

OTHER UNIVERSITY REQUIREMENTS

There are several university-level requirements that are designed to help students succeed both academically and professionally. These requirements may be completed by designated courses that also complete other degree or General Education requirements (e.g. a single course may satisfy a cultural diversity requirement as well as a General Education requirement).

First-Year Engagement Program

The First-Year Engagement Programs are designed to actively involve students in learning, acquaint them with the learning tools and resources available at Penn State and orient them to the scholarly community from the outset of their undergraduate studies in a way that will bridge to later experiences in their chosen majors. In addition, the First-Year Engagement Programs facilitate students' adjustment to the high expectations, demanding workload, increased academic liberties, and other aspects of the transition to college life and introduce them to their responsibilities as members of the University community.

All incoming first-year baccalaureate students are required to complete a First-Year Engagement Program, with a student's campus of enrollment determining whether or not this includes a First-Year Seminar (FYS). All students enrolled in a University Park college, the Division of Undergraduate Studies at University Park, and the World Campus are required to take 1 to 3 credits of the First-Year Seminar, as specified by their college First-Year Engagement Plan. Other campuses may require the First-Year Seminar; campuses that no longer require a First-Year Seminar provide students with a first-year engagement experience. First-year baccalaureate students entering Penn State should consult their enrollment home for these requirements.

Courses that have the First Year Seminar attribute satisfy this requirement. Some courses may also have an identifying suffix (S or T) after the course number. The degree audit and what-if reports in LionPATH use attributes, not suffixes, to determine the applicability of a course to a requirement.

Cultural Diversity

Baccalaureate students are required to complete 3 credits each in United States and International Cultures.

Associate degree students are required to complete 3 credits in United States or International Cultures

United States Cultures

A course that fulfills the United States Cultures requirement must strive to increase students' understanding of contemporary United States society. Such a course need not focus exclusively on the present and may concern a historical subject.

Courses with the United States Cultures designation will include two or more of the following components and will include those components in the graded evaluation of student performance:

1. cultivate student knowledge of issues of social identity such as ethnicity, race, class, religion, gender, physical/mental disability, age, or sexual orientation;

2. convey to students knowledge of different United States values, traditions, beliefs, and customs;
3. increase student knowledge of the range of United States cultural achievements and human conditions through time;
4. increase student knowledge of United States social identities not in isolation, but in relation to one another (for example, the interaction of race or gender with socioeconomic status);
5. introduce students to interpersonal communication and interaction issues among United States cultures;
6. increase student understanding of the nature of societal justice, and equity in the United States at the societal, institutional, and individual levels.

Courses with the United States Cultures attribute satisfy this requirement. It is also common to abbreviate this course designation as U.S.

International Cultures

A course that fulfills the International Cultures requirement must strive to increase student knowledge of the variety of international societies and may deal to some extent with U.S. culture in its international connections. It need not focus exclusively on the present and may, indeed, be a historical subject. Courses with the International Cultures designation will do two or more of the following:

1. cultivate student knowledge of the similarities and differences among international cultures;
2. convey to students knowledge of other nations' cultural values, traditions, beliefs, and customs;
3. increase students' knowledge of the range of international cultural achievements and human conditions through time;
4. increase students' knowledge of nations and cultures not in isolation, but in relation to one another;
5. introduce students to interpersonal communication and interaction issues among international cultures.
6. increase student understanding of the nature of societal justice, and equity in international nations at the societal, institutional, and individual levels.

Courses with the International Cultures attribute satisfy this requirement. It is also common to abbreviate this course designation as IL.

Writing Across the Curriculum

Developing the skill to communicate by means of the written word is extremely important. Courses other than General Education English Composition courses emphasize the ability of students to write. Colleges and/or departments have established Writing Across the Curriculum courses in specific programs. Students are required to complete at least 3 credits of writing-intensive courses offered within their major or college of enrollment.

Typically, Writing Across the Curriculum courses include writing assignments that relate clearly to the course objectives and serve as effective instruments for learning the subject matter of the course. In writing-intensive courses, assignments are designed to help students investigate the course subject matter, gain experience in interpreting data or the results of research, shape writing for a particular audience, or practice the type of writing associated with a given profession or discipline.

2 Other University Requirements

Opportunities for students to receive written feedback from the instructor and to apply the instructor's feedback to their future writing are built into the writing courses. A writing-intensive course may also include peer review of written work, tutorial assistance, instructor conferences, group writing projects, the use of writing or learning centers, teaching assistant feedback, and classroom discussions of assigned readings about writing.

Courses with the Writing Across the Curriculum attribute satisfy this requirement. Some courses may also have an identifying suffix (W, M, X, or Y) after the course number. The degree audit and what-if reports in LionPATH use attributes, not suffixes, to determine the applicability of a course to a requirement. Both baccalaureate and associate degree students complete 3 credits in this area.