
2025-2026 Catalog

Undergraduate General Education Program

Overview of the General Education Program

Essential Skills

Written and Oral Communication: 6 credits

- Includes First Year Writing (WRT 105 or WRT 110): 3 credits

World Languages: 0-6 credits

Thriving in College: 2-3 credits

Ways of Understanding

Arts and Humanities: 9 credits, no more than 6 in any one discipline

- Includes Literature: 3 credits

Social and Behavioral Sciences: 12 credits, no more than 6 in any one discipline

- Includes History: 3 credits

Mathematics and Natural Sciences: 9-10 credits

- Includes Mathematics or Statistics: 3 credits
- Includes Lab Science: 3-4 credits

General Education Elective: 3 credits (may include 3 credits of World Languages)

Total Credits: 41-46

Additional Requirements (can be fulfilled with courses in the major, minor, or other General Education categories):

- **International** (6 credits)
- **Equity, Justice, and Inclusion** (3 credits)
- **Writing in the Disciplines** (3 credits)

Why is there a General Education program?

A General Education Program is the cornerstone of the liberal arts education that a regional comprehensive university like Central offers its students. While the major is narrowly focused on preparing students for the anticipated needs of their projected career, General Education—as its name suggests—provides a broad preparation in the skills and knowledge that empower students to understand the world and appreciate its variety, adapt to change, effectively communicate one's thoughts and ideas, and function as active and engaged citizens.

What is included in the General Education program?

Central's General Education Program is made up of two interrelated parts: Essential Skills and Ways of Understanding.

Essential Skills provide students with the skills they will need to succeed in college and in the world beyond it.

- **Written and Oral Communication** (6 credits): students take First Year Composition and one other course of their choice in order to learn to communicate clearly and persuasively in a variety of circumstances.
- **World Language** (0-6 credits): students demonstrate basic knowledge of a language other than English, either through prior coursework, testing, or taking up to two courses at Central, in order to enhance their knowledge of how language works and to prepare them to live and thrive in a multicultural world. Up to 3 credits of World Language coursework may be used to fulfill the General Education elective requirement.
- **Thriving in College** (2-3 credits): this is Central's First Year Experience course. Students take a course that will familiarize them with the academic options and other resources offered by Central, teach them the academic habits, skills, and techniques needed to succeed in college and beyond, and introduce them to the tools for personal growth that will serve them for a lifetime. Transfer students who enter with 24 or more credits taken at

an accredited institution may fulfill this requirement with a course from any of the General Education categories.

Ways of Understanding introduce students to some of the most important and powerful ways in which we understand our world. They are academic disciplines, but also lenses through which to engage with culture, politics, technology, the economy, the human mind, and other fundamental elements of our society.

- **Arts and Humanities** (9 credits): students take a literature course and two other courses from a wide variety of disciplines in order to learn how philosophy, the arts, and other humanistic endeavors shape our culture and help us understand our world. Courses offer opportunities to study, appreciate, and participate in the arts. No more than 6 credits in any one discipline can be applied to this requirement.
- **Social and Behavioral Sciences** (12 credits): students take a history course and three other courses from a wide variety of disciplines in order to learn how the social and behavioral sciences work and how they view the world. Students have the opportunity to explore questions like “how does the human mind work?” “how can I participate meaningfully in the political arena?” and “how did human society develop?” No more than 6 credits in any one discipline can be applied to this requirement.
- **Mathematics and Natural Sciences** (9-10 credits): students take one mathematics or statistics course at the level of College Algebra or higher in order to learn the fundamentals of quantitative reasoning and its role in the world. Students may further pursue these goals by taking an additional course in quantitative reasoning. Students also take at least one course in a natural science discipline that includes a laboratory or field experience in order to understand the scientific method and the way the sciences explore and explain the natural world. Students may take an additional course in the natural sciences—which need not be a lab course—to learn more about the discipline introduced in their first science course or to explore a different discipline.

Additional General Education requirements. While the Essential Skills and Ways of Understanding categories set out the range and number of courses students must take, Central’s General Education also includes important elements that do not require taking additional courses but can be fulfilled with courses in the major, minor, or other General Education categories. General Education also includes one elective course.

- **International Requirement:** In order to prepare students to thrive in an increasingly globalized world, two of the courses that students must take at Central will help them understand the cultural expressions or social, political, and economic conditions of a region or country other than the United States. Courses abroad also satisfy this requirement.
- **Equity, Justice, and Inclusion Requirement:** One of the courses that students must take will introduce them to the importance of equity, justice, and inclusion to a thriving society by exploring bias and discrimination in the United States and highlighting obstacles to and strategies required to promote equity and social justice and inclusion.
- **Writing in the Disciplines Requirement:** Because learning to write clearly and effectively in one’s chosen discipline is integral to both academic and career success, after satisfying the first-year writing requirement all students shall complete at least three credits of writing instruction appropriate to their major. Each major determines the form of writing instruction best suited to its discipline, to be provided through coursework required for completion of the major. Credits for this coursework are generally a part of the major; in certain circumstances they may be counted in a minor or in General Education. Students should consult their advisor or curriculum sheet for major-specific information about the WID requirement.
- **Elective** (3 credits): To allow students to further explore the breadth of opportunities offered by the General Education Program, the program includes one elective course. Students may fulfill this requirement with a course from any of the General Education categories, either to deepen their experience with a discipline introduced in another course, or to try something new that has piqued their interest. Students who need coursework to fulfill the World Language requirement may do so in whole or part with their elective.

What can you do with General Education?

The essence of Central's General Education Program is breadth: while the major and minor offer in-depth attention to a particular area of study, the distribution requirements of the General Education Program ensure that students are exposed to a wide variety of skills, ideas, and disciplines. Within that variety, however, students can create a path that fulfills their interests.

- You might explore the connections between disciplines by seeking out courses in different areas that address the same topic or related topics: link courses in Geography, Economics, and Earth Sciences that all focus on climate change, or join literature and history courses on nineteenth-century New England with a local Geography course.
- You might focus on learning skills and ideas not connected to your major that you think will make your life more fulfilling: learn the language of a place you've always wanted to visit and take a course on that place's history and culture, or learn to appreciate and understand jazz with courses in music, African-American history, and jazz-age literature.
- Or do something you've always wanted to do and may never have another opportunity to try: learn to draw, travel abroad, go on an archeological dig, or try your hand at writing poetry. You'll be surprised at the opportunities General Education offers.

Additional Information

Writing: Writing is an important skill in all disciplines and an essential part of General Education. When appropriate to subject matter, methodology, and class size, all courses designated for General Education, in particular courses in literature, philosophy, the humanities, history, and the social and behavioral sciences, will require writing, including assigned papers and essay examinations.

Honors Program: Those students who have been admitted to the CCSU Honors Program will fulfill about half of their General Education requirements through the Honors Program curriculum. For further information on the Program, see www.ccsu.edu/honors.

Double-Counting: A maximum of four courses totaling no more than 16 credits in the Essential Skills and Ways of Understanding portions of General Education may be fulfilled by courses in a student's major and/or minor that are designated as applicable to General Education, with no more than 8 credits total from any one field of study. Courses that fulfill the International, Writing in the Disciplines, or Equity, Justice and Inclusion requirements may also fulfill another General Education requirement; otherwise, no course can count in more than one area of General Education.