

UNIVERSITY STUDIES PROGRAM

(Note: Proposed new name, would replace all GE references in this document if approved)

Mission (approved by Faculty Senate Fall 2018)

General Education (GE) is a common experience that fulfills UWL's vision as a student-centered university committed to a quality liberal arts education for the whole person. The program aligns with national best practices to ensure that UWL graduates develop habits of mind essential for fostering intellectual curiosity, personal development, and professional success; creative and critical thinking; and foundations for ethical decision making. The program supports integrative learning, and prepares students for civic engagement, leadership, and global stewardship. The program provides opportunities for students to work with peers and instructors from disciplines that complement their major field of study, preparing them for a work force that increasingly relies upon team work and interaction with people from diverse backgrounds. The program also demonstrates UWL's commitment to the Wisconsin Idea, in which our socially responsible campus serves as a resource for our intertwined local, state, and global communities, collaborating and sharing resources and expertise to improve the human condition.

Program goals (approved by Faculty Senate Fall 2018)

1. *Model interdisciplinary approaches of critical thinking to shape and inform a student's major course of study.*
 - Place foundational knowledge in larger contexts so that every GE course demonstrates the importance of a liberal arts education for the development of the whole person.
 - Help students understand the value of the discipline being studied as well as its relationship to academic majors.
 - Use tools of inquiry from multiple perspectives to develop and address questions that encourage intellectual curiosity and seek to improve the human condition.
 - Develop creative and critical thinkers who engage in ethical and rational decision making in their chosen discipline.
2. *Connect campus and academic life to local, regional, national, and/or international communities.*
 - Promote opportunities for civic engagement and leadership that are academically grounded and socially responsible to prepare students for their intellectual and professional lives.
 - Educate students to draw upon multiple disciplines and cultural viewpoints as they collaboratively participate in a pluralistic society.
 - Cultivate an understanding of, and engagement with, complex interdependent global systems to enable students to recognize themselves as stewards of the world.
3. *Maintain a dynamic GE program to keep pace with the needs of ever-changing global networks.*
 - Support opportunities for cross-disciplinary teaching and learning to promote GE courses as interrelated.

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- Model and encourage dispositions that generate lifelong learners who value innovation, flexibility, and adaptability.
- Ensure that the GE program aligns with best practices and continues to be effective, relevant, and transferable among UW-System schools through regular program-level review and reflection.

What the proposed program is trying to do:

Fit mission and goals approved by Faculty Senate in Fall 2018

Open up categories so that none are “owned” by one department or program to increase flexibility for students (feedback from open forums and August 2017 Brainstorming session)

Allow assessment of the GE program as a whole and/or categories and/or groups and/or courses

Make it easier for transfer students to have GE courses accepted at UWL (feedback from Admissions Office)

Work toward themes/integrated courses (ideas from August 2017 Brainstorming session)

Provide definitions for each category/group to provide guidance for GEC to place courses and add new courses

Prevent abrupt changes that may decimate a department

Preamble

The Mission and Goals of the UW – La Crosse General Education Program are, in spirit, humanistic, helping develop the whole person, seeking to improve the human condition, and creating stewards of the world. The program is designed to afford opportunities to students to learn from a broad swatch of disciplines and apply the ideas, approaches, and skills obtained to their major and future lives as citizens and community members. In addition, courses in the General Education Program will include content knowledge that supports these overall program goals, to help prepare students for a work force that increasingly relies upon team work and interaction with people from diverse backgrounds. In addition, more than 70 percent of employers surveyed* want colleges to place more emphasis on:

- Science and technology
- Teamwork skills in diverse settings
- Written and oral communication
- Critical and analytic reasoning
- Applied knowledge in real-world settings
- Global issues
- Information literacy
- Creativity and innovation

*(<https://www.aacu.org/leap/presidentstrust/talkingpoints>)

The very drafty draft proposal draft

42 total credits required

First College Courses (12/13 credits) These foundation courses introduce skills early in a student's college career that are central to learning, analyzing, evaluating, integrating, and communicating information and knowledge. These skills are essential in all fields of study and their development should be enhanced and refined throughout the college years. Therefore, it is ideal that they be taken the first year of a student's college career.

- FYS (3 cr) (Taken the 1st year) This topics seminar course focuses on developing the knowledge, experiences and skills helpful for success at UWL, including learning strategies, community building, and academic inquiry. By exploring enduring questions students will learn the purposes and value of a liberal arts education.
- Written and Spoken Literacy (6 cr) (Taken within the first 60 credits) Reading, writing, speaking, and listening are the tools individuals use to effectively communicate ideas and to become educated citizens. These skills courses improve students' abilities to read, write, speak, and listen with clarity, precision, and depth of understanding. Courses in this area include FIRST COURSES in written and oral communication.
 - ENG110 or ENG112 or Advanced Placement Writing (3 cr)
 - CST110 (3 cr)
- Quantitative Reasoning (3/4 cr) (Taken within the first 60 credits) Students will learn to use symbols or language to analyze, evaluate, and communicate more precisely. Courses focus on topics necessary to make informed decisions in today's world such as logic, numeracy, and statistics.

University Core (16/17 credits) Students will take courses that expand their knowledge of disciplines and learn skills that will enhance their intellectual development. Collectively, these courses will place foundational knowledge in larger contexts and demonstrate the importance of a liberal arts education for the development of the whole person and their relationship to society.

- Health and Well-Being (3 cr) Students will gain the tools and skills to critically analyze, improve, and value their own health and well-being through application of the dimensions of wellness (such as physical, emotional, intellectual, environmental, social, spiritual, occupational) recognizing that personal wellness is a vital component to one's physical and mental health.
- Arts and Aesthetics (3/4 cr) The arts represent a fusion of the emotional, spiritual, and intellectual realities of the human condition. Study of the arts leads to heightened aesthetic experiences and deepens cultural understanding. This includes courses that focus on understanding, appreciating, and experiencing the fine and performing arts.
- Lab Science (4 cr) Students will learn content and principles within the natural sciences, how scientists use the scientific method as a way of understanding the world, and how to critically evaluate claims from a scientific perspective.
- Ethnic Diversity (3 cr) An essential goal of general education is to improve students' understanding of and sensitivity to cultural diversity in the United States. All students take at least one course that focuses on minority cultures in the United States or women in the United States from a multiracial perspective. All courses in this category fulfill the UW System ethnic studies (ES) requirement for coursework centered on African-American, Hispanic/Latino, Asian-American, or American Indian populations in the U.S.

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- Social and Behavioral Studies (3 cr) Students will use critical analysis to investigate the influence of social institutions on personal attitudes, values, and behavior in order to gain an understanding of oneself in relation to others. Courses in this area focus on the study of human behavior and social institutions.

Integrative Global Perspectives (12 credits) Students will use tools of inquiry from multiple perspectives to develop and address questions that encourage intellectual curiosity and seek to improve the human condition. The course content will connect campus and academic life to local, regional, national, and/or international communities. Courses will be global and/or transregional in scope, with an emphasis on the interconnectivity between communities. One course must be taken from each of the four groups, and the four courses taken must be from four different programs.

- Literary Perspectives (3 cr) Students will learn how to critically read a diverse range of imaginative texts. Critical reading involves interpreting a text's literary elements, articulating contexts that give literature meaning, and evaluating a text's differing perspectives on society and/or the human experience.
- Historical Perspectives (3 cr) Students will learn to use aspects of historical thinking and methods to develop an understanding of the past by developing historical questions and thesis statements; functionalizing primary and secondary sources to support analyses; utilizing historical theory as a prism to construct a conclusion.
- Ethical Perspectives (3 cr) Students will learn how to critically engage an array of pertinent ethical questions. We will consider what our moral obligations are to ourselves and to the larger community.
- Environmental Perspectives (3 cr) Students will learn about environmental issues that exist or are likely to arise in the future. Students will understand, and articulate perspectives on, the complex interactions between human society and the natural world by synthesizing the scientific, ethical, and cross-cultural context of environmental matters.

Additional comments:

- Departments will propose a category home for each of their GE courses based on the definitions and SLOs (SLOs TBD). GEC will approve these placements prior to the implementation of the new program. Courses as they are currently taught may need to be modified to fit the new definitions/SLOs.
- A course can be placed into up to two categories if approved by GEC, but students can only count a course for one category.
- Retroactive credits do not fulfill a GE course requirement.
- We are encouraging faculty from various disciplines who teach courses in the IGP category to coordinate and develop courses to fit a common theme (such as Sustainability or Social Justice). Students would take these courses and the theme would be reflected on their transcript. Themes will be chosen by faculty involved and approved by GEC. In order for a student to receive the credit for the theme, there must be a coordinated assessable product from the four courses involved TBD.
- The GE program needs to be dynamic and ever-changing, and assessable. In other words, this proposal is a *start*. Once implemented, modifications can and *should* be made periodically to keep it fresh. (see Program Goal #3)
- Ensure that an Associate degree that fits UWS policy can still be obtained with this model
- WE/WIM will continue as it currently exists
- BA/BS requirements will continue as they currently exist

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- Will CHI102/FRE 102/GER 102/RUS 102/SPA 102/SPA 103 remain in the Quant Reasoning group? If not, where do they go?
- Should we have a Cultural Competency requirement that can be met by having students take a GCL course or have a Study Abroad Experience?
- HIPs- FYS, e-portfolio? Integrated courses?

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