

Governors State University
UNIVERSITY GENERAL EDUCATION
REQUIREMENT

I. Introduction and General Education Outcomes

The purpose of General Education at Governors State University is to prepare students to participate in a dynamic and diverse world. It provides students with a broad foundation of knowledge, facilitates social responsibility, and provides the practical and intellectual skills needed by capable citizens. This General Education foundation will integrate in-depth study in a specific area of interest and application to the wider world. The GSU General Education Student Learning Outcomes are organized into four areas suggested by the American Association of Colleges and Universities: foundational knowledge, practical skills, social responsibilities, and integrated learning. Each of these areas of development is explained in the learning outcomes outlined below.

Foundational Knowledge outcomes are supported by the content of core general education courses and provide a basis for understanding more specific information in each student's major area of study. The core courses include study of culture and politics, physical and natural sciences, and the arts. At the conclusion of an undergraduate degree program, the student will be able to:

- Define key terms related to human cultures and the physical and the natural world, both in historical and in contemporary settings.
- Describe the physical and the natural world and the boundaries and practices of human cultures.
- Identify current economic, biophysical, and social challenges.
- Demonstrate familiarity with diverse perspectives on complex scientific, social, economic, technological, or aesthetic challenges by constructing a cultural, political or technological argument in the form of a written project, laboratory report, exhibit, performance or community service design.
- Demonstrate understanding of at least two academic fields by applying the perspectives and literature of those fields and proposing a “best approach” solution to a complex question, problem, or challenge using evidence from those fields.

Practical Skills are practical and intellectual abilities that help students demonstrate the knowledge that they have gained. These skills are developed and used throughout the general education curriculum. They include the ability to think critically, to think creatively, and to solve problems. In addition, written and oral communication skills, information literacy, quantitative literacy, and collaborative skills are included in this set of student learning outcomes. At the conclusion of an undergraduate degree program, the student will be able to:

- Use relevant disciplinary conventions, including citation of sources.
- Demonstrate the ability to define an information need and then locate, retrieve, critically evaluate, and use that information.
- Demonstrate the ability to translate verbal problems into mathematical or logical language and the ability to construct valid arguments using the accepted symbolic system of

- mathematical reasoning.
- Construct quantitative analyses and evaluation of data.
- Use analytic inquiry and written, oral, and visual modes of communication to explain theories and approaches to problems.
- Generate evidentially-supported and well-developed arguments that reflect sound interpretations and analysis of social and ethical issues.
- Incorporate diverse evidence in multimodal projects, papers, or performances appropriate for a specified audience.
- Demonstrate the collaborative and cooperative practices needed to function effectively and responsibly in a diverse public square.
- Construct an individual or group project requiring assembling, arranging and reformulating ideas, concepts, designs or techniques.

Social Responsibility is the development of an awareness of personal and social obligations needed for success in a diverse and global society. Learning outcomes in this area include those related to civic engagement, intercultural knowledge, ethical reasoning, and appreciation for lifelong learning. At the conclusion of an undergraduate degree program, the student will be able to:

- Demonstrate academic and intellectual honesty and an appreciation for lifelong learning.
- Demonstrate the ability to accept and act on constructive criticism.
- Demonstrate a commitment to an ecologically sound, socially just, and economically viable planet.
- Demonstrate an understanding and an appreciation of individual cultural perspectives, including non-Western and non-dominant ways of knowing.
- Explain diverse perspectives on contested ethical or policy issues.
- Evaluate insights and evidence on contested issues derived from a range of scholarly, cultural, and community perspectives.
- Frame a response to an ethical or policy question using scholarship from the student's major field of study and at least one other discipline.
- Collaborate in developing, implementing, and evaluating a community-based project.

Integrative Learning student learning outcomes require the combining knowledge gained early in the general education courses with the more specific knowledge gained in the area of the major. Thus, this category represents synthesis of knowledge and advanced intellectual accomplishment. At the conclusion of an undergraduate degree program, the student will be able to:

- Frame a complex scientific, social, technological, economic, or aesthetic challenge or problem.
- Respond to the problem with a summative project, paper, or practice-based performance that draws on current research, scholarship and/or techniques in the student's major field and incorporating information from at least two disciplines.

II. Requirements of All Undergraduate Degree-Seeking Students

A. All undergraduate degree-seeking students are required to:

1. meet one of the course distributions described in sections III, IV, and V;
2. complete a junior seminar and a senior seminar/capstone in the major; and
3. fulfill the writing intensive course requirement as specified in Policy 48, Writing Across the Curriculum.

B. Majors may have additional general education requirements as approved through curriculum

approval and which are listed in the catalog.

III. Students Admitted as Freshmen

- A. Must meet the following course distribution with a grade of “C” or better in each course and a total of 37-38 semester hours:
1. **Communication:** three courses including two courses in written communications (6 semester hours) and one course in oral communications (3 semester hours);
 2. **Mathematics:** one course (3 semester hours);
 3. **Physical and Life Science** three to four courses (7 to 8 semester hours) with one course selected from the life sciences, one course from the physical sciences, and at least one laboratory course;
 4. **Humanities and Fine Arts:** First Year Seminar (3 semester hours), one additional course in the humanities (3 semester hours), and one course in the fine arts (3 semester hours);
 5. **Social and Behavioral Sciences:** Three courses (9 semester hours) from at least two disciplines; and
 6. One of the Humanities, Fine Arts or Social Behavioral Science courses must include a course in improving human relations to include race, ethnicity, gender and other issues related to improving human relations to address racism and sexual harassment.

IV. Transfer Students

Students may fulfill this requirement in any one of three ways. They may:

- A. Complete the course distribution requirements, with a grade of "C" or better in each course and a total of 37-38 semester hours*. Requirements may be met by completing courses approved to meet the general education requirements at Governors State University and/or presenting acceptable transfer courses as evaluated by the Degree Audit Team. These are:
1. **Communication:** three courses (9 semester hours), including a two- course sequence in writing (6 semester hours) and one course (3 semester hours) in oral communication;
 2. **Mathematics:** one course (3 semester hours);
 3. **Physical and Life Sciences:** two to three courses (7 to 8 semester hours) with one course selected from the life sciences and one course from the physical sciences, including at least one laboratory course;
 4. **Humanities and Fine Arts:** three courses (9 semester hours) with at least one course selected from humanities and at least one course from the fine arts;
 5. **Social and Behavioral Sciences:** three courses (9 semester hours) with courses selected from at least two disciplines; and
 6. One of the Humanities, Fine Arts or Social Behavioral Science courses must include a course in improving human relations to include race, ethnicity, gender and other issues related to improving human relations to address racism and sexual harassment.

* For colleges and universities on the quarter calendar system, three (3) quarter credits equal two (2) semester hours.

- B. Transfer to Governors State University having earned an Associate of Arts (A.A.), or Associate of Science (A.S.) degree until Fall 2017, from a regionally accredited Illinois public community college. The Associate of Fine Arts (A.F.A.), Associate of Engineering Sciences (A.E.S.), the Associate of Applied Science (A.A.S.), and the Associate of Science (A.S.) after Fall 2017, do not meet this requirement. Students who have completed an AA degree will not be required to complete any additional general education courses. Students will have to complete all major requirements.
- C. Complete the Illinois Articulation Initiative (IAI) General Education Core Curriculum (GECC) at another institution and have it noted on the transcript. Students who have completed their IAI GECC will not have to complete any additional general education courses. Students will have to complete all major requirements.

V. Students Seeking a Second Bachelor's Degree

- A. Provide documentation of having earned a bachelor's degree from any one of the state universities in Illinois, or
- B. Complete the distribution requirements with a grade of "C" or better in each course and a total of 37-38 semester hours*. Requirements may be met by completing courses that were specifically approved because they meet the relevant general education requirement at Governors State University and/or presenting acceptable transfer courses as evaluated by the GSU Degree Audit Team. These are:
 1. Communication: three courses (9 semester hours), including a two- course sequence in writing (6 semester hours) and one course (3 semester hours) in oral communication;
 2. Mathematics :one course (3 semester hours);
 3. Physical and Life Sciences: two to three courses (7 to 8 semester hours) with one course selected from the life sciences and one course from the physical sciences, including at least one laboratory course;
 4. Humanities and Fine Arts: three courses (9 semester hours) with at least one course selected from humanities and at least one course from the fine arts;
 5. Social and Behavioral Sciences: three courses (9 semester hours) with courses selected from at least two disciplines; and
 6. One of the Humanities, Fine Arts or Social Behavioral Science courses must include a course in improving human relations to include race, ethnicity, gender and other issues related to improving human relations to address racism and sexual harassment.

*For colleges and universities on the quarter calendar system, three (3) quarter credits are equal to two (2) semester hours.

VI. RESPONSIBLE PARTY: The Provost or their designee is responsible for establishing procedures for implementing this policy.

Effective: Fall 1997 Prior Revisions: 4/27/01, SS2006, 5/14/14, 05/19/16
 Interim Policy Revision: 11/17/2023 in conjunction with Gen Ed and IPC
 Committees and Provost's Office