The History of Essential Studies
The University of North Dakota’s Program in General Education

- 2001-2006: General Education Longitudinal Study: in-depth interviews with students on their experience of UND’s GE program.
- 2003, Fall: North Central Accreditation visit: improvement in GE cited, particularly assessment, with focused return visit to check campus progress.
- 2004, May: AAC&U’s General Education Institute at Newport, RI: UND’s team initiates plan for revision of GE program.
- 2005-07: General Education Task Force: 25-member cross-campus group studies GE programming and makes proposal to overhaul goals and program requirements.
- 2007, May: University Senate approves the GE Task Force proposal for “Essential Studies”
- 2007-08: Essential Studies transition year: policies, procedures, and campus events.
- 2008, Spring: HLC visitors return for focused visit: UND’s assessment improvements and Essential Studies are acknowledged and applauded.
- 2008, August: Provost Weisenstein appoints first Essential Studies Director (Tom Steen)
- 2008, Fall: ES program requirements implemented for incoming freshman students.
- 2008, September: UND receives the “Improvement in General Education” award from the Association of General and Liberal Studies (AGLS).
- 2009, June: Provost LeBel arranges funding for ES Office and ES administrative secretary.
- 2009, Summer-Fall: Remodeling of O’Kelly 113 (Dan Kurtz & Facilities staff)
- 2009, Fall: ES program requirements implemented for incoming transfer students
- 2009, September: Sandy Brown appointed as ES administrative assistant
- 2010-11: first students under ES graduate—transfers and 3-years-to-graduate students; ES Capstone requirement applied for the first time.
- 2011-12: First year that a majority of graduates are under ES; ES Capstones (“C”) in place for all students. First cycle of course revalidations (re-approvals; 4-yr. cycle) completed under ES.
- 2012-13: ES program review, to be completed similar to VPAA’s review process for undergraduate programs.