

Policy on General Studies **(Applicable to Undergraduate Education Only)**

Proposed changes clarify the policy connection to Standard 7 and provide guidance for institutions seeking approval of an innovative program under the proposed NEW Policy on Innovative Programs.

The general studies core is the breadth component of an undergraduate degree program. Majors and professional studies are the depth components.

General Studies in Biblical Higher Education

General studies encompass several subject areas, convey an advanced body of knowledge, and provide for the development of a high level of analytical and communicative skills that are expected of program graduates. General studies focus upon key concepts and philosophical issues in the various disciplines. Presuppositions and worldviews are examined in light of biblical principles. The integrating of biblical and general studies forms the basis for development of a biblical worldview and provides a frame of reference for engaging those to whom graduates are called to minister.

Institutional and Programmatic Standard 7: EE 18 requires a general studies core equivalent to a minimum of 30 semester hours for a baccalaureate degree or 15 semester hours for an associate degree, with one or more courses drawn from each of the following four disciplines: communication, humanities/fine arts, natural science/mathematics, and social/behavioral sciences.

Coursework Qualifying as General Studies

For general studies to serve as the breadth component of a degree program, it is essential that the coursework includes a distribution of courses from several disciplines. One or more courses from each of the following disciplines must be included in the general studies core:

- Communication (e.g., composition, public speaking, writing courses)
- Humanities/Fine Arts (e.g., modern and classical languages, history, literature, linguistics, philosophy, archaeology, art, music, graphics)
- Natural Science/Mathematics (e.g., physical science, biology/life science, physics, chemistry, mathematics, statistics)
- Social/Behavioral Sciences (e.g., psychology, sociology, anthropology, political science)

Courses listed are illustrative and not limiting in options for consideration. Courses from other disciplines may be included in the general studies core.

If the program includes a non-Bible/theology major, non-introductory courses in the discipline of the major do not qualify as general studies. Also, courses that qualify as biblical/theological studies, although having general education value in other contexts, do not qualify as general studies within the context of biblical higher education.

A course with three prerequisites does not qualify as general studies. Such a course is too specialized to be classified as “general” and should rather be incorporated into a major or minor.

Any variation in General Studies core credit equivalencies or content for programs approved under the *Policy on Innovative Programs* must be explained and justified.

Applicable Standards: Standard 7

Applicable Policies: *Policy on Innovative Programs*

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