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Proposed Components of Revised  
General Education Curriculum  
General Education Committee



UNIVERSITY *of* VIRGINIA  
COLLEGE *and* GRADUATE SCHOOL *of* ARTS & SCIENCES

# Proposed Components of Revised General Education Curriculum

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## **Summary of Proposed Revisions**

### **College Fellows**

Establish College-wide body of faculty members drawn from across departments and programs who would design, teach, and cultivate the core “Engagement” courses.

### **Engagements (8 Credits)**

- (1) Aesthetic Engagement
- (2) Empirical & Scientific Engagement
- (3) Engaging Difference
- (4) Ethical Engagement

### **Literacies (Varying Credits)**

- (1) World Languages (Proficiency through 2020 level)
- (2) Rhetoric for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (6 Credits)
- (3) Quantification, Computation, and Data Analysis (6 Credits)

### **Disciplines (21 Credits – 3 Credits in Each Category)**

- (1) Artistic, Interpretive, and Philosophical Inquiry
  - (2) The Chemical and Physical Universe
  - (3) Cultures and Societies of the World
  - (4) Historical Perspectives
  - (5) The Living Universe
  - (6) Social and Economic Systems
  - (7) Science and Society
- Students must fulfill these requirements by enrolling in courses across six different departments; double counting courses to fulfill requirements would be suspended.

## Proposed General Education Curriculum

The following is a proposal to modify the Undergraduate Record (effective AY 2018-19) in revision of the College of Arts & Sciences' General Education curricular requirements.

The committee proposes a GE curricular structure subdivided into three components:

[Component 1: Engagements](#)

[Component 2: Literacies](#)

[Component 3: Disciplines](#)

### Component One: Engagements

#### **(8 Credits)**

The first component of the proposed curriculum helps students develop intellectual sensibilities that are generally deployed across all realms of inquiry. The Engagement courses provide students with an intellectual framework to help guide them through their subsequent studies. They will be taught by faculty who, each from the standpoint of their own discipline, will reach beyond that discipline to address one of the four areas of inquiry noted below.

All first-year undergraduate students are required to complete one 2-credit course in each of the four Engagements: Aesthetic Engagement, Empirical & Scientific Engagement, Engaging Difference, and Ethical Engagement. This 8-credit (non-sequential) experience provides the foundation for advanced learning in the disciplines. Each course used to fulfill the Engagements must be taken on a graded basis and may be taken in any order during the first year.

Both external and internal transfer students to the College are not required to take the Engagement courses, nor can transfer students count these courses towards their General Education requirements (please see [Modified General Education Curriculum Requirements for Transfer Students](#) below).

### Component Two: Literacies

#### **World Languages (Proficiency through 2020)**

#### **Rhetoric for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (i.e., written, oral, and digital communication: 6 credits)**

#### **Computation, Quantification, and Data Analysis (6 credits)**

The second component of the proposed curriculum equips our students with fluency in a range of idioms that are essential to individual flourishing, the flourishing of the common good, the capacity to contribute to the discovery of new knowledge and the ability to navigate a heterogeneous, rapidly-transforming, and ever-more-cosmopolitan globe.

All undergraduate students must fulfill the requirements for each of the three *Literacies*: (1) World Languages, (2) Rhetoric for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, and (3) Quantification, Computation, and Data Analysis. Each course used to fulfill the Literacies must be taken on a graded basis.

#### World Languages

Courses satisfying the World Languages requirement develop students' communicative competence in a world language other than their own at an intermediate proficiency level. Students can meet the World Languages requirement by successfully completing one of the following courses of action:

- Earn exemption by placing beyond the 2020 level by examination
- Take 14 credits, or four semesters of a language in the proper sequence typically finishing at the 2020 level
- After placement, complete the remaining courses in the sequence up to the fourth semester (usually 2020)

#### Rhetoric for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

The Rhetoric for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century global literacy provides experience with rhetorical arts learned and practiced over the course of one's life.

##### *First-year Rhetoric for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Course*

All undergraduate students meet the first-year rhetoric requirement by successfully completing one of the requirement-eligible 3-credit ENWR courses as determined by placement including a new slate of advanced course for first-year students who arrive at UVA with a strong background in writing.

##### *Discipline-specific Rhetoric for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Course*

All undergraduate students must complete at UVA a second Rhetoric for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century course with a grade of C- or better.

*Recommendations regarding the eligibility of courses and structure of this requirement are currently under consideration by President Sullivan's Quality Enhancement Program Design Committee (co-chairs Jim Seitz and Siva Vaidhyathan), though the requirement is likely to emulate the present Second Writing Requirement.*

#### Quantification, Computation and Data Analysis.

The Quantification, Computation, and Data Analysis global literacy enables students to apply mathematical skills to understand and solve real world problems. Through this requirement students will develop quantitative literacy in both theory and application. Students fulfill this requirement by completing two 3- or 4-credit courses that include some or all of the following:

- a. Theoretical concepts and structures of mathematics and statistics including (but not limited to) pure mathematics, logic, and theoretical statistics.
- b. Manipulation and interpretation of mathematical expressions.

- c. Application of computational and analytical methods in order to manipulate, organize, summarize, and evaluate quantitative information and experience.
- d. Theoretical and/or practical interpretation and communication of data in order to solve real-world problems.

Courses fulfilling this requirement should be primarily focused on mathematical theory, quantitative and/or computational methods, and statistical analysis, rather than the use of such inquiry in a course with some other primary focus.

### Component Three: Disciplines (21 Credits)

The faculty has established the *Disciplines* requirement to ensure that all students have the background and breadth for further learning in a variety of disciplines. In this component of study, students will explore a wide range of objects of knowledge from a range of perspectives grounded in disciplinary thinking and particular scholarly practices. Courses that comprise the Disciplines component are taught by departments and other existing programs.

All undergraduate students must earn 3 credits in each of the seven Discipline categories listed below.

1. Artistic, Interpretive, and Philosophical Inquiry
2. The Chemical and Physical Universe
3. Culture and Societies of the World
4. Historical Perspectives
5. Living Systems
6. Social and Economic Systems
7. Science and Society

In order to ensure that students are exposed to the broad range of disciplinary thinking throughout the College, students must fulfill this requirement by taking courses from at least six different departments. Though courses may be cross-listed among several Discipline categories, courses may only count towards fulfilling one Discipline category for each student.

### Bachelor of Science Discipline Requirements

The following modifications to the Disciplines requirements are granted to those students enrolled in a Bachelor of Science program:

1. Students enrolled in a Bachelor of Science degree may elect to take 9 credits in one or two of the three following categories (rather than 3 credits in each): The Chemical and Physical Universe, Living Systems, and Science & Society.
2. Students enrolled in a Bachelor of Science degree may double-count one course (3 credits) towards fulfilling two of the following three categories: Cultures and Societies of the World, Historical Perspectives, Social and Economic Systems. The course in question

must be listed in both categories for which it will count. Though the course may be listed in more than two categories, it may only count as fulfilling two categories.

3. Bachelor of Science students must fulfill the Disciplines component by taking courses in five different departments.

### Modified General Education Curriculum Requirements for Transfer Students

All internal and external transfer students to the College of Arts and Sciences must complete both the Literacies and Disciplines requirement.

In addition, transfer students must complete one additional course (3 credits) in three of the four following Discipline categories: Artistic, Interpretive, and Philosophical Inquiry; Cultures and Societies of the World; Historical Perspectives; Social and Economic Systems. Students must fulfill the distributional requirement by taking courses in at least 6 different departments.

To account for the time necessary to revise the UVA & VCCS Guaranteed Admissions Agreement, the proposed General Education curriculum requirements for transfer students will take effect in AY 2020-2021. Until then, transfer students must satisfy the current College Area and Competency requirements as provided in the current Guaranteed Admission Agreement agreement: [UVA & VCCS Guaranteed Admission Agreement](#).

### Forums

Approved by the Faculty in 2014, the Forums will serve as an alternative and concurrent opportunity for students to complete their General Education requirements. Students enrolled in a Forum will not be required to complete the Engagements or Disciplines components, nor are they required to complete the Literacies component as stipulated. Instead, Forum students must complete the World Languages requirement (proficiency through 2020 level) and the Rhetoric for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century requirement (first and second writing requirements). As per the approved program, all Forums are required to incorporate a quantitative component into the specific Forum curriculum that would serve as a proxy for the Quantification, Computation, and Data Analysis literacy.

### Echols Scholars

The Echols Scholars Program is currently under review with recommendations pending approval of the proposed General Education curriculum. In the interim and until final review, Echols Scholars shall retain the current policy of full exemption from General Education requirements. Echols scholars may enroll in Engagement courses for elective credit.

### The College Fellows

We propose the creation of the College Fellows. This is the core of our proposal and the means by which we hope to put the curriculum at the center of College life. The College Fellows would

be a College-wide body of faculty members drawn from across departments and programs. The Fellows would design and teach the Engagement courses (8 credits) together. Appointment to the College Fellows would be for fixed terms. This cohort of faculty would represent the College as a whole and assume responsibility for designing, teaching and cultivating the core general education courses for our first-year students.

## Pilot and Beta-testing

Prior to full implementation in AY 2019-20, the Committee proposes a three-year development and beta-testing phase to begin in Fall 2016. In the first year, the inaugural college Fellows will work to develop and pilot Engagement courses as electives. In the second year, the Engagements as a cohesive component of the new curriculum will be pilot-tested among a sample population. The third year will enroll an expanded cohort of students in the proposed curriculum as a beta-test. Dean Baucom will appoint an oversight committee charged with assessing the pilot program and who will present a full report to CEPC in Spring 2018 for further review.