

The University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee
Academic Program and Curriculum Committee
GENERAL EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS
COMPOSITE DOCUMENT

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I. Introduction

Since the General Education Requirements (UWM Fac. Doc. 1382) were approved by the Faculty Senate in November of 1984, the Academic Program and Curriculum Committee (APCC) has taken a number of actions under the authority given to it by the Senate (III.A.1.2.3.) to establish policies and define procedures for the implementation of GER in the UWM curriculum. In this effort, the APCC has worked closely with, and has been assisted by, the office of the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, the Registrar's Office, the Secretary of the University, and the various schools and colleges. The resulting policy statements and procedural guidelines are gathered here as a convenient reference for department chairs and committees, academic advisors, and campus administrators.

MAY 17, 1984 REVISED
OCT. 18, 1984 AMENDED
NOV. 29, 1984 APPROVED
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I. Introduction

The Special Task Force on General Education Requirements presented the following statement on the “Goals and Rationale of General Education,” in a preamble to its report to the Academic Program and Curriculum Committee:

General education should provide opportunities to develop a strong foundation of verbal and quantitative skills; to understand the roles of methods and processes and their constraining effects on thought; to gain cultural and historical perspectives on the world; to develop consciousness of self in relation to tradition; to appreciate creativity, including the creation, testing, and application of ideas; to see how ideas relate to social structures; and to understand how values infuse both action and inquiry.

In addition to the intellectual objectives of general education, there are career considerations. In a society of rapidly expanding knowledge, training for a special task or concentration in a specific skill, risks the obsolescence of that training. Only a broad grasp of method and of the nature of innovation and renovation can prepare a person for work today. University education should provide the basis for intellectual mobility, for continuing education, and for intellectual replenishment in mid-career. Of course, this must be done without sacrificing necessary depth: the environment of a university provides a unique opportunity to delve deeply into specific areas and thus to serve both the individual and society.

The general education curriculum must be embodied in and exemplified through disciplines. In order to achieve the objectives, the courses in that curriculum cannot deal with techniques in the narrow sense but must explore the foundations of knowledge: how the discipline establishes its concepts; how these concepts of choice are established with respect to alternative patterns of inquiry, modes of expression, or courses of action. General and specialized education are directly related.

General education provides a broad body of knowledge as context for specialization, and the general education emphasis on conceptual inquiry leads students to more comprehensive views of their specialties. In this way students learn to relate particular tasks to general areas and thus acquire sufficient agility of mind and mobility of skills to move from problem to problem as knowledge develops.

II. General Education Requirements

The General Education Requirements for UWM include two major requirement categories, the first designed to assure basic student competencies and the second designed to provide students with a broad body of knowledge as a context for specialization. The first set of requirements, competency requirements, includes the general areas of English composition, mathematics, and foreign language. The second set of requirements, distribution requirements, includes the general areas of the arts, the humanities, the social sciences, and the natural sciences.

A. Competency Requirements

1. Oral and Written Communication (OWC) Competency

The oral and written communication requirement insures that students will be creative, flexible, and effective communicators, whether speaking or writing, and has two parts – Part A and Part B.

a. OWC-Part A is satisfied by either:

- i. earning a grade of C or higher in English 102 or an equivalent course; or
- ii. a suitable score on the UW-System English Placement Test (or other appropriate test, as determined by the English Department).

b. OWC-Part B is satisfied by completing an approved advanced course with a significant written or oral communication component by students who have completed the Part A requirement.

Courses that count toward the Part B requirement may be offered in a variety of disciplines and students are encouraged to choose the course that matches their interests and helps them meet the requirements of their degrees.

Students are expected to complete Part A of this requirement in the first year of their study.

2. Quantitative Literacy (QL) Competency

The Quantitative Literacy requirement ensures that students will have the ability to evaluate, construct, and communicate arguments using quantitative methods and formal reasoning. The requirements are in two parts – Part A and Part B

a. QL-Part A is satisfied by any of the following:

- i. a minimum of 2.5 credits with a grade of C or higher in any 100-level math course (excluding 194 and 199) or Math/Philos 111; or
- ii. a placement level of 30 or higher on the Mathematics Placement Test (or another appropriate test, as determined by the Mathematical Sciences Department).

QL-A skills must be broad-based in order that they have a positive impact on the readiness of students to take a QL-B course in a variety of disciplines. It is recommended that students complete the QL-A requirement within the first 60 credits earned.

b. The QL-Part B requirement is satisfied by completing at least one QL-B course (at least three credits) as decided by the major according to the guidelines below. In general it is expected that a QL-A course is a prerequisite for a QL-B course. However, a course with a QL-A course as a prerequisite is not by definition considered QL-B.

To be certified as a QL-B course, a course must make significant use of quantitative tools in the context of the other course material and formally assess for proficiency in applying these quantitative tools.

3. Foreign Language

This requirement is satisfied by:

- a. completing, prior to enrollment at UWM, two years of high school level instruction in a single foreign language with passing grades; or
- b. completing two semesters (minimum of 6 credits) of college level instruction in a single foreign language with passing grades; or
- c. demonstrating foreign language ability equivalent to (b) above by means of a satisfactory score on an approved placement, proficiency, departmental, or other appropriate examination; or
- d. satisfying the APCC-approved alternative GER Foreign Language Requirement, if any, stipulated by the student's particular degree program.

Completion of the Foreign Language Requirement is a prerequisite for graduation.

B. Distribution Requirements

1. The Arts

Three credits in a course on the history, philosophy, theory, or practice of the creative and expressive arts (e.g. visual arts, dance, music, theatre, and creative writing).

2. The Humanities

A total of six credits in at least two courses.

3. The Social Sciences

A total of six credits in at least two courses.

4. The Natural Sciences

A total of six credits in at least two courses. At least one must include laboratory or field experience illustrating the generation and testing of data and the application of concepts and knowledge to the solution of problems.

5. Cultural Diversity

A total of 3 credits from the list of courses approved for cultural diversity credit.

III. Procedural Matters

The following recommendations relate to the implementation and administration of general education requirements.

A. Governance and Administration

1. The Academic Program and Curriculum Committee has the responsibility for establishing policy in the area of general education. This responsibility includes: the approval of courses to be designated as fulfilling the requirements; the approval of all competency examinations and

the setting of minimum scores; the establishment of policies pertaining to student appeals; and the general monitoring of the academic impact of the requirements.

2. The faculty of an individual school or college may request exemption from portions of the general education requirements for one or more of its programs. Such requests should be addressed to the Academic Program and Curriculum Committee and may be based on such grounds as excessive credit burden on majors, conflict with accreditation standards in the profession, or other academic grounds. Decisions of the Academic Program and Curriculum Committee may be appealed to the Faculty Senate.
3. The administration of the General Education Requirements should be handled by the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, the Registrar's Office, and the separate schools or colleges, in accordance with present procedures. Individual student compliance will be monitored in the same manner as compliance with other curricular requirements, i.e., by school/college advisory staff and by the Registrar's Office. Student appeals will be handled in accordance with established department/school/university procedures. The Academic Program and Curriculum Committee will monitor compliance by schools and colleges.
4. Bulletin copy prepared under (1) and (2) above shall be approved under automatic consent or may be modified by the Faculty Senate before the General Education Requirements are published.

B. General Education Requirements and Admission Requirements

The APCC is charged with the task of working with the Admissions and Records Policy Committee to review admissions standards in relation to general education requirements.

C. Registration, Records, and Class Standing

The Senate should establish a single set of rules for advancement of class standing in all undergraduate schools and colleges.

Freshman – Admission

Sophomore – Semester after completion of 28 credits and removal of all admission deficiencies

Junior – Semester after completion of 58 credits

Senior – Semester after completion of 88 credits, including 18 credits of higher division courses

D. Effective Date

1. These requirements apply to all new students entering at the freshman level in fall 2013.
2. With the exception of Part II, item A.1.b. "OWC – Part B", Part II, item A.2.b "QL – Part B", Part II, item A.3 "Foreign Language," and Part II, item B.5 "Cultural Diversity," these requirements shall apply to new students entering at the freshman level in fall, 1986-87.
3. Part II, item A.3 "Foreign Language" shall apply to new students entering at the freshman level in fall, 1999-00.
4. Part II, item B.5, "Cultural Diversity" shall apply to students new to UWM as of fall, 1989-90.

I. Exemptions to GER

Criteria and procedures for reviewing requests from schools and colleges for variance from the General Education Requirements.

A. Criteria

Requests for exemption from specific aspects of the General Education Requirements cannot be based on objections to the goals and rationale of the requirements, as described in Section I of the GER Composite Document, Faculty Document No. 1382, and must be consonant with the general principle and purpose of the requirements. Requests for exemptions must address each of these issues: (a) why the specific requirement at issue is inappropriate for the students of the school or college, and/or what purpose would be served by an exemption from the requirement, and (b) why the school's or college's program cannot be modified to accommodate the requirement.

In addition, requests for temporary exemptions for specified periods from specific requirements will be considered if it can be shown that the time is needed to modify the school's or college's program to accommodate the requirement.

B. Documentation

With the request for variance, the school or college must submit the most recent available data comparing its program with comparable programs at comparable universities vis-a-vis the requirement at issue, including universities that have adopted or are in the process of adopting university-wide general education requirements similar in character to UWM's.

C. Mechanism

Requests for exemption will be reviewed by a standing subcommittee of the APCC consisting of one member from each of the four divisions of the university, and the chairperson of the APCC. The subcommittee will report to the whole APCC, which must act on the request.

D. Review

All GER exemptions will be reviewed initially in five years and thereafter every 10 years.

E. Appeals

Decisions of the Academic Program and Curriculum Committee may be appealed to the Faculty Senate.

II. Competency Requirements

A. Oral and Written Communication (OWC) Competency

The oral and written communication requirement ensures that students will be creative, flexible, and effective communicators, whether speaking or writing. The requirement is in two parts – Part A and Part B.

1. OWC Part A

The OWC Part A requirement is satisfied by:

- a. earning a grade of C or higher in English 102 or equivalent course;
- b. attaining a suitable score on the UW-System English Placement Test (or another appropriate test, as determined by the English Department);
- c. earning a minimum of 2.5 credits, with a grade of C or higher, in a course that transfers as UWM English 102; or
- d. earning a grade of C or higher in a course that transfers as a UWM higher level expository writing course, as determined by the English Department.

Students are eligible to enroll in 102 in one of two ways:

- a. earning a 576 or higher on the English Placement Test (EPT); or
- b. earning a grade of C or higher in English 101.

NOTE: Fall, 1998-99, English 102 was reactivated and English 112 inactivated in the composition curriculum. English 102 and English 112 are considered repeats of each other, and will be marked as such on transcripts.

2. OWC Part B

The OWC Part B requirement is satisfied by completing an approved advanced course with a significant written and/or oral communication component after completing Part A of the requirement.

Part B courses may be offered in a variety of disciplines; students are encouraged to choose the course that matches their interests and helps them meet requirements of their degree.

Purpose: The second communication course will typically be a low-enrollment course involving substantial instruction in the four modes of literacy (that is, speaking, reading, writing, and listening), with emphasis on speaking and/or writing, either in the conventions of specific fields or in more advanced courses in communication. The APCC defines this as follows: the context in which student work is assessed (i.e. lecture, discussion, lab) has an enrollment cap of 25 or fewer students. Requests to approve courses with larger class size must demonstrate clearly how the objectives and requirements of the course can be satisfied within the larger format.

Objectives: Specific objectives will vary with each discipline, but each course is expected to develop advanced skills in:

- a. Critical reading, logical thinking, and the use of argument and evidence.
- b. The use of appropriate stylistic and disciplinary conventions in writing and/or speaking.
- c. Critical analysis of information from primary or secondary sources for some portion of the speaking and/or writing.

Requirements: These will vary, but each course must satisfy the following:

- a. Multiple assignments [6-8 would be ideal], spaced throughout the semester that culminate in oral and/or written presentations. The balance between oral and written presentations may vary, as appropriate to the discipline and the instructor's preferences, so long as the total amount of graded communication remains reasonably consistent from course to course.

Course Focus in %	Written Work	Oral Work
50:50 written/oral communication	16 pages* in multiple assignments	2 or more formal oral presentations totaling at least 10 minutes
75:25 written/oral communication	24 pages* in multiple assignments	1 or more formal oral presentations totaling at least 10 minutes
25:75 written/oral communication	8 pages* in multiple assignments	2 or more formal oral presentations totaling at least 15 minutes
100:0 written/oral communication	32 pages* in multiple assignments	
0:100 written/oral communication		3 or more formal oral presentations totaling at least 20 minutes

* Drafts count toward the total number of pages.

- b. At least two assignments that require students to submit a draft or give a practice speech, assimilate feedback on it, and then revise it. Additional opportunities for feedback and revision would be better yet.
- c. At least one individual conference with each student, preferably early in the semester, to discuss the student's writing and/or speaking skills.
- d. A requirement that a portion of the speaking and/or writing be based on a research component, appropriate to the discipline and course.

Courses may include the option to integrate speaking and writing into new media formats, including video/animation, podcasts, blogs, vlogs, some kinds of social media, or online discussion and presentation settings.

Prerequisite: Successful completion of, or exemption from, first communication course. Courses designated as satisfying Part A of the requirement may not be used to satisfy Part B of the requirement.

Class size: Recommended 25 or fewer students. Those departments or individuals requesting approval for courses with larger class size must demonstrate how the objectives and requirements of the course can be satisfied within the larger format.

Instructors: Faculty and other instructional staff

Assessment: There will be normal evaluations of student work by individual instructors. In addition, each course proposal shall include an assessment plan designed to demonstrate that the course meets the objectives and requirements stated above.

B. Quantitative Literacy (QL) Competency

The quantitative literacy requirement ensures that students will have the ability to evaluate, construct, and communicate arguments using quantitative methods and formal reasoning. The requirement is in two parts – Part A and Part B.

1. QL Part A

QL Part A is satisfied by:

- a. a placement level of 30 on the Math Placement Test (or another appropriate test as determined by the Mathematical Sciences Department);
- b. a minimum of 2.5 credits, with a grade of C or higher, in any 100-level course in the Math curricular area (excluding Math 194 and Math 199) or in Math/Philos 111;
- c. a minimum of 2.5 credits, with a grade of C or higher, in equivalent or higher-level Math coursework (higher level includes all courses in the Math curricular area with a QL-A course as a prerequisite); or
- d. earning a minimum of 2.5 credits, with a grade of C or higher, in any transfer coursework that meets this requirement.

Mathematical Statistics 215 does not satisfy Part A of the requirement.

This part of the requirement will prepare students to achieve the following outcomes:

- a. make sense of problems and persevere in solving them;
- b. reason abstractly and quantitatively;
- c. construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others;
- d. model with mathematics;
- e. use appropriate tools strategically;
- f. attend to precision;
- g. look for and make use of structure; and
- h. look for and express regularity in repeated reasoning.

QL-A skills must be broad-based in order that they have a positive impact on the readiness of students to take a QL-B course in a variety of disciplines. It is recommended that students complete the QL-A requirement within the first 60 credits earned.

2. QL Part B

QL Part B is satisfied by completing at least one QL-B course (at least three credits) as decided by the major according to the parameters described below.

Purpose: A QL-B course must make significant use of quantitative tools in the context of the other course material and formally assess for proficiency in applying these quantitative tools.

Objectives: Quantitative literacy includes the recognition, construction, and use of valid mathematical models to analyze and manipulate quantitative information to reach reasonable conclusions, predictions, or inferences.

Primary learning outcomes: Outcomes should include the following:

- a. Students will recognize and construct mathematical models and/or hypotheses that represent quantitative information.
- b. Students will evaluate the validity of these models and hypotheses.
- c. Students will analyze and manipulate mathematical models using quantitative information.
- d. Students will reach logical conclusions, predictions, or inferences.
- e. Students will assess the reasonableness of their conclusions.

A QL-B course may, but is not required to, focus on quantitative reasoning in one specific discipline.

Requirements: QL-B courses must include the following:

- a. Significant use of quantitative tools in the context of other course material.
- b. A prerequisite of “successful completion of, or exemption from, a QL-A course.” An individual QL-A course may be specified. Courses designated as satisfying Part A of the requirement may not be used to satisfy Part B. A course with a QL-A prerequisite is not by definition a QL-B course.
- c. Low-enrollment courses. The APCC defines this as follows: The context in which student work is assessed (i.e., lecture, discussion, lab) has an enrollment cap of 25 or fewer students. Requests to approve courses with a larger class size must demonstrate clearly how the objectives and requirements of the course can be satisfied within the larger format.
- d. An assessment plan designed to demonstrate that the course meets the objectives and student learning outcomes stated above.

Disqualifying criteria: Courses that do not satisfy the criteria for QL-B courses include those that deal with quantitative information only in one or more of the following ways:

- a. Students are given a mathematical model (e.g., equation, formula) and are required merely to produce a numerical or qualitative answer through routine calculations or symbolic manipulation.

- b. Students are required to use a computer package to perform calculations or carry out a study without subjecting their results to critical analysis; comparing them to other numerical data; arriving at conclusions, predictions, or inferences; and assessing their reasonableness.
- c. Students are required to deal with quantitative information in primarily descriptive or conceptual ways. For example, courses in “research methods” that lack a substantial reasoning component based on tools covered in a QL-A course would not be certified.

C. Foreign Language

The requirement is satisfied by one of the options below:

1. Two years of high school level instruction in a single foreign language with passing grades prior to enrollment at UWM.
 - a. Students who have completed the second year of high-school-level foreign language with a passing grade will have satisfied the requirement.
 - b. Students who can document satisfactory completion of the equivalent of two years of study at a secondary institution where the language of instruction is other than English, as defined by UWM International Studies and Programs, will have satisfied the requirement.
2. Two semesters (minimum of 6 credits) of college level instruction in a single foreign language with passing grades.
 - a. Students continuing language study at the university must take a placement test to determine the entry course. The placement exam tests reading comprehension and grammatical structure. Students placing into the first-semester course proceed through the sequence until completion of the second semester course. The requirement is satisfied with the successful completion of the second-semester course.
 - b. Students who can document satisfactory completion of the equivalent of two semesters of study at a post-secondary institution where the language of instruction is other than English, as defined by UWM International Studies and Programs, will have satisfied the requirement.
3. Foreign language ability equivalent to (b) above by means of a satisfactory score on an approved placement, proficiency, departmental, or other appropriate examination.
 - a. The requirement may be satisfied by placing into the third-semester of a language via an existing UW-System Foreign Language Placement Test.
 - b. Other nationally or locally developed tests, with appropriate scores, may be approved by the APCC GER Subcommittee for languages not available via the UW-System placement exams.
 - c. Students wishing to demonstrate competency in a language for which there is no approved local or national exam will be assisted by the GER Coordinator in the Registrar’s Office in locating an appropriate person to construct and/or administer an appropriate examination.
4. Other methods of certifying competency may be approved by the APCC GER Subcommittee on a case-by-case basis.

III. Distribution Requirements

Criteria and Procedures for Approval of GER Distribution Credit and Assessment of Learning Outcomes.

A. Policy

1. General Policy

The administration of UWM General Education Requirements will be informed by the UW System Shared Learning Goals, endorsed by the UW System Regents at their meeting of December 4, 2008 and included in the UW System Growth Agenda. The UW System Shared Learning Goals embrace the definition of liberal education developed by the American Association of Colleges and Universities (AAC&U):

Liberal education is a philosophy of education that empowers individuals with broad knowledge and transferable skills, and a strong sense of values, ethics, and civic engagement. These broad goals have been enduring even as the courses and requirements that comprise a liberal education have changed over the years. Characterized by challenging encounters with important and relevant issues today and throughout history, a liberal education prepares graduates both for socially valued work and for civic leadership in their society. It usually includes a general education curriculum that provides broad exposure to multiple disciplines and ways of knowing, along with more in-depth study in at least one field or area of concentration. (<http://blog.aacu.org/index.php/what-is-liberal-education/>)

University of Wisconsin System Shared Learning Goals for Students:

- a. Knowledge of Human Cultures and the Natural World including breadth of knowledge and the ability to think beyond one's discipline, major, or area of concentration. This knowledge can be gained through the study of the arts, humanities, languages, sciences, and social sciences.
- b. Critical and Creative Thinking Skills including inquiry, problem solving, and higher order qualitative and quantitative reasoning.
- c. Effective Communication Skills including listening, speaking, reading, writing, and information literacy.
- d. Intercultural Knowledge and Competence including the ability to interact and work with people from diverse backgrounds and cultures; to lead or contribute support to those who lead; and to empathize with and understand those who are different than they are.
- e. Individual, Social and Environmental Responsibility including civic knowledge and engagement (both local and global), ethical reasoning, and action.

The UW System's goals regarding "Knowledge of Human Cultures and the Natural World" are met through UWM's divisional distribution requirements. As mandated in Faculty Document 1382 (revised), these include the following divisional areas: Arts, Humanities, Social Sciences, Natural Sciences, and Cultural Diversity. These divisional requirements, as stated in the 1984 Task Force document, aim to enable students "to gain cultural and historical perspectives on the world; to develop consciousness of self in relation to tradition; to appreciate creativity, including the creation, testing, and application of ideas; to see how ideas relate to social structures; and to understand how values infuse both action and inquiry" (UWM Fac. Doc. 1382, p. 1, par. 2). To achieve these objectives, courses that count toward divisional distribution requirements may not "deal with techniques in the narrow sense but must explore the foundation of knowledge" (UWM Fac. Doc. 1382, p. 1, par. 4).

While General Education courses work through disciplinary foci and methods, they must equip students with foundational bodies of knowledge, basic analytic perspectives, and core intellectual skills that are equally relevant in the pursuit of a variety of disciplines. These transdisciplinary goals of skill and knowledge are described by the UW System statement as follows: critical and creative thinking, effective communication, intercultural knowledge and competence, and individual, social, and environmental responsibility. These transdisciplinary goals represent vital learning objectives for general education courses. Syllabi for UWM general education courses will specify how one or more of these objectives will be attained by students, usually in reference to a particular course assignment whose assessment can be reported in processes aimed at measuring student learning outcomes and the effectiveness of the General Education program. Typically, the UW System goals will be integrated in assignments along with the outcomes specified in relation to the relevant divisional criteria in Arts, Humanities, Social Sciences, Natural Sciences, or Cultural Diversity (for criteria see section 4 below).

2. Course Policy

All departments or instructional units at UWM may submit courses to the Academic Program and Curriculum Committee for inclusion in the list of courses that satisfy GER Distribution Requirements. The APCC and its GER Subcommittee look to the faculty for leadership in curriculum design and innovation, and will work closely with them to facilitate and implement new or redesigned course plans. All GER courses will include effective assessment plans specific to their chosen learning outcomes; the results of such assessment will be reported to APCC according to the schedule discussed below (b.8). The following policies govern this work:

- a. In principle, courses primarily providing professional training do not meet or satisfy GER distribution requirements.
- b. Courses satisfying GER distribution requirements in the humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences are offered primarily by departments in the College of Letters and Science. Courses satisfying GER distribution requirements in the Arts are offered primarily by departments in the Peck School of the Arts; creative writing is offered by the Department of English. Other schools and colleges, however, may submit courses for approval in the above areas if they meet the specific criteria listed under the appropriate divisional area.
- c. Courses meeting the Cultural Diversity requirement may be offered in any school or college.
- d. To be included in the GER curriculum, courses must demonstrate that they:
 - i. frame instruction in the general methodology of the discipline within a broader context of liberal education as described in the UW System Shared Learning Goals statement, with attention to appropriate learning outcomes derived from those Goals;
 - ii. do not deal with techniques in the narrow sense but explore the foundations of knowledge: how the discipline establishes its concepts; how these concepts of choice are established with respect to alternative patterns of inquiry, mode of expressions, or course of action (see UWM Fac. Doc. 1382, p. 1, par. 4); and
 - iii. follow a syllabus that explicitly articulates how the course meets UWM General Education Requirements by integrating UW System Shared Learning Goals with divisional learning outcomes; syllabi will identify the assignment(s) intended to help

students achieve specific Shared Learning Goals and divisional criteria, including how such assignments will be assessed.

- e. The list of approved courses may be modified by addition or deletion. Request for such modifications must be originated by the appropriate department or unit or the Academic Program and Curriculum Committee (APCC).
- f. Departments or units are urged to integrate GER courses within their programs of study for the major or minor, subject to the guidelines given in (b.4), above.
- g. Restrictions:
 - i. No course may be repeated for GER distribution credit beyond a maximum of three credits.
 - ii. Courses listed as variable topics will not be given GER credit unless the course title and catalog description clearly indicate that the topics offered under that course will always conform to the GER criteria addressed in the original course submission to APCC.
- h. The regular and effective assessment of GER courses and learning outcomes is a joint responsibility of instructional units and the APCC. The APCC will provide instructional units with clear guidelines and templates for reporting GER outcomes. Instructional units will collect and archive assessment data annually for internal purposes of review and action, and do so according to a schedule and format approved and codified by the Departmental Committee. Instructional units will report data results and any actions taken to the APCC during the scheduled five-year external reviews discussed below.
- i. Each year, the GER Subcommittee will prepare a report on the assessment of learning outcomes in one of the divisional areas (Arts, Humanities, Natural Sciences, Social Sciences, Cultural Diversity). These will proceed in sequence each year, creating a five-year cycle for divisional outcomes reports.
- j. At the beginning of the academic year, the GER Subcommittee will notify instructional units offering courses with that year's divisional criteria of the timeline for reporting results and with guidelines regarding how many courses should be reported upon.
- k. By the end of the academic year, the GER Subcommittee will have submitted its report to the APCC for discussion, as well as to all reviewed instructional units. The GER Subcommittee will recommend courses that should continue to have GER or courses that should have GER removed based on the course materials submitted. For courses recommended to have GER status removed, there will be an appeals process for departments to make course adjustments to be GER compliant or submit any additional course materials.

IV. Divisional Criteria

A. The Arts

1. **Definition:** A branch of learning focusing on the conscious use of skill and creative imagination in the production of artistic objects or performances that stress values that stand outside conventional ideas of utility.
2. **Criteria:** Courses satisfying this requirement shall incorporate criterion 1 and at least one other of the following learning outcomes. Students will be able to:

- a. demonstrate comprehension of historical, philosophical, theoretical, or aesthetic perspectives commonly used in the understanding of a specific art; and
- b. apply knowledge of artistic principles, conventions, methods, and practices through the creation or production of works of art; or
- c. compare and contrast the expressive and formal features of different artistic media and/or cultural traditions; this may be accomplished through an analytic study or as part of an original artistic work.

While most courses satisfying this requirement will be at the entry level of the discipline, departments may submit for approval by the APCC some courses in the practice of an art that require a basic level of proficiency.

Courses in the application of the arts as an experience or a method for therapeutic or other applied purposes are not eligible for GER distribution requirements. The application of an artistic methodology to a therapeutic situation, places this type of course beyond the scope and intent of the GER Distribution Requirements.

B. Humanities

1. **Definition:** The academic disciplines that investigate human constructs and values, as opposed to those that investigate natural and physical processes, and those concerned with the development of basic or professional skills.

The humanistic disciplines—such as art history, history, language and literature, philosophy, religious studies, film and media studies—are concerned with questions, issues, and concepts basic to the formation of character and the establishment of values in a human context. They also provide literary, aesthetic, and intellectual experiences that enrich and enlighten human life. In these courses, students will use humanistic means of inquiry, such as: the critical use of sources and evaluation of evidence, the exercise of judgment and expression of ideas, and the organization, logical analysis, and creative use of substantial bodies of knowledge in order to approach the subject of study.

2. **Criteria:** Courses satisfying this requirement shall incorporate criterion 1 and at least one other of the following learning outcomes. Students will be able to:
 - a. identify the formation, traditions, and ideas essential to major bodies of historical, cultural, literary, or philosophical knowledge; and
 - b. respond coherently and persuasively to the materials of humanities study; this may be through logical, textual, formal, historical, or aesthetic analysis, argument and/or interpretation; or
 - c. apply diverse humanistic theories or perspectives to other branches of knowledge or to issues of universal human concern.

C. Social Sciences

1. **Definition:** A branch of science dealing with the study of human behavior, human cultural and physical variation and evolution, and the organization, development, and consequences of human activity, both past and present.
2. **Criteria:** Courses satisfying this requirement shall incorporate criterion 1 and at least one other of the following learning outcomes. Students will be able to:

- a. recognize and analyze intrapersonal, interpersonal, and/or socio-cultural factors associated with individual behavior, collective action, or societal development; and
- b. identify and critically evaluate the function, structure and development of human collectivities, organizations, institutions, and cultures, their infrastructures and interrelationships;
- c. recognize and contextualize human capacities for and/or techniques of creating behavior acquisition and change as viewed from both intra- and inter-cultural perspectives;
- d. demonstrate the ability to identify, apply and effectively communicate methodologies designed for conducting inquiry into human behavior, collective action, societies, or cultures; or
- e. critically evaluate and apply alternative theoretical frameworks that have been used to offer meaningful explanations of social phenomena.

D. Natural Sciences

1. **Definition:** A branch of science concerned with the physical world and its phenomena and with discovering the laws governing them. The branches of Natural Sciences—such as astronomy, geosciences, biological sciences, chemistry, physics—that deal primarily with matter, energy, and their interrelations and transformations; with living organisms and vital processes; with the laws and phenomena relating to organisms, plants and animal life; with the physical processes and phenomena of particular systems; and with the physical properties and composition of nature and its products.
2. **Criteria:** Courses satisfying this requirement shall incorporate criterion 1 and at least one other of the following learning outcomes. Students will be able to:
 - a. understand and apply the major concepts of a natural science discipline, including its breadth and its relationship to other disciplines; and
 - b. explain and illustrate the relationships between experiments, models, theories and laws;
 - c. demonstrate an understanding of the process of generating and testing data, and apply this knowledge to the solution of problems;
 - d. discuss and assess the limitations of data and the possibility of alternative interpretations; or
 - e. apply ethical reasoning to questions, concepts, and practices within a natural science discipline.

At least one of the two required courses must include laboratory or field experience to satisfy the Natural Science GER Distribution Requirement.

E. Cultural Diversity: Race, Ethnicity, and Diversity in the United States

1. **Definition:** Courses in this area focus on the experiences of African Americans, Native Americans, Asian Americans, and/or U.S. Latino/as. Courses should also include perspectives on how differences other than race and ethnicity (such as economic class, gender, gender identity/expression, nationality, religion, sexual orientation, etc.) complicate cultural identity categories. While focused on the United States, courses may also include diasporic and transnational frameworks for understanding key topics.

2. **Criteria:** Courses satisfying this requirement shall incorporate criterion 1 and at least one other of the following learning outcomes. Students will be able to:
 - a. understand and analyze the perspectives, world views, methodologies, and philosophic constructs that the group(s) use(s) to describe, explain, and evaluate its/their life experiences over historical time; and
 - b. investigate critically the social, intellectual, and political structures that support oppression based on race, ethnicity, and other human differences;
 - c. explain fundamental episodes in the history and social construction of concepts of “race” and “ethnicity”;
 - d. reflect critically on how the students’ own culture and experiences influence their knowledge of, and attitudes towards, people whose cultural and social identities differ from their own;
 - e. articulate, within communities of color, the social, cultural, and political contributions of women, transgender people, and persons of varied sexual orientations;
 - f. analyze the role of diversity in the successful functioning of a multiracial democratic society; or
 - g. delineate how formations of race and ethnicity in the United States are part of a larger transnational history.

V. Student Appeals

A. General Policy

1. Student appeals for exemptions from one or more of the General Education Requirements will be handled initially by the school or college in which the student is enrolled (according to the Registrar’s classification) in accordance with established department/college/university procedures.
2. Appeal boards, committees, or officers are expected to adhere to APCC guidelines on student appeals, as set forth in section 5.2 of this statement. Questions concerning any part of this policy statement should be referred to the Chair of the APCC.
3. The APCC will monitor the enforcement of GER by schools and colleges through the appeal procedure (see Section 5.3). If, in the judgment of the committee, questions of compliance are raised, and consultation between the APCC and the unit fails to resolve the problem, the matter will be referred to the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs for intervention.
4. Approval of GER waivers may be made by one school/college transfer with the student to another school/college provided the integrity of the school/college degree requirements is maintained. For example, approval to consider the GER Humanities requirement satisfaction does not waive a school/college 12 credit Humanities requirement selected from a restricted list of courses, nor does waiver of a competency requirement remove competency as an admission requirement to a major or professional school.

B. Grounds for Appeal

1. Students may appeal for exemption from one or more of the General Education Requirements on the basis of:

- a. equivalent academic, professional, or vocational accomplishments as certified by transcripts, diplomas, work records, etc.;
 - b. exceptional circumstances, including cases of unwarranted hardship in the fulfillment of the requirements;
 - c. special requirements of combined majors or unique programs of study, if it can be shown that the intent of GER is fulfilled by the student's program; or
 - d. an academic grievance against a member of the UWM faculty or staff in regard to GER courses or exams, if the grievance is upheld by the appropriate appeals body.
2. Students may NOT appeal for exemption from the GER on the basis of:
- a. philosophical or other objections to GER;
 - b. failure to plan course work properly, or to schedule the required examinations in a timely fashion;
 - c. inability to pass a course or examination;
 - d. academic deficiencies upon admission to UWM;
 - e. transfer to UWM from another institution; or
 - f. a credit load in excess of the University's minimum for graduation, if the additional credits are judged to be within the normal range for the student's degree or program of study.

C. Procedures

1. Student confers with department or program advisers to determine grounds of appeal, as specified in (5.2) above.
2. Student files an appeal with the school or college dean, or with appropriate appeals committee, according to the unit's standard procedures.
3. Dean/committee evaluate appeal according to APCC guidelines and Faculty Senate document relating to GER; decision is rendered on the basis of specific circumstances, as presented and substantiated by the student.
4. Dean's office reports its decision to APCC via the appeals Monitoring Form (See Attachment); units are expected to file their forms within two weeks of the action.
5. APCC chair reviews forms, may request further information on individual cases from the units. If the chair raises questions of compliance with a unit's handling of appeals, and is unable to resolve the matter through consultation with the unit, the matter will be referred to the committee. (Note: if the workload requires it, the chair may appoint an ad hoc subcommittee of the APCC to assist in the screening of appeals.)
6. Upon a majority vote of the APCC, units whose appeals procedures seem not in compliance with the goals and standards of the University's General Education Requirements, will be referred to the Vice Chancellor's office. The Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs will bear the responsibility for intervention and enforcement of the regulations.

- VI. Special and Transfer Students, and Second-Degree Candidates
- A. A course taken at another college/university will count toward GER distribution if it is equivalent to a course on the approved list.
 - B. A course taken at another college/university will not count toward GER distribution if it is equivalent to a UWM course that is not on the approved list (see d.1 below, for an exception for UW-System transfer students).
 - C. A course that transfers to UWM as an elective from MATC, the UW Centers, UW System campuses or other schools/colleges approved by the APCC chair will count toward GER distribution if the department recommends that the course satisfies its criteria for GER courses, and the APCC chair approves the recommendation.
 - D. In accordance with the UW-System Undergraduate Transfer Policy, the following principles of accommodation apply:
 - 1. A course designated as fulfilling a general education breadth requirement at one UW institution should transfer as general education at the receiving campus. This principle should apply, whether or not the receiving institution has a direct course equivalent that satisfies general education.
 - 2. When applying a course toward general education breadth requirements, the receiving UW institution would generally apply it in the same category as similar courses at that institution. However, if the course fulfills a different category at the sending UW institution and the student requests that the original designation be applied, the request should be approved where appropriate under UW-System Undergraduate Transfer Policy principles of accommodation.
 - 3. UW institutions should permit courses completed by UW-System transfer students to transfer in accordance with the course equivalency in effect when the courses were taken and when doing so is beneficial to students.
 - 4. A course designated ethnic studies at one UW institution should be applied toward the ethnic studies requirement at the receiving UW institution.
 - E. Second-degree candidates from accredited institutions are not subject to GER.