

# **Guidelines and Supplemental Guidelines for the Various GEC Categories**

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## Guidelines for New GEC Historical Study

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### Goal/Rationale:

History courses develop students' knowledge of how past events influence today's society and help them understand how humans view themselves.

### Learning Objectives:

1. Students acquire a perspective on history and an understanding of the factors that shape human activity.
2. Students display knowledge about the origins and nature of contemporary issues and develop a foundation for future comparative understanding;
3. Students think, speak, and write critically about primary and secondary historical sources by examining diverse interpretations of past events and ideas in their historical contexts.

Courses proposed for this component of the general education curriculum should be designed with these objectives in mind and should be thought of in terms of their contribution to the requirement as a whole. In particular, any proposal should address the following questions:

1. How do the particular objectives of the course fit the objectives of the Historical Study category?
2. How do the readings assigned fit the objectives of the Historical Study category?
3. How do the weekly/lecture topics fit the objectives of the Historical Study category?
4. How do the written assignments fit the objectives of the Historical Study category?
5. How will students sharpen communication skills through the preparation of essay exams and papers and through participation in discussions in this course?

Please submit a course syllabus, a separate rationale, answers to the questions above with reference to the syllabus, and an assessment plan for the course. Sample assignments and exams may be submitted as well.

Courses proposed for the Historical Study category should:

1. Be vetted by the ASC CCI and CAA in light of the goals and objectives stated above; and,
2. In the spirit of "general education courses," be made available to all undergraduates with a minimum of prerequisites required.

The Successful Assessment Plan will have the following:

1. State the specific learning goals and objectives, and indicate the type(s) of evaluation method(s) (e.g., embedded testing; opinion survey; portfolio) that will be used to determine whether students have achieved the stated learning goals and objectives. Be sure to link specific method(s) and measures to specific goals and objectives.
2. Specify the criteria for determining if goals and objectives have been met, including those for success as well as what would signify a weakness for further improvement. Attach sample grading rubrics or other evaluation instruments if referenced.
3. Describe the general procedures for conducting the assessment, such as student sampling, evaluation of all or some sample of course sections, the way in which different objectives might be evaluated over time, etc.
4. Give the multi-year timeline for implementing the plan and continuation of assessment, including strategies for evaluating improvement over time.
5. Spell out the plan for using outcomes evidence to improve learning over time.

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## **Guidelines for the GEC Second and Third Courses in Writing**

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The rationale for having a minimum of three courses in writing and related skills in the curriculum, from page 6 of the Model Curriculum, reads as follows:

The abilities to read and listen with comprehension and critical acuity are requisite to the gaining of knowledge in a university setting. The ability to express oneself with clarity, both orally and in writing, provides the deepest proof of understanding. Only through such expression can one demonstrate the powers of careful thinking and critical analysis.

Further, we recognize that writing especially is a primary tool in learning itself, not just a means of expressing learning that has taken place. Writing is a powerful mode of thinking; writing involves making choices and then ordering those choices effectively.

A set of three courses with an emphasis on writing, extending from the freshman to the junior/senior level, will enable students to progress from the development of fundamental skills to their application and mastery. These courses must be kept to a size appropriate to the realization of the goals of college composition courses.

### 1. First Course

The first course in writing and related skills is a freshman-level course designed to train students in the fundamentals of expository writing. A prerequisite to the remaining two courses, this first course is housed in the English Department and will most likely be taught by graduate teaching

associates on the Columbus campus and by English faculty and lecturers on the regional campuses.

The aim of the course is to introduce students to the conventions and challenges of academic discourse, preparing them to read critically and analytically and to produce writing characterized by a clear sense of purpose; effectively ordered and fully supported ideas; style appropriate to purpose and audience; and control of grammatical and mechanical elements.

## 2. Second Course

On page 7 of the Model Curriculum, this requirement is described as follows:

In the sophomore year skills in expository writing as well as in oral discussion and/or presentation will be developed through the study of major topics and writings pertaining to the United States (e.g., women in United States society as they appear in literature, the assimilation of immigrant populations, the United States in the world community, the impact of technology on contemporary culture, equality and individual freedom in the United States, public and private patronage of the arts).

Topics that deal with the pluralistic nature of institutions, society, and culture in the United States, with special attention to issues of race, gender, class, and ethnicity, are particularly appropriate.

The principal thrust of such a course will be analysis, discussion, and writing with the goal of extending the student's ability to read carefully and to express ideas effectively.

This second course will be taught by instructors from the Colleges of the Arts and Sciences as well as from other colleges. Courses will bear the departmental designation of the discipline in which they are offered.

For students, the course will further develop basic skills in expository writing and in oral expression. For the instructor, this requirement presents the opportunity to design and teach a course on any American topic of one's own choosing to a small group of undergraduate students. The course should emphasize its subject matter, using written assignments and discussion to complement the investigation of new and interesting topics.

Courses proposed for this requirement of the GEC should be designed with the above description in mind. Proposals should address the following questions:

1. How does this course build on fundamentals of expository writing set forth in the first course in writing (e.g., to produce writing characterized by a clear sense of purpose; effectively ordered and fully supported ideas; style appropriate to purpose and audience; and control of grammatical and mechanical elements)?
2. What major topics and writings pertaining to the United States are addressed in this course?

3. How will components of this course constitute significant writing experiences (e.g., short pieces, in- and out-of-class writing, longer pieces, reactions to works being read, critical evaluations, reviews of longer works, library research, essay exams)?
4. How will opportunities for revisions by students of their written work be provided?
5. What opportunities for the oral expression of students' ideas will be provided in this course (e.g., formal presentations, debates, discussions)?
6. How will students' work in this course be evaluated?

### 3. Third Course

The intent of the required third course in writing and related skills is to assure that junior or senior year students are provided an upper-level course in their major that contains a significant writing component. Page 7 of the Model Curriculum reads as follows:

Departments may choose to accept 1) one or more courses each of which meets this requirement, 2) writing sections of single courses each of which meets this requirement, 3) a group of courses, each containing a writing component, which together meet this requirement, or 4) a course which counts for the major but is outside of the major department.

In addition to requiring students to apply writing skills to their major, this third course should also develop students' skills in the oral articulation of ideas as well as their critical and analytical abilities in reading demanding texts and synthesizing ideas. Course work might also include a research project that exposes students to scholarly literature in their majors and requires them to improve library skills or to access information through computer systems.

Courses proposed to meet this writing requirement should be designed with the above description in mind. In particular, proposals should address the following questions:

1. How does this course qualify as a significant writing course and what is its relationship to the rest of the major?
2. In what way(s) are students provided opportunities for multiple revisions of writing assignments in light of previous response to written assignments?
3. How will this course assist in the development of students' general critical and analytical abilities?
4. Are students provided opportunities to improve library skills or to access information through computer systems? If so, how?
5. In what way(s) are students provided with opportunities for oral articulation of their ideas (e.g., formal presentations, debates, discussions)?
6. How will various components be weighted in determining the student's final grade?

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## **Supplement to the Guidelines for the GEC Writing and Related Skills Category, Second and Third Writing Courses**

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The Writing and Related Skills Panel offers the following information to help faculty develop, obtain approval, and sustain courses that fulfill requirements for the second- and third-level writing courses in the General Education Curriculum (GEC). This document does not supersede in any way “Guidelines for the Second and Third Courses in Writing of the General Education Curriculum,” dated 01/12/89. Instead, it intends to provide practical suggestions to aid in implementing the guidelines effectively. Also included in this document is a checklist for use as a final review of expectations before you submit a proposal to the Writing and Related Skills Panel.

If you are converting an existing course (for example, a course that was a “starred” course under the Liberal Arts Requirements—LAR) to be used for the GEC, remember that GEC requirements are different from LAR requirements. “Starred” courses do not automatically meet expectations for GEC courses. The Panel has found that, while a starred course may in fact require a significant amount of writing, other GEC requirements are often not addressed; the Panel must see evidence that all requirements are addressed before we can approve a proposal. Often, meeting the new requirements fully is a fairly straight-forward matter of incorporating some of the items detailed below. For example, the tendency is to refer to GEC courses in university “short hand” as “writing courses,” rather than as “writing and related skills” courses. However, the “related skills” are essential in meeting requirements and must be included in the proposal. In other words, GEC courses should facilitate the development of writing skills, but they should also help students to develop skills in speaking, in thinking clearly, critically, and analytically, and in using increasingly sophisticated information resources.

### Rationale for Second- and Third-Level Writing and Related Skills Courses

(For additional explanation of second and third level writing and related skill courses, see the guidelines.)

Essentially, GEC writing and related skills courses offer students systematic instruction—from the first year through preparation in the major area—in communicating effectively in speaking and writing, in demonstrating knowledge, and in accessing and using information analytically and effectively. These goals rest on the assumption that, as they progress in experience and expertise and as they understand the ways that academic disciplines vary in their use of knowledge and in their use of language to express and convey meaning, students will gain increased flexibility and dexterity as writers, speakers, and thinkers.

Faculty who teach GEC courses have the responsibility, therefore, of being explicit about how they are integrating writing and related skills into their courses. You need to think quite thoroughly about the goals of the particular course: How do you conceive of writing and other

related skills in the course? How do they matter? What are students communicating to whom—how, why, and in recognition of what conventions, circumstances, or constraints? How and when does direct instruction in writing and related skills take place? What evaluation criteria will you use? How will writing and other demonstrations of language ability count? Obviously, writing and related skills need to be incorporated into course goals, objectives, and evaluation mechanisms, and they should be indicated in the course descriptions to be published in the Course Offerings Bulletin (Book 3).

### Meeting the Goals of the GEC

In order for the university to meet the goals of the GEC, faculty who teach GEC courses need to be responsive in at least two ways. One way is in terms of preparing a course syllabus that explicitly conveys to students the emphases in the course on writing and related skills. The second way is in terms of thinking carefully about the implementation of the syllabus so that what is stated on the syllabus actually represents what will be happening in the course. Clarity, then, becomes essential.

When a proposal is submitted to the Writing and Related Skills Panel, the course syllabus should show evidence of the following:

1. Instruction in Writing. Do you provide instruction in how to write the various kinds of assignments required? Such instruction might include, for example, the use of models that you have annotated to help students see what the written assignments do well, how they are formatted, how they use evidence, document sources, and so on. Or you might include periodic writing workshops during which you ask students to work through how to prepare for a writing assignment with you.
2. Specification of a writing text or manual on the syllabus. If the course is a third-level writing course, the manual should be appropriate to writing and research in the field. A second-level writing course might require a general writing text such as Richard Lanham's *Revising Prose* or one of several excellent writing handbooks, while a third-level course in Business might assign Kitty Locker's *Business and Administrative Communication* textbook. (Many such texts are available for you to look at in the University Writing Center.)
3. Opportunity for feedback on writing and for revision clearly scheduled on the syllabus. The number of drafts you ask students to go through will depend, to a large extent, on how long and complex the writing assignments are. In general, if you assign a number of brief papers, you should probably ask for only one or two drafts at most; otherwise, the logistics of dealing with all that paper and all that turnaround time can be problematic. On the other hand, if students are to work on one or two lengthy assignments for most of the term, three or even four drafts could be appropriate—and manageable. In addition to allowing for (often ungraded) feedback from instructors on drafts, many faculty include peer response to drafts on their syllabi. Use of peer critique gives students added practice in critical thinking and communicating skills. (The Writing Center also has available a number of materials related to peer response.)

4. Opportunity for oral expression clearly scheduled on the syllabus. Such opportunities may include small-group discussion and informal class participation as well as more formal projects, such as class presentations, mini lectures or debates, and so on.
5. Clear indications that writing and related skills amount to a significant component of the course grade and clear articulation of criteria for evaluating writing and related skills.

As you are preparing the syllabus, note that the Writing Center offers Writing Across the Curriculum support. Insofar as resources allow, Writing Center staff can provide the following services:

- individual or group conferences about concrete ways to integrate writing and related skills into courses;
- suggestions for tailoring writing assignments to a specific course syllabus;
- models for responding to and evaluating student writing;
- samples of approved courses for second- and third-level writing courses for the GEC;
- background information and research on writing in general and on writing in the disciplines in particular;
- materials that address a variety of relevant issues and challenges: using peer response and collaborative learning techniques; integrating writing into content area courses; using alternative grading models (e.g., portfolios); responding to and evaluating student writing; dealing with student errors; and attending to issues of difference in content-area courses.

#### Checklist for Preparing GEC Course Syllabi

1. Have you answered each question listed in the guidelines?
2. Have you insured that each section of your course will enroll no more than 25 students?
3. Have you incorporated writing and related skills in the general description, goals, and objectives of the course?
4. Have you specified a writing manual, textbook, or similar materials on the course syllabus? For the third-level writing course, is the manual or textbook specific to the discipline?
5. Do you indicate where instruction on writing and oral skills will occur on the course syllabus?
6. Do you schedule opportunity for feedback on writing and for revision on the syllabus?
  - from peer reviews ?
  - from instructor ?
7. Have you identified for yourself the specific criteria that you will use for teaching and evaluating writing and related skills? Do you indicate on the syllabus that specific criteria will be used and taught?
8. Do you indicate deadlines for drafts, revisions, finished assignments?
9. Have you provided adequately for making sure that students learn how to access needed information resources for the course (e.g., literature searches)?
10. Do you articulate grading criteria on the syllabus?

## **Guidelines for the GEC Quantitative and Logical Skills Component**

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The “Quantitative and Logical Skills” requirement in the new curriculum consists of three sections: a “Basic Computational Skills” requirement which will ordinarily be met by a placement examination, one course in “Mathematical and Logical Analysis,” and one course in “Data Analysis.”

### Basic Computational Skills

The current equivalent of the “Basic Computational Skills” requirement is usually met by mathematics placement level R or above, or successful completion of Mathematics 075 or 076. At this time, no substantial change in this practice is expected. This performance level is roughly equivalent to a good working knowledge of much of a high-school “Algebra II” course. Courses proposed for the “Mathematical and Logical Analysis” and “Data Analysis” requirements should assume at least this level of competence.

### Mathematical and Logical Analysis

On page 9 of the Model Curriculum, this component is described as follows:

A student in a B.A. program must take one course that focuses on argument in a context that emphasizes natural language, mathematics, computer science or quantitative applications not primarily involving data. Courses which emphasize the nature of correct argumentation either in natural languages or in symbolic form would satisfy this requirement, as would many mathematics or computer science courses. . . . The courses themselves should emphasize the logical processes involved in mathematics, inductive or deductive reasoning, or computing and the theory of algorithms. A student in a B.S. program will satisfy this requirement by completing two quarters of calculus or the equivalent.

Many students will fulfill this requirement automatically by taking mathematics or computer science courses required as prerequisites for their major. Courses in logic and argumentation would also be appropriate for this requirement. Courses primarily using ideas from statistics or data analysis will usually not be acceptable for this requirement, but will rather apply to the “Data Analysis” requirement described below.

### Data Analysis

On page 9 of the Model Curriculum, the data analysis component is described as follows:



A fundamental course in data analysis should enable a student to deal with problems of data-gathering, presentation, and interpretation. The student should develop an understanding of problems of measurement, deal critically with numerical and graphical arguments, and gain an understanding of the impact of statistical ideas in daily life and in specific fields of study. Students should develop the ability to present the salient features in data using summary measures and graphical techniques as well as the ability to recognize the uses and misuses of statistics and related quantitative arguments. The development of these skills requires exposure to the fundamental ideas of probability. This course should also introduce the students to the use of the computer in problems of data analysis.

Courses proposed for the “General data analysis” option should be designed with these objectives in mind. In particular, any proposal document should address the following questions:

1. How will the course address the problems of data-gathering, presentation and interpretation of data?
2. How will the students in the course be exposed to graphical and numerical arguments? How will attention be given to problems of measurement in the specific contexts studied?
3. How are statistical ideas to be applied to the course? Please provide typical examples of discussions of the uses and misuses of statistics which will occur in the course.
4. What topics in the study of probability will be presented in the course?
5. How will the course introduce students to the use of the computer?
6. If proposed as a B.A. course, will the course require only the “Basic Computational Skills” described in A., page 9, or will additional prerequisites apply? If proposed as a B.S. course, what level calculus will be required?
7. What measures will be taken to insure a broad treatment appropriate for a general education course?

Specialized courses in data analysis may also be proposed for this component of the model. Quoting from page 10 of the model:

Departments or divisions within the University may wish to design a data analysis course within their own programs. Courses in this area should cover topics and emphasize points of view similar to those in the general data analysis courses above, but in the context of a particular subject matter. In particular, a conceptual background including some use of probability must be included.

A proposal for a specialized data analysis course following these guidelines should respond to questions 1-6 in the list above. The proposal should state whether the proposed course may double-count in the major.

If a department wishes to propose work in a group of courses, each containing some data analysis, as a means for satisfying the data analysis requirement, the proposal should again respond to questions 1-6 above, identifying carefully which goals of the requirement are met in each of the proposed group of courses.

## **Supplemental Guidelines to the GEC Natural Science Category**

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The General Education Curriculum (GEC) adopted by the faculty of the Colleges of the Arts and Sciences on June 8, 1988, lists the following General Learning Objectives for its natural science component:

1. To understand the basic principles and central facts of the physical and biological sciences, and their interrelationships.
2. To understand when, where, and how the most important principles and facts were discovered, thus understanding the key events in the history of science both as events in human history and as case studies on the methods of science.
3. To understand the interaction between science and technology.
4. To understand the social and philosophical implications of major scientific discoveries.

The following paragraph is a summary of a portion of the GEC adopted on June 8, 1988:

Students can fulfill the natural science requirement by completing one of two options. Students pursuing the Bachelor of Arts (BA) may complete Option 1 or Option 2. Bachelor of Science (BS) students must complete Option 2. For Option 1, the student takes two two-course sequences, one with at least one course from the basic physical sciences and one with at least one course from the basic biological sciences. For Option 2, the student takes five courses, including at least one two-course sequence and at least one course in each of the physical and biological sciences. In Option 1, at least one course must contain an appropriate laboratory component; in Option 2, at least three courses must contain a laboratory.

### Guidelines

1. Proposed courses usually deal more effectively with General Learning Objectives (GLO) 1 than with the others. However, course proposers are reminded that this objective is broader than their own discipline. An Option 1 sequence should address as many as practical of the most important principles of ALL of the physical or biological sciences, as the case may be.
2. A proposal which emphasizes GLO 3 to the exclusion of others appears occasionally, usually in an attempt to acquire GEC approval for some existing course that is part of a technical major. Such proposals are usually rejected.
3. GLOs 2 and 4 receive inadequate attention in most currently approved courses. Future reviews are likely to press for more attention to these objectives.
4. Sequences in Option 2 are usually composed of courses used to prepare students for science or technical majors.

4. Individual courses in Option 2 are courses intended primarily for science majors and/or courses which have an appropriate science course as a prerequisite, thus assuring that all students in the course bring some college-level background to it. A course may be both the second course in an Option 1 sequence and an individual course for Option 2.
5. The reference in Option 1 to a course from the "basic physical sciences" or "basic biological sciences" means a course from the science departments of the College of Mathematical and Physical Sciences or from the College of Biological Sciences, respectively. The other course in an Option 1 sequence may come from another college, such as Engineering; Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences; Human Ecology; or Social and Behavioral Sciences.

### Course proposal checklist

1. The proposal should contain complete information concerning course mechanics, including a syllabus, a reading list, the nature of any laboratory, and testing procedures and weightings.
2. The proposed course should identify which option it is intended to fill.
3. A course proposal should give a brief rationale for the level of mathematics used as a prerequisite. Completion of at least the Basic Computational Skills portion of the GEC (placement level R or Mathematics 075) is a prerequisite for most science courses in the GEC. A higher-level math prerequisite may be appropriate, especially in Option 2.
4. The proposal should identify whether the proposed course is part of a sequence. If it is, then the other course should be identified and the nature of the sequence firmly established. It is not enough to put two courses together. Rather, the second course should depend on the material in the first course. A clear sign of this is if the first course is a prerequisite for the second. If the proposed course has a laboratory and/or discussion sections, then the proposal should clearly establish how the lecture, laboratory, and discussions are integrated, how performance in each is to be tested or evaluated, and what the weighting of the different components will be in the total grade. A proposal for a lecture/laboratory course in which the "laboratory" was a weekly movie and/or for which the laboratory counted only 5% would be unlikely to find favor as satisfying the laboratory component of the GEC requirement.

Arts and Sciences Curriculum Committee  
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### **Guidelines for the GEC Social Science Component**

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On page 14 of the Model Curriculum, the role of social science in a general education is described as follows:

Social science consists of the systematic study of the behavior of individuals; of the structure of human societies, cultures, and institutions; and of the processes by which individuals, groups, and societies allocate and use resources. Social scientists recognize that historical and cross-cultural perspectives are important in understanding social, religious, and political phenomena.

The knowledge gained from social science enhances the understanding of human behavior and cognition and is often used to direct social problem-solving and policy-making. In that context, the underlying importance of human values is recognized.

Courses proposed for this component of the general education curriculum should be designed with this definition in mind and should be thought of in terms of their contribution to the requirement as a whole. In particular, any proposal should address the following questions in addition to those posed on the summary sheet.

1. Under which rubric (e.g., individuals and groups) and subtopic(s) is the course proposed? How does it fit there? Regardless of the number of subtopics covered, how does it contribute to the general learning objectives for the “Social Science” component?
2. How does this course serve to exemplify social scientific approaches to the rubric under which it is proposed?
3. How does this course frame its specific approaches and subject matters within a broader social scientific context? How does this course reflect the discipline(s) it represents?
4. What fundamental social scientific questions and issues does this course raise?
5. Is this course proposed to carry the “international” designation? If so, how is its international character defined? (See page 15 of the Model Curriculum.)

\*If this course is also being proposed to meet the “Social Diversity in the United States” requirement, please submit a separate justification, following page 12 of the model and the supplementary guidelines for that requirement.

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### **Supplemental Guidelines for the GEC Arts and Humanities Category**

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Course proposals should have a well-articulated syllabus covering the following points:

#### Objectives

What is the purpose of the course? What kind of learning will occur?

### Procedures

How is the course taught? Do the teaching methods include discussion, reading, viewing, lecture, small groups, interactive experiences? What occurs in the course; what is its tenor? The panel prefers to see a variety of teaching methods.

### Content

What is taught; what is the content? How does the course integrate reading assignments, projects, and/or papers? The panel wants to see the study of some original works (literature, paintings, music, etc.) rather than relying solely on secondary sources.

### Evaluation and grading

Evaluation and grading must be clearly defined and include weighted grade values for each graded component. The panel encourages multiple means of evaluation including but not limited to: papers, essay exams, and class participation. Multiple methods are preferable to any single method (especially rote memorization) and should encourage a synthesis of materials.

It is not necessary to submit sample exams and handouts with your proposal.

### Communication

Panel members are willing to provide informal feedback in the development of GEC course proposals. In addition, sample syllabi are also available.

### Guidelines for Studio Experience in the GEC

Courses with a studio/performance component may be submitted for approval in Arts and Humanities Part 2 (“close analysis of texts and works of art”). Proposers of such courses should emphasize ways in which they address the goal of:

- [developing] knowledge of the humanities and the arts and a humanistic perspective that fosters capacities for: 1) aesthetic and historical responses and judgment; 2) interpretation and evaluation; 3) critical listening, reading, seeing, thinking, and writing; and 4) experiencing the arts and reflecting on that experience. (page 16 of the ASC Model)

It should also be made clear how the courses promote the following general learning objectives:

- To have direct contact with major forms of human thought and expression as distinctive and as interrelated cultural phenomena, and to nurture informed responsiveness to them and heightened participation in them. (page 17)
- To develop abilities to be an enlightened observer or an active participant in a discipline within the visual, spatial, musical, theatrical, rhetorical, or written arts. (page 17)

For such courses to qualify for GEC approval, it is essential that a theoretical, foundational, or conceptual, component be included as a significant proportion of the required course content. The sample syllabi must make this clear through indicated texts, reading assignments, projects, papers, examinations, critiques, and/or final evaluations. The amount of class time devoted to theoretical discussion should be clearly indicated. Courses which primarily emphasize mastery of techniques (i.e. “how-to” courses) are inappropriate for the general education requirement. However, it is recognized that introduction of techniques may be central to appreciation of artistic endeavor as a medium of human expression. When acquisition of basic skills is an important contribution to development of a deeper appreciation of the arts, this must be clearly articulated with particular reference to the objectives quoted above.

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### **Guidelines for the GEC Social Diversity in the United States Component**

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On page 12 of the Model Curriculum, the “Social Diversity in the United States” component is described as follows:

The Special Committee for Undergraduate Curriculum Review asserts that “A liberal education in a university in our own nation today should foster an understanding of American institutions and the pluralistic nature of American Society.” Only with such understanding can citizens appreciate the significance of diversity in our society and the importance of the values of tolerance and equality.

To that end, each student must select a course that gives significant treatment to the pluralistic nature of institutions, society, and culture in the United States with special attention to issues of race, gender, class, and ethnicity. Such courses or sections of courses will be designated by a special symbol.

Social diversity courses can be offered by any appropriate department in the University. Historical, normative, interdisciplinary, or international perspectives on social diversity in the United States might be included in such courses.

This requirement will not add credit hours to a student’s degree program. It should be possible for a student to select a designated course from among general education requirement courses, major courses, and electives.

While courses for this component of the general education curriculum will be designed with these objectives in mind, we are assuming that a goodly number of existing courses, with perhaps some modest changes, might be appropriate offerings. Further, some departments may wish to offer special sections of existing courses that emphasize social diversity (analogous to honors versions of courses). In any event, individual proposals should address the following questions:

1. In what way does this course foster an understanding of American institutions and the pluralistic nature of American society?
2. How does the course promote appreciation of the significance of diversity in our society and the importance of the values of tolerance and equality?
3. What attention is given in the course to issues of race, gender, class, and ethnicity? Are there other issues of diversity that the course will raise?
4. Will this course, when it is offered, always be intended to meet this requirement or are only certain sections of the course proposed in satisfaction of the requirement?

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### **Supplement to the Guidelines for the GEC Social Diversity in the United States Category**

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A description of the Social Diversity Category is listed on page 12 of the Arts and Sciences Model Curriculum. The guidelines for this GEC component, dated 01/12/89, indicate the four questions that must be addressed in the request for GEC status. This document supplements the guidelines by indicating the aspects of a proposal that increase the likelihood of approval and by indicating some items to which attention needs to be paid when preparing requests.

1. The focus of the course is on society and institutions of the United States.
2. It is expected that instruction about the topic of diversity will be included in the course. The course objectives (both on the GEC Request for Course Approval Summary Sheet and on the course syllabus) should reflect that an objective for students is to understand issues related to diversity.
3. The course syllabus must reflect the focus on diversity and be clearly linked to the description of the course given in the summary sheet information. Appropriate materials should be evident in the assigned readings and the topical outline should include time for consideration of issues of diversity.
4. The guidelines indicate that courses in social diversity must include discussion of issues of race, ethnicity, class, and gender. The implementation of this guideline has been to interpret issues in race and ethnicity as one topic, with class and gender forming two other topics. In general, the course must discuss diversity issues related to each of these three topics (race/ethnicity, class, and gender), not just one or two, and not necessarily with equal emphasis. The discussion of these issues should be clearly reflected in the course syllabus.

The guidelines have been interpreted to allow for the approval of courses which implicitly focus on one of the three topics. For example, in a course about women's issues, race/ethnicity and class are discussed. Thus, the three topics are covered. Other combinations of explicit discussion of two topics and implicit discussion of the third are possible.

## Checklist

1. The focus of the course is on the United States.
2. The four questions listed in the Guidelines for the GEC Social Diversity in the United States Component document are addressed in the GEC Request for Course Approval Summary Sheet.
  - In what way does this course foster an understanding of American institutions and the pluralistic nature of American society?
  - How does the course promote appreciation of the significance of diversity in our society and the importance of the values of tolerance and equality?
  - What attention is given in the course to issues of race, gender, class, and ethnicity? Are there other issues of diversity that the course will raise?
  - Will this course, when it is offered, always be intended to meet this requirement or are only certain sections of the course proposed in satisfaction of the requirement?
3. The course syllabus clearly reflects the objective of instruction about issues of diversity.
4. The course syllabus clearly indicates that the required topics in diversity are discussed in class and relevant readings are assigned.
5. The course either discusses (at least) the three required issues in diversity (race/ethnicity, gender, class), or discusses two of the topics explicitly in the context of the third.

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## Guidelines for the GEC Capstone Experiences Component

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As stated on page 3 of the Model Curriculum approved by the Arts and Sciences faculty on June 8, 1988, one of the general principles that guided the Special Committee for Undergraduate Curriculum Review in Arts and Sciences reads as follows: “General Education courses should not be limited to the early quarters or years, but should extend throughout a student’s curriculum.” The “Capstone Experiences” component of the model is intended to meet the spirit of that principle by requiring each student to take one or two GEC courses at the advanced (junior-senior) level. Such courses should be selected from academic units outside of a student’s major and, as such, when taken for GEC credit, will not double-count for major credit. Given appropriate subject matter, capstone courses might simultaneously satisfy the social diversity GEC requirement. In all other cases, however, capstone courses will not cross-count with any other GEC requirement.

### 1. Advanced Study required of B.A. students only)

On page 18 of the Model Curriculum this requirement is described as follows:



For general education to be cumulative, students must not only experience a breadth of learning, but must also advance from introductory study to more in-depth study. In the junior or senior year, each B.A. student will take an upper-division course in social science or in arts and humanities. Courses fulfilling this requirement should meet the general criteria of the social science or arts and humanities general education components explained above. In addition, they should build on introductory general education requirement courses to the extent that they present more advanced, specialized, and in-depth study of subjects than would occur at an introductory level. This course can be any upper-division course in an academic unit (other than that in which the student majors) from which the student took a general education course to meet the social science or arts/humanities requirement.

The general rule of thumb suggested by the above description is that most courses level 300 or above from academic units that offer GEC courses to meet the social science or arts and humanities components will automatically satisfy this requirement. Thus departments and other academic units need not submit proposals for courses to be included in this category. There are certain types of courses, however, that will not be approved as appropriate for this category. Those types are: independent studies, group studies, studio and performance courses, clinics, workshops, co-ops, and internships. Courses that fall into these categories and are thus inappropriate for the advanced study requirement will be identified by the Special Committee and by the ASC Curriculum Committee.

## 2. Issues of the Contemporary World (required of both B.A. and B.S. students)

On pages 18 and 19 of the Model Curriculum, the “Issues of the Contemporary World” requirement is described as follows:

During the senior year each student will select one course that considers one or more contemporary issues of broad and worldwide significance. While issues addressed may arise out of the interests of the sponsoring units, they must also be issues that have worldwide significance and illustrate global interdependence. Topics from which such contemporary issues might be drawn include: energy, urbanizations, food production, race and gender, war and peace, technology and the arts, literacy, cross-cultural communication, the role of religion, governmental regulation, environment, disease and hunger, industrial and technological development, social responsibility, and the social impact on the arts or literature.

Each course should bring together students from diverse majors, thereby creating an integrative learning environment in which, through interaction, the students themselves demonstrate the relationships or connections between information derived from different departments. The thematic approach of the course should ultimately permit students to appreciate the application of knowledge from diverse disciplines to contemporary issues.

Given the academic characteristics of the courses in this category, students must be at level four of their studies. Course requirements should include writing or research components. Such courses may properly be based within a discipline or be interdisciplinary in design. Class size will usually be limited to a maximum of 40 students. However, larger classes might be appropriate provided that accompanying discussion sections are limited to 25 students.

In general, it is expected that courses designed for the existing LAR requirement (III C) can be adapted to fit this new category.

Courses proposed for this requirement of the GEC should be designed with the above description in mind. In particular, any proposal should address the following questions:

1. What contemporary issue(s) will the course address? Does the issue have worldwide significance and illustrate global interdependence?
2. Is the course based within a single discipline or is it interdisciplinary in design?
3. What features of the course will promote the interaction among students from different academic backgrounds.
4. What prerequisites will be specified for this course? Note: generally speaking, the committee prefers minimal prerequisites; in most cases prerequisites should consist of lower-level courses approved for the other GEC categories.
5. What writing or research component will be required as part of the course? Note: as this is intended to be a senior-level course, one should assume that all students will have completed the first and second writing and related skills courses and that some may have completed the third writing course.
6. Will class size be limited to a maximum of 40 students? If larger, are the accompanying discussion sessions limited to 25 students?

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### **Supplemental Guidelines for the GEC Capstone Experiences Component**

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These supplemental guidelines apply to the “Issues of the Contemporary World” capstone experience. The Capstone Experiences Panel reviews only those courses designed to meet this part of the requirement. Departments and academic units are not required to submit proposals for courses to be included in the “Advanced Study” section of the Capstone Experiences Category. Individuals submitting course proposals are encouraged to be sensitive to this distinction.

#### Underlying Assumption

On page 19 of the Model Curriculum which was developed by the Special Committee for Undergraduate Curriculum Review in Arts and Sciences it is noted that “Each [capstone] course should bring together students from diverse majors, thereby creating an integrative learning environment. . . . The thematic approach of the course should ultimately permit students to

appreciate the application of knowledge from diverse disciplines to contemporary issues.” Based on this perspective, the Capstone Panel has consistently operated under the assumption that “Issues of the Contemporary World” capstone courses should be inclusive rather than exclusive.

The panel believes that specific course prerequisites should be avoided when possible; however, it is clearly appropriate to identify generic prerequisites. For example, a natural science prerequisite of at least one course in the basic physical sciences would be considered appropriate since all GEC students would have the prerequisite. The panel would also deem appropriate a prerequisite indicating a student must have had a course in the Individuals and Groups and the Human, Natural, and Economic Resources social science area. When a department wishes to designate specific course prerequisites for a 597, a rationale must be given that includes data showing that significant numbers of students regularly take the specified courses.

### Specific Issues

When evaluating a proposal the panel pays particular attention to the following issues.

1. Capstone (Issues of the Contemporary World) courses cannot be counted twice for meeting requirements and should be outside of a student's major. In the opening paragraph of the “Guidelines for the GEC Capstone Experiences Component” document, it is noted that
  - o “[capstone] courses should be selected from academic units outside of a student's major and, as such, when taken for GEC credit, will not double-count for major credit. Given appropriate subject matter, capstone courses might simultaneously satisfy the social diversity GEC requirement. In all other cases, however, capstone courses will not cross-count with any other GEC requirement.”
2. Capstone courses must address a contemporary issue. Courses proposals frequently fail to clearly state the issue(s) being addressed. This information must be presented in the syllabus. Such presentation is critical when the panel considers the significance and interdependence issue noted next.
3. Capstone courses must address issues having “worldwide significance and illustrate global interdependence.” This is not addressed by arbitrarily including material from other countries or cultures in a reading list. Integration of concepts is deemed critical and that integration must be indicated on the syllabus.
4. Capstone courses should promote interaction among students. It is impossible to visualize how a traditional lecture course could meet this objective, and it is challenging to visualize a lecture-recitation format meeting this objective. When considering the syllabi for 597 courses, the panel looks for serious, conscious ways to facilitate interaction among students.
5. Capstone courses should have a writing or research component. This component is generally met; however, it is often a trivial portion of the course grade. The panel believes this component must be at least 25% of the course grade and should be so noted on the course syllabus.

Arts and Sciences Curriculum Committee  
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