

SENATE COMMITTEE ON CURRICULAR AFFAIRS

Update General Education Policies 142-00, 143-00, 143-10, 143-20, 160-20, 190-10, 192-00,  
192-10, 192-20

CORRECTED COPY

(Shaded area in [square brackets] reflect editorial revision made during Senate meeting)

(Legislative)

Implementation: Upon approval by the Senate (and development of procedures when applicable)

**Executive Summary**

This report synthesizes input from assessment and key stakeholders and recommends updating and simplifying the General Education program for undergraduates. Using recommendations in the Joint Committee on General Education Learning Outcomes Assessment [report](#), years of feedback from the advising community, and considering newly compiled data on disparities in student use of flexibility options in General Education, Curricular Affairs has reconsidered how the General Education program is presented to students and implemented as academic requirements. The current General Education program is complicated, making it challenging for students to understand and for advisers to explain, unintentionally diminishing the value of General Education learning for students. The goal of this report is thus to streamline and simplify the presentation of requirements, including long-standing flexible options within the program; our recommendations reaffirm the core principles of curricular flexibility and intellectual exploration in General Education that Faculty Senate values.

As was recommended in the General Education Learning Outcomes [report](#), the Linked Course pathway will be phased out and Integrative Studies becomes a stand-alone 6 credit category. The Breadth category is adapted to reflect the *minimum number* of credits required for each domain and Exploration now automates the long-standing practice of “Move 3” while capturing the other 9 credits not reflected in Breadth (the additional 6 of the 30 “knowledge” credits is now accounted for in Integrative Studies.) Finally, we recommend clarifying how we explain our General Education program to create more equitable use of existing General Education flexibility for all undergraduates, increase campus-based flexibility for deciding which specific courses to offer, and make more visible the opportunities for students to select General Education courses that spark their intellectual curiosity. The total number of units (credits) for baccalaureate General Education remains 45; for associate degree General Education, see Policy 160-20 below.

It is important to note that these changes are designed to simplify and clarify the General Education requirements while providing greater flexibility in General Education courses for both students and campuses. These changes are a shift in the way we account for the General Education requirements and to remove curricular options that aren’t meaningfully available to students (Linked courses).

**Summary of proposed Baccalaureate General Education program**

<p><b>Foundations</b> (unchanged): Build a basis of effective communication and quantitative literacy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 6 units GQ</li> <li>• 9 units GWS</li> <li>• C or better (current rule)</li> <li>• Single domain only (by default the current rule)</li> <li>• 3 units/credits of a World Language course at the 12<sup>th</sup> credit level of proficiency or higher that exceed the student’s minimum degree requirements could be applied here (current rule)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Breadth</b> (the current minimum of 3 units of single-domain coursework per Knowledge Domain is unchanged): Practice applying a specific way of constructing knowledge to examine a topic</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3 units GA</li> <li>• 3 units GH</li> <li>• 3 units GN</li> <li>• 3 units GS</li> <li>• 3 units GHW</li> <li>• Single domain only (current rule)</li> <li>• 400 level flexibility could apply here by substitution (current rule)</li> <li>• No other flexibility can apply here (current rule)</li> <li>• Students choose courses outside their initial major prefix for GA, GN, GH, GS (does not apply to GHW, current rule)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Integrative Studies</b> (modified to become stand-alone category): Practice synthesizing knowledge from different perspectives to examine a topic</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 6 units with Integrative Studies attribute (N/Q suffix): Inter-domain courses (proposed to include GQ)</li> <li>• Student facing Intentional Breadth Policy 143-20 does not apply to this requirement (different from current)</li> <li>• Courses will count either toward this requirement <u>or</u> in the major requirements (i.e., these cannot be included in a program’s General Education statement, Policy 143-10, without approved exception by SCCA; different from current)</li> <li>• These courses can count toward minors or certificates (current rule) and concurrent/sequential majors (current practice).</li> <li>• GQ designation may be included in Inter-domain courses (different from current, but not changing the Foundations requirement)</li> <li>• Students fulfill this requirement by taking two courses with Integrative Studies attribute/suffix N/Q (similar to current rule, but removes the need to track and double count a specific array of knowledge domains)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Exploration</b> (modified): Follow intellectual curiosity to deepen or widen learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 9 units of additional GA, GH, GN, GS, and Inter-domain courses and up to 3 units of World Language. Must include 3 units of GN course which may be Inter-domain</li> </ul>

- Students choose courses outside their initial major prefix for GA, GN, GH, GS (current rule)
- 400 level flexibility could apply here by substitution (current rule)
- A knowledge domain course that exceeds the minimum prescribed requirement automatically counts here (automation of current rule)
- May include 3 units/credits of a World Language course at the 12<sup>th</sup> credit level of proficiency or beyond that exceed the student's minimum degree requirements (current rule)
- Programs cannot prescribe more than the historical distribution of domain credits (i.e., 9 GN, 6 GS, 6 GH, 6 GA, 3 GHW; current rule)

## **Introduction and Rationale**

The General Education curriculum for all undergraduates at Penn State was legislatively updated for the first time since 1997 in a series of reports approved by the University Faculty Senate (UFS) in 2015 and 2016. As part of these changes, UFS called for continuous assessment of the learning outcomes in general education so that iterative improvements could be made on a shorter timescale. The Standing Joint Committee on General Education Learning Outcomes Assessment (GELO Assessment), which is jointly composed of faculty senators, administrators, and experts in learning outcomes assessment, is charged to collect and analyze data and to make recommendations to UFS about updates to our general education curricular requirements.

The recommendations made below are a result of synthesizing recommendation 2 from the March 2022 report from the Joint Standing Committee on General Education Assessment; four years of input from the advising community (both faculty and professional advisers) and from records experts; and a recent report from Undergraduate Education examining use of the [Move-3](#) (formerly known as the 3-6-9 flexibility) in General Education from an equity perspective. Together, these realize the goal of making data-informed, timely changes to the General Education program.

There is urgency to these recommendations: the current level of curricular complexity in General Education is difficult to explain, challenging to represent logically on audits and degree plans, and has reduced student choice in General Education by requiring students to select courses that meet multiple overlapping criteria. The current complexity creates inequities and costs thousands of hours of personnel time to enact annually. We recommend a **streamlined presentation of requirements** that builds on the long standing and senate-endorsed flexibility within General Education— Move-3, and World language substitution— while honoring one of the guiding principles of the General Education task force: *“The curriculum should retain flexibility that enables students to make timely progress toward degree completion, and should ideally increase the flexibility students have to choose courses they find intellectually engaging”* (Senate Meeting April 28, 2015, *Revision to General Education Curriculum* report). We recognize that these changes still do not create a simple General Education program; working within the constraints of the current program and managing change, this simplified restatement of our current program is an important incremental improvement. Implementation of these recommendations will require substantial time and effort to update degree audits for all undergraduate programs. Importantly, these recommendations do not change the total number of credits of coursework in General Education - these remain 45 – nor do they change learning outcomes.

Based on rationale presented in the General Education learning outcomes assessment report, we recommend phasing out linked courses as a pathway for completing the Integrative Studies curricular requirement. Instead, we recommend allowing the requirement to be met by taking any course that carries the Integrative Studies designation. This simplifies how these courses are represented; all courses approved for Integrative Studies would have the same suffix (N, or Q for honors) and carry a General Education- Integrative attribute. At this time only Inter-domain courses would qualify for this requirement; however, this structure can be more easily amended,

fulfilling Senate's prior stated goal to remain open to additional ways to accomplish Integrative Studies ([2015 General Education Taskforce report](#); p. 25).

Following requests for an opportunity to participate in Integrative Studies courses, we propose to amend our current policy to allow faculty to propose interdomain courses with the GA, GH, GHW, GN, GS, and now GQ general knowledge areas. Appendix A is a memo from the Math/GQ community specifically requesting SCCA take this action. Conversely, Appendix B is a memo from the University Park GWS leadership with their rationale for requesting GWS specifically not be included in Integrative Studies.

The complexity inherent to our general education program needs to be simplified and made transparent and equally available. For example, Move-3 is a popular source of General Education flexibility for students; however, it requires a student/adviser request, approval, and manual audit substitution. This process thus creates barriers to access, unevenness in implementation, and inefficiencies. There have been more than 3000 Move-3 substitution requests *each year* since 2016, and nearly 6000 requests in 2019 alone. In all, there have been 35,000 unique requests for Move-3 substitutions in the CSRS system since it went online in 2014 through April 2022 (even though not all academic units currently use CSRS). Recent data ([Move-3 report](#)) confirm anecdotes of uneven use: underrepresented students and students at Commonwealth Campuses use this flexibility at rates less than would be expected by proportional analysis. We also observe similar barriers to using the World Language substitution. While we do not have as complete data for the World Language substitution in General Education as we do Move-3, we know that there are on the order of 700 or more requests (2017-2020 Data from CSRS; retrieved 11/2021. *This does not reflect Institutional Transfer Reviews. CSRS is not mandated for units or requests, so data is not comprehensive. Approval of requests is at unit discretion and submission does not guarantee approval.*) for this flexibility per year. We believe there are similar disparities to Move-3 in use of this provision and propose that this flexibility be similarly incorporated into the routinely acceptable coursework for General Education.

We thus recommend codifying the Move-3 flexibility (formerly 3-6-9) and World Language substitutions in General Education without need for individual request and approval. Formalizing these substitutions has the additional benefit of also allowing program requirements to be presented in a more straightforward and less complicated way to students. That is, we maintain the policy of requiring 3 single-domain credits in each of the 5 knowledge domains (GA, GH, GS, GN, GHW) while making clear the various forms of flexibility allow exploration among those domains and in Integrative Studies. Degree audits can be programmed to naturally reflect this structural flexibility, significantly reducing the manual entries and audit manipulations.

General Education is our vision for broad and purposeful learning for all Penn State students. We need to be able to explain what the requirements are and why. In this report, we recommend highlighting the learning goals of General Education for students, and how its components work together. We suggest changes in the presentation of the 45 credits of general education courses to clearly separate and name each component, and to articulate the intended learning of each. Reframing in this way moves us away from using courses to double count requirements, overlapping domains, and limiting student choice and flexibility in selecting Integrative Studies

courses. Instead, it systemizes the philosophical intent of the 2015-2016 legislation to highlight integrative thinking and exploration of ideas, in 6 credits of coursework without restriction.

General Education does not stand alone; it is intentionally constructed to build learning and skills foundational for a student's degree program. As such, General Education is intricately intertwined with our degree programs. We have two policies that help ensure that the principle of breadth is accomplished while allowing programs to prescribe parts of a student's General Education requirements. The General Education statement (Policy 143-10) and the Intentional Breadth policy (143-20, often referred to as the Firewall) work together to achieve this balance of breadth and scaffolding. The General Education statement is an approved curricular statement, contained within program proposals, specifying which courses will double count between General Education and program requirements. The Intentional Breadth policy is directed at students and requires that students select courses outside their degree program (based on subject prefix) to meet General Education requirements. This report includes edits to the Intentional Breadth policy to clarify that all students must follow the Intentional Breadth policy as it has been implemented since at least 1997. We also reaffirm that this policy applies to the initial degree program for students pursuing concurrent or sequential majors, which was part of the [2015 General Education Taskforce](#) approved report (pp. 17 and 18) that never was translated into actual policy statements. Audits will still need to be manually adjusted to implement this for concurrent and sequential majors, but this is now included in policy 143-20 to make the intention clear.

As a faculty, we wield these policies to achieve our curricular goals, and in so doing make the curriculum more or less complicated. By examining our programs and requirements through a student-focused lens, our goal is to focus on coherent curricular structures, to move away from imposing rules for students, and when appropriate allow maximum student choice. Every student rule is a potential barrier, and our goal should be to reduce unnecessary barriers for students. We thus propose to adjust how we use policies to manage our learning goals for one section of General Education: in Integrative Studies, we recommend restricting double-counting by programs, but in turn allow students greater choice for meeting the requirement with coursework as closely related to or distant from their degree programs, as they prefer.

We acknowledge this reorganization allows for some change in patterns of student course-taking. However, this legislation does not propose to change the current distributions of approved prescribed general education courses, which are heavily used in science-related and business-related programs. Nor will this legislation dramatically change students' interests and patterns of behavior. An important anticipated outcome of this legislation is a decrease in the number of students who take an excess of 45 credits to meet General Education requirements, helping us advance our institutional goals of equity and controlling costs for students. We also anticipate the proposed changes will reduce pressure to offer courses that meet specific combinations of requirements (for example, GA + GH + Inter-domain) since students will no longer need to select from a narrowed range of choices to check specific boxes.

**Recommendations** Based on the input from the university community described above, the work of the Standing Joint Committee on General Education Learning Outcomes Assessment review of data, and recommendations in the March 2022 report, our committee has discussed and recommends changes to our curriculum and instruction policies, described below and indicated in bold in the following pages:

1. Phase out Linked Courses and different pathways for Integrative Studies.
  - a. No new Linked Course proposals will be approved starting immediately after approval of this report.
  - b. Existing approved Linked Courses will continue with the single-domain general education designation for which they are approved. The Linked attribute and Z-suffix will be removed one year after approval of this recommendation with no additional action required by faculty.
  - c. Linked Courses will cease to be a curricular option for fulfilling the Integrative Studies requirement one year after approval of this recommendation. The small number of students who have begun and need to complete a Linked Courses pair will be able to do this via substitution.
  - d. SCCA will provide a fast-tracked review process for faculty proposing to convert existing Linked Courses to Integrative Studies. SCCA will create an ad-hoc committee to help fast track proposals to convert Linked Courses into Inter-domain or Integrative Studies Courses through the curricular workflow. If the reorganized courses have the same content, learning goals, and domains, SCCA will work to complete the workflow in 45 days. Administrative support for creating and shepherding these proposals will be available from the Office for General Education.
  
2. Allow the six credit Integrative Studies curricular requirement to be completed using any course that is approved for Integrative Studies.
  - a. Existing Inter-domain courses remain and continue to satisfy this requirement.
  - b. The scope of Inter-domain courses is expanded to include the GQ foundation area. Faculty may propose to offer courses that include a focus on learning in GQ as Integrative Studies (Inter-domain) courses (e.g. GQ and GN; GQ and GS). This means that courses now may have a GQ, an additional domain, and Inter-domain designation to fulfill the 6 credits of Integrative Studies. *This does not change the Foundations requirement.*
  - c. Courses students select to satisfy this requirement will not be subject to Policies on Breadth 143-00 and 143-20.
  - d. Integrative Studies credits cannot be prescribed by a program without exception by the Senate Committee on Curricular Affairs (modification of Policy 143-10). It is expected that exceptions would be limited to constraints due to licensure/external accreditation requirements.
  - e. To promote agility and innovative course development, as was implemented for Integrative Studies courses previously, the UFS will allow designation of one semester title (x97) courses to include any General Education (single domain or Inter-domain) or Integrative Studies attribute.

3. Simplify and reorganize the General Education requirements presentation so that the existing Move-3 and World Language substitution is a routine and acceptable option for students to satisfy the General Education requirements without the need for substitution requests or approval. This codifies a long-standing and extremely common way students have exercised flexibility in their General Education requirements.
  - a. Foundations requirements – 9 units of GWS and 6 units of GQ remain as a requirement. A quality grade of C or better will continue to be required for these credits, and the requirement cannot be completed with Inter-domain courses.
  - b. Breadth across the Knowledge Domains – 3 units minimum of each Knowledge Domain (GA, GH, GS, GN, and GHW) will continue to be required and cannot be completed with Inter-domain courses. Policy 143-20 applies to GA, GH, GN, and GS as it currently does.
  - c. Integrative Studies – 6 units of coursework with Integrative Studies attributes including existing Inter-domain courses. The 6 units of Integrative Studies are separated from 15 credits of Breadth and 9 credits of Exploration; Integrative Studies becomes a stand-alone requirement without need for double counting these credits toward both Integrative Studies and General Education knowledge domain requirements.
  - d. Exploration – 9 units of GA, GH, GN, GS, additional Inter-domain courses, and up to 3 units of World Language coursework at the 12<sup>th</sup> credit level and beyond the degree requirements as is currently allowed in the Flexibility of General Education. At least 3 units must carry a GN domain attribute, either single- or inter-domain.
  - e. Clarify that Policy 143-20 applies to all students and only a student's initial major if the student has selected one or more concurrent or sequential majors.
  - f. Because Move-3 was intended to provide students with flexibility, programs are specifically restricted from prescribing a general education course-taking pattern in their General Education statement (specifying what can double count between the major and General Education) that exceeds prescription for any domain beyond the historical distribution of credits between each domain (9 GWS, 6 GQ, 6 GA, 6 GH, 6 GS, 9 GN, 3 GHW).



## The above recommendations are implemented in the below edits to Curriculum and Undergraduate Instruction Policies

Please note that the following contains **bold text for additions** and ~~strikeouts for deleted text~~. In addition, added text is delimited with [Add] [End Add] pairs while deleted text is delimited with [Delete] [End Delete] pairs.

### 142-00 Baccalaureate Degree Requirements in the General Education Program

The General Education program consists of 45 credits distributed among ~~two General Education components: Foundations (15 credits) in Writing/Speaking and Quantification and Knowledge Domains (30 credits) in the Natural Sciences, Arts, Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences, and Health and Wellness. A six-credit requirement in Integrative Studies, through completion of linked or inter-domain coursework, is required within the Knowledge Domain general education credits.~~[end delete] [add] four components: Foundations (15 credits) in Writing/Speaking and Quantification; Knowledge Domain Breadth (15 credits) in the Natural Sciences, Arts, Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences, and Health and Wellness; Integrative Studies (6 credits), through completion of Inter-domain and/or other designated coursework; and Exploration (9 credits) through completion of additional coursework across particular knowledge domains, and/or the study of world language.[end add]

Each approved course is identified in the *Undergraduate Degree Programs Bulletin* and the Course Catalog by descriptive suffixes/ attributes as follows:

**Foundations (15 credits) [add] Build a basis of effective communication and quantitative literacy [end add]**

Foundations courses must be completed with a grade of “C” or better. **[add] Courses may not be Integrative Studies/Inter-domain.[end add]**

- WRITING/SPEAKING (9 credits)  
Courses designated with the GWS attribute satisfy this component.
- QUANTIFICATION (6 credits)  
Courses designated with the GQ attribute satisfy this component. (3-6 credits are selected from mathematics, applied mathematics, and statistics; 3 credits may be selected from computer science or symbolic logic.)

**[add] Breadth in [end add] Knowledge Domains ([delete]30 [end delete] [add] 15[end add] credits) [add] Practice applying a specific way of constructing knowledge to examine a topic [end add]**

Students must complete ~~a minimum of~~ [end delete] 3 credits in each Knowledge Domain; ~~additional credits within the Knowledge domains may either be fulfilled~~

~~through a single domain course(s) or inter-domain course(s).~~ **[add] courses may not be Integrative Studies/ Inter-domain. [end add]**

- **NATURAL SCIENCES** ~~9~~ **[end delete] [add] 3[end add]** credits)  
Courses designated with the GN attribute satisfy this component.
- **ARTS** ~~6~~ **[end delete] [add] 3[end add]** credits)  
Courses designated with the GA attribute satisfy this component.
- **HUMANITIES** ~~6~~ **[end delete] [add] 3[end add]** credits)  
Courses designated with the GH attribute satisfy this component.
- **SOCIAL AND BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES** ~~6~~ **[end delete] [add] 3[end add]** credits)  
Courses designated with the GS attribute satisfy this component.
- **HEALTH AND WELLNESS** (3 credits)  
Courses designated with the GHW attribute satisfy this component.

**Integrative Studies (6 credits** ~~of either Inter-domain or Linked coursework, these credits may overlap with the knowledge domain requirement)~~ **[end delete]) [add] Practice synthesizing knowledge from different perspectives to examine a topic [end add]**

- **INTER-DOMAIN**  
Courses designated with the ~~GenEd~~ **[end delete] [add] General Education-** **[end add]** Integrative: Inter-domain attribute satisfy this requirement. (The ~~attribute~~ **[end delete] [add] suffix [end add]** of N **[add] or Q (honors) [end add]** is commonly used ~~on Inter-domain courses for degree audit~~ **[end delete] [add] for identification [end add]** purposes.)

~~[delete] Linked~~

~~Courses designated with the Gen Ed Integrative: Linked attribute satisfy this requirement. (The attribute of Z is commonly used on linked courses for degree audit purposes.) [end delete]~~

**[add]**

**Exploration (9 credits)**

**Follow intellectual curiosity to deepen or widen learning**

- **Select 3 credits from courses with the GN attribute. This may be completed with inter-domain courses.**
- **Select 6 credits from courses with the GA, GH, GN, GS, or General Education Integrative: Inter-domain attributes and may include 3 credits of World Language course work beyond the 12th credit level or the requirements for the student's degree program, whichever is higher.**

The General Education program extends the concept of flexibility to all aspects of the degree program. Penn State wants students to use General Education as an opportunity to experiment and explore, to take academic risks, to discover, and to learn. A student may:

1. Substitute a 200- to 499-level course in an area of General Education for a course found on the General Education list. For example, a student may take a 400-level course in history and use it to meet the General Education requirement satisfied by a comparable lower-level history course.
2. Substitute 3 units of a World Language course at the 12<sup>th</sup> credit level of proficiency or higher that exceed the student's minimum degree requirements in either of the Foundation areas (GWS or GQ) of General Education.

[end add]

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### 143-00 Breadth in General Education

All General Education courses are to help students explore and integrate information beyond the special focuses of their majors. Students may not meet the General Education **[add] Breadth in [end add] Knowledge Domains [add] and Exploration [end add]** components by taking courses in the department or program identical to that of the academic major. **[add] The Integrative Studies component is not subject to this policy. [end add]**

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### 143-10 General Education Statement

Each program may identify courses that may double count between the major and General Education. The courses should satisfy the intention of General Education as well as serve a curricular purpose for the major. The General Education statement should not exceed the number of credits for a General Education domain that exceeds the **[add] historically [end add]** stated requirement for General Education **[delete] (e.g., 9 GN credits or 6 GS credits) [end delete]** **[add] (i.e., 9 GN credits, 6 GS credits, 6 GA credits, 6 GH credits, 6 GQ credits, 9 GWS credits, 3 GHW credits.) Integrative Studies courses should not be included in the General Education Statement. In exceptional cases (e.g., external accreditation constraints), Curricular Affairs may approve exceptions to this limitation. [end add]**

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### 143-20 Intentional Breadth in General Education

Students **[delete] whose academic majors are in the areas of natural sciences, arts, humanities, and social and behavioral sciences [end delete]** may not meet the General Education **[add] Breadth in [end add] Knowledge Domains [add] and Exploration [end add]** components by taking courses in the department or program identical to that of the academic major **[delete] (this is commonly referred to as the General Education Firewall)[end delete]. [delete] All [end delete] [add] The [end add] General Education [delete] courses are [end**

**delete] [add] program is intended [end add]** to help students explore and integrate information beyond the special focuses of their majors. For example, an Economics major may not use an economics course to fulfill **[delete] his/her [end delete] [add] their [end add]** social and behavioral sciences requirement. Also, students may not count courses cross-listed with courses in their major to fulfill one of the General Education Knowledge Domain, e.g., a Theatre major may not register for THEA 208/AFAM 208 Workshop: Theatre in Diverse Cultures and have it count in the Arts requirement. **[add] This provision does not apply to coursework satisfying the Integrative Studies component. For students completing concurrent or sequential degrees, this policy only applies to the initial degree program. [end add]** (General Education Planning and Oversight Task Force report 4/28/15)

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### **160-20 General Education Requirements for Associate Degrees**

The General Education program for Penn State associate degree students consists of 21 credits distributed among communication and quantification skills (6 credits), the Knowledge Domain areas (15 credits), including courses in the natural sciences (3 credits), arts (3 credits), humanities (3 credits), and social and behavioral sciences (3 credits), and an additional 3 credits in any General Education area, including Health and Wellness (GHW). Up to six credits of Inter-domain courses may be used for any Knowledge Domain requirement, but when a course **[delete] is [end delete] [add] may be [end add]** used to satisfy more than one requirement, the credits from the course can be counted only once.

**FOUNDATIONS [add] - Build a basis of effective communication and quantitative literacy. (Integrative Studies: Inter-domain courses may not be used for this requirement.) [end add]**

Total 6 credits

Requirement: Writing/Speaking (GWS)\* – 3 Credits

Requirement: Quantification (GQ)\* – 3 Credits

\*Requires a grade of C or better

**[add] BREADTH IN [end add] KNOWLEDGE DOMAINS [add]- Practice applying a specific way of constructing knowledge to examine a topic. (Integrative Studies: Inter-domain courses may be used but may only apply to one requirement.) [end add]**

Total (~~15~~ **[add] 12 [end add]**) credits

Requirement: Natural Sciences (GN) – 3 Credits

Requirement: Arts (GA) – 3 Credits

Requirement: Humanities (GH) – 3 Credits

Requirement: Social and Behavioral Sciences (GS) – 3 Credits

~~Any additional General Education course – 3 Credits [end delete]~~

**[add]**

**EXPLORATION- Follow intellectual curiosity to deepen or widen learning**

**Total 3 credits**

**In addition to the above Knowledge Domains course requirements, associate degree students must complete 3 credits in any General Education area. Integrative Studies courses may be used for this requirement. [end add]**

~~[delete] NOTE: Up to six credits of Inter-domain courses may be used for any Knowledge Domain requirement, but when a course is used to satisfy more than one requirement, the credits from the course can be counted only once.[end delete]~~

The General Education program extends the concept of flexibility to all aspects of the degree program. Penn State wants students to use General Education as an opportunity to experiment and explore, to take academic risks, to discover ~~[delete] things they did not know before [end delete]~~, and to learn ~~[delete] to do things they have not done before [end delete]~~.

To these ends, students may, ~~[delete] with the permission of their adviser and dean's representative, [end delete]~~ substitute a 200- to 499-level course for an Arts, Humanities, Natural Sciences, or Social and Behavioral Sciences course found on the General Education list. For example, a student may take a 400-level course in history and use it to meet the General Education requirement satisfied by a comparable lower-level history course.

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### 190-10 Criteria for General Education Courses

Criteria for determining whether a course meets the general learning objectives of General Education.

All General Education Course proposals must be responsive to the following prompts:

1. Which of the seven General Education Learning Objective(s) will be addressed in the course? A minimum of two (2) Learning Objective must be clearly addressed in the course; it is recommended that each course address two to three (2-3) Learning Objectives and not more than four (4).
2. What component(s) of the course will help students achieve the General Education Learning Objectives covered in the course? Provide evidence that students in the course have adequate opportunities to achieve the identified Learning Objectives.
3. How will students be assessed to determine their attainment of the Learning Objective(s) of General Education covered in the course? This assessment must be included as a portion of the student's overall performance in the course.
4. Please provide a copy of the current or proposed syllabus.
5. **[add] One-time offering approval for any General Education or Integrative Studies course may be requested. Normal UFS policies for maximum number of times per title must be followed. [end add]**

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### 192-00 General Education Integrative Studies Criteria

~~[Delete] Within General Education, s[end delete]~~ **[Add] S [end add]** tudents must complete 6 credits in Integrative Studies **[add] coursework as part of their General Education requirements. [end add]** ~~[delete] and must choose to fulfill this requirement through the Linked Courses Pathway or the Inter-Domain Pathway[end delete]~~.

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### ~~[DELETE]~~ 192-10 General Principles for the Linked Courses Pathway

- ~~1. Linked Courses are interrelated General Education Knowledge Domain courses, each meeting the criteria of its own Knowledge Domain (GA, GH, GHW, GN, or~~

~~GS), that approach similar subject matter from different intellectual perspectives or are connected in some other purposeful way to provide opportunities for students to experience and practice integrative thinking across Knowledge Domains. Each Linked Course is approved for only one Knowledge Domain and is also part of a Linkage that includes courses from different Knowledge Domains.~~

- ~~2. The student must complete courses that are linked with each other, each in a different General Education Knowledge Domain (thus including at least two Knowledge Domains), for the linked set to fulfill the Integrative Studies requirement. A single course alone does not count for the Linked Courses Pathway in the Integrative Studies requirement even if that course has been approved to be part of a Linkage. However, because each Linked Course satisfies a Knowledge Domain requirement, the student can use it within that Domain (or perhaps elsewhere in the student's program) whether or not the Linkage is completed. Although, students will usually fulfill the 6-credit Linked Courses Pathway by taking two 3-credit courses in this Pathway students may also use courses carrying anywhere from 1 to 5 credits towards the total of 6 Linked Courses credits.~~
- ~~3. More than two courses may participate in a Linkage; having more than two courses available in a Linkage will provide flexibility and may facilitate students' abilities to complete the package. Each such course is taught by an instructor, or team of instructors, with appropriate expertise in the course's Knowledge Domain.~~
- ~~4. Linkages are proposed by faculty (or teams of faculty) with expertise in the relevant disciplines of each Knowledge Domain; proposals will follow the established curricular processes for course approvals.~~
- ~~5. Either single offering or permanent approval for the Linked Courses designation may be requested. A course may be offered using single offering approval a maximum of 3 times at a given location.~~
- ~~6. Proposals for Linked Courses will:
  - ~~a. Request (or have received) approval as a General Education course in a particular Knowledge Domain, following the standard curricular processes.~~
  - ~~b. Explain how the intellectual frameworks and methodologies of each course's Knowledge Domain will be explicitly addressed in the course and practiced by the students.~~~~
- ~~7. Explain how the courses in the Linkage will be linked with each other. It is anticipated that courses will usually be linked by subject matter, but they should additionally be linked by some purposeful component that provides opportunities for students to experience and practice integrative thinking across Knowledge Domains. The Linkage component between courses needs to be intentional and explicit to students. However, each course in a Linkage must be self-contained such that students can successfully complete just one course in the Linkage if they so choose.~~
- ~~8. Include evidence of unit-level (department, program) and College-level administrative approval of the courses and Linkages, and evidence of substantive consultation among faculty with expertise in the appropriate Knowledge Domain(s) and discipline(s).~~
- ~~9. Briefly explain the staffing plan. Given that each Linked Course is approved for a single Knowledge Domain, it will be taught by an instructor (or instructional team)~~

~~with appropriate expertise in that domain, who will also be expected to implement the Linkage's shared component as defined in the proposal.~~

- ~~10. Describe the assessments that will be used to determine students' ability to apply integrative thinking. [End delete]~~

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**192-20 General Principles for [delete] the Inter-Domain Pathway [end delete] Integrative Studies: Inter-domain courses [end add]**

1. An Inter-Domain course integrates, within one course, selected perspectives, concepts, information, and knowledge from **two of the following [add] general knowledge areas [end add] [delete] Knowledge Domains [end delete]: GA, GH, GHW, GN, GS [add], GQ [end add] [(add), and GWS (end add)].**
2. ~~An Inter-domain course counts towards the General Education requirement in both of its two Knowledge Domains and it provides opportunities for students to experience and to practice integrative thinking across those two Domains.[end delete].~~
3. ~~Students must complete 6 credits of Inter-Domain coursework in order to fulfill the Integrative Studies requirement. Because these courses integrate two Knowledge Domains, and need time to do so, they will each carry at least 3 credits. Although students will usually take two 3-credit courses to fulfill this Pathway, students can also use Inter-Domain courses carrying more than 3 credits, if available. [end delete]~~
4. Each of the ~~two Knowledge Domains in an Inter-Domain course [end delete]~~ **[add] General Education areas [end add]** will receive approximately equal attention (in course topics, assignments, or other course components). Each such course is taught by an instructor, or team of instructors, with appropriate expertise ~~in the two Knowledge Domains for which the course is approved. Inter-Domain-e [end delete]~~ **[add]. C [end add]** courses may be cross-listed or concurrent-listed but this is not required.
5. ~~Although each Inter-Domain course will satisfy a Domain requirement in both of the Knowledge Domains for which it is approved, the number of credits it contributes towards the total of 30 credits required in the Knowledge Domains is not doubled. (For example, a 3-credit course approved as both Natural Science and Social Science will satisfy a Domain requirement in both of those categories; however, this course will contribute 3 credits, not 6, to the total of 30 needed). [end delete]~~
6. Inter-Domain courses are proposed by faculty (or teams of faculty) with expertise in the relevant disciplines ~~of each Knowledge Domain [end delete]~~ represented; proposals will follow the established curricular processes for course approvals. Consultation and support from faculty in relevant fields ~~within both Knowledge Domains where the course will count [end delete]~~ is required.
7. Single-offering or permanent approval for the Inter-Domain Courses designation(s) may be requested. A course may be offered using single-offering approval a maximum of 3 times at a given location.

8. ~~Proposals for Inter-Domain courses will: Request (or have received) approval as a General Education course and satisfy the criteria for two Knowledge Domains, following the standard curricular processes.~~ [end delete] Course proposals will not be approved for more than two ~~Knowledge Domains~~ [end delete] [add] General Education designations [end add].
  9. [add] Course proposals must [end add] ~~E~~ [end delete] [add] e [end add] explain how the intellectual frameworks and methodologies of the ~~two Knowledge Domains~~ [end delete] [add] additional areas [end add] will be explicitly addressed in the course and practiced by the students.
  10. ~~Demonstrate that each of the two domains will receive approximately equal attention, providing evidence from course topics, assignments, or other course components, and that students will integrate material from both domains.~~
  11. ~~Include evidence of unit-level (department, program) and College-level administrative approval of the courses, and evidence of substantive consultation among faculty with expertise in the appropriate Knowledge Domains and discipline(s).~~
  12. ~~Where Inter-Domain courses are cross-listed, consultation with both of those academic units and their Colleges is required. For other Inter-Domain courses, given that all the Knowledge Domains are offered by more than one unit and College, this dual-Domain consultation and support should occur with the most closely related units and Colleges (more than one such unit and College may be relevant).~~
  13. ~~Briefly explain the staffing plan. Given that each Inter-Domain course is approved for two Knowledge Domains, it will be taught by an instructor (or instructional team) with appropriate expertise in both domains.~~ [end delete]
  14. [add] Course proposals must [end add] ~~D~~ [end delete] [add] d [end add] describe the assessments that will be used to determine students' ability to apply integrative thinking.
- 

## Student Facing Policies for Students

~~[Delete] Appendix A.1 General Education (Baccalaureate Degree) Policies and Rules for Undergraduate Students~~

~~The University Faculty Senate, at its meeting in April 2015, adopted a comprehensive revision of General Education Learning Objectives and requirements. This revision was further detailed in the General Education report adopted by the Senate in March 2016. The First-Year Engagement Program as described was revised April 29, 2008, and Intercultural and International Competence requirements was updated on April 27, 2004):~~

~~The General Education curriculum will enable students to acquire skills, knowledge, and experiences for living in interconnected contexts, so they can contribute to making life better for others, themselves, and the world. General Education encompasses the breadth of knowledge involving the major intellectual and aesthetic skills and achievements of~~



~~humanity. This must include understanding and appreciation of the pluralistic nature of knowledge epitomized by the natural sciences, quantitative skills, social and behavioral sciences, humanities, and arts. To achieve and share such an understanding and appreciation, skills in self-expression, quantitative analysis, information literacy, and collaborative interaction are necessary. General Education aids students in developing intellectual curiosity, a strengthened ability to think, and a deeper sense of aesthetic appreciation. General Education, in essence, aims to cultivate a knowledgeable, informed, literate human being.~~

~~An effective General Education curriculum shall facilitate teaching and learning through seven key objectives:~~

~~**EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION**—The ability to exchange information and ideas in oral, written, and visual form in ways that allow for informed and persuasive discourse that builds trust and respect among those engaged in that exchange, and helps create environments where creative ideas and problem-solving flourish.~~

~~**KEY LITERACIES**—The ability to identify, interpret, create, communicate, and compute using materials in a variety of media and contexts. Literacy acquired in multiple areas, such as textual, quantitative, information/technology, health, intercultural, historical, aesthetic, linguistic (world languages), and scientific, enables individuals to achieve their goals, to develop their knowledge and potential, to lead healthy and productive lives, and to participate fully in their community and wider society.~~

~~**CRITICAL AND ANALYTICAL THINKING**—The habit of mind characterized by comprehensive exploration of issues, ideas, artifacts, and events before accepting or formulating a conclusion. It is the intellectually disciplined process of conceptualizing, applying, analyzing, synthesizing, and/or evaluating information gathered from, or generated by, observation, experience, reflection, reasoning, or communication, as a guide to belief and action.~~

~~**INTEGRATIVE THINKING**—The ability to synthesize knowledge across multiple domains, modes of inquiry, historical periods, and perspectives, as well as the ability to identify linkages between existing knowledge and new information. Individuals who engage in integrative thinking are able to transfer knowledge within and beyond their current contexts.~~

~~**CREATIVE THINKING**—The capacity to synthesize existing ideas, images, or expertise in original ways and the experience of performing, making, thinking, or acting in an imaginative way that may be characterized by innovation, divergent thinking, and intellectual risk taking.~~

~~**GLOBAL LEARNING**—The intellectually disciplined abilities to analyze similarities and differences among cultures; evaluate natural, physical, social, cultural, historical, and economic legacies and hierarchies; and engage as community members and leaders who will continue to deal with the intricacies of an ever-changing world. Individuals should~~

~~acquire the ability to analyze power; identify and critique interdependent global, regional, and local cultures and systems; and evaluate the implications for people's lives.~~

~~**SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AND ETHICAL REASONING**—The ability to assess one's own values within the social context of problems, recognize ethical issues in a variety of settings, describe how different perspectives might be applied to ethical dilemmas, and consider the ramifications of alternative actions. Individuals should acquire the self-knowledge and leadership skills needed to play a role in creating and maintaining healthy, civil, safe, and thriving communities.~~

~~Courses taken to meet General Education program requirements may not be taken under the Satisfactory-Unsatisfactory option.~~

~~The baccalaureate degree General Education program consists of 45 credits that are distributed among three General Education components: foundations courses in writing, speaking and quantification (15 credits), knowledge domains in the Arts, Humanities, Natural Sciences, Social and Behavioral Sciences, and Health and Wellness (30 credits), and Integrative Studies (6 credits that overlap with the knowledge domain requirement) that bridges commonality and intersections between the Knowledge Domains. There are three additional requirements that may be completed as a part of either General Education courses or courses required in the major. These requirements, which every baccalaureate degree student must complete, are 3 credits of United States Cultures, 3 credits of International Cultures, and 3 credits of Writing Across the Curriculum course work.~~

~~In addition, all first-year baccalaureate students are required to complete a First-Year Engagement (FYE) program designed to actively involve students in learning, acquaint them with the learning tools and resources available at Penn State, and orient them to the scholarly community from the outset of their undergraduate studies in a way that will bridge to later experiences in their chosen majors. A student's campus of enrollment determines whether or not he/she is required to complete a First-Year Seminar. Campuses that no longer require an FYS provide students with a First-Year Engagement experience. All students in a University Park college or in the Division of Undergraduate Studies at University Park must complete a First-Year Seminar (FYS) for 1 to 3 credits as part of the FYE program.~~

~~Students are advised that the Requirements for the Major of certain baccalaureate degree majors include courses that have been approved as General Education courses. In those cases, the appropriate choice of General Education courses will also satisfy the Requirements for the Major.~~

~~Students whose academic majors are in the areas of natural sciences, arts, humanities, and social and behavioral sciences may not meet the General Education Knowledge Domains components by taking courses in the department or program identical to that of the academic major. All General Education courses are to help students explore and integrate information beyond the special focuses of their majors.~~

## **Courses to be Used for General Education**

### **Skills (15 credits)**

#### **Writing/Speaking (9 credits)**

~~Courses designated with the GenEd: Writing/Speaking (GWS) attribute satisfy this requirement.~~

#### **Quantification (6 credits)**

~~Courses designated with the GenEd: Quantification (GQ) attribute satisfy this requirement (3-6 credits are selected from mathematics, applied mathematics, and statistics; 3 credits may be selected from computer science or symbolic logic).~~

### **Knowledge Domains (30 credits)**

#### **Health and Wellness (3 credits)**

~~Courses designated with the GenEd: Health Wellness (GHW) attribute satisfy this requirement.~~

#### **Natural Sciences (9 credits)**

~~Courses designated with the GenEd: Natural Sciences (GN) attribute satisfy this requirement.~~

#### **Arts (6 credits)**

~~Courses designated with the GenEd: Arts (GA) attribute satisfy this requirement.~~

#### **Humanities (6 credits)**

~~Courses designated with the GenEd: Humanities (GH) attribute satisfy this requirement.~~

#### **Social and Behavioral Sciences (6 credits)**

~~Courses designated with the GenEd: Social & Beh Sci (GS) attribute satisfy this requirement.~~

~~Integrative Studies (6 credits of either Inter-domain or Linked coursework, these credits overlap with the knowledge domain requirement)~~

#### **Inter-domain**

~~Courses designated with the GenEd Integrative: Interdomain attribute satisfy this requirement.~~

#### **Linked**

~~Courses designated with the GenEd Integrative: Linked attribute satisfy this requirement.~~

~~The General Education program extends the concept of flexibility to all aspects of the degree program. Penn State wants students to use General Education as an opportunity to experiment and explore, to take academic risks, to discover things they did not know~~

~~before, and to learn to do things they have not done before. A student may, in consultation with the adviser and the approval of the student's college dean,~~

- ~~1. Substitute a 200- to 499-level course in an area of General Education for a course found on the General Education list. For example, a student may take a 400-level course in history and use it to meet the General Education requirement satisfied by a comparable lower-level history course.~~
- ~~2. Substitute a world language at the twelfth credit level of proficiency, as measured by the Penn State foreign language offerings, for 3 credits in any of the categories of General Education. Baccalaureate-degree students may substitute study in a world/second language at the twelfth credit level of proficiency or higher for any 3 credits in any of the categories of general education only if those 3 credits are in language study beyond their degree requirements.~~
- ~~3. Substitute a course in one of the Knowledge Domains areas of Arts, Humanities, or Social and Behavioral Sciences, Natural Sciences, or Health and Wellness for a course in one of the other areas. For example, a student might take three courses in the Arts, and only one course in the Social and Behavioral Sciences. In another example, a student might take two courses in the Natural Sciences and two courses in Health and Wellness; or a student might take two courses in the Natural Sciences and three courses in the Humanities. This substitution is referred to as the Move 3 substitution.~~
- ~~4. The use of these substitutions (No. 2 and No. 3 above), either alone or in combination, may not lead to the complete elimination of any area in the Foundations or Knowledge Domains categories in the student's general education program, nor may they be applied to reduction of credits in the same domain.~~

~~NOTE: When a course is used to satisfy more than one requirement, the credits in the course can be counted only once.~~

~~General Education courses are identified in the University Course Descriptions and General Education sections of the Undergraduate Degree Programs Bulletin. They can also be found in the Schedule of Courses by the appropriate course designation. [End delete]~~

~~[Delete] Appendix A.2 General Education (Associate Degree)~~

~~The University Faculty Senate, at its meeting in April 2015, adopted a comprehensive revision of General Education Learning Objectives and requirements. This revision was further detailed in the General Education report adopted by the Senate in March 2016.~~

~~The General Education curriculum will enable students to acquire skills, knowledge, and experiences for living in interconnected contexts, so they can contribute to making life better for others, themselves, and the world. General Education encompasses the breadth~~

~~of knowledge involving the major intellectual and aesthetic skills and achievements of humanity. This must include understanding and appreciation of the pluralistic nature of knowledge epitomized by the natural sciences, quantitative skills, social and behavioral sciences, humanities, and arts. To achieve and share such an understanding and appreciation, skills in self-expression, quantitative analysis, information literacy, and collaborative interaction are necessary. General Education aids students in developing intellectual curiosity, a strengthened ability to think, and a deeper sense of aesthetic appreciation. General Education, in essence, aims to cultivate a knowledgeable, informed, literate human being.~~

~~An effective General Education curriculum shall facilitate teaching and learning through seven key objectives:~~

~~**EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION**—The ability to exchange information and ideas in oral, written, and visual form in ways that allow for informed and persuasive discourse that builds trust and respect among those engaged in that exchange, and helps create environments where creative ideas and problem-solving flourish.~~

~~**KEY LITERACIES**—The ability to identify, interpret, create, communicate, and compute using materials in a variety of media and contexts. Literacy acquired in multiple areas, such as textual, quantitative, information/technology, health, intercultural, historical, aesthetic, linguistic (world languages), and scientific, enables individuals to achieve their goals, to develop their knowledge and potential, to lead healthy and productive lives, and to participate fully in their community and wider society.~~

~~**CRITICAL AND ANALYTICAL THINKING**—The habit of mind characterized by comprehensive exploration of issues, ideas, artifacts, and events before accepting or formulating a conclusion. It is the intellectually disciplined process of conceptualizing, applying, analyzing, synthesizing, and/or evaluating information gathered from, or generated by, observation, experience, reflection, reasoning, or communication, as a guide to belief and action.~~

~~**INTEGRATIVE THINKING**—The ability to synthesize knowledge across multiple domains, modes of inquiry, historical periods, and perspectives, as well as the ability to identify linkages between existing knowledge and new information. Individuals who engage in integrative thinking are able to transfer knowledge within and beyond their current contexts.~~

~~**CREATIVE THINKING**—The capacity to synthesize existing ideas, images, or expertise in original ways and the experience of performing, making, thinking, or acting in an imaginative way that may be characterized by innovation, divergent thinking, and intellectual risk taking.~~

~~**GLOBAL LEARNING**—The intellectually disciplined abilities to analyze similarities and differences among cultures; evaluate natural, physical, social, cultural, historical, and economic legacies and hierarchies; and engage as community members and leaders who~~

~~will continue to deal with the intricacies of an ever-changing world. Individuals should acquire the ability to analyze power; identify and critique interdependent global, regional, and local cultures and systems; and evaluate the implications for people's lives.~~

~~**SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AND ETHICAL REASONING**—The ability to assess one's own values within the social context of problems, recognize ethical issues in a variety of settings, describe how different perspectives might be applied to ethical dilemmas, and consider the ramifications of alternative actions. Individuals should acquire the self-knowledge and leadership skills needed to play a role in creating and maintaining healthy, civil, safe, and thriving communities.~~

~~Courses taken to meet General Education program requirements may not be taken under the Satisfactory-Unsatisfactory option.~~

~~The General Education program for Penn State associate-degree students consists of 21 credits distributed among communication and quantification skills (6 credits), the Knowledge Domain areas (15 credits), including courses in the natural sciences (3 credits), arts (3 credits), humanities (3 credits), and social and behavioral sciences (3 credits), and an additional 3 credits in any General Education area (including Health and Wellness (GHW)). Up to six credits of Inter-domain courses may be used for any Knowledge Domain requirement, but when a course is used to satisfy more than one requirement, the credits from the course can be counted only once.~~

~~Students whose academic majors are in the areas of natural sciences, arts, humanities, and social and behavioral sciences may not meet the General Education Knowledge Domains components by taking courses in the department or program identical to that of the academic major. All General Education courses are to help students explore and integrate information beyond the special focuses of their majors.~~

#### ~~Courses to be Used for General Education~~

##### ~~Skills (6 credits)~~

##### ~~Writing/Speaking (3 credits)~~

~~Courses designated with the GenEd: Writing/Speaking (GWS) attribute satisfy this requirement.~~

##### ~~Quantification (3 credits)~~

~~Courses designated with the GenEd: Quantification (GQ) attribute satisfy this requirement (3 credits are selected from mathematics, applied mathematics, statistics, computer science, or symbolic logic).~~

##### ~~Knowledge Domains (15 credits)~~

~~Natural Sciences (3 credits)~~

~~Courses designated with the GenEd: Natural Sciences (GN) attribute satisfy this requirement.~~

~~Arts (3 credits)~~

~~Courses designated with the GenEd: Arts (GA) attribute satisfy this requirement.~~

~~Humanities (3 credits)~~

~~Courses designated with the GenEd: Humanities (GH) attribute satisfy this requirement.~~

~~Social and Behavioral Sciences (3 credits)~~

~~Courses designated with the GenEd: Social & Beh Sci (GS) attribute satisfy this requirement.~~

~~In addition to the above Knowledge Domains course requirements, associate degree students must complete 3 credits in any General Education area. Inter-domain courses (N) may be used for any Knowledge Domain requirement, but when a course is used to satisfy more than one requirement, the credits from the course can be counted only once.~~

~~The General Education program extends the concept of flexibility to all aspects of the degree program. Penn State wants students to use General Education as an opportunity to experiment and explore, to take academic risks, to discover things they did not know before, and to learn to do things they have not done before.~~

~~To these ends, students may, with the permission of their adviser and dean's representative, substitute a 200- to 499-level course for an Arts, Humanities, Natural Sciences, or Social and Behavioral Sciences course found on the General Education list. For example, a student may take a 400-level course in history and use it to meet the General Education requirement satisfied by a comparable lower level history course.~~

~~General Education courses are identified in the University Course Descriptions and General Education sections of the Undergraduate Degree Programs Bulletin. They can also be found in the Schedule of Courses by the appropriate course designation.~~ [End delete]

## Clean copy of Policies

### Curriculum and Undergraduate Instruction Policies

#### 142-00 Baccalaureate Degree Requirements in the General Education Program

The General Education program consists of 45 credits distributed among four components: Foundations (15 credits) in Writing/Speaking and Quantification; Knowledge Domain Breadth (15 credits) in the Natural Sciences, Arts, Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences, and Health and Wellness; Integrative Studies (6 credits), through completion of Inter-domain and/or other designated coursework; and Exploration (9 credits) through completion of additional coursework across particular knowledge domains, and/or the study of world language.

Each approved course is identified in the *Undergraduate Degree Programs Bulletin* and the Course Catalog by descriptive suffixes/ attributes as follows:

#### **Foundations (15 credits) Build a basis of effective communication and quantitative literacy**

Foundations courses must be completed with a grade of “C” or better. Courses may not be Integrative Studies/Inter-domain.

- **WRITING/SPEAKING (9 credits)**  
Courses designated with the GWS attribute satisfy this component.
- **QUANTIFICATION (6 credits)**  
Courses designated with the GQ attribute satisfy this component. (3-6 credits are selected from mathematics, applied mathematics, and statistics; 3 credits may be selected from computer science or symbolic logic.)

#### **Breadth in Knowledge Domains (15 credits) Practice applying a specific way of constructing knowledge to examine a topic**

Students must complete 3 credits in each Knowledge Domain; courses may not be Integrative Studies/ Inter-domain.

- **NATURAL SCIENCES (3 credits)**  
Courses designated with the GN attribute satisfy this component.
- **ARTS (3 credits)**  
Courses designated with the GA attribute satisfy this component.
- **HUMANITIES (3 credits)**  
Courses designated with the GH attribute satisfy this component.
- **SOCIAL AND BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES (3 credits)**  
Courses designated with the GS attribute satisfy this component.
- **HEALTH AND WELLNESS (3 credits)**  
Courses designated with the GHW attribute satisfy this component.



**Integrative Studies (6 credits) Practice synthesizing knowledge from different perspectives to examine a topic**

- **INTER-DOMAIN**  
Courses designated with the General Education- Integrative: Inter-domain attribute satisfy this requirement. (The suffix of N or Q (honors) is commonly used for identification purposes.)

**Exploration (9 credits) Follow intellectual curiosity to deepen or widen learning**

- Select 3 credits from courses with the GN attribute. This may be completed with inter-domain courses.
- Select 6 credits from courses with the GA, GH, GN, GS, or General Education Integrative: Inter-domain attributes and may include 3 credits of World Language course work beyond the 12th credit level or the requirements for the student's degree program, whichever is higher.

The General Education program extends the concept of flexibility to all aspects of the degree program. Penn State wants students to use General Education as an opportunity to experiment and explore, to take academic risks, to discover, and to learn. A student may:

1. Substitute a 200- to 499-level course in an area of General Education for a course found on the General Education list. For example, a student may take a 400-level course in history and use it to meet the General Education requirement satisfied by a comparable lower-level history course.
2. Substitute 3 units of a World Language course at the 12<sup>th</sup> credit level of proficiency or higher that exceed the student's minimum degree requirements in either of the Foundation areas (GWS or GQ) of General Education.

**143-00 Breadth in General Education**

All General Education courses are to help students explore and integrate information beyond the special focuses of their majors. Students may not meet the General Education Breadth in Knowledge Domains and Exploration components by taking courses in the department or program identical to that of the academic major. The Integrative Studies component is not subject to this policy.

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### **143-10 General Education Statement**

Each program may identify courses that may double count between the major and General Education. The courses should satisfy the intention of General Education as well as serve a curricular purpose for the major. The General Education statement should not exceed the number of credits for a General Education domain that exceeds the historically stated requirement for General Education (i.e., 9 GN credits, 6 GS credits, 6 GA credits, 6 GH credits, 6 GQ credits, 9 GWS credits, 3 GHW credits.) Integrative Studies courses should not be included in the General Education Statement. In exceptional cases (e.g., external accreditation constraints), Curricular Affairs may approve exceptions to this limitation.

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### **143-20 Intentional Breadth in General Education**

Students may not meet the General Education Breadth in Knowledge Domains and Exploration components by taking courses in the department or program identical to that of the academic major. The General Education program is intended to help students explore and integrate information beyond the special focuses of their majors. For example, an Economics major may not use an economics course to fulfill their social and behavioral sciences requirement. Also, students may not count courses cross-listed with courses in their major to fulfill one of the General Education Knowledge Domain, e.g., a Theatre major may not register for THEA 208/AFAM 208 Workshop: Theatre in Diverse Cultures and have it count in the Arts requirement. This provision does not apply to coursework satisfying the Integrative Studies component. For students completing concurrent or sequential degrees, this policy only applies to the initial degree program. (General Education Planning and Oversight Task Force report 4/28/15)

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### **160-20 General Education Requirements for Associate Degrees**

The General Education program for Penn State associate degree students consists of 21 credits distributed among communication and quantification skills (6 credits), the Knowledge Domain areas (15 credits), including courses in the natural sciences (3 credits), arts (3 credits), humanities (3 credits), and social and behavioral sciences (3 credits), and an additional 3 credits in any General Education area, including Health and Wellness (GHW). Up to six credits of Inter-domain courses may be used for any Knowledge Domain requirement, but when a course may be used to satisfy more than one requirement, the credits from the course can be counted only once.

FOUNDATIONS - Build a basis of effective communication and quantitative literacy.  
(Integrative Studies: Inter-domain courses may not be used for this requirement.)

Total 6 credits

Requirement: Writing/Speaking (GWS)\* – 3 Credits

Requirement: Quantification (GQ)\* – 3 Credits

\*Requires a grade of C or better

**BREADTH IN KNOWLEDGE DOMAINS** - Practice applying a specific way of constructing knowledge to examine a topic. (Integrative Studies: Inter-domain courses may be used but may only apply to one requirement.)

Total 12 credits

Requirement: Natural Sciences (GN) – 3 Credits

Requirement: Arts (GA) – 3 Credits

Requirement: Humanities (GH) – 3 Credits

Requirement: Social and Behavioral Sciences (GS) – 3 Credits

**EXPLORATION** - Follow intellectual curiosity to deepen or widen learning

Total 3 credits

In addition to the above Knowledge Domains course requirements, associate degree students must complete 3 credits in any General Education area. Integrative Studies courses may be used for this requirement.

The General Education program extends the concept of flexibility to all aspects of the degree program. Penn State wants students to use General Education as an opportunity to experiment and explore, to take academic risks, to discover, and to learn.

To these ends, students may substitute a 200- to 499-level course for an Arts, Humanities, Natural Sciences, or Social and Behavioral Sciences course found on the General Education list. For example, a student may take a 400-level course in history and use it to meet the General Education requirement satisfied by a comparable lower-level history course.

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### **190-10 Criteria for General Education Courses**

Criteria for determining whether a course meets the general learning objectives of General Education.

All General Education Course proposals must be responsive to the following prompts:

1. Which of the seven General Education Learning Objective(s) will be addressed in the course? A minimum of two (2) Learning Objective must be clearly addressed in the course; it is recommended that each course address two to three (2-3) Learning Objectives and not more than four (4).
2. What component(s) of the course will help students achieve the General Education Learning Objectives covered in the course? Provide evidence that students in the course have adequate opportunities to achieve the identified Learning Objectives.
3. How will students be assessed to determine their attainment of the Learning Objective(s) of General Education covered in the course? This assessment must be included as a portion of the student's overall performance in the course.
4. Please provide a copy of the current or proposed syllabus.
5. One-time offering approval for any General Education or Integrative Studies course may be requested. Normal UFS policies for maximum number of times per title must be followed.

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### **192-00 General Education Integrative Studies Criteria**

Students must complete 6 credits in Integrative Studies coursework.

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### **192-10 General Principles for the Linked Courses Pathway**

**Delete the entire policy**

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### **192-20 General Principles for Integrative Studies: Inter-domain courses**

1. An Inter-Domain course integrates, within one course, selected perspectives, concepts, information, and knowledge from two of the following general knowledge areas: GA, GH, GHW, GN, GS, GQ, *[(add) and GWS. (end add)]*
2. Each of the General Education areas will receive approximately equal attention (in course topics, assignments, or other course components). Each such course is taught by an instructor, or team of instructors, with appropriate expertise. Course may be cross-listed or concurrent-listed but this is not required.
3. Inter-Domain courses are proposed by faculty (or teams of faculty) with expertise in the relevant disciplines represented; proposals will follow the established curricular processes for course approvals. Consultation and support from faculty in relevant fields is required.
4. Single-offering or permanent approval for the Inter-Domain Courses designation(s) may be requested. A course may be offered using single-offering approval a maximum of 3 times at a given location.
5. Course proposals will not be approved for more than two General Education designations.
6. Course proposals must explain how the intellectual frameworks and methodologies of the additional areas will be explicitly addressed in the course and practiced by the students.
7. Course proposals must describe the assessments that will be used to determine students' ability to apply integrative thinking.

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### **Student Facing Policies for Students**

#### **Appendix A.1 General Education (Baccalaureate Degree) Policies and Rules for Undergraduate Students**

**Delete entire appendix, redundant with 140-00.**

#### **Appendix A.2 General Education (Associate Degree)**

**Delete entire appendix, redundant with 160-20**

2021-2022 SENATE COMMITTEE ON CURRICULAR AFFAIRS

Adams, Jeff  
Belanger, Jonna  
Berish, Diane  
Burkholder, Joel  
Callejo, David  
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Linn, Suzanna  
Mahoney, Joseph  
Marshall, Megan  
McCloskey, Andrea  
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Robinson, Brandi  
Schulenburg, Janet  
Slattery, Maggie  
Slot, Johanna  
Sprow Forte, Karin  
Thomas, Emily  
Warner, Alfred  
Williams, Mary Beth, Chair  
Yen, John

**APPENDIX A: Memo from the Math Undergraduate Community**

**MEMORANDUM**

**To:** Nicholas Rowland, Ph.D., University Senate Chair.

**CC:** Mary Beth Williams, Ph.D., Curricular Affairs Committee Chair; Michele Stine, Ph.D., Education Committee Chair.

**From:** Charles Helou, Ph.D., Professor of Mathematics; Cesar Martinez-Garza, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Mathematics.

**Date:** September 16, 2019.

**Subject: Expedited Re-evaluation of GQ Classification for Inter-domain Courses**

The University's Undergraduate Mathematics faculty held a vote following its Spring semester meeting to ratify the current request. It is the position of the UG Mathematics faculty that our students are better served by adding the GQ classification to inter-domain courses. Qualitative analysis of advanced mathematics can be adroitly integrated with all other General Education domains with the understanding that quantification need not to be synonymous with raw computation. The review process for proposed inter-domain courses is very rigorous, so, we are confident that any approved inter-domain course involving quantification will rise to the expectations set by the University.

On behalf of the UG Mathematics faculty, we request an expedited re-evaluation of GQ as a viable domain for the creation of new inter-domain courses.

**APPENDIX B: Memo from University Park Leadership Requesting GWS not be included in Inter-domain courses**

**(Communicated via email from Mark Morrisson to Mary Beth Williams; CC Kirt Wilson and Cheryl Glenn on Sept 12, 2022)**

Rationale for exclusion of GWS from proposal

The department heads of Communication Arts & Sciences, English, and the Director of the Program in Writing in Rhetoric that oversees Engl 15 and Engl 202 ask the authors of this proposal to exclude GWS courses from the recommendation that allows GWS courses to be additionally classified as Integrative (N) courses. There are two primary reasons for this request.

First, we contend that combining N and GWS expectations and course objectives into a single course is not pedagogically sound. As the description of the GWS Foundations criteria explains, “In Writing and Speaking (GWS) courses, students do more than improve their abilities to communicate information clearly. They learn to set forth arguments persuasively and well, orally and in writing. Students should emerge from their GWS courses as more accomplished writers and speakers, competent in a wide variety of settings.” GWS courses are more than writing-intensive courses (W). They are more than just the application and refinement of communication skills to a distinctive genre of writing or speaking. A GWS course is a complex endeavor, informed by decades of research in communication and writing instruction, designed to fundamentally alter how students think, listen, interpret messages, and produce/arrange/express ideas “in a wide variety of settings.” Inter-domain courses are, by definition, the synthesis of two or more of our existing domain classifications—Arts, Humanities, Health and Wellness, Natural Sciences, and Social and Behavioral Sciences. These courses are similarly complex but also distinctive from the types of knowledge and instruction demanded by courses with the GWS designation. Providing students with the theory, contexts, and experience necessary for the Writing and Speaking requirement AND bringing students up to speed on multiple domains of knowledge--domains with a distinct history and unique traditions of inquiry--would ultimately undermine both efforts. Neither requirement would be fulfilled well in a single semester.

Our second concern involves the obstacles administrators would face in finding instructors qualified to teach both an inter-domain class and a rigorous, theoretically informed GWS course. The leaders of English, CAS, and the Rhetoric Program believe strongly in the importance of oral and written communication as both a skill that can be taught through expert instruction and a subject matter that can be researched, assessed, and refined. Longitudinal studies at the University of Long Island, Harvard, and Stanford all demonstrate the importance of sustained writing opportunities throughout a student’s college life, writing every year in every subject. However, locating instructors qualified to teach public speaking and composition courses that meet the qualifications described by those studies is challenging. If the university allowed instructors to combine the course objectives of GWS and N designations, staffing those courses would be even more difficult. The university has entrusted the departments of Communication Arts & Sciences and English to provide consistent training and support for more than 63% of GWS-designated courses and hundreds of sections each semester. Staffing these classes requires the commitment of well over two hundred instructors qualified to teach both the theories and the

practice of oral and written communication in their general application. Instructors with the training and expertise to teach both an interdomain course and a foundational course in writing and speech exist; however, the pool is not large. We do not believe GWS+N courses could be staffed with the consistency and quality necessary to warrant opening up GWS courses to inter-domain classification and the added expectations that would accompany the additional classification.