqBBcqSd8maVEIxK4)

Gallaudet IZN Committee Report

<https://drive.google.com/open?id=1mPzqtU5NM91CHDkG8nRNnTCu8aK8dZp>

Articles on General Education in Higher Education and Workforce Readiness

[https://drive.google.com/open?id=1gDetsi8p\\_mDnBJwOsFirD2mAOqg7C1ri](https://drive.google.com/open?id=1gDetsi8p_mDnBJwOsFirD2mAOqg7C1ri)

Links to Models of General Education at other Institutions

<https://drive.google.com/open?id=1QQM4CH2BaraB-KFC5YTgzTCKhoTNqj-CkuZlvNktqa4>