

University of Denver Student Survey about the Common Curriculum

In February 2018, GERI surveyed several hundred undergraduates about their experiences, understandings, and opinions of the Common Curriculum. This survey complemented focus groups that we conducted with five ASEM courses. GERI reported findings as part of our [March 2, 2018 Interim Report](#). For the sake of clarity and convenience, I'm reproducing select findings. Please contact me for access to the raw data.

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| 1. (Q3) How well has the Common Curriculum (General Education) at DU prepared you to do the following? (432 responses) | | | | | | |
|--|-----------------|---------------|-----------------|-----------|----------------|---------------------------------|
| | Not well at all | Slightly well | Moderately well | Very well | Extremely well | I have no basis yet for judging |
| Communicate effectively orally | 6.94% | 21.76% | 40.05% | 21.06% | 5.56% | 4.63% |
| Work effectively in teams | 10.23% | 20.93% | 40.23% | 20.23% | 4.88% | 3.49% |
| Write for a variety of rhetorical situations & research traditions | 4.40% | 15.97% | 33.10% | 28.94% | 11.81% | 5.79% |
| Make ethical judgements & decisions | 8.80% | 19.68% | 31.71% | 24.54% | 9.49% | 5.79% |
| Critically examine concepts, texts, and artifacts | 2.78% | 17.17% | 33.41% | 29.70% | 11.83% | 5.10% |
| Apply knowledge & skills to real world settings | 6.03% | 17.63% | 31.55% | 28.77% | 10.44% | 5.57% |

| 2. (Q26) How well did the Common Curriculum (General Education) at DU prepare you to do the following? (430 responses) | | | | | | |
|--|-----------------|---------------|-----------------|-----------|----------------|---------------------------------|
| | Not well at all | Slightly well | Moderately well | Very well | Extremely well | I have no basis yet for judging |
| Use and interpret qualitative and quantitative information | 5.35% | 25.12% | 36.05% | 22.33% | 5.81% | 5.35% |
| Apply formal reasoning, mathematics, or computational science approaches to problem solving | 11.86% | 26.05% | 30.70% | 16.98% | 6.74% | 7.67% |
| Make connections between texts, ideas, or cultural artifacts and the human experience | 3.26% | 16.05% | 39.30% | 27.91% | 9.07% | 4.42% |
| Understand that science is an iterative process of knowledge generation | 6.06% | 20.05% | 32.87% | 24.94% | 8.86% | 7.23% |
| Describe basic principles of human functioning in social and cultural contexts | 5.59% | 16.55% | 36.60% | 26.11% | 8.86% | 6.29% |

| 3. (Q27) How well has the Common Curriculum (General Education) at DU prepared you to do the following? (431 responses) | | | | | | |
|--|------------------------|----------------------|------------------------|------------------|-----------------------|--|
| | Not well at all | Slightly well | Moderately well | Very well | Extremely well | I have no basis yet for judging |
| Write, speak, listen, and read in a foreign language | 11.60% | 20.19% | 30.63% | 16.01% | 8.35% | 13.23% |
| Understand the culture associated with the foreign language | 9.98% | 18.79% | 29.00% | 19.49% | 9.51% | 13.23% |
| Integrate knowledge and contexts from multiple perspectives to a significant topic or issue | 5.80% | 15.55% | 37.35% | 24.83% | 9.28% | 7.19% |
| Write effectively, providing appropriate evidence and reasoning for assertions | 3.96% | 16.08% | 34.50% | 27.74% | 11.19% | 6.53% |

| 4. (Q6) Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements about the Common Curriculum (General Education) at DU (418 responses) | | | | | |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| | Strongly disagree | Somewhat disagree | Neither agree nor disagree | Somewhat agree | Strongly agree |
| The Common Curriculum helped me choose a major. | 43.54% | 16.99% | 21.05% | 14.59% | 3.83% |
| The Common Curriculum helped me choose a minor. | 35.17% | 12.44% | 20.33% | 22.01% | 10.05% |
| The Common Curriculum requirements prevented me from pursuing additional programs or courses I would have liked to pursue. | 8.61% | 10.53% | 22.97% | 30.38% | 27.51% |
| The Common Curriculum has exposed me to subjects, ideas, or perspectives that I might not have encountered in my major or minor | 5.74% | 7.18% | 17.70% | 45.69% | 23.68% |
| The Common Curriculum requirements are something I needed to get out of the way so I could move on to taking courses in my major. | 3.12% | 7.67% | 16.07% | 30.70% | 42.45% |
| The Common Curriculum requirements helped me figure out which majors I did NOT want to pursue. | 11.96% | 12.20% | 29.43% | 29.43% | 16.99% |
| The Common Curriculum has been a valuable part of my whole education | 15.11% | 19.42% | 30.22% | 26.62% | 8.63% |

| 5. (Q8) Many models for delivering the Common Curriculum (General Education) exist at universities around the world. Please indicate how appealing each of the following models of Common Curriculum delivery would be to you. (400 responses) | | | | | |
|---|-----------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|
| | Not at all appealing | Slightly appealing | Moderately appealing | Very appealing | Extremely appealing |
| Having Common Curriculum courses revolve around a theme from which you could choose, such as climate change, health policies/access, education, ending poverty, gender equality, clean water, sustainable energy, etc. | 9.25% | 16.25% | 30.25% | 28.00% | 16.25% |
| Making the Common Curriculum courses into a minor that shows on your transcript | 10.28% | 10.28% | 26.32% | 30.08% | 23.06% |
| Having Common Curriculum courses delivered using community engaged-service learning techniques where students work with community partners to learn from them and provide a service to them | 12.34% | 20.91% | 31.23% | 20.91% | 14.61% |
| Having a Common Curriculum that requires a distribution of courses across specific disciplines or disciplinary areas (such as Arts, Humanities, Social Sciences, Physical Sciences, and so on). | 17.54% | 22.56% | 32.83% | 18.05% | 9.02% |
| Having a Common Curriculum with specific courses that all students must take (rather than a menu of choices from broad categories) | 61.50% | 16.00% | 15.50% | 4.50% | 2.50% |
| Having a Common Curriculum that focuses on developing skills (communication, quantitative reasoning, ethical judgment, research) as a feature or aspect of many possible courses rather than as a required focus of specific courses. | 7.54% | 20.35% | 35.18% | 23.87% | 13.07% |

| 6. (Q11) What do you think the purpose of the Common Curriculum (General Education) is at DU? (Open-ended responses; 191 students wrote responses, which were coded into the following categories. Several students mentioned more than one. Percentages refer to the number of students who included this idea.) | | |
|---|----|-----|
| 1. Provide range outside major | 33 | 17% |
| 2. Help undecided majors/Help choosing major/Identify passion | 23 | 12% |
| 3. Wide variety of topics and ideas | 40 | 21% |
| 4. Well-rounded individuals, thinkers | 92 | 48% |
| 5. Not sure/no idea | 11 | 6% |
| 6. Waste of time/counterproductive/extract tuition | 41 | 21% |
| 7. Cover the basics/give foundation | 50 | 26% |
| 8. Broad understanding | 36 | 19% |
| 9. Make money/job preparation/skills | 29 | 15% |
| 10. Develop thinking citizens | 4 | 2% |
| 11. Liberal arts | 25 | 13% |
| 12. Transition from HS to college/Integrate into DU | 8 | 4% |
| 13. Other | 48 | 25% |

7. (Q12) Any further comments about or suggestions regarding the Common Curriculum (General Education) at DU? (Open-ended responses; 151 students wrote responses, which were

| coded into the following categories. Several students mentioned more than one. Percentages refer to the number of students who included this idea.) | | |
|---|----|-----|
| 1. Reduce generally # of courses | 14 | 9% |
| 2a. Reduce specific requirement: Writing | 2 | 1% |
| 2b. Reduce specific requirement: Science | 23 | 15% |
| 2c. Reduce specific requirement: Language | 7 | 5% |
| 2d. Reduce specific requirement: Math | 4 | 3% |
| 2e. Reduce specific requirement: AI Society | 1 | 1% |
| 2f. Reduce specific requirement: Other | 4 | 3% |
| 3. Clarify requirements | 1 | 1% |
| 4. More flexibility (choice, interests) | 11 | 7% |
| 5. Relationship between language and study abroad | 2 | 1% |
| 6. Connect to majors | 3 | 2% |
| 7. No changes/I like it | 12 | 8% |
| 8. Better registration | 6 | 4% |
| 9. Do away with it altogether | 5 | 3% |
| 10. Alter specific requirements (change rather than reduce) | 1 | 1% |
| 11. I don't like it/It's useless | 21 | 14% |
| 12. Add a different requirement | 12 | 8% |
| 13. No, n/a, nonsense | 38 | - |
| 14. Interfered with major, timeline, other courses | 23 | 15% |
| 15. Other | 31 | 21% |