

Position Paper on the General Education Curriculum: Concerns and Proposed Remedies*

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Abstract

In 1996, the Commission on Higher Education created a General Education Curriculum. In 1997, it renamed this as GEC-A and created an alternative curriculum it called GEC-B. Since then, there have been concerns in implementing these two sets of GEC requirements: the effects on the teaching loads of departments servicing general education courses, the variations in the GEC-B implementations of technical panels for various programs, the non-delivery of expected outcomes, and the poor computational and English language skills of high school graduates. We present some recommendations to address these issues.

The higher academic programs in the country have two main components, namely, the General Education Curriculum and the Professional Education Curriculum or Specialized Education Curriculum. Being the agency statutorily created to advance the promotion of quality education, the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) issued CHED Memorandum Order (CMO) no. 59, s. 1996 or the New General Education Curriculum (GEC) (CHED, 1996) (henceforth called CMO 59). Such issuance set the minimum re-

*A position paper drafted by the authors in response to a request of the Bikol Foundation for Higher Education board members

quirements for the mandatory General Education Curriculum for undergraduate degrees to 63 units.

In 1997, CHED Memorandum no. 4, s. 1997 entitled Guidelines for Implementation of CHED Memorandum Order No. 59, s. 1996 “New General Education Curriculum (GEC)” (CHED, 1997)[†] (henceforth called CM 4) revised CMO 59 by clarifying that the previous set of minimum requirements of 63 units stipulated in CMO 59 is to be known as GEC-A, and is meant for tertiary courses of study in the Humanities, Social Sciences and Communication (HUSOCOM). The same issuance provides that “[s]tudents majoring in fields other than the Humanities, Social Sciences and Communication need not follow GEC-A but instead may follow another set of minimum requirements known as GEC-B” (CHED, 1997, Guideline 5). GEC-B as an alternative curriculum reduced the minimum requirements from 63 units to 51 units.

The distribution of the 12-unit reduction is as follows:

- three units in Filipino Language;
- three units in Literature;
- three units in Humanities;
- discarding of a three-unit Philippine History course.

While GEC-A has two subjects listed under Mandated Subjects Cluster, namely Rizal’s Life and Works and Philippine History, in GEC-B, Philippine History was removed.

Both GEC-A and GEC-B have 15 units and 12 units for the Mathematics and Natural Sciences Cluster and the Social Sciences Cluster, respectively, and both sets of GEC require nine units of the English Language (CHED, 1997).

This school year will be the twelfth year of implementation of the CMO on the General Education Curriculum. Since its implementation, there have been concerns and issues in the course of the implementation of these two sets of GEC requirements that beg for attention and remediation. These are:

[†]CM no. 4, s. 1997 is not to be confused with CMO no. 4, s. 1997 (Organization of Philatelic Organizations in Higher Education Institutions).

I. The practical implications of the implementation of the two sets of minimum requirements on General Education servicing departments, particularly those under the College of Arts and Sciences

A basic reading of CM 4 which mandated GEC-B reveals a lack of justification why “[s]tudents majoring in fields other than the Humanities, Social Sciences, and Communication need not follow GEC-A but instead may follow another set of minimum requirements known as GEC-B” (CHED, 1997).

Based on the aim of general education, as stated in CMO 59, “the new GEC [...] would help the students see the human being as an integral person living in both a national and a global community” (CHED, 1996). Such a statement implies that with the lesser units in GEC-B, students taking non-HUSOCOM academic programs do not need as much integral formation as that needed by students taking HUSOCOM courses.

If the general education component of a course program refers to a program of non-specialized and non-vocational learning, essential for all members of a free society, then we argue that all students, irrespective of the chosen program, should have the same minimum requirements for general education. The Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) has defined general education as the “part of a liberal education curriculum shared by all students.” It provides broad exposure to multiple disciplines and forms the basis for developing important intellectual and civic capacities. General education may also be called “the core curriculum” or “liberal studies.” (AAC&U, n.d.)

The National University of Singapore (NUS), considered as the top university in the Southeast Asian region, asserts that underlying the General Education program at NUS is the concept of an educated person. It believes that “[r]egardless of the choice of the major, there is a broad range of knowledge, abilities, predispositions and attitudes that we expect of a university graduate, collectively serving as the hallmark of higher education” (National University of Singapore, 2001).

The 12-unit difference between GEC-A and GEC-B has created negative practical implications on the departments under the College of Arts and Sciences as servicing departments. With the reduction of units and required subjects for non-HUSOCOM courses, the loading assignment of teachers has since been grossly affected. This phe-

nomenon can be best illustrated at a rather greater magnitude with the reduction of general education courses in Business programs—programs with the highest number of enrollees in the country.

CM 4 gave HEIs the freedom to choose what set of GEC to use for courses of study outside of HUSOCOM, to wit: “The choice of whether to use GEC-A or GEC-B for any course of study other than the Humanities, Social Sciences and Communication is left to the discretion of the HEI” (CHED, 1997, Guideline 7).

During the early years of implementation of CM 4, HEIs that believe that Philippine History and some Humanities subjects are important for the civic and moral formation of their students continued to include in their curricula these subjects, notwithstanding their elimination as general education courses under the GEC-B. However, the Technical Panels (TPs) for various non-HUSOCOM disciplines continued to add professional courses as academic programs were revised in later years. Consequently, there was practically no room for an inclusion of subjects beyond the minimum requirement of the GEC-B. The semestral load of students also became heavier. On the same account, the HEIs also had difficulty conceptualizing a highly effective way of maintaining the formation subjects needed by the students without the additional costs.

II. The implementation of GEC-B by the Technical Panels for various non-HUSOCOM programs

The various TPs created by CHED have been mandated to periodically review and revise policies, standards, and guidelines for the various disciplines and course programs. These revisions are the subject of CMOs periodically issued for implementation by HEIs.

There have been variations in how the GEC-B has been implemented by the various TPs. Table 1 lists 15 CMOs on various non-HUSOCOM disciplines after the issuance of CM 4. Table 2 reflects how the TPs have implemented the GEC-B. (The Appendix contains comments on Table 2.)

Despite the variations in the implementation of the GEC-B, there seems to be a general observance and appropriation of the minimum requirements of the GEC-B and even an inclination to go beyond the minimum requirements, in effect, an attempt to approximate, if possible, the GEC-A requirements. Such an attempt can be shown by efforts to retain Philippine History and other Humanities

Table 1
CMOs from 2001–2009 on Various Non-HUSOCOM Degree Programs

CMO no.	Title
59, s. 1996 (<i>GEC-A</i>)	New General Education Curriculum (GEC)
CM no. 4, s. 1997 (<i>GEC-B</i>)	Guidelines for Implementation of CHED Memorandum Order No. 59, 1996 “New General Education Curriculum (GEC)”
25, s. 2001 (<i>ITE 1</i>)	Revised Policies and Standards for Information Technology Education (ITE)
53, s. 2006 (<i>ITE 2</i>)	Policies and Standards for Information Technology Education (ITE) Programs
26, s. 2001 (<i>BSA 1</i>)	Revised Minimum Curricular Requirement for the Bachelor of Science in Accountancy (BSA)
3, s. 2007 (<i>BSA 2</i>)	Revised Policies and Standards for Bachelor of Science in Accountancy (BSA), as Amended
30, s. 2001 (<i>BSN 1</i>)	Updated Policies and Standards for Nursing Education
14, s. 2009 (<i>BSN 2</i>)	Policies and Standards for Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) Program
24, s. 2008 (<i>BSECE</i>)	Policies and Standards for the Degree of Bachelor of Science in Electronics Engineering
29, s. 2007 (<i>BSCE</i>)	Policies and Standards (PS) for the Degree of Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering (BSCE)
13, s. 2008 (<i>BSCpE</i>)	Policies and Standards (PS) for the Degree of Bachelor of Science in Computer Engineering (BSCpE)
19, s. 2007 (<i>BSMath</i>)	Minimum Policies and Standards for Bachelor of Science in Mathematics and Bachelor of Science in Applied Mathematics
24, s. 2005 (<i>BSBio</i>)	Minimum Policies and Standards for Bachelor of Science in Biology (BS Bio)
31, s. 2001 (<i>BSTou</i>)	Revised Minimum Curricular Requirement for the Bachelor of Science in Hospitality Management (HM)/Tourism
39, s. 2006 (<i>BSBA</i>)	Policies, Standards and Guidelines for Bachelor of Science in Business Administration (BSBA)
30, s. 2006 (<i>BSTM</i>)	Policies and Standards for Bachelor of Science in Tourism Management (BSTM)/Bachelor of Science in Hospitality Management (BSHM)/Bachelor of Science in Hotel and Restaurant Management (BSHRM)/Bachelor of Science in Travel Management (BSTRM)
17, s. 2005 (<i>BSEntrep</i>)	Minimum Curricular Requirements for Bachelor of Science in Entrepreneurship (BS Entrep)

Table 2
Summary of GEC-B Requirements as Implemented in Selected Non-HUSOCOM Degree Programs Based on CMOs from 2001–2009 (number of units)

CMO	English	Filipino	Literature and Humanities	Mathematics and Natural Sciences	Social Sciences	Mandated subjects	Total
<i>GEC-A</i>	9	9	12 (6 Lit, 6 Hum)	15 (6 Math, 9 Sci)	12 ¹	6 ²	63
<i>GEC-B</i>	9	6	6 (3 Lit, 3 Hum)	15 (6 Math, 9 Sci)	12	3 ³	51
<i>ITE 1</i>	9	6	9 ⁴	15	12	3	54 ⁵
<i>ITE 2</i>	9	6	9 ⁴	15	12	3	54 ⁶
<i>BSA 1</i>	6 ⁷	6	9 ⁸	15 ⁹	12 ¹⁰	3	51 ¹¹
<i>BSA 2</i>	6 ¹²	6	9 ⁸	15 ⁹	12 ¹⁰	3	51 ¹³
<i>BSN 1</i>	9 ¹⁴	6	9 ¹⁵	17 ¹⁶	15 ¹⁷	3	59 ¹⁸
<i>BSN 2</i>	9 ¹⁹	6	6 ²⁰	22 ²¹	15 ²²	6 ²³	64 ²⁴
<i>BSECE</i>	9 ²⁵	6	9 ²⁶	15 ²⁷	12 ²⁸	3	54 ²⁹
<i>BSCE</i>	9 ²⁵	6	9 ²⁶	15 ²⁷	12 ²⁸	3	54 ³⁰
<i>BSCpE</i>	9 ²⁵	6	9 ²⁶	15 ²⁷	12 ²⁸	3	54 ³¹
<i>BSMath</i>	6 ³²	6	9 ⁴	15 ³³	12 ³⁴	3	51 ³⁵
<i>BSBio</i>	6 ³²	6	9 ⁴	15 ³³	12 ³⁴	3	51
<i>BSTou</i>	6 ³²	6	9 ⁴	15 ³⁶	12 ³⁷	3	51
<i>BSBA</i>	9 ³⁸	6	9 ²⁶	15 ³⁹	12 ²⁸	3	54
<i>BSTM</i>	6 ³²	6	9 ⁴⁰	15 ⁴¹	12 ⁴²	3	51 ⁴³
<i>BSEntrep</i>	6 ³²	6	9 ²⁶	15 ³⁹	12 ²⁸	3	51 ⁴³

1. Basic Economics (w/Taxation & Agrarian Reform); General Psychology; Politics & Governance (w/Philippine Constitution); Society & Culture (w/Family Planning)
2. Life & Works of Rizal; Philippine History
3. Life & Works of Rizal
4. Literature; Arts; Philosophy
5. Code of Ethics
6. Professional Ethics
7. Communication Arts (CA) 1 (Study Skills); CA 2 (Writing in the Discipline)
8. Philippine Literature; Arts; Philosophy (Logic)
9. Algebra; Math of Investment; Physical Science; Biology; Information Technology (IT)
10. Philippine History, Politics & Governance; Sociology; Psychology; Economics
11. Speech & Oral Comm. (under Accounting Educ.); no specified Ethics subject
12. CA 1 (Study Skills); CA 2 (Speech & Oral Comm.)
13. Additional GE courses: 6 units (Math [3 units]; Humanities [3 units in Fine Arts, World Culture, or Foreign Language]); Additional GE courses under Basic Business (Business Comm.; Good Governance & Social Responsibility); Ethics under Acctng. & Finance Educ. (Assurance Principle [6 units]; Prof. Ethics & Good Governance [6 units])
14. CA 1; 2; & 3
15. Introduction to Literature; Philosophy of Man; Logic
16. Algebra; Chemistry; Biology/Earth Science/Geology; Physics; IT
17. Psychology; Sociology; Philippine History; Politics & Governance with Philippine Constitution; Asian Civilization
18. Bioethics; Science, Technology, & Society; Health Economics (under Associate of Health Science Educ.)
19. English 1; 2; & 3
20. Philosophy of Man; Logic & Critical Thinking
21. Algebra; Biostatistics; Chemistry; Biochemistry; Physics; IT
22. Psychology; Sociology; Basic Economics; Humanities (World Civilization & Literature); Bioethics
23. Life & Works of Rizal; Philippine History, Government & Constitution
24. CMO reports 87 but already includes health core courses such as Anatomy, Physiology, and even PE and NSTP
25. CA 1; 2; & 3 (Technical Comm.)
26. Humanities 1; 2; & 3
27. Algebra (part of Technical Courses); Chemistry; Physics
28. Social Science 1; 2; 3; & 4
29. With ECE Laws, Contracts, Specifications, & Ethics
30. With CE Laws, Contracts, Specifications, & Ethics
31. With Engineering Ethics & Communication Laws
32. CA 1; & 2
33. Math (6 units); Natural Science (6 units); IT (3 units)
34. any 4 from the GEC list
35. Free electives (6 units)
36. Algebra; Math of Investment; Introduction to Natural Science; General Chemistry [3 units]; Basic Computer
37. Philippine History with Government & Constitution; Basic Economics; General Psychology; Sociology
38. English 1; English 2 (Oral Comm.); English 3 (Business Comm.)
39. Math 1; Math 2 (Statistics); Natural Science 1; & 2; Basic Computer
40. World & Philippine Literature; Arts; Philosophy (Logic)
41. Business Math; Basic Statistics; Environmental Science; Principles of Safety, Hygiene, & Sanitation; Basic Computer
42. Philippine History with Government & Constitution; Basic Economics; General Psychology; Cultural Anthropology
43. Business Core: Business Comm.

subjects, despite the pressure of increasing the number of professional subjects. The consequence of this, however, is that the additional unit requirements result in onerous academic load and an increased expense on the part of the students.

The initiative of the TPs to add subjects that properly belong to the GEC, albeit classified under the Professional Curriculum, is an indication that the general education curriculum is recognized as an invaluable component of the course program. It also indicates a recognition that the GEC complements the professional or specialized curriculum. Concrete examples of these subjects include three units of Business Communication as replacement or equivalent to Writing in the Discipline for the BS Accountancy program, and Health Economics which replaced Basic Economics for the BS Nursing program.

However, the addition of these subjects that properly belong to the GEC but were classified under Professional or Specialized Curriculum had a negative ramification on the academic loads of faculty in the servicing departments. Since these subjects are no longer part of the GEC component of the course program but are listed under Professional or Specialized Curriculum, these subjects are required to be handled by the professional departments. Consequently, such subjects are already required to be handled by faculty qualified to teach professional or specialized courses, thereby creating major problems for the servicing departments in optimally loading their teachers.

The variations in the laboratory unit requirements across the courses also posed practical problems especially for smaller colleges with just enough laboratories to serve the various requirements of the science courses under the GEC.

Based on the trend lengthily discussed above and in due consideration of the negative impact of such a trend on the servicing units, we argue that there should only be one set of minimum requirements on general education for all students, regardless of their chosen academic program.

III. The impact of the General Education Curriculum

Various stakeholders have their respective expectations in terms of the knowledge, skills, competencies, values, and attitudes that the General Education Curriculum envisions to develop and strengthen. These skills and competencies have been associated with the relevant cluster of subjects identified in the CMO on GEC. The

Language cluster seeks to develop communication skills; the Mathematics and the Natural Sciences cluster aims to develop and improve computational skills, problem solving, and scientific inquiry; and the Social Sciences and Humanities cluster strives to instill values and create a strong sense of a guided ethical behavior, citizenship, social responsibility, personal integration, and appreciation of human experiences.

Unfortunately, prospective employers continue to lament the deteriorating communication skills of graduates, particularly in the use of the English language. Further, teachers of professional subjects complain of poor foundational skills of students in both language and computational skills.

Teachers, in general, also complain of low motivation and of the 'easy way out' attitude of students. Parents and adult members of the community worry about the pervasive corruption and deteriorating moral fiber of the country. Students themselves do not see the relevance of Literature to their Business course; or of Algebra to their Communication course, or of Philosophy to their Computer or Information Technology course.

These actual and perceived failures of the General Education Curriculum to deliver the expected outcomes are justifications for a serious review with the intent of revitalizing the General Education Curriculum in terms of content, teaching methodology, and assessment of outcomes. The review is timely, considering that the GEC has been around for a decade.

IV. The lack of readiness of high school graduates for serious and in-depth college level work, in general, and poor English language and computational skills, in particular

A national figure that played a major role in the development of the existing GEC admits that much of what the GEC offers should be given more appropriately to the high school (Cruz, 2009).

The results of various national achievement tests from the earlier National Secondary Achievement Test (NSAT) to the current National Achievement Test (NAT) show consistently low levels of achievement of high school graduates in the areas of English, Mathematics, and Science. CHED (1997) recognizes this profile of college bound students, as reflected in the provision for a bridging course in English intended for those who do not pass the English Placement

Test. It is to be noted that even the Level 3- and Level 4-accredited colleges and universities in the country run a Bridging Program particularly in the areas of English and Mathematics (Ibe & Coronel, n.d.).

This lack of readiness in the language and computational skills of incoming freshmen college students is not unique to the Philippines. The AAC&U (2002) reports that 53% of freshmen college students do remedial work.

Based on the experience of Ateneo de Naga University, despite the Remedial Programs in English and Mathematics, these two subjects continue to be the subjects with the highest failing grades in the first two years in college. It is not completely baseless to state that the same concern is also experienced by other schools in the country. The deficiency in these tools for learning, among other reasons, would account for the low completion rate of 30% for higher education.[‡]

This situation calls for a clear articulation of the level of accomplishment in the relevant high school subjects particularly in terms of communication and computational skills that are appropriate entrance requirements for college.

Recommendations

On the basis of the foregoing, the Bikol Foundation for Higher Education hereby submits the following recommendations:

1. Creation of a Technical Panel for General Education Curriculum that would include experts in the disciplines on core subjects such as English and Filipino Languages, Humanities (including Philosophy and Ethics), Mathematics and the Natural Sciences, and the Social Sciences whose mandate is to review and craft a revitalized General Education Curriculum.

2. Such revitalized GEC shall determine and prescribe a minimum set of requirements for all, regardless of the major field of study; such GEC shall be taken during the first two years in college.

3. In crafting the revitalized GEC, we recommend that the following be considered:

- It shall be guided by the philosophy of liberal education which enables students to acquire the following attributes: “breadth

[‡]CHED figures on “Student Flow” by way of survival and graduation rates, as cited in Ibe and Coronel (n.d.)

of knowledge and capacity for lifelong learning; abilities to analyze, communicate, and integrate ideas; and effectiveness in dealing with values, relating to diverse individuals, and developing as individuals” (AAC&U, 2004a, as cited in Gaff (2004)). It shall also take into account the invaluable contribution of liberal education in developing among students the ability to: apply knowledge and skills in real world settings; conscientiously appreciate and respond to ethical issues; recognize and give value to various cultures; and actively contribute to society as socially responsible citizens;

- The learning competencies that are consistent with the goals and philosophy of liberal education should be well articulated as basis for determining the content of the courses or modules; the levels of exit competencies should be determined as standard for a student’s accomplishment; and authentic and relevant assessment procedures should be used for assessing what has been learned;

- A prior determination of a reasonable semestral workload for students should be made before setting the number of minimum units required for the GEC. We recommend that the 24-unit load per semester for a 2-semester per year scheme be considered as a reasonable maximum load that will enable students to balance classroom attendance with independent work and study outside of the classroom. Of these 24 units, we recommend that the minimum unit-requirements for GEC be a total of 15 units per semester or a total of 60 units (which approximates the existing GEC-A minimum unit-requirement) for GEC for the first four semesters of higher education. This will leave room for the other requirements such as Physical Education and the mandated NSTP subjects. We recommend that HEIs be given free hand to add subjects that will realize their peculiar mission of formation of students but only within the 24-unit workload per semester. This is in respect of the mission of the various sectarian colleges and universities considering that they comprise a big percentage of private tertiary education in the country. Furthermore, it is also in due recognition of their track record in providing quality education;

- Filipino and English Language courses should reinforce each other in the development of oral and written communication and analytical and integrative thinking skills; and

- Issues and themes that affect national unity and global survival should be addressed in the GEC, particularly, but not limited

to, the Social Sciences and Humanities clusters, for example, justice and peace issues, gender, and cultural diversity, among others.

4. We recommend that selective admission to college be legislated. Only those who pass a National College Entrance Examination or a National Secondary School Leaving Examination shall be admitted to college. This admission test in college should be able to measure accomplishments on knowledge and intellectual skills important in higher education.

5. We recommend further that higher education, through a process of wide consultation and close coordination with the Technical Panels for GEC and other disciplines, articulate the level of readiness required of the students in terms of communication and computational skills, reading comprehension skills, and other intellectual skills important for college work. This level of readiness must also be communicated to providers of basic education for the purpose of bridging levels of learning.

6. We also recommend that higher education and basic education be put in one government agency so that these two levels of education can work together on the reforms needed in these levels and consequently bring about the closing of gaps in learning as college bound students become more ready for college work.

7. We recommend that the TP for GEC validate with the TPs for the other disciplines the learning competencies that the GEC hopes to develop and seek commitment to a shared responsibility in accomplishing the goals of both the GEC and the Professional Curriculum. A specific skill for concrete collaboration between the general education faculty and the professional education faculty would be the writing skill. A semester or two of courses in writing are not enough to fully develop students' writing skills. Professional courses are in the best position to reinforce this skill by providing opportunities for writing in their courses. The courses in the other clusters under GEC are also potential avenues for developing writing skills. Writing should be a major activity of students' academic training.

8. We further recommend that curriculum review and mapping for all degree programs be done alongside the GEC review. We recommend that the review be made the basis in conceptualizing a well-thought-out set of professional courses that would fit into a 24-unit load per semester. Such academic load can reasonably ensure that the students have the space to be fully engaged in their studies

outside the classroom setting. The curriculum map should identify professional courses where opportunities are present for the following: the strengthening of the skills in GEC which are required by employers or which can be applied in actual situations in the practice of one's career—oral and written communication skills, and analytical and integrative thinking skills; the integration of ethics in the professional courses; and the engagement of students in their immediate community that would challenge the application of professional skills to real problems and situations.

9. We recommend that CHED provide the opportunities for training teachers along content, teaching methodologies, and assessment that the revitalized GEC requires.

Appendix: Comments on Table 2

- While some programs keep the 51 units minimum requirement as provided by *GEC-B*, some have more than 51. *ITE 1*, *ITE 2*, *BSBA*, and *BSTou* have 54 units. Some other programs with more than 51 units have included Math and Science core courses required by their respective disciplines and not due to the prescribed General Education Curriculum. For example, Nursing reports a total of 87 units under the GE Curriculum but this total includes other subjects (such as Anatomy and Physiology) in addition to the Natural Sciences subjects named in the GE curriculum. These subjects should fall under professional subjects under a sub-category such as Basic Science Courses (similar to the Basic Business Courses sub-category in the Accountancy and Business and Management Education programs) and not under the GE Curriculum because these subjects are requirements for Nursing students only and not for all students as asserted in the General Education definition cited earlier.

- Most programs observe the 9 units in English prescribed in *GEC-B*, but *BSA 1*, *BSA 2*, *BSBio*, *BSMath*, *BSTou*, *BSTM*, and *BSEntrep* have 6 units in English.

It is interesting to note that *BSA 1*, which has 6 units in English under the GE Curriculum, has an additional subject, Speech and Oral Communication, but it is under the category Accounting Education. Obviously, the TP that crafted *BSA 2* realized that Speech and Oral Communication is definitely not an accounting subject, and therefore should not be under Accounting Education category because *BSA 2* retains the 6 units in English, but 3 of these 6 units are now for Oral Communication. It adds another 3 units of Business Communication, but under the Basic Business Courses category.

It should also be noted that *BSTou*, *BSTM*, and *BSEntrep* have 6 units in English and 3 units in Business Communication under the Basic

Business Courses category.

So far, it can be argued that the 3 units deficit in English is compensated by the 3 units in Business Communication. This is not, however, the case for *BSMath* and *BSBio* which each require 6 units of English but do not have provisions similar to the CMOs in Accountancy and Business and Management Education programs, although each has 6 units in free electives.

- All CMOs have 9 units in Literature and Humanities except for *BSN 2* which keeps the 6 units prescribed in *GEC-B*. However, it has 15 units in Social Sciences instead of 12, with the additional 3 unit course being World Civilization and Literature. *BSA 2* has an additional General Education requirement of 6 units but under the Accounting and Finance Education component of the curriculum (p. 12). The 6 units consist of 3 units in Mathematics and 3 units in Humanities from any of the following choices: Fine Arts (Visual and Performing Arts), World Culture, or Foreign Language (p. 14).

- Most CMOs keep the 15 units requirement for Mathematics and Natural Sciences. Some CMOs have more than the minimum requirement, for example, *BSN 1* and *BSN 2*. *BSN 2* includes Science Core subjects relevant to Nursing and allied Health Education courses like Anatomy, Physiology, and Biochemistry in addition to the introductory Natural Sciences courses. Variations in the laboratory unit requirements are also noted. For example, General Chemistry has 3 units lecture and 2 units laboratory in most course programs, but in Engineering courses, it has 3 units lecture and 1 unit laboratory. *BSTou* has 3 units for General Chemistry with no laboratory component. These variations in the requirements for the laboratory component create problems in terms of laboratory room assignments.

- All CMOs keep the 12 units minimum requirement in Social Sciences, except for *BSN 1* and *BSN 2*, each of which has 15 units. With the removal of Philippine History as a mandated subject in *GEC-B*, some CMOs integrate it with Politics and Governance with Philippine Constitution under the course title Philippine History, Government and Constitution. For the CMOs that do not specify particular Social Science subjects in the program curricula, HEIs follow the subjects specified in the *GEC-A* Social Sciences Cluster, namely, Basic Economics, General Psychology, Politics and Governance with Philippine Constitution, and Society and Culture.

- While most CMOs include Basic Economics in the Social Sciences cluster, *BSN 1* does not include it and instead has Health Economics with Taxation and Land Reform, but lists it under the Associate in Health Science Education Curriculum. *BSN 2*, however, restores Basic Economics in the Social Sciences Cluster.

- Of the 15 CMOs in the list, only *BSBio* and *BSMath* do not include Professional Ethics in the curriculum under the Professional subjects category. The CMOs that list Philosophy under the Humanities cluster have

either Logic or Philosophy of Man. *BSA 2* includes a total of 9 units of subjects on civic responsibility and ethics under the professional subjects.

- There is no variation among CMOs on the implementation of the 6 units minimum requirement in the Filipino language.

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Curriculum and instruction are the meat of the educational process. Real change in education comes with changes in the content that teachers teach and students learn, and in the instructional methods that teachers use. Both curriculum and instruction in turn are shaped by expectations about the kinds of educational outcomes that students should manifest by the time they graduate from high school. In civics, for instance, the Oregon Department of Education has developed relatively broad general guidelines; one example calls on students to "understand and apply knowledge about governmental and political systems, and the rights and responsibilities of citizens" (Oregon Department of Education, 1996:16). IX (2011) pp. 81-96 General Article Position Paper on the General Education Curriculum: Concerns and Proposed Remedies— Rebecca C. Torres Academic Vice-President Ateneo de Naga University Lydia T. Goingo Dean, College of Arts and Sciences Ateneo de Naga University Abstract In 1996, the Commission on Higher Education created a General Education Curriculum. The higher academic programs in the country have two main components, namely, the General Education Curriculum and the Professional Education Curriculum or Specialized Education Curriculum. Students and General Education in the 21st Century Economy Three papers have been categorized under this theme. Mr. Roger Y. CHAO Jr., a Ph.D. student. This went through three distinct phases. We started with a meta-literature search on the subject of student learning, particularly in their first year in the university followed by student focus group surveys on their experiences and concerns. To us, a fundamental question needed to be asked and answered: Is it more productive to offer students separate "study skills" classes or to embed such learning into regular classes?