



**General Education Program**

Adopted April 2009

Revised November 2016

## General Education Program Overview

The purpose of the Ohio Northern University General Education Program is to provide students with a broad exposure to the arts and sciences and the knowledge and skills needed to succeed in the 21st century. In keeping with ONU's mission statement, the General Education program integrates "mutually supporting liberal and professional education components" to prepare graduates "for success in their careers, service to their communities, the nation, and the world, and a lifetime of personal growth inspired by the higher values of truth, beauty, and goodness." The University expects each student to cultivate the knowledge and skills specified in the following University learning outcomes:

1. Effective written communication
2. Effective spoken communication
3. Critical and creative thinking
4. Knowledge of the physical and natural world
5. Knowledge of mathematics and statistics
6. Knowledge of human thought and culture
7. Knowledge of human society and the interactions between society and individuals
8. Knowledge of the principles of aesthetics
9. Knowledge of the principles of civics or ethics on a professional, community, or global level
10. An understanding of diverse cultures

## Curriculum Structure

The University expects each student to achieve the General Education learning outcomes through curricular activities.

The University General Education Committee shall assign a General Education learning outcome to specific courses according to criteria that the committee has established. Generally, such assignment shall indicate that a majority of the course content is substantially aligned with a general education learning outcome. This assignment will be indicated in the University Catalog and course syllabi.

Typically, a course will only support one learning outcome. Multiple learning outcomes may be assigned to a course at the discretion of the General Education Committee. If a course supports multiple learning outcomes, a student may only use the course to fulfill one learning outcome.

## General Education Course Framework

ONU's learning outcomes are embedded in a curriculum that includes the following:

### 1. Transitions Experience

This course facilitates the student's transition from high school to college life. Students can receive credit only once for a transitions experience. Other attributes of this course shall be:

- Mandatory for all undergraduate students during their first semester of study as a degree-seeking student. Transfer students with 24 credits or more as a degree-seeking student may be waived from this course at the discretion of the student's respective college of enrollment;
- Demonstrates ties between General Education and the major or potential major;
- Addresses the General Education learning outcome on Critical and Creative Thinking;
- Designed and delivered by the individual colleges.
- The Transitions Experience course may satisfy other requirements of degree programs that the colleges establish.

### 2. Writing Seminar

This course emphasizes English writing skills. Other attributes of this course shall be:

- Mandatory for all undergraduate students during their first year of study unless the English Department approves transfer credit from another institution of higher education;
- Addresses the Effective Written Communication general education learning outcome;
- Class size shall be restricted to 20 students per section;
- The student must successfully complete the Writing Seminar course with a grade of "C" or better.
- The Department of English shall administer this seminar.
- The Writing Seminar may satisfy other requirements of degree programs that the colleges establish.

### 3. Understanding Diverse Cultures Seminar

These seminars will build intercultural knowledge and competence while exploring our role as members of a world community, knowing that we share the future with others. Other attributes of this course shall be:

- Mandatory for all undergraduate students who have completed a transitions experience;
- The seminar must be completed at ONU;
- The course will have a significant written assignment that includes a revision process;
- Class size shall be restricted to 18 students per section;
- Pedagogy must include active learning;
- Students are advised to fulfill this requirement after completion of the ENGL 1221 Writing Seminar (or its equivalent);
- All members of the faculty may submit proposals for these seminars to the General Education Committee for approval;
- These seminars may satisfy other requirements of degree programs that the colleges establish.

#### 4. Additional Courses

Academic courses supporting the general education learning outcomes may satisfy other requirements of degree programs that the colleges establish.

The student must successfully complete all other approved academic courses according to the grading standard that the student's college determines.

## Assessment of General Education

To ensure continuous improvement of the general education program, the University Assessment Committee shall develop an assessment regimen for the general education program. The committee shall:

- Assess whether the general education program is enabling students to fulfill the University Learning Outcomes;
- Develop a timetable for continuing periodic assessment of each component of the general education program;
- Develop protocols for communicating assessment results to the University General Education Committee and the university faculty.

## Governance of the General Education Program

The governing entity of the university-wide general education program shall be the University General Education Committee, an operational committee of the university that has responsibility for administering the general education program.

### University General Education Committee

1. Membership.
  - a. The Director of General Education, an ex officio member;
  - b. Three representatives from the College of Arts and Sciences;
  - c. One representative from the College of Business Administration;
  - d. One representative from the College of Engineering;
  - e. One representative from the College of Pharmacy;
  - f. One student representative.
2. Selection of members.
  - a. The Vice President for Academic Affairs shall appoint the Director of General Education, an ex officio member of the committee, who shall hold faculty rank;
  - b. The faculty of each respective college shall elect their representative(s) to the committee.
  - c. The student representative shall be appointed by the Student Senate President with Student Senate approval.
3. Areas of Responsibility.

The Committee shall:

  - a. Assign general education learning outcomes to courses;
  - b. Review and recommend, in conjunction with the University Assessment Committee, changes in the following areas to the appropriate bodies through the office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs:
    - i. the university general education course framework;

- ii. the university general education learning outcomes;
- iii. the assessment processes associated with the general education learning outcomes.

4. Administrative Coordinator and Liaison.

The Director of General Education shall chair the committee and serve as its administrative coordinator and liaison.

## **Institutional Support for General Education**

The academic courses in the general education program shall constitute part of a faculty member's normal teaching load. The institution will seek opportunities to provide professional development to support faculty.

# General Education Program Requirements

## 1. Effective written communication.

Students demonstrate the written communication skills necessary to communicate professionally and effectively as responsible members of their organizations and their communities. (Met by passing the ENGL 1221 course and the senior capstone course sequence of the primary major. An additional assessment writing sample will be generated for written communication by Learning Outcome 10 below.)

## 2. Effective spoken communication.

Students will be able to demonstrate the oral communication skills necessary to develop and deliver an original prepared, purposeful presentation designed to increase knowledge, to foster understanding, or to promote change in the listeners' attitudes, values, beliefs, or behaviors. (Met by passing one course from a list of approved courses such as the CAMS area courses that instruct students in speeches, debates, and other oral presentation techniques.)

## 3. Critical and creative thinking.

Students will be able to explore, synthesize, and analyze information and ideas and formulate effective solutions in imaginative or innovative ways. (Met by passing a Transitions Experience course and the capstone sequence of the primary major.)

## 4. Knowledge of physical and natural world.

Students will demonstrate an understanding of the scientific process and the basic principles and applications of the life or physical sciences. (Met by passing one course from a list of approved courses in CHEM/PHYS/BIOL/GEOL.)

## 5. Knowledge of mathematics and statistics.

Students have the ability to express mathematical concepts and solve quantitative problems. (Met by passing one course from a list of approved courses in MATH/STAT.)

## 6. Knowledge of human thought and culture.

Students will demonstrate a knowledge of ideas and ways of understanding and interpreting the human experiences. (Met by passing one course from a list of approved courses including areas such as PHIL, RELG, ENGL, HIST. The list will overlap greatly with the courses currently carrying the A&S Humanities attribute in Banner.)

## 7. Knowledge of human society and the interactions between society and individuals.

Students will describe how historical, economic, political, social, and spatial relationships and identities develop, persist, and change. (Met by passing one course from a list of approved courses including areas such as CAMS/PLSC/PSYC/SOC/Economics. The list will overlap greatly with the courses currently carrying the A&S Social Science attribute in Banner.)

## 8. Knowledge of the principles of aesthetics.

Students will demonstrate knowledge of the principles of beauty as expressed by the arts. (Met by passing one course from a list of approved courses including areas such as MUSC/ART/theatre, ENGL literature courses.)

## 9. Knowledge of the principles of civics or ethics on a professional, community, or global level.

Students will understand the principles of ethical reasoning or civic responsibilities. (Met by passing one course from a list of approved courses including areas such as PHIL and PLSC.)

## 10. An understanding of diverse cultures.

Students will encounter elements of diverse cultures or societies. (Met by passing one course from a list of approved courses.)



**Ohio Northern University**  
**General Education Course Evaluation Criteria**  
(Modified April 2016)

General education courses will be approved as meeting at least one of the University general education learning outcomes. The University general education learning outcomes are:

1. Effective written communication
2. Effective spoken communication
3. Critical and creative thinking
4. Knowledge of the physical and natural world
5. Knowledge of mathematics or statistics
6. Knowledge of human thought and culture
7. Knowledge of human society and the interactions between society and individual
8. Knowledge of the principles of aesthetics
9. Knowledge of the principles of civics or ethics on a professional, community, or global level
10. An understanding of diverse cultures

The University General Education committee will approve a course as meeting one of these ten outcomes if it meets the following criteria for approval:

1. Courses approved for general education typically are three credits, although the committee may approve other credit-bearing courses at their discretion.
2. The course learning objectives must be strongly aligned to a general education learning outcome. If a course supports multiple learning outcomes, a student may only use the course to fulfill one learning outcome.
3. Courses must meet the parameters outlined in the general education plan approved in April 2016. These include the following:
  - Multiple learning outcomes may be assigned to a course at the discretion of the General Education Committee.
  - With the exception of Writing Seminar, a student must successfully complete the general education course according to the grading standard that the student's college determines.
  - Courses approved as meeting Learning Outcome 10 will be conducted in a seminar style format with high-impact learning pedagogy, will have an 18-person enrollment limit, and will require students to produce a substantive written assignment with revision. Faculty involved in this course will establish a common rigor of course expectations and a common assessment practice.

Individual academic course instructors and activity supervisors may request an exemption or exemptions from these criteria from the General Education Committee.