To: Provosts and Vice Presidents for Instruction
    Statewide General Education Committee

From: Randall Brumfield, Chief Academic Officer

cc: Matt Freeman, Executive Director
    Linda Clark, President, Board of Education
    Dave Hill, Board of Education, Chair, Committee on Instruction, Research, and Student Affairs

Date: January 12, 2018

Re: Charge for Common Course Indexing

Background
In order to provide greater transparency and seamlessness within transfer processes the State Board of Education (Board) has directed institutions to develop a common indexing convention for a core set of curricula offered in the General Education Matriculation (GEM) framework. Common course indexing includes three elements: common course number, common course title, and common GEM area designation (also known as a GEM stamp).

The courses in the attached list were identified through consultation with GEM discipline groups, Board workgroups, and independent research conduct by the Office of the State Board of Education (OSBE). These are consistent, though not as comprehensive, as those designated in the common course convention adopted by the Board in 1996. Course numbers and titles provided in the list reflect those most commonly utilized across Idaho public institutions.

The majority of courses on the list have been identified as:

1.) Available to students across most, if not all, Idaho public institutions.
2.) Designated at 100 or 200 level.
3.) Maintaining equivalencies across institutions per the Course Transfer website (coursetransfer.idaho.gov).
4.) Designated with a GEM stamp at most institutions.
**Action**
Institutions are expected to update these courses with common course indexing for inclusion in their course catalog no later than the 2019-20 academic year.

Applicable academic, administrative, and governance processes should commence at the institution level in Spring 2018. Among other reasons this is to ensure that, if needed, instructional units have sufficient opportunity to coordinate with other Idaho public colleges and universities for delivery beginning in Fall 2019. This will also provide General Education review and approval processes to be completed prior to the 2019-20 course catalog publication cycle.

Regular updates will be provided by OSBE to the Board throughout the 2018 calendar year regarding progress on these items. As the Governor’s Office and state legislators have expressed significant interest in this initiative, they will be informed periodically.

**Summary**
Given the increased scrutiny by various stakeholders regarding the seamless articulation of courses and ease of transferability across Idaho’s public postsecondary institutions, and offering added clarity towards shared coordination of general education, this action seeks to achieve these outcomes through proactive measures adopted by the Board and institutions. Furthermore, the outcome will assist towards addressing recommendations from the Governor’s Task Force on Higher Education and developing system-wide behavior across Idaho public institutions as expected by the Board, Governor, and legislators.