



**ACADEMIC PROGRAMS  
& ASSESSMENT**

**Criteria for General Education Course Certification**

Information drawn from the USHE R470 Policy (December 1, 2023)

**General Education Core Requirements**

General education core essential learning outcomes address foundational competencies to promote student success across the curriculum and prepare students for subsequent coursework. The essential learning outcomes for the core areas are not exhaustive, and other outcomes may also be addressed at each institution's discretion.

***American Institutions:***

- Consistent with Utah Code section 53B-16-103(1)(b), to satisfy this requirement students must “demonstrate a reasonable understanding of the history, principles, form of government, and economic system of the United States.” Approved courses should include the use of disciplinary methods from history, political science, or economics to come to an understanding of the history, principles, multi-cultural populations, form of government, and economic system of the United States.
- Approved courses will address the following:
  - Use of Primary Documents: Analyze, contextualize, and use primary source documents to understand the history, principles, form of government, and economic system of the United States;
  - Interpretation: Explain and use historically, politically, and economically relevant information;
  - Communication: Communicate effectively about the history, principles, form of government, and economic system of the United States;
  - Diversity: Engage a diversity of viewpoints in a constructive manner that contributes to a dialogue about the history, principles, form of government, and economic system of the United States; and
  - Integration: Use historical, political, and economic methods to come to an understanding of the United States that integrates those viewpoints. This requirement may be fulfilled by a discrete course, a multidisciplinary integrated course, or multiple courses.

***Quantitative Literacy:***

- Students satisfy this requirement by demonstrating familiarity with fundamental quantitative methods and concepts, formal reasoning, the ability to apply quantitative skills in an appropriate context, and the ability to evaluate arguments based on quantitative reasoning.
- Approved courses will significantly focus on the following:
  - Interpretation: Explain information presented in mathematical forms (e.g., equations, graphs, diagrams, and tables);

- Representation: Convert relevant information into various mathematical forms (e.g., equations, graphs, diagrams, and tables);
- Calculation: Demonstrate the ability to successfully complete basic calculations to solve problems;
- Application/Analysis: Make judgments and draw appropriate conclusions based on quantitative analysis of data, recognizing the limits of this analysis;
- Assumption: Make and evaluate important assumptions in estimation, modeling, and data analysis;
- Communication: Express quantitative evidence in support of the argument or purpose of the work (in terms of what evidence is used and how it is formatted, presented, and contextualized); and
- Creation: Demonstrate the ability to problem solve using quantitative literacy across multiple disciplines.

***Writing:***

- Students may satisfy this requirement by completing at least two institutionally approved courses focused on the development of academic composition and communication skills to serve as a foundation for continued writing experiences across the curriculum, in professional settings, and as a tool for democratic and civic engagement. Students must demonstrate an ability to evaluate and synthesize credible information and effectively organize and deliver well-reasoned arguments appropriate to an intended audience.
- Over the course of six credit hours, students will demonstrate skill with the following:
  - Context and Purpose for Writing: Includes consideration of audience, purpose, and the circumstances surrounding the writing task(s);
  - Content Development: Uses appropriate, relevant, and compelling content to illustrate mastery of the subject, conveying the writer’s understanding, and shaping the whole work;
  - Genre and Disciplinary Conventions: Demonstrates detailed attention to and successful execution of a wide range of conventions particular to a specific discipline and/or writing task(s), including organization, content, presentation, formatting, and stylistic choices;
  - Sources and Evidence: Demonstrates skillful use of high-quality, credible, relevant sources to develop ideas that are appropriate for the discipline and genre of the writing;
  - Control of Syntax and Usage: Uses language that skillfully communicates meaning to readers with clarity and fluency; and
  - Revision and Feedback: Shapes texts through the process of revision and feedback.

**General Education Breadth Area Requirements**

Students are required to complete requirements within five different breadth areas to cultivate the exposure to a range of subjects, analytical skills, and to develop the intellectual agility required to navigate a variety of perspectives and participate effectively in professional life and a diverse democracy.

***Arts:***

- Students shall demonstrate an understanding of the scope and variety of the fine arts, explain the aesthetic standards used in making critical judgments in various artistic fields, and demonstrate knowledge of the diversity of values, beliefs, ideas, and practices embodied in artistic expression.
- Courses with the General Education Arts designation will generally reflect criteria such as:
  - Discuss the scope and variety of the fine arts, e.g., art, music, theatre, or dance;
  - Recognize the aesthetic standards used in making critical judgments in various artistic fields;
  - Analyze and articulate understanding of a range of artistic processes;
  - Participate in and/or appreciate an introductory performance, production, or design experience in the arts; or
  - Demonstrate how the creative process is informed and limited by social and historical contexts.

***Humanities:***

- Students shall demonstrate proficiency in analyzing primary sources regarding the complexities and changes in human experience through analytical reading and critical thought and shall be able to analyze how human experience is shaped by social, cultural, linguistic, and/or historical circumstances.
- Courses with the General Education Humanities designation will generally reflect criteria such as:
  - Derive evidence from primary sources regarding the complexities and changes in human experience through analytical reading and critical thought;
  - Describe how human experience is shaped by social, cultural, linguistic, and/or historical circumstances;
  - Demonstrate attentiveness to linguistic, visual, and/or audio texts when communicating meaning; or
  - Use appropriate verbal, perceptual, or imaginative skills when organizing meanings, developing a sense of self, and balancing potentially disparate values.

***Life Sciences:***

- Students shall demonstrate an understanding of science as a way of knowing about the natural world and living organisms. Life Science proficiency requires an understanding of the scientific method in conducting research and subjecting empirical evidence analysis to scientific models. Proficiency also entails an understanding of how the life sciences have shaped and been shaped by historical, ethical, cultural, and social contexts.
- Courses with the General Education Life Sciences designation will generally reflect criteria such as:
  - Demonstrate understanding of science as a way of knowing about the natural world;

- Demonstrate a basic understanding of how organisms live, grow, respond to their environment, and reproduce;
- Discuss the organization and flow of matter and energy through biological systems;
- Explain from evidence patterns of inheritance, structural unity, adaptation, and diversity of life on Earth; or
- Describe how the life sciences have shaped and been shaped by historical, ethical, and social contexts.

***Physical Sciences:***

- Students shall demonstrate familiarity with scientific methods and modeling to understand forces in the physical world and an understanding of how the physical sciences have shaped and been shaped by historical, ethical, cultural, and social contexts.
- Courses with the General Education Physical Sciences designation will generally reflect criteria such as:
  - Demonstrate understanding of science as a way of knowing about the physical world;
  - Demonstrate understanding of forces in the physical world;
  - Discuss the flow of matter and energy through systems (in large and small scales);
  - Develop evidence-based arguments regarding the effect of human activity on the Earth; or
  - Describe how the physical sciences have shaped and been shaped by historical, ethical, and social contexts.

***Social and Behavioral Sciences:***

- Students shall demonstrate an understanding of social and behavioral science methodology, concepts, and theories, and demonstrate a critically reasoned understanding of human cultures, value systems, institutions, economic structures, social patterns, and individual variation.
- Courses with the General Education Social and Behavioral Sciences designation will generally reflect criteria such as:
  - Demonstrate understanding of social and behavioral science methods, concepts, and theories;
  - Formulate basic questions about social behavior and phenomena through interpretive and systematic analyses;
  - Develop empirically-derived and theoretically-informed explanations of human behavior in both its individual and collective dimensions; or
  - Demonstrate a critically-reasoned understanding of social patterns and individual variation congruent with and divergent from those patterns.

***Institutional Requirements***

- A GE course in Personal, Professional, and Civic Growth will provide an opportunity for students to gain a combination of knowledge and skills to help them develop as individuals and prepare them to contribute to the community and the work force.

- Approved courses will address the following:
  - Analyze the implications of decision-making on personal, professional, or civic development;
  - Identify relevant information to address a problem; evaluate this information for validity; and apply findings to develop solutions;
  - Employ logical and ethical reasoning to effectively communicate in personal, civic, or professional contexts;
  - Engage effectively and ethically in a digital space while adapting to emerging technologies; and
  - Apply critical thinking skills to analyze civic, environmental, ethical, or social issues.