

9.3. General Education Requirements

(a) rationale for the general education component

The coherence of the general education core curriculum at the institution is ensured by several factors, including direction from the Louisiana Board of Regents, alignment with the mission of the university and the curricular structure of undergraduate degree programs, and oversight of the General Education committee, all of which ensure that students in every discipline receive appropriate instruction in a variety of disciplines, beyond the focus of individual programs. All undergraduate students acquire breadth of knowledge by completing a 42-credit hour General Education **Core Curriculum** as part of their degree requirements. This set of courses is comprised of courses in English Composition, Mathematics, Social & Behavioral Sciences, Natural Sciences, Literature, History, Communication, and Fine Arts. The General Education **Core Curriculum** is designed to ensure that graduates acquire the knowledge and skill to live productive lives as responsible and knowledgeable citizens of their region, their country and the world, capable of working effectively with others while displaying openness to different viewpoints and understanding the diversity of human values. Through general education courses, graduates learn to appreciate the possibilities of human achievement and the patterns of human thought in both the arts and the sciences. To this end, courses in the core curriculum ensure broad learning across the humanities, arts, social studies, and biological and physical sciences, while teaching competencies in technology, communication, critical thinking, and analytical skills. Courses in these disciplines are not specialized or focused on specific skills or techniques pertaining to the student's intended profession, but "provide an introduction to a discipline, as in a survey course that covers a wide range of material within a specific discipline or area of inquiry and acquaints students with a broad section of the information or skills available in that area, or an appreciation course that introduces students to a creative field and leads to a general understanding and appreciation of work by others."

[<https://regents.la.gov/divisions/planning-research-and-academic-affairs/academic-affairs/academic-affairs-policies-and-procedures/academic-affairs-policy-2-16/>]

According to Academic Affairs Policy 2.16, "The Board of Regents recognizes that all undergraduate academic credentials should contain a broad-based common educational experience that enhances students' ability to describe, interpret, and analyze their world. In addition to building awareness of a wide range of material and enriching the academic experience, general education should promote intellectual inquiry through basic content and methodology and contribute to the graduate's ability to communicate effectively in oral and written English." [<https://regents.la.gov/divisions/planning-research-and-academic-affairs/academic-affairs/academic-affairs-policies-and-procedures/academic-affairs-policy-2-16/>]

These Statewide General Education Requirements include:

- **English Composition.** *Effective written communication skills are essential to prepare students to effectively and intelligently communicate in a variety of contexts.*
- **Mathematics/Analytical Reasoning.** *As a cornerstone for the liberal arts, engineering, and sciences, mathematical/analytical reasoning skills are an essential component of all disciplines.*
- **Natural Sciences.** *Natural sciences study both life and physical sciences in an approach to understanding the universe by studying objects, phenomena, laws of nature and the physical world.*
- **Humanities.** *Humanities offer a broad-based study of cultural traditions and the human condition, including everything from language, literature and religion to history, philosophy and communication.*
- **Social/Behavioral Sciences.** *Social and Behavioral Sciences study human behavior and the relationship between individuals and their societies.*
- **Fine Arts.** *The Fine Arts provide an opportunity to explore and to value aesthetic creation and form as an essential means of conceiving and expressing the human experience.*

General education is an integral part of our students' educational experience and is aligned with the broader mission of the institution in its relationship with the state and the community, in the context of which general education is "designed to ensure that graduates acquire the knowledge and skill to live productive lives as responsible and knowledgeable citizens of their region, their country and the world, capable of working effectively with others while displaying openness to different viewpoints and understanding the diversity of human values." [<https://academicaffairs.louisiana.edu/initiatives/general-education>]. Campus advisors in each department or discipline ensure that students complete the General Education core in timely fashion for graduation.

The continuing relevance of general education is ensured by the active deliberation of the General Education Committee, which was first formed in Fall 2006 and institutionalized as a permanent component of the collegiate governance structure in AY2008-2009. [[link](#)] The committee "exists to review, develop, and recommend policy regarding general education to the University Committee on Academic Affairs and Standards (CAAS), to recommend inclusion or exclusion in the matrix of acceptable general education courses, and to participate constructively in assessment of the general education goals." [Link to document] The General Education Committee meets monthly to consider, debate, approve, and amend the general education core curriculum as changes in programs dictate, while maintaining overall compliance with the Regent's requirements. This programmatic focus and the active debate that results from it are evidenced by the committee's minutes, and the many policy changes emerging from the committee. As the regular meeting schedule [[link: Agendas](#)] and deliberations ([link: minutes](#)) of the General Education Committee attest, the committee has worked to align UL Lafayette's general education curriculum with the requirements of the Board of Regents ([link: https://regents.la.gov/divisions/planning-research-and-academic-affairs/academic-affairs/academic-affairs-policies-and-procedures/academic-affairs-policy-2-16/](https://regents.la.gov/divisions/planning-research-and-academic-affairs/academic-affairs/academic-affairs-policies-and-procedures/academic-affairs-policy-2-16/)), as well as with the best general education practices at other institutions in an effort to create a coherent rationale for general education as a whole at UL Lafayette.

The coherence of the committee itself and its relevance to the entire range of programs at UL Lafayette is ensured by its membership, which includes representatives from each discipline group contained in the general education core (English Composition, Mathematics/Analytical Reasoning, Natural Sciences, Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences, and Fine Arts), as well as representatives from each College at the institution, the Director of Assessment, and Academic Affairs. The committee reports to the Assistant Vice President for Programs, who supervises the catalog. Changes to the general education program are regularly submitted to the University Committee on Academic Affairs and Standards (CAAS) for review and inclusion in the catalog, pending approval by the Assistant Vice President for Programs office and the Provost.