

Faculty Senate

University College and General Education Committee

Report #2003-04-8

Revised General Education Program (2001)

The University College and General Education Committee considered the following matters at their meeting of March 18, 2004. They are now presented to the Faculty Senate for confirmation.

I. Courses

A. Fine Arts and Literature Core Area (A)

The UCGE Committee recommends that the Faculty Senate approve the following courses for the (A) area of the revised General Education Program (2001), including the assignment of the Diversity designation:

- 1) MUS 101 Introduction to Music (examining human differences, using qualitative data, using artistic activity) Diversity**
- 2) RUS 391, 392 Masterpieces of Russian Literature (examining human differences, reading complex texts, writing effectively) Diversity**

B. Letters Core Area (L)

The UCGE Committee recommends that the Faculty Senate approve the following course for the (L) area of the revised General Education Program (2001), including the assignment of the Diversity designation:

PHL 325 American Philosophy (examining human differences, reading complex texts, writing effectively, using qualitative data) Diversity

C. Natural Sciences Core Area (N)

The UCGE Committee recommends that the Faculty Senate approve the following courses for the (N) area of the revised General Education Program (2001):

- 1) PHY 111 General Physics I (reading complex texts, using quantitative data, using information technology)**
- 2) PHY 112 General Physics II (reading complex texts, using quantitative data, using information technology)**
- 3) PHY 185 Laboratory for General Physics I (reading complex texts, using quantitative data, using information technology)**
- 4) PHY 186 Laboratory for General Physics II (reading complex texts, using quantitative data, using information technology)**
- 5) NFS 207 General Nutrition (reading complex texts, using quantitative data, using information technology)**

D. Social Sciences Core Area (S)

The UCGE Committee recommends that the Faculty Senate approve the following courses for the (S) area of the revised General Education Program (2001), including the assignment of the Diversity designation:

- 1) ECN 100 Introduction to Economics (examining human differences, reading complex texts, writing effectively) Diversity**
- 2) ECN 306 Introduction to Economic Research Methods (using quantitative data, using information technology writing effectively)**
- 3) ECN 381 Radical Critiques of Contemporary Political Economy (examining human differences, reading complex texts, writing effectively) Diversity**

II. UNIVERSITY MANUAL

The UCGE Committee recommends that the Faculty Senate approve the following changes to the UNIVERSITY MANUAL to reflect the revised General Education Program (2001): (changes are in green type):

8.20.10 (NEW) General Education The purpose of general education at the University of Rhode Island is to lay a foundation for the lifelong enrichment of the human experience and for a thoughtful and active engagement with the world around us. This foundation is built on recognition of the complex nature of the natural and human worlds. The

objective of general education is to introduce students to the fundamental dimensions of this complexity and to build an appreciation of different ways of understanding it and different cultural responses to it. Specifically, courses in the seven (7) core areas of General Education address: Artistic and literary expression and interpretation (Fine Arts and Literature see 8.20.14); wisdom and traditions of the past and present in a global setting (Letters see 8.20.17); interrelationships of the natural world (Natural Sciences see 8.20.16); human behavior in social, economic, cultural, and political contexts (Social Sciences see 8.20.15); mathematical and quantitative skills and their application (Mathematical and Quantitative Reasoning see 8.20.13); writing and speaking in English (English Communication see 8.20.12); communicating across cultures (Foreign Language/Cross-cultural Competence see 8.20.18).

In addition, because particular skills are essential to a thoughtful engagement with the world, each course in General Education must incorporate opportunities to practice three (3) or more of the following: reading complex texts, writing effectively, speaking effectively, examining human differences, using quantitative data, using qualitative data, using information technology, engaging in artistic activity (see 8.20.23 for descriptions of integrated skills)

8.20.11 All baccalaureate students at the University of Rhode Island shall fulfill the University's General Education requirements as outlined in paragraphs 8.20.12 through **8.20.24** (for exception(s) see paragraph 8.20.19). Students will normally fulfill a majority of their University General Education requirements while in residence at University College. Transfer students may receive General Education credit for courses taught at another institution insofar as such courses are equivalent to courses given General Education credit at the University of Rhode Island. Students pursuing a second baccalaureate degree shall be exempt from general education requirements for the second degree if in the judgment of their academic dean they have completed comparable requirements for their first degree.

8.20.12 All baccalaureate students shall be required to take six credits **in courses that improve written and oral communication skills. This English Communication requirement includes** at least three credits devoted specifically to courses designed to improve written communication skills. Courses which are appropriate for fulfilling the English Communication requirement in general shall be designated **"(EC)"** and courses which are

appropriate for fulfilling the written English Communication requirement shall be designated "(ECw)" in the University Catalog. Only one 100-level writing (ECw) course may be included in satisfying the six-credit English Communication requirement. For information on having this requirement waived by proficiency examination see 8.20.19.

8.20.13 In order to ensure exposure to the subject matter in mathematical and quantitative reasoning, all baccalaureate students shall take three credits in courses that advance skills in, understanding of, and appreciation for mathematics and the disciplines that have grown from mathematics. Courses which are appropriate for fulfilling this requirement shall be designated "(MQ)" in the University Catalog for information on having this requirement waived by proficiency examination see 8.20.19.

8.20.14 In order to ensure exposure to the subject matter in fine arts and literature, all baccalaureate students shall take six credits in courses in the Fine Arts and Literature core area. This core area shall include courses that promote aesthetic interpretation and an appreciation of its role in human experience; courses related to historical and critical study of the arts and literature as well as creative activity. Courses which are appropriate for fulfilling this requirement shall be designated "(A)" in the University Catalog.

8.20.15 In order to ensure exposure to the subject matter in social sciences, all baccalaureate students shall take six credits in courses in the Social Sciences core area. This core area shall include courses related to the study of human development and behavior and varying social, economic, cultural, and political solutions to societal and global problems. Courses which are appropriate for fulfilling this requirement shall be designated "(S)" in the University Catalog

8.20.16 In order to ensure exposure to the subject matter in natural sciences, all baccalaureate students shall take six credits in courses in the Natural Sciences core area. Courses in this area employ scientific methods to examine the physical nature of the world, the biological dimension of human life, and the nature of the environment and its various life forms. Courses which are appropriate for fulfilling this requirement shall be designated "(N)" in the University Catalog.

8.20.17 In order to ensure exposure to the subject matter in letters, all baccalaureate students shall take six credits in courses in the Letters core

area. This core area shall include courses that examine human values, thought and culture in social, historical, and philosophical contexts through the use of primary sources and critical expositions. Courses which are appropriate for fulfilling this requirement shall be designated "(L)" in the University Catalog

8.20.18 Courses in the Foreign Language/Cross-cultural Competence core area promote understanding of one's own cultural perspective in a multicultural world and develop the skills necessary to work, live, and interact with persons from different backgrounds, including developing bilingual skills, the comparative study of cultures, the study of cross-cultural communication, and/or study/internships abroad. All baccalaureate students shall take course work in a foreign language or culture or demonstrate competency through the intermediate level (104 in a living language or 302 in a classical language). This requirement may be satisfied as follows: 1) a two-course sequence in a language previously studied for two or more years in high school through at least the 103 level in a living language or 301 in a classical language appropriate to a student's level of competence (e.g. 102 and 103, 102 and 301; 131 and 103; 103 and 104; 301 and 302). All placement issues, including appropriateness are the responsibility of the Languages Department; 2) demonstration of competence through the intermediate level by proficiency examination (see 8.20.19) or by successfully completing the 104 level in a living language or the 302 level in a classical language; 3) course work in a language not previously studied (or studied for less than two years in high school) through the beginning level; 4) two courses selected from **the list of courses designated by the University College and General Education Committee as Cross-cultural Competence courses**; 5) study abroad in an approved academic program for one semester; 6) majoring in a foreign language. Formally registered international students, students with a recognized immigrant **status and students who are** naturalized citizens may be exempt from the foreign language or cross-cultural competence requirement **at the discretion of the dean of the student's academic college**. Courses which are appropriate for fulfilling this requirement shall be designated "(FC)" in the University Catalog

8.20.19 Eligible students may have the requirement waived in writing **(ECw)**, mathematical and quantitative reasoning **(MQ)**, and/or foreign languages or **cross-cultural competence c (FC)** by successfully passing a proficiency test before the beginning of their second semester of full-time registration. Students who transfer from B.S. to B.A. programs may

request proficiency testing in foreign language before the beginning of their second semester in the B.A. program. (Students for whom a requirement is waived must still complete the specified number of credits for their degree program.) The **College Writing Program**, Mathematics, and Languages departments shall determine criteria for eligibility no later than February of each year so that new students may be notified of these criteria as part of their Orientation. In February the departments also shall report on these criteria and the results of the current year's proficiency testing to the UCGE Committee.

8.20.20 Individual colleges may decrease the University General Education requirements by reducing the number of credits in any one of the **core areas** defined in paragraphs 8.20.14-8.20.18 by three credits.

8.20.21 In the Colleges of Arts and Sciences and Human Science and Services and for the BGS program, credits within a student's own field of concentration may not be counted towards General Education requirements in Fine Arts and Literature, Letters, Natural Sciences and Social Sciences. In the other colleges, credits within a student's professional college may not be counted towards General Education requirements. However, courses which serve as prerequisites for a concentration can be used to fulfill the General Education requirement. Exceptions to the above may be granted by the UCGE Committee and the Faculty Senate.

8.20.22 Each undergraduate course approved as appropriate for General Education **may** be placed in **more than one core area**. If a course is countable in more than one **core area**, a student may count the course in only one **core area**. **Core area** designations shall be indicated in the University **Catalog**. Placement of courses within **core areas** shall be determined by the University College and General Education Committee (UCGE) and the Faculty Senate based on recommendations from the colleges. The following criteria shall apply: 1) courses, except those focusing on essential skills, must acquaint students with the modes of thought and methods of inquiry used in the particular discipline while giving due weight to content; 2) courses must serve the needs and interests of students throughout the University and not be designed primarily to satisfy concentration or professional program requirements; 3) courses to be included in any particular **core area** may be drawn from departments other than the one bearing the name of the **core area**; 4) courses with prerequisites will usually not be appropriate for General Education

purposes except that a course with a single prerequisite which is itself appropriate for General Education may be appropriate; 5) in general, topics, directed study, and other open ended courses shall be excluded from consideration for General Education; topics for the Honors Colloquium shall be considered for General Education upon request of the Honors Program and Visiting Scholars Committee.

8.20.23 (NEW) The following integrated skills shall be addressed in a substantial part of the coursework and in the evaluation of students' performance:

- a. Read complex texts: Course requires students to "read," evaluate, and interpret primary sources, critical commentaries, or works of art.**
- b. Write effectively: Course requires written assignments designed to allow students to practice and improve writing skills with regular feedback from the instructor such as by submitting drafts and revisions, by writing a series of comparable papers, or by writing long assignments in shorter units.**
- c. Speak effectively: Course requires oral presentations designed to allow students to practice and improve speaking skills with instructor and/or group feedback.**
- d. Examine human differences: Course requires assignments which examine the role of difference within and across national boundaries. Appropriate examples of "difference" would include but not be limited to race, religion, sexual orientation, language, culture, and gender.**
- e. Use of quantitative data: Course requires assignments which involve the analysis, interpretation, and/or use of quantitative data to test a hypothesis, build a theory, or illustrate and describe patterns.**
- f. Use of qualitative data: Course requires assignments which involve the analysis, interpretation, and/or use of qualitative data to test a hypothesis, build a theory, or illustrate and describe patterns.**
- g. Use of information technology: Course requires assignments which involve the use of information technology such as web-based research (access to and evaluation of information), participation in class-related internet conferencing, or introduction to and use of computer programs.**

h. Engage in artistic activity: Course requires assignments which involve the creative process in the practice of fine arts skills and aesthetic appreciation with instructor and/or group feedback.

8.20.24 (NEW) Two of the courses taken as part of a student's general education program must be selected from courses designated by a "D." This overlay does not increase the number of credits required in the general education program.

8.20.25 (formerly 8.20.23) The University College and General Education Committee shall make recommendations to the Faculty Senate regarding implementation and administration of General Education and shall report periodically its evaluation of the General Education Program, including a review of the appropriateness of courses for General Education.

8.20.30 (NEW) General Education is only a portion of any undergraduate degree program. Major and minor requirements along with electives contribute significantly to students' education. All programs should include in their curricula opportunities for students to develop further the skills that this general education program addresses. As a consequence of the interaction between General Education and major programs, the University of Rhode Island expects that all programs will lead students toward:

- a. The ability to think critically in order to solve problems and question the nature and sources of authority**
- b. The ability to use the methods and materials characteristic of each knowledge area with an understanding of the interrelationship among and the interconnectedness of the core areas**
- c. A commitment to intellectual curiosity and lifelong learning**
- d. An openness to new ideas with the social skills necessary for both teamwork and leadership**
- e. The ability to think independently and be self-directed; to make informed choices and take initiative**