

THE UNIVERSITY OF TOLEDO
Guidelines for the Development of General Education Courses
Approved by Faculty Senate April 26, 2005
(Revised April 2008)

The University of Toledo's General Education curriculum is a foundation for undergraduate education. It exposes the student to a range of disciplines that gives breadth to the learning experience, prepares students for their degree programs, and develops students as life-long learners who will thrive in, and contribute significantly to a constantly changing global community.

The General Education curriculum gives students critical reasoning skills to explore complex questions, grasp the essence of social, scientific and ethical problems, and arrive at nuanced opinions. It hones their ability to communicate orally and in writing. It allows them to recognize their place in history and culture, and to appreciate their connection to others in a multicultural world. It prepares them to be thoughtful, engaged citizens in participatory democracy. It requires them to explore the whole range of the liberal arts, both for the intrinsic value of doing so, and also in preparation for study in their degree programs. Specifically, they gain insights into the social and behavioral sciences, become familiar with the history, aesthetics, and criticism of the fine arts, gain experience in the scientific method through laboratory work, and use philosophical and mathematical processes to examine theoretical and natural phenomena.

The University of Toledo's university-wide general education curriculum is designed:

1. To broaden the range of experiences open to students
2. To help students develop the disciplined, analytical and critical skills necessary for intellectual development throughout life
3. To prepare students to make better-informed and humane decisions and to be able to communicate those decisions to others
4. To cultivate students' potential for creative expression

The curricular components through which these goals are met are as follows:

I. Skill areas (9 Semester Hours)

- English composition (1100 or higher) 6 semester hours
- Mathematics (1180 to 2600) 3 semester hours

II. Subject areas (21-24 Semester Hours)

Includes at least two courses totaling 6 hours in each of the following areas:

- Humanities and Fine Arts
- Social Sciences
- Natural Sciences (including at least one lab)
- Diversity: one course in Diversity of U.S. Culture and one course in Non-U.S. Culture.

Students may satisfy one of the two multicultural requirements with at least one course that simultaneously fulfills a second area of the general education curriculum.

Courses designated as included in the General Education Curriculum are listed in the University of Toledo's General Catalog.

FACULTY GOVERNANCE OVERSIGHT OF THE GENERAL EDUCATION CURRICULUM

Oversight of the University's General Education Curriculum is the responsibility of the [Faculty Senate Core Curriculum Committee](#). This committee, consisting of representatives from each college and the Provost's Office, monitors the composition, frequency of scheduling and assessment of the general education curriculum. Proposals for additions to the General Education Curriculum must be approved through the [Faculty Senate Core Curriculum Committee](#) and the Faculty Senate as a whole. Appropriate forms are available [via the Faculty Senate Web Page](#).

SYLLABI FOR GENERAL EDUCATION COURSES

All general education courses must have a written course syllabus, which at a minimum must contain the following elements:

- A statement identifying the course as a general education course and specifying which requirement(s) are being fulfilled
- Learning objectives supportive of the general education learning objectives
- Course requirements
- Evaluation methods

The [Faculty Senate Core Curriculum Committee](#) will annually review selected syllabi and other course materials of existing general education courses to assess compliance with the learning objectives of the general education curriculum.

DEVELOPMENT OF GENERAL EDUCATION COURSES

I. SKILLS AREAS: [English Composition and Mathematics](#)

The following general principles guide the development of general education courses and serve as the bases upon which approval will be given:

- [English Composition Courses](#) should emphasize expository prose writing. Pre-college level, English as a Second Language (ESL), creative writing, and speech courses will not fulfill this requirement.
- [Mathematics Courses](#) extend beyond three years of college preparatory math (including algebra II). Pre-college level math courses such as arithmetic, plane geometry, beginning and intermediate algebra will not fulfill this requirement.

II. SUBJECT AREAS: Humanities and Fine Arts

Humanities

[Courses intended](#) to fulfill the requirement are likely to reside in the classics, literature, history, language, religion, or philosophy. Humanities general education courses should be broad-based; narrowly focused courses will generally not fulfill this requirement. In order to qualify for the general education curriculum, a course must fulfill at least one, but should strive for a preponderance, of the five criteria below:

- a. Provide an introduction to a particular humanities discipline
- b. Provide historical perspectives of our world
- c. Provide an overview of philosophical systems that compete for our attention
- d. Provide a broad understanding of literary or cultural currents of the past and/or the present
- e. Present cross-cultural perspectives

After completing the humanities general education curriculum, a student should be able to:

- Comprehend and interpret various artistic and humanistic "texts" – i.e., works of literature, art, music, film, history, philosophy, etc.
- Demonstrate a knowledge of ethical concerns or issues inherent in various contexts from everyday life to public policy
- Demonstrate a knowledge of the major trends, figures, and events in the development of world culture
- Recognize and critically appraise arguments and develop arguments of one's own

- Demonstrate an understanding of the intricacies, complications, and uncertainties of historical explanation
- Think critically about cultures of the past and present
- Demonstrate the ability to communicate effectively in both oral and written forms of expression

Fine Arts

Courses intended to fulfill this requirement should introduce students to the basic principles, history, concepts, criticism, and techniques of the fine or performing arts. Such courses are likely to reside in the visual arts, music, theatre and film.

In order to qualify for the general education curriculum, a course must fulfill at least one, but should strive for a preponderance, of the criteria below:

- a. Provide an introduction to a particular artistic discipline
- b. Provide a broad understanding of artistic currents of the past and/or the present
- c. Present cross-cultural perspectives on the arts

After completing the fine arts general education curriculum, a student should be able to:

- Critically evaluate works of art
- Demonstrate creative skills in a fine or performing art or an appreciation of the arts as a significant human activity or expression
- Recognize how the arts are integrated with the values of individuals and cultures

Social Sciences

Courses intended to fulfill the requirement should be broad, survey-type courses that emphasize methods of thinking and approaches to problems rather than merely material specific to that field. A general education course in Social Science should integrate factual, institutional, methodological and basic theoretical issues involved in the study of society or human behavior. The course should emphasize critical thinking across a broad range of social and behavioral topics. Ideally, such a course will be interdisciplinary—for example, an economics course might deal not only with principles of economics but with politics, psychology, geography, anthropology and/or sociology. Generally, such courses may not be suitable for prospective majors.

In order to qualify for the general education curriculum in Social Science, a course need not contain all of the elements, but should strive for a preponderance, of the following criteria:

- a. Provide an introduction to social science theory and/or methodology.
- b. Reveal, describe, analyze and critically evaluate the connections between and among human beings and their place in the world, whether ethical, cultural, physical, or social.
- c. Demonstrate knowledge of the diversity of social, economic, and political institutions, processes, and their interrelationship within the U.S. and/or world.
- d. Provide orientations toward collective behavior.
- e. Present cross-cultural orientations.
- f. Provide multi-variable explanations of social issues.
- g. Provide macro (institutional/societal) and micro (individual and small group) approaches.
- h. Provide frameworks or settings for applied learning, knowledge, or skills.

After completing the Social Sciences general education a student should be able to:

- Think critically about their own societies and the larger global community.
- View issues from a multiple holistic perspective.
- Demonstrate knowledge of multiple methodologies
- Demonstrate knowledge of multiple theoretical approaches.
- Synthesize and apply social science concepts.
- Make informed, reasoned, and ethical personal and public choices.

Natural Sciences (including at least one lab)

Courses intended to fulfill the Natural Science competency should expose students to the process of scientific inquiry and encourage development of a perspective of science in the world. Such a course should provide not mere facts but an understanding of the basic issues, methodologies, and theories that drive inquiry in the major disciplinary areas of the sciences.

Courses would normally be drawn from the biological sciences, environmental sciences, geology, chemistry, physics and astronomy. Emphasis should be placed on reasoning skills rather than recall of scientific content or a high level of skill in mathematics or reading.

In order to qualify for the general education curriculum in Natural Science, a course need not contain all of the elements, but should strive for a preponderance, of the following criteria:

- a. Provide an understanding of the nature of science in general and of major scientific concepts
- b. Provide analysis and evaluation of scientific information
- c. Provide discipline specific principles and information
- d. Present applications and demonstrate the value of the discipline to society in general
- e. Introduce scientific reasoning skills

After completing the Natural Sciences general education curriculum, a student should be able to:

- Identify scientific language, concepts, assumptions, and processes.
- Demonstrate knowledge of scientific methods and reasoning in science
- Analyze and interpret scientific evidence
- Determine when scientific information supports a given conclusion
- Demonstrate knowledge of the impact of scientific discovery on human thought and society.

DIVERSITY REQUIREMENTS

This requirement aims to foster an understanding of and respect for different cultures and peoples, both within and outside the US, through the study of their beliefs, customs, histories, values and interrelationships.

Diversity of US Culture

A diversity of US Culture course includes but is not restricted to an examination of the economic, political, philosophical, social or artistic life of distinct cultural communities in the United States. Communities may include but are not limited to communities based on race, ethnicity, class, gender, sexual orientation, beliefs, and disability.

A student who completes the diversity of US culture requirement should be able to:

- Explain the cultural relationships between dominant and non-dominant cultures within the U.S.
- Describe how diverse cultural communities contribute to the development of U.S. culture.
- Compare complex social structures within diverse US cultural communities

Non-US Culture

A Non-US Culture course includes but is not restricted to an examination of the economic, political, philosophical, social or artistic life of communities outside the United States that did not contribute to the dominant culture in the US.

A student who completes the Non-US culture requirement should be able to:

- Demonstrate awareness of cultural communities outside the US
- Demonstrate knowledge of responsible citizenship in a global society.

- Explain the cultural relationships between dominant and non-dominant populations outside the US.
- Compare complex social structures within diverse cultural communities outside the US.
- Recognize contemporary global issues facing a non-U.S. culture

Due to the infrequency of scheduling some general education courses, which in turn has misled students into expecting certain offerings to become available to them, minimum guidelines need to be developed for offering courses designated as "general education." Ideally, a course designated as general education should be offered at least once a year, unless a given department offers a large number of different general education courses, generally which fulfill the same competency area, each term. A course which has been accepted into the general education curriculum must be offered at least once every two years, barring extenuating circumstances such as sudden loss of teaching faculty or resources which prevent the offering of a particular course.

In addition, sensitivity should be shown to meeting the needs of both full- and part- time students, as well as day and evening students, when identifying a course to fulfill general education requirements. Details regarding frequency of offerings are contained in the New Course forms and will be considered by this committee when reviewing courses for inclusion in the general education curriculum.