Frequently Asked Questions for Faculty and Staff Regarding the “Transitional Timeline for FQ Implementation and FS Phase-out: Mānoa Campus”

1. Why is UH Mānoa replacing the Foundations-Symbolic Reasoning (FS) requirement with the Foundations-Quantitative Reasoning (FQ) requirement?

UH Mānoa (UHM) is adopting FQ as an undergraduate requirement to ensure students graduate from UHM with a sufficient level of competence in quantitative reasoning. The Western Association for Schools and Colleges (WASC), the university’s accrediting body, has designated quantitative reasoning as one of the 5 core competencies for undergraduate education. At the request of the UHM Faculty Senate Executive Committee, the General Education Committee and Foundations Board, and the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, the Quantitative Reasoning Working Group (QRWG) was formed at UHM in February 2014 to accomplish the following: 1) define quantitative reasoning; 2) evaluate compatibility of the FS requirement with the QR definition; 3) establish a baseline; and 4) determine current QR learning opportunities.

The QRWG ultimately determined that the FS requirement does not mandate sufficient quantitative skills. Students in non-STEM fields may graduate with little or no training in quantitative reasoning, and this lack of training can negatively impact their upper division studies as well as post-graduate success. As a result of the efforts of the QRWG (see http://manoa.hawaii.edu/quantitativereasoning), the Mānoa Faculty Senate approved a resolution in April 2015 to replace the FS requirement with an FQ requirement, effective Fall 2018. A resolution to establish the FQ Hallmarks was approved by the Mānoa Faculty Senate in January 2016. In accordance with these two decisions, UHM is moving forward with an implementation plan to transition from FS to FQ.

2. What is quantitative reasoning?

In examining best practices, the QRWG, in consultation with WASC and the Mānoa Faculty Senate, established the following as its definition of competency in quantitative reasoning for UHM: “The ability to apply mathematical concepts to the interpretation and analysis of quantifiable information in order to solve a wide range of problems, from those arising in pure and applied research to everyday issues and questions. It includes the ability to do the following: apply math skills; judge reasonableness of results; understand and communicate numerical information via variables and equations, graphs and charts, words/sentences; and recognize the limits of mathematical or statistical methods.”

3. Why can’t FS courses be eliminated in Fall 2018?

Per UH policy, students are held to the general education and program requirements that are in place at the time they enter the UH System, otherwise known as the requirements of their “core year.” In recognition of this, UHM will not eliminate FS courses until Fall 2023 to provide sufficient time for these students to complete their FS requirement.

4. When are FS courses being phased out?

FS courses will continue to be offered through Summer 2023 to ensure there is adequate time for students who entered the UH System prior to Fall 2018 to complete their FS requirements, and to ensure departments have sufficient time to plan and make appropriate programmatic
changes. All faculty, particularly faculty members from departments that currently offer FS courses, are urged to carefully examine where FS courses appear in program sheets and in 4-year degree plans. Please also consider whether the students in your majors currently fulfill their FS requirement through a prerequisite course.

5. Will current students be able to choose between the FS and FQ requirements?
Students who enter the UH System prior to Fall 2018 will have the option of fulfilling FS or FQ as one of their general education requirements. Students entering the UH system in Fall 2018 and beyond are bound to the FQ requirement, and may not choose to satisfy the FS requirement instead. Students should contact their designated School/College academic or faculty advisor for more information.

6. Can students place out of the FQ requirement?
This is a question that is still being discussed at the administrative level. Students may continue to earn UHM course credit via AP, CLEP, and IB exams, or other articulated transfer credits. If the credits earned are determined to be equivalent to an FQ course, then those students will have fulfilled their FQ requirement.

7. Are the other UH campuses adopting Quantitative Reasoning as a requirement?
As of the last UH Foundations Systemwide Group meeting held on April 22, 2016, the following campuses have indicated they are moving toward formally adopting a Quantitative Reasoning requirement: Honolulu Community College, Kapi'olani Community College, Kaua'i Community College, Leeward Community College, Maui College, and Windward Community College. The UH West O'ahu campus is still engaged in discussion over this issue. UH Hilo and Hawai'i Community College have already adopted Quantitative Reasoning as an official requirement.

While UHM hopes that all campuses under the articulation agreement move forward together in this transition, it is ultimately up to each campus how they will implement the requirement. Information regarding how other UH campuses will proceed in adopting the Quantitative Reasoning requirement will be added to the QRWG website as it becomes available.

8. Will UH Mānoa offer enough FS and FQ courses to meet the needs of current and incoming students?
Yes. UHM has a timeline guiding the process of implementing the FQ requirement and phasing out FS courses to ensure this change in requirement will not hinder students from graduating in four years, per the Fifteen to Finish initiative.

The General Education Office (GEO) is conducting a preliminary analysis of enrollment data and has requested additional pertinent information from STAR in order to determine how many seats must be available per semester to accommodate student need.

9. If I don't currently teach an FS course, may I develop an FQ course?
Yes. All departments are encouraged to develop FQ courses that serve the varying needs of UHM students. The QRWG website contains resources on quantitative reasoning, and the GEO will be conducting professional development workshops to assist faculty in their development efforts. Department chairs are also encouraged to communicate their plans with
each other so that departments can determine whether it is in their best interest to design a new FQ course.

10. I currently teach quantitative reasoning skills in my course. What should I know before I apply for an FQ designation?

In order to obtain an FQ designation, the department must submit a proposal to the GEO, as is practice for any department seeking a Foundations designation. The Foundations Board and General Education Committee (GEC) will review the proposal to ensure it meets the requirements of the General Education program, most notably in adhering to the FQ Hallmarks. Other notable requirements for Foundations courses:

- The course must be introductory-level (100- or 200-level).
- The course must carry 3 credits.
- The course cannot simultaneously carry a Diversification or Focus designation (E, HAP, O, WI).
- A UHM-1 or UHM-2 form will need to be completed.
- An assessment plan must be included in the proposal that outlines how the department will demonstrate the course has met each FQ Hallmark and learning objective.
- The proposal must be signed by the department chair.
- All Foundations designations are “course-based.” If the proposal is approved to carry the FQ designation, all instructors who teach the course will be required to teach the course with fidelity to the FQ Hallmarks.
- The department must identify a “course coordinator” who will ensure that the Hallmarks will be consistently upheld amongst all sections offered by the department.

If you believe your course meets the FQ Hallmarks, consult with your department regarding whether the course should be proposed for an FQ designation. All departments are encouraged to consider whether they are able to offer FQ courses. The FQ Hallmarks are available here:


11. Where can I find information on other departments’ plans regarding FS and FQ course offerings?

In September 2016, the Foundations Board and GEO will contact all departments that currently offer FS courses to discuss the future of those courses. The GEO will utilize the QRWG website (http://manoa.hawaii.edu/quantitative.reasoning) to provide updated information regarding the future of all FS courses, as well as information regarding new FQ courses that have been proposed, so that all departments have access to this information.

All departments are encouraged to review the FQ Hallmarks and begin thinking about developing new FQ courses.

12. Where can I get more information regarding the proposal process?

Please contact the GEO at gened@hawaii.edu or 956-6660. Departments are encouraged to contact the GEO and work with the Foundations Board prior to submitting course proposals to help promote a smooth review process.
13. When will FQ course proposal forms be available?
   The GEO will work with the Foundations Board and GEC to finalize FQ course proposal forms during the Fall 2016 semester. Forms are anticipated to be ready for use by the beginning of November 2016. Forms will be posted on the General Education website, and an announcement will be sent out to the departments via email when the forms are available.

14. May I still submit a proposal for a new FS course?
   Because a plan is in place to phase out FS courses, it is highly recommended that efforts be concentrated on developing FQ courses. However, new FS course proposals will still be accepted in Fall 2016. The final deadline for submission is September 30, 2016.

15. Will I be able to teach an FQ course earlier than Fall 2018?
   No. Students will not be held to an FQ requirement until Fall 2018. As outlined in the transition timeline, the Foundations Board will begin reviewing new FQ course proposals in Spring 2017. If a course proposal is reviewed and approved by the Foundations Board prior to Fall 2018, the FQ designation for that course will not appear in the Catalog, STAR, MyUH, or Class Availability until Fall 2018 registration begins. To avoid confusion, departments are prohibited from advertising the course with an FQ designation until Fall 2018 registration, and students will not earn FQ credit if they take the course prior to Fall 2018.

16. Will there be updates to this FAQ sheet?
   Yes, this FAQ sheet will be updated as more information becomes available. In addition, work is underway to add questions to this sheet that are geared toward advisors, and to produce an FAQ sheet for students. All updates will be posted to the QRWG website: http://manoa.hawaii.edu/quantitativereasoning

   In addition, you may contact the General Education Office at gened@hawaii.edu at any time.