

Task Force on Attributes Assessment

Report to Faculty Senate

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Task Force Charges

The Task Force, as part of their work:

1. will establish standards and procedures for determining:
 - a. the standard of content or types and significance of attribute-related coursework for a course to qualify for an attribute,
 - b. how courses with approved attributes are periodically reviewed according to course content and student learning assessment
 - c. the process for, and the role of shared governance in, revising attribute standards and procedures
 - d. the process for convenor selection
 - e. any other recommendations for strengthening attributes proposal, review and assessment processes moving forward
 - f. if considerations should be given to whether W, R, and Q attributes require attention and how their procedure and structure would align to those used for attributes.
2. will develop a system to track courses and maintain approved course attributes through periodic review can be conducted and the University community is clear on which courses carry which attributes.
3. will review and revise the AHVI attribute structure.
4. should identify the number of courses available for each subscript
5. should also review any evidence from the student appeals who are trying to graduate without the need to fulfill attributes
6. will review distinguishing features of the two sets of subscripts and if the AHVI needs to be looked upon by the union.
7. may consider any other attributes not mentioned in their charge as part of their comprehensive review.

The Task Force will produce recommendations for Faculty Senate consideration by the Fall 2024 semester with an update on initial steps planned provided by the May 2024 Senate Retreat. The Senate authorizes the Senate Executive Committee to constitute the membership of the proposed task force following expressed interest of all stakeholders institution-wide.

Executive Summary

The Task Force on Attribute Assessment involved faculty convenors and coordinators of attributes and subscripts, representatives from academic advising, as well as members from the general faculty body and administration. Over the course of the 2023-2024 academic year, we met as an entire group six times for two-hour meetings. In addition, subgroups organized their own meetings to collect and analyze the data in the report (see [Methods Used To Compile This Report's Findings](#) for full detail) . We collectively wrote this report, which was then organized and edited by the co-chairs of this Task Force.

In this report, there are four overarching “problems” with the current attributes system identified by the Task Force based on our data collection and analysis:

1. The general education curriculum structure is perceived as complicated and restrictive for students. This often leads students to select a class to “check a box” rather than pursue their own academic interests. In fact, this structure actually consists of two structures: a G-course-based curriculum and an attributes-based curriculum, which creates 84 total credits relevant to the General Studies curriculum: 32 credits of G-courses and up to 52 credits of attributes. The 52 credit requirement for attributes represents 40% of a student’s overall graduation requirement, whereas the 32 credits for General studies courses represents only 25%. Relatedly, our cross-comparative analysis of other public institutions in New Jersey showed that Stockton University has the most rigid framework for curriculum requirements when considering both attributes *and* General Studies categories.
2. The process for applying for attributes is inconsistent, complex, and sometimes perceived as adversarial and/or cumbersome.
3. The process of applying approved attributes to semester course schedules is confusing to many faculty. This is also true regarding the process of applying for graduation requirement waivers.
4. There are varying levels of concern expressed by respondents across all three surveys that students are not fulfilling graduation requirements in the ideal timeline (i.e., eight semesters) due to, specifically, the attribute structure within the general education curriculum.

Based on these four “problems” identified through our data analysis, we present a series of administrative and procedural recommendations as well as a set of curricular models for faculty and administration to review and consider. Along with each proposed curricular model is a summary which discusses the model’s strengths and limitations. We strongly emphasize two points:

1. None of the recommendations in this report include any changes to the current General Studies Curriculum of GEN, GAH, GIS, GNM, and GSS courses. This speaks to the

entrenchment of faculty commitment to a liberal arts education and the School of General Studies. We, as a Task Force, strongly endorse and defend the need for a comprehensive and innovative general studies curriculum within the School of General Studies. Further, we consider these curricular models as a *starting point* of conversation for us as a campus community to deliberate on how to preserve the tradition of General Studies while also accounting for the evolving, dynamic needs of our student body.

2. This Task Force *strongly* recommends that the Faculty Senate arrange *multiple opportunities for discussion and deliberation* throughout AY 2024-2025 to ensure the inclusion of all stakeholder voices, including a Faculty Assembly in Fall Semester 2024. We conclude with a recommended timeline for carrying out these tasks and moving forward with any changes.

Methods Used To Compile This Report's Findings

It was essential to the Task Force that all relevant information, from all sources and stakeholders, was collected to inform the recommendations from this report. As a result, the Task Force implemented multiple data collection methods to ensure this was achieved.

First, to inform the Task Force regarding the historical context of the current attributes/subscript system, as well as to attempt to clarify the ethos of General Studies as a core component of the Stockton mission, the Faculty Senate/Assembly archives were utilized. Using the assistance of our archival librarian, Heather Perez, the appropriate and relevant records were identified, compiled, and read. They are summarized in the “Historical Context of the Development of the Attributes/Subscripts System at Stockton” sub-section.

To inform the Task Force about the comparability of Stockton’s general education requirements to other, comparable colleges/universities’ general education curricula, a comprehensive review of 16 higher education institutions and their general education curriculum was conducted. This review considered curricular structure, requirements, and procedures/policies. The findings from this review are summarized in the “Comparison to General Studies Requirements from Other Comparable Colleges/Universities” sub-section.

To inform the Task Force about the perceived effectiveness of the current attribute/subscript system, three surveys were developed and disseminated to the three main stakeholders in university curriculum: faculty, students, and relevant administrators/staff. Both qualitative and quantitative data were collected, aggregated, and analyzed to determine how each group of stakeholders evaluated our current system. The findings are summarized throughout the “Identification of the ‘Problem(s)’ section.

To inform the Task Force regarding the current status and efficacy of the process for applying, reviewing, and approving courses with attributes/subscripts, the Task Force invited both current and past convenors of all attributes/subscripts to attend a meeting to share their insights. In this meeting, convenors were asked to share information regarding the standards for each of their corresponding attributes/subscripts, the review process itself and its procedures, as well as their perceptions on potential improvements and/or changes that they’d like to see. The conclusions from this “focus group” are integrated throughout the “Identification of the ‘Problem(s)’” section.

Lastly, to inform the Task Force regarding the status of all offered courses with subscripts and attributes, data from the Office of Institutional Research and the Office of the Registrar was gathered to enumerate how many classes and sections with attributes/subscripts are offered, in what schools, and how often they are offered as well as relevant graduation data. This data is

included in the “Availability of Classes with Attributes/Subscripts and Declining Graduation Rates” sub-section.

It is important to note that we did not edit the qualitative data for factual inaccuracies or grammatical and spelling errors, although we recognize and acknowledge that they do exist. We did not edit the qualitative data in order to preserve the sentiment of the writer and because some of the inaccuracies were essential to highlighting the issues presented throughout the report. We only anonymized the qualitative data to protect the identity of respondents or individuals named in the comments.

Identification of the “Problem(s)”

Historical Context of the Development of the Attributes/Subscripts System

The following history shaped the work of the Task Force and several of its subcommittees and should be reviewed to fully understand the context and evolution of the general education system more broadly, and the value and distinctiveness of the General Studies School more specifically.

The following historical documents were reviewed as part of this analysis:

- Various Faculty Assembly/Senate minutes starting in 1995 (as referred to and summarized below),
- The General Studies Committee, Second Report from July 15, 1997, entitled “Ideas for Faculty Workshop Consideration” (available [here](#)),
- The “Task Force on General Education Curriculum Reform Report” from September 1, 2006 (available [here](#)), and
- The Task Force on Essential Learning Outcomes (ELOs) Report from May 2023 (available [here](#)).

In 1995, the General Studies Committee reported to the Faculty Assembly a concern that students were not receiving an appropriate breadth of knowledge across their G courses. Students would take both GAH courses in the Arts but none in the Humanities or vice versa; similarly, both GNM classes would focus on biological science rather than taking one in the physical sciences. A proposal to subdivide the G classes into GART, GHUM, GPHY, and GBIO was scrapped by the Faculty Assembly; the Assembly felt structural subdivisions would create a checklist mentality among the students, which they did not want. The General Studies Committee was then tasked to develop an alternate plan.

Also in 1995, a proposal for GIS to move to the Junior year was discussed. Proponents felt limiting GIS to the Junior year would create a sense of community between transfer and first-time students through this common experience. Opponents saw the delay in GIS as a delay in teaching ethics. Both sides agreed that ethics needs to be taught in context throughout the curriculum rather than in one targeted course.

In November 1997, the General Studies Committee proposed the creation of subscripts for historical consciousness (H), international awareness (I), ethical sensitivity (E), and arts (A). The Faculty Assembly minutes report there were no questions or discussion of this proposal. No vote count was reported, only that the proposals were passed.

Notably, also in 1997, there was considerable discussion about the purpose of our general education requirements and general studies curriculum, and clear recommendations for options

to improve on the existing curriculum at the time. Below is a description of the “Nature of General Studies Courses”, referring to the general studies curriculum currently made up of GAH, GEN, GIS, GSS, and GNM courses:

As regards the nature of General Studies courses, these attributes seem essential:

- 1) that they are transdisciplinary or interdisciplinary in one of several ways: either by applying knowledge beyond what is typical in program courses; or by considering the larger context of the subject; or by the drawing upon several disciplines;*
- 2) that they are targeted to the non-major; and*
- 3) that they are self-contained, free-standing, i.e., complete educational experiences in themselves.*




In January of 1999, the Faculty Assembly finalized the language for defining each of the subscripts A, H, I, and V (E having changed to V by this point) which is still used by most of the convenors. H convenors updated the description prior to 2020 to be in accord with best practices from the American Historical Association. An overarching explanation for all the subscripts was included in the 1999 report and reads, in part,

The courses should use a ‘W 1.5’ sort of a model for determining how much of the content should be related to the subscript. In other words, these courses should have as a primary focus the content found under each of the subscript descriptions. For example, an ‘H’ subscripted course cannot occasionally touch on historical events, a historical perspective and analysis should be integral to the vast majority of the course content. No course can receive more than one of the new subscripts (although it could receive a ‘W’ or ‘Q’ designation in addition to the subscript).

Proposal of the A, H, I, and V additionally called for a substantial number of subscript convenors in order to insure one or more be present in the G meetings approving courses thus guaranteeing “rigor and breadth.” There is no further reporting in subsequent Faculty Assembly minutes as to how the subscript convenors were chosen or carried out their duties. It appears the initial idea of coupling approval of subscripts with approval of the G courses never occurred. Minutes for September 1999 indicate the subscripts were already in place for some classes and more were being added.

Additionally, in May 2023, the Task Force on Essential Learning Outcomes (ELOs) issued their recommendation that the university adopt and follow a set of themes to better align learning outcomes across the board, including attributes, subscripts, and General Studies courses. Below is their recommendation:

Figure 1: ILTs: Communication, Community and Competency

Communication	Community	Competency
		
<p><u>ELO Alignment</u> Communication skills Information Literacy Critical Thinking/Reading</p> <p><u>Plus:</u> Professional Communication Media Literacy Interpersonal Communication</p>	<p><u>ELO Alignment</u> Global Awareness Teamwork and Collaboration Adapting to Change</p> <p><u>Plus:</u> Active, integrative, significant, social, service, and engaged learning</p>	<p><u>ELO Alignment</u> Ethical Reasoning Creativity and Innovation Quantitative Reasoning</p> <p><u>Plus:</u> Scientific Literacy Digital/Data Literacy Financial Literacy Cultural Literacy</p>

Source: ELO Task Force Report (May 2023), available at https://www.stockton.edu/faculty-senate/documents/2023_documents/may2023/ELO_TASK_FORCE_REPORT_S2_3.pdf

Despite this recommendation, however, as of yet, the University is still determining implementation, if any.

Comparison to General Studies Requirements at Comparable Institutions

The Assessment of Attributes task force, first, evaluated how other higher education institutions design and implement a General Studies curriculum. The goals were to identify and summarize general studies/general education/core requirements at New Jersey public institutions and other comparable institutions. This comparison allows us to better understand what other schools have adopted in terms of curriculum requirements, their processes for course approvals, and how they communicate available required courses to students.

The Sub-Task Force Process

This analysis researched general education/core requirements at the following 16 schools: Fairleigh Dickinson, Kean, Monmouth, Montclair, NJIT, Ramapo, Rider, Rowan, Rutgers, Seton Hall, Saint Joseph's, TCNJ, Temple, University of Delaware, William Paterson and Widener. The list of schools was derived from a curriculum review by the Business Administration (formerly Business Studies) Program. The original source was the Office of Enrollment Management which noted that the schools were considered Stockton's primary (and secondary) competitors. For each of the 16 schools, information was gathered and collated regarding the general studies/general education requirements taking other factors into consideration, including credit requirements, skills and content areas, notable college/university-wide requirements, and mission-driven factors. The research findings were compiled into a General Education Curriculum report (see [Curriculum Sub-Task Force Report](#)) that was then consolidated into a General Education Curriculum spreadsheet which was used for analysis. A detailed case analysis for one school, Rowan University, was also completed (see [Appendix A](#) for the full detailed analysis).

Summary of General Education Curriculum in the Region

Tables 1 and 2 show the current general education curriculum at Stockton. In addition to the 32 credits required in the five General Studies categories (16 credits for transfers with more than 64 credits completed), students must also layer *an additional 52 credits* of attribute and subscript requirements, for a total of up to 84 credits in general education requirements. Because the attributes and subscripts are layered on top of existing courses, the best way to think about this is that students must use 52 out of their total of 128 credits in the attributes/subscripts curriculum. This means that Stockton is currently prescribing *a minimum of 40%* of our students' curriculum with these general education requirements.

Table 1: Summary of Stockton's Graduation Requirements for a B.A.

	Incoming students with less than 64 transfer credits	Incoming students with more than 64 transfer credits
General Studies array:	A total of 32 credits:	A total of 16 credits:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 8 credits in GAH - 4 credits in GEN - 4 credits in GIS - 8 credits in GNM - 8 credits in GSS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 4 credits in GIS - 12 credits in GAH, GNM, or GSS
Attributes & Subscripts <u>layered on top of other courses:</u>	A total of up to 52 credits: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 16 credits in W1/W2 - 12 credits in Q1/Q2 - 8 credits R1/R2 - 16 credits of AHVI 	A total of up to 52 credits: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 16 credits in W1/W2 - 12 credits in Q1/Q2 - 8 credits R1/R2 - 16 credits of AHVI
At some distance:	A total of 32 credits	A total of 48 credits
Program & Cognate	A total of 64 credits	A total of 64 credits
TOTAL POSSIBLE CREDITS TO GRADUATE	128 - 180 credits*	128 - 180 credits*
*This range of credits to graduate reflects the fact that students must find classes that cover more than one requirement in order to graduate on time since 64 program credits + 84 general education credits =148 credits, significantly more than the graduation requirement of 128.		

Table 2: Summary of Stockton’s Graduation Requirements for a B.S.

	Incoming students with less than 64 transfer credits	Incoming students with more than 64 transfer credits
General Studies array:	A total of 32 credits: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 8 credits in GAH - 4 credits in GEN - 4 credits in GIS - 8 credits in GNM - 8 credits in GSS 	A total of 16 credits: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 4 credits in GIS - 12 credits in GAH, GNM, or GSS
Attributes & Subscripts:	A total of up to 52 credits: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 16 credits in W1/W2 - 12 credits in Q1/Q2 - 8 credits R1/R2 - 16 credits of AHVI 	A total of up to 52 credits: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 16 credits in W1/W2 - 12 credits in Q1/Q2 - 8 credits R1/R2 - 16 credits of AHVI
At some distance:	A total of 16 credits	A total of 32 credits
Program & Cognate	A total of 80 credits	A total of 80 credits
TOTAL POSSIBLE	128 - 180 credits*	128 - 180 credits*

CREDITS TO GRADUATE		
*This range of credits to graduate reflects the fact that students must find classes that cover more than one requirement in order to graduate on time since 64 program credits + 84 general education credits =148 credits, significantly more than the graduation requirement of 128.		

The research for each school relative to Stockton was gleaned and consolidated into the following 14 categories (see Table 3). The process of identifying these categories included the following steps. We started listing out each of the 16 institutions' requirements in a matrix to better understand the data. Then, as we added requirements for individual institutions, we simultaneously evaluated the broader themes and started to group them together into a list of more cohesive themes or categories. Table 3: Snapshot of General Education Curriculum Across 16 Institutions

Category/ Theme	Stockton's Current Curriculum	# institutions with this requirement (n = 16)	Range of credits required	Additional comments
Communication	16 credits W1/W2 courses with grades of C or better (4 classes, or 12.5% of overall credits)	16	3 - 15 credits (1-5 classes) 7.5% (William Patterson) to 33% (Montclair) MEDIAN = 6 credits (2 classes)	Schools take a variety of approaches, focusing on a blend of writing, oral communication, and other skills. Requirements range from only 1 writing course to up to 5 required courses in writing and other related skills. Five institutions require <u>speech and oral communication</u> : Rowan, Montclair, Monmouth, Kean, and Fairleigh Dickinson. Only 2, Temple and Rider, include <u>reading</u> as part of a writing course requirement
Arts & Humanities	8 Credits GAH, 4 credits A-Arts, and 4 credits H-History for a total of 16 credits (4 classes total, or 12.5% of overall credits)	15	3-12 credits (1-4 classes) MEDIAN = 9 credits (3 classes)	Five institutions have a history requirement as part of an overall requirement; 10 institutions have an art requirement, with 2 more adding arts to the humanities; 3 institutions require literature; 3 institutions require philosophy and religion.
Quantitative analysis	12 credits Q1 or Q2 courses (3 classes, or 9.4% of overall credits)	13	3 - 8 credits (1-2 classes) MEDIAN = 3 credits (1 class)	Generally, schools require 1-3 courses, with most requiring 1 or 2 courses. Ramapo requires double the credits in this area as compared to writing
Social sciences	8 Credits GSS (2 classes, or 6.25% of overall credits)	12	3-9 credits (1-3 classes)	There is some overlap with diversity requirements in this category; examples: Diversities and Social Inequalities

Category/ Theme	Stockton's Current Curriculum	# institutions with this requirement (n = 16)	Range of credits required	Additional comments
			MEDIAN = 4.5 credits (1-2 classes)	
Science	8 Credits GNM (2 classes, or 6.25% of overall credits)	12	3-9 credits (1-3 classes plus labs) MEDIAN = 4 credits (1-2 classes/labs)	
Global/cultural understanding or literacy	4 credits I-International/Multicultural (1 class, or 3.13% of overall credits)	10	3 - 12 credits (1-4 classes) MEDIAN = 3 credits (1 class)	There is more variance in how this category is defined. Here are some examples: global literacy, global issues, global cultural perspectives, cultural diversity, cultural literacy, engaging the world, a "multicultural" course, global awareness, cultural understanding
First-year seminars	4 credits FYS (1 class, or 3.13% of overall credits)	9	1-3 credits (1 class) MEDIAN = 2.5 credits (1 class)	Many schools did not have this requirement, skewing the median # of credits to fewer than 1 class, however every school with this requirement has a single standalone class.
Ethical reasoning	4 credits V-Values (1 class, or 3.13% of overall credits)	6	3-4 credits (1 class) MEDIAN = 0 credits	As only 6 schools have a requirement, thus pushing the median to 0. Themes include: values & ethics, faith & reason, diversity & justice, belief systems, ethics intensive
Information/ technological literacy	N/A	6	0-6 credits (1-2 classes) MEDIAN = 0 credits	Only 6 schools have a requirement, one of them with a single 0 credit requirement, thus pushing the median to 0. Themes include: information literacy, tech literacy, computing literacy (understanding software/algorithms), research skills, data science. One institution requires 0 credit course to be completed to graduate
Inter-disciplinary	4 Credits GEN & 4 Credits GIS (2 classes, or 6.25% of overall credits)	5	3-9 credits (1-3 classes) MEDIAN = 0 credits	Themes include: The Human Experience, Our Common Future

Category/ Theme	Stockton's Current Curriculum	# institutions with this requirement (n = 16)	Range of credits required	Additional comments
Languages	N/A	4	3-6 credits (1-2 classes) MEDIAN = 0 credits	Three institutions require courses, and 1 requires 2nd language (proficiency)
Diversity	8 credits R1/R2 (2 classes, or 6.25% of overall credits)	4	3 credits (1 class) MEDIAN = 0 credits	This requirement is either a standalone or overlaid with another category including global/cultural understanding - the median is therefore not useful for this category on its own.
Experiential education	N/A	4	1-6 credits (1-2 courses) MEDIAN = 0 credits	Example: Discovery Learning Experience (DLE) DLE courses are typically taken in a student's senior year. Examples of DLE courses include: Internships, Study Abroad, Senior Theses, Practica. Example: Transformations Capstone Course Example: Engaged Learning requirement for two high-impact experiences
Civics & government	N/A	1	4 credits (1 class) MEDIAN = 0 credits	Requirement for "community and civic engagement" at William Patterson.
TOTAL GENERAL EDUCATION CREDITS	<i>32 - 84 credits</i>		<i>16 - 67 credits</i> MEDIAN = 41 credits	

Note: The columns may not add up to the total row, because of differences in how individual schools break down their general education requirements into separate categories. The total row reflects the stated total credit requirement across all schools.

Additional notable findings:

The university-wide requirements at some schools were directly aligned with their mission. Several examples are below:

- Fairleigh Dickinson - 6 credits in global education
- NJIT - 3 credits in computing literacy
- Rider - 2 high-impact engaged learning experiences from [six categories](#)
- Seton Hall - [core curriculum is rooted in questions central but not exclusive to the Catholic intellectual tradition](#)
- Saint Joseph's - Jesuit tradition common core

- TCNJ - first-year community-engaged learning non-credit, 80-hour requirement

The General Education distribution requirements varied by major at some schools (Kean, Montclair, Saint Joseph's). Rider requires students to complete an Engaged Learning Graduation requirement. TCNJ requires students to pass an online, 0-credit Information Literacy graduation requirement. Finally, some schools categorized General Education requirements by theme:

- Rider (Essential Competencies, Disciplinary Perspectives)
- Rowan (6 core literacies - Artistic, Communicative, Global, Humanistic, Quantitative, Scientific)
- Rutgers (Contemporary Challenges, Areas of Inquiry, Cognitive Skills and Processes)
- Saint Joseph's (Signature Courses, Variable Courses, Integrative Learning Courses, Overlay Requirements)
- TCNJ (Intellectual and Scholarly Growth, Social Justice, Multidisciplinary Perspectives)

“Problems” Identified by the Student Survey

The Attribute Assessment task force, second, initiated a comprehensive student survey to gauge their opinions on the current attribute/subscript system at Stockton University. The goal of the survey was to understand if changes proposed by the Task Force align with the student body's expectations and needs, given their central role as primary stakeholders. This goal was reinforced by the belief that students' insights are important for making informed decisions about the educational framework, ensuring that it not only adheres to academic integrity but also fosters student success and satisfaction.

The data collected from 152 respondents provide a comprehensive view of Stockton University's student body (the full report on respondent demographics can be found in section I of the [Student Survey Report](#)). Across all academic years, from First Year to Senior, responses were approximately evenly distributed, with each year having between 30 (20%) and 44 (29%) respondents (only 3 respondents identified as “super-seniors”). Similarly, representation from across Schools closely mirrors the distribution of students within those Schools, with between 21 (14%) and 37 (24%) respondents from each (except for GENS and EDUC, which had 4 respondents each). The majority of respondents were pursuing a B.S. ($N=76$; 50%) or a B.A. ($N=60$; 39%) degree. Most survey respondents reported GPAs above 3.0, with 87 (57%) reporting above a 3.5 and 48 (32%) reporting between 3.0 and 3.5. Additionally, the majority of respondents ($N=112$; 74%) rated their own understanding of the General Studies system and its requirements as a 4 or 5 on a 5-point scale. The majority of respondents reported that they were satisfied or very satisfied with Stockton University as a whole ($N=118$; 78%) and with their G courses ($N=96$; 63%). On average, the students who responded to the survey have good grades and are happy with their academic experience at Stockton.

This summary will detail the results from this survey in the context of the problems that were highlighted by the results and may not be exhaustive of all the results. For those interested, the full Student Survey report can be found [here](#).

Lack of Flexibility in General Studies Requirements

Students reported overall satisfaction with their experience with the University and their General Studies Courses, with 77.6% and 63.2% of students reporting Satisfied/Very Satisfied, respectively (section II a of the [Student Survey Report](#)). These satisfaction scores drop precipitously when asked about their experiences with their attributes and subscripts, Satisfied/Very Satisfied being 52.6% for the AHVI's, 57.2% for the Qs and Ws, and 26.4% for the R's. One possible explanation for this can be gleaned by considering student responses to whether they take general studies courses based on interest or to meet an attribute/subscript requirement (see section IV a of the [Student Survey Report](#)). Students were split on this question with on average 44.9% indicating they took classes based on interest and 34.3% indicating they took classes simply to meet an attribute or subscript requirement.

A thematic grouping of student comments when asked what they would add or remove from the attribute/subscript requirements reveals a significant desire for a reduction in the number of requirements, and minimal desire for additions (see section V a of the [Student Survey Report](#)). The most common suggestions were requests to limit the number of R courses, eliminate the R requirement, eliminate the A requirement, reduce the number of Q and W requirements, eliminate the H requirement, and more comments calling for more flexibility in one manner or another. It is worth noting that very few student comments across the survey advocated for reducing the overall number of required general studies courses (i.e., G courses), and a few specifically acknowledged the importance of general studies and at-some-distance courses to a well-rounded education.

Some students noted instances where either they or someone they knew faced graduation delays due to missing attributes or subscripts. These concerns are supported by graduation denial data collected from the Registrar showing that 3.3% of students who applied for graduation in Spring 2024 were denied, in part, due to lacking attributes and/or subscripts. For a full breakdown of this data see [Appendix B. Spring 2024 Student Graduation Data](#). Concerns over fulfilling all of their general education requirements are not the result of overly anxious students, but seems to be a frequent concern Sockton students have when building their course schedules.

As stated previously, the student survey comments underscored a clear preference for greater flexibility within the attributes and subscripts system, with many advocating for a reduction in requirements altogether. According to the comments, the current framework limits students' capacity to customize their education, potentially resulting in dissatisfaction and disengagement. Students expressed a desire to pursue courses of personal interest while also fulfilling their general studies requirements.

I would take away needing three W's and three Q's because it is a lot and sometimes its hard to find something you're interested in concerning writing and math. I would only make the requirement a W1 and a W2 and a Q1 and a Q2.

I understand the importance of a well-rounded education, but I think the general studies requirements basically accomplish the majority of that by themselves and the attributes do not need to be as demanding. The current system results in students taking classes they have no interest in simply to obtain an attribute. They will often not perform well in classes they do not care about which can affect their GPA, which (for more demanding majors) can affect their career. The overall credits requirement can stay the same to avoid losing out on tuition revenue from less attributes. This system would give students the freedom to take more classes they actually care about while still providing a well-rounded education through a lesser amount of strict attribute requirements.

I have enjoyed Much of my general studies coursework and most of my attribute courses, I believe very much in liberal education and not just technical skills, etc - I support completely taking the amount of GEN coursework that is required- but the attribute requirements create a lot of stress- in my life and in the lives of other students I have spoken with. There just aren't Enough of some of them, and - in the most grateful, appreciative and understanding way possible- the R courses that are available are often biased to the point of restricting student learning and critical thinking

Furthermore, transfer students indicate the rigidity and size of the current requirements makes it hard for them to complete all the current requirements in two years.

Overall, it is simply a little too much to fit in for a person with any sort of abnormal transcript. As a person who transferred in with a (expletive) (sic) ton of courses to satisfy stuff all over the board, moving around to make the classes fit for a unique class schedule to satisfy a graduation timeline, along with Stockton's requirement that so many of the credits be fulfilled at Stockton, made it feel like a bit too much, and I'm sure many non-transfers who switch majors/double major/get bad class advice from one advisor/etc. feel the same way.

The survey reveals a gap between overall student satisfaction and their engagement with attributes and subscripts. While most students are content with their university experience, higher levels of dissatisfaction arises with attribute requirements. Many students advocate for reducing these requirements, citing stress and challenges, especially for transfer students. Anticipation and/or actualization of graduation delays due to missing attributes further highlights the rigidity issues inherent to the current system. This feedback underscores the need for a more flexible approach, balancing a well-rounded education with students' individual interests and circumstances.

Misalignment of A and H with Future Goals/Career

Students generally acknowledge the value of A and H subscripts in fostering a well-rounded education and contributing to personal growth beyond academic achievements (A: 54.6% and 54.6% agreement, respectively; H: 64.5% and 50.6% agreement, respectively). However, when questioned about the alignment of these attributes with their future goals, only 33.6% agreed for the A attribute and 39.5% agreed for the H subscript, while 46.1% disagreed for A and 40.1% disagreed for H, the remainders being a neutral response. The following student comment carries the sentiments contained in this numerical information,

I feel like the H attribute has a good idea behind it, but I've already learned plenty in middle and high school.

Some students have a different perspective and wish they could take more A and H classes, but can't due to the numerous requirements contained in the general studies systems (G-courses and Attributes/Subscripts).

Personally, I wish that my education allowed me more time and courses that follow the A and H requirements. I feel like they are important to my major but are looked over. I see the value in R classes to some majors but maybe only requiring 1 would be better.

Students recognize the value of A and H subscripts in fostering a well-rounded education and personal growth. However, their alignment with future goals is unclear. This feedback suggests a need to reconsider the necessity of the A and H requirements or to change them such that they better align with students' educational aspirations and needs.

Difficulty in Enrolling in R Courses

The R1 and R2 attributes received the most attention in students' comments regarding desired changes to the attribute/subscript system. Among survey respondents, 33.5% indicated they chose R1 and/or R2 courses out of interest, while 46.7% stated they enrolled to fulfill an attribute requirement. This frustration may stem from class availability issues.

Firstly, there is a notable shortage of R1 and R2 courses offered annually, failing to meet the demand. Historical course counts are outlined in the section on '[Problems with Availability of Classes with Attributes/Subscripts 2017-2023](#)' below. Secondly, a majority of R1 courses are not offered within the G-course system but are program-specific. These constraints contribute to students' struggles in enrolling in courses with R1 and R2 subscripts. Consequently, students often prioritize fulfilling R1 and R2 requirements over genuine interest in the course content, with the fewest proportion of students indicating that they took R courses out of interest rather than to meet an attribute requirement (34%) compared to the other attributes and subscripts.

This difficulty is compounded by students' desire to fulfill both G-course and R1 and R2 requirements concurrently. They perceive it as inefficient to use non-G-course options to fulfill attribute/subscript requirements, given the existing number of requirements they must fulfill in both the G-course system and in the attributes/subscripts system.

A representative comment given about the R1/2 attributes is the following,

Remove one or R requirements. It is difficult to get good classes that satisfy both requirements, there aren't enough offerings, and you can't transfer in an R attribute from another school, even if the class was all about race.

This comment highlights student frustration with the limited availability of courses offering R1 and R2 attributes and also underscores another issue between the general studies system and students: a lack of understanding of the meaning of course attributes and subscripts. This student is mistaken, and many classes do transfer in as R1 or R2 (see here for [approved transferred courses for R1/2](#)). The problem here is that the student thinks a course about race should implicitly be assigned an R1 or R2, which is not the case. This problem is further explained in the following "Problem" section.

Misunderstanding of Course Attributes and Subscripts - Student “Buy In” Part 1

Students have some misconceptions about the meaning and significance of course attributes and subscripts. These misconceptions influence course selection and engagement, potentially leading to negative perceptions of classes and instructors. Addressing these misunderstandings is crucial for promoting informed decision-making and enhancing student learning experiences.

Part of the underlying problem is that students lack “buy in” with regard to general studies. Students in general agree that the attributes and subscripts make for a well-rounded education and contribute to their growth outside of academia. However, they fail to link the attributes and subscripts with their future goals and/or career aspirations. Consider this student comment

Yes, most are not related to [my] major, or provide any knowledge required for [my] future career.

This sentiment is not unique and shows a disconnect between the value a liberal arts education brings to students both with regard to bettering themselves and towards their future goals and careers.

Another part of the problem is a misunderstanding of what constitutes a AHVI or WQR course. Several student comments expressed a desire for all general studies courses to carry an attribute while others suggested that any course which ought to have any attribute or subscript should be given it automatically.

Courses automatically have all applicable attributes, not necessary for faculty to apply it themselves. Unless they alter the course.

For example, a student may feel that a course should carry a W1 or W2 if they are required to do a lot of writing as part of their grade. While this reflects a misunderstanding of what is required for a course to be given any attribute or subscript, it should not be ignored as a problem. It too contributes to a lack of “buy in” from the students.

Addressing this “buy in” problem may help reduce the opposition many students have towards having to take general studies coursework. Students who are convinced of the usefulness or at least the purpose of a course are more likely to be engaged and open to learning, and are more likely to retain the skills and knowledge from that course. Students who resent having to take a course may do the least they can to scrape by with a passing grade, learning and retaining as little as they can, in which case we are not succeeding in forming well-rounded students.

Desire for Greater Relevance to Major - Student “Buy In” Part 2

A common opinion expressed in comments to the student survey was that general studies courses and attribute requirements should better align with students’ major field of study (see section V b of the [Student Survey Report](#)). Within these opinions, some students expressed a desire for their general studies courses to be better tailored in content to their major.

If I had the power I would have specific general courses to correlate with each major so it at least interests them as well as helping them with their future careers.

Some, however, made it clear that they wanted to take fewer courses that they felt were not directly related to their major:

I would remove the Q1/2 requirements for majors who do not have math as part of the discipline.

I would require to take an A, H, V, I, Q1, R1, R2, and W1 because unless your major requires an additional writing or math course the students shouldn't have to pay for courses that don't help their major.

This sentiment is, of course, counter to the goal of achieving a well-rounded education. This result will perhaps be unsurprising to some who are used to students who remark that they do not understand why they have to take any courses that are not directly related to their major.

Although we may feel that they are wrong in this case, we should not ignore this attitude that pervades much of the student population. It is another symptom of our failure to achieve “buy in” as described in the previous subsection.

While few would argue that reducing requirements that seem distant to a major would contribute to a well-rounded education, we may achieve greater flexibility if the number of general studies requirements “close to” a major were reduced. Students in the social sciences, for example, could be required to take only one (instead of two) GSS courses, leaving them the flexibility to replace that requirement with any G course or at-some-distance course.

Dissatisfaction with Available Information and Assistance

One part of the survey to which students responded with the least satisfaction was their access to helpful resources for understanding the general studies course, attribute, and subscript requirements (section II b of the [Student Survey Report](#)). Barely more than a third of students (36.7%) were satisfied or completely satisfied with information available through resources such as the University website, approximately the same fraction (35.5%) were satisfied with the information they received from the Office of Academic Advising, and only slightly more (41.5%) were satisfied with the information they received from faculty. This was one of the most frequent sentiments expressed in the comments on that section of the survey (see section II c of the [Student Survey Report](#)), including:

... I got sick and gained stress weight during Fall semester of my senior year while trying to figure out - on my own- how to make everything 'fit' together in order to graduate on time because I was at the end of my undergraduate financial aid eligibility. ARHU was incredibly responsive and helpful, but there were failings in the precepting program and advising functions that could have prevented the 'down to the wire' situation I ended up in. A younger person with less motivation to make a pest of themselves & self-advocate to work it out, might have ended up paying for an extra semester out of pocket...

Complexity in the number and type of specific requirements embedded within the general studies course system leads to confusion for both preceptors and students. Inevitably, mistakes will be made, information will be miscommunicated or misunderstood, and some students will struggle to fulfill all the requirements for graduation in eight semesters no matter how the system is structured. Any decrease in the number and complexity of specific requirements will, however, reduce the frequency of these kinds of mistakes. Furthermore, preceptors will hopefully be able to spend less time helping students strategize how to fulfill their general studies requirements and more time advising them on how to succeed in their chosen field of study.

“Problems” Identified by the Faculty Survey

The Attribute Assessment Task Force, thirdly, administered a survey to Stockton’s teaching faculty. The goal was to measure faculty perceptions on the current attributes structure and application process. The full report, along with summary tables and qualitative comments for responses to all questions in the survey, can be found in [Faculty Survey Aggregate Data](#).

Through an analysis of the responses, there were a few common and key areas that survey-takers drew attention to. A summary of those key findings are as follows:

1. Responses from survey-takers indicated that the application review process is often understood as a gatekeeping mechanism rather than an opportunity for professional development.
2. Responses from survey-takers emphasized a need for standardization across the application processes.
3. Responses from survey-takers noted difficulties in accessing and incorporating the particular expectations for each attribute or subscript into their applications and in their courses.
4. Responses from survey-takers noted a need for a more consistent and standard framework to define attributes and subscripts including their relationship to one another, to the General Studies curriculum, and to program courses.
5. Responses from survey-takers indicated interest in pursuing either improvements or changes to the current attribute structure (AVHI). Similar, but fewer, had interest in pursuing changes to the current subscript structure (WRQ1/2). There were few instances in which survey-takers expressed a desire to add additional requirements to the current system (e.g., Language, Gender, Computational Science).

In what follows, representative data from the survey—both quantitative and qualitative—are offered to provide evidence for the findings outlined above.

Note on Context and Standpoint of Qualitative Analysis

The qualitative data from survey-takers is complex and expresses a wide spectrum of perspectives (see [Faculty Survey Aggregate Data](#) for all qualitative responses). For this report, attention was focused on comments and feedback that were actionable and could lead to productive solutions. To determine whether comments were actionable and productive, comments had to be compatible with the following assumptions. These assumptions form the basic foundation of the attribute and subscript procedure and structure:

1. To obtain an attribute for a course, someone must apply for the attribute and designation.
2. The attribute application must go through a review process where the course & application, if not approved, may be denied or given additional feedback in order to align the application with the content goals of the attribute.

3. Applications for attributes are reviewed by interdisciplinary content specialists in the academic area that the attribute covers.

Demographics of Survey-Takers

Full demographics can be found in [Faculty Survey Aggregate Data](#). Ninety (90) respondents from various schools, including NAMS (23.3%), SOBL (20%), EDUC (14.4%), ARHU (12.2%), GENS (11.1%), BUSN (10%), and HLTH (8.9%) participated in the survey.

71.1% of the responses were Tenured Faculty (Instructor, Associate, or Full Professor) and 12.2% Tenure-Track Faculty (Instructor or Assistant Professor). 8.9% of respondents were Adjunct Professors, and 4.4% were NTTP Teaching Specialists. 2.2% had dual roles as administrators, and 1.1% were also Staff Members.

57.8% of respondents have been at Stockton for over ten years, and 17.8% for 7-10 years.

70% of the respondents had W1/W2 attributes attached to their courses, followed by Q1/Q2 (50%). Other attributes/subscripts attached to the courses included V (40%), H (28.9%), R1/R2 (26.7%), I (22.2%), and A (15.6%).

The vast majority of faculty respondents (N = 83; 92%) reported having previously or currently taught a class with at least one attribute. A slightly smaller, but still large majority of faculty respondents (N = 75; 83%) reported having previously applied for at least one attribute, with the average number of attributes that faculty reported applying for was 2.41 (median = 2; mode = 2).

Perception of application process as a gatekeeping mechanism rather than professional development

In the findings discussed below, while some respondents expected some degree of rigor in the application process and found the feedback to be a helpful form of mentorship, there were others who did not always agree that the standards or rigor of the application were appropriate. Instead, these respondents framed the application process as an unnecessary or unfair gatekeeping mechanism.

Respondents commented on the rigor of the application process, often discussing the application and review of courses in terms of an “easy” or “difficult” process. The percentage of respondents who found the application process an easy or very easy experience were the following: 67% (8 out of 12) of those who applied for a Q1 attribute, 55% (6 out of 11) of those who applied for a R1 attribute, 82% (9 out of 11) of those who applied for an A attribute, 42% (8 out of 19) of those who applied for a V attribute, and 69% (9 out of 13) of those who applied for an I attribute. In contrast, however, of the 14 respondents who had applied for a W1 attribute, three (21%) respondents found the application process easy or very easy while seven (50%) respondents reported it as a difficult or very difficult experience. Similarly, only nine (16%) of those who

applied for a W2 attribute (n = 57) found the application easy or very easy while 30 respondents (51%) found it difficult or very difficult, and only six (25%) of those who applied for a H attribute (n = 24) found the application easy or very easy while 12 (50%) reported the application process as a difficult or very difficult experience.

Table 4. Description of application experience by attribute. (N = 75)

	Very Easy	Easy	Neither Easy nor Difficult	Difficult	Very Difficult
W1 N = 14	2 (14.3%)	1 (7.1%)	4 (28.6%)	4 (28.6%)	3 (21.4%)
W2 N = 57	2 (3.5%)	7 (12.3%)	18 (31.6%)	25 (43.9%)	5 (8.8%)
Q1 N = 12	3 (25%)	5 (41.7%)	2 (16.7%)	2 (16.7%)	
Q2 N = 25	4 (16%)	5 (20%)	11 (44%)	5 (20%)	
R1 N = 11	1 (9.1%)	5 (45.5%)	5 (45.5%)		
R2 N = 25	1 (4%)	3 (12%)	12 (48%)	6 (24%)	3 (12%)
A N = 11	2 (18.2%)	7 (63.6%)	2 (18.2%)		
H N = 24	2 (8.3%)	4 (16.7%)	6 (25%)	4 (16.7%)	8 (33.3%)
V N = 19	4 (21.1%)	4 (21.1%)	9 (47.4%)	2 (10.5%)	
I N = 13	4 (30.8%)	5 (38.5%)	4 (30.8%)		

Additionally, the findings suggest that the application and review process for attributes often provides the primary and sole means through which faculty will receive mentorship and professional development in the content area of the attribute. In the process of applying for an attribute, the most commonly utilized means of professional development used in preparation for the application process included exchanging emails with the attribute convenor (72%), seeking out feedback on the application from the convenor (48%), and reviewing example or sample applications (43%). Some but fewer respondents participated in a Summer Institute related to the attribute (24%) or a presentation on the attribute (9%).

Table 5. Use of professional development opportunities by those who applied for attributes. (N = 75)

Attended a Summer Institute related to an attribute or subscript	18 (24.3%)
I attended a workshop or presentation during the academic year related to an attribute or subscript	7 (9.3%)
attended a workshop or presentation related to an attribute or subscript that was geared specifically for faculty in my program	3 (4.0%)
I met individually with the convenor of an attribute or subscript (either f2f or online).	31 (41.3%)
I exchanged email correspondences with the attribute or subscript convener prior to applying for an attribute	54 (72%)
I sought and received feedback on my application prior to applying for an attribute or subscript.	36 (48%)
I reviewed examples or sample applications from faculty colleagues or from the Stockton website.	32 (42.7%)
I discussed the application process with a faculty member who had previously applied	30 (40%)
None of these	6 (8%)

The most common reasons reported by faculty respondents for applying for attributes were the course already being aligned with the focus of the attribute (85%) and wanting to increase enrollment in their class(es) (50%).

In the qualitative data, survey-taker’s discussion of ease or difficulty in the application was often connected to their impression of the rigor of the application process. In this context, “rigor” can be described as the degree to which faculty are asked to make visible and justify their choices, are held accountable to those choices through feedback, and be given an approval decision based on those choices which could include denial. In the qualitative responses, there seem to be three kinds of reactions to rigor:

(1) **Rigor is inappropriate.** For some respondents, they largely did not trust the convenor or committee’s feedback and felt entitled to the attribute, regardless of review. Rather than seeing feedback as an opportunity to better align with the expectations of the attribute’s content area, it was seen as an obstacle to something they were entitled to. Some representative comments include:

Putting the students first and trusting the intent of faculty applying for subscripts/attributes. Faculty and programs who use the process to either advance their respective careers or "hijack" certain designations hurt everyone.

A specific program- like writing or history should not monopolize the decision

(2) **Rigor is expected but has exceeded the threshold of what's acceptable.** Some respondents agreed and expected that some review process should be in effect, but that the current process(es) has exceeded what they felt was an appropriate and fair review. Some representative comments include:

While we all appreciate the value of constructive feedback, as a university we should be supportive of colleagues' efforts to present quality curricula to our students throughout all programs. This should be a helpful process, not a judgmental one. [...]
Understandably, application should not yield automatic designation. However, reading all aspects of the application (especially areas that explain content specific writing) is instrumental in a committee's ability to not only appreciate what the applicant is trying to accomplish, but also in helping them achieve it moving forward.

Over time, applying for subscripsts/attributes has become much more burdensome.

The process felt needlessly cumbersome. I understand that the committee wanted to make sure the course was appropriately aligned, but much of what I was asked to submit felt like busy work.

(3) **Rigor in the application process is expected and appropriate.** Respondents commented on having been given feedback or revision notes that have helped them better align with the attribute's standards and/or in the development of their own course goals. Alternately, respondents sometimes *expected* more rigorous feedback—either about their application or to aid in the development of their course—but did not receive it. Some representative comments include:

The process for applying for W2 required that I make some adjustments to my syllabus, which I was happy to do. I also received support in the types of writing the W committee was seeking, which allowed me to be more informed when making the adjustments.

*So far all the application processes have been smooth, rigorous and fair
I received feedback from the committee on the objectives and contents that are additionally needed receive R2 attribute. I thought that was a good process to maintain an accepted standard.*

In connection to discussions of rigor, respondents alluded to their own freedom in designing their courses and questioned the role of the committee in directing content within a faculty member's course. For these respondents, the review process is described as infringing upon their academic freedom to teach content they believe is most important in their course.

a lot of justification is needed to complete the request for the attribute often resulting in two or three revisions to the syllabus to meet the committee's approval--too much intervention by the committee members on the faculty member's choice of content for the course; it seems the attribute committee members direct the majority of assignments in the courses--ex: writing and the "H" taking sections of classroom/course time in order to fulfill the 50% or above requirement of content in the course for the attribute; other faculty are determining the content of the course and the direction for the course

...I have found that "best practices" are used as bullying mechanisms - BPs are teaching preferences by some faculty, and if you don't teach something like they do (for example, with a particular pedagogical style), you are not using best practices. So, then the "recommendations" become how OTHERS would teach the course, and it is no longer the course you designed, nor taught in an authentic manner that represents the best skill sets of the faculty member.

Some respondents questioned whether all faculty are positioned to teach any academic content, particularly the content covered by the attributes.

...Stockton assumes that a faculty member can teach anything which is a fallacy. Writing courses, especially should be taught by writing teachers. The FRST program could be extended to include additional writing and math requirements. The FRST teachers are better equipped to teach writing and math. I realize this might increase staffing burdens, however, faculty from other areas of the university such as Literature, Communications, and History who have extensive writing experience could also teach these course.

Need for standardization across application processes

When asked about recommendations to strengthen the process for proposing and reviewing applications for attribute and subscripsts, survey-takers agreed that certain aspects of the application process—whether among AVHI or WRQ—could be more standardized and common from attribute to attribute. In this context, “standardizing” the application process refers to identifying aspects of the review procedure that any attribute could employ regardless of different disciplinary or academic content.

Discussed below are some of the specific suggestions survey-takers offered to standardize the process; however, several survey-takers broadly endorsed the idea of standardizing the review process or creating more consistency across attributes.

Making requirements clearer, standardizing them across attributes, and streamlining proposal requirements.

Standard website, standard deadlines, standard review process across all attributes and subscripts. Seems like each of the attributes/subscripts operate in their own universe with their own review process and deadlines. It's hard to keep track of everything.

More uniformity in the application procedure across attribute types and easy-to-find resources online

Specifically, survey-takers offered several suggestions that they believed could contribute to a more streamlined, consistent, and standard review process. Many of the suggestions listed below were alluded to several times by different respondents.¹

- a. Provide a common set of resources (such as sample applications, description, guidelines for review, video tutorials, etc.) on the website.
- b. Review applications through a committee of faculty, rather than one convenor.
- c. Greater availability and access to sessions or workshops to prepare applications, particularly for new and/or adjunct faculty.
- d. Follow common deadlines for review and follow a common timeline for decision-making.
- e. Outlining a common procedure for resubmitting revised applications or appealing a decision.
- f. Incentivizing faculty to participate in the application process.

Difficulties in accessing and incorporating the expectations for attribute or subscript

Respondents noted how well they understood the expectations of the attribute during the application process, whether in preparation for the application or during the review/feedback stages. The findings below outline that respondents were not always clear on the expectations or definition of the attributes.

Discussions of attribute expectations seem to manifest in these categories:

(1) Expectations have changed over time. Some respondents note some difficulty in understanding the expectations of attributes when their criteria or standards shift over time.

Expectations for documentation are burdensome, the goal posts seem to move constantly as to what is required to get a W2 designation.

...W2 committee seemed to be in the process of changing their standards for approval and therefore the review process was difficult and unclear.

¹ A common suggestion was more consistent and common criteria across all attributes. That suggestion is described separately and in more depth below.

...The fact a group of faculty can change the definition of an attribute/subscript, something that impacts all faculty and students, without having to go through Faculty Senate and Administration is shocking and needs to be changed.

(2) Expectations are not articulated clearly. Respondents also note whether expectations are unclear or not available when developing their applications and courses.

The W2 Q2 course with new faculty teaching had difficulties as the specifics were not very clear

Advice on HOW to make course suit attribute instead of 'guessing' criteria of convenors.

(3) Faculty may be aware of the expectations, but do not agree with expectations of the attribute. Respondents sometimes demonstrate some awareness of what's expected in an attribute but do not agree with that standard or criteria. Alternatively, they may be aware of the expectation, but do not understand how it's relevant.

Both the W and R committees have very particular criteria and somewhat prescriptive ideas about how those criteria should be met. They require a fully fleshed out course with assignments that demonstrate particular goals and metrics. Even if you have extensive knowledge and experience teaching writing or about race and racism, if your theory and methods diverge from the committee's expectations, you will be asked to revise and resubmit....

The expectations for the H attribute seem to require that we teach history research methods, which is well outside of the scope of my course.

Need for a standard framework that defines attributes and subscripts

Part of the survey asked respondents to indicate how they understand the relationship between content of an attribute and content of a course, including whether the current suggested content percentages of each attribute were appropriate. Broadly, there did not seem to be a clear understanding of the common goals or mission of attributes (AVHI) and likewise there appears to be a desire for greater consistency in defining attributed courses collectively. Below are findings that evidence this idea.

As detailed in [Appendix C](#), there are many differences in the standards used to define the AHVI attributes and evaluate applications for courses seeking the attributes. However, the faculty respondents stated that it was important or very important that content requirements should be standard across all AHVI attributes (77%). When faculty respondents were asked specifically about how standards should be defined for the AHVI attributes, the majority felt it was important

or very important to define attributes by a percentage of relevant class content (79%), and to define a percentage of relevant content assessed as part of the student’s final grade (67%). Additionally, a majority of faculty respondents felt that the AHVI attributes should be secondary content in the class with the corresponding attribute (A: 63%; H: 64%; V: 75%; I: 72%).

Table 6. Importance of AHVI attribute application standards.

	Not at all important	Important	Very important
An AHVI subscript should be defined by a percentage of relevant AVHI CONTENT COVERED in the instruction of the course	19 (21.1%)	43 (47.8%)	28 (31.1%)
An AHVI subscript should be defined by a percentage of relevant AVHI CONTENT ASSESSED as part of a student's final GRADE	29 (32.2%)	53 (58.9%)	8 (8.9%)
The AVHI subscripts should each have a committee of faculty to review and approve courses for the attribute	11 (12.2%)	42 (46.7%)	37 (41.1%)
Any content percentages (whether in instruction or in final grades) should be standard across the AHVI attributes	21 (23.3%)	43 (47.8%)	26 (28.9%)
Each subscript convenor should establish their own criteria to define the subscript	56 (62.2%)	26 (28.9%)	8 (8.9%)

Table 7. Faculty perceptions of whether AHVI is “across” or “within” the discipline.

	A	H	V	I
A course with this attribute should be PRIMARILY concerned with the attribute’s content (similar to W1, Q1, and R1 courses)	33 (36.7%)	32 (35.6%)	23 (25.6%)	25 (27.8%)
A course with this attribute can be primarily focused on ANOTHER topic and should have the AVHI content as its SECONDARY content (similar to W2, Q2, and R2 courses).	57 (63.3%)	58 (64.4%)	67 (74.4%)	65 (72.2%)

Related to these findings, respondents also stated that all AHVI applications should be reviewed by a committee of faculty (88%). However, it’s also notable that respondents believed it was “not at all important” that each convenor establish their own definitional criteria for their attribute (62%). This suggests that applicants may want to establish greater trust in the administration of the attributes and that the attributes currently tend to operate unilaterally depending on the sole convenor overseeing it.

As detailed in [Appendix D](#), there are also many differences in the standards used to define the WQR attributes and evaluate applications for courses seeking those attributes. Similarly to responses about the AHVI attributes, when faculty respondents were asked specifically about how standards should be defined for the W, Q, and R attributes, the majority agreed or strongly agreed that all W1, Q1, and R1 content requirements should be the same (81%), and that all W2, Q2, and R2 content requirements should be the same (65.6%).

Table 8. Agreement with WQR attribute application standards.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Currently, the requirement for amount of relevant content in a W1, Q1, and R1 class is “the majority of class time”. This content requirement should remain the same across all W1, Q1, and R1 attributes	1 (1.1%)	2 (2.2%)	14 (15.6%)	41 (45.6%)	32 (35.6%)
Currently, the requirement for amount of relevant content in a W2, Q2, and R2 class are different. A W2 class requires 15-20% of the content and at least 30% of the course grade to be writing-related, A Q2 class requires at least 20% of the content to involve mathematical ideas, A R2 requires at 25% of course time and course grade to be relevant to race This content requirement should be the same across all W2, Q2, and R2 attributes.	2 (2.2%)	8 (8.9%)	21 (23.3%)	35 (38.9%)	24 (26.7%)

Among the survey-taker’s comments, there did not seem to be a clear consensus on any particular approach in redefining or reframing the attributes and subscripts. However, many survey-takers noted the *need* or *desire* to see more consistency in how we communicate and define the attribute’s academic content. Some frustration was directed at the inconsistency across attributes in terms of the percentages that define each respective attribute:

The current percentages for W2, Q2 & R2 imply that they are not all equally important

The differing requirements across the 2s is weird and unnecessary. It makes application more difficult and, if they all have the same categorization (as 2), shouldn't that mean the same thing?

More attention was directed at the unclear overall mission and goal of the attributes and subscripts. Some representative comments include the following:

I'm not 100% sure what the goal of the subscripts is anymore....

...Attributes, to me, are general education categories, yet do not report to GENS directly. They represent Stockton's commitment across schools to general education, and ultimately demonstrate faculty ownership of general education. Ideas to "abolish" the subscript structure would have to proceed broadly and collaboratively, and with a vision consistent with Stockton's mission....

We keep adding things to the curriculum and never reflect on how it is all working together. The requirements keep getting more and more complex and it is unclear if any of these are helping us attain the outcomes they are intended to. What actually are the outcomes? Have we collectively articulated them since these subscripts were introduced?

I have a hard time seeing how these 4 subscripts connect to the mission of the university in a clear way, and in a way that helps advance the mission and improve the education experience for the students. The subscripts also fail to distinguish Stockton in any way from other institutions....

A consistent set of expectations of the A, H, V, I attributes would be useful.

All attributes should have the same rules/expectations regarding transfer courses, graduation requirements, etc.

Again, there did not seem to be any particular framework that survey-takers offered that would uniformly define the mission and goal of the attributes or subscripts. However, in commenting on how attributes could be defined, they often sought a framework that helped define the attributes in relationship with *other* attributes as well as the G-suite categories. There were also questions about *how* and *who* should be determining the definition of an attribute.

(1) Noting the distinction that attributes have with a G category. Respondents suggested that there does not appear to be a clear distinction between some attributes and a corresponding G-course subject area. For example, some respondents raised whether the A-attribute is already closely aligned with GAH courses. These discussions were often accompanied with arguments to eliminate some attributes since they're accounted for already in a G-course subject.

There is redundancy in this. Why require two GAH courses AND an A attribute? Why require R courses AND a V attribute? Aren't R courses, by definition, dealing with values? Why is there an H attribute? I see the need for students to learn about history.

But I can also see the need for them to learn about economics, politics, literature, biology, etc. Why privilege the discipline of history? The makes no sense.

The G-course structure seems to be a fine system. I am not sure why the AHVI is even needed. It is like having two slightly mutually exclusive systems imperfectly interposed atop one another. Also, in my experience, students do not seem to understand the point of the AHVI system. In a time where the importance of college degrees is being questioned, I think it is imperative we make changes to remove "pointless" course work from the curriculum.

(2) Noting the distinction between one attribute and another attribute. Respondents have compared two or more attributes that seem to have some overlap. There are comments that use the blurriness between attributes as a way to either eliminate or collapse certain attributes together. For instance, with the addition of R1 and R2, there were questions about the role of the I-attribute. Likewise, there were questions about whether the V-attribute and the H-attribute seem to have already accounted for R1 and R2.

(3) Noting the process of how an attribute should define their scope, including who has the right to. Respondents were, in fact, interested in having a clear distinction between attributes, but had different ideas about that process. For instance, respondents note the roles of program faculty, an attribute committee, and faculty writ-large in determining a definition of an attribute.

Interest in pursuing improvements and changes to structure of the attributes (AVHI) and/or subscripts (WRQ1/2).

The previous section offered findings from the survey data that noted interest in how the AVHI or WRQ designations can be *redefined* or *reframed* under a common mission. However, other comments were directed at changes that would lead to a reduction or elimination of some of the attributes or subscripts—and in a few instances, addition of new attributes. The section below describes the scope of some of those suggestions.

(1) Faculty noted problems with and supported changes to the AHVI structure. In the faculty survey, 40% of the 90 faculty respondents stated that the AHVI structure could be improved, with an additional 17% supporting replacement of the current AHVI structure with something different, and 14% supporting the abolition of the structure altogether. In total, 71% of faculty respondents were supportive of changes to the current AHVI structure in the curriculum.

Table 9. Perceptions on functioning of current AHVI structure.

The subscript structure is functioning properly.	26 (28.9%)
The subscript structure could be improved.	36 (40%)

The subscript structure should be abolished and replaced with a different structure.	15 (16.7%)
The subscript system should be abolished without a replacement.	13 (14.4%)

Interestingly, despite the support for changes, most faculty endorsed the content associated with the AHVI structure. 77% of faculty agreed or strongly agreed that the arts were vital to a student’s liberal arts education at Stockton, while 77%, 79%, and 78% similarly endorsed historical consciousness, values/ethics, and international multiculturalism, respectively.

Table 10. Faculty agreement with, “I believe the content of courses with the ___ subscript is vital to a student’s liberal arts education at Stockton University.”

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
A - Arts: Content	5 (5.6%)	2 (2.2%)	14 (15.6%)	33 (36.7%)	36 (40%)
H - Historical Content	6 (6.7%)	4 (4.4%)	10 (11.1%)	30 (33.3%)	40 (44.4%)
V - Values and Ethics	4 (4.4%)	3 (3.3%)	12 (13.3%)	23 (25.6%)	48 (53.3%)
I - International	4 (4.4%)	5 (5.6%)	11 (12.2%)	29 (32.2%)	41 (45.6%)

In addition to many faculty feeling that there is too much overlap among the attributes and the G curriculum (as detailed in the section above), faculty respondents were also concerned that students enrolled in courses primarily to fulfill requirements rather than take courses with subject matter in which they have an interest.

Subscripts are superfluous given the acronyms (which could be expanded slightly if faculty desired more options) and often restrict students choice of coursework. The attributes are also implemented largely to increase enrollment, which seem antithetical to the idea of general studies courses.

Students are more concerned with just "checking off" the number/type of attributes and choose courses for that reason only as opposed to seeking out courses that would satisfy their academic curiosity and stimulate their intellect.

I would like to see a reduction in the grouping of multiple subscripts within single courses, as students overemphasize searching for the courses that check off as many boxes as possible over selecting topics that interest them. Individuals courses might address more than one of these areas, but should have a central focus.

Many faculty respondents also noted that the curriculum in general does not seem well thought out.

We keep adding things to the curriculum and never reflect on how it is all working together. The requirements keep getting more and more complex and it is unclear if any of these are helping us attain the outcomes they are intended to. What actually are the outcomes? Have we collectively articulated them since these subscripts were introduced?

it all feels very arbitrary

The current subscript structure is dated and confusing. Models at other schools should be examined and inform a new structure.

We have too many requirements. Getting all of them is especially difficult for transfer students.

Some felt strongly that the attributes should be abolished.

I would replace these subscripts altogether. Courses should be including this content where it makes sense, not simply to get the subscript.

The entire attribute system is dated and cumbersome and creates more roadblocks for students to fulfill degree requirements. Students who enroll in well designed courses (program and non program) will be exposed to the experiences and content without mandating them to take courses with a particular letter attached to it.

Other responses indicated that faculty would like to preserve the attribute requirements, even if the structure gets changed in some ways.

I like it- gives our students a broad liberal arts education.

I hope that the subscripts are not completely dropped or drastically, because I think they still serve the purpose of broadening the types of courses students take within the spirit of a liberal arts education

I would keep these subscripts. I think they each add value to a student's liberal arts degree. Without them, there would be very little liberal arts left for most students.

(2) Faculty also noted problems with and supported, although to a lesser degree, changes to the WQR structure. In the faculty survey, 42% of the 90 faculty respondents stated that the W, Q, and R structures could be improved, with an additional 11% supporting the replacement of the current structure with something different, and 4% supporting the abolition of the structure altogether. They had varied thoughts on how it should be improved.

Table 11. Faculty perceptions of functioning of WQR structure.

The subscript structure is functioning properly.	38 (42.2%)
The subscript structure could be improved.	38 (42.2%)
The subscript structure should be abolished and replaced with a different structure.	10 (11.1%)
The subscript system should be abolished without a replacement.	4 (4.4%)

I originally checked "the attribute structure is functioning properly", but then I changed to "could be improved", because I was reflecting on how many of our students take and pass W1 courses but are completely unable to write sentences. This makes me wonder if the problem is with the attribute structure?

I'm not sure the 1 and 2 distinctions of the attributes have been all that helpful. For instance, with writing, W2's are defined in a way that makes it seem as though the primary content of the class is wholly and distinct from the writing content of the class. But seems like they go hand in hand? It seems a W2 course isn't that students should be doing "less" writing, but that they're practicing writing within a disciplinary context. In other words, I'm not sure that it's helpful to have W2, R2, and Q2 as "secondary" content in a class (which implies "fewer" or "less" than primary). Rather, it seems more like the content is just being learned WITHIN a particular CONTEXT--which implies it taught and learned alongside and throughout a class.

The requirements for attributes change even every year depending on the convenor. I believe the Q1 and W1 attributes are important and should be incorporated into FRST and program courses. Each program could have W2 course.

Among the WQR requirements, the R had by far the most comments from faculty identifying issues and recommending change.

I don't equate R1/R2 attributes with writing and quantitative reasoning; therefore the above questions needed to parse out R from the other two essential attributes. And why do R courses have the largest 25% expectation? Such thinking does not compute???

We do not offer enough R1/R2 courses to require students to take two courses and still graduate on time.

The amount of time spent on writing and quantitative reasoning should remain separate from the R attributes. The first two are skills based and the latter are competency based. Hence, my "neutral" responses.

Other respondents heavily supported the current R requirement, but asked for University support to make it successful.

I want to assert my support of the R1/R2 requirement. Our students need to learn more about the past and present impact of race and racism. Since we offer many R1/R2 courses in the [identifier removed], our student don't experience difficulty registering for these courses. If students [identifier removed] are experiencing difficulty fulfilling this requirement, I hope that the University will respond by offering more R1/R2 courses across the curriculum to address this need.

(3) Faculty perceive, and preliminary institutional data supports, that a subgroup of students is delaying graduation (i.e., beyond eight semesters) as a result of the current attribute structure. Faculty respondents were asked to provide insight regarding the issue of whether students are held back by the current attributes system’s requirements. To be clear, we have minimal institutional data available to back up these perceptions; the institution, in the past, has neither tracked reasons for graduation delays nor exceptions/waivers that are granted due to attribute deficits. What institutional data we do have can be found in [Appendix B](#) and generally supports the perceptions discussed here. From the faculty survey, a portion of faculty respondents (42%) stated that they have not had any preceptees who were held back by the attributes structure. However, a slightly smaller portion of respondents (32%) reported that they had at least one student, on average, in an academic year, need to extend their graduation timeline due to a deficit in attribute requirements. Another 26% reported being unsure. Notably, these responses in the survey are self-reported data from a subset of faculty who took the survey which indicate a general *impression* or *perception* that students are being held back by the attributes rather than direct corroborating evidence of an issue. More specific institutional data would be needed to corroborate this survey data; however, this data does still indicate some faculty frustration during precepting.

Table 12. Preceptor reports of number of students, in an academic year, extending graduation deadlines due to attribute deficits.

Number of Preceptees	N (%)
None	38 (42.2%)
1-3	22 (24.4%)
4-6	4 (4.4%)
7-9	2 (2.2%)
10+	1 (1.1%)
Not sure	23 (25.6%)

For those who reported preceptees being held back by the attributes requirements, the most common reported attributes in deficit were R1 (21%), R2 (17%), W2 (14%) and H (11%). This is in line with the attributes that faculty reported students having difficulty registering for. Faculty agreed or strongly agreed that R1 classes (53%) and R2 classes (48%) were the most difficult for students to register for.

Table 13. Faculty perceptions on which attributes are causing students' extension of graduation timelines.

Q1	Q2	R1	R2	W1	W2	A	H	V	I
6(6.7%)	7(7.8%)	19(21.1%)	15(16.7%)	5(5.6%)	13(14.4%)	7(7.8%)	10(11.1%)	3(3.3%)	3(3.3%)

“Problems” Identified by the Administrator Survey

The Attributes Assessment task force, lastly, surveyed relevant administrators and staff regarding the current attributes and subscripts process and structure. The administrator survey and report has four sections: 1) contributions and challenges of course attributes, 2) the attribute system and graduation, 3) course attributes and skill building, and 4) the attribute system and higher education today. Of the 17 respondents who participated in the survey, eight identified as managers, seven as staff, and three chose not to reveal their identity. Most (12) were from Academic Affairs. It should be noted that the small sample size is a limitation of the data presented in this section.

Overall, there is broad consensus that the attributes have value in producing well-rounded students, with the strongest support being for the W1 and W2 requirements. The only concern within this skill set (W1/W2) was that it is strictly about writing, not about communication skills more broadly and that no public speaking was required. Support for the other attributes was weaker.

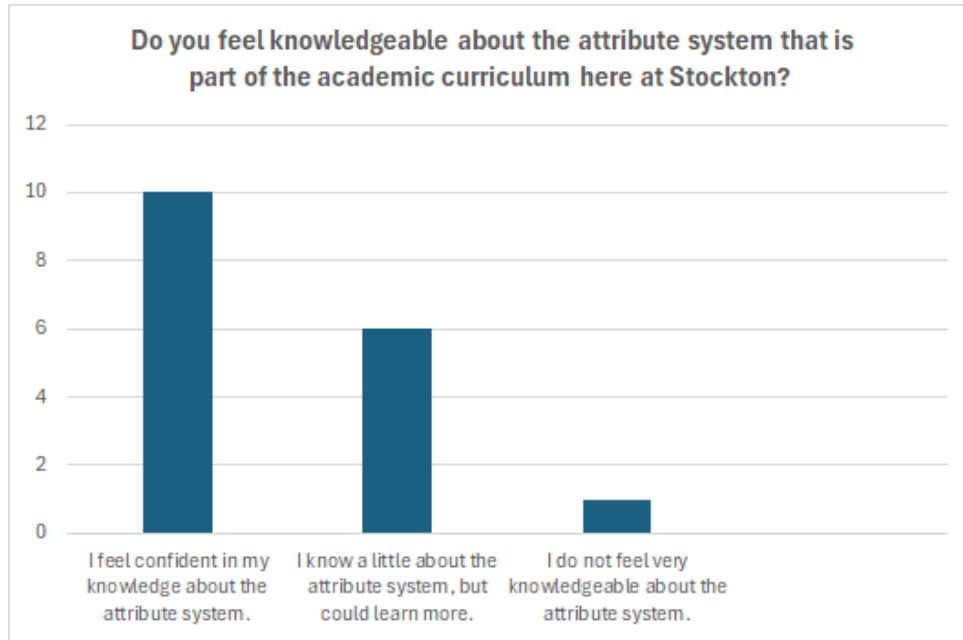
It is notable that while the majority of respondents found value in the AHVIs, many respondents added a caveat that they think the system by which we ensure that students gain this breadth of knowledge and worldviews is clunky and burdensome. Additional themes that stood out concerned student buy-in for the requirements, especially with regards to the AHVI and R1 and R2 attributes. Respondents conveyed that if we want all students to have some exposure to these ideas, we need to make it easier for faculty to get attributes approved for their courses.

Contributions and Challenges of Course Attributes

In this section, we asked about the knowledge and understanding of the attribute system at Stockton University of managers and staff.

When asked **Do you feel knowledgeable about the attribute system that is part of the academic curriculum here at Stockton?** 59% of respondents report that they “feel confident in my knowledge about the attribute system.” 35% report that they “know a little about the attribute system, but could learn more” and 6% report that they do not feel very knowledgeable about the attribute system (17 respondents total) (Table 4).

Figure 2. Knowledge about the attribute system



When asked, **“What are the strengths and contributions of our course attribute system, and of specific attributes?”** open-ended responses generally fell into three categories. 57% of respondents indicated that the strengths and contributions of the attribute system lay in ensuring that students have a breadth of foundational knowledge as part of their undergraduate education. 24% indicated that facilitating course selection to promote this breadth of knowledge is the main strength/contribution. 24% reported developing skills and knowledge applicable to careers as the main strength/contribution.

When asked, **“What challenges do we confront with our course attribute system, and of specific attributes? What needs to be improved?”** open-ended responses were more varied. Below are several common themes and representative response language.

The most common were responses about the attribute system being too complicated and confusing for students and advisors:

It seems to be overly complicated and cumbersome - both for the students and the preceptors to track.

Several responses mentioned the difficulty of fulfilling all attributes for transfer students:

sometimes, particularly with transfer students, it can become difficult to identify available courses that meet multiple requirements and scheduling needs.

Several respondents thought that there are too many attributes:

There are just too many attributes and makes it difficult for students to double dip and may require them to stay a semester longer than necessary and incur unneeded expenses.

Numerous responses complained about a lack of clear messaging to students about the purpose of the system generally and in particular attributes:

I feel that there needs to be more clear explanation for students so they can not only understand the reason for this structure, but also be able to articulate themselves why this system is so beneficial for their learning path.

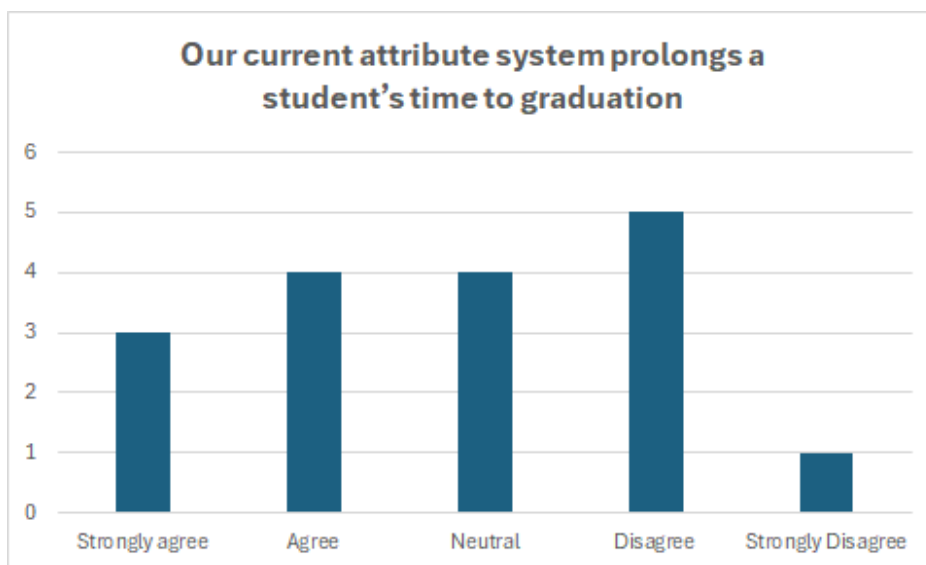
Additionally, responses mentioned the following:

- Too few available courses with certain attributes/subscripts, especially R1.
- Difficulty fitting specific attribute requirements into student schedules.
- Lack of program courses in some majors to fulfill attributes outside of GENS courses.

The Attribute System as a Barrier to Graduation

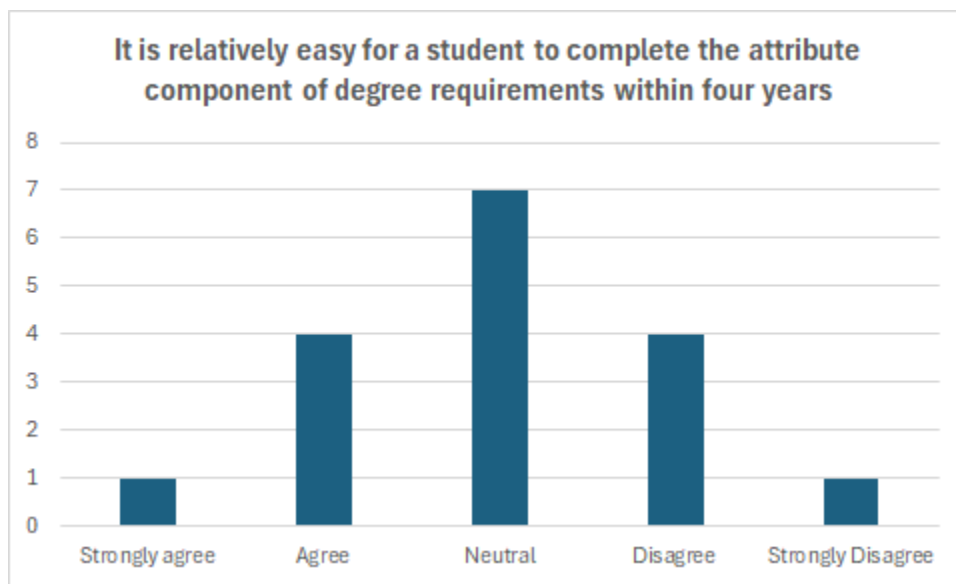
We also wanted to learn more about how managers and staff thought about the attribute system as it pertains to student graduation. First, we asked if respondents agree or disagree with the statement “**Our current attribute system prolongs a student’s time to graduation.**” Most respondents (41%) either agree or strongly agree that our attribute system “prolongs a student’s time to graduation.” 24% of respondents are neutral. 35% respondents disagree or strongly disagree that our attribute system prolongs a student’s time to graduation (Table 5).

Figure 3. The current attribute system and a student’s time to graduation.



We also asked respondents if they agreed with the statement “**It is relatively easy for a student to complete the attribute component of degree requirements within four years.**” Views are evenly split, with 29% saying they agree or strongly agree that “It is relatively easy for a student to complete the attribute component of degree requirements within four years.” 29% disagree or strongly disagree with that statement. About 42% are neutral (17 respondents total) (Table 6).

Figure 4. Ability of students to complete attribute requirements in 4 years



When asked if respondents had any additional comments they would like to provide related to these questions, several comments revealed that the attribute system is overwhelming and students may not understand the requirements, which then can make it difficult for students to identify, plan, and complete all of the attribute requirements in a timely manner. Relatedly, other respondents emphasized the necessity of quality precepting and for more faculty members to offer attribute-designated courses.

The attribute system is overwhelming to students and could discourage them from continuing with their education here. There needs to be a limit/reduction of what we currently have or removal all together.

I would like to see more faculty members offer attributes, and make the process for "applying for attributes" simpler. If the institution believes the attribute are essential, then they should create less barriers for instructors to add them to courses.

The answer is student specific - a student with good advising or attention to detail (learning to use advanced course search) should be able to complete requirements in 4 years. Transfer students are sometimes disadvantaged as are first gen students who do not receive good precepting/advising/guidance regarding the attributes.

Requests for Graduation Waivers

We also asked administrators about the waiver process (that is, the process of a student receiving a waiver to be exempt from taking an attribute-course). When asked: If you work in the Provost's office, Academic Advising, or as an Assistant Dean, **how often do students request graduation waivers due to not having completed a course attribute (R1/R2, W1/W2, Q1/Q2, AHVI) in a given year?** Two respondents reported they receive waiver requests from more than 20 students a year, and two respondents reported under 15 students a year. When asked, none of the respondents provided a number of requests for each specific waiver. In terms of the number of waivers granted, two respondents reported less than 25% and one reported less than 50%. Again, when asked, no respondent provided a number of granted waivers for each specific attribute.

We found it important to ask those who work in administration to help us learn about their understanding of the process of deciding if a waiver ought to be granted to a student. The responses were quite varied, but one common theme that emerged was uncertainty if there was a process at all. Those who did provide insight shared the following:

students can file an appeal to R attributes if they started before the R was required the left and came back without much time left in their degree.

I believe that would be the decision of the Dean of General Studies.

Yes, there is an electronic form for such a request- Students seeking a degree must complete set forth graduation requirements in order to achieve their degree. These requirements may be viewed in Stockton University's procedure for Graduation. Appeals for graduation requirement waivers can be submitted at this link: [Graduation Requirement Waiver Appeal](#).

I work with the program chair and use past precedence as factors in making a decision. The student's transfer point is a factor with R classes. However, as the number of R classes is consistently increasing, there is less need to grant waivers. Waivers are typically allowing a second R2 in lieu of a R1.

We also asked, **“Is it ever appropriate to request that a convener approve a course to contain an attribute that is not already present so that a student can graduate?”** 42% reported “never” and 58% reported “sometimes, depending on the context” (12 respondents total). Follow-up comments helped provide some useful background information:

That decision needs to come from the Provost's Office/Registrar.

If a student has a valid reason to request a waiver and the attribute is not relevant to the major and they are willing to take an additional elective that is relevant to their major, there should be consideration provided.

The Course content should lend itself in some way to an attribute for it to be considered.

For some highly academically involved students in dual degree, or electing to complete multiple minors, an independent study that fulfills an attribute can help the student graduate within a 4 year time frame.

Typically, the convener may be consulted, not to evaluate the class, but to explore options.

Course Attributes and Skill Building

We also asked managers and staff about their thoughts regarding how the course attribute system contributes to our students' development and strengthening of academic skills. In general, there is strong support for the idea that attribute courses provide essential education to our students and are necessary as part of the course curriculum. In fact, there was also support for additional courses to possess attributes to ease the burden of students and advisors in finding courses that fit in the schedule:

I believe it is helpful for all such courses to be identified by an attribute. If there are "other courses in the curriculum," it should be easier to add the appropriate attribute to those courses. More courses carrying attributes would probably eliminate a lot of the scheduling and graduation issues mentioned in the previous section. The best approach might be revisions to the application and approval process, rather than changes to the requirements themselves.

Writing

In terms of support for specific attributes, we present the following results: 81% of respondents agree or strongly agree that "the W1 and W2 courses hone a student's knowledge and practice of writing, which are necessary as part of the course curriculum." 19% are neutral (16 responses total). The W1 and W2 courses had the strongest support of respondents, as most agreed that writing is foundational and essential as part of a student's college education.

I think some of these students, especially those who were in the middle of the pandemic, would benefit more from a straight English class as those found in county college than the writing/subject classes. They need review of the basics before they could move onto a subject/paper writing.

Writing is essential in nearly every career. It's a form of communication.

Quantitative

The Q-attribute had the most respondents giving a neutral answer. Still, a majority of respondents support the value of the Q-attribute. 56% of respondents agree or strongly agree that "the Q1 and

Q2 courses hone a student's abilities to reason quantitatively and are necessary as part of the course curriculum." 38% are neutral. 6% disagree (16 responses total). Only one person disagreed that there is value in the math requirement. Several comments emphasized that there should not be a "one size fits all" approach to the quantitative courses offered to students, and instead, their majors should be taken into account.

Most students just end up taking a low level math class in their first year even if they will not be using math skills in their major to check that box. should have more relative options for each major.

Depends on the major. An art student wouldn't necessarily need all four Qs. However, the level of difficulty for the course may show the capability of the student to complete more difficult tasks.

For Q1 and Q2 attributes, consideration of their majors should always be considered. There should never be a one size fits all Q level attribute requirement.

AHVI

Support for AHVI attributes is strong. 62% agree or strongly agree with the statement: "The AHVI courses hone a student's skills in arts, historical studies, values, and international/multicultural learning and are necessary as part of the course curriculum." 19% are neutral. 19% disagree or strongly disagree (16 responses total). However, more than a few comments focused on the burdensome nature of the system itself, and wonder if AHVI learning objectives could be achieved more efficiently through General Studies offerings or additional course selections:

They do, but students should be able to hone these skills within GENS or program courses.

I wonder if it would be possible for all G courses to carry one of these.

These are already part of the GENS curriculum - Arts and History General Arts and Humanities - these already exist. If we reduced a few of these maybe students would graduate faster.

While every student should have the opportunity to explore the arts and history, students are sometimes put in stressful situations to pick classes that satisfy these requirements. Many public high schools in NJ require some form of the above to graduate, if I am not mistaken. By the time a student comes to college, they likely know if they are interested in the arts. I feel that many subject areas require an essential understanding of history, making the "H" attribute relevant. Some of these attributes (except for "V" and "H,"

perhaps) may be better suited on a co-curricular transcript. The "V" and "H" attributes can be expanded to include concepts of the R and I concepts, as many of my Stockton courses during undergrad demonstrated.

R1/R2

A majority support this requirement: 56% agree or strongly agree with the statement “The R1/R2 courses provide essential education on race and racism and are necessary as part of the course curriculum.” 19% are neutral. 25% disagree or strongly disagree with the statement (16 responses total). Issues around the R1/R2 requirement from those who generally supported their value focused on two themes. First, there are not enough courses available and, second, finding it odd that only issues of oppression that surround race are required without addressing other aspects such as sexuality, gender, religion, etc.

An overall cultural competency requirement is sufficient for students. There are so many ways to learn and grow as a global citizen. A separate R1/R2 negates a student's choice to learn about the world on their own terms.

I wonder if this attribute can be expanded to a broader requirement that requires students to study oppression as a whole. Otherwise, additional attributes should be added (students will likely not like additional requirements). When one form of hate is required to be studied, it brings to question why others (sexism, homophobia, transphobia, etc.) are not. All forms should be studied if our students are to be the citizens we know they can be when they graduate.

Courses regarding racism should be optional for those who want to take it based on their interest, not forced to take to graduate. Students should not be forced to take these courses to complete their program and should be able to request a waiver if they feel it does not apply to their major. It should not be mandatory. In nearly two decades of working in higher education, I never heard of this as a required course for students to graduate, let alone two required courses. I have heard a lot of complaints regarding this from students and parents.

I think that if you require these fairly new attributes for every student, you need to have enough courses in a variety of modalities so that every student can fulfill their obligation. To roll out these new attributes without having the courses to back them is not a good decision.

In sum, there is broad consensus that the attributes have value in producing well-rounded students, with the strongest support being for the W1/W2 requirement. Still, some respondents

question whether these learning objectives could be adjusted to provide greater flexibility to student schedules, or tailored to their specific interests and/or majors.

The Attribute System in Higher Education Today

In the final section of the administrator survey, we asked managers and staff two questions about their thoughts regarding the current attribute system and how it fits within the larger picture of higher education.

In response to the first question “**How do you think Stockton’s attributes fit within the broader trends of higher education?**” there was an overall mixed feedback from the respondents. Out of the thirteen who answered the question, about five respondents reported they were “not sure” or did not have enough information to know if the attribute system fits within the broader trends of higher education. Those who affirmed the attribute system (six respondents) noted its similarity with other academic institutions and its long-lasting commitment to helping students become engaged citizens:

This is a curriculum structure that is similar to what many others are doing, and which provides structure while at the same time allowing plenty of freedom. It aligns with many SLO-based systems that have designations that are similar or include goals such as Civic Engagement.

Most universities have requirements like this. Trends come and go, but the job of higher ed will always be to create informed, engaged citizens.

I appreciate that Stockton is requiring its citizens to think critically about topical issues. However, we [f]all behind in studying (and fighting on campus, frankly) gender oppression.

The trends in higher education I am familiar with for 2024 is that higher education has been put into a political spotlight, AI is expanding and transforming education, and online degree offerings are gaining traction. I think Stockton's attributes fit into developing a well rounded graduate with fundamental skills, moving course offerings associated with these attributes online may be beneficial for 4 year degree attainment.

Finally, a small number of respondents reported “No” (two respondents). One respondent emphasized that the attribute system should include public speaking or interpersonal communication.

No. It is actually unbelievable that there is not a communication attribute requirement such as public speaking or interpersonal communication. Most universities have that

requirement for every major and is an essential life skill every student should possess before graduating. At the very least consider including the W1 and W2 courses with tangible outcomes demonstrating students' abilities to become effective communicate in writing and verbally.

The second question asked **“Do you think our current course attribute system makes us more or less competitive in recruiting and retaining students compared to neighboring universities?”** Out of the thirteen respondents, five reported a definitive “less competitive” another five reported “not sure.” Others did not think the attribute system actually factored into students’ decision making when choosing which university to attend.

Much less. No one understands the attribute system outside of Stockton! Even most of Stockton doesn't understand it!

Neither - information about attributes isn't shared until students are registering for courses; so it has little sway over them selecting Stockton over another institution.

Less competitive. Effective communication skills for students to thrive in their interviews and career growth opportunities should be prioritized before forcing students to take R1 and R2 courses to earn their degrees.

Some respondents did report that the attribute system makes us more competitive or offered suggestions to better compete using our attribute system:

Overall, I think it makes us more competitive as our neighboring universities have created course attribute systems with more specificity that could potentially draw students away. Leaving course attributes broad and allowing students to choose can promote retaining students leaving them feeling that they have carved their own unique route to learning at our institution.

I think Stockton needs to implore the value of these attributes as part of the Stockton Experience and why this education would be different than other schools. If the narrative was used effectively, students would want to engage in more classes with attributes.

“Problems” with Availability of Classes and Declining Graduation Rates

[Appendix E](#) provides a snapshot of course offerings for all attributes and subscripts. For each requirement, this section and the corresponding appendix includes the following information: course availability, distribution of program and General Studies courses, and the distribution of faculty teaching these courses by school. Below is a summary of these data for each requirement:

AHVI Courses

Starting with AHVI, there is a clear imbalance of courses across all four areas with more than double the number of A-attribute courses and about half as many H-attribute courses as compared to I-International and V-Values courses. There has been a notable decline in H-History courses since 2020-2021, while others remained relatively steady to broader enrollment trends.

A-Arts Snapshot for AY 22-23:

- A total of 232 courses were offered
- Most are at the 1000 or 2000 level
- 86.2% of courses were taught by ARHU faculty
- 64.6% were program courses, and 35% were General Studies courses
- 75% of the General Studies courses were GAH; 1 was GNM, 8 were GIS, 11 were GEN, and the remaining 62 were GAH
- 99% of seats were filled

H- History Snapshot for AY 22-23:

- A total of 107 courses were offered
- Most are at the 2000 or 3000 level
- 41% of courses were taught by ARHU faculty
- 43% were program courses, and a majority of 57% were General Studies courses
- 56% of the General Studies courses were GAH; 3 were GNM, 9 were GSS, 13 were GIS, 2 were GEN, and the remaining 34 were GAH
- 99% of seats were filled

I-International Snapshot for AY 22-23:

- A total of 189 courses were offered
- Most are at the 2000 level, followed by an even split between 1000 or 3000 level
- 27.5% of courses were taught by ARHU faculty, followed closely by 25.4% SOBL
- 57% were program courses, while 43% were General Studies courses
- 45% of the General Studies courses were GSS; 2 were GNM, 8 were GIS, 18 were GEN, 17 were GAH, and the remaining 37 GSS
- 95% of seats were filled

V-Values Snapshot for AY 22-23:

- A total of 189 courses were offered
- Most are at the 3000 level, followed by 2000 level

- About 20% of courses were taught by BUSN faculty, another 20% by GENS faculty, followed closely by EDUC and HLTH
- 38% were program courses, with majority 62% General Studies courses
- 10 were GNM, 27 were GIS, 6 were GEN, 12 were GAH, and the remaining 31 GSS
- 97% of seats were filled

O,W,& R Courses

Moving to the other attributes/subscripts, we see a few trends that are notable across the “1” and “2” course designations in terms of level of courses, faculty teaching them, and what programs are offering them.

Q1 and Q2 Snapshot for AY 22-23:

- Most Q1 courses are offered by NAMS faculty, followed by GENS. A majority are program courses, not General Studies.
- Most Q2 courses are offered by BUSN, followed very closely by NAMS. They are also a majority of program courses.
- Q1s are mostly offered at the 1000 and 2000 levels, while Q2s are mostly offered at the 2000 and 3000 levels.

W1 and W2 Snapshot for AY 22-23:

- Most W1 courses are offered by General Studies faculty and a majority are General Studies courses.
- Most W2 courses are offered by SOBL, followed closely by ARHU and BUSN. They are mostly program courses.
- W1s are mostly offered at the 2000 level, while W2s are mostly offered at the 3000 level, followed closely by an even split of 2000 and 4000 level courses.

R1 and R2 Snapshot for AY 22-23:

- While not all current students are required to meet the R1/R2 requirement, there is a clear lag in available courses as compared to the AHVI attributes for which there is only a single 4-credit course requirement. For example, for I and V courses there were about 190 available in 2022-2023, while there were only 50 R1 and 68 R2 courses available.
- A majority of R1 courses are program courses taught by SOBL faculty.
- A slight majority of R2 courses are General Studies courses taught by mostly ARHU faculty, with a more even split among faculty in other schools as compared to R1.

Graduation Denials, Rates, and Trends

[Appendix B](#) provides a snapshot of the potential impact that availability of classes, as well as the complexity of the current attributes structure, may be having on students’ graduation timelines.

Graduation Denials Due to Attributes

In Spring 2024, 1,560 students applied for graduation and 129 (8.3%) were denied. Of those 129 denied graduation, 51 (40%) were denied graduation and were missing at least one attribute

requirement, a total of 3.3% of all applications. Of the 51 students denied graduation with missing attributes, 26 of those applicants were not missing any other requirements, consisting of a total of 1.7% of graduation applications. Further breakdown of which attributes the students who were denied graduation were missing can be found in Table 14 in [Appendix B](#). This, however, does not include students who were aware they had not fulfilled all attribute requirements and therefore did not apply for graduation, despite Spring 2024 being their eighth semester at Stockton. This partial data suggests that attributes can and do impact graduation and there is a need to begin tracking information about why students are not able to graduate within 4 years and whether the attributes are a primary obstacle to timely graduation.

Negative Trend in the 4-Year Graduation Rate

We can also document that the 4-year graduation rate has decreased over the last decade from a high of 62% for the Fall 2016 cohort, to 51% for both the Fall 2018 and Fall 2019 cohorts (see Figure 5 in [Appendix B](#)). The 2010 cohort was the last to dip this low, at 50%. But the rate had been improving since 2010. Please note, the 2019 cohort reflects the most recent data, as the 4-year graduation rate for the 2020 cohort will be available after 2024. To be sure, multiple factors are likely to blame for this decline, including the immediate and long-term impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Results from the student, faculty, and administrative surveys in this report provide the most reliable insights about the impact of attribute requirements on graduation timelines.

Additionally, we can report the average number of credits for conferrals each year (see Figure 6 in [Appendix B](#)). This chart shows a flat trend of around 140 credits for conferrals each year from 2018-2023, highlighting that, on average, Stockton students graduate with 9% more credits than the required 128 credits. This is further broken down by average transfer and Stockton credits, as well. These data are up to date as of May 8, 2024, and include the most recent 2019 first year cohort and any transfer students who arrived after 2019 and graduated before 2024. As a reminder, graduation data alone cannot tell us the role that attributes might play. The survey results are where readers should go for that information.

Proposed Solutions/Recommendations

In this section, the task force presents recommendations of four kinds:

1. Recommendations regarding the attributes and subscripts structure, in the form of curricular models,
2. Recommendations regarding the process for applying, evaluating, and approving courses for attributes and/or subscripts,
3. Recommendations regarding administering the attributes and subscripts curriculum (in any form), and
4. Recommendations for the next steps in this process.

The task force reviewed all data within subcommittees as well as among the collective to determine the below recommendations.

Recommendations Regarding the Attributes Structure: Curricular Models to Consider

This task force acknowledges that historically and at present, there have been and are many valid ways in which the problems raised in this report can be addressed in Stockton's general education curriculum. The general consensus of this report is that changes need to be made to the curriculum, but there is significant variation in *how* those changes should be made and *what* those changes should be. As a result, the task force presents the following "models" of curricular changes to the attributes and subscripts structure for review as possible ways to modify the curriculum. The models presented below are not exhaustive of all the potential ways to address the problems identified in this report but are merely presented as potential starting points for further investigation and discussion. Each model is presented in the context of its benefits, detailing the specific changes it makes from the current structure while acknowledging the potential downsides or drawbacks to those changes.

Model Option A

Model A seeks to primarily address the perception that the current structure is overly complex and restrictive (as listed below), while preserving the commitment of the university to a liberal arts education for all our students and the faculty. It also seeks to enhance the distinctiveness of Stockton to allow students to explore their own interests by "designing" their own general studies/interdisciplinary curriculum. The academic freedom faculty have to design General Studies courses should not be restricted by an onerous attribute/subscript system, and a balance that favors more flexibility in General Studies and other courses should be returned. Model A is economically neutral and potentially also a revenue-generator, as it includes recommended changes to Writing courses that will likely increase retention, which is important as the university continues to see decreases in enrollment and face budget constraints as a result. The

changes in this model would be a return to students having more flexibility to take the General Studies courses that reflect their passions, allowing them to design their own curricular path based on their career and personal interests. While we acknowledge that the justification behind general education requirements is that if left to their own devices, students would not get the benefit of a liberal arts curriculum developed by faculty experts. However, the evidence from this report shows that we have overshot this approach with an overly prescriptive set of requirements, and Model A is a correction designed to preserve faculty control over our students curriculum, with the necessary flexibility demanded by interdisciplinary fields and careers. This model is also more reflective of the university's mission and values:

Stockton University's mission is to develop engaged and effective citizens with a commitment to life-long learning and the capacity to adapt to change in a multicultural, interdependent world. The university's values include: Excellence in teaching and dedication to learning, Inclusivity and Diversity, Academic Freedom, Integrity and Respect, Shared Governance, Community Engagement and Civic Responsibility, Global Perspectives, Sustainability and Environmental Stewardship.

Problems Model A addresses:

1. This model primarily seeks to reduce attribute requirements while maintaining, and even strengthening, General Studies and the liberal arts education we value at Stockton. It solves the critical problem identified by students (as shown in the student survey above) and faculty (as shown in the faculty survey), of onerous requirements preventing them from taking the courses they'd prefer to take, or worse, preventing them from graduating. The current set of attribute/subscript requirements additionally prevent our students from shaping their liberal arts education to suit their individual interests and goals - both professional and personal. The high number of attribute *and* General Studies requirements additionally makes it difficult for small-medium programs to developing course sequences for their students based on their career interests, as they are limited in the courses they can now recommend. This is especially true for transfer students who must still meet 13 attribute requirements on top of General Studies and Program requirements. This problem is most evident in the rigidity of current requirements (with 40% of the curriculum prescribed in attributes and subscripts), as compared to similar institutions (as shown in the comparative study above). Recall that attributes and subscripts are layered *on top of our existing general education requirements* of 8 General Studies courses across 5 established categories of GEN, GAH, GNM, GSS, and GIS.
2. A minor problem this model addresses is one gap identified in our current requirements of the lack of other communication requirements (as shown in the comparative study above and administrative survey above).

Specific Changes included in Model A:

1. Reduce the overall Arts & Humanities requirements from 5 courses (20 credits of GAH + A + H + V) to 2 courses (8 credits) of GAH courses. This additionally includes:
 - a. Cutting the H-Historical Consciousness attribute, acknowledging that the 8 credits of GAH includes historical courses. Additionally, this is the only attribute that is discipline-specific, as evidenced by the requirement to teach historical methods to get the H designation.
 - b. Cutting the A-Arts attribute, acknowledging that the 8 credits of GAH includes arts courses. *However, the A-Arts attribute could be added back into this model, given the large number of available A courses - it is the most available to students, in fact. If that happens, the “savings” in this model goes from 20 credits to 16 credits, which is still a substantial reduction in overall requirements and would still solve the primary problem this Model is targeting.*
2. Preserve the V- Values 1 course requirement and make it more broadly defined beyond Arts & Humanities. It was overwhelmingly the most popular requirement in the student survey and there is also sufficient availability of V courses, based on the data included in the appendix. Further, by expanding the V category to include civic engagement and environmental stewardship, we’ve better aligned the V-Values requirement to Stockton’s mission and values, while creating an opportunity for more faculty to add to this attribute.
3. Preserve the I-International 1 course requirement for the same reasons to keep V. “Global Perspectives” is in the mission statement, and listed as a standalone value of the university. As currently defined, it is sufficiently broad to capture multiple facets of “global perspectives”, and should remain as flexible.
4. Reduce the Writing requirement by a single course from 4 to 3 courses and reduce the maximum cap for all W1 courses to 20 similar to the model recently implemented by BSHS (effective Fall 2024) and other programs, and reduce the maximum cap for all W2 courses to 25 to be equivalent to seminar caps. Additionally, this includes expanding the 3rd course to include other forms of communication, for example public speaking. Most comparable institutions expanded “communication” to include more discipline-specific modes of communication. Note that the W1 requirements are preserved in this model, acknowledging the value that Writing/FIRST faculty bring to improving our students’ skills in this area - the W1 courses and faculty do not change with this model. Additionally, this recommendation is backed by evidence in the form of the Writing Committee’s previous external review, which made the same recommendation to reduce the number of requirements from 4 to 3 classes. Please note this recommendation can be split by reducing the number of courses required, while preserving the current framework for W2 courses. Finally, this change should be complemented by additional professional development for faculty teaching writing because the number of courses will be smaller.
5. Reduce the Quantitative requirement by a single course from 3 to 2 courses. Students who need more Q courses for their fields of study can, and will, still get that within their

program and cognate courses, as programs (many of them B.S. degrees) can require courses that carry a Q1 or Q2 for their students (e.g., statistics and methods Q1 and Q2 courses that are required for most SOBL majors). The intended result of this change is that students in majors that do not require as much quantitative analysis, but instead require or will benefit from other skills, will be able to take more General Studies and program courses to build the skills they want and need to develop for their field (e.g., languages). Like with W1 courses, Q1 faculty would still teach Q1 courses.

6. Reduce the R1/R2 requirement by a single course to 1 course that can be either R1 or R2, or the R1 and R2 could be combined into a single “R” attribute, as proposed in another model. The reduction to a single R requirement is recommended because of a lack of a sufficient number of R1 *and* R2 courses, and the current burden on a single school offering the most R1 courses (SOBL). However, this requirement is unique to Stockton and should still be preserved as a standalone requirement that is not subsumed by another (broader) category. As of now, there are sufficient courses to meet a single course requirement.

Tradeoffs with Model A:

1. This model addresses a problem, that the sheer number of attribute requirements in addition to General Studies requirements are an impediment to timely graduation, that does not impact all our students in the same way. There are many factors that determine whether students will experience the number of attributes as a problem for graduation, for example whether they started here or transferred in, the size of their major and availability of program-required courses that may overlap with attribute courses that often fill to capacity, scheduling limitations due to work schedules or athletic practices, and more.
2. The H and A subscripts are completely abolished (*with a note that A would be favored to be added back in and expanded to become A- Arts & Humanities, if there were enough interest*).
3. The reduction of writing requirements from 4 to 3 classes could be more informed to meaningfully address and align with other specific concerns. The current writing requirements are aligned with other universities who have committed to a Writing-Across-the-Curriculum approach to teaching writing: see, for instance, [Lehman College, CUNY](#), [Fairfield University](#), [William Paterson University](#). The inclusion of a WC requirement as part of a broader communication requirement may require the expertise of Communication Studies and other faculty with forms of expertise (e.g., Computer Science, Computer Information Systems, Languages, etc). There may not be buy-in from these additional programs to expand a communication requirement. Additionally, there is no evidence in a lack of availability for W (or Q courses), and there is not consensus to reduce this requirement in particular.

4. A reduction in Quantitative classes from 3 to 2 would reduce students' exposure to quantitative reasoning in majors that don't embed Q classes in their program courses, which could produce less mathematically fluent graduates. In addition, not specifically requiring a Q2 course could significantly reduce the number of students who would be exposed to applied math within a discipline. Many students may opt to take 2 Q1 classes, and never experience a Q2 class.

Model A Curriculum Design

Standard G-Course Array - 12 or 16 courses (48 or 64 Credits Total)	
Arts & Humanities	2 GAH courses (8 Credits Total)
Social Sciences	2 GSS courses (8 Credits Total)
Natural Sciences	2 GNM courses (8 Credits Total)
Interdisciplinary	1 GIS + 1 GEN course (8 Credits Total)
At Some Distance	4 - 8 courses* generally outside the major's home school (16 - 32 Credits Total that may include additional GAH, GSS, GNM, GIS, or GEN classes) *A B.S. requires 4 courses, whereas a B.A. requires 8 courses

Attributes - 8 requirements (32 Credits Total) that may still be added to G-courses & program courses, reducing this set of requirements by 20 credits	
Writing & Communication	<p>At least three (3) W1 or WC courses, including: two W1 courses with grades of C or better, with at least one W1 taken during the freshman year, and at least one W1 or WC course numbered 3000 or higher.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Writing intensive courses (W1) focus on improving students' writing as their primary goal and basis for evaluation, and may investigate a theme or topic to provide subject matter for that writing. ● Writing and Communication courses (WC) include writing and/or another form of communication (e.g., public speaking) and focus on a topic either within a degree program or in General Studies, and use writing and/or communication skills as an important means of learning and of evaluation. This new-ish category <i>could</i> be moved to a curriculum committee that included COMM and other faculty, while W1 courses would remain under the purview of the Writing Coordinator.

Quantitative Analysis	<p>At least two (2) Q1 or Q2 courses, including at least one Q1 course (one must be taken during the freshman year), and at least one Q1 or Q2 course. No minimum grade requirement, similar to the current approach.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Quantitative reasoning intensive courses (Q1) focus primarily on mathematical thinking; developing students' quantitative skills is the primary goal. ● Quantitative reasoning across the curriculum courses (Q2) focus on a topic or subject area outside of mathematics. Mastering that area is the primary goal of the course, but quantitative/mathematical thinking is used as an important means of learning the subject matter.
Race & Racism education	<p>At least 1 R course, either an R1 or R2, with either no grade requirement, or a grade requirement of C for both types of course. Alternatively, the R1 and R2 could be combined to be a single attribute. Below are the current descriptions of each type:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Race and racism education intensive courses (R1) are centered on Race and Racism Education as the primary subject matter. ● Race and racism education across the curriculum courses (R2) focuses on a subject or field, and race and racism education are an important lens to learn the subject matter.
Values, Ethics, Civics, Environmental Stewardship	<p>At least 1 course: keep the V-attribute and expand the current definition to include civics/citizenship AND sustainability/environmental stewardship.</p>
Global Perspectives	<p>At least 1 course: keep the I-attribute and make sure the definition continues to reflect the broad diversity of this field.</p>
<i>OPTIONAL: Arts & Humanities</i>	<p><i>If A-Arts is brought back into this model, this would be at least 1 course that combines the previous A-Arts and H-History subscripts into a new expanded A-Arts attribute that is open to different types of Arts & Humanities courses, for example in Philosophy & Religion.</i></p>




Addressing ELOs in Model A: Placing it within Integrative Learning Themes (ILTs)

If the Faculty Senate moved forward with the recommendation from the May 2023 report from the Task Force on ELOs, this would require the new themes to be integrated with our general education requirements.. In that report, the Task Force made a single recommendation to adopt a set of three integrative learning themes (ILTs) to replace ELOs. Technically, this would be easy to do by the Registrar to essentially “turn off” the current set of ELOs. Then, the Faculty Senate can decide how far they want to take the recommendation from the Task Force on ELOs and this Task Force, and go from there in terms of where to integrate the three recommended themes. It is important to note that the approach of using ILTs to drive the entire set of general education requirements mimics what we saw at other institutions in researching the comparative study

included in this report. For example, the Rowan Core (see Appendix G) includes six themes, or core literacies: Artistic, Communicative, Global, Humanistic, Quantitative, and Scientific. Should we move forward to adopt a set of ILTs, based on the incredibly thorough work of the Task Force on ELOs, we would need to implement our general education requirements as part of those themes. Please note, the three themes are intended to be comprehensive across the entire university, so we are not limited to only attributes/subscripts and general studies courses to achieve the learning outcomes expected under each theme.

The updated figure below - with new information added to the last row - demonstrates how the reduced set of attributes/subscripts in Model A can be easily incorporated into the three themes recommended in Spring 2023 by the Task Force on ELOs.

Model A with Recommended Themes from the ELO Task Force

Communication	Community	Competency
		
<p><u>ELO Alignment</u> Communication skills Information Literacy Critical Thinking/Reading</p> <p><u>Plus:</u> Professional Communication Media Literacy Interpersonal Communication</p>	<p><u>ELO Alignment</u> Global Awareness Teamwork and Collaboration Adapting to Change</p> <p><u>Plus:</u> Active, integrative, significant, social, service, and engaged learning</p>	<p><u>ELO Alignment</u> Ethical Reasoning Creativity and Innovation Quantitative Reasoning</p> <p><u>Plus:</u> Scientific Literacy Digital/Data Literacy Financial Literacy Cultural Literacy</p>
<p><u>MODEL A</u></p> <p><u>Attributes/Subscripts:</u> W1 & W2/WC</p> <p><u>Plus:</u> GEN, GSS, GAH, FYS, program courses</p>	<p><u>MODEL A</u></p> <p><u>Attributes/Subscripts:</u> International/Global Perspectives - I R1/R2</p> <p><u>Plus:</u> FYS, GSS, GIS, service-learning, program</p>	<p><u>MODEL A</u></p> <p><u>Attributes/Subscripts:</u> Q1 & Q2 Values, Ethics, Civics, Environmental Stewardship - V</p> <p><u>Plus:</u> GAH, GEN, GIS, GNM,</p>

	courses	program courses
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Source for ILTs: ELO Task Force Report (May 2023), available at https://www.stockton.edu/faculty-senate/documents/2023_documents/may2023/ELO_TASK_FORCE_REPORT_S23.pdf

Model Option B

This model imagines what would be necessary for an interdisciplinary **across-the-curriculum** or **in-the-disciplines** approach to the current attribute (AVHI) system. An “across-the-curriculum” approach defines the attribute content as content learned within the context of other disciplinary content: not wholly separate and distinct from disciplinary content, but learned within and through its contexts.

The primary purpose of this model would be to provide a unifying framework to define a common goal or purpose of the AVHI attributes. In doing so, it can better clarify why we have AVHI content as part of the curriculum, but logistically, it can also address some issues in administering this curriculum, including aiding in the review/application process for attributes and in professionally developing faculty in these areas. Although other potential frameworks are possible, this model pursues an across-the-curriculum approach since it is already being implemented through the WRQ2 programs.

Problems Model B Addresses

Approaching revisions in this way would help address much of the problems and issues raised by convenors of the attributes and at-large faculty. Some of those problems that this model addresses are described below. Much of the problems that this model addresses pertain to the concerns raised by faculty about the unclear purpose of the attributes, lack of professional development, and inconsistent administration of the review and application process.

1. **Provides a common framework that unifies the purpose and approach of the attribute curriculum.** Among the issues raised by faculty was the inconsistent approach taken from one attribute to the next: some attributes like A and H seemed to be approached more like a disciplinary course in art and history respectively. While other unifying frameworks are possible, an across-the-curriculum approach is already being implemented at Stockton through the WRQ2 courses and historical documents indicate the intention of the AVHI were to be across-the-curriculum in nature.
2. **Similarly, eliminates the need to define attribute courses through percentages.** Another point of confusion among faculty and admin was guidelines provided for attributes in the form of percentage, e.g. some percentage of content of the class should cover X attribute content. However, there are several downsides to this approach: by splitting content up cleanly, it implies there should be no or little interaction between the

course content and the attribute content. An across-the-curriculum approach recognizes that the attribute content is learned within and through the disciplinary content.

3. **Provides guidance for how to revise current attributes, eliminate attributes, or (if needed) add future attributes.** With a broader framework for the attributes, it can provide the current attributes guidance for how to remain within the curriculum at Stockton while also providing guidance on what content we want as part of the General Studies curriculum. Put another way, if we agree on an across-the-curriculum approach, then courses that do not or cannot fit that purpose would need to either be revised or removed from the curriculum. Along these lines, a guiding framework can anticipate whether we want to include future attribute content as part of the curriculum such as a D-Digital Literacy, C-Computational Skills, or L-Language requirement.
4. **Guides the design of professional development for faculty who teach attributed courses.** One of the issues raised among faculty was the high standard placed on pursuing some attributes since it seemed like they must become disciplinary experts on the attributed content. An across-the-curriculum approach focuses on directing faculty members attention to their knowledge of the attribute content WITHIN their own disciplines. Professional development in the attribute content will still be necessary, but each faculty member can draw upon their disciplinary expertise to develop knowledge in the attribute content. For example, a faculty member in the field of writing may know something about how to produce and circulate knowledge, but a faculty member in psychology will have a much better understanding of how to produce and circulate knowledge within the discipline of psychology—both faculty members can benefit from one another’s knowledge.
5. **Offers consistent approach in reviewing attribute applications.** By defining a common approach and purpose of the attributes, each attribute would need to be more deliberate in how they define the criteria and expectations of the attribute. An issue among faculty with the attributes has been the unclear and often-time inaccessible criteria to evaluation applications. With explicit guidelines that align with the broader framework of across-the-curriculum, faculty will have a better understanding of how the attribute works in connection with their course prior to applying.

Although this model provides a means and justification to eliminate some attributes, if needed, it does not see the elimination and reduction of attributes or subscripts as a primary problem. There is still no clear evidence that the attributes are exclusively responsible—in a widespread and debilitating way—for issues in retention and in extending students’ time to graduate.

Overview and Implementation of Model B

This model will first need to define what constitutes an **across-the-curriculum** attribute at Stockton. Any attribute (and attribute’s program and student learning outcomes) that cannot fit within the scope of this definition would not be considered an across-the-curriculum content.

1. Across-the-Curriculum content should be a knowledge, practice, or method that is **interdisciplinary** in nature: it is a content that is and can be practiced in any academic discipline or field of knowledge.
2. Across-the-Curriculum content is learned and explored **in context** of any and other academic disciplines or fields of knowledge. In other words, across-the-curriculum content is learned within and through another disciplinary content rather than separately from it.
3. Each Across-the-Curriculum content can have common outcomes and focus regardless of the disciplinary content within which it's taught and learned.
4. Through professional development, any faculty member can be trained and prepared to teach across-the-curriculum content within and through their existing disciplinary expertise.

Beyond the definition and scope of an across-the-curriculum approach above, there are some administrative support structures that would be necessary to reasonably and effectively facilitate an across-the-curriculum attribute. Those would include the following:

1. **Convenors for Across-the-curriculum attributes should be compensated in order to offer mentorship and professional development to those teaching the attribute.** Compensation will allow the convenors, then, to spend time in developing the review and assessment process for the attribute. In the absence of compensation, these attributes cannot run efficiently. Current compensation for WRQ convenors is 2 course releases a year.
2. **Each Across-the-curriculum attribute should also be supported by a committee of colleagues across the university to set expectations, provide oversight, and review applications.** The committee allows accountability for the convenor as well as fairness for applicants.
3. **Each Across-the-curriculum attribute should provide teaching faculty with regular and funded opportunities for professional development in the attribute's content area.** Professional Development should be structured so that all faculty teaching an attribute will have periodic encounters and contact with those administering the attribute. Professional development can include regular summer institutes on the attribute content, a faculty fellow through the CTLD who can provide more one-on-one mentorship, and/or one-off workshops during the semester on particular topics.
4. **There should be a streamlined and standard way of providing resources to faculty about the attribute and application process.** The most likely means of doing so is to provide each attribute their own **dedicated webpage** on the website that lists all necessary information including application, convenor/committee contacts, sample applications, deadlines, attribute goals/definition, criteria and eligibility.
5. **Each Across-the-curriculum attribute should be considered its own program which will involve the production and circulation of annual reports and periodic**

program reviews. Each Across-the-curriculum content should be regularly assessed so that convenors and the university at-large can make evidence-based adjustments in the ongoing administration of the attribute.

In the absence of the infrastructure laid out above, then the attribute will not be able to impact students efficiently and effectively in learning the across-the-curriculum content. Much of the administrative criteria above is already in practice with the WRQ convenors.

<p>W - Writing & Communication</p>	<p>Four (4) W courses with a grade of C or better:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. One (1) W1 course taken in the first year 2. One (1) W1 or W2 course at any level 3. One (1) W1 or W2 course at any level 4. One (1) W1 or W2 course at the 3000-level <p>These requirements would remain the same, However, we might consider moving from four to three W requirements <i>if it would help to better administrate a writing-across-the-curriculum approach.</i> Reducing any requirements should be done in recognition of the higher quality writing education students should be receiving with fewer course requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing instruction in Writing-Across-the-Curriculum courses becomes more deeply embedded in the course. Rather than a “secondary” focus (defined as a percentage of content), writing is learned in context of the disciplinary content and primarily as a way to learn how knowledge in this field is produced and circulated. • All W courses (W1/W2) capped at 25 students (with FRST 1101 remaining with a cap of 20) • Each BA/BS/BFA program should develop a plan to include at least 1 W course as part of their degree requirements. Programs should work with the W convenors to develop outcomes, degree map, and plan for these courses. • A course can be applied for “blanket” W2 approval if the course is part of program requirements. • FT instructors of Writing-across-the-Curriculum can receive a course release after teaching three semesters with a W2 course. In their course-release semester, the FT instructor will participate in a 1-semester professional development seminar. This is done in recognition of the outsized labor needed to effectively teach a writing course in comparison to other kinds of courses on campus. It also incentivizes faculty to buy into professional dev’t in writing-across-the-curriculum.
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<p>Q - Quantitative Reasoning</p>	<p>Three (3) Q courses with a grade of D- or better:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. One (1) Q1 course taken in the first year 2. One (1) Q2 course at any level 3. One (1) Q1 or Q1 course taken at any level. <p>These requirements would remain the same, However, we might consider reducing Q requirements <i>if it would help to better administer an across-the-curriculum approach.</i> If we move from three requirements to two requirements, what other administrative or infrastructural changes can be made to strengthen these courses with fewer requirements?</p>
<p>R - Race & Racism education</p>	<p>Two (2) R-Race-Across-the-Curriculum requirements. A few reasons for this change:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unlike with W and Q, there is not necessarily a dedicated faculty to teach R1 courses (like the FRST writing & math program faculty) and likewise no first-year R1 requirement. For those reasons, unless we establish that requirement and corresponding program, then the R requirements should just be across-the-curriculum content. • Given the criteria outlined above about what constitutes Across-the-Curriculum content, the R requirement can still be a robust and high-impact course for students, even if they do not take an “R1” class. • Because R convenor is already compensated in the same way W and Q are, then much of the criteria to effectively <i>administer</i> R are already established so there is no need (like AVHI) to remove it or rebuild it significantly.
<p>V - Values, Ethics, & Civics</p>	<p>Revisions should be made to each respective attribute so the criteria above for an Across-the-Curriculum approach can be met. If the criteria for Across-the-Curriculum approach cannot be met, then the attribute can be removed or re-imagined in a different way. This also allows a framework to guide any additions future faculty may want to include as part of the curriculum.</p>
<p>I - Global Perspectives</p>	
<p>A - Art Appreciation</p>	
<p>H - Historical Consciousness</p>	

Drawbacks or Trade-offs of Model B:

1. This model requires an additional annual economic request, and the university is in the midst of reducing the overall budget with Academic Affairs struggling to meet their target for AY24-25 (e.g., courses are being canceled, and other measures are being taken to “right size” some programs which has led to non-renewal of *several* adjunct faculty).

- a. The economic increase is tied to the recommendation to increase the workload for attribute convenors without 1) clear benefits from this additional work, and 2) a clear commitment of current convenors that they would be willing to meet the additional requirements for programs such as holding more frequent meetings, submitting meeting minutes, coordinating annual assessment efforts, writing annual reports, and being subject to the periodic program review (PPR) process.

Model Option C

1. This model would greatly reduce the number of required student attributes, but would not significantly alter Stockton’s liberal arts curriculum. Students would only need to worry about fulfilling their 8 G classes and 2W1s, 2Q1s, and 1R, some of which would likely be included within their program or G courses.
2. Students would keep the same menu of options, but would be allowed more flexibility and choice. All 3 survey groups indicated that there is value in the liberal arts curriculum, but also that there is a clear desire for more flexibility for students to choose courses that are of interest.
3. This model would address the issue of students not having enough preparation in writing and quantitative reasoning. Although student requirements would decrease, their overall exposure to these skill areas would likely increase given they would be required to take two W1/Q1 classes instead of one. In addition, all students would learn about writing within their discipline, and would almost certainly encounter additional W2/Q2 within their G classes.
4. This model would require all students to take one R intensive course, and would allow options for students to take R2 courses within their G course choices.
5. This model would allow for new attributes to be added to the G curriculum. Students would be allowed more choice to select courses that make sense for them off the menu of courses with approved attributes. Students would still get a variety because each G category lends itself to certain attributes more than others.

<u>Standard G-Course Array - 12 or 16 courses (48 or 64 Credits Total)</u>	
Arts & Humanities	2 GAH courses (8 Credits Total)
Social Sciences	2 GSS courses (8 Credits Total)
Natural Sciences	2 GNM courses (8 Credits Total)
Interdisciplinary	1 GIS + 1 GEN course (8 Credits Total)
At Some Distance	4 - 8 courses* generally outside the major’s home school (16 - 32 Credits Total that may include additional GAH, GSS, GNM, GIS, or GEN classes) *A B.S. requires 4 courses, whereas a B.A. requires 8 courses

Attributes - Faculty Facing Only - 0 additional requirements:

- All G courses would be required to carry an attribute. We could keep AHVI, W2, Q2, R2 and even add others such as WGSS, Comm, Litt, civics, etc.
- All AVHI, W2, Q2, and R2 attributes (and any additional) would become faculty facing only, and students wouldn't interact with them.
- This would mean that faculty would need to successfully apply for one attribute for each G class in order for it to be approved or continue running (Most G courses do carry at least one of these attributes already).
- Students wouldn't need to worry about these attributes because they wouldn't need to fulfill each one, but rather we would just assume that they would get some combination of these categories, since all G courses would carry them, but it would be less prescriptive. Students probably wouldn't get every single one, but they would likely get most of them.
- This would solve the issue of classes with multiple attributes attached. Since students wouldn't see the attributes, there would be no incentive to add additional attributes. Classes could be more focused on the attributed subject, which is an issue that came up many times in the faculty survey

<u>Attributes - Student Facing - 5 requirements (20 Credits Total) that may still be added to G-courses & program courses, reducing the current attribute requirements by 8</u>	
Writing & Communication	<p>At least two (2) W1 courses, with grades of C or better, with at least one W1 taken during the freshman year.</p> <p>Writing intensive courses (W1) focus on improving students' writing as their primary goal and basis for evaluation, and may investigate a theme or topic to provide subject matter for that writing.</p>
Quantitative Analysis	<p>At least two (2) Q1 courses, including at least one Q1 taken during the freshman year.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quantitative reasoning intensive courses (Q1) focus primarily on mathematical thinking; developing students' quantitative skills is the primary goal.
Race & Racism education	<p>At least 1 R course</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Race and racism education intensive courses (R1) are centered on Race and Racism Education as the primary subject matter.

Additional Requirements: In addition, each program would be required to create a Writing in the Discipline course. This would not add any additional burden on the student to fulfill an attribute because it would be covered within their required program courses.

Specific Changes Included in Model C

1. This model would significantly reduce the number of required student attributes, but would not significantly alter Stockton's liberal arts curriculum. Students would only need

to worry about fulfilling their 8 G classes and 2W1s, 2Q1s, and 1R, some of which would likely be included within their G courses.

2. All G courses would be required to carry an attribute. We could keep AHVI, W2, Q2, R2 and even add others such as WGSS, Comm, Litt, civics, etc.
3. All AVHI, W2, Q2, and R2 attributes (and any additional) would become faculty facing only, and students wouldn't interact with them.
4. This would mean that faculty would need to successfully apply for one attribute for each G class in order for it to be approved or continue running (Most G courses do carry at least one of these attributes already).
5. Students wouldn't need to worry about these attributes because they wouldn't need to fulfill each one, but rather we would just assume that they would get some combination of these categories, since all G courses would carry them, but it would be less prescriptive. Students probably wouldn't get every single one, but they would likely get most of them.
6. Each program would need to create a Writing in the Disciplines course, if one does not already exist

Tradeoffs with Model C

1. While students would still have the option to take courses with all attributes, they will likely not take every single one, resulting in less exposure to the liberal arts
2. Although most G courses carry an attribute, some do not and might not align well with any of the current attributes. This could be addressed if the faculty decides that exposure to new attributes, such as WGSS, Comm, Litt, Civics, etc., would benefit students.
3. This would significantly reduce the burden of fulfilling specific attributes for students with minimal additional costs to the University: the G Convenor position would need to have additional compensation since they would be responsible for handling applications for all attributes other than Q1/2, W1/2, and R1/2.

Model Option D

This model reflects similar sentiments as expressed in Model A, but does so in a way that may present a simpler implementation method. This model removes the AHVI attributes completely, without replacement, and provides more flexibility in the Race and Racism requirement. As a result it:

1. Reduces the overall attribute requirements that students have to complete to graduate. As a result, this would increase the flexibility of choice that students ideally would have to create their own interdisciplinary/general studies experience. By the same logic, it would reduce the "classes as checkboxes" approach to general studies that were identified throughout the surveys.

2. Reduces the burden on/incentive for faculty to add attributes to their classes to increase enrollment. As a result, this would reduce limitations that faculty expressed in the types of courses they propose as G courses.
3. Addresses the availability issues identified with offerings of courses with the attributes of R1 and R2. By offering an option for satisfying the requirement, there are multiple ways in which students can satisfy the requirements. This would likely reduce student difficulty enrolling in these courses and increase the efficiency with which students meet this graduation requirement.
4. Allows for students to gain the same level of writing and quantitative skills as the current structure allows (although, if appetite were present, reductions could additionally be applied here as detailed in Model A).

<u>Standard G-Course Array</u>	
Arts & Humanities	2 GAH courses (8 Credits Total)
Social Sciences	2 GSS courses (8 Credits Total)
Natural Sciences	2 GNM courses (8 Credits Total)
Interdisciplinary	1 GIS + 1 GEN course (8 Credits Total)
At Some Distance	4 - 8 courses* generally outside the major's home school (16 - 32 Credits Total that may include additional GAH, GSS, GNM, GIS, or GEN classes) *A B.S. requires 4 courses, whereas a B.A. requires 8 courses

Writing & Communication	<p>Four (4) W1 or WC courses, including: one W1 course with grades of C or better taken during the freshman year, two additional W1/W2 courses, and at least one W1/W2 course numbered 3000 or higher.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Writing intensive courses (W1) focus on improving students' writing as their primary goal and basis for evaluation, and may investigate a theme or topic to provide subject matter for that writing. ● Writing and Communication courses (W2) include writing <i>and/or another form of communication (e.g., public speaking)</i> and focus on a topic either within a degree program or in General Studies, and use writing <i>and/or communication skills</i> as an important means of learning and of evaluation.
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Quantitative Analysis	<p>Three (3) Q1 or Q2 courses, including at least one Q1 course (one must be taken during the freshman year), and two Q1 or Q2 courses.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Quantitative reasoning intensive courses (Q1) focus primarily on mathematical thinking; developing students' quantitative skills is the primary goal. ● Quantitative reasoning across the curriculum courses (Q2) focus on a topic or subject area outside of mathematics. Mastering that area is the primary goal of the course, but quantitative/mathematical thinking is used as an important means of learning the subject matter.
Race and Racism education	<p>One (1) R1 class OR two (2) R2 courses.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Race and racism education intensive courses (R1) are centered on Race and Racism Education as the primary subject matter. (50% or more) ● Race and racism education across the curriculum courses (R2) focuses on a subject or field, and race and racism education are an important lens to learn the subject matter. (At least 25%)

Specific Changes in Model D:

1. The AHVI structure is completely removed from the general studies curriculum. There is no substitute for it.
2. The Race and Racism education requirement shifts from 1 course with a R1 attribute and 1 class with either a R1 or R2 attribute to 1 R1 class or 2 R2 classes.

Drawbacks/Downsides to Model D:

1. Students will not, systematically, be required to engage with the AHVI content areas. While it is possible that students could (likely, easily) address the content of the A and H attributes in their GAH courses, there is not a G course equivalent of the content of the V or I attributes.
2. There is the potential that students never take a class that focuses primarily on race and racism. The University has identified, and this task force agrees, that student exposure to education in race and racism is crucial. While they will be exposed to the content through two R2 courses, using race and racism as a lens as opposed to a primary subject matter

does potentially have a different impact on their knowledge and the goals of this attribute overall.

Recommendations Regarding Course Application Process for Faculty

1. *Create a broader “General Education Curriculum Review Committee” under the Faculty Senate that can apply the same standards for course applications across the board.* This would entail creating a new umbrella Curriculum Committee with sub-committees that have the relevant expertise. These sub-committees would be similar to the current stand-alone committees for General Studies, W1/W2, R1/R2, and Q1/Q2, and the review of courses for ANY attribute would also be rolled into this umbrella committee as smaller sub-committees. The W1/W2 and Q1/Q2 coordinators and review committees could also remain intact and lead their respective sub-committees, reporting to the new “Curriculum Review Committee”. This committee, and its sub-committees, should have diverse faculty expertise as well as school representation. This committee and its sub-committees would evaluate all G course applications as well as all attribute/subscript applications.
 - a. This Curriculum Review Committee would create a new website that will host a streamlined application for course submissions that includes links to all criteria for courses to be considered for each attribute/subscript, along with other relevant information. On the back end, the applications would be sent to the appropriate subcommittees. On this site there would also be a menu of options for ALL course attributes and subscripts that faculty may be interested in, with links to relevant resources for each option. There would also be a single calendar/timeline of dates for the application & review process, with a space for updates from the subcommittees.
2. *Create a common set of procedures and systems for applying for any attribute.* This would ideally involve a common, electronic submission/database system. This process could, potentially, be integrated into the current use of Maxient systems. Procedures, in this context, would refer to how the attributes and subscripts are administered and how information about the attributes/subscripts are presented to faculty. This should include common deadlines, common or similar applications, and clearly described criteria.
 - a. These committees should develop and implement clear and explicit procedures and criteria or values that will guide application reviewing.
 - b. The instructions for the applications should explicitly highlight that the review (sub)committee serves as content experts and that the application process (and the preparation for that application) should be approached as a mutual facilitation process (where faculty are helping faculty) to use best practices to satisfy the requirements of the attributes.

Recommendations for Administering the Attributes System

1. *Establish an approval process for waivers.* Based on the data from the administrator/staff report, a number of administrators are unclear about how exactly waivers are

considered/processed. This process should identify who reviews the application, and the qualifications that need to be met for approval.

2. *Create a central electronic database of waiver applications and approvals.* There needs to be a database of waivers so we can keep track of how many are given for which specific attributes.
3. *If the attribute system is kept intact, increase the amount of attribute courses.* Our data from the administrator/staff survey reveal there are concerns about students completing their degrees within four years, and the difficulties confronted by transfer students in particular, when trying to fulfill requirements. If we keep the attribute system, increasing the amount of attribute courses may prove useful.
4. *Implement a tracking system regarding graduation timelines and “extensions”.* As highlighted throughout this report, many stakeholders claim that the attributes/subscripts curriculum is detrimental to graduation completion deadlines. The university should implement a tracking system to determine if this is accurate or if there are other reasons for graduation timeline extensions.

Recommendations For Next Steps

1. Faculty Senate should review and distribute this report to allow time for the campus community to consider the work and recommendations of this Task Force. In Fall 2024, Senate can provide a mechanism for faculty to deliberate on the findings and recommendations through a Faculty Assembly (or additional special meeting) to discuss this report at length and invite stakeholders to present, so that everyone has a chance to react and provide their thoughts and feedback to the Senate.
 - a. This would include specific forums in which faculty can submit, present, and discuss potential “models” for curricular changes. As stated above, the models presented here are *starting points* and the task force acknowledges that there may be other options to consider.
2. To ensure that this report produces the best possible outcomes, the Task Force suggests that the Faculty Senate follow the following timeline for further discussion and eventual implementation of any changes:
 - a. AY 2024-2025: submissions of and discussions on curriculum models take place through forums and culminating in a Faculty Assembly.
 - i. This process must include representatives from the Office of Academic Advising and those who “code” DegreeWorks to ensure that any changes are feasible in terms of implementation within the systems Stockton currently uses.
 - ii. Models should be narrowed down to 3-4 to be voted on for implementation should be voted on in the Spring 2025 Faculty Assembly meeting.

- b. AY 2025-2026: implement the policy and procedures component regarding any curricular changes.
 - i. If the Faculty Senate recommends any changes to the current graduation requirements, revisions must be made to University Procedure 2050 Graduation <https://stockton.edu/policy-procedure/documents/procedures/2050.pdf> using the formal shared governance process.
 - ii. Coding curricular changes into DegreeWorks will need to take place
 - iii. University Bulletin will need to be updated to reflect any curricular changes.
 - iv. Relevant systems and procedures for any changes made to the application process will need to be created and implemented.
- c. Fall 2026: all changes to be fully implemented and become applicable to incoming first-year students and future application processes.

Conclusions

In summary, this report identified four overarching “problems” with the current attribute/subscript curriculum:

1. The general education curriculum structure is perceived as complicated and restricting choice for students.
2. The process for applying for attributes is inconsistent, complex, and sometimes perceived as adversarial and/or cumbersome.
3. The process of applying approved attributes to semester course schedules is confusing to many faculty. This is also true regarding the process of applying for graduation requirement waivers.
4. There are varying levels of concern expressed by respondents across all three surveys that students are not fulfilling graduation requirements in the ideal timeline (i.e., eight semesters) due to, specifically, the attribute structure within the general education curriculum.

This report also identified a significant number of recommendations to the curriculum, process, and implementation of the attributes/subscript structure.

This report is preliminary. As detailed in the recommendations, there are many more discussions to be had and issues to be further addressed. Nothing in this report is offered as a definitive solution to these problems. We feel that an additional full academic year is needed to address this among the faculty as a collective.

We also strongly believe that any changes to the attributes/subscript curriculum should be made by the Faculty Assembly, not just the Faculty Senate. As history has shown, sometimes curricular decisions are implemented without the full faculty contribution. As curricular changes to the attributes/subscripts structure would impact the most important part of Stockton’s curriculum, general education, we strongly feel that all faculty need to have the opportunity to discuss, debate, and to vote.

We also strongly believe that while this process should be evidence-based and informed by the relevant and knowledgeable stakeholders, it should not languish. The status quo is clearly and definitively not working and changes need to be made. We urge efficiency and decisiveness in the next steps, hence the two academic year timeline outlined in our recommendations. The findings of this report solidify that change is necessary and we believe that it will benefit all stakeholders if implemented successfully sooner rather than later.

Lastly, we thank the Faculty Senate for the opportunity to investigate and critically evaluate the attributes/subscripts curriculum and look forward to the discussions and changes that come from it.

Appendices

Appendix A: Case Study of Rowan's University General Education Curriculum

Rowan Core is Rowan University's general education program. Students complete course requirements in six Rowan Core literacies:

- Artistic
- Communicative
- Global
- Humanistic
- Quantitative
- Scientific

Courses in each of these literacies have defined learning objectives they should address ([listed here](#)), with “a minimum of two Rowan Core outcomes...assessed per course per semester. The assessment scores must be based on graded student work in the class.”

“Effective Fall 2018, Rowan Core is the product of years of collaborative planning, beginning with the articulation of six literacies with goals and outcomes for each, and progressing to a University Senate proposal that established the foundation of the program. **While Rowan Core is the general education program, students develop the Rowan Core literacies not only in their general education courses but in their major coursework as well.**” Rowan Core literacies are assigned to disciplinary courses within majors.

In addition to Rowan Core general education requirements, students must complete the following **Rowan Experience** requirements:

- **One Broad-Based Literature-designated Course (LIT)** (3 credits). In Broad-Based Literature courses, students develop their critical skills by performing in-depth analyses of texts.
- **One Writing-Intensive-designated Course (WI)** (3 credits). The ability to write effectively is vital for any well-educated person, no matter their career field. Students' writing skills will be bolstered by these special courses emphasizing learning, and expressing one's learning, through the writing process.
- **One Rowan Seminar-designated Course (RS)** (3 credits). College is very different from high school; all Rowan first-year students are supported through this transition in their Rowan Seminar course. Students build skills for success in college-level work and will engage with the Rowan community. Students who transfer in as sophomores, juniors, or seniors do not take Rowan Seminar courses.

[Specific guidelines that LIT and WI courses](#) should adhere to are outlined here.

Rowan maintains [an accessible list of all courses that currently satisfy Rowan Core and Rowan Experience \(LIT and WI\) requirements](#) and the upcoming semesters when they will be offered.

Administration of Rowan Core

Rowan Core, LIT and WI courses are overseen by the [Learning Assessment and Rowan Core Committee](#) (LARC), a Policy Committee of the University Senate. LARC has 19 members (in AY23-24), including 13 faculty (at least one from each school), representatives from the library (1), AFT (1), and professional staff advisors (2). Additionally, the Director of Assessment and a representative from the Registrar's office both serve as non-voting members.

LARC has the following responsibilities (**emphasis added**):

- Ongoing review of Rowan University's assessment principles and practices.
- **Develop and approve changes to Rowan Core policy. (Significant changes require Senate approval.)**
- **Review and approve new course assessment plans, including Rowan Core, WI, and LIT assessment.** (This review must be completed as part of the curriculum proposal process before a course receives a Rowan Core, WI, or LIT course attribute.)
- Review and approve proposed changes to course assessment plans. (This does not require a curriculum proposal. Simply contact the chair via email to begin the process.)
- **Communicate regularly with departments regarding Rowan Core policy, the status of Rowan Core courses, and assessment requirements.**
- **Manage the Rowan Core program in coordination with the Director of Assessment (e.g., maintain a shared database, systematic review and analysis of assessment data).**
- Periodic review of existing course assessment plans to ensure that they remain relevant and follow best practices in assessment.
- **Revoke the Rowan Core, WI, or LIT attributes from a course if the department fails to perform and report on the approved student assessments.**
- Work with departments on program assessment, including the optional integration of program assessment with Rowan Core, WI, and LIT course assessment plans.
- **Review student appeals of transfer credit to fulfill Rowan Core, WI, or LIT requirements.**
- **Revise existing Rowan Core learning outcomes (or add new ones) as needed.**

[Approval of new courses for Rowan Core, LIT or WI](#)

All new courses at Rowan are considered in the University Senate Curriculum Committee. Courses proposed as Rowan Core are first sent to LARC for review to develop assessment materials and acquire a literacy approval before undergoing the Senate Curriculum Committee review.

Rowan Core, LIT and WI courses must meet defined assessment standards. In the course approval application, Rowan Core, LIT and WI must complete a course assessment document that outlines the specific Rowan Core, LIT or WI learning objectives that a course will meet as well as how they will be assessed. Faculty submit assessment instruments (including assignment prompts and rubrics) for evaluation.

Sample assessment plans are available for review and faculty proposing new Rowan Core, LIT or WI courses are “welcome to send ideas, drafts, questions, etc. To LARC committee chair...ahead of...official submission.”

Assessment information is reported into a central assessment management system each semester: “Faculty teaching Rowan Core courses are required to use the assessment methods that were proposed by the course director and approved by the Rowan Core Committee. These assessment methods are graded components of the course. Faculty then submit their evaluations of each of their students’ work using an online form within TracDat, the University’s assessment management system.” Data is then made available in an interactive dashboard to department chairs, assessment committee members and course directors for review.

Rowan Core, LIT and WI courses must include provided language in their syllabi about the course learning objectives and the broader general education program: “The syllabus for each Rowan Core, WI or LIT course will include a statement about the Rowan Core or Rowan Experience requirement, along with a list of the learning outcomes being assessed. This statement will be included in the course’s assessment plan.”

Miscellaneous Rowan General Education Policies

From [Rowan Core Policy Summary](#)

Retroactive Credit

If a course is added to Rowan Core after a student has taken it, the course will retroactively count as satisfying that student’s Rowan Core Literacy requirement.

Substitutions and Waivers

Consistent with our commitment to general education as an institutional curriculum shared by all of our graduates, the Rowan Core requirements apply to all programs. Departments therefore cannot substitute non-equivalent courses in a general way or remove the requirement for fulfilling a literacy from their program. On a case-by-case basis, however, departments may authorize substitutions for individual students when warranted by extenuating circumstances, based on their existing waiver power.

On a case-by-case basis, departments and/or advisors may also authorize switching students from the previous general education model to Rowan Core, when it is determined in consultation with the student that the change will advance the student’s progress to degree.

Transfer Credit for Rowan Core, WI or LIT Courses

The Rowan Core literacy requirements are waived for transfer students with an earned A.A. or A.S. degree from a NJ community/county college. For all other students, the following criteria will be used to determine whether transfer credits fulfill Rowan Core requirements. These criteria are intended to make it easier for students to count transfer credits earned elsewhere, while still preserving the integrity of assessment in our own Rowan courses. By establishing transfer equivalencies to the various Rowan Core literacies, students and advisors can easily see which courses and exams are satisfying Rowan Core, WI or LIT requirements.

Workflow for Establishing Rowan Core Transfer Equivalencies

The LARC Committee is responsible for establishing equivalencies between transfer courses or exams and the various Rowan Core literacies, plus the WI and LIT requirements.

A course or exam that comes in from another institution with no established transfer equivalency will go out to the relevant department chair or head on the Outstanding Data report. The policy process then outlines three options for how to proceed with transfer equivalency determinations.

Workflow for Establishing WI Transfer Credit

A transfer course will not automatically fulfill the Writing Intensive (WI) requirement—even if its equivalent Rowan course does so. (Even if the two courses are established as being equivalent in disciplinary content, there is no guarantee that the transfer course is also being taught consistently with Rowan’s WI guidelines.) ...

Students can submit an appeal to have their transfer course fulfill the WI requirement. This appeal will be reviewed by the LARC Committee chair, based on the following criteria:

- At least 40% of the course grade based on writing assignments (as indicated on the syllabus);
- Significant course time dedicated to the teaching of writing (as indicated on the syllabus).

Access full information on [Rowan’s General Education Curriculum pulled from their websites here](#).

Appendix B. Spring 2024 Student Graduation Data

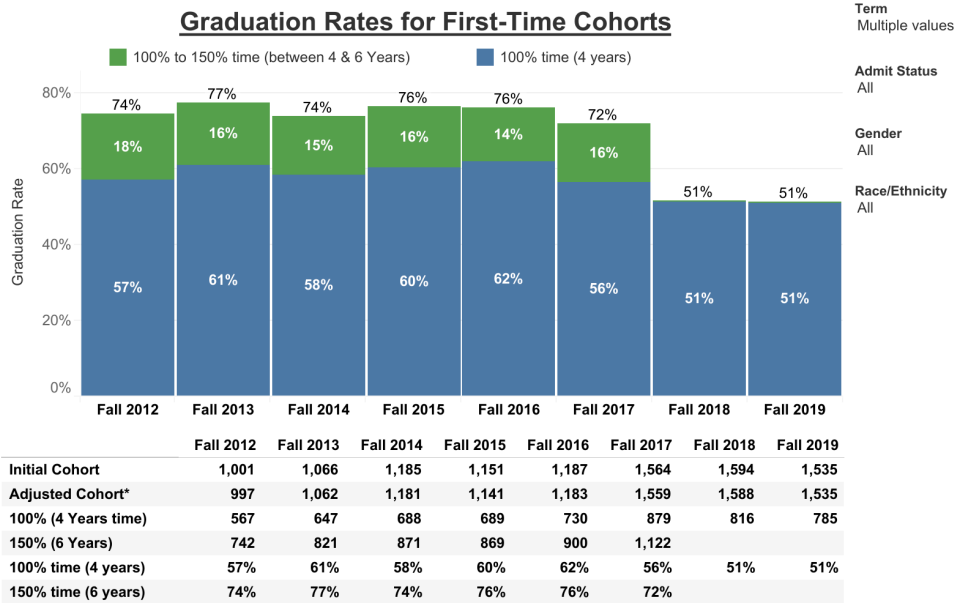
For Spring 2024, 1,560 students applied for graduation. Of those 1,560, 129 (8.3%) were denied graduation. Of those 129 denied graduation, 51 (40%) were denied graduation and were missing at least one attribute requirement (see Table __ for detailed breakdown). That means, for the Spring 2024 graduation cycle, 3.3% of all applications were denied graduation due to at least one missing attribute requirement. Of the 51 students denied graduation due to missing attributes, 26 of those applicants were not missing any other requirements such as program requirements, G-courses, or At-Some-Distance (ASD)--this number accounts for 1.7% of graduation applications. This, however, does not include students who were aware they had not fulfilled all attribute requirements and therefore did not apply for graduation, despite Spring 2024 being their eighth semester at Stockton. This partial data suggests that attributes can and do impact graduation and there is a need to begin tracking information about why students are not able to graduate within 4 years and whether the attributes are a primary obstacle to timely graduation.

Table 14. Attributes not fulfilled in Spring 2024 graduation denials.

Attribute	Number	Percent of denials (n = 51)
W1/W2	28	55%
Q1/Q2	10	20%
R1/R2	14	27%
A	5	10%
H	2	4%
V	6	12%
I	1	2%

Note: Of the 51 denials with attribute deficits, 17 had more than one attribute requirement remaining. As a result, percentages will not add up to 100%.

Figure 5. Graduation rates for first-year students.

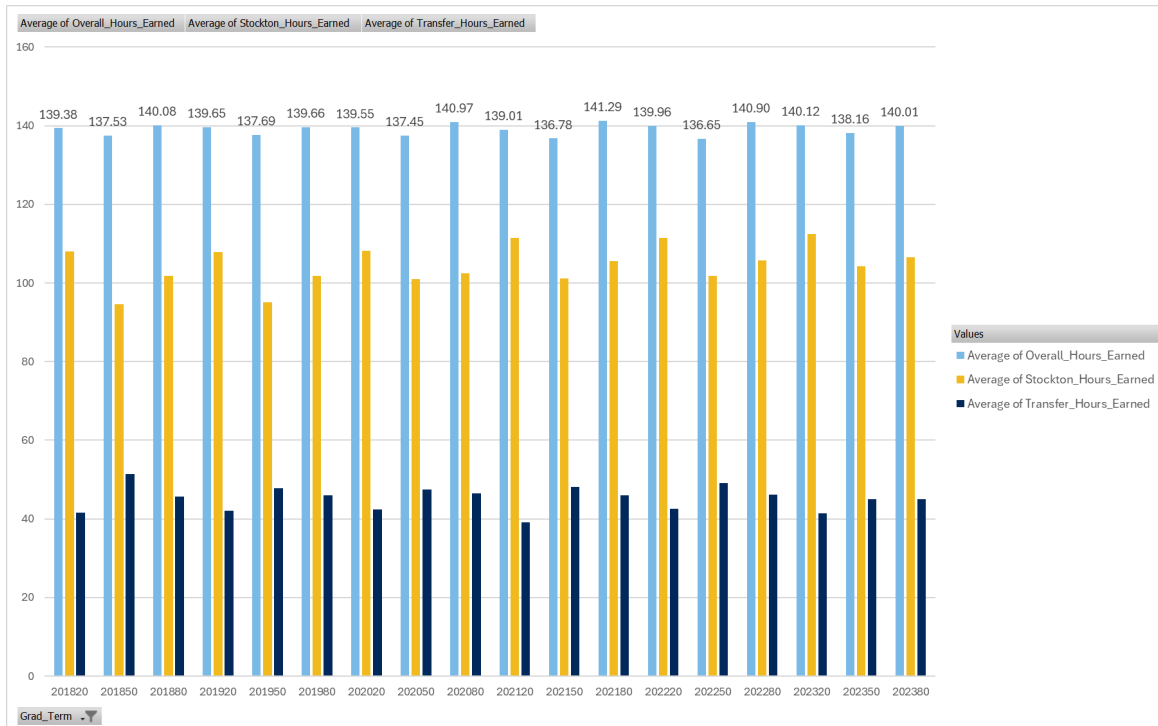


* The initial cohort minus students who left the institution for one of the following allowable reasons: the student is deceased or is permanently disabled and thus unable to return to school; the student left school to serve in the armed forces or was called to active duty; the student left school to serve with a foreign aid service of the Federal Government, such as the Peace Corps; the student left school to serve on an official church mission.

Source:

https://public.tableau.com/views/GradRetention_16004488044920/GraduationRates?:language=en-US&:embed=y&:sid=&:embed_code_version=3&:loadOrderID=0&:display_count=y&publish=yes&:origin=viz_share_link

Figure 6. Average Credits per Degree Conferral



Appendix C. Comparison of the AHVI attributes' current course standards.

	<i>A attribute</i>	<i>H attribute</i>	<i>I attribute</i>	<i>V attribute</i>
<i>Amount of relevant content</i>	At least 50% of course time to practicing, viewing, or listening to the fine arts	Course focus on history as the core content (minimum 50%) exposing	Primary focus at least two of the following subject areas: international issues, class issues, gender issues, ethnicity issues, and/or race issues	Ethical decision making and ethical dilemmas is a primary component
<i>Application pages</i>	1	3	1	1
<i>Requirements of "fit"</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Focus on the languages of art, music, architecture, drama, and dance -Expand the student's knowledge of both the creative process and the aesthetics of a given art form from the perspective of either a practitioner or an informed observer -Include at least one primary experience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Exposing students to a range of sources over time and across geographical regions, societies, and cultures that reveal historical origins, changes, continuities, discontinuities, and causation -Encourage classes to pay particular attention to recovering and amplifying the voices of those whose experiences have traditionally not been preserved -Students learn how to empathize with historical actors and the choices they made. -Encourage students to interpret the past as engaged citizens 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Made to consider a perspective different from their own particular worldview -Critical examination of, and comparison to, other cultures -Cultural differences may arise out of differences in national or regional origins, race or ethnic group, class, and/or gender 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Understanding and applying a variety of ethical concepts such as justice, fairness, or loyalty -Actively engage in ethical reasoning and acts of ethical imagination and must practice looking at both sides of an issue in the form of papers, examinations or other activities
<i>Requirement: Description of general "fit"</i>	Yes – “Explanation of why the course ‘fits’ into the above subscript category”	Yes – “Outline syllabus targeting H skills” and “ways will your course fulfill H-subscript requirements”	Yes – “Explanation of why the course “fits” into the above subscript category”	Yes – “Explanation of why the course “fits” into the above subscript category”
<i>Requirement: Description of fulfillment of specific requirements</i>	No	Yes	No	No

<i>Requirement: Number of specific requirements to be individually addressed</i>	N/A	5	N/A	N/A
<i>Requirement: Provide syllabus</i>	No	Yes	No	No

Appendix D. Comparison of W, Q, and R attributes' current course standards.

	<i>W1</i>	<i>W2</i>	<i>Q1</i>	<i>Q2</i>	<i>R1</i>	<i>R2</i>
<i>Amount of relevant content</i>	-Majority of class time should be spent on writing	-15-20% of course instruction (in class or online) on activities and practices that develop students' writing -minimum of 30% of a student's final grade should focus on their progress with writing	-Majority of class time is spent on mathematical concepts and procedures	-At least 20% of class time involves mathematical ideas -Both mastery of disciplinary content and mathematical proficiency are used to evaluate student performance	-Majority of the course materials and assignments are spent discussing race and racism	-At least 25% of course time should be devoted to the study of race and/or racism education -25% of instructional time should be spent engaging students on the ways that race and racism is systematic, systemic and institutional within a specific field -At least 25% of the course grade is based on assignments that engage with/critically examine race and racism
<i>Application pages</i>	3	2	Google form	Google form	Qualtrics form	Qualtrics form
<i>By Course or By Section</i>	Course	Section	Both, by request	Both, by request	Section	Section

<i>Requirements of "fit"</i>	-Writing should be the primary subject of the course -Majority of a student's grade in the class should be based on writing	-Focus is on disciplinary/interdisciplinary content, and students learn and practice writing through their engagement with that content area -Instruction both in a particular content area as well as in writing	-Mathematical thinking is the primary focus of study; work on mathematics during virtually every class session -Emphasis on the underlying structures of mathematics -Emphasize the importance of mathematical modeling of realistic situations -Draw connections among different areas of mathematics	-Mathematics is used as a tool for understanding disciplinary or interdisciplinary content outside of mathematics -Feature applications that utilize real-world data and situations -Explicit connections should be made between mathematical ideas and disciplinary content	-Focus on race and racism education as the core subject of the course	-Focus on disciplinary or interdisciplinary content, using race and racism education as a way of learning about another subject -Explicit connections should be made between ideas about race and racism education and disciplinary content -Engage students in activities that support learning of these complex fields
	<i>W1</i>	<i>W2</i>	<i>Q1</i>	<i>Q2</i>	<i>R1</i>	<i>R2</i>
<i>Requirement: Description of general "fit"</i>	No	No	No	No	No	No

<i>Requirement: Description of fulfillment of specific requirements</i>	-Overall philosophy of teaching writing and evidence in plan for class -Specific writing skills and facilitation of development of these skills -Outline the main writing activities -Method for grading student writing -Breakdown of assessment of writing -Accomplishing of first-year writing goals	-Writing Assignments -Writing Instruction -Writing Assessment	-QUAD learning outcomes w/ examples -Quant. Reasoning topics + learning outcome -Percentage of lessons/assessment based on quant. reasoning or math skills	-QUAD learning outcomes w/ examples -Quant. Reasoning topics + learning outcome -Percentage of lessons/assessment based on quant. reasoning or math skills -Examples of linking quant to non-math, discipline	-Experience, training and/or interest in teaching about race and racism -Overall philosophy of teaching about race and racism -Specific learning goals and how will be facilitated -Main topics of discussion in the course each week, and associated assignments -Assessment method	-Overall philosophy of teaching about race and racism -Specific learning goals and how will be facilitated -Description of allocation of 25% of instructional time on discussions of and analysis of race and racism, and the associated readings and assignments
<i>Requirement: Number of specific requirements to be individually addressed</i>	6	3	3	4	5	3/4
<i>Requirement: Provide syllabus</i>	Yes + relevant assignments	Yes + relevant assignments	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Appendix E: Attribute Course Data for Stockton University 2017-2023

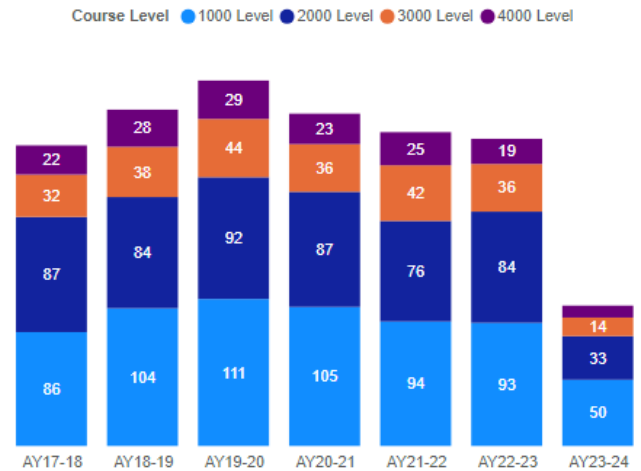
Source: [Open in Power BI](#); Course Enrollment by Attribute; Data as of 2/9/24, 9:24 AM

A-Arts

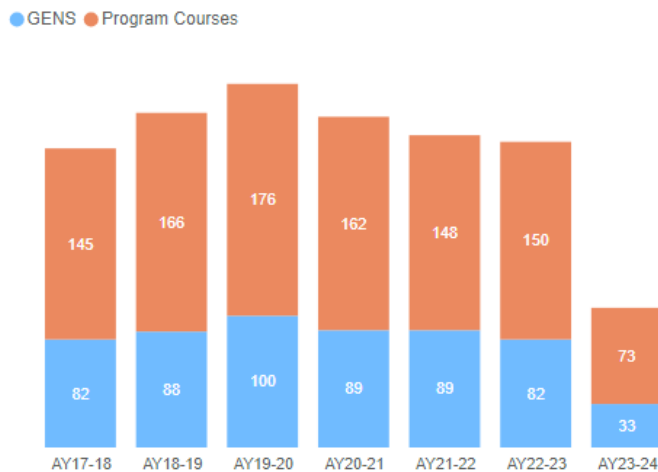
Snapshot for AY 22-23:

- A total of 232 courses were offered
- Most are at the 1000 or 2000 level
- 86.2% of courses were taught by ARHU faculty
- 64.6% were program courses
- 75% of the General Studies courses were GAH; 1 was GNM, 8 were GIS, 11 were GEN, and the remaining 62 were GAH
- 99% of seats were filled
- Programs offering these course

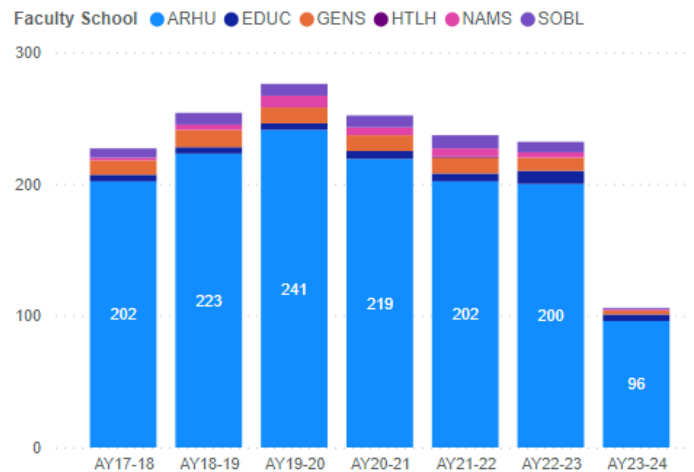
Courses by Course Level



Courses by Course Acronym



Courses by Faculty School

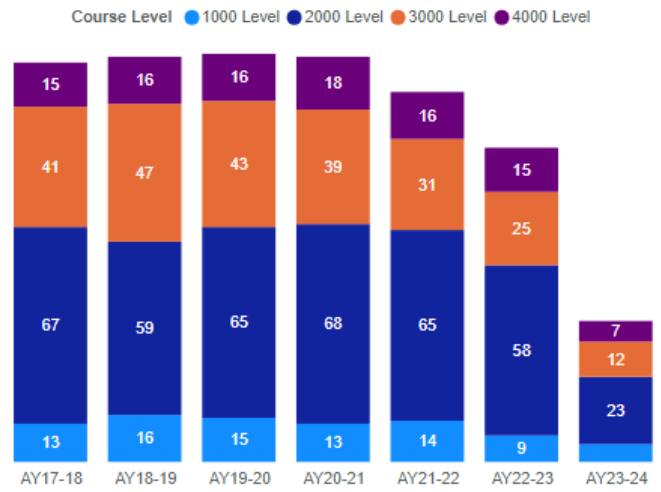


H- History

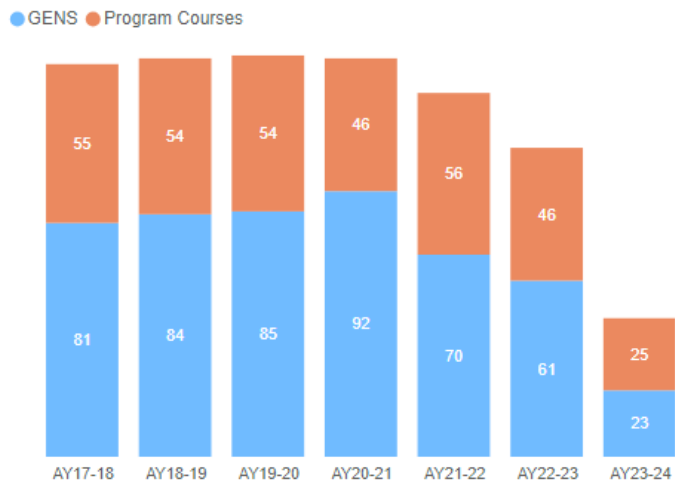
Snapshot for AY 22-23:

- A total of 107 courses were offered
- Most are at the 2000 or 3000 level
- 41% of courses were taught by ARHU faculty
- 43% were program courses
- 56% of the General Studies courses were GAH; 3 were GNM, 9 were GSS, 13 were GIS, 2 were GEN, and the remaining 34 were GAH
- 99% of seats were filled

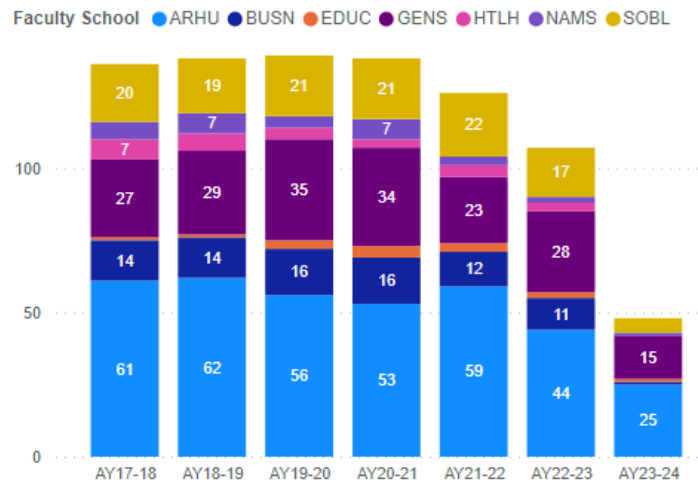
Courses by Course Level



Courses by Course Acronym



Courses by Faculty School

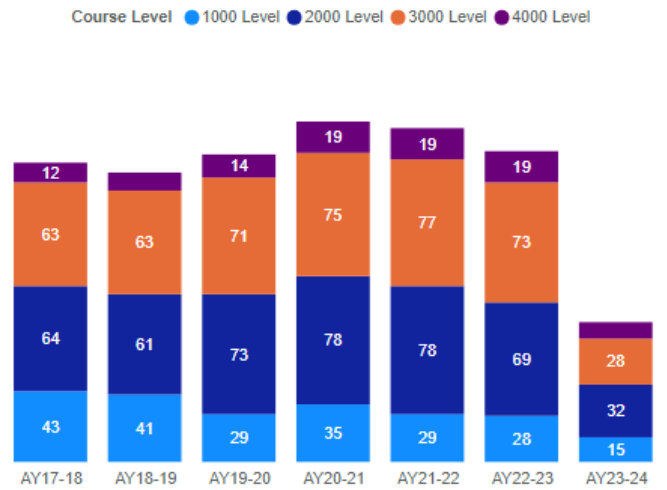


V-Values

Snapshot for AY 22-23:

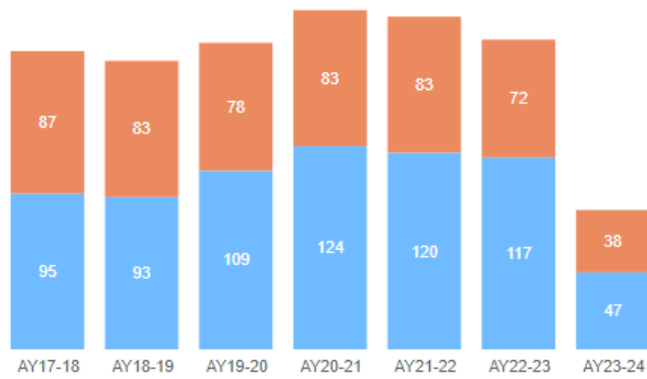
- A total of 189 courses were offered
- Most are at the 3000 level, followed by 2000 level
- About 20% of courses were taught by BUSN faculty, another 20% by GENS faculty, followed closely by EDUC and HLTH
- 38% were program courses
- 10 were GNM, 27 were GIS, 6 were GEN, 12 were GAH, and the remaining 31 GSS
- 97% of seats were filled

Courses by Course Level



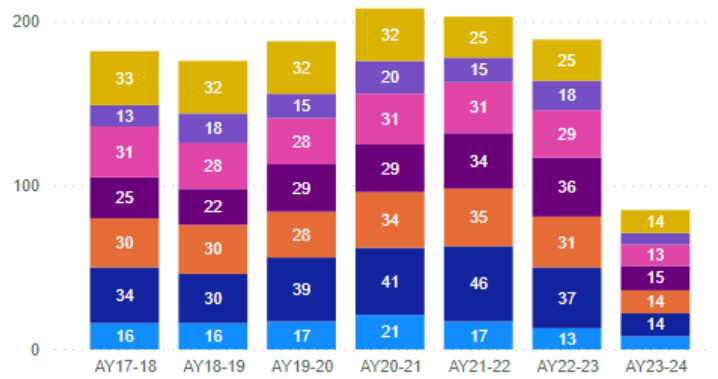
Courses by Course Acronym

● GENS ● Program Courses



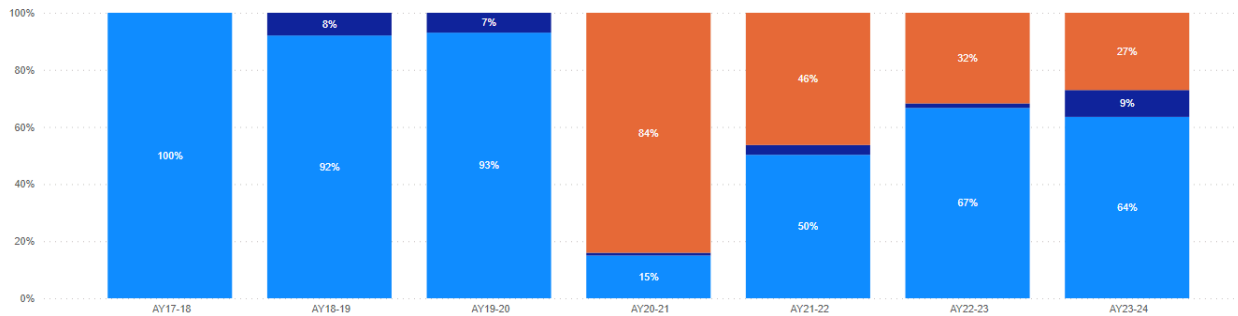
Courses by Faculty School

● ARHU ● BUSN ● EDUC ● GENS ● HTLH ● NAMS ● SOBL



Courses by Location

● Main Campus ● Atlantic City ● Online

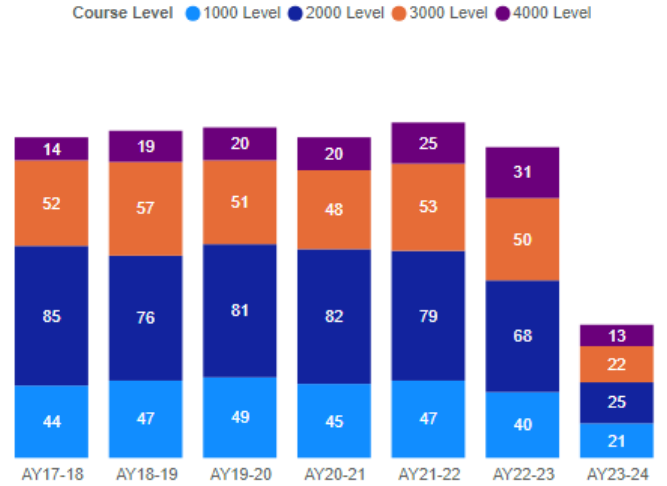


I-International

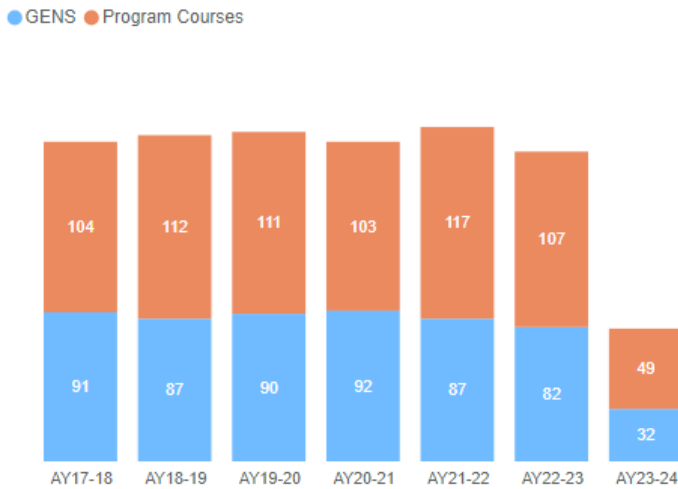
Snapshot for AY 22-23:

- A total of 189 courses were offered
- Most are at the 2000 level, followed by an even split between 1000 or 3000 level
- 27.5% of courses were taught by ARHU faculty, followed closely by 25.4% SOBL
- 57% were program courses
- 45% of the General Studies courses were GSS; 2 were GNM, 8 were GIS, 18 were GEN, 17 were GAH, and the remaining 37 GSS
- 95% of seats were filled

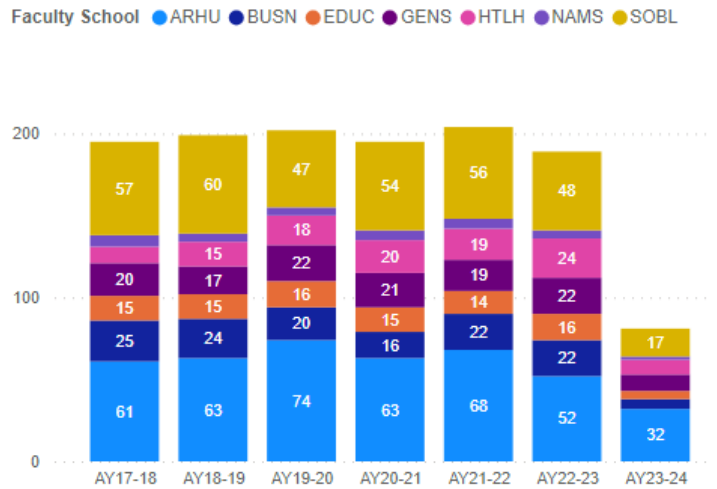
Courses by Course Level



Courses by Course Acronym

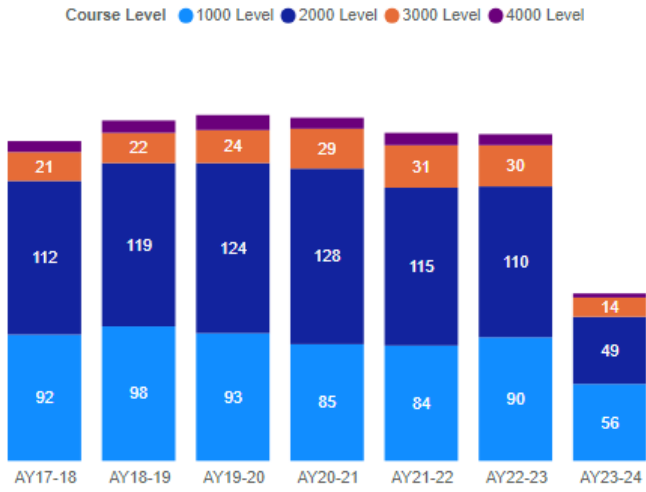


Courses by Faculty School

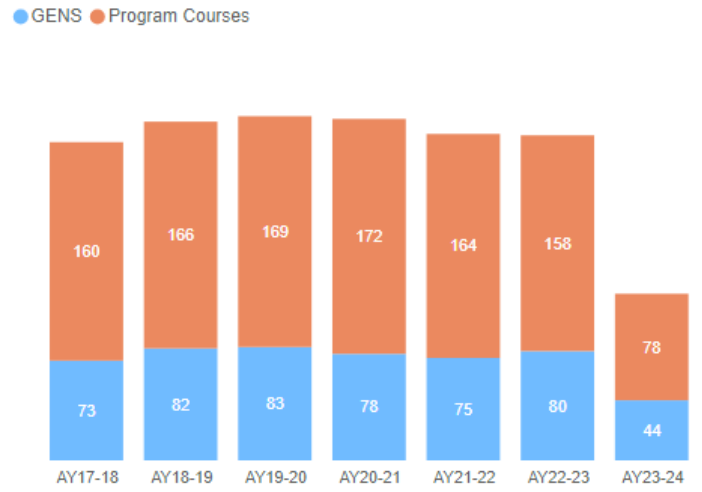


Q1

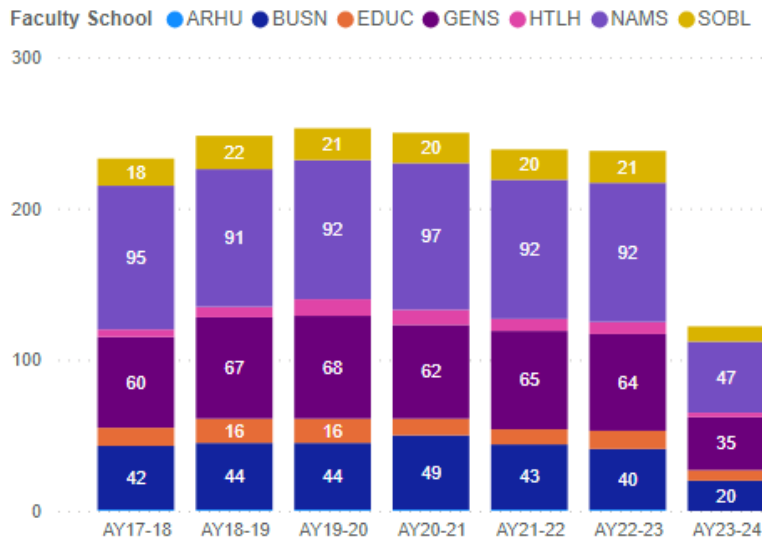
Courses by Course Level



Courses by Course Acronym

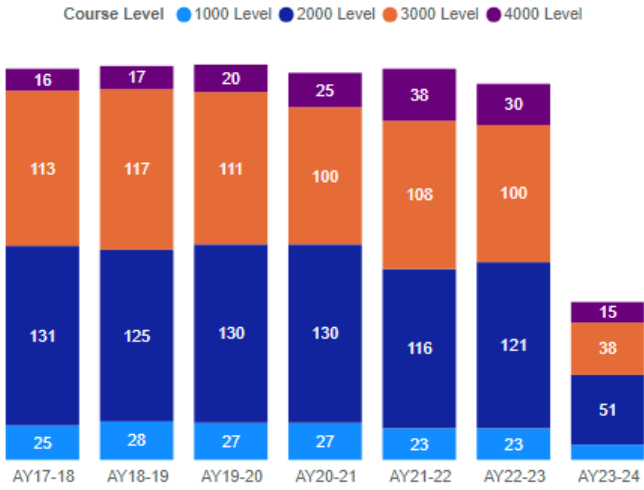


Courses by Faculty School

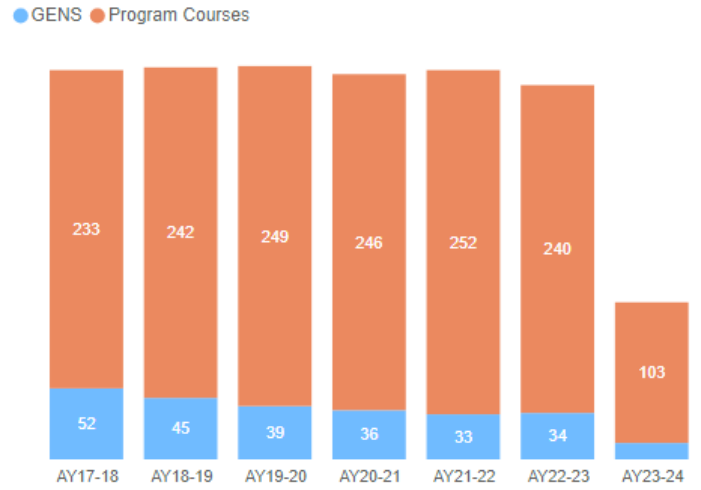


Q2

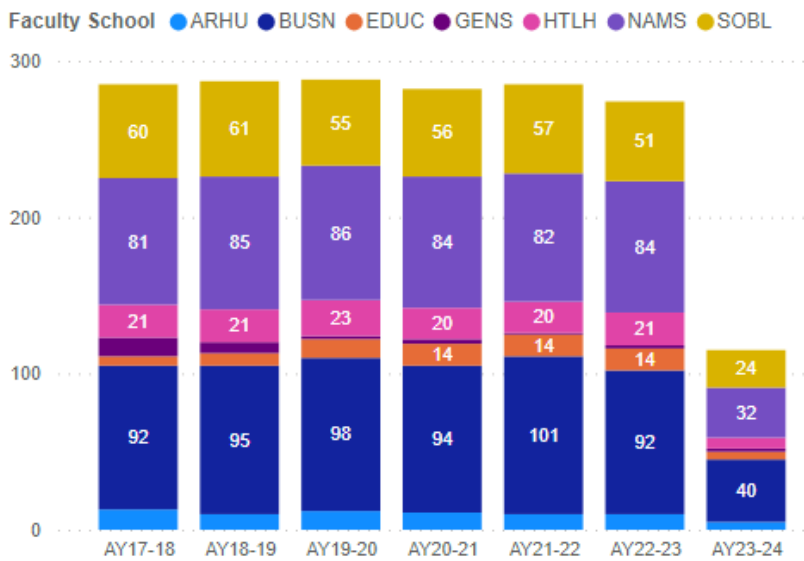
Courses by Course Level



Courses by Course Acronym

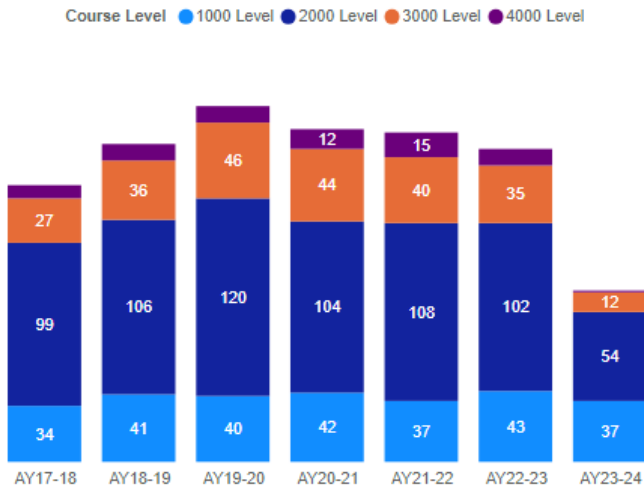


Courses by Faculty School

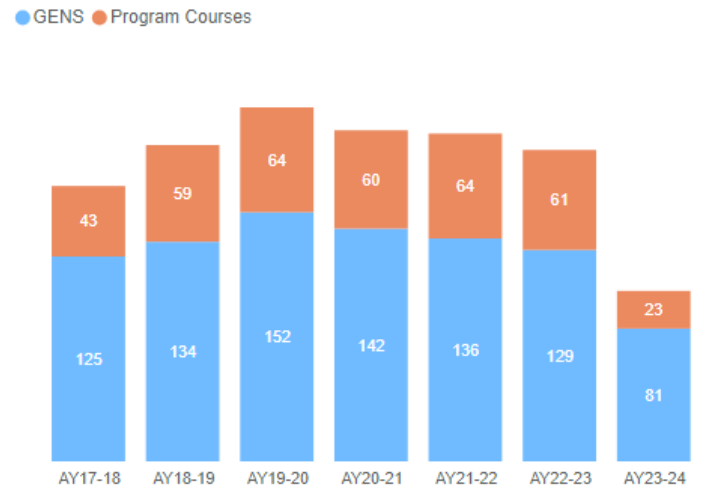


W1

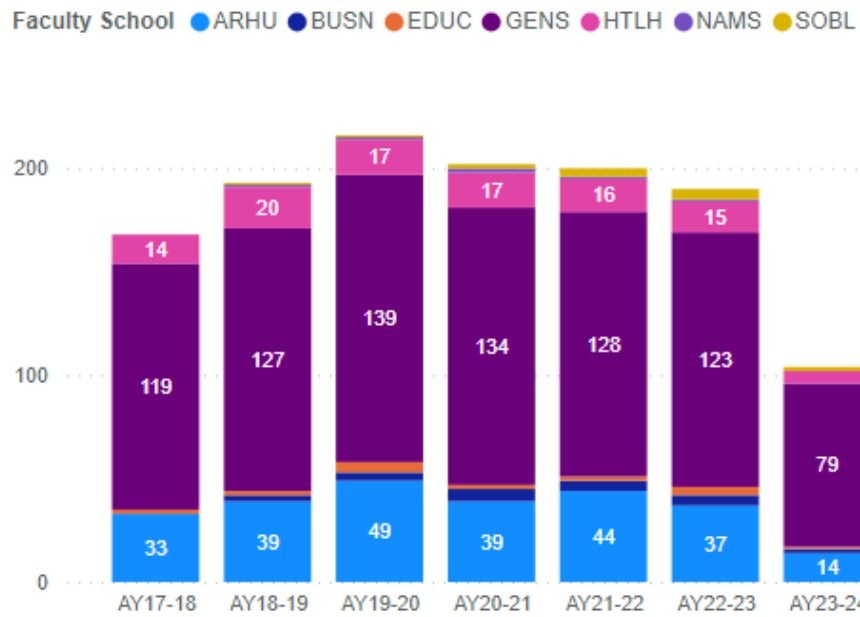
Courses by Course Level



Courses by Course Acronym

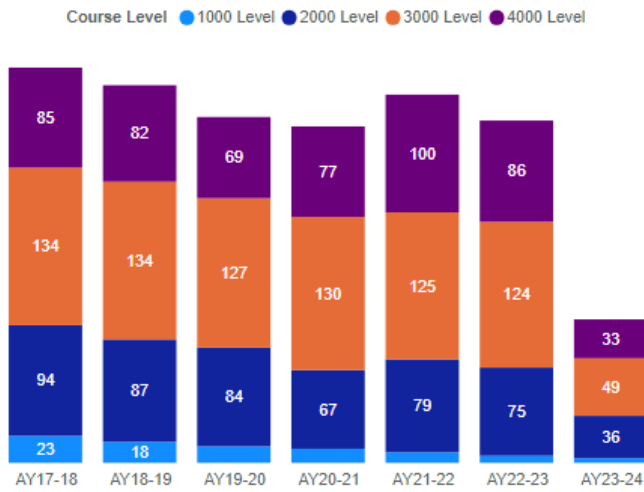


Courses by Faculty School

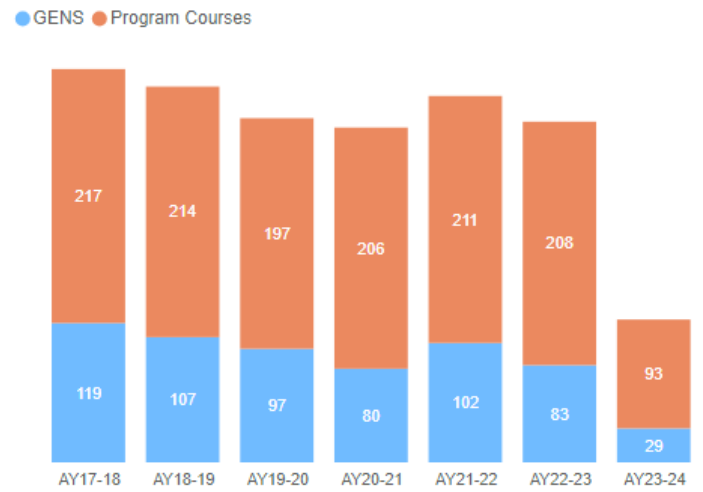


W2

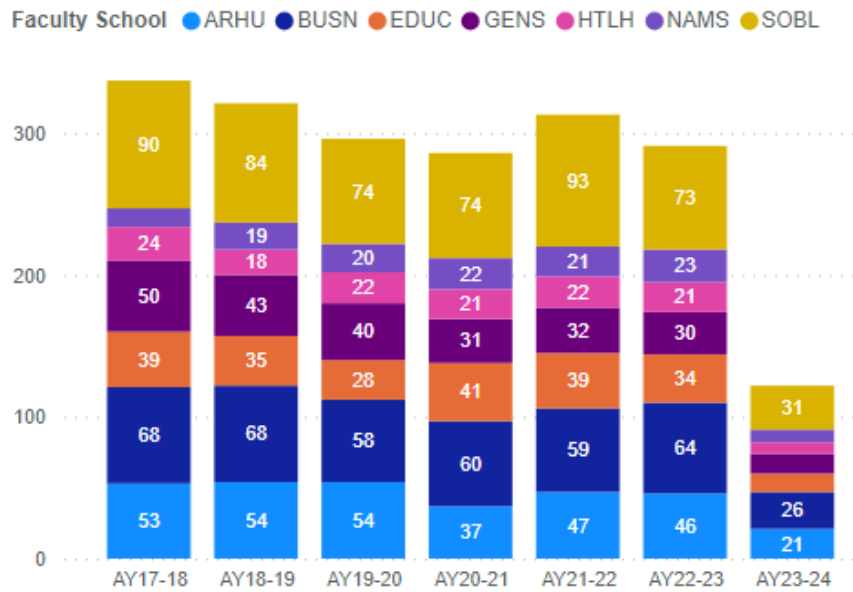
Courses by Course Level



Courses by Course Acronym



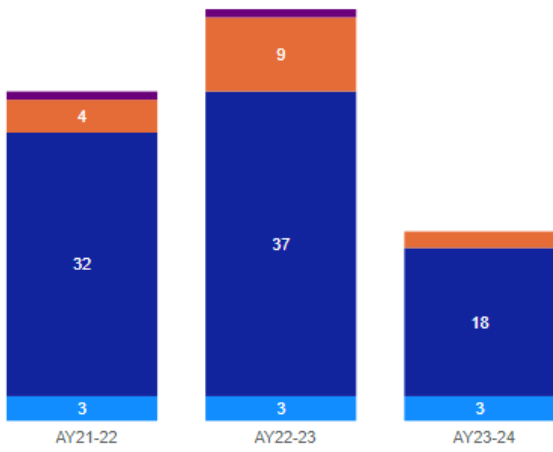
Courses by Faculty School



R1

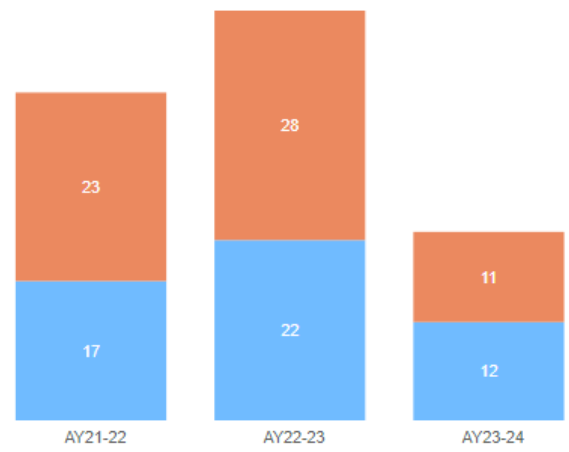
Courses by Course Level

Course Level ● 1000 Level ● 2000 Level ● 3000 Level ● 4000 Level



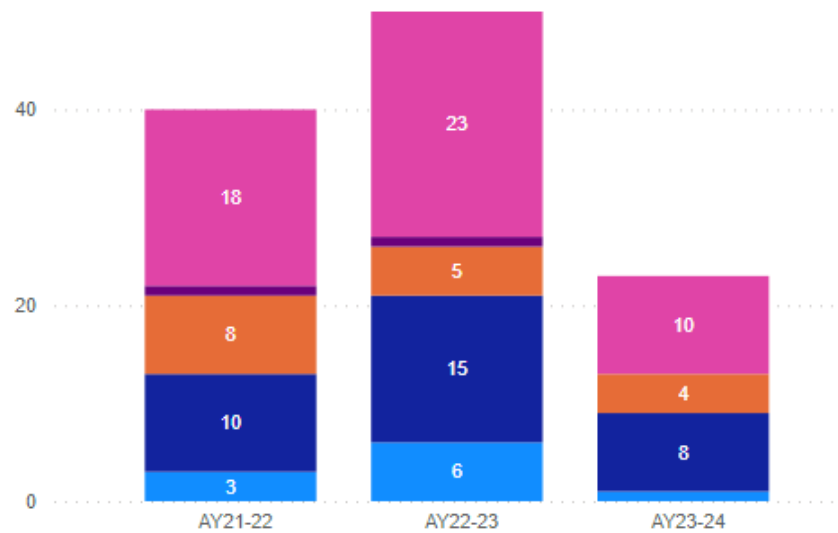
Courses by Course Acronym

● GENS ● Program Courses



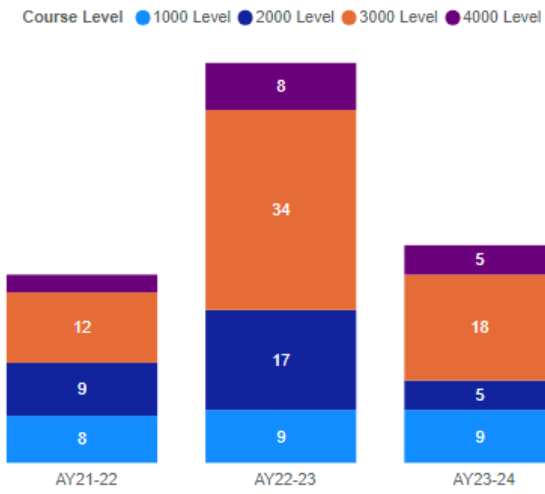
Courses by Faculty School

Faculty School ● ARHU ● EDUC ● GENS ● HTLH ● SOBL

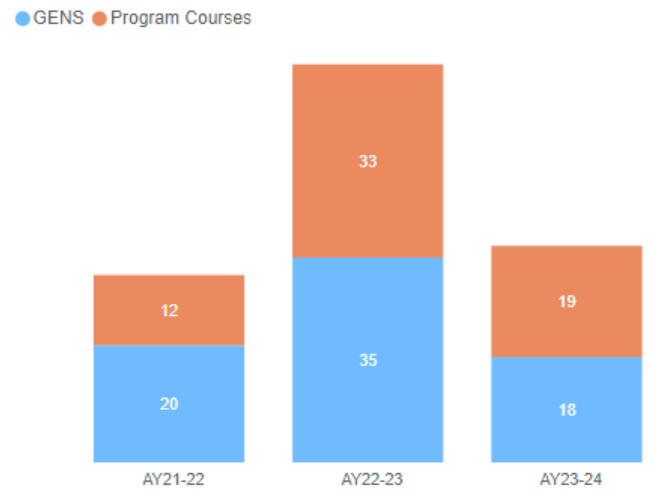


R2

Courses by Course Level



Courses by Course Acronym



Courses by Faculty School

