

# IU South Bend Campuswide General Education Requirements

## WHAT IS GENERAL EDUCATION?

A general education program is designed to address the following questions: What is an educated person? What should educated people know and be able to do when they graduate from college?

The general education program at IUSB establishes a learning environment that serves the academic, civic, cultural, and career needs of an educated citizen within the global community. The campuswide general education curriculum provides students with knowledge of the basic tenets of a variety of academic disciplines and the skills to function effectively in positions of responsibility and leadership. It instills in students an appreciation of the interconnectedness of disciplines, the diversity of human cultures and experiences, self-awareness conducive to personal growth, and a love of learning.

The general education curriculum complements the depth and focus of our major programs and ensures that graduates will have the breadth of experience that enables them to think critically, communicate clearly, act professionally and ethically, and appreciate wisdom and beauty. In this way, it prepares students to be successful in their chosen professions and become valued citizens and leaders within their communities, individually enriched by their studies and stimulated by the spirit of discovery.

The campus-wide general education curriculum is composed of three elements and requires a total of between 33 and 39 credit hours of course work.

- I. Fundamental Literacies Courses (13-19 cr.)
- II. Common Core Courses (12 cr.)
- III. Contemporary Social Values Courses (8 cr.)

## THE FUNDAMENTAL LITERACIES

**Writing** – The ability to write clearly and correctly is arguably the most important academic skill an individual can acquire.

**Critical Thinking** – The ability to analyze an argument and recognize its strengths and weaknesses is a hallmark of an educated person. This ability develops fully through repeated practice in a wide variety of courses throughout a student's academic career.

**Oral Communication** – It is important to develop skill both in formal oral presentations and the ways in which oral communication can be enhanced and expanded by non-verbal means.

**Visual Literacy** – Increasingly, communication in the modern age depends less on speech and the written word and more on visual media. Images can be extremely effective tools for conveying information and mood, and it is important for today's college graduate to appreciate the power — for good and ill — of visual media.

**Quantitative Reasoning** – Mathematics has long been a standard component of the university curriculum. Aside from the obvious practical utility of some mathematical topics, the study of mathematics can develop skill in the application of logic and, in some cases, critical thinking skills.

Check when Complete	Campuswide General Education Requirements*	Course	Sem/Yr./Grade
<b>FUNDAMENTAL LITERACIES:</b> The development of certain fundamental skills is necessary for success in academic pursuits and also for success and fulfillment in life beyond the university.			
	<b>A. Writing</b> (requires C or higher)	ENG-W 131	
	<b>B. Critical Thinking</b>		
	<b>C. Oral Communication</b>	SPCH-S 121	
	<b>D. Visual Literacy</b>		
	<b>E. Quantitative Reasoning</b>		
	<b>F. Information Literacy</b> (1 cr.)	COAS-Q 110	
	<b>G. Computer Literacy</b>		
<b>COMMON CORE COURSES**:</b> One course in each of the following areas. One course must be at the 300-level. Prerequisites may be required for 300-level courses.			
	<b>A. The Natural World</b> AST, BIOL, CHEM, GEOL, PHYS, etc.		
Introduces students to the methods and logic of science, and helps them understand the importance of science to the development of civilization and the contemporary world. Provides a context within which to evaluate the important scientific and technological issues of modern society.			
	<b>B. Human Behavior and Social Institutions</b> ANTH, POLS, PSY, SOC, etc.		
Develops insights into human nature, the nature of social institutions, and the social processes that have shaped the world of the 21 <sup>st</sup> century. In an interdisciplinary way, introduces the distinctive perspectives of the social sciences, emphasizing frameworks and techniques used in explaining causes and patterns of individual and institutional behavior.			
	<b>C. Literary and Intellectual Traditions</b> CMLT, ENG, FINA, HIST, PHIL, etc.		
Explores, in an interdisciplinary way, one of the great humanistic traditions of inquiry regarding one of the following themes: ideas of self, ideas of truth, ideas of beauty, ideas of community, ideas of nature, ideas of conflict. Writing-intensive, discussion-focused.			
	<b>D. Art, Aesthetics and Creativity</b> CMLT, ENG, FINA, HIST, MUS, PHIL, THTR, etc.		
Explores artistic disciplines and associated forms, materials, and practices. Develops students' making, looking, and listening skills. Through the creative process students will explore relationships to other individuals and cultures, and will review the implications of their learning for their personal, academic, and professional pursuits.			
<b>CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL VALUES</b>			
	<b>A. Non-Western Cultures</b>		
	<b>B. Diversity in U.S. Society</b>		
	<b>C. Health and Wellness</b> (2 cr.)		

– Thanks to the explosive growth of electronic means of communication and data storage, an individual's access to information is now practically unlimited. It is imperative that today's university graduate develop skills in finding and evaluating information, both in print and in electronic form.

**Computer Literacy** – In the 21st century preparation for life beyond the university surely includes learning how to use computers for a variety of tasks.

#### CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL VALUES

**Diversity in U.S. Society** – The United States is a society of immigrants; and the diversity in ethnic, religious, and national influences that we enjoy as a result is one of our nation's greatest strengths and sources of pride. Nevertheless, it is surprisingly easy in the U.S. to live in virtual isolation from this rich diversity of cultures, and even to be ignorant of the ways in which race, class, gender, and sexual orientation shape an individual's view of American society. It is essential, at the beginning of the 21st century, that a university education address this most pressing of national issues.

**Non-Western Cultures** – In an international context, the 21st century can be expected to bring substantial changes in the global distribution of population, wealth, and political influence. The era of European dominance is past; and despite its current status as the world's sole superpower, the United States will see the influence of other countries and continents gain in the coming decades. In order to be prepared for this future, an educated American citizen should be familiar with the culture and politics of these emerging regions.

**Health and Wellness** – The goal of university education is to prepare students for life beyond the university. While this preparation rightly focuses primarily on students' intellectual growth and development, it must not neglect their physical and emotional well-being. The importance of physical and mental wellness to success in life, as well as instruction in activities that promote and maintain this wellness, are important components of general education.

#### CAMPUS THEME

The Campus Theme connects course work and extracurricular learning by means of an annual thematic focus and is highlighted by a program of guest speakers and other campus events. The campus theme brings together the efforts of the general education program, the American Democracy Project, the One Book/One Campus initiative, and contributions from the entire range of campus organizations and departments. The campus theme for the 2007-2008 academic year is "Sustainable Communities." Instructors are encouraged to include in their syllabi assignments that make use of the resources provided within the events program. This year's "One Book" selection is *An Enemy of the People* by Henrik Ibsen.