Michigan Tech

Office Memo

Office of the Provost and
Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs

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TO: Richard Koubek, President

FROM: Andrew Storer, Provost & Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs

DATE: March 5, 2026

SUBJECT: Senate Proposal 14-26

Attached is Senate proposal14-26, “Proposal to Establish an Associate of Science in General Studies,” and a memo stating the Senate passed this proposal at their February 19, 2026 meeting. I have reviewed this memo and recommend approving the proposal.

If you concur with my recommendation, the provost’s office will seek the following approvals.

X Board of Trustees
n/aMichigan Association of State Universities (MASU)
X Higher Learning Commission (HLC); screening required for all degree programs as well certificates

Programs cannot be fully advertised until all noted approvals are obtained. Once Board of Trustees approval has been granted, limited advertising to make prospective students aware of the planned program may be conducted so long as any outstanding regulatory approvals are noted, e.g., "pending state and Higher Learning Commission approval".

I concur X do not concur _____ with the provost’s recommendation as stated in this memo.

Richard Koubek, President

3/17/26

Date

University Senate

Michigan Tech

DATE:	February 19, 2026
TO:	Richard Koubek, President
FROM:	Robert Hutchinson, University Senate President
SUBJECT:	Proposal 14-26
COPIES:	Andrew Storer, Provost & Senior VP for Academic Affairs

At its meeting on February 19, 2026, the University Senate approved Proposal 14-26, "Proposal to Establish an Associate of Science in General Studies" Feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

The University Senate of Michigan Technological University

Proposal 14-26

Proposal to Establish an Associate of Science in General Studies

Basic Program Information

Primary Contact: Alex Guth, Provost's Office
Program/Degree type: Associate of Science (AS)
Program Title: Associate of Science in General Studies
Planned Implementation Date: Fall 2026
Program location/modality: on-campus
Target student population: current students

General description and characteristics of program

This is a two-year, 64-credit, general-use program that will benefit students eligible for specific state scholarship programs and allow some who leave before completing their bachelor's to leave with a college credential.

Rationale

This new Associate program is being proposed in order to provide the same options that the recent Associate of Science in Engineering program (program code EAEN, senate proposal 28-23) was created to provide for students in the College of Engineering.

Primarily, this program would allow students in any major to have a credentialled off-ramp should they leave the university, and would also allow more students to better utilize specific state funding sources that require enrollment in an Associate's program.

While the AS in Engineering has been benefiting Engineering students, the other Associate option (Associate of Arts in Humanities, SAH) is not a good fit for most of our other students. Rather than have every college design its own Associate's, this program is proposed as a general alternative to reduce the proliferation of 2-year degree offerings.

If this program is approved, the Associate of Arts in Humanities would be shelved.

Related programs: within MTU and at other institutions

Michigan Tech currently offers two associate degrees.

- Associate of Science in Engineering (EAEN, 65 credits)
- Associate of Arts in Humanities (SAH, 67 credits)
    - Note that the Humanities program had originally been an option (what we now refer to as a concentration) within an Associate Degree in General Studies.

Michigan Tech is only 1 of 4 State Universities in Michigan that offer associate degrees (these universities are not in a community college district). Northern Michigan, LSSU, and Ferris all offer significantly more Associate programs than we do, and they all have “general studies” options as well as other very flexible associate programs.

- Northern Michigan University
    - Associate of Science - General Studies (60 credits)
    - Associate of Arts - General Studies (60 credits)
        - Both require 24 credits of general education and 16 credits in specific prefixes aligned with the degree type.
- Lake Superior State University
    - Associate of Arts in Liberal Arts (62 credits)
        - Requires completion of general education and any minor.
    - Associate of General Studies (62 credits)
        - Requires completion of general education and a 20-credit concentration.
- Ferris State University
    - Associate of Arts in General Studies (60 credits)
        - Requires 36 credits of general education and 24 credits as one of 3 concentration options or directed studies.
    - Associate of Arts in Integrative Studies (60 credits)
        - Requires 36 credits of general education, a 2-credit course on integrated learning, and 22 credits of electives.

Projected Enrollment

Students in this program would be shifting from the two other Associate programs rather than generating new enrollment. Most students are expected to be pulled from the Humanities program, but some non-Engineering students are currently utilizing the AS in Engineering as a better fit with their primary major.

There are currently 518 students with an Associate’s program listed as their first or second major (the vast majority have the Associate's as their second major). Based on primary majors, it is expected that approximately 200 of these students would be better served by a General Studies option.

Specialized Accreditation Requirements

None.

Professional Licensure Requirements

None.

Curriculum Details

Learning Goals

As the only required courses fulfill Essential Education requirements, the learning goals for the AS in General Studies reflect the Essential Abilities. All listed goals are mapped to the “Level 2 - Developing” rubric criteria.

Essential Ability	**The Student…** (Level 2 - Developing)	**Where Developed**
Reflect	Reviews prior learning (and past experiences inside and outside of the classroom) as a descriptive review, clarifying some meanings or indicating a broader perspective about educational or life events	MTU Seminar Composition
Evaluate Information	Uses information with awareness of context, limitations, and credibility. Partially leverages that awareness	Composition
Communicate Contextually	Demonstrates the ability to use communication formats and methods with some consideration of the context, purpose, and audience	Composition
Communicate Quantitatively	Interprets quantitative evidence and communicates ideas that follow from that evidence	Math, STEM, Natural/Physical Science
Welcome Challenge	[demonstrates] Flexibility to try new activities, approaches, or explore new ideas in structured, prescribed settings when outcomes are likely to be successful. Requires structure and support to make progress toward goals. Shows some perseverance. Begins to consider strategies (habits, behaviors, or skills) to try	Activities for Well-being and Success

Assessment Plan

Learning Goal Assessment will follow the Essential Education assessment process. As current assessment practices do not allow for the disaggregation of specific student populations within a

class, and most students in this program would also be in one of many primary majors, the program will be evaluated primarily through program review.

Program review will focus on student success metrics, including student persistence/retention, degree completion (for both primary and secondary majors, as applicable), and time to degree.

Curriculum Design

Minimum Credits: 64

Essential Education (24 cr minimum)

All courses are to be selected from the approved Essential Education Course lists.

Required First Year Experience (16 cr):

- Michigan Tech Seminar (1 cr)
- Composition (3 cr)
- Foundations in the Human World (3 cr)
- Math (3 cr)
- Natural and Physical Sciences (3 cr)
- STEM (3 cr)

Distribution Pathway (6 cr)
Choose a minimum of 3 credits from 2 of the following lists:

- Arts and Culture (3 cr)
- Communication Intensive (3 cr)
- SHAPE (3 cr)
- STEM (3 cr)

Activities for Well-Being and Success (2 cr)

Electives

- Complete additional coursework, 1000-level or higher, in any prefix, to meet the 64-credit minimum.

Model Schedule

Semester / Year	Fall	Spring
Year 1	Seminar (1 cr) Composition (3 cr) Natural/Physical Science (3 cr) Electives (9 cr)	Foundations of the Human World (3 cr) Math (3 cr) Activities (1 cr) Electives (9 cr)

	16 credits	16 credits
Year 2	Communication Intensive (3 cr) STEM (3 cr) Electives (10 cr)	Arts and Culture (3 cr) Activities (1 cr) Electives (12 cr)
	16 credits	16 credits
		Total credits = 64

Faculty Qualifications

Courses will be taught by faculty determined to be qualified by their respective home units and through other university review, where appropriate. Faculty qualifications will be available upon request.

Program-specific policies, regulations, and rules

General Procedures

- Diplomas will be printed for students who apply.
- Associate awards will not be announced during the commencement ceremonies.
- To be eligible to be awarded the AS in General Studies, a student must:
    - earn a minimum of 15 credits through Michigan Tech
    - and have a minimum cumulative grade point average of 2.00

Resources Needed

Library and other learning resources needed

No new library resources will be needed.

Suitability of existing space, facilities, and equipment

Current spaces and facilities are sufficient.

Program Costs

No program costs are expected to be needed to launch this program.

108.1.2: Criteria for Financial Evaluation Proposed Academic Programs

Relation to University Strategic Plan

This program can be seen to support the following university goals (https://www.mtu.edu/stratplan/principles/goals/):.

- **Education/Educational Program** - "Develop and enhance pathways to completion of undergraduate and graduate programs."
- **People/Quality of Life** - "Increase diversity, and promote success of all students, …"
- **Scholarship/Economic and Social Development** - "Foster social development and economic growth of our state and the local community."

The Associate of Science in General Studies will promote these goals by:

1. Allowing students to more fully access available state funding promotes the success of all students.
2. Providing a more seamless experience with their chosen bachelor's and allowing the full utilization of available scholarship money can improve retention of low-income students. This, in turn, promotes diversity in the student population and the completion of undergraduate programs, and thus the success of all students.
3. Serving as an off-ramp for students who do decide to leave Michigan Tech before completing their bachelor's degree, as simply having a college credential can open additional employment options.

Impact on University Enrollment

- **Projected number of students in the program**: 200 (as Second Major)
- **Source of new students**: current enrollment shift
- **How will demand for the new program correlate with existing enrollment patterns?** This program will pull from the two existing associate programs and will mimic enrollment patterns of the primary majors. With the move to free community college, there is an increased incentive for students not to start their college education at 4-year universities like Michigan Tech. However, finishing an associate's degree at a community college does not necessarily reduce the time needed to complete a bachelor's degree by 2 years or the same number of credits completed for the associate's degree. Assisting students who start here in accessing the full amount of funding they are eligible for while making progress towards their desired bachelor's degree will hopefully result in better retention and time to degree for the bachelor's.
- **Current enrollment in the unit**: N/A

Impact on Resources in Home Department

- Not Applicable

Impact on Resources in Other Units Within the University.

For non-engineering students using the currently available Associate's programs for state funding, this new program should reduce the load on advisors who assist these students. As this program is not expected to attract new students, an impact on other units in the university is not expected.

Impact on other resources

None.

Assessment of the ability to obtain the necessary resources assuming requested funds are obtained

- Not Applicable. No additional resources are needed or requested.

Past Proposal Outcomes

- Not Applicable

Departmental Budget Contribution

- Not Applicable

How do the benefits from this program compare to other alternatives that are currently under consideration or development?

- In order to provide the same benefits garnered from the AS in Engineering to non-engineering students on campus, the main alternative would be to create specialized associate programs tailored to each College, or to create multiple concentrations within a general associate degree.
- This proposal allows us to assist the most students with the fewest Associate's options. Adding a large number of associate programs is out of alignment with our institutional focus on research and baccalaureate and graduate education