

## **FAQ on the Revisions to EO 1100 Revised August 23, 2017 CSU General Education Breadth**

The following list of commonly raised questions and Chancellor's Office responses is provided with the release of Executive Order 1100 Revised August 23, 2017 *CSU General Education Breadth Requirements*. Questions have been received through consultation and survey feedback from faculty, students and administrators. This document is organized according to the EO structure, to assist in cross-referencing. A summary of revisions made to the general education (GE) EO appears at the end of this document. All requirements refer exclusively to baccalaureate-level learning.

### **Article 1. Applicability**

#### **1. When do these changes take effect?**

The policy is effective fall 2018 and applies to students enrolling in fall 2018 and subsequent terms who: (1) have not previously been enrolled continuously at a campus of the CSU or the California Community Colleges (CCC) and (2) who have not satisfied lower-division general education requirements according to the provisions of Title 5 Sections 40405.2 or 40405.3. Students subject to earlier catalog years may elect to change their catalog year and be subject to the new GE requirements as well as current major degree program requirements and campus graduation requirements.

#### **2. Can we delay implementation until fall 2019 to give us more time for the curricular changes we need to carry out?**

It would be difficult to justify delaying the benefits afforded by these policy changes, which increase opportunities for student success and facilitate efficient degree completion. Student-supportive policy changes include:

- Intermediate Algebra is no longer required as the uniform prerequisite for all courses in CSU General Education Breadth Area B4 Mathematics/Quantitative Reasoning.
- Approved GE Area B4 courses may now include non-algebra intensive courses such as statistics pathways, statistics for majors, computer science and personal finance, for example.
- Major courses and campus-wide required courses that are approved for GE credit shall also fulfill (double count for) the GE requirement.
- To facilitate efficient degree completion systemwide, 48 semester units<sup>1</sup> is set as both the minimum and maximum for total GE units. Stand-alone one-unit GE laboratory courses may increase the maximum to 49 units. (See question #17);
- To ensure efficient completion of lower-division certification and transfer from CCC campuses, coupled with efficient degree completion at the CSU, this policy clarifies that the nine units of upper-division GE courses are taught only in Areas B, C and D.

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<sup>1</sup> One semester unit is equivalent to 1.5 quarter units.

## Article 2. Fulfilling CSU General Education Breadth Requirements

### **3. Can California State Universities (CSU) certify GE completion (either complete certification or subject-area certification) in the same way the California Community Colleges (CCC) do?**

Yes, policy now allows certification of lower-division GE Areas satisfactorily completed at any CSU campus. Such lower-division certification ensures that students shall not be held to any additional lower-division GE requirements, mirroring the certification process between CCC and CSU campuses.

Upper-division GE courses completed at one CSU campus shall fulfill the same requirement at any other CSU campus and shall be applied toward the student's residency requirement.

### **4. What are "Golden Four" GE courses?**

Courses in GE Subareas A1, (oral communication in the English language), A2 (written communication in the English language), A3 (critical thinking) and B4 (mathematics/quantitative reasoning) are sometimes referred to as the "Golden Four" or "Basic Skills" courses. They are required for transfer admission to the CSU, and each of the four courses must be passed with a minimum grade of C-, per Title 5 Section 40803.

### **5. Can a CSU campus that requires a minimum C grade for GE courses, other than the Golden Four, require a student to repeat a transferred GE course for which a C-, or lower, is earned?**

No, satisfactory completion of a GE course on one campus shall be recognized as satisfied at any other CSU campus. However, if the course is also required for the major, and the major requires a higher minimum grade, the course shall satisfy the GE requirement but not the major requirement.

### **6. If the Golden Four require a minimum C- grade to satisfy CSU GE requirements, can students take those courses for Credit/No Credit?**

GE policy does not prohibit students from satisfying the Golden Four requirements with a Credit grades as long as the "CR" represents a letter grade of C- or better. However, we recommend that students take these courses for a letter grade as some majors may require letter grades in all required courses.

### **7. Why are the upper-division GE units restricted to Areas B, C and D?**

This clarification of existing requirements reflects the organization of 48 units of CSU GE Breadth, with 39 units in lower-division certification and the remaining 9 units left for upper-division completion. The upper- and lower-division units coordinate with the number of units required in Areas A through E, as shown in the following chart.

	Semester units required for transfer (ADT & full certification)	Semester units required for CSU GE Breadth	Semester units remaining after transfer
<b>Area A</b>	9	9	0
<b>Area B</b>	9	12	3
<b>Area C</b>	9	12	3
<b>Area D</b>	9	12	3
<b>Area E</b>	3	3	0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>9</b>

Lower-division certification includes 9 lower-division semester units each in Areas A, B, C and D and 3 lower-division semester units in Area E, which totals 39 of the 48 units required. Following completion of the first 39 units at a CSU or community college, the remaining 9 semester units (of the total 48 GE units required) reside in Areas B, C and D—the only Areas that require a total of 12 units each—3 units each beyond lower-division certification. These 9 units coincide with the 9 semester-units of upper-division GE required at the CSU. (See Attachment A of EO 1100 Revised for an illustration of this distribution.)

**8. When should a CSU student take upper-division GE courses?**

In most cases, upper-division GE courses should be restricted to students who have completed 60 semester units or more. This protects the integrity of the increasing complexity of degree requirements, and it conserves upper-division courses for the graduating seniors whose degree completion could be slowed without access to required upper-division GE courses. At the same time, the CSU has committed to providing the courses students need, when they need them. There may be cases in which students with fewer than 60 units may need to enroll in an upper-division GE course to continue making full-time progress toward degree completion. At a minimum, students shall be required to have satisfactorily completed the Golden Four courses (written communication, oral communication, critical thinking and mathematics/quantitative reasoning) before enrolling in upper-division GE courses.

**9. Are there software approaches to preventing a student from enrolling in upper-division GE courses without first having completed one course each in GE Areas A1, A2, A3 and B4?**

Yes, the campus Office of Admissions and Records or the Office of the Registrar could edit the prerequisites for upper-division GE courses to include the completion of courses in GE subareas A1, A2, A3 and B4. If additional assistance is required, you may contact Dr. April Grommo, Director of Enrollment Management Services, at 562-951-4726 or [agrommo@calstate.edu](mailto:agrommo@calstate.edu).

**10. Is “double counting” of GE courses required?**

Yes, campuses may no longer prohibit the double counting of GE requirements and other requirements. Major required courses that are approved for GE credit and courses and campus-

wide required courses that are approved for GE credit shall also fulfill (double count for) the GE requirement.

**11. Will the transfer of upper-division GE courses dilute CSU campus distinctiveness?**

No, historically this has not been the case because the transfer of upper-division students from one CSU to another is extremely rare. Of the 419,622 degree-seeking undergraduates enrolled in fall 2016, only 463, or .1%, had transferred from one CSU campus to another that fall. Essentially all students who graduate from a particular CSU campus have taken their 9 upper-division GE semester units at the home campus.

**12. If a campus has a service learning, GVAR or other all-campus requirement that is completed as part of GE, can the campus continue this practice?**

No, there is no upper-division Area A allowed in CSU policy. Campus GE requirements need to conform to the Area requirements and 48 semester-unit limit (or 49 semester units as described in Article 4 Area B). Campus-wide requirements may continue double counting with GE requirements.

**13. If a campus GE program requires a GE Area beyond those required in the EO, does the campus need to discontinue the additional campus-specific GE Area?**

Campuses have many options, including moving the courses from that extra GE Area into an existing GE Area, moving the courses out of GE entirely and double counting them as an overlay with GE requirements, reclassifying the courses as campus-specific graduation requirements apart from GE, or designating the courses as major requirements, among other possible strategies. Total degree requirements will need not to exceed 120 units (or the unit total approved by Chancellor White in 2014).

**14. Cultural diversity and ethnic studies courses are not specified in the CSU GE Breadth requirements. Does that mean the campuses have to eliminate these courses?**

No, campuses can retain their cultural diversity and ethnic studies courses, which can fit within the frameworks of EO 1100 total GE Area limits and GE Area distribution limits. Almost all CSU campuses have been double counting their cultural diversity requirement with GE requirements, helping students to complete degree requirements efficiently. If there are questions about reconfiguring campus requirements, please contact Dr. Alison Wrynn, State University Associate Dean at 562 951-4602 or awrynn@calstate.edu.

**Article 3. Premises of CSU General Education Breadth**

**15. Can a CSU campus refuse to accept a GE course from another CSU (or from a CCC or other regionally accredited institution) if the course was taught online?**

No, course modality is not to be considered when evaluating courses for transfer. GE requirements may be satisfied through courses taught in face-to-face, hybrid, or completely

online modalities. Pursuant to California Education Code Section 66763, a course provided entirely online shall be accepted for credit at the student's home campus on the same basis as it would be for a student matriculated at the host campus.

#### **Article 4. Subject Area Distribution**

**16. Can courses that meet the requirements of CSU GE Subarea B4 have a prerequisite?**

Yes, the new policy allows CSU faculty to specify the prerequisites relevant to each GE math or quantitative reasoning course.

Courses in Subarea B4 shall allow students to demonstrate the abilities to reason quantitatively, practice computational skills, and explain and apply mathematical or quantitative reasoning concepts to solve problems. Courses in this Subarea shall include a prerequisite reflective only of skills and knowledge required in the course. In practice, it will be important for students to be advised to take a Subarea B4 course that is appropriate for their major. For some majors, this will require a mathematics class such as calculus, which may have a mathematics prerequisite.

Courses meeting the GE mathematics/quantitative reasoning requirement may include traditional mathematics (e.g., algebra, trigonometry and calculus) as well as statistics. Additionally, GE math/quantitative reasoning options now may include—for example—personal finance, statistics for specific majors, or computer science, which may not be exclusively algebra based. The change allows students more flexibility in completing their bachelor's degrees, and more opportunities to apply mathematical and quantitative reasoning to the world around them.

**17. The Quantitative Reasoning Task Force (QRTF) recommended specific GE mathematics/quantitative reasoning requirements. Why are those not included in the revised policy?**

In defining the Subarea B4 requirement, the revised EO embraces the fundamental principles of the *QRTF Report* recommended definition, while keeping within the language conventions for EO 1100 Area definitions. The Academic Senate General Education Task Force (GETF) may discuss recommendations that fall outside the scope of this revision project (clarification, ensuring equity and facilitating efficient degree completion).

**17. Can our campus have 49 units of GE if we require a 4 semester-unit lecture-and-laboratory course? Can we require 49 units if we require a 3 semester-unit B1 or B2 science lecture course and a related stand-alone one-unit laboratory course?**

Yes, while it is expected that campuses could satisfy the laboratory experience requirement with a 3-unit lecture course with an integrated laboratory experience, campuses may require another one semester-unit for a laboratory experience (class). See Article 4, Area B of EO 1100 Revised for a full explanation.

**18. Can any GE course exceed the unit count required for a Subarea?**

Higher-unit GE courses may not be required, but GE courses bearing higher units may be allowed to satisfy GE Area or Subarea requirements. Major courses that double count toward satisfaction of a GE Subarea may carry a higher unit than the Subarea requires, but students need to be given the option of completing a lower-unit GE course. The most efficient path to degree completion may be through taking, for example, a 5-unit biology major course that also satisfies the B2 and B3 GE Subareas. Compared to taking the 5-unit biology major course and a separate 3-unit B2 GE course and 1-unit B3 GE course, the student who double counts the GE course with the major requirement would save four units.

**Article 5. Transfer and Articulation**

**19. What is an “eligible institution” for articulation?**

Any regionally accredited institution or international higher education institution legally authorized to deliver postsecondary instruction in their country is eligible for course articulation with CSU campuses.

**20. Can CSU campuses articulate GE courses with institutions other than CCCs?**

Yes. Article 5 “Transfer and Articulation” in the executive order refers to the annual CSU GE Breadth and Intersegmental General Education Transfer Curriculum (IGETC) review process that is shared among the CCC, CSU and University of California systems. CSU campuses may continue to articulate courses with all eligible institutions in the same manner they do now.

**21. Can a student transfer CCC courses to the CSU to meet upper-division GE requirements?**

No. According to Title 5 Section 40409(a), “No upper-division credit may be allowed for courses taken in a community college.”

**22. Can students transferring to the CSU with an Associate Degree for Transfer (ADT) be required to take additional lower-division GE courses?**

No, a student who transfers to the CSU with a CCC Associate of Arts for Transfer (AA-T) or Associate of Science for Transfer (AS-T) is fully certified for 39 units of lower-division CSU GE and *cannot be held to additional lower-division GE requirements*. ADT transfer students are obligated to complete the nine semester units of upper-division GE courses that are part of the 60 CSU semester units required to complete the CSU degree.

**23. What is “GE for STEM” within ADTs?**

To accommodate the high number of lower-division major preparation courses required in some STEM majors, students pursuing certain ADTs may be eligible to take GE Breadth for STEM.

This allows them to defer taking two lower-division GE courses (one in Area C and one in Area D) until after transfer. See Article 5.3.5 of EO 1100 Revised for details.

**24. Which exams may be used for GE course certification?**

Satisfactory scores on external examinations, like Advanced Placement, may be used to award GE credit and to certify satisfaction of GE Sub-areas. Coded memo [ASA-2017-13](#) provides the current list of GE units to be awarded for specified examination scores. The list is updated on an annual basis. In addition, course-based challenge exams completed at one CSU campus for a CSU GE course shall be recognized at all other CSU campuses. For more information concerning credit-by-examination policy, see [EO 1036](#) Systemwide Admission Eligibility and/or Baccalaureate Credit Awarded for External Examinations, Experiential Learning, and Instruction in Non-Collegiate Settings.

**Article 6. Implementation and Governance**

**25. Why are courses that have not been taught within a five-year period supposed to have GE status removed?**

Concerns have been raised that the number of GE course offerings on some CSU campuses is overwhelming to students, causing confusion when students try to select courses to satisfy GE requirements. The five-year period allows for regular campus review and adjustments.

**26. Are CSU campuses required to include students on the campus-wide GE committee?**

Yes, it is required to include students on campus GE committees. Additionally, administrators and other staff members may serve on campus GE committees. However, in all cases the majority of the committee membership shall remain instructional faculty.

**Summary of Changes to EO 1100\***

Section	Revision
2.1	Changes the term “CSU GE pathways” to “CSU GE patterns.”
2.2.1	Sets the required semester units for GE Breadth at 48 as both a minimum and maximum, while allowing 49 semester units to reflect practice of requiring a 4 semester unit lecture/lab course or a 1 semester-unit lab course on some campuses. Required laboratory units have often not appeared in GE unit totals.
2.2.2	Establishes minimum C- grade requirements for oral communication, written communication, critical thinking and mathematics/quantitative reasoning, per Title 5.
2.2.3	Clarifies when students should enroll in upper-division GE courses.
2.2.3 and 4	Clarifies that the 9 semester units required at the upper division must be taken in Areas B, C, and D. Some campuses currently require upper-division GE in other areas, which can cause students to take more units than should be the case.

<b>2.2.4</b>	Requires that 9 semester units of upper-division GE shall be taken in the CSU.
<b>2.2.6.1</b>	Institutionalizes double counting for efficient degree completion. Major courses and campus-wide required courses that are approved for GE credit shall also fulfill (double count for) the GE requirement.
<b>2.2.6.2</b>	Campuses are encouraged to allow the double counting of the 6 semester units of American Institutions with GE Area D Social Science.
<b>2.2.1.c and 5.6.2.a</b>	Specifies binding completion. Once a GE requirement is satisfied, students shall not be required to satisfy it again, even if the student were to change campus or major.
<b>3.2</b>	Clarifies that GE courses may be taught in all modalities (e.g., face-to-face, online, and hybrid) formats.
<b>3.3</b>	Removes the long list of LEAP information, replaced with a link.
<b>(formerly 3.4 in previous EO version)</b>	Removes the section on entry-level skills and remediation, as this policy exclusively addresses general education and not admission or remediation requirements.
<b>4</b>	Removes the Intermediate Algebra prerequisite from math/quantitative reasoning Subarea B4 and adds language describing this requirement. Sample course titles are given as examples of the expanded vision for satisfying the mathematics/quantitative reasoning requirement.
<b>4</b>	Specifies additional appropriate course content for Area E (e.g., information literacy and student success strategies), while personal finance is removed from this Area.
<b>5.3.4</b>	Adds information regarding GE for students who earn ADTs.
<b>5.6</b>	Clarifies reciprocity among CSU campuses for GE courses.
<b>6.2.1.c.1</b>	Requires campuses to provide sufficient sections of GE Subarea A2 written communication and B4 mathematics/quantitative reasoning courses to support completion of these requirements within the first year of freshman enrollment.
<b>6.2.1.c.1</b>	Adds requirement to remove GE status for GE courses not offered within a five-year period.

\*This chart does not reflect all modifications. For example, stylistic changes, numbering changes and reorganization of elements do not appear in this chart.

### **Need further assistance?**

Contact Dr. Alison Wrynn, State University Associate Dean, Academic Programs at 562-951-4603 or [awrynn@calstate.edu](mailto:awrynn@calstate.edu).



**Attachment A**  
**Requirements for Lower- and Upper-Division**  
**California State University General Education Breadth**

GE Area	Lower-Division Semester Units	Upper-Division Semester Units	Total Semester Units* Required
<b>Area A English Language Communication and Critical Thinking</b>			
One course in each Subarea			
A1 Oral Communication			
A2 Written Communication			
A3 Critical Thinking			
<b>Area A total semester units required:</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Area B Scientific Inquiry and Quantitative Reasoning</b>			
One course in each Subarea			
B1 Physical Science			
B2 Life Science			
B3 Laboratory Activity - associated with the course taken to satisfy either B1 or B2			
B 4 Mathematics/Quantitative Reasoning			
<b>Area B total semester units required:</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Area C Arts and Humanities</b>			
At least one course in each Subarea			
C1 Arts: Arts, Cinema, Dance, Music, Theatre			
C2 Humanities: Literature, Philosophy, Languages Other than English			
<b>Area C total semester units required:</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Area D Social Sciences</b>			
<b>Area D total semester units required:</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Area E Lifelong Learning and Self-Development</b>			
<b>Area E total semester units required:</b>	<b>3</b>		<b>3</b>
<b>Total GE Units Required</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>48</b>

**Note:**

Students who transfer to the CSU with an Associate Degree for Transfer (ADT) or full CSU GE certification, have completed required 39 lower-division GE semester units. This includes 9 lower-

division semester units each in Areas A, B, C and D, and 3 lower-division semester units in Area E. Their remaining required 9 semester units fall into CSU GE Areas B, C and D, and are to be taken at the upper-division level.

\*To determine unit requirements at quarter-based campuses, multiply the semester unit requirement by 1.5.