

Subject: Gen Ed Revision Concerns
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Paulette:

I am very concerned about the absence of any social science requirement in the proposed revisions. Although it is POSSIBLE that students can take social science courses as part of the new guidelines, it is also quite possible that students could fulfill general education requirements without any social science. Despite the assurances from the committee that developed these revisions that they were trying to minimize substantive changes, the absence of social science in the proposal IS a substantive change from the general education package that is currently in operation and it IS a substantive change from the previous system that was in operation for decades prior to that. It also flies in the academic face of ASU's master plan that emphasizes the necessity to globalize and internationalize the curriculum, a goal which has social science as its anchor. I can see no legitimate academic rationale for this change in the available reports. Other rationales such as reducing complexity and maximizing student flexibility are there, but there are no substantive academic rationales for this considerable change. This is especially curious since requirements for history and the arts were maintained. What is the rationale for maintaining these and effectively eliminating the need for social science? It is critically important for students to develop social science perspectives on an increasingly intertwined world that impacts all of us directly. Social science literacy is just as critical as any other form of literacy if we are going to have citizens of this country and the world who are adequately informed about the world in which they are going to have to survive and thrive. I am appalled that convenience has taken precedence over best academic practice. I am equally concerned that a general sociopolitical move toward making education more conservative and palatable to students and anti-intellectual elements of society might be influencing this omission.

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