

Pre-2006 Perspectives Curriculum: Description

Undergraduates at the University must fulfill the General Education requirements common to most fields of study and the more specialized requirements of their major field. The General Education requirements fall under two headings: Basic Skills (English composition, foreign languages, and mathematical sciences) and Perspectives (Aesthetic, Natural Sciences, Philosophical, Social Sciences, and Western Historical/Non-Western/ Comparative).

The faculty believe that General Education rests upon the knowledge and practice of the Basic Skills. These include the ability to: write clearly, read critically, speak effectively, comprehend a foreign language, use mathematics, reason analytically, and understand abstract ideas.

To impart and polish these basic skills, the curriculum requires training in English composition and rhetoric, a foreign language, and mathematical sciences.

The five Perspectives requirements build upon students' knowledge of the Basic Skills and ask them to learn both the content and the methodologies of several disciplines. Students must take courses in the Aesthetic Perspective (literature and the fine arts), the Natural Sciences Perspective, the Philosophical Perspective, the Social Sciences Perspective, and the Western Historical/Non-Western/Comparative Perspective.

These Basic Skills and Perspectives requirements make up the core of the General Education curriculum. The Basic Skills requirements apply to all students. The Perspectives requirements fall into two categories: nine courses are required of all freshmen and sophomores by the General College. Four more courses, selected from four of the five perspective areas, are required of juniors and seniors pursuing the degree of bachelor of arts in the College of Arts and Sciences. These requirements are detailed in the following sections.

Effective fall 1994, all first-year students (regardless of major) entering UNC-Chapel Hill must take a cultural diversity course from an approved list.

Effective fall 1998, all first-year students (regardless of major) entering UNC-Chapel Hill must also fulfill an oral communication requirement.

Basic Skills

Writing and Oral Communication

The faculty of the General College and the College of Arts and Sciences expect students to write and speak effectively. Instructors should help students realize that there is a direct relationship between thinking clearly, writing clearly, and speaking clearly. Faculty in all disciplines and professions should therefore develop the writing and speaking skills of their students. Students should expect to be graded on spelling, grammar, and style, as well as on the content and organization of their written work; in addition, students should expect to be graded on presentation, style, poise, and diction, as well as on the content and organization of their oral presentations.

English Composition and Rhetoric

All students at the University must pass or exempt ENGL 11 and ENGL 12 or satisfy the freshman honors literature requirement ENGL 29/29W, CLAS 29, GERM 29, SLAV 29, or ROML 29. These courses develop the skills of writing, reasoning, and argumentation, which are necessary to the entire educational endeavor. Students may prepare for these courses while in high school by taking courses in English composition and literature and speech communication beyond the four years of English required for admission to the University. Students who have had such preparation usually perform better in their classes than those who have not.

Placement in English composition is determined by the student's score on the SAT I Verbal, the SAT II: Writing Subject Test, or the Advanced Placement Test in composition. Those who feel their test scores do not accurately reflect their writing and speaking abilities may take a Written and Oral exam offered by the English Department. If placement scores or the exam indicate a need for instruction and practice in preparation for ENGL 11, students will pass the developmental course ENGL 10 before taking ENGL 11.

Regardless of placement, continuous enrollment is required until the series of English Composition and Rhetoric courses is completed. Any student whose native language is not English will be required to pass ENGL 11-12 like other students. However, that student will be permitted to waive, without credit, the foreign language requirement up to or through level 4. An authorized representative of the appropriate University department must confirm the student's proficiency in the language up to that level in order for the waiver to be granted.

Writing Skills

Students who wish to improve their writing can make appointments with a tutor in the Writing Center. This free, noncredit service is available to any member of the University community. Faculty members who identify weak writers should refer them to the Writing Center as early as possible in the semester in order to ensure maximum benefit from tutorial instruction. In cases that seem especially severe, faculty may recommend that a student attend tutorials at the Writing Center as a requirement for passing the course.

Oral Communication Skills

Effective fall 1998, all first-year students (regardless of major) entering UNC-Chapel Hill who are exempted from taking ENGL 11 and ENGL 12 (Composition and Rhetoric) must, in order to graduate, pass with a letter grade a one-hour course entitled Oral Communication (COMM 09). (Honors students fulfill this requirement by passing their equivalent courses for ENGL 12.) This Oral Communication course is also available to students who are enrolled in or have received credit for Composition and Rhetoric.

Foreign Languages

The study of a foreign language enables students to see more clearly the nature and structure of their own language while gaining an understanding of a foreign culture.

Students should improve their language preparation by continuing their foreign language study through the senior year of high school. It is preferable that they complete four years of one high school language rather than, for example, taking two years each of two different languages.

Placement in a foreign language is determined by the student's score on the College Board SAT II: Subject Test, the Advanced Placement Test in a foreign language (taken at the completion of language study in high school), or the appropriate placement test administered by the University during freshman orientation.

All first-year students entering the University after May 15, 1990, must meet the foreign language requirements described below in order to fulfill the General Education Basic Skills requirement in the General College. These same requirements apply to sophomore transfers admitted after May 1, 1991, and to junior transfers admitted after May 1, 1992.

Students admitted to the University before the aforementioned dates should consult their academic dean about their foreign language requirements and the application of transfer credit for foreign language courses taken at another college or university toward the fulfillment of their foreign language requirement.

In the following statements, "high school foreign language" is defined as completion of two or more years of courses in the same high school foreign language.

Students whose foreign language placement is below level 4 of their high school foreign language and who wish to continue in this language must complete through level 3. Credit hours toward the 120-academic hour graduation requirement are not awarded for level 1, if students place into level 1 (with the exception of Japanese). Grades earned in level 1 courses, however, are computed in the students' grade point average and are used in all academic eligibility and academic load considerations.

Students who enroll in a foreign language other than their high school foreign language are required to complete through level 3. In this case, credit hours towards fulfilling the 120-academic hour graduation requirement are awarded for successful completion of level 1.

Students whose placement is level 4 of their high school foreign language and who wish to continue in that language must complete through level 4. Placement credit is awarded for level 3 upon successful completion of level 4. Students whose placement is beyond level 4 of their high school language have fulfilled the foreign language requirement and are awarded placement credit for levels 3 and 4.

Some undergraduate degree programs require the completion of foreign language courses beyond that needed to fulfill the General Education Basic Skills requirement. Academic advisers will inform students if their degree programs require completion of additional foreign language courses.

Mathematical Sciences

Through the study of mathematics students reinforce or acquire the ability to reason and to use analytic and quantitative ideas in both theoretical and applied contexts. In today's world of fast-paced scientific and technological advances, the importance of such skills cannot be overstated.

Students should prepare by taking precalculus and/or calculus in high school and by continuing their mathematical studies up through their senior year of high school. Not to do so may put them at a disadvantage in the University.

Placement in the mathematical sciences will be determined by scores on the College Board SATII: Mathematics Subject Test Level IIC, or the Advanced Placement Test (AB or BC). Students whose placement scores indicate a weakness in basic algebra skills may take MATH R, a review course in high school algebra. MATH R carries three credit hours for purposes of determining a student's GPA, eligibility, or financial aid status, but does not count toward the 120 academic hours required for graduation.

All first-year students entering the University after May 15, 1990, must meet the new mathematical sciences requirements described below in order to fulfill the General Education Basic Skills requirement in the General College. These same requirements apply to sophomore transfers admitted after May 1, 1991, and to junior transfers admitted after May 1, 1992.

Students admitted to the University before the aforementioned dates should consult their academic dean about their mathematical sciences requirements and the application of transfer credit for mathematical sciences courses taken at another college or university toward the fulfillment of this requirement.

Students who place into MATH 10 (Algebra) are required to complete MATH 10 and one additional course selected from the approved mathematical sciences course list. Students who place above MATH 10 are exempted from this course requirement and are required to complete one course selected from the approved mathematical sciences course list. Placement hours are not awarded for exempting MATH 10.

Some undergraduate degree programs require completion of specific mathematical sciences courses beyond those needed to fulfill the General Education Basic Skills requirement. Academic advisers will inform students if their degree programs require completion of additional mathematical sciences courses.

Exemption from MATH 10 or successful completion of this course is a prerequisite for enrolling in any course on the approved mathematical sciences course list given below. Placement scores that allow students to exempt MATH 10 may initially exclude these students from some of these courses.

The Basic Course list provides courses that do not require a specific prerequisite (first group of courses). However, some students may be advised to complete MATH 10 before proceeding to MATH 30 or complete MATH 30 before proceeding to MATH 31. If the equivalent of MATH 10 is completed at another institution with at least a grade of C, exemption from the MATH 10 requirement is granted. However, no transfer credit hours toward fulfilling graduation requirements are awarded for the successful completion of this course. Additionally, transfer credit for any mathematical sciences course on the Basic Course list (for which MATH 10 is a prerequisite) exempts a student from the MATH 10 requirement. On the other hand, students with advanced placement, exceptional ability, or superior

performance may select a course from the second list (courses with prerequisites) consisting of courses that have been one of the basic courses as a prerequisite.

Aesthetic Perspective

Two courses are required in order to fulfill the Aesthetic Perspective: one in literature and one in the fine arts. The purpose of this requirement is to enable students to explore the varieties of artistic creation and to realize how the full range of human experience is given expression in the arts.

Natural Sciences Perspective

Two courses are required for the Natural Sciences Perspective. At least one of these must include a lecture course with a complementary laboratory (i.e., CHEM 11 and 11L, BIOL 11 and 11L, or ASTR 31 and 31L, etc.). It is important for students in today's technologically complex world to develop an understanding of the methodology and some of the content of the sciences. Those students who have exceeded their minimum high school science requirement are at an advantage in the University's science courses.

Philosophical Perspective

One course is required to fulfill the Philosophical Perspective. Students will investigate moral and ethical issues, and develop the ability to arrive at reasoned viewpoints.

Social Sciences Perspective

Two courses from different departments are required to satisfy the Social Sciences Perspective. The courses study social institutions and social evolution. The methodology of the social sciences is an important element of this Perspective requirement.

Western Historical/Non-Western/Comparative Perspective

Two courses are required. One must cover a period of Western history before 1700. The other may be another Western history course, spanning at least two centuries if the first course did not, or it may be a non-Western or comparative course. Students will choose at least one course from the first column below and may choose the other from any column below. The purpose of the requirement is to develop in students an appreciation of the cultural heritage of the Western world. By studying a non-Western culture, or comparing Western and non-Western cultures, students broaden their understanding of their own culture and of the world.

Pre-1700 Western History

First Year Seminars

First Year Seminars offer an introduction to the intellectual life of the University. The seminars enroll a maximum of twenty students and are led by faculty who are both active scholars and accomplished teachers. While drawing on diverse disciplines and subject areas, the seminars share a focus on how scholars pose problems, discover "truths," resolve controversies, and evaluate knowledge.

Priority registration will be given to first year students. Students can only enroll in one First Year Seminar. These seminars MAY NOT be declared Pass/Fail. All departments will use the following numbering system to indicate General College perspectives and cultural diversity:

- 6B Natural Science (required lab)
- 6C Natural Science (optional lab)
- 6D Natural Science (without lab)
- 6E Social Sciences
- 6F Philosophical
- 6G Pre-1700 Western History
- 6I Other Western History
- 6J Non-Western/Comparative
- 6K Fine Arts
- 6M Literature
- 6N Cultural Diversity
- 6P Math Requirement

Cultural Diversity Requirement

One course is required for graduation. The Cultural Diversity requirement applies to all first-year students (regardless of major) entering UNC-Chapel Hill for the first time in fall 1994. As of fall 1996, the requirement applies to all entering students at UNC-Chapel Hill, first-year students and transfers alike. This requirement gives students the opportunity to gain a better understanding of cultural diversity as it will affect their lives in our increasingly pluralistic society. A number of courses fulfilling the Cultural Diversity requirement fulfill perspective requirements as well. Thus, it is possible for a student to fulfill both the Cultural Diversity requirement and a Perspective requirement with the same carefully chosen course. Although the Cultural Diversity requirement can be fulfilled at any time before graduation, students are encouraged, when possible, to fulfill the requirement while enrolled in the General College. Under normal circumstances, however, students in the General College are expected to register for courses numbered below 100.

Honors Seminars

Honors Seminars are offered in all the Perspectives; these are available to students in the Honors Program and to others by permission. They may be used to complete the Perspectives requirements. Details are available through the Honors Office.

Qualified students are permitted to fulfill some General College requirements with courses chosen from the lists of upper-level requirements.

Physical Education Requirement

All students must pass a swimming test and complete two physical education activities courses. These are one hour each and are not counted toward the graduation requirement of 120 academic hours.

General Education: Juniors and Seniors

During their junior and senior years, students seeking the bachelor of arts degree must complete General Education requirements by passing upper-level perspective coursework in four of the five perspective areas. Students who choose two Western historical courses to fulfill their General College historical perspective requirements must take an upper-level non-Western/comparative course as one of their four upper-level Perspectives. These courses may not be taken pass/fail. None of the courses may be in the student's major (or second major), unless it is a capstone course or an honors course (excluding FREN 21A, GERM 21A, SPAN 21A). Courses in the minor departments may not be used to satisfy Arts and Sciences perspective requirements.

The faculty approved these requirements for all BA degree candidates because they believe that juniors and seniors benefit from further study in the Perspectives and because the additional courses add coherence and depth to the General Education requirements. To this end, students are encouraged to pursue courses in sequence as they fulfill their requirements.

For example, a student might take CLAS 33, *The Age of Pericles*, as an introduction to the literature, art, and thought of classical Greek civilization, and continue with CLAS 62, *The Tragic Dimension in Classical Literature*, a more specialized course. Or, a student might take introductory physics and calculus courses in the General College and then specialized courses in electronics as a junior or senior.

Capstone Courses

Capstone courses particularly stress one or more of the following: the presuppositions of a discipline and how they determine the way it is studied; the intersection of interests between two or more disciplines; and the ethical implications of the ways in which knowledge is applied. Capstone courses are not required for graduation, but students are encouraged strongly to satisfy one or more of their four upper-level Perspective requirements with capstone courses.