GENERAL EDUCATION PROGRAM UPDATE

Last issue you met Dr. Susan Miller-Cochran, the new Executive Director for the General Education refresh initiative. Since then, Susan has organized the faculty and students who have graciously committed some time to the reorganization of General Education into 4 working groups. These groups are meeting weekly to develop and propose a different General Education structure than what we currently have. The four groups are:

**Curriculum Working Group**: is researching different ways of presenting gen ed to students and include the basic requirements/plan.

**Infrastructure Working Group**: is responsible for the mechanics of implementation once the curriculum group has a plan.

**Teaching and Learning Working Group**: will be the support for the General Education instructors. They will try to maintain quality of teaching by offering pedagogical trainings and workshops, amongst other things.

**Communication**: Whatever plan that the faculty moves forward for General Education, there will need to be a plan to communicate with faculty, staff, ABOR, and most importantly, the students. If students do not understand the value of Gen Ed courses, then we are not being successful in our mission.

There are many people working on this project and we will continue to provide updates as they develop.

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**D2L Did You Know?**

**Zoom (Online Meetings)**

**Description**
Zoom is the University of Arizona's online synchronous meeting tool of choice and is free to use for any university business. It has the ability to use video cameras, microphones, screen sharing, and so much more.

**Create a Zoom Meeting**
1. Inside D2L, Go to UA Tools on your Course Homepage and look for the Zoom link!
2. Go to [http://arizona.zoom.us](http://arizona.zoom.us) and log in with your NetID.
3. If you are a member of the Arizona Health Sciences Center you can go to [http://uahs.zoom.us](http://uahs.zoom.us) and log in with your NetID.
4. For meetings discussing healthcare, health education, or health data research use the HIPAA Zoom Login. You can go to [https://hipaa-zoom.arizona.edu](https://hipaa-zoom.arizona.edu). Select the HIPAA Zoom Login button and log in with your NetID.

**Training**
The fastest way to learn Zoom is with a 1:1 meeting with Joshua Butcher, [jbutcher@email.arizona.edu](mailto:jbutcher@email.arizona.edu) or a member of the Academic Technologies team [acad-tech-support@list.arizona.edu](mailto:acad-tech-support@list.arizona.edu) in UITS. Some colleges and departments also offer support for Zoom.

**View our online help pages at:**
- Instructor Zoom Help Pages
- Student Zoom Help Pages
- Resources
- Real Time Online Training provided by Zoom
- Zoom Documentation
- Saving Adobe Connect Recordings
Picture Rosters Tool Suite

The Picture Rosters Tool Suite provides picture flash cards to assist instructors with learning to recognize students in the class. This tool also provides a random student selector to help ensure that students are called upon evenly in class or discussions. These tools are augmented by the abilities to display rosters and photo grids for classes and save them to PDF for offline viewing and/or printing.

Instructors and TAs who are listed as such in UAccess Student will automatically see their classes and will have access until 30 days after the end of the class.

Dr. Paul Blowers was the visionary who came to us with the original flash card and random student picker concept for this application. Soon afterward, Dr. Boris Reiss suggested the photo grid option. Both of these contributors generously provided samples to illustrate the desired functionality. We extend our thanks to Dan Mayhew at FSO-Technology for his help in this vital portion of the project.

Flash Cards:

This provides a programmed implementation of a spaced repetition interactive learning system modeled after a system developed by Sebastian Leitner in the early 1970s (Harris 2014). Although Leitner used physical flashcards with algorithms for physically moving cards from partition to partition within a box, this application simulates this system in software.

When you have guessed and scored a correct recognition, that will increment the streak value for that student’s flashcard. However, when you miss, the streak value is reset to zero. All flashcards with a streak value of zero will be included in the next session’s flashcard deck. Flashcards with a streak value greater than zero will be deferred for their streak value number of sessions. This means that the flashcards for recognized students will be shown less frequently than those that have been missed. The increased spacing of the correctly recognized flashcards helps to reinforce memory in harmony with the forgetting curve. The overall system implemented here in software is based on a system developed in the 1970’s by Sebastian Leitner.

Random Student:

The random student picker may be useful in class discussions both as an aid in recognition of students and to ensure that students are called upon as evenly as possible. This function randomly selects students from the class whether or not they have available CatCard pictures. The random selection is made from among those students having the lowest selection count. Thus, a student will not be shown again until all others in the class have been selected.

Photo Grid:

Generate a photo grid and save it to PDF for either offline viewing or to print. This compact format of pictures with names below them can be a great aid in learning to recognize students.

Availability:

Currently, this tool is available to all instructor roles as listed in UAccess Student. We are investigating how we may be able to add support for additional roles in the future.

Classes are populated well in advance of the start of the class, however, some newly enrolled students may not yet have CatCard pictures until around the start of class. Overall, about 93% of students have available CatCard pictures, but the distribution across all classes is not even.

To get started, click on the picture rosters tool and login with NetID+. From there you should be able to see your classes having positive enrollment. If you enjoy using this tool, please spread the word amongst your faculty colleagues!

For more information or help contact Charlie Hill
Engaging writing opportunities can help learners communicate information, clarify their thinking, and learn new concepts. The Writing & Learning Project supports instructors in incorporating purposeful and relevant writing tasks into their courses. We do so by bringing instructors together from across disciplines to talk about, experiment with, and reflect on how writing works with their teaching and their students’ learning. The Project has a wide variety of resources of which you can take advantage:

**Guiding Student Peer Review**

**Teaching Resources**

**Sites of Writing at UArizona**

**Workshops**

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**Writing & Learning Project Team**

Aimee Mapes  
Director, Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC)  
More about Aimee

Lindsay Hansen  
Coordinator, Writing & Learning Project  
More about Lindsay

Lauren Harvey  
Writing Instruction Specialist  
More about Lauren

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**SUPPORT FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS IN LIGHT OF INCREASED TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS AND TRAVEL BANS**

The administrative team in the writing program recently met to discuss some of the current global and national events impacting our international students and colleagues, and we wanted to send out a message in support of all those who are facing stress at this time. Just some of the recent events include the restrictions on travel and contact with loved ones due to the Coronavirus, increased travel bans on Myanmar, Eritrea, Kyrgyzistan, Nigeria, Sudan, and Tanzania, as well as increased tensions with Iran and Venezuela. We know many of us are either from these countries or have students from these countries in our classes, and we all have friends and colleagues from many of these countries who are experiencing increased levels of stress, anxiety, and real, practical challenges due to recent occurrences. Here are some things to keep in mind. Don’t feel you need to make an announcement in class, but you may want to remind all students of the resources in #5. The other resources/suggestions can be used in your class or with individuals as you deem appropriate.

1) We encourage you to make your classroom a safe space to talk about these issues with your students. We have heard reports from other universities (e.g., ASU) that Chinese and other Asian students are experiencing prejudicial behaviors from other students. If you see such behavior and need guidance on how to directly address it, to the Dean of Students or to UA Global (International Student Services, ISS).

2) At the same time, we should not make assumptions about students’ immigration or visa status. These records are private and should not be revealed (they are protected under FERPA).

3) All students and faculty are restricted from travel to China at this time. If you are planning travel to China in the next few months, you should reconsider such travel, watch travel restrictions closely and, if you are an international student or faculty member planning to travel to China, keep in close contact with ISS to avoid issues with your fall return. Instructors should also be aware that students may not be able to travel home over the summer months too. You do not need to advise them on this matter, but can direct them to ISS for advice. Students can get walk-in advising during the following times at the ISS office:
   - Mondays: 1:30-4:00 pm  
   - Tuesdays: 9:00-11:00 am and 1:30-4:00 pm  
   - Thursdays: 1:30-4:00 pm  
   - Fridays 9:00-11:00 am

4) Although international students (F-1 and J-1 visa holders) from the countries affected by the newly expanded travel ban are not restricted from travel (except travel to China), they may face increased scrutiny when they travel outside the United States. They are also advised to coordinate with ISS to ensure they do not face problems upon reentry. The increased travel restrictions do affect non-student visa holders from many of the countries. Thus, if they have family members planning to travel to the U.S. from these countries, they may be affected by the ban.

5) Mid-semester is a good time to remind all students about student services and resources on campus. We know that they learn about these services at the beginning of the term, but when they start to feel more pressure and stress, they may forget about these services. Counseling And Psychological Services (CAPS)  
Dean of Students

6) If you have questions about a specific country and how they are affected by the travel ban or if you have questions about restrictions on travel related to the Coronavirus, NAFSA: Association of International Educators has useful resources:

   a. Information on travel restrictions related to the Coronavirus  
   b. Information on the expanded travel ban

In closing, we would like to reiterate that you do not need to make an announcement in your class about travel restrictions, but would encourage you to remind all students of the resources listed in #5. The other information provided here can be used on a case-by-case basis if it seems appropriate for your students either individually or as a class.

(used with permission Shelley Staples, Alan Kohler, and Jenny Slinkard on behalf of the Writing Program)

Think Critically  
Use Information Effectively  
Understand and Value Differences  
Communicate Effectively