General Education Curriculum

Program information

College	Undergraduate Studies		
Department or school	Enter department or school		
Degree abbreviation	Required for all bachelor's degrees	**CIP code**	e.g., 54.0101
Program website	www.fau.edu/ugstudies/general-education-curriculum		

Our commitment to you

This Academic Learning Compact describes the program's mission, what students who complete the program will know and be able to do and how faculty assess that learning. Florida Atlantic University publishes a compact for every degree program and standalone certificate so students, families, employers and the community can see what each program commits to providing its graduates.

Program mission

The General Education Curriculum is designed to ensure that every undergraduate student graduates as an informed citizen through participation in rigorous general education courses. It gives every student a shared foundation in communication, the humanities, the social sciences, the natural sciences and mathematics.

Florida Atlantic University's mission

Florida Atlantic University is recognized as an opportunity university and R1 research institution dedicated to transforming lives through education, discovery, and innovation. We empower students to achieve economic mobility, advance knowledge that creates meaningful impact, and forge partnerships that drive prosperity and connection in the communities we serve.

How the program supports the university mission

The curriculum supports the university's mission by transforming lives through education. It builds the writing, reasoning and number skills every student needs for later courses and careers, giving every graduate a common foundation.

About the program

Every undergraduate at Florida Atlantic University completes at least 36 credits of general education courses. These include 15 credits of State of Florida core courses and up to 21 credits of university course options. The courses cover five areas: communication, humanities, social science, natural science and mathematics, plus six credits of additional enrichment. Students also meet the state civic literacy requirement. The curriculum is the foundation for every bachelor's degree at the university.

Student learning outcomes

By completion, students will be able to demonstrate outcomes in three core areas: content/discipline knowledge and skills (Outcome 1), communication skills (Outcome 2), and critical thinking skills (Outcome 3). Faculty assess all three core outcomes every year.

A. Content/Discipline Knowledge and Skills

What students will know and be able to do in their field

Areas this program addresses (check at least two)

- ☒ **Declarative knowledge:** key vocabulary, history, theories and concepts of the field
- ☒ **Research skills:** finding, gathering, analyzing and reporting information the way the field does
- ☐ **Technical skills:** hands-on tools and methods of the field, such as software, instruments, lesson plans or business reports

- Students will be able to explain forms of human expression in literature, history, art, music and philosophy, including works from the Western canon.
- Students will be able to describe patterns of human behavior.
- Students will be able to describe how institutions influence human behavior and how humans influence these institutions.
- Students will be able to explain important scientific concepts, principles, and paradigms.
- Students will be able to use the scientific method to explain how principles of scientific inquiry and ethical standards are used to develop and investigate research questions.
- Students will be able to explain mathematical theories and their applications.
- Students will be able to display quantitative literacy.

How students show it

The general education program evaluation involves course embedded assessments, and these cover a wide range of types and formats. Most of the courses use objective-based tests at midterm and as a final. Courses with more manageable enrollment employ presentation, group assignments/projects, and papers.

B. Communication Skills

How graduates will share ideas and work with others

Areas this program addresses (check at least two)

- ☒ **Written communication:** clear, well-organized writing suited to the audience and purpose
- ☐ **Oral communication:** well-organized presentations that connect with an audience
- ☐ **Other forms of communication:** visual, media, performance or exhibit work
- ☐ **Team/collaborative communication:** contributing to group projects and shared goals

- Students will demonstrate effective written communication skills by exhibiting the control of rhetorical elements that include clarity, coherence, comprehensiveness, and mechanical correctness.

How students show it

Communication outcomes are measured through the WAC program which collects and rates papers collected from ENC 1101.

C. Critical Thinking Skills

How graduates will analyze, create and solve problems

Areas this program addresses (check at least one)

☒ **Analytical skills:** weighing evidence, comparing ideas and judging arguments

☒ **Creative skills:** combining knowledge to create something new, such as a design, performance or proposal

☐ **Practical skills:** applying knowledge to real situations, such as a business proposal, lesson plan or grant

- Students will be able to reflect critically on subjects concerned with human culture.
- Students will be able to apply appropriate methods to the analysis of social, psychological, ethical, political, technological, or economic issues.
- Students will be able to critically evaluate scientific claims, arguments, and methodology.
- Students will be able to analyze resulting data and draw appropriate conclusions from such data.
- Students will be able to choose and apply mathematical and/or computational models and methods in problem solving.

How students show it

The general education program evaluation involves course embedded assessments, and these cover a wide range of types and formats. Most of the courses use objective-based tests at midterm and as a final. Courses with more manageable enrollment employ presentation, group assignments/projects, and papers.

Assessment approaches

General education assessment is course-based because it draws on courses from many colleges and departments. Faculty select and manage the assessment tools that best fit their pedagogy and discipline, determine mastery level for each outcome, and report the degree of mastery against both course and general education SLOs. This approach means a variety of assessments are used, at the professor's discretion. The common standard across courses is the percentage of students who reach mastery after the instructor has calibrated, for that class and students, what performances count as mastery. Unlike assessment of majors, general education cannot rely on scaffolding or sequential development. Gen-ed classes typically enroll large, heterogeneous groups of students who are not part of a shared cohort and who will not progress together through a fixed sequence of courses. There is no ongoing connection among gen-ed offerings the way there is within a major, so each term begins essentially with improvements from the previous individual courses. Assessment must therefore focus on what can be demonstrated within a single course rather than across a program-trajectory.