**History:**

Historically, BGS degrees were developed across the US in the 1970s and 1980s as universities sought to engage with non-traditional students and provide a more flexible avenue for degree completion. There is little agreement on the specific qualities common to a BGS degree, and not all colleges and universities offer them; none of our peer institutions does. In the context of KU, recent iterations of the BGS degree were justified as offering students more flexibility given the extensive demands of the General Education requirements. With the implementation of the KU Core, however, all CLAS students now have more flexibility, with even those pursuing the BA now having greater flexibility than was ever offered to BGS students. The implementation of the KU Core in particular requires that we reconsider the BGS and reshape it to best serve the population we believe most benefits from it.

With this in mind, over the last two years, CUSA has undertaken discussions of the scope, purpose, and place of the BGS degree amongst the other degrees offered by CLAS. The BS offers depth; the BA balances breadth and depth. For the BGS to remain a distinct degree, it seems obvious that it must emphasize breadth while maintaining the educational rigor that puts it on par with both the BA and BS.

In order to re-imagine the BGS within the new landscape created by the KU Core, CUSA asked departments how they imagined the degree, and asked Larry Fillian to find data revealing what student population the BGS has been serving (see attached data). CUSA’s ultimate goal was to revise the BGS degree in such a way that it best serves a particular student population and maintains credibility both at KU and for outside stakeholders.

We note that there is a small population of students who pursue a BGS because they are completing degrees in one of the professional schools and want also to pursue a major in the College. CUSA believes that we want to continue to encourage this activity, but that there are other ways to facilitate College Bachelor’s degrees for these students. The BGS requirements recommended below thus do not treat this special population.

CUSA identified several characteristics of a large proportion of BGS students based on the data:

- The majority of students who choose the BGS enter the workforce immediately after graduation, rather than pursuing graduate or professional school.

- Students often choose the BGS late in their careers at KU; many choose it as a way to graduate more quickly.

- Although students are drawn from a range of achievement levels and preparation, the average incoming test scores and KU GPA of BGS students are lower than those of BA and BS students.

- Half of the students who choose the BGS do so because they want to avoid the 4-semester BA language requirement.
Proposal:
CUSA proposes that the BGS is best suited to prepare students for the workforce with a variety of intellectual tools and skills. With this in mind, we recommend the following:

1. KU Core
2. Major
3. Second focus area:
   a. 2nd major or degree;
   b. a minor and a CLAS certificate

*Justification* for (b.): CUSA has encouraged departments to propose interdisciplinary certificates to help shape elective offerings and prepare students for education and employment after graduation. These certificates seem especially well suited for the population we believe is best served by the new BGS.

4. Additional goals and skills:

   a. **Learning outcome: written communication.**

   Students must pass (or have credit for) two writing courses that satisfy Core Goal 2 Learning Outcome 1 (written communication) and at least one additional course beyond ENGL 102.
   1. A student whose initial placement is ENGL 101 must take ENGL 101, ENGL 102, and a third Goal 2.1 course.
   2. A student whose initial placement is in ENGL 102 or ENGL 105 (and who does not have credit for ENGL 101) must take ENGL 102 or ENGL 105 and an additional Goal 2 Outcome 1 (written communication) course.

   *Justification:*
   With the KU Core, students may be able to fulfill the writing requirement without taking a college-level writing course (i.e. through test scores). Students need solid written communication skills in order to succeed in the workplace. Students who enter with lower test scores or are otherwise less prepared for college-level writing (i.e., those who fall into category 1 above) are best served by more actual college-level writing experience.

   [This is the same as the BA requirement except that it asks for a third Goal 2.1 course for those who are entering at a remedial level.]

   b. **Learning outcome: quantitative literacy.**

   Students must pass an additional course beyond the KU Core Quantitative Literacy goal with a pre-requisite of Math 101, or another course approved by CUSA (e.g. statistics, modeling).

   *Justification:*
   Basic quantitative literacy is essential success beyond graduation, both on the job and off. This requirement follows the justification for the BA, which argued that basic quantitative
skills are essential in the current economy, and that algebraic skills are the foundation for most other math courses such as statistics.

c. Learning outcome: language and culture.
Students may complete this requirement in one of three ways:
   i. At least one semester of non-English language study (including ASL), or proof of one-semester proficiency in a language other than English, and one additional Goal 4.2 course; or
   ii. One course in linguistics and two additional Goal 4.2 courses;
   iii. Two semesters of non-English language study (including ASL), or proof of two-semester proficiency in a language other than English.

Justification:
Language study offers students a broad range of benefits, including enhancing their understanding of language structure (laying the foundation for other-language learning as well as improving native language skills), and exposing them to other-cultural thinking, both of which are especially important in an increasingly global economy. The requirement encourages student exposure to language study with the hope that they will choose to take full advantage of the benefits of KU’s diverse offerings in language, while providing risk-averse students or those with a documented foreign-language-learning disability other options for completing the degree.

[Does the addition of 2 Goal 4.2 courses for the linguistics option provide a sufficient disincentive for avoiding language while still capturing the learning goal we're trying to achieve with a single semester of language?]

Students must take an approved career-focused course or internship (e.g. LA&S 492: The Job Search or regular or service-learning internship offered through departments).

Justification:
Students with clear career paths who chose the BGS as well as those who come to the BGS late with no clear employment trajectory are both well-served by coursework or experiences geared to prepare them for the workplace. These courses all serve this goal in different ways.

e. Learning outcome: laboratory or field experience.

[As per BA?]