

# SECTION SEVEN

## GENERAL EDUCATION

General Education — Breadth Requirements are instituted to provide the opportunity for students to explore many disciplines before and during their major concentration of studies in one program. Instruction in the methodologies and an introduction to the range of various bodies of knowledge are given in General Education to expand the potential of each student to comprehend, adapt to, and influence a complex and rapidly changing world.

### Authority

The authority for implementing General Education curricula in the California State University is given in the California Code of Regulations, Title 5, Section 40405. This authority is further defined in CSU Executive Order 338. The campus has, over the years, established a number of policies concerning various aspects of General Education; these are noted in the document called General Education Guidelines, which is produced by the General Education Governing Committee, incorporated into this section.

CSU Executive Order 595, (at the end of this section), defines the procedures for "certification" of General Education courses by California Community Colleges and other participating regionally accredited institutions.

A course may be approved for General Education credit only when it meets the criteria of the category (ies) for which it is proposed and the rules applying to all General Education courses. An Interdisciplinary Course bearing the "IC" course number suffix must, in addition, satisfy the specific criteria for such courses. A course which is approved with Human Diversity (HD) status must also satisfy certain criteria. The General Education Guidelines should be consulted for these.

### Proposals for G.E. Courses

Proposals for approval of specific courses for General Education credit are submitted by the Dean of a college directly to the Chair of the General Education Governing Committee (GEGC), a standing committee of the Planning and Educational Policies Council. The GEGC will review each course in detail and recommend action to the Planning and Educational Policies Council. The P.E.P. Council will pass on each recommendation and submit its recommendations to the Academic Senate. The Academic Senate will recommend approval or disapproval to the President. Upon completion of this process, which takes approximately one academic year, those courses approved will be placed on the Master List of Approved General Education Courses published twice each academic year by the Associate Vice President for Instructional Programs.

### G.E. Categories

At CSULB General Education courses meet the criteria and definitions of five academic categories:

- A. Communication in the English Language and Critical Thinking
- B. The Physical Universe: Physical Sciences and Life Sciences
- C. Humanities and The Arts
- D. Social and Behavioral Sciences and The Historical Backgrounds of Human Social, Political, and Economic Institutions
- E. Self-Integration: The Physiological and Psychological Entity

Courses in American History and in American government and ideals, which are separately mandated by Title 5, Article 40404, have been integrated into the General Education requirements of Category D.

The intent of University policy is that a lower-division General Education course present the broad features of a discipline or major subdiscipline. Such courses should provide the student with factual knowledge of the area and experience in the use of prevailing methodologies. Prerequisite courses or demands for knowledge or skills beyond those required for admission to the University are appropriate

only when an approved alternative course, which does not have college-level preparatory work, is regularly offered.

Upper-division courses, approved to meet the 9-unit upper-division course unit minimum requirement, include regular courses and Interdisciplinary Courses. All such courses should provide the student with factual knowledge, at a level which may assume two years of college experience and maturity and may require a prerequisite course, and at a depth consistent with the goal of necessity to providing comparative, contrastive, and other evaluative exercises within the scope of the subdiscipline.

#### Periodic Course Review

Courses approved for General Education credit are reviewed periodically for conformance to the intent of General Education and to the originally approved course characteristics. Normally the review takes place every five years, but some courses may be reviewed more or less often to accommodate an even loading of the review process or as a result of questions raised about the course in the Program Review process or by other formal action. The review date of an approved course is shown on the Master List of Approved General Education Courses.

The Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs is responsible for maintaining and publishing the "Master List of Approved General Education Courses." The *Schedule of Classes* list of approved General Education courses is prepared from the Master List.

In all cases the list that is published in the *Schedule of Classes* is the authoritative list for that semester.

If a course is identified by the "GE" symbol in the *Schedule* listings of courses, it will be counted for General Education whether or not it is listed in the General Education List of the *Schedule*. If a course is not identified with the "GE" symbol, but is listed in the *Schedule* under one or more of the General Education categories it will count for General Education.

The Spring *Schedule of Classes* also governs the Summer sessions; the Fall *Schedule* also governs the Winter session.

# GENERAL EDUCATION GUIDELINES 1993-94

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## DOCUMENTS GOVERNING GE IN THE CURRICULUM HANDBOOK

Executive Order 595 .....	End of Section 7
Policy 79-08 (Textbooks and Faculty in Multi-Section Courses)	
Curriculum Handbook (Syllabus, Standard Course Outline, Bibliography)	
Policy 96-00 .....	End of Section 7
GE Categories by Department .....	End of Section 7
GE Instructions .....	End of Section 7
GE Checklist .....	End of Section 7
GE Paper Reduction Guidelines .....	End of Section 7

# GENERAL EDUCATION GUIDELINES

## Introduction

These Guidelines have been developed on the basis of the General Education Governing Committee's (GEGC) practices, within existing policy, in reviewing courses for inclusion in the General Education Program, and are made available to Departments and Colleges in order to assist them in the development and evaluation of courses proposed for General Education.

Underlying the Committee's practices and the policies is the principle that General Education breadth requirements are instituted in order to provide students with the opportunity to explore many disciplines before and during their major studies in one program. Instruction in the methodologies of and an introduction to various types of knowledge are offered in General Education to expand the potential of each student to comprehend, adapt to and influence a complex and rapidly changing world.

The principal policy documents which govern General Education are found in the *University Curriculum Handbook*.

## Steps in Course Approval Process

*(About one academic year will be required)*

1. Request for GE approval originates at Department level (or College level in the case of College-based courses), and is reviewed by the Department Curriculum Committee and Department Chair. If approved, it is forwarded to the College Curriculum Committee. (See page 5 for required materials.)
2. College Curriculum Committee reviews request. If approved, it is forwarded to the Dean (or designee).
3. After reviewing and signing off, the Dean (or designee) arranges for forwarding the request to the General Education Governing Committee (a standing committee of the Planning and Educational Policies [PEP] Council).

Courses that are cross-listed in more than one department/college cannot be considered by GEGC until approvals from each unit have been received by GEGC coincidentally.

4. The GEGC reviews the request. Decisions of the GEGC are based on written materials submitted. The Dean/Associate Dean, Chair of the College Curriculum Committee, and Department, are urged to attend GEGC meetings where their courses are scheduled for discussion; other faculty are always welcome. The Chair of the GEGC may, on occasion, ask College representatives for brief clarification if the written materials do not resolve questions.
5. Once each academic semester, the Chair of the GEGC forwards to the PEP Council a report of the GEGC actions/recommendations in regard to courses on the Master List of Approved GE Courses reviewed during that academic term. (These actions could be that a course continue on the GE List, be deleted from it, be added to it or to a different or additional category, have IC status added or deleted or its projected review date changed or the like.)
6. PEP Council reviews the recommendation. If approved, it is forwarded to the Academic Senate.
7. Academic Senate reviews the recommendation. If approved, it is forwarded to the Provost of the University for final action.
8. After the Provost's action, approved courses are placed on the Master List of Approved General Education Courses, which is published twice each academic year by the Associate Vice-President for Academic Affairs.

## Periodic Review of Approved Courses

*(The same steps are followed, as outlined on p. 4)*

*(The same materials are required, as listed on p. 5)*

All approved courses are reviewed at least every 5 years.

This review is to assure conformity to current General Education Policy.

When a course is scheduled to be reviewed, as indicated on the Master List of Approved General Education Courses, the Chair of the GEGC will notify the College Dean, with a copy to the Department Chair. This notice will include the deadline for receipt of the materials. In calculating the 15-week period

established by policy (96-00) for submission of the requested materials the Chair will include only time within the regular semesters.

Failure to submit a course to the GEGC for review by the deadline indicated on the memorandum of the GEGC request for materials will be interpreted as a Departmental and/or College request to delete the course from the General Education Program and will be so honored.

Substantive changes to any course on the Master List of Approved General Education Courses will necessitate an immediate review.

Substantive changes include changes in title, description, number of units, instructional level. Such changes will be monitored by means of the curricular certification process.

Requests for approval in additional or different General Education Categories, including IC and HD status, will result in a complete review of the course for previously approved categories as well as new categories.

#### Before Submitting a Request for GE Approval

One should be aware of several considerations before submitting a request to have a course approved for General Education.

In serving the breadth requirement of the baccalaureate degree, GE courses must acquaint students with both the subject matter and the methodologies of the various discipline categories. Except when specifically noted in category criteria statements, courses in each category should explicitly demonstrate what sorts of questions are studied by those disciplines, what kinds of evidence are sought, how evidence is interpreted and used. It is expected that whenever it is appropriate, students will have opportunity to work with original sources, either in the original language or in translation. Opportunity should be provided, whenever possible, for students to work with complete works as well.

General Education courses should be designed to permit instructors to show students why those who work in the field find the subject matter interesting and valuable, how the subject matter is related to other fields and why the subject has relevance for the student's life and educational objectives.

All GE courses must demonstrably encourage development of skills in critical thinking and/or problem solving, as well as in written and/or oral communication. Such skills development must be especially evident in lower-division courses in order to comply with the intention of Executive Order 595.

Course components designed to develop writing and/or oral skills might include such items as discursive writing on examinations, papers, laboratory reports, journals, oral reports, and participation in class discussions if the course is so organized that every student is expected to participate. (See page 6 for additional expectations for Interdisciplinary Courses).

Course components and teaching strategies designed to develop problem-solving and/or critical thinking skills will vary considerably according to the disciplines involved, but might include such exercises as numerical problem-solving, logical thinking, evaluation of evidence, critiques of published writings and reports, and/or experience requiring the drawing of conclusions.

Faculty assigned to teach General Education courses should be demonstrably qualified not only to present the subject matter of the courses but also to demonstrate the methodologies and viewpoints of the discipline Category for which it is approved. They should strive to engender interest and enthusiasm in students for the subject matter and the analytical processes inherent in the subject matter.

#### Materials Which Must Accompany All Requests for GE Approval

*(Within GE Paper Reduction Limits)*

*(Consult GE Checklist)*

1. "GE" Form: "Request for Approval of a Course for General Education Credit." Must be signed by the Department Chair, College Curriculum Committee Chair, and Dean of the College (or designee).
2. Course Syllabi (the individual faculty member's "plan of action" for a particular offering of the course): For the last two semesters offered a) From all instructors of single section courses, or b) Representative syllabi for multisection courses.

Syllabi include:

- a. Week by Week outline of topics to be covered and assignments.
  - b. Required and recommended readings.
  - c. Basis for course grade.
3. Standard Course Outline (the document that governs individual instructor syllabi): Contains catalog description, statement of course objectives, outline — either thematic and/or sequential — of the subject matter to be covered, instructional requirements for all faculty teaching the course, which might include specification of text(s), mandatory course assignments, exam types and percentage of course grade to be assigned to various course requirements. (See Appendix 4.3.)
  4. Sample examinations, term paper topics, course projects. These are especially important for interdisciplinary and human diversity courses, since they illustrate the ways students are expected to integrate the different disciplines, and/or address specific requirements.
  5. Information on course components which are designed to develop oral and/or writing skills.
  6. Information on course components and teaching strategies which are designed to develop problem solving and/or critical thinking skills.
  7. More extensive bibliography, such as reserve book list, instructor's bibliography, annotated bibliography for students, significant journals, etc. In the case of multiple section courses, the bibliographies of all instructors for past two semester offerings should be included. In all cases, the bibliography should include the currently most important works in the field as appropriate to the course, as well as the works and journals actually used in the course.
  8. If film is used in the course, or other audio-visual materials, indicate in the week-by-week outline what in-class time is devoted to such materials, and clarify the relationship between viewing/listening and the academic activity of the course. In addition, provide information as to why the activity requires in-class viewing/listening rather than out-of-class preparation time. (The GEGC wishes to be assured that such in-class viewing/listening does not constitute a substitute for in-class interaction between the instructor and the students. Additional concern arises when as much as one-third of class time is spent in such activity.)

#### Special Considerations for IC (Interdisciplinary) Courses

1. IC courses must be upper-division courses. Each course must include English 100 or its equivalent, and Upper Division Status as minimum stated prerequisites.
2. Other prerequisites for IC courses are appropriate and are encouraged, since IC courses are intended to assist students in the synthesis or analysis of disciplinary knowledge and perspectives. (See pp. 6-7 for discussion of synthesizing and analyzing types of IC courses.) Prerequisites (other than in Item 1 above) should normally be lower-division courses available in the General Education Program.

There should be some expectation that students have already taken some General Education courses that provide at least some introduction to the nature of the subject matter to be covered in the IC course. IC courses are meant to be advanced courses which call upon students to "coordinate the varying intellectual tools of their education" and therefore presume previous development of learning skills which can now be brought to bear integrative learning experiences.

3. IC courses must contain a substantial writing component. The GEGC looks for opportunity for the students to develop writing skills as the course progresses, and expects evidence of early and on-going writing assignments. Such development requires a series of several writing exercises that are corrected and provide feedback, not only on content but also on organized coherence and integration of disciplinary perspectives.

#### Types of IC Courses

Both INTERDISCIPLINARY and MULTIDISCIPLINARY courses may be proposed for the upper division General Education IC requirement (see Policy 79-16).

The GEGC recognizes that these two types of approaches may on occasion overlap, but the following guidelines are intended to clarify the theoretical distinctions between INTERDISCIPLINARY and MULTIDISCIPLINARY courses and the GEGC expectations in regard to both.

In BOTH types of courses, the burden is upon the instructor to teach equally the facts and the methodological approaches to accumulating and evaluating those facts from each of the disciplines involved. An explicit identification of premises and sources is necessary to help students develop the ability to dif-

ferentiate evidence from interpretation of evidence, and to recognize the scope and limitation inherent in each methodology and perspective.

Thus, in a course where literature and history are combined, for example, the methodologies of both disciplines should be clarified in the analysis of any literary or historical texts. The mere use of materials associated with a discipline does not of itself make a course either interdisciplinary or multidisciplinary. (For example, the incorporation of novels or of a sociological study in the reading list of a class would not be considered as adequate to make the course an IC course.)

In any IC course, the number of disciplines whose perspectives are involved would ordinarily be limited to two or three in order for the required synthesis or analysis to take place in an effective manner.

#### The Interdisciplinary IC Course

The course "exhibits interaction among disciplines in the approach to its subject matter, whether that results in mutual benefit or in stresses between or among disciplines." (See Policy 80-06)

The perspectives of discrete disciplines are retained while being focused on a common object. For example, the concept of "underdevelopment" could be analyzed from the perspectives of geography, political science, history, economics, or cultural anthropology.

#### The Multidisciplinary IC Course

It is logical to assume that the multidisciplinary course results in the student's heightened awareness of the conflicts which revolve around a common object when divergent perspectives are focused on it.

In the case of a MULTIDISCIPLINARY type of IC course, the GEGC expects instructors to be familiar with the relationships which already exist between and among the contributing disciplines.

#### Special Considerations for HD (Human Diversity) Courses

HD courses reflect the University's commitment to foster respect for human diversity in its General Education program in compliance with CSU Executive Order 595. HD courses are specifically designed to focus attention on the significant influence of various populations and cultures within the United States.

HD courses should deal with both theoretic and practical issues of race, ethnicity and gender, and provide a comparative treatment of no fewer than two nationally significant ethnic cultures from among the African American, Asian American, Latino American and Native American cultures.

A comparative treatment of the significance of gender should be included in the course.

HD courses meeting the above criteria (Policy 96-00) shall allow for consideration of special needs, class, sexual orientation, language, religion and other distinctions which reflect the diversity of the United States.

#### Special Considerations for Non-IC Upper Division Courses

Upper division courses for General Education should be broadening in aim and subject matter. Lower division prerequisites are appropriate, but should normally be limited to courses regularly available to students in the General Education program. Any background experience expected of students is to be of an introductory nature and is to be spelled out in prerequisite form.

#### Inappropriate Courses

Certain types of upper-division courses are inherently INAPPROPRIATE for the General Education Program:

1. Courses available for graduate credit (upper-division courses marked with an asterisk (\*) in the Catalog, or double-numbered courses which pair an undergraduate and 500 or 600 numbered graduate-level course.)
2. Advanced disciplinary courses, with or without stated prerequisites.
3. Courses specifically designed for and required of majors.
4. Courses with prerequisite expectations that cannot normally be met within the context of the GE program.
5. Specialized courses with limited focus in subject matter, perspective and/or methodology.

### Potentially Appropriate Courses

Other types of upper-division non-IC courses quite logically may be potentially appropriate for General Education:

1. Broad-based courses, including some courses required in the major which may have limited lower-division prerequisites that are normally available in the General Education program.
2. Courses with focused subject matter which demonstrate wideranging implications of the subject.
3. Courses designed for non-majors and/or open only to non-majors.

### Special Considerations for "International Category" (D.2.a)

This requirement is intended to acquaint students with world cultures and societies other than our own. Therefore, courses which have a substantial component devoted to the United States are generally not appropriate.

Courses in this category should be broad and international in scope. They should embrace major world regions and ordinarily should not be devoted to single countries.

They should focus primarily on the societies and cultures themselves, in an international context, rather than on theory, and should be broad enough to help students understand modern societies and their problems.

### Summary

The General Education Governing Committee members may also utilize, in addition to the preceding considerations and the policy documents in the *Curriculum Handbook*, and checklist of general characteristics (see GE Checklist and Instructions attached). These general characteristics constitute only one level of review.

Specific characteristics for proposed categories are also considered, as spelled out in Executive Order 595 and Policy 96-00.

IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT IN ITS DELIBERATIONS, THE GEGC RELIES ON THE ACTUAL COURSE MATERIALS SUBMITTED, AS INDICATED ON THE GE FORM AND ON PAGE 5 OF THIS PACKET OF GUIDELINES.

### Challenges to GEGC Actions

A Department or College may appeal decision of the GEGC (Policy 96-00) by:

1. Forwarding a memorandum to the Chair of the GEGC requesting reconsideration of a GEGC decision  
AND
2. Supporting that request with additional information/documentation to demonstrate how or why the original decision of the GEGC was in error.

An appeal to the GEGC must precede the last meeting of the Committee prior to action on the biannual supplement in order for the matter to be reconsidered before the GEGC semester-end list of actions/recommendations is forwarded to the PEP Council (See Item 5 under Steps in the Approval Process, page 2 of this document)

Decisions of the GEGC can also be appealed at the PEP council at the time the GEGC actions/recommendations appear on its agenda as a consent item. Appeals to the PEP Council are initiated by the College, not the Department, and are directed to the Chair of the PEP Council.

The PEP Council will:

1. Refer the course back to the GEGC for reconsideration. Reconsideration requires the College to submit additional information/documentation to demonstrate how or why it believes that the original GEGC decision was in error.
2. Request that the GEGC forward in writing the rationale for its decision after such reconsideration if its decision is to uphold the original action.

3. Request the College to provide copies of all original materials submitted to the GEGC upon which the GEGC decision was made for members of the PEP Council.

These materials must be distributed to the PEP Council members prior to the meeting in which the matter is to be considered. Oral presentations are permitted at this meeting. Decisions of the PEP Council are final on matters of GEGC course appeal.

#### Postscript

Questions, concerns, and/or suggestions regarding the General Education Guidelines should be addressed to the Chair of the General Education Governing Committee.

Revised Spring 1993