

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS  
AT URBANA - CHAMPAIGN

**Office of the Provost and Vice Chancellor  
For Academic Affairs**

Swanlund Administration Building  
601 East John Street  
Champaign, IL 61820



December 18, 2000

TO: Deans, Directors & Department Heads

FROM: Diane Musumeci, Chair  
General Education Board

RE: Procedures for Certifying Courses in General Education

Since the General Education Board began certifying courses for campus-wide credit in the spring of 1991, we have developed several mechanisms for coordinating and accelerating the process, each of which has been accompanied by a new or revised cover sheet. By this memo we are consolidating all General Education course proposal information in a single packet, attached, which includes the following:

- 1) General Education Board Certification Procedures
- 2) General Education Proposal Checklist
- 3) General Education Board Proposal for General Education Certification
- 4) *Guidelines for General Education Courses*

Electronic versions of the General Education Board Proposal for General Education Certification form are available from [www.provost.uiuc.edu/departments/gened](http://www.provost.uiuc.edu/departments/gened).

DM/lmo

Enclosures

**UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN  
GENERAL EDUCATION BOARD**

**Certification Procedures**

The General Education Board comprises six subcommittees: Composition, Quantitative Reasoning, Humanities and the Arts, Social and Behavioral Science, Cultural Studies, and Natural Science. Each subcommittee has its own chair, appointed year-to-year by the chair of the General Education Board.

A course proposed for General Education credit goes through the following certification process:

1. **Initiation.** Courses proposed for General Education are sent by the department to the college for approval. The college then sends the course proposal, complete with cover sheet, to the Office of the Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs (OPVCAA).
2. **Transmittal.** OPVCAA transmits a copy of the proposal to each member of the appropriate subcommittee(s). In addition, OPVCAA copies the department head, the college representative, and the chair of the General Education Board on the letter of transmittal, and others when pertinent.
3. **Approvals.** OPVCAA receives notice of final actions, i.e., any courses which have been approved or turned down for General Education credit, from the subcommittee chair. OPVCAA issues an implementation letter notifying the college of the newly-approved course; the department head, the chair of the General Education Board, and the subcommittee chair are copied on this letter.
4. **Requests for Revision.** Occasionally, the committee may require additional information or clarification pertaining to a course under review. Subcommittee chairs generally work directly with the unit to resolve the issue, but should make sure OPVCAA and the appropriate assistant or associate undergraduate dean in the college of control is copied on any correspondence. OPVCAA should also be informed of the final outcome (see 3, above).
5. **Approved Course Lists.** OPVCAA maintains cumulative lists of courses certified for General Education credit on the World Wide Web ([www.provost.uiuc.edu/gened](http://www.provost.uiuc.edu/gened)). Subcategory indicators are also added to the *Timetable*.

## GENERAL EDUCATION PROPOSAL CHECKLIST

- Complete course information section (Section A)
- Select General Education category or categories (Section B)
- Include Attachments (Section C)
  - New Course
    - Proposed UIUC Course Outline
    - Proposed UIUC Course Data Sheet
  - Existing or Previously Approved Course
    - Official Course Outline/Course Data Sheet
    - Syllabus including complete outline of topics, texts and readings, and assignments
- Review Part I (Guidelines for All General Education Courses) and Part VIII (Perspectives on Women and Gender) of the *Guidelines for General Education Courses*.
- Address the General Information Questions (Section D)
- Address the Category-specific Questions (Section E)
- Include the College Approval and cover sheet

**UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN  
GENERAL EDUCATION BOARD**

**Proposal for General Education Certification**

**A. Course Information:**

Department: \_\_\_\_\_ Course Rubric/Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Course Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Credit Hours: \_\_\_\_\_ Cross-listings: \_\_\_\_\_

Existing Course, No Revision       New Course       Revised Course

Weekly Hours: Lecture: \_\_\_\_\_ Disc: \_\_\_\_\_ Lab: \_\_\_\_\_ Other (specify): \_\_\_\_\_

Anticipated Semester Enrollment: \_\_\_\_\_ Section Sizes: Lecture: \_\_\_\_\_ Disc: \_\_\_\_\_ Lab: \_\_\_\_\_ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**B. General Education Category:** Check the category or categories for which certification is proposed. A course may be proposed for only one category, with the exception of those categories marked with an asterisk (\*). See the *Guidelines for General Education Courses*, Part I, Section 1.8. However, courses approved for Advanced Composition, Cultural Studies and Quantitative Reasoning II may be certified for simultaneous certification in a distribution area (i.e., Natural Sciences & Technology, Humanities & the Arts, or Social & Behavioral Sciences).

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> English Composition I                                   | Natural Science & Technology                                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Advanced Composition (formerly English Composition II)* | <input type="checkbox"/> Physical Sciences                         |
|  | <input type="checkbox"/> Life Sciences                             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Quantitative Reasoning I                                |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Quantitative Reasoning II*                              | Humanities & Arts  |
|  | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature and the Arts                   |
| Cultural Studies   | <input type="checkbox"/> Historical and Philosophical Perspectives |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Western/Comparative Culture(s)*                         |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Non-Western Culture(s)*                                 | Social & Behavioral Science  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> U.S. Minority Culture(s)*                               | <input type="checkbox"/> Social Science                            |
|  | <input type="checkbox"/> Behavioral Science                        |

**C. Attachments:** For new courses, attach the proposed official University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign Course Outline and Course Data Sheet (these are the documents submitted when creating or formally revising a course). If the course is already approved, attach a copy of the official Course Outline/Course Data Sheet and a current syllabus for this course. The syllabus should include a complete outline of topics, texts and readings, and assignments.

**D. General Information:** For all proposals for certification, please attach a statement responding to the following (in numbered order):

1. Is the course required for a major concentration? If so, which ones (program or department)?
2. Is this course part of a sequence? If so, identify the other courses in the sequence, and indicate whether this course is complete in itself for students who may not take the entire sequence.

3. What is the frequency with which the course will be offered (e.g., every semester, once a year)?  
Approval of this certification means that the proposing department is committed to offering the course on a continuing and regular basis for a minimum of three years after approval.

4. Briefly describe how the course fulfills these overall objectives of general education.

Courses approved for general education are expected to provide substantive, rigorous, and broad introductions to important theories, concepts, and methodologies in a particular field of study that are appropriate for nonmajors; to broaden students' understanding of human thought and achievement; and to enhance critical and analytical thinking.

5. Describe the instructional format and provide special justification as necessary.

Departments are responsible for developing appropriate instructional formats for courses proposed for general education. The course format should not only be appropriate to the discipline and course content, but also should be consistent with the aims of general education. In most instances the goals of general education as set forth in the campus guidelines will not be met by instruction in mass lectures without discussion or laboratory sections.

6. Courses approved for general education are expected to have as an integral part of their design means that promote the development of students' communication skills relevant to the area, its data, and methods. Briefly describe the means (e.g., written exams, papers, oral reports, projects) that address this goal.

7. Indicate those who will teach the course and describe carefully the procedures for training and supervising teaching assistants.

All general education courses should be taught by faculty or under the direct responsibility of a staff member at least at the rank of assistant professor and, where teaching assistants are utilized, appropriate means for preparing, supervising, and providing guidance to teaching assistants should be provided.

8. Indicate briefly how materials on women and gender issues are integrated into the course, or if they are not, why that is appropriate for this course.

The general education requirements adopted by the UIUC Senate state that "where appropriate, general education courses should help students become familiar with scholarship on the significance of women and gender. Material drawn from this scholarship should be an integral part of a substantial number of general education courses." To assure the effective implementation of this guideline, the General Education Board asks that departments carefully review the availability of relevant scholarship on women and gender issues (and of scholarship on the subject by women scholars) to assure that these materials are integrated into the courses where that is appropriate.

9. Briefly describe how evaluation and adherence to general education guidelines will be monitored.

Departments offering courses for general education credit are responsible for assuring that the courses are taught in line with the guidelines for general education courses and that the courses and instruction are regularly evaluated by discipline-appropriate methods.

**E. Category-specific Information:** Please review the *Guidelines for General Education Courses* and respond to the questions corresponding to the General Education category or categories for which this course is proposed. Indicate succinctly (2-3 pages maximum) how the course is designed to meet the guidelines for the specific area (or areas) of general education for which it is proposed.

### **English Composition I**

1. Show that the course has instruction in writing as its primary emphasis, includes a full semester (or equivalent) of weekly writing assignments, and includes primarily multi-draft writing assignments. What provision does the course make for careful evaluation of writing assignments?
2. What strategies does the course use to emphasize critical thinking and to strengthen development of students' ideas, clarity of expression, and organization along with their basic writing skills?

### **Advanced Composition (formerly English Composition II)**

1. Into which of the following categories does this course fall? (a) Rhetoric or communication course building on Composition I, (b) a General Education course in another area having a substantial writing component, (c) a required or elective course in a major or minor field of study (explain).
2. How does this course use writing assignments to facilitate analysis and synthesis of the subject matter of the course, or in the case of writing courses in the rhetoric and communication disciplines, application of the principles under study?
3. What strategies does the course use to require substantial original composition over the course of the semester, including directed rewriting following careful evaluation?
4. Show that the course is taught in section sizes consistent with the goals of students' receiving thoughtful appraisal of their writing and a substantial portion of the course grade being based upon evaluation of written work.

### **Quantitative Reasoning I**

Respond to the appropriate section below.

#### **If the course is a mathematics course:**

1. Show that the course is either a calculus course, or a mathematics course for which calculus is a prerequisite, or a college-level mathematics course emphasizing logical thought processes as opposed to memorization or manipulation of mathematical formulas.
2. How does the course teach clear organization and exposition of mathematical thought?

#### **If the course is a computer science course:**

1. Show that the course involves problem formulation, algorithm development, and a significant amount of coding of programs.
2. What field of computer applications is addressed in the course?

**If the course is a probability or statistics course:**

1. How does the course emphasize the relationships between the assumptions of the probabilistic and statistical models discussed and the conclusions drawn?
2. What strategy is employed to assure that students will understand when particular models are appropriate or inappropriate?

**If the course is a course in symbolic logic:**

1. How does the course emphasize the algebra of symbolic and scientific reasoning, and introduce the techniques of formal logics, including truth-fundamental logic and quantification theory, methods for the valuation of scientific evidence, and the use of scientific information in decision making?
2. How does the course teach the student the translation of verbal arguments into their symbolic counterparts, the manipulation of symbols, and the translation of word problems into their symbolic representations?

## **Quantitative Reasoning II**

The Quantitative Reasoning II requirement can be met by completing: (1) a second course approved for Quantitative Reasoning I credit; (2) a course in mathematics, statistics, computer science or symbolic logic that builds upon and expands a prerequisite course taken to meet the Quantitative Reasoning I requirement; or (3) a course in any department at the 100, 200 or 300-level in which at least 25 percent of the course material and graded material require the use of mathematics, computer science, probability and statistics, or symbolic logic consistent with Quantitative Reasoning I guidelines. Only courses in category (3) must be submitted for Quantitative Reasoning II approval and must adhere to the guidelines below.

**If the course incorporates mathematics:**

If the course incorporates mathematics show how at least 25 percent of the course content and graded material incorporates either calculus, or mathematics for which calculus is a prerequisite, or college-level mathematics emphasizing logical thought processes as opposed to memorization or manipulation of mathematical formulas.

**If the course incorporates computer science:**

Show how at least 25 percent of the course content and graded material incorporates problem formulation, algorithm development, and a significant amount of coding of programs.

**If the course incorporates probability or statistics:**

Show how at least 25 percent of the course content and graded material incorporates the relationships between the assumptions of the probabilistic and statistical models discussed and the conclusions drawn?

**If the course incorporates symbolic logic:**

Show how at least 25 percent of the course content and graded material incorporates the algebra of symbolic and scientific reasoning, and introduce the techniques of formal logics, including truth-fundamental logic and quantification theory, methods for the valuation of scientific evidence, and the use of scientific information in decision making?

**Foreign Language**

Since the Foreign Language requirement is based on completion of a third or fourth semester foreign language course, Foreign Language courses do not need to be submitted for General Education approval. Any course that is considered the third or fourth level of a Foreign Language will satisfy the requirement.

**Natural Sciences and Technology**

Respond to the appropriate section below.

**If the course is in the physical sciences:**

1. Show that the course presents the fundamentals of the science, or has as a prerequisite a college course in the fundamentals of the science.
2. Show that the course emphasizes the scientific method, including making observations, evaluating data, and solving problems.

**If the course is in the life sciences:**

1. Show that the course presents fundamentals of the life sciences, or has as a prerequisite a college course in fundamentals of the life sciences, such as cell/molecular biology, organismic biology, genetics/evolution, physiology/metabolism/energetics, ecology/population biology.
2. Show that the course emphasizes the scientific method, including making observations, evaluating data, and solving problems.

**Humanities and the Arts**

1. Describe the reading requirements in this course.
2. Describe the writing requirements in this course.
3. How does the course introduce students to the typical critical approaches and methods of the discipline, and to past accomplishments in the field?
4. How does the course foster the goals of humanistic study, including: skill in communication; discriminating judgment and appreciation of ideas; understanding of cultural traditions; appreciation of cultural ethnic and national diversity; and reflection on the human condition?

5. If the course contains elements of more than one category within the Humanities and the Arts (literature, the arts, historical perspectives, or philosophical perspectives), explain why this course is more appropriate for the category for which it is proposed.

**If this is a course in literature:**

1. Show that the course gives significant consideration to the aesthetic quality and the formal aspects of the works studied.
2. What aspects of literature will this course emphasize? They may include authorship, audience, cultural attitudes or values, specific themes, stylistic and generic features, historical, socio-political and/or philosophical issues.

**If this is a course in the arts:**

1. List or describe the art forms, genres or specific objects to be studied.
2. How will the course concern itself with the characteristics of the medium and other appropriate issues, such as its social function, its means of conveying meaning, and the evaluation of the art forms?
3. Will the students participate in the creation of art? If so, please elaborate.

**If this is a course in historical perspectives:**

1. What chronological and/or geographical aspect of human history is studied in this course?
2. Show how the course addresses continuity and change in the human experience and elucidates the development of institutions, ideas, beliefs, and social structures.
3. Show how the course familiarizes students with significant movements, persons, and events in their intellectual, social, economic, and political contexts.

**If this is a course in philosophical perspectives:**

1. How does the course offer a critical inquiry into problems of human thought, value, or existence, and engage students in the study of philosophical issues?
2. Show how the course involves either (i) study of philosophical works presenting perspectives on recurring intellectual, cultural, or social issues and problems, or (ii) study of an important institution, discipline or practice (e.g., law, religion, art, reasoning, science) that explores its place in life generally, its relation to other endeavors, and its claim to importance.

**Social and Behavioral Sciences**

1. If the course contains elements of both the Social Sciences and Behavioral Sciences categories below, show how the emphasis of the course makes it most appropriate for the category for which it is being proposed.

**If it is a Social Sciences course:**

1. What social groups, institutions, organizations, or processes are studied in this course? What is the chronological, geographical, or cultural area within the scope of the course?
2. Show how the course emphasizes persons in relation to other persons and to their environment.
3. Show how the course considers both methodological and substantive issues, and formulates and inquires into basic questions about the nature of social life.

**If it is a Behavioral Sciences course:**

1. Show how the course studies human behavior in an empirical approach.
2. Discuss the attention given in the course to the general issues and the methods of the behavioral sciences.

**Cultural Studies**

1. Show how the course treats topics and issues that promote a deeper understanding of the culture(s) discussed.
2. Show how the course provides at least one of the following: (i) a broad description and analysis of the interaction of intellectual, artistic, political, economic, social, and other aspects of a society's cultural life; (ii) an intensive investigation of the cultural life of a society or group in a particular time and place; (iii) a focused investigation of particular aspects of the culture of a society or group (e.g., its art and architecture); or (iv) a comparative investigation of cultural systems and the development of constructs for cross-cultural sensitivity and analysis.
3. If the course contains elements of both the Western and Non-Western categories below, but is being proposed for one of those categories, show how the emphasis of the course makes it more appropriate for the category for which it is being proposed.

**If it is a Western/Comparative Culture(s) course:**

1. Show how the course provides understanding and appreciation of significant aspects of the cultural tradition evolved from the confluence of Greek and Roman philosophical thought and European religious traditions, i.e., the cultural traditions associated with European and North American countries; OR show how the course provides understanding and appreciation of significant aspects of the cultural traditions of both Western and Non-Western cultural traditions, and indicate the comparisons and contrasts drawn between the different traditions.

**If it is a Non-Western or U.S. Minority Culture(s) course:**

1. Show how the course provides understanding and appreciation of significant aspects of cultural traditions that have their origins outside the Western cultural tradition or outside the dominant cultural tradition of the United States.