

Faculty Assembly Updates— General Education Reform



January 15, 2025

Dr. Belkys Torres

Associate Vice Provost for Inclusive
Excellence in Education

Task Force Objectives

- Prepare engaged and informed graduates for the challenges of the 21st century without increased financial burden or time to degree;
- Evaluate and unify our curricular offerings so that we can optimize access, equity, and success for all undergraduates.



Current Status of Gen Ed at Pitt

- All 6 first-year admitting schools and 3 campuses espouse their own Gen Ed Requirements (GERs); upper-division schools include them via prerequisites
- Little to no connection between GERs and Learning Outcomes
- Learning Outcomes are becoming outdated
 - Misaligned with workforce expectations

Challenges with Current Status

- Hampered in developing transfer/articulation partnerships
 - Transfer rates have decreased nearly every year for a decade
 - We are being out-competed in facilitating pipelines
- Complex inter-unit (school/campus/institution) collaboration
- Extended time-to-degree
 - Increases debt load
- Access and flexibility of course selection
- Vulnerable in future accreditation evaluation



Plan for Pitt: 2028

It's Possible at Pitt

Progress Card

The Progress Card shows us how our plan is progressing.
It informs administrative decisions.



We will cultivate student success.



Programmatic Excellence

Outcomes

Accreditation is and remains at highest levels year over year

Baseline

Current

Target

Current each year

Key Initiatives

- Launch Revised General Education Requirements by 2028
- Launch Center for Excellence in Online Education by 2024
- Launch PittForce portfolio by 2026
- Complete student awards plan by 2025

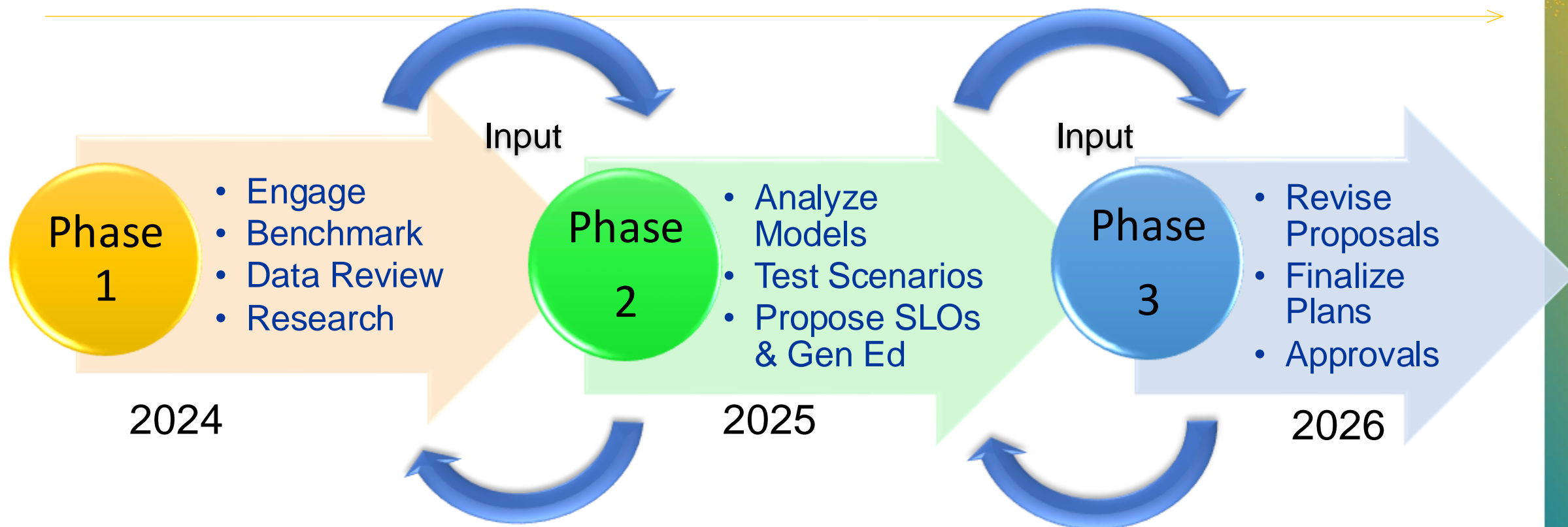


Vision for Gen Ed Reform

Design general education as a purposeful program with a beginning and an end, that allows students to understand, explain, and showcase the **value of a liberal arts education**. We imagine a program founded upon:

- Student agency & exploration;
- Connected & scaffolded student learning;
- Relevance to & flexibility for a changing world;
- Ways of thinking & ways of knowing to contextualize content;
- Reflection on learning across the curriculum;
- Collaboration across disciplines;
- Holistic assessment & periodic review of course offerings. Pitt Gen Ed

Timeline



Pitt Gen Ed



Phase 1—Engagement

✓ Hosted 16 Listening Sessions—Spring 2024

9 for Faculty & Staff

4 for Students

1 for Pitt Bradford faculty and staff

1 for Pitt Bradford students

1 for Pitt Bradford Gen Ed Committee

Participants

- 139 faculty

- 112 staff

- 18 students

✓ Student Surveys—Spring and Fall 2024 +3,000 responses

- Student Experience in the Research University (SERU)

- Gen Ed Student Experience Survey

Pitt Gen Ed



Phase 1—Engagement

Major Takeaways

- Committed to centering liberal arts education as foundational to all students' learning, regardless of major
- Motivated by a student-centered approach to Gen Ed Reform; offers agency and flexibility for students/advisors; maintain rigorous faculty approval process
- Interested in embedding experiential learning and high-impact practices
- Concerned about increased workloads or decreased course offerings
- Desire for more data and information to guide faculty and staff engagement/feedback



Phase 1—Data Review

May 2024 Retreat: Curricular Mapping of Existing Gen Eds

- Associate Deans and Vice Presidents of Academic Affairs informed the Gen Ed Task Force of existing Gen Ed curriculum at each school/campus
- Overview of course offerings, program assessment, advising, oversight and syllabus review process
- Comparative analysis of existing curricula and student experience across the 9 first-year admitting schools/campuses

✓ Major Takeaways:

- Goal of unifying curricular offerings is achievable
- Opportunities to incentivize student learning across disciplines/schools
- Innovations in student learning abound across schools/campuses; we can learn from and leverage those assets



New Online Resources

- Pitt's General Education Reform Library Guide
- AAC&U Valid Assessment of Learning in Undergraduate Education (VALUE)
- Gen Ed Reform—External Benchmark, List of Peers

www.provost.pitt.edu/general-education-task-force/gen-ed-additional-resources



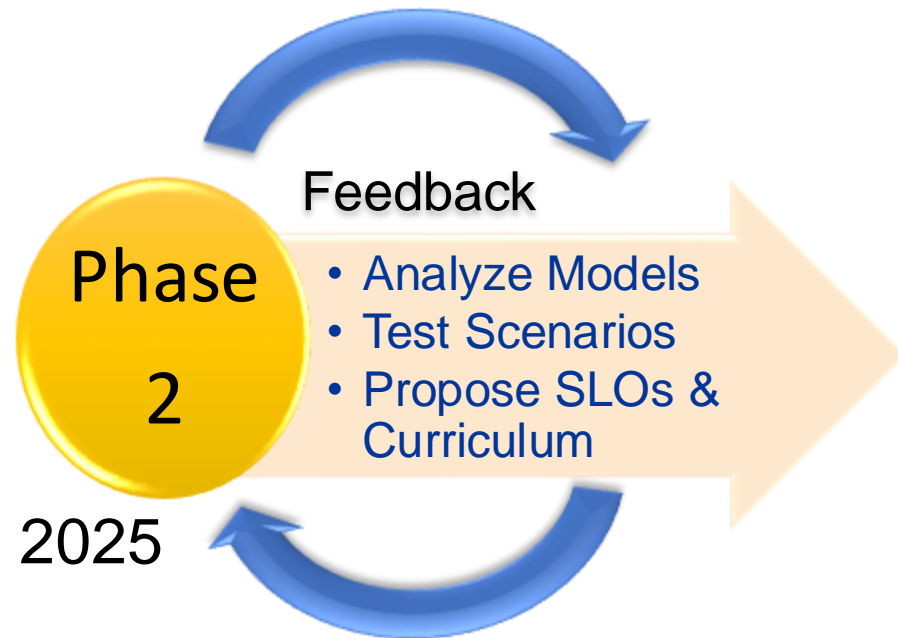
Phase 1—External Benchmarking

- Boston University
- Carnegie Mellon University
- Clemson University
- Ohio State University
- Pennsylvania State University
- Temple University
- University of Arizona
- University at Buffalo - SUNY
- University of Louisville
- University of South Carolina
- Virginia Tech

<https://pitt.libguides.com/genedreform/benchmarking>

Pitt Gen Ed

Current Timeline & SEPC Collaboration



- Input on process to solicit faculty feedback
- Insights on SLOs and rubrics
- Advice regarding shared governance structure for new Gen Eds Program
- Feedback on White Paper
(forthcoming summer 2025)



generaled@pitt.edu



[provost.pitt.edu/
general-education-task-force](https://provost.pitt.edu/general-education-task-force)



University of
Pittsburgh® | Office of
the Provost