Call for proposals: Our General Education curriculum should be a showcase for the kind of great teaching and learning that can thrive only in a research university. Courses of this kind provide many students with their first real exposure to what makes university-level learning different from high school. Many students come alive intellectually from having taken an exciting General Education course. But all too often, General Education is treated as an afterthought by both faculty and students – as something to "get out of the way," frequently at other, cheaper institutions or even in high school. The health of a public research university, and the vitality of its undergraduate program, depend on making the appeal of intellectual inquiry immediately apparent to students.

Thanks to generous support from the Rippey Teaching Endowment and other donor funds, the College of Arts and Sciences is able to commit significant resources to this effort. Faculty working individually or in groups are invited to submit proposals for General Education course redesign and to work closely with the CAS Dean's Office to develop, implement, and assess them. A series of proposal development workshops is scheduled for later this fall, with applications due on January 15, 2014. Funds can be used for a host of purposes, including faculty stipends, starting as early as Summer 2014. Funding support ranges from $8,000 for individuals to $40,000 for large collaborative groups.

Rationale for the call: Discussions with several dozen CAS faculty this summer revealed great enthusiasm for re-enlivening our General Education curriculum. We envision a General Education Renaissance that will increase this curriculum’s educational effectiveness for students as well as its intellectual appeal to the faculty who teach it. We suspect these outcomes are related since we often hear about students’ eagerness to learn when they sense intellectual enthusiasm on the part of their professors. As the heart of the liberal education we most value, General Education should be understood as the foundational enterprise it really is. We are therefore calling on all CAS faculty to consider contributing to this initiative by submitting
proposals for new General Education courses or new ways to teach existing courses. We hope that the changes we have in mind will strike a chord with faculty in all disciplines, and that the work required to design proposals will be satisfying. Although we may well receive more proposals than can be immediately supported by the funds available in CAS, we will try to incorporate as many people and ideas as we can – in keeping with our philosophy that General Education is a major responsibility of the whole faculty. We are fortunate at the UO that outstanding faculty have traditionally taken this responsibility seriously and have used their talents to introduce beginning students not only to their disciplines, but to the life of the mind more broadly.

**What we’re looking for, in general:** During our preliminary discussions this summer, faculty repeatedly expressed two desires with respect to General Education – namely, to make its interdisciplinary nature more palatable and to use it more consciously to hone cognitive skills. In brief, this was their thinking:

1. Both students and faculty benefit when General Education courses create opportunities for linking questions and ideas among different disciplines. This could be done by creating individual courses deliberately designed by two or more faculty to be interdisciplinary. It could also be done by creating thematic linkages among existing courses in diverse disciplines. Such course groupings could serve as smaller, more compact versions of the sprawling General Education curriculum we currently have and thereby promote the formation of the kind of intellectual communities that can make General Education come alive.

2. The General Education curriculum could be used even more effectively than it currently is to hone students’ general capacity for analysis and synthesis, and to work on written and quantitative reasoning in particular. We recognize that a student’s entire educational experience contributes to these abilities, but General Education courses offer an opportunity for explicit attention to them. That’s the rationale for the UO’s current requirement for General Education courses in writing composition and also in mathematics or foreign language. We are not suggesting that these courses be replaced, rather that their effect be amplified by deliberately embedding practice in the relevant skills elsewhere in the General Education curriculum.

**The centrality of diversity:** The increasing diversity of our student body, a point of institutional pride, poses a special challenge for our General Education curriculum. Domestic minorities make up 27% of the entering Fall 2013 freshman class; international students, another 10%. Among freshmen who are Oregon residents, 37% are eligible for Pell Grants. And a quarter of newly arriving undergraduates transfer from other institutions, often having completed some but not all of their General Education coursework elsewhere. There is no “one size fits all” for today’s undergraduates. Our students enter university life on very disparate personal and academic trajectories. Most come eager and well-prepared to learn but not always from backgrounds where liberal, as opposed to vocational, education is reflexively prized. Any successful pedagogy for General Education must actively incorporate consideration of these realities.
Examples of proposals that might be appropriate: We’re seeking proposals from individuals or groups of faculty who wish to apply these or other ideas to the design or redesign of General Education courses. We have imagined the kinds of proposals described below, but these are simply examples. The list is not meant to be limiting.

1. A pair of faculty might team-teach a course of great topical appeal—e.g. on climate change, big data, war, debt, food, global health, environmental humanities, or the future of Europe—especially where collaborations among UO faculty already exist and more advanced coursework is already available.

2. Larger groups of faculty (“clusters”) might want to link a number of courses that examine a common question or theme. Linkage would be looser than in individual courses that are co-taught, but might be achieved through a 1-2 credit “connector” course, guest visits across different courses, a shared web presence, or common advising, outreach, and co-curricular activities. Students who took a number of courses from such a group could potentially satisfy a significant proportion of their General Education requirements – the Group requirements in particular. Mini-curricula of this kind can foster the formation of intellectual communities that lost longer than one quarter, and allow students to take better advantage of what the university offers (e.g. interaction with visiting scholars, educational experiences abroad, or academic programs in the residence halls).

3. Faculty might propose enhancements to a current course that emphasize writing and/or quantitative reasoning—for example, through an explicit focus on graphs or statistics, even if the course is not primarily mathematical in content. Conversely, faculty who are already teaching writing or mathematics courses might want to collaborate with colleagues teaching traditional “group-satisfying” courses to connect skill development with specific course topics.

4. Faculty might want to adopt new pedagogical strategies to promote student participation and higher-order thinking, especially in large-enrollment courses. Examples might include hybrid or “flipped” classroom teaching, role-playing simulations, moderated blogs, live feedback in lecture, the use of undergraduate assistants recruited from past offerings of a course, or even theatrical training in the timeless “sage on a stage” mode of delivery. The Teaching Effectiveness Program is an excellent resource for such strategies.

5. Faculty might reorient their courses around the cultivation of one or more “literacies” every citizen should have, rather than the coverage of a discrete body of disciplinary subject matter. A focus on, say, historical, scientific, digital, ethical, or global literacy can foreground problem-solving and critical analysis more effectively than the one-way transmission of canonical knowledge. Such literacies might in many cases be cultivated through deeper integration of both current and classic academic research into the General Education classroom.
Timetable and process

• **Pre-proposal activities – Fall Term 2013**

  o **Workshops:** During this term, we plan three workshops to enlarge the group of participating faculty and to support individuals as well as groups in proposal development. The first workshop will allow faculty who could not participate during the summer to join the enterprise now. The other two will give potential proposers the chance to refine their ideas in conversation with us and with other colleagues. We anticipate that different faculty may come up with related ideas, and we want to be able to point out opportunities for collaboration. Most important, we are trying to create a process that is not mysterious and is collegial.

  The schedule of Fall Term workshops is as follows:

  1. Thu. Oct. 31, 12:00-2:00pm, EMU Coquille and Metolius River Rooms
     Recap of summer CAS faculty discussions for newcomers to General Education curriculum development.

  2. Wed. Nov. 20, 1:30-3:00pm, Friendly Hall 109
  3. Thu. Nov. 21, 9:30-11:00am, Friendly Hall 109
     Proposal development workshops. Faculty seeking to develop their ideas into full proposals are encouraged to attend one of these.

  RSVP to Lexy Wellman at lwellman@uoregon.edu if you wish to attend one of these workshops. We are also happy to meet with you separately.

  o If you are interested in developing a proposal, we strongly urge you to submit an informal **pre-proposal statement** of interest to adue@uoregon.edu. That way, we can provide feedback and coordinate those who are working independently on related proposals.

• **Proposal Preparation and Submission**

  o **Proposal Due Date:** Proposals will be due on **January 15, 2014**, and should closely follow the “Proposal Guidelines and Policies” on pages 7-9 below. Send completed proposals to adue@uoregon.edu.

  o **Guidelines in Brief:** You may read the “Proposal Guidelines and Policies” in detail at your leisure, but we wanted to highlight here the ones you should be aware of up front.
1. **Commitment by senior faculty:** Responsibility for each proposal must be assumed by a senior faculty member (or two) who will teach at least one course funded through the proposal. Our principal funding source is currently limited to use by associate or full professors, but in view of the critical role and expertise of non-tenure-track faculty in UO’s General Education curriculum, we also include senior instructors and senior lecturers among the senior faculty invited to spearhead proposals. Other faculty are absolutely welcome to participate centrally in the development and implementation of a proposal and to teach courses within it, but their work must be coordinated by a senior faculty member who is committed to the project.

2. **Plan for assessment:** How will you determine whether your initiative is working? Here we are not trying to burden you with externally imposed assessment rubrics, but we would like to understand how you will recognize the success of your effort. Qualitative as well as quantitative indicators are possible, and if you wish it, help with identifying and using informative measures will be available from CAS and Academic Affairs. UO will have to conduct a formal assessment of its entire General Education curriculum in the near future, and this initiative is a chance to begin a university-wide discussion on how that might best be done.

3. **Plan for sustaining your initiative in the future:** We are concerned with two kinds of longevity – financial and intellectual. At a minimum, faculty must commit to offering their courses twice, normally during the 2014-15 and 2015-16 academic years. In addition, we ask you to consider:
   
   a. How will your initiative be continued once the current one-time CAS funds have been spent?
   b. How will you promote the long-term faculty engagement required to sustain your curricular innovation? This is particularly important for large collaborations involving multiple linked courses.

4. **Desired features of new or re-designed courses:**
   
   a. Proposals should be explicit about how they fulfill one or more objectives of the UO’s statement on the Purpose of General Education (see bit.ly/cdLJ5H).
   
   b. Eligible courses must be accessible to first- and/or second-year students, typically at the 100- or 200-level, and be offered in CAS or in other traditional arts and sciences disciplines (art history, for example).
   
   c. Large-enrollment courses will be favored for funding.
5. **Expectations of awardees:** In addition to teaching their courses for at least two consecutive years, awardees will be expected to analyze the impact of their efforts, present formally on their results, and serve informally as consultants for future college- and university-wide discussions of the UO General Education curriculum. Our hope is to create a cadre of faculty whose efforts will catalyze deeper engagement with General Education across the institution and inspire colleagues to re-enliven their own General Education courses.

6. **Use of funds:** We have made faculty compensation more generous than some other internal UO teaching and research grants because we have high expectations of significant, ongoing faculty involvement. Course buyouts and GTFships, however, present special challenges because of their high expense; buyouts that take faculty out of the classroom—even for the worthy purpose of developing a new course—are an especially problematic use of donor funds. Otherwise, we enjoy great flexibility in the use of these funds to jump-start sustainable experiments.

- **Review and funding of proposals.** All proposals will be reviewed by a panel of CAS faculty, which will make recommendations for funding to the CAS Deans. The number and size of the grants awarded for 2014-15 will depend on the nature of the proposals – with a maximum of $40,000 plus OPE going to large groups proposing changes to a substantial number of courses. Decisions are expected in mid-February. Two more cycles of proposals and grants are planned for 2015-16 and 2016-17.

**Contacts in CAS**
Feel free to contact any of us with questions or ideas.

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CAS General Education Renaissance
Proposal Guidelines and Policies

Proposals are due January 15, 2014 and must include the components below. Email proposals to adue@uoregon.edu. We strongly encourage participants to submit an informal pre-proposal statement of interest. This will enable us to provide feedback and coordinate groups who are working independently on related proposals.

1. Title and abstract. Give the proposal a title and summarize it in 50 words or fewer.

2. List of participants. Indicate one or at most two principal faculty contacts for the proposal. Principal contacts should be senior faculty in CAS (associate or full professors, senior instructors, or senior lecturers) who teach one or more courses funded through the proposal. Also list any other faculty teaching courses under the proposal, and any other individuals involved in its planning, implementation, and assessment. Provide the department and rank/title for each faculty participant.

3. List of course(s) to be designed or redesigned, including subject code and course number,^1 course title, and name(s) of faculty who will be teaching. Eligible courses must be accessible to first and/or second year students, typically at the 100- or 200-level, and be offered in CAS or in other traditional liberal arts and sciences disciplines (such as art history). Indicate which courses are new and which are already in the UO Catalog, and which UO General Education requirements each one meets or is expected to meet. ^2 Provide historical student enrollment numbers for existing courses and anticipated enrollments for newly proposed or redesigned courses. Large-enrollment courses will be favored for funding.

4. Narrative description. Describe the proposal in no more than three single-spaced pages, focusing on its rationale, objectives, and design. Include consideration of how the proposal fulfills one or more objectives in UO’s statement on the purpose of General Education (see bit.ly/cdLJ5H). Explain how any existing course included as part of the proposal will be redeveloped, substantively and/or pedagogically; and what will make any newly proposed course successful, popular, and truly innovative. Append syllabi or syllabus outlines when possible. Address whether and how the proposal will be sustainable once initial CAS funding has been spent. For larger collaborations, devote special attention to ensuring long-term faculty engagement as individual faculty rotate in and out. Finally, outline a method of assessment, to study the impact of the proposal and to determine whether it will have been successful.

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^1 An experimental General Education course may be offered once for group-satisfying credit under the 100 or 300 number (for lower- or upper-division courses, respectively) so long as the proposing faculty member simultaneously submits it to the curriculum committees for permanent status and receives preliminary approval.

^2 See bit.ly/1aebW3d on bachelor’s degree requirements, bit.ly/19saWeS on group-satisfying requirements, and bit.ly/1aecar7 on multicultural requirements.
5. **Timeline.** Indicate when the course(s) will be planned and developed, when it will be offered to students, and when follow-up evaluation and assessment are expected to be complete. Courses should normally be offered in at least two successive academic years starting in 2014-15. Awardees will also be expected to present formally on the results of their efforts and to serve informally as consultants on General Education curriculum reform in the future. To that end, please indicate any known sabbaticals or upcoming leaves involving participating faculty.

6. **Department head approval.** Provide confirmation of department head approval for any course not already taught as part of a faculty member’s regular course roster, and for any course to be team-taught by two or more instructors. If a course will drain enrollment from a related one, or otherwise disrupt the curriculum of an existing major or minor, department head approval must also be secured. Overloads require both department head and CAS approval.

7. **Budget.** Please describe, as best you are able, the anticipated cost of the proposal. Separate faculty compensation expenses from all other expenses. Other expenses may include teaching materials and supplies, gatherings with students and other student outreach, technology services and equipment, journal clubs, workshops, fact-finding travel, visiting scholars, undergraduate student assistants, administrative support, or any other reasonable and appropriate course development needs. We strenuously encourage the search for matching funds from other sources for such expenses.

   The faculty compensation portion of the budget should adhere to the guidelines below. Stipends may be taken as salary, as professional development funds (ASA), or as a combination of the two. CAS will add OPE to stipends (or partial stipends) taken as salary; budget an additional 29% for OPE. Funds may normally not be used for course buyouts or GTFships.

   Compensation rates differ for three types of faculty effort: (a) developing a new course or wholly redeveloping an existing one; (b) revamping an existing course without wholly redeveloping it, normally as part of a cluster of faculty; and (c) leading a cluster of faculty who are developing, redeveloping, and/or revamping courses. Formal presentation of results and ongoing availability for informal consultation on General Education reform are expected of awardees but not separately compensated.

   Maximum faculty compensation rates are as follows. Proposers may elect to reduce these rates in order to accommodate higher budgets for other expenses. The maximum award, before adding OPE, is $40,000.

   **(a) Develop a new course or wholly redevelop an existing one**
   
   $5,000 summer stipend in 2014
   
   plus
   
   $3,000 academic year stipend, one half payable during each of the two quarters the course must be taught in AY 2014-15 and 2015-16
(b) Revamp an existing course (normally as part of a cluster)
$4,000 academic year stipend, one half payable during each of the two quarters course must be taught in AY 2014-15 and 2015-16

(c) Lead a faculty cluster
$2,000 stipend for a single cluster leader, payable in one lump sum
or
$1,500 stipend for each of two cluster co-leaders, payable in one lump sum

Below are some sample models. Other combinations are possible. Again, OPE of 29% should be added only for that portion of stipend(s) taken as salary.

**Individual.** One faculty member develops a new course ($8,500 plus applicable OPE). $5,000 summer stipend plus $3,000 academic year stipend plus $500 for other expenses.

**Collaboration.** Two faculty members develop two new courses ($17,000 plus applicable OPE). Double the above figure.

**Team teaching.** Two faculty members develop one new course ($14,000 plus applicable OPE). Each faculty member collects a $5,000 summer stipend but the two split the $3,000 academic year stipend, and use $1,000 for other expenses.

**Cluster.** One faculty member leads four others in revamping existing courses ($25,000 plus applicable OPE). $2,000 stipend for faculty cluster leader plus $4,000 academic year stipend for each of five faculty members, including the cluster leader, revamping an existing course, plus $3,000 for other expenses.

**Supercluster.** Two faculty members develop two new courses and lead four others in revamping existing courses ($40,000 plus applicable OPE). $1,500 stipend for each cluster leader, $5,000 summer stipend and $3,000 academic year stipends for each cluster leader to develop a new course, and $4,000 academic year stipends for each of four faculty members revamping an existing course, plus $5,000 other expenses.