

# GENERAL EDUCATION CURRICULUM—PERSPECTIVE, ANALYSIS, COMMUNICATION (G-PAC)

In addition to the University General Education Requirement (<https://bulletin.gwu.edu/university-regulations/general-education/>), undergraduate students in Columbian College must complete a further, College-specific general education curriculum—Perspective, Analysis, Communication (G-PAC) (<https://advising.columbian.gwu.edu/general-education-curriculum-gpac/>) as well as the course CCAS 1001 First-Year Experience. Together with the University General Education Requirement, G-PAC engages students in active intellectual inquiry across the liberal arts. Students achieve a set of learning outcomes that enhance their analytical skills, develop their communication competencies, and invite them to participate as responsible citizens who are attentive to issues of culture, diversity, and privilege.

**Coursework (<https://bulletin.gwu.edu/university-regulations/general-education/#generaleducationtext>) for the University General Education Requirement is distributed as follows:**

- One course in critical thinking in the humanities.
- Two courses in critical thinking, quantitative reasoning, or scientific reasoning in the social sciences.
- One course that has an approved oral communication component.
- One course in quantitative reasoning (must be in mathematics or statistics).
- One course in scientific reasoning (must be in natural and/or physical laboratory sciences).
- UW 1020 University Writing
- After successful completion of UW 1020, 6 credits distributed over at least two writing in the discipline (WID) courses taken in separate semesters. WID courses are designated by a "W" appended to the course number.

**Coursework for the CCAS G-PAC requirement is distributed as follows:**

- Arts—one approved arts course that involves the study or creation of artwork based on an understanding or interpretation of artistic traditions or knowledge of art in a contemporary context.
- Global or cross-cultural perspective—one approved course that analyzes the ways in which institutions, practices, and problems transcend national and regional boundaries.
- Local or civic engagement—one approved course that develops the values, ethics, disciplines, and commitment to pursue responsible public action.

- Natural or physical science—one additional approved laboratory course that employs the process of scientific inquiry (in addition to the one course in this category required by the University General Education Requirement).
- Humanities—one additional approved humanities course that involves critical thinking skills (in addition to the one course in this category required by the University General Education Requirement).
- CCAS 1001 First-Year Experience

**Certain courses are approved to fulfill GPAC requirements in more than one category.**

Courses taken in fulfillment of G-PAC requirements can also be counted toward majors or minors. Transfer courses taken prior to, but not after, admission to George Washington University can count toward the University General Education Requirement and G-PAC, if those transfer courses are equivalent to GW courses that have been approved by the University and the College.

Lists of approved courses in the above categories are included on each undergraduate major's (<https://bulletin.gwu.edu/arts-sciences/#majorstext>) page in this Bulletin.

In addition to the University General Education Requirement (<https://bulletin.gwu.edu/university-regulations/general-education/#text>), undergraduate students in the Columbian College of Arts and Sciences (CCAS) must complete a further, Columbian College-specific general education curriculum—Perspective, Analysis, Communication, or G-PAC. Together with the University General Education Requirement, G-PAC engages students in active intellectual inquiry across the liberal arts. Students achieve a set of learning outcomes that enhance their analytical skills, develop their communication competencies, and invite them to participate as responsible citizens who are attentive to issues of culture, diversity, and privilege.

G-PAC approved courses, Dean's Seminars, and Sophomore Colloquia that may be available for registration are listed on the CCAS Advising website. (<https://advising.columbian.gwu.edu/general-education-courses/>)

**Tier One: University General Education Requirement**  
All undergraduate students at GW are required to fulfill Tier One of the University's General Education Requirement. The University General Education curriculum trains students to engage in active intellectual inquiry across a variety of disciplines by developing a range of analytical skills, including critical thinking, quantitative reasoning, and scientific reasoning.

- **Critical thinking** refers to the analysis and evaluation of complex information (systems of theory or thought) as well as the formulation of logical arguments based on that analysis.
- **Quantitative reasoning** refers to the process of modeling problems of the real world within a formal abstract system, solving those problems using systematic numerical methods of analysis, and interpreting the results.

- **Scientific reasoning** refers to consistent, logical thought patterns that are employed during the process of scientific inquiry that enables individuals to propose relationships between observed phenomena, design experiments to assess the validity of these relationships, and evaluate the results of these experiments, all using the tools, skills, and techniques of quantitative reasoning.

In addition to these elements of inquiry, students are trained to communicate effectively in both written and oral formats, not only in their general education course sequence, but in their majors.

- The **written communication** requirement trains students in the effective use of language to express critical thinking that evaluates rhetorical situations, identifies significant lines of inquiry, investigates and analyzes available knowledge, and develops rigorous arguments appropriate to the intended audience.
- The **oral communication** requirement trains students in the effective interpretation, composition, and presentation of information, ideas, and values to a specific audience.

Only those courses that are designed specifically to meet the objectives outlined above, and that are assessed for their outcomes in these areas, count for University General Education credit.

While students learn these analytical and communicative skills in a range of disciplines, not all courses in each discipline are designed to teach these skills. Many courses are focused more on content or on other intellectual goals. Students are expected to not only learn these skills in their General Education courses, but also employ them in their pursuit of their majors and, when they leave the University, their pursuit of their professions and participation in the world around them.

All students are required to take five Tier One courses (for a total of 15 to 16 credits) in a range of disciplines drawn from the social sciences, humanities, natural or physical sciences with a laboratory component, and mathematics or statistics.

- In some cases, these courses may be used to satisfy school-specific requirements and/or major requirements. Students should check with their schools and/or departments to determine which courses may be double counted.
- Students who are contemplating transferring from one school to another should carefully consult the Tier One requirements for the school of origin and the school of transfer to ensure that the general education courses selected for one school also count for the other school.

For their writing requirement, all students are required to take three courses: UW 1020 University Writing and two Writing in the Disciplines (WID) courses, for a total of 10 credits. WID courses are designated with a 'W' appended to the course number. WID courses may also fulfill general education, distribution, school-specific, or major requirements, if the courses are designated for

that purpose. Students should check with their schools and/or departments to determine which courses may be double counted.