

General Education for new students starting Fall 2016

General Education at Western Connecticut State University combines course-based competencies with opportunities to explore a wide range of disciplines outside of a student's major. The university has identified 10 competencies that support academic success and prepare students for life-long learning. There are shared learning outcomes for each competency, which are embedded in courses across the curriculum.

Competencies may be satisfied in the major, minor or any other area of interest. There are no rules about how many competencies can be satisfied in the major. The only rules are:

- All competencies must be satisfied (as listed below).
- All students must complete at least 40 credits outside of their major discipline.

With this approach, the university has created the opportunity for students to develop essential skills and habits of mind in disciplines where they are most engaged with the material. It is important that students explore ideas from several areas of curriculum outside their major, but without an arbitrary limit on that exploration.

Part 1: Competencies (Click the links for the definitions and for the lists of approved courses.)

- [First Year Navigation *FY*](#)
- [WRT101 Composition I *W1*, Writing Intensive Tier 2 *W2*, Writing Intensive Tier 3 *W3*](#)
- [Creative Process *CP*](#)
- [Critical Thinking *CT*](#)
- [Health and Wellness *HW*](#)
- [Information Literacy *IL*](#)
- [Intercultural Competency *IC*](#)
- [Oral Communication *OC*](#)
- [Quantitative Reasoning *QR*](#)
- [Scientific Inquiry *SI*](#)

All students must complete all of these competencies. *FY*, *W1*, and 3 other competencies should be completed in the first 30 credits.

Students must then **repeat three different competencies**, excluding writing and first year navigation. Most competencies should be completed within the first 60 credits.

Credits for competencies will be counted where they apply (in the major or in the general education part 2).

Finally, all students will enroll in a [Culminating General Education Experience *CE*](#) to tie together their educational experience at WCSU. In most cases, the *CE* course is the major capstone/thesis.

Part 2: Explorations

All students must complete 40 credits outside of their major. These may be used to meet competencies not covered in the major. When all competencies are met, students may take any course of interest to them that is not in their major discipline.

IMPORTANT: Not all courses satisfy the same competency every time they are offered. In addition, some courses satisfy two competencies, which could give students room for an additional elective. Read the descriptions in open/close carefully.

First Year Navigation (FY) Competency

First Year Experience programs take a variety of forms to provide academic and co-curricular support as students begin university life. This competency allows first year students to transition into the University and to appreciate the values, culture, and resources of the academic community. [Courses that satisfy FY](#)

Creative Process (CP) Competency

The creative process begins with an understanding of the specific discipline or form involved. This knowledge serves as a foundation for inspiration and imagination. This inspiration is then developed and explored through a process of discovery and research leading to a preliminary version of the creative work. [Courses that satisfy CP](#)

Critical Thinking (CT) Competency

Critical thinking is an intellectual and analytical activity through which students develop the ability to recognize, examine, critique and synthesize arguments. It consists of two key components: acquiring the skills to assess the clarity, accuracy, relevance, and strength of arguments, and developing habits of mind to utilize those skills. [Courses that satisfy CT](#)

Health and Wellness (HW) Competency

The educated person has an understanding of the relationships between good health and personal and societal choices. Such a person appreciates that good physical health improves quality of life and cognitive functioning, understands which lifestyle choices enhance physical and mental well-being, and knows how to implement those choices. Wellness is an active, lifelong process of becoming aware of choices and making decisions that allow individuals and communities to thrive.

[Courses that satisfy HW](#)

Information Literacy (IL) Competency

Information literacy forms the basis for lifelong learning. It is common to all disciplines, to all learning environments, and to all levels of education. It enables learners to master content and extend their investigations, become more self-directed, and assume greater control over their own learning. [Courses that satisfy IL](#)

Intercultural (IC) Competency

Intercultural competence is defined by the following general characteristics: (1) knowledge about cultures, including knowledge about issues that can arise when members of diverse cultures interact; (2) receptive attitudes to learning about and maintaining contact with diverse others; and (3) skills required to draw upon both knowledge and attitudes when learning about and/or interacting with others from diverse cultures. [Courses that satisfy IC](#)

Oral Communication (OC) Competency

Oral communication is a prepared presentation that demonstrates knowledge of a selected topic and attempts to move an audience. This process involves the thoughtful evaluation of a topic, the clear, concise expression of an argument, the use of appropriate evidence in support of the argument, the effective engagement of the intended audience, and the polished delivery of a well-crafted presentation. [Courses that satisfy OC](#)

Quantitative Reasoning (QR) Competency

Quantitative reasoning is the ability to recognize, interpret, and use quantitative information in a variety of situations in order to understand and create arguments supported by quantitative evidence. Students possessing quantitative reasoning skills will be able to solve problems, draw conclusions, and make informed decisions based on quantitative information.

[Courses that satisfy QR](#)

Scientific Inquiry (SI) Competency

Science is a way of knowing based on empirical observation and verification. Scientific inquiry involves asking appropriate questions, designing and implementing strategies to answer those questions, and interpreting and explaining the results within a disciplinary/theoretical context. [Courses that satisfy SI](#)

Writing Intensive (W1) Competency, Tier 1

WRT101 Composition I: As an introduction to college composition, this course provides first-year students with the writing skills needed to succeed in university studies. While they engage in writing as a process, students compose critical responses to sophisticated expository and argumentative texts (non-fiction). Students write in a variety of non-fiction genres and learn the fundamentals of planning, organizing, drafting, and revising a fully documented college research project.

Students who place out of Writing Tier 1 through Advanced Placement, SAT Scores, or a University Placement test will automatically meet this competency. [Courses that satisfy W1](#)

Writing Intensive (W2) Competency, Tier 2

The second tier Writing Intensive competency encourages students to learn and think in ways that cannot be attained through other pedagogical patterns. It requires targeted instruction to allow students to learn more about the subject matter through writing and to learn how to improve their writing. The writing intensive competency must also involve research and a process of revision. [Courses that satisfy W2](#)

Writing Intensive (W3) Competency, Tier 3

Three tiers of the writing competency allow students to develop their writing ability through continued practice. As the culminating writing experience, Tier 3 focuses on a discipline-specific synthesis of the skills acquired in the earlier tiers.

[Courses that satisfy W3](#)

Culminating General Education Experience (CE)

The primary goal of the general education curriculum is to cultivate the capacity for lifelong learning. This can be demonstrated in the student's ability to:

- Evaluate and draw defensible conclusions from information and other artifacts;
- Synthesize material from different bodies of knowledge; and
- Communicate ideas and arguments in forms appropriate to the discipline.

Pre-requisites for CE courses are the successful completion of at least one exposure to each of the general education competencies (FY, CP, CT, HW, IC, IL, OC, QR, SI, and WI). [Courses that satisfy CE](#)

First Year Navigation (FY) Courses

BIO198, COM101, COM160, HIS100, HUM100, HUM101, HUM102, HUM114, HUM119, HUM120, HUM1XX, PSY100, SPA186, THR100, WRT101

Creative Process (CP) Courses

ENG105, ENG275, HIS255, HUM115 to HUM2XX Philosophical Issues in Literature, HUM1XX, HUM2XX, PHI250, WRT102, WRT171, WRT172, WRT242, WRT243, WRT244, WRT274

Critical Thinking (CT) Courses

ANT110, ANT1XX, CHE102, ENG104, ENG105, ENG105, ENG106, ENG106, ENG107, ENG107, ENG130, ENG131, ENG131, ENG1XX, ENG1XX, ENG209, ENG210, ENG211, ENG212, ENG213, ENG213, ENG214, ENG274, HIS/PS262, HIS/WS210, HIS/WS325, HIS100, HIS148, HIS149, HIS186, HIS187, HIS200, HIS201, HIS205, HIS206, HIS212, HIS213, HIS233, HIS266, HIS271, HIS288/HIS289, HIS290, HIS291, HIS292, HIS293, HIS302, HIS303, HIS304, HIS318, HIS330, HIS332, HIS363, HIS370, HIS415, HIS416, HIS450, HUM117 to HUM2XX, HUM2XX, HUM2XX, HUM2XX, PHI100, PHI110, PHI111, PHI112, PHI120, PHI221, PHI226, PHI229, PHI231, PHI232, PHI233, PHI234, PHI240, PHI241, PHI244, PHI245, PHI252, PHI259, PHI260, PHI2XX, PHI2XX, PHI300, PHI315, PHI340, SPA330, SPA331, SPA337, SPA360, SPA361, SPA365, SPA370, SPA3XX

Health and Wellness (HW) Courses

HPX177, HUM2XX, PSY260

Information Literacy (IL) Courses

COM101, ENG105, ENG106, ENG107, ENG130, ENG1XX, HIS425, HUM2XX

Intercultural Competency (IC) Courses

ANT110, ANT1XX, ARB101, ARB102, CHI162, CHI164, ENG213, ENG214, FR162, FR164, GER162, GER164, HIS/NW115, HIS/WS319, HIS200, HIS201, HIS212, HIS216, HIS250, HIS251, HIS255, HIS266, HIS271, HIS277, HIS281, HIS287, HIS288, HIS289, HIS290, HIS291, HIS292, HIS293, HIS330, HIS332, HIS366, HIS368, HIS382, HIS383, HUM113, HUM2XX, HUM2XX, HUM2XX, HUM2XX, IT162, IT164, NWC103, NWC105, NWC107, NWC110, NWC112, PHI240, PHI241, PHI244, PHI245, PHI2XX, PHI340, POR162, POR164, POR196, POR198, SPA110, SPA111, SPA162, SPA164, SPA196, SPA197, SPA203, SPA204, SPA221, SPA222, SPA224, SPA225, SPA226, SPA2XX, SPA2XX, SPA2XX, SPA330, SPA331, SPA337, SPA360, SPA361, SPA365, SPA370, SPA3XX

Oral Communication (OC) Courses

HIS206, HIS363, COM160, HIS/WS319, HIS287, HIS366, COM160, HUM2XX, HUM1XX, PHI250, HUM115 to HUM2XX, PHI110, PHI112, PHI120, PHI231, PHI232, PHI252, PHI259, HUM117 to HUM2XX, PHI111, PHI233, PHI234

Quantitative Reasoning (QR) Courses

MAT110, MAT115, MAT118, MAT120, MAT127, MAT133, MAT135, MAT141, MAT170, MAT171, MAT181, MAT182, MAT185

Scientific Inquiry (SI) Courses

BIO100, BIO103, BIO104, BIO105, BIO106, BIO107, BIO110, BIO115, BIO132, CHE102, PSY324

Writing Intensive, Tier 1 (W1) Courses

WRT101, WRT101P

Writing Intensive, Tier 2 (W2) Courses

ENG104, ENG105, ENG105, ENG106, ENG106, ENG107, ENG107, ENG130, ENG130, ENG131, ENG1XX, ENG1XX, HIS/WS325, HIS370, HIS415, HIS416, HIS425, HIS450, HUM113, HUM113, HUM2XX, HUM2XX, HUM2XX, PHI226, PHI229, PHI260, PHI300, PSY324, SPA110, SPA111, WRT103, WRT210, WRT245, WRT273, WRT371

Writing Intensive, Tier 3 (W3) Courses

HIS490, MAT4XY, PHI315, PHI320, PHI332, PHI334, PHI338, PSY426, PSY439

Culminating General Education Experience (CE) Courses

HIS490, MAT4XY, PSY426, PSY439, PHI320, PHI332, PHI334, PHI338

* Additional courses are reviewed by the General Education Committee and approved by the Provost on a regular basis. Students should refer to Open/Close to view the available courses and their competencies.