

**Boston University** Office of the Provost



**Professor Jean Morrison, University Provost and Chief Academic Officer**

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**TO:** Boston University Faculty and Staff

**FROM:** Jean Morrison, University Provost and Chief Academic Officer

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "JM", written in a cursive style.

**DATE:** March 4, 2016

**SUBJECT:** Final Report of the Task Force on General Education

I am pleased to share with you the final report of the Task Force on General Education, which recommends the elements of a University-wide General Education (GE) Program for undergraduate students at Boston University. The report may be accessed on the Task Force's website at <http://www.bu.edu/gened/>.

The General Education Program recommended by the report of the Task Force is the culmination of 15 months of intensive meetings, conversations, consultation, and deliberations that included 36 separate meetings over a four-month period, involving a wide range of stakeholders within the BU community including faculty in every school and college. The Task Force approached its task with rigor, seriousness, and considerable attention to consensus building and consultation.

I think that the result of these efforts is a very sophisticated and thoughtful proposal for establishment of BU's first ever University-wide General Education Program, which has the real potential to become an outstanding, national model for undergraduate GE in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. As you will read in the report, the proposal fully considers and reflects on Boston University's history and institutional values in a modern context and incorporates these into a GE Program that is suited to BU and achieves the overarching goal of articulating the unique aspects and inherent value of a BU undergraduate degree.

With the report of the Task Force complete, we will now begin the formal process of consideration of the GE proposal through the University Council (UC), which is our faculty governance system. Our current University Bylaws and UC Constitution are silent on governance processes for consideration and oversight of undergraduate academic programs that span schools and colleges, such as the proposed GE program. In order to accommodate both the establishment and ongoing oversight of the GE program, the processes for governance at both the University and the UC level are being created and the necessary amendments to the Bylaws and UC Constitution are under consideration by the Board of Trustees and the University Council.

Following the established process for considering proposals for new academic programs, the GE Program proposal will be discussed and considered in the standing UC Committee on

Undergraduate Academic Programs and Policies (UAPP) this month, and by the full University Council during its meetings in April and May. I encourage you to share any feedback that you have on the proposal with the elected members of the UC in your schools and colleges during this crucial period of discussion and consideration. In addition, faculty will have an opportunity to engage in a discussion of the GE Program proposal during the upcoming Faculty Assembly on March 23.

As a reminder, the charge to the Task Force on General Education was to develop a *vision* and *intellectual framework* for the general education of all our undergraduate students – which is accomplished with the submission of this report. As outlined in my initial charge to this group, its work was envisioned as the first in a two-step process. If the proposal is approved by the University Council, a second task force will be charged with developing a plan for implementing the GE Program and charting a course for making it operational. This second, implementation task force will conduct its work during the 2016-2017 academic year, with the goal of making the Program's first offerings available to students in the Fall of 2017.

I am very enthusiastic about the proposal and I invite you to join me in thanking the members of the Task Force on GE for their dedication and commitment to developing a truly compelling vision for establishing University-wide General Education at Boston University.

Cc: Robert A. Brown  
Academic Deans  
Provost's Cabinet