

State Requirements for General Education

There are state requirements for the content of a general education program. In particular, the Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR) 13B.06.01.03 states:

A. While public institutions have the autonomy to design their general education program to meet their unique needs and mission, that program shall conform to the definitions and common standards in this chapter. A public institution shall satisfy the general education requirement by:

(1) Requiring each program leading to the A.A. or A.S. degree to include not less than 30 and not more than 36 semester hours, and each baccalaureate degree program to include not less than 40 and not more than 46 semester hours of required core courses, with the core requiring, at a minimum, course work in each of the following five areas:

(a) Arts and humanities, (b) Social and behavioral sciences, (c) Biological and physical sciences, (d) Mathematics, and (e) English composition; or

(2) Conforming with COMAR 13B.02.02.16D(2)(b)------(c). { THIS PERMITS GREAT FLEXIBILITY: SEE BELOW, SECTION 2(b) }

B. Each core course used to satisfy the distribution requirements of §A(1) of this regulation shall carry at least 3 semester hours.

C. General education programs of public institutions shall require at least:

(1) One course in each of two disciplines in arts and humanities; (2) One course in each of two disciplines in social and behavioral sciences; (3) Two science courses, at least one of which shall be a laboratory course; (4) One course in mathematics at or above the level of college algebra; and (5) One course in English composition.

D. Interdisciplinary and Emerging Issues.

(1) In addition to the five required areas in §A of this regulation, a public institution may include up to 8 semester hours in a sixth category that addresses emerging issues that institutions have identified as essential to a full program of general education for their students. These courses may:

(a) Be integrated into other general education courses or may be presented as separate courses; and (b) Include courses that: (i) Provide an interdisciplinary examination of issues across the five areas, or (ii) Address other categories of knowledge, skills, and values that lie outside of the five areas.

However COMAR 13B.02.02.16D states:

D. General Education Requirement.

(1) An approved degree-granting institution shall provide to its students, within the required curriculum for graduation, a general education that is designed to provide the student with the skills and knowledge necessary to:

(a) Communicate effectively in oral and written English; (b) Read with comprehension; (c) Reason abstractly and think critically; (d) Understand and interpret numerical data; (e) Understand the scientific method; (f) Recognize and appreciate cultural diversity; and (g) Understand the nature and value of the fine and performing arts.

(2) A nonpublic institution shall satisfy the general education requirement by:

(a) Requiring each associate degree program to include not less than 20 semester hours and that each baccalaureate degree program shall include not less than 40 semester hours of required arts and science core courses, with at least one 3-semester-hour course from each of the following five areas:

(i) Arts and humanities, (ii) English composition, (iii) Social and behavioral sciences, (iv) Mathematics, and (v) Biological and physical sciences;

(b) An integrated and structured general education experience required of all students, adopted by the governing board of the institution, which shall be demonstrated to the Commission at the time of initial approval or reaffirmation of approval, to achieve the goals of general education as defined in §D(1) of this regulation; or

(c) A process to measure competencies and to award credit in the areas of general education adopted by the governing board of the institution, which shall be demonstrated to the Commission to achieve the goals of general education in accordance with guidelines approved by the Commission.