

MEMORANDUM

DATE: June 16, 2015

TO: Deans, Directors, Department Heads, and Advisors

FROM: Jennifer Ricketts, Chair, University-Wide General Education Committee (UWGEC)
Celeste Pardee, Assistant Director for Academic Policies and Organizations

RE: Tier One Study Area Requirements Revision

With support from Senior Vice Provost for Academic Affairs Gail Burd, the University-Wide General Education Committee proposed in January 2015 to simplify the Tier One Study Areas so that UA's General Education requirements would be less confusing for freshmen and transfer students. A proposal to eliminate the breadth categories within the three Study Areas—Individuals/Societies, Natural Sciences, and Traditions/Cultures—was approved by the Undergraduate Council in March 2015 and by the Faculty Senate on May 11, 2015. The revised Tier One Requirements (see below) will be effective for all incoming and continuing undergraduates as of Fall 2016, regardless of Catalog.

Revised General Education – Tier One Requirements (to be posted in the 2016-17 Catalog)

Tier One courses introduce students to fundamental issues and concepts pertinent to three study areas. Courses in each study area have a department prefix but the same number, as shown below. To complete each study area, students must take two courses ~~in different subareas or categories, designated by a letter (A, B, C) following the 3-digit course number.~~

Tier One Study Areas:

Individuals & Societies (xxxx150)

Traditions & Cultures (xxxx160)

Natural Sciences (xxxx170)

Required Breadth:

2 - 150 courses ~~with different letters (A, B, C)~~

2 - 160 courses ~~with different letters (A, B, C, D)~~

2 - 170 courses with different letters (A, B, C)

Total: 6 courses

~~The first course taken in a study area category (e.g., ARC 160D1) will count toward the Tier One requirement; a second course taken in the same study area category – identical course number and letter (e.g., JUS 160D1) – will count as general elective credit. If a student takes an additional course in one of the study areas (e.g., a third xxxx150 course), it will count as general elective credit. Note: Tier One courses cannot apply toward the major or minor.~~

Rationale for the Revision:

- Removal of the breadth categories within each study area simplifies course articulation for transfer students who don't finish an AGECE from an Arizona community college.
- Students frequently choose two courses within the same study area category, mistakenly thinking they have completed the study area requirement, when in fact they have not.
- Eliminating the significance of the course letters (A, B, C, D) will reduce faculty and student confusion about the meaning of categories within each study area.
- Tier One requirements will be easier to explain to high school students at recruitment sessions and to new students at orientations.
- This simplification will better align the UA's General Education with those of ASU and NAU.

Management of the Revised Requirements:

- One year is needed for UAccess Student staff to implement this change to Student Academic Advisement Reports, Smart Planner, and other UA systems. In the meantime, college advisors may make course adjustments for the estimated 100 incoming transfer students who are affected by the one-year implementation delay.

- Incoming freshmen and continuing students who want to take advantage of the approved revisions may take any two courses in each Study Area, knowing that their Academic Advisement Reports will be revised within the year in accordance with the changes shown above. Course adjustments for these students are not necessary.
- The following note has been added to the Tier One Requirements in the 2015-16 Catalog:
6/1/15 Note: As of Fall 2016, Tier One Requirements will be simplified for all new and continuing students. The three Study Areas will be satisfied by taking any two 150 courses, any two 160 courses, and any two 170 courses. Students in the 2015-16 (or an earlier) Catalog may disregard the breadth categories (designated by A, B, C, D) in each Study Area, knowing that their Academic Advisement Reports will be revised in accordance with this approved change by Fall 2016.

Questions about the revised Tier One Requirements may be addressed to Celeste Pardee, Curricular Affairs, at 621-5375, or at cpardee@email.arizona.edu.