

The General Education Framework

Each school must approach general education revision in a way that makes sense for its academic and cultural climate. No single approach, or recommendation, will work for every college. These key takeaways can, however, help kickstart the process.

- **It's okay to start small.** General education change often happens incrementally, rather than all at once. Taking small steps often allows for feedback, iteration, and measurement.
- **Involve faculty early.** As key stakeholders in general education, faculty members can help define priorities and drive the revision process.
- **Look to students.** Student buy-in is a huge determinant of general education success. Ask your student body what matters to them and how they'd like to see civic learning show up in the classroom.
- **Think beyond specific courses or departments.** Civic skills—such as how to have productive conversations, use credible information, and solve problems collaboratively—can be integrated into many existing curricula, not only those that are thematically related.
- **Augment courses that can't be replaced.** Classes that are necessary for academic mastery or career preparation don't need to be replaced. There may be creative ways to embed civic learning within their curricula.
- **Flexibility is key.** What works well in one department, or one class, may need to be adapted for another.
- **Consider off-campus learning.** Engaging with one's neighborhood, city, and country is an important part of civic education. General education requirements can be a powerful way to encourage off-campus learning.
- **Define and measure success.** Develop specific metrics for success (learning objective mastery, program participation, community engagement) and monitor them to ensure the curriculum is working.
- **Consider institutional priorities.** General education can be a tool for building community identity, sparking productive action, and furthering the common good.
- **Trust, but support, students.** Students are often ready and willing to have hard conversations, as long as they feel safe to do so. Focus on creating that supportive environment in the classroom.



[Learn more about how colleges have revised general education to emphasize civic learning.](#)