

**ACADEMIC PLANNING AND PRIORITIES COMMITTEE  
APRIL 2019 REPORT TO SENATE**

At the April 17, 2019 meeting of APPC it was RESOLVED that APPC unanimously approves and recommends to Senate for approval the general education model, institutional learning outcomes, and revised policy ED 16-0 Types of Undergraduate Credentials. Attached is the *Report of the General Education Taskforce (June 2018)*.

**1. For Approval**

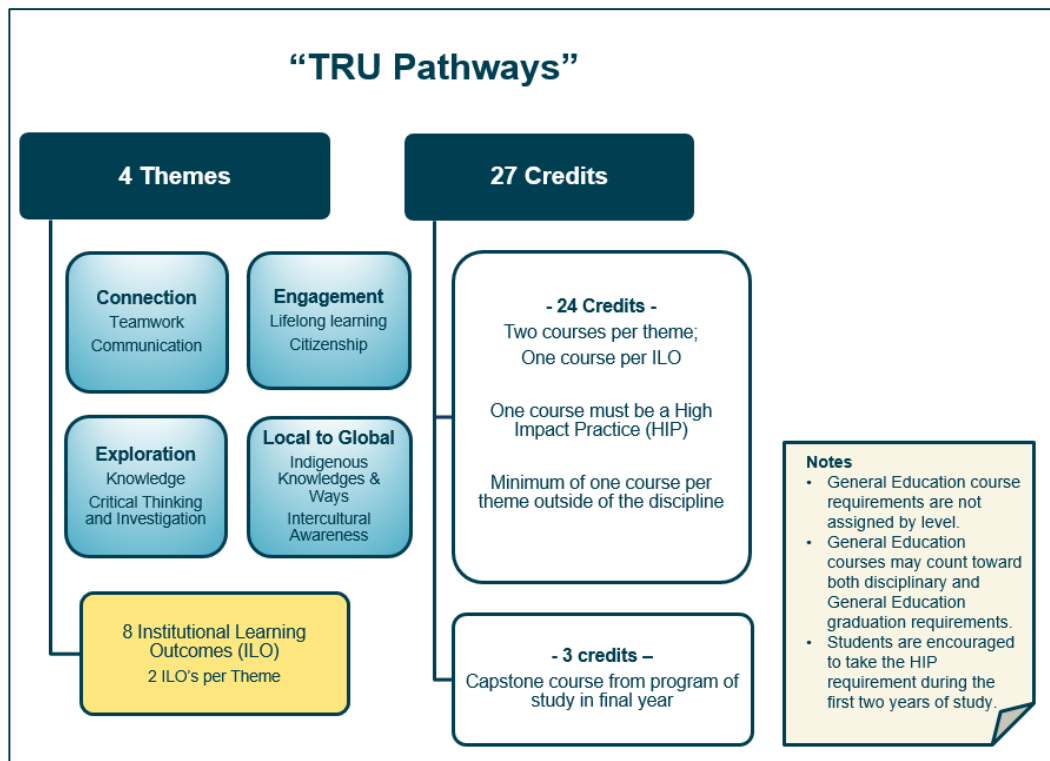
**a) General Education Model**

General education requirements total 27 credits:

One 3-credit course for each ILO	3 credits x 8 courses = 24 credits
One 3-credit capstone course	3 credits x 1 course = 3 credits

Within the 27 credits:

- 1 course must be a High Impact Practice course (HIP), recommended to be taken in Year 1 or 2
- 1 course from each theme must be outside of the major discipline for a total of 4 courses
- Capstone course is taken in the final year of study



## b) Institutional Learning Outcomes

A TRU graduate should be able to...
<p>... demonstrate the necessary skills of effective leadership and teamwork. <i>TRU graduates act with integrity, they seek opportunities to work cooperatively in meaningful ways across all areas of their personal and professional lives. Through collaboration, graduates support thoughtful dialogue and connections with others. They nurture safe environments where people can take risks and challenge assumptions.</i></p>
<p>... demonstrate effective communication skills appropriate to a range of audiences and contexts. <i>TRU graduates use the art of wordsmithing to succinctly communicate ideas. They aptly use an arsenal of communication methods including oral, written, graphic, visual, digital, artistic, and numerical. They rely on evidence and scholarly research to support a claim. By paying careful attention to their audience, they tailor their communications in a meaningful manner. Graduates listen, seek clarification, and work to understand and respect other viewpoints and contrasting opinions.</i></p>
<p>... reflect on and set goals for learning beyond their university experience. <i>TRU graduates understand the limits of their knowledge and value opportunities to learn more. With active intent, they engage with their communities personally, and professionally. They work independently and productively, identifying opportunities to further their careers, and establishing action plans to meet their goals. Not easily discouraged by setbacks, they reflect and apply learned strategies, to adapt to changes in society.</i></p>
<p>... critically evaluate and apply socially responsible, sustainable and ethical behaviours. <i>TRU graduates strive to live within the means of the planet. They apply ethical principles to decision-making by considering the social, economic, and ecological side effects of everyday actions. Their entrepreneurial spirit motivates them to tackle modern issues for the benefit of future generations. Graduates practice compassion and value human rights, reinforcing fairness, equity, and equality in their daily lives.</i></p>
<p>... acquire, connect and apply a depth and breadth of knowledge. <i>TRU graduates seek out new avenues and possibilities to ponder, research, and create. Within interdisciplinary and discipline-specific frameworks, they use evidence to make informed decisions. Graduates apply skills gained beyond their university experience to innovate solutions. They use their depth and breadth of knowledge to bridge domains and, in sharing their discoveries with others, they inspire positive change.</i></p>
<p>... construct meaning from information by applying creative and critical thinking through research. <i>Through design, imagination, and creativity, graduates discover knowledge and produce new knowledge. They use sound research methodologies to navigate obstacles and solve problems. Using reliable assessment methods and analyzing relevant data, they reach meaningful conclusions. They have the tools to evaluate arguments and charged rhetoric, and to envision scenarios that divert from the familiar.</i></p>
<p>... recognize and respect the value of Indigenous knowledges and ways. <i>Graduates affirm the value of Indigenous teaching, learning, oral histories, and research. TRU graduates foster reciprocal relationships and create safe spaces for open dialogue and diverse voices. They give back through ethical research practices which support the immediate environment and local concerns. Through their understanding of Canada's Indigenous history, graduates are compelled to respond to the Truth &amp; Reconciliation Calls to Action.</i></p>
<p>... recognize and respect the value of diverse cultural worldviews, including one's own. <i>TRU graduates exhibit attributes of engaged, democratic citizens. By practicing self-awareness, they notice bias and suspend judgement in unfamiliar contexts. Graduates embrace diverse perspectives and appreciate those who bring varied viewpoints, skills, knowledge, and approaches to problem solving. They continually strive to offer positive contributions to the complexities of societies both locally and globally.</i></p>

## 2. Notice of Motion

### a) Revised Policy: ED 16-0 Types of Undergraduate Credentials

Respectfully submitted,



Donna Petri  
Chair (Acting), Academic Planning & Priorities Committee



## TYPES OF UNDERGRADUATE AND GRADUATE CREDENTIALS

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POLICY NUMBER	ED 16-0
APPROVAL DATE	JANUARY 26, 2015
PREVIOUS AMENDMENT	DECEMBER 21, 2005
REVIEW DATE	JANUARY 26, 2020
AUTHORITY	SENATE/PLANNING COUNCIL FOR OPEN LEARNING
PRIMARY CONTACT	REGISTRAR/DEANS

### **POLICY**

Thompson Rivers University (TRU) offers programs of study leading to undergraduate certificates, diplomas, and degrees; post-baccalaureate certificates and diplomas; and graduate certificates, diplomas, and degrees. This policy is intended to set minimum requirements for credentials. Individual programs may set higher requirements.

- I. **Undergraduate certificates** comprise less than 60 credits and generally involve in-depth study in a specific discipline. Students may, upon completion, continue their studies in order to pursue an undergraduate diploma and/or a baccalaureate degree.
- II. **Undergraduate diplomas** comprise 60 to 119 credits and generally involve in-depth study in a specific discipline. Students may, upon completion, continue their studies in upper-level work in order to pursue a baccalaureate degree.
- III. **Associate degrees** are undergraduate credentials comprising of 60 to 119 credits and generally involve a broad range of course offerings balanced with in-depth study in a specific discipline. Students may, upon completion, continue their studies in upper-level work in order to pursue a baccalaureate degree.
- IV. **Advanced certificates and diplomas** require students to have completed an undergraduate diploma or associate degree prior to entry to the advanced certificate or diploma program. Advanced certificates and diplomas are normally characterized by in-depth study in specific disciplines.
  - 1) Advanced certificates are awarded for the completion of a diploma (or equivalent) and up to 15 additional undergraduate credits,

- 2) Advanced diplomas are awarded for the successful completion of a diploma (or equivalent) and 16 or more additional undergraduate credits.

**V. Baccalaureate degrees** ~~are comprised of a minimum 120 credits and incorporate the TRU institutional learning outcomes into the program of study, including the following undergraduate credentials, of which there are two types: There are two types of Baccalaureate degrees:~~

a. **First-year Entry** ~~comprise a minimum of 120 credits. They~~ which generally takes s one of three forms:

- i. A combination of lower-level breadth requirements as a prerequisite for more specific discipline- and theme-based study at the upper level,
- ii. A largely prescribed curriculum at both the lower and upper levels for specific discipline- or theme-based study,
- iii. A general program featuring an interdisciplinary combination of courses at the lower and upper levels.

b. **Delayed Entry** ~~are baccalaureate degrees that~~ which usually focuses on preparing students for entry into a profession or occupational field. ~~They and~~ require the following:

- i. ~~120 cumulative credits, at minimum, where~~ Cumulative credits are undergraduate credits required for admission plus credits required to complete the degree.
- ii. A minimum of 30 prior university undergraduate credit for admission.

**V. Post-baccalaureate certificates** require students to already hold a baccalaureate degree and are composed of a maximum of 30 additional undergraduate credits in a specific area of study.

**VI. Post-baccalaureate diplomas** require students to already hold a baccalaureate degree and are composed of a minimum of 31 additional undergraduate credits in a specific area of study.

**VII. Graduate certificates** comprise graduate coursework and will typically have 25% or fewer credits than a Master's degree offered in the same discipline. Students may, upon successful completion, continue their studies in order to pursue a graduate diploma and/or degree, where available.

**VIII. Graduate diplomas** comprise graduate coursework and will typically have

between 25% and 50% the number of credits of a Master's degree in the same discipline. Students may, upon successful completion, continue their studies in order to pursue a graduate degree, where available.

- IX. Master's degrees** comprise graduate coursework and will typically require the equivalent of at least 4 semesters of full-time studies to complete. Masters degrees may be course based, course and project based, or course and thesis based.

## REGULATIONS

### I. ASSOCIATE DEGREES

For detailed information about Associate Degree requirements consult the BC Transfer Guide: <http://www.bctransferguide.ca/associate/requirements/>

### II. BACCALAUREATE DEGREES

All TRU baccalaureate degrees will require the completion of at least 120 credits, and must includeing:

- I. the number of required general education credits as outlined in the Senate approved TRU General Education model; and,
- I.II. Of these, a minimum of 45 credits ~~must be~~ at the upper level (in this policy, "upper level" means 3000- or 4000-level courses).

Specific degrees may require more than 120 credits overall and/or more than 45 upper-level credits. Degrees may be general or may include the elements listed in 1), 2), and/or 3) below.

#### 1) **MAJORS, MINORS, THEMATIC OPTIONS, CONCENTRATIONS, AND CO- OPERATIVE EDUCATION WITHIN DEGREES AND HONOURS DEGREES**

- a. **Major:** Consists of a minimum of 24 credits in a specific discipline or defined cross- disciplinary area with a minimum of 15 credits at the upper level. A major must be declared prior to the completion of 60 credits, unless otherwise stated by the program.
- b. **Minor:** Consists of a minimum of 9 upper-level credits in a specific discipline. A minor must be declared no later than the commencement of the final semester of study. Unless stated otherwise by program guidelines, students may complete any TRU Minor regardless of the degree they are pursuing provided they are approved by the Dean (or designate) of their academic unit.

- c. **Thematic Option:** Consists of a minimum of 24 credits in an approved interdisciplinary thematic area with 15 credits at the upper level. A thematic option should be declared prior to the completion of 60 credits, unless otherwise stated by the program
- d. **Concentration:** Consists of a minimum of 12 upper-level credits in a specific discipline or defined cross-disciplinary area. A concentration may accompany a declared major or be independent of a major. A concentration should be declared prior to the commencement of the final semester of study.
- e. **Co-operative Education** integrates a student's academic studies with paid work experience in approved employment opportunities. Students gain experience in a field related to their program according to the following criteria:
  - i. Co-op work terms are developed and approved by TRU.
  - ii. The student is engaged in productive and meaningful work.
  - iii. The student's performance in the co-op work term is monitored by TRU.
  - iv. The student's performance in the co-op work term is supervised and evaluated by the employer and the co-op faculty.
- f. **Multiple Majors, Minors, Concentrations, Thematic Options, or Combinations of the Above** are allowed in some degrees. To qualify for a double major or a double concentration, both majors and concentrations must be offered by the same degree program; otherwise, it is a multiple program (see 3. below). A degree with a double major, double minor, double concentration, double thematic option, or any combination of majors, minors, concentrations, or thematic options requires the satisfactory completion of all requirements of each of the individual majors, minors, concentrations, or thematic options.

## 2) HONOURS DEGREE

- a) An honours degree requires the completion of a minimum of 120 credits. Of these, a minimum of 9 additional credits, beyond the number required in the non-honours option of the program, must be at the upper level.
- b) Students must have a 'B' average in relevant university courses (relevant as defined by the program) upon admittance to an honours program and must maintain a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 3.00 in their final 60 credits. Individual programs may have additional, or stricter, standards than those mentioned above.

3) **MULTIPLE PROGRAMS** occur when students undertake more than one certificate, diploma or degree with the University. When students undertake multiple specializations within a single degree, they are considered double majors, minors, or concentrations (see II. 2 f. above).

- i. Multiple programs require the satisfactory completion of all requirements of each of the individual programs.
- ii. Multiple programs may be completed either concurrently or sequentially.
- iii. Graduating multiple program students will receive one credential for each of the programs. The credentials awarded to multiple program graduates will not differ from those awarded to graduates of the corresponding single credential programs.
- iv. A minimum of 6 additional credits will be required for a dual certificate program.
- v. A minimum of 15 additional credits will be required for a dual diploma program.
- vi. A minimum of 30 additional credits will be required for a dual degree program.

### **III. RESIDENCY**

All credentials must meet the University's residency requirements as per policy ED 8-0 Educational Standards in Credit Courses and Programs

### **IV. TRANSCRIPT NOTATION**

Information pertaining to the type of credential (honours, major, minor, concentration, and thematic option) will be printed on the student's transcript upon completion of all requirements for the credential.





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## Executive Summary

In fall 2016, the General Education Taskforce (GET) was created with the following purpose, “to advise APPC on the establishment, revision, or discontinuance of policies and procedures in relation to general education curriculum”.

For our purposes, general education refers to “an integrated course of study that helps students to develop the breadth and depth of intellect to become more effective learners and to prepare them for a productive life of work, citizenship, and personal fulfilment.”<sup>1</sup>

Although the term general education is not commonly used in the Canadian post-secondary context, the philosophical underpinnings of general education are foundational components of TRU’s unique mandate and mission. As a learner-centred institution, TRU is dedicated to the intellectual and social development of its students through courses, programs, and experiential learning opportunities that provide learning and critical thinking skills, and the encouragement to approach issues with creativity.

GET began meeting in February 2017 and after much research, consultation, and deliberation is recommending to APPC that TRU adopt a general education curriculum within all undergraduate degrees. GET recommends a thematic model of general education, based upon institutional learning outcomes (ILO) which have been derived from the Senate approved Graduate Attributes. The proposed model is consistent with TRU mission statement, values, and strategic priorities. It supports student choice within their area of study and allows for exploration beyond the degree major. The recommendation includes revision to policy ED 16-0 as well as a full general education model. These recommendations will need to follow normal academic approval processes and, once approved, will require a transition period for implementation.

<sup>1</sup> NWCCU. (2017, January). *NWCCU Accreditation Handbook*. Retrieved from <http://www.nwccu.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/Accreditation-Handbook-2017-edition.pdf>

## Background

### *Internal Audit*

In fall 2016, TRU conducted an audit of the graduation requirements for each of its baccalaureate programs (see Appendix A: General Education Audit of TRU Baccalaureate Degrees). The audit demonstrated that all undergraduate degree programs contain some component of general education. A common thread amongst TRU Open Learning (OL) degrees was a requirement of 6 credits of communication (ENGL, CMNS or JOUR) and 15 to 30 credits of general education. Similarly, all campus-based degrees require 3 to 6 credits of communication; social science or humanities electives; math, statistics, or science electives; and a range of 15% to 40% of courses outside of the discipline. General education is also evident in both of TRU's Associate of Arts and Associate of Science degrees. The curriculum for these degrees is set by the BC Council on Admissions & Transfer (BCCAT).

While elements of general education exist in all TRU baccalaureate degrees and all undergraduate degrees met the requirement for depth and breadth, as per Policy ED 16-0 and the Degree Quality Assessment Board (DQAB) *Degree Program Review Criteria and Guidelines*, the purpose of the audit was to understand if general education was embedded in degrees at TRU. In addition, the process presented an opportunity to identify potential gaps and areas for improvement in all degrees.

Along with the audit of all degrees, a representative group of the Accreditation Steering Committee (ASC) met to discuss the Northwest Commission on Colleges & Universities (NWCCU) recommendation regarding general education in associate and baccalaureate degrees at TRU. This group brought the discussion to the ASC in November of 2016 and the ASC agreed that general education is broader than accreditation and required collegial academic discussion and resolution at the university level.

### *Establishment of a General Education Taskforce*

The ASC recommended to APPC the establishment of a General Education Taskforce (GET) to further explore the concept of general education at TRU. It was also recommended that the taskforce report to the Academic Planning and Priorities Committee (APPC) of Senate per the APPC terms of reference which state:

Advise Senate on policies and processes for the development, review, implementation and communication of educational plans that support the priorities of the University; and, establish such subcommittees as needed to fulfil the Committee's responsibilities.

On November 7, 2016, APPC passed a motion to recommend to Senate the establishment of GET and on November 28, 2017, Senate approved the motion. A call for nominations to serve on GET went out to all faculty councils, relevant department heads, and Deans Council in December 2016 and January 2017. Nominations were

approved at the February 9, 2017 meeting of APPC and GET met for the first time later that month.

GET is chaired by a faculty member and includes 24 members: 13 faculty members; three (3) student representatives; and eight (8) administration and staff (see Appendix B: Terms of Reference and Committee Membership). GET meets twice a month and follows a process which is intentionally iterative, faculty led, collaborative, and consultative. The responsibilities of GET, as per the terms of reference, include:

Following broad consultation with Faculties and Schools at TRU, to advise APPC on the establishment, revision, or discontinuance of policies and procedures in relation to general education curriculum; and, other duties as assigned by APPC.

For a comprehensive timeline of GET activities, including consultations and key milestones, see Appendix C. Consultations continually affirmed an overwhelming support for the value of general education, while a strong disinterest in creating an overly complicated, restrictive program that will negatively impact our students was consistently voiced.

## Proposed General Education Model

### *Research into Best Practices*

In February 2017, two (2) members of GET and two (2) teaching fellows from the Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT) attended the AAC&U General Education annual conference. The conference provided an opportunity to learn more about the design, implementation, and assessment of general education. A summary of learnings from the conference was presented at GET's March 9, 2017 meeting. The key takeaways for meaningful and successful general education included the following:

- broad-based committee representation;
- evidence-based practice;
- a strong communication plan;
- inclusion and transparency;
- purposeful planning and structure;
- support at all levels;
- avoid turf wars regarding enrolment into specific courses; and
- help students see the connections between the institutional learning outcomes (ILO) and their degree requirements.

GET's goal was not to import another institution's general education model or curriculum but rather find a model that works best for TRU and its students.

### *Draft Institutional Learning Outcomes*

Best practices for developing a general education model are to start with expected institutional learning outcomes (ILO) for all graduates as reported by member institutions of the AAC&U<sup>2</sup> and other prominent researchers in the field<sup>3</sup>. GET noted that Senate had approved Graduate Attributes in 2015 (see Appendix D: Senate approved Graduate Attributes) and these were seen to be the best starting point for the development of the ILO's as they were derived from TRU's mission statement, Strategic Priorities, and Academic Plan.

GET used an iterative process to develop the ILO's. The background to GET and general education, along with draft ILO's, were shared at meetings of each Faculty Council, Instructional Designer, Librarian, and TRUSU Student Caucus over the summer and fall of 2017. Faculty and staff were invited to provide feedback via an on-line survey. This feedback was used to further refine the ILO's and develop the general education model.

<sup>2</sup> AAC&U. (2016). *Recent Trends in General Education Design, Learning Outcomes, and Teaching Practices*. Retrieved from [https://www.aacu.org/sites/default/files/files/LEAP/2015\\_Survey\\_Report2\\_GEtrends.pdf](https://www.aacu.org/sites/default/files/files/LEAP/2015_Survey_Report2_GEtrends.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> National Institute for Learning Outcomes and Assessment. (2014). *Knowing What Students Know and Can Do: The Current State of Student Learning Outcomes Assessment in U.S. Colleges and Universities*. Retrieved from <http://www.learningoutcomeassessment.org/documents/2013%20Abridged%20Survey%20Report%20Final.pdf>

Figure 1 outlines the eight (8) draft ILOs. These are presented in no particular order, as there is no hierarchy within the ILO's. To assist with consistent application, GET has provided an explanation or intended meaning for each ILO. The ILO's served the basis for the development of a general education model for TRU.

**Figure 1: Draft Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILO's)**

A TRU graduate should be able to...
<p>... demonstrate the necessary skills of effective leadership and teamwork.</p> <p><i>TRU graduates act with integrity, they seek opportunities to work cooperatively in meaningful ways across all areas of their personal and professional lives. Through collaboration, graduates support thoughtful dialogue and connections with others. They nurture safe environments where people can take risks and challenge assumptions.</i></p>
<p>... demonstrate effective communication skills appropriate to a range of audiences and contexts.</p> <p><i>TRU graduates use the art of wordsmithing to succinctly communicate ideas. They aptly use an arsenal of communication methods including oral, written, graphic, visual, digital, artistic, and numerical. They rely on evidence and scholarly research to support a claim. By paying careful attention to their audience, they tailor their communications in a meaningful manner. Graduates listen, seek clarification, and work to understand and respect other viewpoints and contrasting opinions.</i></p>
<p>... reflect on and set goals for learning beyond their university experience.</p> <p><i>TRU graduates understand the limits of their knowledge and value opportunities to learn more. With active intent, they engage with their communities personally, and professionally. They work independently and productively, identifying opportunities to further their careers, and establishing action plans to meet their goals. Not easily discouraged by setbacks, they reflect and apply learned strategies, to adapt to changes in society.</i></p>
<p>... critically evaluate and apply socially responsible, sustainable and ethical behaviours.</p> <p><i>TRU graduates' strive to live within the means of the planet. They apply ethical principles to decision-making by considering the social, economic, and ecological side effects of everyday actions. Their entrepreneurial spirit motivates them to tackle modern issues for the benefit of future generations. Graduates practice compassion and value human rights, reinforcing fairness, equity, and equality in their daily lives.</i></p>
<p>... acquire, connect and apply a depth and breadth of knowledge.</p> <p><i>TRU graduates seek out new avenues and possibilities to ponder, research, and create. Within interdisciplinary and discipline-specific frameworks, they use evidence to make informed decisions. Graduates apply skills gained beyond their university experience to innovate solutions. They use their depth and breadth of knowledge to bridge domains and, in sharing their discoveries with others, they inspire positive change.</i></p>
<p>... construct meaning from information by applying creative and critical thinking through research.</p> <p><i>Through design, imagination, and creativity, graduates discover knowledge and produce new knowledge. They use sound research methodologies to navigate obstacles and solve problems. Using reliable assessment methods and analyzing relevant data, they reach meaningful conclusions. They have the tools to evaluate arguments and charged rhetoric, and to envision scenarios that divert from the familiar.</i></p>
<p>... recognize and respect the value of Indigenous knowledges and ways.</p> <p><i>Graduates affirm the value of Indigenous teaching, learning, oral histories, and research. TRU graduates foster reciprocal relationships and create safe spaces for open dialogue and diverse voices. They give back through ethical research practices which support the immediate environment and local concerns. Through their understanding of Canada's Indigenous history, graduates are compelled to respond to the Truth &amp; Reconciliation Calls to Action.</i></p>
<p>... recognize and respect the value of diverse cultural worldviews, including one's own.</p> <p><i>TRU graduates exhibit attributes of engaged, democratic citizens. By practicing self-awareness, they notice bias and suspend judgement in unfamiliar contexts. Graduates embrace diverse perspectives and appreciate those who bring varied viewpoints, skills, knowledge, and approaches to problem solving. They continually strive to offer positive contributions to the complexities of societies both locally and globally.</i></p>

### **Potential General Education Models**

During the summer and fall of 2017, GET conducted research into best practices and explored the most common models of general education. Following the review, five (5) models of general education were summarized and presented (i.e. background,

structure, pros, and cons) to GET for discussion. Following the presentations, an analysis of pros and cons with a lens specific to the TRU context was developed. In February 2018, GET members selected their first and second choices to guide the development of a general education model at TRU. The overwhelming consensus was in favour of a thematic model, this then formed the foundation for the uniquely TRU model proposed in this report.

### *Qualities of a Thematic Model*

The thematic model organizes ILO's into relevant themes or topics. Each theme can include courses across different disciplines; however, for a course to be included it must meet the intent and include the learning outcome identified within the theme. By grouping courses under themes, students can see coherence to the ILO's and make connections between the years of their degree. Further, students can approach their selection of electives with a clear purpose. This concept was particularly important for GET as it allowed for the weaving of TRU values into the general education model.

### *Naming General Education at TRU*

In BC, the term general education is associated with a variety of programs. For example, the BC Adult Graduation Diploma (General Education Diploma or GED) is awarded to adult learners (18 years and older) who have completed their high school through upgrading. At TRU, we offer a General Studies certificate, diploma, and bachelor's degree. Therefore, it was prudent to look at alternate names.

In Canada, some institutions have taken a similar approach by developing general education brands uniquely their own. For example, Simon Fraser University's "WQB" for writing, quantitative, and breadth requirements; and Capilano University's "Cap Core."

GET desired to identify a name distinctive to TRU and the philosophical aims of the University. In January 2018, the AVP Marketing & Communications led GET through a Unique Value Proposition (UVP) exercise. The resulting dialogue reinforced our student-centred approach thus influencing the language we used for constructing the model and its components, and ultimately the naming of general education at TRU.

As eloquently underscored by Jankowski and Marshall (2017)<sup>4</sup> in *Degrees that Matter*,

Once students are aware of the various courses they are being asked to take, why they are being asked to take them, what each adds to their knowledge and skills, how what they are learning in the course is applied in the real world, and what career paths the various learning opportunities build toward, then students have multiple pathways into and out of education that are flexible, transparent, and responsive to student needs (page 49).

<sup>4</sup> Jankowski, N. and Marshall, D. (2017). *Degrees that Matter: Moving Higher Education to a Learning Systems Paradigm*. Sterling, VA. National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment.

With the above sentiments in mind, GET recommends using the name “TRU Pathways” which aligns well with the TRU Brand “Find your Path” and TRU values of diverse programming and flexible learning opportunities.

### *Proposed TRU General Education Model – “TRU Pathways”*

The proposed general education model is centred on four (4) themes: Connection, Engagement, Exploration, and Local to Global. These themes are further separated into two (2) sub-themes each. The themes originated from complimentary groupings of the ILO’s, and each sub-theme relates directly to one ILO. See Figures 2 and 3 for a graphic representation of the model.

The design is intentionally flexible to allow for programs to scaffold learning across a student’s major/program of study. Apart from a capstone course, general education requirements are not assigned by year level. Required courses may count toward both general education credits and disciplinary graduation requirements.

General education requirements total 27 credits:

One 3-credit course for each ILO	3 credits x 8 courses = 24 credits
One 3-credit capstone course	3 credits x 1 course = 3 credits

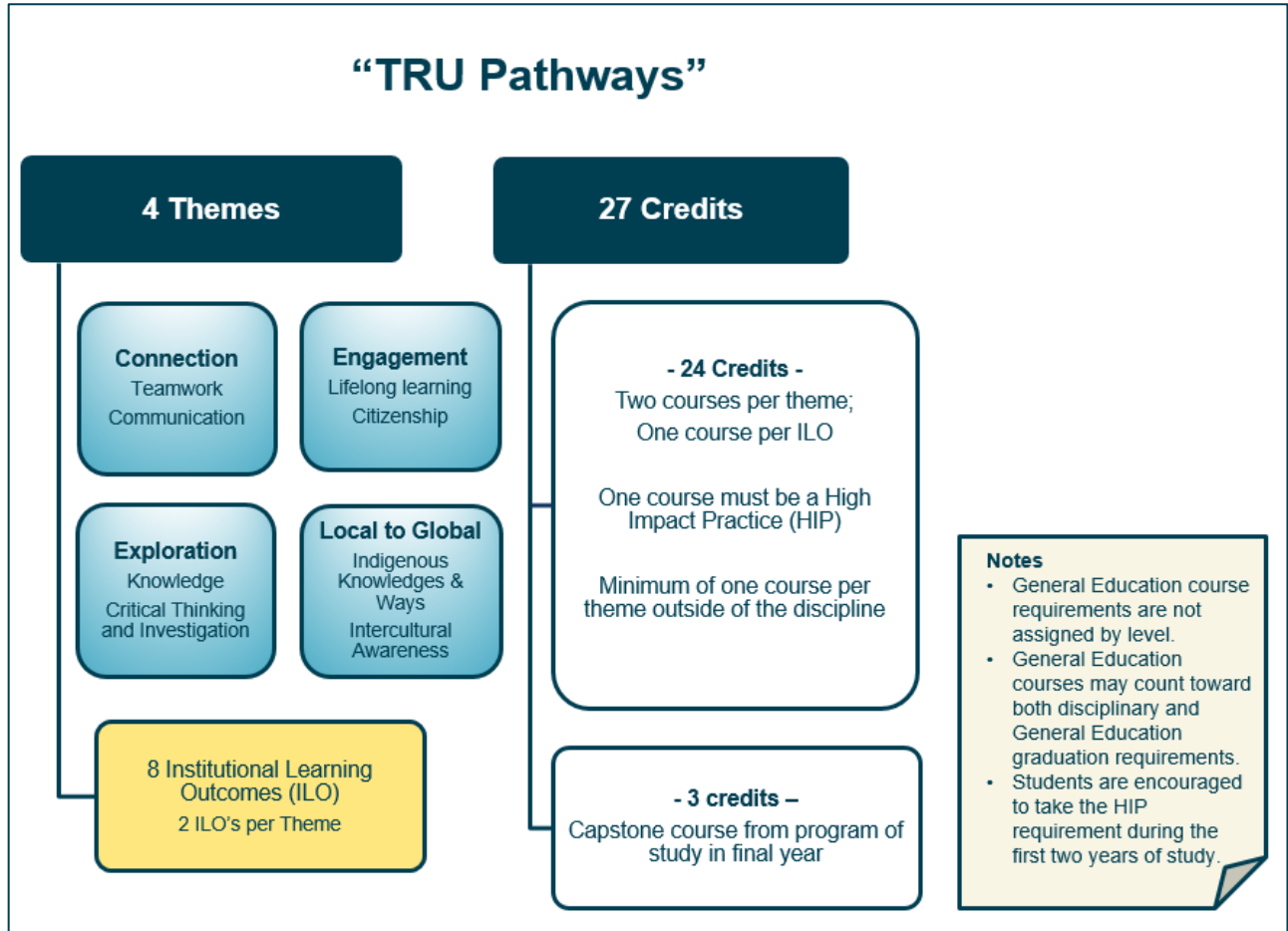
Within the 27 credits:

- 1 course must be a High Impact Practice course (HIP), recommended to be taken in Year 1 or 2
- 1 course from each theme must be outside of the major discipline for a total of 4 courses
- Capstone course is taken in the final year of study

In April 2017, a draft of the model was presented at an interactive open forum and included an invitation to provide feedback through online surveys. The response was positive, in particular, the emphasis on experiential learning through the HIP and capstone requirements was welcomed. Coupled with feedback from APPC, revisions were made to one of the ILOs, which resulted in creating two distinct ILOs for each Intercultural Awareness and Indigenous Ways of Knowing. The TRU community felt strongly about being intentional in addressing the Strategic Priorities and TRU’s response to the Truth & Reconciliation calls to action through the ILOs.



**Figure 2: Proposed General Education Model**



**Figure 3: TRU Pathways Model and Draft Institutional Learning Outcomes**

A TRU graduate should be able to...		
<b>Connection</b>	<b>Teamwork</b>	<p>... demonstrate the necessary skills of effective leadership and teamwork.</p> <p><i>TRU graduates act with integrity, they seek opportunities to work cooperatively in meaningful ways across all areas of their personal and professional lives. Through collaboration, graduates support thoughtful dialogue and connections with others. They nurture safe environments where people can take risks and challenge assumptions.</i></p>
	<b>Communication</b>	<p>... demonstrate effective communication skills appropriate to a range of audiences and contexts.</p> <p><i>TRU graduates use the art of wordsmithing to succinctly communicate ideas. They aptly use an arsenal of communication methods including oral, written, graphic, visual, digital, artistic, and numerical. They rely on evidence and scholarly research to support a claim. By paying careful attention to their audience, they tailor their communications in a meaningful manner. Graduates listen, seek clarification, and work to understand and respect other viewpoints and contrasting opinions.</i></p>
<b>Engagement</b>	<b>Lifelong Learning</b>	<p>... reflect on and set goals for learning beyond their university experience.</p> <p><i>TRU graduates understand the limits of their knowledge and value opportunities to learn more. With active intent, they engage with their communities personally, and professionally. They work independently and productively, identifying opportunities to further their careers, and establishing action plans to meet their goals. Not easily discouraged by setbacks, they reflect and apply learned strategies, to adapt to changes in society.</i></p>
	<b>Citizenship</b>	<p>... critically evaluate and apply socially responsible, sustainable and ethical behaviours.</p> <p><i>TRU graduates' strive to live within the means of the planet. They apply ethical principles to decision-making by considering the social, economic, and ecological side effects of everyday actions. Their entrepreneurial spirit motivates them to tackle modern issues for the benefit of future generations. Graduates practice compassion and value human rights, reinforcing fairness, equity, and equality in their daily lives.</i></p>
<b>Exploration</b>	<b>Knowledge</b>	<p>... acquire, connect and apply a depth and breadth of knowledge.</p> <p><i>TRU graduates seek out new avenues and possibilities to ponder, research, and create. Within interdisciplinary and discipline-specific frameworks, they use evidence to make informed decisions. Graduates apply skills gained beyond their university experience to innovate solutions. They use their depth and breadth of knowledge to bridge domains and, in sharing their discoveries with others, they inspire positive change.</i></p>
	<b>Critical Thinking &amp; Investigation</b>	<p>... construct meaning from information by applying creative and critical thinking through research.</p> <p><i>Through design, imagination, and creativity, graduates discover knowledge and produce new knowledge. They use sound research methodologies to navigate obstacles and solve problems. Using reliable assessment methods and analyzing relevant data, they reach meaningful conclusions. They have the tools to evaluate arguments and charged rhetoric, and to envision scenarios that divert from the familiar.</i></p>
<b>Local to Global</b>	<b>Indigenous Knowledges &amp; Ways</b>	<p>... recognize and respect the value of Indigenous knowledges and ways.</p> <p><i>Graduates affirm the value of Indigenous teaching, learning, oral histories, and research. TRU graduates foster reciprocal relationships and create safe spaces for open dialogue and diverse voices. They give back through ethical research practices which support the immediate environment and local concerns. Through their understanding of Canada's Indigenous history, graduates are compelled to respond to the Truth &amp; Reconciliation Calls to Action.</i></p>
	<b>Intercultural Awareness</b>	<p>... recognize and respect the value of diverse cultural worldviews, including one's own.</p> <p><i>TRU graduates exhibit attributes of engaged, democratic citizens. By practicing self-awareness, they notice bias and suspend judgement in unfamiliar contexts. Graduates embrace diverse perspectives and appreciate those who bring varied viewpoints, skills, knowledge, and approaches to problem solving. They continually strive to offer positive contributions to the complexities of societies both locally and globally.</i></p>

### *Rationale for the Model*

In drafting the model, GET carefully considered the future needs of TRU graduates across their professional, personal, and civic lives. The proposed model reflects TRU's diversity of programming and unique mandate for open and flexible learning opportunities that serves its regional, national, and international communities. For this reason, GET is strongly in favour of including a mandatory HIP course and capstone course.

The National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)<sup>5</sup> defines HIPs as the following:

- Learning community or some other formal program where groups of students take two or more classes together;
- Courses that included a community-based project (service-learning);
- Work with a faculty member on a research project;
- Internship, co-op, field experience, student teaching, or clinical placement;
- Study abroad; and,
- Culminating senior experience (capstone course, senior project or thesis, comprehensive exam, portfolio, etc.).

HIPs allow students to apply their learning in a variety of contexts thus deepening their understanding and application of skills across domains. Research has shown significant increases in student retention when a HIP is taken within a student's first two years of study. George Kuh (2008)<sup>6</sup> argues that:

When done well – some programs and activities appear to engage participants at levels that elevate their performance across multiple engagement and desired outcomes measures such as persistence” and that such “deep approaches to learning are important because students who use these approaches tend to earn higher grades and retain, integrate, and transfer information at higher rates (p.14).

GET recognizes that the capstone requirement may be the most significant change to the design of degree programs at TRU; however, best practices suggest the benefits for students out-weigh the challenges of implementation. As Cynthia Wells posits in *The Contextual Significance of General Education in Higher Education*<sup>7</sup>, “What makes capstones a good practice of general education is the manner in which they enable students to make connections and synthesize their undergraduate experiences” (p.58).

The TRU Pathways model for general education was reaffirmed as a realistic model for TRU through a SOAR Analysis exercise led by the Director of CELT. The SOAR

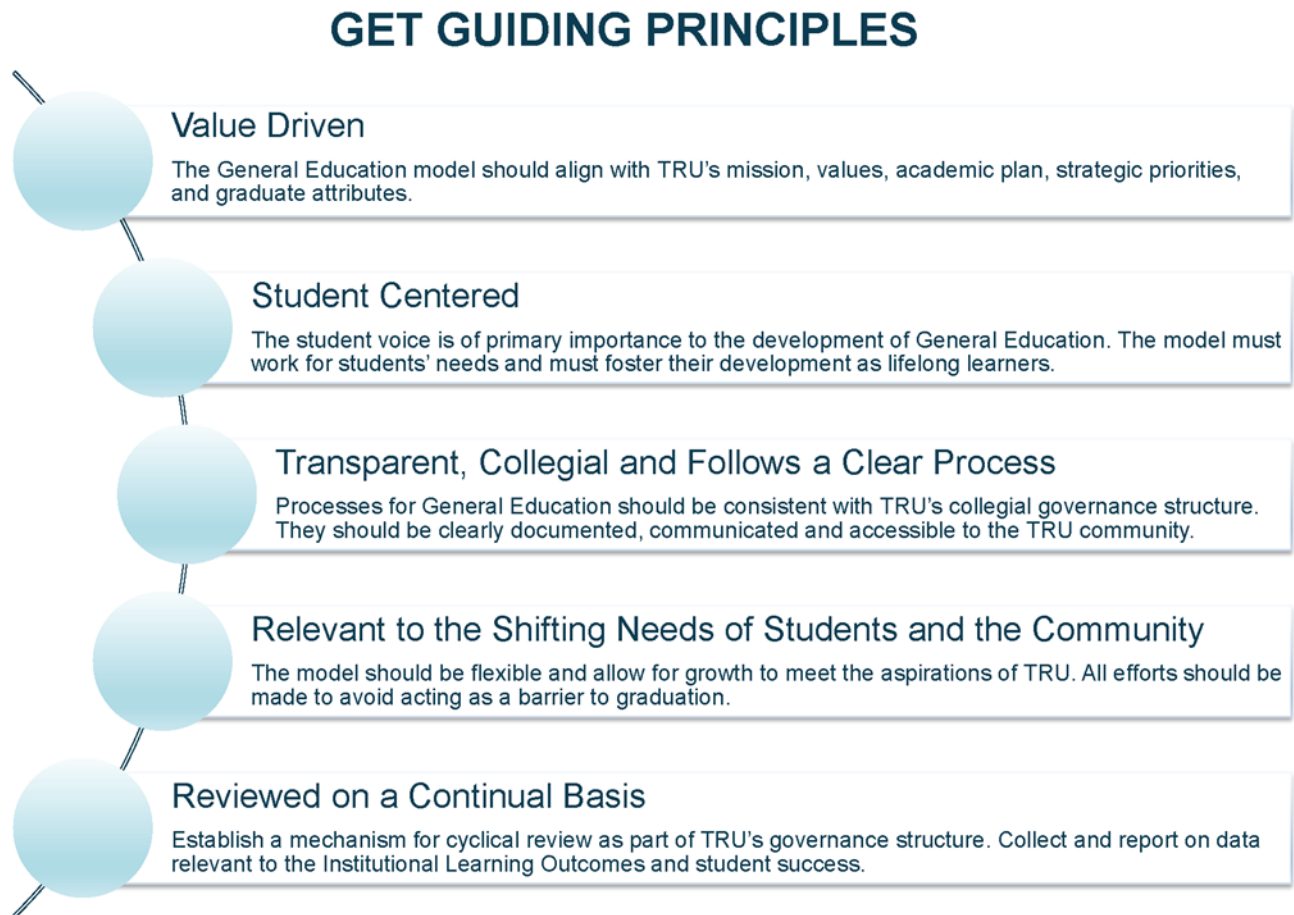
<sup>5</sup> National Survey of Student Engagement. (2018). *High Impact Practices*. Retrieved from [http://nsse.indiana.edu/html/high\\_impact\\_practices.cfm](http://nsse.indiana.edu/html/high_impact_practices.cfm)

<sup>6</sup> Kuh, G.D. (2008). *High-impact educational practices: What they are, who has access to them, and why they matter*. Washington, DC: Association of American Colleges & Universities.

<sup>7</sup> Wells, C.A. (2016). *The Contextual Significance of General Education in Higher Education*. Retrieved from <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1002/aehe.20068>

Analysis articulated the Guiding Principles (see Figure 4) that informed GET through its work on developing the ILO's and the TRU Pathways model (See Appendix E: SOAR Analysis Report).

**Figure 4: GET Guiding Principles**



### ***Identifying General Education Courses***

GET recommends that initially a committee be formed to set criteria and identify courses from existing TRU offerings that will qualify for each ILO. Into the future, GET recommends that the process to identify general education courses be embedded within TRU's normal curricular approval process within Educational Program Committee (EPC). Figure 5 provides suggestions for courses, or types of courses, which may qualify as meeting the ILOs.

**Figure 5: Potential General Education Courses**

	Potential courses
<b>Teamwork</b>	Courses about leadership and teamwork, including courses which incorporate leadership and teamwork into the pedagogical approaches, e.g. leadership, organizational behavior and philosophy.
<b>Communication</b>	Any course about or building skills of oral, visual or written communication skills, e.g. communications, English, journalism, fine arts, modern languages and psychology.
<b>Lifelong Learning</b>	Any course that requires students to reflect on and set goals beyond their university experience, e.g. sociology, geography, capstone, career education, co-op, service learning and field schools.
<b>Citizenship</b>	Any course in which students explore social, political, economic, and ecological endeavours, e.g. natural resource science, ethics, political science, environmental studies, history, psychology, philosophy and business law.
<b>Knowledge</b>	Includes all majors and concentrations, e.g. discipline specific courses at the upper level.
<b>Critical Thinking &amp; Investigation</b>	Courses related to research methodologies, e.g. statistics, research methods (qualitative and/or quantitative), numeracy, digital literacy, data science and computing science.
<b>Indigenous Knowledges &amp; Ways</b>	Courses related to Indigenous knowledges and ways, e.g. anthropology, archaeology, sociology, education, social work, nursing, and history.
<b>Intercultural Awareness</b>	Courses that incorporate diverse world views, e.g. anthropology, experiential learning, sociology, geography, history, languages, economics and politics.

## **Revisions to Policy ED 16-0**

Policy ED 16-0 Types of Undergraduate and Graduate Credentials identifies the types of undergraduate and graduate credentials offered at TRU, as well as the minimum requirements for each type of certificate, diploma, and degree. As the proposed general education model includes recommended ILO's and required credits, the policy will need to be revised to reflect the recommendations. At this point, GET is only recommending policy changes to undergraduate degrees. The incorporation of general education and the ILO's to certificates and diplomas will require further discussion and consultation. See Appendix F: TRU policy ED 16-0 with suggested revisions in track changes.

The phrasing is open with the intent that the specifics related to credits, HIPs, capstone, and wording of ILOs will be approved at Senate in a procedures document. This document will provide guidelines in greater detail thus allowing TRU the flexibility to shift with the evolution of the University and changing needs of students, economic demands, and government priorities.

## Items for Further Consideration

Should the proposed model be accepted, GET has discussed several items requiring further consideration prior to implementation. Below, GET provides its thoughts for ways to address some of the considerations; however, GET concedes that it does not yet have solutions for all outstanding questions:

Questions	Recommendations
<p>How will this affect transfer students?</p> <p>Will transfer students require the same number of general education credits or will an exemption be allowed?</p>	<p>As part of the assessment of transfer courses, set criteria could be used to flag transfer courses as satisfying a general education requirement, and then stored in a database for easy flagging in the future.</p> <p>This can be applied to processes for articulation agreements, as well.</p> <p>The Credit Bank could be audited for general education complements.</p>
<p>How will general education courses be identified?</p>	<p>Initially, a subcommittee could be established to set criteria and assess courses for general education.</p>
<p>What does the implementation timeline look like (i.e. phased-in or all at once)?</p>	<p>EPC approval is required for all programs as general education requirements will need to be incorporated into program requirements.</p> <p>Modification of programs should be staged within a timeline.</p> <p>General education requirements should apply only once a program has been approved through EPC and only to students new to the program.</p>
<p>What additional resources will be required?</p>	<p>General education can be aligned with existing curriculum development and cyclical program review supported by CELT.</p>
<p>How does this affect OL requirements?</p> <p>Will the same general education model be used for campus and OL programs?</p>	<p>This discussion should be held by the Planning Council for Open Learning (PCOL).</p>

<p>How will general education be assessed, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessment of ILOs; and</li> <li>• Ensuring courses selected for general education remain relevant.</li> </ul>	<p>New courses can be assessed through the academic approval process, more specifically EPC.</p> <p>Cyclical program review could include assessment of courses identified as general education to ensure the course has not strayed from intended ILO.</p> <p>CELT is working on assessment models for all programs at TRU, general education can be included within this work.</p>
<p>What is the definition of a HIP?</p>	<p>Currently, TRU applies the NSSE definition; however, TRU's department of Career Education is exploring broader definitions including the <a href="#"><u>Comparative Matrix of Co-operative Education with Other Forms of Work Integrated Learning (ACE)</u></a>.</p> <p>GET recommends a committee develop a definition that meets the needs of TRU.</p>
<p>How can we support Academic Advising, Degree Works, and the Registrar's Office?</p>	<p>Educating students on general education requirements will be an essential component of implementation. Creating a tracking system that is clear and works within existing frameworks (i.e. DegreeWorks and Banner) will be paramount.</p> <p>GET has one representative from the Registrar's Office. We suggest continued consultation with key stakeholders and clear guidelines be developed.</p>
<p>Does general education apply to apprenticeships, certificates, and diplomas?</p>	<p>This requires further discussion and the general education requirement would have to be adjusted to meet the different requirements for the programs.</p>



## Conclusion

GET was tasked with recommending a model of general education at TRU. Over the past sixteen months, GET has engaged in a collaborative and inclusive approach garnered by evidence-based decision making, at the heart of which has been a student-centred focus. Finally, GET sought to be visionary and creative while addressing TRU's values.

### *Action Item*

GET recommends the following motion be brought forward:

*APPC to approve and recommend to Senate for approval the proposed general education model which includes the Institutional Learning Outcomes and revisions to policy ED 16-0 Types of Undergraduate and Graduate Credentials.*

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We thank you for the opportunity to engage in philosophical and courageous conversations with colleagues across the University about the purpose of higher education and the role TRU plays in preparing its graduates for success. It is our desire to have a positive impact on the University and its students, and to minimize the impact of implementation by using existing infrastructures. We look forward to hearing your feedback.

## Appendices

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## Appendix A

### General Education Audit of TRU Baccalaureate Degrees

September 25, 2016

#### Summary

Almost universally, the bachelor degrees at TRU require a minimum of 120 credits to graduate and share a minimum requirement of 3 credits of communications (course codes CMNS, ENGL or JOUR qualify depending on the program). Alternatively, the number of required elective credits varies greatly from program-to-program, i.e. 6 credits (BSN) to 48 credits (BSW).

#### Defining general education for this report

When selecting the “general education” credits, I placed particular emphasis on those courses outside of the discipline (i.e. the 4-digit course code was not the same course code as the required credits). For example, for a student enrolled in the bachelor of Social Work, any course code not beginning with SOCW would be considered “outside of the discipline” and contributed to the overall general education credit score.

In other instances, many course codes referenced the same discipline (e.g. non-business courses or course codes not beginning with: ACCT, BBUS, BLAW, MIST, ENTR, FNCE, HRMN, IBUS, MKTG, MNGT, ORGB, SCMN, or BUSN) and were all lumped under Business and therefore did not contribute to the general education score for this report.

#### Examples of general education language used by Faculties and Departments

Program	General Education Language
Education and Social Work	English, Math and/or Lab Science, Liberal arts, Social Sciences, and Humanities
Business	Humanities, Social Sciences, and Communications
Science	At least two disciplines other than English; general electives; Arts, Humanities, Business or Science
Adventure, Culinary Arts and Tourism	Communications and New Media; Math and Statistics; Organizational behavior; finance and decision-making; marketing; economics; unspecified electives
Arts	English; Scientific and Formal reasoning; Breadth; Distribution (i.e. Humanities, Social Sciences, Creative and Performing Arts); Second Language; Writing Intensive
Nursing	English, Philosophy, Biology, non-Nursing electives

## Breakdown of general education by bachelor and associate degree

*\*In many instances, there was conflicting data in curricUNET, on the website, and in the academic calendar. The information below reflects my best efforts to make sense of the data; however, it may not be an entirely accurate representation of what is occurring in practice.*

# Campus Division

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## Bachelor Degrees in Education and Social Work

<b>Total credits to complete degree</b>	<b>120</b>	
Total Credits outside of discipline (General Education Score)	48/120	40.0%
Required credits outside of discipline		30
Elective credits (unspecified)		48

Program structure:

- Minimum of 120 credits
- Minimum of 48 credits in the liberal arts, social sciences and humanities
- Minimum of 60 credits in social work or education courses

Sample of major requirements	
<i>*Year 1 and 2 requirements plus:</i>	
BSW	Total: 120 credits Minimum 48 credits of liberal arts, sciences and humanities Minimum of 63 credits in SOCW courses 12 credits of Arts, Social Work or a Block awarded from certificate/diploma
BED	Total: 60 + 72 credits 70 credits of required discipline-specific courses beginning in "ED" 3 credits of "ED" electives
BETT	Total: 150 credits <i>*Candidates must have an interprovincial Trades Qualification (Red Seal) plus a minimum of 4 years' direct experience to enter program.</i> 31 credits of pedagogical course work 24 credits of technical subjects 11 credits of practica Minimum of 30 credits of Arts and Science electives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 6 credits of English Composition and Literature</li> <li>- 6 credits of Math and/or Lab Science</li> </ul>

## Bachelor Degrees in Business

<b>Total credits to complete degree</b>	<b>120</b>	
Total Credits outside of discipline (General Education Score)	45/120	37.5%
	Required Credits outside of discipline	45
	Elective credits (unspecified)	9-15

### Program Structure:

- Minimum of 120 credits
- Minimum of 45 credits in non-business courses (i.e. course codes not beginning with: ACCT, BBUS, BLAW, MIST, ENTR, FNCE, HRMN, IBUS, MKTG, MNGT, ORGB, SCMN, or BUSN)
- 6 credits of Humanities
- 6 credits of Social Sciences
- 3 credits of Communications
- 9 – 15 credits of Electives (dependant upon degree)

Sample of major requirements	
<i>*General BBA requirements plus:</i>	
Accounting	30 credits of upper level courses within the discipline 9 credits of electives (6 lower level + 3 upper level)
Economics	Minimum of 42 credits of ECON 12 credits of upper level electives (not specified)
Finance	24 credits of upper level courses within the discipline 15 credits of electives (9 upper level + 6 not specified)
Human Resource Management	24 credits of upper level courses within the discipline 15 credits of electives (9 upper level + 6 not specified)
International Business	30 credits of upper level courses within the discipline 15 credits of electives (9 upper level + 6 not specified)
Marketing	24 credits of upper level courses within the discipline 15 credits of electives (9 upper level + 6 not specified)
Entrepreneurship	36 credits of upper level courses within the discipline 15 credits of electives (9 upper level + 6 unspecified)
Supply Chain Management	36 credits of upper level courses within the discipline 15 credits of electives (9 upper level + 6 unspecified)
Associate Degrees in Business	
Associate of Commerce and Business Administration Diploma (DACB)	Comprised of the courses in Year 1 and 2 of the BBA degree. Students may substitute general education electives for MATH 1170 and ECON 2330.

## Bachelor Degrees in Science

<b>Total credits to complete degree</b>	<b>120</b>	
Total credits outside of discipline (General Education Score)	Up to 48*; 18 specified	15.0%
	Required Credits outside of discipline	18
	Elective Credits (unspecified)	27-33

### Program Structure:

- Minimum of 120 credits
- \*Minimum of 72 credits in Science disciplines (i.e. Biology, Chemistry, Computing Science, Forestry, Geology Mathematics, Natural Resource Science, Physical Geography, Physics or Statistics).
- Minimum of 18 credits in courses outside of Science including:
  - o 6 credits of English
  - o 9 – 12 credits in at least two disciplines other than English
  - o 27 - 33 general electives (from any academic discipline)
    - Electives must include at least 9 credits outside of science and must include at least two disciplines (other than English)

Sample of major requirements	
<i>*BS Major requirements: 48 credits of upper level courses; 30 – 41 credits of upper level courses within the discipline; remaining credits may be from any are of Arts, Humanities, Business, or Science (7-18 credits available).</i>	
<i>**Electives must include at least 9 credits outside of science and must include at least two disciplines (other than ENGL) outside of science. Remaining electives can be chosen from any academic discipline.</i>	
Computing Science	Total: 120 credits 9 credits of non-COMP courses 3 credits of non-Science electives 27 credits of general electives (from any academic discipline)
Animal Biology	Year 1: 30 credits; 6 of which must be ENGL Year 2: 31 credits; 6 of which must be electives** Year 3 and 4: 59 credits; 15 of which must be electives**
Biology	Year 1: 30 credits; 3 of which must be ENGL or CMNS Year 2: 30 credits; 6 of which must be electives** Year 3 and 4: 59 or 62 credits; 21 of which must be electives**
Chemistry	Total: 120 credits 72 credits within Science 39 credits within Chemistry 18 credits of non-Science and non-English 9 credits of English 3 credits of Communications 6 credits of Math

Natural Resource Science	<p>Year 1: 30 credits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Non-Science required courses: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o 6 credits of English</li> <li>o CMNS2300 Critical Thinking and Writing for Science and Technology</li> <li>o ANTH1210 Cultural Anthropology</li> <li>o 3 credits of electives (unspecified)</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>Year 2: 30 credits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Non-Science required courses: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o 3 credits of CMNS</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>15 credits of upper level electives  12-15 credits of other electives; must include 9-12 credits in at least two disciplines outside of science (other than English).  The remaining elective credits may be chosen from any discipline.</p>
Physics	<p>Year 1-2: 15 credits of electives  Year 3-4: 24 credits of electives</p>
Mathematics	<p>Year 1-2: 60 credits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Non-Science required courses: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o 6-9 credits of ENGL or CMNS</li> <li>o 6-9 credits of electives (unspecified)</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>Year 3-4: 60 credits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 18 credits of electives; may include science courses</li> </ul>
Ecology and Environmental Biology	<p>6-9 credits of English and/or Communications  9-12 credits of non-Science electives  6 credits of other electives (unspecified)</p>
Economics and Mathematics	<p>Total: 120 credits  Minimum of 66 credits in Economics and Mathematics/Statistics  15 credits of Economics core courses  15 credits of Mathematics/Statistics core courses  18 credits of upper level electives; 9 of which must be science electives and 9 credits of non-science electives</p>
<b>Associate degrees in Science</b>	
Subject areas: Biology, Chemistry, Computing, Physical Geography, Geology, Math, Physics, Stats	<p>General associate degree requirements (60 credits):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 6 credits of English</li> <li>- 6 credits of Arts (other than English)</li> <li>- 6 credits of Math</li> <li>- 36 credits of Science requirements</li> <li>- 6 credits of electives (Arts, Sciences, or other areas)</li> </ul>

## Bachelor Degrees in Adventure, Culinary Arts and Tourism

<b>Total credits to complete degree</b>	<b>120</b>	
Total Credits outside of discipline (General Education Score)	30/120	25.0%
	Required Credits outside of discipline	21
	Elective credits (unspecified)	43

### Program Structure (BTM\_GEN):

- Minimum of 120 credits
- 6 credits of Communications and New Media (i.e. CMNS, JOUR, ENGL)
- 3 credits of Math
- 3 credits of Statistics (i.e. STAT, ECON)
- 6 credits of Organizational behavior (i.e. TMGT, HRMN, BBUS, ORGB)
- 6 credits of finance and decision-making (i.e. ACCT, BBUS, TMGT)
- 6 credits of marketing (TMGT, MKTG, EVNT, HMGD)
- 6 credits of economics (ECON)
- 21 credits of unspecified electives (e.g. TMGT, EVNT, languages, sciences, arts, business, etc.)
- 3 credits of upper level communications (CMNS – Travel writing)

Sample of major requirements	
<i>*Discipline-specific requirements - of the 45 required upper level credits, 15 credits of concentration, 3 credits towards capstone project, and 24 credits of electives.</i>	
BTM_GEN requirements (see above) plus:	
Tourism Management	12 credits of lower level electives (both outside and within the discipline are accepted) 18 credits of upper level electives (unspecified)
Festivals and Events	Total: 42 credits 15 credits of Festivals and Events concentration 3 credits capstone project 24 credits of electives; upper level credits required as needed to equal at least 45 upper-level credits in degree-theme requirements with remaining electives to complete total 120 degree credits. <i>*This allows for a potential of 15 credits of electives outside of the discipline.</i>
Innovation and Entrepreneurship	15 credits of concentration requirements 3 credits capstone project 24 elective credits*
Resort Experience	15 credits of concentration requirements 3 credits of capstone project 24 credits of electives*
Adventure Studies, General	3 credits of Tourism Essentials 3 credits of Law



Sample of major requirements	
*Discipline-specific requirements - of the 45 required upper level credits, 15 credits of concentration, 3 credits towards capstone project, and 24 credits of electives.	
BTM_GEN requirements (see above) plus:	
	3 credits of Culture, History & Geography 3 credits of Environmental Stewardship → <i>The 4 categories above all begin with a Tourism acronym.</i> 21 credits of electives (unspecified)
Adventure Studies, Major	21 credits of 4 <sup>th</sup> year ADVG 3 credits of capstone project 18 credits of electives*

## Bachelor Degrees in Arts

<b>Total credits to complete degree</b>	<b>120</b>	
Total credits outside of discipline* (General Education Score)		Not clear
	Required Credits outside of *major*	60-78
	Elective credits (unspecified)	Not clear

### Program Structure:

- Maximum of 12 credits may be taken in courses outside of the Arts and Sciences (e.g. CONV, PHED, TMGT, SOCW, COOP, etc.)
- 6 credits of English
- 9 credits of Scientific and Formal reasoning (e.g. ARCH, COMP, MATH, GEOG, ASTR, BIOL, NRSC, PHYS, STAT, ECON, PSYC, FRST, etc.)
- 12 credits of Breadth (i.e. a minimum of 3 credits in at least four different Arts' disciplines – ARCH, ECON, MATH, SOCI, SPEE, VISA, THTR, etc.)
- 6 credits of Distribution (i.e. a minimum of 3 credits in at least two of the following: Humanities, Social Sciences, Creative and Performing Arts)
- 6 credits of a Second Language
- 12 credits of Writing Intensive (6 lower + 6 upper level credits)

\*\*Breadth, distribution, second-language, and writing intensive courses can be used to meet more than one requirement.

Sample of major requirements	
<i>*Majors require a minimum of 42-45 and a maximum of 60 credits in one discipline.</i>	
Fine Arts	6 credits of English 9 credits of Humanities and Social Sciences (min. 3 in each) 3 credits of Math or Science 6 credits of academic electives (3 credits may come from Visual Arts or Art History) 78 credits of Studio requirements
Interdisciplinary Studies	Admission: successful completion of 60 credits from any associate of Arts or Science degree Degree requirements: additional 60 credits <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 3 credits of Critical Thinking (e.g. ADVG, ANTH, ECON, HIST, PHIL, etc.)</li> <li>- 3 credits of Research Methods (e.g. ANTH, GEOG, PSYC, THTR, etc.)</li> <li>- 18 credits in one area of concentration</li> <li>- 6 credits of Writing Intensive</li> <li>- 9 credits of Breadth</li> <li>- Up to 12 credits of lower and upper level electives</li> </ul>
Journalism	Total: 120 credits Minimum of 60 credits of Journalism courses

	36 credits of lower level electives (any course is acceptable) 24 credits of upper level electives (any course is acceptable)
Economics	45 credits in Economics 3 credits in Math 3 credits in disciplines within Arts 39-42 credits of Supplementary Arts Requirements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- ANTH, CMNS, GEOG, HIST, PHIL, POLI, PSYC, SOCI, SPEE (specific course codes outlined in calendar)</li> </ul>
English	6 credits of lower level English 9 credits of second year Literature 3 credits of second year English (ENGL 2110) 6 credits of second year English electives Minimum of 30 credits of upper level English *Students are permitted to substitute upper level PHIL, THTR, CNST, and JOUR courses within the required 30 credits.
Geography and Environmental Studies	51 credits required within the discipline: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 15 credits of lower level (human geography, physical geography, and techniques)</li> <li>- 6 credits of lower level electives with the course acronym GEOG</li> <li>- 30 credits of upper level with the course acronym GEOG</li> </ul> <i>*This should allow for 60+9 credits of electives outside of the discipline (unspecified).</i>
Philosophy	15 credits of lower level PHIL 12 credits of upper level PHIL 6 credits of PHIL electives 6 credits of electives in select Arts courses (ENGL, HIST, etc.) <i>*Totals 39 credits of concentration; potential for 60+21 credits outside of the discipline (unspecified).</i>
Psychology	Year 1 and 2: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 12 credits of required PSYC courses</li> <li>- 3-6 electives in PSYC.</li> </ul> Year 3 and 4: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Minimum 30 and maximum 42 credits of upper level Psychology concentration</li> </ul> *Psychology has designated specific PSYC courses in the fields of Science (minimum 6 credits) and Social Science (minimum 6 credits). <i>*Totals 60 credits of concentration; potential for 60 credits outside of the discipline (unspecified).</i>
<b>Associate degrees in Arts</b>	
Associate of Arts degree	Total: 60 credits Year 1: 36 credits <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 6 credits of English</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 6 credits of Humanities (including the creative and performing arts but not including studio courses)</li> <li>- 6 credits of additional Arts</li> </ul> <p>*No more than 6 credits in any one subject area.</p> <p>Year 2: 18 credits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 9 credits of Science <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o 3 Nature Science</li> <li>o 3 Natural Science with a lab</li> <li>o 3 Math/Stats/Comp Sci)</li> </ul> </li> <li>- 9 credits of electives (unspecified)</li> </ul>
Modern Languages	<p>Total: 60 credits</p> <p>6 credits of English</p> <p>36 credits of Arts (other than English)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 6 credits in Social Sciences</li> <li>- 6 credits in Humanities</li> <li>- 6 credits in additional Arts courses</li> <li>- 24 credits of Arts (two or more subject areas)</li> </ul> <p>9 credits of Science</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 3 Nature Science</li> <li>- 3 Natural Science with a lab</li> <li>- 3 Math/Stats/Comp Sci)</li> </ul> <p>9 credits of Electives (may be outside of the Arts and Sciences)</p>

## Bachelor Degree in Nursing

<b>Total # of credits to complete degree</b>	<b>126</b>	
Total credits outside of discipline (General Education Score)	21/126	16.7%
	Required Credits outside of discipline	21
	Electives (unspecified)	6

### Program Structure:

- 6 credits of English
- 6 credits of Biology
- 3 credits of Philosophy
- 6 credits of non-Nursing electives

# Open Learning Division

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## Summary

The OL division at TRU has a more easily identifiable prescription for general education requirements. Almost universally, the OL version of bachelor degrees at TRU require a minimum of 120 credits to graduate and share a minimum requirement of 6 credits of communications (over the 3 credits required for many campus programs) and 24 general education credits (compared to the unspecified number for campus programs). Similar to campus programs, the number of required elective credits varies greatly from program-to-program, e.g. 15 credits (BSc, Health Science) vs. 33 credits (BBA, Commerce).

For OL Arts and Science degrees, the General Education requirements are clearly identified and categorized (see Arts example below).

### Bachelor Degrees in Arts - OL

<b>Total credits to complete degree</b>	<b>120</b>	
General Education Requirements	30/120	25.0%
	Required Credits outside of discipline	
	Elective Credits (unspecified)	30**

### Program Structure:

- Minimum of 120 credits
- All degrees require 6 credits of English/Communications.
- Degree programs in Arts offered through TRU-OL require the completion of general education requirements (credit value varies from 18 to 27).
- General Education Requirements are typically defined as:

General Education Discipline Areas	
Humanities (other than English)	6 credits
Mathematics and/or Science	6 credits
Social Science	6 credits
Interdisciplinary Fields	6 credits

Humanities	Interdisciplinary Fields
Art History	Asian Studies
Classical Languages and Literature	Canadian Studies
Classical Studies	Environmental Studies
Comparative Literature	Gender Studies
Communications	Indigenous (First Nations) Studies
Creative Writing	Latin American Studies

Cultural Studies  
History  
Humanities  
Journalism  
Linguistics  
Media Studies  
Modern Languages and Literature  
Music History  
Philosophy  
Religious Studies  
Theatre Studies

Urban Studies  
Women's Studies

### **Social Science**

Anthropology  
Archaeology  
Criminology  
Economics  
International Relations  
Political Science  
Psychology  
Regional/Human/Cultural  
Geography  
Sociology

### **Mathematics and/or Science**

Biochemistry	
Biology	Kinesiology
Botany	Mathematics
Chemistry	Microbiology
Computer Science	Ocean Science
Earth Science	Physical Anthropology
Ecology	Physical Geography
Environmental Science	Physics
Geology	Physiology
Geophysics	Statistics
Astronomy	Zoology

\*\*30 credits of the degree requirements (with no more than 15 credits at the upper level) may be applied credit; fine and performing arts studio courses and technology courses. Education, business and administrative studies courses are reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

#### Lower-Level Requirements (0-18 credits)

The number of credits and specific course requirements vary, depending on the area of specialization.

#### Upper-Level Requirements (45 credits)

15 credits in each of two areas of specialization for a total of 30 credits

15 upper-level elective credits

#### Additional Requirements (33-51 credits)

The number of additional credits varies, depending on the area of specialization.

Sample of major requirements	
English	120 credits total 45 credits of lower and upper level electives 6 credits of English 6 credits of Humanities (other than English) 6 credits of mathematics/statistics and/or science 6 credits of social science
History	120 credits total 45 credits of lower and upper level electives 6 credits of English (comp and lit) 6 credits of mathematics/statistics and/or science 6 credits of social science 6 credits of Canadian history
Fine Arts	120 credits total 27 credits of general education 6 credits of English (comp or lit) 6 credits of humanities (other than art history and English) 6 credits of math/stats and/or science 6 credits of social science 3 credits of academic electives (may include art history) 18 credits in history and art theory 75 credits of studio work
Psychology	120 credits total 6 credits in English (comp or lit) 6 credits in Humanities (other than English) 3 credits in math/stats and/or science 45 credits of lower and upper level electives
Criminology	120 credits total 24 credits of General Education 6 credits of English (comp or lit) 6 credits of Humanities 3 credits in math and/or science 3 credits in statistics 51 credits of electives 15 credits of upper level electives 36 credits of lower level electives
Associate degrees in Arts	
Associate of Arts Degree	60 credits total 6 credits of English (comp and lit) 18 credits in first-year Arts (other than English)



	<p>6 credits of social sciences</p> <p>6 credits of humanities (including the creative and performing arts but not including studio courses); no more than 6 credits in any one subject area</p> <p>18 credits in second-year Arts (must be two or more subject areas)</p> <p>6 credits of natural science (e.g. anthropology, astronomy, biology, chemistry, geology, physics, physical geography) including 3 credits in a lab science</p> <p>9 credits of electives (from any academic discipline)</p>
--	---

### Bachelor Degrees in Business - OL

<b>Total credits to complete degree</b>	<b>120</b>	
Credits outside of discipline	21	17.5%
	Required Credits outside of discipline	21
	Elective Credits (unspecified)	21-33

**Program Structure:**

- Minimum of 120 credits
- 18-21 credits of General Education requirements

Sample of major requirements	
Real Estate Management	120 credits total 12 credits of General Education 6 credits in Humanities 6 credits in Social Sciences 6 credits in English and Communications 3 credits of Statistics 21 credits of electives *business, real estate, or related elective
Commerce	120 credits total 60 credits from 2-year business diploma 18 credits of General Education 3 credits in English 3 credits in natural sciences 6 credits in humanities or social sciences 6 credits in arts and sciences 54 credits of Core Knowledge requirements 33 credits of Electives (academic and/or applied credits to bring the total # of credits to 120) 15 credits of Concentration required (i.e. accounting, finance, general management, HR, etc.)
Technology (Trades & Tech Leadership)	*Students with a recognized 4-year trades qualification typically receive up to 60 PLAR credits toward total 120. 120 total credits 60 credits of Core Knowledge/Lower-level requirements 15 credits of General education 3 credits in English 3 credits in applied communications 3 credits in computing science

	<p>3 credits in natural science</p> <p>3 credits in liberal arts or science elective</p> <p>18 credits of Leadership requirements</p> <p>27 credits of electives (selection subject to the approval of the program advisor)</p> <p>12 credits of "closed" electives (BBUS, MNGT)</p> <p>15 credits of "open" electives (BBUS, FNCE, MNGT)</p>
--	---

## Bachelor Degrees in Tourism - OL

<b>Total credits to complete degree</b>	<b>120</b>	
Credits outside of discipline	21	17.5%
	Required Credits outside of discipline	21
	Elective Credits (unspecified)	27-30

Program Structure:

### **Bachelor of Tourism Management**

\*Graduation from a recognized two-year tourism/hospitality program or a minimum of 60 credits of directly applicable coursework, preferably including core business and tourism and hospitality foundation courses.

- 120 credits total
- 21 credits of General Education
  - 6 credits in English (comp and lit.)
  - 3 credits in Statistics
  - 3 credits in Humanities (other than English)
  - 3 credits in introductory economics
  - 3 credits in geography
  - 3 credits in natural science
- 30-33 credits of Core Business and Tourism/Hospitality requirements
- 27-30 credits of other electives (generally met through block transfer from recognized tourism management or hospitality administration diploma programs)

### Bachelor Degrees in Science – OL

<b>Total credits to complete degree</b>	<b>120</b>	
Credits outside of discipline	24	20.0%
	Required Credits outside of discipline	24
	Elective Credits (unspecified)	24-27

**Program Structure:**

- 120 credits total
- 24 credits of General Education
  - 6 credits in English
  - 6 credits in Humanities (other than English)
  - 6 credits in math/stats and/or science
  - 6 credits in social science
- 27 credits of electives (may be lower, upper or non-science courses)

Sample major requirements	
Major program	120 credits total 24 credits of General Education 6 credits of English 6 credits in Humanities (other than English) 6 credits in math/stats and/or science 6 credits in social science 24 credits of electives (lower, upper science or non-science courses)
Comp. Science	120 credits total 75 credits of core knowledge/lower-level requirements 6 credits of English/Communications 33 credits of academic electives in any subject area 3 credits in any course, excluding science 9 credits in any course, excluding computing science 45 credits of upper level requirements 36 credits of COMP 9 credits of upper level electives (unspecified)
Associate degrees in Science	
	60 credits total of first and second-year courses 6 credits in English 6 credits in Arts (other than English) 6 credits of math 18 credits in first-year natural science, math/stats, or engineering

(no more than 6 credits in one area)

18 credits in second-year in two or more of the following subject areas:

natural science, math/stats, or engineering science

6 credits of first or second-year academic courses (electives?)

### **Bachelor of Health Science**

- 120 credits total

\*Admission requirements: completion of a minimum two-year diploma in health care or related area from a recognized program)

- 6 credits in English

- 3 credits in Statistics

- 3 credits in Humanities (other than English)

- 3 credits in research methods

- 15 credits of electives (discipline-specific in consultation with program advisor)

## Appendix B

### GENERAL EDUCATION TASKFORCE

#### TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Academic Planning and Priorities Committee of Senate struck a taskforce on General Education with a mandate to produce a draft proposal with recommendations for Thompson Rivers University's (TRU) general education curriculum.

#### COMPOSITION

##### Chair

- Faculty member (ex officio, voting) to be elected by the taskforce

##### Voting Members

- One faculty member representative from each of the Faculties and Schools
- Two Open Learning faculty members
- One faculty member representative from Library
- AVP-Academic
- Accreditation Liaison Officer
- The Executive Director of Aboriginal Education (or designate)
- One Dean
- One staff member
- One representative from the Registrar's Office
- One Open Learning Instructional Designer
- One representative from the Centre for Excellence in Learning & Teaching
- Two undergraduate students
- One graduate student

##### Non-Voting Member

- One representative from Marketing & Communications

\*Nominations to be approved by the Academic Planning and Priorities Committee (APPC) of Senate.

#### RESPONSIBILITIES

- Following broad consultation with Faculties and Schools at TRU, advise APPC on the establishment, revision, or discontinuance of policies and procedures in relation to general education curriculum.
- Other duties as assigned by APPC.

## **General Education Taskforce (GET)**

### **Responsibilities**

- Following broad consultation with Faculties and Schools at TRU, advise the Academic Planning and Priorities Committee (APPC) of Senate on the establishment, revision, or discontinuance of policies and procedures in relation to general education curriculum.
- Other duties as assigned by APPC.

### **Membership**

Staff member	Alana Hoare
School of Nursing (faculty member)	Andrea Sullivan
Faculty of Arts (faculty member)	Annie St. John Stark
Centre for Excellence in Learning & Teaching	Catharine Dishke Hondzel
Undergraduate Student	Dana Prymak
Faculty of Education & Social Work (faculty member)	Dian Henderson
AVP Academic	Donna Petri
Registrar's Office	Marjorie Budnikas
Open Learning Faculty Member (OLFM)	John Patterson
OL Instructional Designer	Ken Monroe
Faculty of Student Development (faculty member)	Kyra Garson
Faculty of Adventure, Culinary Arts & Tourism (faculty member)	Lian Dumouchel
School of Business & Economics (faculty member)	Lisa Lake
Marketing & Communications	Lucille Gnanasihamany
Accreditation Liaison Officer	Matt Kennedy
Library (faculty member)	Michael Purcell
Graduate Student	Marriappan Vesudevan
Executive Director of Aboriginal Education (or designate)	Paul Michel
Dean	Sandra Vermeulen
Undergraduate Student	Shreya Patel
Faculty of Science (faculty member)	Susan Purdy (Chair)



## Appendix C

# General Education Taskforce (GET) Activities November 2016 – Present

Senate approved the establishment of GET, with direct reporting to APPC, on November 28, 2016. After a call for nominations was sent out to all faculties/schools, select departments, and TRUSU, GET met for the first time on February 16, 2017.




GET meets regularly, twice each month. During the winter of 2018, GET formed two sub-groups: 1) Model and, 2) Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILO). These groups met on a weekly basis to develop drafts of the General Education model and ILOs. Over the past year, GET has held in excess of 30 working meetings to collaborate on the drafting of a General Education model that uniquely represents TRU's mission and values.

In addition to conducting research into best practices, GET held a half-day SOAR Analysis workshop, lead by Catharine Dishke Hondzel, Director, Centre for Excellence in Learning & Teaching (CELT). Other notable activities included:

- A Unique Value Proposition (UVP) Exercise lead by Lucille Gnanasihamany, AVP Marketing and Communications
- Invited guest speaker Dr. Jenny Shanahan, Assistant Provost for High-Impact Practices, Bridgewater State University, to meet with GET
- Members of GET attended the AAC&U and AGLS Conferences
- The Chair of GET, Susan Purdy, provided monthly updates to APPC
- A panel of GET representatives presented at the 2018 TRU Teaching Practices Colloquium
- GET held an interactive open forum on April 17, 2018

The following two pages provide a timeline of GET activities and key milestones.

### Timeline Legend

-  Consultation
-  GET Activities
-  Reports to APPC



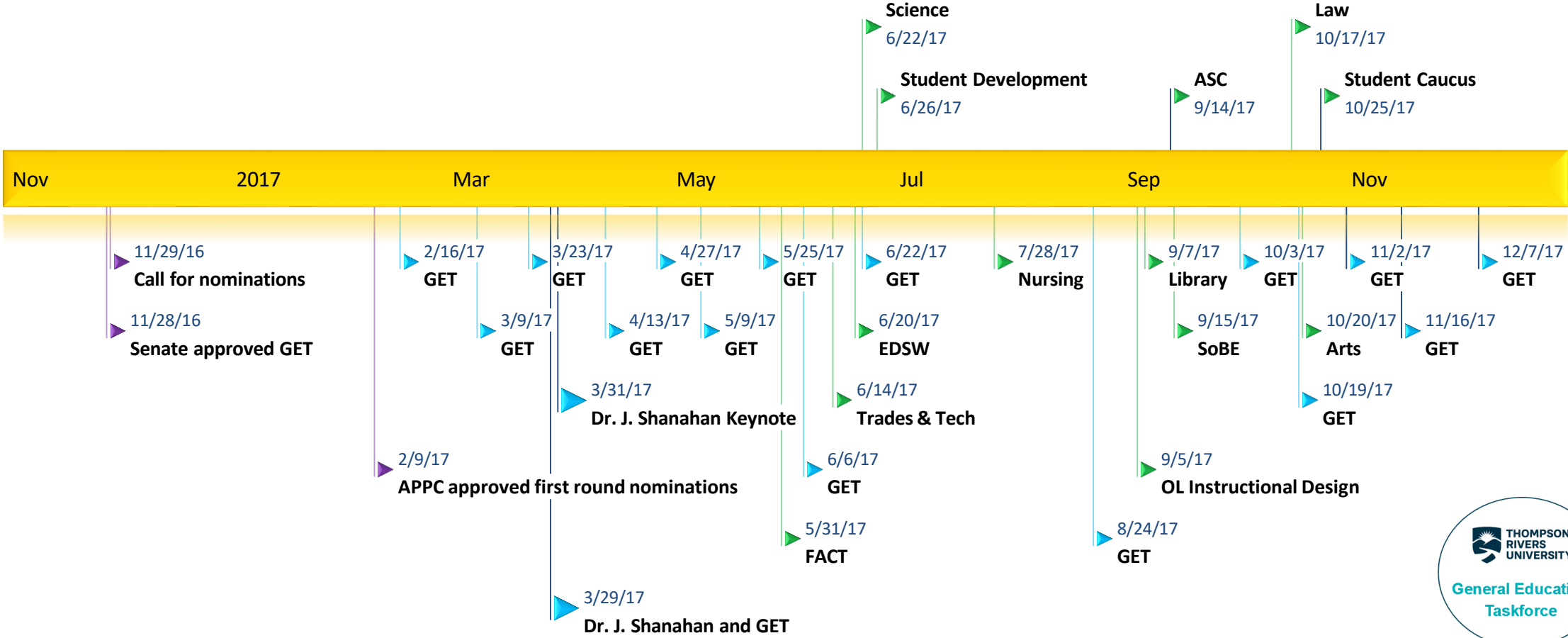
AAC&U Conference 2/22/17 - 2/25/17

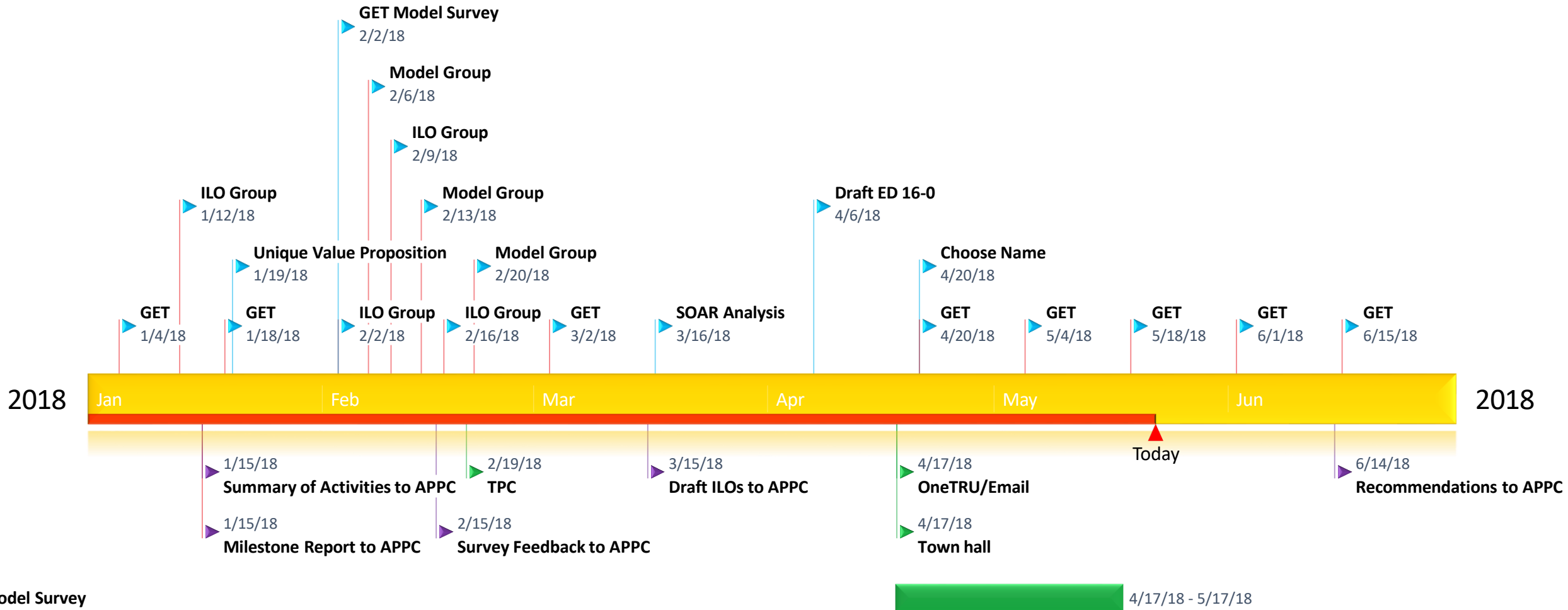
Draft ILOs 3/9/17 - 5/25/17

Fluid Survey 6/6/17 - 11/30/17

Models Research and Presentations 10/3/17 - 11/2/17

AGLS Conference 9/22/17 - 9/23/17





## Appendix D

### *Describing the Attributes of TRU Graduates*

TRU is a comprehensive, learner-centred, environmentally responsible institution that serves its regional, national, and international learners and their communities through high quality and flexible education, training, research and scholarship. As a learner-centred institution, TRU is dedicated to the intellectual and social development of our students through courses, programs, and experiential learning opportunities that provide learning and critical thinking skills and the encouragement to approach issues with creativity. TRU is committed to developing graduates who set high standards for their learning and endeavour to meet the challenges of the future. The TRU Graduate Attributes support the university-wide elements articulated in the TRU Strategic Priorities (2014-2019) and the TRU Academic Plan (2012). Programs and departments use the graduate attributes to articulate clear and measurable learning outcomes at the course and program level to their students. To these ends, each TRU graduate possesses knowledge, skills, and values that characterize excellence in education in their chosen field of study and can demonstrate competence in the following as is appropriate for their area of study:

<b>KNOWLEDGE</b>	<i>Depth and Breadth of Knowledge</i>
	<i>Knowledge Acquisition and Application</i>
<b>SKILLS</b>	<i>Creative Thinking and Expression</i>
	<i>Critical Thinking, Analysis, Problem Solving and Research</i>
	<i>Communication</i>
	<i>Teamwork and Leadership</i>
<b>VALUES and COMMITMENTS</b>	<i>Social Responsibility and Ethical Behaviour</i>
	<i>Sustainability and Entrepreneurship</i>
	<i>Intercultural Understanding</i>
	<i>Lifelong Learning</i>

## **KNOWLEDGE**

### ***Depth and Breadth of Knowledge***

For instance, TRU graduates: Employ and synthesize the concepts and methodologies of the discipline through a range of levels. Identify interdisciplinary opportunities to gather, review and evaluate information and carry out other knowledge-based activities consistent with their area of study.

### ***Knowledge Acquisition and Application***

For instance, TRU graduates: Acquire and apply information, summarize and interpret quantitative and qualitative data, use technology in authentic applications, and employ visual elements of the discipline. Review, evaluate, interpret and present information common to the field of study. Analyze “real world” problems and recommend and/or implement solutions. Investigate, analyze, and evaluate a variety of issues and carry out other knowledge-based activities consistent with their area of study.

## **SKILLS**

### ***Creative Thinking and Expression***

For instance, TRU graduates: Design, imagine, reconstruct and demonstrate their learning. Seek innovative and non-traditional opportunities to examine situations and resolve problems and carry out other skills-based activities consistent with their area of study.

### ***Critical Thinking, Analysis, Problem Solving and Research***

For instance, TRU graduates: Construct meaning from information. Analyze and synthesize information, investigate ideas, and formulate multiple and alternate solutions to problems. Discover that knowledge can be uncertain, ambiguous and limited, and how these limitations might influence results and interpretation of information.

### ***Communication***

For instance, TRU graduates: Use effective oral and written communication techniques. Communicate information, arguments, and analyses accurately and reliably. Demonstrate respectful communication by listening, seeking clarification, and working to understand the other viewpoints and carry out other skills-based activities consistent with their area of study.

### ***Teamwork and Leadership***

For instance, TRU graduates: Demonstrate effective leadership skills. Seek opportunities to collaborate. Work cooperatively and supportively as a member of an inter- or intra-disciplinary team and carry out other skills-based activities consistent with their area of study.

## **VALUES and COMMITMENTS**

### ***Social Responsibility and Ethical Behaviour***

For instance, TRU graduates: Share knowledge and skills within the community (local, national, and international). Apply ethical principles to decision-making. Engage in ethical and professional practices in an accountable manner. Demonstrate behaviour consistent with ethical practices that positively impact the community and carry out other values and commitments-based activities consistent with their area of study.

### ***Sustainability and Entrepreneurship***

For instance, TRU graduates: Apply principles of responsible sustainability practices to entrepreneurial or community-based service activities related to their disciplines. Justify, recommend, and express opinions on sustainability practices and environmental stewardship. Demonstrate entrepreneurial collaboration that supports career development opportunities or partnerships with government, industry, or NGO's. Carry out other values and commitments-based activities consistent with their area of study.

### ***Intercultural Understanding***

For instance, TRU graduates: Recognize the importance of valuing diverse perspectives in intercultural contexts. Collaborate with others to bring different skills, knowledge, and tools to problem solving. Recognize the value of including traditional and contemporary Aboriginal teaching, learning, research, and creative practices to work and in the community and carry out other values and commitments-based activities consistent with their area of study.

### ***Lifelong Learning***

For instance, TRU graduates: Work independently and productively. Set personal and professional goals and establish an action plan to attain the goals. Reflect on personal development and use strategies to learn from self-reflection and carry out other skills-based activities consistent with their area of study.

# General Education Taskforce

Report on SOAR Exercise  
April 3, 2018



Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching

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Strengths .....5  
Opportunities .....7  
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## Executive Summary

This report summarizes the strategic SOAR workshop that the General Education Taskforce (GET) participated in on March 16, 2018. Results are framed in discussion of over-arching **S**trengths, **O**pportunities, **A**spirations, and **R**esults (SOAR) as well as a summary of the major themes and goals. Each section of the report takes on a different format to best represent the results of the group conversations.

The SOAR approach was chosen by the GET as the activity for a winter retreat to inform the development of the principles and processes for General Education at TRU, to inform the model that will be used to support GE at TRU, and to engage in team development and knowledge sharing. In total, 16 GET members participated in the exercise, which took place over four hours. This group was comprised of faculty, staff, and students from across TRU.

SOAR is a strategic planning framework with an approach that focuses on strengths and seeks to understand a program and its environment by including the voices of the relevant stakeholders. Focusing on strengths means that the SOAR conversations center on what is being done right, which areas or goals can be enhanced, and builds on what is compelling to the various stakeholders. By engaging stakeholders across each faculty/school, Open Learning, Marketing and Communications, the Office of the Provost and Vice President Academic, the Registrar's Office, and students, we were able to capture a broad picture of a complex system by accessing many different perspectives. This systems approach tries to understand the integration and dynamics of the many relationships and interactions among people, programs, functions, and the broader environment. This helps stakeholders see and understand at a high level how the system works and where their unique contribution makes a difference.

The SOAR approach draws from Appreciative Inquiry (AI). AI is a philosophy and organizational change approach that builds on strengths rather than deficits or weaknesses. The process of the SOAR relies on a series of guided conversations that participants have with each other in order to elicit information and define results. One thing you will notice in this report is that the questions are framed in a way that attempts to identify the processes and procedures that are already working for General Education (GE) at TRU as it currently stands, as well as what the stakeholders aspire it to become. The participants in the SOAR were challenged to discuss ways to do 'more of what works' rather than identifying and eliminating problems and gaps. This offers a flexible framework that allows non-experts to be engaged in the process and find



ways of developing innovative practices and strategic directions. This collective effort is designed to maximize people's commitment and encourage their hard work and insights. Participants in the SOAR worked in small teams through each of the components of the analysis. What quickly became evident is that the responses of each team were complimentary. This form of convergent validity supports the findings and adds strength to the recommendations.

It is important to note that the SOAR process and this report compliments, rather than replaces earlier work done by the GET. This includes the revisions to the Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILO) (2018) and the GET Draft Model (2018).

Based on the data collected during the SOAR conversations the report culminates with five recommendations.

TRU's approach to GE and the model must be:

1. Value-driven
2. Student-centered
3. Transparent, collegial, and follow a clear process
4. Relevant to the shifting needs of students and the community
5. Reviewed regularly and receive continuous monitoring and oversight

Though not comprehensive, it is my belief that these recommendations stem directly from the ideas presented by the GET members.

I have done my best to faithfully represent the ideas brought forward during the exercise, and am grateful to all the participants for their willingness to engage in this meaningful conversation. Any errors or omissions in this document are my own.

Presented to the GET by

Catharine Dishke Hondzel  
Director, Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching  
April 3, 2018

## Strengths

The GET was asked to consider the strengths of the proposed GE model developed by the taskforce. This included conversations about what GET was most proud of, what makes the model unique to TRU, and what the greatest achievements have been in the past year.

Participants worked in small teams and discussed their shared understandings. This led to larger group conversations which brought forward the broad themes and provided supporting evidence.

Strength	Supporting Statements
<p><b>Collaborative and inclusive</b>  <i>GET has, and will continue to involve everyone in the campus in its work.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consulted every faculty and school</li> <li>• Committee is has broad-based representation and is faculty-driven</li> <li>• Collaborative approach, consensus model</li> <li>• Members are open to learning from each other</li> </ul>
<p><b>Reflects TRU values</b>  <i>TRU values include:            Leadership and Teamwork            Communication            Life-long learning            Sustainability            Depth and breadth of knowledge            Critical and creative thinking            Diverse and worldviews</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Model respects the diversity of programming and TRU’s unique mandate Model</li> <li>• Incorporates the ILO statements</li> <li>• Shared and distributed responsibility- keeps everyone on task</li> <li>• Committee represents stakeholders from across the campus community</li> <li>• Diversified model- Indigenous and global perspectives are woven throughout</li> <li>• Desire to have a positive impact on the campus including faculty, staff, and students</li> </ul>
<p><b>Evidence-based decision making</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Backward design of model (starting with ILOs)</li> <li>• Studied other models from other institutions to make an informed decision</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regular discussions about long-term impact</li> <li>• GET took time to reflect and bring ideas back to the larger group</li> </ul>
<b>Audience-focus</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reflects TRU values</li> <li>• Considers students' future needs</li> <li>• Adaptable to changing needs of the campus</li> <li>• Faculty-majority committee</li> <li>• Ideas have been shared and feedback elicited from faculty councils, student caucus, the Accreditation Steering Committee, APPC, and Senate</li> <li>• Plan to hold a town hall to further engage the campus in this conversation about the model</li> </ul>
<b>Visionary and creative</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minimize the impact of implementation (use existing processes)</li> <li>• Support ongoing initiatives</li> <li>• Strengthen faculties and schools</li> <li>• Provide structure for mentorship and training about GE</li> <li>• Develop resources that can be used for other initiatives</li> <li>• Considers what we don't know, and can't predict</li> <li>• Provides opportunities for growth and adaptation of the model</li> <li>• Reflects the needs of TRU students</li> </ul>

Notes:

## Opportunities

Participants were asked to consider the changes TRU can expect to see in the next three to five years, the external forces and trends that may impact GE, and the opportunities that provided for the implementation of General Education. These opportunities are reinforced by how they influence and impact students, faculty, and the community.

Expected Areas of Change	Supporting Statements
Demographic change in student population	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Age (increase in mature students)</li> <li>• Background (greater variety)</li> <li>• Expectations (greater)</li> <li>• Prior learning (greater)</li> <li>• Increasing diversity</li> <li>• Increasing international enrolments</li> <li>• Shift to technology-mediated learning</li> <li>• Shift from rural to urban (?)</li> </ul>
Impact of Truth and Reconciliation Commission Recommendations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increasing focus on recognizing and working toward Indigenous rights</li> <li>• Holistic approach to Indigenizing TRU approach to learning, including curriculum, teaching methods, research methodology, etc.</li> </ul>
External forces on TRU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Economic impacts</li> <li>• Environmental changes and issues (“wicked problems”)</li> <li>• Political and social changes</li> <li>• How we live and evolve together</li> <li>• Rapidity of technological and social change</li> <li>• Federal government requirements</li> <li>• BC Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills &amp; Training requirements</li> <li>• Professional programmatic accreditation requirements</li> <li>• NWCCU Accreditation requirements</li> <li>• Labour market needs and demands</li> <li>• Social media</li> <li>• Shifting needs of the community in response to the external forces</li> </ul>

Internal forces from within TRU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leadership and institutional priorities shift over time</li> <li>• Technology adoption</li> <li>• Knowledge-keepers and turnover of staff/ faculty</li> <li>• Growth in Open Learning</li> </ul>

Opportunities for GE	Supporting Statements
Positive curriculum change	<p>GE Will support positive and intentional changes to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The structure of programs</li> <li>• Teaching approaches that include High-Impact Practices (i.e. experiential learning, problem-based learning, community-based learning, capstone projects, etc.)</li> <li>• Assessment strategies</li> <li>• Interdisciplinary collaboration and connections</li> <li>• Foster cross-pollination between faculties, departments, schools, and disciplines</li> <li>• Integrate core themes throughout the degree</li> <li>• Establish a variety of capstone projects</li> </ul>
Future-ready students	<p>GE will help students to become:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Well-rounded citizens</li> <li>• Prepared for a changing world</li> <li>• Adaptable to a variety of circumstances</li> <li>• Able to articulate what they know and can do</li> <li>• Capable of engaging in thoughtful decision-making (particularly with respect to choosing electives)</li> <li>• Thought-leaders in the community</li> <li>• Prepared for employment</li> <li>• Life-long learners</li> <li>• Inspired leaders who are capable of creative and critical thinking</li> <li>• Aware of local and global issues</li> </ul>
Institutionally intentional	GE is developed with TRU values in mind.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GE will be woven into existing processes and programs in a holistic way</li> <li>• It will respect the existing educational committees and governance structures at TRU</li> <li>• It will remain value-centered</li> <li>• GE will respect disciplinary variety and provide opportunities for new ways of learning</li> <li>• It will encourage and invite faculty involvement, calling on faculty expertise in teaching and program development</li> <li>• GE will reinforce the TRU mandate</li> <li>• It will strengthen the reputation of TRU as an innovative and dynamic post-secondary institution</li> <li>• It will be accessible to a range of students</li> </ul>
Community-oriented	<p>GE Will be relevant and responsive to the needs of the community:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students will have opportunities to become socially and environmentally competent and develop an awareness of the needs of their community or region</li> <li>• GE will foster knowledge for students to understand their impact, which goes beyond the individual</li> <li>• It will consider the importance of place as a part of the wider community</li> <li>• It will respect and value the unique needs of people in this time and space.</li> </ul>

Notes:

## Aspirations

Aspirations reflect the values of the GET, specifically what faculty, staff, and students care deeply about. These discussions were centered on the areas in which resources and energy should be directed and focus the strengths and opportunities into meaningful components. In an uncertain environment with many possible outcomes, the aspirations orient the program and provide a way to increase capacity while strengthening existing processes. Each statement is followed by aspirations the group indicated were important to consider in order to foster continued growth and success. These actions are brought forward in the results section with the goal of measurement and success criteria.

### Student-Centered Design

The GET believes that the collective progress made so far has been due to the development of a student-centered approach which takes into consideration the unique needs of TRU's students. Its mandate is to provide open access to all students as well as diversity in the delivery of programs and learning opportunities. In order to be successful, students must continue to be part of the design of GE and be consulted on how it is implemented.

1. We will continue to engage students in the conversation about what GE is, and what it means to them.
2. Students will value what GE adds to their degree.
3. We will monitor what faculty, staff, and student perceptions of the GE model are throughout the process of implementation. Further, we recommend that the GE model be reviewed on a continuous cycle for improvement.

### Foster Student Growth

Through GE, students must be provided with ongoing opportunities to be successful, to articulate what they know and what they can do. Students should feel that GE adds value to their degree. If we are successful, by the time students graduate, GE will have enhanced students' learning and they will be prepared, socially and environmentally aware, and consider themselves life-long learners.

1. Students will be able to identify positive growth in their own knowledge and understanding(s).
2. Students will be able to identify that they have had a high-quality education/learning experience.
3. Students will be capable and prepared to have a positive impact on their community/region.

### Governance

General Education will be seen as a campus-wide initiative that has positive support and generates enthusiasm. It will be collectively governed in a way that respects the values, culture and traditions of TRU and will be seen as a positive addition to the campus culture.

1. Faculty, staff, and students will be involved and feel included in the ongoing governance and implementation of GE at TRU.
2. The processes of implementing GE will be transparent and inclusive, honoring the collegial and existing academic structure already in place.
3. GE will validate the institutional and program learning outcomes, reinforcing the inherent value of existing programs.
4. GE will be regularly reviewed to ensure its continued relevance, and alignment with ILOs, so it can adapt to changing needs.

### Situated in Place

General Education will reflect the values and the culture of Thompson Rivers University and its location in Kamloops and Williams Lake on the traditional and unceded territory of the Secwepemc peoples. The GE model will deliberately foster student growth and ways of knowing and learning with a view to the broader community- locally, globally, historically and with an aim of a preferred future of educated citizens.

1. GE will validate students' learning pathways while providing them with opportunities to broaden their knowledge, skills and values.



2. GE will provide opportunities for students to learn through their experiences as well as the experiences of others, encouraging reflection and respecting diverse ways of knowing.
3. Students, faculty, staff and other members of the community will learn together within the GE framework and feel supported.

Notes:

## Results

*How will we know if GE is successful?*

The SOAR process asked participants to consider what meaningful measures will indicate that GE is on track with achieving its goals, what measurable results need to be captured, and what resources are needed to implement this project. The General Education Taskforce will then recommend targets and thresholds for measuring GE. This final section of the SOAR report is an invitation to innovate to transform creative ideas into action items. Since every organization has limited resources, choices must be made that make the best use of existing processes, systems, and structures within an established institutional culture.

The next step of this process is to begin identifying the data sources that are available, or that must be created in order to capture the measurements that are seen as most meaningful. To minimize waste, choices should reflect the aspirations of the group and use the simplest and most accessible tools to directly measure meaningful results.

Measures
Information about the following measures will provide evidence to support the aspirations and would indicate whether or not GE implementation was successful.
<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Student satisfaction</li><li>2. Student engagement</li><li>3. Students' perceptions of feeling respected and valued</li><li>4. Percentage of students who have met GE requirements when academic program complete</li><li>5. Student membership on committees and initiatives</li><li>6. Faculty involvement in GE monitoring</li><li>7. Number of students engaged in research</li><li>8. Student graduation/completion rates</li><li>9. Student registration rates</li><li>10. Attendance and class participation rates</li><li>11. Number of students with diverse major/minor program involvement</li><li>12. Perceptions of employers about preparation/readiness of TRU graduates</li></ol>

13. Employment rates and outcomes
14. Faculty, staff, and student awareness of GE and requirements
15. Faculty, staff, and student perceptions regarding GE
16. Number of High-Impact Practices (HIPs) in courses
17. Participation rates in sustainable practices
18. Student entrepreneurial activity rates
19. Number of courses that meet GE requirements
20. Faculty, staff, and student intercultural competency

### Potential Tools

1. National Survey of Student Engagement
2. Surveys of students
3. Surveys of graduates/alumni
4. Surveys of employers
5. Surveys of faculty
6. Program review reports
7. DegreeWorks reports
8. Intercultural competency index
9. Employment rates
10. Institutional planning data/reports
11. STARS Report (sustainability)

Notes:

## Recommendations

TRU's approach to general education and the model must be:

### **1. Value-driven**

Throughout the SOAR exercise, participants consistently reaffirmed the GET's commitment to the TRU values including the TRU's mandate for open and flexible learning and to serve its regional, national, and international learners and their communities. The group also believed that the values contained within the Graduate Attributes, ILOs, and Strategic Priorities would serve to frame GE. These values center the group and direct the development and implementation of the GE model.

### **2. Student-centered**

Drawing directly from the TRU values, the student voice is of primary importance to GE. At all stages of this process GET must involve students as stakeholders, work with students to develop materials that communicate directly to students, and share information in an open and accessible format. As GE is implemented, future, current, and past students must be involved in consultation. The GE model must work for student needs and must foster their development as life-long learners.

### **3. Transparent, collegial, and follow a clear process**

In implementing GE, the taskforce should avoid creating new or complicated structures that will only be used for GE. The group recommends that GE should make use of existing governance and reporting structures. The process of implementation should be consistent with the existing model of collegial governance, conversations should remain positive and forward-looking, and all processes should be clearly documented, communicated, and accessible to the TRU community.

### **4. Relevant to the shifting needs of students and the community**

As a GE model is established it should be developed with flexibility and growth in mind. As external needs adapt and shift, processes should be put in place to allow for changes to be made following guidelines that meet the values and aspirations of the GE process. The implementation of GE should not create barriers to learning including any difficulty registering or barriers to graduation.

Advisors must be well-versed in GE in order to offer meaningful and accurate support for students. When barriers are experienced or perceived by any stakeholder an established review and audit process should be used to reduce the likelihood of them occurring in the future.

## **5. Reviewed regularly and receive continuous monitoring and oversight**

GET recommends establishing a GE committee embedded within TRU's governance structure to monitor the GE model and a process of cyclical review. This process will reflect the values of GET that are shared within this report, provide a mechanism for reducing barriers to access and systematically collect and report on data relevant to the specified outcome measures. As with the implementation of any new program, review and monitoring will be most critical in the first few years as baseline measures are established and the program is marketed. It will be essential to be highly responsive to the TRU community.



## TYPES OF UNDERGRADUATE AND GRADUATE CREDENTIALS

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POLICY NUMBER	ED 16-0
APPROVAL DATE	JANUARY 26, 2015
PREVIOUS AMENDMENT	DECEMBER 21, 2005
REVIEW DATE	JANUARY 26, 2020
AUTHORITY	SENATE/PLANNING COUNCIL FOR OPEN LEARNING
PRIMARY CONTACT	REGISTRAR/DEANS

### POLICY

Thompson Rivers University (TRU) offers programs of study leading to undergraduate certificates, diplomas, and degrees; post-baccalaureate certificates and diplomas; and graduate certificates, diplomas, and degrees. This policy is intended to set minimum requirements for credentials. Individual programs may set higher requirements.

- I. **Undergraduate certificates** comprise less than 60 credits and generally involve in-depth study in a specific discipline. Students may, upon completion, continue their studies in order to pursue an undergraduate diploma and/or a baccalaureate degree.
- II. **Undergraduate diplomas** comprise 60 to 119 credits and generally involve in-depth study in a specific discipline. Students may, upon completion, continue their studies in upper-level work in order to pursue a baccalaureate degree.
- III. **Associate degrees** are undergraduate credentials comprising of 60 to 119 credits and generally involve a broad range of course offerings balanced with in-depth study in a specific discipline. Students may, upon completion, continue their studies in upper-level work in order to pursue a baccalaureate degree.
- IV. **Advanced certificates and diplomas** require students to have completed an undergraduate diploma or associate degree prior to entry to the advanced certificate or diploma program. Advanced certificates and diplomas are normally characterized by in-depth study in specific disciplines.
  - 1) Advanced certificates are awarded for the completion of a diploma (or equivalent) and up to 15 additional undergraduate credits,

- 2) Advanced diplomas are awarded for the successful completion of a diploma (or equivalent) and 16 or more additional undergraduate credits.

**V. Baccalaureate degrees** ~~are comprised of a minimum 120 credits and incorporate the TRU institutional learning outcomes into the program of study, including the following undergraduate credentials, of which there are two types: There are two types of Baccalaureate degrees:~~

- a. **First-year Entry** ~~comprise a minimum of 120 credits. They~~ which generally takes one of three forms:
  - i. A combination of lower-level breadth requirements as a prerequisite for more specific discipline- and theme-based study at the upper level,
  - ii. A largely prescribed curriculum at both the lower and upper levels for specific discipline- or theme-based study,
  - iii. A general program featuring an interdisciplinary combination of courses at the lower and upper levels.
  
- b. **Delayed Entry** ~~are baccalaureate degrees that~~ which usually focuses on preparing students for entry into a profession or occupational field. ~~They and~~ require the following:
  - i. ~~120 cumulative credits, at minimum, where~~ Cumulative credits are undergraduate credits required for admission plus credits required to complete the degree.
  - ii. A minimum of 30 prior university undergraduate credit for admission.

**V. Post-baccalaureate certificates** require students to already hold a baccalaureate degree and are composed of a maximum of 30 additional undergraduate credits in a specific area of study.

**VI. Post-baccalaureate diplomas** require students to already hold a baccalaureate degree and are composed of a minimum of 31 additional undergraduate credits in a specific area of study.

**VII. Graduate certificates** comprise graduate coursework and will typically have 25% or fewer credits than a Master's degree offered in the same discipline. Students may, upon successful completion, continue their studies in order to pursue a graduate diploma and/or degree, where available.

**VIII. Graduate diplomas** comprise graduate coursework and will typically have

between 25% and 50% the number of credits of a Master's degree in the same discipline. Students may, upon successful completion, continue their studies in order to pursue a graduate degree, where available.

- IX. Master's degrees** comprise graduate coursework and will typically require the equivalent of at least 4 semesters of full-time studies to complete. Masters degrees may be course based, course and project based, or course and thesis based.

## REGULATIONS

### I. ASSOCIATE DEGREES

For detailed information about Associate Degree requirements consult the BC Transfer Guide: <http://www.bctransferguide.ca/associate/requirements/>

### II. BACCALAUREATE DEGREES

All TRU baccalaureate degrees will require the completion of at least 120 credits, and must includeing:

- I. ~~the number of required general education credits as outlined in the Senate approved TRU General Education model; and,~~
- II. ~~Of these,~~ a minimum of 45 credits ~~must be~~ at the upper level (in this policy, "upper level" means 3000- or 4000-level courses).

Specific degrees may require more than 120 credits overall and/or more than 45 upper-level credits. Degrees may be general or may include the elements listed in 1), 2), and/or 3) below.

#### 1) **MAJORS, MINORS, THEMATIC OPTIONS, CONCENTRATIONS, AND CO- OPERATIVE EDUCATION WITHIN DEGREES AND HONOURS DEGREES**

- a. **Major:** Consists of a minimum of 24 credits in a specific discipline or defined cross- disciplinary area with a minimum of 15 credits at the upper level. A major must be declared prior to the completion of 60 credits, unless otherwise stated by the program.
- b. **Minor:** Consists of a minimum of 9 upper-level credits in a specific discipline. A minor must be declared no later than the commencement of the final semester of study. Unless stated otherwise by program guidelines, students may complete any TRU Minor regardless of the degree they are pursuing provided they are approved by the Dean (or designate) of their academic unit.



- c. **Thematic Option:** Consists of a minimum of 24 credits in an approved interdisciplinary thematic area with 15 credits at the upper level. A thematic option should be declared prior to the completion of 60 credits, unless otherwise stated by the program
- d. **Concentration:** Consists of a minimum of 12 upper-level credits in a specific discipline or defined cross-disciplinary area. A concentration may accompany a declared major or be independent of a major. A concentration should be declared prior to the commencement of the final semester of study.
- e. **Co-operative Education** integrates a student's academic studies with paid work experience in approved employment opportunities. Students gain experience in a field related to their program according to the following criteria:
  - i. Co-op work terms are developed and approved by TRU.
  - ii. The student is engaged in productive and meaningful work.
  - iii. The student's performance in the co-op work term is monitored by TRU.
  - iv. The student's performance in the co-op work term is supervised and evaluated by the employer and the co-op faculty.
- f. **Multiple Majors, Minors, Concentrations, Thematic Options, or Combinations of the Above** are allowed in some degrees. To qualify for a double major or a double concentration, both majors and concentrations must be offered by the same degree program; otherwise, it is a multiple program (see 3. below). A degree with a double major, double minor, double concentration, double thematic option, or any combination of majors, minors, concentrations, or thematic options requires the satisfactory completion of all requirements of each of the individual majors, minors, concentrations, or thematic options.

## 2) HONOURS DEGREE

- a) An honours degree requires the completion of a minimum of 120 credits. Of these, a minimum of 9 additional credits, beyond the number required in the non-honours option of the program, must be at the upper level.
- b) Students must have a 'B' average in relevant university courses (relevant as defined by the program) upon admittance to an honours program and must maintain a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 3.00 in their final 60 credits. Individual programs may have additional, or stricter, standards than those mentioned above.

3) **MULTIPLE PROGRAMS** occur when students undertake more than one certificate, diploma or degree with the University. When students undertake multiple specializations within a single degree, they are considered double majors, minors, or concentrations (see II. 2 f. above).

- i. Multiple programs require the satisfactory completion of all requirements of each of the individual programs.
- ii. Multiple programs may be completed either concurrently or sequentially.
- iii. Graduating multiple program students will receive one credential for each of the programs. The credentials awarded to multiple program graduates will not differ from those awarded to graduates of the corresponding single credential programs.
- iv. A minimum of 6 additional credits will be required for a dual certificate program.
- v. A minimum of 15 additional credits will be required for a dual diploma program.
- vi. A minimum of 30 additional credits will be required for a dual degree program.

### **III. RESIDENCY**

All credentials must meet the University's residency requirements as per policy ED 8-0 Educational Standards in Credit Courses and Programs

### **IV. TRANSCRIPT NOTATION**

Information pertaining to the type of credential (honours, major, minor, concentration, and thematic option) will be printed on the student's transcript upon completion of all requirements for the credential.