

GENERAL EDUCATION MODEL CONCEPTS FOR SOU, SPRING 2021

Goals of General Education Transformation:

1. Apply **Strategic Direction 1, Goal 1, and Strategic Direction 4** to General Education.
2. Reduce General Education credit burden for students.
3. Make General Education learning goals and requirements more transparent and purposeful for students.
4. Make General Education model more attractive to prospective students.
5. Do all of the above while ensuring maximum transferability of credits.

Strategic Direction I: SOU will transform its pedagogy and curriculum (how and what it teaches) to enhance the success of its learners and graduates.

Goal One: SOU will develop curriculum and provide learning experiences that prepare all learners for life and work in an evolving future; connect directly with the challenges of our community, region, and world; and build self-confidence and the capacity to think critically, innovate boldly, and create lives of purpose.

Strategic Direction IV: SOU will create a diverse, equitable, inclusive community where learners flourish.

Guide to General Education Capacities:

PURPOSEFUL LIVING

This capacity supports students in building skills for personal and professional development. The learning outcomes bridge higher education to broader goals related to self, community, and career. The proficiencies offer a practical and purposeful approach to self-reflection, connection with others, communication of purpose, and adaptation in an ever-changing world.

EQUITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION

The capacity for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion prepares students to engage in a lifelong, intentional, and continuous process of learning culturally affirming ways of being, interacting, and behaving that contribute to equitable living outcomes in both global and local communities. EDI prioritizes the critical awareness of historical and contemporary structural inequity and its causes; encourages the development of empathy, respect, and skills for communicating across differences (including but not limited to: race, ethnicity, Indigeneity, gender, gender identity or expression, disability, body size, age, sexuality, social class, religion, linguistic background, and nationality); and develops tools in service of a diverse, equitable, and inclusive society. Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion involves the active combination of each of these frameworks; it is not to be interpreted as equity, diversity, or inclusion.

COMMUNICATION & EXPRESSION

The capacity for Communication and Expression equips students to create, develop, and convey ideas with an audience in mind (e.g., using writing, speaking, listening, dialogue, sound, visual images, media, embodied expression, movement, and/or networked digital tools) and to receive, appreciate, and analyze those ideas.

INQUIRY & ANALYSIS

The capacity for Inquiry & Analysis enables students to pose meaningful questions; gather, analyze, evaluate, and synthesize relevant information; and articulate how the information cycle (the iterative process by which information is understood, consumed, & produced) contributes to an understanding of the world and shapes decisions, actions, and conclusions.

NUMERICAL LITERACY

The capacity in Numerical Literacy develops a student's ability to reason and solve quantitative problems situated within a variety of disciplinary and interdisciplinary contexts. Students learn to ask mathematical questions about their world, identify appropriate methods to interpret data, and clearly communicate their results in a variety of formats.

CREATIVITY & INNOVATION

The Creativity and Innovation capacity equips students to devise original approaches to creative projects or complex problems. Students are afforded the opportunity to produce original work that expands or transforms existing approaches and methods, towards the goal of engaging an audience with work that possesses meaning and value. Creativity is an ongoing and iterative process, whereby students strive to improve their work by considering and incorporating feedback. This capacity fosters the self-confidence and imagination necessary to innovate boldly and bring a product or solution to fruition.

MODEL A: 1-to-1 COURSE TO CAPACITY MODEL (38-46 credits)

REQUIRED CORE (38 credits):

FIRST YEAR EXPERIENCE 1 4 credits Purposeful Living Lens Introduction of GenEd ePortfolio	FIRST YEAR EXPERIENCE 2 4 credits Purposeful Living Lens Development of GenEd ePortfolio	FIRST YEAR EXPERIENCE 3 4 credits Purposeful Living Lens Development of GenEd ePortfolio		
LD COMMUNICATION & EXPRESSION 1 course (3-4 credits)	LD INQUIRY & ANALYSIS 1 course (3-4 credits)	LD NUMERICAL LITERACY 1 course (3-4 credits)	LD CREATIVITY & INNOVATION 1 course (3-4 credits)	LD EQUITY, DIVERSITY, & INCLUSION 1 course (3-4 credits)

CHOOSE 2 CAPACITIES FROM THE FOLLOWING (6-8 credits):

UD COMMUNICATION & EXPRESSION 1 course (3-4 credits)	UD INQUIRY & ANALYSIS 1 course (3-4 credits)	UD NUMERICAL LITERACY 1 course (3-4 credits)	UD CREATIVITY & INNOVATION 1 course (3-4 credits)	UD EQUITY, DIVERSITY, & INCLUSION 1 course (3-4 credits)
				UD GenEd "Capstone" 2 credits Purposeful Living Lens Completion of GenEd ePortfolio

EXPLANATORY NOTES

In this model, the Purposeful Living capacity is treated as a framing lens for the remaining five capacities, with a 12-credit, purpose-driven FIRST YEAR EXPERIENCE sequence that introduces the GenEd ePortfolio, and a culminating 2-credit GenEd "Capstone" in which students complete their ePortfolio.

Students take one 3-to-4-credit, 1-to-1 capacity course in *each* capacity at the lower-division level. They must also take an upper-division EDI course and choose two upper-division courses from the remaining four capacities.

In this model, each GenEd course that goes forward for approval would need to apply for a specific capacity and count only toward that capacity.

This model is focused on courses rather than credits.

GENERAL EDUCATION "PATHWAY" CERTIFICATES:

We encourage the creation of General Education "Pathway" Certificates (possibly built from stackable micro-credentials) awarded to students at the completion of their GenEd program if they complete one of the pre-set pathways.

GenEd "Pathway" Certificates should be intentionally designed to be highly interdisciplinary (drawing from arts, humanities, mathematics, social sciences, natural sciences, and technology) without turning those into "strand" buckets. Students would see certificate requirements in DegreeWorks and how their capacity credits are earned via those requirements but wouldn't think of these as "science" or "humanities" requirements.

Model Pros:

1. Clear, transparent, easy to explain.
2. Easy to track on the back-end.
3. Lots of scaffolding potential.
4. Capacity-centered.
5. EDI a priority

Model Questions:

1. Any prefix restrictions?
2. Is GenEd "Capstone" based in the major discipline or taught by FIRST YEAR EXPERIENCE faculty as a bookend?
3. How is Purposeful Living threaded through the middle section of the curriculum?
4. How will courses transfer in and out?
5. Is UD EDI more important than other UD capacities? Why or why not?

Model Cons:

1. More prescriptive. Lower flexibility.
2. Reduced student control.
3. Potentially less interdisciplinary.

MODEL B: FLEXIBLE MODEL (44-54 credits)

FIRST YEAR EXPERIENCE 1
4 credits
Purposeful Living Lens
Introduction of GenEd ePortfolio

FIRST YEAR EXPERIENCE 2
4 credits
Purposeful Living Lens
Development of GenEd ePortfolio

FIRST YEAR EXPERIENCE 3
4 credits
Purposeful Living Lens
Development of GenEd ePortfolio

COMMUNICATION & EXPRESSION
6-8 credits required

Credits can be earned through traditional academic courses or approved experiential learning opportunities.

INQUIRY & ANALYSIS
6-8 credits required

Credits can be earned through traditional academic courses or approved experiential learning opportunities.

NUMERICAL LITERACY
6-8 credits required

Credits can be earned through traditional academic courses or approved experiential learning opportunities.

CREATIVITY & INNOVATION
6-8 credits required

Credits can be earned through traditional academic courses or approved experiential learning opportunities.

EQUITY, DIVERSITY, & INCLUSION
6-8 credits required

Credits can be earned through traditional academic courses or approved experiential learning opportunities.

UD GenEd "Capstone"
2 credits
Purposeful Living Lens
Completion of GenEd ePortfolio

EXPLANATORY NOTES

In this model, the Purposeful Living capacity is again treated as a framing lens for the remaining five capacities, with a 12-credit, purpose-driven FIRST YEAR EXPERIENCE sequence that introduces the GenEd ePortfolio, and a culminating 2-credit GenEd "Capstone" in which students complete their ePortfolio.

Students must earn a minimum of 6 credits in each capacity, but would have a variety of ways to earn those, including 1-4 credit traditional academic courses, credit for prior learning, independent studies, and experiential learning opportunities. The goal in this model would be to create opportunities for students to design their own education.

In this model, any traditional GenEd course that goes forward for approval would need to apply for a specific capacity and count only toward that capacity. Likewise, opportunities would be available for work to be designated as credit earning in a capacity via the GenEd ePortfolio.

This model is focused on credits rather than courses.

GENERAL EDUCATION "PATHWAY" CERTIFICATES:

We encourage the creation of General Education "Pathway" Certificates (possibly built from stackable micro-credentials) awarded to students at the completion of their GenEd program if they complete one of the pre-set pathways.

GenEd "Pathway" Certificates should be intentionally designed to be highly interdisciplinary (drawing from arts, humanities, mathematics, social sciences, natural sciences, and technology) without turning those into "strand" buckets. Students would see certificate requirements in DegreeWorks and how their capacity credits are earned via those requirements but wouldn't think of these as "science" or "humanities" requirements.

Model Pros:

1. Puts students in control.
2. Creates opportunities for dynamic course creation that is responsive to current events.
3. Flexible for transferring in courses.
4. Facilitates interdisciplinary course creation.

Model Questions:

1. Any prefix restrictions?
2. Is GenEd "Capstone" based in the major discipline or taught by FIRST YEAR EXPERIENCE faculty as a bookend?
3. How is Purposeful Living threaded through the middle section of the curriculum?
4. How will courses transfer in and out?
5. Most courses are 4 credits, this will put students over on most requirements unless they choose CPL or other classes.

Model Cons:

1. Advising heavy.
2. Potentially difficult to transfer out.
3. Focus on portfolio could get lost for students doing a lot of independent work.