

Draft Gen Ed Framework: The Catamount Core Curriculum

Overview of Gen Ed Process:

The UVM Faculty Senate approved several broad General Education categories in 2011, supplementing the existing 6-credit Diversity requirement. Since that time, nine additional credits specific General Education requirements were added to University-level General Education in the form of the Foundational Writing and Information Literacy requirement (3 credits), the Sustainability requirements (3 credits), and the Quantitative Reasoning requirement (3 credits).

In Spring 2019, UVM completed a comprehensive self-study as part of its decennial institutional reaccreditation under the New England Commission on Higher Education (NECHE). This process allowed us to identify institutional strengths, opportunities and areas for improvement, as well as measure UVM's policies, practices and curricula against the NECHE standards for accreditation. In this process, it became clear that General Education at UVM was falling short of realizing the intent of standard 4.16:

The general education requirement is coherent and substantive. It embodies the institution's definition of an educated person and prepares students for the world in which they will live. The requirement informs the design of all general education courses, and provides criteria for its evaluation, including the assessment of what students learn.

In addition, UVM's current 15 credits of centrally approved and assessed General Education Requirements, described above, do not meet the expected 40 credits (as stated in Standard 4.18) and do not cover the three broad areas outlined within Standard 4.17 (Arts and Humanities; Social Sciences; and Natural Sciences including Math).

These General Education standards were cited by the Commission on Higher Education in their [November 2019 affirmation of accreditation letter](#), noting that General Education is area for UVM to focus on in its 5-year interim report to NECHE in Spring 2024.

General Education Alignment Task Force:

In August 2019, Provost Prelock charged General Education Alignment Task Force to develop a proposal for expanded, University-level general education requirements (see Appendix B). This Task Force worked throughout the fall to develop the General Education Framework presented here, including reviewing existing college/school curricula at UVM, considering the structure of General Education at other NECHE institutions, and gathering additional requirement ideas from faculty in a formal proposal process (See Appendix C).

The Task Force received 11 proposals in November, 2019 and extensively reviewed all of them with respect to how they would contribute to a unified and cohesive curriculum, the potential for multiple pathways to completion of the requirement (i.e. lower likelihood of creating bottlenecks for students), and feasibility of implementation within the context of the demands of existing degree programs, including externally accredited programs. While not all proposals were directly incorporated into the framework outlined below, all of them did contribute significantly to task force members' conceptualization of a General Education curriculum that would prepare our students to become the "accountable leaders who will bring to their work dedication to the global community, a grasp of complexity, effective problem-solving and communication skills, and an enduring commitment to learning and ethical conduct" described in the UVM mission statement. Proposers will be invited to participate as members of the appropriate ad hoc Faculty Senate/Task force committees to refine the framework categories in Spring 2020.

The proposed General Education framework will be taken to the Faculty Senate in Spring 2020. The Senate process will include the convening of ad hoc committees to review and refine the description and approval criteria for each of the Catamount Core Curriculum course designations (Appendix A). The ad hoc committee will report back to the Faculty Senate and the Gen Ed Alignment Task Force, which will incorporate suggested revisions into the framework. A Faculty Senate vote on the framework will take place at the April or May 2020 Senate meeting. The Senate will also be asked to approve the creation of a University General Education Curriculum Committee. This faculty committee will have the authority to review and approve all General Education courses in the new Catamount Core Curriculum.

The Task Force included faculty and administrators representing each undergraduate degree-granting college and school, as well as the Faculty Senate Executive Committee:

J. Dickinson, Associate Provost for Academic Affairs (Task Force Chair)
Barbara Arel, GSB representative
Rosemary Dale, CNHS representative
Jeff Frolick, CEMS representative
Joel Goldberg, CAS representative
Cathy Paris, CALS representative and Faculty Senate Executive Committee representative
Joan Rosebush, General Education Coordinating Committee representative
Katharine Shepherd, CESS representative
Allan Strong, RSENR representative



CATAMOUNT CORE CURRICULUM PROPOSAL

CURRENT UNIVERSITY WIDE GEN ED STRUCTURE (15 credits)

- D1 RACE AND RACISM IN THE U.S.
- D2 DIVERSITY OF HUMAN EXPERIENCE
- FWIL FOUNDATIONAL WRITING AND INFORMATION LITERACY
- QR QUANTITATIVE REASONING
- SU SUSTAINABILITY



CATAMOUNT CORE CURRICULUM

CATAMOUNT CORE is made up of 42 credits in courses distributed across three main areas: LIBERAL ARTS (18 credits); CORE SKILLS (12 credits); and COMMON GROUND VALUES (12 credits).

Students will be able to take courses that fulfill more than one category BUT they MUST still take at least 40 unique credits of courses that have been approved to fulfill CATAMOUNT CORE CURRICULUM requirements.

LIBERAL ARTS

18 CREDITS

- H1, H2, H3 HUMANITIES AND ARTS
6 credits
- S1 SOCIAL SCIENCES
6 credits
- N1, N2 NATURAL SCIENCES
6 credits

CORE SKILLS

12 CREDITS

- QR QUANTITATIVE REASONING
- FWIL COMMUNICATION 1
Foundational Writing and Info Literacy
- WIL2 COMMUNICATION 2
Writing and Info Literacy Tier 2
or
- OC Oral Communication
- IA Integration and Application of Knowledge in the Major

COMMON GROUND VALUES

12 CREDITS

- D1 DIVERSITY 1
- D2 DIVERSITY 2
- SU SUSTAINABILITY
- GC GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP
- SJ SOCIAL JUSTICE*

* SOCIAL JUSTICE is a co-requirement that can be attached to a course approved in any of the other COMMON GROUND VALUES.

Guiding Principles for the Catamount Core Curriculum:

Vision: UVM General Education should expose students to the intellectual breadth of the liberal arts, develop the skills needed to integrate and apply diverse areas of knowledge, and build the foundations for lifelong learning and active participation in local and global communities.

Centralized Approval: The Alignment Task Force recommends the establishment of a unified university-level faculty General Education Curriculum Committee. Inclusion of courses in the Gen Ed program would be by approval of the Gen Ed Curriculum Committee, which will also have oversight of Gen Ed at UVM. The Committee would be led by a faculty General Education Coordinator.

40-credit Rule: Students will be able to take courses that fulfill more than one category (e.g., Humanities and D1) but they **MUST** still take at least 40 unique credits of courses that have been approved to fulfill a Gen Ed requirements. For example, through careful selection, a student may fulfill all of the Gen Ed requirements (a total of 42 credits) after taking only 33 unique credits of coursework. The 40-credit rule requires that the student still complete an additional 7 or more credits in courses approved as fulfilling any of the Gen Ed requirements.

Three curricular areas:

The Catamount Core is made up of 42 credits in courses distributed across three main areas: Liberal Arts (18 credits); Core Skills (12 credits); and Common Ground Values (12 credits).

The outline of the Catamount Core Curriculum below includes both existing Gen Ed categories and new categories. Existing categories are in [blue](#). Approval criteria for existing requirements are available at: <https://www.uvm.edu/generaleducation>. *Draft approval criteria* for all new requirements are included in Appendix A. These draft approval criteria will be further refined in ad hoc committees organized jointly by the Faculty Senate and the General Education Alignment Task Force in Spring 2020.

Curricular Area 1: Liberal Arts (Currently Proposed Total = 18 credits)

Liberal Arts are distributed across three main subcategories. The subdivisions in these categories are designed to reflect currently existing categories within the colleges/schools. This is also necessary for some programs such as teacher preparation, which need students to take courses in specific sub-categories to meet licensure requirements.

Humanities: H1, H2, H3. Students will take at least 6 credits from this category:

- H1 Humanities
- H2 Fine Arts
- H3 Literature

Social Sciences: S1. Students will take at least 6 credits from this category.

Natural Sciences: N1, N2. Students will take at least 6 credits from this category:

- N1 Natural science, no lab.
- N2 Natural science with lab.

The designations in Curricular Area 2: Core Skills, and Curricular Area 3: Common Ground Values, can overlap with Liberal Arts categories, and can also be fulfilled through approved courses in other disciplinary or interdisciplinary areas.

Curricular Area 2: Core Skills (Currently Proposed = 12 credits)

QR: Quantitative Reasoning (3)

Communication Skills (6)

FWIL: Foundational Writing and Information Literacy (3)

Writing and Information Literacy Tier Two (3)

OR

Oral Communication (3). This requirement can be fulfilled EITHER by taking a course approved as WIL2, OR by taking a course approved to fulfill the Oral Communication requirement.

IA: Integration and application of knowledge (3), “Capstone” requirement.

Courses in the Integration and Application of Knowledge in the Major (IA) category are designed to allow students to demonstrate their ability to integrate and apply theoretical and practical knowledge developed in one or more areas of specialization.

Curricular Area 3: Common Ground Values (Currently Proposed = 12 credits)

Note that the Social Justice requirement is a co-designation. Students must take at least one SJ-designated course, but this course will by definition overlap with another Common Ground Values Course.

D1: Race and Racism in the United States (3)

D2: Diversity of Human Experience (3)

SU: Sustainability (3)

GC: Global Citizenship (3).

Courses approved in this category promote learning outcomes that prepare students to engage actively and responsibly in both local and global communities. All courses approved in this category *must* articulate how students will develop and demonstrate decision-making and problem-solving skills in one or more of the following areas:

- **Civic Engagement:** All courses approved for CL or SL designations fulfill the Global Citizenship requirement.
- **Ethical conduct and decision-making.** Courses that focus directly on the understanding and development of ethical decision-making and problem-solving can be approved to fulfill the Global Citizenship requirement. This may include both courses in the field of philosophical ethics, and applied courses focused in areas such as data ethics, research ethics, business ethics, and medical ethics.
- **Global Literacies and Transcultural Competencies.** Courses in which students develop foreign language competency and/or in-depth transcultural competencies can be approved to fulfill the Global Citizenship requirement. A UVM-approved study abroad experience of 3 or more credits can fulfill the Global Citizenship requirement.
- **Technology and Society.** Courses in which students learn about the impact of technological developments, including how technology can contribute to problem-solving, the ethics of technology development and use, and design thinking can be approved to fulfill the Global Citizenship requirement.
- **Global Challenges.** Courses that focus on integrated approaches to global-scale problems such as global and community health; climate change; food production; and human rights can be approved to fulfill the Global Citizenship requirement.

SJ: Social Justice (3)

SJ is a co-requirement that can be attached to courses approved in any of the other Common Ground Values (D1; D2; SU; GC). Courses in this area will have a specific focus on understanding social injustices and inequalities, attending to multiple perspectives, and engaging in problem-solving with the aim of promoting social justice.

Gen Ed Alignment Task force timeline:

June 2019	UVM team attends AACU Gen Ed Institute
August 2019	Gen Ed Alignment Task Force begins work
September 2019	Task Force members present at faculty meetings
October 2019	Initial framework and call for additional category proposals
November 15, 2019	Deadline for additional category proposals
December 2019	Revised framework discussed in Curricular Affairs meeting
January 2020	Final Draft Framework discussed with senior leaders; ad hoc
January 27, 2020	Review of framework at Faculty Senate meeting; call for
February 2020	Ad hoc committees working (up to Spring Break)
March 23, 2020	Revised Gen Ed categories/framework presented for discussion
April 20, 2020	Continued discussion and vote on Gen Ed Framework
May 2020	Gen Ed curriculum presented to Board of Trustees

Catamount Core Curriculum tentative implementation timeline

Academic Year	Implementation Goals
2020-2021 2021-2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establish Gen Ed Curriculum Committee - Begin course approvals for all categories. - Units address curriculum and catalogue changes to align with Gen Ed
2022-2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Phase 1 adding in Humanities and Arts, Social Sciences, Natural Sciences Gen Ed requirements for class of 2026 -Ongoing assessment of capacity based on course approvals for new categories.
2023-2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Phase 2 with all remaining Gen Ed categories for class of 2027
2023-2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Assessment of progress, and opportunity to consider some revisions to the curriculum -Spring 2024: 5-year interim report to NECHE

APPENDIX A

DRAFT Catamount Core categories edited at 12/16/2019 Gen Ed Alignment Task Force meeting and incorporating language from additional category proposals

The following *draft* approval criteria will be further refined by ad hoc committees organized jointly by the Faculty Senate and the General Education Alignment Task Force in Spring 2020. Approval criteria for current requirements (QR; FWIL; D1; D2; SU) are available at <https://www.uvm.edu/generaleducation>.

Curricular Area 1: Liberal Arts. Total: 18 credits.

Liberal Arts credits are distributed across three main subcategories: Humanities and Arts; Social Sciences; and Natural Sciences.

HUMANITIES and ARTS (H1; H2; H3): 6 credits

This category has three subcategories: H1: Humanities, H2: Fine Arts, and H3: Literature. Students will take at least 6 credits from this category. Specific degree programs may require that these credits be in one or more of the following subcategories.

Draft Approval Criteria for Humanities subcategories:

H1: Humanities

The central disciplines of the Humanities are: history of the arts, classics, history, philosophy, political thought and theory, and religion. Foreign language courses may be approved in the H1 category or the H3 category.

Courses in the Humanities involve and promote:

- the study of human thought and culture, including individual expressions and the subjectivities that underlie them;
- the ability to read, interpret, and evaluate primary documents and/or materials using the theories and methodology of the discipline in which they are offered.

H2: Fine Arts

“Fine Arts,” disciplines seek to understand and explore the visual and performing arts as means of expression. A course may be approved for the H2: Fine Arts category if it meets all of the following criteria:

- The course addresses (through discussion and practice) formal elements and principles specific to the discipline in which it is offered
- The course implements models of critical analysis relevant to the discipline in which it is offered
- The course addresses historical models and/or contemporary practice specific to the discipline in which it is offered

APPENDIX A: Draft Catamount Core Category Descriptions

- The course promotes artistic expression through study of history, theory, studio production, or performance

H3: Literature

A course that studies the literature of any culture in any language may be approved for the H3 category if it meets all of the following criteria:

- At least 50 percent of the course reading comprises literary texts (e.g., novels, poetry, drama, memoirs, graphic novels) and/or readings in literary theory.
- The course has as a primary purpose the understanding and appreciation of this literary content.
- Application of literary analysis techniques to achieve this understanding and appreciation are primary course goals.

SOCIAL SCIENCE (S1): 6 credits

Students will take at least 6 credits from this category. Specific degree programs may require that these credits be in one or more of the following subcategories.

Draft Approval Criteria for Social Sciences:

A course approved for the Social Sciences category must be consistent with the scientific method and must share at least two of the following characteristics typical of courses in a Social Science discipline:

- The course promotes observation of human social phenomena as a way of knowing, including analysis of social systems by studying either their components or their entirety.
- The course emphasizes the process of generating working hypotheses based on quantitative and/or qualitative observations, and presents the evolution of hypotheses into theories and/or models that account for courses of social phenomena.
- The course illustrates the use of appropriate theories and models to predict or explain change in social systems over time.

NATURAL SCIENCE (N1; N2): 6 credits

Students will take at least 6 credits from this category. Specific degree programs may require that these credits be in one or more of the following subcategories.

This category has two subcategories: N1 and N2 (lab).

APPENDIX A: Draft Catamount Core Category Descriptions

Draft approval criteria for Natural Sciences:

For a course to be approved in the Natural Sciences (N1 or N2) category, course content must emphasize the scientific method as applied to understanding the natural world.

N1 courses do not include a lab. N2 courses have a laboratory component.

Both N1 and N2 courses must have the following components:

- The course promotes observation of Nature as a way of knowing, including the analysis of complex systems by isolating and studying their components in the field or under controlled conditions.
- The course emphasizes the process of generating working hypotheses based on quantifiable observations and presents the evolution of hypotheses into theories and/or models that account for courses of natural phenomena.
- The course illustrates the use of appropriate theories and models to predict change in natural systems over time.

In addition, N2 courses must meet the following criteria:

- Offer a total of four credits combining a lecture component and a lab component, integrating scientific theory and practice
- The course has an experiential learning component dedicated to training students in the practice of isolating and studying natural phenomena in the field or under controlled conditions
- Through practical and written work, students demonstrate their understanding of the scientific method

Curricular Area 2: Core Skills. Total: 12 credits

The core skills requirements include two current requirements (**QR** and **FWIL**) as well as an additional **Communication skills requirement (WIL2 or OC)** and **Integration and Application of Knowledge in the Major (IA)**.

These designations can overlap with Liberal Arts categories, and can also be fulfilled through approved courses in other disciplinary or interdisciplinary categories. If approved, these courses may carry two Core Skills designations, such as WIL2 and IA.

QUANTITATIVE REASONING (QR): 3 credits. Current requirement.

COMMUNICATION SKILLS (FWIL; WIL2; OC). 6 credits, including current FWIL requirement.

All students must take a 3-credit FWIL course in their first year.

Students will have a choice of then completing a 3-credit course designated as **Writing and Information Literacy Tier 2 (WIL2)** course, OR a 3-credit course designated as **Oral Communication (OC)** course.

WRITING AND INFORMATION LITERACY TIER 2 (WIL2). 3 credits. Draft approval Criteria:

For approval, a course must meet the following criteria:

- include multiple opportunities for students to engage in writing/information literacy activities
- include opportunities for students to make use of feedback in developing their work
- a substantial portion of the semester grade is derived from written assignments

In addition, the course must address and assess student learning in each of the three outcomes (listed below), attending to at least two bullet points for each outcome.

Using Disciplinary or Field-Based Frameworks

- Students understand and can apply increasingly complex disciplinary approaches to reading, writing, and working with information
- Students learn and use the language and methods of their chosen discipline or field
- Students engage with debates or conversations important in the discipline or field
- Students demonstrate an ability to communicate to a range of audiences appropriate for their disciplines/fields

Developing Flexible Writing and Inquiry Processes

- Students become aware that writing and information literacy develop via flexible and iterative processes
- Students develop the capacity to reflect on and improve their processes and performances

APPENDIX A: Draft Catamount Core Category Descriptions

- Students evaluate claims, arguments, or recommendations in light of available evidence
- Students evaluate sources for reliability and usefulness

Using Information Ethically

- Students credit others whose work they have consulted or used
- Students have awareness of the processes by which information is generated and accessed in handle data and source material ethically and with integrity in the discipline/field

ORAL COMMUNICATION (OC). 3 credits. Draft approval Criteria:

For approval, a course must meet the following criteria:

- Students should have at least three opportunities per course to develop and practice oral communication skills through a wide range of possible assignments.
- The course should include faculty supervised and evaluated oral presentations wherein at least 30% of the grade is based on oral presentation and listening.
- Provide as much opportunity as possible for students to practice and improve their oral presentations as well as opportunity to critique oral communication. For approval, the instructor should address how the course size and structure will enable sufficient practice for students to meet the outcomes.
- Emphasize listening as well as presentation skills.

In addition, the course must address and assess student learning in each of the following outcomes:

- Demonstrate oral communication skills such as: appropriate selection of topic and materials; appropriate organization; effective presentation; the ability to adapt to audience, setting, and occasion
- Demonstrate critical thinking and problem-solving skills by discerning, describing and/or adapting to connections between audience, speaker, and occasion.
- Evaluate and synthesize materials from diverse sources and integrate multiple perspectives into oral presentations.
- Listen effectively and critically evaluate orally presented information and arguments.

INTEGRATION AND APPLICATION OF KNOWLEDGE IN THE MAJOR (IA): 3 credits.

Draft approval Criteria:

Courses in the Integration and Application of Knowledge in the Major (IA) category are designed to allow students to demonstrate their ability to integrate and apply theoretical and

APPENDIX A: Draft Catamount Core Category Descriptions

practical knowledge developed in one or more areas of specialization. To be approved in this categories, courses must meet the following criteria:

- Be designed for junior or senior students in a disciplinary, interdisciplinary, or pre-professional area of study, with correspondingly advanced course content and expectations for work consistent with the course level, which must be 100-level or above
- Require students to complete one or more projects requiring at least two of the following:
 - substantial independent research and/or creative work, either in theoretical or applied contexts
 - integration of multiple perspectives, data sources, theories, methodologies, or creative approaches, reflecting students' ability to integrate and apply knowledge gained throughout their educational experience
 - critical self-assessment on their development as emerging professionals

Curricular Area 3: Common Ground Values. Total: 12 credits

The Common Ground Values requirements promote the University mission “to prepare students to be accountable leaders who will bring to their work dedication to the global community, a grasp of complexity, effective problem-solving and communication skills, and an enduring commitment to learning and ethical conduct,” and the Our Common Ground goal of preparing students to live and work in a diverse and changing world. The Common Ground Values requirements include the current 3-credit requirements of **D1, D2, and SU**, as well as new requirements of **Global Citizenship (GC) and Social Justice (SJ)**.

Note that the Social Justice requirement is a co-designation. Students must take at least one SJ-designated course, but this course will by definition overlap with another Common Ground Values Course, i.e. will also have a designation of D1, D2, SU, or GC.

GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP (GC). 3 credits. Draft approval Criteria.

Courses approved in this category promote learning outcomes that prepare students to engage actively and responsibly in both local and global communities. All courses approved in this category *must* articulate how students will develop and demonstrate decision-making and problem-solving skills in one or more of the following areas:

- **Civic Engagement:** All courses approved for CL (Civic Learning) or SL (Service Learning) designations fulfill the Global Citizenship requirement.
- **Ethical conduct and decision-making.** Courses that focus directly on the understanding and development of ethical decision-making and problem-solving can be approved to fulfill the Global Citizenship requirement. This may include both courses in the field of philosophical ethics, and applied courses focused in areas such as data ethics, research ethics, business ethics, and medical ethics.
- **Global Literacies and Transcultural Competencies.** Courses in which students develop foreign language competency and/or in-depth transcultural competencies can be approved to fulfill the Global Citizenship requirement. A UVM-approved study abroad experience of 3 or more credits can fulfill the Global Citizenship requirement.
- **Technology and Society.** Courses in which students learn about the impact of technological developments, including how technology can contribute to problem-solving, the ethics of technology development and use, and design thinking can be approved to fulfill the Global Citizenship requirement.
- **Global Challenges.** Courses that focus on integrated approaches to global-scale problems such as global and community health; climate change; food production; and human rights can be approved to fulfill the Global Citizenship requirement.

SOCIAL JUSTICE (SJ): 3-credit co-requirement; can only be fulfilled with another Common Ground Values designation.

SJ co-designation draft approval criteria:

This is a co-requirement that can only be fulfilled in courses already approved in any of the other Common Ground Values areas (D1; D2; SU; GC). Courses approved for the SJ designation will have a specific focus on understanding social injustices and inequalities, attending to multiple perspectives, and engaging in problem-solving with the aim of promoting social justice.

To be approved, courses must demonstrate how students will demonstrate achievement of at least three of the following outcomes.

- Demonstrate awareness and sensitivity to human rights issues and a basic understanding of social injustices and inequities;
- Demonstrate an understanding of the origins, histories, experiences, and contemporary working solutions of specific injustices and inequalities;
- Demonstrate critical thinking skills to analyze information from a variety of perspectives, paying particular attention to marginalized voices and experiences;
- Develop action plans to diminish and resolve social injustices and inequities;
- Demonstrate an understanding of distinct roles social science, historical precedents, social theory, culture, and ethics play in the development of an informed approach to social justice;
- Articulate a set of methods and practices for continuing the life-long process of recognizing our biases, learning how to change oppressive systems, and building a more socially just and equitable society.



The University of Vermont

Office of the Provost
and Senior Vice President

TO: University of Vermont Faculty

FROM: Patricia A. Prelock, Interim Provost and Senior Vice President

DATE: August 20, 2019

SUBJECT: General Education Alignment Task Force

UVM recently completed a comprehensive self-study as part of its decennial institutional reaccreditation under the New England Commission on Higher Education (NECHE). This process allowed us to identify institutional strengths, opportunities and areas for improvement, as well as measure UVM's policies, practices and curricula against the [NECHE standards for accreditation](#). In this process, it became clear that General Education at UVM falls short of realizing the intent of standard 4.16 (emphasis added):

The general education requirement is *coherent and substantive*. It embodies the *institution's* definition of an educated person and prepares students for the world in which they will live. The requirement informs the design of all general education courses, and provides criteria for its evaluation, including the *assessment of what students learn*.

In addition, UVM's current 15 credits of centrally approved and assessed General Education requirements (D1/D2; FWIL; QR and SU) do not meet the expected 40 credits (as stated in Standard 4.18) and do not cover the three broad areas outlined within Standard 4.17 (Arts and Humanities; Social Sciences; and Natural Sciences including Math).

To bring UVM's curriculum into alignment with the NECHE standards, and to ensure that our students benefit from a unified curriculum that defines a "UVM education," I have charged a General Education Alignment Task Force to develop a proposal for expanded, University-level general education requirements. The Task Force is chaired by J. Dickinson, Associate Provost for Academic Affairs.

In the coming year, the General Education Alignment Task Force will offer regular updates on its progress to the Faculty Senate. Early in Spring 2020, they will present a comprehensive proposal to move UVM's general education curriculum from 15 to 40 credits. Throughout Spring 2020, the Task Force will consult with the Faculty Senate to review, discuss and achieve agreement on an overall General Education vision and requirements.

This is a large and complex undertaking, and so the Alignment Task Force reflects faculty strengths across our schools and colleges, and deep knowledge of General Education at UVM. Members of the Task Force will be visiting college/school faculty meetings this Fall to discuss the process with you and gather input and ideas as they develop the initial proposal.

I encourage faculty to reach out to the task force representative in their college or school to share thoughts on the educational components that all of our students should have as part of their UVM experience.

Task Force Membership:

J. Dickinson, Associate Provost for Academic Affairs (Task Force Chair)

Barbara Arel, GSB representative

Rosemary Dale, CNHS representative

Jeff Frolick, CEMS representative

Joel Goldberg, CAS representative

Cathy Paris, CALS representative and Faculty Senate Executive Committee representative

Joan Rosebush, General Education Coordinating Committee representative

Katharine Shepherd, CESS representative

Allan Strong, RSENR representative

cc: Suresh Garimella, President



The University of Vermont

**General Education Alignment Task Force
UVM General Education Framework and Call for Proposals (Additional Categories)
October 10, 2019**

General Education Framework

The General Education (Gen Ed) Alignment Task Force was appointed in Summer 2019 by Interim Provost Prelock with the goal of creating a common general education curriculum for all UVM undergraduate students that aligns with both a faculty vision for undergraduate education and with the criteria outlined in the [New England Commission of Higher Education \(NECHE\) standards 4.16-4.18](#).

The Alignment Task Force, taking into consideration current requirements across the undergraduate schools and colleges, and models from a range of comparable institutions, has been working on a basic framework for General Education. This framework is not a final proposal; a more detailed proposal will be brought to the Faculty Senate for further discussion, finalization, and approval of specific criteria/outcomes for categories in Spring 2020.

NECHE Standards for Accreditation specify that General Education must be coherent and substantive, reflect faculty ideas of what an educated person should be, and be evaluated and assessed as a curriculum. The curriculum must comprise at least 40 credits and include coursework in Humanities and Arts, Social Sciences, and Natural Sciences, including Mathematics.

Proposed General Education Framework

Vision: UVM General Education should expose students to the intellectual breadth of the liberal arts, build the skills needed to integrate and apply diverse areas of knowledge, and offer the foundations for lifelong learning and active participation in local and global communities.

Centralized Approval: The Alignment Task Force is recommending the establishment of a unified university-level faculty General Education Curriculum Committee. Inclusion of courses in the Gen Ed program would be by approval of the Gen Ed Curriculum Committee, which will also have oversight of Gen Ed at UVM. The Committee would be led by a faculty General Education Coordinator.

Current Gen Ed Categories: The current 15 credits of Gen Ed will be incorporated into the General Education program.

New Categories: Gen Ed courses will be distributed among categories, including the NECHE-specified areas of Humanities and Arts, Social Sciences, and Natural Sciences, including Mathematics. The Alignment Task Force is also committed to an additional category: “Integration and Application of Knowledge in the Major.” These categories ensure that our General Education meets NECHE requirements, while also reflecting other commonalities in curricula across the University.

Students will be able to take courses that fulfill more than one category (e.g., Humanities and D1) but they **MUST** still take 40 unique credits of Gen Ed approved courses to graduate.

At this time, the Alignment Task Force also invites proposals for new Gen Ed categories, beyond those listed above.

Proposal Process

Proposers must fill out the attached form completely and submit it electronically to Associate Provost J. Dickinson with a copy to Catherine Symans in the Provost’s Office by 4 p.m. on November 15, 2019. Proposers must have an active, salaried faculty appointment at UVM. Only complete proposals will be considered. As General Education is envisioned as spanning the University, proposers are strongly encouraged to think broadly about their proposed category and its importance to students across campus, and to partner with faculty from multiple departments, schools and colleges to draft a strong proposal. Strong proposals will offer multiple pathways for completion, rather than relying on a narrow set of courses.

The Task Force will carefully review all proposals and incorporate components into the detailed Gen Ed framework presented to the Faculty Senate in Spring 2020.

PROPOSALS DUE November 15, 2019
Email completed proposals as a single PDF to [J. Dickinson and Catherine Symans](#)
Proposal for an Additional General Education Category

Please answer all questions below. Incomplete proposals cannot be considered.

1. Proposer’s name(s) and program(s)/department(s). Add more rows as needed:

Name	Program/Dept.

2. **Name** of proposed category.
3. **Brief description** of the category (150-300 words).
4. **Justification** for the category in the context of the Gen Ed vision statement. Why should every UVM undergraduate student fulfill this category as part of their education? (300 words).
5. Please include a summary of the **learning outcomes** all UVM students would be expected to achieve in this category.
6. Have you identified **other institutions** that have this or a similar category? If so, please provide links to these institutions’ Gen Ed/core curriculum page(s).
7. Briefly summarize **selection criteria** that could be used to determine whether a course should be approved to meet this category.
8. Identify **UVM faculty and programs** that currently offer (or could offer) courses that would satisfy this Gen Ed category. Have you contacted them and asked them to join you on this proposal?
9. Please provide a broad range of current courses that you think would fulfill this requirement. You can also suggest courses that would need to be developed or revised.
10. What, if any, resources or training would be needed to make enough spots in qualifying classes available to all UVM students?