

# **The CUE Companion**

A guide for CUE chairs, new CUE members, curriculum committees, and anyone else who wants to know more about how CUE functions

Committee on Undergraduate Education

Western Washington University

Last updated 20 October 2015

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## Disclaimer

Every effort has been made to ensure that the information in this document is complete and correct. However, there may have been changes to policies and practices since the document was last updated. As CUE is a subcommittee of ACC, should anything in this document conflict with the ACC Handbook, current ACC policy, or a decision of the ACC, the ACC decision or policy should be deemed correct.

## General Information

### What is the Committee on Undergraduate Education (CUE)?

CUE is the body at Western that oversees the general education program, which consists of the GURs together with the writing proficiency requirement. CUE also is responsible for approving First Year Experience (FYE) courses. It is a standing subcommittee of the Academic Coordinating Commission (ACC). The voting membership of CUE includes:

- Faculty representing each of the colleges:
  - One from Business and Economics
  - One from Fairhaven
  - One from Fine and Performing Arts
  - One from Huxley
  - Two from Humanities and Social Sciences (typically one from Humanities, one from Social Sciences)
  - One from Science and Engineering
  - One from Woodring
  - One from the Library
- Two “at large” faculty who teach GURs
- The Director of Writing Support
- Two students designated by the Associated Students. One of these students is typically the AS VP for Academic Affairs, the other is an “at large” position.
- The Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education

In addition, representatives of three university offices attend CUE meetings as non-voting members:

- The Director of Academic Advising
- The Associate Director of University Residences
- A representative from the Registrar’s Office

Finally, a member of ACC or CUE may serve as a liaison between the two committees. In some years, a faculty member sits on both ACC and CUE, and this person can fill the liaison role. In some years, one or more members of CUE have attended ACC meetings as non-voting members. For the 2015-16 academic year, a member of ACC was appointed to fill this liaison function.

### What is CUE’s charge?

- Advise the Academic Coordinating Commission on all curriculum matters related to General Education, including the acceptance of courses for listing as fulfilling General University Requirements (GURs) and oversight of the Writing Proficiency (WP) requirement.
- Promote the goals of a liberal education in general, and writing and general education goals in particular, within the academic community.
- Periodically review these educational goals and assess the degree to which these goals have been achieved. These spheres of assessment include the University, colleges, and departments.

The Committee on Undergraduate Education shall communicate its findings, and recommendations for improvement, to the ACC and the appropriate units.

- Work in cooperation with and with support from the offices of the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education; and the University Writing Program.
- Report to the ACC.

## What does CUE do?

CUE's work falls into 7 main areas:

- **Course Proposal Review** - CUE reviews all course proposals (new courses, revisions, or cancellations) involving a GUR or FYE attribute.
- **GUR Links and Strands** – CUE is responsible for soliciting and reviewing applications for GUR “links” (two connected courses in the same quarter, at least one a GUR) and “strands” (three connected GUR courses in three consecutive quarters)
- **Assessment** – CUE is responsible for evaluating the effectiveness of the general education program and making recommendations for improvement.
- **Education and Outreach** – CUE communicates messages to students, faculty, and other stakeholders related to a liberal arts and sciences education in general, and general education and writing instruction in particular.
- **Professional Development** – CUE creates and/or promotes opportunities for GUR faculty to improve their teaching, and provides resources for those faculty on its web page.
- **Policy Recommendations** – CUE reviews proposed changes to the GUR program suggested by other bodies (e.g., departments, colleges). From time to time, CUE may put forward its own proposals for changes to the GUR program, based on assessment data or other sources of information.

## Course Proposals

### When does a course proposal form need to be routed through CUE?

Course proposal forms must be approved by CUE if any of the following apply:

- New courses:
  - If the proposer wishes the course to have a GUR or FYE attribute
- Course revisions:
  - If the course currently has a GUR or FYE attribute. Note that the proposal form must be reviewed by CUE even if the proposed change does not directly relate to that attribute, e.g., a change in title, prerequisites, credit hours, etc.
  - If the proposer wishes to add a GUR or FYE attribute to an existing course.
  - If the proposer wishes to remove a GUR or FYE attribute from an existing course.
- Course cancellations:
  - If the course currently has a GUR or FYE attribute.

## What is the deadline for submitting a course proposal to CUE?

For permanent courses (i.e., courses listed in the catalog), the deadline for the 2015-16 academic year is February 2, 2016. This allows time for approvals from CUE to reach ACC prior to their own deadline. Temporary and experimental courses are not listed in the catalog, thus, they have no set deadline, but note that they still must be approved by CUE and ACC prior to being offered (see below).

## Do experimental/temporary courses (X97) need to be routed through CUE?

Ordinarily, experimental or temporary courses receive final approval from the appropriate college curriculum committee, and are only passed along to ACC as an informational item. However, if an experimental or temporary course will have a GUR or FYE attribute, it is treated like any other course, and must be approved by CUE and then by ACC.

## Do WP courses need to be routed through CUE?

CUE oversees the writing proficiency requirement at Western. However, each department has the authority to add or remove a WP designation from its own courses. Departments are responsible for ensuring that courses with a WP designation satisfy the requirements for such courses. The current requirements are as follows:

- Only upper-division courses may have a WP designation.
- Students should have opportunities to write multiple drafts of assigned papers, and should receive suggestions for revision of those drafts.
- A specific percentage of the course grade should be based on writing assignments, as indicated in the table below. Note that these are minimum percentages; higher percentages may be used at the discretion of the department/instructor.

	Credit Hours of Course	% of Grade Based on Writing Assignments
WP1	1	75
	2	50
	3	25
	4	20
	5	15
WP2	2	75
	3	50
	4	40
	5	30
WP3	3	75
	4	55
	5	45

## What sections of the course proposal e-form must be completed for a GUR course?

For GUR courses, the following sections of the e-form must be completed:

*Type of GUR change being made. This is not about whether the course itself is new/revised/cancelled, but whether the GUR attribute is being added/revised/cancelled. So, if the proposer wants to add a GUR attribute to an existing course, they should check "New" here. If they want to cancel the GUR attribute on an existing course but keep the course itself, they should check "Cancellation."*

E. GUR Course?  New  Revision  Cancellation  N/A

*GUR category. This should be provided even if the proposer wishes to cancel the GUR attribute or the course as a whole, so that CUE members know which GUR category will be affected by these changes. If the proposer wishes to change the course from one GUR category to another, they should mark the new category here.*

### Communication (COM)

ACOM = ENG 101

BCOM  CCOM  SET of  
Courses

### Humanities (HUM)

Option 1   
Option 2 (Set of Courses)

### Quantitative & Symbolic Reasoning (QSR)

Stand alone course   
Must be taken with Math 112 or  
Math 107   
Other (please explain)

### Social Sciences (SSC)

### Comparative, Gender & Multicultural Studies (ACGM) or (BCGM)

Block A-CGM   
Block B-CGM

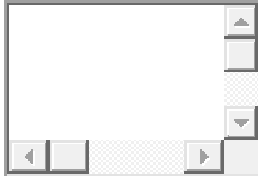
### Natural Sciences (LSCI) & (SCI)

LSCI (includes lab component)   
SCI

*Explanation for how the course fits the proposed GUR category. See the description for the various GUR categories in the WWU catalog. If the proposer wishes to cancel the GUR attribute or the course as a whole, this section may be left blank.*

**Briefly explain how the proposed course meets the catalog description for the specified GUR Category.** About 50 words.

(Explanation of GUR category can be found here: <http://www.wvu.edu/depts/registrar/pdfs/gur.pdf> )



*GUR competencies addressed by the course. In addition to GUR categories, Western has identified 11 “competencies” that the general education program is supposed to develop in students. Proposers should select one or two of these competencies that seem to best reflect what students will be learning in the course. If the proposer wishes to cancel a GUR attribute or the course as a whole, this section may be left blank.*

The general education program provides **Knowledge of Human Cultures and the Natural World** (sciences, social studies, mathematics, humanities, histories, languages, art) as well as the following competencies. Mark no more than ONE or TWO total of the eleven GUR competency categories below that will be addressed in this course.

#### **Intellectual and Practical Skills**

- Analyze and communicate ideas effectively in oral/written/visual forms.
- Analyze and interpret information from varied sources.
- Use quantitative and scientific reasoning to frame and solve problems.
- Apply tools of technology, with an understanding of their uses and limitations.
- Work collaboratively and manage projects to effective completion.

#### **Personal and Social Responsibility**

- Understand and evaluate assumptions, values, and beliefs in context of diverse local, national and global communities.
- Understand and assess the impacts of interactions among the individual, society, and the environment.
- Recognize the rights, responsibilities, and privileges of participating in, and contributing as a citizen in, a diverse society.
- Reflect on one’s own work and on the ethical dimensions of academic pursuits.

#### **Integrative and Applied Learning**

- Identify and analyze complex problems.
- Explore, imagine and create.

*Method of assessing competencies. This question is not about the course as a whole, but about the particular competencies selected in the previous section. Given the competency selected above, this section should explain how the instructor will measure what students have learned regarding understanding and evaluating assumptions, values and beliefs.*

**Briefly explain how the competency (ies) selected above will be assessed.** About 50 words. (For reference: [GUR Competency Rubric.](#) )



*Syllabus. Note that a syllabus should be attached even for course revisions. If the proposer wishes to cancel a GUR attribute or the course as a whole, a syllabus does not need to be provided.*

**Attached Files**

FileName	Description	Added By	Date	Del
<a href="#">HELEN COMMUNICATION THEORY SYLLABUS.DOCX</a>		Rae Lynn A. Schwartz-DuPre	11/6/2013 11:28:05 AM	

*CUE approval section for GUR courses.*

CUE GUR Approved? YES  NO  Tabled



## What sections of the course proposal e-form must be completed for a FYE course?

For FYE courses, the following sections of the e-form must be completed:

*Type of FYE change being made. This is not about whether the course itself is new/revised/cancelled, but whether the FYE attribute is being added/revised/cancelled. So, if the proposer wants to add a FYE attribute to an existing course, they should check "New" here. If they want to cancel the FYE attribute on an existing course but keep the course itself, they should check "Cancellation."*

F. FYE Course Proposal?  New  Revision  Cancellation  N/A

*FYE learning outcomes. Note that at least two of these outcomes must be selected in order for the course to be approved as an FYE course.*

1. The ACC handbook states that FYE courses should meet at least two of the following learning outcomes. Please mark all those that are appropriate for the course being proposed.
- Demonstrate an understanding of inquiry and creative processes from disciplinary and/or interdisciplinary perspective(s).
  - Articulate individual learning goals in the context of a liberal arts education and identify means for achieving these goals
  - Enhance competency in academic skills including: framing questions/posing problems, critical literacy, evaluating information sources, writing, oral communication, and collaboration



*This section should contain a brief explanation of how the course will achieve the particular learning outcomes checked in the previous section.*

How will the course achieve the proposed learning outcomes?

*Explanation of fit with FYE program objectives. This section should explain how the course will help achieve the four objectives.*

2. The ACC handbook states that FYE courses should meet all of the following criteria:

- ▶ Give first-year students a small group experience to help them integrate into university life.
- ▶ Give first-year students the opportunity for more interaction with faculty, fostering a stronger sense of academic community
- ▶ Communicate high academic expectations to students.
- ▶ Help students recognize and take advantage of the roles that various campus resources play in their academic lives.

Please explain how the course will achieve these criteria:

*Syllabus. Note that a syllabus should be attached even for course revisions. If the proposer wishes to cancel an FYE attribute or the course as a whole, a syllabus does not need to be provided.*

*CUE approval section for FYE courses.*

CUE FYE Approved? YES  NO  Tabled

What is the process for routing a course proposal form through CUE?

- 1) The course proposal is approved by the relevant college curriculum committee, prior to being submitted to CUE.

- 2) This curriculum committee forwards the e-form to the chair of CUE and to the administrative assistant in the Faculty Senate Office. Note that curriculum committee minutes do not need to be forwarded to CUE; unlike ACC, CUE works directly from the e-forms.
- 3) The CUE chairs review the e-form for completeness. If any of the sections identified above are blank or incomplete, the CUE chair contacts the proposer of the course, copying the chair of the relevant curriculum committee, and ask that the missing information be added.
- 4) Once the relevant sections of the e-form are complete, the CUE chair places the course proposal on the agenda for the next CUE meeting. The complete e-form needs to be received before the agenda is sent out to CUE members, which generally means by the end of the day on Monday for a Thursday CUE meeting.
- 5) CUE reviews the course proposal during its meeting. Based on that discussion, CUE takes one of three actions:
  - a. Approves the course proposal as-is.
  - b. Does not approve the course proposal. Note that this only applies to the GUR or FYE attribute, not the course as a whole.
  - c. Tables the course proposal. This action is usually taken when CUE members would like additional information or clarification before making a decision.
- 6) The CUE chair completes the approval section of the form (see below) and forwards it to the catalog coordinator, who in turn notifies ACC of the approval.
- 7) ACC will review the course proposal once it has been approved by both the appropriate college curriculum committee and by CUE.
- 8) If CUE tables the course proposal, the CUE chair sends a message to the course proposer, copying the curriculum committee chair. Depending on the reason for tabling, this message could request additional information, ask for clarification, or suggest changes. Once the proposer has addressed the concerns raised by CUE, the course proposal will be placed on the CUE agenda again for further review. Note that the course proposer may also decide to withdraw the request for GUR or FYE status.
- 9) If CUE does not approve the course proposal, the CUE chair sends a message to the course proposer, copying the curriculum committee chair, explaining the reason for the decision.

## What does CUE look for when reviewing GUR course proposals?

The following are the most common aspects of a course proposal that are discussed in CUE meetings, listed in approximate order of importance:

- 1) Fit of the course with the proposed GUR category. Fit is usually evaluated in terms of:
  - a. The catalog language describing the relevant GUR category. Note that this language discusses both subject matter and the approach to that subject matter. For example, the language describing the SSC category refers to “empirical investigation” with the goal to “discover coherent patterns in human activity.”
  - b. Consistency with GUR courses already approved. For example, if other courses similar to the proposed course have been given a HUM attribute but the course proposer is requesting a SSC attribute, CUE members may ask the proposer to clarify how this

course is different from those other courses, or may ask the proposer to consider requesting a HUM attribute instead. Note, however, that general education policy and program goals may change over time, so similarity of the proposed course to an already approved course is no guarantee of approval, especially if it has been several years since the already approved course was reviewed.

- 2) Fit of the course with general education program goals. This generally centers on the idea that general education is the “breadth” component of a Western education, complementing the “depth” component represented by the major. Thus, CUE members are likely to question a proposed GUR course with more than one or two prerequisites (including “hidden” prerequisites) or that is effectively limited to students in a particular major. For the same reason, CUE members are also likely to question a course with a strong professional training component.
- 3) Appropriateness of the selected competencies. The competencies do not necessarily need to “match” the GUR category, but they should make sense given the overall nature of the course.
- 4) Appropriateness of indicated assessment methods. Does the explanation of assessment methods make sense in light of the selected competencies? For example, if the proposer selected “Work collaboratively and manage projects to effective completion,” but then indicates that assessment will be done via multiple-choice tests, CUE members are likely to be concerned.
- 5) Consistency, coherence, and completeness. If the information provided on the e-form doesn’t seem to match the syllabus, or if different portions of the e-form don’t seem to fit with each other, this is likely to raise questions for CUE members.

## Meetings

### Meeting Times

CUE meets on alternate Thursdays in OM 340 from 4 pm to 5:30 pm. This committee meets approximately 5 times per quarter.

### Agendas

Prior to each meeting, the Faculty Senate Office emails a meeting packet to all CUE members that includes an agenda, minutes for approval, course descriptions, and any documents relevant to agenda items. This packet is typically sent 2-3 days prior to the meeting, e.g., on Tuesday for a Thursday meeting. CUE members and outside parties (e.g., departments, colleges) may suggest items which they would like CUE to consider.

### Voting

A quorum of CUE members (over 50% of voting members) must be present at a meeting for any agenda item requiring a vote. Members who are unable to attend a meeting may submit a proxy vote on a particular agenda item to the CUE chair in advance of the meeting. These proxy votes are counted toward the quorum.

## Course Proposal Review

For meetings in which a small number of course proposals are to be voted on, typically the entire CUE membership is asked to review the e-forms and syllabi in advance of the meeting. However, when there are many course proposals on the agenda, two steps are commonly taken to ensure expedient review:

- 1) The CUE membership is divided into 2-3 subgroups, and each subgroup is responsible for thoroughly reviewing a subset of the course proposals. During the meeting, each subgroup shares any issues, comments, or concerns they identified during this review.
- 2) Based on comments from subgroup members, course proposals are divided into two groups: Those for which no issues or concerns were identified, and those where issues or concerns were identified. The course proposals for which no issues were identified are voted on as a block. The remaining course proposals are discussed and voted on one at a time.

## Minutes

During each meeting, a recorder appointed by Faculty Senate Office takes notes documenting discussions and any items voted on. The recorder assembles these notes into curriculum minute format (see the ACC Handbook). The minutes are emailed to CUE members in the meeting packet for the following meeting. CUE members have an opportunity to make revisions to minutes at the beginning of each meeting. Minutes require a majority vote for approval.

Once the minutes have been approved, the Faculty Senate Office forwards the minutes to ACC for approval. Note that ACC meeting agendas are generally sent out several business days prior to the meeting. Thus, it is not unusual for CUE to have their next meeting before the minutes from the previous meeting have been reviewed by ACC.

## Administrative Tasks

These tasks are generally handled by the CUE chair or the administrative assistant in the Faculty Senate Office.

## Beginning of Year

- Send Outlook meeting requests to CUE members for each of the CUE meetings during the year. Not everyone uses the Outlook calendar to manage their commitments, but for those members who do, this is a convenient way to help them remember when CUE meetings will occur. (Typically done by Senate Office)
- Make sure the CUE e-mail list is up to date and reflects any changes in membership from the previous year. (Typically done by Senate Office)
- Decide on assessment activities for the year, and send appropriate communications to deans, chairs, and assessment coordinators. This should be discussed and voted on by the CUE membership.
- Form subgroups to work on particular initiatives or tasks. In recent years, there have been three such subgroups, one focused on communication (e.g., the gen ed web page), one focused on assessment, and one focused on professional development and support for teaching communication (gen ed competency #1). Periodically CUE meeting time is allocated to allow these subgroups to work on their assigned task and then report back to the larger committee.

## Beginning of Each Quarter

- Send out an announcement to instructors teaching GUR courses that quarter. At a minimum this message can thank the instructors for their contributions, but it also typically asks the instructors to help CUE communicate messages about the gen ed program to students.

## End of the Year

- Follow up on any assessment tasks still outstanding for the year.
- Prepare end-of-the-year report for ACC.
- Assist as needed with determining the CUE membership for the following year. Typically the Senate Office will ask CUE members whose terms are concluding if they would like to continue, and will manage recruitment for vacant positions. However, CUE chairs can provide help in the following areas:
  - Identifying CUE members who will not be completing their full term, and notifying the Senate Office of this.
  - Encouraging departing members to recruit a replacement.

CUE members are appointed by ACC, so CUE doesn't make decisions or vote on any membership-related issues.

- Determine the meeting calendar for the following year. This should be voted on by the CUE membership.
- Select a chair for the upcoming year. This should be voted on by the CUE membership.