TO: The Academic Senate
FROM: Committee on Instruction and Curriculum (CIC)
SUBJECT: Rotation of General Education (G.E.) Clusters
ACTION REQUESTED: Approval by the Academic Senate of the Following Policies for Review and Rotation of G.E. Clusters:

1. All G.E. Clusters will be reviewed every three years. Before the review, all faculty members will be invited to submit proposals for new clusters. The review will create a new list of clusters, which may include new ones as well as continuation of existing ones.

2. The review will follow the usual procedure for matters involving G.E., beginning with CIC’s G.E. Subcommittee and proceeding to CIC itself and then the Academic Senate.

3. The following criteria will be used for review of existing clusters:
   a. Degree of thematic integration
   b. Fulfillment of learning outcomes, as indicated by assessment data (to be provided by the G.E. Coordinator)
   c. Attractiveness of cluster to students, as indicated by enrollments
   d. Student opinion of the cluster, as indicated by student evaluations (to be provided by the G.E. Coordinator)

4. The following criteria will be used for review of new clusters:
   a. Degree of thematic integration, as indicated in the proposal
   b. Proposed plan for fulfillment of learning outcomes
   c. Attractiveness of cluster theme and courses to students

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:
Ever since the cluster program was first approved in 1997, the Director of General Education has intended to review and rotate the clusters periodically, so that they could be continuously renewed and improved. However, in the absence of learning outcomes, there were no criteria for review. Now we have lower division learning outcomes - and a rotation system is needed more than ever, with the discontinuation of the sophomore clusters. The last offering of sophomore clusters is taking place this year, 2004-05. Many of these clusters are of high academic quality and popular with students, and in many cases the faculty members have expressed a desire for the opportunity to revamp them and offer them as freshman clusters. A periodic rotation of clusters will open opportunities to do this.

The G.E. Subcommittee, after lengthy discussion, proposed the review and rotation system above (with one exception) at its meeting of Nov. 11, 2004. By a vote of 7-0-0 at its Jan. 3, 2005 meeting, CIC approved the changes proposed by the G.E. Subcommittee. It made one modification: the addition of 4b, “Proposed plan for fulfillment of learning outcomes,” as one of the criteria for review of new clusters. That made these criteria more complete and more parallel to those for the review of existing clusters.

There was some discussion in CIC of the length of the rotation period. The consensus was that three years would be enough time to develop a successful cluster and at the same time would open sufficiently early or frequent opportunities for the birth of new clusters or renewal of sophomore clusters. The G.E. Program as a whole is reviewed every 5 years, but it was not considered a good idea to review the clusters in the same year that the whole program is reviewed, since both reviews will require a good deal of faculty time and energy. A new round of clusters was approved in Spring 2004, so the first review and rotation will take place in Spring 2007.