

**Revised General Education Requirement
June 2008**

The General Education (GE) requirement reflects the faculty’s image of “the well-educated person.” All students have the opportunity to develop expertise in depth in their majors, minors, or a combination of these. The GE requirement adds to that depth a breadth of knowledge and experiences represented by coursework outside of the area of the student’s major. The GE requirement also trains the student in four core “literacies” that the faculty considers crucial for success in one’s profession but also crucial to thoughtful, engaged participation in the community, nation, and world.

The GE requirement has two components: **Topical Breadth**, and **Core Literacies**.

The GE requirement is defined in terms of units, not courses. The units of every course at UCD (with very few exceptions) are assigned to one of the three **Topical Breadth Areas** or are certified as interdisciplinary. *Unless otherwise restricted, every course unit that a student takes, including courses for major and minor requirements, will be counted toward the required minimum number of units in each Topical Breadth Area.* In the case of a course that has been certified as interdisciplinary, a student may count the units of the course in only one of the areas in which it has been certified.

With the exception of units used to satisfy the English Composition element (1a) of the four **Core Literacies** (see below), units approved for a **Core Literacy** will be accepted toward satisfaction of the appropriate **Topical Breadth** component. *However, units may be counted toward satisfaction of only one Core Literacy.*

Students may take courses P/NP to fulfill their GE requirements, up to the limits set by college and campus regulations. Students may not present Advanced Placement or International Baccalaureate credit in satisfaction of GE requirements.

A. Topical Breadth Component 52 units

- Arts and Humanities12-20
- Science and Engineering 12-20
- Social Sciences12-20

B. Core Literacies Component 35 units

1. Literacy with Words and Images at least 20 units

The ability to form, organize, and communicate one’s ideas is at the center of the faculty’s notion of what it means to be an educated person. The objective of this core literacy is to help create graduates who can communicate their ideas effectively in written, oral, and visual forms. The requirement also seeks to enhance students’ critical judgment of oral, written, and visual messages created by others.

a. English Composition (8 units)

(College of A&ES, College of L&S, College of Biological Sciences, College of Engineering)

b. Writing experience coursework in the student's major or elsewhere (at least 6 units)

Writing experience coursework provides students instruction on how to communicate ideas in the subject matter of a course. Students write in appropriate forms under the guidance of faculty and graduate students. The opportunity to improve writing after having received careful commentary is crucial to this requirement.

c. Oral skills coursework or additional writing experience coursework (at least 3 units)

The skills involved in the effective communication of ideas through oral presentation build on and strengthen the critical thinking skills exercised through writing. As an alternative to developing oral communication skills, the student may take additional coursework certified as writing experience (see requirement b).

d. Visual literacy coursework (at least 3 units)

The objective of this requirement is to provide graduates with the analytical skills they need to understand how still and moving images, art and architecture, illustrations accompanying written text, graphs and charts, and other visual embodiments of ideas inform and persuade people. Coursework may stress the skills needed to communicate through visual means as well as the analytical skills needed to be a thoughtful consumer of visual messages.

NOTE: A student must have completed the Entry Level Writing Requirement (formerly known as the Subject A requirement) before receiving credit for coursework satisfying requirements a, b, and c.

2. Civic and Cultural Literacy at least 9 units

The objective of this core literacy is to prepare people for thoughtful, active participation in civic society. Such graduates think analytically about American institutions and social relations, understand the diversity of American cultures, and see the relationships between the national and local cultures and the world.

a. American Cultures, Governance, and History (at least 6 units, of which at least 3 units must be in a course certified as focusing on issues of domestic diversity)

The objective is to create graduates who have an understanding and appreciation of the social and cultural diversity of the United States and of the relationships between these diverse cultures and larger patterns of national history and institutions. Such graduates are able to bring historical understanding and analytical skills to their participation in the civic spheres of

society and are able to think analytically about the nature of citizenship, government, and social relations in the United States.

b. World Cultures (at least 3 units)

The objective is to create graduates with a global perspective, graduates who can live comfortably and productively in a world where communication technologies, economic relationships, and the flow of people across national borders increasingly challenge national identities and create transnational cultures. Students can satisfy this requirement through coursework or through certified study abroad.

3. Quantitative Literacy at least 3 units

The objective is to create graduates who understand quantitative reasoning and who are capable of evaluating claims and knowledge generated through quantitative methods.

4. Scientific Literacy at least 3 units

The objective is to create graduates who understand the fundamental ways scientists approach problems and generate new knowledge, and who understand how scientific findings relate to other disciplines and to public policy.