

# General Education and University Requirements (ECCE)

## Lower Division General Education

To ensure educational breadth, accredited U.S. institutions generally require completion of courses in several disciplines or areas - usually oral and written communication, mathematics, science, social science, and humanities. This constitutes the institution's general education requirements.

General education is an important part of the distinctive UIS degree and consists of more than a series of distribution requirements. The UIS General Education Curriculum provides structure for the whole baccalaureate experience while allowing the flexibility transfer students need to enter the institution and the curriculum with ease. General education course work helps student achieve the goals and outcomes for baccalaureate education listed above. In certain cases, prerequisites or major requirements may be fulfilled by general education courses.

General education courses are usually 100- and 200-level offerings, and consist of the following categories [NOTE: academic preparation credits, also known as remedial and developmental course work, do(es) not count towards general education requirements]:

- *Freshman Seminar* - 1 course, 3 hours (students who transfer to UIS with 30+ hours are not responsible for this category). This is a course in college survival skills which may be taught in any discipline, and will be counted as fulfilling a general education humanities, social science, or science requirement.
- *Written Communication* - 2 courses, 3 hours each; courses must be passed with a grade of C or better (grades of C- or lower will not be accepted).
- *Oral Communication* - 1 course, 3 hours.
- *Math* - 1 course, 3 hours. Choose a mathematics course appropriate to your major. Check with your advisor to ensure you choose an appropriate course.
- *Life and Physical Science* - 2 courses, 3 or 4 hours each, one in physical science and one in life science (one course must include a laboratory).
- *Comparative Societies* - 1 course, 3 hours; course may satisfy either humanities or social science category (students who transfer to UIS with 30+ hours are not responsible for this category).
- *Humanities* - 3 courses, 3 hours each; one course should be from the visual, creative, or performing arts and at least one from other humanities.
- *Behavioral and Social Sciences* - 3 courses, 3 hours each; courses must be taken in at least two disciplines.

Transfer students may satisfy general education requirements in one of three ways:

1. Complete the requirements of the Illinois Articulation Initiative Core Curriculum.
2. Graduates of Illinois community colleges holding an Associate of Arts, an Associate of Arts and Science, or an Associate of Arts in Teaching degree are considered to have met all UIS general education requirements. Students having earned an Associate of Science degree are not considered to have automatically met all UIS general education requirements; however, students who believe they have met the requirements (e.g., through the Illinois Articulation Core Curriculum) may request an academic review by submitting a Student Petition.
3. Complete the requirements of the UIS General Education Curriculum. If a student satisfactorily completes the objectives of a General Education area but earns fewer hours than required in a particular category, the remaining hours for that area can be waived so long as the total transfer hours earned in a particular category are within one semester hour of the required total. However, students must complete the minimum of 12 courses and 37 semester hours. Up to one fractional semester hour can also be waived, but the minimum requirements will still be enforced.

Transfer students in some degree programs may use a limited number (no more than 12 hours) of 300- level courses to meet general education requirements. Students should consult with their academic advisor for additional information. The 300-level courses used to meet general education requirements must be approved by the Office of Undergraduate Education. The current list of approved courses is available on the General Education website.

## University Requirements: Engaged Citizenship Common Experience (ECCE)

In addition to general education requirements, all UIS undergraduate students are required to take a minimum of 10 hours of Engaged Citizenship Common Experience (ECCE) courses, a set of courses tied to UIS' heritage, mission, vision, and values. These courses provide a distinctive element to the baccalaureate education at UIS and encourage students to make a difference in the world. Most of the course work in this category is interdisciplinary and is designed to help students recognize the value of multiple perspectives. ECCE categories help students meet the Goals and Learning Outcomes for Baccalaureate Education, particularly Goal Five, Engaged Citizenship.

The Engaged Citizenship Common Experience (ECCE) includes 200, 300, and 400-level courses. All undergraduates at UIS will be required to take the following ECCE course work: One credit hour of the ECCE Speaker Series course and two of the following three ECCE categories for at least nine credit hours: US Communities, Global Awareness, and Engagement Experience. Some degree programs may require students to take particular ECCE courses. Students should consult with advisors in the major for further guidance.

Courses taken to meet the 10 hours of ECCE requirements cannot be used to meet lower division general education course work, but they may count toward requirements, electives, or prerequisites in the major and minor.

Students must complete a minimum of three hours in two of the following three categories:

## **U.S. Communities**

Courses in this category aim to broaden students' knowledge about substantial, distinctive, and complex aspects of the history, society, politics, and culture of United States communities.

## **Global Awareness**

Courses in this category help students to understand and function in an increasingly interdependent and globalizing environment and to develop an appreciation of other cultural perspectives. They foster awareness of other cultures, polities, or natural environments, past or present.

## **Engagement Experience**

This category offers students structured opportunities to integrate knowledge, practice, and reflection in the context of an engaged citizenship experience. Students may fulfill this part of the ECCE curriculum through an internship, Prior Learning Assessment, a service-learning course, a research project, a group project course, or study abroad, among others.

Students who desire or are required to complete an internship or project may do so through the Engagement Experience.

## **ECCE Speaker Series**

For one semester, students will be required to enroll in the ECCE Speaker Series course and participate in a series of campus-sponsored lectures by speakers who exemplify engaged citizenship. Credit will be awarded upon completion of all course requirements. Students must complete one hour of Speaker Series course work but may take an additional hour in a different semester if desired.

## **Assessment of General Education and ECCE**

Assessment of general education and ECCE will involve both direct and indirect measures of student learning based on the Goals and Learning Outcomes for Baccalaureate Education and on the established criteria for courses in the curriculum. Every general education learning outcome should be reviewed every three years by collecting direct evidence of student learning. Students are required to participate in general education and ECCE assessment.