

University of Illinois at Springfield
General Education Council
Course Approval Criteria
Category: Behavioral and Social Sciences

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

- UIS New Course Proposal and Change Form
- General Education Checklist

Forms are available at: <http://www.uis.edu/generaleducation/curriculum/facultyforms.html>

Forms and a syllabus for the course 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 Dr. Karen Moranski, Office of Undergraduate Education (206-7413 or kmora1@uis.edu). The recommended UIS Syllabus Template is available at:

<http://www.uis.edu/generaleducation/curriculum/facultyforms.html>

General Information on Lower Division General Education

Below is a checklist of criteria that faculty teaching lower division courses should meet:

Lower Division Gen. Ed. Requirements
My course is 100 or 200 level and provides introductory information or overviews rather than knowledge that is highly specific to a particular discipline or degree program;
My course is a 3-hour course, except for composition, laboratory science, and some math courses, which may be 4 hours.
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 Baccalaureate Learning Outcomes for Goals 1-4, and, whenever possible, selected outcomes for Goal 5, Engaged Citizenship. (Baccalaureate Goals and Learning Outcomes are listed below.)
My course meets selected category outcomes, listed below.

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 should 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.

Baccalaureate Goals and Learning Outcomes

1. Discovery of Knowledge

- a. Reading baccalaureate-level materials effectively, reflecting comprehension and synthesis.
- b. Exhibiting a knowledge of and ability to effectively locate, evaluate, interpret, and use information.
- c. Exhibiting a knowledge of and ability to use information and communication technologies.

2. Integration of Knowledge

- a. Engaging in critical thinking by analyzing, evaluating, and articulating a range of perspectives to solve problems through informed, rational, decision-making.
- b. Differentiating the approaches that underlie the search for knowledge in the arts, humanities, natural sciences, history, or social and behavioral sciences.

3. Application of Knowledge

- a. Exhibiting a knowledge of and ability to use contemporary technologies.
- b. Identifying, interpreting, and analyzing quantitatively presented material and solve mathematical problems.
- c. Constructing intellectual projects independently and work effectively in collaboration with others

4. Communication of Knowledge

- a. Expressing ideas, facts and arguments in a written format that depicts competency in the use of syntax, organization, and style appropriate to the audience.
- b. Exhibiting effective oral communication skills, paying attention to content and audience.

5. Engaged Citizenship

- a. Recognizing the social responsibility of the individual within a larger community.
- b. Practicing awareness of and respect for the diversity of cultures and peoples in this country and in the world.
- c. Reflecting on the ways involvement, leadership, and respect for community occur at the local, regional, national, or international levels.
- d. Identifying how economic, political, and social systems operate now and have operated in the past.
- e. Engaging in informed, rational, and ethical decision-making and action.
- f. Distinguishing the possibilities and limitations of social change.

Category Overview

The goals of the Behavioral and Social Science general education requirement are:

- to increase student knowledge of the content and processes used within the social and behavioral sciences as they are used to discover, measure, describe, explain, and/or predict human behavior at individual and systems levels;
- to introduce students to the values of behavioral and social sciences disciplines;
- to promote student understanding of self, social systems, and the world;
- to enhance student knowledge of social and/or cultural institutions within contemporary and historical contexts;
- to develop students' ability to locate relevant and verifiable information using academic resources and available technologies;
- to develop students' ability to critically analyze, synthesize, evaluate, and communicate that information using appropriate technologies;
- to promote the use of knowledge, skills, and ethical values in decision-making and behavior;
- to promote awareness of diversity and respectful, informed communication about social and cultural differences.

The Behavioral and Social Science category includes introductory or integrative courses in anthropology, communication, criminal justice, economics, history, legal studies, political studies, psychology, sociology, and interdisciplinary studies in several programs.

Criteria

Required learning objectives

Behavioral and Social Science courses should help students meet as many as possible of the following learning objectives:

- identify the assumptions and foci of the discipline(s), and their major areas of sub-specialization;
- describe the historical and social contexts within which the discipline(s) developed;
- demonstrate knowledge of major theoretical perspectives and methods of inquiry, including quantitative and/or qualitative approaches;
- recognize and describe the ethical values of the discipline(s);
- develop and apply in context knowledge of human behavior, psychological processes, social institutions, cultures, and/or social groups, using key concepts and terminology from the discipline(s);
- locate, review, synthesize, and communicate verifiable information from the discipline(s);
- analyze problems and discuss contemporary issues using relevant knowledge from the behavioral and social sciences.

Preferred course features

Behavioral and Social Science courses are encouraged that help students:

- identify how economic, political, and/or social systems operate now and have operated in the past;
- explore the relationship between the individual and society as it affects the personal behavior, social development and quality of life of the individual, the family and the community;
- think critically about how individuals or social groups are influenced by political, geographic, economic, cultural, and/or family institutions in their own and other diverse cultures;
- reflect on how one's own belief system may differ from others; and
- apply ethical principles to real-world situations.