

FLORIDA GULF COAST UNIVERSITY
GENERAL EDUCATION PROGRAM POLICY

(Approved by the General Education Council on October 9, 2008)

The General Education Program at Florida Gulf Coast University supports the FGCU mission and guiding principles by promoting academic excellence, preparing students for their majors and cultivating habits of lifelong learning. In accordance with Florida Statute Title XLVIII, Chapter 1007.25, FGCU students complete 36 credit hours of General Education coursework within the subject areas of communication, mathematics, social sciences, humanities, and natural sciences. Where applicable, courses taken to meet state common prerequisites for a program may also be used to fulfill General Education requirements.

In compliance with the State Board of Education Rule 6A-10.024, a transfer student who has successfully completed the General Education requirements for any public university or community college in Florida prior to enrolling as a degree-seeking student at FGCU, and has this completion noted on his/her official transcript, shall be considered to have satisfied the General Education requirement. All other transfer students are expected to complete the FGCU General Education Program. Transfer student transcripts will be evaluated to determine course equivalencies and fulfillment of FGCU General Education requirements.

FGCU shall accept General Education credit from Florida state universities and community colleges for courses that are designated by those institutions as General Education courses.

In accord with Florida Statute Title XLVIII, Chapter 1007.27(2) and credit-by-exam equivalencies adopted by the Florida state Articulation Coordinating Committee, for purposes of completing the requirements for General Education, Gordon Rule, or major prerequisites, credit for specific course numbers awarded by exam are treated as equivalent to credit earned in the same courses at FGCU.

All courses offered for General Education credit at FGCU must be approved by the General Education Council as part of the university curricular approval process, and shall meet the following criteria:

1. Open to students across all majors and offered on a regular and consistent basis;
2. Provides consistent and comparable instruction across all sections, using common course goals and learning outcomes;
3. Purposefully addresses one of the General Education Subject Areas in the syllabi for all course sections;
4. Provides sufficient breadth of experience for the General Education Subject Area in which it is approved;
5. Addresses one (1) or more of the General Education Competencies (as described below) and is assessable in one (1) of those Competencies during any designated assessment period;

GENERAL EDUCATION LEARNING GOALS

(Approved by the General Education Task Force on March 31, 2004)

Goal 1: Aesthetic Sensibility

- Know and understand the variety of aesthetic frameworks that have shaped, and continue to shape, human creative arts.
- Analyze and evaluate the aesthetic principles at work in literary and artistic composition, intellectual systems, and disciplinary and professional practices.
- Collaborate with others in projects involving aesthetic awareness, participation, and/or analysis.

Goal 2: Culturally Diverse Perspective

- Know and understand the diversity of the local and global communities, including cultural, social, political, and economic differences.
- Analyze, evaluate, and assess the impact of differences in ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, native language, sexual orientation, and intellectual/disciplinary approaches.
- Participate in collaborative projects requiring productive interaction with culturally diverse people, ideas, and values.

Goal 3: Ecological Perspective

- Know the issues related to economic, social, and ecological sustainability.
- Analyze and evaluate ecological issues locally and globally.
- Participate in collaborative projects requiring awareness and/or analysis of ecological and environmental issues.

Goal 4: Effective Communication

- Know the fundamental principles for effective and appropriate communication, including reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills.
- Organize thoughts and compose ideas for a variety of audiences, using a range of communication tools and techniques.
- Participate in collaborative projects requiring effective communications among team members.

Goal 5: Ethical Responsibility

- Know and understand the key ethical issues related to a variety of disciplines and professions.
- Analyze and evaluate key ethical issues in a variety of disciplinary and professional contexts.
- Participate in collaborative projects requiring ethical analysis and/or decision-making.

Goal 6: Information Literacy

- Identify and locate multiple sources of information using a variety of methods.
- Analyze and evaluate information within a variety of disciplinary and professional contexts.
- Participate in collaborative analysis and/or application of information resources.

Goal 7: Problem-Solving Abilities

- Understand the multi-disciplinary and interdisciplinary nature of knowledge.
- Apply critical, analytical, creative, and systems thinking in order to recognize and solve problems.
- Work individually and collaboratively to recognize and solve problems.

Goal 8: Technology Literacy

- Develop knowledge of modern technology.
- Process information through the use of technology.
- Collaborate with others using technology tools.

Goal 9: Community Awareness and Involvement

- Know and understand the important and complex relationships between individuals and the communities in which they live and work.
- Analyze, evaluate, and assess human needs and practices within the context of community structures and traditions.
- Participate collaboratively in community service projects.

Goal 10: Personal Growth and Development

- Identify personal values; acquire knowledge of ways to enhance mental and physical wellness; become knowledgeable about goal-setting strategies, including the goal of life-long learning.
- Challenge and defend personal values; select wellness strategies; set personal goals and objectives, including the goal of life-long learning.
- In putting values into practice, accept personal responsibility for consequences of actions; practice and refine wellness strategies; refine goals, including the goal of life-long learning, based on additional knowledge, experience, and interaction with others.

GENERAL EDUCATION COMPETENCIES

(Approved by the General Education Council on November 2, 2005)

Working with SACS representatives and with members of FGCU's Office of Curriculum and Instruction and Office of Planning and Institutional Performance, the Council determined that the identification of measurable general education competencies—skills sets fundamental to academic success—would help us to make the collection of robust and essential data efficient. In other words, it was an impossible task to measure all ten learning goals as part of an accreditation review. As a result, the Council examined national models and best practices for measuring General Education and concluded that four competencies—oral communication, written communication, critical thinking, and quantitative analysis—formed the bedrock of the ten General Education Learning Goals noted above. The competencies are clear, nationally-recognized, and measurable skills that all university graduates should be able to demonstrate.

Competency 1: Quantitative Reasoning

- Solve mathematical problems;
- Analyze and interpret quantitative data;
- Summarize data into graphic and tabular formats;
- Make valid inferences from data;
- Distinguish between valid and invalid quantitative analysis and reasoning.

Competency 2: Oral Communication

- Select a topic, and develop it for a specific audience and purpose, with respect for diverse perspectives;
- Organize and deliver a clear and effective presentation, with command of verbal and nonverbal communication;
- Use active listening skills in interpersonal settings;
- Participate in and lead group discussions effectively.

Competency 3: Written Communication

- Employ the conventions of standard written English;
- Select a topic, and develop it for a specific audience and purpose, with respect for diverse perspectives;
- Select, organize, and relate ideas and information with coherence, clarity, and unity;
- Develop research skills including the ability to collect, analyze, synthesize, and accurately present and document information;
- Apply critical reading skills.

Competency 4: Critical Thinking

- Define a problem using appropriate terminology;
- Select and organize information;
- Identify assumptions and underlying relationships;
- Synthesize information, and draw reasoned inferences;
- Formulate an appropriate problem solving strategy;
- Evaluate the feasibility of the strategy.