

UO Undergraduate General-Education Group-Requirement Policy

The following criteria was proposed by the Undergraduate Council and the College of Arts and Sciences Curriculum Committee. The University Senate approved them in May 2001 by Motion US0001-3 Replacement Motion governing the approval of courses meeting general-education requirements and the distribution of courses student must complete within each group. Revised May 11, 2011 to authorize general education credit for courses waiting for permanent numbers. Revised May 22, 2013 to make clear that repeatable courses are not assigned groups satisfying status. Revised March 12, 2015 to remove the Inter-College General Education Review Committee (ICGER) from the review and approval process. Revised February 14, 2018 to include course outcomes and criteria from AA/OT, OTM, and HB2998 Credit Transfer Workgroup Foundational Curricula.

1. Group-satisfying courses in Arts and Letters, Social Science, and Science must meet the following general criteria:

- 1.1. **Group-satisfying courses in arts and letters** must create meaningful opportunities for students to engage actively in the modes of inquiry that define a discipline. Proposed courses must be broad in scope and demonstrably liberal in nature (that is, courses that promote open inquiry from a variety of perspectives). Though some courses may focus on specialized subjects or approaches, there must be a substantial course content locating that subject in the broader context of the major issues of the discipline. Qualifying courses will not focus on teaching basic skills but will require the application or engagement of those skills through analysis and interpretation.
- 1.2. **Group-satisfying courses in the social sciences** must be liberal in nature rather than being professionally oriented or limited to the performance of professional skills. They must cover a representative cross-section of key issues, perspectives, and modes of analysis employed by scholars working on the subject matter addressed by the course. The subject matter of the course will be relatively broad, e.g., involving more than one issue, place, or time. Courses with an emphasis on methods and skills will satisfy the requirement only if there is also a substantial and coherent theoretical component.
- 1.3. **Group-satisfying courses in the sciences** should introduce students to the foundations of one or more scientific disciplines, or should provide an introduction to fundamental methods (such as mathematics) that are widely used in scientific disciplines. Courses should introduce students to the process of scientific reasoning.

2. Specific Criteria:

- 2.1. Group-satisfying courses must be numbered at the 100, 200, and 300 levels.
- 2.2. Lower division courses must be offered annually, and upper division courses at least every other year.
- 2.3. Approved courses must be at least 4 credits each.
- 2.4. Approved courses cannot be repeatable for credit.

- 2.5. Upper-division group-satisfying courses must provide depth and rigor beyond that of typical lower-division general-education courses. Departments must justify, in terms of content, workload, and method of instruction, the assignment of a course to the upper level.
- 2.6. Courses that are offered for majors only are excluded from group status, but courses that are designed for both majors and other students may qualify.
- 2.7. Although laboratory courses are not automatically excluded from group status in the sciences, to acquire this status, the courses must not focus primarily on techniques or data collection.

3. Procedures governing the approval of all courses designed to meet general-education group requirements.

- 3.1. Before submission to the Senate, such courses proposed by departments must be reviewed:
 - 3.1.1. By the curricular committees (or equivalent) of the various colleges and schools and
 - 3.1.2. By the University Committee on Courses. There must be two committee faculty members present during the vote who are not representatives of the College of Arts and Sciences.
- 3.2. The University Committee on Courses is authorized to establish procedures governing the review process.
- 3.3 At the discretion of the University Committee on Courses, a course that has been submitted for review may be taught for group-satisfying general education credit once under a temporary course number while it is being reviewed, if the committee initially reviews it and determines the course would meet the criteria of group-satisfying courses as initially proposed.

4. Completion of group requirements (student progress):

- 4.1. Within the full set of courses that fulfills all of the requirements, students may not count
 - 4.1.1. more than one course that has the subject code of the major, or
 - 4.1.2. more than three courses that have the same subject code.
- 4.2. Within the smaller set of courses that fulfills the requirements of each group, students must complete at least two courses that have the same subject code.

Outcomes and Criteria:

Arts and Letters*:

OUTCOMES

As a result of taking General Education Arts & Letters courses, a student should be able to:

- Interpret and engage in the Arts & Letters, making use of the creative process to enrich the quality of life; and
- Critically analyze values and ethics within a range of human experience and expression to engage more fully in local and global issues.

* “Arts & Letters” refers to works of art, whether written, crafted, designed, or performed and documents of historical or cultural significance.

CRITERIA

A course in Arts & Letters should:

- 1) Introduce the fundamental ideas and practices of the discipline and allow students to apply them.
- 2) Elicit analytical and critical responses to historical and/or cultural works, such as literature, music, language, philosophy, religion, and the visual and performing arts.
- 3) Explore the conventions and techniques of significant forms of human expression.
- 4) Place the discipline in a historical and cultural context and demonstrate its relationship with other discipline.
- 5) Each course should also do at least one of the following:
 - a. Foster creative individual expression via analysis, synthesis, and critical evaluation;
 - b. Compare/contrast attitudes and values of specific historical periods or world cultures; and
 - c. Examine the origins and influences of ethical or aesthetic traditions.

Natural Sciences

OUTCOMES

As a result of taking General Education Natural Science courses, a student should be able to:

- Gather, comprehend, and communicate scientific and technical information in order to explore ideas, models, and solutions and generate further questions;
- Apply scientific and technical modes of inquiry, individually, and collaboratively, to critically evaluate existing or alternative explanations, solve problems, and make evidence-based decisions in an ethical manner; and
- Assess the strengths and weaknesses of scientific studies and critically examine the influence of scientific and technical knowledge on human society and the environment.

CRITERIA

A General Education course in Natural Science should:

- 1) Analyze the development, scope, and limitations of fundamental scientific concepts, models, theories, and methods.
- 2) Engage students in problem-solving and investigation, through the application of scientific and

mathematical methods and concepts, and by using evidence to create and test models and draw conclusions. The goal should be to develop analytical thinking that includes evaluation, synthesis, and creative insight.

- 3) Examine relationships with other subject areas, including the ethical application of science in human society and the relevance of science to everyday life.

In addition,

A General Education course in Natural Science should:

- Engage students in collaborative, hands-on and/or real-life activities that develop scientific reasoning and the capacity to apply mathematics and that allow students to experience the exhilaration of discovery.

Social Sciences

OUTCOMES

As a result of taking General Education Social Science courses, a student should be able to:

- Apply analytical skills to social phenomena in order to understand human behavior; and
- Apply knowledge and experience to foster personal growth and better appreciate the diverse social world in which we live.

CRITERIA

An introductory course in the Social Sciences should be broad in scope. Courses may focus on specialized or interdisciplinary subjects, but there must be substantial course content locating the subject in the broader context of the discipline(s).

Approved courses should help students to:

- 1) Understand the role of individuals and institutions within the context of society.
- 2) Assess different theories and concepts and understand the distinctions between empirical and other methods of inquiry.
- 3) Utilize appropriate information literacy skills in written and oral communication.
- 4) Understand the diversity of human experience and thought, individually and collectively.
- 5) Apply knowledge and skills to contemporary problems and issues.