

General Education at CSUSB:

An integrative, developmental program based on students as

SEEKERS, KNOWERS, MAKERS, DOERS

The development of the General Education (GE) transformation for fall 2020 has been guided by principles that include a commitment to a multidisciplinary liberal arts education, with an emphasis on responsible citizenry, designing a GE program from a student centered approach, acknowledging the importance and inclusion of all disciplinary fields and departments, and fulfilling state requirements while maintaining the integrity of the GE program. These principles also include a commitment to the diversity and inclusiveness values of CSUSB. We further acknowledge the importance of creating a GE program that will balance with other student requirements in the 120 unit cap to graduate.

Faculty groups have worked together to create the following GE structure developed to create a GE experience that promotes appropriate developmental experiences, encourages high impact practices, fulfills state and system requirements, supports integrative approaches to curriculum design, fulfills CSUSB specific student learning outcomes, while allowing for flexibility in the many ways students fulfill GE requirements. We kept the units to a minimum while supporting innovation. The product is a GE model focused on the developing student while allowing the exploration of academic themes.

This document includes background information about the design of the new program, descriptions of features in the structure, a table of GE requirements, a table demonstrating how possible GE thematic pathways work in relationship to GE requirements, and a table of GE requirements in relationship to GE student learning outcomes (GLOs).

Philosophy:

CSUSB students need a GE program that matters to the larger context of their lives, while the faculty who teach in the program should have support to ensure that students are able to integrate and transfer learning across their classes and beyond. This proposal provides a narrative purpose and developmental structure for CSUSB's GE program to help accomplish those ends. By identifying the purposes of GE as a process of students becoming ever more prepared and capable agents, ready to meet the responsibilities and opportunities that lie ahead in their personal, professional, and civic lives, the plan demystifies academic work and connects it to the kinds of critical processes and knowledges that will enable students to act as confident participants in the intellectual and affective projects of their lives.

Developmentally, the plan moves students from the critical literacies required for rigorous inquiry, through multiple disciplinary perspectives, to the more sophisticated application of

their academic experience to their lived experience and the challenges that matter to them. Conceptually, it stages this development by asking faculty and students to see the project of GE as moving students from *seekers* to *knowers* to *makers* and finally *doers*. Seekers and knowers focus on the critical literacies that form the foundation of intellectual inquiry and learn how different disciplines approach inquiry as they take up important human concerns. Makers and doers further explore how knowledge is made across disciplines and become active participants in that process. Throughout, the program encourages students to apply what they learn to their personal, civic, disciplinary, and professional lives--with a particular focus on understanding and addressing societal and global challenges.

In addition to providing the traditional foundations and breadth of a general education program, this plan allows students to organize some of their GE program within themes of inquiry (or pathways). This opens the door for a GE program that acknowledges the unique position and context of CSUSB. CSUSB is situated in a region that has advantages and challenges that are idiosyncratic to the region but are often universal as well. Examples might include racial diversity and inequality, community violence, economic disparity, humans and technology, environmental challenges, sustainability, food and famine, globalization, immigration, gender equity, entrepreneurship and social injustice, etc. Additionally, the signature features of the program that provide a structural means of scaffolding learning longitudinally across the program, should help organically build learning cohorts, and provide opportunities for interested students to complete interdisciplinary GE minors.

In sum, this 49-unit plan strives to achieve a GE program that better structures and supports broad, integrative learning, that speaks to the context and the lived experiences of CSUSB students, and that addresses the social, environmental, and economic needs and challenges of our region.

Signature Features in a Developmental Structure

The GE program at CSUSB includes unique elements to enhance the student experience through opportunities for high engagement. The program includes:

Foundation Seminar - This seminar, intended for first-year students, introduces them to the idea of academic inquiry and explores different disciplinary ways of knowing and doing, with attention to the metacognitive elements of learning. Students develop a sense of their role as a college-level learner.

Designations - CSUSB is committed to student learning experiences in diversity and inclusiveness, global perspectives, and written communication. Designated courses build on developmental opportunities in the GE program by requiring students to take courses with a central focus in these areas. The course requirements are designed to provide comprehensive opportunities for students in the areas of Diversity and Inclusiveness, Global Perspectives, and Written Communication.

Pathways (optional) - Students may elect to further engage in general education through thematic pathways that provide integrative experiences based on interest in themes addressing modern societal issues.

Thematic pathways may include 4 -6 courses within the GE requirements that are integrated through a common theme or inquiry question. Course options within the themes must be consistent with the interdisciplinary nature of GE, and include classes from multiple departments and colleges, with no more than 2 classes from one department, and no more than 3 classes from 1 college. Students who complete a thematic pathway will have the option to obtain a minor in the GE thematic topic. In some cases this may require students to take an additional class beyond their GE requirements. Note that a minor at CSUSB must include 18 semester units, including 6 upper division units.

Note: The distinction between Years 1 and 2 and Years 3 and 4 (noted in features below) is not intended to be rigid in terms of student progress in the program. Given the differing demands of majors (some front-loaded at the lower division level and some heavy at the upper division level), this plan expects students to progress as they can within the terms of their overall education. The designation of seeker/knower or doer/maker, however, will still serve to guide faculty in imagining course purposes.

Seeker/Knower (Years 1 & 2) Program Features:

- **Foundation Seminar (3 units):** The foundation seminar introduces students to the idea of academic inquiry and explores different disciplinary ways of knowing and doing, with attention to the metacognitive elements of learning. (Generally a first year course, but available to interested transfer students as a means of orienting to CSUSB's GE project.) To satisfy Area E, the Foundation Seminar should include orientation to thinking strategies applicable to lifelong problem solving in academic, social, and personal life, and introduce critical thinking, information literacy, and academic planning for student success. Student learning in this area shall include selective consideration of content such as human behavior, sexuality, nutrition, physical and mental health, stress management, financial literacy, social relationships and relationships with the environment, as well as implications of death and dying and avenues for lifelong learning. Physical activity may be included, provided that it is an integral part of the study elements described herein.
- **Foundation Courses:** Students select courses within a collection of foundation courses that develop the critical literacies necessary for college level success, and prepare students for later work as makers and doers. These courses are designed to fulfill state requirements, while attending to the developmental nature of learning. In addition, they contribute to the acquisition of the GE student learning outcomes (GLOs) identified by the CSUSB campus teaching community. These classes may be part of the integrated pathways that help draw connections for students across their learning experiences.

Maker/Doer (Years 3 & 4) Program Features:

- **Themed Pathways:** While students may complete the GE requirements in an “ala carte” fashion (a distribution of individual courses), students may complete the GE units within a themed pathway. Each pathway includes a combination of lower and upper division courses that address a common theme. Such themes would be built around interdisciplinary questions of inquiry such as *diversity studies*, *food and famine studies*, *sustainability*, and so on, depending on faculty preferences. Courses in pathways should provide attention to methods of knowledge-making, as well as the knowledge of the field itself. Students may choose courses from different pathways if they wish, so long as they fulfill all the GE requirements, but only students who stay within a pathway will be eligible for a GE minor.
- **Culminating “Inquiry in Context” Courses:** Upper division GE courses provide the opportunity for students to experience making and doing through learning experiences that provide inquiry in context. Upper division GE courses should be integrative classes that invite each student to explore the content within the context of their lives and worlds. Themed pathways could conclude with an inquiry in context course that either a) includes a student-designed inquiry project on an issue currently affecting their community and that involves academic research in order to address or intervene in the concern, or b) engages the student in high impact hands on practices such as service learning, internships, faculty-sponsored research, volunteering within a learning context, community-based practice, and study abroad.

Meeting GE Requirements:

This plan ensures that all CSUSB’s GE Learning Outcomes (GLOs) adopted in 2015 are addressed through a process of mapping them across the state mandated Title V requirements. It also ensures that students who decide to not obtain the thematic minor and switch pathways will still be exposed to all of the GLOs, and obtain a strong and broad education. (See charts, attached, to see how all state and CSUSB requirements are met.) Here is a brief overview of what the program accomplishes:

1. Demonstrates connections between academic disciplines and students’ lived experiences (EO 1100r).
2. Exposes students not only to subjects (a body of knowledge) but also the disciplinary lenses through which we look at different subjects (GLO- Integrative Learning).
3. Explicitly directs students to think about ways of thinking (metacognition) and provide opportunities for reflection on their learning processes (GLO- Learning how to Learn).
4. Focuses on students’ development throughout their college careers by providing “signpost” courses that allow reflection upon different stages (foundation seminar and Inquiry in context upper division requirement).
5. Requires both diversity and global studies content (GLOs Diverse Perspectives, Global Perspectives).

6. Encourages collaboration among instructors as well as among students (GLO Collaboration).
7. Can be successfully navigated by transfer students, as well as students who do their complete program at CSUSB. We acknowledge that the experience of transfer students will necessarily be different from that of 4-year students, and transfer students may not be able to complete the interdisciplinary minors within 120 units.

Designations

To achieve the many different GE student learning outcomes in balance with the many other outcomes students must achieve to graduate several course designations have been created to overlay CSUSB campus requirements with the state requirements. These designations ensure that students complete requirements specific to CSUSB values regardless of their choices in GE. Courses with a designation go beyond a focus on the associated GLOs; they intentionally and comprehensively incorporate the designation in the content and goals of the course. Contained within the course offerings for GE foundations and disciplinary perspectives are offerings with course designations that fulfill the following GE requirements. Students may fulfill Diversity and Inclusiveness, Writing Intensive, and Global Perspectives designations within GE or with courses in their major that have designations. Courses outside of GE that become designated courses would then be included in the GE outcomes assessment.

Diversity and Inclusiveness Designation (DI)

Courses with a DI designation comprehensively explore multiple perspectives in order to develop student understanding to collaborate respectfully and effectively with others across a variety of cultures and contexts.

Global Perspectives Designation (G)

Courses with a G designation comprehensively develop the student ability to understand global contexts and to contribute to an ever changing and pluralistic world.

Writing Intensive Requirements (WI)

Students satisfy the writing requirements by completing:

- Two Writing Intensive (WI) designated courses in the GE program, at least one at the upper division level (required to satisfy GWAR).
- Students may substitute 1 writing intensive course outside of GE (major, minor, or elective) to satisfy 1 WI course.

NOTE: Writing Intensive courses must not only be certified to receive the WI designation, but also it is recommended that instructors have professional development in best practices in promoting advancing literacies. Such courses should intentionally build upon the critical reading and writing practices initiated in the foundational A1 writing courses, and incorporate

guided writing assignments into the curriculum. A central feature of a WI intensive course is that the instructor provides pedagogical attention and support for the writing (and research) assigned.

To meet the definition of Writing Intensive, a course must satisfy the following requirements:

- Writing is comprehensively integrated into the course and tied to course objectives and learning outcomes.
- Writing comprises a significant part of the course work and reflects genres and writing activities appropriate to the course and discipline.
- Writing is explained and supported in the course: students are engaged in explicit discussions of the relevance of writing to the course and/or discipline, provided guidance in meeting genre and style expectations, and offered opportunities to assert their agency within those terms.
- Writing assignments are scaffolded. Writing and thinking activities are designed to support one another and to feed one another throughout the course.
- Writing is supported by feedback and opportunities for revision. Instructors provide meaningful feedback on writing assignments and incorporate systematic opportunities for writers to work with that feedback.

Additional Considerations of the GE Transformation

We seek to satisfy the CSUSB General Education Learning Objectives at the same time as we maximize integration of the curriculum, student engagement, commitment and collaboration, along with efficiency and flexibility.

- *Integration, engagement, and commitment:* Students own their own general education to the extent that they choose among thematic options, and their general education is integrated across classes providing meaning and purpose to the program and increased engagement. Faculty teach in emphases and programs of their own creation. Faculty collaborate as part of the regular submission and organization process, ideally continuing during implementation.

- *Efficiency and flexibility:* General education requirements from Executive Order 1100, the GEAR upper-division writing requirement, American institutions and Constitution, and CSUSB specific values and GLOs are held to 49 semester units. Students are not required to take the particular courses included in a minor – so GE remains maximally available for students with difficult schedules.

-*GLOs*: Each GLO has multiple required exposures within the program, following the developmental philosophy of the program. All the courses address multiple GLOs providing students with repeated exposure to each GLO.

Basic GE Requirements

	units	GE category		
University Foundations (21 units)	3	Foundation Seminar (E)		
	3	Oral communication (A1)		
	3	Written communication (A2)		
	3	Critical thinking (A3)		
	3	Mathematics/Quantitative reasoning (B4)		
	3	American government (D1)		
	3	US history (D2)		
Disciplinary Perspectives (28 units)	Scientific Inquiry (B)	3	Physical science (B1)	
		3	Life science (B2)	
		1	Laboratory Activity associated with the course taken to satisfy B1 or B2 (B3)	
		3	Upper Division Scientific Inquiry (B4)	
	Arts & Humanities (C) (One choice must be upper division)	3	Arts (C1)	
		3	Humanities (C2)	
		3	1 additional course chosen from C1 or C2 (C3)	
		3	Upper Division Arts & Humanities (C4)	
	Social Sciences (D)	3	Social Sciences Discipline Perspectives (D3)	
		3	Upper Division Social Science (D4)	
			Note: Within Social Sciences (D) at least 2 disciplines must be represented in D, including choices in US History and Government	
Designations		Contained within the course offerings for GE foundations and disciplinary perspectives are offerings with course designations that fulfill the following GE requirements		
WI: Writing Intensive	WI	Students complete at least two courses designated writing intensive; at least one upper division. (Formerly Category F)		
DI: Diversity and Inclusiveness Perspectives		WI designations may or may not be completed by GE courses. Students are encouraged to seek advising from the department of their major or minor to determine their best options for completing this requirement.		
G: Global Perspectives	DI	Students are required to complete at least one course in Diversity and Inclusiveness Perspectives. This requirement is fulfilled by taking one of the courses in GE Foundations or Disciplinary Perspectives with a DI designation, or a designated course in their major (3 units) (Formerly Category G)		
	G	Students are required to complete at least one course in Global Perspectives. This requirement is fulfilled by taking one of the courses in GE Foundations or Disciplinary Perspectives with a G designation, or a designated course in their major (3 units).		

Basic GE Requirements with 2 generic pathways

	units	GE category		Theme 1 (envision your theme here)	Theme 2	
University Foundations (21 units)	3	Foundation Seminar (E)				
	3	Oral communication (A1)		Course title (fulfills A1 and theme)		
	3	Written communication (A2)			Course title (fulfills A2 and theme)	
	3	Critical thinking (A3)				
	3	Mathematics/Quantitative reasoning (B4)				
	3	American government (D1)			Course title (fulfills D and theme)	
	3	US history (D2)				
Disciplinary Perspectives (28 units)	Scientific Inquiry (B)	3	Physical science (B1)	Course title (fulfills B1 and theme)		
		3	Life science (B2)			
		1	Laboratory Activity associated with the course taken to satisfy B1 or B2 (B3)			
		3	Upper Division Scientific Inquiry (B5)		Course title (fulfills B and theme)	
	Arts & Humanities (C)	3	Arts (C1)			Multiple course title (fulfills A1 and theme) student has choice
		3	Humanities (C2)		Course title (fulfills C2 and theme)	
		3	Choice of C1 or C2 (C3)			Course title (fulfills C1 or 2 and theme)
		3	Upper Division Arts & Humanities (C4)		Course title (fulfills C4 and theme)	
	Social Sciences (D)	3	Social Sciences Discipline Perspectives (D3)			Course title (fulfills D and theme)
		3	Upper Division Social Science (D4)		Course title (fulfills D and theme)	
			Note: Within Social Sciences (D) at least 2 disciplines must be represented in D, including choices in US History and Government			
Designations		Themes should allow for the completion of required designations: WI, DI, and G. Designations may be part of themed courses.				





GLO minimum specification by GE Category

	units	GE category		GLOs								
				Learning how to learn	Thinking critically	Critical Literacies	Diverse perspectives	Global perspectives	Integrative learning	Ethical responsibility	Collaboration	
University Foundations (21 units)	3	Foundation Seminar (E)		X		X (I, W)			X		X	
	3	Oral communication (A1)		X		X (I,O)					X	
	3	Written communication (A2)		X	X	X (I,W)						
	3	Critical thinking (A3)		X	X					X		
	3	Mathematics/Quantitative reasoning (B4)		X		X (Q,T)						
	3	American government (D)			X		X			X		
	3	US history (D)				X (I)	X			X		
Disciplinary Perspectives (28 units)	Scientific Inquiry (B)	3	Physical science (B1)		X	X (Q,T)						
		3	Life science (B2)		X	X (Q,T)						
		1	Laboratory Activity			X (Q,T)					X	
		3	Upper Division Scientific Inquiry (B)			X (Q,T)			X			
	Arts & Humanities	3	Arts (C1)			X (I and W or O)						Plus 1 more
		3	Humanities (C2)	Choice (2)		X (W or O)	Choice (1)	Choice (1)		Choice (2)		
		3	C1 or C2									
		3	Upper Division C					X	X			Plus 1 more
	Social Sciences (D)	3	Social Sciences Discipline Pers				X	X				
		3	Upper Division Social Science		X		X	X	X			
Designations	WI	Writing Intensive		X		X (W)						
	DI	Diversity and Inclusiveness					X					
	G	Global Perspective						X				

Note: Critical Literacies break down into Information literacy (I), Oral (O), Written (W), Quantitative (Q), and Technological (T)
 Choice indicates the selection of at least 1 GLO from that choice number; Plus 1 more indicates the need 1 additional from any GLO to meet minimum requirements
 Individual classes may designate additional GLOs relevant to the course (all courses required to include a minimum of 3 GLOs)

Summary

This GE structure promotes curriculum choices that attend to the developmental nature of general education and student learning. Through multiple experiences with GLOs, and curriculum that leads to inquiry in context students move from seekers and knowers, to makers and doers. The distinction between Years 1 and 2 and Years 3 and 4 is not intended to be rigid in terms of student progress in the program. Given the differing demands of majors (some front-loaded at the lower division level and some heavy at the upper division level), this plan expects students to progress as they can within the terms of their overall education. The designation of seeker/knower or doer/maker, however, will still serve to guide faculty in how to imagine course purposes.

First Year - Seeker		Foundation Seminar Foundation Courses
Sophomore - Knower		Complete Foundations Disciplinary Perspectives Integrate classes through possible thematic pathway
Junior - Maker		2 upper division Disciplinary Perspectives At least one upper division writing intensive course Continue to integrate classes through possible thematic pathway
Senior - Doer		Complete upper division GE Complete possible GE minor

General Education Learning Outcomes at CSUSB

GLOs

General Education at CSUSB fosters intellectual rigor and exploration whereby students understand and investigate the foundations and consequences of ideas, theories, beliefs, and expressions. The program uses a multidisciplinary approach to encourage ongoing and self-motivated learning and to inform student creativity, reasoning, decision-making, expression, and responsible action. It's a process whereby students...

- 1) **Learning How to Learn/Metacognition** - Develop awareness of their learning processes, becoming reflective, self-directed learners who are able to apply and adapt their processes of learning in new contexts.
- 2) **Thinking Critically** - Think critically, evaluate, analyze, and solve problems employing multiple methods of reasoning.
- 3) **Critical Literacies** - Analyze the ways that information, including quantitative and technological, oral and written, both shape and are shaped by social contexts.
 - (3.1) **Information Literacy**
 - (3.2) **Oral Communication**
 - (3.3) **Written Communication**
 - (3.4) **Quantitative Reasoning**
 - (3.5) **Technological Literacy**
- 4) **Diverse Perspectives** - Explore multiple perspectives in order to collaborate respectfully and effectively with others across a variety of cultures and contexts.
- 5) **Global Perspectives** - Develop the ability to understand global contexts and to contribute to an ever changing and pluralistic world.
- 6) **Integrative Learning** - Become aware of connections and differences across disciplines and learning experiences in order to frame and address ideas and questions they encounter in their lives.
- 7) **Ethical Responsibility** - Recognize that they are ethically responsible for the impact that their ideas, decisions, and actions have upon their lives and local and global communities.
- 8) **Collaboration** - Explore and understand multiple perspectives in order to collaborate and communicate effectively, both orally and in writing, across a variety of cultures and contexts.