



COLLEGE OF
Letters & Science
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON
The Heart of a Great University

20 November, 2015

To: Sarah Mangelsdorf, Provost
Jocelyn Milner, Associate Provost

From: Karl Scholz 
Dean, College of Letters and Science
Elaine M. Klein 
Assistant Dean and Chair, University General Education Committee

RE: Report of the University General Education Committee to the University APC

Attachment: 2014-15 Report of the University General Education Committee

On November 13, 2015, the University General Education committee unanimously approved the attached Annual Report to the University Academic Planning Council.

In addition to summarizing the committee's work in the past year, the report also conveys to the UAPC its draft Assessment Plan for General Education, which was approved by the committee on September 11, 2015. Modeled on the template circulated to departments and programs across the university, the new plan clearly articulates learning outcomes associated with the UW-Madison General Education program. These outcomes approved by the committee make explicit what has long been implicit in the criteria used to determine whether courses carry GER designations; thus, the committee considers that these outcomes are already aligned with the current GER course array.

The GER learning outcomes for the four domains of General Education (Breadth, Communication, Ethnic Studies, and Quantitative Reasoning) are:

Breadth

Students acquire critical and creative thinking skills as well as enhance their problem-solving skills through a breadth of study across the humanities and arts, social studies, biological sciences and physical sciences.

Students will:

- articulate examples of significant contributions to human understanding achieved through various "ways of knowing" found in the arts and humanities, social and behavioral sciences, and quantitative, physical, and mathematical sciences.
- recognize and articulate the ways in which different disciplines approach questions that call upon different tools of inquiry, understanding, and creative enterprise.

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- identify ways in which multiple tools of inquiry and understanding can be used to achieve greater insight into resolving “big” questions (e.g., climate change, poverty, global health etc.), evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of those approaches, and understanding which complementary approaches will help achieve meaningful change.
- evaluate different modes of inquiry across the humanities and arts, social studies, biological sciences and physical sciences and identify strengths and weaknesses of those approaches across disciplines when approaching a question.

Communication

Students apply skills for effective communication (planning, information seeking, drafting, and revising) to communication tasks, both in and out of the classroom.

Student’s written and spoken work will:

- make effective use of information retrieved, organized, and synthesized from appropriate sources.
- present ideas and information clearly and logically to achieve a specific purpose.
- make effective use of communicative forms appropriate to a specific discipline, and adapted to the intended audience.
- use appropriate style and conventions associated with particular communicative forms, genres, or disciplines.

Ethnic Studies

Students draw connections between historical and present day circumstances, and consider perceptions and cultural assumptions when examining questions and making decisions.

Students will:

- articulate some of the effects the past has had on present day circumstances, perceptions of, and disparities in, race in the U.S.
- recognize and question cultural assumptions, rules, biases, and knowledge claims as they relate to race and ethnicity.
- examine questions and make decisions with consideration for the cultural perspectives and worldviews of others.

Quantitative Reasoning

Students utilize mathematical models for scientific or real life problems to set up, analyze, interpret, make judgments and draw appropriate conclusions based on quantitative analysis of data.

Students will:

- set up an abstract mathematical model or hypothesis for a given scientific or real life problem.
- interpret, handle and manipulate quantitative data sets for scientific or real life problems.
- quantitatively analyze data to obtain relevant insight about a given problem.
- make judgments and draw appropriate conclusions based on the quantitative analysis of data.

The committee respectfully submits this annual report to the UAPC, and requests UAPC approval of the learning outcomes for General Education. As noted in the report, approval of these learning outcomes will prompt a series of revisions to current materials used to communicate with students and advisors about GER, as well as to develop projects that will be used to assess student learning in these terms.

2014-15 Report of the University General Education Committee

Approved, November 13, 2015

The University General Education Committee (UGEC) is responsible for oversight of the campus-wide undergraduate General Education Requirements, or GER (Attachment A). The requirements were adopted by the Faculty Senate in May 1994, after review by a faculty committee that found common ground among all UW-Madison undergraduate schools and colleges that “every graduate should be able to write and speak with competence, employ tools and methods of mathematics and quantitative reasoning, and possess knowledge in one or more of the natural sciences and social sciences, in literature, and in at least one or more of the human disciplines” (Bitzer Committee Report, p. 5). At the time the report was submitted, no campus-wide requirements existed to ensure a base level of knowledge and skills that characterize each UW-Madison student. A suite of course-based requirements was proposed and adopted, and the College of Letters & Science (which fields most courses meeting the requirements) was entrusted to implement and administer the requirements.

The Dean of L&S convenes the UGEC, appointing members in consultation with the deans of the other undergraduate schools and colleges (Attachment B). The committee reports to the University Academic Planning Council (UAPC), which is empowered to approve policy changes the committee may recommend related to the requirements. UGEC operating procedures and other information about the GER program may be found online at www.ls.wisc.edu/gened.

Though the requirements have remained largely the same as originally proposed, the purpose has been more clearly articulated: today, they are understood to exist to help ensure that every baccalaureate student at UW-Madison acquires the essential core of an undergraduate education, to prepare students for living a productive life, being citizens of the world, appreciating aesthetic values, and engaging in lifelong learning in a changing world. Students complete coursework across the humanities and arts, social studies, and natural sciences, and in communication and quantitative reasoning; one course must be designated as meeting the Ethnic Studies Requirement, which promotes learning related to culturally diverse U.S. society. GER is a component of the “Wisconsin Experience,” though the requirements are not solely responsible for that experience, since GER complements the work students do in majors and degree programs (the province of the schools and colleges) as well as in extracurricular high-impact learning practices.

The work of the UGEC necessarily involves consultation with colleagues across campus, so committee members bring to bear the perspectives of different schools and colleges, as well as academic and co-curricular realms, in shared oversight of GER. The report that follows summarizes processes by which the course array is administered and where the committee focused its attention in 2014-2015.

I. Administration of GER

New Courses. Courses are added to or removed from the GER course array through the online course proposal process. Departments may seek review for Communication A or B, Quantitative Reasoning A or B, or Ethnic Studies courses, or for courses to carry the L&S Breadth

Designations that facilitate auditing GER breadth. These reviews involve faculty and staff who understand the subject matter, GER course criteria, and GER learning outcomes. Communication and QR reviews are assigned to a faculty liaison, and requests for ESR designation are referred to the Ethnic Studies Subcommittee. Requests for GER breadth are reviewed by the L&S Curriculum Committee, which has representation from faculty across the three GER breadth divisions. Finally, because Comm A and QRA courses are the most narrowly defined requirements, special committees are convened to consider occasional requests to add new Comm A and QRA courses. If a request for a GER designation is approved, it is assigned a course attribute that can easily be audited by the Degree Audit Reporting System, and students who take courses with GER attributes will find their GER met regardless of the School/College in which their degree is earned.

As noted in our last report, the existence of the online course proposal system has greatly streamlined and improved the process by which faculty may seek to apply GER designations to courses.

Preventing Course Drift, Supporting Curriculum. We are keenly aware of the tendency of courses to “drift” from their original purposes. The GER liaisons, subcommittees, and others who support GER actively monitor the course array and intervene as needed.

- The QR liaison has recently engaged in a curriculum mapping initiative, reviewing all QRA course syllabi and has proposed changes to the course requisites to ensure that students in these courses are sufficiently prepared for them.
- Regular meetings of the Comm A Subcommittee help ensure that faculty and staff involved in these courses discuss issues and concerns related to student learning in them. In 2014-2015, this committee was reconfigured and expanded, to better allow discussion of the broad “Communication Requirement”, and to identify means by which we might assess the impact of this requirement on student learning.
- The Ethnic Studies Subcommittee evaluates all courses that meet the Ethnic Studies Requirement (ESR), all student requests for course substitutions, and sponsors regular meetings of the faculty who teach courses that meet the requirement. In 2014-2015, the ESS focused its attention, in particular, on expanding the ESR course array at the elementary and intermediate levels, to help achieve the aspiration that students will complete the requirement “early” in their UW-Madison experience.
- The Writing Across the Curriculum Program, as part of its mission to infuse instruction in written and oral communication in Comm B and other writing intensive courses, provides annual training for faculty and TAs teaching Comm B courses.
- Each semester, the chair of the UGEC sends a memo to departments and instructors of courses designated as meeting Comm, ESR, and QR requirements reminding them of the learning outcomes associated with those requirements. Efforts like the revision of the Communication Requirement FAQ (Summer 2015) also aim to better describe the requirements in terms of outcomes, in addition to outlining the formal criteria courses must meet.

- Registrar's Office staff and curricular service representatives monitor the Schedule of Courses to ensure that the enrollment system facilitates correct enrollment in GER courses. (For example, these colleagues monitor "meets with" arrangements to ensure that courses are correctly designated with respect to GER, and that Comm B courses include writing instruction.)
- The GER liaisons, ES Subcommittee, and various deans' offices in consultation with the UGEC chair manage student requests for GER course substitutions/exceptions. Since General Education Requirements are never waived, it is sometimes necessary to allow students to count non-GER courses toward meeting requirements. For a substitution to be considered, the course must align with the GER learning outcomes and must meet all of other criteria for a GER course.

GER Course Array. In 2014-2015, the Office of Academic Planning and Institutional Research conducted a study of the GER course array, compiling descriptive data for Comm, ESR, and QR course array, focusing on the number of courses, which courses have been taught within the last five years, Spring/Fall/Summer offerings, enrollment trends, and instructor type. (Attachment C)

The UGEC discussed the report and found much of the information unsurprising: for example, it is not uncommon to find a considerable amount of instruction in foundational math and communication courses to be provided by graduate assistants, nor is it unexpected to see more QRA enrollments in Fall than in Spring, since completion of QRA is an important requisite for students pursuing studies in STEM areas; more QRA seats are available in Fall so these students can make timely progress in their curricula. The UGEC has noted that departments may consider expanding Summer Term GER, perhaps by offering more ESR and QRB courses.

The UGEC agrees that "aging" or "untaught" courses in the Comm B and ESR array warrants a closer look. In the coming year, the Communication Liaison will review Comm B syllabi, both to ensure that these courses continue to serve the requirement and to verify that course syllabi reflect current practice. (A similar review of QRB courses conducted in 2011-12 may account for the low number of untaught QRB courses.) The ES Subcommittee will conduct a similar review of ESR courses. Other questions posed by APIR – such as those related to expanding mechanisms that award GER by standardized tests or through credit by examination – will require further UGEC discussion.

II. Assessment of Student Learning

Since 2003, the University General Education Committee (UGEC) has used a formally adopted long-range Assessment Plan to guide campus-level efforts to understand the impact and efficacy of the General Education Requirements.

FOCUS: GER Assessment Plan Revisions

The UGEC has a long and noteworthy record of assessing UW-Madison GER (<http://www.ls.wisc.edu/gened/AssessmentReports.htm>). In 2013-2014, the committee updated the assessment plan that was included in the 2013-14 Report to the UAPC. That plan identified a

robust set of learning outcomes for each of the General Education Requirements, and mapped GER to the broad outcomes associated with *The Wisconsin Experience*. That list of detailed learning outcomes is daunting, and assessment specialists working with the Provost's Office noted that the number of outcomes would make implementation of the plan difficult, since it is extremely difficult to assess so many outcomes. The committee was asked to revisit the plan before undertaking any new assessment projects.

In 2014-2015, the UGEC developed a more limited set of learning outcomes and simplified the assessment plan, using the template provided by the Provost's Office, in hopes that this work would lead to a more sustainable assessment strategy.

The revised GER learning outcomes are less focused on the particular requirements for and outcomes of the many courses that comprise the GER course array. They are intended to be comprehensive and general, to align with broad outcomes associated with the four domains of general education. The committee developed these outcomes by examining existing policy (e.g., FacDoc 1065a), the criteria used to approve courses to carry GER designations (the Criteria for Communication and for QR courses), and previously approved annual reports and assessment materials.¹ These foundational and implementation documents represent campus values related to General Education, since the criteria for GER were articulated by the faculty and guide consideration of whether proposed GER courses have the capacity to promote student learning in these domains. The committee used this information to describe the general learning outcomes inherent within an expectation that these courses would study particular subjects or use particular pedagogies - in essence, "reverse-engineering" learning outcomes from existing policy and faculty decisions about courses approved to meet the requirements.

The Draft General Education Assessment Plan (Attachment D) contains the proposed outcomes. Because these outcomes are derived from criteria used to determine if GER courses meet requirements, the courses are already mapped to the outcomes; there is no need to undertake a broad curriculum mapping project for the course array to evaluate whether courses currently carrying GER designations should still do so.

The UGEC seeks endorsement of these outcomes from the University Academic Planning Council. If approved, the committee will develop an assessment plan that will leverage work already underway (e.g., National Survey of Student Engagement, Post Graduation Plans Survey, Climate Surveys, and analyses of course taking patterns conducted by Academic Planning and Institutional Research). The committee will complement this work by identifying opportunities to conduct focused studies using direct assessment strategies to better understand the impact of GER on student learning. The GER Assessment Committee will be convened to finalize and implement the plan.

In addition to development and implementation of the new assessment plan, the UGEC will oversee revisions to the Undergraduate Catalog and GER advising materials, update the General

¹ This work was undertaken for the Breadth, Communication, and Quantitative Reasoning Domains; learning outcomes for Ethnic Studies Requirement were developed by the ESR faculty in Spring 2010, and were approved by the UAPC in June 2011.

Education website, work with APIR to include GER learning outcomes as the institution develops a new course proposal system, so relevant General Education outcomes might be included on syllabi for courses that meet these requirements.

FOCUS: Ethnic Studies Requirement (ESR)

We continue to implement recommendations arising from the assessment of student learning in, and the impact of, the ESR.

- Staff in L&S worked with colleagues across campus advising units to implement the UGEC recommendation that students be required to complete the requirement within the first 60 credits completed in residence. In 2014, the UAPC encouraged the committee to pursue a strategy to encourage students to complete the requirement early, focusing on reaching out to advisors, advising units and operations (e.g., SOAR, CCAS), and more generally to enhance communication about early completion of all three foundational requirements: Comm A, ESR, and QRA. This approach promotes consistency and parity among the requirements students should complete early, while also allowing time to build the ESR course array to accommodate more students at this level of the curriculum. (See Attachment E for an example of advising materials.)
- Professor Ethelene Whitmire, Chair of the ES Subcommittee, and Elaine Klein, Director of General Education, served on a campus-wide committee charged to develop clear actions steps to implement the new Diversity Framework, several recommendations of which relate to the ESR. These include encouraging students to complete the requirement early, expand the array of ESR courses and of opportunities for students to engage in “high impact” activities that align with ESR learning outcomes, and to develop regular strategies for monitoring the impact of these efforts. We anticipate that in 2015-2016, the Ethnic Studies Subcommittee will engage in continued discussion of the Diversity Framework, and the ESR’s alignment with many of its goals.
- Faculty who teach in Ethnic Studies areas (both in the context of traditional departments as well as in ES focused subject areas) continue to build course capacity that will allow the university to serve more students early in their undergraduate careers. Since the recommendations of the ES assessment study were released in Fall 2013, the ESR course array has seen several changes:
 - Many existing courses in Afro Am Studies were moved from “Advanced” to “Elementary” levels
 - New courses were approved at “Elementary” or “Intermediate” level (“sophomore standing” requisite):
 - Counseling Psychology 230 – Race and the Developing Child
 - English/Asian Am 462 - Topics in Asian Am Literature
 - Folklore 430 - Topics in American Folklore: Ethnic Studies
 - History 219 –American Jewish Experience: From Shtetl to Suburb

- History 243 - Colony, Nation, and Minority: The Puerto Ricans' World (in progress)
- History/Asian Am 276 – Chinese Migrations since 1500
- History 355 - Work, Freedom & Democracy
- History 393 - Slavery, Civil War, and Reconstruction, 1848-1877
- ILS 170 – Creativity and the Civic-Minded Culture
- Journ 162 – Mass Media in Multicultural America
- Music/Jewish Studies 319, German 267 – Yiddish Song & Jewish Experience
- Religious Studies 403 - Topics in Religious Studies-US Ethnic Studies
- Sociology 170 – Population Problems
- New courses were approved at “Advanced” level (these courses often serve transfer students, who may enter after having completed their first 60 credits)
 - AIS/HDFS 522 – American Indian Families
 - Comm Arts 574 - Rhetoric of US Immigration and Naturalization
 - Design Studies / Land Arch 639 – Culture and the Built Environment
 - English 374 - African and African Diaspora Literature and Culture
 - Library & Info Studies 665, Topics in Race and Ethnicity in the Information Society
 - Poli Sci 481 – Honors Seminar on Race and Politics in the US

FOCUS: Communication A and Information Literacy

As has been noted in previous reports, students who satisfy the Comm A requirement by placement test or transfer credit are not exposed to Library instruction, as is required when using a UW-Madison course to satisfy the requirement. In 2013-2014, the Libraries Teaching & Learning Programs (T&LP) group piloted tools to better communicate about this important requirement with advisors, by including information in students’ advising record, so advisors can counsel students about completing the web-based “Computerized Library User Education” (CLUE) module. The Libraries also partnered with Communication Arts 100 to document completion of the library education module in the Student Center, so information about completion is easily available to instructors in courses that require students to complete the module.

In 2014, T&LP received Educational Innovation funding to work with DoIT to develop a “next-generation CLUE.” The CLUE tool was modernized to allow better blended integration with the five Comm A courses, project goals included recreating CLUE as a learning module that might be attached to any course. This flexibility would allow any instructor on campus to encourage students to revisit and reinforce library research skills in the context of courses beyond Comm A and Comm B. It would also mean faculty who teach courses that emphasize writing and research could require completion of the module by students who do not take a UW-Madison Comm A course. The project has had a successful pilot in Summer 2015, with ESL 118. It will be fully implemented in all Comm A courses in Fall 2015. The new tool is rebranded as “Sift & Winnow: Libraries@UW.” (See: <https://kb.wisc.edu/helpdesk/page.php?id=4988>)

As with all EI projects, and consistent with the long record of T&LP's engagement with evidence-based change, assessment of student learning is an important component of this project. The project has been designed to capture data on student learning in quizzes submitted, in-class worksheets completed, as well as via focus groups to be conducted with students and instructors. The Libraries are formalizing the EI assessment plan as an on-going standing assessment plan to evaluate the effectiveness of the new Sift & Winnow tool and the face-to-face in-library session component.

FOCUS: Calibration of QR-A Courses. As noted above, in Summer 2015, the GER Quantitative Reasoning liaison, Professor Benedek Valko, conducted a curriculum mapping review and calibration of courses that meet the Quantitative Reasoning-A requirement, to verify that these courses continue to meet the criteria QR-A. This review was complemented by a study conducted by Academic Planning and Institutional Research, which examined the QR-A/QR-B course combinations for two graduating cohorts (Attachment F). Professor Valko's review identified differing levels of preparation required to enter each QR-A course, and he recommended that minimum prerequisites for QR-A courses be better aligned. The departments responsible for these courses were contacted and these revisions are under way.

III. Focused Discussion: International/Global Education and General Education

In 2014-2015, the UGEC spent little time discussing the question of whether or not UW-Madison should impose a new requirement pertaining to "global" or "international" education, which had framed much of the previous year's work. This inattention was due, in part, to the campus instructional strategy relative to global and international studies being in flux: it made little sense to consider imposing a new GER until a clear direction for campus was defined, an infrastructure established, and faculty expertise and attention might again be available to recruit into the discussion.

It continues to be the committee's view that if a new requirement were to be developed, it must first be informed by learning outcomes that will frame review of curriculum and experiences that would satisfy the requirement. This framework would also facilitate investigation into the extent to which students may already be achieving these outcomes, and whether students should best pursue these outcomes within the context of majors and degree programs rather than via GER. Finally, as noted above, the infrastructure supporting each requirement is non-trivial: imposing a new requirement will weigh heavily upon already limited resources.

IV. Other Matters

The UGEC also discusses policy matters and other issues related to supporting a breadth of study as part of undergraduate education.

- *Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium and Wisconsin Common Core State Standards.* The UGEC continued discussion of the State of Wisconsin adoption of the Common Core State Standards, and the interest UW-Madison faculty may have in the definition of "college

readiness” and what that may mean for “general education” at each institution. No policy decisions have been made; however, members of the committee are keeping a watchful eye on this area.

- ***UW System Liberal Arts Essay Contest.*** A subcommittee of the UGEC again served as the campus-level review panel for the tenth annual UW System scholarship competition focused on the liberal arts. This annual competition challenges students to articulate, in their own words, the role liberal education plays in helping them to understand their lived experience. The subcommittee selected three essays that were forwarded to the state-level competition, and was pleased to learn that one student’s essay was among the top three in the state, and another received an honorable mention.
- ***Liberal Education and America’s Promise “LEAP.”*** The ten-year anniversary of the AACU initiative to have a positive impact on the discussion of liberal education has inspired UW System to undertake a state-wide assessment of how LEAP has affected institutions in the system. UW-Madison’s LEAP liaisons, Professor Jolanda Vanderwal Taylor and Associate Dean Nancy Westphal-Johnson are participating in the project.

On behalf of the University General Education Committee, this report is submitted by

Elaine M. Klein, Chair, UGEC
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Undergraduate Study at UW–Madison: General Education Requirements
From the Undergraduate Catalog, 2015-2017 (http://pubs.wisc.edu/ug/geninfo_study ger.htm)

The purpose of the General Education Requirements is to ensure that every graduate of the University of Wisconsin–Madison acquires the essential core of an undergraduate education. This core establishes a foundation for living a productive life, being a citizen of the world, appreciating aesthetic values, and engaging in lifelong learning in a continually changing world. These requirements provide for breadth across the humanities and arts, social studies, and natural sciences; competence in communication, critical thinking, and analytical skills appropriate for a university-educated person; and investigation of the issues raised by living in a culturally diverse society. The Wisconsin Experience begins with this core of intellectual and practical skills, basic knowledge of human cultures and the physical world (and, importantly, the strategies used to understand these topics), and tools intended to contribute to their sense of personal and social responsibility; the work students do in their majors and to complete their degrees also helps them to learn what they need to know not just for making a living, but also for making a life.

Completing the General Education Requirements is an important part of achieving these competencies, and to do so, students choose from many courses in communication, quantitative reasoning, natural science, humanities/literature/arts, social studies, and ethnic studies. Many of these courses also count toward other degree requirements.

All students except those who matriculated at a college or university before May 20, 1996, must satisfy the university-wide General Education Requirements. Students should always check with their advisors to see if their school or college has any additional requirements that go beyond the basic UW–Madison requirements, or if the programs in which they are enrolled ask them to fulfill these requirements through specific courses or by pursuing them in a particular order. Please see this website for a comprehensive description of the General Education Requirements and the courses that may be taken to fulfill them.

The university-wide General Education Requirements are:

Breadth, 13–15 credits, distributed over three areas

All students must complete 13–15 credits of course work intended to provide a breadth of experience across the major modes of intellectual inquiry. Breadth course work is intended to give students a broad intellectual perspective on their undergraduate education and their world by encouraging them to look at and understand subjects through the various modes of inquiry used in the natural, physical and social sciences, arts, and humanities.

Students are required to complete the following breadth requirements:

- Natural Science, 4 to 6 credits, consisting of one 4- or 5-credit course with a laboratory component; or two courses providing a total of 6 credits
- Humanities/Literature/Arts, 6 credits
- Social Studies, 3 credits

This requirement challenges students to understand that there are many ways to research and explore, and ultimately understand, the world around us. These many "ways of knowing" are intended to enrich the undergraduate experience and complement intensive study in students' majors. Through these courses, many students discover subjects and ideas that will become lifetime interests, or that offer the creative stimulus to see their favorite subjects from new perspectives.

The **natural sciences** (which include studies in the physical and biological sciences) involve knowing the world through scientific inquiry—assembling objective information that can be used to explain observed natural phenomena in a way that is thorough and verifiable. Laboratory components give students firsthand experience in methods of scientific research. These courses help students see both the explanatory and creative processes in science that are transforming our world.

The **humanities, literature, and the arts** examine the world through many different lenses that help students interpret and think critically about creative and cultural expressions of what it means to be human. Some courses focus on the production and analysis of artistic, literary, and scholarly works; others help students learn about and compare religious and philosophical conceptions of humankind; still others study history and the peoples and regions of the world. All of these courses encourage students to analyze the range of creativity, cultural expressions, and ideas about and patterns in human existence—history, literature, art, culture, folklore—and to use that information to better understand humanity.

In the **social sciences**, students learn other ways to understand humanity. Courses in this area are found in a wide range of fields that share a common focus on the systematic study of personal interactions, and the interactions of society and institutions. These fields use quantitative and qualitative research strategies to look at the variety and scale of these interactions, and in these courses, students learn how to formulate research questions and determine what techniques are best used to answer those questions.

These "ways of knowing" the world around us intersect and overlap, and the ideas presented in one area will often inform and transform what we know or think about what we know about the others. Taken as a whole, the breadth requirement is intended to help UW–Madison graduates appreciate the many and complex ways to understand the world around us. By these means, students develop skills that help them make informed decisions in a wide range of political, economic, and social contexts, to think critically about the world, to better understand humanity, and to behave in socially responsible ways.

Communication, 3 to 5/6 credits

Part A. Literacy Proficiency. 2–3 credits at first-year level dedicated to reading, listening, and discussion, with emphasis on writing. While most incoming freshmen are required to complete course work to fulfill this requirement, students may be exempted from Part A by approved college course work while in high school, AP test scores, or placement testing. Students are expected to satisfy this requirement by the end of their first year.

Part B. Enhancing Literacy Proficiency. 2–3 credits of more advanced course work for students who have completed or been exempted from Part A. Students should consult with the appropriate undergraduate advisor about when this requirement should be completed. Courses that satisfy this requirement are offered in many fields of study; although a wide variety of courses fulfill this requirement, students are encouraged to select a course most in keeping with their interests or other requirements of their intended field(s) of study.

Ethnic Studies, 3 credits

All students must take one course of at least 3 credits which is designated as an Ethnic Studies course. The ethnic studies requirement is intended to increase understanding of the culture and contributions of persistently marginalized racial or ethnic groups in the United States, and to equip students to respond constructively to issues connected with our pluralistic society and global community. Because this increased understanding is expected to have a positive effect on campus climate, students are encouraged to complete this requirement by the end of their second year. Please note that many ethnic studies courses may also fulfill breadth and other requirements.

Information about learning outcomes to be achieved by Ethnic Studies Courses can be found on the General Education website.

Quantitative Reasoning, 3 to 6 credits

Part A. Quantitative Reasoning Proficiency. 3 credits of mathematics or formal logic. Students may be exempted from Part A by approved college work while in high school, AP test scores, or placement testing. Some students, however, may need to complete a prerequisite before enrolling in a Quantitative Reasoning Part A course. To ensure timely progress to completion of the undergraduate degree, students should complete this requirement by the end of their first year.

Part B. Enhancing Quantitative Reasoning Proficiency. 3 credits of more advanced course work for students who have completed or been exempted from Part A. (Students must satisfy Part A before they may go on to Part B.) Courses that satisfy this requirement are offered in a variety of fields of study. Students are encouraged to select a course in keeping with their interests or other requirements of their intended field(s) of study.

Identifying Courses that Meet General Education Requirements

The university offers hundreds of courses that meet the requirements described above. Students should consider their own interests and check with their advisor when deciding which courses to complete. Please note that many undergraduate programs of study have breadth requirements that go beyond these basic university-wide requirements.

The following symbols are used in the UW–Madison course listings to indicate how courses count toward satisfying the communication, quantitative reasoning, and ethnic studies portions of the General Education Requirements.

a—Communication Part A

b—Communication Part B

q—Quantitative Reasoning Part A

r—Quantitative Reasoning Part B

e—Ethnic Studies

Note: Some Communication Part B courses carry Communication B credit only at the lecture or section level and/or only in certain semesters; these courses may instead be footnoted in the Course Guide.

A wide array of indicators are used to designate the type of breadth courses carry. Please refer to this website for more information. General Education and breadth indicators appear in the UW–Madison course listings. Students should also be aware that each school and college may, at its own discretion, designate additional courses that satisfy these requirements. For this reason, students should consult their advisors to obtain information about how these requirements are implemented in the school or college in which they are enrolled.

Policies Related to the General Education Requirements

Exceptions: All students are required to meet the fundamental degree requirements of the university, which include a general education component. The university has determined that waivers to the communication and quantitative reasoning portions of the general education component would fundamentally alter the nature of the University of Wisconsin–Madison degree. (Students should not expect to obtain disability-based waivers to the communication and quantitative reasoning portions of the General Education Requirements.)

Pass/Fail: Effective fall 2012, all courses taken to meet the University General Education Requirements must be taken on a graded basis. These grades are included in students' GPA calculations according to school/college GPA rules.

University General Education Committee 2015-2016

Elaine Klein (Chair)

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The Undergraduate General Education Courses Offered at UW-Madison

In September 2014, the University Academic Planning Council reviewed the annual report from the University General Education Committee. Though the focus of that meeting was on a particular issue related to the timing of completion of the Ethnic Studies requirement, there was a general request for more information about the general education course array and its implementation. This analysis provides the requested information with an emphasis on the general education courses offered to undergraduates in the last five years. For each of the five requirements we provide information about:

1. **Courses approved to satisfy the requirements.** How many courses are there and when were they last offered?
2. **Enrollment trends.** How many undergraduates enroll in general education courses?
3. **Semester type.** Are courses offered and enrollments aligned between spring, summer, and fall semesters?
4. **Instructor role.** Are general education courses taught by faculty, academic staff, or graduate students?
5. **Courses.** Which courses do undergraduates take to satisfy general education requirements?

This report focuses on the five core general education requirements in communication, ethnic studies, and quantitative reasoning. These requirements include:

1. Two levels of **communication**
 - **Part A: Literacy Proficiency:** Credits at the first year level dedicated to reading, listening, and discussion, with emphasis on writing.
 - **Part B: Enhancing Literary Proficiency:** More advanced work for students who have completed Communications Part A, usually in a discipline.
2. **Ethnic Studies:** A course intended to increase understanding of the culture and contributions of persistently marginalized racial or ethnic groups in the United States, and to equip students to respond constructively to issues connected with our pluralistic society and global community.
3. Two levels of **quantitative reasoning**
 - **Part A: Quantitative Reading Proficiency:** A college level course in mathematics or formal logic.
 - **Part B: Enhancing Quantitative Reasoning Proficiency:** A more advanced course in mathematics or formal logic for students who have completed Quantitative Reasoning Part A.

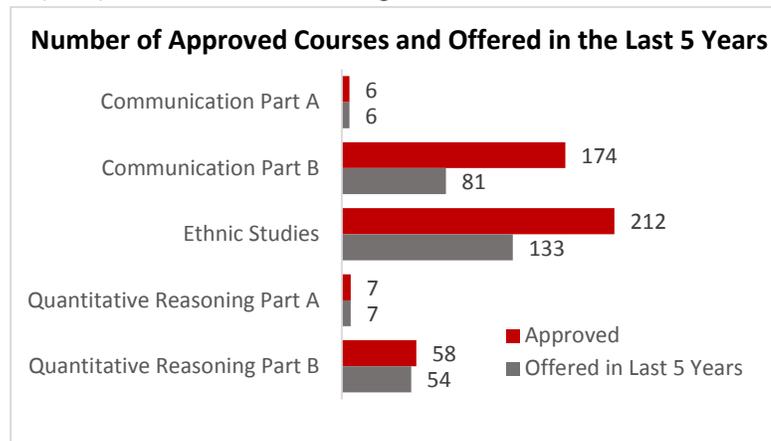
About the Data

1. The data used in this report includes courses approved to satisfy the five general education requirements as of April 1, 2015.
2. Counts of enrollments and course offerings include the semesters between spring 2010 and fall 2014 (five calendar years). When a year is cited (for example, 2014) it refers to a calendar year (spring, summer, and fall) so that the most recent completed semester, fall 2014, could be included.
3. Information about the type of instructor (faculty, graduate assistant etc.) was obtained by linking the instructor information provided in the schedule of classes to their title codes in the human resources data system. Courses with multiple instructors are counted only once. If one of the instructors was a tenured or tenure-track faculty member, then the course is counted as having a faculty instructor. A course that has both an academic staff instructor AND a graduate student instructor is counted as having an academic staff instructor.
4. Course enrollments are undergraduates only. Special students or graduate students (most commonly in upper level Quantitative Reasoning Part B courses) also enroll in these courses. They are not included in the enrollments reported in this analysis because the focus is on general education requirements that only apply to undergraduates.

Courses Approved to Satisfy General Education Requirements

The number of courses available to undergraduates ranges from six Communication Part A courses to 212 possible Ethnic Studies courses. All of the Communication Part A and Quantitative Reasoning Part A courses were offered at least once in the last five years. Most (93%) Quantitative Reasoning Part B courses were also offered at least once in the last five years.

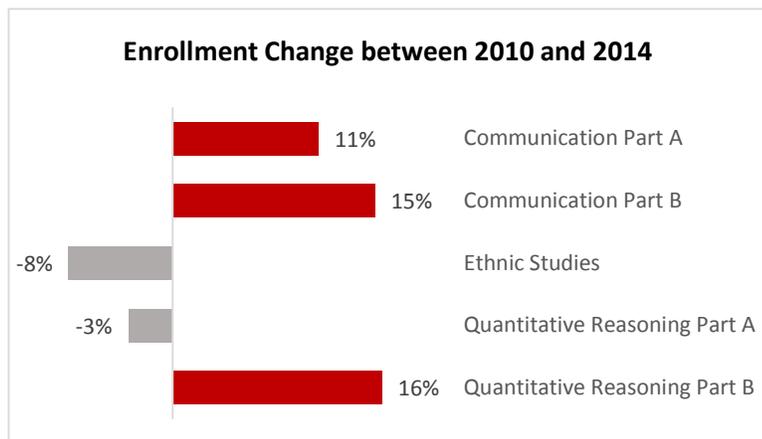
Compared to courses that fulfill these three requirements, courses that fulfill the Ethnic Studies and Communication Part B requirements were not all routinely offered. Of the 174 approved Communication Part B courses, 81 (47%) were offered at least once in the last five years. Of the 212 approved Ethnic Studies courses, 133 (63%) were offered at least once in the last five years.



Enrollment Trends

Between 2010 and 2014 there was an increase in enrollments in three of the five general education requirements and a decrease in two. The largest increase, 16%, was in Quantitative Reasoning Part B courses. During this same time period there was a rapid increase in enrollments in STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) majors. The major-specific portion of STEM majors often requires multiple courses that also fulfill the Quantitative Reasoning Part B requirement and may have contributed to the increase.

The second largest increase was in Communication Part B courses, where enrollments grew 15% over the last five years. This increase is probably most related to higher overall undergraduate enrollments but some of the growth may be from students taking more than one course.



The third largest increase was in Communication Part A courses where enrollments grew by 11% over the last five years. Some of the increase came from an increasing number of new freshman students. At the same time, an increasing percentage of new students satisfied the requirement through the English placement test or through Advanced Placement tests, so the increase in enrollments was not as

high as for Communication Part B courses.

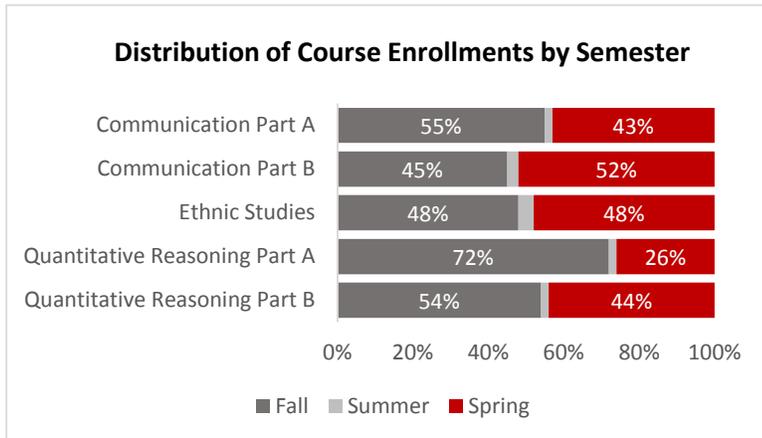
Enrollment in Quantitative Reasoning Part A decreased by 3% over the last five years. Even though there was an increase in the number of new freshmen over the same time period, these students increasingly satisfied this requirement through placement testing or through Advanced Placement tests.

The largest decrease in course enrollments occurred in Ethnic Studies courses, where enrollments decreased by 8% over the last five years. Because the Ethnic Studies requirement cannot be satisfied through Advanced Placement tests or through a UW placement test, every UW-Madison graduate needs to take an Ethnic Studies course. Decreasing enrollments in Ethnic Studies courses at a time when overall undergraduate enrollment

increased means either that the proportion of students who enrolled in multiple Ethnic Studies courses decreased, that students took these courses at other institutions (other studies show no evidence to support this), or that students delayed enrolling in Ethnic Studies courses.

Semester Type

Undergraduate enrollments in Communication Part A, Quantitative Reasoning Part A, and Quantitative Reasoning Part B courses were higher in fall semesters than spring semesters. Enrollments in Quantitative Reasoning Part A courses were particularly imbalanced, with 72% of enrollments occurring in the fall semester and 26% in the spring semester.



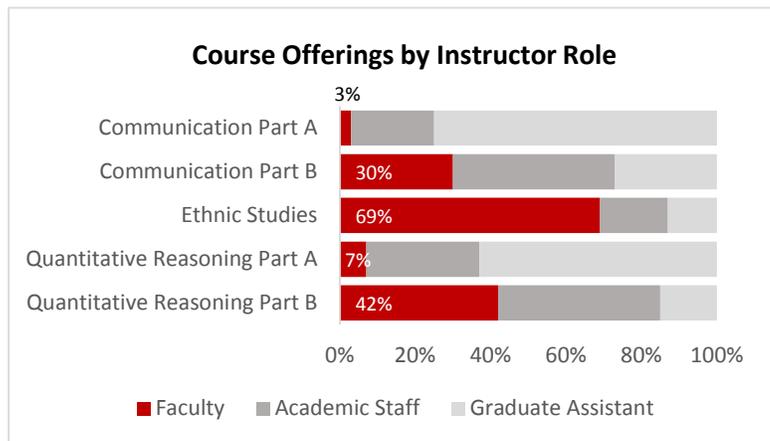
Enrollments in Ethnic Studies courses were evenly split between fall and spring semesters. The Ethnic Studies requirement also had the highest proportion of enrollments during the summer session (4%).

Communication Part B courses were the only general education courses that had a higher proportion of enrollments in the spring semester compared to the fall semester. Fifty-two percent (52%) of enrollments in Communication Part B courses were in spring semesters compared to 45% of enrollments in fall semesters.

Communication Part B courses were the only general education courses that had a higher proportion of enrollments in the spring semester compared to the fall semester. Fifty-two percent (52%) of enrollments in Communication Part B courses were in spring semesters compared to 45% of enrollments in fall semesters.

Instructor Role

We classified each general education course offered in the last five years by whether the “primary” instructor was a tenured or tenure-track faculty member, an academic staff member, or a graduate assistant (see note 4 in the “About the Data” section on Page 1 for information on how courses with multiple instructors were handled). The percentage of courses taught by a UW-Madison faculty member ranged from 3% for Communication Part A courses to 69% for Ethnic Studies courses.



Graduate assistants made up more than half of the instructors in Communication Part A and Quantitative Reasoning Part A courses.

The percentage of courses taught by academic staff instructors ranged from 18% for Ethnic Studies courses to 43% for both Communication Part B and Quantitative Reasoning Part B courses.

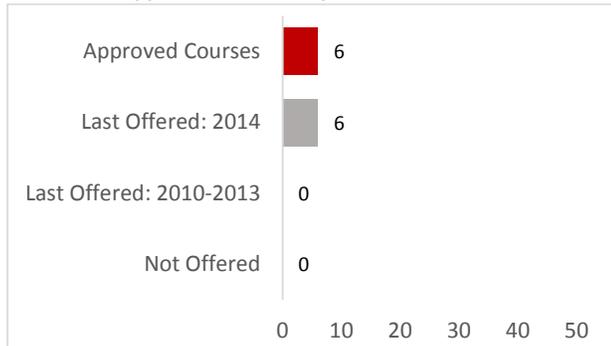
More in depth information about each of the five general education requirements follows.

Communication Part A (Comm A)

Approved Courses: There are six approved courses that satisfy the Communication Part A requirement.

All six of the Communication Part A courses were offered in 2014 and all six of these courses were offered in each of the last five years.

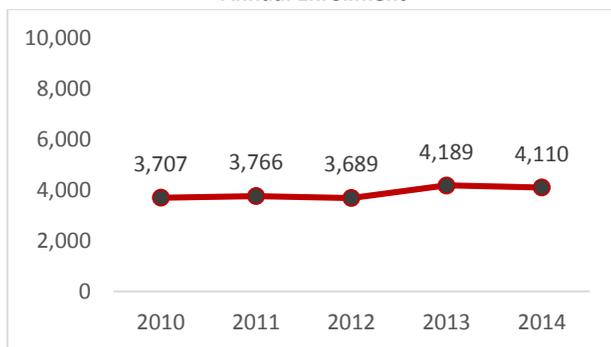
Approved Courses by Last Offered Year



Enrollments: Enrollments in Communication Part A courses have remained relatively steady. Over the last five years, enrollments have fluctuated by 500 with a low of 3,689 enrollments in 2012 and a high of 4,189 enrollments a year later in 2013.

The two highest enrollment years in the last five occurred in the most recent two years, concurrent with larger new freshman classes.

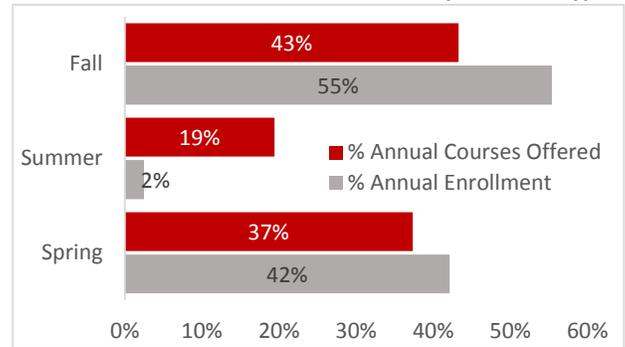
Annual Enrollment



Semester Type: Over the last five years, 43% of Communication Part A course offerings were in fall semesters and 37% were in the spring. The rest of the course offerings, 19%, occurred in summer terms.

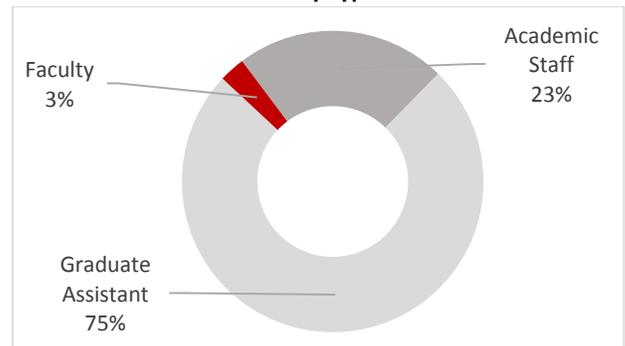
More than half (55%) of enrollments were in spring semesters and 42% of enrollments were in the fall semester. Although summer session made up 19% of Communication Part A courses offered, only 2% of enrollments occurred during the summer session.

Distribution of Courses and Enrollments by Semester Type



Instructors: Over the last five years, 3% of Communication Part A courses were taught by a tenured or tenure-track faculty member. Ninety-seven percent (97%) were taught by an academic staff instructor (23%) or graduate assistant instructor (75%) as the primary instructor.

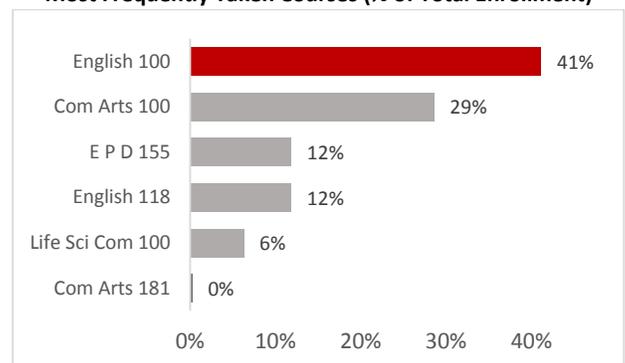
Courses Offered by Type of Instructor



Courses: English 100 accounted for 41% of Communication Part A enrollments and was the most common course students took to fulfill the Communication Part A requirement.

Four of the six Communication Part A courses were offered through College of Letters and Science subjects. Engineering Professional Development 155 and Life Sciences Communication 100 were the two non-L&S courses.

Most Frequently Taken Courses (% of Total Enrollment)

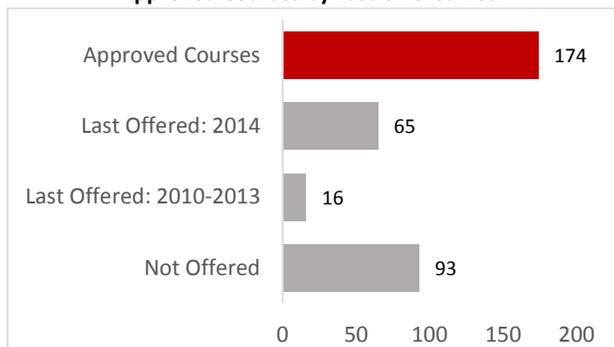


Communication Part B (Comm B)

Approved Courses: There are 174 approved courses that satisfy the Communications Part B requirement – 92 approved at the course level and 82 courses approved at the section level.

Thirty-seven percent (37%) of Communications Part B courses were offered in 2014. An additional 9% were not offered in 2014 but were offered at least once between 2010 and 2013. More than half (53%) of Communication Part B courses have not been offered in the last five years.

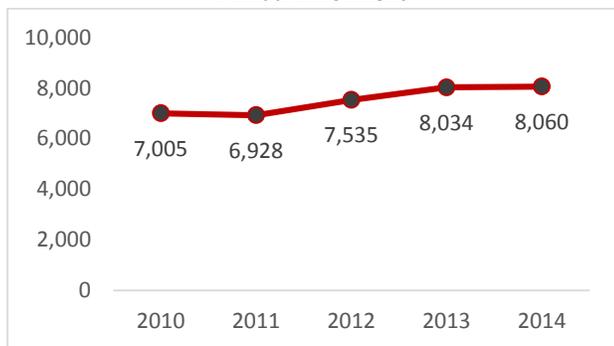
Approved Courses by Last Offered Year



Enrollments: Enrollments in Communication Part B courses have increased by 15% over the last five years, from 7,005 enrollments in 2010 to 8,060 enrollments in 2014, concurrent with larger new freshman classes.

Most of the increase occurred between 2011 and 2013.

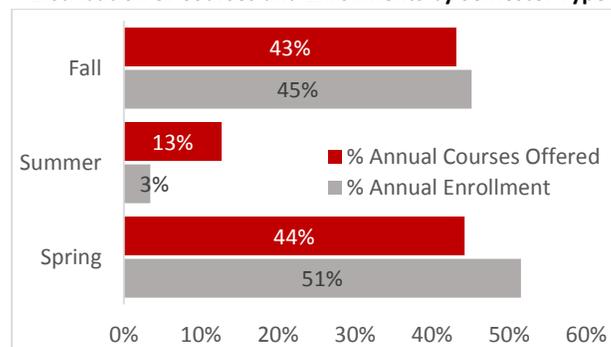
Annual Enrollment



Semester Type: Over the last five years, Communication Part B course offerings were evenly split between fall and spring semesters (43% and 44% of offerings, respectively). The rest of the course offerings, 13%, occurred in summer terms.

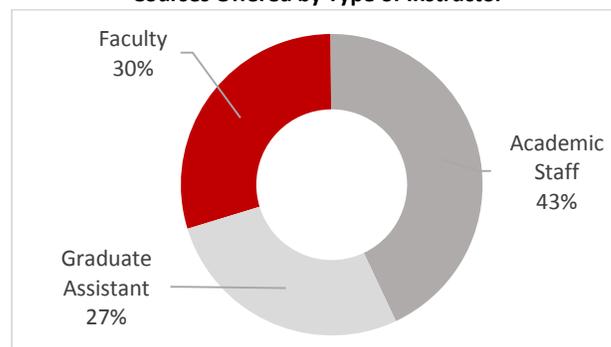
Slightly more than half (51%) of enrollments were in spring semesters and 45% of enrollments were in the fall semester. Although summer session made up 13% of Communication Part B courses offered, only 3% of enrollments occur during the summer session.

Distribution of Courses and Enrollments by Semester Type



Instructors: Over the last five years, 30% of Communication Part B courses were taught by a tenure or tenure-track faculty member. Seventy percent (70%) were taught by an academic staff instructor (43%) or a graduate assistant instructor (27%) as the primary instructor.

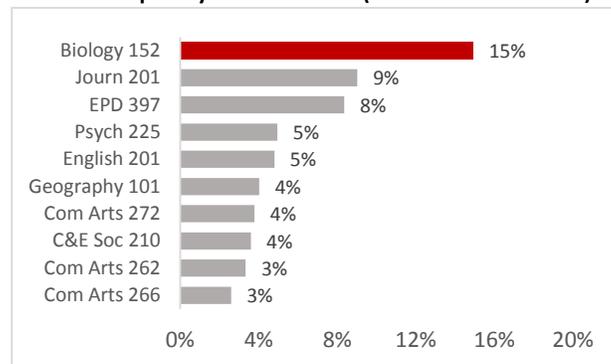
Courses Offered by Type of Instructor



Courses: Biology 152 accounted for 15% of Communication Part B enrollments and was the most common course students took to fulfill the Communication Part B requirement.

Except for Engineering Professional Development 397 and Community and Environmental Sociology 210, the other eight most commonly taken courses were offered through College of Letters and Science subjects. These ten courses accounted for 59% of Comm B enrollments over the last five years.

Most Frequently Taken Courses (% of Total Enrollment)

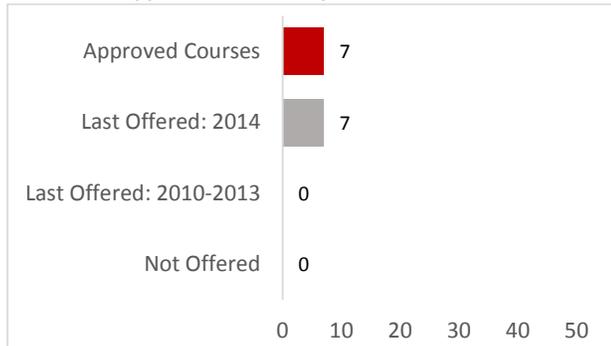


Quantitative Reasoning Part A (QR-A)

Approved Courses: There are seven approved courses that satisfy the Quantitative Reasoning Part A requirement.

All seven of the Quantitative Reasoning Part A courses were offered in 2014 and all seven of these courses were offered in each of the last five years.

Approved Courses by Last Offered Year



Enrollments: Enrollments in Quantitative Reasoning Part A courses have remained relatively steady. Over the last five years, enrollments fluctuated by 233 with a low of 2,248 enrollments in 2011 and a high of 2,481 enrollments a year later in 2012.

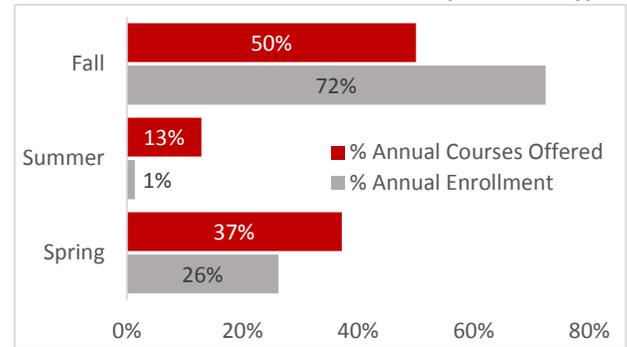
Annual Enrollment



Semester Type: Over the last five years, Quantitative Reasoning Part A courses were more likely to be offered in the fall instead of the spring. Half (50%) of courses were offered in fall semesters compared to 37% offered in spring semesters. The rest of the course offerings, 13%, occurred in the summer session.

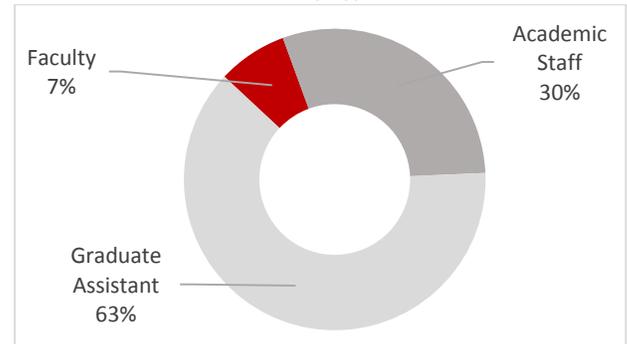
Almost three quarters (72%) of enrollments in Quantitative Reasoning Part A courses were in fall semesters and 26% of enrollments were in the spring semester. Although summer session made up 13% of Quantitative Reasoning Part A courses offered, only 1% of enrollments occurred during the summer session.

Distribution of Courses and Enrollments by Semester Type



Instructors: Over the last five years, 7% of Quantitative Reasoning Part A courses were taught by a tenured or tenure-track faculty member. Ninety-three percent (93%) were taught by an academic staff instructor (30%) or a graduate assistant instructor (63%) as the primary instructor.

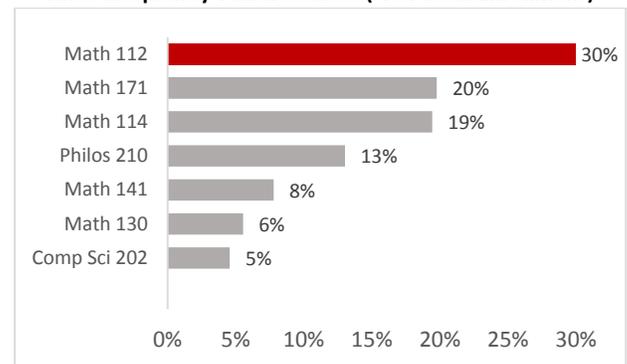
Courses Offered by Type of Instructor



Courses: Math 112 accounted for 30% of Quantitative Reasoning Part A enrollments and was the most common course students took to fulfill the QR-A requirement.

All seven of the Quantitative Reasoning Part A courses were offered through College of Letters and Science subjects.

Most Frequently Taken Courses (% of Total Enrollment)

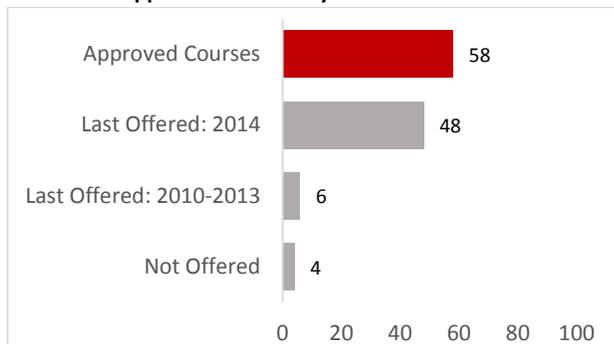


Quantitative Reasoning Part B (QR-B)

Approved Courses: There are 58 approved courses that satisfy the Quantitative Reasoning Part B requirement.

Eighty-three percent (83%) of Quantitative Reasoning Part B courses were offered in 2014. An additional 10% were not offered in 2014 but were offered at least once between 2010 and 2013. Seven percent (7%) of Quantitative Reasoning Part B courses were offered in the last 5 years (4 courses).

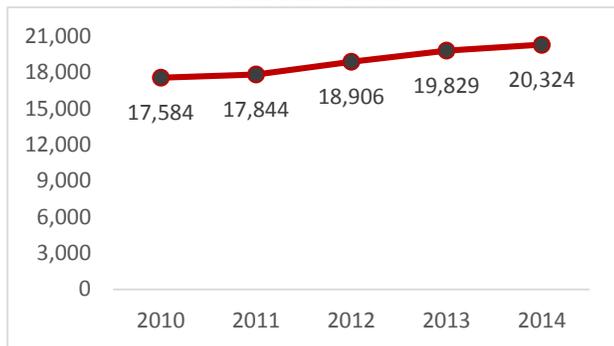
Approved Courses by Last Offered Year



Enrollments: Enrollments in Quantitative Reasoning Part B courses increased by 16% over the last five years, from 17,584 enrollments in 2010 to 20,324 enrollments in 2014, concurrent with larger new freshman classes.

Most of the increase occurred between 2011 and 2013.

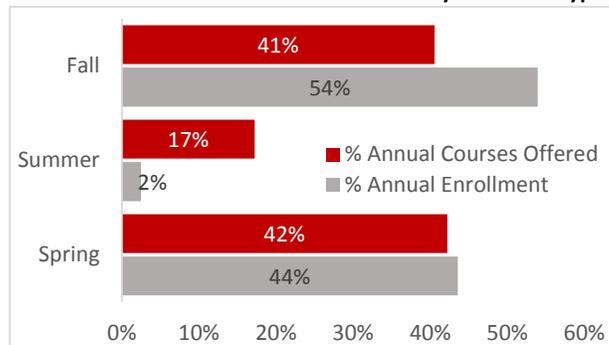
Annual Enrollment



Semester Type: Over the last five years, Quantitative Reasoning Part B course offerings were evenly split between fall and spring semesters (41% and 42% of offerings, respectively). The rest of the course offerings, 17%, occurred in summer terms.

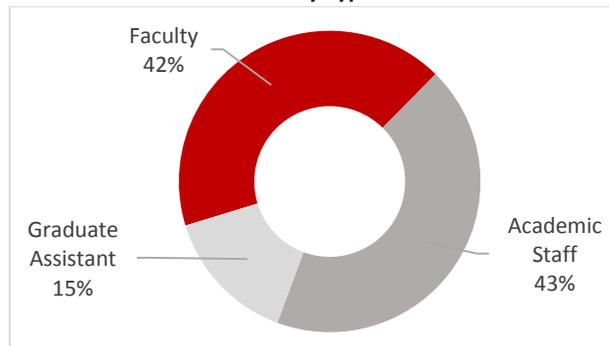
More than half (54%) of enrollments were in spring semesters and 44% of enrollments were in the fall semester. Although summer session made up 17% of Quantitative Reasoning Part B courses offered, only 2% of enrollments occurred during the summer session.

Distribution of Courses and Enrollments by Semester Type



Instructors: Over the last five years, 42% of Quantitative Reasoning Part B courses were taught by a tenured or tenure-track faculty member. Fifty-eight percent (58%) were taught by an academic staff instructor (43%) or a graduate assistant instructor (15%) as the primary instructor.

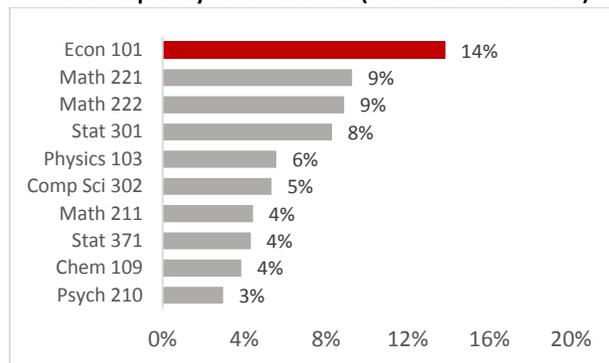
Courses Offered by Type of Instructor



Courses: Economics 101 accounted for 14% of Quantitative Reasoning Part B enrollments and was the most common course students took to fulfill the QR-B requirement.

All of the ten most commonly taken Quantitative Reasoning Part B courses were offered through College of Letters and Science subjects. These ten courses accounted for 67% of QR-B enrollments over the last five years.

Most Frequently Taken Courses (% of Total Enrollment)

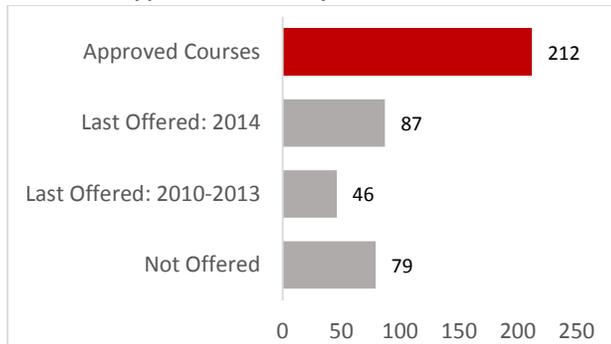


Ethnic Studies

Approved Courses: There are 212 approved courses that satisfy the Ethnic Studies requirement.

Forty-one percent (41%) of Ethnic Studies courses were offered in 2014. An additional 22% were not offered in 2014 but were offered at least once between 2010 and 2013. Thirty-seven percent (37%) of Ethnic Studies courses were not offered in the last 5 years.

Approved Courses by Last Offered Year



Enrollments: Enrollments in Ethnic Studies courses have decreased by 8% over the last five years, from 9,086 enrollments in 2010 to 8,381 enrollments in 2014.

Between 2012 and 2013, and 2013 and 2014, there were particularly large fluctuations in enrollments in Ethnic Studies courses. The fluctuations were not caused by changes in the number of Ethnic Studies courses offered as these remained relatively constant over the last five years.

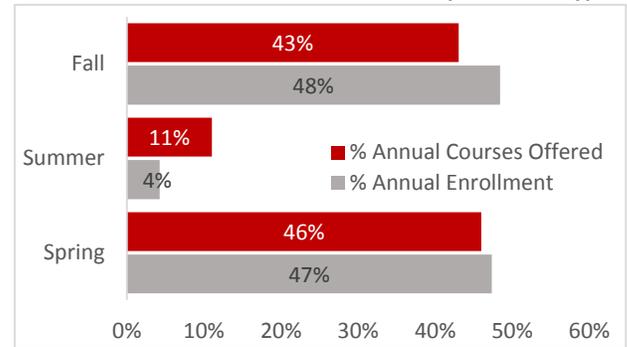
Annual Enrollment



Semester Type: Over the last five years, 43% of Ethnic Studies course offerings were in fall semesters and 46% were in spring semesters. The rest of the course offerings, 11%, occurred in summer terms.

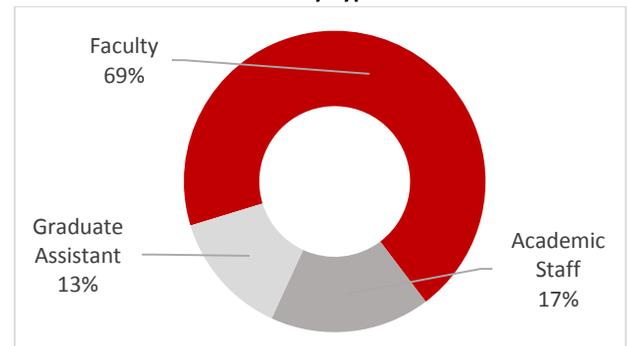
Enrollments were evenly split between fall and spring semesters (48% and 47% respectively). Although summer session made up 11% of Ethnic Studies courses offered, only 4% of enrollments occurred during the summer session.

Distribution of Courses and Enrollments by Semester Type



Instructors: Over the last five years, 69% of Ethnic Studies courses were taught by a tenured or tenure-track faculty member. Thirty-one percent (31%) were taught by an academic staff instructor (17%) or a graduate assistant instructor (13%) as the primary instructor.

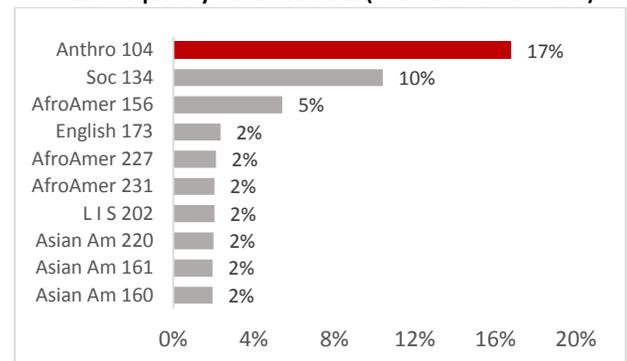
Courses Offered by Type of Instructor



Courses: Anthropology 104 accounted for 17% of Ethnic Studies enrollments and was the most common course students took to fulfill the Ethnic Studies requirement.

All of the ten most commonly taken Ethnic Studies courses were offered through College of Letters and Science subjects. These ten courses accounted for almost half (47%) of Ethnic Studies enrollments over the last five years.

Most Frequently Taken Courses (% of Total Enrollment)



UW-Madison General Education Assessment Plan

Approved: September 11, 2015

Mission and Purpose

The General Education program at University of Wisconsin-Madison ensures that every graduate acquires the essential core of an undergraduate education. This core is intended to provide a foundation not only for further study, but also for living a productive life, being a citizen of the world, appreciating aesthetic values, and engaging in life-long learning in a continually changing world. For this reason, the program demands competence in communication, critical thinking and analytical skills appropriate for a university-educated person (*communication, quantitative reasoning*); investigation of the issues raised by living in a culturally diverse society (*ethnic studies*); and breadth of study across the humanities and arts, social studies, biological sciences and physical sciences (*breadth*).¹

Learning Outcomes

UW-Madison has adopted a communication framework developed by the Association of American Colleges and Universities that fosters better public understanding of the role and value of higher education. The “Essential Learning Outcomes” described in AAC&U’s Liberal Education and America’s Promise (LEAP) provide a consistent framework for discussing student learning. At UW-Madison, General Education ensures that students obtain a broad foundation that is enhanced by more advanced studies in the major and through distinct degree programs offered by the various schools and colleges. General Education learning outcomes describe a set of broad knowledge and skills intended to help students recognize, understand, evaluate, and respond to the challenges of the twenty-first century.

The general education program consists of four broad domains of learning: Breadth, Communication, Ethnic Studies, and Quantitative Reasoning.

- Students acquire critical and creative thinking skills as well as enhance their problem-solving skills through a breadth of study across the humanities and arts, social studies, biological sciences and physical sciences (*Breadth*).
- Students apply skills for effective communication (planning, information seeking, drafting, and revising) to communication tasks, both in and out of the classroom (*Communication*).
- Students draw connections between historical and present day circumstances, and consider the perceptions of majority and non-majority group members along with cultural assumptions when they examine questions and make decisions (*Ethnic Studies*).

¹ Based on the “Mission and Purpose of General Education”; see <http://www.ls.wisc.edu/gened/>

- Students utilize mathematical models for scientific or real life problems to set up, analyze, interpret, make judgments and draw appropriate conclusions based on quantitative analysis of data (*Quantitative Reasoning*).

Breadth

Students acquire critical and creative thinking skills as well as enhance their problem-solving skills through a breadth of study across the humanities and arts, social studies, biological sciences and physical sciences.

Students will:

- articulate examples of significant contributions to human understanding achieved through various “ways of knowing” found in the arts and humanities, social and behavioral sciences, and quantitative, physical, and mathematical sciences.
- recognize and articulate the ways in which different disciplines approach questions that call upon different tools of inquiry, understanding, and creative enterprise.
- identify ways in which multiple tools of inquiry and understanding can be used to achieve greater insight into resolving “big” questions (e.g., climate change, poverty, global health etc.), evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of those approaches, and understanding which complementary approaches will help achieve meaningful change.
- evaluate different modes of inquiry across the humanities and arts, social studies, biological sciences and physical sciences and identify strengths and weaknesses of those approaches across disciplines when approaching a question.

Communication

Students apply skills for effective communication (planning, information seeking, drafting, and revising) to communication tasks, both in and out of the classroom.

Student’s written and spoken work will:

- make effective use of information retrieved, organized, and synthesized from appropriate sources.
- present ideas and information clearly and logically to achieve a specific purpose.
- make effective use of communicative forms appropriate to a specific discipline, and adapted to the intended audience.
- use appropriate style and conventions associated with particular communicative forms, genres, or disciplines.

Ethnic Studies

Students draw connections between historical and present day circumstances, and consider perceptions and cultural assumptions when examining questions and making decisions.

Students will:

- articulate some of the effects the past has had on present day circumstances, perceptions of, and disparities in, race in the U.S.

- recognize and question cultural assumptions, rules, biases, and knowledge claims as they relate to race and ethnicity.
- examine questions and make decisions with consideration for the cultural perspectives and worldviews of others.

Quantitative Reasoning

Students utilize mathematical models for scientific or real life problems to set up, analyze, interpret, make judgments and draw appropriate conclusions based on quantitative analysis of data.

Students will:

- set up an abstract mathematical model or hypothesis for a given scientific or real life problem.
- interpret, handle and manipulate quantitative data sets for scientific or real life problems.
- quantitatively analyze data to obtain relevant insight about a given problem.
- make judgments and draw appropriate conclusions based on the quantitative analysis of data.

General Education Courses

Students are able to earn credits in a wide array of courses that meet General Education requirements. All General Education courses are developed, reviewed, approved, and evaluated by UW-Madison faculty who have expertise in the academic disciplines, areas of study, and pedagogies covered by the requirements. All courses that meet General Education requirements are proposed and approved through the governance, via the university course proposal process, with requests originating from faculty in departments/programs, moving to school/college Curriculum Committees, before final approval by the University Curriculum Committee. Review and approval of General Education designations is integrated into this process.

The criteria for General Education courses are made available online, at www.ls.wisc.edu/gened. Faculty liaisons and/or subcommittees review courses to determine whether they meet formal requirements and that syllabi reflect the capacity to promote student learning with respect to General Education learning outcomes. Review of particular requirements is conducted by individuals or committees, as indicated below:

- Breadth
 - Courses intended to carry L&S breadth designations are reviewed and approved by the L&S Curriculum Committee
 - Other schools/colleges may designate additional courses that meet breadth requirements, usually in consultation with the L&S CC
- Communication
 - Comm A: specially convened committee, chaired by the General Education Communication liaison
 - Comm B: General Education Communication liaison
- Ethnic Studies: Ethnic Studies Subcommittee
- Quantitative Reasoning

- QR-A: specially convened committee, chaired by the General Education QR liaison
- QR-B: General Education QR liaison

Assessment of Student Learning

Assessment of General Education is directed by the Faculty Research Director, in consultation with the UGEC and the GER liaisons and subcommittees. Each of the four domains of General Education is evaluated using strategies appropriate to the domain. Wherever possible, GER assessment should take advantage of “enterprise-wide” assessment opportunities (e.g., evaluating responses to the National Survey for Student Engagement, to the Post-Graduation Plans survey, and to the Campus Climate Survey). Departments and programs undertaking academic program review should be asked also to consider GER, both to reflect on courses offered in service to the program, and on how their majors and certificates build on what students learn in foundational courses. The potential to enhance our understanding of GER learning outcomes should also be considered as campus explores new enterprise-wide systems (e.g., a campus-level course evaluation system, course proposal and catalog systems, curriculum mapping initiatives).

DRAFT

The details of this plan will be finalized by the General Education Assessment Committee, following UAPC approval of the GER-Learning Outcomes.

	Direct	Indirect	Actions Taken/Planned
Breadth <i>future/planned</i>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>New course proposal system should include questions about learning outcomes, allowing analysis of student perception of “breadth” (and other GER) courses</i> 	
Communication <i>2015-16</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Sifting & Winnowing tutorial: Direct testing and in-class worksheet response</i> • <i>Statistical analysis of student performance in key Comm B courses</i> • <i>Sample and review communication artifacts from key courses</i> • <i>Focus group with students (reflection on communication process/task)</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Analysis of NSSE, PGP writing, communication, & information literacy questions</i> • <i>Sifting & Winnowing Information Literacy module: Instructor Surveys, Student Focus Groups</i> • <i>Analysis of Comm A to Comm B “flow” to identify key courses/opportunities to articulate learning from A to B.</i> • <i>Curriculum Mapping: Review Comm B syllabi</i> 	

<p>Ethnic Studies <i>future/planned</i></p>		<p><i>In partnership with CDO:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“Rising junior” survey of student perceptions and attitudes about intercultural communication</i> • <i>Campus climate survey</i> • <i>Analysis of NSSE intercultural communication skills questions, and “Experiences with Diverse Perspectives” module (administered 2015)</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to implement recommendation that ESR be completed early • Course/curriculum development with faculty • Outreach to advisors
<p>Quantitative Reasoning <i>2015-2016</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Statistical analysis of student performance in key QRB courses (e.g., most frequently taken QRB, non-computational QRB)</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Analysis of NSSE, PGP and broad QR questions</i> • <i>Focus groups with graduating seniors from various QRA conditions, post QRB</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completed <u>Curriculum Mapping</u> Review of QRA syllabi, communicate with QRA and QRB faculty • Update requisites on QRA courses to address deficiencies gap

Assessment Results

Results of GE assessment are considered by the faculty responsible for the domain assessed, and recommendations for changes in policy or practice are made to the University General Education Committee. When those recommendations call for a formal change in policy, the UGEC seeks approval and a recommendation for implementation from the University Academic Planning Council, which serves as the academic executive committee of the Faculty Senate. Reports on assessment activities are provided on the General Education website, at www.ls.wisc.edu/gened.

Attachment E

UW-Madison General Education: Essential Learning in Four Domains

Breadth, 13-15 credits

- Natural Science, 4 to 6 credits (One 4- or 5-credit course with a lab, or two courses for a total of 6 credits)
- Humanities/Literature/Arts, 6 credits
- Social Studies, 3 credits

Communication (Comm), 3 to 5/6 credits

- Part A: Literacy Proficiency. 2-3 credits at first-year level in reading, listening, discussion, and writing*
- Part B: Enhancing Literacy Proficiency. 2-3 credits of advanced communication course work, usually in a discipline

Ethnic Studies (ESR), 3 credits

- One 3-credit course

Quantitative Reasoning (QR), 3 to 6 credits

- Part A: 3 credits of mathematics, statistics, or formal logic*
- Part B: 3 additional credits in quantitative reasoning

NOTES:

- *General Education Requirements are never waived*
- *A-level requirements are not waived if students complete a B-level course first; both levels must be completed*
- *Requirements marked with an asterisk (*) may be completed by placement or other test score*
- *Some Schools/Colleges have more, or more specific, requirements that align with their school/college-level mission and/or with degree goals.*

When should students complete their GERs?

The UW-Madison GERs are quite flexible. Assessment data suggest that students who complete “A” before “B” requirements do better in “B” courses – and better, overall, in other courses that call upon those skills. Since these GERs prepare students for success in college, there is an expectation that they should be completed early.

- Comm A: completed by the end of the first year
- QRA: within first 60 credits taken in residence
- ESR: within the first 60 credits taken in residence

Wait – is that new about the ESR?

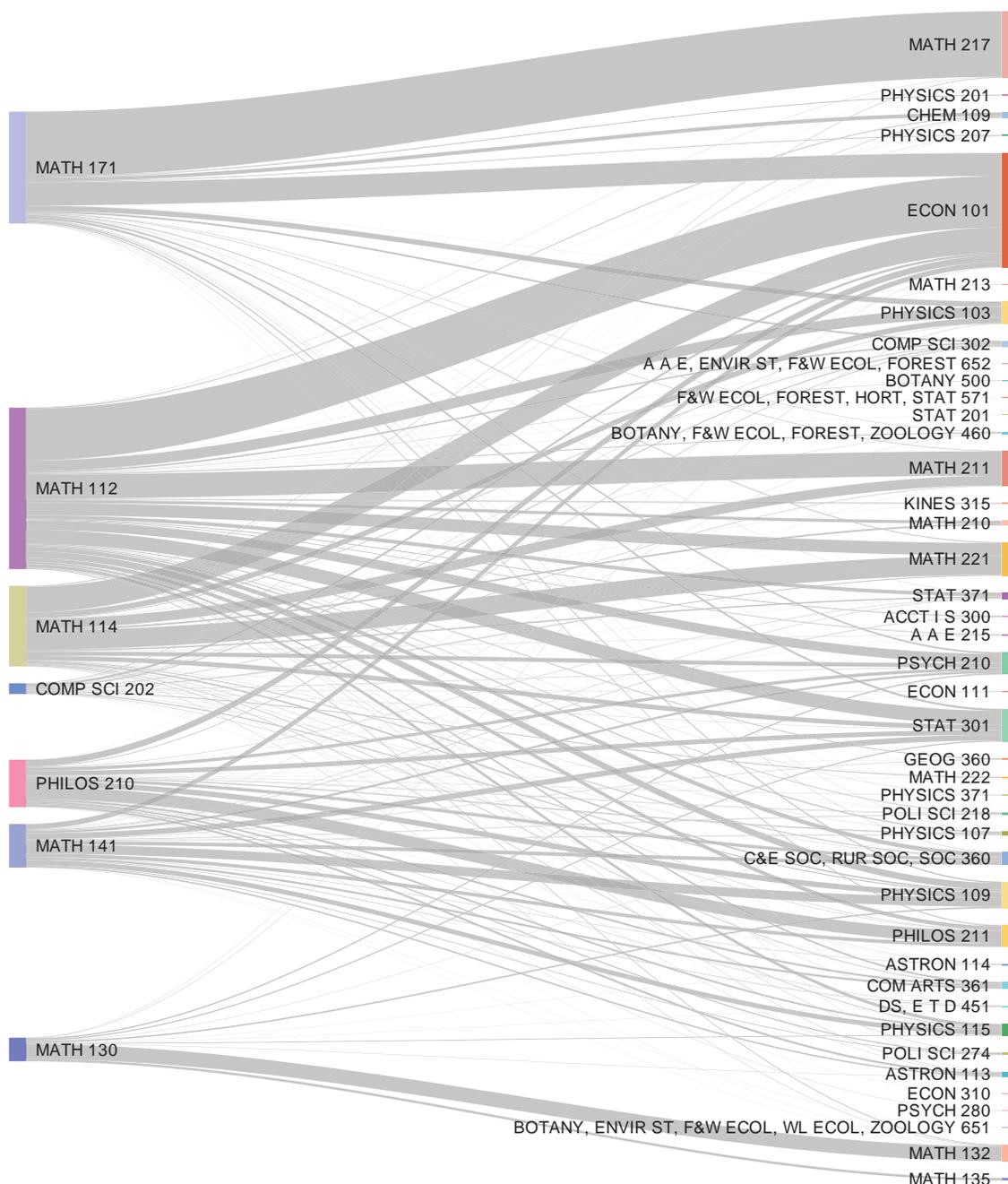
The Ethnic Studies Requirement was created to have a positive effect on campus climate and help students participate effectively in a multicultural environment. Evidence from a 2012 assessment study suggests that student attitudes toward issues of race and ethnicity are positively affected by taking an ESR course. The faculty and staff who teach ESR courses, the University Academic Planning Council, and the Campus Diversity Framework strongly recommend that students complete the ESR early.

How are these expectations enforced?

- QR-A must be completed before QR-B, and is enforced via enrollment requisites.
- For some Comm A courses, students with fewer than 45 credits are given enrollment priority. For others, students with more than 45 credits are not permitted to enroll or may enroll only with permission.
- Some programs do not afford students opportunities to complete ESR “early”; for these students, completion “as early as possible” should be the goal.
 - Early completion enrollment controls have not been placed on ESR courses at this time
 - Departments and programs are expanding the ESR course array at the “elementary” and “intermediate” levels to accommodate more students seeking early completion.

Attachment F

QR-A/QR-B Combinations for 2013 and 2014 Graduates



Data and graph prepared by Mckinney Austin and Clare Huhn, Academic Planning & Institutional Research, Office of the Provost. ("Overview of QR-A Courses at UW-Madison," August 2015)

Number of baccalaureate degrees completed, 2012-13 and 2013-14:	13,216
Number of students in cohort who took a QR-B course:	12,158
Number of students in cohort who took a QR-A course:	3,532
Number of students in cohort who took a QR-A course followed by a QR-B course:	2,847
Number of observations/combinations of QR-A followed by QR-B for cohort:	3,169*

*includes students who took more than one QR-B course