

# General Education Submission Form

Electronic submissions are required.

A. GE component for which course is being proposed: Writing & Speaking Proficiency

B. Submitted by Tom Knecht

C. Ideally, submissions should be discussed by the entire department prior to submittal.

Chair has reviewed and approved the course.

D. Course being proposed (please attach syllabus): POL 108: U.S. Congress

E. This course

Has not been modified, but is being submitted to check its suitability

Has had its syllabus rewritten to communicate the course's contribution to GE

Has had its contents modified to address the relevant GE issues

Is a new course designed to fulfill the GE requirement

F. This course is being submitted as

**A Template.** Applicable to courses with multiple sections which require only general training in the discipline. The submission should come from the department chair and should clearly identify what course content and what elements of the syllabus the department has agreed will common to all sections. Upon approval by the GE Committee, any course whose syllabus is determined by the department to meet the specifications of the template is approved to satisfy this area requirement. A copy of each syllabus should be forwarded to the GE Committee for record keeping purposes.

**An Individual Course.** Applicable to courses requiring specialized training in the discipline or are typically offered by a particular instructor. The course should be resubmitted and reassessed in the event of a change in staffing or syllabus.

G. Statement of rationale:

(Include a list of the area certification criteria (former called GE objectives) and GE Student Learning Outcomes (if applicable). These certification criteria and GE SLOs are listed in the GE Committee Combined document. After each certification criterion and GE SLO, list several course activities (lectures, readings, assignments, etc.) that address it. If it is not completely obvious, explain how the activities relate to the certification criterion or outcome. Please attach a copy of the syllabus which has been annotated to identify the corresponding activities. Electronic annotations are required. Please use the *comment* feature in Word to annotate electronic copies).

See next

## Statement of Rationale

### Students will

- Communicate in written form for a variety of purposes and audiences across the curriculum.

The central feature of the course is SIMGOV, a simulation of the U.S. House of Representatives. SIMGOV will teach you how Congress works by allowing you to act as a miniature legislature. As in the real world, the participants will seek goals related to their positions. To do well in SIMGOV, participants must formulate policy proposals, actively participate in committee and floor debates, and take steps to ensure their reelection.

Students will write a minimum of 25 pages over the semester. The writing style will include technical bills, persuasive pieces (editorials) and a website. Students will receive ample feedback and will have opportunities for rewrites. I spend considerable time discussing how to write bills, editorials, and websites. Students also have access to numerous examples of each style of writing.

- Communicate effectively in oral presentations.

Politicians talk a lot. Since this is a simulation of the U.S. House, students will talk a lot. They will learn how to participate in committee meetings and caucus, learning Roberts' Rules of Order. They will speak to the entire class (the House Floor) and try to persuade their colleagues. And they will make campaign style ads that speak to constituents. I spend considerable time talking about political rhetoric and how to deliver public addresses.

- Research policy issues and present work in the form of written bills and oral arguments in committee and floor sessions.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the theoretical principles of Congress.
- Review and critically analyze the literature on Congress.