

California State University, Long Beach Policy Statement xx.xx  
GENERAL EDUCATION

[This policy supersedes PS 00-00, which was compiled from and supersedes the following policy statements: 71-21, 71-23, 72-03, 72-15, 73-05, 73-09, 75-02, 76-04, 77-29, 78-23, 79-16, 79-20, 79-28, 80-06, 80-06 supplements #1(1983), #2(1987), and #3(1987), 81-11, 81-11 supplement #1 (1982), 81-11 amended (1985), 81-11 amended(1988), 83-04, 83-04 supplements #1(1985) and #2(1987), 87-01, 91-00 91-00 (Rev.)(1994), 96-00, and 98-00]

This policy was recommended by the Academic Senate on xxxx and confirmed by the president on  
xxxx.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. The components of an undergraduate education include the major, in which the student acquires depth of knowledge, electives that allow a student to explore personal or career-related interests, and General Education (GE). General Education allows students to develop competency in academic skills that are essential to all academic majors. In addition, General Education offers students broad knowledge beyond the focus of the major, as well as exposure to the rich diversity of the human experience. General Education should foster habits of mind that lead to lifelong learning and prepare graduates for full and productive lives.
- 1.2. The General Education program at CSULB sequentially introduces students to the mastery of academic skills along with a pattern of course work that will provide graduates with an understanding of self, the physical world, the development and functioning of human society, and its cultural and artistic endeavors, as well as an understanding of the methodologies, value systems, and thought processes employed in human inquiries. It involves three stages: Foundation, Explorations, and Capstone. Students who begin their college careers at CSULB will complete all three stages, while transfer students who enter the university with a certified General Education transfer program will be expected to complete the final (Capstone) stage only.
- 1.3. General Education breadth requirements are specified in California Code of Regulations, Title 5, Article 40405, and in Executive Order 595.
- 1.4. Each California State University, Long Beach baccalaureate graduate shall have completed a minimum of 48 semester units of GE courses distributed as described in section 5, below. The GE program includes three (3) units of approved course work in U.S. history and three (3) units of approved course work in U.S. Constitution and American ideals required by Section 40404 of Title 5 and EO 405 (see categories D.1.a. and D.1.b., below).
- 1.5. In addition to periodic review of courses and program assessment, several other areas are important to the health of the General Education program. These areas include the following:
  - faculty development and curricular innovation and improvement, including programs that offer incentives for faculty involvement in General Education
  - support for programs designed to create learning communities

- provision of adequate numbers of course sections at times that meet student needs and in patterns that permit the formation of learning communities
- collaboration across academic units to create pathways and to offer courses in sequences and at times that facilitate their inclusion in pathways
- establishment of program enforcement mechanisms that help rather than hinder student progress through the program
- communication with feeder community colleges regarding the CSULB GE program

2. THE ESSENTIAL GE STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES ARE<sup>1</sup>:

**2.1 Knowledge of Human Cultures and the Physical and Natural World**

- Achieved through study in the Sciences and Mathematics, Social Sciences, Humanities, Histories, Languages, and the Arts

**2.2 Intellectual and Practical Skills, including**

- Written Communication
- Oral Communication
- Critical Thinking
- Quantitative Reasoning
- Information Literacy and Technology Literacy
- Teamwork
- Creativity, Inquiry, and Discovery

**2.3. Personal and Civic Responsibility, including**

- Global Competencies
- Intercultural Competence (cultural values/traditions-U.S.)
- Ethical Reasoning and Social Responsibility
- Self-Understanding
- Foundation and Skills for Lifelong Learning

## 2.4. **Integrative Learning**, including

- Synthesis and Interdisciplinary Methods of Inquiry

## 3. STRUCTURE OF THE GENERAL EDUCATION CURRICULUM

- 3.1. The General Education curriculum is organized as three sequential phases. The first is the Foundation, a group of courses designed to provide fundamental learning skills. The second is Explorations, courses distributed across the curriculum that are intended to provide an opportunity to explore the various way of acquiring and examining knowledge while continuing to develop learning skills. The third is the Capstone, designed to integrate knowledge and skills developed earlier in the curriculum.
- 3.2. In completing the Foundation, Explorations, and Capstone phases of the General Education program, all students must complete a distribution pattern described in section 4, below.
- 3.3. Within the Explorations and Capstone courses of the General Education program, all students must take one 3unit course of instruction that focuses on instructive examples of human diversity in the United States (Human Diversity in the U.S. courses). All students must also take one three (3) unit course of instruction that focuses on global issues or world societies and cultures (Global Issues courses).
- 3.4. At least nine (9) units of the General Education program must be approved upper-division Capstone courses taken after the student achieves upper-division standing (completion of 60 semester units) and must normally be completed at California State University, Long Beach (see special requirements).
- 3.5. **Foundation**
  - 3.5.1. The first-year program at CSULB should pay special attention to the development and improvement of fundamental academic skills that are critical to student success in college. Every CSULB student will be expected to demonstrate mastery of key academic skills early in the course of study at CSULB, ideally within the first-year. Among the skills most central to success are communication in English, both written and oral, mathematical concepts and quantitative reasoning, and analytical and critical thinking. Students also need a solid foundation in skills for learning, including the ability to read for information, information retrieval literacy skills, and basic technology skills.
  - 3.5.2. All students are assessed at entry into the university for readiness for baccalaureate-level work in English composition and mathematics. The first priority for any student who is not prepared for baccalaureate-level work is to become fully prepared for college. Accordingly, students who have not demonstrated readiness for baccalaureate-level English or mathematics must complete the appropriate pre-baccalaureate courses within the first- year after admission to CSULB. A student who is required to take either pre-baccalaureate mathematics or pre-baccalaureate composition may register for other 100-level Foundation or other General Education classes only if those courses do not have pre- or co-requisites in the area of deficit.

3.5.3. The following courses make up the Foundation curriculum:

- one three (3) unit course in Written Communication in English
- one three (3) unit course in Oral Communication in English
- one three (3) unit course in Critical Thinking
- one three (3) unit course in Mathematics

(Detailed descriptions of these categories are found in section 7, below.)

3.5.4. These courses should emphasize foundational learning skills.

3.5.5. The above courses must all be completed with a grade of at least "C".

3.5.6. The Foundation curriculum must be completed by the time the student has completed 36 units of baccalaureate-level work at CSULB.

3.5.7. Courses in the Foundation curriculum will be numbered from 100 to 199. All other General Education courses must have pre- or co-requisites from the Foundation curriculum, and all General Education courses numbered 300 or higher must have the entire Foundation curriculum as prerequisites. A Foundation course may have a pre- or co-requisite of another Foundation class, if educationally justified.

### 3.6. Explorations

3.6.1. After an early focus on fundamental learning and academic skills, students will have an opportunity to explore human knowledge in many disciplines. The Explorations stage encompasses all areas outside the Foundation curriculum, as described under "Distribution." It excludes the final nine (9) units of General Education, described under "Capstone."

3.6.2. General Education courses numbered from 100 through 199 may be appropriately taken at the same time as courses in the Foundation curriculum; however, the General Education Governing Committee will establish expectations for such courses that will acknowledge the nature of the student audience with at least some focus on essential learning skills. Courses that demonstrably integrate skills and content or content-focused courses that are linked to skills courses are especially suitable for this level.

3.6.3. Although the primary purpose of Explorations is the development of breadth of knowledge, it is expected that all courses will offer opportunities for continued development of foundational skills. Reading, writing, oral discussion and presentation, problem solving, quantitative reasoning, and critically- and analytically based research are central to the learning of content. For this reason, all courses outside the Foundation must have pre- or co-requisites from the Foundation, and all courses numbered 300 or higher must have the entire Foundation curriculum as prerequisites.

3.6.4. In addition, as students progress through their Explorations, they will be expected to develop additional skills and attributes, including ethical reasoning, analytical reading, creativity, respect for difference, awareness of other cultures, questioning of stereotypes, the values of citizenship, negotiating skills, and other attributes of use in a diverse society. Courses at this level will be evaluated for their attention to one or more of these areas and to Foundational skills, as well as content.

### 3.7. **Capstone**

3.7.1. The final nine (9) General Education units form the Capstone. All students, including transfer students who have completed a certified lower-division General Education program, must complete nine (9) units of Capstone courses.

3.7.2. The purpose of the Capstone is to bring the strands of the General Education experience into focus, to reinforce knowledge and skills acquired from many areas, and to incorporate depth in the form of more sophisticated tools and analysis, if not necessarily in terms of content knowledge. For transfer students, the Capstone may offer an opportunity to connect to the campus in a learning community outside of the major department.

3.7.3. Capstone General Education courses shall be upper-division. These courses will have as prerequisites the entire Foundation curriculum along with one or more Explorations courses and upper-division standing. All courses at this level must demonstrably develop advanced college skills, including writing, synthesis and application of knowledge, analysis, critique, and research.

## 4. GENERAL REGULATIONS

4.1. Only courses on the General Education Master Course List at the time the student takes the course shall count for General Education.

4.2. To ensure that every course in the General Education program contributes to student achievement of the goals of the entire program, all course syllabi for approved General Education courses must include information on the expected GE learning outcomes to be addressed in the course. It is not expected that every GE course will address every outcome; faculty are strongly encouraged to tailor specific course learning outcomes to a subset of the GE learning outcomes and to explain how those will be addressed in the particular course.

4.3. Because the program is intended to provide breadth, no more than 10 units of General Education courses in the student's major department may be used to satisfy the GE requirements. General Education courses must be on the approved list at the time the student takes the course. "Courses in the major department" include all courses housed in the department offering the major, regardless of prefix. (For example, courses in French and in Italian are in the same department.)

4.4. In some cases, two previously separate disciplines offering separate programs have been placed within a single department for administrative purposes (for example, Comparative World Literature and Classics). Such disciplines may request to be considered as separate

departments for purposes of this restriction. The request must be approved by the Curriculum and Educational Policies Council.

- 4.5. There is no limit to the number of units outside the major department that may be used to satisfy both the requirements for the major and the requirements for General Education.
- 4.6. Where appropriate exams exist, Foundation and Explorations requirements may be met by external examinations, such as Advanced Placement or International Baccalaureate exams.
- 4.7. A cross-categorized course may be counted (at the student's option) in any one of the approved categories A-E, but not in more than one.
- 4.8. No course may be designated as meeting both the Global Issues and Human Diversity in the U.S. requirements.
- 4.9. Because General Education is a breadth requirement, students will normally have no prior experience in the discipline beyond an introductory course. Therefore, upper-division courses designed primarily for students majoring in the discipline will not be acceptable for the General Education program. Any course that has requisites that are not on the General Education Master Course List will need justification as to why such courses must be requisites and why such requisites will not unduly restrict enrollment.
- 4.10. No course identified in the catalog as available for credit in a graduate program will be permitted for General Education credit. Double-numbered courses (400 and 500 level) may not be used for General Education credit.
- 4.11. General Education courses may be offered in various formats and instructional modes and in various time frames. Departments have the burden of demonstrating that the General Education objectives and the expectations of student performance are maintained in all formats in which the course is taught.
- 4.12. Transfer courses may be used to meet the Capstone, Global Issues, and Human Diversity in the U.S. requirements only under the conditions shown in sections 8, 9, and 10.

## 5. DISTRIBUTION REQUIREMENT

Students must complete a minimum of 48 units of approved General Education courses, distributed as follows:

Category A. -- At least nine (9) units in Communication in the English Language and Critical Thinking

Category B. -- At least nine (9) units in Natural Sciences and Mathematics

Category C. -- At least nine (9) units in the Arts and Humanities

Category D. -- At least 12 units in Citizenship and Social and Behavioral Sciences and History

Category E. -- At least three (3) units in Self-Integration

Additional courses chosen from the list of approved General Education courses in Categories

B, C, and D to bring the total to a minimum of 48 units.

- 5.1. Category A -- Communication in the English Language and Critical Thinking (all included in the Foundation) -- At least nine (9) units to include:
  - 5.1.1. Category A.1. -- At least three (3) units chosen from approved courses in Written Communication in English
  - 5.1.2. Category A.2. -- At least three (3) units chosen from approved courses in Oral Communication in English or a combination of oral and written communication in English.
  - 5.1.3. Category A.3. -- At least three (3) units chosen from approved courses in Critical Thinking.
- 5.2. Category B -- Natural Sciences and Mathematics -- At least nine (9) units to include
  - 5.2.1. Category B.1. -- At least six (6) units of Natural Sciences to include
    - 5.2.1.1. Category B.1.a. -- At least three (3) units chosen from approved courses in the Biological Sciences, which must include a laboratory experience
    - 5.2.1.2. Category B.1.b. -- At least three (3) units chosen from approved courses in the Physical Sciences, which must include a laboratory experience
  - 5.2.2. Category B.2. -- At least three (3) units of study chosen from approved courses in Mathematics (included in the Foundation)
- 5.3. Category C. -- the Arts and Humanities -- At least nine (9) units to include:
  - 5.3.1. Category C.1. -- At least three (3) units chosen from approved courses in the Arts
  - 5.3.2. Category C.2. -- At least six (6) units from 2 areas chosen from approved courses in the Humanities chosen from
    - 5.3.2.1. Category C.2.a. --Literature,
    - 5.3.2.2. Category C.2.b. -- Philosophy, and
    - 5.3.2.3. Category C.2.c. -- Foreign Languages
- 5.4. Category D -- Citizenship and Social and Behavioral Sciences and History -- At least 12 units to include
  - 5.4.1. Category D.1. -- At least six (6) units chosen from approved courses in U.S. Citizenship
    - 5.4.1.1. Category D.1.a. -- At least three (3) units chosen from approved courses in U.S.

## History

- 5.4.1.2. Category D.1.b. -- At least three (3) units chosen from approved courses in the Constitution and American Ideals
  - 5.4.2. Category D.2. -- At least six (6) units, from two different disciplines, chosen from approved courses in the Social and Behavioral Sciences and History
  - 5.5. Category E -- At least three (3) units chosen from approved courses in Self-Integration
  - 5.6. Additional courses to reach the minimum total of 48 units may be chosen from any courses approved for General Education credit in categories B, C, and D. This includes both courses that fit the specific designations above and other approved courses, designated as B.3 or C.3, that meet the general headings of category B or C but do not fit one of the specific required categories.
  - 5.7. Special requirements -- All students, including all transfer students, must complete:
    - 5.7.1. at least 3 units from the above categories devoted to the study of Human Diversity in the United States, and
    - 5.7.2. at least 3 units from the above categories devoted to the study of Global Issues.
  - 5.8. Capstone Requirements -- All students, including all transfer students, must complete at least 9 units of Capstone courses. Capstone courses may be used to meet the specific category requirements and the Global Issues and Human Diversity in the U.S. requirements, if those have not been met by other courses.
    - 5.8.1. Students are expected to complete the Capstone requirement at CSULB. An exception will be made for students who transfer from another CSU campus after completing some of the upper-division GE requirement at that campus. To be accepted toward the Capstone requirement at CSULB, the transfer course must be approved for upper division general education credit at the campus offering the course. Other courses may be used, on an individual basis, to meet the requirement if they are approved for General Education at the campus offering the course and if the purpose of the course meets the criteria for a CSULB Capstone course.
    - 5.8.2. Students who transfer from baccalaureate institutions other than the CSU after completing upper-division General Education courses may petition to have one or more such courses accepted toward the Capstone requirement. Such petitions will be evaluated on the basis of the criteria above.
6. GE REQUIREMENTS FOR RETURNING AND TRANSFER STUDENTS
- 6.1. Students who have not maintained continuous attendance status shall be subject to the General Education requirements in effect at the time of their reentry to the university, with the following exceptions.
    - 6.1.1. Previous CSULB students who were under earlier General Education requirements and who before breaking continuous attendance needed no more than three additional

courses to complete the entire General Education requirement shall be allowed to complete the General Education requirement in effect at the time of the previous attendance. However, all students must complete at least 9 units of upper division General Education courses, of which a minimum of 6 units must be Capstone courses.

- 6.1.2. Previous CSULB students who were under the earlier General Education requirements and who before breaking continuous attendance completed one or more upper-division GE courses shall be required to complete additional Capstone courses as needed to complete the total of 9 upper-division units. At least two of the courses in the overall program must be Capstone courses.
- 6.2. Transfer students who enter CSULB with full GE certification from a California Community College must complete both the Human Diversity in the U.S. and the Global Issues requirements if these requirements were not met through transfer, but these students need not complete any other GE courses except the Capstone, which cannot be met through transfer from a community college. Transfer students who enter CSULB without full GE certification from a California Community College must complete the CSULB General Education requirements.
7. GENERAL EDUCATION COURSE CONTENT CRITERIA (sections enclosed with quotation marks are quoted from EO 595)
  - 7.1. All courses in the General Education program must demonstrably encourage development of academic skills. At the Foundation stage, these skills will focus on written and oral communication, critical thinking and problem solving, or mathematics and quantitative reasoning.
  - 7.2. Foundation Courses  
Because of the nature of the courses that constitute the Foundation, it is expected that classes will be organized either as small groups or as large lectures with small group discussions, activities, or workshops. Although no explicit class size limit will be set for other General Education classes targeted to first-year students, the GEGC will consider whether the proposed modes of instruction are consistent with the learning objectives of the course and the level.
  - 7.3. Courses beyond the Foundation level must continue to enhance the Foundation skills, as well as to build additional skills as indicated in the descriptions of the specific levels and categories. Instruction approved to fulfill the General Education requirements “should recognize the contributions to knowledge and civilization that have been made by members of various cultural groups and by both men and women.” Wherever appropriate, the content of courses should include examples of the relationship of human and cultural diversity to the subject matter.
  - 7.4. General Education courses should include, as an integral component of teaching, sensitivity to different points of view and diverse learning methods.
  - 7.5. University 100 (1 unit): Introduction to the University. This course is a graduation requirement for students entering as lower-division students and is not considered a General Education requirement. It shall be developed collaboratively by the faculty

teaching it and shall be pedagogically coordinated with the skills and content of the first-year curriculum. The course shall introduce students to the history of universities (including the history, mission, and character of CSULB) and current issues in higher education. It shall introduce students to the use of academic research libraries and introduce them to the skills essential for success in an academic environment.

## 7.6 Category A: Communication in the English Language and Critical Thinking

### 7.6.1. Category A.1., Written Communication in English, and A.2., Oral Communication in English criteria

“Instruction approved for fulfillment of the requirement in communication is to be designed to emphasize the content of communication as well as the form and should provide an understanding of the psychological basis and the social significance of communication, including how communication operates in various situations. Applicable course(s) should view communication as the process of human symbolic interaction focusing on the communicative process from the rhetorical perspective: reasoning and advocacy, organization, accuracy; the discovery, critical evaluation and reporting of information; reading and listening effectively as well as speaking and writing. This must include active participation and practice in written communication and oral communication.”

### 7.6.2. Category A.3., Critical Thinking criteria

“Instruction in critical thinking is to be designed to achieve an understanding of the relationship of language to logic, which should lead to the ability to analyze, criticize, and advocate ideas; to reason inductively and deductively; and to reach factual or judgmental conclusions based on sound inferences drawn from unambiguous statements of knowledge or belief. The minimal competence to be expected at the successful conclusion of instruction in critical thinking should be the demonstration of skills in elementary inductive and deductive processes, including an understanding of the formal and informal fallacies of language and thought, and the ability to distinguish matters of fact from issues of judgment or opinion.”

## 7.7. Category B: Natural Sciences and Mathematics

### 7.7.1. Category B.1., Natural Sciences criteria

“Instruction approved for the fulfillment of this requirement is intended to impart knowledge of the facts and principles which form the foundations of living and non-living systems. Such studies should promote understanding and appreciation of the methodologies of science as investigative tools, the limitations of scientific endeavors: namely, what is the evidence and how was it derived? In addition, particular attention should be given to the influence which the acquisition of scientific knowledge has had on the development of the world's civilizations, not only as expressed in the past but also in present times.” Courses in this category may include lecture/laboratory courses or combinations of a lecture course and a separate but related laboratory course.

### 7.7.2. Category B.2., Mathematics criteria

“In specifying inquiry into mathematical concepts and quantitative reasoning and their application, the intention is not to imply merely basic computational skills, but to

encourage as well the understanding of basic mathematical concepts.”

- 7.7.3. Category B.3., Additional Natural Sciences and Mathematics criteria  
All courses in B.1. and B.2. are also in B.3. This category includes, in addition, courses that fit the general criteria for category B but do not meet other criteria for completion of the General Education program, mainly courses that do not qualify for B.1 because they do not include a laboratory.

7.8. Category C: Humanities and the Arts

- 7.8.1. Category C.1., Arts, C.2.a., Literature, and C.2.b., Philosophy criteria  
“Instruction approved for the fulfillment of this requirement should cultivate intellect, imagination, sensibility, and sensitivity. It is meant in part to encourage students to respond subjectively as well as objectively to experience and to develop a sense of the integrity of emotional and intellectual response. Students should be motivated to cultivate and refine their affective as well as cognitive and physical faculties through studying great works of the human imagination, which could include active participation in individual esthetic, creative experience. Equally important is the intellectual examination of the subjective response, thereby increasing awareness and appreciation in the traditional humanistic disciplines such as art, dance, drama, literature, and music.” The arts disciplines of film and design are also included in this category. Therefore, courses used to meet this category must address the cultural and aesthetic context of the experience. “The requirement should result in the students’ better understanding of the interrelationship between the creative arts, the humanities and self. Studies in these areas should include exposure to both Western cultures and non-Western cultures.”

- 7.8.2. Category C.2.c., Foreign Languages criteria  
“Foreign language courses may be included in this requirement because of their implications for cultures both in their linguistic structures and in their use in literature; but foreign language courses which are approved to meet a portion of this requirement are to contain a cultural component and not be solely skill acquisition courses. “

- 7.8.3. Category C.3., Additional Humanities and the Arts criteria  
All courses in C.1. and C.2. are also in C.3. Additional courses in this category must meet the general humanities criteria above but need not also fit into one of the specific subcategories.

7.9. Category D: Citizenship and Social and Behavioral Sciences and History

- 7.9.1. Category D.1.a., U.S. History criteria  
The purpose of this requirement is to foster in students an awareness of the United States experience and of the people, institutions, circumstances, and events in United States history that have shaped contemporary conditions, as provided for in Title 5, Article 40404. The requirement is intended to enable students to function as responsible and constructive citizens. Courses meeting this requirement should, at a minimum, include the following:  
a. an analysis of the significant events occurring within the entire territory of the

United States, including the relationships among regions within that area and relationships with external regions and powers, as appropriate

- b. a chronological span of not less than 100 years
- c. an examination of the nature and extent of the continuity of the United States experience within itself and with the cultures from which it is derived
- d. consideration of the relationship of such factors as geography, religion, natural resources, economics, cultural diversity, and politics to the development of the nation during the time period covered
- e. coverage of the role of national, economic, ethnic, gender, and socioeconomic groups in the events described
- f. introduction to the groups and individual leaders who have been instrumental in the development of the United States
- g. attention to the phenomenon of conflict (or change) as a variable in the United States national experience

7.9.2. Category D.1.b., Constitution and American Ideals criteria

The purpose of this requirement is to give students a comprehensive understanding of and appreciation for American political institutions and processes established by the United States Constitution and the California state constitutions, as provided for in Title 5, Article 40404. Students will acquire the knowledge and skills essential to effective political participation and citizenship. All courses meeting this requirement must at a minimum include the following:

- a. the political philosophy of the framers of the Constitution and the nature and operation of United States political institutions and processes that operate under the Constitution as amended and interpreted
- b. the rights and obligations of citizens in the political system established under that Constitution
- c. principles and practices of political organization, including political parties, interest groups, legislative politics, and campaign practices
- d. analysis of the American citizenry, including political culture and voting behavior
- e. constitutionally and legislatively established administrative and regulatory institutions including analysis of bureaucracies and their impact on citizens at the national, state, and local levels
- f. the constitution of the state of California within a framework of the historical evolution of the state and the nature of the processes of state and local government under that constitution
- g. the nature of federalism, including the relationship of federal to state and local practices, the resolution of jurisdictional conflicts, and the political processes involved

7.9.3. Category D.2, Social and Behavioral Sciences and History criteria

“Instruction approved for fulfillment of this requirement should reflect the fact that human social, political and economic institutions and behavior are inextricably interwoven. Problems and issues in these areas should be examined in their contemporary as well as historical settings, including both Western and non-Western contexts.”

7.10. Category E, Self-Integration criteria

“Instruction approved for fulfillment of this requirement should facilitate understanding of the

human being as an integrated physiological, social, and psychological organism. Courses developed to meet this requirement are intended to include selective consideration of such matters as human behavior, sexuality, nutrition, health, stress, key relationships of humankind to the social and physical environment, and implications of death and dying. Physical activity could be included, provided that it is an integral part of the study described herein.”

## 8. CAPSTONE COURSES

### 8.1. General criteria for Capstone courses:

- 8.1.1. All Capstone courses must demonstrably develop advanced college skills, including synthesis and application of knowledge, analysis, critique, and research. Capstone courses are intended to help students integrate knowledge and skills developed earlier in the curriculum, working at a more advanced level than in Explorations courses. Therefore, Capstone courses must require as prerequisites upper-division standing, completion of the entire Foundation, and one or more courses from the Explorations stage. No section of any capstone course should have more than 35 enrolled students.
- 8.1.2. Instructors in all upper-division Capstone courses that carry General Education credit will integrate into the course a substantial writing component. This is usually interpreted to mean at least a total of 5000 words in the various assignments. The writing component either may be integrated throughout the courses or may be a cumulative report or project that has, as part of the report or project, ongoing evaluation and feedback throughout the semester. The writing assignments may be in whatever form the instructor deems appropriate to the subject matter and methodology of the course, but the assignments must be a factor in evaluating student performance.
- 8.1.3. Faculty who teach these courses should refer students with serious writing difficulties to seek writing instruction, tutoring, or other appropriate assistance to improve their writing skills as early as possible. For this reason, there must be early (first one-third of the term) feedback on student writing and further feedback throughout the term, including opportunity for revision where appropriate to the assignment.
- 8.1.4. Faculty may obtain guidance in the choice of writing assignments and information on evaluating writing through workshops and other supportive programs sponsored by the Division of Academic Affairs.

### 8.2. Types of and criteria for Capstone courses -- Suitable courses for inclusion at the Capstone level include the following:

- 8.2.1. Advanced Skills courses (no more than 3 units out of 9). These courses require students to apply skills at a level above that of Explorations courses. Examples include, but are not limited to, (a) advanced composition, (b) research and advanced methods, and (c) presentation skills.
- 8.2.2. Service Learning courses (no more than 3 units out of 9). Such courses may include community service internships in social, health, support, school, or environmental programs or courses that include components of university or community service along with other objectives.

8.2.3. Interdisciplinary courses that focus on a specific topic through comparative application or synthesis of knowledge using the theory and methodology from two or more disciplines.

8.2.3.1. Interdisciplinary courses require students to integrate knowledge from separate disciplines, to employ the perspectives from the differing views of disparate disciplines, and to coordinate the varying intellectual tools and methods of the General Education program. In an Interdisciplinary course, the different special knowledge, methods, and perspectives of two or more academic disciplines are brought together in the exposition or treatment of a particular topic or problem. Such a 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. An Interdisciplinary course may be designed to lead students to integrate knowledge acquired in the previous study of separate disciplines (interdisciplinary), or it may approach one topic, problem, or phenomenon with the various tools and perspectives of different disciplines (multidisciplinary). A discipline is generally considered to be a system of learning or instruction, usually the basis for an academic department or program. When a course that claims to involve a discipline not clearly covered by this definition is proposed, the General Education Governing Committee will decide whether the course meets the intent of the Interdisciplinary course requirement.

8.2.3.2. Many courses deal with subject matter at the borderline between traditional disciplines. Faculty members frequently include information from other disciplines. These attributes do not suffice to qualify a course for Interdisciplinary status. Rather, an Interdisciplinary course has as an explicit objective throughout the course the requirement that students develop skills in approaching the topic through comparative application of the approaches and methodologies of different disciplines.

8.2.3.3. An Interdisciplinary course may be approved for more than one General Education category or subcategory when the course's disciplinary emphasis and content fall under more than one General Education category, but the student will receive credit in only one.

## 9. GLOBAL ISSUES COURSES

9.1. Students are required to complete at least 3 units of course work from any category devoted to the study of global issues or world societies and cultures. These courses must be designed to introduce students to cultures and places beyond the boundaries of the United States.

9.2. To qualify for the Global Issues designation in General Education, the course must either (1) have as its central focus the world as a whole as its field of inquiry, or (2) engage in a sustained and systematic analysis of global processes within the context of one world region (broadly defined) outside the United States that compares how these processes operate differently within and across that region, or

- (3) engage in a sustained and systematic comparison between at least two major world regions or significantly distinct societies, at least one of which must be outside the United States.

10. HUMAN DIVERSITY IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA COURSES

- 10.1. It is the goal of the faculty that courses approved for CSULB General Education foster respect for human diversity in the United States of America (USA). Human Diversity in the USA courses introduce students to the life experiences of people with whom they are less familiar to promote the understanding of diversity and encourage tolerance and acceptance of others.
- 10.2. To recognize the significant influence of diverse populations and cultures within the United States of America and to bring attention to these influences and the nature of these cultures, every student graduating with a baccalaureate degree from CSULB must satisfactorily complete one 3-unit course of instruction that focuses on examples of human diversity in the United States of America (Human Diversity in the USA courses).
- 10.3. Course Criteria - Human Diversity in the USA Courses:
  - 10.3.1. A Human Diversity in the USA course must meet the General Education criteria as defined in CSU Executive Order 595 and existing CSULB General Education policies.
  - 10.3.2. A Human Diversity in the USA course must present current and course appropriate theoretical understandings of the nature of human diversity in the United States of America. Courses should clearly demonstrate pedagogical and disciplinary approaches to the study of the diversity of human beings.
    - 10.3.2.1. A Human Diversity in the USA course must examine the influence of gender, race, and ethnicity and one or more additional markers of social difference in the USA within both the specific field of study and the general society.
    - 10.3.2.2. A Human Diversity in the USA course must provide a comparative treatment of nationally significant minority cultures, to include at least two of the following groups: African Americans, Native Americans, Chicana(o)/Latina(o) Americans, Asian Americans, Pacific Islander Americans, and Middle Eastern Americans. Courses must also include a comparative treatment of the significance of gender.
    - 10.3.2.3. A Human Diversity in the USA course must also consider one or more additional markers of social difference, such as special needs, age, class, disability, sexual orientation and gender identity, language, religion, and other distinctions that reflect the diversity of the United States of America.
  - 10.3.3. Transfer courses may be accepted as meeting the Human Diversity in the USA requirement if they (a) are General Education courses at another CSU campus that meets that campus's cross cultural or multicultural or diversity requirement or (b) are General Education courses specifically formulated to provide examination of

diversity issues.

## 11. UNIT REDUCTIONS IN HIGH UNIT MAJORS

To achieve a reduction of required GE units for their students, the chairs of departments (or directors of programs) with high-unit degree majors may request -- and the Curriculum and Educational Policies Council may recommend, with review by the Academic Senate -- a reduction of the required units to a minimum of 45. When a program is approved for this reduction, students in the program must still complete the minimum required units in Categories B, C, and D.

## 12. PATHWAYS

12.1. A pathway is a suggested sequence of courses that leads the student through the General Education program. A pathway should be envisioned as an advising tool that brings coherence and meaning to General Education requirements by offering students the opportunity to explore particular areas of interest, complement and make connections to a major field of study, or use General Education to learn more about potential majors. Pathways may feature themes consisting of a group of courses connected through content or overarching content. Well-built pathways should offer distinctive General Education experiences that capitalize on the remarkable assets of CSULB (e.g., its diversity, its location on the Pacific Rim, its strength in the arts.) Pathways should also support the creation of learning communities by bringing a group of students following a pathway together over an extended set of experiences.

12.2. Students need not choose a pathway to complete General Education requirements and may switch pathways at any time. However, any student who completes all requirements in a published pathway will have completed all university General Education requirements.

12.3. The following regulations apply to pathways:

12.3.1. Pathways may be developed by individual departments, by colleges, by other academic programs, or by collaborations among departments or academic programs. Broadly based pathways should be encouraged.

12.3.2. Pathways shall be identified in the catalog by program.

12.3.3. All pathways must meet all distribution requirements, as well as Foundation and Capstone requirements.

12.3.4. Departments and colleges are encouraged to collaborate in identifying thematically linked groups of courses in pathways and to schedule such courses so as to facilitate concurrent or sequenced enrollment. Thus, two or more courses from different departments that address aspects of a common theme might be scheduled so that a student could take the grouping in a single semester or in consecutive semesters.

12.3.5. Prior to publication, a pathway must be approved by the GEGC and by the CEP Council.

12.3.6. The GEGC will review approved pathways every five years.

### 13. GOVERNANCE OF THE GENERAL EDUCATION PROGRAM AND REVIEW OF COURSES

#### 13.1. Governance

13.1.1. The authority to review and approve courses for inclusion in the General Education Master Course List belongs to the General Education Governing Committee (GEGC), with final authority residing in the Curriculum and Educational Policies Council.

13.1.2. Membership and duties of the GEGC shall be specified by the Academic Senate.

#### 13.2. Review of courses

13.2.1. Departments with courses undergoing review have the burden of proof that the requirements of the distribution area, of the other expectations of the program level (Foundation, Explorations, Capstone), and of the course's contribution to the overall General Education program have been met.

13.2.2. Once a course has been approved for General Education credit, it will be reviewed periodically. The standard period between reviews is five years. Any course that undergoes substantial change requires appropriate reevaluation to remain on the list of approved courses. A request for inclusion of a course in an additional General Education category or subcategory or a request for Capstone status for a course already on the list of approved General Education courses requires a review and evaluation of the course for all prior as well as requested categories of General Education. Departments (except for courses that have not yet been offered) may be asked to provide anonymous examples of student work as evidence that course expectations are appropriate.

13.2.3. The Colleges must submit materials for each of their courses on the General Education Master Course List for periodic review and evaluation. Failure to submit a course for by the end of the semester following the semester during which the college received a request will be interpreted as a desire to delete the course from the list of approved courses and will be so honored.

13.2.4. Inactive courses -- If a course has not been offered for four consecutive semesters, the originating department will be asked to justify why the course should not be immediately dropped from the General Education Master Course List. The GEGC may grant the department a one-year extension; however, if a course has not been offered for six semesters, it will be dropped and will be reinstated only after a full review.

#### 13.3 Assessment of the General Education Program

13.3.1 The General Education Program shall be assessed for quality assurance and effectiveness.

- 13.3.2 The General Education Master Course List shall serve as the data source for the assessment of the General Education Program.
- 13.3.3 Non-compliance with the General Education Program assessment process for quality assurance and effectiveness will result in the discontinuance of the involved course.

#### 14. COURSE LIST APPEAL PROCEDURES

- 14.1. A department (via the college) may appeal a decision regarding placement of a course on the GE Master Course List. The department (via the college) does this by requesting reconsideration and submitting further information about the course to show why the original decision was incorrect.
- 14.2. Although the appeal must be written and include all necessary information and arguments, representatives of the department and college may attend the meeting at which the GEGC reviews the appeal to ask and answer questions.
- 14.3. If a department discovers that one of its courses is approved for General Education under a specific category and the course is not appropriate, that department should request that the course be deleted from the General Education Master Course List.
- 14.4. If after the appeal referred to above a college still disagrees with the judgment of the GEGC, it may appeal to the Curriculum and Educational Policies Council. If this is done, the GEGC will prepare for the council a statement of the reasons for its decision. The college will furnish the members of the council copies of the course justification and the additional materials provided for the committee. All materials shall be distributed to council members prior to the meeting at which the matter is to be considered. Oral presentations may also be made at the Curriculum and Educational Policies Council meeting, if the college wishes.
- 14.5. The judgment of the Curriculum and Educational Policies Council on appeals will be final.
- 14.6. Disagreements over the implementation of this policy shall be referred to the Curriculum and Educational Policies Council.
- 14.7. Except in those instances for which it is provided that the Curriculum and Educational Policies Council has final authority, the actions of the council shall be subject to review by the Academic Senate.