

General Education Requirements

Courses must be taken for a letter grade and may not be taken on a pass/no pass basis unless the course is only offered on a pass/no pass basis. You must complete all courses with a C- or better. With the exception of Spark Seminar, lower and upper division common course requirements may be shared with your major, concentration, or minor requirements. They can also be shared with the Intellectual Experience Badges. All courses will include a project that can be uploaded to your ePortfolio.

Lower Division Common Course Requirements

I. Spark Seminar

The Spark Seminar introduces first-year students to life at a research university. It asks you to focus on the nature of inquiry by exploring a particular topic over the course of the semester, engaging with campus and local resources, generating research questions, and presenting original ideas in writing and other forms of communication. Spark seminars may be taken concurrently with either WRI 001 or WRI 010.

II. Written Communication

Designed to help you develop your college-level skills in effective use of language, analysis and argumentation, organization, and strategies for creation, revision and editing.

III. Quantitative Reasoning

For some of you, mathematics and statistics will be an essential tool for mastering a field in depth. For others, you will build your ability to understand how quantitative methods are applied in society to support arguments and solve problems.

IV. Language

The study of language exposes you to different ways of structuring thought. You can complete the language requirement one of four ways:

1. *Coursework*: Complete one of the following courses.
2. *Campus based test*: Passing the campus-administered Foreign Language test demonstrating proficiency equivalent of one year of college foreign language.
3. *Advanced Placement or International Baccalaureate Exams*: Earning appropriate scores on an AP/IB Exam.
 - Score of 3, 4 or 5 on one of the following College Board AP exams: Chinese Language and Culture, French Language and Culture, German Language and Culture, Italian Language and Culture, Japanese Language and Culture, and Spanish Language and Culture; or
 - Score of 5, 6 or 7 on one of the Higher Level IB exam in a foreign language or literature; or
 - Score of 3, 4 or 5 on the College Board AP Exam in Computer Science A.
4. *High School Coursework*: Completing the third year of one language in high school with a course GPA of at least C.

Upper Division Common Course Requirements

I. *Crossroads Course*

Like the Spark Seminar, the Crossroads course will focus on a specific topic but from an interdisciplinary perspective. It emphasizes different, yet complementary, disciplinary approaches, methods, and assumptions, and provides you with an opportunity for research and analysis.

II. *Writing in the Discipline*

This upper division requirement can be satisfied either with a designated writing course or a writing-intensive course in the major. The focus is on how to write for a particular field. A one-credit lab course attached to another course may also satisfy this requirement if the primary focus of the lab is writing.

III. *Integrative Culminating Experience*

Intended to be completed as part of your major, the Integrative Culminating Experience requirement may be fulfilled through a traditional capstone course, senior or advanced seminar, service-learning course, portfolio, or other methods your faculty choose to integrate learning in the program.

Approaches to Knowledge

Courses in this area introduce you to the different ways disciplines (and broad branches of knowledge) ask questions and think about the world. The Approaches to Knowledge requirement is divided into two areas: Area A and Area B. You are required to take three courses in each area, for a total of six courses. These courses are intended to also count towards major requirements.

I. AREA A: Natural and Engineering Science

You must take three courses in the area of Natural and Engineering Science. At least one course must be from Natural Sciences and one course must be from Engineering Sciences.

II. AREA B: Social Science, Arts and Humanities

You must take three courses in the area of Social Science, Arts and Humanities. At least one course must be from Social Science and one course must be from Arts and Humanities.

Intellectual Experience Badges

These required Badges can be achieved in courses, including required Quantitative Reasoning, Language, Crossroads, Writing in the Discipline, and Integrative Culminating Experience General Education courses. They can also be achieved in Approaches to Knowledge courses, courses in the major, minor and elective courses. In addition, these Intellectual Experience Badges can be fulfilled in the co-curriculum. Courses and co-curricular activities can be used to satisfy more than one Intellectual Experiences Badges, but not more than two.

To emphasize the ways GE is part of the entire curriculum, at least three of the courses used to fulfill Intellectual Experience Badges must be upper division. The Crossroads course and the Integrative Culminating Experience in the major satisfy two of these upper division requirements.

Courses taken to achieve Badges must be taken for a letter grade and may not be taken on a pass/no pass basis unless the course is only offered on a pass/no pass basis. You must complete all courses with a C-or

better. Similarly, all co-curricular experiences must be successfully completed to satisfy the Badge. All courses and co-curricular experiences will include a project that can be uploaded to your ePortfolio.

The required Intellectual Experiences are:

- a. *Scientific Method*: Learn how the scientific method leads to new knowledge about the natural world by collecting and integrating previous knowledge using empirical evidence.
- b. *Literary and Textual Analysis*: Learn how language creates meaning and ambiguity.
- c. *Media and Visual Analysis*: Explore how media and images create, shape, and express meaning.
- d. *Quantitative and Numerical Analysis*: Evaluate data and develop quantitative reasoning skills.
- e. *Societies and Cultures of the Past*: Explore the interactions between multiple dimensions of past societies.
- f. *Diversity and Identity*: Consider how multiple kinds of difference—ethnic, racial, gender, and sexual—impact individuals and societies in the past and present.
- g. *Global Awareness*: Learn about environments, cultures, and issues in nations and regions outside the US.
- h. *Sustainability*: Explore the ways in which humans affect and are affected by the natural world.
- i. *Practical and Applied Knowledge*: Carry out field work, laboratory experimentation, or artistic practice.
- j. *Ethics*: Investigate the ethical implications of research, policy, or behavior.
- k. *Leadership, Community, and Engaging the World*: Take your work at UC Merced off the campus in one of multiple ways: you may engage in at least one of a variety of experiences including study abroad, UCDC, UC Sacramento, leadership in campus organization, community engaged research or service, or off-campus internships.

ePortfolio

To keep track of your learning, you will compile an ePortfolio. The purpose of the ePortfolio (which is part of CatCourses) is to give you a chance to review the development of your education. Every course that meets a GE requirement will have an assignment related to that requirement that you will upload into your ePortfolio on CatCourses. Students may add other projects if they wish. The portfolio will provide the basis for reflection on learning to be integrated into the culminating experience in the major; it will also be used to help you prepare for life after graduation.

For Transfer Students: Satisfying General Education

Because the GE requirements included in previous catalogs informed transfer student preparation to enter UC Merced, transfer students who enter UC Merced in academic years 2018-19 or 2019-20 will be held to the GE requirements included in the 2017-18 Catalog.

A transfer student is defined as someone who applies and is admitted as a transfer student for admissions purposes. In addition to meeting the transfer admissions requirements described by Undergraduate Admissions, transfer students should complete an acceptable general education course pattern and preparatory courses for the intended major, prior to transfer. Successful completion of general education and major preparation will assure that you do not need to take any additional lower division courses at UC Merced.

Please note the following: California Community College transfer students who complete the Intersegmental General Education Transfer Curriculum (IGETC) satisfy all lower division general education requirements at UC Merced. For further details, see the Catalog section of the School that offers your intended major. Transfer students from other University of California campuses who have completed lower division general education requirements at the UC campus have satisfied lower division general education requirements at UC Merced.