

R470, General Education, Common Course Numbering, Lower-Division Pre-Major Requirements, Transfer of Credits, and Credit by Examination¹

R470-1. Purpose: To assure reciprocity and consistency in the structure and core requirements for General Education programs in the Utah System of Higher Education (USHE); to provide a course numbering code for the System, to establish common lower-division pre-major requirements and support timely progress toward student graduation; to provide policies and principles for the transfer of credit among System institutions; and to establish the credit by examination policy.

R470-2. References

- 2.1. Utah Code §53B-2-106(2)(c) (Direction of Instruction, Examination, Admission and Classification of Students)
- 2.2. Utah Code §53B-16-102 (Changes in Curriculum)

R470-3. General Education Policy: General Education is defined as the intellectual and practical knowledge and skills required of students to communicate effectively, to employ quantitative and qualitative analysis in problem solving, to interpret and evaluate information, to work successfully within diverse groups and complex organizations, to adjust to and manage change, and to act with social responsibility, intellectual honesty, and ethical judgment.

The Board of Regents' policy is to assure there is consistency in the structure and core requirements of General Education programs at all USHE institutions, and that institutions will grant complete reciprocity for the General Education courses and programs completed at other USHE institutions.

3.1. General Education Credit and Core Requirements: To assure full value and reciprocity among all USHE institutions, the number of credits required in General Education for each institution shall range from at least 30 to 39 semester credits, including credits required in the core areas of composition, quantitative literacy, and American institutions. Institutions are encouraged to allow students who demonstrate competencies by other means to satisfy General Education requirements, such as through Advanced Placement tests.

Students must satisfy all of the following General Education core requirements, which will be included at all institutions:

3.1.1. Composition: Students shall be required to complete English 1010, Introduction to Writing (3 credits), and English 2010, Intermediate Writing (3 credits).

3.1.2. Quantitative Literacy: Students may satisfy this requirement by completing Mathematics 1030, Quantitative Literacy (3 credits), or Mathematics 1040, Statistics (3 credits), which have prerequisites of high school intermediate algebra or 2 years of high school algebra. Students may also satisfy the requirement by completing at least one institutionally approved mathematics course at the level of college algebra or which requires college algebra as a prerequisite.

¹ Approved August 19, 2005. Replaces R463, Credit by Examination; R465, General Education; R467, Lower Division Major Requirements; R471, Transfer of Credit and R472, Course Numbering.

3.1.3. American Institutions: Students may satisfy this requirement by completing one of the following courses: Economics 1740, United States Economic History, (3 credits); Political Science 1100, American Political Institutions (3 credits); or History 1700, American Civilization (3 credits). An interdisciplinary integrated course that satisfies comparable competencies may also satisfy the requirement. Some institutions may require a two course sequence in the areas of economics, political science, or history which satisfy comparable competencies.

3.2. General Education Breadth Requirements beyond the Core: In addition to completing all core requirements described in 3.1, students will be required to complete 18 to 27 credits beyond the General Education core. These courses shall be in the areas of fine arts, humanities, social and behavioral sciences, life sciences, physical sciences, and other areas deemed appropriate at individual USHE institutions. Outside the core requirements, USHE institutions are encouraged to establish unique course requirements, which reflect emphases of the institutions, strengths of faculties, and the varying interests of students. Institutional General Education requirements may be accessed through the www.utahsbr.edu Website.

3.3. Substitution of Courses in Pre-Major Area for General Education Requirements: To encourage timely decisions by students to select pre-major areas while promoting educational breadth, institutions may allow students with declared pre-majors in areas listed in section 3.2 to substitute courses in their pre-major area for General Education requirements in that area. Students may achieve the required number of total General Education credits by completing additional coursework in other General Education areas. Transfer students who retain the same pre-major area will be allowed to maintain the substitution at the receiving institution and will not be required to complete additional General Education coursework in their major area.

3.4. Similar Names, Common Numbers, and Equal Credits for General Education Courses: To facilitate articulation, General Education courses at USHE institutions that have essentially the same learning goals and similar content, rigor, and standards, should have similar names, common numbers, and equal credits. The Statewide Articulation Committee shall assure through institutional action that all courses satisfying General Education requirements at any USHE institution will be articulated to the fullest extent possible to satisfy comparable General Education requirements at all other USHE institutions.

3.5. General Education Common Competencies/Learning Goals: To support efforts to assess the results of General Education instruction, common competencies/learning goals underlying General Education areas shall be identified by the General Education Task Force, under the direction of the Chief Academic Officers. These competencies/learning goals will be utilized at all USHE institutions. All General Education courses will be expected to address the identified competencies/learning goals.

R470-4. Committees for General Education Procedures: To implement the General Education policy, the following committees shall be established.

4.1. General Education Task Force: The General Education Task Force will be comprised of one representative from each USHE institution, nominated by the Chief Academic Officer and appointed by the President, and non-voting or ex officio members as needed for expertise on particular issues. This task force shall:

4.1.1. Identify competencies/learning goals in the core and other General Education areas, based on recommendations made by the General Education faculty, and submit recommendations to the Chief Academic Officers.

4.1.2. Propose methods to assess student outcomes in General Education and submit those recommendations to the Chief Academic Officers and the USHE institutions.

4.1.3. Facilitate coordination with groups working on related tasks by appointing members of the Task Force to assist other USHE committees, such as the Statewide Articulation Committee, as requested and appropriate.

4.2. General Education Area Task Forces: The General Education Area Task Forces include Fine Arts, Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences, Life Sciences, and Physical Sciences. These task forces shall be comprised of two representatives from each USHE institution, nominated by the appropriate academic dean and appointed by the Academic Vice President, and non-voting or ex officio members as needed for expertise on particular issues. These task forces may be convened by the General Education Task force as needed. These task forces shall:

4.2.1. Provide recommendations on the competencies that underlie each General Education area and suggestions on methods that should be used to assess student outcomes in relation to these competencies. These recommendations are to be submitted to the General Education Task Force for review.

4.2.2. Meet annually or as needed to review the General Education competencies/learning goals in each area, and discuss and compare programs.

4.2.3. Submit recommendations for review by the General Education Task Force, then to the Chief Academic Officers for approval.

R470-5. Course Numbering Code: Courses of similar level shall be given numbers in accordance with the following code.

5.1. Lower-Division Courses: This includes all USHE institutions.

- 0001-0999 Remedial or preparatory courses—noncredit
- 1000-1999 Freshman courses
- 2000-2800 Sophomore courses
- 2800-2999 Lower-division independent study designation (directed reading, individual projects, etc.) and selected pre-major courses

5.2. Upper-Division Courses: This includes courses at the University of Utah, Utah State University, Weber State University, Southern Utah University, Utah Valley University, and Dixie State College of Utah. These numbers are meant to act as a guide.

- 3000-3999 Junior courses
- 4000-4800 Senior courses
- 4800-4999 Upper-division independent study designation (directed reading, individual projects, festivals, institutes, workshops, seminars, etc.)
- 4800 Individual research courses (1-5 credits)
- 4830 Directed reading courses (1-5 credits)
- 4860 Practicum courses (1-12 credits)
- 4890 Intern courses (1-12 credits)
- 4920 Workshops, festivals, institutes (1-5 credits)
- 4950 Field trips (1-5 credits)
- 4990 Seminars (1-5 credits)

- 5000-5799 Advanced upper-division and graduate courses (graduate credit allowed for department majors or by permission of student's department chair)
- 5800-5999 Advanced upper-division and graduate independent study designation (seminars, directed reading, individual projects, etc.)

5.3. Honor's Programs: These courses can be found at the University of Utah, Utah State University, Weber State University, Southern Utah University, Snow College, Dixie State College, and Utah Valley University.

- Honor's courses will be clearly designated in institutional catalogs.

5.4. Graduate Courses: These can be found at the University of Utah, Utah State University, Weber State University, and Southern Utah University. These numbers are meant to act as a guide.

- 6000-7999 Graduate courses (students without baccalaureate degrees must obtain special permission to enroll)
- 6800-6899 Graduate seminars (including methodology and research seminars)
- 6900-6999 Directed reading, individual projects, thesis, etc.
- 6970-6979 Master's thesis research
- 6980-6989 Master's thesis faculty research consultation
- 6990 Master's thesis continuing registration
- 7800-7899 Advanced graduate seminars
- 7900-7969 Doctoral independent study, special topics, etc.
- 7970-7979 Doctoral dissertation and/or project research
- 7980-7989 Doctoral dissertation faculty research consultation
- 7990 Doctoral dissertation continuing registration

R470-6. Lower-Division Pre-Major Requirements: In establishing policies and procedures to support ease of transfer and timely progress toward graduation for USHE students, the Board of Regents recognizes that pre-majors and emphases may differ because of the institutions' unique missions. Committees and procedures are therefore established to provide common lower-division pre-major requirements so when students transfer or apply for upper-division majors, they will receive full value for their academic work.

6.1. USHE Major Committees: To achieve these objectives, the Office of the Commissioner shall organize USHE Major Committees in each of the disciplines. Major departments at the universities are expected to work closely with these Major Committees to achieve the greatest possible congruence between the major emphases at community colleges and lower-division major requirements at four-year institutions.

6.1.1. The Chief Academic Officers of each institution shall nominate a faculty representative from his or her institution in each discipline area. If appropriate, the President may also nominate faculty representatives in major areas within a discipline.

6.1.2. Meetings of the Major Committees shall be organized by the Office of the Commissioner and be held at least annually.

6.2. Committee Responsibilities: It shall be the responsibility of each USHE Major Committee to:

6.2.1. Reach agreement on specific required lower-division pre-major courses that are common at all USHE community colleges and that are equivalent to the requirements at the four-year institutions. It is important to note the equivalencies are based on content and mastery of subject matter, not just course level. Not all institutions offer all lower-division courses.

6.2.2. Continually review standards of skills and content matter that should be satisfied in required lower-division pre-major area courses, to assure that students who complete the coursework will be fully prepared to successfully complete upper-division coursework.

6.2.3. Assure that in most major programs at USHE four-year institutions, courses numbered 3000 or higher are not required to be taken by lower-division students, and that community colleges do not offer courses at the lower division that the Major Committee agrees should be taught at the upper division. Exceptions will be dealt with by the individual Major Committees.

6.2.4. Review lower-division courses that are now commonly numbered to assure that they fulfill General Education and pre-major requirements. Additional lower-division courses may be considered for common numbering if they are similar in content, standard, and rigor as specified in Utah Code.

6.3. **Maximum Credits:** Each committee will establish a maximum number of credits of lower-division pre-major coursework to be required in each discipline.

6.3.1. Generally, the number of credits required should be limited so that students may also complete required General Education coursework within the number of credits allowable for the AA or AS degree.

6.3.2. Exceptions may be made when mandated by accreditation, licensing, extra-departmental professional, or other institutional requirements, and, consequently, students may not be able to complete required General Education coursework within the number of credits allowable for the AA or AS degree.

6.3.3. If Major Committees determine that additional lower-division credits are needed to prepare students to successfully complete upper-division coursework, the committee may recommend the delay of some General Education requirements until after transfer and/or acceptance to an upper-division major program. Under no circumstances will individual Major Committees be allowed to make exceptions to General Education requirements—a degree may not be awarded unless the General Education and program requirements for that degree are met.

6.4. **Admission to Upper-Division Major Program:** Completion of required lower-division pre-major coursework by transfer students from USHE community colleges shall not constitute an assurance that they will be admitted into the major program at a USHE four-year institution. It must be understood that many programs have a limited number of openings and admission is therefore highly competitive.

6.5. **Disclosure of Partial Program:** If an institution does not have the faculty or resources to offer as part of its curriculum all of the agreed-upon lower-division pre-major courses in a given discipline and emphasis, it will inform prospective students interested in that pre-major area that the institution does not offer all the needed lower-division pre-major courses and that they may want to consider attending another institution that offers the required coursework.

R470-7. Transfer of Credit Policy: USHE colleges and universities shall facilitate transfer from institution to institution.

7.1. **Transfer of General Education Credits**

7.1.1. Transfer of Partially Completed General Education Credits: For transfer students from USHE institutions who have not fully satisfied the General Education requirements, all USHE receiving institutions shall accept at full value all General Education coursework approved by the sending institution provided it meets the minimum letter grades accepted by the receiving institution. Receiving institutions shall only require transfer students to complete any additional coursework needed to satisfy the unmet requirements of the receiving institution.

7.1.2. Transfer of Completed General Education Credits through Program Completion: An AA or an AS degree earned at any USHE institution will meet the General Education requirements of any other USHE institution. If a student has completed all institutional General Education requirements, a Letter of Completion issued by the sending institution that confirms such General Education completion should be accepted by the receiving USHE institution.

7.2. Transfer of Non-General Education Credits: Credit for courses numbered 1000 or above earned in the USHE, regardless of being General Education credits or not, are transferable within the USHE and will be carried on the student's transcript by the receiving institution.

7.2.1. Application of Credit: Acceptance of credit should not be confused with its application. Transfer applicants are entitled to a clear disclosure by the receiving institution of the difference between acceptance of credits and the application of credits toward a credential or degree. Transfer credit may or may not apply to the graduation requirements of an institution, regardless of the number of credits transferred. The receiving institution will apply credit based on the appropriateness to a particular institution's specific degree program requirements and curricula.

7.2.2. Transfer with Upper-Division Status: Institutions shall enable community college students, if they fully complete an AA or AS degree and a prescribed pre-major area that comports and articulates with the receiving institution's pre-major requirements, to transfer with upper-division status to any USHE four-year institution without needing to take any lower-division pre-major courses at the receiving institution.

7.2.3. Exceptions to Applying Pre-Major Coursework Credit: Exceptions may occur when mandated by institutional requirements or other accreditation, licensing, or extra-departmental professional requirements, and as provided in 6.3.3, 6.4, 6.5 above. In such cases, the transfer student will be expected to complete the lower-division coursework required at the four-year institution.

R470-8. Credit Transfer Principles

8.1. Institutional Integrity: In order to promote institutional integrity, each institution is responsible for developing its own transfer policies and procedures consistent with the policies established by the Board of Regents to facilitate the transfer of credits within the USHE.

8.2. Transfer Statements: Because USHE institutions are part of a statewide system, institutions should perfect and communicate reasonable and definitive transfer statements to avoid confusion and possible injustice to individual applicants and to promote articulation within the USHE.

8.3. Minimum Standards: The educational quality of the sending institution is a basic consideration. Course content and level of credit earned at the sending institution should be comparable to those of the receiving institution.

8.4. Individual Student Consideration

8.4.1. Anticipated Program: Information of program and course requirements, including transfer and articulation agreements among two-year and four-year institutions, should be published and available to prospective students. Students should be encouraged to establish educational goals early in their educational program. Each student should request assistance from an academic advisor to assure the student's educational goals fit with the program at the institution to which that student intends to transfer. Transfer policies and practices should facilitate transfer once the student is prepared to enter, and has been accepted to, the anticipated program.

8.4.2. Readiness Appraisal: An institution receiving students who have not completed the General Education requirements of the sending institution will appraise the readiness of those students to perform in the new environment by assessing work completed and judging the comparability of the material and credits earned.

8.4.2.1. Accredited Institutions: A receiving institution should have reasonable confidence that students from recognized regionally-accredited institutions are qualified to undertake its educational program. Students from recognized national or specialized accredited institutions may need to demonstrate competency only in instances where academic attainment is uncertain.

8.4.2.2. Unaccredited Institutions: Receiving institutions should validate any credits earned at unaccredited institutions on an individual basis. Validation may be assisted by information provided by or about the unaccredited institution such as a catalog covering the years students attended, a description of the courses students completed, course syllabi, faculty credentials, and library facilities.

8.5. Foreign Institutions and Proprietary Schools: In evaluating credits from foreign institutions and proprietary schools, the receiving institution should make equivalency and placement decisions in terms of its own policies and curricula.

8.6. Credits from Extra Institutional Settings: In order to expand the range of educational opportunities and to incorporate them into the credit exchange system, and in order to remove unnecessary restrictions to access, institutional policies should contain statements on credits earned in extra institutional settings (structured and non-structured) including the military, religious institutions, and career and technical institutions.

8.7. Basic Responsibilities of All Institutions: The basic responsibilities of both sending and receiving institutions include:

8.7.1. Furnishing transcripts and course descriptions vital in judging the quality and quantity of transfer students' work,

8.7.2. Advising students as to the acceptability of the credits shown on individual transcripts,

8.7.3. Making clear and prompt decisions on credit acceptance and application,

8.7.4. Informing potential students of services by the institution.

R470-9. Credit by Examination Policy: The Board of Regents accepts as valid the concept of credit by examination without equivalent previous college coursework. Because of the variety of testing programs, the domain of individual

departments and General Education, and the need for appropriate articulation agreements among state institutions, the following specific policies shall apply.

9.1. Examinations That Replace Specific Coursework: Individual departments should consult with Major Committees and/or equivalent departments at sister institutions to establish consistent and acceptable application of the following examination instruments.

9.1.1. Departmentally Devised Examinations: Each department should determine which of its offerings may be challenged by examination and should construct, administer, and evaluate appropriate examinations upon the request of students.

9.1.2. External Standardized Examinations: External standardized examinations should be evaluated by individual departments as they become available to determine their appropriateness, validity, and acceptable scores. When a transfer student has completed the General Education requirements of a USHE institution, the receiving institution will honor the sending institution's determination of General Education credit awarded, including credit granted for external standardized exams.

9.1.2.1. Advanced Placement Examinations: The following policies for the awarding of credit for Advanced Placement have been determined by a statewide committee with representatives from all USHE institutions:

9.1.2.1.1. Scores of 3, 4, or 5 should receive a maximum of up to 10 semester hours of credit for a foreign language exam, up to 8 semester hours of credit for a full year course, or a maximum of 4 semester hours of credit for a half year course.

9.1.2.1.2. A score of 2 should be evaluated by the department to determine what, if any, credit should be awarded.

9.1.2.1.3. A score of 1 should receive no credit.

9.1.2.2. CLEP Examination: CLEP General Examination credit should be recognized and a standard should be set based on the recommendation of the Statewide Articulation Committee and CLEP Examination Guidelines. A minimum score of 50 is required to award credit with 10 semester hours per test being the maximum number of credits allowed. Each institution has the autonomy to award credit as it sees fit; however, the following guidelines are for awarding General Education credit.

9.1.2.2.1. Composition: The Freshman College Composition with Essay exam will satisfy the Introduction to Writing requirement.

9.1.2.2.2. Quantitative Literacy: College Algebra Subject exam or the Calculus Subject exam will satisfy the Quantitative Literacy requirement.

9.1.2.2.3. American Institutions: The American Government Subject exam will satisfy the American Institutions requirement.

9.1.2.2.4. Life Science: The Biology Subject exam will satisfy the Life Science requirement.

9.1.2.2.5. Physical Science: The Chemistry Subject exam will satisfy the Physical Science requirement.

9.1.2.2.6. Humanities: The Analyzing and Interpreting Literature with Essay exam will satisfy the Humanities requirement.

9.1.2.2.7. Social and Behavioral Sciences: The Introductory Psychology or Introductory Sociology exams will satisfy the Social and Behavioral Sciences requirement.

9.1.2.2.8. Other General Education: Other General Education credit may be awarded as determined by each institution.

9.1.3. International Baccalaureate: Credit should be granted for International Baccalaureate examinations and/or diplomas as determined by each institution.

9.2. Allowable Credit: Institutional limits may be imposed on General Education. Institutional limits may also be imposed on departmentally devised or standardized subject area examinations.