

## **CRITERIA FOR AREAS OF GENERAL EDUCATION**

The areas of general education for the degree Associate in Arts are:

- Language and Rationality
  - English Composition
  - Writing and Critical Thinking
  - Communications and Analytical Thinking
- Mathematics (proficiency)
- Natural Sciences
- Humanities
- Social and Behavioral Sciences
- Wellness
  - Area of Health
  - Physical Education
- American Institutions
- American Cultures

The areas of general education for the degree Associate in Science are:

- Language and Rationality
  - English Composition
  - Communications and Analytical Thinking
- Mathematics (proficiency)
- Natural Sciences
- Humanities
- Social and Behavioral Sciences
- Physical Education
- American Cultures

Presented here are proposed criteria for the areas of:

- Language and Rationality
  - English composition
  - Writing and Critical Thinking
  - Communications and Analytical Thinking
- Humanities
- Social and Behavioral Sciences
- Natural Sciences
- Wellness
  - Area of Health
  - Physical Education
- American Institutions
- American Cultures

## **A. Language and Rationality**

This area consists of three sub-areas: English Composition, Writing and Critical Thinking, and Communication and Analytical Thinking.

### **1. English Composition**

Courses in the area of English composition should require that students

- Demonstrate reading comprehension for a range of college-level texts.
- Write essays demonstrating college-level reasoning and organization in academic prose.
- Apply basic research skills in written form.

### **2. Writing and Critical Thinking**

Courses in the writing and critical thinking area should require that students

- Analyze, synthesize and evaluate academic and cultural texts.
- Write complex argumentative essays.
- Demonstrate critical thinking skills in class discussion and in writing.
- Use appropriate research techniques to produce an acceptable research paper.

### **3. Communications and Analytical Thinking**

Courses in the area of Communications and Analytical thinking are those that cover the principles of logical thought, clear and precise expression and critical evaluation of communication in whatever symbol system the student uses, and which teach students to apply these principles. Such courses teach

- An appreciation of the power of language through both oral and written channels
- An understanding and command of, and an appreciation for, the principles of language within a system, as language is symbolic of meaning in that system.

These principles are applied through the teaching of

- logical thinking
- clear and precise expression of ideas and concepts in a variety of forms
- critical evaluation of expression in a variety of forms
- the ability to think and to communicate clearly and effectively both orally and in writing, using language and symbolic expressions appropriate to the course.

The pattern of coursework should include:

- consideration of reasoning
- teaching of organizational skills
- the importance of accuracy
- reading and listening effectively as well as speaking and writing
- active participation and practice in written communication and oral communication.

Courses fulfilling the Communications and Analytical Thinking requirement include, but are not limited to, courses in oral communication, mathematics, logic, statistics, computer languages and programming, and related disciplines.

## **B. Natural Science**

Courses in the Natural Science Area are those that examine the physical universe, its life forms, and its natural phenomena. Courses shall be presented from a theoretical point of view and focus on core concepts and methods of a science discipline and shall address:

The scientific method by

- Developing the student's appreciation and understanding of the scientific method and investigative tools, and the limitations of scientific endeavors' namely, what is the evidence and how was it derived?
- Emphasizing experimental methodology, the testing of hypotheses, and the power of systematic questioning, rather than only the recall of facts.

The relationship between science and other human activities by

- Encouraging the student's understanding of the relationships between science and other human activities.
- Developing the student's knowledge of the influence that the acquisition of scientific knowledge has had on the development of the world's civilizations, not only as expressed in the past but also in present times.

The ability to think critically by

- Developing the student's ability to distinguish between opinion based upon preconceptions and opinion based upon controlled scientific experiment.
- Developing the student's ability to solve scientific problems in contexts other than those, which model problems and solutions.

Courses fulfilling the Natural Science area include, by are not limited to, astronomy, biology, physical geography, physical anthropology, and physics.

### **C. Social Science**

The area of social and behavioral sciences includes courses that focus on people as members of a society. Such courses include the core concepts of human behavior, the historical perspective, methodology, and/or critical thinking, all from a theoretical point of view. Such courses espouse:

These core concepts:

- Examine the nature and principles of individual and group behaviors.
- Illustrate that human, social, political and economic institutions and behavior are inextricably interwoven.
- Articulate the complexity of human behavior and the variety of approaches necessary to explain it.
- Examine the historic and contemporary ideas that have shaped our world.
- Examine problems and issues in their contemporary as well as historical setting, including (as appropriate) both Western and non-Western contexts.
- Develop a student's sensitivity through historical perspective, to the process and rate of social change and to the historical backgrounds or current social behavior.

The pattern of coursework should include:

- studying the methods of the social and behavioral sciences.
- developing an awareness of inquiry used by the social and behavioral sciences.
- stimulating critical thinking about the ways people have acted in response to their societies and by promoting appreciation of how societies and social subgroups operate.
- enabling students to cultivate new interests and to develop their abilities to search for answers, recognizing that there is always more to learn.
- developing an understanding of the cultural tradition from which they come and of other cultural traditions.

Courses fulfilling the Social and Behavioral Sciences requirement include, but are not limited to, anthropology, sociology, psychology, history, political science and economics. Early Childhood Development is also included.

### **D. Humanities**

Courses in the Humanities area are those that focus on the cultural activities and artistic expressions of human beings. It is believed that students enrolled in these courses might be provided with a better opportunity for an enriched and enhanced life, as they are encouraged to adopt a more complete and informed view of the world- a world they share with others.

Courses in the Humanities focus on the cultural activities and artistic expressions of human beings. Course are presented from a subjective and objective perspective eliciting an integrity of emotional, intellectual, cognitive, and physical responses to great works of the human imagination that would include active participation in individual aesthetic and creative assignments and experiences. The Humanities teach:

An increasing awareness and appreciation of the traditional creative/artistic disciplines such as:

- Visual Art (painting, drawing, sculpture, photography, architecture as well as exterior, interior, and graphic design)
- Musical Art (both instrumental and vocal - art, folk, and popular forms including Opera)
- Literary Art (The Novel, Epic and Lyrical Poetry and Prose forms)
- Dramatic Art (including tragedy and comedy-ancient and modern- and narrative dance and film)

Both Western and non-Western aspects of these disciplines will be examined and all will be examined from both a technical and aesthetic perspective. Specific classes strive to do the following.

Increase awareness and understanding of:

- Philosophical thought (in shaping moral and ethical decision making)
- Spiritual values (including, but not restricted to, the study of and participation in the Great Religions of the World)
- Mythological lessons (and their ability to influence contemporary behavior)
- Scientific discovery (as it has enabled and encouraged human achievement)
- Political and Social Institutions (in examining the determinant factors of belief and action)
- Foreign Languages (including the cultures and world views of those who speak these languages)

The pattern of course work should include:

- Employing critical thinking and stimulation to create and shape value judgments based on expanded perspectives provided by these disciplines.
- Using specific investigatory techniques including the Dialogic Process: Dialog, Reflection, Action, and Change; and
- Hermeneutics: the search for deeper levels of meaning and understanding through dialog [the dialogic process] with text. [that with which the dialog occurs]

Courses fulfilling the Humanities requirement include, but are not limited to, Music, Theatre Arts, Fine Arts (Art, Photography, Visual Communications, Interior Design), Foreign Languages, and Humanities (Humanities, Philosophy, Creative Arts, Religious Studies.)

#### **E. Wellness**

The area of Wellness offers a variety of courses that help students develop the knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviors that promote lifelong health and physical fitness. Courses in this area:

- Facilitate a lifelong commitment to physical well-being, health, and fitness.
- Balance and contribute to student's academic learning.
- Guide students through changing a health behavior so that they learn how to successfully modify behaviors on their own for the future.

The principles of Wellness are applied through:

- Evaluating critically scientifically-derived knowledge about health and wellness;
- Interpreting the results of health risk appraisals, fitness assessments or diet analyses;
- Establishing a healthy lifestyle based on assessment results and individual goals;
- Completing a log of behaviors;
- Identifying challenges to maintaining a healthy lifestyle;
- Identifying appropriate lifestyle modification techniques based on results of health risk appraisals, fitness assessments or diet analysis;
- Discussing the benefits of maintaining a healthy lifestyle;
- Communicating health and wellness concepts;
- Describing changes of healthy behavior;
- Describing examples of the relationships of personal, community, and global health issues.

Courses in Wellness include, but are not limited to, Health.

Courses in Physical Education help students:

- Develop an awareness of the importance of a healthy lifestyle through physical activity
- Focus on the development of overall well-being through physical activity.
- Incorporate key principles of healthy lifestyle and physical activity to enhance their quality of life.

Courses in Physical Education include a variety of activity courses.

## Criteria for American Institutions

The criteria for this area are adopted /modified from the guidelines CSU's American Institutions requirement, contained in CSU Executive Order No. 405. It is the intent that the course accepted to fulfill this 3 unit requirement will also fulfill 3 of the 6 units required to fulfill American Institutions at CSU.

Any course or examination which addresses the historical development of American institutions and ideals must include all of the subject matter elements identified in the following subparagraphs of this paragraph. Nothing contained herein is intended to prescribe the total content or structure of any course.

1. Significant events covering a minimum time span of approximately one hundred years occurring in the entire Division now included in the United States of America, including the relationships of regions within that Division and with external regions and powers as appropriate to the understanding of those events within the United States during the period under study.
2. The role of major ethnic and social groups in such events and the contexts in which the events have occurred.
3. The events presented within a framework which illustrates the continuity of the American experience and its derivation from other cultures including consideration of three or more of the following: Politics, economics, social movements, and geography.

Any course or examination which addresses the Constitution of the United States, the operation of representative democratic government under that Constitution, and the process of California State and local government must address all of the subject matter elements identified in the following subparagraphs. Nothing contained herein is intended to prescribe the total content or structure of any course.

1. The political philosophies of the framers of the Constitution and the nature and operation of United States political institutions and processes under that Constitution as amended and interpreted.
2. The rights and obligations of citizens in the political system established under the Constitution.
3. The Constitution of the State of California within the framework of evolution of Federal-State relations and the nature and processes of State and local government under that constitution.
4. Contemporary relationships of State and local government with the Federal government, the resolution of conflicts and the establishment of cooperative processes under the constitutions of both the State and nation, and the political processes involved.

## **Criteria for American Cultures**

Courses satisfying the American Cultures requirement for the AA or AS degree shall meet the following criteria:

1. Study American cultures.
2. Address at least three cultural groups (chosen from African Americans, Asian-Americans, European-Americans, American Indians, Latino-Americans) in a comparative and integrative way.
3. Use the words of the identified groups themselves, to the extent possible.
4. Focus on the study of contributions of the identified groups to American culture.

Such courses shall satisfy the following objectives:

1. Study of the interactions of ethnic groups.
2. Positive relationships among ethnic groups are critical to American society; these courses will contribute to that end.
3. Advanced education is obliged to explore major social issues.
4. Students of all ethnic identities need to be exposed to other ethnic identities.
5. Demographic changes in our state demand an understanding of and ability to work with people of divergent backgrounds.