

UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT **GENERAL EDUCATION GUIDELINES**

As approved by the University Senate on May 12, 2003*

*including motions passed by the Senate on 11/10/03, 12/8/03, and 4/1/05.

Goals of General Education*:

The purpose of general education is to ensure that all University of Connecticut undergraduate students become articulate and acquire intellectual breadth and versatility, critical judgment, moral sensitivity, awareness of their era and society, consciousness of the diversity of human culture and experience, and a working understanding of the processes by which they can continue to acquire and use knowledge. It is vital to the accomplishment of the University's mission that a balance between professional and general education be established and maintained in which each is complementary to and compatible with the other.

The following four principles should support any effort in general education:

Universality. All students at the University of Connecticut should have the same University General Education Requirements irrespective of their major, School or College. Schools and Colleges may not restrict the courses that students are allowed to use in fulfilling the University General Education Requirements.

Accessibility. All students at the University of Connecticut should have timely access to General Education courses and support services.

Transferability. Students must be able to transfer from one School or College to another without having to repeat General Education Requirements. A procedure should be established for the smooth transition of students who transfer into the University from other institutions.

Faculty Participation. General Education courses should be taught by faculty; resources should be allocated to promote this practice.

Guidelines for General Education are presented in three parts:

A. The General Education Requirements:

1. Content Areas
2. Competencies
3. Principles

B. Oversight and Implementation

C. Criteria for Specific Content Areas and Competencies

* Based on the Ad Hoc Committee on General Education of 1985, the Task Force on General Education Report of 2000, and the Senate Curricula and Courses Committee Report of May 2001.

PART A: The General Education Requirements

PART A - 1: Content Areas

There are four Content Areas:

- Group One – Arts and Humanities. Six credits.
- Group Two – Social Sciences. Six credits.
- Group Three – Science and Technology. Six to seven credits.
- Group Four – Diversity and Multiculturalism. Six credits.

Content Area Operating Principles:

- a. The Content Area courses in Groups One, Two, and Three must be taken in six different academic units. Content Area courses may be counted toward the major.
- b. Normally, the six credits required as a minimum for each Content Area will be met by two three-credit courses. However, in Group One, one-credit performance courses may be included. Students may use no more than three credits of such courses to meet the requirement.
- c. In Group Three, one of the courses must be a laboratory course of four or more credits. However, this laboratory requirement is waived for students who have passed a hands-on laboratory science course in the biological and/or physical sciences.
- d. In Group Four, at least three credits shall address issues of diversity and/or multiculturalism outside of the United States.
- e. One, and only one, Group Four course may also serve as a Group One, Group Two, or Group Three requirement.
- f. For Groups One, Two and Three, there will be no multiple designations. An individual course will be approved for inclusion in only one of these Groups.
- g. Interdisciplinary (INTD) courses may be proposed for inclusion in General Education. Each such INTD course must be approved by the General Education Oversight Committee (GEOC) and must be placed in only one of the first three Content Areas. No more than six credits with the INTD prefix may be elected by any student to meet the General Education Requirements.
- h. General Education courses, whenever possible, should include elements of diversity.

PART A – 2: Competencies

The University of Connecticut places a high value on the ability of its undergraduates to demonstrate competency in five fundamental areas – computer technology, writing, quantitative skills, second language proficiency, and information literacy. The development of these competencies rests on establishing clear expectations for students both at entrance and upon graduation, and on constructing a framework so that our students can reach these competencies.

The structure of each competency involves two parts: one establishing entry-level expectations and the second establishing graduation expectations. The entry-level expectations apply to all incoming students. The entry and exit expectations for these five competencies are delineated in Part C of this document.

It is unreasonable to place the institutional responsibility for developing these competencies solely on individual courses. Therefore, a plan has been developed to enrich the instructional environment through the development of a Learning Center, a place where students can come for asynchronous learning supported by tutors, advisors, teaching assistants, peer preceptors and faculty, as well as through the use of technology. Faculty members should begin undergraduate classes with a summary of the competencies and proficiencies that a student will need to bring to the subject matter. Students can avail themselves of the services within the Learning Center to bring their skill levels up to faculty expectations.

PART A – 3: Principles for the General Education Curriculum

The General Education curriculum should entail a breadth of academic experience for all students, while at the same time providing an intellectually rigorous and challenging set of courses.

There must be a significant commitment to several principles:

1. Course Accessibility.

In Content Area Groups One, Two and Three, General Education courses cannot have prerequisites except for other General Education courses. Courses in Group Four may also have prerequisites outside of General Education courses.

2. Universality.

Each department or School and College may propose courses for any of the four Content Areas. All courses approved for the General Education Requirements must be valid for all Schools and Colleges of the University of Connecticut in meeting the University General Education Requirements. This in no way inhibits the various Schools, Colleges, departments or programs from setting up additional internal requirements, and allows for courses to be used by a student to satisfy simultaneously University General Education Requirements and requirements for the School, College, and/or major.

3. Other Operating Principles:

- a. General education courses should be delivered by faculty members. Whenever possible, class sizes should be limited to permit direct interactions between students and faculty.
- b. All courses offered for General Education credit must be approved by the GEOC. There will be no rollover of existing course offerings. Procedures for course approval are listed in Part B.
- c. No academic unit may set enrollment bars or priorities for their own students for any General Education course, with the following exceptions:
 - (1). An academic unit may reserve any percentage of seats for its own students in a 200-level W course that is not also approved for a content area.
 - (2). An academic unit may reserve a maximum of 50% of capacity for its own students in any section of a 200-level course approved for Group IV (Diversity and Multiculturalism) as long as it is not also approved for any other content area.
- d. While many courses may require both quantitative reasoning and writing, for the purposes of order and clarity there will be no multiple competency designations for 100-level courses. This in no way should inhibit departments from requiring writing in their Q offerings or quantitative analysis in their W courses. Multiple competency designations, where a single course fulfills both Q and W requirements, are limited to 200-level courses.
- e. University of Connecticut students seeking an Additional Degree or a Double Major are required to complete the requirements for both degrees/majors. If an individual course is approved to fill a competency requirement for both degrees/majors, successful completion of that course will meet that requirement for both degrees/majors.
- f. All students entering the University of Connecticut or changing school or college within the University beginning with the Fall semester 2005 are expected to meet these General Education Requirements. Bearing in mind the principles outlined in this document, the Dean of the admitting School or College may make substitutions to the requirements for students who entered higher education prior to Fall 2005 and on a continuing basis for other students. Each Dean will submit an annual report summarizing this activity to GEOC by the end of the Spring semester each year.
- g. Undergraduate students with Bachelor's degrees from accredited institutions are exempt from the General Education Requirements.
- h. Graduates of community college degree programs who completed requirements under approved General Education articulation agreements with the University will have satisfied all General Education Requirements.

PART B: Oversight and Implementation

The curriculum in degree programs remains vibrant and alive because faculty members constantly attend to it. They debate what is essential and what is optional to a degree program; they assess how the character of individual courses contributes to the whole; and they consider whether courses are properly sequenced relative to one another. If a general education curriculum is to avoid almost instant ossification, it requires a similar level of faculty involvement and on-going attention. Given the responsibilities of the Senate Curricula and Courses Committee, it is unreasonable to expect this body to be directly responsible for General Education other than at the policy level that is its charge.

General Education Requirements will be overseen by a General Education Oversight Committee (GEOC), a faculty group appointed by the Senate and representative of the Schools and Colleges. The Committee also will have an undergraduate student and a graduate representative. The GEOC shall be a subcommittee of the Senate Curricula and Courses Committee, whose chair will serve as a non-voting member of GEOC. The Directors of the W and Q Centers will also be given non-voting appointments to GEOC. The GEOC will monitor the General Education curriculum. The creation of a Senate-appointed committee recognizes the policy control of the Senate in matters relating to undergraduate education. This Committee will work in association with the Office of Undergraduate Education and Instruction because this office has University-wide responsibility for the health of undergraduate education and the fiscal resources to address emerging issues. Financial support for the activity of the GEOC will come from the Office of the Provost.

The GEOC will be charged with:

- ▶ setting the criteria for approving all course proposals for the Content and Competency Areas;
- ▶ setting the criteria for entrance and exit requirements for the Competency Areas;
- ▶ developing policy regarding the delivery of the University-wide General Education program;
- ▶ reviewing and approving courses proposed for inclusion in the General Education Requirements;
- ▶ determining the resources necessary to deliver the new General Education Requirements (number of seats per Content Area per year, etc.);
- ▶ monitoring periodically courses that satisfy General Education Requirements to ensure that they continue to meet the criteria adopted by the Senate; and
- ▶ reviewing the University-wide General Education program to ensure that its goals are being met and recommending changes to the Senate Curricula and Courses Committee when appropriate.

The membership of the GEOC shall be representative of the Faculty of all of the Schools and Colleges and members shall be appointed following current Senate Nominating Committee

practice. While the members and chair shall be proposed by the Nominating Committee and approved by the Senate, the process of consultation shall include the Vice Chancellor for Academic Administration. Because the GEOC is a subcommittee of a Senate committee, the chair need not be a Senator.

Terms of appointment to the GEOC shall be two years, except in the case of the student member where a one-year term is appropriate. In addition, one half of the first group of GEOC members shall be appointed for one year to ensure some overlap in membership from year to year. Normally, no member shall serve more than two consecutive terms of two years each without leaving the committee for at least two years. The chair shall serve one three-year term and shall not be re-appointed.

The chair of the GEOC shall be responsible for the management of the General Education course proposal review process and the continued oversight of the curriculum. Because of the unusually demanding nature of this position, the chair will be given 50% release time and be provided with administrative support.

Faculty members involved in General Education have different pedagogical challenges from those facing instructors in major or graduate courses. These faculty members should be brought together on a regular basis to collaborate on issues concerning the delivery of these courses. This can be accomplished by the chair of the GEOC, who will organize their regular meetings. These meetings will provide the kind of on-going discussion necessary to keep this part of the curriculum vibrant and vital.

IMPLEMENTATION:

1. The GEOC shall establish and appoint members to four Content Area subcommittees. Each subcommittee will establish the criteria for all courses to be approved for its respective Area. Each of these subcommittees shall have broad representation from the Schools and Colleges and should be limited to a workable number.
2. The GEOC shall establish and appoint members to five Competency subcommittees. Each subcommittee will establish and continue to review entrance and exit expectations for its respective Area. Each of these subcommittees shall have broad representation from the Schools and Colleges and should be limited to a workable number.
3. Once the criteria for each of the Content Areas are developed and accepted by the GEOC, they must be submitted to the Senate Curricula and Courses Committee and then to the Senate for final approval.
4. Any new or revised University-wide criteria for the Competency Areas that are accepted by the GEOC must be submitted to the Senate Curricula and Courses Committee and then to the Senate for final approval.
5. Once criteria for the Content and Competency Areas are approved by the Senate, courses may be submitted to the GEOC for approval.
6. Courses newly proposed for General Education, once they have been approved by the

GEOC, will be submitted to the Senate Curricula and Courses Committee for formal approval and submission to the Senate. Courses that had been included in the previous General Education listing, once they have been approved by the GEOC, will be submitted directly to the Senate for final approval.

7. After no more than one year of course submissions and approvals, the GEOC will submit the entire menu to the University Senate for final approval.
8. In parallel, there will be an evaluation made by the Budget Committee of the Senate to determine:
 - a. if sufficient seats and resources exist to handle the undergraduate enrollment;
 - b. if academic resources, particularly TA's to assist in W courses, are available to meet enrollment demands; and
 - c. if the Learning Center has been adequately funded to support the General Education Requirements.

Once these conditions are met, the new General Education Requirements will be introduced to incoming freshmen the following Fall Semester, or as soon as deemed possible for the purposes of publication and scheduling.

PART C: Criteria for Specific Content Areas and Competencies

Specific criteria for the four Content Areas and five Competencies were developed by the General Education Oversight Committee (GEOC) through nine Subcommittees that were formed to oversee these areas. The formation and functions of these Subcommittees were mandated by the General Education Guidelines, which were passed by the University Senate on May 6, 2002. The four Content Area Subcommittees and the Q and W Competency Subcommittees are responsible for reviewing and recommending to the Senate Curricula and Courses Committee courses proposed for inclusion in the General Education roster of courses. They are also responsible for monitoring periodically courses that satisfy General Education Requirements to ensure that they continue to meet the criteria adopted by the University Senate. For the remaining three Competency Areas, the Subcommittees will review the entrance and/or exit expectations in these areas and the means whereby the expectations are to be met.

As stated at the beginning of this document, the purpose of general education is to ensure that all University of Connecticut undergraduate students

1. become articulate,
2. acquire intellectual breadth and versatility,
3. acquire critical judgment,
4. acquire moral sensitivity,
5. acquire awareness of their era and society,
6. acquire consciousness of the diversity of human culture and experience, and
7. acquire a working understanding of the processes by which they can continue to acquire and use knowledge.

In order for any course to be included in Content Area Groups One, Two, Three or Four, it

should be oriented toward these overarching goals. In addition, specific criteria for the four Content Areas and five Competency Areas are given below.

Group One – Arts and Humanities

Definition of Arts and Humanities for General Education:

Arts and Humanities courses should provide a broad vision of artistic and humanist themes. These courses should enable students themselves to study and understand the artistic, cultural and historical processes of humanity. They should encourage students to explore their own traditions and their places within the larger world so that they, as informed citizens, may participate more fully in the rich diversity of human languages and cultures.

The broadly based category of Arts and Humanities includes courses in many different aspects of human endeavor. In areas of exploration traditionally included within “the Arts and Literature,” students should explore modes of aesthetic human expression that develop within cultures and are delivered through (a) visual arts (painting, sculpture, architecture, etc.), (b) dramatic performances (live theatre, video and film performances, dance, etc.), (c) musical composition and performance, and/or (d) writing in various literary forms. In areas of exploration traditionally included within “the Humanities,” students should explore areas of knowledge and analysis relating to human history, philosophy, or culture.

The primary modes of exploration and inquiry within the Arts and Humanities are historical, critical, and aesthetic. The subject matter of courses in Group One should be approached and analyzed by the instructor from such artistic or humanistic perspectives.

Criteria:

Courses appropriate to this category must, through historical, critical and/or aesthetic modes of inquiry, introduce students to and engage them in at least one of the following:

1. Investigations and historical/critical analyses of human experience;
2. Inquiries into philosophical and/or political theory;
3. Investigations into the modes of symbolic representation;
4. Comprehension and appreciation of written, graphic and/or performance art forms;
5. Creation or “re-creation” of artistic works culminating in individual or group publication, production or performance. Three-credit courses in this category must be supplemented by written or oral analysis/criticism.

Group Two – Social Sciences

Definition of Social Sciences for General Education:

The social sciences examine how individuals, groups, institutions, and societies behave and influence one another and the natural environment. Courses in this group enable students to analyze and understand interactions of the numerous social factors that influence behavior at the individual, cultural, societal, national, or international level. They use the methods and theories of social science inquiry to develop critical thought about current social issues and problems.

Criteria:

Courses appropriate to this category must meet all of the following criteria:

1. Introduce students to theories and concepts of the social sciences.
2. Introduce students to methods used in the social sciences, including consideration of the ethical problems social scientists face.
3. Introduce students to ways in which individuals, groups, institutions, or societies behave and influence one another and the natural environment.
4. Provide students with tools to analyze social, political, or economic groups/organizations (such as families, communities, or governments), and to examine social issues and problems at the individual, cultural, societal, national, or international level. Social issues that might be addressed include gender, race, social class, political power, economic power, and cross-cultural interaction.

Group Three – Science and Technology

Definition of Science and Technology for General Education:

These courses acquaint students with scientific thought, observation, experimentation, and formal hypothesis testing, and enable students to consider the impact that developments in science and technology have on the nature and quality of life. Knowledge of the basic vocabulary of science and technology is a prerequisite for informed assessments of the physical universe and of technological developments.

Criteria:

Courses appropriate to this category should:

1. Explore an area of science or technology by introducing students to a broad, coherent body of knowledge and contemporary scientific or technical methods;
2. Promote an understanding of the nature of modern scientific inquiry, the process of investigation, and the interplay of data, hypotheses, and principles in the development and application of scientific knowledge;
3. Introduce students to unresolved questions in some area of science or technology and discuss how progress might be made in answering these questions; and
4. Promote interest, competence, and commitment to continued learning about contemporary science and technology and their impact upon the world and human society.

Laboratory courses in this category must teach fundamental principles of the biological and/or physical sciences through hands-on participation.

Group Four – Diversity and Multiculturalism

Definition of Diversity and Multiculturalism for General Education:

In this interconnected global community, individuals of any profession need to be able to understand, appreciate, and function in cultures other than their own. Diversity and multiculturalism in the University curriculum contribute to this essential aspect of education by bringing to the fore the historical truths about different cultural perspectives, especially those of groups that traditionally have been under-represented. These groups might be characterized by such features as race, ethnicity, gender, sexual identities, political systems, or religious traditions, or by persons with disabilities. By studying the ideas, history, values, and creative expressions of diverse groups, students gain appreciation for differences as well as commonalities among people.

Subject matter alone cannot define multicultural education. A key element is to examine the subject from the perspective of the group that generates the culture. The inquiry needs to be structured by the concepts, ideas, beliefs, and/or values of the culture under study. A variety of approaches can be used, including comparative or interdisciplinary methodologies. Regardless of the approach, courses should view the studied group(s) as authors and agents in the making of history.

Criteria:

Courses may be contemporary or historical in focus; they may be broadly based or highly specialized; they may be at an introductory or advanced level. Courses must contribute to advancing multicultural and/or diverse perspectives and also highlight the perspective of the group(s) under study.

Courses appropriate to this category must meet at least one of the following criteria:

1. Emphasize that there are varieties of human experiences, perceptions, thoughts, values, and/or modes of creativity;
2. Emphasize that interpretive systems and/or social structures are cultural creations;
3. Consider the similarities that may exist among diverse groups;
4. Develop an understanding of and sensitivity to issues involving human rights and migration;
5. Develop an awareness of the dynamics of social, political, and/or economic power in the context of any of the above four items.

At least one course selected by each student must provide an international perspective and/or comparative study of the history of culture(s) over time and place. Courses meeting the international requirement must focus on a group(s) outside of the United States or on cultural continuities and transformations.

Computer Technology Competency

Definition of Computer Technology Competency:

The computer technology entry expectations are designed to ensure that all incoming students will have sufficient skills and knowledge in the use of computers and associated computer technology to begin university study. Computer technology relates to both the hardware and software used in performing common computing tasks. The following standards identify essential skills for students' appropriate and responsible use of existing and emerging technology tools for communication, productivity, management, research, problem solving and decision making. Incoming students should take an online assessment of their knowledge of and competency in the eight computer skill areas listed below. Students meeting these entrance expectations will be better prepared to perform various computing tasks essential for a successful undergraduate experience. It is expected that incoming students who do not meet the minimum competency level in any of the eight computer skill areas will do so by the end of their freshman year. These skills may be developed in a variety of ways, for example through workshops and self-paced learning modules provided by the University.

Entry Expectations:

Students should demonstrate a basic understanding of and competency in computer technology in the following eight areas:

1. Computer Operation Basics;
2. Word Processing;
3. Presentation Software;
4. Spreadsheets;
5. Databases;
6. Graphics and Multimedia;
7. Internet - Web Basics;
8. Electronic Communications.

Exit Expectations:

Each major will establish expectations for the computer technology competencies of its graduates and will build the development of these into the major curriculum. These departmental requirements must be approved at the College or School level, in the same way that new 200-level courses are approved.

Information Literacy Competency

Definition of Information Literacy Competency:

Information literacy involves a general understanding of and competency in three integrally related processes:

- Information development and structure – an understanding of how information is created, disseminated and organized;
- Information access – an understanding of information communication processes and a facility with the tools required to tap into these processes;
- Information evaluation and integration – an ability to evaluate, synthesize and incorporate information into written, oral, or media presentations.

Entrance expectations:

None

Exit expectations:

Students should be able to meet the following expectations abstracted from the Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education from the Association of College and Research Libraries. ¹

1. Define and articulate information needs.
2. Compare and contrast information resources across a variety of formats (e.g., journal, book, website, database).
3. Identify and use primary sources of information.
4. Describe the procedures for using sources of information in the major field of study.
5. Select effective approaches for accessing information.
6. Implement an efficient and effective search strategy.
7. Develop expertise working with a variety of information sources.
8. Evaluate information for consistency, accuracy, credibility, objectivity, innovation, timeliness, and cultural sensitivity.
9. Synthesize main ideas to construct new concepts.
10. Ethically and legally acknowledge information sources, following discipline guidelines.
11. Incorporate the information in the planning and creation of a product or performance.
12. Use a variety of information technology applications to effectively communicate project outcomes.

These skills will first be developed at a basic level with incoming students and then in a more advanced, discipline-specific manner within the majors. Basic information literacy will be taught to all freshmen as an integral part of ENGL 110/111, in collaboration with the staff of the University Libraries. Each major program will consider the information literacy competencies required of its graduates and build those expectations into the upper-level research and writing requirements in the major. These departmental requirements must be approved at the College or School level, in the same way that new 200-level courses are approved. The subject area

specialists at the University Libraries will provide support.

Learning Modules:

The University Libraries will create a series of interactive learning modules that will equip students with the information competencies that they need to succeed at the University of Connecticut. These modules will be integrated into the orientation program, the First Year Experience program and/or the first year composition courses. They will also be available for asynchronous learning at any time in the University Libraries or the Learning Center, and at the regional campuses.

¹ Association of College and Research Libraries. (2003). Information literacy competency standards for higher education. Retrieved February 25, 2003, Information Literacy
http://www.ala.org/Content/NavigationMenu/ACRL/Issues_and_Advocacy1/Information_Literacy1/ACRL_Information_Literacy_Web_Site/ACRL_Information_Literacy_Web_Site.htm

Standards Toolkit

http://www.ala.org/Content/NavigationMenu/ACRL/Issues_and_Advocacy1/Information_Literacy1/ACRL_Information_Literacy_Web_Site/Standards_Toolkit/Standards_Toolkit.htm

Quantitative (Q) Competency

Definition of a Q course:

Q courses require the knowledge and use of mathematics and/or statistics at or above the basic algebra level as an integral part of the course. These courses might include comprehensive analysis and interpretation of data. The mathematical and/or statistical methods and skills required are those specific to the particular course and discipline.

Criteria:

Courses appropriate for a Q designation should have the following attributes:

1. Mathematics and/or statistics at or above the basic algebra level must be an integral part and used throughout the course;
2. Courses must include use of basic algebraic concepts such as: formulas and functions, linear and quadratic equations and their graphs, systems of equations, polynomials, fractional expressions, exponents, powers and roots, problem solving and word problems. Formal abstract structures used in symbolic logic and other algebraic analyses are acceptable;
3. Courses should require the student to understand and carry out actual mathematical and/or statistical manipulations, and relate them to whatever data might be provided in order to draw conclusions. Merely feeding numerical data into a program on a computer or a calculator to obtain a numerical result does not satisfy this requirement. Technology should be viewed as a tool to aid understanding and not as a driver of content.

Entry Expectations:

The present admission requirement for quantitative skills is the satisfactory completion of three or more years of high school mathematics course work including second-year algebra and first-year geometry. Students are strongly encouraged, however, to take four years of mathematics in high school. All students are expected to enter the University with a competency in basic algebra and quantitative reasoning as preparation for completing Q courses. All entering students will be evaluated for quantitative proficiency based on their Math SAT1 score and/or class rank.

Exit Expectations:

All students must pass two Q courses, which may also satisfy a Content Area requirement. One Q course must be from Mathematics or Statistics. Students should discuss with their advisor how best to satisfy these requirements based on their background, prior course preparation and career aspirations. Students may be encouraged to complete MATH 101: *Basic Algebra With Applications* (a course that does not carry credit toward graduation) prior to enrolling in their first Q course. In some cases, advisors may recommend postponing registration in a Q course until after the student has completed a semester of course work at the University.

The University Quantitative Center:

Advisors may also recommend that students avail themselves of support services offered at the University Quantitative Center in Storrs and at the regional campuses. The Quantitative Center will be directed by a full time faculty member who will oversee the administration of diagnostic examinations, quantitative-skills tutorials, workshops, modules, supplemental instruction, etc. The Quantitative Center will also provide support to advisors and to faculty teaching Q courses on all campuses.

Second Language Competency

Definition of Second Language Competency:

Second-language competency prepares students for the increasingly multilingual challenges of the marketplaces of goods and ideas and for participation in local, regional and global affairs. It is thus an integral component of both liberal and practical education that contributes to students' articulateness in the second language and in their native language as well as to their consciousness of the diversity of human cultures and languages.

Because the broad benefits of learning and using a second language can be gained from the study of diverse languages – ancient and modern, written and spoken, less and more widely taught, verbal and sign – any natural language may satisfy this requirement.

Entry Expectations:

The present admission requirement for second language skills is two years of study in a second language in high school or the equivalent. Students are strongly encouraged, however, to take three or more years of the same second language by the time they complete high school.

Exit Expectations:

A student meets the minimum requirement if admitted to the University with three years of a single foreign language in high school, or the equivalent. When the years of study have been split between high school and earlier grades, the requirement is met if the student has successfully completed the third-year high school level course. With anything less than that, the student must pass the second semester course in the first year sequence of college level study in a single language.

Writing (W) Competency

Definition of Writing Competency for General Education:

The writing across the curriculum W course requirements are designed to ensure that writing instruction continues after the Freshman English writing courses (English 110 or English 111). As one of the fundamental ways through which academic disciplines explore, construct, and communicate their various forms of knowledge, writing is an essential component of a university education. The goals of the Freshman English seminars emphasize the need to “engage students in the work of academic inquiry through the interpretation of difficult texts, [to help them participate in] the issues and arguments that animate the texts, and [to reflect] on the significance for academic and general culture and for themselves of the critical work of reading and writing” (Freshman English Seminar Description 1). The W requirement extends that work to other courses with an emphasis on the significance of writing in individual major fields of study.

W courses should demonstrate for students the relationship between the writing in the course and the content learning goals of the course. Students should not write simply to be evaluated; they should learn how writing can ground, extend, deepen, and even enable their learning of the course material. In addition then to the general formal questions concerning strategies for developing ideas, clarity of organization, and effectiveness of expression, and the discipline specific format, evidentiary, and stylistic norms, the W requirement should lead students to understand the relationship between their own thinking and writing in a way that will help them continue to develop both throughout their lives and careers after graduation.

The W requirement can be met in formats other than the standard three-credit course. For example, a department might add a fourth credit to a three-credit course to convert the course to a W; another department might adopt a portfolio assessment mechanism that requires substantial writing over a number of semesters’ work in the major; and another department might organize a series of partial W courses in sequence that when completed would fulfill the W requirement.

The W requirement does not limit writing only to courses with a W designation; the requirement is designed to support and encourage writing instruction throughout the curriculum. Courses without a W designation, for example, still would commonly require that students write papers and essay examinations.

The University Writing Center:

Much of the outside-of-class work involved in writing instruction will be supported by qualified tutors in the University Writing Center at Storrs and the regional campuses. The center, directed by a senior, tenured faculty member with another faculty member as an assistant and a group of graduate student (and in some cases undergraduate) tutors from across the disciplines, will be a clearing house for writing issues throughout the University. The Director of the Writing Center will organize on all campuses faculty development workshops for W course instructors and will be responsible for organizing and supervising the W course instructor orientations/workshops. The Writing Center will train tutors, and the Writing Center office will house copies of all W course syllabi that have been approved by GEOC.

Staffing:

W courses normally will be taught by University of Connecticut faculty. When that is not possible, then qualified graduate students may be used to assist faculty in 200-level W courses or, with faculty supervision, to teach a 100-level W course.

All new instructors of W courses will be provided with a W course orientation. This orientation will be required of all teaching assistants assigned to assist in a 200-level or to instruct a 100-level W course. The orientation will present the W course guidelines and the pedagogical strategies and learning outcomes of the Freshman English courses in order to provide the institutional context and rationale for the requirement. Detailed descriptions of the Freshman English courses and a copy of the writing handbook required of all students in Freshman English will be distributed at the workshop. All orientation materials will be made available to experienced W course faculty. Supplemental workshops will be offered throughout the academic year. All W course instructors will be invited to those voluntary workshops, which will be designed to support the teaching of writing.

Departmental Responsibility:

1. Each department must submit to GEOC a pedagogically sound plan for all W courses approved for the major. That plan must include specific courses and a brief rationale for how those courses are central to the major.
2. All plans that involve fulfilling the W requirement within each department (the preferred plan) or that link to courses in other departments must be submitted to the GEOC W course subcommittee for review and the GEOC for final approval.
3. Any changes in previously approved W courses that substantially alter the mode of writing instruction must be submitted to GEOC for review.
4. If a department desires to approve one or more W courses taught in other departments as a part of its own major requirements, the outside departments must agree to such arrangements.
5. Courses at the 100-level taught by TAs or 200-level courses with TA help must have a mechanism for TA supervision approved by GEOC.

Criteria:

Courses (and their equivalents) appropriate for a W designation should:

1. Require that students write a minimum of fifteen pages that have been revised for conceptual clarity and development of ideas, edited for expression, and proofread for grammatical and mechanical correctness;
2. Address writing in process, require revision, and provide substantial supervision of

student writing. (The structure of revision and supervision may vary, including in-class writing workshops, individual consultation, substantial formative commentary on drafts, and so on.);

3. Have an enrollment cap of nineteen students per section;
4. Make explicit the relation between writing and learning in the course;
5. Articulate the structure of supervision of student writing;
6. Explain the place and function of revision in the course;
7. Detail how the page requirement will be met;
8. Require that students must pass the writing component in order to pass the course.

Entry Expectations:

1. Freshman English placement options for first year students at the University of Connecticut will vary depending upon their incoming qualifications.

Honors: Honors Students may choose English 250, a three-credit seminar taught by fulltime faculty, to fulfill the Freshman English requirement.

SAT Placement Scores: Students with Verbal SAT (VSAT) scores of 430 and below are automatically placed in English 104. There is no pre-class appeal. Student writing is evaluated after the first week of the term. In rare cases it is possible, based on that writing and with the approval of the Director of Freshman English, for a student to be moved into an English 110 or 111 section.

Students with VSAT scores of 440-540 have the option to enroll in either English 104 or English 110 or 111. Student writing is evaluated after the first week of the semester and all inconsistencies brought to the attention of the Director of Freshman English. At this point a student may be placed in a course more appropriate to his or her writing. All students who remain in English 104 must pass that course in order to move on to English 110 or 111.

Students with VSAT Scores above 540 have the option to enroll in either English 110 or 111.

2. Connecticut Community College Transfer Students:
There is an articulation agreement with each community college that prescribes which two, three-credit community college courses fulfill UConn's Freshman English requirement. Four of these six credits count toward the four-credit Freshman English requirement; the other two credits come in as elective.

3. Transfer students from other Connecticut colleges and from out-of-state: These students are assessed on a case-by-case basis by the Director of Freshman English.

Exit Expectations:

1. All students must take either English 110 or 111.
2. Additionally, all students must take two writing-intensive courses, one of which must be approved for the student's major (see Departmental Responsibility above). These courses may also satisfy other Content Area requirements. (Note: English 110 or 111 is a prerequisite to all writing-intensive courses.)
3. A writing-intensive course approved for the student's major does not have any credit-hour restriction, but it is to be at the 200-level.