GENERAL EDUCATION PROGRAM

Dr. Joshua Fausty, Director gened@njcu.edu (gened@njcu.edu?subject=Gen Ed)
The General Education Program (https://www.njcu.edu/academics/resources-services/general-education) provides students with invaluable learning experiences across a wide range of academic fields on topics of general interest. While major and minor programs focus on specific disciplines, the General Education (Gen Ed) program ensures that all students, regardless of major, explore a range of scholarly approaches in a variety of fields. While its scope is broad, Gen Ed prioritizes in-depth, active learning and emphasizes essential skills building for success in college and beyond.

- In the Gen Ed Learning Communities, students take two or more thematically linked courses together, learning about fascinating topics from diverse disciplinary perspectives.
- Students gain knowledge through study and experience; they discover and pursue their chosen areas of interest in courses that explore distinct approaches to intellectual inquiry.
- Academic study becomes an integrative exploration of oneself and the world.

Gen Ed: How it Works

Students complete the Gen Ed program by moving through the Tiers in order—first Tier I, then Tier II, and finally Tier III—though some overlap may be necessary during certain semesters.

- Tier I consists of a required English Composition course and Math course, plus four seminar courses in the Modes of Inquiry.
- Tier II consists of English Composition and six seminar courses in the Modes of Inquiry.
- All Gen Ed students take at least two seminars (at least 6 credits) in each of the four Modes of Inquiry for a total of ten seminar courses (at least 30 credits) across Tiers I and II.
- All students take one Tier III capstone course (3 credits) in the final semester of Gen Ed.
- Intermodal courses count toward the distribution requirements in two Modes of Inquiry.

Transfer students who enter NJCU with 30 or more credits may receive Gen Ed credit for up to six Tier I courses transferred in and may take as few as four Tier II courses to reach the required total of ten Tier I and II courses (at least 30 credits).

Gen Ed Learning Communities

The General Education Learning Communities (GELCs) are thematic pairs and clusters taken together by a cohort of students. Professors work together to integrate courses, align teaching strategies, and build joint assignments and assessments. This encourages students to make connections among linked courses and learn from relationships among course content and modes of inquiry. It also provides a great opportunity for students to build relationships with peers taking two or three courses together in the same semester.

Note: Students need to see an advisor to enroll in the GELCs.

Student Learning Outcomes

Each General Education course provides instruction in, and participates in programmatic assessment of, two of the six University-wide student learning outcomes:

- Civic Engagement and Intercultural Knowledge, which involves working to promote the civic life of communities and the knowledge, skills, and values to do so.
- Critical Thinking and Problem Solving, which involves being able to explore a range of perspectives, ideas, and data reaching a conclusion.
- Information and Technology Literacy, which involves effectively finding and using information, and developing or using technology applications to solve problems.
- Oral communication, which involves effective and purposeful presentation of information orally for a defined purpose and to an identified population.
- Quantitative Literacy, which involves solving applied quantitative problems, and developing arguments that are supported by data and quantitative evidence.
- Written Communication, which involves effective expression of ideas in writing.

*Above definitions derived from American Colleges & Universities (AAC&U)

The Modes of Inquiry

Creative Process and Production

Courses in this category focus on creative expression and provide students with opportunities to develop their own forms of creative expression and to interpret and appraise those of others. Students are expected to learn to communicate ideas and information through art, design, performance, media, or creative writing; to develop particular artistic or creative skills or examine the historical development and social functions of the creative arts.

Language, Literary, and Cultural Studies

Courses in this category explore ideas, systems of thought, or culture(s) through language, literature, and other texts (including historical, political, and cultural narratives). Students will begin to interpret and analyze a range of texts and to recognize and question the various contexts in which particular narratives are produced and received. They are expected to compare different cultural and literary histories and traditions; use texts to analyze contemporary questions and issues; and evaluate diverse identities, experiences, and perspectives in relation to their own.

Scientific and Quantitative Inquiries

Courses in this category provide opportunities to examine the natural and physical world through disciplined systematic inquiry. Students will learn how science investigates the world, asking certain types of questions, generating empirical evidence, then applying logical rigor in answering
those questions. Students may also interpret and apply quantitative data and inferences to the world beyond the classroom.

**Social and Historical Perspectives**

Courses in this category address the historical, economic, political, psychological, and social factors that shape and influence people’s thoughts and behavior. During their course of study in this area, students may examine the historical roots and contemporary workings of social institutions and structures; the interconnections among and within diverse nations, cultures, and populations; and the artifacts associated with them.

**Intermodal Courses**

Intermodal courses count toward the distribution requirements in two Modes of Inquiry; they provide greater flexibility in selecting future Tier I and II courses but count only once toward the ten courses (at least 30 credits) required across Tiers I and II.

**General Education Tier I**

Tier I consists of a required English Composition course and a Math course, plus four courses in the Modes of Inquiry.

The Tier I Math requirement is determined by the student’s major.

All Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) majors must take MATH 175 to satisfy the Tier I Math requirement.

All Business majors must take MATH 164 to satisfy the Tier I Math requirement.

All freshman Humanities and Social Science Majors must take MATH 114 or MATH 140 to satisfy the Tier I Math requirement.

All transfer Humanities and Social Majors who have taken MATH 112 or equivalent at another institution are exempt from additional Tier I Math requirements.

Students must consult with an academic advisor or the Math department for information on prerequisites for required Math courses.

Note: Students who place into ENGL 101 without ENGL 95 are permitted to take as few as one Tier I course and as many as nine Tier II courses to reach a total of ten courses (at least 30 credits) across Tiers I and II; they must consult with an academic advisor before choosing this option.

**General Education Tier II**

Tier II consists of a second English Composition course and six courses in the Modes of Inquiry.

All students take at least two courses (at least 6 credits) in each of the four Modes of Inquiry for a total of ten courses (at least 30 credits) across Tiers I and II.

Note: Students who place into ENGL 101 without ENGL 95 are permitted to take as few as one Tier I course and as many as nine Tier II courses to reach a total of ten courses (at least 30 credits) across Tiers I and II; they must consult with an academic advisor before choosing this option.

**General Education Tier III**

All students take one Tier III capstone course (at least 3 credits) in the final semester of General Education (Gen Ed). In the capstone course, students develop, design, and present significant individual or group research and creative projects. The capstone provides a hands-on experience in which students showcase the skills and knowledge they have gained in Tiers I and II. The Mode of Inquiry and two learning outcomes for each capstone project are determined in consultation with the professor. Students must complete at least eight courses across Tiers I and II prior to enrolling in the capstone. Because the capstone can integrate Gen Ed with the major, students are encouraged to consult with an advisor in selecting a capstone.

**General Education Tier I Courses by Modes of Inquiry**

Click here for a full list of General Education Tier I courses by Modes of Inquiry.

**General Education Tier II Courses by Modes of Inquiry**

Click here for a full list of General Education Tier II courses by Modes of Inquiry.

**General Education Tier III Courses**

Click here for a full list of General Education Tier III courses.