General context

• A 'General Education' curriculum is an unusual feature of the American university system. For example, most European universities expect incoming students to know what they want to major in and they expect them to take courses related to their chosen discipline.
  o Many first year courses in the USA focus on foundational general language and quantitative skills.
  o General education courses also help students to explore potential majors, and offer breadth of knowledge needed to be an educated citizen.
  o Breadth requirements have been consolidated into a 'General Education' curriculum. Most GE units are concentrated in the first two years, but some upper division units are taken while students are deepening their exposure to the major as juniors or seniors.
  o Questions about mission and goals of GE curriculum are fundamental to planning a University education.

• Many students take college courses at multiple institutions are exposed to different general education curricula. Thus, there is a tension between developing a unique or signature general education curriculum and maintaining transferability of courses to different institutions.

• Large public university systems (e.g. California) may develop common general education standards that set expectations and standards and allow for transferability.

General Education at Sonoma State University

• Our curriculum is guided by the California Code of Regulations (Title 5, 40405), which also concerns equivalent graduation requirements from community of colleges and the University of California.

• Within the CSU, the structure and implementation of the curriculum is based on the Chancellor’s executive order 1100 describing breadth requirements. The executive order provides detail about articulation among California colleges, unit requirements, double counting of GE units, general learning outcomes (including LEAP outcomes), and subject area requirements. It also sets requirements for
implementation, including periodic review of courses fulfilling area requirements and use of evidence of student attainment of learning outcomes to inform the design and implementation of the curriculum.

- Further definitions of requirements and procedures are provided by the SSU Curriculum Guide and other university documents.

**Recent developments in the SSU General Education curriculum**

**2000-2005**
- Faculty members participate in a workshop held by AACU (American Association of Colleges and Universities) in Asheville, North Carolina to work on a common vision of GE goals and objectives.
- All day faculty retreat on General Education and adoption of GE Mission Goals and Objectives statement.
- The Academic Planning Committee creates a 'General Education Task Force' to develop a plan for GE reform and revision.
- GE task force produces report entitled "A New Path for General Education at Sonoma State." This report proposed creation of a first year experience curriculum, a senior level capstone requirement and changes in structure of the mid-level curriculum.
- Development of University 150, a Freshman Year Experience GE course taught by faculty members across campus.
- Adoption of GE Mission Goals and Objectives statement and inclusion in catalog.

**2006-2010**
- New processes approved for approving and modifying GE courses. Univ 150 made permanent.
- Learning outcomes for GE areas are developed in a campus-wide effort involving governance committee members and faculty members across campus.
- Completion of first program review with a report by an external reviewer from California State University East-Bay (Sally Murphy). Program review focuses on structure, enrollment patterns, processes for approval of courses, learning outcomes and aligning them to statewide standards, and assessments including review of course syllabi.

**2010-2015**
- Changes in configuration of GE pattern for courses taught mostly in the school of Arts and Humanities. Widespread transition towards 4 unit courses.
- Development of additional first year experience courses, including Humanities Learning Communities, Science 120, and the Chemistry first year course.
• Development of Sophomore Experience courses and curriculum in Social Sciences and Arts and Humanities

Sources
California Department of Education (http://www.cde.ca.gov/re/lr/cl/)
Chancellors Office Executive Order (http://www.calstate.edu/eo/EO-1100.html)
Liberal Education in an international context (http://www.universityworldnews.com/article.php?story=20150825170126943&query=general+education)
AACU materials (http://www.aacu.org/resources/general-education)
Orientation to American universities for an outsider (http://studyusa.com/en/a/58/understanding-the-american-education-system)

Program review of GE – Attach??
1. Think-Pair-Share - What do students need to learn to succeed, grow and contribute in the 21st century?

Big Ideas that came out
• Problem Solving Skills
• Critical Thinking
• Saving the world
• Analysis of arguments
• Writing
• Awareness

General Thoughts – Awareness of challenges, Awareness of the world, Ability to self motivate, Smart people who can write well, Collaborate, tech skills and abilities, understanding of cultures, fitness and wellness, statistical literacy, self regulation skills, response to change, create, metacognition,

2. Think-Pair-Share – How does our current GE program help students achieve success in the 21st century and/or how can it be improved?

Big Ideas that came out
• Breath and skill based learning
• Innovation with sci 120/SYE/ and other programs
• The curriculum is sometimes focused on dept needs for FTES
• Too much of a check box approach

General Thoughts – learn how to communicate and learn outside dept, don’t bore students, eliminate grades, insufficiently and sporadically, cultural requirement not clear, GE helps develop conversations, encourages civic engagement and moral development.

Closing discussion
What should be in the next program review?
Learning Communities?
What type of GE course would YOU offer and why?
What type of support would you need?
How do you envision the process of faculty governances to propose such a course?