

University of Illinois at Springfield

General Education Council

ECCE Course Approval Criteria

Area: U.S. Communities

To seek general education course approval, faculty or programs must complete two forms:

- UIS New Course Proposal and Change Form
- Baccalaureate Outcomes Checklist

Forms available at: <http://www.uis.edu/academicplanning/curriculum/index.html>. Forms and syllabus should be submitted 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, please contact the Associate Vice Chancellor for Undergraduate Education, Office of Undergraduate Education (206-7413).

Note on Assessment:

All faculty submitting a course for approval will need to participate in institutional assessment. Consent to participate and supply necessary materials is required for course approval. Assurance of student learning and continuous improvement processes offer faculty the opportunity to engage in the scholarship of teaching and learning and are expected of every institution of higher learning by regional accreditors. If the course is approved:

- Faculty may be asked to submit sample student work for assurance of student learning projects.
- Faculty will be provided instructions on submitting student work and other materials, such as syllabi and assignment prompts, by project coordinators.
- Faculty may need to make arrangements to make copies of student work submitted in paper or to make available electronically submitted work.

Assessment projects are reviewed by the Institutional Review Board and are confidential for both faculty and students. All identifying information is removed from student work prior to the assessment process, and data are presented in the aggregate. Assessment is used to measure student learning and is **not** used in evaluation of instructors.

Note on Recertification:

The General Education Council will recertify courses on a rolling basis, usually every 3-5 years. Recertification is the process by which the General Education Council will ask for a current syllabus and analyze it to ensure the course continues to meet the learning outcomes and other requirements for the category. If GEC changes the category learning outcomes or other course approval criteria, faculty may be asked to recertify courses to meet the revised requirements. Adequate time and faculty development will be provided to faculty to make the changes.

General Information on the Engaged Citizenship Common Experience (ECCE)

Below is a handy checklist of criteria that faculty teaching ECCE should meet:

U.S. Communities ECCE Requirements
My course is 200, 300, or 400 level.
My course is a 3- or 4-hour course.
My course is available and accessible to all students, regardless of major, and a student's prior knowledge of the topic or discipline(s) addressed in the course is <i>not</i> assumed.
My course meets selected learning baccalaureate outcomes in Goal 5, Engaged Citizenship (listed below) and the category-specific learning outcomes (listed below).
My course meets <i>at least</i> the following three UIS baccalaureate skills outcomes from Goals 1 and 2: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Read baccalaureate-level materials effectively, reflecting comprehension and synthesis;• Exhibit a knowledge of and ability to effectively locate, evaluate, interpret, and use information;• Engage in critical thinking by analyzing, evaluating, and articulating a range of perspectives to solve problems through informed, rational, decision-making.
My course utilizes an <i>interdisciplinary approach</i> ; that is, it draws on the content, concepts, and/or methodologies of two or more disciplines with a deliberate effort to achieve integration.
My course includes activities and assignments that involve students in an <i>active learning process</i> (Active learning involves activities beyond students listening to lecture. Lecture is of course a valuable tool in the

classroom, but students in ECCE courses should read, write, discuss, or be engaged in solving problems. They should engage in higher-order thinking tasks, such as analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. Instructional activities should involve students in doing things and thinking about what they are doing.)

My course presents perspectives and value systems that extend beyond the usual cultural boundaries of most students.

My course helps students answer the following questions:

- What are the major issues, trends, expressions, policies, etc. regarding the topic of the course?
- How has my worldview been affected by my experiences, attitudes, assumptions and beliefs? (Note: issues that could come up in discussion include but are not limited to race/ethnicity, class, socio-economic status, gender, sexual orientation, religion, ethics, nationality, age, physical ability, etc.)
- How can I apply the skills, values, and ideas developed in this course? (e.g., reading the news, getting involved in a campaign, joining or forming a club on campus, planning study abroad, etc.).

The General Education Council will use the above criteria in making determinations about the appropriateness of the course for the general education curriculum. For the GEC to make a positive determination, the above requirements must be visible in the syllabus. On the General Education Checklist, you will be asked to indicate that your course meets the above criteria. Feel free to use space on that form to explain how the proposed course meets these criteria.

Please note that the **baccalaureate outcomes for Goal 5, Engaged Citizenship** are as follows:

Upon completion of the general education curriculum, students should be able to:

1. Recognize the social responsibility of the individual within a larger community.
2. Practice awareness of and respect for the diversity of cultures and peoples in this country and in the world.
3. Reflect on the ways involvement, leadership, and respect for community occur at the local, regional, national, or international levels.
4. Identify how economic, political, and social systems operate now and have operated in the past.
5. Engage in open-minded and ethical decision-making and action.
6. Distinguish the possibilities and limitations of social change.

Category Overview for U.S. Communities:

U.S. Communities courses should broaden students' knowledge about substantial, distinctive, and complex aspects of the history, society, politics, and culture of United States communities. Courses must be interdisciplinary, and must clearly identify the nature of this interdisciplinarity in their course materials.

U.S Communities courses should examine the varied experiences of these communities, and their experiences with respect to social institutions and cultural values within the national context. 'Communities' may be defined in a variety of ways, including but not limited to geographical communities, communities of interest, communities of ideology or communities of religion. Faculty submitting courses for approval under the U.S. Communities rubric must identify in their course introduction which communities will be studied in the course, the nature of these communities, and explain why they are substantial, distinctive and complex.

Required Learning Outcomes for US Communities Courses

Course readings and assignments clearly help students exhibit both of the following learning outcomes:

• Diversity

Students demonstrate awareness of and respect for diversity within the US. Students demonstrate empathy for and a nuanced understanding of multiple worldviews and experiences within the US, considering at least **three** of the following criteria:

- race, ethnicity
- gender
- class
- sexuality
- age
- ability
- religion/spirituality
- migration/immigration,
- rural/urban/suburban residence
- region

Students comprehend, empathize with, and demonstrate a nuanced understanding of specific communities within the United States

Students explain these phenomena in relation to larger national and international contexts. (e.g. cultural, environmental, historical, political, ideological and/or economic).

Student work reflects understanding and consideration of the viewpoints of those in communities other than their own.

• **Power Inequities**

Students identify and analyze power inequities among diverse populations within natural, historical and/or contemporary contexts.

Students explain how the groups above often have differential experiences with/treatment by/ representation regarding social institutions/organizations and their representatives (e.g., in education, policy, family/marriage, land & housing rights, law, business, workplace, healthcare, etc.).

Students analyze the historical, political, economic, and/or social causes of these inequities.

A note about international comparisons:

US Communities courses may compare US communities with communities outside the United States. Such comparisons should not be a major feature of the course, but rather be used to highlight and identify particular features of the history, society, politics, or culture of the US communities that are the focus of the course. The use of a comparative framework should help students appreciate differences or similarities of particular US communities to communities in other cultures.