



GE Talking Points

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General Information: In Fall 2018, the University of California, Merced will launch a new General Education Program, intent on creating a common experience for all undergraduate students*. The new General Education Program provides a framework for integrative learning by nurturing the spirit of inquiry, building students' knowledge of disciplines, cultures and perspectives.

Spark Seminars: During students' first year at UC Merced they will take a Spark seminar, which introduces them to life at a research university. Each seminar will be unique with topics relating to the area of research and/or interest of the instructor. This experience will allow students to engage with a faculty member who is sharing his or her expertise and passions, all while engaging with campus and local resources, generating research questions, and presenting original ideas.

Language: As part of the new General Education Program, students are required to complete a language requirement intent on exposing students to different ways of structuring thought. A distinctive feature is the option for students to satisfy this requirement by completing a foreign *or* computer language. Students are also offered the opportunity to complete the requirement by spending a semester or summer abroad.

Upper Division: At the upper division level, students will take courses that bring together the perspectives of two disciplines and help them focus on how to write for a particular field (i.e. writing for a career in anthropology, computer science, or biology). Finally students will have a culminating experience in their major that may include a capstone class, a senior seminar, a service learning project, a portfolio, or a thesis.

Co-Curricular: To demonstrate the fact that the new General Education Program has been integrated into all aspects of students' experiences, the Intellectual Experience Badges can be completed with coursework or through experiences outside the classroom. In this way, students are encouraged to study abroad to learn about other cultures, seek internships to gain knowledge and expertise in the field, and participate in research opportunities.

ePortfolio: In culmination of the successful work completed, each student will be provided with an electronic portfolio where they can track their learning experiences and review their educational development. This portfolio will also help students prepare for life after graduation.

*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.