

# GENERAL EDUCATION COURSES AREA DESIGNATIONS PURPOSE AND REQUIREMENTS

(revised July 2003, accepted March 2004, revised September 2006, revised January 2019)

Oklahoma State University General Education will provide students with general knowledge and skills conducive to lifelong learning in a complex society. Specifically, through general education at Oklahoma State University students will:

- Construct a broad foundation for the specialized course of study,
- Develop the ability to read, observe, and listen with comprehension,
- Enhance their skills in effective communication,
- Expand their capacity for critical analysis and problem solving,
- Expand their capacity to understand and respect diversity in people, beliefs, and societies, and
- Develop the ability to appreciate and function in the human and natural environment.

Every general education course is aligned with one of four content areas: analytical and quantitative thought (A), humanities (H), social and behavioral sciences (S), and natural sciences (N). In addition, OSU students must participate in a diversity course (D), an international dimension course (I) and in natural sciences courses that include a lab component and have a scientific investigation (L) designation.

A course is qualified to be part of the general education curriculum if it meets the needs of students across multiple disciplines without requiring extensive specialized skills and satisfies all the criteria for a specific general education area. General Education courses may not have more than two prerequisite requirements. However, certain exceptions exist when students are allowed to test out of the prerequisite courses and place directly into the advanced course. The purpose and requirements for each general education area follow. *These requirements must be clearly articulated in the course syllabus.*

## General Education Area Designations

### ANALYTICAL AND QUANTITATIVE THOUGHT - (A)

#### 1. Purpose:

Courses designated "A" incorporate the study of systems of logic and the mathematical sciences with a primary emphasis on inductive and/or deductive processes.

#### 2. Requirements:

- a. Students will critically analyze and solve problems using quantitative, geometric, or logical models.
- b. Students will form inferences using logical systems and mathematical information and communicate them effectively.
- c. Students will give appropriate multiple representations (symbolical, visual, graphical, numerical, or verbal) of logical or mathematical information.

### HUMANITIES - (H)

#### 1. Purpose:

Courses designated "H" concentrate on the expression, analysis, and interpretation of ideas and the aesthetics or values that have formed and informed individuals and societies.

#### 2. Requirements:

- a. Students will critically analyze the relationships of aesthetics, ideas, or cultural values to historic and contemporary cultures.
- b. Students will develop an understanding of how ideas, events, arts, or texts shape diverse individual identities.
- c. Students will demonstrate their understanding through written work that provides them the opportunity to enhance their writing skills; upper division "H" courses will include extensive written work.

1. Writing assignments must be weighted in the grading scheme such that students are discouraged from skipping the assignment (i.e. writing assignments are worth a minimum of 10% of the overall grade).
2. The minimum required number of pages may be encompassed in one or multiple assignment/s. Informal writing assignments (like journals or class notes) and group projects will not count toward writing minimum. Multiple drafts of the same work cannot be counted twice in the cumulative page minimum.
3. Lower-division courses must include at least five pages of out-of-class written assignments or essays.
4. Upper-division courses must include at least ten pages of out-of-class written assignments or essays. Instructors must provide feedback that students can incorporate in subsequent writing assignments (by revising and resubmitting a single assignment or submitting multiple assignments). At least one writing assignment must be at least 4 pages in length.

\* Courses focused on studio work, design, performance, or individual creative production are not eligible for "H" designations.

## **SOCIAL AND BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES - (S)**

### **1. Purpose:**

Courses designated "S" propose theoretical constructs based on empirical observation (including quantitative or qualitative methods) to explain human behavior and society in social and/or physical environments.

### **2. Requirements:**

- a. Students will critically analyze generalizations about society and explore theoretical structures.
- b. Students will understand the role of empirical observation using quantitative or qualitative methods in the social and behavioral sciences.
- c. Students will demonstrate their understanding through written work that provides them the opportunity to enhance their writing skills; upper division "S" courses will include extensive written work.
  1. Writing assignments must be weighted in the grading scheme such that students are discouraged from skipping the assignment (i.e. writing assignments are worth a minimum 10% of the overall grade).
  2. The minimum required number of pages may be encompassed in one or multiple assignment/s. Informal writing assignments (like journals or class notes) and group projects will not count toward writing minimum. Multiple drafts of the same work cannot be counted twice in the cumulative page minimum.
  3. Lower-division courses must include at least five pages of out-of-class written assignments or essays.
  4. Upper-division courses must include at least ten pages of out-of-class written assignments or essays. Instructors must provide feedback that students can incorporate in subsequent writing assignments (by revising and resubmitting a single assignment or submitting multiple assignments). At least one writing assignment must be at least 4 pages in length.

## **DIVERSITY - (D)**

### **1. Purpose:**

Courses designated "D" prepare students for engaged citizenship in the diverse, multicultural society of the United States.

### **2. Requirements:**

- a. Students will reflect on identity through the examination of one or more underrepresented groups (e.g. racial, ethnic, religious, social class, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation) in present day United States.
- b. Students will examine the ways underrepresented groups define and express themselves and the context in which these definitions are constructed.
- c. Students will critically analyze theories and systems of cultural, societal, political, or economic power.
- d. Students will demonstrate their understanding through written work that provides them the opportunity to

enhance their writing skills; upper division “D” courses will include extensive written work.

1. Writing assignments must be weighted in the grading scheme such that students are discouraged from skipping the assignment (i.e. writing assignments are worth a minimum 10% of the overall grade).
  2. Writing assignments must be tied to the purpose/requirements of the “D” designation.
  3. The minimum required number of pages may be encompassed in one or multiple assignment/s. Informal writing assignments (like journals or class notes) and group projects will not count toward writing minimum. Multiple drafts of the same work cannot be counted twice in the cumulative page minimum.
  4. Lower-division courses must include at least five pages of out-of-class written assignments or essays.
  5. Upper-division courses must include at least ten pages of out-of-class written assignments or essays. Instructors must provide feedback that students can incorporate in subsequent writing assignments (by revising and resubmitting a single assignment or submitting multiple assignments). At least one writing assignment must be at least 4 pages in length.
- e. In courses worth three or more credit hours, at least one-half of the course materials must relate to one or more underrepresented groups. A course that is fewer than three hours must be entirely devoted to these groups. A detailed class schedule should be included on the course syllabus to confirm content minimum has clearly been met.

## **INTERNATIONAL CULTURES - (I)**

### **1. Purpose:**

Courses designated “I” prepare students for engaged citizenship in today’s global society through understanding of cultural perspectives outside the United States. Courses concerning ethnic and cultural minorities within the U.S. do not qualify.

### **2. Requirements:**

- a. Students will examine current interactions of groups or cultures external to the United States within their political, economic, ideological, or natural contexts.
- b. Students will understand how current international cultures relate to complex, systems related to oppression, political ideology, globalization, or other similar dynamics.
- c. Students will demonstrate their understanding through written work that provides them the opportunity to enhance their writing skills; upper division “I” courses will include extensive written work.
  1. Writing assignments must be weighted in the grading scheme such that students are discouraged from skipping the assignment (i.e. writing assignments are worth a minimum 10% of the overall grade).
  2. Writing assignments must be tied to the purpose/requirements of the “I” designation.
  3. The minimum required number of pages may be encompassed in one or multiple assignment/s. Informal writing assignments (like journals or class notes) and group projects will not count toward writing minimum. Multiple drafts of the same work cannot be counted twice in the cumulative page minimum.
  4. Lower-division courses must include at least five pages of out-of-class written assignments or essays.
  5. Upper-division courses must include at least ten pages of out-of-class written assignments or essays. Instructors must provide feedback that students can incorporate in subsequent writing assignments (by revising and resubmitting a single assignment or submitting multiple assignments). At least one writing assignment must be at least 4 pages in length.
- d. In courses worth three or more credit hours, at least one-half of the course materials must relate to international cultural perspectives on the present times. A course that is fewer than three credit hours must be entirely devoted to these groups. A detailed class schedule should be included on the course syllabus to confirm content minimum has clearly been met.

## **NATURAL SCIENCES - (N)**

### **1. Purpose:**

Courses designated “N” feature the systematic study of physical or biological processes and the mechanisms and consequences of human intervention in those processes.

### **2. Requirements:**

- a. Students will understand the scientific inquiry process.
- b. Students will use the methodologies and models of science to define, evaluate, and solve problems in biological and physical sciences.
- c. Students will evaluate evidence, interpretations, results, and solutions related to the physical and biological sciences.
- d. Students will understand the consequences of human intervention in physical and biological processes and mechanisms.
- e. Students will demonstrate their ability to communicate in a manner appropriate to the discipline through written assignments.

## **SCIENTIFIC INVESTIGATION - (L)**

### **1. Purpose:**

Courses designated “L” emphasize evaluating scientific hypotheses through the scientific inquiry process and must include the equivalent of at least one semester credit hour of physical or biological laboratory experience.

### **2. Requirements:**

- a. Students will critically analyze scientific problems, formulate hypotheses, conduct appropriate experiments, and summarize and interpret results.
- b. Students will communicate procedures, results and conclusions through written work appropriate to the discipline.

Effective Fall 2020, all new requests for General Education designations must meet the purpose and all requirements in this document. Courses with approved General Education designations will retain the General Education designation until their next review. When the General Education Advisory Council next reviews the course the course must satisfy the purpose and all requirements to retain the General Education designation. If the designation(s) is denied during a review, the course will retain the designation(s) for one year during which time the course can be revised and resubmitted for reconsideration.