Breadth of Knowledge – Definitions

**Quantitative Reasoning (QR)**

*Foundational Skill*

A QR course should contain discussion, instruction, use (on the part of students), and assessment of one or more of the following:

- Creation and interpretation of mathematical models (such as formulas, graphs, tables, and schematics) and inferences from such models
- Representation of mathematical (quantitative) information symbolically, visually, numerically, and verbally
- Problem solving using arithmetical, algebraic, geometric, logical, and/or statistical methods
- Evaluation of solutions to mathematical problems (estimate, check answers, identify alternative, select optimal results, and recognize limits of the methods)

Quantitative reasoning skills must be a significant element of the course and the instructor should analyze student learning related to quantitative reasoning as part of the overall course assessment.

**DEI - Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion**

*Contemporary Topic*

To earn this breadth of knowledge students must acquire an understanding of the nature of equality and the development and perpetuation of inequality through interlocking systems of oppression, privilege, and power. Coursework in this area may address race, ethnicity, class, sex, religion, ideology, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, or other forms of identity, difference, and exclusion.

- Students will recognize the need for a world that honors human difference and the importance of taking action to advance equity and inclusion.
- Students will recognize and assess worldviews and biases that influence social inequality today within the context of historical or contemporary events.
- Students will learn the value of communicating in a manner that acknowledges and respects the differences of others.
- Students will synthesize concepts of diversity, equity, and inclusion and apply these to local, regional, national, and global 21st century community contexts.

*Note: DEI definition was endorsed by GenEd Committee April 25th, 2017.*

**SCE – Society, Culture, and Ethics**

*Contemporary Topic*

Individuals and groups of people have developed complex and varied understandings of the world, of how to relate to one another, and of what is right. Undergraduate students should be able to describe their own cultural traditions and ethical frameworks, and how they inform their decision-making.
Students should also be able to identify attributes of cultures and societies, and be able to describe the worldviews and decision-making approaches deployed in languages and cultures not their own. Students earning this breadth of knowledge should be able to discuss a culture’s products and practices, including economic, social, political, artistic, linguistic or ethical systems, and be able to appreciate their differences across time and space.

- Students will be able to describe a diversity of human societies and cultures that exist and have existed around the world over time.
- Students will explain how the elements of social and cultural systems interrelate, and are reproduced over time.
- Students will compare the norms of different societies and cultures.
- Students will analyze particular ethical decisions in relation to general systems of belief.

Note: SCE definition was endorsed by GenEd Committee April 25th, 2017.

Technology and Innovation (TI)
Contemporary Topic

Analysis and understanding of technological trends, innovation and discovery processes, and related effects, opportunities and dangers. A course or experience that fits this topic area might examine the social implications of technologies, relationships between invention and law, varied perspectives on technological change, and/or histories of technology. These courses should not be “how-to” courses that focus on applications of technologies. The focus of such courses should be the analysis of the role and impact of technology and innovation in societies.

Fine Arts (FA)
Distribution Area

Courses in this area help students understand and appreciate creative works and history of the arts. In addition, these courses aim to teach students to recognize the comprehensive role of arts as an expression of the cultural values of a society and the need to preserve these expressions for the benefit of future generations. Courses from the following disciplines are examples of this distribution area: dance, drama, music, and visual arts.

Historical Perspectives (HP)
Distribution Area

Courses in this area should contain discussion, application, analysis, and/or evaluation of one or more of the following:

- Primary and secondary historical artifacts
- Applied historical methodologies to significant issues and/or debates
- Current and historical debates about the study and presentation of historical issues
September 8th, 2017

Historical analysis and research skills must be a significant element of the courses in this area. Courses from the following disciplines are examples: history, classics, history of art and music, Africana studies, and Judaic studies.

**Humanities and Literature (HU)**  
*Distribution Area*

Courses in this area help students develop competency in the understanding of the human condition and of the values inherent in it. This understanding will help the development of insights into and a critical evaluation of the meaning of life. A course that fulfills the Humanities and Literature requirement should contain discussion, instruction, use, and assessment of one or more of the following:

- Texts specific to the field which illustrate the subject of analysis. For example, a literature course should utilize literary texts such as novels, poetry, drama, etc. Similarly, a philosophy course that fulfills this requirement should include primary texts in the field.
- Literary and/or Humanities methodologies applied (by students with instructor supervision) to significant issues and/or debates.
- Current and historical debates about the study and presentation of humanities and/or literary issues and texts.

Reading, qualitative analysis specific to the discipline, and writing skills must be a significant element of the course, should contribute significantly to the course grade, and the instructor should analyze student learning related to humanities or literary perspectives and/or methodology as part of the overall course assessment. Courses from the following disciplines are examples of this distribution area: classics, communication, English, foreign languages, linguistics, philosophy, rhetoric, and courses not included in the other distribution areas.

**Natural Sciences (NS)**  
*Distribution Area*

In a natural science course, students will learn fundamental scientific concepts and apply them to the natural world using quantitative and qualitative scientific methods. They will study one or more of the following:

- How scientific principles and knowledge are applied to specific problems
- The nature of scientific evidence
- How scientific knowledge and evidence are obtained
- How major principles, concepts, and models inform our understanding of the natural world
- The interaction of society with the natural world

A natural science course must incorporate quantitative problem-solving or a broad, systematic conceptual survey drawn from the traditional physical or life sciences. Assessment of student learning should focus on this aspect of the course. At the conclusion of the course, students should be able to demonstrate an understanding of scientific concepts and methods.
Social Sciences (SS)
Distribution Area

A social science course teaches an understanding of human behavior and the organization of human activities--at the individual, group, community, societal, and global levels--arrived at through the analysis of theory and the use of quantitative and qualitative research methods. Students study how major principles, concepts, and models of the social sciences enhance our understanding of the human experience; the nature of social science evidence and how it is collected; and how social science knowledge is applied to specific problems and issues facing individuals, families, communities, societies, and the world.

At the conclusion of the course, students should be able to demonstrate:

- An understanding of the kinds of questions social scientists ask and the ways they go about answering these questions
- Knowledge of the major principles, concepts, and models of at least one social sciences discipline
- An understanding of methods social scientists use to examine human behavior