



COLLEGE OF
Letters & Science
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

12 July 2018

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Jocelyn Milner, Vice Provost and Director, Academic Planning and Institutional Research

FROM: Elaine M. Klein, Associate Dean and 
Chair, University General Education Committee

RE: Report of the University General Education Committee, 2017-18

CC: Cal Bergman, Associate Dean for Student Academic Affairs, L&S
Sarah Kuba, Academic Planner, Academic Planning and Institutional Research
Jennifer Noyes, Associate Dean for Operations and Staff
John Karl Scholz, Dean, L&S
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I'm pleased to share with you the annual report of the University General Education Committee, covering work undertaken in the 2017-18 academic year. Some of that work continues over the Summer term: a small working group is finalizing efforts to clarify criteria and learning outcomes for Quantitative Reasoning A and B courses, and another group is preparing to pilot the Fall 2018 assessment recommended by the faculty and staff who teach ESR courses.

In the coming year, I anticipate the committee will continue its discussions of how best to integrate these and other GER learning outcomes into the tools campus is developing, implementing, and improving for proposing courses, building syllabi, and fielding course evaluations. The committee will also participate in campus-wide efforts to prepare for a successful and useful Higher Learning Commission comprehensive evaluation.

If you have questions about the report, please do not hesitate to contact me.

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Report of the University General Education Committee, 2017-18

I. Overview

The University General Education Committee (UGEC) oversees the campus-wide undergraduate General Education Requirements, or GER. Adopted by the Faculty Senate in May 1994, these requirements represent the faculty finding common ground among all UW-Madison undergraduate schools and colleges, with respect to the view 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). Prior to the adoption of GER, no set of campus-wide requirements existed to ensure a common body of knowledge and skills that characterized undergraduate education at UW-Madison.

To facilitate implementation of the requirements, expectations were articulated in terms of courses and credits, with course criteria or broad outcomes defined by faculty committees. The College of Letters & Science was entrusted to implement and administer the requirements. Today, the Dean of the College convenes the University General Education Committee to provide oversight that informs administration of the requirements. The L&S Dean also appoints the Director of General Education and funds staff who support committee operations, process course actions and requests for course substitutions, etc. UGEC members are appointed in consultation with the deans of the other undergraduate schools and colleges (Attachment A) and the leaders of units that support undergraduate education. The UGEC reports annually to, and consults with, the University Academic Planning Council (UAPC), which is empowered to approve policy changes the committee may recommend. UGEC operating procedures and other information about the GER program may be found online at <http://gened.wisc.edu>.

As noted in previous reports, the requirements have remained largely the same as they were originally approved. Over time, efforts to assess student learning have produced subtle, but significant changes:

- regular meetings of faculty and staff who teach Ethnic Studies courses have strengthened the instructional community and secured greater consistency in teaching to support the ESR learning outcomes;
- improved articulation of course criteria and learning outcomes for ESR, Communication, and QR have led to better assessment procedures and modifications to the course array;
- key aspects of the unique Communication requirement have been improved (library instruction, oral communication);
- enforcement of course sequencing where it matters (e.g., QR-A must be completed before QRB) and encouragement to complete certain requirements early (Comm-A, ESR, QRA); and, more generally,
- the purpose of General Education has been more clearly articulated, and efforts to communicate more clearly about the role they play in undergraduate education has permeated campus advising conversations.

As noted in the Guide (Attachment B) and on the General Education website, the requirements are intended to 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. Students must also complete one course designated as meeting the Ethnic Studies Requirement, which promotes learning related to the cultural diversity of U.S. society. General Education is a component of the “Wisconsin Experience,” complementing the work students do in their majors and degree programs, and in extracurricular and high-impact learning experiences.

The report that follows provides an overview of topics on which the committee, its liaisons, and subcommittees focused attention in 2017-18. We begin with policy matters that require the attention of the UAPC, then provide a summary of assessment activities, and conclude with a summary of other business conducted.

II. Policy Matters

Clarification: English as a Second Language and Communication A

As detailed in the UGEC memo “University General Education and ESL” (Klein to Mangelsdorf and Milner, 3/23/2018, discussed by the UAPC on April 19, 2018), the committee clarified the connection between English language proficiency and the Communication A requirement to address concerns and complaints expressed about UW-Madison practices for English as a Second Language (ESL) placement and the treatment of test and transfer credit for students required to take ESL placement tests and courses. Because some of these concerns and complaints were rooted in old practices and outdated policies, the committee thought it useful to note clearly where ESL and Comm-A intersect today. As noted in that memorandum:

- *All undergraduate students must satisfy the General Education Communication A requirement, and may do so with transfer, test, or course credit.*
- *Students directed to take the UW-Madison English as a Second Language Assessment Test (MSN-ESLAT) must also demonstrate English language proficiency. They do so by completing ESL118, or by achieving a test score that exempts them from taking ESL118, which is a Comm-A course.*
- *ESL118 is unique among Comm-A courses because it includes focused attention and dedicated instruction with respect to English language proficiency skills that are not taught in other UW-Madison Comm-A courses. In ESL118, the written and oral communication skills taught in other Comm-A courses serve as the applied realm in which proficiency in academic English is taught, practiced, and tested. A student who completes ESL118 or achieves an exempt test score also satisfies Comm-A.*
- *Due to the focused second-language instruction provided in ESL courses, for those students who are directed to take MSN-ESLAT, and who must complete a course in residence to satisfy the Comm-A requirement, ESL118 is the only Comm-A course they may take in residence to satisfy the requirement.*

Efforts to implement changes to admissions, placement testing, course enrollment, and advising practices arising from this clarification are already under way, in anticipation of the need to communicate clearly with students who will enter the university in Fall 2018. At the time of this writing, these changes have already been discussed in several venues focused on student advising: including the Academic Advising and Policy Leadership Group (AAPL), the Advisors' Consortium, and SOAR Advisor's training. The topic will likely continue to be discussed as Summer 2018 SOAR advising gets under way.

In the course of its discussions, UGEC and Comm-A Subcommittee members noted that some students who had satisfied Comm-A with ESL118 may wish to take additional Comm-A courses, since each course emphasizes different skills. Members recommended rescinding policy limiting the number of Comm-A courses students may take in residence. They recommend that:

- *Students who wish to do so may complete more than one Comm-A course in residence.*

II. Assessment of Student Learning

Since 2003, the UGEC has used a formally adopted long-range Assessment Plan to guide our understanding of the impact and efficacy of the General Education Requirements. (Reports of GER assessment projects can be found online at <https://gened.wisc.edu/AssessmentReports>.) Over the years, the UGEC has updated the GER learning outcomes and adapted its assessment strategy to study the four domains of learning relative to GER, rather than to assess individual courses or to focus on detailed components of individual requirements.

GER Learning Outcomes and the Student Digital Ecosystem - Syllabus and Course Evaluation

The committee participated in several discussions with campus leaders related to the intersection of General Education and a comprehensive, campus-wide initiative to adopt a new "Student Digital Ecosystem" affecting nearly every academic and curricular process on campus. This ambitious initiative includes adoption of a new academic and curricular repository system that encompasses a new digital program and course catalog (the Guide), a new online course proposal and course information system (Lumen Courses), new processes and tools for proposing program actions (Lumen Programs), and new tools to help departments manage enrollment and optimize class scheduling. In these discussions, the UGEC offered advice about and advocated for incorporating learning outcomes associated with General Education to facilitate sustainable and strategic assessment of GER. For example, learning outcomes that appear on syllabi for GER courses should reflect the goals of the requirements (though they might be translated through the specific content of the course). To facilitate inclusion of GER outcomes on courses, the committee envisions that the new tool for building syllabi might allow users to select from the "bank" of learning outcomes associated with the course's GER attribute, or the GER outcomes might automatically populate that part of the syllabus to help faculty draft course-level learning outcomes.

A closely related project focused on a new campus-wide course evaluation system also promises to facilitate systematic and sustainable assessment processes. With respect to General Education, the capacity to elicit student reflections on learning relative to GER would afford the campus the opportunity to engage in more systematic and comprehensive assessment of areas where the curriculum is most dispersed and most challenging to assess (i.e., “general breadth”), as well as areas where a broader range of inquiry would complement more narrowly focused direct assessment projects.

In anticipation of the aspiration that GER learning outcomes will eventually be accessible to the course proposal, course evaluation, program proposal, and other components of the Student Digital Ecosystem, the UGEC has been working to update and improve language describing GER outcomes. UGEC committee members have also participated in pilot projects using the new course evaluation system, to provide feedback informed by an understanding of how individual courses contribute to more general learning outcomes.

GER Assessment Focus: ESR Assessment Plan

The 2016-17 survey of faculty who teach ESR courses affirmed instructors’ perceptions of alignment between their course materials and the ESR learning outcomes, with the majority of instructors reporting their perception that their courses were effective in helping students achieve those outcomes. That said, respondents recommended to the committee that a more direct assessment of student learning should be planned and undertaken. In 2017-18 the Ethnic Studies Subcommittee met with ESR course instructors and developed an assessment plan for ESR courses (Attachment C). This plan will be piloted in 2018-19.

GER Assessment Focus: Implementation of Recommendations from ESR Course Calibration: “Best Practices” for Online Ethnic Studies Instruction

The recommendations of the 2016-17 ESR course array study included a call for better understanding of and guidelines related to the development of online ESR courses. In 2017-18 the Ethnic Studies Subcommittee met with ESR course instructors to discuss opportunities and concerns about online instruction and ESR. Members of the subcommittee (as well as other ESR instructors) also participated in the TeachOnline@UW learning community, which provides stipends and instructional support for online course development. The ESR instructors supported general recommendations for effective use of distance-mediated instructional technologies, whether those tools are used for courses that are taught fully online, or for courses taught in hybrid format. They offered only one additional recommendation: that, while all UW-Madison credit-bearing courses (regardless of teaching format) are expected to include substantive interaction between student and instructor, ESR instructors consider that ESR courses also benefit from substantive interaction between students, and online courses should foster civil interaction on the challenging topics that tend to arise in ESR courses. The committee expects to continue these discussions in the coming year.

GER Assessment Focus: Implementation of Ethnic Studies Curriculum Changes and Revised Course Criteria

In 2017-18 several curricular recommendations arising from the previous year's curriculum mapping effort that focused on the ESR course array were implemented.

- A number of courses had the ESR designation removed
- Several courses that carry the designation were placed into “monitoring,” involving the review of the course syllabi to be taught in future terms. In a few cases, this provoked substantive change at the department-level. Notably, the Department of Anthropology has adopted new procedures that ensure ongoing attention to the ESR content of Anthropology 104, which plays a very important role in our ability to deliver a large amount of credit to so many students. The department has adopted procedures for monitoring course syllabi to ensure compliance with course criteria, has convened a team of 3-4 faculty who are committed to teaching the course and developing a consistent suite of course content modules that support the ESR learning outcomes, has adopted new hiring and mentoring procedures for the graduate student lecturers who teach the course in Summer terms, is working with the REACH initiative to develop a sustainable TA training model for the course, and has fostered graduate-student initiated working groups where these “future faculty” identify and address the demands of leading discussion sessions on challenging topics. (For more information, please see Attachment D.)
- Departments that teach comparative and international ESR courses have been contacted, so they are aware of the changes to ESR course criteria (approved in September 2017) and may ensure that the handful of courses that could be affected by the changes will be updated by Fall 2019.

Many of the subcommittee's other recommendations that relate to TA allocation and training, faculty hiring and support for the four ethnic studies units, and the nature of instructors' experiences and perceptions about teaching ESR courses, extend beyond the province of the GER curriculum and course array, and we note that these recommendations have informed a variety of decisions made by university leaders. For example, with appreciation for the thoughtful coordination of the ethnic studies units, a cluster hiring proposal dedicated to increasing the number of faculty affiliated with these units was recently approved. Finally, the College of Letters & Science created the Gullickson Teaching Fellows program to develop programming focused on Teaching Assistants who support large enrollment courses. Though this program is not limited to ESR courses, the initiative aligns with committee recommendations focused on developing future faculty skills in creating an inclusive classroom environment, addressing implicit bias, and fostering constructive conversations that arise around issues of race, ethnicity, and indigeneity.

GER Assessment Focus: Implementation of Recommendations from Communication B Curriculum Calibration

The 2016-17 Comm-B Curriculum Calibration exercise noted that instructors asked for and needed additional guidance concerning the oral communication aspects of Comm-B into their

courses. The memorandum sent to all Comm-B instructors was revised to highlight issues related to instructional support for these learning outcomes, including a list of strategies for incorporating oral communication exercises, and a link to a Canvas instructional module offering instructions for online presentations and peer-review (<https://canvas.wisc.edu/courses/19374>). An additional recommendation proposed the development of more direct assessment of oral communication skills.

To build capacity for future assessment of students' oral communication skills, a small pilot project was undertaken. That project defined more clearly assessable oral communication skills, noting which skills are shared with written communication, which skills are shared but take different forms, and which are specific to oral communication. This work provided a foundation for development of a rubric that could be used to evaluate "textual," "embodied," and "overall" aspects of oral communication. The tool was tested in two Communication B courses that capture artifacts of student learning, and was found to be a useful tool for focused evaluation of the existing oral communication learning outcomes. The UGEC recommends continuing this work in 2018-19. The report of the pilot project is available, with other General Education Assessment Reports, at <https://gened.wisc.edu/AssessmentReports>.

GER Assessment Focus: Information Literacy Assessment for Communication Requirement

In collaboration with UGEC, UW-Madison Libraries have implemented assessment plans for the Information Literacy component of both the A and B levels of the Communication Requirement. In 2016 an Educational Innovation grant was awarded for the redesign of the Libraries' blended information literacy module. A mixed methods assessment plan and reporting template was created. The systematic annual reporting for Comm-A continues and adjustments are made to the blended module each year. In light of the Comm-A success, the Libraries implemented a Comm-B assessment pilot over the 2017-18 academic year in order to provide a supportive structure for continuous improvement to library information literacy instruction, supporting student learning outcomes, and contribute to campus accreditation efforts. As the initial pilot year concludes, the model will expand in subsequent years to develop a more robust picture of information literacy student learning outcome achievement in Comm-B courses across campus.

GER Assessment Focus: QR Learning Outcomes, Assessment Plan

The QR liaison, in consultation with other faculty who teach QR courses, found that the original course criteria and learning outcomes for QR-A and QR-B were insufficiently distinct for use in new digital systems that rely on clearly articulated learning outcomes. Revisions to the learning outcomes, and a plan for sustainable assessment based on those outcomes, will be developed by an ad hoc committee in Summer 2018.

III. GER Course Array

The adoption of a new online course proposal system included consideration of GER as a component of the standard course approval workflow process. This integration ensures that

faculty governance procedures are followed and that decisions are made with due and timely consideration to allow students to build course schedules with foreknowledge of how courses selected will meet GER. The process is straightforward: departments indicate on the proposal that they 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. Following school/college approval, the request is passed on to faculty liaisons (Comm-B and QR-B reviews) or to committees (ESR and Breadth) who understand the subject matter, GER course criteria, and GER learning outcomes. (In relatively rare cases when Comm-A and QR-A courses are requested, special committees are convened.) When a request for a GER designation is approved, the course is assigned an attribute that allows students easily to search for courses that meet their requirements, and that allows the student record to be audited by the Degree Audit Reporting System, so students can track their progress toward completion of GER. Thus far, the transition to the new course proposal system (effective January 1, 2018) has gone well.

A list of courses added to the GER course array in 2017-18 appears as Attachment E.

IV. Other Matters

The UGEC also discussed policy matters and other issues related to supporting a breadth of study as part of undergraduate education. In 2017-18, most of those discussions revolved around the second annual UW-Madison scholarship competition focused on the liberal arts. This competition, which arose from the now-defunct UW System Liberal Arts Essay Contest, challenges students to articulate, in their own words, the role liberal education plays in helping them to understand their lived experience. The winning essays may be found online at <http://ls.wisc.edu/news/the-liberal-arts-form-the-foundation-for-the-future>.

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

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June 26, 2018

Attachments:

- A. UGEC Membership, 2017-18
- B. The Guide: General Education Requirements
- C. ESR Assessment Plan
- D. Update: Anthropology 104
- E. New GER Courses (2017-18)

University General Education Committee 2017-2018

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- Through study in the sciences and mathematics, social sciences, humanities, histories, languages, and the arts

Intellectual and Practical Skills

Teamwork and problem solving. Practiced extensively across the curriculum in the context of progressively more challenging problems, projects, and standards for performance.

- Inquiry and analysis
- Critical and creative thinking
- Written and oral communication
- Quantitative literacy
- Information, media, and technology literacy

Personal and Social Responsibility

Anchored through active involvement with diverse communities and real-world challenges.

- Civic knowledge and engagement—local and global
- Intercultural knowledge and competence
- Ethical reasoning and action
- Foundations and skills for lifelong learning

Integrative Learning

Demonstrated through the application of knowledge, skills, and responsibilities to new settings and complex problem.

- Synthesis and advanced accomplishment across general and specialized studies

The ELOs were developed through an extensive project conducted by the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) responding to the question: "What qualities and skills do you want in college graduates?" The ELOs represent the responses from employers, business leaders, faculty, staff, and alumni.

REQUIREMENTS FOR UNDERGRADUATE DEGREES

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The University of Wisconsin–Madison sets minimum standards that must be met by all students pursuing an undergraduate degree. The information in the following paragraphs provides general information about study at UW–Madison. Requirements may vary among the schools and colleges, and for specific programs. Students should learn about and understand the specific requirements for their program of study.

TOTAL DEGREE CREDITS

To receive a bachelor's degree from UW–Madison, students must earn a minimum of 120 degree credits (which includes AP, IB and other test credit, transfer credit, and retroactive credit). Requirements for some programs may exceed 120 degree credits. Students should consult with their college or department advisor for information on specific credit requirements. Undergraduate Majors (p. 5).

RESIDENCE CREDIT

Degree candidates are required to earn a minimum of 30 credits in residence at UW–Madison. "In residence" means on the UW–Madison

campus with an undergraduate degree classification. "In residence" credit also includes UW–Madison courses offered in distance or online formats, as credits earned in UW–Madison Study Abroad/Study Away programs. Some schools and colleges may have additional requirements concerning courses taken in residence; students should refer to the specific school or college section of the *Guide* or consult with an advisor.

UNDERGRADUATE MAJOR DECLARATION

Undergraduate degrees at UW–Madison presume that students are completing a program of study that consists of a degree program that combines the requirements for the degree with focused study in a discipline, or that combines school or collegewide requirements with an undergraduate major in which they pursue focused study. All undergraduates are expected to have declared or to have been admitted to their focused area of study by the end of the semester in which they have accumulated 86 credits. Students who have not met this expectation may be prevented from enrolling in future terms until they meet with their advisor. Some schools and colleges have additional requirements governing when majors may be declared; students should refer to the specific school or college section of the *Guide* and consult with an advisor about declaring their major. For additional details, see Policy on Major Declaration for Schools/Colleges That Enroll Undergraduates (<https://kb.wisc.edu/vesta/page.php?id=58465>).

ACADEMIC PROBATION

Undergraduate students must maintain the minimum academic thresholds, including the minimum grade point average specified by the school, college, or academic program to remain in good academic standing. Students whose academic performance drops below these minimum thresholds will be placed on academic probation.

GENERAL EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS

All undergraduate students at UW–Madison must complete the university-wide General Education Requirements, which are designed to convey 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 necessary for success in college and beyond; and investigation of the issues raised by living in a culturally diverse society. This core is intended to provide students with intellectual and practical skills, basic knowledge of human cultures and the physical world, strategies for understanding these topics, and tools intended to contribute to their sense of personal and social responsibility. General Education complements the work students do in their majors and degrees. Together, these requirements help students 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, ethnic studies, quantitative reasoning, and breadth of study across disciplines in the natural sciences, humanities, literature, and arts, and social and behavioral sciences.

Each school and college may choose to allow General Education courses to count toward other degree and/or major requirements. Students should always check with their advisors to discuss any additional degree requirements and determine if students are required to take specific General Education courses or to complete the requirements in a

particular order. Students should review their Degree Audit (DARS) report to see how they are progressing toward fulfilling the General Education requirements. Please refer to this website (<https://gened.wisc.edu>) for more information about the requirements.

The university-wide General Education requirements are:

BREADTH, 13–15 CREDITS, DISTRIBUTED OVER THREE AREAS

All students must complete 13–15 credits of coursework intended to provide a **breadth** of experience across the major modes of academic inquiry. This requirement encourages students to adopt a broad intellectual perspective, to examine the world through investigative, critical, and creative strategies practiced in the natural (computational, biological, and physical) sciences, social and behavioral sciences, as well as in the arts and humanities.

Learning Outcomes: 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, computational, biological sciences and physical sciences.

In courses satisfying the Breadth requirement, 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 computational, biological, and physical 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; computational, biological, and physical sciences, and identify strengths and weaknesses of those approaches across disciplines when approaching a question.

To achieve these outcomes, students are required to complete courses in the following areas.

- 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, understand, communicate about, and interpret creatively the world around us. These “ways of knowing” intersect and overlap, and the ideas presented in one area will often inform and transform what students know and how they think about the others. 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 their own and others’ experience, and to behave in socially responsible ways. (For more information about how this exposure to breadth of inquiry and expression enriches students’ undergraduate experience and complements intensive study in the major,

please see the General Education Requirements (<https://gened.wisc.edu>) website.)

COMMUNICATION, 3 TO 5/6 CREDITS

The **Communication** requirement helps to ensure that all graduates of UW–Madison acquire essential communication and research-gathering skills necessary for success in university course work and beyond. Communication–A (**Comm–A**) and Communication–B (**Comm–B**) courses train students to gather and assess information from a variety of sources and to present different kinds of information, insight, and analysis to diverse audiences. These courses are essential for students’ career success and their preparation for public life in a rapidly changing world. While Comm–A courses focus exclusively on essential communication skills, Comm–B courses provide content instruction in a specific discipline and teach research, writing, and speaking skills in conjunction with the course content. Comm–B courses are offered by departments across campus and vary widely in topic, content, and format.

Learning Outcomes: Students develop skills that enable them to be effective speakers and writers in and out of the classroom.

In courses satisfying the Communication requirement, students 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.

To achieve these outcomes, students must complete the following Communication requirements:

- **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 coursework 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 of undergraduate study.
- **Part B. Enhancing Literacy Proficiency.** 2–3 credits of more advanced coursework 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

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 expected to complete this requirement within the first 60 credits of undergraduate study

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

In courses satisfying the Ethnic Studies requirement, 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.

Students complete this requirement by taking one course of at least 3 credits that is designated as an Ethnic Studies course.

QUANTITATIVE REASONING, 3 TO 6 CREDITS

Quantitative Reasoning is the process of forming conclusions, judgments or inferences from quantitative information. The Quantitative Reasoning requirement at UW–Madison has two parts: Part A and B. **Quantitative Reasoning A** courses provide students with skills in mathematics, computer science, statistics or formal logic that are needed for dealing with quantitative information. The acquired skills are broad-based in order to have a positive impact on the readiness of students to take a Quantitative Reasoning B course in a variety of disciplines. **Quantitative Reasoning B** courses allow students to enhance their Quantitative Reasoning Proficiency in a more advanced setting, where they make significant use of quantitative tools in the context of other course material.

Learning Outcomes: 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.

In courses satisfying the Quantitative Reasoning requirement, 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.

Students must complete the following to satisfy the Quantitative Reasoning Requirement:

- **Part A. Quantitative Reasoning Proficiency.** This requirement can be satisfied by:
 - approved college work while in high school, AP test scores, or placement testing; or
 - taking a 3 credit course at UW–Madison with a Quantitative Reasoning A designation.

To ensure timely completion of the undergraduate degree, students should complete Part A of the Quantitative Reasoning requirement by the end of their first year.

- **Part B. Enhancing Quantitative Reasoning Proficiency.** 3 credit course at UW–Madison with a Quantitative Reasoning B designation after satisfying the Part A requirement. 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 language is 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. Courses that satisfy these requirements are also tagged with a mortarboard symbol. #

- Communication Part A
- Communication Part B
- Ethnic Studies
- Quantitative Reasoning Part A
- Quantitative Reasoning Part B

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 will be indicated in the Schedule of Classes.

Course descriptions also include information about whether courses meet General Education Humanities, Natural Science, or Social Studies Breadth Requirements. (Click on course numbers in the *Guide* to see this information.) 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.

GENERAL EDUCATION POLICIES

Exemption from General Education: All students are required to meet the fundamental degree requirements of the university, which include general education.

Disability-Based Waivers: 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.

GRADUATING

Declaration of Intent to Graduate. When students expect to graduate, they must indicate their intent by completing the graduation application available in the MyUW Student Center. It is the policy of UW–Madison that all work for the degree must be completed and all degree requirements satisfied before the degree can be conferred.

Conferral of Degrees. When students have been certified as having completed all university general education, degree, and major

ESR Assessment Plan

The Ethnic Studies Subcommittee and Faculty and Staff instructors of courses that meet the Ethnic Studies Requirement (ESR) recognize the need to engage in ongoing assessment of student learning relative to this General Education Requirement. Beginning with the fundamental assumption that mastery of the content is the primary goal of any course, four learning goals that transcend specific content areas and instead speak to common objectives among ESR courses offered in a wide variety of topics. In all ESR courses, 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. Thus, all ESR courses are expected to promote learning in the following four dimensions:

1. **Awareness of History's Impact on the Present** - Ethnic Studies courses highlight how certain histories have been valued and devalued, and how these differences have promulgated disparities in contemporary American society.
2. **Ability to Recognize and Question Assumptions** – Ethnic Studies courses promote recognition and application of critical thinking skills, specifically with respect to teaching students to harbor a healthy skepticism towards knowledge claims, whether in the form of media, political, or popular representations, primarily as these relate to race and ethnicity. As part of this process, the ESR should challenge students to question their own assumptions and preconceived notions on these topics.
3. **A Consciousness of Self and Other** - Awareness of self is inextricably linked with awareness of and empathy towards the perspectives of others. In constructing a space for this kind of discussion in their classrooms, Ethnic Studies courses give students an opportunity to think about identity issues, including their own identity, as well as the connections they might have to people “outside” their focused social circle.
4. **Effective Participation in a Multicultural Society** – Ethnic Studies courses should be relevant to students’ “lives outside the classroom”, and pursuing the objectives above should not only lead to student behavioral change, but to action in the real world. The ESR should ultimately engender in students the ability to participate in a multicultural society more effectively, respectfully, and meaningfully. This participation may be as mundane as being able to discuss race with a colleague or friend, or to recognize inequities in interpersonal, institutional, or other contexts.

Through engagement with ESR courses, students will be able to:

- A. articulate some of the effects the past has had on present day circumstances, perceptions of, and disparities in, racial and ethnic minority communities the U.S.
- B. recognize and question cultural assumptions, rules, biases, and knowledge claims as they relate to race and ethnicity.

- C. examine questions and make decisions with consideration for the cultural perspectives and worldviews of others.

Assessment Strategies:

Direct Assessment

- Prior to each semester in which ESR courses are offered, the UGEC will contact all instructors of ESR courses to notify them of the upcoming assessment focus, and request that instructors incorporate into their ESR course a brief exercise intended to elicit authentic student responses relative to that focus. (Specific prompts will be provided.) Materials produced in these brief exercises will be submitted to the ES Subcommittee for review. The subcommittee will evaluate a sample of all materials submitted; evaluation will be based on the ESR rubric (attached). Areas of focus will rotate annually among the three outcomes articulated above.

Indirect Assessment

- A bank of questions related to the ESR learning outcomes will be provided for use in the AEFIS course-evaluation system. Instructors of ESR courses that use the AEFIS system will be encouraged to incorporate the ESR questions into the course evaluation process. Responses will be aggregated and analyzed by the subcommittee.
- Because additional aspirations related to the ESR involve effective participation in a multicultural society as well as positively affecting the UW-Madison campus climate, assessment of the ESR also involves analysis of data obtained in campus climate surveys, NSSE responses, alumni surveys, and other efforts to interrogate UW-Madison's progress in this dimension of learning. These activities will involve ad hoc analysis of data available through these other sources.

Responsibility for Assessment

The Ethnic Studies Subcommittee of the University General Education Committee is responsible for assessing this requirement. The committee will approve the rotation of areas of focus for inquiry, develop prompts to be used, sample and evaluate responses. Summary reports of these activities will be submitted to the UGEC for inclusion in the annual UGER Assessment report. Recommendations arising from these efforts will be discussed in the regular meetings of ESR instructors and communicated to departments offering ESR courses. Where policy changes are required, the subcommittee will forward recommendations to the University General Education Committee and, in turn, to the University Academic Planning Council for approval.

Summary of Changes: Anthropology 104

The Chair of the Department of Anthropology reports that the faculty have adopted several department-level procedures to ensure that Anthropology 104 is delivering the expected ESR content.

- 1) The department chair prompts the instructor to produce a draft syllabus, send it to the department chair and then the chair submits it to the Ethnic Studies Subcommittee by the Feb 1, Sept. 15, or Dec 1 “monitoring” deadline.
- 2) A team of 3-4 faculty have been identified as those who are particularly committed to teaching Anthro 104 moving forward. This group of faculty will develop content as a team to help ensure that the course provides similar learning experiences for students from one semester to the next. The REACH program, which is sponsored by the Vice Provost for Teaching and Learning, is assisting in these efforts.
- 3) The graduate students who teach the course in the Summer sessions are hired by late November-early December. This allows them time to learn more about the specific needs for ESR instruction and to participate in the larger conversations about the goals of the requirement. These instructors will use a syllabus developed by the Anthro 104 faculty, but will adapt the syllabus to the smaller learning environment and compressed learning timeframe. As they perform this work, they will interact with, consult, and be mentored by the Anthro 104 faculty.
- 4) For the next two years, REACH funding will support a TA who will assist with pedagogical training of Anthro 104 TAs. The goal of this support is that the TA and Anthro 104 faculty will develop pedagogical materials and a sustainable approach to TA training for the course.
- 5) A “grass-roots” effort has arisen among cultural anthropology graduate students who are eager to improve how they teach difficult and challenging content. These students have developed a working group that meets each semester to share tips, best practices, and materials. They share materials with each other (and intend to share them with future generations of TAs) via a Google doc.

Adapted from original content submitted by email, Schroeder to Klein, May 8, 2018

Additions to the GER Course Array, 2017-2018

Comm-A: No courses proposed

Comm-B:

- Asian Languages and Cultures 236, “Asia Enchanted: Ghosts, Gods, and Monsters”
- Literature in Translation 255, “Boccaccio’s Decameron – the Human Comedy”
- Nursing 692, “Health and Illness Concepts with Individuals, Families, and Communities”

Ethnic Studies:

- Anthro 265, “Intro to Culture and Health”
- Art History 104, “The Art of Diversity: Race and Representation in the Art and Visual Culture of the United States”
- Asian Am 152, “Asian American Literary and Popular Culture: Race, Fantasy, Futures”
- Asian Am 170, “Hmong American Experiences in the United States”
- Counseling Psychology 237, “Mental Health, Self-Awareness, and Social Justice: Working in Diverse Communities”
- Counseling Psychology/CLS 331, “Immigrant Health and Wellbeing”
- Ed Policy Studies 505, “Issues in Urban Education”
- English 401, “Race, Sex, and Texts (How to do things with writing)”
- Environmental Studies 306, “Indigenous Peoples and the Environment”
- Gender and Women’s Studies 446, “Queer of Color Critique”
- Geography 345, “Managing Nature in Native North America”
- Religious Studies 404, “African American Religions”
- Sociology 440, “Ethnicity, Race, and Justice”
- Sociology 443, “Immigration, Crime, and Enforcement”

Three proposals for courses to carry the ESR designation were denied because the courses did not meet the expectation that such courses should have a central focus on groups that have been persistently marginalized in the U.S.

QR-A: One course proposed; request was changed to QR-B.

QR-B:

- Astronomy 140, “Earth 2.0: The Exoplanet Revolution”
- Ed Psychology 215, “Probably Correct: How to Think With Statistics and Data”

A request for QR-B designation for another course was denied on the basis of the low level of math skills that were the focus of the course. The sponsoring faculty withdrew the request to allow creation of the course while conversations continue about how the course may be revised to meet the requirement.