

Oklahoma State University is committed to producing graduates who have a depth of knowledge in their major fields of study and a breadth of general knowledge to address issues in a complex society. OSU graduates have a mastery of a specific subject matter and solid, diversified general education. With a commitment to breadth in general education, the following philosophy was adopted in 2001:

General Education at Oklahoma State University provides students general knowledge, skills and attitudes conducive to lifelong learning in a complex society. Specifically, general education at Oklahoma State University is intended to construct a broad foundation for the student's specialized course of study; develop the student's ability to read, observe and listen with comprehension; enhance the student's skills in communicating effectively; expand the student's capacity for critical analysis and problem solving; assist the student in understanding and respecting diversity in people, beliefs and societies; and develop the student's 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), natural sciences (N), and social and behavioral sciences (S). In addition, OSU students must participate in an international dimension course (I) and in natural sciences courses that include a lab component and have a scientific investigation (L) designation. Beginning in Fall 2008 all new students will also complete a diversity (D) course. A course is qualified to be part of the general education curriculum if it meets the needs of students in all disciplines without requiring extensive specialized skills and satisfies all the criteria for a specific general education area. The criteria for each general education area follow:

Analytical and quantitative thought (A) courses incorporate the study of systems of logic and the mathematical sciences and place primary emphasis on the development of the intellect through inductive and/or deductive processes. Their aim is broader than proficiency in techniques and includes appreciation of how the processes can supplement intuition and provide ways to analyze concrete problems. Goals of "A" courses are to prepare students to critically analyze and solve problems using quantitative, geometric or logical models; form inferences using logical systems and mathematical information and communicate them in writing; give appropriate multiple representations (symbolical, visual, graphical, numerical or verbal) of logical or mathematical information; and estimate, analyze, or check solutions to problems to determine reasonableness, alternative solutions, or to determine optimal methods or results.

Humanities (H) courses concentrate on the expression, analysis and interpretation of ideas and the aesthetics or values that have formed and informed individuals and societies; and emphasize diversity in the expression of human ideas and aesthetic or cultural values. Goals of "H" courses are to prepare students to critically analyze the relationships of aesthetics, ideas, or cultural values to historic and contemporary cultures; develop an understanding of how ideas, events, arts or texts shape diverse individual identities; and demonstrate their understanding through written work that provides them the opportunity to enhance their writing skills.

Contemporary international culture (I) courses emphasize contemporary cultures outside the United States. Goals of "I" courses are to prepare students to critically analyze one or more contemporary cultures external to the United States; understand how contemporary international cultures relate to complex, modern world systems; and demonstrate their understanding through written work that provides them the opportunity to enhance their writing skills.

Scientific investigation (L) courses include the equivalent of at least one semester credit hour of laboratory experience aimed at interpreting scientific hypotheses and emphasize scientific inquiry and experimental methodology. Goals of "L" courses are to prepare students to critically analyze scientific problems, formulate hypotheses, conduct appropriate experiments, and interpret results; solve problems using scientific inquiry and experimental methodology; communicate procedures, results and conclusions to others; and demonstrate their

understanding through written work appropriate to the discipline that provides them the opportunity to enhance their writing skills.

Natural science (N) courses feature the systematic study of natural processes, and the mechanisms and consequences of human intervention in those processes; and place primary emphasis on the subject matter of one or more basic physical or biological sciences in a broadly integrative fashion. Goals of “N” courses are to prepare students to understand the scientific inquiry process; critically analyze the physical world using the language and concepts of science; use the methodologies and models of science to select, define, solve, and evaluate problems in biological and physical sciences; evaluate evidence, interpretations, results, and solutions related to the physical and biological sciences; understand the consequences of human intervention in natural processes and mechanisms; and demonstrate their understanding through written work appropriate to the discipline that provides them the opportunity to enhance their writing skills.

Social and behavioral sciences (S) courses propose theoretical constructs to explain human behavior and society in social and/or physical environments; and are based on empirical observation of human behavior rather than the study of aesthetics, ideas or cultural values. Goals of “S” courses are to prepare students to critically analyze generalizations about society and explore theoretical structures; understand the role of empirical observation in the social and behavioral structures; and demonstrate their understanding through written work that provides them the opportunity to enhance their writing skills.

Diversity (D) courses emphasize one or more socially constructed groups (e.g. racial, ethnic, religious, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation) in the United States. Goals of “D” courses are to prepare students to critically analyze historical and contemporary examples of socially constructed groups in American society or culture and the distribution of political, economic, and/or cultural benefits and opportunities afforded to these groups; to understand how these groups relate to the student’s academic discipline and American culture; and demonstrate their understanding through written work that provides them the opportunity to enhance their writing skills.

3.4 General Education Requirements. Although the University has a general education program, each college determines and publishes the general education requirements for its degree programs. College requirements may exceed the minima for general education established by the University, which are 40 semester credit hours (exclusive of physical education activity courses by OSRHE policy):

1. six semester credit hours of English composition;
2. three semester credit hours of American history (HIST 1103 or equivalent), and three semester credit hours of American government (POLS 1113);
3. at least six semester credit hours in each of the approved general education designated areas of Humanities and Natural Sciences (at least one course in each of these two areas must come from the approved general education lower-division course list);
4. at least three semester credit hours of Analytical and Quantitative Thought and Social and Behavioral Sciences;
5. at least one course designated as International Dimension, one course in Scientific Investigation, and one Diversity course.

Substitution of general education courses is allowed when background for the major demands greater depth in an area in which a general education requirement is stated. Only in the Analytical and Quantitative Thought “A” and Natural Sciences “N” areas is substitution of the more advanced lower-division course permitted. Such a substitution

requires the recommendation of the student's academic adviser and dean and the approval of the Office of the Provost and Senior Vice President.

Courses used to fulfill general education requirements are identified by code letters that appear preceding the course titles listed in the back of the Catalog and in the class schedule. The code letters designate the general education category for which the course may be used:

- A Analytical and Quantitative Thought
- D Diversity
- H Humanities
- I International Dimension
- L Scientific Investigation
- N Natural Sciences
- S Social and Behavioral Sciences

General Education courses are also identified in the Student Information System (SIS) and on the Internet site maintained by the Office of Academic Affairs.

The Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education require computer science proficiency prior to graduation. This requirement could be met by:

1. successfully completing a high school computer science course that meets State Regent's high school curricular requirements;
2. satisfying an institution's computer proficiency assessment; or
3. successfully completing college-level course work that the institution designates.

The method by which a student demonstrates computer science proficiency at OSU varies by major. This requirement does not increase the number of courses required to earn a degree. The use of computers is an integral part of every degree program; hence a student demonstrates proficiency by satisfactorily completing degree requirements.