

Proposal for a new UTK General Education + Graduation Requirement

What makes this new curriculum different?

- **Global Citizenship:** Requiring all students to have exposure to both a US-focus and International focus course will ensure more students take a US History or other US-focused course to help them understand issues of pluralism and their role within the United States.
- **Electives:** The new General Education curriculum offers students more choice and flexibility by allowing them to choose specific areas and courses in which to take their 6 elective General Education credits. By not limiting the areas or departments in which these electives are taken, students have the flexibility to pursue a minor as they fulfill General Education requirements.
- **Applied Arts & Humanities:** This new elective option will allow students to count experiential courses in the arts (e.g., performance-based music or theatre classes, studio art) toward their General Education requirements, promoting active learning.
- **Engaged Inquiries:** The most significant change in the new General Education is not in the specific content to which students will be exposed in the classroom but the ways in which students *experience* the curriculum within – and beyond – the classroom. The Engaged Inquiries designation is designed to encourage active and experiential learning, interdisciplinary thinking, self-reflection, and application; in short, it is designed to encourage innovative pedagogy to transform students' (and instructors') experience of the General Education curriculum.

Proposal for a new UTK General Education + Graduation Requirement

OVERVIEW

Ways of Communicating – 5 courses, 9-15 credits

Written Communication (WC) – 3 courses

- English first-year composition sequence – 2 courses
- 1 Additional WC-designated course (*may be in major; can be fulfilled with 1-3 credits*)

Verbal Communication (OC)– 2 courses

- 1 OC-designated course (*may be in the major; can be fulfilled with 1-3 credits*)
- **1 Applied Oral Communication (AOC)-designated course** (*may be in major; can be fulfilled with 1-3 credits*)

Broadening Perspectives – 31+ credits

- **Ways of Knowing – minimum of six 3-4 credit courses**
 - **Arts & Humanities (AH)** – 1 course
 - **Natural Sciences (NS)** - 2 courses
 - **Quantitative and Logical Reasoning (QR)** – 2 courses
 - **Social Sciences (SS)** - 1 course
- **Global Citizenship – minimum of two 3-4 credit courses**
 - **International Focus (GCI)** – 1 course
 - **US Focus¹ – (GCUS)** - 1 course
- **Electives – 6 credits**
 - Selected from any of the following designations: AH, AAH², GC, or SS

Engaged Inquiries³ (EI) – 9 credits⁴

Engaged Inquiries courses may be within the student's major, minor, elective, or any General Education area (AH, AAH, AOC, GCI, GCUS, OC, NS, QR, SS, WC). Students must complete at least 9 EI credits from at least 2 different departments.

In addition to the above revised General Education proposal, we are also proposing an additional graduation requirement: **THE VOLUNTEER DIFFERENCE:**

- **Contemporary Issues and Solutions Integrative Experience⁵ –0-3 credits**

¹Global Citizenship – US Focus courses “develop students’ understanding of historical and contemporary influences on the experiences of those living in the United States in order to foster students’ awareness of their own identities and responsibilities in an increasingly pluralistic country and world.”

²Applied Arts & Humanities (AAH) courses allow students to learn by doing through performances or creative activities.

³Engaged Inquires courses are defined as courses that meet learning outcomes from at least 2 of the following domains: (a) Integrative or Multidisciplinary Knowledge; (b) Applied Learning; (c) Collaborative Learning; (d) Reflective Development.

⁴The taskforce recommends a phased roll-out of the EI requirement, such that only 3 EI credits are required of students who enter UTK in the first catalog year of the new curriculum, 6 EI credits are required of students who enter UTK in the second catalog year, and the full 9 credits not being required until catalog year 3.

⁵Courses or experiences that satisfy the Contemporary Issues and Solutions requirement provide students with the opportunity to integrate the disciplinary ways of knowing, awareness of self and other, and communication and reasoning skills developed through their General Education curriculum with focused inquiry in one or more specific disciplines (often a student's major) to examine critical issues facing today's world. Students may fulfill this requirement through a variety of VOL-designated experiences including capstone courses; internship, experiential, and service-learning courses; paid and unpaid internships, volunteer experiences, and study abroad experiences.

Notes:

- *Individual courses may appear under more than one General Education category if they fulfill the learning outcomes of multiple categories (e.g., a single course might qualify for both GCUS and SS designations). However, no course may be used to satisfy two Broadening Perspectives requirements (e.g. a student may not use one course to satisfy both the GCUS and an SS requirement).*
- *All current General Education courses will need to re-apply for General Education designation (if departments wish to retain those courses' General Education designation). It should not be assumed that courses currently in one category will automatically carry over to a new category. In order for a course to be considered for General Education designation, an application is required that articulates the ways in which the course would meet the (in some cases new or revised) student learning outcomes for that category and addresses how those outcomes will be assessed, both at the student level (i.e., formative and summative class assignments) and the course level (i.e., plans for ongoing assessment and course development).*

Side-by-side comparison of current and proposed new requirements

CURRENT	NEW*
3 WC	3 WC
OC	OC
--	AOC
2 QR	2 QR
2 NS	2 NS
2 CC	GCUS, GCI
AH 1	AH 1
AH 2	Elective 1: AH, AAH, SS, or GC
SS 1	SS1
SS 2	Elective 2: AH, AAH, SS, or GC
--	Volunteer Difference graduation requirement: Contemporary Issues & Solutions

AH = Arts and Humanities

AAH = Applied Arts & Humanities

AOC = Applied Oral Communication

CC = Cultures and Civilization

GC = Global Citizenship

GCI = Global Citizenship - International Focus

GCUS = Global Citizenship - US Focus

NS = Natural Sciences

OC = Oral Communication

QR = Quantitative Reasoning

SS = Social Sciences

WC = Written Communication

***9 of students' 120+ credits must be designated Engaged Inquiries (EI)**

FAQs:

What about foreign language requirements?

Assuming the language course meets the GCI learning outcomes, two semesters of a foreign language could be used to satisfy the GCI requirement *and* one elective requirement. (Assuming American Sign Language (ASL) courses meet the GCUS learning outcomes, two semesters of ASL could be used to satisfy the GCUS requirement *and* one elective requirement.)

It looks like some students may take only one Social Science or Arts & Humanities course. Is that true?

Possibly, yes. Keep in mind, however, that we expect courses in the Global Citizenship category to span the Social Sciences, Arts, and Humanities. That means, for example, that a student might only take one Ways of Knowing Social Science course but use a second course from a social science discipline to fulfill the GCUS requirement.

The new curriculum guarantees exposure to the Arts & Humanities and the Social Sciences for all students while also introducing flexibility for students to choose courses in which they are most interested or to pursue minors.

How will our students fit in the new Applied Oral Communication course?

Our expectation is that there are already many courses students take within their major in which disciplinary communication is sufficiently emphasized to meet the AOC designation, meaning departments would not necessarily have to create a new course. (Rather, they could apply for such an existing course to satisfy the AOC General Education requirement.)

How will our students fit in the new Contemporary Issues and Solutions graduation requirement?

Again, our expectation is that there are many courses students take within their major or to fulfill the Global Challenges requirement in Arts & Sciences that could readily be adjusted to fulfill the CIS graduation requirement. In addition, programs could develop 0-credit options for pre-existing study abroad or internship requirements. This requirement creates exciting opportunities for programs to consider innovative capstone courses and co-curricular experiences.

PROCESS IMPLICATIONS

Each subcommittee will need to review existing / develop new criteria and review processes for approving courses. All courses must be resubmitted for consideration for inclusion in the new General Education. New applications must include specific information about assessment plans. The General Education committee will also need to determine a process for regularly re-approving courses.

WAYS OF COMMUNICATING

- Verbal Communication:
 - Rename the OC sub-committee of the General Education committee
 - Development of clear criteria and a clear review process for approving courses for the AOC designation. (cf. the criteria and review process for approving courses for the WC designation)
- Written Communication (WC): Existing structure

BROADENING PERSPECTIVES

- Arts & Humanities (AH): Existing structure
 - AH sub-committee would also be charged with developing clear criteria for, reviewing and approving courses with the Applied Arts & Humanities (AAH) designation.
- Cultures & Civilizations (CC): sub-committee of the General Education committee will be eliminated
- Global Citizenship (GC):
 - new sub-committee formed to review and approve courses in both the GCI and GCUS areas.
 - Development of clear criteria and a clear review process for approving courses for the GC designation.
- Quantitative Reasoning (QR): Existing structure
- Natural Science (NS): Existing structure
- Social Sciences (SS): Existing Structure

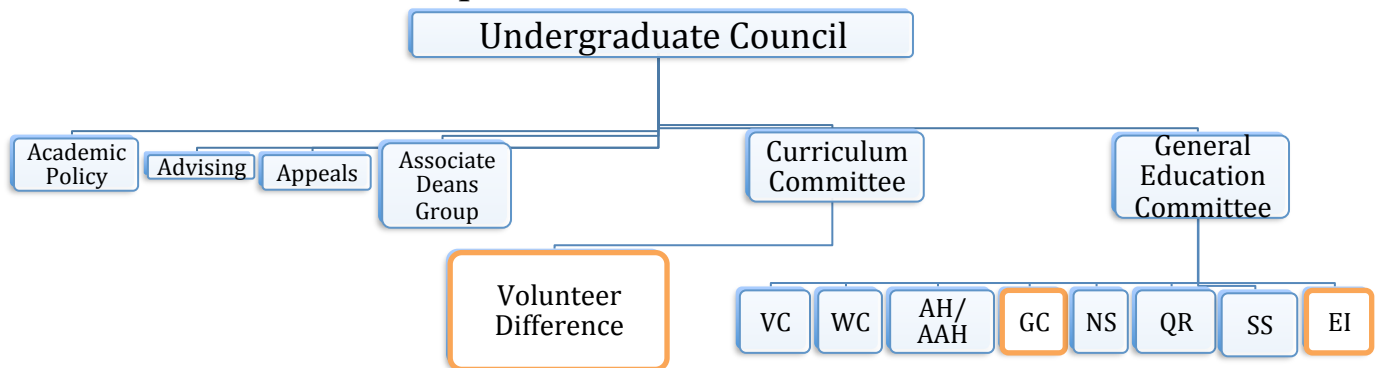
ENGAGED INQUIRIES (EI)

- Formation of a new Engaged Inquiries Sub-committee to review and approve courses in these areas

VOL: Contemporary Issues & Solutions

- Formation of a new *Volunteer Difference* subcommittee under the Curriculum Committee of the Undergraduate Council. This subcommittee would refine learning outcomes and develop approval processes for this new graduation requirement.

Proposed new committee structure



Proposed Timeline

- Spring 2017 New curriculum structure approved
- Fall 2017 New committees formed; timeline for re-approving existing courses developed; new Gen Ed advertised so departments may begin planning in earnest; course (re)approval begins
- Spring 2018 Course (re)approval continues
- Fall 2018 Bulk of courses for new Gen Ed submitted for approval
- Spring 2019 List of approved courses released for department / college review
- Fall 2019 College updates due (changes to college curricula, majors, in response to new courses on Gen Ed lists)
- Spring 2020 All changes for Fall 2020 catalog approved!
- Fall 2020 NEW GEN ED goes into effect, with 3 credits of EI courses required
- Fall 2021 6 credits of EI courses required
- Fall 2022 9 credits of EI courses required; full implementation of new Gen Ed