

GENERAL EDUCATION REQUIREMENT

The General Education Curriculum

All courses in the General Education Curriculum contribute to its overarching goal, as expressed in its Statement of Purpose:

We strive to produce globally and socially aware graduates who engage in critical, ethical, and innovative thinking to solve problems and better their communities and the world.

Niagara University's mission drives the undergraduate general education curriculum, which is committed to preparing students for a successful and fulfilling academic, professional, and personal life. The curriculum prepares students to think and act in the world as engaged citizens and responsible leaders. Courses within the four pillars of the undergraduate degree ensure that students achieve academic excellence in both the liberal arts and professional educations.

The General Education curriculum is built upon four pillars: Foundations, Inquiry, Exploration, and Mastery.

- Through three **Foundations** courses, students develop essential skills, such as oral and written communication and critical analysis and reasoning, that prepare them to succeed at Niagara and in their life beyond. The first-year seminar, Vincentian Social Justice, also engages students in the university's Catholic and Vincentian tradition and fosters opportunities for students to develop diverse perspectives as well as their own values and ethics.
- Seven **Inquiry** courses develop different ways of analyzing, preparing students to make well-reasoned judgments both outside and within their academic field. Through these courses students also strengthen scientific and quantitative reasoning, and information literacy.
- Six **Exploration** courses expand students' cultural and global awareness and cultural sensitivity. Exploration includes an Experiential Learning elective (EXP) that enables students to engage in hands-on discovery and application of knowledge through direct participation in real-world settings (e.g., internships, study abroad, research).
- The Foundations, Inquiry, and Exploration courses develop the skills, perspectives, and values that support the fourth pillar: **Mastery** of students' major area of study.

General Education Policies:

Language Track: Language study is a key component of a liberal arts education. Students taking language courses strengthen skills in communication, cross cultural awareness, and global engagement. Sustained study of another language over the course of two semesters exposes students to new perspectives and encourages them to reflect on their own and others' culture and traditions. To encourage students to study another language, the General Education curriculum features a Language Track: When a student takes two courses of the same language, SPK 100 Effective Speech can be replaced with the second language course. When a student takes two courses of the same language and majors in that language, SPK 100 Effective Speech/the second language course will be replaced with a Free Elective.

Writing Intensive Requirements: Students need strong writing skills to succeed at Niagara University and in their careers. In order to develop these skills, students are required to take three Writing Intensive courses.

Two are taken as part of the General Education curriculum, Writing 100: Writing and Rhetoric and English 110: Literary Perspectives. The third course is taken in the major, usually as the capstone course.

Code	Title	Credits
Foundations		
VSJ 100	Vincentian Social Justice*	3
WRT 100	Writing and Rhetoric	3
SPK 100	Effective Speech	3-6
OR 2 courses in same foreign language		
Inquiry		
ENG 110	Literary Perspectives*	3
REL 101 or REL 103	The Search for God Introduction to Christianity	3
HIS 110	Modern US History*	3
PHI 105	Reason & Responsibility	3
ONE course in Social Science Inquiry (SSI)		3
ONE course in Natural Science Inquiry (NSI)		3
ONE course in Quantitative Reasoning		3
Exploration		
ONE course in Artistic Engagement (AE)		3
ONE course in Social Justice (SJ)		3
ONE course in Global Engagement (GE)		3
ONE course in Experiential Learning (EXP)		3
ONE Philosophy Elective (PHI)		3
ONE Religious Studies Elective (REL)		3
Total Credits		48-51

* A maximum of three courses per subject (except Religion and Philosophy which is four) can be taken as part of these courses to ensure breadth and exploration of study.

* VSJ 100, ENG 110, and HIS 110 are topic-based courses. They share core student learning outcomes, but each section focuses on a specific topic or perspective.