University of Cincinnati | General Education Core

The General Education Core has a firm foundation in UC’s Academic Plan, to reaffirm liberal education as the core to preparing students as life-long learners. Our General Education course requirements are purposefully designed to strengthen five important learning outcomes or competencies throughout the student’s progress toward their degree. We have designed a purposeful, sequenced, and on-going approach to achieving the General Education Undergraduate Core Competencies:

**Critical Thinking** – Analysis, synthesis, and evaluation of information and ideas from multiple perspectives

**Effective Communication** – Competence in oral, visual, and written language; use of resources and technology for communication

**Knowledge Integration** – Fusion of information and concepts from multiple disciplines

**Social Responsibility** – Application of knowledge and skills gained from the undergraduate experience for the advancement of a diverse and sustainable society

**Information Literacy** – The essential skill that supports each of the other competencies and permeates every component of the General Education Core. Information literacy is a set of abilities requiring individuals to recognize when information is needed and have the ability to locate, evaluate, and effectively use the information. It enables learners to master content and extend their investigations, become more self-directed, and assume greater control over their learning

In the UC model, the faculty determine how student in a given major or program will meet these common requirements. These specific pathways through the common general education program will be stored in eCurriculum and visible to the public through the [major maps](#) for each program.

**Key Touchpoints**

- **First Year Experience.** The foundation of UC’s First Year Experience (FYE) approach is the responsiveness to ongoing student reflection and a common of set of targeted learning areas (including our FY Career Education outcomes).
  - One or more appropriate First Year courses, or learning communities. The course(s) used to complete FYE might also apply to another GenEd requirement (see below).
  - Begin Foundational Skills and Breadth of Knowledge (BoK) requirements.

- **Mid-Collegiate.** Purposeful mid-collegiate programming and student reflection will continue to provide on-going support for students as they proceed through their college career. Components include:
  - One or more mid-collegiate Experiential Learning (EL) courses or academic experiences (service learning, co-op, internship, study abroad, UC Forward, [beer](#))
education, student teaching, exhibition, performance, clinical experience, student teaching, student research). EL experiences must be:

- Intentional: Experiences are structured and mapped; instructors behave as facilitators
- Learner-Centered & Holistic: Student growth – both personal and academic – is central
- Collaborative and Contextualized: Experiences are authentic and occur within the learner’s community or communities; real world complexity is embraced
- Personal: Facilitators and learners participate in guided activities that enable them to predict, react, and reflect on the experience from their own perspective

- Methodology. Each academic major program requires academic training in the understanding of the systematic methods and history of the discipline/profession (course or experience determined by unit or major).
- Mid-Collegiate Writing. A college-determined course, usually ENGL2089, "Intermediate Composition". Intermediate Composition will reinforce what students learn in the first year and will focus their attention on where meaning is made. It also introduces higher-level learning about writing and reading communicated across academic disciplines. The primary goal of the course is to help students develop rhetorical sensitivity to differences in academic and professional writing across the disciplines (see English Composition).
- Complete Foundational Skills and BoK requirements.
- Address Mid-Collegiate Career Education Outcomes. These outcomes often are addressed in the EL or Methodology course(s) described above.

- **Senior-Year Experience.** A senior-year experience that enables students to transition to a profession or graduate school and continue to pursue life-long learning and social responsibility.
  - The capstone experience is designed to demonstrate proficiency in the Baccalaureate Competencies and in the content/skills of the program/major. As a culminating experience, the capstone should require interdisciplinary and contextual perspectives (course or experience determined by unit or major). Note: a capstone course is usually 3 credit hours, but can be determined by the unit or major.
  - Address Capstone Career Education Outcomes. These outcomes may be addressed in the capstone experience described above or in other, upper division courses or workshops.

**Foundational Skills**

- **English Composition** (6 credit hours)
  - ENGL1001 "English Composition" to be completed during the first year
  - ENGL2089 "Intermediate Composition" or other designated writing course to be completed during the mid-collegiate years [after having earned 30 credit hours for matriculated students]
• **Quantitative Reasoning (QR)** (3 credit hours)

The appropriate level of analytical and/or mathematical literacy determined by each academic unit/program. **The required QR course(s) should align with the math pathway which is appropriate for the student’s major:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pathway</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Statistics Pathway</td>
<td>College-level introductory statistics courses designed for students without a Calculus background and who do not require College Algebra or Calculus.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quantitative Reasoning Pathway</td>
<td>College-level courses designed to emphasize quantitative thinking and problem solving using quantitative methods.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STEM-Preparation Pathway</td>
<td>College-level courses (i.e., College Algebra, Pre-Calculus, Trigonometry, Business Calculus, and/or Calculus) designed for students in mathematics-intensive majors.</td>
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**Breadth of Knowledge Requirements (BoK)**

- **Contemporary Topics:** UC’s GenEd Core is designed to direct students to courses and experiences that prepare graduates to contribute and thrive in a global, diverse, and technological society. **Each student should take at least 2 courses. Each of the 2 courses must come from a separate topic from the 3 listed below (6 credit hours).**

  - DEI – Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
  - SCE – Society, Culture, and Ethics
  - TI – Technology and Innovation

- **Distribution Areas:** UC's GenEd program assures exposure to the traditional disciplines that are the hallmark of a liberally educated person. **Students should choose 4 courses from a minimum of 3 distribution areas. (12 credit hours)**

  - Fine Arts (FA)
  - Historical Perspectives (HP)
  - Humanities and Literature (HU)
  - Natural Sciences (NS)
  - Social Sciences (SS)

*See Definitions for detailed descriptions.*

Interdisciplinary Courses may carry up to two BoK classifications when faculty certify that a course fully meets the expectations of each BoK. Students completing these courses will earn credit for each of the indicated BoKs. This option is meant to encourage and facilitate the completion of course sequences for depth of learning, double majors, and certificate programs.
Additional Programmatic Requirements:

Each program must provide a curricular plan for students to address institutional or state requirements.

These goals include:

1. Statewide Distribution Requirements
2. UC’s Diversity Equity and Inclusion Outcomes
3. UC’s Career Education Outcomes

Each program must address these outcomes by requiring students to select appropriate general education BoK categories or by utilizing an “across the curriculum” approach, where these outcomes are addressed through content embedded in required major courses or experiences.