



Curriculum Handbook

Chapter 7. General Education Requirements

7.1 Overview

This chapter outlines the standards and basic processes used to review courses proposed to meet general education and graduation requirements, including the following patterns:

- Napa Valley College General Education (Local GE)
- CSU General Education Breadth (CSU GE)
- Intersegmental General Education Transfer Curriculum (IGETC)

The GE Subcommittee meets once a semester, as needed, to review courses proposed for the Local GE pattern and other requirements. Membership and processes for the GE Subcommittee are described in Chapter 3 of this Handbook.

Courses proposed for transfer GE patterns (CSU GE and IGETC) are sent out for external review and follow the processes and deadlines established by the CSU Chancellor's Office and UC President's Office. Please contact the Articulation Officer for more details.

Starting Fall 2025, CSU GE and IGETC will be phased out and replaced by a singular general education transfer pathway called Cal-GETC. {The mechanisms to accept course proposals for this new GE pattern are not yet in place, but the Curriculum Committee will provide updates on this as the rollout of Cal-GETC continues.}

7.2 Guiding Principles for General Education

Recognizing that specific deadlines and processes may need to be altered in response to each year's workload, external timelines, or emerging needs, the following general principles shall guide processes for reviewing courses for general education:

- The Academic Senate, advised by the Curriculum Committee, establishes Local GE categories consistent with title 5 regulations.
- The Curriculum Committee, advised by the GE Subcommittee, approves placement of courses within Local GE categories.
- Discipline faculty may propose a course for a particular Local GE or Transfer GE area.
- The Articulation Officer advises discipline faculty and members of the GE Subcommittee on eligibility for Local and Transfer GE areas.

- Wherever possible, Local GE placement processes and deadlines shall attempt to align with Transfer GE categories and effective approval dates.

7.3 Proposing a Course for General Education

Faculty may propose adding a GE designation to a new or existing course through the curriculum management system (CourseLeaf). The consideration to designate a course as meeting GE criteria is based on a review of the course outline of record (COR). Faculty are encouraged to meet with the Articulation Officer early during the course development process to ensure that evidence to support a specific GE designation is clearly and explicitly described in the COR. The Articulation Officer may also reach out to faculty authors with suggestions for GE placement during the review of new courses.

Requests for Local GE placement must be recommended by members of the GE Subcommittee and approved by the Curriculum Committee. Committee members will review the COR in the context of Local GE categories and requirements when making recommendations for placement. {Courses that are unanimously recommended by the GE Subcommittee will go on the Curriculum Committee's consent agenda; in the case of a split vote, they will be placed on the action agenda for further discussion.}

Requests for Transfer GE placement (CSU GE and/or IGETC) are submitted by the Articulation Officer through the ASSIST database. Approvals are determined based on external review of the COR by faculty within the CSU and UC systems. The Articulation Officer will communicate external decisions on CSU GE and IGETC approvals to faculty authors as they are received and advise faculty on any necessary follow up. See the Curriculum Committee website for typical articulation timelines.

7.4 Local GE Requirements

Napa Valley College's general education pattern represents a common curriculum that is the foundation of the Associate Degree (A.A. or A.S.) irrespective of major. Courses proposed for Local GE designation must be consistent with the college's general education philosophy, as described in AP 4025, and meet the additional criteria specific to the area of specialty. A course may be approved in more than one Local GE area, but students may not use the same course to satisfy the requirement in more than one GE area (double count).

Area A: Natural Sciences

Courses in the natural sciences examine the physical universe, its lifeforms, and its natural phenomena. These courses will help develop an appreciation and understanding of the scientific method and also impart to the student an understanding of the relationships between science and the world around them. This area includes introductory or integrative courses in astronomy, biology, chemistry, general physical science, geology, meteorology, oceanography, physical geography, biological anthropology, physics, and other scientific disciplines.

- Courses approved for CSU GE Area B1: Physical Science, CSU GE Area B2: Life Science, IGETC Area 5A: Physical Science, or IGETC Area 5B: Biological Science are assumed to meet Napa Valley College's GE Area A.

Area B: Social and Behavioral Sciences

Courses in the social and behavioral sciences focus on people as members of society. These courses will develop an awareness of the methods of inquiry used by the social and behavioral sciences. They should also stimulate critical thinking about the ways people act in response to their societies and should promote an appreciation of how societies and social subgroups operate. This area includes introductory or integrative courses in cultural anthropology, cultural geography, economics, history, political science, psychology, sociology, and related disciplines.

- Courses approved for CSU GE Area D: Social Sciences or IGETC Area 4: Social and Behavioral Sciences are assumed to meet Napa Valley College's GE Area B.

Area C: Humanities

Courses in the humanities study the cultural activities and artistic expressions of human beings. These courses will help develop an awareness of the ways in which people throughout the ages and in different cultures have responded to themselves and the world around them with artistic and cultural creations and help the student develop aesthetic understanding and an ability to make value judgments. This area includes introductory or integrative courses in the arts, foreign languages, literature, philosophy, religion, and related disciplines.

- Courses approved for CSU GE Area C1: Arts, CSU GE Area C2: Humanities, IGETC Area 3A: Arts, or IGETC Area 3B: Humanities are assumed to meet Napa Valley College's GE Area C.

Area D: Language and Rationality

Courses in language and rationality develop the principles and applications of language, whether it be written, spoken, or symbolic. These courses will explore language toward logical thought, clear and precise expression, and critical evaluation of communication. Three separate components of this area will be required.

D1. English Composition

Courses fulfilling the composition requirement focus on written language. These courses include substantial instruction and practice in both expository and argumentative writing.

- Courses approved for CSU GE Area A2: Written Communication or IGETC Area 1A: English Composition are assumed to meet Napa Valley College's GE Area D1.

D2. Mathematical Concepts and Quantitative Reasoning

Courses fulfilling the mathematical concepts and quantitative reasoning requirement focus on symbolic language. These courses will help the student successfully process information requiring quantitative analysis, calculation, and the ability to use and criticize quantitative arguments.

- Courses approved for CSU GE Area B4: Mathematics/Quantitative Reasoning or IGETC Area 2: Mathematical Concepts & Quantitative Reasoning are assumed to meet Napa Valley College's GE Area D2.

D3. Communication and Analytical Thinking

Courses fulfilling the communication and analytical thinking requirement focus on spoken or symbolic language. These courses will help the student achieve an understanding of the relationship between language and logic, developing an ability to communicate ideas, analyze and solve problems, and identify the assumptions upon which particular conclusions depend. This area includes courses in oral communication, mathematics, logic, computer languages and programming, and related disciplines.

- Courses approved for CSU GE Area A1: Oral Communication or IGETC Area 1C: Oral Communication are assumed to meet Napa Valley College's GE Area D3.

Area E: Ethnic Studies

Courses fulfilling the Ethnic Studies requirement focus on the interdisciplinary and comparative study of race, ethnicity, and culture in the United States, with specific emphasis on four historically defined racialized core groups: Native Americans, African Americans, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, and Latina and Latino Americans. Ethnic Studies courses must be offered in Ethnic Studies departments and programs, with disciplines focusing on the four autonomous core groups—including Chicana/o Studies, Latina/o Studies, La Raza Studies, African American Studies, Black Studies, Africana Studies, Native American Studies, American Indian Studies, Pacific Islander Studies, Filipino American Studies, and Central American Studies—each having distinct epistemologies, theories, and methodologies that center a critical Ethnic Studies lens (ASCCC Resolution 09.07, Spring 2021).

- Courses in this area must be approved for CSU GE Area F: Ethnic Studies or IGETC Area 7: Ethnic Studies and shall meet a minimum of 3 of the 5 following core competencies:
 - Analyze and articulate concepts such as race and racism, racialization, ethnicity, equity, ethno-centrism, eurocentrism, white supremacy, self-determination, liberation, decolonization, sovereignty, imperialism, settler colonialism, and anti-racism as analyzed in any one or more of the following: Native American Studies, African American Studies, Asian American Studies, and Latina and Latino American Studies.

- Apply theory and knowledge produced by Native American, African Americans, Asian Americans, and/or Latina and Latino American communities to describe the critical events, histories, cultures, intellectual traditions, contributions, lived-experiences, and social struggles of those groups with a particular emphasis on agency and group-affirmation.
- Critically analyze the intersection of race and racism as they relate to class, gender, sexuality, religion, spirituality, national origin, immigration status, ability, tribal citizenship, sovereignty, language, and/or age in Native American, African American, Asian American, and/or Latina and Latino American communities.
- Critically review how struggle, resistance, racial and social justice, solidarity, and liberation, as experienced and enacted by Native Americans, African Americans, Asian Americans, and/or Latina and Latino Americans are relevant to current structural issues such as communal, national, international politics as, for example, in immigration, reparations, settler-colonialism, multiculturalism, and language policies.
- Describe and actively engage with anti-racist and anti-colonial issues and the practices and movements in Native American, African American, Asian American, and/or Latina and Latino American communities and a just and equitable society.

7.4.1 Other Associate Degree Graduation Requirements

In addition to courses fulfilling the Local GE areas listed above, the Associate Degree (A.A. or A.S.) includes additional course requirements specific to Napa Valley College. These graduation requirements, as defined in AP 4100, are more disciplinary-specific and focused in scope. Unless otherwise noted, courses in these areas may be used to meet multiple requirements (double count), including general education and major requirements, and competencies.

Placement of courses in these areas will be determined by review of the discipline, objectives, and content areas listed in the COR and through consultation with discipline faculty. New courses meeting these graduation requirements will be placed on the agenda of the GE Subcommittee and included on the consent agenda of the Curriculum Committee.

Kinesiology/Health Requirement

Courses fulfilling the kinesiology and health requirement focus on the practice and study of human movement, sports, health, fitness, and better living. This area includes courses in kinesiology, physical education, dance, and health, and related disciplines.

Students majoring in health occupations fields, veterans with six months service, students who have completed the policy academy, and students who have already earned a bachelor's degree or higher are all exempt from the kinesiology/health graduation requirement.

American History and Institutions Requirement (A.A. degree only)

Courses fulfilling the American History and Institutions requirement examine the historical development of American institutions and ideals, as well as the Constitution of the United States, the operation of representative democratic government under the Constitution, and the process of California state and local government. Students must complete one course in American history and one course in American government. The courses chosen to satisfy this requirement cannot be used to satisfy Local GE Area B: Social and Behavioral Sciences.

Courses meeting the requirement in American history must include all of the following subject matter elements:

- Significant events covering a minimum time span of approximately one hundred years and occurring in the entire area now included in the United States of America, including the relationship of regions within that area and with external regions and powers as appropriate to the understanding of those events within the United States during the period under study.
- The role of major ethnic and social groups in such events and the contexts in which the events have occurred.
- The events presented within a framework that illustrates the continuity of the American experience and its derivation from other cultures, including consideration of three or more of the following: politics, economics, social movements, and geography.

Courses meeting the requirement in American government must include all of the following subject matter elements:

- The political philosophies of the framers of the Constitution and the nature and operation of United States political institutions and processes under that Constitution as amended and interpreted.
- The rights and obligations of citizens in the political system established under the Constitution.
- The Constitution of the state of California with the framework of evolution of federal-state relations and the nature and processes of state and local government under that Constitution.
- Contemporary relationships of state and local government with the federal government, the resolution of conflicts and the establishment of cooperative processes under the constitutions of both the state and nation, and the political processes involved.

Courses approved for one or more the CSU graduation requirements in United States History, Constitution, and American Ideals (CSU Executive Order 1061) meet the same categories in Napa Valley College's American History and Institutions graduation requirements.

7.4.2 Competencies for the Associate Degree

Competencies are academic knowledge, skills, and abilities that a student must master as part of the Associate Degree. These competencies are required by both title 5 regulations and local requirements as described in AP 4100. At Napa Valley College, students will demonstrate their mastery of competencies by completing courses approved to meet these requirements with a satisfactory grade. Courses approved for these competencies may be used to meet multiple requirements (double count), including general education, additional graduation, and major requirements.

Reading and Writing Competency

The reading and writing competency can be met by successfully completing an English course approved for Local GE Area D1 or by demonstrating competency that is comparable and at the same level as the course typically known as Freshman Composition.

Mathematics Competency

The mathematics competency can be met by successfully completing a mathematics course approved for Local GE Area D2 or by demonstrating competency that is comparable and at the same level as the course typically known as Intermediate Algebra.

Cultural Competency

Courses satisfying this competency analyze the contributions and perspectives of people belonging to underrepresented groups, defined as any group that has experienced marginalization in the dominant culture and/or collective discrimination or exclusion from equal participation or representation in social/economic/political institutions. These may include but are not limited to groups based on age, sex, gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and disability. Such analysis is to be explicit, not implicit, in the course of study and substantial and thematic rather than incidental or supplemental to a different focus. Courses that satisfy this requirement must significantly fulfill the majority of the following criteria:

- Study the history or experience of underrepresented groups.
- Identify specific contributions by underrepresented groups.
- Explore interactions within and among underrepresented groups.
- Increase students' knowledge and understanding of other cultures.
- Develop an awareness of different forms of discrimination and marginalization.
- Analyze issues relevant to underrepresented groups.
- Identify theories and practices of accommodation, assimilation, integration, and pluralism.
- Acquaint students with the concept of intersectionality.
- Recognize artistic achievements and aesthetic values of nonwestern cultures.
- Understand the value of diversity.

Placement of courses meeting the cultural competency must be voted on by members of the GE Subcommittee and approved by the Curriculum Committee based on a review of the COR. All courses that fulfill the Ethnic Studies graduation requirement also satisfy the cultural competency requirement.

7.5 Transfer GE Requirements

Napa Valley College students pursuing an Associate Degree for Transfer (AA-T or AS-T) complete one of two patterns for general education: the CSU General Education-Breadth (CSU GE) or Intersegmental General Education Transfer Curriculum (IGETC) pattern. The specific categories and requirements of these general education patterns and the approval of courses to meet these areas are determined by external bodies. Please contact the Articulation Officer for more information on processes and timelines.

7.5.1 CSU GE

The CSU Chancellor's General Education Advisory Committee (GEAC), which is made up primarily of members of the Academic Senate of the CSU, but includes faculty and staff representatives from the CSU and CCC, provides recommendations on CSU GE Breadth policy. Current requirements and processes are published on the California State University PolicyStat website: <https://calstate.policystat.com/policy/8919100>.

7.5.2 IGETC

Requirements for the IGETC pattern are approved by the Intersegmental Committee of the Academic Senates (ICAS) and updated annually. For details, see the most recent published version of the IGETC Standards, Policies, and Procedures Manual on the ICAS website: <https://icas-ca.org>.

7.5.3 Cal-GETC

The California General Education Transfer Curriculum (Cal-GETC) was established in response to AB 928 (Berman 2021) which requires a singular lower division general education pathway for transfer to CSU and UC campuses to be implemented by Fall 2025. The new [Cal-GETC Standards Version 1.1](#) document was approved by ICAS in May 2023 and can be located on their website. More details on timelines and processes will be forthcoming.

7.6 References and Resources

Academic Senate for California Community Colleges, [Resolution 09.07 \(Spring 2021\)](#) Defining Ethnic Studies and its Four Core Disciplines.

California Code of Regulations, [title 5 §55061](#) Philosophy and Criteria for Associate Degree and General Education.

California Code of Regulations, [title 5 §55063](#) Minimum Requirements for the Associate Degree.

California State University, [Executive Order 1061](#) Graduation Requirements in United States History, Constitution, and American Ideals.

California State University, [CSU General Education Breadth Requirements](#).

California State University and University of California, [Guiding Notes for General Education Course Review](#) (September 2022).

Intersegmental Committee of the Academic Senates, [Cal-GETC Standards](#) version 1.1 (December 2023).

Intersegmental Committee of the Academic Senates, [IGETC Standards, Policies, and Procedures](#) version 2.4 (May 2023).

Napa Valley College, [Administrative Procedure 4025](#) Philosophy and Criteria for Associate Degree and General Education.

Napa Valley College, [Administrative Procedure 4100](#) Graduation Requirements for Degrees and Certificates.

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