

## CSU Executive Order #595

THE CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY  
Office of the Chancellor  
400 Golden Shore  
Long Beach, California 90802

Executive Order: 595

Title: General Education-Breadth Requirements

Effective Date: January 1, 1993

Supersedes: 338, 342

This Executive Order is issued pursuant to Title 5, California Code of Regulations, Sections 40402.1, 40405, 40405.1, and 40405.4, and Sections 1 and 2 of Chapter III of the Standing Orders of the Board of Trustees of the California State University.

The requirements, policies, and procedures adopted pursuant to this Executive Order shall apply to students enrolling in fall 1981 and subsequent terms who have not previously been enrolled continuously at a campus of the CSU or the California Community Colleges and who have not satisfied lower-division general education requirements according to the provisions of Sections 40405.2 or 40405.3 of Title 5.

## I. Scope and Purpose

This Executive Order is intended to establish a common understanding about CSU General Education-Breadth Requirements (pathway A below) and to provide for certification by regionally accredited institutions of the extent to which transfer students have met these requirements. Reciprocity among the CSU campuses for full and subject-area completion of lower-division General Education-Breadth Requirements is also addressed in this Executive Order.

Policies adopted by the Board of Trustees in July 1991 provide for three ways for undergraduate students to fulfill general education requirements of the CSU:

- A. Fulfillment of CSU General Education-Breadth Requirements (Title 5, Section 40405.1), including a minimum of nine semester units or twelve quarter units at the CSU campus granting the baccalaureate degree.
- B. Completion of the Intersegmental General Education Transfer Curriculum (Title 5, Section 40405.2), as certified by a California community college, plus a minimum of nine upper-division semester units or twelve upper-division quarter units at the CSU campus granting the baccalaureate degree.
- C. Completion of lower-division general education requirements of a University of California campus (Title 5, Section 40405.3), as certified by that campus, plus a minimum of nine upper-division semester units or twelve upper-division quarter units at the CSU campus granting the baccalaureate degree. Implementation of this alternative is contingent on development of a formal agreement between the California State University and the University of California.

## II. Campus Responsibility

- A. The faculty of a CSU campus has primary responsibility for developing and revising the institution's particular General Education-Breadth program. Trustee policy describes broad areas of inquiry, which may be viewed from various disciplinary and interdisciplinary perspectives. Within the framework provided, each CSU campus is to establish its own requirements and exercise its creativity in identifying courses and disciplines to be included within its General Education-Breadth program. In undertaking this task, participants should give careful attention to the following:
1. Assuring that General Education-Breadth Requirements are planned and organized so that their objectives are perceived as interrelated elements, not as isolated fragments.
  2. Considering the organization of approved courses into a variety of "cores" or "themes," each with an underlying unifying rationale, among which students may choose.
  3. Evaluating all courses approved as meeting current General Education-Breadth Requirements to determine which continue to meet the objectives and particular requirements contained herein.
  4. Considering development of new courses as they may be necessary to meet the objectives and particular requirements contained herein.
  5. Considering the possibility of incorporating integrative courses, especially at the upper-division level, which feature the interrelationships among disciplines within and across traditional general education categories.
  6. Providing for reasonable ordering of requirements so that, for example, courses focusing on learning skills will be completed relatively early and integrative experiences, relatively later.
  7. Developing programs that are responsive to educational goals and student needs, rather than programs based on traditional titles of academic disciplines and organizational units.
  8. Considering possibilities for activity as well as observation

in all program subdivisions.

- B. The effectiveness of a General Education-Breadth program is dependent upon the adequacy of curricular supervision, its internal integrity and its overall fiscal and academic support. Toward this end, each campus shall have a broadly representative standing committee, a majority of which shall be instructional faculty, and which shall also include student membership, to provide for appropriate oversight and to make appropriate recommendations concerning the implementation, conduct and evaluation of these requirements.
- C. Each campus shall provide for systematic, readily available academic advising specifically oriented to general education as one means of achieving greater cohesiveness in student choices of course offerings to fulfill these requirements.
- D. Each campus shall provide for regular periodic reviews of general education policies and practices in a manner comparable to those of major programs. The review should include an off-campus component.

### III. Objectives of CSU General Education-Breadth Requirements

General Education-Breadth Requirements are to be designed so that, taken with the major depth program and electives presented by each baccalaureate candidate, they will assure that graduates have made noteworthy progress toward becoming truly educated persons. Particularly, the purpose of these requirements is to provide means whereby graduates:

- A. will have achieved the ability to think clearly and logically, to find information and examine it critically, to communicate orally and in writing, and to reason quantitatively;
- B. will have acquired appreciable knowledge about their own bodies and minds, about how human society has developed and how it now functions, about the physical world in which they live, about the other forms of life with which they share that world, and about the cultural endeavors and legacies of their civilizations;
- C. will have come to an understanding and appreciation of the principles, methodologies, value systems, and thought processes employed in human inquiries.

The intent is that General Education-Breadth Requirements be planned and organized to enable students to acquire abilities, knowledge, understanding, and appreciation as interrelated elements, not as isolated fragments.

### IV. Entry-Level Learning Skills

Title 5 of the California Code of Regulations, Section 40402.1, provides that each student admitted to the California State University is expected to possess basic competence in the English language and mathematical computation to a degree that may reasonably be expected of entering college students. Students admitted who cannot demonstrate such basic competence should be identified as quickly as possible and be required to take steps to overcome their deficiencies. Any coursework completed primarily for this purpose shall not be applicable to the baccalaureate degree.

## V. Distribution of General Education-Breadth Units

Every baccalaureate graduate who has not completed the program specified in Subsection B or C of Section I above shall have completed the program described in Subsections A through E below, totaling a minimum of 48 semester units or 72 quarter units. At least nine of these semester units or twelve of these quarter units must be upper-division level and shall be taken no sooner than the term in which upper-division status (completion of 60 semester units or 90 quarter units) is attained. At least nine of the 48 semester units or 12 of the 72 quarter units shall be earned at the campus granting the degree.

Each campus is authorized to make reasonable adjustments in the number of units assigned to the five categories in order that the conjunction of campus course credit unit configuration and these requirements will not unduly exceed any of the prescribed credit minima. However, in no case shall the total number of units required be less than 48 semester units or 72 quarter units. (No campus need adjust normal course credit configurations for the sole purpose of meeting the requirements specified herein.)

Instruction approved to fulfill the following requirements should recognize the contributions to knowledge and civilization that have been made by members of diverse cultural groups and by women.

- A. A minimum of nine semester units or twelve quarter units in communication in the English language, to include both oral communication and written communication, and in critical thinking, to include consideration of common fallacies in reasoning.

Instruction approved for fulfillment of the requirement in communication is to be designed to emphasize the content of communication as well as the form and should provide an understanding of the psychological basis and the social significance of communication, including how communication operates in various situations. Applicable course(s) should view communication as the process of human symbolic interaction focusing on the communicative process from the rhetorical perspective: reasoning and advocacy, organization, accuracy; the discovery, critical evaluation and reporting of information; reading and listening effectively as well as speaking and writing. This must include active participation and practice in written communication and oral communication.

Instruction in critical thinking is to be designed to achieve an understanding of the relationship of language to logic, which should lead to the ability to analyze, criticize, and advocate ideas, to reason inductively and deductively, and to reach factual or judgmental conclusions based on sound inferences drawn from unambiguous statements of knowledge or belief. The minimal competence to be expected at the successful conclusion of instruction in critical thinking should be the demonstration of skills in elementary inductive and deductive processes, including an understanding of the formal and informal fallacies of language and thought, and the ability to distinguish matters of fact from issues of judgment or opinion.

- B. A minimum of twelve semester units or eighteen quarter units to include inquiry into the physical universe and its life forms, with some immediate participation in laboratory activity, and into mathematical concepts and quantitative reasoning and their applications.

Instruction approved for the fulfillment of this requirement is intended to impart knowledge of the facts and principles which form the foundations of living and non-living systems. Such studies should promote understanding and appreciation of the methodologies of science as investigative tools, the limitations of scientific endeavors: namely, what is the evidence and how was it derived? In addition, particular attention should be given to the influence which the acquisition of scientific knowledge has had on the development of the world's civilizations, not only as expressed in the past but also in present times. The nature and extent of laboratory experience is to be determined by each campus through its established curricular procedures. In specifying inquiry into mathematical concepts and quantitative reasoning and their application, the intention is not to imply merely basic computational skills, but to encourage as well the understanding of basic mathematical concepts.

- C. A minimum of twelve semester units or eighteen quarter units among the arts, literature, philosophy and foreign languages.

Instruction approved for the fulfillment of this requirement should cultivate intellect, imagination, sensibility and sensitivity. It is meant in part to encourage students to respond subjectively as well as objectively to experience and to develop a sense of the integrity of emotional and intellectual response. Students should be motivated to cultivate and refine their affective as well as cognitive and physical faculties through

studying great works of the human imagination, which could include active participation in individual esthetic, creative experience. Equally important is the intellectual examination of the subjective response, thereby increasing awareness and appreciation in the traditional humanistic disciplines such as art, dance, drama, literature and music. The requirement should result in the student's better understanding of the interrelationship between the creative arts, the humanities and self. Studies in these areas should include exposure to both Western cultures and non-Western cultures.

Foreign language courses may be included in this requirement because of their implications for cultures both in their linguistic structures and in their use in literature; but foreign language courses which are approved to meet a portion of this requirement are to contain a cultural component and not be solely skills acquisition courses. Campus provisions for fulfillment of this requirement must include a reasonable distribution among the categories specified as opposed to the completion of the entire number of units required in one category.

- D. A minimum of twelve semester units or eighteen quarter units dealing with human social, political, and economic institutions and behavior and their historical background.

Instruction approved for fulfillment of this requirement should reflect the fact that human social, political and economic institutions and behavior are inextricably interwoven. Problems and issues in these areas should be examined in their contemporary as well as historical setting, including both Western and non-Western contexts. Campus provisions for fulfillment of this requirement must include a reasonable distribution among the categories specified as opposed to completion of the entire number of units required in one category.

- E. A minimum of three semester units or four quarter units in study designed to equip human beings for lifelong understanding and development of themselves as integrated physiological and psychological entities.

Instruction approved for fulfillment of this requirement should facilitate understanding of the human being as an integrated physiological, social, and psychological organism. Courses developed to meet this requirement are intended to include selective consideration of such matters as human behavior, sexuality, nutrition, health, stress, key relationships of



humankind to the social and physical environment, and implications of death and dying. Physical activity could be included, provided that it is an integral part of the study described herein.

Campuses may permit "double counting" of courses for General Education-Breadth and major requirements and prerequisites only after giving careful consideration to the impact of such actions on General Education-Breadth programs. Decisions to permit double counting in General Education-Breadth and a degree major may be made only after an approval is provided through campuswide curricular processes.

Up to six semester units taken to meet the United States History, Constitution, and American Ideals Requirement (Title 5 of the California Code of Regulations, Section 40404) may be credited toward satisfying General Education-Breadth Requirements at the option of the campus.

## VI. Exceptions

Exceptions to the foregoing requirements may be authorized only under the following circumstances:

- A. In the case of an individual student, the campus may grant a partial waiver of one or more of the particular requirements of Title 5 of the California Code of Regulations, Section 40405.1, to avoid demonstrable hardship, such as the need to extend the time required for completion of the degree in the case of a senior-level transfer student.
- B. In the case of high-unit professional major degree programs, the Chancellor may grant exceptions to one or more requirements for students completing the particular program. Such exception must be considered at the campus level prior to initiating the request. A full academic justification shall be submitted to the Senior Vice Chancellor, Academic Affairs, who shall submit his or her recommendation and that submitted by the campus president, along with all relevant documents, to the Chancellor.

## VII. General Education Advisory Committee

A systemwide Advisory Committee on General Education is hereby established. While it is important that the membership of this committee be broadly based, the membership will in largest part be drawn from the instructional faculty of the California State University. Liaison membership from the instructional faculty of the California Community Colleges may be included as well.

The responsibilities of this committee will be as follows:

- A. To review and propose any necessary revisions in the objectives, requirements, and implementation of CSU General Education-Breadth policy to ensure high-quality general education.
- B. To continue to study general education policies and practices inside and outside the system and, as appropriate, to stimulate intersegmental discussion of the development of general education curricula.
- C. To review the implications of CSU General Education-Breadth policy for students transferring to the CSU and for the institutions from which they transfer, and to propose any necessary adjustments to pertinent policies and practices.
- D. To report as appropriate to the Chancellor and the Board of Trustees.

The Chancellor or the Senior Vice Chancellor, Academic Affairs, may from time to time request the committee to address and provide advice on other issues related to development and well-being of General Education-Breadth policy and programs in the California State University.

## VIII. Certification by Non-CSU Regionally Accredited Institutions of Transfer Students' Fulfillment of CSU General Education-Breadth Requirements

### A. Premises

1. It is the joint responsibility of the public segments of higher education to ensure that students are able to transfer without unreasonable loss of credit or time.
2. The faculty of an institution granting the baccalaureate degree have primary responsibility for maintaining the integrity of the degree program and determining when requirements have been met.
3. There shall ordinarily be a high degree of reciprocity among regionally accredited institutions in the absence of specific indications that such reciprocity is not appropriate.

### B. Conditions for Participation

Any institution that is accredited by a recognized regional accrediting association and that offers the BA or BS degree or the first two years of such degree programs may participate in General Education-Breadth certification if it agrees to the following provisions:

1. The participating institution shall designate a liaison representative who shall participate in various orientation activities and provide other institutional staff with pertinent information.
2. The participating institution shall identify for certification purposes those courses or examinations that fulfill the objectives set forth in Section III of this Executive Order and such additional objectives as may be promulgated by the Chancellor of the California State University.
  - a. The courses and examinations identified should be planned and organized to enable students to acquire abilities, knowledge, understanding, and appreciation as interrelated elements, not as isolated fragments.
  - b. Interdisciplinary courses or integrated sets of courses that meet multiple objectives of the CSU General Education-

Breadth Requirements may be appropriate components of general education (cf. Subsections A-5 and A-7 of Section II).

- c. Credit units of an interdisciplinary course or integrated set of courses may be distributed among different areas of general education, as appropriate.
3. The CSU Office of the Chancellor, Division of Academic Affairs, shall maintain a list of participating institutions' courses and examinations that have been identified and accepted for certification purposes.
- a. Each entry in the list shall include specification of the area or areas and objectives to which the course or examination relates and the number of units associated with each area or objective. (See Attachment A.)
  - b. The list shall be updated annually. Each participating institution shall transmit annually to the CSU Office of the Chancellor, Division of Academic Affairs, any proposed changes to its portion of the list. If a course is to be added or if the specification of areas and objectives for a course is to be modified, the participating institution shall include in its submission the approved course outline. If a course is part of an integrated set of courses, the submission shall identify the set and describe how the course complements the others in the set.
  - c. As of the effective date of this executive order, the list will include all entries that were submitted by participating institutions and not identified for challenge under the provisions of Executive Order 342. Recognizing the integrity of faculty curricular review processes in participating institutions, the CSU expects that proposed updates will generally be acceptable. However, after the effective date of this executive order, additions or modifications of entries shall be reviewed by a subcommittee of the Advisory Committee on General Education for congruence with the areas and objectives specified. The subcommittee is to be drawn from the instructional faculty of the California State University. The subcommittee may ask the participating institution for additional materials and is encouraged to consult faculty from the California State University or California Community Colleges who have relevant expertise. The

subcommittee may refer decision on acceptance of the course to the Advisory Committee on General Education. A course that is reviewed and determined to be inconsistent with the objectives with which it has been associated will not be added to the list.

- d. A copy of the list shall be made available in printed or electronic form to any CSU campus or participating institution. Participating institutions are free to share their course outlines and communications from the CSU about those course outlines with other participating institutions.
  - e. The participating institution shall be responsible for reviewing periodically its portion of the list to assure that entries continue to be appropriate and to reflect current knowledge in the field. It is also responsible for reapproving entries that are found to have remained appropriate and for directing to the subcommittee of the Advisory Committee on General Education any questions such updating of the courses may have raised as to their congruence with CSU General Education-Breadth areas and objectives.
4. The participating institution shall report certification for individual students in a format to be specified.

#### C. Acceptance of Certification

CSU campuses shall accept full certification or subject-area certification, as defined below, by participating institutions. Students admitted to a CSU campus with full certification may not be held to any additional lower-division general education requirements; students admitted to a CSU campus with subject-area certification may not be held to any additional lower-division general education coursework in the subject areas certified. Neither full certification nor subject-area certification exempts students from unmet lower-division graduation requirements that may exist outside of the general education program of the campus awarding the degree.

- 1. To qualify for full certification, a student must satisfactorily complete no fewer than 39 lower-division semester units or 58 lower-division quarter units of instruction appropriate to meet the objectives of Sections III and V. The units must be distributed as follows, except as

specified in Subsection 3 below:

- a. In Area A, no fewer than nine semester units (12-15 quarter units), including instruction in oral communication, written communication, and critical thinking.
  - b. In Area B, no fewer than nine semester units (12-15 quarter units), including instruction in physical science and life science flat at least one part of which must include a laboratory component and mathematics/quantitative reasoning.
  - c. In Area C, no fewer than nine semester units (12-15 quarter units), with at least one course in the arts and one in the humanities (see Attachment A).
  - d. In Area D, no fewer than nine semester units (12-15 quarter units), with courses taken in at least two disciplines (see Attachment A).
  - e. In Area E, no fewer than three semester units (4-5 quarter units).
2. To qualify for subject-area certification, a student must satisfactorily complete instruction appropriate to meet the objectives of one or more subsections of Section V. The units must be distributed as follows, except as specified in Subsection 3 below:
- a. For Area A, no fewer than nine semester units (12-15 quarter units), including instruction in oral communication, written communication, and critical thinking. A single course may not be certified as meeting more than one subarea for any given student.
  - b. For Area B, no fewer than nine semester units (12-15 quarter units), including instruction in physical science and life science flat at least one part of which must include a laboratory component and mathematics/quantitative reasoning. A single course may not be certified as meeting more than one subarea for any given student, except for laboratory components incorporated into a physical or life science course.
  - c. For Area C, no fewer than nine semester units (12-15 quarter units), with at least one course in the arts and

one in the humanities (see Attachment A).

- d. For Area D, no fewer than nine semester units (12-15 quarter units), with courses taken in at least two disciplines (see Attachment A).
  - e. For Area E, no fewer than three semester units (4-5 quarter units).
3. Exceptions to restrictions above may be made for programs in which instruction is integrated into a set of courses or into interdisciplinary courses designed to meet multiple objectives. Interdisciplinary courses in this case would be expected to be offered at an appropriately greater number of units.

#### D. Limitations on Certification of Students

- 1. A participating institution may not certify a student for more than 39 semester units or equivalent. If more than one participating institution certifies a student, the CSU campus granting the degree need not accept certification for more than 39 semester units or equivalent.
- 2. A CSU campus need accept as certified for a given subject area no more than the minimum numbers of units specified in Subsections A through E in Section V above.
- 3. A participating institution may certify a student for no more than 30 semester units (45 quarter units) total in subject areas B through D combined. If more than one participating institution certifies a student, the CSU campus granting the degree need not accept certification for more than 30 semester units (45 quarter units) total in subject areas B through D combined.
- 4. Baccalaureate-granting institutions certifying a student for units earned in upper-division courses or examinations may provide certification only for those units that were completed during or after the term in which the student achieved upper-division status (i.e., earned a total of at least 60 semester units or 90 quarter units).
- 5. A participating institution may certify completion of courses or examinations taken at other eligible institutions, provided that all such courses and examinations would be identified for



certification purposes by the institution offering them. If so identified, those courses and examinations shall contribute to qualification of a student for full certification or subject-area certification, as appropriate.

6. Upon transfer, no student shall be required to complete more units in general education-breadth than the difference between the number certified in accordance with this executive order and the total units in general education-breadth required by the campus granting the degree.

## IX. Lower-Division General Education Reciprocity Among CSU Campuses

- A. Lower-division general education requirements designated by CSU campuses as having been satisfactorily completed in their entirety, shall be recognized as fulfilling all lower-division general education requirements of the CSU campus granting the baccalaureate degree without regard to differences that may exist between the two programs. (A course or examination is to be regarded as satisfactorily completed if the student's performance meets the minimum standards for full acceptance toward satisfying a requirement as set by the campus at which the course or examination was taken.) For the purposes of this section, completion of lower-division general education requirements is equivalent to qualification for full certification, as defined in Subsection C of Section VIII above. Transfer students admitted with documentation of full lower-division general education program completion at another CSU campus may not be held to any additional lower-division general education requirements by the campus awarding the degree.
- B. Lower-division general education subject-area requirements designated by CSU campuses as having been satisfactorily completed, shall be recognized as fulfilling the corresponding subject-area general education requirements of the CSU campus granting the baccalaureate degree without regard to differences that may exist in the configuration of the two programs or in the content of the subject area. For the purposes of this section, completion of lower-division general education subject-area requirements is equivalent to qualification for subject-area certification, as defined in Subsection C of Section VIII above. Transfer students admitted with documentation of completion of one or more general education subject areas at another CSU campus may not be held to any additional lower-division general education requirements in that subject area by the campus awarding the degree.
- C. The provisions of Subsections A and B of this section do not exempt students from unmet lower-division graduation requirements of the CSU campus awarding the degree, or from lower-division courses required by individual baccalaureate majors at the CSU campus awarding the degree.
- D. Students seeking to transfer under the provisions of this section shall be responsible for requesting verification that lower-division general education program or subject-area requirements

have been met. Upon the request of a currently or formerly enrolled student, the CSU campus from which the student seeks to transfer shall determine the extent to which that student has satisfactorily completed the lower-division general education requirements in each subject area, and shall provide official documentation of such completion.

November 20, 1992

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Barry Munitz, Chancellor

## Attachment A

### Designations for Subject Areas and Objectives

#### Area A: Communication in the English Language and Critical Thinking

References: Sections V-A, VIII-C-1-a, VIII-C-2-a

Oral Communication	A1
Written Communication	A2
Critical Thinking	A3

#### Area B: Physical Universe and Its Life Forms

References: Sections V-B, VIII-C-1-b, VIII-C-2-b

Physical Science	B1
Life Science	B2
Laboratory Activity	B3
Mathematics/Quantitative Reasoning	B4

#### Area C: Arts, Literature, Philosophy and Foreign Languages

References: Sections V-C, VIII-C-1-c, VIII-C-2-c

Arts (Art, Dance, Music, Theatre)	C1
Humanities (Literature, Philosophy, Foreign Languages)	C2

#### Area D: Social, Political, and Economic Institutions and Behavior; Historical Background

References: Sections V-D, VIII-C-1-d, VIII-C-2-d

Anthropology and Archeology	D1
Economics	D2
Ethnic Studies*	D3
Gender Studies*	D4
Geography	D5
History	D6
Interdisciplinary Social or Behavioral Science	D7
Political Science, Government, and Legal Institutions	D8
Psychology	D9
Sociology and Criminology	D0

#### Area E: Lifelong Understanding and Self-Development E

References: Sections V-E, VIII-C-1-e, VIII-C-2-e

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\* Ethnic Studies or Gender Studies courses emphasizing artistic or humanistic perspectives may be categorized in Area C.

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