



University Policy Statement

UPS 411.201

GENERAL EDUCATION: OBJECTIVES AND COURSE DEVELOPMENT

The Objectives of General Education

General education is central to a university education, and should enhance students' awareness of themselves in a complex universe, drawing upon multiple points of view. As a result of general education experience, students should acquire **knowledge** of diverse disciplinary and cultural perspectives and **skill** in comparing, contrasting, applying, and communicating effectively these perspectives in tasks considered appropriate to particular courses.

The General Education Program at California State University, Fullerton, is divided into six major Areas: 1. English Communication, 2. Mathematical Concepts and Quantitative Reasoning, 3. Arts and Humanities, 4. Social and Behavioral Sciences, 5. Physical and Biological Sciences, and 6. Ethnic Studies. Additionally, the General Education program includes one Overlay, Z. Cultural Diversity, that adds content but no additional units to designated General Education courses.

The learning objectives specified in this document will not be used in the assessment of the General Education Student Learning Goals and Outcomes. Instead they are intended to guide faculty in the preparation of new courses for submission to the General Education program. They also will be used by the General Education committee in evaluating courses for initial inclusion in the General Education curriculum and by the General Education Review Committee when courses are submitted for recertification.

English composition, critical thinking, oral communication, and mathematical concepts and quantitative reasoning are essential components of the entire program of General Education at California State University, Fullerton.

Courses approved to be taught in languages other than English may be included in the General Education curriculum except in subareas 1A, English Composition, and 1C, Oral Communication. Such courses shall meet the objectives for the GE subarea for which they are proposed.

General Education fosters frequent, varied writing across the curriculum. General Education courses shall include student writing appropriate to the course. Writing in General Education courses shall involve the organization and expression of complex data or ideas. Instructors shall provide careful and timely evaluations of writing so that deficiencies are identified and suggestions are offered for improvement on subsequent writing in the course. Evaluations of the student's writing competence shall be used in determining the final course grade. When a student is enrolled in a combined lecture and laboratory course, the laboratory portion of the course may be used to satisfy the General Education writing requirement.

Each course in Areas 1-5 should meet the majority of the learning objectives within that Area or subarea, thus satisfying the spirit and intention of the learning objectives. Courses that satisfy subarea 4B shall, in addition, include all of the subject matter elements required by the CSU graduation requirement in United States History, Constitution and American Ideals section I.A.1.a. Courses that satisfy Area 6, Ethnic Studies, must meet learning objectives that address at least three of the five CSU Area 6 Core Competencies. Courses that satisfy Overlay Z, Cultural Diversity, must include all of the learning objectives for the overlay.

Syllabi for courses in the General Education curriculum shall follow UPS 300.004 (Policy on Syllabi).

General Education courses may be taught in any modality (e.g., in-person, hybrid, or fully online).

Area 1. English Communication

English Communication includes English Composition, Critical Thinking, and Oral Communication. These shall be lower-division courses.

Overall Objectives

Students taking courses in Area 1 shall practice and enhance their skills and abilities to

- Organize one's thoughts and communicate them clearly and effectively, using language that demonstrates sensitivity to gender and cultural differences.
- Find, evaluate, select, synthesize, organize, cite and present information and arguments clearly and effectively for a variety of purposes and audiences.
- Recognize and evaluate the features, functions, and contexts of language that express and influence meaning.
- Compare and contrast with care and accuracy the relative merits of alternative or opposing arguments, interpretations, assumptions, and cultural values.
- Reflect in an open-minded manner on one's own thinking in relation to the ideas of others.

Courses in subareas 1A, English Composition, and 1C, Oral Communication, shall be taught in English.

1A. English Composition

Students taking courses in subarea 1A shall practice and enhance their skills and abilities to

- a. Develop and present clearly written messages in English.
- b. Express and advocate ideas clearly and effectively in writing.
- c. Present well-organized written messages exhibiting sound reasoning and advocacy that depend on the critical evaluation of relevant information.
- d. Understand the rhetorical principles that underlie form, content, context, and effectiveness of choices made in written messages including how matters of style affect successful communication.
- e. Improve one's own writing skills through the critique of the writing of others.
- f. Use writing to synthesize creative and innovative ideas, solutions, and knowledge.

1B. Critical Thinking

Students taking courses in subarea 1B shall practice and enhance their skills and abilities to

- a. Understand the role of logic and its relation to language.
- b. Understand elementary inductive and deductive processes, including formal and informal fallacies.
- c. Develop the skills to distinguish propositions and statements of fact from issues of judgment or opinion.
- d. Develop skills to advocate for ideas.
- e. Develop skills to reach well-supported factual and judgmental conclusions and the skills to successfully advocate for these conclusions.
- f. Evaluate, critique, and analyze the quality and sufficiency of evidence and other forms of support for a position, including recognition of underlying lines of argument.

1C. Oral Communication

Students taking courses in subarea 1C shall practice and enhance their skills and abilities to

- a. Demonstrate the ability to communicate orally and listen effectively.
- b. Understand the rhetorical principles that underlie form, content, context, and effectiveness of communication choices in formal speeches or social interactions.
- c. Present well-organized oral messages practicing sound reasoning and advocacy that depend on the effective discovery, critical evaluation, accurate presentation, and clear reporting of relevant information and supporting evidence.
- d. Understand how culture and social context influence oral communication and to appreciate the value of different communication styles.
- e. Select and use effectively appropriate techniques and materials to support ideas and to motivate and persuade others.

Area 2. Mathematical Concepts and Quantitative Reasoning

Courses in 2A shall be lower-division courses. Courses in 2U shall be upper-division courses. In addition to traditional mathematics, courses in Area 2 may include computer science, personal finance, statistics or discipline-based mathematics or quantitative reasoning courses.

2A. Mathematical Concepts and Quantitative Reasoning

Students taking courses in subarea 2A shall demonstrate the abilities to reason quantitatively, practice computational skills, and explain and apply mathematical or quantitative reasoning concepts to solve problems.

Students taking courses in subarea 2A shall

- a. Understand and appreciate the varied ways in which mathematics or quantitative reasoning is used in problem-solving.
- b. Understand and appreciate the varied applications of mathematics or quantitative reasoning to real-world problems.

- c. Perform appropriate numerical calculations, with knowledge of the underlying mathematics, and draw conclusions from the results.
- d. Demonstrate knowledge of fundamental mathematical concepts, symbols, and principles.
- e. Solve problems that require mathematical analysis and quantitative reasoning.
- f. Summarize and present mathematical information with graphs and other forms that enhance comprehension.
- g. Utilize inductive and deductive mathematical or quantitative reasoning skills in finding solutions, and be able to explain how these skills were used.
- h. Explain the overall process and the particular steps by which a mathematical or quantitative reasoning problem is solved.
- i. Demonstrate a sense of mastery and confidence in the ability to solve problems that require mathematical concepts and quantitative reasoning.

2U. Implications and Explorations in Mathematical Concepts and Quantitative Reasoning

Courses in this subarea draw upon, integrate, apply, and extend knowledge and skills previously acquired in subarea 2A. These courses have substantial mathematical and quantitative reasoning content and require completion of subarea 2A as a prerequisite to enrollment.

Students taking courses in subarea 2U shall

- a. Integrate themes in mathematics and quantitative reasoning from cross-disciplinary perspectives.
- b. Solve complex problems that require mathematics and quantitative reasoning.
- c. Relate mathematics and quantitative reasoning to significant social problems or to other related disciplines.
- d. When deemed appropriate, apply disciplinary concepts from mathematics in a variety of settings, such as community-based learning sites and activities.

Area 3. Arts and Humanities

Arts and Humanities include Introduction to the Arts (3A), Introduction to Humanities (3B), and Explorations in the Arts or Humanities (3U).

Courses in 3A and 3B shall be lower-division courses. Courses in 3U shall be upper-division courses.

Overall Learning Objectives

After completing course requirements in Area 3, students shall

- a. Cultivate their intellect, imagination, sensibility, and sensitivity through the study of the arts and humanities.
- b. Understand and explicate major concepts, themes, and imagery found in the arts and humanities and recognize aesthetic qualities and processes that characterize works of the human intellect and imagination.

- c. Understand how significant works in the arts and humanities respond to and address enduring problems of human existence.
- d. Appreciate the interdisciplinary nature of the arts and humanities, including disciplines both within and outside the arts and humanities.

3A. Introduction to the Arts

Students taking courses in subarea 3A shall

- a. Understand and appreciate the visual and performing arts.
- b. Become cognizant of the various aesthetic and non-aesthetic values that have contributed to the development of civilization.
- c. Recognize and analyze the social, historical, and cultural significance of works of human imagination, including those in the culturally diverse contemporary world.
- d. Cultivate, both emotionally and intellectually, an understanding of the interrelationship between the self and the creative arts through the study of the arts or through experiencing the arts, including for example, attending dance recitals, concerts, and plays, and visiting art sites such as museums.

Although courses in subarea 3A may include creative activities on the part of the student, these courses may not exclusively emphasize skills development and must integrate a substantial cultural component.

3B. Introduction to the Humanities

Students taking courses in subarea 3B shall

- a. Cultivate their intellectual reasoning skills, expand their capacity for creative imagination, develop their reasonable moral sensibilities, and increase their capacity for sensitive engagement through studying works of human imagination and reason (which are to be primarily—although not exclusively—written texts and literature).
- b. Understand how the humanities have contributed to the development of culture, including the comparative study of the humanities in diverse cultures.
- c. Understand how the humanities have sought to provide answers to complex problems facing humanity, including the relationship of the self to culture and the natural world, the nature of moral and legal obligations, and the meaning and purpose of human existence.

3U. Explorations in the Arts or Humanities

Courses in this subarea shall draw upon, integrate, apply, and extend knowledge and skills previously acquired in subareas 3A and/or 3B. Although courses approved for 3U will typically meet either the objectives for Explorations in the Arts or Explorations in the Humanities, some interdisciplinary courses may draw upon the learning objectives from both areas. Completion of appropriate courses in subarea 3A and/or 3B shall be required as a prerequisite for all courses in 3U. The learning objectives for subarea 3U include the learning objectives for subareas 3A and/or 3B.

All courses in subarea 3U must integrate a substantial cultural component. Courses in subarea 3U may include creative activities on the part of the student provided they do not emphasize skills development exclusively.

In addition to the learning objectives of 3A and/or 3B, students taking courses that are **Explorations in the Arts** shall

- a. Gain visual and performance literacy through the scholarly observation of culturally and historically significant art with an emphasis on the endeavor of the artist/creator.
- b. Cultivate an understanding of a work of art that embodies an objective as well as subjective response to the aesthetic experience, defend an informed opinion, and communicate their view to others.
- c. Relate the arts to significant social problems.
- d. Understand the broad, unifying themes in the arts from a wide array of perspectives.
- e. Deepen previously acquired artistic appreciation and understanding through participation either in making or performing of art forms or through the experience of such a process by direct observation.

In addition to the Learning Objectives of 3A and/or 3B, students taking courses that are **Explorations in the Humanities** shall

- a. Understand broad, unifying themes from cross-disciplinary perspectives in the humanities.
- b. Understand the relevance of the humanities for the thoughtful consideration of complex contemporary problems.
- c. Appreciate the complex relationship and interaction between the humanities and other fields of learning, including the natural sciences, social sciences, and arts.

Area 4. Social and Behavioral Sciences

Social and Behavioral Sciences include Introduction to the Social and Behavioral Sciences, American History, Institutions, and Values, and Explorations in Social and Behavioral Sciences.

Courses in 4A and 4B shall be lower-division courses. Courses in 4U shall be upper-division courses.

Overall Learning Objectives

After completing courses from different disciplinary perspectives in Area 4 students shall

- a. Understand the ways that social, political, and economic institutions and human behavior are interconnected.
- b. Understand problems and issues from respective disciplinary perspectives and examine issues in their contemporary as well as historical settings and in a variety of cultural contexts.
- c. Understand the principles, value systems, ethics, and methodologies employed in social science inquiry.
- d. Understand the ways cultures construct social differences, such as those based on ethnicity, gender, race, class, and sexual orientation, and their effects on the individual and society.

4A. Introduction to the Social and Behavioral Sciences

Students completing courses in subarea 4A shall

- a. Understand the purpose of the social sciences and the distinguishing features of the social sciences.
- b. Understand and explain major social science concepts, methods, and theories and apply them to concrete problems of contemporary society.
- c. Reflect on what it means to be a social, historical, cultural, psychological, and political being.
- d. Reflect on their own social, cultural, and political experiences in light of social science concepts, methods, and theories.
- e. Understand the integrated nature of social, political, and economic behaviors and institutions in different geographical and historical contexts.
- f. Understand processes of social, political, and cultural change and differentiation in a variety of cultural contexts.

4B. American History, Institutions, and Values

Students completing courses in subarea 4B shall

- a. Recognize the significance of cultural, intellectual, ethical, economic, and political struggles that have shaped American society over time.
- b. Understand critically the historical development of American institutions and values and their impact on the individual and collective lives of Americans.
- c. Recognize the significance of the interaction of ethnic and other social groups to the historical development of American society, institutions, and values within contexts of accommodation and resistance.
- d. Understand critically how government under the Constitution of the United States has shaped American society.
- e. Critically situate changes in American society within the context of global events.
- f. Analyze primary source materials, engage in critical and constructive discussions, and communicate effectively in writing.

Courses in subarea 4B shall include all of the following subject matter elements as they contribute to completion of CSU graduation requirement in United States History, Constitution, and American Ideals.

- a. Significant events covering a minimum time span of approximately one hundred years and occurring in the entire area now included in the United States of America, including the relationships of regions within that area and with external regions and powers as appropriate to the understanding of those events within the United States during the period under study.
- b. The role of major ethnic and social groups in such events and the contexts in which the events have occurred.
- c. The events presented within a framework that illustrates the continuity of the American experience and its derivation from other cultures, including consideration of three or more of the following: politics, economics, social movements, and geography.

4U. Explorations in Social and Behavioral Sciences

Because courses in subarea 4U build upon the learning objectives in 4A, completion of subarea 4A shall be required as a prerequisite for all courses in 4U. In addition, students completing courses in subarea 4U shall

- a. Examine problems, issues, and themes in the social sciences in greater depth; in a variety of cultural, historical, and geographical contexts; and from different disciplinary and interdisciplinary perspectives.
- b. Analyze and critically evaluate the application of social science concepts and theories to particular historical, contemporary, and future problems or themes, such as economic and environmental sustainability, globalization, poverty, and social justice.
- c. Analyze and critically evaluate constructs of cultural differentiation, including ethnicity, gender, race, class, and sexual orientation, and their effects on the individual and society.
- d. Apply theories and concepts from the social sciences to address historical, contemporary and future problems confronting communities at different geographical scales, from local to global.

Area 5. Physical and Biological Sciences

Physical and Biological Sciences includes Physical Science, Biological Science, Laboratory Experience, and Implications and Explorations in Physical and Biological Sciences.

Courses in 5A through 5C shall be lower-division courses. Courses in 5U shall be upper-division courses.

Shared Learning Objectives

5A. Physical Science

5B. Biological Science

5C. Laboratory Experience

Subareas 5A, 5B, and 5C share a set of core learning objectives. Students taking courses in subareas 5A, 5B, and 5C shall

- a. Understand the nature of scientific inquiry and the unique way that the natural sciences and mathematics describe the universe.
- b. Evaluate the validity and limitations of theories and scientific claims in interpreting experimental results.
- c. Understand the dynamic and evolving nature of the sciences.
- d. Recognize the importance of scientific paradigms and methods in understanding scientific concepts.
- e. Use quantitative techniques and scientific reasoning to investigate problems and phenomena in the natural universe.
- f. Understand the potential limits of scientific endeavors and the value systems and ethics associated with human inquiry.
- g. Understand different types of uncertainty and its impact on scientific methodology and reasoning.
- h. Analyze and manipulate graphical representations of data.

- i. Formulate and evaluate hypotheses using quantitative techniques.
- j. Use statistical techniques to evaluate uncertainty in experimental data.

5A. Physical Science

Students taking courses in subarea 5A shall explore the core objectives described above through in-depth exploration of the physical universe. Students taking courses in subarea 5A shall obtain a foundational understanding of either the nature of matter and energy, or Earth as a planet and its relation to the universe.

Students taking courses focusing on the nature of matter and energy shall

- a. Understand that energy exists in many forms, and that in any process, energy changes form and/or place, but the total amount of energy remains the same.
- b. Recognize that objects interact with one another by exerting forces, and that unbalanced forces acting on an object cause change in the motion of the object.
- c. Understand that all matter has observable properties that depend on the conditions and scale at which we look. Investigations of matter at the atomic and subatomic levels explain the properties, reactions, and interactions of matter.

Students taking courses focusing on the Earth as a planet and its relation to the universe shall a.

Apply basic principles of the physical and life sciences to understand earth and astronomical systems.

- b. Understand that earth materials and structures are organized in interacting systems and that the Earth itself is part of a planetary system.
- c. Understand that the Earth changes continuously, and is part of a universe that itself is changing.
- d. Recognize that energy and matter flow and cycle through earth and astronomical systems, of which human society is an integral part.
- e. Understand that changes within an earth or astronomical system may affect other earth or astronomical systems. Humans are part of and may affect or be affected by these systems.
- f. Understand that earth and astronomical systems have interacted and evolved over billions of years encompassing the lifetime of planet Earth, the solar system, and the universe.

5B. Biological Science

Students taking courses in subarea 5B shall explore the foundations of the Biological Sciences through in-depth exploration of living systems. Students taking courses in subarea 5B shall

- a. Understand that living things are made of smaller structures whose functions enable organisms to survive.
- b. Understand that living things depend on each other and the physical environment as they interact to obtain, change, and exchange matter and energy.
- c. Understand that the great diversity of living things, ranging from single-celled organisms to complex, multi-celled organisms including microbes, plants, and animals, is the result of billions of years of evolution through the mechanisms of heredity, mutation, and natural selection.

5C Laboratory Experience

Students taking courses in subarea 5C shall

- a. Apply scientific methodology through active experimental methods and experiences (laboratory/activity).
- b. Evaluate the validity and limitations of theories and scientific claims in interpreting experimental results.

Courses in subarea 5C shall be associated with 5A or 5B.

5U. Implications and Explorations in the Physical and Biological Sciences

Courses in this subarea draw upon, integrate, apply, and extend knowledge and skills previously acquired in subareas 5A-5C. These courses have a substantial scientific content and require completion of appropriate courses in subareas 5A-5C as prerequisites to enrollment.

Students taking courses in subarea 5U shall

- a. Integrate themes in physical and/or biological science from cross-disciplinary perspectives.
- b. Solve complex problems that require scientific reasoning.
- c. Relate physical and/or biological science to significant social problems or to other related disciplines.
- d. When deemed appropriate, apply disciplinary concepts the natural sciences in a variety of settings, such as community-based learning sites and activities.

Area 6. Ethnic Studies

An “Ethnic Studies course” is a course taught by faculty from the African American Studies, Asian American Studies, and Chicana and Chicano Studies Departments and identified in the catalog as taught through the African American Studies, Asian American Studies, and Chicana and Chicano Studies Departments as the home departments, if cross-listed.

Only the Ethnic Studies Requirement Committee may interpret California State University core competencies for the Ethnic Studies Requirement into CSUF GE Area 6 learning objectives to be used to select courses to fulfill the requirement. Courses that satisfy the Ethnic Studies requirement shall meet learning objectives that address at least three of the five CSU core competencies.

Courses in Area 6 may be upper-division courses so long as adequate numbers of lower-division course options in Area 6 are available to students.

Students completing courses in Area 6 shall

- 1a. (For lower division courses) Identify, define, and interpret core concepts such as race, racism, racialization, ethnicity, equity, ethno-centrism, eurocentrism, white supremacy, self-determination, liberation, decolonization, sovereignty, anti-racism, migration, labor systems, settler colonialism, imperialism, citizenship, and immigration in any one or more of the following disciplines: African American Studies, Asian American Studies, Chicanx/a/o and Latinx/a/o Studies, and Native American Studies. Addresses CSU GE Area 6 core competency 1.

- 1b. (For upper division courses) Analyze, evaluate, and apply core concepts such as race, racism, racialization, ethnicity, equity, ethno-centrism, eurocentrism, white supremacy, self-determination, liberation, decolonization, sovereignty, anti-racism migration, labor systems, settler colonialism, imperialism, citizenship, and immigration in any one or more of the following disciplines: African American Studies, Asian American Studies, Chicanx/a/o and Latinx/a/o Studies, and Native American Studies. Addresses CSU GE Area 6 core competency 1.
2. Apply theory, creative expression, and/or knowledge to describe the histories, cultures, lived-experiences, and struggles within and/or across African American, Asian American, Chicanx/a/o and Latinx/a/o, and/or Native American communities from one or more of the following: African American Studies, Asian American Studies, Chicanx/a/o and Latinx/a/o Studies, and Native American Studies. Addresses CSU GE Area 6 core competency 2.
3. Describe and critically analyze the intersection of race with forms of difference affected by systems and hierarchies of oppression, for example:
 - structural racism
 - capitalism, genocide
 - sexism, heterosexism
 - ableism
 - political and cultural representationin African American, Asian American, Chicanx/a/o and Latinx/a/o, and/or Native American communities. Addresses CSU GE Area 6 core competency 3.
4. Demonstrate knowledge of and critically analyze creative activities and imagination such as poetry, performance, music, media, and popular culture in African American, Asian American, Chicanx/a/o and Latinx/a/o, and/or Native American communities. Addresses CSU GE Area 6 core competency 3.
5. Explain and interpret how histories of struggle, justice, solidarity, cultural and creative practice, language, identity development, and/or liberation are relevant to current identities and social structures on communal, national, international, and/or transnational scales as experienced, enacted, and studied by African Americans, Asian Americans, Chicanx/a/os and Latinx/a/os, and Native Americans. Addresses CSU GE Area 6 core competency 4.
6. Describe, document, and critically reflect on engagement with community issues focused on anti-racist and anti-colonial issues, and the practices and movements in African American, Asian American, Chicanx/a/o and Latinx/a/o, and/or Native American communities to build a just and equitable society. Addresses CSU GE Area 6 core competency 5.
7. Engage, produce, and critically analyze creative activities and imagination such as poetry, performance, music, media, and popular culture in African American, Asian American, Chicanx/a/o and Latinx/a/o, and/or Native American communities. Addresses CSU GE Area 6 core competency 5.

Z. Cultural Diversity

Courses that satisfy the Cultural Diversity requirement must include all of the following learning objectives and in addition be approved GE courses in any area or subarea except Areas 1, 2A, or 6. A course satisfying Overlay Z shall be taken at CSU Fullerton.

Students completing courses in Overlay Z shall

- a. Demonstrate an understanding of the ways in which culture, difference, and otherness are socially constructed and fundamental to social interaction in an inter-connected world.
- b. Demonstrate reflection and appreciation of the complex relationships that various factors such as gender, ethnicity, race, sexual orientation, religion, class, and exceptionality bring to a discussion of society and culture.
- c. Demonstrate a critical understanding of how power, privilege, and oppression play out across a range of cultures, human experiences, intersecting social locations, and historical experiences, including but not limited to one's own experiences.
- d. Recognize how one's own cultural histories and practices mediate one's own sense of self and relationships to others.
- e. Describe and understand how to enact ethical and transformative frameworks and modes of exchange and communication that promote rights, social justice, equity, and inclusiveness.

Courses in General Education that meet these learning objectives will be identified by an asterisk (*) in appropriate publications or websites.

Source: General Education Committee

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 28, 2024

Supersedes: UPS 411.201 dated 12-14-21
and ASD 21-131