

**General Education Reform Model**  
(Approved May 3, 2005 / Effective Fall, 2006)

**CORE PROPOSAL: The New Pattern of G.E. Courses**

	<b>Minimum units</b>
<b>Basic Skills</b>	12 units
<b>Subject Explorations:</b>	
Natural Sciences	8 units
Social Sciences	6 units
Arts and Humanities	6 units
Lifelong Learning	3 units
Comparative Cultural Studies/Gender, Race, Class, and Ethnicity Studies, and Foreign Languages	6 units
<b>U.S. History and Local Government (Title V)</b>	6 units

**TOTAL GENERAL EDUCATION UNITS (including Title V)   48 units \***

\* A minimum of 48 units must be completed to meet General Education requirements; the sum of the minimums for each section is 47 units; if, after completing the requirements for all sections, fewer than 48 units have been completed then one additional G.E. course selected from any of the G.E. sections must be completed to meet the 48 unit requirement. Many students will reach 48 units by completion of a G.E. course containing extra units such as selected math, science, philosophy and foreign language courses.

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**IC<sup>o</sup>** = Information Competence  
**WI<sup>u</sup>** = Writing intensive

<sup>o</sup>**Information Competence.** Students should progressively acquire a basic understanding of information retrieval tools and practices and should improve their skills in evaluating and using information.

<sup>u</sup>**Writing Intensive** means a minimum writing requirement of 2,500 words per course.

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**Basic Skills (12 units)** coursework provides students with the knowledge and abilities they will find useful and necessary in other G.E. and University courses, and in their pursuits after graduation. These fundamental courses

- Analytical Reading and Expository Writing
- Critical thinking
- Mathematics, and
- Oral Communication

will teach students how to read to understand complex topics and write about them, how to distinguish correct from faulty reasoning, how to study and appreciate mathematical ideas and quantitative reasoning, and how to make public presentations of their own thoughts and research.

Students should complete this section within the first 60 units. One course in this section must include **IC** components.

**Subject Explorations (29 units)** coursework provides students with the following:

Courses in the **NATURAL SCIENCES** provide students with: (a) fundamental knowledge in the sciences, (b) an understanding of how scientific knowledge moves forward using the scientific method, and (c) a solid background in science and technology in a world that is increasingly reliant on scientific and technological advances.

**ARTS AND HUMANITIES** coursework will help students to appreciate the rich history of human knowledge, the arts, and the literatures of their own or other cultures, especially as it applies to, literatures, religions, and philosophy.

**SOCIAL SCIENCES** coursework will give students an understanding of the behavior of humans as we relate to each other, to ourselves, and to our environments as we create the structures and values that govern our lives in the

present and through time. These courses will give students an appreciation of the areas of learning concerned with human thought, and an understanding of the nature, scope, and limits of social-scientific study.

**LIFELONG LEARNING** coursework encourages students to develop an appreciation for the importance of the continued acquisition of new and diverse knowledge and skills, and offers opportunities to integrate personal, professional, and social aspects of life.

**COMPARATIVE CULTURAL STUDIES/GENDER, RACE, CLASS, AND ETHNICITY STUDIES, AND FOREIGN LANGUAGES** coursework will provide students with an introduction to the cultures and languages of other nations and peoples, the contributions and perspectives of minority cultures other than their own, and how gender is viewed in these cultures.

Within **Subject Explorations**: (a) at least one course within Subject Explorations must include **IC**, and (b) courses that fulfill **Title V** requirements cannot be used to fulfill the **Subject Explorations** requirement.

**U.S. History and Local Government (6 units)** is prescribed by California law (Title V) for graduation. Courses listed as fulfilling the **U.S. History and Local Government** requirement cannot fulfill requirements of **Subject Explorations**.

**Upper Division General Education (9 units)** at the 300-level or above must be selected from within **Subject Explorations** or **U.S. History and Local Government**, and must be **WI**.

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#### **Summary of G.E. Reform changes reflected by the Core Proposal:**

1. Unit reductions to the individual sections, lowering the total required G.E. units to 48.
  2. In Subject Exploration, removal of requirements to take coursework from at least two different departments / subject areas; with the acknowledgement that this has removed many of the prior requirements to take courses from specific disciplines.
  3. The two natural science courses must have accompanying labs. These labs or field studies will have the lecture component as either a pre- or co-requisite.
  4. U.S. history and local government upper division courses may now count towards the upper division G.E. requirement if WI certified by EPC.
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#### **PROPOSAL I: Double Counting and Waivers**

- a. G.E.-approved courses that are required by a major and/or offered by the department of a major will count for G.E. credit as follows:
  - i. *Courses counting for major credit and offered by the department of the major.* A student may count for G.E. credit one G.E. course offered by the department of the major.\*
  - ii. *Courses counting for major credit but not offered by the department of the major.* An unlimited number of such courses may count for both major credit and G.E. credit. (Note: This item retains the current policy.)\*
  - iii. A major program may elect to restrict its majors from counting courses for G.E. credit when those courses are required by the major and/or offered by the department. (That is, a major program may choose to prevent its majors from exercising the options i and ii above.)
- \* The major program may substitute another course that is equivalent to or more rigorous than an existing G.E. course and is consistent with the Goals and Student Learning Outcomes of the appropriate G.E. category. Any such substitution is subject to approval by EPC.
- b. Programs will have the opportunity to request appropriate G.E. waivers from EPC to meet external accreditation requirements and/or to account for their interdisciplinary breadth.

#### **RATIONALE:**

1. Many lower-division courses, as well as some survey-based upper-division courses, required in majors are also suited to General Education, as the student-learning outcomes are appropriate to both student populations. Therefore, the current G.E. Program contains a large number of waivers to allow courses to

count for both G.E. and major credit. The proposed policy will obviate the need for many of these exceptions.

2. This ensures that students are exposed to diverse opinions and experiences outside of the department of their major while handling the issue of G.E.-equivalent courses that may be required by the major. For example, the requirement within a major to take a particular math course that also satisfies the G.E. requirement in math.
3. The current G.E. Program has little flexibility to accommodate students who enter the university with advanced skills and knowledge in areas outside their majors to pursue these interests for G.E. credit by taking more rigorous, majors-only courses. The proposed policy will allow major programs to permit G.E. credit to such qualified non-majors for these courses, subject to review by EPC. Such courses must meet all criteria for G.E. certification in the subject area.

### **PROPOSAL II: Comparative Cultural, Gender, Race, Class and Ethnicity Studies, and Foreign Languages (CGR) Credit for Transfer Students**

Students transferring community college or university coursework must meet a three unit CSUN requirement in **CGR**. This requirement can be met through transfer credit evaluation or the completion of appropriate CSUN upper division G.E. courses in **CGR**.

#### **RATIONALE:**

1. For many years, this campus community has held that an understanding of cultures and perspectives other than one's own is an educational imperative. If anything, multicultural understanding and appreciation has become even more important in a world increasingly closely bound by international economic, cultural, artistic, and technological ties. The above requirement ensures that all graduates of CSUN will have had at least three (3) semester units of coursework in this area.
2. Many current CSUN section F courses are already covered by articulation agreements to similar courses offered at community colleges. Upon passage of Proposal II, articulation agreements between CSUN and community colleges must be thoroughly reviewed to ensure that articulation agreements are up-to-date. Furthermore, academic advisors at community colleges must be made aware of the G.E. changes at CSUN so that they can properly advise students to include courses that provide a multicultural perspective in their coursework at the community college.

### **PROPOSAL III: Changing Majors**

G.E. courses fulfilling a particular G.E. requirement transfer as G.E. credit even if the student changes to a major that would not recognize a particular course as fulfilling their G.E. requirement. In other words: **fulfilling a G.E. requirement fulfills that G.E. requirement**. However, after a student changes their major, the student will be responsible for fulfilling the G.E. requirements of the new major in the areas of G.E. that have not been completed plus all course requirements of the new major.

**RATIONALE:** Students should not be penalized (within the confines of G.E.) for changing their major. Once a student has been given credit for fulfilling a specific G.E. category, he or she should not lose credit for that requirement if he or she changes to a major that does not normally allow that specific course to count as G.E. for its majors.

### **PROPOSAL IV: Assessment**

Assessment will be a component of G.E. course recertification by EPC.

**RATIONALE:** Assessment is critical to the continuing improvement of the G.E. program and is part of the University's accountability practices.