

**Central Michigan University
General Education Council**

**THE UNIVERSITY PROGRAM:
A BASIC DOCUMENTS SET**

General education at Central Michigan University has two components, University Program (UP) and Competency Requirements. This document set refers only to the UP portion of this program. Students must satisfactorily complete at least thirty hours of University Program courses in order to fulfill UP requirements. At least three hours must be satisfactorily completed in each subgroup of each of the four UP groups. Additional hours may be taken from any group. Competency requirements are described further in the *Bulletin*.

Gathered together here are the basic provisions which govern the University Program component, provisions enacted by the Academic Senate as amended. Prefatory to those provisions are two brief statements outlining the original intent of the University Program.

11/6/91
Revised 10/16/93; 5/08/02

I
THE ORIGINAL INTENT
THREE PROPOSITIONS

As the University Program took shape from 1975 through 1977, three fundamental propositions emerged.

First, coherence. The UP is a program, a carefully structured ensemble of courses designed to introduce students to the content and methods of major fields of human knowledge. The UP's Group and Subgroup definitions are neither wholly subject matter in orientation, nor wholly methodological, but are a blend of both.

Second, representativeness. Each UP course is presumed to be the only course taken by a student within a particular Subgroup. Therefore each course must be representative of the Subgroup within which it is found.

Third, completeness. Each course must stand alone as a complete and coherent statement, and must be explicitly informed by a central guiding principle.

Taken together, these three propositions - coherence, representativeness, and completeness - ensure that a student understands not only the central guiding principle of a course taken; not only how that course, and that principle, fit into the larger picture of human knowledge; but also, from the UP courses taken collectively, what that larger picture looks like.

--General Education Council, October 1, 1991

II.
THE ORIGINAL INTENT:
UNIVERSITY PROGRAM GROUP DEFINITIONS

No grouping or regrouping of specific named courses will guarantee a student a general education, particularly when only thirty credit hours of time are provided in which to do the job. Indeed, the objective of a general education is presumably not merely to convey a body of subject matter, but also to equip a student with the conceptual tools to place the information he or she gathers during a lifetime into a meaningful perspective. With that view, the groups subject to definition (particularly humanities, natural sciences and social sciences) partake of a meaning deeper and richer than that defined simply by content. Instead, content and conceptual approach blend and inform one another. What differs, for example, in a philosopher's view of the twentieth century and a social scientist's, is not only the content of their observations, the kinds of questions they ask, but also the way in which the questions are asked and the use to which the information gained is put. Neither content nor concept alone are sufficient for defining the humanities, natural sciences and social sciences. Together, a rational, defensible and educationally sound division may be made. By reason of the above, group definitions were not primarily drawn with disciplines in mind. Indeed...academic units (generally based upon traditional disciplinary lines) may well find that their present course offerings fall within several categories, and may wish to propose courses for the program in several categories. But it must be admitted that, as with any attempt to classify knowledge, the knife does not always cut perfectly cleanly. There seemingly will always be some boundaries of a vague and blurred nature, where reasonable persons may reasonably disagree...

--Letter of Transmittal
University Program Implementation Committee
to Academic Senate, February 15, 1977

III. THE UNIVERSITY PROGRAM

GROUP DESCRIPTIONS AND LEARNING OUTCOMES

The University Program is divided into four groups, each with at least two subgroups. These groups and subgroups represent area and integrated studies and are defined below. In addition to a general goal of the UP – that students in every class will be able to demonstrate skills in reading carefully, discussing cogently, and writing clearly about the facts and the interpretation of facts covered in these courses – each subgroup is organized around specific learning objectives, which are listed following the group and subgroup definitions below. Courses in a particular subgroup should adhere to these outcomes. (Note: It is possible that a course may not include *every* subgroup outcome, but it should strive to achieve a majority. Individual courses may also include specific outcomes in addition to those outlined here).

GROUP I - HUMANITIES

Historically, “the Humanities” has designated study of the classical Greek and Latin heritage; in polemical usage, it spoke for a strictly human, as opposed to supernatural or divine, standard for measuring and valuing human affairs. In current academic affairs, the term still carries both of these older significances: it expresses the importance of the study of cultural and artistic heritage; and it affirms the need for consideration of the human being *per se*, and only secondarily as measured by scientific or institutional standards. Therefore, as a group, the Humanities are defined as those areas of knowledge and study which examine and explore human experience and achievement, in order to attain a deeper understanding of the essential characteristics of the human condition.

Subgroup A. Human Events and Ideas

These studies involve concern with discerning coherence, order, meaning and significance in human events and ideas. The focus is upon substantial and significant aspects of human experience and upon the development of ideas and ideals. The subject matter may range from the examination of broadly general or universal propositions to the examination of human thoughts and actions in various contexts over a period of time.

By the end of Subgroup I-A, students will be able to:

- Demonstrate knowledge of significant figures, ideas, or movements that have shaped human experience and/or achievement in at least one area (literature, visual arts, philosophy, religion, music, and theatre) and place these materials in an historical, cultural, or intellectual context;
- Employ basic humanities methodologies to analyze, critically evaluate, and/or interpret issues, themes, literary or musical compositions, works of art, etc. from the domain of at least one humanities discipline;
- Engage in significant debates on issues in the humanities, demonstrating an ability to recognize diverse points of view.

Subgroup B. The Arts

These studies include a focus on the aesthetic dimension of human creative activity. Emphasis in these studies is placed primarily upon the development of aesthetic sensitivity, both intellectual and emotional, based upon critical analysis of the structure and the execution of works of art.

By the end of Subgroup I-B, students will be able to:

- Demonstrate an understanding of the aesthetic dimensions of artistic works and performances;
- Apply critical methodologies to the analysis and interpretation of artistic works and performances;
- Identify and explain the significance of major works and artists from a range of cultural, historical, and aesthetic traditions;
- Identify and explain the significance of key features or techniques characterizing major periods, genres, or traditions of art;
- Explain the relationship between artistic creations and their aesthetic, sociocultural, and historical contexts;
- Identify and interpret various ways in which the arts function in contemporary society.

GROUP II - NATURAL SCIENCES

As a group the natural sciences explore and examine natural phenomena in order to establish basic principles concerning the material universe. Its approach includes, but is not limited to, the observation, identification, description, experimental investigation and theoretical explanation of natural phenomena. To these ends the scientific method is crucial, providing as it does the rules for concept formation, conduct of observations and experiments, model-building and validation of hypothesis

by empirical means.

Subgroup A. Descriptive Sciences

These studies represent an attempt to understand natural phenomena primarily through observation, description and classification. Complex systems are analyzed in terms of the function of each part and their relation to other systems. Categories are developed while preserving their interrelatedness.

By the end of Subgroup II-A, students will be able to:

- Describe the underlying principles involved in scientific inquiry;
- Make scientific observations and evaluate the quality of data collected to determine its significance and accuracy;
- Discuss observations and descriptions and make generalizations based on them;
- Describe and draw conclusions from general scientific principles;
- Apply scientific principles to daily living, including evaluating current issues in the media.

Subgroup B. Quantitative and Mathematical Sciences

These studies reflect attempts to understand phenomena primarily through experimentation, simplification, quantification and deduction. Simplified models of complex phenomena are used to discover and establish fundamental principles. Mathematics statements concerning those models permit quantitative predictions.

By the end of Subgroup II-B, students will be able to:

- Describe the underlying principles involved in scientific inquiry;
- Solve scientific problems, applying all of the steps of the scientific method, including formulating questions and hypotheses, making scientific measurements, and making quantitative evaluations of the data collected to determine its significance and accuracy;
- Discuss collected data and make generalizations based on them.
- Describe and draw conclusions from general scientific and mathematical principles;
- Apply computational skills and scientific principles to daily living, including the evaluation of current issues in the media.

Specific Criteria.

1. Each course should stress scientific approaches and methodologies as well as subject matter.
2. The fundamental goal of each course should be to develop an understanding of basic science.
3. Lab Course Criteria:
 - a. At least 30 clock hours per semester must be spent in lab work for each hour of credit;
 - b. University Program standards are not satisfied by demonstration labs; students must carry out substantially all of the lab work;
 - c. Lab courses must demonstrate the same kind of methods as the Subgroup in which they are found.

GROUP III - SOCIAL SCIENCES

The social sciences are defined as those fields of knowledge and study which explore and examine the social dimension (and where appropriate the physical environment) of human life. In these studies an attempt is made to understand the behavior of individuals, groups, and institutions and where possible to establish scientifically- validated propositions.

Subgroup A. Behavioral Sciences

These studies involve a focus on the analysis of individual human behavior within society. Studies of such phenomena such as motivation, personality and perception are included.

By the end of Subgroup III-A, students will be able to:

- Recognize and explain the rudiments of the different methods used in the social and behavioral sciences;
- Recognize, explain and cite examples of the reciprocal influences between individuals and their social environments;
- Recognize and explain prominent characteristics of individuals that influence or are influenced by social environments;
- Recognize and explain prominent characteristics of social environments that influence or are influenced by individuals.

Subgroup B. Studies in Social Structures

These studies involve the analysis of social structures, their functioning, and their changes, whether processes of evolution, history, or conflict. These structures include social institutions, organizations, networks, and groups as well as the cultural elements upon which they rest. This area's major causal foci are social and cultural forces.

By the end of Subgroup III-B, students will be able to:

- Demonstrate a basic understanding of at least one major technique used in the analysis of social organization.
- Describe the structure, functioning, and patterns of change involved in at least one major area of social organization.
- Explain the process by which social and/or cultural forces shape some major aspect of social organization.
- Apply some basic concepts pertaining to the analysis of social organizations in the student's own social and/or cultural contexts or the context of participants in their own social organization.

GROUP IV –INTEGRATIVE AND AREA STUDIES

Group IV is divided into three subgroups, each of which has as its characteristic feature a type of subject matter that is more appropriately studied from a variety of perspectives.

Subgroup A: Integrative and Multi-disciplinary Studies.

In these studies there is an emphasis on the examination of an issue or a subject from an integrative or multi-disciplinary viewpoint, so as to expose complex relationships and interdependencies within the issue or subject and between it and other issues or subjects. The focus is upon the integration of approaches and methods. The course must address the assumptions that underlie the alternative approaches. The issues or subjects chosen must be recognizable as significant and of continuing interest. Courses in this subgroup must make students aware of the various methodologies needed for adequate study of the issue or subject. The following specific criteria are attached to Group IV-A:

1. The perspectives of the respective disciplines should be identified;
 2. To satisfy the multi-disciplinary criteria, the methodologies themselves of the pertinent disciplines must be used, rather than simply drawing upon the data or conclusions of scholars or researchers in those disciplines;
 3. The assumptions underlying each discipline's approach must be identified.
- [Reference: Gen Ed Subcommittee, 10/5/00; Academic Senate 11/21/00]

By the end of Subgroup IV-A, students will be able to:

- Explain the value of the comparative perspective in an area of humanities (e.g., comparative literature), social science, or natural science;
- Describe the differences and similarities of at least two methodologies that apply to the content of the course taken;
- Analyze a social problem and distinguish how the different disciplines covered in the course taken would approach solving the problem.

Subgroup B: Studies in Global Cultures.

These studies involve exploration of significant geographical, cultural, or political units outside of the Anglo-American cultural tradition. The courses may be based in more traditional academic disciplines, and may require the student to become familiar with specific disciplinary methodologies; but their major goal should be to acquaint students with the fundamental and distinctive characteristics of the unit (s) under examination. Alternatively this subgroup may be satisfied by taking a course in foreign language which includes cultural study.

A course in global cultures explicitly includes but is not limited to a search for that which makes the unit or units under consideration a unity, i.e., the fundamental considerations linking those found within a geographical, political or cultural boundary and differentiating them from others outside that boundary.

[Reference: Academic Senate 12/12/01]

By the end of Subgroup IV-B, students will be able to:

- Describe the common features of a particular geographical, cultural, or political unit as well as the diversity within that unit;
- Define, discuss, and illustrate the cultural values (social, political, religious, economic, etc.) or systems of values of the geographic, cultural, or political unit(s) under study;
- Illustrate and discuss common perceptions and attitudes, including biases and stereotypes, concerning the particular geographical, cultural, or political unit(s) in question;
- Demonstrate how, with respect to a given geographical, cultural, or political unit, the past relates to the present (e.g.

- the French Revolution and contemporary French society) and the part to the whole (France and *la francophonie*);
- Describe and illustrate the contributions (e.g. religious, artistic, scientific, etc.) of the geographical, cultural, or political unit(s) under study to the world at large and/or to American culture in particular;
- Give evidence of an understanding of a cultural tradition other than one's own.
- For foreign languages, communicate and comprehend effectively in the target language at the level appropriate for the particular course.

Subgroup C: Studies in Racism and Cultural Diversity in the United States.

Courses in this category will focus primarily on one or more of the major groups which experience both racism and invidious discrimination in the United States, but may also include issues of gender, ethnicity, and sexual orientation. Such courses will at least:

1. emphasize the contributions of the group(s) to U.S. society;
2. consider the roots, behavioral and institutional manifestations and consequences of racism, discrimination and stereotyping; and
3. where appropriate, indicate the variation within the focus group. [References for IV.C: Gen Ed. Subcommittee minutes, 11/21/91; UCC minutes, 12/11/91; Academic Senate 1/14/92]

By the end of Subgroup IV-C, students will be able to:

- Demonstrate an understanding of the causes of racism and how stereotyping helps perpetuate racism and other forms of discrimination;
- Demonstrate knowledge of the history of at least one group that has experienced racism and invidious discrimination in the United States;
- Discuss the contributions to US society of at least one group that has experienced racism and how these contributions compare with or relate to the contributions made by other groups;
- Define and give examples of how past and present institutional racism and discrimination advantage some people while disadvantaging others;
- Where applicable to the course, discuss the similarities and differences of racism and one other form of discrimination based on gender, ethnicity, and sexual orientation.



GUIDELINES FOR THE SELECTION OF UNIVERSITY PROGRAM COURSES

1. While any course offered under University Program Groups I, II, or III may be rooted in a particular academic discipline and may be taught from that perspective, each course so offered must be representative of its subgroup as well as of its own discipline. The fundamental assumption used by the course evaluation committee is that any course so offered is presumed to be the only course taken by a student in that subgroup. As a result, it is suggested that each course emphasize the following elements:
 - a. techniques common to its discipline, and to the extent possible, those techniques common to its subgroup;
 - b. value premises commonly recognized as arising from the various issues, theories and methodologies within the coverage of the course.
 - c. limits of any single discipline's approach to the subject at hand.
2. Each course offered under the University Program, in addressing its own subject matter, must be a complete statement in and of itself. In Groups I, II, and III courses may not require specific course prerequisites. In the case of Group IV, submission of 300 and 400 level courses is encouraged and courses with prerequisites will be allowed.
3. Each course offered as part of the University Program must require a significant amount of meaningful writing. Courses may be exempted from the writing requirements if they are shown to require equivalent amounts of computation or public speaking.
4. Each course offered as part of the University Program is expected to include a requirement where practicable, that students attend at least one relevant out-of-class university event and provide a report or reflection on that experience as one component of their grade. Instructors may select an appropriate event or events from lists provided each semester by sources

such as campus calendar (<http://events.cmich.edu/>), the Office of Institutional Diversity (<http://www.diversity.cmich.edu/mss/calendar.htm>), etc.

Implementation Notes: Instructors will be permitted to augment the lists to include university, department, or community speakers, events, etc. which are determined by the instructor to be particularly valuable to our students and the goals of general education and diversity awareness. It is expected that Instructors will make alternative assignments or suggestions to students who because of class or other conflicts are absolutely unable to attend any of the recommended events. In the case of a time conflict, a class that a student is registered for must take precedent over an assigned event. [Reference: Academic Senate 3/25/03]

5. Application for Subgroup IV-B certification for a temporary course. A study of a culture may involve travel to the site of the culture and such travel-oriented courses may, due to expense or other complications associated with travel abroad, be a course offered only on a temporary basis. By application to the General Education Subcommittee one-time Subgroup IV-B certification may be granted. Certification for a permanent course must go through the curricular process.

Proposals are to be filed with the General Education Sub-committee and must address the following process and criteria:

- 1) Explain how the course meets the content criteria for Subgroup IV-B (see Group IV – Integrative and Area Studies, Subgroup B above).
- 2) Submit a copy of the course syllabus. The course objectives should meet the objectives of Subgroup IV-B.
- 3) Explain the nature of the cultural exposure in the class, how it relates to course content, and how this exposure differs from the exposure attained by tourists taking a guided tour. Illustrate how the study of the unit under consideration is being made.
- 4) Describe the pre-departure academic preparation and/or requirements (e.g. readings, meetings, writing, foreign language instruction, etc.)
- 5) Explain how the course will meet the Writing Across the University Program requirements (see General

Education

Writing Policies for ways to fulfill the writing requirement).

- 6) Demonstrate how the student's time spent in the course corresponds to a 3 credit hour course.

LIMITATIONS ON STUDENT COURSE SELECTION

1. Students must satisfactorily complete at least thirty hours of University Program courses in order to fulfill University Program requirements. At least three hours must be satisfactorily completed in each subgroup of each of the four University Program groups. Additional hours to complete the University Program may be taken from any group.

2. Unless the degree specifically prohibits it, courses that are required under Other Degree Requirements may also be used to satisfy University Program requirements, provided that the courses are also on the list of University Program courses. University Program courses may also be taken as part of a major or minor unless otherwise restricted.

3. The University Program has been designed to encourage [students] to explore as many different disciplines as possible; therefore, [students] must choose [their] University Program courses from different designators. Only one time may [a student] take a second course with the same designator to satisfy [his/her] University Program requirement. Typically [students] will be required to take courses with nine (9) different designators. [Reference: Gen. Ed. Subcommittee 10/24/91; UCC 2/13/92; Academic Senate 2/19/92]

4. Within Group II, each student must select at least one laboratory experience equivalent to at least one laboratory credit hour. [Reference for change in #4: Gen. Ed. Subcommittee 2/25/93; UCC 3/17/93; Academic Senate 4/13/93]

5. Students must earn a minimum cumulative grade point average of 2.0 in University Program courses in order to graduate.

6. Students may not take more than two courses or seven hours of CR/NC in the University Program.

7. CLEP General Examination credit is not accepted for University Program credit.

8. In fulfilling the University Program IVB requirement, [a student] may count up to 3 semester hours (CMU International Program Studies or transfer) for any college or university-level coursework in any department taken at any institution of higher education located outside the United States and Canada. Coursework taken in the Province of Quebec; however, may be used.

If [a student] is interested in participating in international programs, [the student] should note that [he or

she] may also apply to the General Education Subcommittee for further University Programs credit for coursework done abroad on a course-by-course basis. Documentation of the nature of the work done in each course (such as syllabi, course outlines, and assignments) is essential. It is [the student's] responsibility to collect and provide such documentation. [Interested students should] contact the Director of International Programs for further information. [Reference: UCC Minutes, 9/30/92]

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ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Only persons with faculty rank, with the exceptions designated below, may deliver instruction and assign grades in University Program courses. Laboratory sections may be taught by graduate teaching assistants. Doctoral students on teaching assistantships who have been granted admission to candidacy for the doctoral degree may also be assigned to deliver University Program courses. In these cases, the students must be approved through the normal hiring process(es) of the department for faculty teaching University Program courses. University Program courses involving unusual pedagogies or teaching methods will be considered by the General Education Subcommittee on a case-by-case basis for possible exception to this rule.
2. Any course not previously approved for University Bulletin inclusion must first secure approval through the ordinary University curricular process. Courses already approved for inclusion in the University Bulletin may be submitted directly to the General Education Subcommittee for consideration. Only University units with authority to offer credit courses may submit courses to the General Education Subcommittee.
3. Any course proposal submitted for inclusion in the University Program must be accompanied by a detailed syllabus signed by the instructor(s) assigned to teach the course. When an instructor who has not previously taught the course is assigned to teach it, the department, before instruction begins, shall see that he/she affixes his/her signature to the approved syllabus.

Approved by the Academic Senate April 26, 1977 and November 29, 1977

Revised 4/3/79; 11/18/80; 2/23/82; 10/8/85; 1/20/87; 2/26/91; 1/14/92; 2/19/92; 4/13/93, 11/21/00; 3/25/03; 1/27/04, 10/4/05