

North Dakota General Education Council Proposed GERTA+ Policy – NDSU Perspective

The GERTA+ (General Education Requirement and Transfer-Plus) policy proposal would allow any NDUS institution to develop an alternative general education program, provided it meets shared/agreed-upon learning outcomes across the NDUS system. The proposal has been developed and revised by the North Dakota General Education Council over a number of years, and the learning outcomes have been approved by the faculty senate in all 11 NDUS institutions, including NDSU.

Overview:

- Proposal allows NDUS institutions to create alternative general education programs.
- Any proposed alternative would need to demonstrate how the alternative meets five of [AACU's LEAP essential learning outcomes \(ELOs\):*](#)
 - Written communication
 - Oral communication
 - Quantitative literacy
 - Critical & creative thinking
 - Breadth of knowledge
- Any alternative gen ed program would still require 36 credit hours
- Any proposed alternative would need to pass through the ND Gen Ed Council, then the NDUS Academic Affairs Council, then the NDUS Cabinet, then to the NDUS Chancellor, and finally to the SBHE.

History:

- North Dakota is a LEAP state and promotes discussion of general education through biannual summits sponsored by the NDGEC.
- Larry Peterson was a primary driver of LEAP outcomes and a key advocate of GERTA+.
- NDSU Faculty Senate previously approved LEAP outcomes.
- NDSU Faculty Senate previously discussed GERTA+ in 2015.

Benefits for NDSU Institution & Faculty:

- Shifts gen ed emphasis to competencies, not course categories.
- LEAP ELOs align with our existing approved Gen Ed Outcomes.
- Shift is in sync with what HLC is looking for - promotes robust assessment.
- Can possibly pave the way to cross-state assessment.
- Allows each campus flexibility in determining general education curriculum.
- No campus is required to adopt an alternative gen ed curriculum.
- Oversight via NDGEC ensures all NDUS institutions are meeting equivalent gen ed standards.

Benefits for NDSU Students:

- Shifts focus from completion of courses to acquired competencies.
- Emphasizes a deeper understanding of the purpose of gen ed.
- LEAP ELOs potentially allow registrar to accept more transfer credits (our current GERTA is quite rigid).
- Increased acceptance of transfer credits means higher retention and graduation at NDSU.

* The five LEAP ELOs have been approved by the faculty senates of each of the 11 NDUS institutions.