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Academic Affairs

Responsible Office:  
[Academic Affairs](#)

**Procedure Title:**  
General Education Requirement

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This procedure item applies to:  
Community Colleges  
State-Operated Campuses

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## Summary

Campuses with undergraduate programs shall have one or more general education curricula consistent with the SUNY General Education Requirement (SUNY-GER), which may be supplemented by local and programmatic general education requirements. Each such curriculum shall be developed by faculty and shall consist of courses that lead to the SUNY-GER student learning outcomes developed by the Provost's Advisory Committee on General Education (PACGE). Campuses shall have a process for locally approving SUNY-GER courses and updating the System-level list of such courses. To promote student mobility and degree completion, campuses shall provide information to students about the SUNY General Education Requirement, and shall provide a General Education Transcript Addendum (GETA) for students transferring to another SUNY campus.

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## Process

### *Glossary of Terms*

**General Education.** An undergraduate curriculum of broad, high-quality courses that provides students with a set of non-specialized, coherent and focused educational experiences aimed at enabling students to acquire knowledge and skills that are useful and important for all educated persons regardless of their jobs or professions. (*Source:* Trustees Resolution 2010-006)

**SUNY General Education Requirement (SUNY-GER).** The 30-credit requirement for SUNY baccalaureate degree recipients, which supports academic excellence as well as student choice, mobility and degree attainment by expecting students to demonstrate achievement of University-wide learning outcomes in seven of ten knowledge and skill areas (two of which are required) and two required competency areas.

**Local General Education Requirements.** General education requirements established by individual SUNY campuses to either add specificity to the SUNY-GER (e.g., require specific SUNY-GER areas) or exceed the 30-credit SUNY-GER.

**Programmatic General Education Requirements.** Specific general education requirements associated with individual academic programs, such as requirements in programs leading to teacher certification that are externally mandated. These may be met within the 30-credit SUNY-GER, but they may also exceed the SUNY-GER (e.g., additional courses, minimum course grades).

**Liberal Arts and Sciences (LAS).** The New York State Education Department requires a minimum number of credits in liberal arts and sciences courses in each registered undergraduate degree program, as shown in Table 1. In all cases, SUNY-GER courses may be counted as liberal arts and sciences courses.

**Table 1**  
**Minimum Amount of Liberal Arts Content Required**  
**for Each Undergraduate Degree**

Degree	Minimum Proportion of Content	Minimum Number of Credits
Associate in Arts (AA)	3/4	45
Associate in Science (AS)	1/2	30
Associate in Applied Science (AAS)	1/3	20
Bachelor of Arts (BA)	3/4	90
Bachelor of Science (BS)	1/2	60
All other undergraduate baccalaureate degrees (BBA, BE, BFA, BPS, BTech, etc.)	1/4	30

SOURCE: <http://www.highered.nysed.gov/ocue/aipr/liberalarts.htm>

### **Implementation**

1. **General education curriculum.** A campus shall have one or more general education curricula consistent with University policy. Each such curriculum shall enable graduates of baccalaureate degree programs to meet the SUNY-GER student learning outcomes for Basic Communication, Mathematics, at least five of the other eight SUNY-GER knowledge and skills areas, and the two SUNY-GER competency areas. A campus may also have local and programmatic general education requirements.
  1. **SUNY-GER courses.** A campus shall have a faculty review process for adding, deleting or revising SUNY-GER courses and updating the System-level list of approved SUNY-GER courses. Each such course shall be aligned with the SUNY-GER student learning outcomes for its SUNY-GER area(s), as presented in the *Guidelines for the Approval of State University General Education Requirement Courses*. (**Appendix A**)
  2. **Syllabi for SUNY-GER courses.** In keeping with good practice and the expectations of the Middle States Commission on Higher Education, campuses are encouraged to have syllabi for SUNY-GER courses that include the SUNY-GER student learning outcomes.
  3. **Advanced or upper-division courses.** To complement and build on students' academic preparation and prior learning, and to promote seamless student mobility and timely degree completion, a baccalaureate campus is encouraged to permit both native and transfer students to use advanced or upper-division courses to meet SUNY-GER areas.
  4. **Student Waivers or Equivalencies.** Where appropriate, in accordance with local academic policies, a campus shall afford students an opportunity to obtain a waiver or equivalency for a SUNY-GER area by demonstrating college-level proficiency in the student learning outcomes for that area. Waivers may also be granted as a reasonable accommodation for a learning or other disability.
  5. **Programmatic Waivers.** A campus may seek a waiver of a SUNY-GER knowledge and skills area for a specific academic program when the program's curriculum is governed by external standards, such as, but not limited to, specialized accreditation. The required areas of Basic Communication and Mathematics may not be waived. The flexibility in the updated SUNY-GER reduces, and may even eliminate, the need for waivers.
  6. **Local and programmatic general education requirements.** If a campus has local and/or programmatic general education requirements that specify the SUNY-GER areas to be met, or add course requirements beyond the 30-credit SUNY-GER, the campus shall promote student mobility within the University and timely degree attainment by providing clear and accessible information and advisement to prospective and enrolled students.

7. **Information for students.** A campus shall provide information to prospective and enrolled students about SUNY-GER, local and programmatic general education requirements through its catalog, website, advisement and other means. The information shall be clear, accurate, complete, current and easy to find. The Office of the Provost will work with campuses to help make information about general education requirements at each baccalaureate campus accessible to students and their advisors. [N.B. The updated SUNY-GER is effective for freshmen entering the University in fall 2010. However, a campus may extend the flexibility of the 7 of 10 SUNY-GER to transfer, continuing and returning students by giving them the choice of using the 10 of 10 SUNY-GER or the new 7 of 10 SUNY-GER.]
  8. **Assessment of the general education curriculum.** A campus shall have a process that meets the standards of the Middle States Commission on Higher Education for assessing student learning outcomes in general education, including the SUNY-GER student learning outcomes, and for using assessment results to promote improvement.
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2. **Programs Leading to Associate in Arts (AA) and Associate in Science (AS) Degrees.** Campuses should design AA and AS programs to enable students to complete as much of the SUNY-GER as feasible. Whenever practical, campuses should include a total of 30 credits of SUNY-GER in these programs, with flexibility for students to select SUNY-GER areas that fit their transfer goals.
  3. **Programs Leading to Associate in Applied Science (AAS) Degrees.** The University's student mobility policy does not address AAS programs, which are designed to lead to employment rather than transfer. However, campuses are encouraged to include as many SUNY-GER knowledge and skills areas as feasible, including Basic Communication and Mathematics, in their AAS programs, especially if a program tends to transfer significant numbers of students or graduates to SUNY baccalaureate programs. As appropriate, campuses are encouraged to advise students in AAS programs about transfer options.
  4. **Student Mobility and Transfer.** One of the goals of the SUNY-GER is to support a seamless education pipeline and degree attainment, consistent with *The Power of SUNY: Strategic Plan 2010 and Beyond*.
    1. **Junior status for transfer students.** As stated in Board policy adopted in 1990, and reaffirmed in Trustees Resolution 2009-138, "graduates of two-year colleges within SUNY with an AA or AS degree, when accepted in parallel programs at baccalaureate campuses of the University, shall be accorded full junior status and be given the opportunity to complete the requirements for a bachelor's degree within four additional semesters of full-time work; and graduates of two-year colleges within SUNY, when accepted with junior status within parallel programs at baccalaureate campuses of the University, shall be granted full credit for general education courses taken and not be required to repeat successfully completed courses with similar content" Trustees Resolution 2009-138 added that "students transferring within the State University of New York will be treated by their receiving institution in the same way as native students of that institution for all academic purposes."
    2. **Transfer of the SUNY-GER.** Trustees Resolution 2009-138 requires that students transferring with or without a SUNY AA or AS degree will receive full credit for general education courses successfully completed (i.e., for which credit was awarded at the prior institution)...and will not be required to repeat successfully completed courses with similar curricular content." This means that transfer students who meet the 30-credit SUNY-GER at sending campuses shall be deemed to have met the 30-credit SUNY-GER at a receiving campus. Similarly, transfer students who meet a SUNY-GER area at sending campuses shall be deemed to have met that SUNY-GER area at a receiving campus. As feasible, to promote student mobility and timely degree attainment, a receiving campus shall waive local and programmatic requirements for transfer students who have completed the 30-credit SUNY-GER or who have met a SUNY-GER area that is comparable to a local or programmatic requirement.
    3. **Grades in SUNY-GER courses.** A SUNY-GER area successfully completed at a sending campus shall be accepted as meeting the same SUNY-GER area at a receiving campus. With regard to the transfer of a SUNY-GER course to meet local and/or programmatic requirements, a grade of C or higher shall be guaranteed acceptance. A grade higher than C may only be required of transfer students if it is also required of native students.
    4. **General Education Transcript Addendum.** A sending campus shall provide a General Education Transcript Addendum (GETA) for each transferring student, and a receiving campus shall accept the GETA as certification of completed SUNY-GER areas. **(Appendix B)**

5. **Baccalaureate programs: facilitating transfer from AA and AS programs.** Baccalaureate campuses shall enable students with AA and AS degrees from SUNY campuses who are accepted in parallel programs to complete baccalaureate degrees within four semesters of full-time study. To achieve this, campuses may use multiple approaches, including:
1. entering into formal articulation agreements and other arrangements with regional campuses offering AA and AS programs;
  2. offering joint or dual degree programs with campuses offering AA and AS programs;
  3. incorporating SUNY-GER courses into the upper-division requirements of transfers' baccalaureate programs; and
  4. developing upper-division general education courses or modules.
6. **AA and AS programs: facilitating transfer to baccalaureate programs.** AA and AS programs are intended to lead to transfer to baccalaureate programs in SUNY and other institutions. To support student mobility within the University, programs leading to AA and AS degrees should be designed to enable students to complete the SUNY-GER. Campuses with AA and AS programs may use such approaches as:
- entering into formal articulation agreements and other arrangements with regional SUNY baccalaureate campuses;
  - developing special advisement tracks for students planning to transfer within SUNY;
  - developing flexible certificate programs in general education that permit students to complete SUNY-GER areas appropriate for their transfer goals; and
  - using the SUNY Learning Network (SLN), where SUNY-GER courses are identified in promotional materials and online at <http://www.sln.suny.edu>.
- The Office of the Provost will continue to work with campuses offering AA and AS degrees to promote seamless student mobility.
7. **AAS programs: facilitating transfer to baccalaureate programs.** The University's policy on student mobility does not address AAS programs, which are designed to lead to employment rather than transfer. However, campuses are encouraged to include as many SUNY-GER knowledge and skills areas as feasible, including Basic Communication and Mathematics, in their AAS programs, especially if a program tends to transfer significant numbers of students or graduates to SUNY baccalaureate programs.

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## Forms

[Course Addition Template](#)

[Course Deletion Template](#)

[Programmatic Waiver Request Template](#)

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## Related Procedures

[Assessment Procedure](#)

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## Other Related Information

[General Education Requirement](#)

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## Authority

[NYS Education Law §355\(2\)\(h\)](#) (Powers and duties of trustees . administrative and fiscal functions)

State University of New York Board of Trustees Resolution 98-241, adopted December 15, 1998

[State University of New York Board of Trustees Resolution 2010-006, adopted January 19, 2010](#)

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## History

The State University of New York Board of Trustees Resolution 98-241 adopted on December 15, 1998

Memorandum to Presidents 03-01 of January 2, 2003

[Trustees Resolution 2010-006, adopted January 19, 2010](#)

[Memorandum to Presidents 2010-01 of May 28, 2010](#)

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## Appendices

[Guidelines for the Approval of State University General Education Requirement Courses](#)

[Sample General Education Transcript Addendum \(GETA\)](#)