

18. SYSTEMWIDE GENERAL EDUCATION PROGRAM

For the purposes of this policy:

“Coordinated institution” means each community college and Washburn University.

“Kansas public institution” means each state university and each participating coordinated institution.

“Major” means a field of study within a degree program, having its own curriculum. A degree program may have more than one major.

“Systemwide transfer course” means a course approved by the Board, for which faculty develop and update learning outcomes. These courses transfer to any Kansas public institution offering an equivalent course.

a. General Education Requirements at State Universities and Participating Coordinated Institutions. The general education requirements at each state university and each participating coordinated institution shall consist of the following:

i. Effective no later than the 2024 fall semester, each Kansas public institution shall use a common systemwide general education framework within associate of arts (A.A.) degrees, associate of fine arts (A.F.A) degrees, associate of science (A.S.) degrees, and all baccalaureate degrees.

ii. The systemwide general education framework shall include 34-35 credit hours within the following seven areas. A student shall be considered to have completed the systemwide general education framework for A.A. degrees, A.F.A degrees, A.S. degrees, and all baccalaureate degrees by meeting the following requirements:

(1) English Discipline Area – 6 Credit Hours

(2) Communication Discipline Area – 3 Credit Hours

(3) Math and Statistics Discipline Area – 3 Credit Hours (Must be college level. Intermediate algebra shall not meet any of the math degree requirements)

(4) Natural and Physical Sciences Discipline Area – 4-5 Credit Hours

One course with a lab from the following subject areas:

Anatomy

Astronomy

Biochemistry

Biology

Botany
Chemistry
Earth Science
Ecology
Environmental Science
Geology
Meteorology
Microbiology
Physical Geography
Physical Sciences
Physics
Physiology
Zoology

Other subjects that the offering institution determines fit within the natural and physical sciences area

(5) Social & Behavioral Sciences Discipline Area – 6 Credit Hours

A minimum of two courses from two of the following subject areas:

Anthropology
Criminal Justice
Economics
Ethnic and/or Gender Studies
Geography
Political Science
Psychology
Social Work
Sociology

Other subjects that the offering institution determines fit within the social sciences area

(6) Arts & Humanities Discipline Area – 6 Credit Hours

A minimum of two courses from two of the following subject areas:

Art *
Communications
Cultural Studies
Dance*
English
General Humanities
History
Literature

Modern and Classical Languages

Music*

Philosophy

Religion

Theater*

Other subjects that the offering institution determines fit within the arts and humanities

*The application of performance courses in this subject area is at the discretion of the institution.

(7) Institutionally Designated Area – 6 Credit Hours

This area provides flexibility for each Kansas public institution to define requirements to account for societal issues, local needs, and institutional priorities (Intermediate algebra shall not meet any of the requirements in this area).

iii. Each Kansas public institution that verifies that the student has met the requirements in paragraphs 18.a.ii.(1)-(7) of this policy section shall note “KS Systemwide General Education Completed” on its official transcript.

iv. The application of the systemwide general education requirements for transfer students is detailed in the Board’s transfer and articulation policy.

b. Incorporating Credit by Exam into the General Education Framework

i. To ensure that students have comparable opportunities to earn general education credit by demonstrating requisite knowledge and skills on national assessments, a Kansas public institution shall award credit, consistent with the provisions established in the Board’s credit by exam policy, for general education courses in:

(1) the subjects detailed in paragraphs 18.a.ii.(1)-(6) of this policy section; and

(2) any applicable subjects within the institution’s institutionally designated area selected from paragraph 18.a.ii.(7) of this policy section.

ii. General education credit earned based on achieving a requisite score on an exam detailed in the Board’s credit by exam policy shall be noted on each Kansas public institution’s transcript and apply towards satisfying a general education requirement on the same basis as if the credit had been earned through completing the course(s).

iii. Transferring credit awarded through credit by exam is addressed in the Board’s transfer and articulation policy.

c. Request for a Major to Deviate from Systemwide General Education Requirements

i. A Kansas public institution may request that a specific major include general education requirements that deviate from the systemwide general education requirements established by this policy by submitting a request to the General Education Council. A Kansas public institution that receives approval to modify one or more requirements of the systemwide general education framework for a specific major shall use the remaining portions of the systemwide general education framework that were not included in the approved modification. The General Education Council shall issue a recommendation to approve or deny the request. The General Education Council's recommendation shall be submitted for review to the Board President and Chief Executive Officer who will determine if the request is approved or denied. Each request shall include a degree requirements sheet outlining the proposed general education requirements (disciplines, course title options, and credit hours), the major requirements (course titles and credit hours), and any other course requirements that are needed to complete the degree and shall address the following:

(1) Identify the major for which the institution is requesting to modify the systemwide general education requirements and/or add to the systemwide general education requirements.

(2) If requesting a modification, identify the discipline area(s) of the systemwide general education framework that the institution seeks to modify.

(3) If requesting to add credit hours to the systemwide general education requirements, identify the addition being requested.

(4) Identify the challenges the systemwide general education requirements create for students in this major (if, for example, it extends the time to degree beyond four years, or results in certain critical courses being left out of a major).

(5) Identify the systemwide transfer courses that can be applied to satisfy the modified systemwide general education requirements and/or additions to the systemwide general education requirements.

(6) Identify any accreditation and/or licensure requirements associated with this major that make it impossible to employ the systemwide general education requirements.

(7) Detail how the institution will ensure that the potential modified general education or additional general education requirements will not create barriers to transfer students.

d. Coordinated Institutions Opting Out of this Policy

i. Any coordinated institution may opt out of participating in this policy and its required application to the Board's transfer and articulation policy in Chapter III.A 2.g. If a coordinated

institution wishes to opt out, the institution's president shall submit written notification to the Board, which will be discussed as an informational agenda item at a regular Board meeting. For each coordinated institution that opts out, all systemwide general education program and transfer-related academic advising, marketing, and general information content will explicitly note that the institution declined to participate in the systemwide general education program.

e. Reporting

i. Annual Submissions

(1) Each Kansas public institution shall annually submit the following, which will be subject to verification from the General Education Council. Some of these elements will be published on the Board of Regent's website:

(a) a list of the courses meeting the systemwide general education discipline area requirements in paragraphs 18.a.(1)-(6) and the institutionally designated area in paragraph 18.a.(7);

(b) a list of the majors in which the Board President and Chief Executive Officer has granted permission to deviate from the systemwide general education requirements; and

(c) a list of the majors in which the Board President and Chief Executive Officer has granted permission to continue requiring a specific general education course – and not waive such a course requirement – for a transfer student who has completed the systemwide general education or completed a systemwide general education discipline area requirement. See 2.g.v. for more information.

(2) Board Staff Report

(a) Board staff shall submit an annual report to the Board that includes:

(i) a list of the majors at each Kansas public institution in which the Board President and Chief Executive Officer has granted permission to deviate from the systemwide general education requirements; and

(ii) a list of the majors at each Kansas public institution in which the Board President and Chief Executive Officer has granted permission to continue requiring a specific general education course – and not waive such a course requirement – for a transfer student who has completed the systemwide general education or completed a systemwide general education discipline area requirement.

ii. Other Submissions

(1) As determined by the Board of Academic Affairs Standing Committee, Kansas public institutions shall submit a degree map for each major it offers. These are term-by-term sample course schedules that specify milestones, courses, and special requirements that are necessary for facilitating timely degree completion. The review of the degree maps will include a focus on how the systemwide general education is integrated into the maps. Additionally, an emphasis will be placed on interpreting the pathway to completion through the lens of a prospective, current, and transfer students because this tool will serve as a planning resource for all of these students; and

(2) As needed, the General Education Council may request additional information pertaining to this policy and/or general education transfer.

f. General Education Council

i. A General Education Council comprised of college and university representatives shall be established. The members of the General Education Council shall be approved by the Board President and Chief Executive Officer. The General Education Council shall:

(1) Review and verify the annual submissions detailed in subsection 18.e.;

(2) review and issue recommendations to the Board President and Chief Executive Officer when an institution submits a request to deviate from the systemwide general education requirements, as detailed in subsection 18.c.;

(3) investigate and act upon institutional and/or student complaints, with input from the Board President and Chief Executive Officer and/or Board, as needed, regarding the systemwide general education program requirements policy and its application to the Board's transfer and articulation policy;

(4) issue guidance, with input from the Board President and Chief Executive Officer and/or Board, as needed, regarding the Board's systemwide general education requirements policy and its application to the Board's transfer and articulation policy; and

(5) develop a procedures document to guide the Council's activities.