February 27, 2025

Dear Provost Usher and President Close,

The General Education Improvement Task Force was charged in December 2024 to deliver the following by February 21 (extended to February 28 because of campus closures):

- Recommend a modified structure for general education at Radford University.
- Develop a general timeline to implement the recommended modified structure for general education at Radford University.
- Ensure that the recommended modified structure for general education is assessable.

With the guidance of AAC&U Senior Fellow Dr. Jennifer Hart, the Task Force presents our recommendations for a new general education model that helps students develop fundamental skills through Competency courses, apply knowledge from a range of disciplines through Inquiry courses, and explore connections through Integration courses.

After developing the initial draft of the model, the Task Force elicited feedback from faculty, staff, and students. Feedback was gathered through a Qualtrics survey, with subsequent town halls at each college, the Roanoke Campus, and with SGA. The resulting recommendations have incorporated relevant feedback.

Additionally, the Assistant Provosts for Faculty & Curriculum and Student Success, the Registrar, the Director of Advising, and representatives from Information Technology worked adjacent to and with the Task Force to generate timelines for implementation and an assessment architecture.

Our recommendation package includes the following:
- Model Structure of a General Education Program
- Drafts of Supporting Documentation
    - Policy Recommendations
    - Implementation Considerations: Academic Advising, First Year Seminar, Assessment, and Curricular
    - Assessment Architecture
    - Curriculum Support Guide
    - Curricular Review Guide for General Education: Phase 1
    - Curricular Review Guide for General Education: Phase 2
    - Gantt Charts for Implementation: First Year Seminar, Registrar, Assessment
    - First Year Seminar Program Overview

The Task Force would like to thank both of you for your support of this work. We would also like to thank Faculty Senate Secretary Geoff Pollick for his indefatigable support in the Fall and Spring semesters.

We are available to present this model structure to the REAL Council, the Faculty Senate Curriculum Committee, the Faculty Senate, and any other body that would like to review and discuss our recommendations.

We look forward to robust debate in committee and on the Senate floor, and we expressly hope this model structure is approved to launch in AY 2026-27.

For the Task Force,
David Beach, Chair and Director of Undergraduate Curriculum

Artis: Christopher Monceaux, Chemistry
CEHD: Anna Devito, Health and Human Performance
CHBS: Brock Cutler, History
CVPA: Amy VanKirk, Dance
Davis: Thomas Duncan, Economics
Nursing: LeAnna Ratliff, RUC Nursing
Waldron: Sarah Rakes, Social Work
Roanoke: Courtney Watson, Writing, Language, and Literature
Faculty Senate: Kim Gainer, Writing, Language, and Literature Senator
Provost's Office: Jerel Benton, Assistant Provost for Student Success

A Proposal for General Education at Radford University

Mission Statement

The General Education Program is a transformative learning experience that advances the university's values and its vision of student-centered learning, positioning students as ethical community leaders in Appalachia, the Commonwealth, and beyond. Throughout the program, students will cultivate core competencies, encounter and experiment with new ways of thinking, and learn how different disciplines develop and apply knowledge to make meaningful change.

Goals of the General Education Program

Radford University aims to educate students through a General Education Program that:
- Builds on the skills and knowledge that students bring with them while also setting a new foundation for success in college, in their major, in their career, and in their life by creating educational opportunities that:
    - Provide transformative experiences that expose students to new ideas, challenge their assumptions, and encourage self-reflection
    - Engage with the world and explore the richness of human experience
    - Cultivate an understanding of and respect for different ways of knowing
    - Develop the tools and skills essential for lifelong learning

- Helps students better understand themselves and others so that they can actively participate in their communities as engaged, informed citizens by creating educational opportunities that:
    - Establish a connection to and understanding of place—Appalachia, the Commonwealth, and beyond
    - Develop ethical reasoning and self-awareness

Learning Outcomes of the General Education Program

Throughout the General Education Program, students will:
- Develop fundamental skills to acquire knowledge and establish a foundation for future success in their college career and beyond.
- Apply knowledge from a broad range of representative disciplines.
- Explore the connections between general education courses and their broader experiences with their college, major, career, and lives.

Throughout the program, students will develop complementary skills in critical thinking, digital literacy, and civic engagement.

Program Requirements

<u>Competencies</u> – 9 credits
- Mathematics (3 credits)
- Written Communication (6 credits)
- Introductory Writing
- Intermediate Writing

<u>Inquiries</u> – 18 to 20 credits
- Scientific Inquiry (6-8 credits, at least 1 lab course)
- Humanistic and Artistic Inquiry (6 credits)
- Social and Behavioral Inquiry (6 credits)

<u>Integrations</u> – 4+ credits
- Find Your Place: Radford 101 (3 credits) – gateway seminar to support student success in college
- Navigate Your Journey - credit-bearing culminating experience (minimum sophomore standing)

Total: Minimum 31 credits.

Competencies Goals and Outcomes

Through competency courses, students will develop fundamental skills that make possible the acquisition of knowledge to establish a foundation for future success in their college career and beyond.

Quantitative Reasoning
- Translate information among various mathematical forms (e.g., equations, graphs, diagrams, tables, words).
- Solve problems using appropriate mathematical tools.

Written Communication
Introductory
- Employ reading strategies that inform written communication.
- Engage in the writing process – including pre-writing, drafting, revising, editing, and proofreading – to improve written communication.
- Use appropriate vocabulary, mechanics, grammar, style, and documentation.

Intermediate
- Demonstrate competency in writing for specific audiences and purposes.
- Communicate through writing the understanding of content and/or texts.

Inquiries Goals and Outcomes

Critical thinking is characterized by the comprehensive exploration of issues, ideas, artifacts, and events before accepting or formulating an opinion or conclusion. Through inquiry courses, students will demonstrate their ability to acquire and apply knowledge from a broad range of representative disciplines. Students will develop and apply methodological skills that encourage continuing exploration and lifelong learning.

Scientific Inquiry
- Explain scientific concepts related to observable, measurable natural phenomena
- Discriminate between valid and invalid inferences made using scientific concepts and evidence.
- Describe data collected via the scientific method (required for lab courses only, optional for non-lab courses).

Humanistic and Artistic Inquiry
- Describe basic concepts in artistic or humanistic analysis.
- Explain the context of an artistic practice, cultural form, artifact, or philosophical idea.

Social and Behavioral Inquiry
- Describe concepts or methods used in social or behavioral analysis.
- Analyze social or behavioral interactions using disciplinarily appropriate concepts and methods.

Integrations Goals and Outcomes

Through integration courses, students will explore and demonstrate the connections between courses in the general education program and their broader experiences in college, their major, their career, and their lives.

Find Your Place (Radford 101) Learning Outcomes

Find Your Place (Radford 101) is designed to foster a strong sense of belonging while laying the foundation for student success at Radford University. The course connects students with their peers, faculty, and the broader university community, cultivating an environment in which they feel supported and valued. Through this experience, students develop essential skills for academic and personal achievement, engage with digital literacy by identifying credible information sources and using digital tools ethically, and explore the influence of place—whether Appalachia, the Commonwealth, or beyond—on their education and sense of identity. By encouraging reflection and connection, the course also promotes civic engagement and prepares students to contribute meaningfully to their communities.

This course has three specific areas of focus:
- Digital Literacy
  - Identify credible digital information sources.
  - Use a range of digital tools ethically.
- Civic Engagement
  - Explain the influence of place - Appalachia, the Commonwealth, or beyond - on their educational experience.
  - Demonstrate an awareness of personal and societal responsibilities related to civic engagement.
- Student Success
  - Demonstrate foundational skills necessary for academic and personal achievement at Radford University.

Navigate Your Journey Learning Outcomes

The culminating experience of General Education provides students with opportunities to demonstrate the relevance of General Education to their major/career and guarantees access to high-impact practices for all students. Students participate in collaborative learning, produce scholarly, creative, or clinical work, and present the outcomes to the university community and, possibly, beyond.

Courses or credit-bearing experiences will fulfill the following learning outcomes:

- Apply knowledge and skills gained through general education courses to scholarly or creative production.
- Present the outcome of learning according to professional standards.

Policy Recommendations

- What does it mean to be a General Education course?
    - Be a 100-/200-level course
    - Open to all students
    - Carry no prerequisite*

    * If a course is the second part of a sequence that requires the first course as a prerequisite, that course would also carry the same general education designation.

    While some exceptions may be made to these general guidelines on a case-by-case basis, the guiding principle for those exceptions should be that a student should not need specialized knowledge obtained before the course in order to be successful in the course.

- Courses need to carry credit to be assessed.
    Courses that fulfill general education requirements must carry credit in order to be assessed.

- Rename REAL Council to General Education Council
    As the body overseeing the management of the university's general education program, the REAL Council (to be renamed General Education Council) will continue to facilitate the management of the new program according to policies and procedures agreed upon by the Faculty Senate and the Provost's Office, including the review of courses submitted to meet general education designations, the collection and reporting of assessment data, the development of policy recommendations related to the operation of the general education program, and efforts related to program improvement and instructor/student support.

- VCCS A.A. and A.S. degree holders would be exempt from General Education.

- VCCS A.A.S. degree holders and out-of-state associate degree holders would need a course-by-course audit.

    - Tartan Transfer agreements should emphasize completion of general education at the community college level.

- No double-dipping in general education.
  Students may not use a single course to meet multiple general education requirements, even if that course carries multiple general education designations.

- Test-out process (AP, IB, CLEP, Cambridge, Placement Test)
  A student who has placed into an upper-level course should be considered to have fulfilled their general education requirement in that category if:
    o The course is part of a sequence that involves placement exams.
    o One or more of the courses below it in the sequence also carries the same general education designation.

- RADF 101 as department/school first-year seminar
  Students can meet the RADF 101 requirement by enrolling in a 3-credit departmental first-year seminar that meets the learning outcomes of RADF 101. Exceptions to the credit requirement will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis based on accreditation requirements.

- Minimum of 24 general education credits required before taking Navigating Your Journey
  Students must have minimum sophomore standing before enrolling in a Navigating Your Journey course.

- Navigate Your Journey as major capstone
  Major capstone courses, undergraduate research experiences, and other educational opportunities can be considered to fulfill the Navigate Your Journey component as long as they a) meet the learning outcomes, b) carry course credit, and c) students are required to submit a work product that can be assessed.

- Integrations for transfer/dual enrollment students
  Transfer/dual enrollment students who have acquired fewer than 24 credits of general education requirements will be required to complete a RADF 101 course specifically designed for transfer/dual enrollment students. Transfer/dual enrollment students who have acquired at least 24 credit of general education requirements and are eligible to take the Navigating Your Journey course will have the RADF 101 requirement waived.

- Restrictions for using General Education courses in the major
  Students may use 9-12 credits of general education to meet major requirements

(and vice versa). Departments/schools, however, should ensure that the structure of their major continues to meet accreditation requirements for breadth and allows students to continue to meet the goals and outcomes of the general education program.

- Every policy should be on a general education web site through the Provost's Office
Policies related to student completion of the general education requirements will be updated on a central, static page on the general education website, available through the Provost's Office, with links available via Advising resources.

- General education topics courses at 100-/200-level
General education topics courses at the 100- and 200-level will only be approved under the condition that the coordinating unit can guarantee that the courses taught under that topics number will meet the learning outcomes for the relevant general education category for which it has an approved designation. The instructor of record will be responsible for submitting assessment data for that course that corresponds with the relevant general education designation.

Academic Advising Implementation

Communication and Training

- **Comprehensive Training**: Provide academic advisors with in-depth training on the new Gen Ed requirements, including course pathways, policies, and how they integrate with major requirements.
- **Clear Communication**: Develop a detailed and accessible communication plan to ensure advisors understand the rationale, goals, and structure of the new Gen Ed program.
- **Advising Resources**: Create user-friendly materials (e.g., handbooks, FAQs, flowcharts) to assist advisors in explaining the program to students.

Alignment with Technology and Tools

- **Degree Audit Systems**: Update degree audit tools like DegreeWorks to reflect the new Gen Ed requirements accurately and train advisors on their functionality.

- **Interactive Tools**: Develop interactive advising tools to help students visualize their academic path.

Transition and Exception Management

- **Transition Plans for Current Students**: Develop clear guidelines for current students to transition to the new Gen Ed program or remain on their current curriculum. (Recommendations)
- **Exceptions and Overrides**: Establish clear processes for handling exceptions, substitutions, or transfer equivalencies within the new program.
- **Transfer Student Considerations**: Collaborate with enrollment management to align the new Gen Ed requirements with articulation agreements.

Policy Considerations

- Integrative Requirement/Transfer Policy
- AA/AS/AAS Transfer Policy Impacts
- REAL Council Changes

Find Your Place Program

- Program Model Design
- Program Budget
- Course Proposal
- Course Design
- Course Assessment
- Training Development and Implementation

Assessment Implementation

- Assessment rubrics will need to be designed for each competency/inquiry/integrative. These should be designed by faculty with facilitation by assessment professionals. They will be designed over the course of three years with the first areas designed in 2025-26 for implementation in 2026-27.
- Workshops for faculty interested in teaching any general education course need to be designed.
- Rubrics will need to be pushed into each D2L course in the area being assessed that year. This may require collaboration between the Registrar's Office, IT, and IEQI.
- The program will need to be built into Planning and Self Study so that assessment data can be imported into D2L for analysis and reflection.
- Reporting templates will need to be designed.
- Dashboards will need to be designed.

Curricular Implementation

- Find Your Place and Navigating Your Journey courses need to be approved through Curriculog once they are designed. Under current policy, this will require the Faculty Senate Curriculum Committee to serve as "departmental committee."
- Lists of current REAL Courses will be created with current designations; departments will align courses in the new general education program. Departments will have time to review these and make alterations if needed.
- Bulk curricular approval for designations will need to be done by the new general education committee.

Assessment Architecture

- Assessment data collection would be staggered over a three-year cycle:
  - 2026-27
    - Competencies data collection
  - 2027-28
    - Scientific & Humanistic/Artistic Inquiries data collection
    - Competencies reflection
  - 2028-29
    - Social/Behavioral Inquiries & Integrations data collection
    - Scientific & Humanistic/Artistic Inquiries reflection
    - Competencies program revision
  - 2029-30
    - Competencies data collection
    - Social/Behavioral Inquiries & Integrations reflection
    - Scientific & Humanistic/Artistic Inquiries program revision
  - 2030-31
    - Scientific & Humanistic/Artistic Inquiries data collection
    - Competencies reflection
    - Social/Behavioral Inquiries & Integrations program revision

- Faculty-driven process about assessing teaching and learning.
- Workshops for faculty interested in teaching any general education course would be designed.
- Assessment rubrics will be designed for each competency/inquiry/integration course. These should be designed by faculty with facilitation by assessment professionals.
- Reporting templates will need to be designed.
- Dashboards will be designed in collaboration among IEQI, IT, and the Registrar's Office.
- One assessment rubric for each learning outcome would be embedded in D2L.
- Individual instructors would identify an assignment that fulfills the learning outcomes and then would complete an assessment rubric embedded in D2L.
- Students complete the assignment as part of their regular course work.
- Instructors grade the assignment using their normal scoring criteria as part of the students' class grade.
- If anyone is identifiable in any way, data are not included in the output.

- Data go directly to the General Education Program. Departments/schools will not be required to generate assessment reports.
- Individual instructor reports will only be provided to the instructor.
- Faculty cannot be evaluated using their individual assessment report.
- Program-level reports will be publicly shared on the General Education Program web site.

Curriculum Support for General Education

Curriculum, Assessment and Accreditation supports from the Provost's Office as we consider implementation of the proposed general education program. The Provost and the Assistant Provost for Faculty and Curriculum are committed to supporting faculty through this change. Our goal is that faculty and programs have all the supports they need to make curricular changes if the proposed general education program is approved.

Who will be providing these supports?
Provost, Assistant Provost, Faculty Liaison, Director of IEQI, consultant

What do we have to do?
The Provost's Office will provide programs with a list of all their courses that are in the current REAL program with a suggestion for its placement in the proposed general education program. Consideration will be given to pre-requisites and course numbers as well as current designations. If the proposed general education is approved, these suggested placements will be shared with programs in April, alongside a curricular review guide. Programs will be able to review. Programs can change the initial General Education course designation or remove courses from general education entirely if they wish. In the next year, programs may also need to make additional changes, including changing course numbering or adding course designations to existing courses. Optional consultations will be available as discussed below. These changes will be approved in bulk and will not require Curriculog forms.

What is optional?
Because programs integrated REAL into their curriculum in different ways and each programs needs are different, a number of support options are available. Some support options are more self-service for those who are confident about making the changes but need a little help and some are more full-service for those who desire significant support. These are all optional.

Support will be available for the following areas:

- Program revisions
- Making bulk changes to course numbers
- Untangling REAL from majors or minors
- Effects of the changes on program assessment plans
- Accreditation standards, including programmatic accreditation
- Degree program vs major

The following types of optional consultations will be available for all of the above areas:

- Quickstart guide

- Curriculum review guides
- Workshops
- One-on-one sessions
- Open office hours for curriculum, assessment and accreditation support
- Creation of multiple sample curriculum maps for your program to kickstart department conversations
- Curricular bootcamp – an intensive 1-day focused on supporting an entire department through curricular changes with stipend for participation

Curricular Review Guide for General Education: Phase 1

General Education courses should be aimed at a student with no specialized knowledge or skill. They should be at the 100- or 200-level with the exception of "Navigate Your Journey" courses. They should not have pre-requisites except for intermediate writing and sequential courses at the 100- and 200-level (e.g., CHEM 111 and CHEM 112).

*All course conversions will need to be submitted by the date announced by the Registrar in order to be included in the initial phase of batch transfers.

- Does your course numbering reflect the content of the course and expectations for student learning?
    - Is the course that you offered under REAL a 300-level or higher course?
        - If no, which category in the new program should it go in based on the learning outcomes? Instructors teaching this course will need to be able to use a course assignment to collect assessment data based on the learning outcomes.
        - If yes, does the course need to remain at that level? Does the course numbering reflect the content of the course and expectations for student learning or was it a decision made to fit the expectations of REAL minors? Do you need to change eh course number? Do you need to remove the gen ed designation?
          *Make sure to check with programs that rely on your courses to meet course requirements before making decisions.
          **The Provost's Office can help answer questions about transfer policy and accreditation
- Does your course have a prerequisite?
    - If no, it may qualify as a general education course if it meets the learning outcomes of one of the designations.
    - If yes, is this a course that the average student can successfully manage without preexisting or specialized knowledge? (Exception: sequential courses at the 100- and 200-level.)
        - If no, you should keep the pre-req but remove the course from your general education course offerings.
        - If yes, are there any reasons that you think might necessitate a pre-req still?

- If no, remove the pre-req and determine whether it qualifies as a general education course by meeting the learning outcomes of one of the designations.
- If yes, discuss with other programs and the Provost's Office to verify before making your decision.

Find Your Place Courses: Things to Consider

Find Your Place (Radford 101) is designed to foster a strong sense of belonging while laying the foundation for student success at Radford University. The course connects students with their peers, faculty, and the broader university community, cultivating an environment in which they feel supported and valued. Through this experience, students develop essential skills for academic and personal achievement, engage with digital literacy by identifying credible information sources and using digital tools ethically, and explore the influence of place—whether Appalachia, the Commonwealth, or beyond—on their education and sense of identity. By encouraging reflection and connection, the course also promotes civic engagement and prepares students to contribute meaningfully to their communities.

This course has three specific areas of focus:

- *Digital Literacy*
  - *Identify credible digital information sources.*
  - *Use a range of digital tools ethically.*
- *Civic Engagement*
  - *Explain the influence of place - Appalachia, the Commonwealth, or beyond - on their educational experience.*
  - *Demonstrate an awareness of personal and societal responsibilities related to civic engagement.*
- *Student Success*
  - *Demonstrate foundational skills necessary for academic and personal achievement at Radford University.*

- Do you have courses already offered in your department that could fit the "Find Your Place" course expectations (see above)?
  - Courses should include an assignment through which the learning outcomes can be assessed.
  - If you need to make adjustments to existing courses to meet this requirement, instructors should be encouraged to participate in the workshops offered over the next year to develop their courses.

- Is your college working to develop thematic/meta-major "Find Your Place" courses? Or can you work with other departments to develop a shared thematic course?
  - Departments and colleges should identify instructors who are committed to teaching this course and think carefully about how it will fit into workload and course rotations.
  - Where possible, instructors for this course should be full-time faculty.
  - Instructors developing a new course should be encouraged to participate in workshops offered over the next year.
- If your department/college is not planning on adapting or creating a "Find Your Place" course, are there faculty in your unit who would be interested and available to teach centrally offered RADF 101 courses?

"Navigate Your Journey" Experiences: Things to Consider

The culminating experience of General Education provides students with opportunities to demonstrate the relevance of General Education to their major/career and guarantees access to high-impact practices for all students. Students participate in collaborative learning, produce scholarly, creative, or clinical work, and present the outcomes to the university community and, possibly, beyond.

Courses or credit-bearing experiences will fulfill the following learning outcomes:

- *Apply knowledge and skills gained through general education courses to scholarly or creative production.*
- *Present the outcome of learning according to professional standards.*

- Do you already have a capstone course or seminar that majors are required to take?
  - Can the learning outcomes for "Navigate Your Journey" be incorporated into this course and assessed through an existing, new, or revised assignment?
- If there is no capstone course or seminar in your major, are there upper division courses that all majors take where you could incorporate the learning outcomes for "Navigate Your Journey" and assessment through an existing, new, or revised assignment? Are there required undergraduate research experiences or applied learning/experiential learning opportunities in which all students in your major participate where you could incorporate the learning outcomes for "Navigate Your Journey" and assessment through an existing, new, or revised assignment?
- If there are no existing options within your major, can you:
  - Create a course that provides this experience for students?
  - Work with another department to provide access for your students in one of their relevant existing courses?

- Collaborate with another department(s) to develop an intentionally interdisciplinary course that would incorporate the learning outcomes for "Navigate Your Journey" and assessment through an existing, new, or revised assignment?

Curricular Review Guide for General Education: Phase 2

Minors - In reviewing all existing minors to determine whether they should continue, be revised, or be phased out, please consider:

- Does the minor have intellectual integrity and intention? Is the structure and content of the minor motivated by topic or discipline or method (rather than, for example, meeting requirements for REAL minors)?
- Does the minor have a beginning, a middle, and an end? Does the endpoint have an experiential or applied component?
- Does the minor have at least 6 credits of dedicated courses that do not overlap with general education?
- Does the minor have strong enrollments and a clear audience and demand?
- Does your department or unit (or interdisciplinary cluster of departments) have the instructional capacity to regularly offered the different components of the minor? *Please note that any degree program in the catalog requires that courses be regularly offered*.
- Are there changes to the minor that could be made to make it more efficient and/or appealing?

Majors - In reviewing all existing majors to determine whether they require revision, please consider:

- If you are accountable to external accrediting bodies, are you clear about the flexibility that may exist within accreditation requirements? The Provost's Office can help in conversations with accreditors.
- If you rely on transfer credit, are you meeting expectations and following rules that govern the transfer process (i.e. you cannot transfer a 100-level course in to meet the requirements of a 300-level course). The Provost's Office can help clarify transfer policies and negotiate curricular revision.
- If you designed your major to maximize connection to REAL, does the structure and content of your major still make sense under the new general education requirements? Are there changes you can make to simplify your program and reduce required credits in light of these gen ed changes?

- Are there places in your major where you have an opportunity to share courses with other programs so that you can maximize program efficiency and instructional resources?
- Are there concentrations with low enrollments that you can combine or eliminate?
- If your major is credit-heavy and cannot be reduced through the means above, are there ways that you can think strategically about how students navigate general education requirements by providing a curricular map or designing course requirements that maximize the 12 credits of allowed double-dipping between general education and the major?
    - How can "Find Your Place" and "Navigate Your Journey" courses fit into or overlap with your major requirements?
    - How might you be able to integrate courses that offer other gen ed credit into your major requirements by collaborating with other departments rather than offering your own version of a course?

Find Your Place

Period Highlight: 1 | Plan Duration | Actual Start | % Complete | Actual (beyond plan) | % Complete (beyond plan)

Responsibility	ACTIVITY	PLAN START	PLAN DURATION	ACTUAL START	ACTUAL DURATION	PERCENT COMPLETE
Taskforce	Form FYP Taskforce	3	2	0	0	0%
Taskforce	Program Design	4	12	0	0	0%
Taskforce	FYP Program Budget	4	12	0	0	0%
Taskforce	Course Design and Proposal	14	8	0	0	0%
Taskforce	Submit Course Proposal	27	2	0	0	0%
Taskforce	Course Assessment Plan	27	5	0	0	0%
Taskforce	Program Evaluation Plan	27	5	0	0	0%
Taskforce	Design Faculty Development Plan	34	5	0	0	0%
Taskforce	Finalize Program Logistics (Course Scheduling, Enrollment Procedures, Major Activities, etc.)	40	9	0	0	0%
	Taskforce Ends	48	1	0	0	0%
Director/Assistant Director, Student Connection Program	Implement Course Schedule	48	3	0	0	0%
Director/Assistant Director, Student Connection Program; CITL	Implement Faculty Development	51	7	0	0	0%
...stant Director, Student Connection Program and Director of Acad...	Implment Enrollment Procedures	65	13	0	0	0%
Director/Assistant Director, Student Connection Program	First Year Seminar Symposium	76	1	0	0	0%
Director/Assistant Director, Student Connection Program	Course Launch	78	1	0	0	0%

Start of Fall 2025

Registrar Implementation (DRAFT)

Responsibility	ACTIVITY	PLAN START	PLAN DURATION	ACTUAL START	ACTUAL DURATION	PERCENT COMPLETE
AP Curriculum & Faculty/Office of the Registrar	Modern Campus Catalog/Curriculum Project	1	4	0	0	0%
Office of the Registrar	Explore systems funcitonality to implement GEP	2	8			
Office of the Registrar	Curriculum and editorial updates to 25-26 Catalog	4	14	0	0	0%
um & Faculty/Office of the Registrar/ Director, Undergraduate	Designation Build:Identify a preliminary designation in the new Gen Ed program for each course currently in REAL	5	4	0	0	0%
um & Faculty/Office of the Registrar/Director, Undegraduate	Designation Build:Departments submit their recomended designations or approve the preliminary designation	9	2	0	0	0%
Office of the Registrar	Publish 25-26 University Catalog	18	1	0	0	0%
Office of the Registrar	Degree Works & Banner curriculum coding updates (25-26 catalog)	9	16	0	0	0%
Gen Ed Council	Designation Build: Bulk approval for designations (does this need to be formally done by the new gen ed group?) [TBD]	0	0	0	0	0%
Office of the Registrar	Transfer Virignia Portal Review and Updates (25-26 catalog)	10	12	0	0	0%
Office of the Registrar	VCCS Transfer Guide Updated and published (25-26 catalog)	10	3	0	0	0%
Office of the Registrar	Copy and prepare new 26-27 University Catalog for upcoming curriculum cycle	20	4	0	0	0%
AP Curriculum & Faculty/Office of the Registrar	Update and prepare Curriculum forms for 26-27 catalog cycle	20	4	0	0	0%
AP Curriculum & Faculty	Launch Curriculum Forms for 26-27 catalog cycle	28	27	0	0	0%
Office of the Registrar	Course build for fall 26 opens	46	4	0	0	0%
Office of the Registrar	Fall26 Schedule Visible to Students	53	4	0	0	0%
Office of the Registrar	Curriculum and editorial updates to 26-27 Catalog	54	14	0	0	0%
Office of the Registrar	Fall26 Registration Begins - April (first wk)	57	21	0	0	0%
Office of the Registrar	Degree Works & Banner curriculum coding updates (26-27 catalog)	61	16	0	0	0%
Office of the Registrar	Transfer Virignia Portal Review and Updates	64	12	0	0	0%
Office of the Registrar	VCCS Transfer Guide Updated and published	64	3	0	0	0%
Office of the Registrar	Publish 26-27 University Catalog	70	1	0	0	0%
Office of the Registrar	Copy and prepare new 27-28 University Catalog for upcoming curric cycle	72	2	0	0	0%
AP Curriculum & Faculty/Office of the Registrar	Update and prepare Curriculum forms for launch (27-28)	72	2	0	0	0%
Office of the Registrar	Website Review	?	12	0	0	0%
Office of the Registrar	Website Updates	?	8	0	0	0%
Office of the Registrar	Policy Review	?	2	0	0	0%
Office of the Registrar	Policy Updates	?	5	0	0	0%
Office of the Registrar	Procedure review, update, and training (ex: change of major, petitions, etc.)	?	4	0	0	0%
Academic Advising	Academic Advisor Training	?	0	0	0	0%
Office of the Registrar	Banner - Course and Program attribute updates	61	4	0	0	0%
Office of the Registrar	Banner - Student attribute updates	61	2	0	0	0%
Office of the Registrar	Banner - Course designation and title updates	61	4	0	0	0%
Office of the Registrar	Transfer Course Equivalency and Coding Updates	61	4	0	0	0%

Weeks: Mar-25, Apr-25, May-25, Jun-25, Jul-25, Aug-25, Sep-25, Oct-25, Nov-25, Dec-25, Jan-26, Feb-26, Mar-26, Apr-26, May-26, Jun-26, Jul-26, Aug-26

Curriculum and Assessment (Draft)

Week Highlight: 1 — Plan Duration | Actual Start | % Complete | Actual (beyond plan) | % Complete (beyond plan)

Responsible Party	ACTIVITY	PLAN START	PLAN DURATION	ACTUAL START	ACTUAL DURATION	PERCENT COMPLETE
	Design and Launch of Gen Ed Council	4	4	0	0	0%
	Designation Build:Identify a preliminary designation in the new Gen Ed program for each course currently in REAL	5	4	0	0	0%
	Designation Build:Departments submit their recomended designations or approve the preliminary designation	9	2	0	0	0%
	D2L Logistics for Assessment and Rubrics	5	1	0	0	0%
	Create approving body for general education asseessment (subcommittee)	5	9	0	0	0%
	Identify faculty volunteers to participate in build and internal piloting phase 1 and phase 2	5	2	0	0	0%
	Internal Build/Pilot Phase 1:Collect sample assignments - instructions and results deidentified	6	3	0	0	0%
	Internal Build/Pilot Phase 1: Rubric discussion /build(Our Turn?) includes training for participants	8	4	0	0	0%
	Designation Build: Bulk approval for designations (does this need to be formally done by the new gen ed group?)	12	2			
	Internal Build/Pilot Phase 1: Rubric development draft deadline	15	0	0	0	0%
	Internal Build/Pilot Phase 2: (Instructor Works Sessions):Communication to Instructor Volunteers	22	1	0	0	0%
	Assessment Infrastructure Build: Create training for ongoing support for faculty teaching competencies	22	14	0	0	0%
	Internal Build/Pilot Phase 2: (Instructor Works Sessions):Review rubric and identify assignments to bring	22	2	0	0	0%
	Internal Build/Pilot Phase 2: (Instructor Works Sessions):Virtual work sessions (or in person) (Our Turn?) includes training for participants	0	0	0	0	0%
	Internal Build/Pilot Phase 2:Deadline for revised draft	26	1	0	0	0%
	Internal Build/Pilot Phase 2: Discussion/approval by General Education Assessment Subcommittee	27	2	0	0	0%
	External Pilot/Discussions(GE Instructor Pilot - Past Courses): Communication to instructors - use rubric in pilot includes traing for participants	28	1	0	0	0%
	External Pilot/Discussions(GE Instructor Pilot - Past Courses):Instructor assements using the rubric	28	2	0	0	0%
	External Pilot/Discussions(GE Instructor Pilot - Past Courses):Discussionw ith other constituents (e.g. senat, others, etc.)	28	4	0	0	0%
	External Pilot/Discussions(GE Instructor Pilot - Past Courses): Feedback Throughout	28	4	0	0	0%
	External Pilot/Discussions(GE Instructor Pilot - Past Courses): Final Revised Draft	35	1	0	0	0%
	External Pilot/Discussions(GE Instructor Pilot - Past Courses): Discussion/approval by Gen Ed Assessment Subcomittee	36	2	0	0	0%
	Assessment Infrastructure Build: Build program into Planning and Self Study for instructor reporting	28	8	0	0	0%
	Assessment Infrastructure Build: Design reporting templates for instructor and program reporting	28	8	0	0	0%
	Assessment Infrastructure Build: Design dashboards for general education assessment data	28	8	0	0	0%
	GE Instroctor Pilot (Active Courses):Identify faculty to participate in spring pilot	37	2	0	0	0%
	GE Instroctor Pilot (Active Courses): rubric develiver to D2L expert for D2L upload	38	1	0	0	0%
	GE Instroctor Pilot (Active Courses): Training in January Ourturn for volunteer faculty	44	2	0	0	0%
	GE Instroctor Pilot (Active Courses): Instructors deploy rubric in spring pilot classes	45	12	0	0	0%
	GE Instroctor Pilot (Active Courses): Deadline for instructor assessment data and feedback	56	1	0	0	0%
	GE Instroctor Pilot (Active Courses): Final edits, if needed, to rubri and approval by general education assessment subcommittee	57	4	0	0	0%
	Assessment Infrastructure Build: Deploy repoting template to volunteer instructors	57	4	0	0	0%
	Assessment Infrastructure Build: Deadline for instructor feedback on reporting	62	1	0	0	0%
	Assessment Infrastructure Build: Deploy Dashboards	57	4	0	0	0%

Find Your Place Program

Introduction

The transition to college represents a foundational shift in students' educational journeys, marked by new responsibilities, opportunities, and challenges. To enhance this transition, we propose a Find Your Place Program (Radford 101) designed to foster a strong sense of belonging while laying the foundation for student success at Radford University. The course will connect students with their peers, faculty, and the broader university community, cultivating an environment in which they feel supported and valued. Through this experience, students develop essential skills for academic and personal achievement, engage with digital literacy by identifying credible information sources and using digital tools ethically, and explore the influence of place—whether Appalachia, the Commonwealth, or beyond—on their education and sense of identity. By encouraging reflection and connection, the course also promotes civic engagement and prepares students to contribute meaningfully to their communities.

The core method of reaching these goals will be through courses designed around meta-majors—broad academic clusters that help students explore related disciplines and better understand the academic pathways available to them. This meta-major framework (table 1) will directly connect new students to intended and/or potential fields of study. By linking students to meta-majors in their very first semester, this program helps them clarify their interests, develop essential academic skills, and cultivate a sense of belonging within their chosen fields.

Meta Majors
Business and Economics
Liberal Arts, Fine Arts, and Humanities
Social and Behavioral Sciences
STEM
Nursing, Health, and Human Services
Teaching and Education
Pre-Health Majors

Find Your Place (Radford 101) is designed to foster a strong sense of belonging while laying the foundation for student success at Radford University. The course connects students with their peers, faculty, and the broader university community, cultivating an environment in which they feel supported and valued. Through this experience, students develop essential skills for academic and personal achievement, engage with digital literacy by identifying credible information sources and using digital tools ethically, and explore the influence of place—whether Appalachia, the Commonwealth, or beyond—on their education and sense of identity. By encouraging reflection and connection, the course also
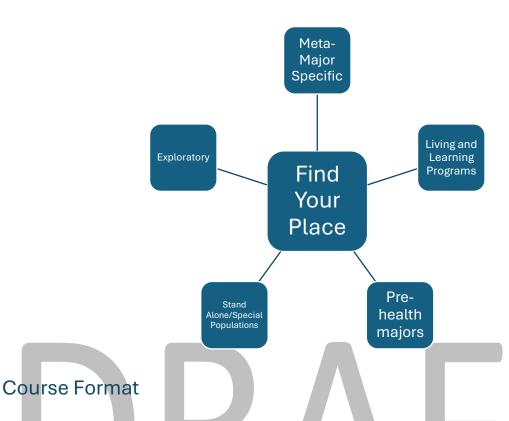
promotes civic engagement and prepares students to contribute meaningfully to their communities.

Rationale

1. **Foster a sense of belonging:** Encourage students to connect with the unique history, culture, and environment of Radford University, Appalachia, and the Commonwealth of Virginia and beyond, instilling a deeper appreciation of the region's heritage and cultivating a commitment to serving its communities.
2. **Guided Exploration:** Many first-year students arrive on campus curious or uncertain about their major. Offering courses aligned with meta-majors provides a structured environment for them to explore broad areas of study before making a more specific choice.
3. **Academic Integration:** By clustering courses around meta-majors, students experience early immersion in the concepts, issues, and career paths relevant to each broad field, fostering a deeper sense of purpose and motivation.
4. **Skill Development:** Regardless of the meta-major they choose, first-year students need foundational skills in executive functioning, communication, time management, and critical thinking, all of which will be embedded into the courses.
5. **Community and Support:** Small, interactive courses led by faculty experts in that meta-major—combined with peer mentorship—create supportive micro-communities that increase students' confidence and sense of belonging.

Program Structure

This comprehensive Find Your Place program will offer multiple formats to meet diverse student needs, including meta-major courses, courses linked to living learning programs, pre-health major first-year courses, exploratory first-year courses, and standalone courses for special populations (such as transfer students or students repeating a first-year course). Each course will enroll up to 20 students and will be taught by a faculty member whose expertise aligns with the relevant meta-major, living learning program theme, or the specific population's academic and developmental needs. All courses will be enriched by discussions, hands-on assignments, and collaborative projects that expose students to the core principles and big questions within each broad area of study.

Diagram nodes: Meta-Major Specific, Exploratory, Living and Learning Programs, Find Your Place (center), Stand Alone/Special Populations, Pre-health majors

Course Format

- **Focused Exploration Aligned with Program Structure:** Whether a course is anchored in a meta-major, integrated into a living learning program, designed for pre-health majors' guidance, exploratory in nature, or tailored to a special population (e.g., transfer students or those repeating a first-year course), each course will delve into representative questions, texts, and professional practices within the relevant field or thematic focus. For example, a STEM-focused course might include lab tours or data analysis exercises, while a Social Sciences-focused course could emphasize research methods and public policy discussions.
- **Active Learning Techniques:** Through group discussions, presentations, and collaborative projects, students will apply disciplinary tools and learn to articulate their developing academic and professional interests. These methods will be adapted to each course's specific context, whether that context is a meta-major, living learning community, or an exploratory track for undecided students.
- **Experiential Components:** Whenever possible, instructors will incorporate hands-on experiences such as field trips, guest speakers, or community engagement activities. These experiences will be chosen to underscore the applicability of the course's focus—be it STEM, Social Sciences, Humanities, or another area—and to illuminate potential career pathways associated with that meta-major or specialized program.

Student Learning

General Education Outcomes

- Digital Literacy
  - Identify credible digital information sources.
  - Use a range of digital tools ethically.
- Civic Engagement
  - Explain the influence of place - Appalachia, the Commonwealth, or beyond - on their educational experience.
  - Demonstrate an awareness of personal and societal responsibilities related to civic engagement.
- Student Success
  - Demonstrate foundational skills necessary for academic and personal achievement at Radford University.

Skill Development and Support

In tandem with subject-area content, these courses will emphasize foundational skills crucial for first-year success, ensuring that students are equipped not only for subsequent courses within their meta-major but also for overall academic excellence:

1. **Digital Literacy**: Provide foundational technology training—including platform navigation, online research techniques, and responsible digital citizenship—so students can confidently and ethically engage with digital resources, collaborate on virtual projects, and protect their personal data in academic and professional contexts.
2. **Information Literacy:** Instruction in navigating databases, evaluating sources, and applying proper citation methods prepares students for more advanced coursework in any major.
3. **Communication & Presentation Skills:** Written assignments and oral presentations help students articulate ideas clearly and persuasively, a skill set universally required in upper-level classes.
4. **Executive Functioning:** Practical strategies will address balancing academic demands and personal responsibilities—a skill essential for long-term success.
5. **Critical Thinking & Research Methods:** Students learn to ask probing questions, assess evidence, and synthesize information, all within the context of their chosen meta-major.
6. **Wellbeing & Self-Care:** The program connects students to relevant campus resources, such as the writing center, counseling services, and career counseling, reinforcing a holistic approach to academic life.
7. **Critical Thinking & Research Methods:** Students learn to ask probing questions, assess evidence, and synthesize information, all within the context of their chosen meta-major.

Student Projects and Capstone Experiences

To deepen engagement and highlight the applied dimension of each field, courses will culminate in a small-scale project or "capstone" reflective of the meta-major's practices or course type. For instance:

- **STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics)**
  Might require a group project analyzing real-world data or a problem-solving challenge, demonstrating practical applications of scientific methods.
- **Business and Economics**
  Could have teams develop proposals for hypothetical start-ups or nonprofit initiatives, showcasing foundational entrepreneurial and organizational skills.
- **Liberal Arts, Fine Arts, and Humanities**
  Might include a creative portfolio or a critical analysis of cultural texts or artifacts, emphasizing interpretive skills and creative expression.
- **Social and Behavioral Sciences**
  Could culminate in a mini research paper or case study on a pressing social issue, highlighting the use of empirical methods and policy analysis.
- **Nursing, Health, and Human Services**
  Might focus on community health assessment projects or outreach campaigns, applying concepts of patient care, wellness, and social support systems.
- **Teaching and Education**
  Could have students draft lesson plans, design service initiatives, or analyze educational policy, reflecting real-world classroom and community teaching strategies.
- **Pre-health majors**
  Might center on foundational academic and career exploration, culminating in a reflective plan that integrates insights from multiple disciplines.

These final projects empower students to apply their new skills and interests in an authentic, collaborative manner. By presenting their work at a small-scale "meta-major fair" or in-class showcase, they also gain experience in public speaking and receive constructive faculty and peer feedback

Assessment and Evaluation

To ensure continuous improvement and measure the program's effectiveness, we will employ a robust assessment framework:

1. **Student Feedback:** Anonymous surveys and focus groups will gauge participants' sense of confidence, engagement, and clarity about their academic path.

2. **Peer Mentor Observations:** Mentors will track students' progress and challenges, submitting periodic reflections to inform ongoing refinements.
3. **Faculty Reviews:** Instructors will share best practices and course outcomes, ensuring that courses consistently align with departmental goals and evolving student interests.
4. **Academic Performance Data:** Metrics such as retention, GPA, and progress toward degree completion will be monitored, allowing the institution to measure the program's impact on student success.

Findings from this assessment will inform iterative enhancements to the courses and broader institutional strategies for first-year support.

Conclusion

By anchoring the Find Your Place in meta-majors, we directly address students' desire for clarity and exploration in their early academic experiences. This approach not only builds a robust foundation of essential college-level skills but also nurtures a sense of identity and community within broad fields of study. Through mentorship, collaborative learning, and hands-on projects, the program equips students with the intellectual tools, personal support, and confidence they need to thrive academically. We invite stakeholders and institutional partners to champion this initiative, uniting our campus under a shared commitment to support and guide each student's journey toward success in college and beyond.