

General Education Implementation Committee

- **Committee Members:**

- Don Adams, Philosophy
- Tom Burkholder, Chemistry
- Mark Jackson, Biology
- Stephen Cohen, English
- Peter Morano, Physical Education Human Performance
- James Mulrooney, Biomolecular Sciences
- Christopher Pudlinski, Communication
- Brad Waite, Psychological Science
- Beth Merenstein, Sociology (Chair)

Mission Statement: In conjunction with the depth of knowledge students receive from their chosen major, a university education offers breadth of knowledge and skills to be "broadly educated, culturally and globally aware students who will contribute meaningfully to their communities as engaged professionals and citizens."¹ In completing the general education portion of this undergraduate program, students will be able to:

- Think critically and logically, as well as demonstrate information literacy
 - Because individuals should be able to distinguish between the myriad of conflicting sources of information in the world around them, and be able to articulate their own well-reasoned thoughts and opinions.
- Communicate effectively
 - Because expression of ideas in writing and other media is necessary in both business and social settings.
- Use the skills necessary for quantitative and scientific reasoning and analysis
 - Because individuals need to have comfort with quantitative and scientific data and problems from a variety of real-life contexts.
- Understand historical, natural, and social scientific phenomena
 - Because individuals need to see themselves as members of a world community, with the ability to impact and alter this community.
- Understand and appreciate aesthetic dimensions
 - Because individuals need to be familiar with the diverse forms of aesthetic expression that can encourage creativity, self-expression, and a critical reflection of ours, and other, cultures.
- Understand and appreciate ethical dimensions
 - Because individuals should be able to recognize and apply standards (e.g., honesty, integrity) for conduct in their everyday lives.

¹ CCSU Vision Statement

- Based on the above Mission Statement, we have defined the following learning outcomes as essential to a General Education Curriculum:
 - **Learning Outcomes:**
 - i. written and oral communication
 - ii. Scientific reasoning
 - iii. Critical thinking
 - iv. Information literacy
 - v. Ethics
 - vi. Quantitative reasoning
 - vii. Natural phenomena
 - viii. Social and behavioral phenomena
 - ix. Aesthetic understanding (arts and humanities)

- Based on the above learning outcomes, the **General Education Plan** (*minimum 40 credits*) is as follows:
 - **Arts and Humanities** (minimum 9 credits): Students will acquire the critical tools and concepts to understand, analyze, and value significant artifacts, phenomena, and movements in the visual and performing arts, literature, and/or philosophy. Students will learn to understand the function of the arts and humanities and develop the cultural literacy and creative, critical, and self-critical skills that are essential to citizenship in a free society.
 - **Social and Behavioral phenomena** (minimum 9 credits): Students will study the interrelatedness of various realms of human experience from multiple and diverse social, behavioral, and historical perspectives. Students will understand how scientific and nonscientific methods are used to examine the relationships between individuals, their communities, and the wider societies.
 - **Natural sciences** (minimum 6 credits): Students will gain a broad base of scientific knowledge and methods used to study the natural and physical world. This will enable them to develop scientific literacy and the understanding of scientific concepts and processes essential for informed personal and social decision making.
 - **Quantitative Reasoning** (minimum 6 credits): Students will be able to interpret, represent, and apply mathematical concepts and evaluate quantitative elements they encounter in various aspects of their life.
 - **Written Communication** (minimum 3 credits): Students will learn to write clearly and persuasively, to locate and respond to other writing, and to use appropriate conventions both in general and in their academic discipline. Students will understand writing as a process, and as a means of engaging with and influencing the world around them.
 - All students will be required to take an Introduction to College Writing class (ENG 110 or ENG 105) as a foundational course in writing.

- As part of the university's Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) program, students will also take two courses—one at the intermediate level and one at the upper level—that reinforce skills and develop writing appropriate to their major disciplines. These two courses will count in the student's major, not in General Education, but if a department chooses not to offer WAC courses, students can use their remaining general education credits to fulfill their WAC requirements (see attached WAC description)
- **Foreign Language** (0-6 credits): To introduce them to the skills needed to participate in a globalized culture and economy, students will learn a foreign language at the second semester level. Students may demonstrate this proficiency through an examination; those unable to do so by exam will do so through course work (1 or 2 semesters, depending on placement via exam), which may be counted as general education elective credit.
- **Critical Thinking** (minimum 3 credits): Students will be introduced to critical thinking and information literacy skills by taking a Critical Inquiry Seminar (CIS). CIS may be offered in, and used to satisfy, any of the first four categories above, or can be taken as a general education elective. CIS thus does not add credits to General Education, but rather is used in the fulfillment of other Gen Ed requirements (see attached CIS description).
- **General Education Electives** (0-7 credits): After fulfilling the requirements above, many students will have room for General Education Electives. In order to allow students to pursue their interests while fulfilling Gen Ed requirements, elective credits may come from a variety of sources:
 - Additional Gen Ed courses in any of the areas above.
 - Gen Ed courses that meet any of the remaining learning outcomes (oral communication, information literacy, and ethics).
 - Courses used to fulfill the Foreign Language requirement
 - Courses used to fulfill the WAC requirement, if a student's department does not offer the necessary courses in the major.

Categories	Credits (min 40 credits)
Written Communication	Minimum 3
Arts and Humanities	Minimum 9
Social and Behavioral Sciences	Minimum 9
Natural Sciences	Minimum 6
Quantitative Reasoning	Minimum 6
Foreign Language	0-6
Critical Thinking	Minimum 3 (used to fulfill other requirements)
Electives	0-7

- A maximum of 8 credits can be double counted towards a student's major or minor.

- A maximum of 6 credits taken within any one designator.
- If a department offers WAC courses in its majors, all General Education requirements can be fulfilled within the state-mandated 40-credit minimum for General Education.

Recommendations

- The General Education Implementation Committee recommends that the Curriculum Committee develop guidelines and create a process for determining courses for inclusion in general education.
- The General Education Implementation Committee recommends that the Assessment Committee develop guidelines and create a process for assessing general education.
- The General Education Implementation Committee recommends that consideration of the revised General Education program include consideration of a proposal for the creation of “tagged courses” (see attached description). Tagged courses would replace the current system of “designated” courses (e.g. International, Diversity, Literature); tagged courses would not be Gen Ed requirements, but would be a mechanism for interested faculty to create a group of courses from different disciplines on a particular subject and to offer them to departments which may want their majors or minors to take a course on such subjects.