Program Approval

I. General Information

A. Institution   Pittsburg State University

B. Program Identification

Degree Level:	Associate Degree
Program Title:	General Studies
Degree to be Offered:	Associate of Arts in General Studies
Responsible Department or Unit:	Interdisciplinary/College of Arts and Sciences
CIP Code:	24.0101
Modality:	Face-to-Face, Online, Hybrid
Proposed Implementation Date:	Fall 2023

Total Number of Semester Credit Hours for the Degree: 60

II. Clinical Sites: Does this program require the use of Clinical Sites?   No

III. Justification

Pittsburg State University requests approval to create the Associate of Arts in General Studies degree. This request is being proposed as part of a renewed focus on Student Success, specifically the pursuit of retention and persistence goals, and in support of the Kansas Board of Regents' strategic plan, "Building a Future".

To address the recommendations in Pittsburg State's playbook from the National Institute for Student Success (NISS), Pittsburg State is in the process of:

- Rebuilding the Student Success Center to include Academic Advising, First-Year Programs and Career Development.
- Developing centralized advising under the newly created Academic Advising Center starting with the Fall 2022 first-year student cohort and beginning with early enrollment in April 2023.
- Implementing the Educational Advisory Board's (EAB) Student Success Management System, Navigate, for Fall 2023.
- Restructuring the Office of Institutional Effectiveness to include two new positions focused on redefining Pittsburg State's data strategy with the goal to strengthen and better direct recruitment and retention efforts.
- Implementing Oracle's Student Financial Planning and beginning the pre-implementation of Oracle's Student Management System.

The creation of the Associate of Arts in General Studies has been included as one of many strategies Pittsburg State has identified to improve student success. The new degree will allow Pittsburg State the opportunity to award the Associate of Arts and recognize academic achievement while students are in pursuit of their Bachelor degree. In addition, there is no additional cost to the student as the tuition and fees paid toward their pursuit of the Bachelor's Degree cover this program.

IV. Program Demand:

A. Survey of Student Interest

The Associate of Arts degree is only available for students pursuing a Bachelor degree at Pittsburg State University. Students, both prospective and current, will <u>not</u> have the option to select the Associate of Arts in General Studies degree as a stand-alone program.

B. Market Analysis

According to the 2022 Report on the Condition of Education from the National Institute of Education Sciences (Institute of Education Sciences, 2022), the median annual earnings in 2020 for workers with an Associate degree was $44,100 which was $4,200 higher than workers with some college but no degree. In addition, research done by the National Student Clearinghouse (National Student Clearinghouse, n.d.) shows that completion of an Associate degree provides a valuable stepping stone to completion of a Bachelor degree reinforcing Pittsburg State's strategies for the KBOR NISS Initiative. These factors alone provide a strong basis for creation of the Associate of Arts; however, it should also be noted that many students stop out without being awarded a degree that they have already earned and paid for. Between Fall 2019 and Spring 2022, PSU had nearly 600 students who stopped attending prior to earning a Bachelor degree but who met most of the requirements for the proposed Associate of Arts in General Studies.

V. Projected Enrollment for the Initial Three Years of the Program

Year	Total Headcount Per Year		Total Sem Credit Hrs Per Year	
	Full- Time	Part- Time	Full- Time	Part- Time
Implementation				
Year 2		Does not apply		
Year 3				

The Associate of Arts degree is only available for students pursuing a Bachelor degree at Pittsburg State University. Students, both prospective and current, will <u>not</u> have the option to select the Associate of Arts in General Studies degree as a stand-alone program. Therefore, no students will be enrolled in the Associate of Arts in General Studies program.

VI. Employment

According to the 2022 Report on the Condition of Education from the National Institute of Education Sciences, the median annual earnings in 2020 for workers with an Associate degree was $44,100 which was $4,200 higher than for workers with some college but no degree. In addition, research done by the National Student Clearinghouse shows that completion of an Associate degree provides a valuable stepping stone to the completion of a Bachelor degree. These factors alone provide a strong basis for the creation of the Associate of Arts; however, it should also be noted that many students stop out without being awarded a degree that they have already earned and paid for.

VII. Admission and Curriculum

A. Admission Criteria

The Associate of Arts degree is <u>only available for students pursuing a Bachelor degree at Pittsburg State University</u>. Therefore, students will be admitted using Qualified Admission criteria. Please see: https://www.pittstate.edu/admission/undergraduate-admission-requirements.html#first-year

B. Curriculum

The curriculum plan will follow a student's Bachelor degree semester-by-semester plan. As the student is following their Bachelor degree plan and once they meet the eligibility requirements for the Associate of Arts in General Studies, the student will be contacted and awarded the Associate of Arts in General Studies with the exception of students who choose to opt out. The Associate of Arts in General Studies will be conferred only at the close of each semester and summer session to align with current PSU policy for conferring all degrees and other credentials.

The requirements will include the following:

- Student must be seeking a Bachelor degree.
- Student must have at least 60 credit hours completed (developmental credit hours not included).
- Student must have at least 15 credit hours completed in residence (developmental credit hours not included).
- Student must have at least a 2.0 cumulative GPA.
- Student must have completed the Pitt State Pathway or KBOR General Education depending on the student's catalog year.

The curriculum plan will vary depending on the student's Bachelor degree, but a plan reflecting PSU's current general education follows. A list of requirements reflecting the current general education and a list of requirements reflecting the new systemwide general education is included as Appendix A.

Year 1: Fall   **SCH = Semester Credit Hours**

Course #	Course Name	SCH
ENGL 101	English Composition	3
COMM 207	Speech Communication	3
	Quantitative/Analytic Methods course	3
	Human Systems course	3
	Gorilla Gateway course	2

Year 1: Spring

Course #	Course Name	SCH
ENGL 299	Introduction to Research Writing	3
	Natural World course	4
	Human Experience course	3
	Human Systems course	3
	Elective	3

Year 2: Fall

Course #	Course Name	SCH
	Human Systems course	3
	Wellness Strategies	4
	Pathway Elective	3
	Electives	6

Year 2: Spring

Course #	Course Name	SCH
	Human Systems course	3
	Electives	11

Total Number of Semester Credit Hours ……………………………………………… 60

VIII. Core Faculty

> Note: * Next to Faculty Name Denotes Director of the Program, if applicable

This program will utilize existing faculty already associated with the student's Bachelor degree. No new faculty or courses are required since the degree requirements are already stacked within the student's Bachelor degree program.

Faculty Name	Rank	Highest Degree	Tenure Track Y/N	Academic Area of Specialization	FTE to Proposed Program
			Does not apply		

Number of graduate assistants assigned to this program **………………………………………… 0**

IX. Expenditure and Funding Sources

The Associate of Arts degree is only available for students pursuing a Bachelor degree at Pittsburg State University. Students, both prospective and current, will <u>not</u> have the option to select the Associate of Arts in General Studies degree as a stand-alone program. No new expenditures or funding sources are expected or required.

A. EXPENDITURES	First FY	Second FY	Third FY
Personnel – Reassigned or Existing Positions			
Faculty	0	0	0
Administrators *(other than instruction time)*	0	0	0
Graduate Assistants	0	0	0
Support Staff for Administration (*e.g., secretarial*)	0	0	0
Fringe Benefits *(total for all groups)*	0	0	0
Other Personnel Costs	0	0	0
Total Existing Personnel Costs – Reassigned or Existing			

Personnel – New Positions			
Faculty	0	0	0
Administrators *(other than instruction time)*	0	0	0
Graduate Assistants	0	0	0
Support Staff for Administration (*e.g., secretarial*)	0	0	0
Fringe Benefits *(total for all groups)*	0	0	0
Other Personnel Costs	0	0	0
Total Existing Personnel Costs – New Positions			
Start-up Costs - One-Time Expenses			
Library/learning resources	0	0	0
Equipment/Technology	0	0	0
Physical Facilities: Construction or Renovation	0	0	0
Other	0	0	0
Total Start-up Costs			
Operating Costs – Recurring Expenses			
Supplies/Expenses	0	0	0
Library/learning resources	0	0	0
Equipment/Technology	0	0	0
Travel	0	0	0
Other	0	0	0
Total Operating Costs			
GRAND TOTAL COSTS			

Does not apply (watermark)

B. FUNDING SOURCES *(projected as appropriate)*	Current	First FY (New)	Second FY (New)	Third FY (New)
Tuition / State Funds	0	0	0	0
Student Fees	0	0	0	0
Other Sources	0	0	0	0
GRAND TOTAL FUNDING	0	0	0	0
C. Projected Surplus/Deficit (+/-) (Grand Total Funding *minus* Grand Total Costs)				

X. Expenditures and Funding Sources Explanations

The Associate of Arts degree is only available for students pursuing a Bachelor degree at Pittsburg State University. Students, both prospective and current, will <u>not</u> have the option to select the Associate of Arts in General Studies degree as a stand-alone program. No new expenditures or funding sources are expected or required.

The new degree will allow Pittsburg State the opportunity to award students a degree that they have already earned and paid for and provide a stepping stone achievement to students as they pursue their Bachelor degree.

XI. References

Institute of Education Sciences. (2022). *Report on the Condition of Education 2022* (NCES 2022-144). U.S.
    Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences. https://nces.ed.gov/pubs2022/2022144.pdf

National Student Clearinghouse. (n.d.). *National Student Clearinghouse Research Center*.
    https://nscresearchcenter.org/

Appendix A

The chart below outlines the curriculum for the Associate of Arts in General Studies covering Pittsburg State's current General Education and the upcoming KBOR General Education beginning with the 2024-2025 University Catalog.

AA in General Studies Pitt State Pathway Catalogs prior to 2024	Hours	AA in General Studies KBOR General Education Catalogs beginning 2024	Hours
ENGL 101	3	ENGL 101	3
ENGL 299	3	ENGL 299	3
COMM 207	3	COMM 207	3
Quantitative /Analytic Methods	3	Math Pathways	3
Natural World	4-5	Natural and Physical Sciences	4-5
Human Experience	3-6	Arts & Humanities	6
Human Systems	9-12	Social & Behavioral Sciences	6
Wellness Strategies	4	Institutionally Designated: Wellness Strategies	1
Gorilla Gateway	2	Institutionally Designated: Gorilla Gateway	2
Pathway Elective	3	Institutionally Designated: General Education Elective	3
Total General Education	**40-41**	**Total General Education**	**34-35**
Degree Electives	**19-20**	**Degree Electives**	**25-26**
Total for AA Degree	**60**	**Total for AA Degree**	**60**

In developing the Associate of Arts degree, Pittsburg State reviewed Associate of Arts degrees at community colleges across the state and the degree plan above reflects the path implemented at many of those reviewed.