STOCKTON UNIVERSITY

PROCEDURE

General Studies

Procedure Administrator: Assistant Provost
Authority:
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Approved By: Dr. Herman J. Saatkamp, Jr., President

I. PURPOSE:

To outline academic requirements, categories, and descriptions of General Studies.

II. PROCEDURE:

A. GENERAL STUDIES. Stockton's distinctive General Studies program constitutes the University curriculum's commons, the place where students and faculty with various specializations meet to find common ground. The program was designed on basis of three premises:

(i) The world of knowledge and ideas is essentially seamless and is not really divided into discrete compartments.

(ii) The important problems that students should confront, e.g., war and peace or environmental issues, can't be understood by any single academic discipline alone. Not surprisingly, modern scientific advances often depend on interdisciplinary approaches.

(iii) Changing workforce trends suggest that graduates will change not only jobs but also careers more frequently than has been the case in the past. Flexibility, the capacity for lifelong learning and, in particular, the acquisition of generic, transferable skills will be requisite in the current and future economy.

These notions do not mitigate the importance of specialized preparation through a degree major. Specialized education and the resulting expertise in a field will continue to be important to graduates, and to society at large. However, the University believes that specialized knowledge alone does not provide all the preparation that students need for the future; both general studies and the disciplinary major are important in a liberal arts environment where excellence is pursued.

The distinctive feature of the approach at Stockton is that General Studies is provided through a separate curriculum and academic school. The University believes that breadth of education is not well-served by simply requiring students to take introductory courses in various disciplines, as is the case at some other institutions. Traditional introductory courses in most disciplines are usually designed as the first step in a major for students who wish to specialize, rather than providing breadth of understanding for the non-major and general student.

General Studies courses are intended to enrich one's learning, to provide for explorations of new fields, to provoke and stimulate new thinking, to encourage experimentation and to test one's perspectives; these intentions are often addressed in ways that cross the boundaries of individual academic disciplines.

The General Studies course offerings are taught by all members of the faculty from all schools. The courses may study a problem or theme or offer a survey of related topics. What the courses have in common is that they are designed to explore ideas, stimulate critical thinking and provide breadth of perspective for all students regardless of major.

As the General Studies curriculum is not a foundation curriculum consisting of introductory courses, students take courses in this area throughout their college career.

Learning is a lifelong process, and as such, one of the most important abilities a student can develop is the capacity to plan and manage learning experiences. At Stockton, the student's preceptor should play an important role by helping the student develop this ability in the major and in general education courses.

In order to provide concrete meaning to the general concepts outlined above, the University has defined a number of desirable goals for the general education of all students. Although these goals cannot all be met through General Studies courses alone (they also need to be addressed in the degree major), each General Studies course at Stockton is designed to help achieve at least some of the following objectives in addition to the goals of one of the five General Studies course categories:

Primary Goals

Objective 1: Commitment to lifelong learning, to the exploration of new ideas outside one's specialization, and to placing one's own knowledge in the context of other disciplines and of society as a whole.

Objective 2: Commitment to citizenship, through the ability to make informed decisions about public issues – while conscious of one's responsibility for doing so and of one's responsibility as an individual for the social whole.

General Competencies

Objective 3: Ability to reason logically and abstractly and to comprehend and criticize arguments.

Objective 4: Ability to understand numerical data so as to be able to comprehend arguments and positions that depend on numbers and statistics.

Objective 5: Ability to write and speak effectively and persuasively.

Objective 6: Capacity for "reflective reading" – entering into personal dialogue with a text.

Objective 7: Development of a conceptual framework with which to assimilate new experiences – and the ability to adapt it as necessary.

General Content Experiences

Objective 8: Appreciation and understanding of artistic experiences as reflections of the depths and quirks of the human spirit.

Objective 9: Scientific knowledge of the physical and natural world, and understanding how that knowledge is attained and evaluated.

Objective 10: Historical knowledge of the continuities and conflicts common to humans across eras and cultures.

Objective 11: Awareness of the achievements and perspectives of people of different nations and cultures, and of different races, genders and ethnicities.

Objective 12: Understanding of the techniques, findings and procedures of the social sciences as they relate to social structures and to evaluating issues of public policy.

Objective 13: Critical understanding of one's own values and those of others, and of their role in making ethical choices.

B. GENERAL STUDIES REQUIREMENT Curriculum requirements exist to ensure that Stockton graduates have met the general education objectives for all students and the goals of General Studies:

- The "twenty-five percent" rule
- The distribution requirement in General Studies
- The "At-Some-Distance" requirement
- The limit on the number of allowable credits per General Studies area (G-) category
- The subscript requirement
- The basic studies requirement
- The quantitative reasoning requirement
- The writing requirement
- The freshman seminar requirement.

The status of a student, e.g., beginning freshman or transfer, and the student's degree program (B.A. or B.S.) determines the manner wherein these requirements must be met.

The "Twenty-Five Percent" Rule

Twenty-five percent of all the courses a student takes at Stockton must be General Studies courses. This is called the twenty-five percent rule. This rule applies to transfer students as well as first-year students.

For first-year students and transfer students with less than 64 credits:

32 credits must be taken within General Studies for either a BA or a BS degree.

If you have transfer credits, some of these may be allocated as General Studies courses:

- 1–15 transfer credits: no General Studies equivalencies awarded
- 16–31 transfer credits: up to 1 General Studies equivalency awarded
- 32–47 transfer credits: up to 2 General Studies equivalencies awarded
- 48–63 transfer credits: up to 3 General Studies equivalencies awarded.

For first-year students and transfer students with less than 64 credits:

32 credits must be taken within General Studies for either a BA or a BS degree.

Transfer allocation

If you have transfer credits, some of these may be allocated as General Studies courses:

- 1-15 transfer credits: no General Studies equivalencies awarded
- 16 - 31 transfer credits: up to 1 General Studies equivalency awarded
- 32 - 47 transfer credits: up to 2 General Studies equivalencies awarded
- 48 - 63 transfer credits: up to 3 General Studies equivalencies awarded.

For students with 64 transfer credits: Bachelor of Arts/Bachelor of Science:

The General Studies requirement is lowered to 16 credits. The At-Some-Distance credit then grows to 48 credits for the B.A. degree, and 32 credits for the B.S. degree. This is very helpful to the transfer students who may have many excess elective credits. The distribution requirement is no longer in effect but all students must take four credits in the GIS category.

The Distribution Requirement

For first year students and transfer students with fewer than 64 credits, for B.A. and B.S. option:

8 credits in GAH
4 credits in GEN
4 credits in GIS
8 credits in GNM
8 credits in GSS

At-Some-Distance Electives

For first-year students and transfers with fewer than 64 credits, the At-Some-Distance electives constitute one-quarter of the degree for a Bachelor of Arts and one-eighth of the Bachelor of Science degree:

For students with 64 transfer credits, the At-Some-Distance electives increase by 16 credits and the General Studies category shrinks by 16 credits. This makes the Stockton curriculum very receptive for transfer credits.

Limit on the Number of Allowable Credits per General Studies (G-) Category

For a B.A. degree: no more than 16 credits in any G-category may be applied to the B.A. degree.

For a B.S. degree: no more than 12 credits in any G-category may be applied to the B.S. degree.

The General Education Goals Requirement: Subscripts

In addition to the distribution requirement, there is one additional requirement to ensure that these goals are met. All students matriculating in fall of 1999 and thereafter must take and pass one course in each of four areas: Arts (A), Historical Consciousness (H), Values/Ethics (V) and International/Multicultural (I). The sole exception is for students already having the baccalaureate degree: such students are exempt from this and all General Studies requirements.

These courses, while required, do not add any credits to the minimum of 128 to graduate. Students may take Stockton courses that have been designated by A, H, V or I and apply them to program, cognate, General Studies and At-Some-Distance as appropriate.

For transfer students, one or more of these courses may already have been taken in transfer. Any unfulfilled categories must be completed at Stockton.

C. GENERAL STUDIES CATEGORIES. **GENERAL STUDIES COURSE CATEGORIES**

General Studies courses are divided into five categories that explore broad areas of knowledge, often in interdisciplinary or multidisciplinary ways.

GAH: General Arts and Humanities (GAH) courses are designed to acquaint students with the arts and humanities and provide various cultural perspectives on the past and present.

GEN: General Interdisciplinary Skills and Topics (GEN) courses emphasize the dynamic nature of education. They develop learning and communication skills, explore experimental ways of knowing, or examine topics that cut across or lie outside traditional academic disciplines.

GIS: General Integration and Synthesis (GIS) courses are advanced courses for seniors that are designed to deal with problems and questions larger than a single discipline. They are intended to gain perspective on the self, on disciplines of learning and their relationships, and on the recurrent concerns of humankind. The requirement that students take at least four credits of GIS course work is an attempt to help them bring together their earlier General Studies experiences into some kind of integrated framework.

GNM: General Natural Sciences and Mathematics (GNM) courses examine the broad concerns of science, explore the nature of scientific process and practice, and seek to provide an understanding of mathematics and the natural environment.

GSS: General Social and Behavioral Sciences (GSS) courses assist students in understanding human interactions – how people live, produce and resolve conflict as individuals and as groups. They focus on topics, problems and methods of concern to the social sciences.

At-Some-Distance Electives: At-Some-Distance electives are not free, unrestrictive electives. They are defined as a category only when the student chooses a major program of study. The At-Some-Distance electives provide a breadth of study in courses that are in some way unrelated to the student's major program. For example, a Sociology course would be considered At-Some-Distance for a Chemistry major, but as a Cognate for a Psychology major. General Studies courses are usually counted as At-Some-Distance from any major.

Approval History:

	Date
President	06/23/10