

## **University College and General Education Committee Report #2013-14-4**

*On March 6, 2014 the University College and General Education Committee met and now moves approval through paper ballot of the following model language for the University Manual and Catalog.*

*The proposed General Education Program **as described by Appendix E and Appendix F of the final report, URI University College and General Education Committee Report and Recommendations, January, 2014,** was presented at the February 20, 2014 Faculty Senate meeting. Only minor editorial changes have been made based on feedback received.*

*These sections serve to provide ~~model~~ Manual and Catalog changes. University Manual and Catalog change proposals will be submitted after the March 20, 2014 vote on the program, if the motion to approve prevails.*

### **Appendix E: Proposed General Education University Manual Language January 2014**

**8.20.10 General Education.** The foundation of all academic efforts begins with a broad base of knowledge covering all areas of human accomplishment and experience, broadly categorized as the arts and humanities, the sciences including mathematics, and the social sciences. Therefore, URI students will gain exposure to the theories and practices of these three areas, as well as on their relationships to one another, regardless of each student's major. Knowledge, by itself, is insufficient for development of well-rounded individuals. URI students will receive focused training and practice in the competencies of writing, oral communication, mathematics, and information literacy and apply all four to a wide variety of projects. Knowledge and competencies, however, are still insufficient. To be a fully functioning citizen, students must develop a sense of their place in society at the local, national, and global levels. URI students will be exposed to the experience and practice of responsibilities in civic engagement, global perspectives, and cultural competency to clearly perceive and engage with the world in which they live. Finally, the student must clearly demonstrate the ability to synthesize knowledge, competencies, and responsibilities in a coherent and comprehensive display of scholarly or practice-based work. This is the fundamental goal of the URI General Education program -- to enable students to develop themselves as scholars and individuals ready to employ knowledge, competencies, responsibilities, and synthesis to solve problems and engage confidently with the personal, public, and professional spheres.

The General Education program will assess student exposure to eleven (11) Student Learning Outcomes in four (4) areas:

- A. Build **knowledge** of diverse peoples and cultures and of the natural and physical world.

1. Understand the context and significance of the **arts and humanities** using theoretical and historical perspectives.
  2. Understand and apply theories and methods of the **science, technology, engineering, and mathematical (STEM) disciplines**.
  3. Understand theories and methods of the **social and behavioral sciences**.
- B. Develop intellectual and interdisciplinary **competencies** for academic and lifelong learning.
4. **Write** effective and precise texts that fulfill their communicative purposes and address various audiences.
  5. **Communicate effectively** via understanding audiences, listening, delivering oral presentations, and actively participating in teams or group work.
  6. Apply the appropriate **mathematical, statistical, or computational strategies** to problem solving.
  7. Develop **information literacy** to independently research complex issues.
- C. Exercise individual and social **responsibilities**.
8. Develop and engage in **civic knowledge and responsibilities**.
  9. Develop and exercise **global responsibilities**.
  10. Develop and exercise **cultural competencies**.
- D. **Integrate and apply** these abilities and capacities, adapting them to new settings, questions, and responsibilities to lay the foundation for lifelong learning.
11. Demonstrate the ability to **synthesize** multiple knowledge perspectives, competencies, and responsibilities.

**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 8.20.14 (for exception(s) see paragraph 8.20.15). Students may fulfill their University General Education requirements throughout their undergraduate career. 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. ([#03-04--29](#))

**8.20.12** All General Education courses will assess two Student Learning Outcomes, in the following configurations:

- A Knowledge (Area A) and a Competency (Area B)
- A Knowledge (Area A) and a Responsibility (Area C)

A Competency (Area B) and a Competency (Area B)  
A Competency (Area B) and a Responsibility (Area C)  
Integration (Area D) and a Competency (Area B)  
Integration (Area D) and a Responsibility (Area C)

Students must take at least three (3) credits of courses, or an approved sequence, for each of the eleven assessed Student Learning Outcomes, plus additional courses to complete a minimum of 40 credits of approved General Education courses. Approved general education courses will cover at least 1 Student Learning Outcome fully; some courses may cover 2 Student Learning Outcomes fully. Overlap is allowed when a course fulfills two Student Learning Outcomes, but the credits cannot be double counted towards the total of 40. For information on having any requirement waived by proficiency examination see 8.20.15. ([#03-04--29](#)), ([#05-06--25](#))

**8.20.13** Students must take two (2) Grand Challenge courses as part of their General Education requirements.

**8.20.14** Any course that assesses two (2) of the General Education Student Learning Outcomes may be submitted to the University College and General Education Committee for approval to fulfill General Education requirements, regardless of that course's place in a Major or prerequisites. No College, Department, Major, Minor, or other program or course of study may require a student to choose a specific course to satisfy the General Education requirements, although courses that fulfill requirements or pre-requisites for majors which also happen to satisfy General Education requirements can be recommended through advising.

**8.20.15** Eligible students may have the requirement waived in any of the Competencies (B) or Responsibilities (C) of the Student Learning Outcome by successfully passing a proficiency test before the beginning of their second semester of full-time registration. The University College and General Education Committee 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. ([#03-04--29](#))

**8.20.16** Topics for the Honors Colloquium and other Honors courses shall be considered for General Education upon request of the Honors Program and Visiting Scholars Committee. ([#03-04--29](#))

**8.20.17** 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. ([#03-04--29](#))

**8.20.30** 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. [#03-04--29](#)

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## **Appendix F: Proposed General Education Catalog Language January 2014**

### **Institutional Objectives and Student Learning Outcomes for Undergraduate General Education at the University of Rhode Island**

#### **A. Build knowledge of diverse peoples and cultures and of the natural and physical world.**

1. Understand the context and significance of the art and humanities using theoretical, historical, and experiential perspectives.
2. Understand and apply theories and methods of the science technology, engineering, and mathematical (STEM) disciplines.
3. Understand theories and methods of the social and behavioral sciences.

#### **B. Develop intellectual and interdisciplinary competencies for academic and lifelong learning.**

4. Write effective and precise texts that fulfill their communicative purposes and address various audiences.

5. Communicate effectively via understanding audiences, listening, delivering oral presentations, and actively participating in teams or group work.

6. Apply the appropriate mathematical, statistical or computational strategies to problem solving.

7. Develop information literacy to independently research complex issues.

**C. Exercise individual and social responsibilities.**

8. Develop and engage in civic knowledge and responsibilities.

9. Develop and exercise global responsibilities.

10. Develop and exercise cultural competencies.

**D. Integrate and apply these abilities and capacities, adapting them to new settings, questions, and responsibilities to lay the foundation for lifelong learning.**

11. Demonstrate the ability to synthesize multiple knowledge perspectives, competencies, and responsibilities.

**General Education Requirements**

The University believes that all undergraduate students, regardless of their degree programs, need experience in the study of fundamentals that build on the student's previous education and continues through the undergraduate student years and beyond.

The foundation of all academic efforts begins with a broad base of knowledge covering all areas of human accomplishment and experience, broadly categorized as the arts and humanities, the sciences including mathematics, and the social sciences. Students should recognize the interrelatedness of these areas of knowledge as they pertain to complex global issues. Therefore, URI students will gain exposure to the theories and practices of these three areas, as well as on their relationships to one another, regardless of each student's major. Students will demonstrate critical thinking and evaluation in each of the following areas: 1) arts and humanities; 2) science, technology, engineering, and mathematical (STEM) disciplines; and 3) social and behavioral sciences.

Knowledge, by itself, is insufficient for development of well-rounded individuals. URI graduates will need to demonstrate specific interdisciplinary competencies in personal, public, and professional venues to succeed in their studies as well as their future lives. URI students will receive focused training and practice in the areas of writing, oral communication, mathematics, and information literacy and apply all four to a wide variety of projects. These competencies will be developed over time at the foundational level and within discipline specific major courses, which will lay the foundation for success in their future careers and lifelong learning.

Knowledge and skills, however, are still insufficient. To be a fully functioning citizen, students must develop a sense of their place in society at the local, national, and

global levels. URI students will be exposed to the experience and practice of civic engagement, diversity, and global perspectives to clearly perceive and engage with the world in which they live. Recognizing that many URI students are already engaged contributors in their communities, these outcomes can possibly be fulfilled through co-curricular and experiential learning activities.

Finally, the student must recognize the interrelatedness and interdisciplinary nature of contemporary problems and clearly demonstrate the ability to synthesize knowledge, competencies, and responsibilities. Students must demonstrate this integration in a coherent and comprehensive display of scholarly or practice-based work. This is the fundamental goal of the URI General Education program -- to enable students to develop themselves as scholars and individuals ready to synthesize knowledge, competencies, and individual and social responsibilities, in order to solve problems and engage confidently with the personal, public, and professional spheres.

Students are required to take a minimum of three credits of courses, or an approved sequence, for each of the 11 Student Learning Outcomes, plus additional courses to complete a minimum of 40 credits of approved general education courses. Approved general education courses will cover at least 1 Student Learning Outcome fully; some courses may cover 2 Student Learning Outcomes fully. Overlap is allowed when a course fulfills two Student Learning Outcomes, but the credits cannot be double counted towards the total of 40. At least two courses must be taken from a list of approved Grand Challenge courses that address major issues facing the world today. Courses within the major that have been approved as general education courses may also be used to fulfill any of the 11 Student Learning Outcomes. Competency and Responsibility Student Learning Outcomes are eligible to be waived through proficiency exams.

In their first semester, all entering freshmen and new transfer students with fewer than 24 credits are required to take *URI 101: A Freshman Seminar*, including community service provided by the Feinstein Enriching America Program, or an equivalent approved course (see [Course Descriptions](#)).

Students in the Honors Program can receive general education credit for honors courses that have been approved for general education credit.

Transfer students can receive general education credit for courses taken at other institutions as long as such credits are in courses equivalent to approved general education courses at URI.