Georgia Perimeter College Faculty Senate
New Course

Title of Proposal: Add First-year Seminar Course (GPCS 1010) as an elective outside of the Core (Areas A-F).

Initiator and Place of Origin: First-year Experience Steering Committee (represented by Barbara Brown in this matter)

Date Approved by Curriculum Committee:

Course Curriculum Chair(s): There is no appropriate curriculum chair.
[sign if committee agrees; attach comments]

Proposal connected with other Proposal(s), #(#): None.

Implementation date of the Proposal: Fall 2010.

The Dunwoody Campus Faculty Senate has reviewed this proposal.

Signed: ______________________________ Date: ____________________
(Campus Chair)

The Dunwoody Campus Library Director has reviewed this proposal.
(Only required for new courses, programs, or curriculum)

Signed: ______________________________ Date: ____________________
(Library Director)

The Social Sciences Academic Dean has reviewed this proposal.

Signed: ______________________________ Date: ____________________
(Academic Dean)

This Proposal has met Senate procedural requirements and is ready for Senate review and action.

Signed: ______________________________ Date: ____________________
(Faculty Senate Chair)
# Georgia Perimeter College Faculty Senate

## New Course

**Course Title:** First-year Seminar  

**Course Abbreviation and number:** GPCS 1010  

**Credit Hours:** 3  

**Contact Hours per Week:** 3  

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<th>Lab [ ]</th>
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### A. Rationale

Most other USG institutions (see: [http://www.usg.edu/research/students/grad_ret/usg_survey_of_first-year_experience_programs.pdf](http://www.usg.edu/research/students/grad_ret/usg_survey_of_first-year_experience_programs.pdf)) have some type of first-year course. Such courses have the potential to promote success and retention and to engage students in the learning process early on. The USG has also mandated that all USG institutions develop first-year experience programs. Our rationale for developing such a course involves all of these factors.

Development of a First-Year Seminar course as part of a First-Year Experience relates to USG Strategic Goal One: “Renew excellence in undergraduate education to meet students’ 21st century educational needs.” One of the challenges related to this goal is to improve graduation and retention rates by institution and by sector. One of the specified activities for implementation is that “All 34 institutions that serve freshmen will have first-year experience programs” (from: [http://www.usg.edu/strategicplan/one/grad_rates.phtml](http://www.usg.edu/strategicplan/one/grad_rates.phtml)).

### B. Criteria (Answer each of the following questions yes, no, or not applicable. A short explanation may be included where necessary.)

1. Are the objectives of the institution met? Yes. We believe that developing this course will help us to engage and retain students and to promote student success.

2a. Have you discussed this proposal with the Library Director of at least one campus? Yes.

2b. Does that Library Director agree that library holdings are adequate to support this course? (If not, attached plan for correcting deficiencies.) No additional library holdings should be required to support this course. This course will be multidisciplinary in nature, so will not require acquiring additional holdings to support the course. One of the objectives of the course will be for students to be aware of the library holdings and to become facile at accessing the holdings of the library on campus or online.

3. Will suitable space for classrooms and labs be available? Yes. No labs are needed. Since this course will be offered on an elective basis, we anticipate that demand will be manageable, and that we can schedule in existing classrooms.

4. Can the course be scheduled in the near future? Yes, we would like to offer this course starting in Fall 2010.
5. Will the course appear in the catalog and the schedule? Yes, once approved. In addition, we anticipate that specific themes will be described in the course notes in the online schedule, and that the college may develop a mini-catalog of First-Year Seminar Courses, enabling students to select sections with themes that interest them.

6. Is a textbook needed for the course? Yes. Initially a commercially available textbook will be used for the course. Ultimately, GPC faculty may develop their own textbook, as has been done at Kennesaw State University.

7. Is a textbook available for the course? Yes. There are many appropriate options.

8. Will this course require hiring new personnel? No. This course can be taught by existing faculty and full-time staff with master’s degrees.

9. Does the course overlap with any other course/program? Overlaps with, but does not entirely duplicate HEDS 1011. We will continue to offer HEDS 1011 until it is determined whether both courses are needed.

10. Will the course transfer to the senior colleges and universities? No. These courses CAN transfer, but no USG school is obligated to accept transfer credit for another’s First-year Seminar. Per Board of Regents mandate, these courses exist outside the core.

11. Has the need for the course been adequately demonstrated? (A description of the methods and results of marketing techniques to determine sufficient enrollment to justify the course may be inserted at the end of this document.) Development and offering of such a course has been mandated by the USG. Advising, Counseling and Retention Services can encourage students to enroll. This course can also be “marketed” at New Student Orientations. We will also need to develop a catalog (or web page listing) of First-year Seminar courses with topics listed for each section.

12. Will the addition of this course affect the present balance within the department or between departments? No.

13. Have the budgetary implications of this change been assessed? (Insert a five year budget plan at the end of this document.) [See end of document.]

14. Is the course compatible with the core curriculum? Yes. This course will exist outside of the core, as is recommended and allowed by USG rules.

15. Has this proposal been discussed with the Academic Deans? Yes. It has been discussed among all the Academic Deans.

16. Has a separate Senate proposal been completed to insert the new course into a program of study? No. Since the course will exist outside of the core (A-F) and will not be required, it does not need to be added to a program of study. This is already the case with HEDS 1011.

C. Other Questions

1. Approval of this course would necessitate a deletion of the following course(s): None at this time. Although this course will overlap somewhat with HEDS 1011, we are not yet certain whether there is sufficient overlap to justify deletion of HEDS 1011.

2. This course may apply toward graduation in the following programs: None.
3. This course would be taught on the following campus(es): All campuses and online.

4. In what discipline must an instructor be SACS qualified in order to teach this course? Instructors must have Master’s degrees. There is no specific discipline required.

5. To which area of the core curriculum would this course apply? Would exist outside of the core (Areas A – F), as do the physical education courses and the Regents’ Test at present.

“In addition to physical education activity/basic health courses, an orientation course may be required outside of Areas A through F in excess of the maximum number of hours indicated for undergraduate degrees. Transferring students taking an orientation course at one institution may be required to take an additional orientation course (outside the maximum hours indicated for the undergraduate degree) at the receiving institution.”

From: http://www.usg.edu/academic_affairs_handbook/section2/2.04/2.04.01.phtml

6. Is this course a required course or an elective course in that area? This course will be an elective course.

7. Is this course offered at other USG institutions? Comparable courses are offered at most USG institutions, in response to a USG mandate to develop and offer such courses (http://www.usg.edu/research/students/grad_ret/usg_survey_of_first-year_experience_programs.pdf).

The survey linked above does not provide detailed information on other institutions First-year Seminars. However, the following information is gleaned from several institutions’ websites.

Georgia State University
- Main emphasis is on Freshman Learning Communities which focus on having first-time full-time students take five courses together. Typically their First-year Seminar (GSU 1010 – New Student Orientation Course) is included as one of the courses in the Freshman Learning Communities.
- Each Freshman Learning Community is organized around a theme. This theme is also explored in GSU 1010. The expectation is that each section of GSU 1010 will focus 70% on the academic theme and 30% on orientation topics.
- When GSU is embedded in a Freshman Learning Community, it is effectively “required.”
- Target is 25 students in each Freshman Learning Community.
- Initially GSU 1010 was offered only as a 3-credit course. Currently it may be offered for 1-3 credits.
- They also have some 2-credit “perspectives” courses in Area B, and are experimenting with requiring a 2-credit “perspectives” course plus a 1-credit version of GSU 1010.
- All students are encouraged to take GSU 1010, and it is listed as a recommended course for the first semester in all programs of study.

Georgia Institute of Technology
- Offers GT 1000.
- One credit course.
- Not required.

University of Georgia
- Has made development of a robust first-year experience the focus of their QEP (still in development).
- Will require ALL first-year students (except transfer students) to take a first-year seminar.
- Seminar sections will have 15 students.
- They anticipate that they will need to offer 300-350 seminar sections each year.
• Seminars will be 1 credit.
• Faculty can choose to develop and offer seminars for two credit hours but will only be compensated for a single credit hour.
• Faculty will be paid $2500 for teaching a seminar section.
• Seminar faculty will be tenured, tenure-track, or emeriti.

Atlanta Metropolitan College
• Is one of only two USG institutions not offering some sort of first-year experience program. (The other is Bainbridge College.)

Gainesville State College
• Offers GSCE 1101 – The Gainesville State College Experience
  • Two-credit course
  • Recommended for all new students and required for those who must take three or more Learning Support and/or CPC courses. (Sounds a lot like our HEDS course with a primary focus on study skills, etc.)

Kennesaw State University
• KSU 1101 - 3-credit-hour academically rigorous course that incorporates vital transition issues such as study skills and time management with ethical decision-making, diversity and multiculturalism, global citizenship, civic engagement, and communication skills.
  • Described as the “Flagship” of KSU’s first-year experience program.
  • MAY be included in a theme-based learning community (20-25 students) or may be offered as a stand-alone (which may be theme-based).
  • All KSU 1101 sections utilize Foundations of Academic Inquiry, a custom-published textbook written and edited by University College faculty.
  • All sections of KSU 1101 also integrate a common reader as well as out-of-class activities that promote connections with the campus and greater community.
  • REQUIRED for first-time full-time students, but from the numbers, does not appear to be required for other students. First-time full-time students may exempt the KSU 1101 requirement by enrolling in a learning community that combines two or more General Education courses. (Most learning communities do contain a KSU 1101 section, however.)

8. Should the grade mode be institutional or normal/transferable? Institutional, as is the HEDS course grade.

9. In which GPA calculations will the course count? Collegiate course GPA.

10. Can students audit the course? No.

11. Will this course satisfy a CPC deficiency? No.

12. Will this course follow the normal class meeting times and schedule? If not, what type of class meeting times and schedule will it follow? It will follow normal class meetings and schedule.

13. Specify prerequisites, co-requisites, approval of department chair and appropriate Learning support and ESL requirements. There are no prerequisites or co-requisites. Any student may enroll in this course.

D. Briefly describe how this course will help meet the objectives of the College. We hope that this course will improve student success, engagement and retention.

E. Common Course Outline
I. Course Abbreviation: GPCS 1010

II. Credit Hours: 3

III. Course Title: First-Year Seminar

IV. Prerequisites: None
Corequisites: None

V. Catalog Description: The goal of this course is to promote student success at Georgia Perimeter College and beyond. Students will be introduced to study at the college level through a seminar focused on a chosen theme and guided by a leader. Through exploration of the theme, students will become engaged with the college and the community, develop self-understanding, learn about strategies, behaviors, and college resources that will optimize their personal and academic success, build their information literacy skills, and plan for their future at the college and in their careers.

VI. Expected Educational Results:
A. Course Results:
   Students will achieve learning objectives in four domains:

   **Enhancing Student Learning Through Engagement**
   *Students who complete this course should be able to do the following:*
   1. Demonstrate positive involvement with students in their seminar group, the faculty seminar leader, and the college.
   2. Identify student organizations and attend campus and community social, academic, or cultural events.
   3. Distinguish and participate in various forms of engagement, including community service, civic engagement, or service-learning.
   4. Describe concepts of diversity and embrace diverse perspectives in campus, local, national and global communities.

   **Understanding Self and Planning for the Future**
   *Students who complete this course should be able to do the following:*
   5. Identify core values to demonstrate an understanding of self that guides personal, academic and career decision-making and goal setting.
   6. Apply appropriate study skill strategies to enhance academic success.

   **Factors that Promote Success**
   *Students who complete this course should be able to do the following:*
   7. Explore effective time management strategies and develop personal and academic time management processes.
   8. Identify and utilize college resources appropriately.
   9. Demonstrate appropriate classroom and campus etiquette according to
the Student Code of Conduct and generally expected academic behaviors.

10. Demonstrate effective problem-solving and decision-making skills.
11. Utilize learning skills and apply them to career and personal endeavors.

**Achieving Information Literacy for Academic Success**

*Students who complete this course should be able to do the following:*

12. Identify and articulate a question or questions associated with a research topic or problem.
13. Locate, evaluate, organize, and manage information through the use of technology tools and library resources.

**B. General Education Outcomes**

*Completion of this course should contribute to students’ ability to meet the following goals of the GPC core curriculum:*

1. Communicate effectively through speaking, listening, reading, and writing.
   - Students will develop their speaking skills by speaking with and giving formal presentations to their instructor and students in their seminar group.
   - Students will develop their listening skills by listening to ideas of fellow students, the instructor, and various other auditory sources of information.
   - Students will develop their reading skills by completing reading of assigned texts and articles.
   - Students will develop their writing skills through writing assignments that may include journals, essays, papers, and essays on exams.

2. Demonstrate effective problem solving and critical thinking skills.
   - Students will develop critical thinking skills through in depth exploration of the topic that provides the central theme of the seminar, exploring that topic through discussion and debate, writing opinion essays, and interacting with people that hold a varied viewpoints on the theme.
   - Students will develop problem solving skills by applying knowledge gained in the course to problems related to the theme.

3. Locate, organize, and analyze information through the use of a variety of computer applications.
   - Students will learn to locate, organize, and analyze information related to the seminar theme as part of the course goal for students to find, evaluate, and manage information through the use of
technology tools.

4. Apply the knowledge of personal, societal, and cultural development to living and working in a culturally diverse environment.
   - Students will learn to apply the knowledge of personal, societal, and cultural development to living and working in a culturally diverse environment as part of the course goal for students to define and participate in intercultural and international factors or events at play at the college, locally, nationally, or globally.

VII. Course Content
Note that each section of this course will be organized around a theme selected by the instructor and approved by the First-Year Seminar Committee. No matter what theme is selected, it is expected that the following topics will be covered.
1. Introduction to the higher education system
2. Collegiate-level expectations
3. Expectations for college behaviors
4. Strategies for achieving academic and personal success
5. Georgia Perimeter College
   - Resources
   - Structure
   - Clubs and organizations
   - Policies and procedures
6. Community service, civic engagement or service learning
7. Communities: College, personal, regional, global
8. Ethnic and cultural differences
9. Personal and academic goal setting
10. Career directions
11. Time management
12. Information literacy

VIII. Assessment of Expected Educational Results
A. Course Grade
Grades from some combination of the following will be used to determine each student’s final course grade: class participation, journal or homework assignments, papers, projects, oral presentations, and exams. Exams may be multiple choice, some combination of multiple choice and short answer or essay, or purely essay and/or short answer. All instructors must use a MINIMUM of five graded assignments/activities for the course, including the final exam. Individual instructors may determine the relative weightings of each component in determining the grade for the course, and must state the weightings to be used in
determining student grades in the course syllabus.

B. Department Assessment

• As a new course, this course will be assessed every fall and spring semester for the first two academic years that it is offered.
• After the initial two-year period, this course will be assessed at the end of the fall semester in even-numbered years.
• The construction of the assessment for this course will be the responsibility of the college wide First-Year Seminar Committee.

C. Use of Assessment Findings

• All instructors are responsible for reviewing the results of the outcome assessment for their sections and transmitting the results to the First-Year Seminar Committee. Individual instructors should use feedback from assessment in their classes to review and evaluate and enhance their own teaching practices.

• The First-Year Seminar Committee will meet at least once each semester following the administration of the course assessment. The review of the course outcome assessment findings will provide information on success in achieving the desired outcomes for this course on a college-wide basis. If fewer than 70% of the students perform successfully on measures of any learning outcome, the committee will examine teaching practices related to that outcome, the assessment instrument, and the desired learning outcomes to determine which, if any, of these need modifying. The committee will share its findings and recommendations with all instructors teaching this course, and may make changes to the desired educational outcomes, teaching practices, or assessment instrument(s) as appropriate.

IX. Date: 4/2/10 (Sixth Draft of Common Course Outline)
Five-Year Budget Plan for GPCS 1010

It is difficult to predict the budgetary implications of adding this course as an elective. If students take these courses in place of other courses they would have taken (the most likely scenario), there is no need for additional personnel; we would just need to shift the teaching load of current faculty so that part of their workload is one or more sections of the First-Year Seminar and there would be no additional funding needed.

If students take these courses in addition to what they would have taken, we might need additional instructors, but we would also be generating additional revenue. Initially, we expect that the number of sections to be offered will be relatively low and can be absorbed by academic departments with instructors teaching these sections.

Most colleges seem to run their first-year seminars with about 15 - 25 students per section. We are suggesting a target average class size of 20 students per section at GPC.