Revised General Education Curriculum to begin Fall 2014  
presented by the General Education Committee (2009 – present)

Introduction

Just as it is incumbent on faculty within their disciplines to periodically re-evaluate and update their curricula, so must the faculty of a university do so for its general education curriculum. For the past several years, the General Education Committee, along with many other dedicated faculty members from across the campus, have closely re-examined this substantial component of every undergraduate degree program.

This proposed revised General Education program continues to fall within the SACS requirements and addresses the THEC and Complete College requirements in that the program provides a clearer vision of outcomes for the program and for the students. The number of hours required is the same as before and is in line with all other Tennessee general education programs. The clearly articulated outcomes should be easy for students to understand and also easier to assess as a part of the certification and recertification process.

General education courses ask students to explore specific domains of knowledge utilizing a variety of skills and approaches with the goal of personal and professional growth. The courses that cross multiple disciplines and categories of study offer students the time and space to explore, connect, and prepare for the opportunities and challenges within their major.

It has been 16 years since the faculty has visited the curriculum that all students are required to take and includes 41 hours of their university experience. This kind of commitment by students and faculty warrants a regular assessment to assure it follows current best practices and remains valuable to the student experience.

UTC's Philosophy and Goals of General Education Curriculum

The UTC faculty believes that the general education curriculum can expand students' fundamental knowledge, abilities, and aesthetic sensibilities, leading to more enriched lives and a more comprehensive view of our global world.

General Education Goals

Through study in rhetoric and composition, the natural sciences, mathematics, statistics, the behavioral and social sciences, non-Western culture, the humanities, and the fine arts, graduates of The University of Tennessee at Chattanooga will be able to:

- Express a broad knowledge of human cultures and the physical and natural world;
- Think critically, analytically, and reflectively;
- Employ qualitative and quantitative information to define and defend viewpoints, solve problems, and to make informed decisions;

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1 SACS Requirements related to General Education programming:

In each undergraduate program, the institution requires the successful completion of a general education component at the collegiate level that (1) is a substantial component of each undergraduate degree, (2) ensures breadth of knowledge, and (3) is based on a coherent rationale.

These credit hours are to be drawn from and include at least one course from each of the following areas: humanities/fine arts, social/behavioral sciences, and natural sciences/mathematics. The courses do not narrowly focus on those skills, techniques, and procedures specific to a particular occupation or profession.

• Communicate effectively, especially in speech and in writing; and collaborate on common tasks; and
• Synthesize information and concepts across general and specific disciplinary studies, demonstrated through the application of knowledge, skills and responsibilities to new settings and situations.

Categories of Study

The achievement of the five overall general education outcomes listed above will begin by students completing courses in the categories listed below for a total of 40-41 credit hours.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Credit Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rhetoric and Writing</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Fine Arts &amp; Humanities</td>
<td>12 total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Historical Understanding</td>
<td>(3 credit)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literature</td>
<td>(3 credit)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thought, Values &amp; Beliefs</td>
<td>(3 credit)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visual and Performing Arts</td>
<td>(3 credit)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Natural Sciences</td>
<td>7-8 (including a minimum of at least 1 lab course)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavioral &amp; Social Sciences</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statistics</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Western Culture</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>40-41 credit hours</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Summary of Proposed Changes

• Specific learning outcomes for the overall general education curriculum and for each general education category are articulated.
• Cultures and Civilizations and Fine Arts and Humanities categories are reworked to make them more flexible for students who may change majors over the course of their undergraduate program.
• Student exemptions in the Math and Statistics categories are specified that allow students to satisfy those categories without having to “backtrack” to lower level course work in order to satisfy general education requirements.
• Non-Western Cultures is separated as a category by itself to reduce confusion about the total number of hours required to meet general education requirements.
• Specific guidelines for all general education courses are articulated.
Guidelines and Criteria for ALL General Education Courses

Communication skills are a central part of this proposed general education curriculum. While specific writing requirements are not detailed in this proposal, all General Education courses must provide students with meaningful opportunities to communicate the results of their inquiries and analyses. All types of communication are encouraged, including any form of communication specific to a discipline: oral, written, visual, graphic, and other forms of communication. Departments and faculty teaching general education courses must determine the best way to provide students with meaningful practice in communication.

In addition to communication skills, all general education courses must:

- Be appropriate for students with no prior college-level background in the category of study.
- Include appropriate general and category-specific technologies to advance and expand students’ information literacy and technology skills.
- Promote and develop college-level reading ability (e.g. advanced vocabulary, reading for multiple levels of meaning, comprehension of expressions of the discipline under study.)
- Engage students in the critical analysis of the works of the category of study.
- Prompt students to identify and discuss significant and/or influential moments in the evolution of the category of study.
- Encourage students to make meaningful connections between their studies in general education and their major area of study.
- Require students to review and abide by the UTC Honor Code.

Given the nature of General Education, courses must:

- Be open to any UTC student, independent of classification or major. Exemptions with accompanying rationale can be requested at the time of certification/recertification.
- Require NO co- or pre-requisites other than approved General Education courses. Exemptions with accompanying rationale can be requested at the time of certification/recertification.

Along with the specific course outcomes, all General Education Course syllabi must place the following statement in a prominent place in the syllabus and list the category or subcategory outcomes.

This course is certified as a General Education course fulfilling the <name of category> category. Please consult with your advisor and check the specific requirements for your major to determine if this course is a good fit for your plan of study.

The overall outcomes for the category are:
<list the category or subcategory outcomes>.

The General Education Committee will grant programmatic exceptions to departments that demonstrate that a General Education requirement would unduly interfere with the progress of their students toward graduation or put at risk their program’s accreditation. The current exceptions granted to programs for General Education requirements will remain in place until such time as those programs come up for accreditation or renewal. Programmatic exceptions will be reviewed and renewed, if still necessary, when programs, as a part of their self study, seek accreditation or renewal.
Rhetoric and Writing Category

| Rhetoric and Writing | 6 credit hours | 2 sequential courses |

In general, students must complete six (6) credit hours in the Rhetoric and Writing Category. This requirement typically consists of two sequential 3-hour courses to be taken consecutively, each with a grade of C or better. Students are expected to complete this requirement within the first 30 attempted credit hours. Students with ACT-English scores of 30 or above (SAT Verbal of 680 or above) are exempt from the first course in this sequence.

Some students may not be eligible to enroll in general education courses in this category until they fulfill prescribed course requirements. See the UTC catalog section on Advising, Orientation, and Registration (http://catalog.utc.edu/content.php?catoid=8&navoid=156) and information about directed self-placement (www.utc.edu/Academic/DirectedSelfPlacement) for further information.

Category Purpose:
The purpose of this category is to develop a student’s ability to read and write critically and communicate effectively in a variety of genres and contexts.

Rhetoric and Writing: Course I

Category Outcomes:
Upon completion of the required credit hours in this course and receipt of a grade of C or better, students will be able to:

- Read and understand multiple genres and texts.
- Use academic writing strategies with an emphasis on developing ideas, formulating a thesis, constructing an argument, and adjusting organization and details to meet audience needs.
- Use revision strategies to clarify and improve a writing project’s purpose, thesis, organization, use of supporting details, use of source material, and audience appropriateness.
- Work effectively in peer groups to give and receive feedback on emerging drafts.
- Use at least one multi-subject database to find relevant research and effectively incorporate material from their research into formal assignments.
- Apply basic citation principles in at least one style (such as MLA or APA).
- Complete formal writing projects using appropriate grammar, mechanics, formatting, and tone.

Rhetoric and Writing: Course II

Category Outcomes: Upon completion of the required credit hours in this course and receipt of a grade of C or better, students will be able to:

- Develop effective arguments for multiple audiences using appropriate rhetorical strategies and various types of evidence.
- Develop a focused research question and identify research strategies for finding appropriate primary and secondary sources.
- Understand and use several multi-subject databases to locate sources; evaluate sources for reliability and persuasive potential; understand and use other research methods where appropriate.
- Effectively and ethically incorporate the words and ideas of others into their own original writing.
- Confidently use at least one common citation method, (such as MLA or APA).
- Successfully complete several formal writing projects, including research-driven arguments, using appropriate grammar, mechanics, formatting, and tone.
The Fine Arts and Humanities Category

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Fine Arts &amp; Humanities</th>
<th>12 credit hours total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Historical Understanding (3 credit hours)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literature (3 credit hours)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thought, Values &amp; Beliefs (3 credit hours)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Visual and Performing Arts (3 credit hours)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Students must complete a total of 12 credit hours in The Fine Arts and Humanities category. There are four (4) subcategories in this overarching category: Historical Understanding; Literature; Thought, Values and Beliefs; and Visual and Performing Arts. Some of The Fine Arts and Humanities courses may fulfill the requirements for more than one subcategory. A student must take at least one course in each subcategory.

Category Purpose:
The purpose of this category is to develop skills in the analysis and interpretation of products of human thought and imagination in the realms of visual and performing arts, history, literature, philosophy, ethics, and religion.

Category Outcomes:
Upon completion of the required credit hours in this category, students will be able to:

- Describe the forms and limits of knowledge in the arts and the humanities.
- Identify the relationships among ideas, text, and artistic works and their cultural and historical contexts.
- Recognize and evaluate competing interpretations of texts broadly defined.
- Compare the differences and commonalities among the various disciplines in the Fine Arts and Humanities.
- Apply the techniques of interpretation and analysis characteristic of disciplines in the Fine Arts and Humanities to explore significant issues, texts, and artistic works.
- Communicate the results of their inquiries and analyses in writing.

Historical Understanding Subcategory

Subcategory Purpose:
The purposes of this subcategory are to develop student skills in historical analysis and to increase student understanding of the past and its complexities. Students are encouraged to check the specific requirements for their major for this category.

Subcategory Outcomes:
Upon completion of the required credit hours in this subcategory, students will be able to:

- Explain concepts such as cause and effect, change over time, context, and contingency.
- Explain the varieties of historical evidence and assess their strengths and limitations.
- Analyze and interpret primary and secondary source material, distinguish between them, and place them in context.
- Evaluate multiple perspectives that emerge from differing narratives and sources.
- Follow and construct logical and coherent historical arguments.
- Articulate the relationship between the past and the present.
Literature Subcategory

Subcategory Purpose:
The goal of the literature subcategory is to promote critical engagement with the written word through prose, poetry, and drama. Students will acquire skills in the analysis and interpretation of texts and deepen their knowledge of the ways in which figurative language contributes to human thought and expression. Courses in this category should promote college-level reading skills through an emphasis on comprehension, building vocabulary, and exposure to a range of literary expression. Students are encouraged to check the specific requirements for their major for this category.

Subcategory Outcomes:
Upon completion of the required credit hours in this subcategory, students will be able to:
- Recognize and analyze figurative language.
- Identify and discuss multiple levels of meaning.
- Construct theses and logical arguments related to the meaning or contexts of texts.
- Arbitrate competing interpretations.
- Articulate differences in genre (e.g. fiction, poetry, drama, etc.) and sub-genre (e.g. short story, essay, epic, sonnet, etc.).
- Address the influence of cultural and historical contexts on literary texts.
- Read and comprehend college-level literature.

Thought, Values & Beliefs Subcategory

Subcategory Purpose:
The goal of this subcategory is for students to engage analytically and critically at least one body of philosophical, ethical, and/or religious thought. Students will examine ways in which such thought can shape decisions and actions. Students are encouraged to check the specific requirements for their major for this category.

Subcategory Outcomes:
Upon completion of the required credit hours in this subcategory, students will be able to:
- Identify the key components of at least one body of thought.
- Explain and analyze a body of thought.
- Apply the unique perspective of the body of thought to a specific problem or question.
- Effectively articulate in writing their individual perspective in relation to the body of thought.

Visual and Performing Arts Subcategory

Subcategory Purpose:
The purpose of this subcategory is to engage students in aspects of human creative thought and expression. Students are encouraged to check the specific requirements for their major for this category.

Subcategory Outcomes:
Upon completion of the required credit hours in this subcategory, students will be able to:
- Describe, interpret, and analyze creative modes of expression.
- Offer multiple solutions to specific creative problems.
- Form and defend judgments about creative modes of expression.
- Compare ideas, issues, or themes in human civilizations' achievements.
Non-Western Culture Category

Non-Western Culture | 3 credit hours

General Education courses in Non-Western Culture may be certified for a second general education category or subcategory. If courses are selected with care, students will be able to use one course to fulfill both the Non-Western category and another General Education category at the same time. However students must still complete 40-41 credit hours in the general education curriculum.

Category Purpose:
Courses in this category will investigate some aspect of a culture whose dominant traditions originate outside of "Western" (as defined below) traditions, values, and systems of thought and belief. The purpose of this category is to ensure that students explore at least one culture outside of the Euro-American framework. Students are required to take one course certified in this category. This course may also be certified in another category or subcategory.

Category Outcomes:
Upon completion of the required credit hours in this subcategory, students will be able to:
- Identify and analyze knowledge, artifacts, or practices of at least one non-Western* culture.
- Recognize and articulate the complexities of human differences within the culture or cultures under examination.
- Draw comparisons between the culture or cultures under examination and Western* traditions or practices.

*For the purposes of this document, “Western” is defined as an ideological, not a geographic, construct referring to peoples whose traditions trace their origins predominantly to European or American cultural heritages, recognizing that virtually no culture can be said to be “purely” Western or non-Western.

Among the clearest examples of Western cultures as defined above would be the nations and non-indigenous cultures of the continents of North America, Europe, and Australia. Likewise the clearest examples of “non-Western” cultures would be the nations and cultures of Asia and Africa and the indigenous cultures of North and South American and Australia. We recognize that there are some gray areas, such as the cultures of South and Central America or countries like Israel or even Russia, which are sometimes characterized as “Western” and sometimes not. Departments seeking certification for courses dealing with such nations or cultures should explain their rationale for labeling their course “non-Western.”

The Natural Sciences Category

The Natural Sciences | 7-8 credit hours
2 courses + a minimum of at least 1 lab course

Students must complete seven or eight (7-8) credit hours of courses in the Natural Sciences category. At least one course will include a laboratory component that contributes to ¼ of the final grade. The laboratory component grade may be reported separately. Students are encouraged to check the specific requirements for their major for this category.

Category Purpose:
The purpose of this category is to allow students to participate in the systematic ways in which human beings analyze the physical universe, to appreciate the achievements of the human mind in comprehending the universe, and to understand the significant role of the natural sciences in human development.
Category Outcomes:
Upon completion of the required credit hours in this category, students will be able to:

- Explain intellectual foundations, conceptual approaches, and methodologies of the natural sciences.
- Understand and explain scientific terminology.
- Discuss historical, social and political issues related to scientific data and advances.
- Construct graphic and analytical models from a description of a specific natural phenomenon.
- Formulate a hypothesis based on empirical data.
- Apply the scientific method to solve problems.
- Design experiments to test hypotheses.
- Express conclusions and implications from scientific experiments using a variety of methods.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Behavioral and Social Science Category</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Behavioral &amp; Social Sciences</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 credit hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 courses</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Students are required to complete six (6) credit hours in the Behavioral and Social Sciences category. These two courses should be from different disciplines unless requirements for the major stipulate otherwise.

Category Purpose:
The purpose of this category is to explore the nature of human behavior and social systems.

Category Outcomes:
Upon completion of the required credit hours in this category, students will be able to:

- Use and communicate evidence and theory to examine individual, social and or cultural phenomena.
- Explain the strengths and limitations of behavioral or social science methods in predicting human behavior.
- Describe and explain social or behavioral phenomena by applying a discipline’s concepts and/or theories.
- Engage in reasoning using qualitative or quantitative social science or behavioral science tools and information.
- Analyze empirical observations in relation to discipline-appropriate theoretical constructs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mathematics Category</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mathematics</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 credit hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 course</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

In general, students must complete three (3) credit hours in the Mathematics Category. Students are expected to complete this requirement within the first 30 attempted credit hours. Students with ACT-Math scores of 28 or above (SAT Math of 630 or above) are exempt from this requirement.

Some students may not be eligible to enroll in general education courses in this category until they fulfill prescribed course requirements. See the UTC catalog section, “Advising, Orientation, and Registration,” (http://catalog.utc.edu/content.php?catoid=8&navoid=156) for further information.
Category Purpose:
The purpose of this category is to develop students’ ability to use abstract and deductive reasoning, to think logically and creatively about quantitative phenomena, and to analyze and solve real-world and abstract mathematical problems.

Category Outcomes:
Upon completion of the required credit hours in this category, students will be able to:
- Explain key mathematical concepts or prove mathematical statements.
- Describe both the strengths and limitations of mathematics in addressing human problems.
- Use a variety of appropriate mathematical concepts, skills, tools, and methods to solve quantitative problems that arise in students’ personal and professional lives.
- Analyze and resolve real-world and abstract quantitative situations that require critical thinking, logical reasoning, and the ability to identify assumptions and separate relevant from irrelevant information.
- Communicate, interpret, and justify results with clarity and coherence.

### Statistics Category

<table>
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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 course</td>
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</table>

Students must complete three (3) credit hours in the Statistics Category. Some students may not be eligible to enroll in general education courses in this category until they fulfill prescribed course requirements. Check prerequisite and co-requisite requirements for courses certified for this category for specific information.

Category Purpose:
The purpose of this category is to develop students’ ability to use statistical reasoning in their personal and professional lives.

Category Outcomes:
Upon completion of the required credit hours in this category, students will be able to:
- Apply conceptual understandings of basic statistical principles to real-world situations.
- Use statistical thinking.
- Explain statistical concepts and interpret statistical results using appropriate statistical vocabulary.
- Apply techniques of descriptive and inferential statistics and basic probability principles to real data.
- Recognize the strengths and limitations of statistics in addressing human problems and conduct investigations of statistically accessible problems.
- Use software packages for data analysis and statistical understanding.
General Education Committee
Barbara Norwood, Chair, current chair of the General Education Committee
Tom Balazs, English
Jose Barbosa, Biological and Environmental Sciences
Stephanie Bellar, Political Science
Ralph Covino, History
Betsy Darken, Mathematics
Matthew Guy, English
Ann Holmes, Physics, Geology, and Astronomy
Rebecca Jones, English
Anne Lindsey, Art
Claire McCullough, Engineering & Computer Science
Kim Wingate, Education

Administrative Support:
Karen Adsit, Lifelong Learning & Walker Center for Teaching & Learning
Dawn Ford, Walker Center for Teaching & Learning
Linda Orth, Registrar
Susan Ritz, University Planning
Jocelyn Sanders, Associate Provost for Academic Affairs

Past General Education Committee members who contributed:
Pam Carter, Education
Lorraine Evans, Sociology, Anthropology & Geography
Victoria Steinberg, Modern Languages & Literature
Anthony Steinhoff, History
Jack Thompson, Engineering & Computer Science
Eddie Wang, Physics, Geology, and Astronomy

Thanks as well to all faculty who participated in the General Education Retreat (Fall 2011) and in the many discussion sessions held over the past two years.