

GENERAL EDUCATION TRANSFER CURRICULUM

Background:

Section 66720 of Assembly Bill 1725 (Vasconcellos) mandates the development of a transfer core curriculum to facilitate the transfer of students from the California Community Colleges to the University of California and California State University. This mandate, already being addressed by the faculty of the three postsecondary segments, should prove extremely beneficial to community college students, for it will eliminate current confusion created by the myriad of articulation agreements with each of the 19 CSU campuses and 8 UC campuses which offer undergraduate courses of study.

Adoption of 31 Units of a General Education Transfer Curriculum and of UC and CSU Transfer Curricula:

In November, 1987, the Intersegmental Committee of the Academic Senates of the UC, CSU, and Community Colleges adopted 31 units of a general education transfer curriculum, recognizing it as the base upon which the full transfer curriculum will be built. In May, 1988, the UC Academic Senate adopted a UC general education transfer curriculum of 34 units, adding a second English composition class to the 31 unit base. At the same time, the CSU Academic Senate adopted a 37 unit general education transfer curriculum, adding an oral communication and a critical thinking requirement to the 31 unit base. Thus, at the present time, the segments are just 9 units apart from final agreement upon a single curriculum.

Community College Recommendations:

Meanwhile, the Chancellor's Office and Academic Senate for California Community Colleges tallied results of a spring, 1988, statewide survey of administrators and faculty, and compiled the following recommendations for development of the final curriculum:

1. There is need for greater uniformity and consistency among receiving campuses in the interpretation and application of regulations regarding the "double counting" of some courses for both general education and academic major requirements, as well as general education and state Education code requirements.
2. Critical thinking need not be required as a separate course in the general education curriculum, but critical thinking skills should be developed in courses throughout the curriculum.

3. The separate course requirement for critical thinking should be eliminated in order to allow the transfer curriculum to include two semesters of English composition and one semester of oral communication as requirements.
4. The proposed general education curriculum should include a foreign language competency requirement which could be fulfilled by the student's successful completion of two years of high school instruction, or the college equivalent. A uniform definition of the college equivalent of two years of high school foreign language instruction should be adopted and applied consistently by the UC and CSU systems.
5. Applied statistics should be allowed to fulfill the mathematics/quantitative reasoning requirement, provided that the statistics courses have a prerequisite of at least intermediate algebra.
6. The three segments of public postsecondary education should develop a uniform policy for granting credit for high school advanced placement courses.

The Intersegmental Committee of the Academic Senates will continue to address the general education transfer curriculum in the hope of reaching final agreement before the conclusion of the current academic year.

Development of a High-Prerequisite Major Curriculum and of Implementation Process:

In addition, two subcommittees of the Intersegmental Committee of the Academic Senates are also at work. One has set as its task the development of a general education transfer curriculum for students with high prerequisite majors. Chaired by Edward Alpers (UCLA), this committee has just begun to meet. Its work should facilitate the transfer of engineering, nursing, and other students in the professions. The second subcommittee, chaired by Phil Hartley (Chaffey), will develop a mechanism for implementation of the transfer curriculum. At this time, UC has agreed to adopt a certification process similar to that used by CSU; thus, students transferring to either CSU or UC would have their community college coursework certified for transfer by the community college. The receiving institution could challenge courses it deemed inappropriate or outside the guidelines of the general education curriculum description.

**REPORT OF THE INTERSEGMENTAL DRAFTING COMMITTEE
FOR A GENERAL EDUCATION TRANSFER CURRICULUM**

November 12, 1987

REPORT OF THE INTERSEGMENTAL DRAFTING COMMITTEE FOR A GENERAL EDUCATION TRANSFER CURRICULUM

Following a careful, extended process of deliberation and analysis of existing criteria and requirements, the Intersegmental Drafting Committee for a General Education Transfer Curriculum is pleased to submit its recommendations. In doing so, it has been attentive both to its specific charge and to the broader concerns of our society with respect to the general education of our postsecondary student population.

The committee believes that the principal role of general education is to develop students' abilities to think and that an effective way to meet this standard is to emphasize that most general education courses should require significant amounts of writing. General education courses should not merely transmit information, but should require analysis, criticism, and synthesis. One of the most effective tools for achieving these goals is the written essay, evaluated with attention to the quality of its writing as well as the accuracy of its content. In addition, the committee also notes that speaking, listening, and reading are important abilities that a general education course should foster. Participation in the intellectual and cultural life of our society requires sound ability in verbal communication of all kinds.

The committee also believes that courses in the transfer curriculum should be culturally broad in their conception. They should help students understand the nature and richness of human culture and social structures through a comparative approach, and have a pronounced historical perspective.

Similarly, one of the most useful things that students should get from their general education is an understanding of the modes of inquiry that characterize the different areas of human thought the nature of the questions that can be addressed, the way questions are formulated, the way analysis is conducted and the nature and limitations of the answers obtained.

The preceding comments should make clear the committee's intention that the General Education Transfer Curriculum be intellectually challenging; indeed, it must be to do a responsible job of preparing students for entry into the upper division of our demanding four-year institutions and for full participation in the life of the state. It is equally clear that participation in such a curriculum itself requires adequate preparation. Finally, the committee takes this opportunity to reemphasize the importance of high school preparation, and to caution that poor preparation may require students to take remedial courses prior to entry into the transfer curriculum.



Completion of the General Education Transfer curriculum prior to transfer should be recognized as satisfying all lower division general and breadth education requirements of the receiving institution. Any receiving institutions that insist upon the completion of certain of their general education requirements as a prerequisite for transfer must also accept completion of the full transfer curriculum as satisfying that screening requirement. However, the receiving institution may legitimately insist that transfer students complete any general education requirements that must be taken at the upper division level by non-transfer students, or that must be satisfied by all students by upper division course work. In addition, transfer students must fulfill all other admission requirements.

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Both the State University and the University have a specific American Institutions requirement that is separate from their general education requirements. Completion of the General Education Transfer Curriculum might not satisfy those requirements. Similarly, general education requirements are separate from lower division requirements for the major. Students pursuing majors that require extensive lower division preparation may not find the General Education Transfer Curriculum option to be advantageous.

All courses offered towards satisfaction of the requirements of the General Education Transfer Curriculum must be baccalaureate in level and must be acceptable for transfer among all segments of public post-secondary education. Advanced Placement credit that is considered equivalent to a course accepted for credit towards the Transfer Curriculum should also be acceptable. The following requirements are listed in terms of the number of semester-courses specified for each designated area and the minimum number of semester units so represented. Appropriate conversions for quarter-system campuses (five community colleges, six campuses of the California State University, and seven campuses of the University of California) will be developed within each segment.

PROPOSED GENERAL EDUCATION TRANSFER CURRICULUM

Subject Area: English Communication (3 semesters, 9 units)

The English Communication requirement shall be fulfilled by completion of three semesters or nine units of lower division courses in English reading, critical thinking, written composition, and oral communication, at least two semesters or six units of which must be devoted to written composition. Courses in this area shall include close analysis of a variety of representative texts.

The inclusion of a sequence in English Communication in a program of general education is of basic importance to the remainder of the Curriculum. Ability to read at a mature level, to think critically, to write with clarity, and to speak effectively is fundamental to acquisition of knowledge in other areas of the liberal arts. Transmission and exchange of ideas is an essential part of the activity of a liberally-educated citizen. These courses should enable students to go beyond the level of reception and transmission of information and ideas to the more abstract conceptualization of ideas.

Subject Area: Mathematics/Quantitative Reasoning (1 semester, 3 units)

The Mathematics/Quantitative Reasoning requirement shall be fulfilled by completion of a one-semester or three-unit course in mathematics or statistics.

Courses on the application of statistics to particular disciplines may not be credited towards satisfaction of the Mathematics/Quantitative Reasoning requirement.

The increasingly complex, technological nature of the society in which we live routinely confronts us with a variety of information requiring calculation, comparison, and other forms of analysis for problem solving. In addition, many disciplines require a sound foundation in mathematical concepts. The requirement in Mathematics/Quantitative Reasoning is designed to prepare students to respond effectively to these challenges.

Subject Area: Arts and Humanities (3 semesters, 9 units)

The Arts and Humanities requirement shall be fulfilled by completion of three semesters or nine units of coursework which encourages students to analyze and appreciate works of intellectual, literary, aesthetic and cultural importance. At least one course shall be taken in the Arts and one in the Humanities. Courses should provide students with some historical understanding of major civilizations and cultures, both Western and non-Western, including those of ethnic minorities. In the Arts, students should also learn to develop an independent and critical aesthetic perspective.

Courses that are primarily performance or studio classes in the Arts may not be credited towards satisfaction of the Arts and Humanities requirement.

The Arts and Humanities historically constitute the heart of a liberal arts general education because of the fundamental humanizing perspective that they provide for the development of the whole person. Inclusion of this requirement is, therefore, grounded in the deepest traditions of Western education with its emphasis on language, literature, and the fine arts. At the same time, the great diversity of contemporary American--especially Californian--society adds a vibrant dimension to our received definition of the Arts and Humanities that opens up great possibilities for expansion of that tradition. To focus on the received traditions of the West and the less familiar traditions of other cultures, including the minority cultures in our own society, is to enrich the education of future generations of California citizens.

Subject Area: Social and Behavioral Sciences (3 semesters, 9 units)

The Social and Behavioral Sciences requirement shall be fulfilled by completion of three semesters or nine units of coursework which reflects the integration of human social, political, and economic institutions and behavior. Problems and issues in these areas should be examined in their contemporary and historical setting, as well as present a comparative perspective on both Western and non-Western societies, including those of ethnic minorities. Courses should be presented from a theoretical point of view and focus on core concepts of the discipline rather than on personal, practical, or applied aspects.

No more than one of the courses taken to satisfy the United States History, Constitution, and American Ideals Requirement (Title 5, California Administrative Code, Section 40404) shall be credited towards satisfaction of the Social and Behavioral Sciences Subject Area requirement.

Each of us is born into, lives, and must function effectively within an environment that includes other individuals. People have, from earliest times, formed social and cultural groups that constitute the framework for the behavior of the individual as well as the group. By taking courses in the Social and Behavioral Sciences students will gain a basic knowledge of the cultural behavior and social organizations in which they exist as well as the cultural behavior and social organizations of other human societies.

Subject Area: Physical and Biological Sciences (2 semesters, 7 units)

The Physical and Biological Sciences requirement shall be fulfilled by two semesters or seven units of coursework which includes at least one course in the Physical Sciences and one course in the Biological Sciences, at least one of which incorporates a laboratory. Courses should emphasize experimental methodology, the testing of hypotheses, and the power of systematic doubt, rather than the recall of "facts." Courses that emphasize the interdependency of the sciences are especially appropriate for non-science majors.

The contemporary world is pervaded by science and its applications, and many of the most difficult choices facing individuals and institutions concern the interface of scientific and technological capability with human values and social goals. To function effectively in such a complex world, students must develop a comprehension of the basic concepts of physical and biological sciences, and a sophisticated understanding of science as a human endeavor, including the limitations as well as the power of scientific inquiry.

Respectfully submitted,

Carmen M. Decker, Committee Chair
Department of English and Spanish
Cypress College

Frieda Stahl
Department of Physics & Astronomy
California State University, Los Angeles

Edward A. Alpers, Dean
Honors and Undergraduate Programs
University of California, Los Angeles

Maryamber Villa
History Department
Los Angeles Valley College

Bernice Biggs
Department of English
San Francisco State University

Mark Wheelis
Department of Bacteriology
University of California, Davis

Brian Federici
Department of Entomology
University of California, Riverside

Connie Anderson
Specialist, Chancellor's Office
California Community Colleges

Ray Geigle
Chair, Academic Senate
The California State University

Carla Fern, Coordinator
Undergraduate Admissions & Articulation
University of California, Berkeley

Theo Mabry
Social Sciences Division (Anthropology)
Orange Coast College

Chuck Lindahl
Office of the Chancellor
The California State University