AU’s General Education Program

General Education New Faculty Orientation
23 August 2011
Higher Education

- why students go to college
- not a continuation of high school…
- …but a chance to become who you are
- learning more
- learning different
General Education

* not one’s major, but broader learning
* the “heart” of the undergraduate program
* two models:
  * core courses
  * distribution requirements
Implicit Definitions

* core courses: generally educated = know a few particular things in some detail
* distribution requirements: generally educated = know a little about a lot
* AU: generally educated = a critical intellectual disposition or habit of mind
AU’s Alloy

- a blend, not a synthesis
- choice within limits:
  - five curricular areas
  - diverse course offerings (150 in all), taught by all departments of the university
- program-wide values

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Six Program Values

* written and oral communication
* critical thinking, including information literacy
* ethics
* aesthetics
* perspectives of race, class, culture, and gender
* a global point of view
Five Curricular Areas

1. The Creative Arts
2. Traditions that Shape the Western World
3. Global and Multicultural Perspectives
4. Social Institutions and Behavior
5. The Natural Sciences
The Three Rules

1. **Distribution Rule**: two courses in each curricular area; both courses from the same “cluster”

2. **Sequence Rule**: take the foundation course in an area before taking a second-level course in that area

3. **Multidisciplinary Rule**: no more than two courses offered by a single department
**Things Students Are Wondering**

- AP credit: yes, for up to four courses
- transfer credit: once enrolled at AU, all courses for General Education credit *must* be taken at AU
- pass/fail option: yes
- taking courses not for General Education credit: of course!
Resources

- syllabus archive
- GenEd teaching tips
- networking among faculty
- GEFAP
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