

# General Education Program



University of Wisconsin  
**Stevens Point**



# GEP Mission

The UW-Stevens Point General Education Program (GEP) provides the framework of a liberal education, equipping students with the knowledge and skills to facilitate intellectual and personal growth, pursue their advanced studies and improve the world in which they live.



# Contents

## General Education Program (GEP)

- 4 GEP Learning Outcomes
- 6 Map of the GEP
- 7 Relationship Between the GEP and Different Degree Types

## Levels of the GEP Structure

### **8 Foundation Level**

- 9 First-Year Seminar
- 10 Written and Oral Communication
- 12 Quantitative Literacy
- 13 Wellness

### **14 Investigation Level**

- 15 Arts
- 16 Humanities
- 16 Historical Perspectives
- 19 Social Sciences
- 19 Natural Sciences

### **20 Cultural and Environmental Awareness**

- 21 Environmental Responsibility
- 23 U.S. Diversity
- 23 Global Awareness

### **24 Integration Level**


- 25 Interdisciplinary Studies
- 26 Experiential Learning
- 28 Communication in the Major
- 29 Capstone Experience in the Major

## Key Policy Changes

- 30 Placement, Test-Out and Credit-by-Exam
- 30 Transfer Credits
- 30 Catalog Year Requirements and Advising
- 31 New GEP Category Abbreviations

# GEP

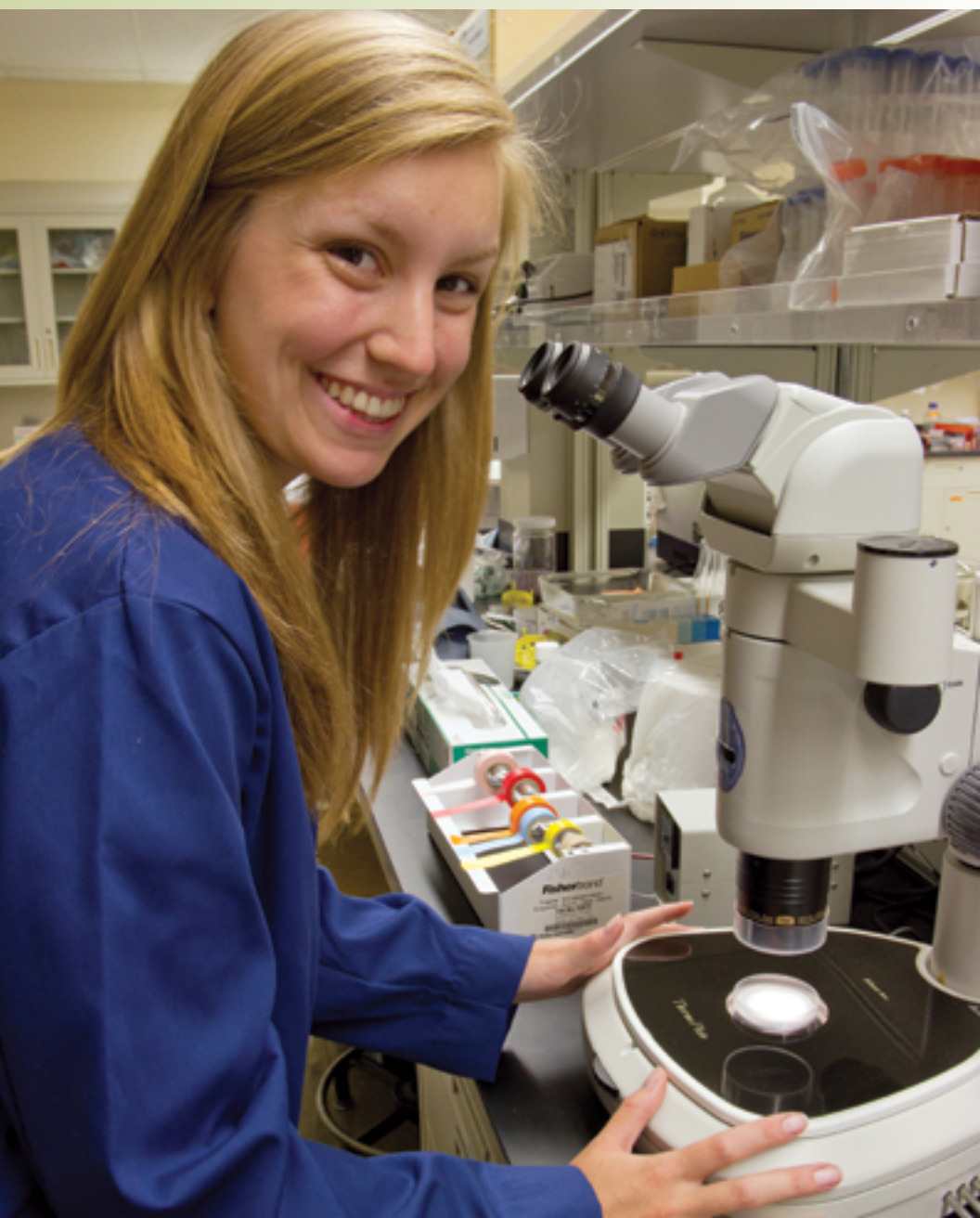
## Learning Outcomes



### **The General Education Program seeks to develop the qualities of global citizenship in four distinct ways.**

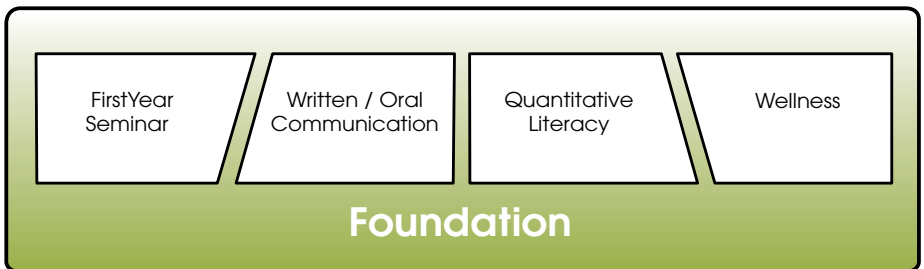
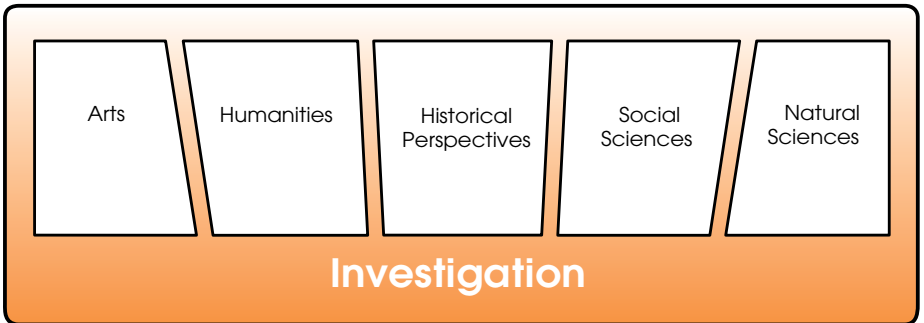
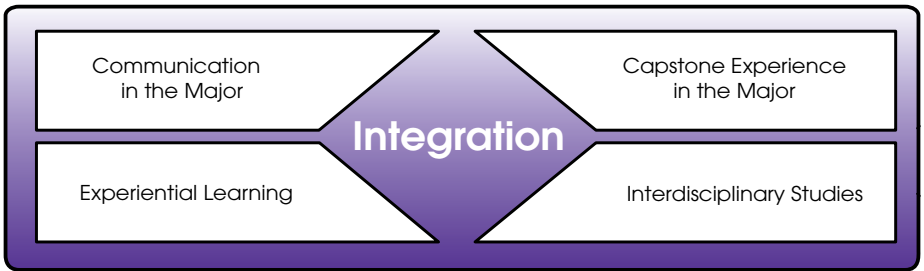
After completing the general education curriculum, students will:

- Demonstrate critical thinking, quantitative and communication skills necessary to succeed in a rapidly changing global society.
- Demonstrate broad knowledge of the physical, social and cultural worlds as well as the methods by which this knowledge is produced.
- Recognize that responsible global citizenship involves personal accountability, social equity and environmental sustainability.
- Apply their knowledge and skills, working in interdisciplinary ways to solve problems.



## General Education Program Levels

Foundation, Investigation, Cultural and Environmental Awareness and Integration.





**Cultural and Environmental Awareness**

*Cultural and Environmental Awareness requirements can be met through courses in the Foundation, Investigation or Integration levels.*

## **Relationship Between the General Education Program (GEP) and Degree Types**

The GEP applies to all students regardless of degree type (BA, BS, BM and BFA). In addition to the GEP, specific degree requirements for the BA, BS, BM and BFA have been integrated into majors.

# Foundation Level

*(10–16 credits)*

Courses listed under this category are intended to provide students with the basic skills necessary for intellectual development and to succeed in their studies at UW-Stevens Point, including critical thinking, quantitative literacy, information literacy, written and oral communication and wellness.







# Developing Fundamental Skills

## First-Year Seminar (3 credits)

A First-Year Seminar is an academically rigorous foundational course for incoming first-year students. The course is designed to introduce critical thinking skills, orient students to the academic community and campus life and equip first-year students with other skills necessary to be successful. Fostering intellectual inquiry and self-assessment, this course will help students begin the process of taking responsibility for their education, career choices and personal development.

All First-Year Seminars should focus on topics about which instructors have both expertise and interest and which are engaging to a general audience of first-year students. The primary function of the First-Year Seminar should NOT be to serve as an introduction to a major. Ordinarily, no First-Year Seminar may be required for a major. Upon completing this requirement, students will be able to:

- Describe the importance of a liberal education and the ways in which academic study is structured at UW-Stevens Point.
- Describe the importance of critical thinking and information literacy and apply the associated skills.
- Identify and apply appropriate note-taking, test-taking and time-management strategies to their academic studies.
- Describe the importance of co-curricular involvement and how it enhances their academic study at UW-Stevens Point.
- Identify and utilize UW-Stevens Point programs, resources and services that will support their academic studies and co-curricular involvement.
- Develop a plan that demonstrates their responsibility for their own education, specifically how it relates to their interests, abilities, career choices and personal development.

### **Please Note:**

*UW-Stevens Point's Faculty Senate approved a five-year phase-in of the First-Year Seminar requirement on April 21, 2010. Until the fall semester 2018, students who are not able to take a First-Year Seminar shall take three additional credits at the Investigation Level (24 credits total). These additional three credits are beyond the 21 credits already required and are not constrained by the six-credit limit in each category.*

# Foundation Level

## Written Communication (3-6 credits)

Introductory writing classes provide an essential foundation of communication skills on which students can build throughout the rest of their university careers and beyond. They develop students' skills in analyzing audience, structuring written documents and understanding and applying the conventions of effective writing. Subsequent writing courses build upon these skills by helping students learn to locate sources, critically analyze information and synthesize their ideas with those of others to write well-supported academic arguments. They also provide an essential starting point for the more specialized writing students will be expected to do in the future within their fields of study.

The Written Communication outcomes will be satisfied by:

**English 101: Freshman English and English 202: Sophomore English.**

With the appropriate placement, English 150: Advanced Freshman English may be substituted for English 101/202.

English 101 should be taken during the first year.

English 202 should be taken during the second year and will have a prerequisite of English 101.

*Upon completing this requirement students will be able to:*

- Identify basic components and elements that shape successful writing such as topic, purpose, genre and audience.
- Compose an articulate, grammatically correct and organized piece of writing with properly documented and supported ideas, evidence and information suitable to the topic, purpose and audience.
- Critique their own and others' writing to provide effective and useful feedback to improve their communication.



# Written and Oral Communication

## Oral Communication (3 credits)

Learning to speak effectively is an essential part of a liberal education. However, effective communication in today's society requires more than acquiring oral presentation skills. UW-Stevens Point also expects students to develop skills in using visual communications technologies and other media tools to enhance presentations and connect more meaningfully with audiences.

The Oral Communication outcomes will be satisfied by:

### **Communication 101: Fundamentals of Oral Communication.**

*Upon completing this requirement students will be able to:*

- ▶ Identify basic components and elements that shape successful oral presentation such as topic, purpose, genre, composure and audience.
- ▶ Compose and deliver an articulate, grammatically correct and organized oral presentation using appropriate communication technologies as well as properly documented and supported ideas, evidence and information suitable to the topic, purpose and audience.
- ▶ Critique their own and others' speaking to provide effective and useful feedback to improve their communication.

*All requirements in the Foundation Level must be completed before students reach 60 credits. If not, students will be restricted to enrolling for a maximum of 12 credits each semester until the Foundation Level is complete.*

*Depending on placement, students will complete 10-16 credits in Foundation Level, including the following: First-Year Seminar, Written and Oral Communication, Quantitative Literacy and Wellness.*

# Foundation Level

## Quantitative Literacy (0-3 credits)

Quantitative literacy is knowledge of and confidence with basic mathematical/analytical concepts and operations required for problem-solving, decision-making, economic productivity and real-world applications. Such skills are essential for citizens living in today's global society.

*Upon completing this requirement students will be able to:*

- Select, analyze and interpret appropriate numerical data used in everyday life in numerical and graphical format.
- Identify and apply appropriate strategies of quantitative problem solving in theoretical and practical applications.
- Construct a conclusion using quantitative justification.

All Quantitative Literacy courses have a prerequisite of Math 90 or higher. To select an appropriate Quantitative Literacy course, check the student's math placement code.

### Placement Codes

#### Code = 1

If the student earned a placement code of 1, then the student is placed into Math 90 and must complete the course before earning 30 credits. If the student does not complete Math 90 prior to earning 30 credits, then the student will be restricted to enrolling in a maximum of 12 credits a semester until Math 90 is completed.

#### Code = 3 or 4

If the student earned a placement code of 3 or 4, then the student must select an appropriate Quantitative Literacy course.

#### Code = 7, 8 or 9

If the student earned a placement code of 7, 8 or 9, then the student has satisfied the Quantitative Literacy requirement. If the student received a placement code of 99, placement has not been determined. The student should not register for any Mathematics or Quantitative Literacy course until a placement exam has been completed and a code has been assigned.

If the student does not believe that his/her placement is accurate, then he/she may retake the test once or petition once to participate in an alternate placement process. Contact the Department of Mathematical Sciences, Room B246, Science Building, 715-346-2120.

# Quantitative Literacy and Wellness



## Wellness (1 credit)

Wellness is a dynamic process of becoming aware of and making conscious choices toward a more balanced and healthy lifestyle. It is multi-dimensional and holistic, encompassing lifestyle, mental and spiritual well-being and the environment. Wellness is an essential attribute of a well-rounded, liberally educated person and of strong societies. Understanding the dimensions of wellness and their impact on individuals, families and societies is essential to being a responsible global citizen. Wellness is a one-credit requirement but can be satisfied by a two- or three-credit course with the Wellness designation.

*Upon completing this requirement students will be able to:*

- ▶ Identify the seven dimensions of wellness.
- ▶ Recognize the interaction between each dimension of wellness and the overall impact on personal, national and global health and well-being.
- ▶ Develop an individual plan for healthy living that demonstrates an understanding of the principles of wellness.

# Investigation

## Level

(21 credits)





# Understanding the Physical, Social and Cultural Worlds

All courses at the Investigation Level should be designed to serve one of two student populations:

- Survey courses designed to serve all students regardless of major; such courses do not presume academic or disciplinary preparation beyond the Foundation Level.
- Courses designed to serve students in specific majors; such courses presume more advanced background preparation appropriate to the discipline.

Ordinarily, courses in the Investigation Level will not have prerequisites beyond the Foundation Level. Students will complete 21 credits in this area, including a minimum of three credits and a maximum of six credits from each category.

## Arts (3-6 credits)

The arts celebrate the human capacity to imagine, to create and to transform ideas into expressive forms. The arts provide us with a rich record of human cultures and values throughout time. They enable us to understand and enjoy the experience of our senses and to sharpen our aesthetic sense. Courses in the arts examine the process of creativity and explore the artistic imagination or the relationship between artists, their works and the societies in which their works are produced. The arts challenge us to understand creativity and the distinctive intellectual process of the human imagination.

*Upon completing this requirement students will be able to:*

- Identify aesthetic, cultural and historical dimensions of artistic traditions and techniques.
- Demonstrate an understanding of creative expression by critiquing, creating or collaborating on a specific work of art.
- Express their own understanding and interpretation of works of art critically and imaginatively.

# Investigation Level

## Humanities (3-6 credits)

The humanities explore the fundamental ideas and values shaping cultures and civilization, in life and as represented in the written word, using scholarly approaches that are primarily analytical, critical or interpretive. By introducing students to concepts and beliefs within and outside their own perspectives, courses in the humanities help students to understand and critically engage a variety of worldviews and the ideas that give them meaning.

*Upon completing this requirement students will be able to:*

- Demonstrate an ability to read carefully, speak clearly, think critically or write persuasively about cultures and cultural works/artifacts (including texts, images, performances and technologies, as well as other expressions of the human condition).
- Identify and analyze how beliefs, values, languages, theories or laws shape cultures and cultural works and artifacts.
- Engage a variety of ideas and worldviews critically by formulating reflective and informed moral, ethical or aesthetic evaluations of cultures and cultural works/artifacts.

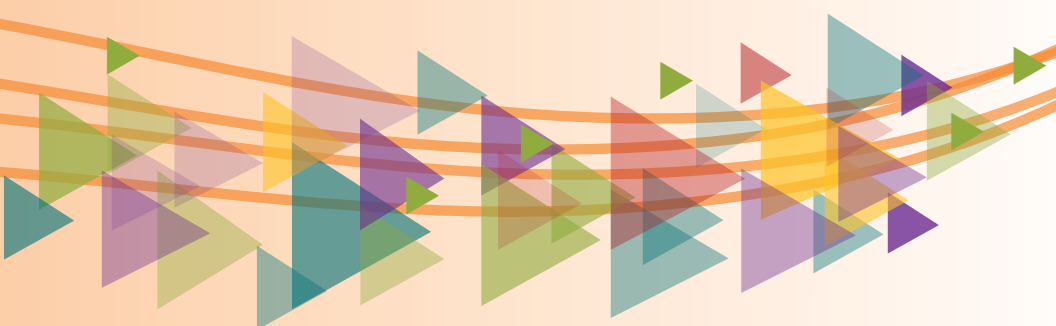
## Historical Perspectives (3-6 credits)

An understanding of the past and the methods by which people seek to explain it are essential to finding meaning in the present. By exploring the evolution of human societies—their institutions, ideas and values—students gain a framework for understanding themselves and the world; and they learn to make connections between history and the natural sciences, the social sciences, the arts and the humanities.

*Upon completing this requirement students will be able to:*

- Describe events from past cultures, societies or civilizations.
- Recognize the varieties of evidence that historians use to offer diverse perspectives on the meaning of the past.
- Identify the role of human agency in shaping events and historical change.
- Explain historical causality.
- Evaluate competing historical claims that frequently inform the present.





**Building on the skills and knowledge from the Foundation Level, courses listed under this category are meant to encourage students to acquire broad knowledge of the world in which they live, as well as the various disciplinary methods by which this knowledge is produced.**



# Investigation

## Level





## Social Sciences (3-6 credits)

The social sciences provide students with an understanding of humans and their behavior as individuals and within communities, institutions and social structures. Courses in this category equip students to contribute to public discourse and function as responsible citizens of their professions and communities.

*Upon completing this requirement students will be able to:*

- Define the major concepts and methods used by social scientists to investigate, to analyze or to predict human or group behavior.
- Explain the major principles, models and issues under investigation by the social sciences.
- Examine how the individual or groups of individuals are influenced by social, cultural or political institutions both in their own culture and in other cultures.

## Natural Sciences (3-6 credits)

As the progress of our society becomes more dependent on science and technology, our future becomes increasingly dependent upon a scientifically literate population. Individuals today must be sufficiently knowledgeable about scientific facts, science applications and the process of scientific inquiry to make reasoned decisions concerning their use in addressing society's problems. Courses in this area must contain a laboratory component to help students develop an understanding of scientific inquiry.

*Upon completing this requirement students will be able to:*

- Identify the basic taxonomy and principles of the scientific method as it pertains to the natural, physical world.
- Infer relationships, make predictions and solve problems based on an analysis of evidence or scientific information.
- Apply scientific concepts, quantitative techniques and methods to solving problems and making decisions.
- Describe the relevance of some aspect of the natural science to their lives and society.

# Cultural and Environmental Awareness

Students will complete 0-3 credits in each of the areas designated for Cultural and Environmental Awareness. In many cases, courses offered in this area will fulfill one other requirement in the General Education curriculum at the same time, either at the Foundation, Investigation or Integration Levels.

## Environmental Responsibility (0-3 credits)

Maintaining a sustainable natural environment is necessary to the long-term survival of all organisms, including humans. An understanding of the individual, social, cultural and natural factors that influence and contribute to environmental sustainability and ecosystem function is, therefore, essential to responsible global citizenship.

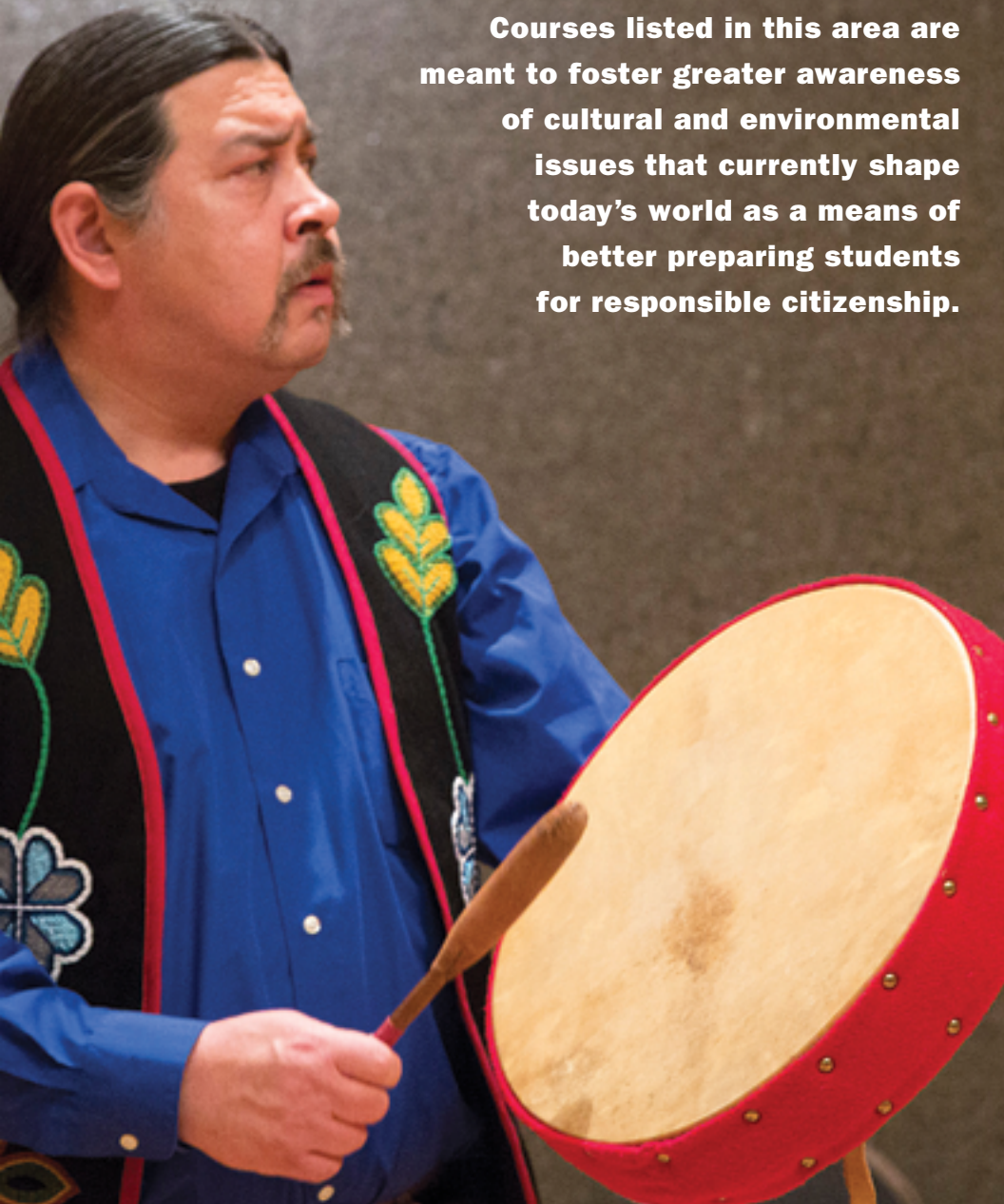
*Upon completing this requirement students will be able to:*

- ▶ Recognize areas of interaction between human society and the natural environment.
- ▶ Identify the individual, social, cultural and ecological factors that influence environmental sustainability.
- ▶ Evaluate competing scientific claims that inform environmental debates.



# Cultural and Environmental Awareness

**Courses listed in this area are meant to foster greater awareness of cultural and environmental issues that currently shape today's world as a means of better preparing students for responsible citizenship.**





## U.S. Diversity (0-3 credits)

U.S. Diversity courses are designed to consider the role of diversity in American life, where diversity is defined to include both individual differences (e.g. personality, learning styles and life experiences) and other group and social differences (e.g. race, gender, ethnicity, country of origin, class, sexual identity/orientation, religion, ability or other affiliations). Satisfaction of this requirement will prepare students to act thoughtfully and responsibly as a U.S. citizen in a global society.

*Upon completing this requirement students will be able to:*

- Describe the various dimensions of diversity and marginalization within the United States.
- Explain the means by which one or more persistently marginalized groups in the U.S. have negotiated the conditions of their marginalization.

## Global Awareness (0-3 credits)

Global Awareness courses examine the unique cultural, political, economic, intellectual and/or religious components of societies, countries, regions and peoples that are distinct from those found within the United States. By learning about these cultures, students can appreciate the key differences and similarities between diverse modes of human life and reach a better understanding of the human condition on a global scale. Moreover, this understanding will prepare students to act thoughtfully and responsibly in a global society.

*Upon completing this requirement students will be able to:*

- Identify and explain various components of a culture that is distinct from those found within the United States.
- Analyze how cultural similarities and differences are negotiated in ways that help shape the modern world.

# Integration Level

Students will complete 0-6 credits in this area, as well as several additional requirements that are embedded in each major.

## Interdisciplinary Studies (0-3 credits)

Under this category, students are asked to complete one of three options:

- a single three-credit interdisciplinary course
- an interdisciplinary certificate
- an interdisciplinary major or minor

Each option encourages students to apply the knowledge and skills they have learned in the context of a topic of their choosing and to do so in ways that facilitate making connections across disciplines. In this way, students learn to recognize that issues can be viewed in multiple ways and that solving problems requires integrating and harmonizing these perspectives. Students electing to complete a three-credit course option shall have a minimum of sophomore standing before enrolling in any Interdisciplinary Studies course.

*Upon completing this requirement students will be able to:*

- Identify an issue or question related to the interdisciplinary course(s) and describe what each discipline contributes to an understanding of that issue.
- Explain the benefits of being able to combine these contributions.





**Courses listed under this category are meant to build on the earlier components of the General Education Program, giving students the opportunity to develop, integrate and apply the knowledge and skills they learned.**



# Integration Level

## Experiential Learning (0-3 credits)

Students benefit from opportunities to learn by reflecting on experiences beyond their typical classroom activities and by applying the knowledge and skills they gain from traditional courses in new settings. To fulfill this requirement, students will:

- Complete an approved Experiential Learning project.
- Reflect on the Experiential Learning project to gain further understanding of their university education and an enhanced sense of personal responsibility as a member of a larger community.

### Options

The Experiential Learning requirement may be completed through one of two different options:

- 1 A structured, recurring credit-bearing **course** or learning experience and can include (but is not limited to): service-learning courses, internships, externships, practicum experiences, field experiences, student teaching or credit-bearing study-abroad experiences. Students transferring to UW-Stevens Point can request to have a previous Experiential Learning course satisfy the requirement.
- 2 A student-initiated Experiential Learning **activity** (ELA) that could be either credit-bearing or non-credit-bearing and can include (but is not limited to) credit-bearing independent studies, undergraduate research opportunities, creative performances, community service projects, student leadership experiences or professional development through paid or unpaid work experiences or internships. Students must complete the ELA while enrolled at UW-Stevens Point.

# Beyond the Classroom



All Experiential Learning Activities (ELAs), for option 2, must meet the following criteria:

- All ELAs must be coordinated with an ELA mentor. Any UW-Stevens Point faculty or academic staff (instructional or non-instructional) member may serve as a mentor for an ELA.
- Students must meet with their ELA mentor and complete an ELA plan form before beginning the activity.
- The ELA plan must be approved by the mentor before the student begins the activity.
- An ELA must consist of a minimum of 16 hours of service and/or experience.
- Students must reflect on their activity through oral and/or written communication with their mentor.
- The mentor will evaluate the ELA and record when the ELA has been completed.

# Integration Level



## Communication in the Major

Communication in the Major courses provide students with systematic opportunities to develop oral and written communication skills in the context of their chosen fields, beginning the process of learning to communicate effectively in discipline-specific formats and styles.

Departments will designate a minimum of six credits at the 200-level or above within each major to meet the Communication in the Major requirement.

The Communication in the Major requirement may vary substantially between different UW-Stevens Point majors and cannot transfer between majors. Thus, the only way to satisfy this requirement is to complete the specific requirements embedded within each major.

*Upon completing this requirement students will be able to:*

- ▶ Apply discipline-specific standards of oral and written communication to compose an articulate, grammatically correct and organized presentation/piece of writing with properly documented and supported ideas, evidence and information suitable to the topic, purpose and audience.
- ▶ Critique their own and others' writing/oral presentations to provide effective and useful feedback to improve their communication.

## Within the Major



### Capstone Experience in the Major

A capstone experience is either a single seminar or a broader culminating experience designed to be offered near the completion of a student's program of study. It is meant to provide students the opportunity to make connections between the key learning objectives of their majors and the General Education Program outcomes and to consider how their educations have prepared them for the world beyond the university.

The Capstone Experience in the Major requirement may vary substantially between different UW-Stevens Point majors and cannot transfer between majors. Thus, the only way to satisfy this requirement is to complete the specific requirements embedded in each major.

# Key Policy Changes

## Placement, Test-Out and Credit-by-Exam Policies

- ◆ A code of 7 or higher on the UW System Math placement test will exempt students from the Quantitative Literacy requirement.
- ◆ Students may test-out of or receive credit-by-exam for all General Education Program (GEP) requirements, except Communication in the Major and Capstone Experience in the Major requirements.

## Transferring Credit to UW-Stevens Point

- ◆ If a student has earned an approved bachelor or associate degree from another UW System four-year institution, a UW College or an approved associate degree from one of the Wisconsin Technical College System (WTCS) Liberal Arts Transfer Programs, then the student will have satisfied the UW-Stevens Point General Education Program requirements, except for the Communication in the Major and Capstone in the Major requirements.
- ◆ Currently, those institutions affiliated with the Liberal Arts Transfer Program include Madison Area Technical College, Milwaukee Area Technical College, Chippewa Valley Technical College, Western Wisconsin Technical College and Nicolet Area Technical College.

## Catalog Year Requirements and Advising Policy

- ◆ Because the degree requirements will now be embedded in the major, students will no longer have the option of choosing a pre-2013 set of major requirements with the post-2013 GEP requirements. If the student requests a general education catalog year of Fall 2013 or later, then their major catalog year must be Fall 2013 or later.
- ◆ This policy applies to transfer students as if they had originally enrolled at UW-Stevens Point.
- ◆ Transfer students from the UW Colleges who are continuously enrolled have the option of observing UW-Stevens Point's general education requirements in effect when first enrolled at a UW College campus.

## Earning Multiple Baccalaureate Degrees

- ◆ Upon the implementation of the new General Education Program (GEP) and the new degree type requirements, students will be permitted to receive two separate diplomas if they complete the requirements for multiple different baccalaureate degree types concurrently.



## GEP Category Abbreviations

<b>GEP Category:</b>	<b>Abbreviation:</b>
First-Year Seminar	FYS
Written Communication	WC
Oral Communication	OC
Quantitative Literacy	QL
Wellness	WLN
Arts	ART
Humanities	HU
Historical Perspectives	HP
Social Sciences	SS
Natural Sciences	NS
U.S. Diversity	USD
Global Awareness	GA
Environmental Responsibility	ER
Experiential Learning	XL
Interdisciplinary Studies	IS



**University of Wisconsin**  
**Stevens Point**