University of Illinois at Springfield
General Education Council
Course Approval Criteria
Area: Freshman Seminar

To seek general education course approval, faculty or programs must complete two forms:
• UIS New Course Proposal and Change Form
• Baccalaureate Outcomes Checklist
Forms are available at: http://www.uis.edu/generaleducation/curriculum/facultyforms.html Submit forms and syllabi to the appropriate college curriculum committee, then to the dean, and finally to the Office of Undergraduate Education (PAC525) for distribution to the General Education Council. For questions, contact the Office of Undergraduate Education (206-7413 or uisuge@uis.edu).

Category Overview for Freshman Seminars

Students will take one Freshman Seminar in the first semester of college at UIS. These courses must be 100 level and 3 credit hours. These courses may only be used to satisfy the requirements for Freshman Seminar and cannot be used to meet major or minor requirements.

The goals of the Freshman Seminar category include
• Helping first-year students develop core academic skills needed for success at college;
• Providing students with an introduction to the academic research process through completion of a project that involves research and reflection and is shared with the UIS community;
• Providing students with the tools for making a successful transition from high school to college;
• Helping students develop into self-motivated, life-long learners;
• Helping students make use of academic support services.

This category is open to all academic fields of inquiry, and content for the course is open. Faculty may develop topics that use the lens of a single discipline or may integrate the perspectives of two or more disciplines, but the course must be available and accessible to all students, regardless of major. Faculty pedagogy must incorporate the active, student-centered learning opportunities inherent in seminars, e.g. group work, debate, dialogue, team projects, etc., rather than faculty-centered learning where lecture and multiple-choice quizzes and exams predominate.

Freshman Seminar Learning Outcomes:

Freshman Seminar is a student’s introduction to college and provides a crucial vehicle through which students will develop strong academic skills and habits. This category is the foundation for all later learning at UIS. Consequently all learning outcomes listed below are required and should be reflected in both classroom activities and assignment.

Students will be able to:
• Exhibit appropriate behavior in a classroom setting, including preparedness, attentiveness, and respect for the instructor and other students.
• Employ appropriate student/instructor electronic and office hour communication skills.
• Demonstrate ability to calculate course grade and grade point average.
• Exhibit skills in critical reading for inquiry, learning, and thinking.
• Exhibit the practice of college-level note-taking both in class settings and from readings that can be used to perform other tasks such as studying for tests and writing critical essays.
- Demonstrate technological literacy, including proficiency with word processors, course management systems, and/or electronic storage; with creating, saving, organizing and sharing of electronic files and resources; and with finding technical assistance from campus and professional sources.
- Locate, evaluate, organize, and use research material from electronic and print sources.
- Exhibit skills in integrating concepts and examples from multiple sources.
- Exhibit engagement in course content through academic activities.
- Complete college-level writing assignments that
  - demonstrate a clear purpose;
  - demonstrate the appropriate conventions of formal academic writing;
  - respond appropriately to the needs of different audiences;
- Exhibit some development of oral communication skills, paying attention to content and audience.
- Exhibit appropriate study habits and time management skills for success in college.
- Demonstrate understanding of the Academic Integrity Policy through the appropriate documentation of sources for course assignments.

Please note: This category will not change, but will require further elaboration with examples. We expect that these will become available when freshman seminar instructors submit syllabi and obtain paid training in Spring 2012. As always, we learn through the process of collaboration. We offer a syllabus as one example only.