

**Idaho State Board of Education**  
**GOVERNING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**  
**SECTION: III. POSTSECONDARY AFFAIRS**  
**N. Statewide General Education**

**April 2014**

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In our rapidly-changing world, students need to understand how knowledge is generated and created. They need to adapt to new knowledge and opportunities as they arise, as well as effectively communicate and collaborate with increasing diverse communities and ways of knowing. In combination with a student's major, General Education competencies prepare students to use multiple strategies in an integrative manner, to explore, critically analyze, and creatively address real-world issues and challenges. Course work provides graduates with an understanding of self, the physical world, the development and functioning of human society, and its cultural and artistic endeavors, as well as an understanding of the methodologies, value systems, and thought processes employed in human inquiries. General Education helps instill students with the personal and civic responsibilities of good citizenship. General Education prepares graduates as adaptive, life-long learners.

This subsection shall apply to the University of Idaho, Boise State University, Idaho State University, Lewis-Clark College, Eastern Idaho Technical College, College of Southern Idaho, College of Western Idaho, and North Idaho College (hereinafter "institutions").

1. The state of Idaho's General Education framework for Associate of Arts, Associate of Science, and Baccalaureate degrees shall be:
  - a. The General Education curricula must be thirty-six (36) credits.
  - b. Twenty-seven (27) to thirty (30) credits of the General Education curricula (dependent upon Written Communication placement) must fit within the *General Education Matriculation* (GEM) competency areas defined in subsection 4.
  - c. Six (6) to nine (9) credits of the General Education curricula are reserved for institutions to create competency areas that address the specific mission and goals of the institution. Courses in these competency areas shall have learning outcomes linked to Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) Essential Learning Outcomes.
2. The intent of the General Education framework is to:
  - a. Establish statewide competencies that guide institutions' determination of courses that will be designated as GEM courses;
  - b. Establish shared rubrics that guide course/general education program assessment; and
  - c. Create a transparent and seamless transfer experience for undergraduate students.
3. There are six (6) General Education Matriculation (GEM) competency areas. The first two emphasize *integrative skills* intended to inform the learning process throughout General Education and major. The final four represent *ways of knowing* and are intended to expose students to ideas and engage them in a broad range of active learning experiences. Those competencies are:
  - a. Written Communication
  - b. Oral Communication
  - c. Mathematical Ways of Knowing
  - d. Scientific Ways of Knowing
  - e. Humanistic and Artistic Ways of Knowing
  - f. Social and Behavioral Ways of Knowing

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4. GEM courses in each area shall include the following competencies.
  - a. Written Communication: Upon completion of a course in this category, students are able to demonstrate the following competencies.
    - i. Use flexible writing process strategies to generate, develop, revise, edit, and proofread texts.
    - ii. Adopt strategies and genre appropriate to the rhetorical situation.
    - iii. Use inquiry-based strategies to conduct research that explores multiple and diverse ideas and perspectives, appropriate to the rhetorical context.
    - iv. Use rhetorically appropriate strategies to evaluate, represent, and respond to the ideas and research of others.
    - v. Address readers' biases and assumptions with well-developed evidence-based reasoning.
    - vi. Use appropriate conventions for integrating, citing, and documenting source material as well as for surface-level language and style.
  - b. Oral Communication: Upon completion of a course in this category, students are able to demonstrate at least five (5) of the following competencies.
    - i. Research, discover, and develop information resources and structure verbal messages to increase knowledge and understanding.
    - ii. Research, discover, and develop evidence-based reasoning and persuasive appeals for influencing attitudes, values, beliefs, or behaviors.
    - iii. Understand interpersonal rules, roles, and strategies in varied contexts.
    - iv. Effectively listen and adapt verbal messages to the personal, ideological, and emotional perspectives of the audience.
    - v. Employ effective verbal and nonverbal behaviors that support communication goals.
    - vi. Effectively recognize and critically evaluate the reasoning, evidence, and communication strategies of self and others.
  - c. Mathematical Ways of Knowing: Upon completion of a course in this category, a student is able to demonstrate the following competencies.
    - i. Read, interpret, and communicate mathematical concepts.
    - ii. Represent and interpret information/data.
    - iii. Select, execute and explain appropriate strategies/procedures when solving mathematical problems.
    - iv. Apply quantitative reasoning to draw and support appropriate conclusions.
  - d. Scientific Ways of Knowing: Upon completion of a course in this category, a student is able to demonstrate at least four (4) of the following competencies.
    - i. Apply foundational knowledge and models of a natural or physical science to analyze and/or predict phenomena.
    - ii. Understand the scientific method and apply scientific reasoning to critically evaluate arguments.

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- iii. Interpret and communicate scientific information via written, spoken and/or visual representations.
  - iv. Describe the relevance of specific scientific principles to the human experience.
  - v. Form and test a hypothesis in the laboratory or field using discipline-specific tools and techniques for data collection and/or analysis.
- e. Humanistic and Artistic Ways of Knowing: Upon completion of a course in this category, students are able to demonstrate at least five (5) of the following competencies.
- i. Recognize and describe humanistic, historical, or artistic works within problems and patterns of the human experience.
  - ii. Distinguish and apply terminologies, methodologies, processes, epistemologies, and traditions specific to the discipline(s).
  - iii. Perceive and understand formal, conceptual, and technical elements specific to the discipline.
  - iv. Analyze, evaluate, and interpret texts, objects, events, or ideas in their cultural, intellectual or historical contexts.
  - v. Interpret artistic and/or humanistic works through the creation of art or performance.
  - vi. Develop critical perspectives or arguments about the subject matter, grounded in evidence-based analysis.
  - vii. Demonstrate self-reflection, intellectual elasticity, widened perspective, and respect for diverse viewpoints.
- f. Social and Behavioral Ways of Knowing: Upon completion of a course in this category, students are able to demonstrate at least four (4) of the following competencies.
- i. Demonstrate knowledge of the theoretical and conceptual frameworks of a particular Social Science discipline.
  - ii. Develop an understanding of self and the world by examining the dynamic interaction of individuals, groups, and societies as they shape and are shaped by history, culture, institutions, and ideas.
  - iii. Utilize Social Science approaches, such as research methods, inquiry, or problem-solving, to examine the variety of perspectives about human experiences.
  - iv. Evaluate how reasoning, history, or culture informs and guides individual, civic, or global decisions.
  - v. Understand and appreciate similarities and differences among and between individuals, cultures, or societies across space and time.

**5. General Education Requirement**

- a. This subsection applies to Associate of Arts, Associate of Science, and Baccalaureate degrees.

General Education curricula must reflect the following credit distribution:

Competency Area	Minimum Credits
Written Communication	3 to 6 (depending on placement)
Oral Communication	2

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Mathematical Ways of Knowing	3
Scientific Ways of Knowing	7 (from two different disciplines with at least one laboratory or field experience)
Humanistic and Artistic Ways of Knowing	6 (from two different disciplines)
Social and Behavioral Ways of Knowing	6 (from two different disciplines)
Institutionally-Designated Competency Areas	6 to 9 (depending on Written Communication placement)

- i. GEM courses are designed to be broadly accessible to students regardless of major, thus college-level and non-GEM pre-requisites to GEM courses should be avoided unless deemed necessary by the institution.
  - ii. Additional GEM courses, beyond the General Education curricula, may be required within the major for degree completion.
- b. This subsection pertains to Associate of Applied Science degrees.
- i. The General Education curricula for the AAS degree must contain a minimum of fifteen (15) credits, so distributed in the following areas:

Competency Area	Minimum Credits
Written Communication	3
Oral Communication	3
Mathematical Ways of Knowing	3
Social and Behavioral Ways of Knowing	3
Institutionally-Designated Competency Areas	3

**6. Governance of the General Education Program and Review of Courses**

- a. GEM courses are developed by faculty and approved via the curriculum approval process of the institution delivering the courses. Those courses are transferable as meeting the GEM requirements at any Idaho public institution. Faculty discipline groups representing all public postsecondary institutions shall ensure consistency and relevance of General Education competencies related to their discipline.
- b. The State General Education Committee (The Committee): The Committee, established by the Board, shall consist of a representative from each of the eight public postsecondary institutions. To ensure transferability, the Committee reviews competencies and rubrics for institutionally-designated General Education categories; final approval resides with the Board. Committee membership and duties are prescribed by the Board.
- c. The eight (8) public postsecondary institutions shall identify all GEM courses in their curricula and identify them on the state transfer web portal.