

Adopted: March 3, 2020

ACADEMIC SENATE  
of  
CALIFORNIA POLYTECHNIC STATE UNIVERSITY  
San Luis Obispo, CA

AS-889-20

RESOLUTION ON SUBJECT AREA GUIDELINES (II)  
FOR GENERAL EDUCATION 2020

**Impact on Existing Policy: This resolution replaces the corresponding General Education guidelines (Areas III and IV) found in AS-504-98/GE “Resolution on General Education 2000.”**

- 1 WHEREAS, Cal Poly’s Academic Senate has approved the *Template for General Education*  
2 *2020*; and  
3  
4 WHEREAS, Implementation of the new *Template* requires the establishment of course criteria  
5 and educational objectives for all General Education courses; therefore, be it  
6  
7 RESOLVED: That the Academic Senate of Cal Poly approve the attached *Subject Area*  
8 *Guidelines* covering Areas C, D, and E in the *Template for General Education*  
9 *2020*; and be it further  
10  
11 RESOLVED: That these *Guidelines* be used for the review and implementation of pre-existing  
12 and proposed General Education courses from Areas C, D, and E within the  
13 2020–2021 and subsequent catalogs.

Proposed by: General Education Governance Board  
Date: November 20, 2019

## **General Education**

The General Education program is compliant with CSU requirements and is uniquely tailored to our comprehensive polytechnic education. At Cal Poly all curriculum, including general education curriculum, is designed and taught by faculty with appropriate training and disciplinary expertise. Educational objectives are expectations for student learning, achievement of which can be periodically assessed. Course criteria are expectations for course design that will be used in the consideration of the course proposal, course modifications, and course renewal. Educational objectives and course criteria for general education subject areas are included below. General education class instruction includes the opportunity for skill acquisition, development, evaluation, and self-reflection.

### **Arts and Humanities Lower-Division Courses Introduction**

#### **Area C**

In Area C students explore the human condition as expressed in literature, philosophy, and the arts. Courses in this area expose students to broad achievements in the arts and humanities that changed and/or continue to change how we understand ourselves emotionally, intellectually, and culturally. These courses seek to improve and encourage students' ability to read with critical judgment and write with clarity. These courses emphasize writing as an integral part of the process of learning and discovery. They also cultivate an awareness of language and the arts as forms of expression valuable both in themselves and for developing critical awareness. By placing basic knowledge in a larger context, these courses provide a vision of why the arts and humanities are important to well-rounded university graduates. Lower-division courses provide a broad foundation for in depth experiences in upper-division courses.

Activities in Area C1 may include participation in individual aesthetic, creative experiences; however, courses that primarily emphasize skills development and/or professional preparation are excluded from Area C.

Students may take courses in languages other than English in partial fulfillment of the Area C requirement if the courses do not focus primarily on skills acquisition but also contain a substantial cultural component. This may include literature among other content.

#### **Area C Educational Objectives and Criteria**

##### **C1 Arts – Lower-Division Educational Objectives**

Consistent with the EO 1100-R and Cal Poly's current General Education program, "arts" in the GE program means architecture, cinema, dance, music, theater, visual arts, and related fields.

Upon completion of a qualifying C1 course, students should be able to:

EO1 Describe key aesthetic developments in the arts, including formal, material, and/or technical innovations as well as contributions made by individuals from diverse and/or underrepresented groups<sup>1</sup>;

EO2 Summarize key historical and contemporary developments in the arts, including contributions made by individuals from diverse and/or underrepresented groups; relate these developments to their broader social, political, and/or historical contexts;

EO3 Explain and/or employ relevant artistic skills and techniques to explore the possibilities and limitations of aesthetic form as an expressive medium and the relationships between form and content;

EO4 Differentiate between subjective and objective responses to aesthetic experiences and/or works of art;

EO5 Analyze subjective and objective responses to aesthetic experiences and/or works of art;

EO6 Apply critical standards/frameworks to evaluate and interpret the cultural significance of canonical and non-canonical works of art, including works from diverse and/or underrepresented groups and traditions.

### **C1 Arts – Lower-Division Criteria**

The course proposal and expanded outline for lower-division Area C1 courses must clearly indicate how they meet all of these criteria:

CR1 Develop skills in historical and critical analysis;

CR2 Courses with laboratory or activity components develop skills in at least one particular area of practice in the arts;

CR3 Instructional materials and course content (e.g., readings, examples used in class, course assignments) incorporate contributions made by individuals from diverse and/or underrepresented groups;

CR4 As appropriate, address issues of sustainability;

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<sup>1</sup> By “diverse” we intend the definition of diversity found in the Cal Poly Statement on Diversity and Inclusivity (<https://digitalcommons.calpoly.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1807&context=senateresolutions>). By “underrepresented groups” is intended groups who are currently underrepresented and historically marginalized groups.

CR5 Require disciplinary appropriate writing assignments that comprise at least 10% of overall course grade.

## **C2 Literature – Lower-Division Educational Objectives**

All C2 literature courses must satisfy the following educational objectives and criteria.

Upon completion of a qualifying C2 course, students should be able to:

EO1 Identify and define an array of historical and critical literary terms, categories, and conventions;

EO2 Read, analyze, and interpret literary texts with insight, engagement, discernment, and empathy;

EO3 Explicate texts from a diverse range of traditions, including texts from historically underrepresented groups;

EO4 Critique texts that account for the rhetorical relationships among writer, audience, text, and genre;

EO5 Analyze how power structures and how social, cultural, and historical contexts shape literary production and reception.

## **C2 Literature – Lower-Division Criteria**

The course proposal and expanded outline for lower-division Area C2 courses must clearly indicate how they meet all of these criteria:

CR1 Enrollment prerequisites list completion of Area A;

CR2 Compare and contrast a wide range of literary traditions, including works from historically underrepresented groups, from a period covering two hundred years or more;

CR3 Instructional materials and course content (e.g., readings, examples used in class, course assignments) incorporate contributions made by individuals from diverse and/or underrepresented groups;

CR4 As appropriate, address issues of sustainability;

CR5 Meet all other criteria for GE writing-intensive courses (GE Writing Intensive Requirements).

## **C2 Philosophy – Lower-Division Educational Objectives**

Upon completion of a qualifying C2 course, students should be able to:

EO1 Read philosophy with a focus on impartiality, careful insight, and engagement;

EO2 Critically compare a historically diverse range of philosophical movements and their relationship to other intellectual movements;

EO3 Critically examine the implications of holding a particular philosophical position;

EO4 Integrate philosophical arguments into a holistic philosophical view;

EO5 Apply philosophical methods to analyze and evaluate a variety of positions.

## **C2 Philosophy – Lower-Division Criteria**

The course proposal and expanded outline for lower-division Area C2 courses must clearly indicate how they meet all of these criteria:

CR1 Enrollment prerequisites list completion of Area A;

CR2 Include at least one ancient or medieval work, at least one modern work, and no more than one work from the 20th and 21st century;

CR3 Rely upon primary texts for readings;

CR4 Include recognized accomplishments in philosophy;

CR5 Address (e.g., readings, course assignments) issues of diversity and inclusion;

CR6 As appropriate, address issues of sustainability;

CR7 Meet all other criteria for GE writing-intensive courses (GE Writing Intensive Requirements).

## **C2 Study Abroad Languages Other than English – Lower-division Educational Objectives**

Cal Poly study abroad courses (such as SPAN 141-142-143 and SPAN 241-242-243) would be included in this area. In compliance with EO 1100-R, these courses contain a substantial cultural component because they are taken in the context of full immersion in the target language and culture.

Upon completion of a qualifying C2 study abroad course, students should be able to:

EO1 Demonstrate communicative and cultural competence that will enable them to participate actively and appropriately in the target language culture;

EO2 Recognize cultural development reflected in changing language use, including the significance of evolving technology in the development of the target language;

EO3 Describe the social, cultural, and historical contexts specific to the language being studied, including differences between various registers of language use;

EO4 Identify and analyze diverse perspectives based on linguistic and cultural heritage.

## **C2 Study Abroad Languages Other than English – Lower-Division Criteria**

The course proposal and expanded outline for lower-division Area C2 courses must clearly indicate how they meet all of these criteria:

CR1 Enrollment prerequisites list completion of Area A;

CR2 Develop speaking, listening, reading, and writing abilities at an intermediate level or above;

CR3 Provide a wide variety of activities and materials designed to develop students' communicative and cultural competence;

CR4 Emphasize an understanding of language in its socio-cultural context;

CR5 Instructional materials and course content (e.g., readings, examples used in class, course assignments) incorporate contributions made by individuals from diverse and/or underrepresented groups;

CR6 As appropriate, address issues of sustainability;

CR7 Meet all other criteria for GE writing-intensive courses (GE Writing Intensive Requirements).

## **Upper-Division C – Arts and Humanities**

These courses must be integrative in nature, requiring the application and generalization of knowledge and/or understanding from foundation Area C courses (as appropriate) to the advanced study of a subject or to new, but related, areas of inquiry within the arts and humanities. These courses may be interdisciplinary in nature and should focus on achieving depth rather than breadth. Courses in this area also emphasize writing as an integral part of the process of learning and discovery.

## **Upper-Division C Educational Objectives**

Upon completion of a qualifying upper-division Area C course, students should be able to:

EO1 Integrate factual and conceptual knowledge in the arts or the humanities to the advanced study of a subject or to new, but related, areas of inquiry;

EO2 Evaluate issues in the arts or the humanities, including issues of diversity and inclusion;

EO3 Critically analyze a focused area of study in the arts or the humanities;

EO4 Evaluate how relationships between different areas of study in the arts or the humanities provide additional perspectives on knowledge.

## **Upper-Division C Criteria**

The course proposal and expanded outline for upper-division Area C courses must clearly indicate how they meet all of these criteria:

CR1 Enrollment prerequisites list completion of Areas A1 Oral Communication, A2 Written Communication, and A3 Critical Thinking, and B4 Mathematics/Quantitative Reasoning as pursuant to EO1100 Revised (section 2.2.3) and C1 or C2; some courses will require additional pre-requisites as course content dictates;

CR2 Explore in depth a subject related to the disciplinary/interdisciplinary study of the arts and/or humanities;

CR3 Demonstrate the subject's relationship to other cultural achievements and to relevant issues of diversity and inclusion;

CR4 Instructional materials and course content (e.g., readings, examples used in class, course assignments) incorporate contributions made by individuals from diverse and/or underrepresented groups;

CR5 As appropriate, address issues of sustainability;

CR6 Meet all other criteria for GE writing-intensive courses (GE Writing Intensive Requirements).

## **Social Sciences**

### **Area D**

Area D provides students with an understanding of how social, political, and economic institutions and behaviors are historically and inextricably interwoven. Students learn, via social scientific inquiry, how the human experience is shaped by broad societal and cultural traditions and structures as well as by individual factors. Courses in this area also emphasize writing as an integral part of the process of learning and discovery. Courses that emphasize skills development and professional preparation are excluded from Area D. Lower-division courses provide a broad foundation for in depth experiences in upper-division courses.

#### **Area D Lower-Division Social Science Educational Objectives**

Upon completion of a qualifying lower-division D course, students should be able to meet five or more of the following eight educational objectives:

EO1 Describe how communities have historically grouped together;

EO2 Describe how groups and individuals develop social, economic, political, and legal institutions and relationships that are important for themselves as individuals and the welfare of their communities;

EO3 Provide examples of the origins and meaning of the public order, commerce, and social institutions;

EO4 Interpret the histories of western and non-western societies in a cross-cultural, global perspective and recognize the growing interdependence of the global community;

EO5 Analyze the ways that social, political, and economic institutions and human behavior are interconnected;

EO6 Examine the human experience in comparative terms through an understanding of the diversity of experience from both individual and group perspectives with special attention to the issues of diversity such as gender, ethnicity, and race;

EO7 Examine the structural relationships between diversity, inequality, and social, economic, and/or political power;

EO8 Examine the contributions of the extant literature and research methodologies related to the study of social, economic, political, and/or legal issues in a global society;

## **D1 Lower-Division: American Institutions (4 units)**

### **Criteria for courses that meet the American Institutions and 40404 requirement**

In addition to meeting five or more of the eight educational objectives for lower-division Area D, the course proposal and expanded course outline for courses in American Institutions and 40404 must clearly indicate how the course meets all of the following criteria:

CR1 Address significant events covering a minimum time span of approximately one hundred years and occurring in the entire area now included in the United States of America, including the relationships of regions within that area and with external regions and powers as appropriate to the understanding of those events within the United States during the period under study;

CR2 Incorporate the role of major ethnic and social groups in such events and the contexts in which the events have occurred;

CR3 Cover the events presented within a framework that illustrates the continuity of the American experience and its derivation from other cultures, including consideration of three or more of the following: politics, economics, social movements, and geography;

CR4 Incorporate the political philosophies of the framers of the Constitution and the nature and operation of United States political institutions and processes under that Constitution as amended and interpreted;

CR5 Highlight the rights and obligations of citizens in the political system established under the Constitution;

CR6 Include the Constitution of the state of California within the framework of evolution of federal-state relations and the nature and processes of state and local government under that Constitution;

CR7 Explore the contemporary relationships of state and local government with the federal government, the resolution of conflicts and the establishment of cooperative processes under the constitutions of both the state and nation, and the political processes involved;

CR8 Require disciplinary appropriate writing assignments that comprise at least 10% of overall course grade.

## **Area D2 Lower-Division (8 units)**

***(excludes American Institutions and 40404 requirement)***

The course proposal and expanded outline for lower-division Area D courses must clearly indicate how they meet all of these criteria:

CR1 Address the origins, structures, functions, patterns of change, and integration of basic human social institutions (for example, family, government, economy, education, and/or religion);

CR2 Include relevant research methodologies;

CR3 Explore social phenomena from non-western, cross-cultural, comparative, and/or global perspectives;

CR4 Examine cultural and/or social diversity, including the drivers of ethnic, gender, and class-based inequality;

CR5 Apply theory to practical current issues;

CR6 Require disciplinary appropriate writing assignments that comprise at least 10% of overall course grade.

### **Upper-Division D (4 units)**

Courses must be integrative in nature, requiring application and generalization of knowledge and understanding from foundation Area D courses to the advanced study of a subject or to new, but related, areas of inquiry. These courses may be interdisciplinary in nature and should focus on achieving depth rather than breadth. Courses in this area also emphasize writing as an integral part of the process of learning and discovery. Attention to issues of gender and diversity is encouraged. Courses require the completion of two lower-division Area D.

### **Upper-Division D Educational Objectives**

Upon completion of a qualifying upper-division D course, students should be able to:

EO1 Examine problems and issues from their respective disciplinary perspectives;

EO2 Develop reasoned, logical, evidence-based arguments that expand upon lower-division area D coursework;

EO3 Explain how human, social, political, and economic institutions and individual behavior are inextricably interwoven;

EO4 Examine issues in their contemporary as well as historical settings and in a variety of cultural contexts;

EO5 Examine how relationships between two or more areas of study inform our perspectives.

## **Upper-Division D Criteria**

The course proposal and expanded course outline for courses in upper-division D must clearly indicate how the course meets all of the following criteria:

CR1 Enrollment prerequisites list completion of Areas A1 Oral Communication, A2 Written Communication, and A3 Critical Thinking, and B4 Mathematics/Quantitative Reasoning as pursuant to EO1100 Revised (section 2.2.3) and a lower-division D course; some courses will require additional pre-requisites as course content dictates;

CR2 Apply knowledge acquired in lower-division Area D courses to the advanced study of self and society;

CR3 Include relevant principles, methodologies, value systems and ethics employed in social scientific inquiry;

CR4 Examine the impact of social, economic, political, legal, and/or commercial institutions on individuals, societies in the U.S. and/or international contexts, including inequities in treatment of diverse and/or underrepresented<sup>2</sup> groups;

CR5 Meet all other criteria for GE writing-intensive courses (GE Writing Intensive Requirements).

## **Lifelong Learning and Self Development (4 units)**

### **Area E**

This requirement is designed to equip students for lifelong learning and self-development as integrated physiological, psychological, and social beings. Courses in this area focus on topics such as student success strategies, human behavior, sexuality, nutrition, physical and mental health, stress management, information literacy, social relationships and relationships with the environment, as well as implications of death and dying or avenues for lifelong learning. Physical activity may be included, if it is an integral part of the study elements described herein. Courses in this area shall focus on the development of skills, abilities and dispositions. Courses in Area E shall be four units of lower-division foundational course work.

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<sup>2</sup> By “diverse” we intend the definition of diversity found in the Cal Poly Statement on Diversity and Inclusivity (<https://digitalcommons.calpoly.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1807&context=senateresolutions>). By “underrepresented groups” is intended groups who are currently underrepresented and historically marginalized groups.

## **E Educational Objectives**

Upon completion of a qualifying Area E course, students should be able to meet five or more of the following:

EO1 Explain the importance of maintaining physical, social, and mental health;

EO2 Describe the self as an integrated physiological, psychological, and social being;

EO3 Recognize themselves as individuals undergoing a particular stage of human development;

EO4 Practice appropriate social skills to enhance learning and develop positive relationships with others who have identities and experiences different from their own;

EO5 Develop a lifelong commitment to practices for personal growth, health, well-being, and societal responsibility;

EO6 Describe the commonalities and differences among people across the lifespan in social or cultural contexts;

EO7 Evaluate how well-being is affected by social systems and how they can facilitate their personal development.

EO8 Critically evaluate information sources and merit of claims on the basis of methods and empirical evidence;

## **E Criteria**

The course proposal and expanded outline for lower-division Area E courses must clearly indicate how they meet all of these criteria:

CR1 Introduce the knowledge, skills and attitudes to engage in learning and personal development practices;

CR2 Examine the interrelation of physiological, psychological, and socio-cultural factors on personal development across the lifespan;

CR3 Illustrate the physiological, socio-cultural, and psychological influences on the well-being of individuals and groups;

CR4 Examine the interaction of social institutions, culture, and environment with individual behavior;

CR5 Explore the importance of active engagement by individuals in their communities for the betterment of personal and public life;

CR6 Apply theories and methods to examine the self in various contexts and assess the advantages and disadvantages of these approaches;

CR7 Focus on lifelong learning and/or student success strategies (but not emphasize the logistics of progressing through a degree program);

CR8 Require disciplinary appropriate writing assignments that comprise at least 10% of overall course grade.

# TEMPLATE FOR GENERAL EDUCATION 2020

## Standard GE Template

The standard template includes the following distribution of courses:

<b>Area A: English Language Communication and Critical Thinking</b>		
A1	Oral Communication	4
A2	Written Communication	4
A3	Critical Thinking	4
<b>Total Units in Area A</b>		<b>12</b>

<b>Area B: Scientific Inquiry and Quantitative Reasoning</b>		
B1	Physical Science	4
B2	Life Science	4
B3	Laboratory Activity	in B1 or B2
B4	Mathematics/Quantitative Reasoning	4
Upper-Division B		4
<b>Total Units in Area B</b>		<b>16</b>

<b>Area C: Arts and Humanities</b>		
<i>Lower-division courses in Area C must come from three different prefixes.</i>		
C1	Arts: Arts, Cinema, Dance, Music, Theater	4
C2	Humanities: Literature, Philosophy, Languages other than English	4
Lower-Division C Elective – <i>Select a course from either C1 or C2</i>		4
Upper-Division C		4
<b>Total Units in Area C</b>		<b>16</b>

<b>Area D: Social Sciences</b>		
D1	American Institutions (Title 5, Section 40404 Requirement)	4
D2	Lower-Division D – <i>Select courses from two different prefixes</i>	8
Upper-Division D		4
<b>Total Units in Area D</b>		<b>16</b>

<b>Area E: Lifelong Learning and Self-Development</b>		
Lower-Division E		4
<b>Total Units in Area E</b>		<b>4</b>

<b>GE Electives in Area B, C, and D</b>		
GE Electives – <i>Select courses from two different areas; may be either lower- or upper-division levels.</i>		8
<b>Total Units in GE Electives</b>		<b>8</b>

<b>TOTAL UNITS IN GENERAL EDUCATION PROGRAM</b>		<b>72</b>
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## GE Template for High-Unit Programs

The template includes the following distribution of courses for qualifying high-unit programs:

<b>Area A: English Language Communication and Critical Thinking</b>		
A1	Oral Communication	4
A2	Written Communication	4
A3	Critical Thinking	4
<b>Total Units in Area A</b>		<b>12</b>

<b>Area B: Scientific Inquiry and Quantitative Reasoning</b>		
B1	Physical Science	4
B2	Life Science	4
B3	Laboratory Activity	in B1 or B2
B4	Mathematics/Quantitative Reasoning	8
Upper-Division B		4
Area B Electives		8
<b>Total Units in Area B</b>		<b>28</b>

<b>Area C: Arts and Humanities</b>		
<i>Lower-division courses in Area C must come from three different prefixes.</i>		
C1	Arts: Arts, Cinema, Dance, Music, Theater	4
C2	Humanities: Literature, Philosophy, Languages other than English	4
Lower-Division C Elective – <i>Select a course from either C1 or C2</i>		4
Upper-Division C		4
<b>Total Units in Area C</b>		<b>16</b>

<b>Area D: Social Sciences</b>		
D1	American Institutions (Title 5, Section 40404 Requirement)	4
D2	Lower-Division D	4
Area D Elective – <i>Select either an additional lower-division D2 or an upper-division D course</i>		4
<b>Total Units in Area D</b>		<b>12</b>

<b>Area E: Lifelong Learning and Self-Development</b>		
Lower-Division E		4
<b>Total Units in Area E</b>		<b>4</b>

<b>TOTAL UNITS IN GENERAL EDUCATION PROGRAM</b>		<b>72</b>
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## **High-Unit Programs**

Consistent with EO 1100-R (2.2.5), Cal Poly recognizes the need to offer consideration to high-unit major degree programs. Cal Poly's definition of a high-unit program in the GE template included herein is equivalent to our definition of "engineering programs" from the prior GE template: all programs within the College of Engineering along with the other ABET accredited programs of ARCE and BRAE. Only these programs will be considered high-unit major degree programs.

## **Writing Component**

All General Education courses must have an appropriate writing component. In achieving this objective, writing in most courses should be viewed primarily as a tool of learning (rather than a goal in itself as in a composition course), and faculty should determine the appropriate ways to integrate writing into coursework. The writing component may take different forms according to the subject matter and the purpose of a course. Outside of the GE areas specified below, at least 10% of the grade in all GE courses must be based on appropriate written work (e.g., lab reports, math proofs, essay questions, word problems, exam questions).

GE areas A2, A3, Upper-Division C, and Upper-Division D are designated as Writing Intensive. All courses in these areas must include a minimum of 3,000 words of writing and base 50% or more of a student's grade on written work. GE area C2 is also designated as Writing Intensive, but all courses in this area must include a minimum of 2,000 words of writing and base 50% or more of a student's grade on written work. All Writing Intensive courses must include process-oriented writing instruction in which faculty provide ongoing feedback to students to help them grasp the effectiveness of their writing in various disciplinary contexts. The kind and amount of writing must be a factor in determining class sizes.



OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

## MEMORANDUM

**To:** Dustin Stegner

**Date:** April 22, 2020

**From:** Jeffrey D. Armstrong  
President

**Copies:** Mary Pedersen  
Al Liddicoat  
Amy Fleischer  
Andy Thulin  
Christine Theodoropoulos  
Dean Wendt  
Philip Williams  
Bruno Giberti  
Gary Laver  
Cem Sunata

**Subject:** Response to AS-889-20 – Resolution on Subject Area Guidelines (II) for General Education

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This memo formalizes my support of the above-entitled Academic Senate resolution which relates to General Education Areas C, D and E.

Please extend my thanks to the Academic Senate members for their attention to this matter.