

**Updated: 10/4/07**

# **The NJ AOA-Sponsored General Education Institute Team Recommendations**

August 15, 2007

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Overview: The AOA [NJ Community College Academic Officers Association] sponsored a team of faculty and administrators to attend a General Education Institute sponsored by the AAC & U [Association of American Colleges & Universities] in May 2007. The team worked together from Saturday, May 19, through Tuesday, May 22. The team's recommendations and its additions to and revision of hitherto existing documents are included below. Please note that **NO** changes in the General Education Foundation have occurred. This version is identical in substance with the original 1997 version. Language has been added to increase clarity and/or enhance connectedness to the original version. It is expected that these documents will support future state wide efforts to enhance consistency in general education programs across the community college sector.

Recommendations:

1. AOA reviews and approves the following documents:
  - **General Education Foundation** (August 15, 2007 Version)
  - **NJCC General Education Goals and Objectives** (August 15, 2007, Version)
  - **NJCC General Education Course Criteria** (August 15, 2007, Version),
  - Policy Statement on CC General Education Credit
  - New Jersey Community College Procedure Governing the Operation of the **General Education Coordinating Committee (GECC)**
2. AOA advises the CC Presidents that it has adopted the reformatted version of the
  - **General Education Foundation** (August 15, 2007, Version)
3. AOA recommends to the CC Presidents the
  - Policy Statement on CC General Education Credit
4. AOA has agreed to revisit the following issues as related to Community College General Education requirements:
  - NJCC General Education Goal 4 **Technological Competency or Information Literacy**
  - NJCC General Education Goal 9 **Ethical Reasoning and Action**
  - Explore adoption of a unified (statewide) course numbering system

**A General Education Foundation for  
Associate in Arts, Associate in Science, Specialized Associate, and Certificate Programs  
in New Jersey's Community Colleges**

(1997 Adoption; 2007 Reaffirmation; August 15, 2007 Revision)

General Education Goal(s) addressed									Course Categories (Goal Categories)	AA credits	AS credits	AAS, AFA AS Nursing credits	Certificate credits
1								9	<b>Communication</b> (Written and Oral Com.)	9	6	6	3
	2	3	4					9	<b>Mathematics – Science – Technology</b> <b>Mathematics 3-8 cr.</b> (Quant. Knlg. & Skills) <b>Science 3-8 cr.</b> (Sci. Knlg. & Rsng.) <b>Technological Competency or Information Literacy 0-4 cr.</b>	12	9	3	3
				5				9	<b>Social Science</b> (Society and Human Behavior)	6	3	3	
					6			9	<b>Humanities</b> (Humanistic Perspective)	9	3		
						7		9	<b>History</b> (Historical Perspective)	6			
							8	9	<b>Diversity courses</b> (Global & Cult. Awns.)	3			
									Unassigned general education credit		6	8	
									<i>General education foundation total</i>	<i>45</i>	<i>30</i>	<i>20</i>	<i>6</i>

Gen. Ed. Foundation Course Categories	NJCC Goal Categories*	Course Criteria: Below are brief descriptions of the course criteria for satisfying the requirements. For fuller descriptions, see the <b>NJCC GE Course Criteria</b> (August 15, 2007).
1 <b>Communication</b>	1 Written and Oral Communication	An array of courses which prepare students to speak, read, and write effectively. At least two of these must be composition courses for A.A. and A.S. degrees. At least one of these must be a composition course for specialized degree programs and certificates.
2 <b>Mathematics</b>	2 Quantitative Knowledge and Skills	Any college level mathematics course including statistics, algebra, or calculus course(s). These courses should build upon a demonstrated proficiency in basic algebra.
3 <b>Science</b>	3 Scientific Knowledge and Reasoning	Any course(s) in the biological or physical sciences – including non-majors survey courses. At least one of these courses must have a laboratory component.
4 <b>Technology</b>	4 Technological Competency or Information Literacy	Any course that emphasizes common computer technology skills (e.g. computer science, information technology) that helps students to access, process, and present information. This component is not required for students who can demonstrate competency.
5 <b>Social Science</b>	5 Society and Human Behavior	Any introductory course(s) from among anthropology, economics, geography, political science, psychology, or sociology.
6 <b>Humanities</b>	6 Humanistic Perspective	Any broad-based course(s) in the appreciation of art, music, or theater; literature; foreign language; history; philosophy and/or religious studies.
7 <b>History</b>	7 Historical Perspective	Any broad-based course(s) or sequence of courses in World, Western, non-Western, or American History.
8 <b>Diversity courses</b>	8 Global and Cultural Awareness	Any course whose primary purpose is to expose students to a multicultural society or people, possibly within the context of non-introductory study of a foreign language. If this goal is integrated into one or more general education course(s), the three credits may be moved from this category to another general education category.
	9 Ethical Reasoning and Action	This ethical reasoning and action goal may be infused in any of the above categories. These courses should include the ethical implications of issues and situations.

**Note:** This document should be used in conjunction with the **NJCC GE Learning Goals & Suggested Individual College-Wide Learning Obj.** (8-15-2007).

Programs	Allocation Notes: The credit allocation below is consistent with the 1997 NJCC Gen. Ed. Foundation grid.
AA	The Associate in Arts (AA) program requires a minimum of 45 semester credit hours of general education coursework from among the indicated categories.
AS	The Associate in Science (AS) program requires a minimum of 30 semester credit hours from among the indicated categories, with minimum distributions as shown. Beyond these minimums, any 30-credit subset of the AA program credit distribution will be accepted. General education coursework in excess of the 24 credits listed should follow the AA distribution limits.
Specialized Associate AAS, AFA, & AS Nursing	The specialized associate degrees shall include Applied Associate in Science (AAS), Associate in Fine Arts (AFA), and AS in Nursing. These programs shall require no fewer than 20 semester credit hours of General Education. Notwithstanding any articulation agreements, the general education courses should support career preparation. General education coursework in excess of the 12 credits listed should follow the AS distribution limits.
Certificate	The Certificate (or Academic Certificate) shall prepare students to read and write effectively. At least one other general education course is required. The Certificate of Achievement (COA) requires no general education courses beyond those that support career education. The Certificate of Completion (COC) is a noncredit certification program, which is not applicable within the general education context.

# NJCC General Education

## Learning Goals and Suggested Individual College-Wide Learning Objectives

(Adopted, 1997; Revised, August 15, 2007; Updated, October 4, 2007)

<p><b>New Jersey Community College General Education Philosophy:</b> Students are empowered to meet twenty-first century challenges through learning processes that lead to knowledge acquisition, skills mastery, critical thinking, and the exercise of personal, social, and civic responsibilities.</p>		
<p>The Colleges maintain responsibility for offering a general education program whose learning objectives facilitate attainment of all <b>NJCC Gen Ed Learning Goals</b>. Course-level learning objectives must be consistent with the <b>Individual College-Wide Learning Objectives</b> that fulfill the <b>NJCC Gen Ed Learning Goals</b>. (Local general education courses must also be consistent with <b>NJCC GE Course Criteria</b> for satisfying requirements.)</p>		
NJCC Goal Categories (Course Category)	NJCC Gen. Ed. Learning Goals	Suggested Individual College-Wide Learning Objectives: Colleges have discretion in the establishment of <b>Individual College-Wide Learning Objectives</b> that support the achievement of the <b>NJCC Learning Goals</b> . The following is a list of examples.
1 <b>Written and Oral Communication</b> (Communication)	Critical thinking is embedded Students will communicate effectively in both speech and writing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Students will explain and evaluate what they read, hear, and see.</li> <li>b. Students will state and evaluate the views and findings of others.</li> <li>c. Students will logically and persuasively state and support orally and in writing their points of view or findings.</li> <li>d. Students will evaluate, revise, and edit their communication.</li> </ul>
2 <b>Quantitative Knowledge and Skills</b> (Mathematics)	Students will use appropriate mathematical and statistical concepts and operations to interpret data and to solve problems.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Students will translate quantifiable problems into mathematical terms and solve these problems using mathematical or statistical operations.</li> <li>b. Students will construct graphs and charts, interpret them, and draw appropriate conclusions.</li> </ul>
3 <b>Scientific Knowledge and Reasoning</b> (Science)	Students will use the scientific method of inquiry, through the acquisition of scientific knowledge.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Applying the scientific method, students will analyze a problem and draw conclusions from data and evidence.</li> <li>b. Students will distinguish between scientific theory and scientific discovery, and between science and its scientific technological applications, and they will explain the impact of each on society.</li> </ul>
4 <b>Technological Competency or Information Literacy</b> (Technology)	Students will use computer systems or other appropriate forms of technology to achieve educational and personal goals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Students will use computer systems and/or other appropriate forms of technology to present information.</li> <li>b. Students will use appropriate forms of technology to identify, collect, and process info.</li> <li>c. Students will use appropriate library/learning resource tools such as cataloging systems to access information in reference publications, periodicals, bibliographies, and data bases.</li> <li>d. Students will recognize when information is needed and be able to locate, evaluate, and use information.</li> </ul>
5 <b>Society and Human Behavior</b> (Social Science)	Students will use social science theories and concepts to analyze human behavior and social and political institutions and to act as responsible citizens.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Students will analyze and discuss behavioral or societal issues using theories and concepts from a social science perspective.</li> <li>b. Students will explain how social institutions and organizations influence individual behavior.</li> <li>c. Students will describe and demonstrate how social scientists gather and analyze data and draw conclusions.</li> <li>d. Students will apply civic knowledge both locally and globally and engage in activities that exercise personal, social, and civic responsibility.</li> </ul>
6 <b>Humanistic Perspective</b> (Humanities)	Students will analyze works in the fields of art, music, or theater; history (see note in Goal 7); literature; and philosophy and/or religious studies; and will gain competence in the use of a foreign language.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Students will describe commonly used approaches and criteria for analyzing works*.</li> <li>b. Students will analyze works* and applying commonly used approaches and criteria.</li> <li>c. Students will demonstrate a value added competence in the production and comprehension of a foreign language.</li> </ul> <p>* in the fields of art, music, or theater; literature; philosophy and/or religious studies and possibly within the context of studying and using a language other than English.</p>
7 <b>Historical Perspective</b> (History)	Students will understand historical events and movements in World, Western, non-Western or American societies and assess their subsequent significance. Note: may be included in Goal 6.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Students will state the causes of a major historical event and analyze the impact of that event on a nation or civilization.</li> <li>b. Students will discuss a major idea, movement, invention or discovery, and how it affected the world or American society.</li> <li>c. Students will demonstrate how writers' interpretations of historical events are influenced by their time, culture, and perspective.</li> </ul>
8 <b>Global and Cultural Awareness</b> (Diversity courses)	Students will understand the importance of a global perspective and culturally diverse peoples.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Students will link cultural practices and perspectives with geographic and/or historical conditions from which they arose.</li> <li>b. Students will explain why an understanding of differences in people's backgrounds is particularly important to American society.</li> <li>c. Students will recognize and explain the possible consequences of prejudicial attitudes and discriminatory actions.</li> <li>d. Students will recognize and assess the contributions and impact of people from various nations and/or cultures.</li> </ul>
9 <b>Ethical Reasoning and Action</b>	Students will understand ethical issues and situations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Students will analyze and evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of different perspectives on an ethical issue or a situation.</li> <li>b. Students will take a position on an ethical issue or a situation and defend it.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Note:</b> This document should be used in conjunction with the <b>General Education Foundation</b> (8- 15- 2007) and the <b>NJCC GE Course Criteria</b> (8-15- 2007).</p>		

# NJCC General Education Course Criteria

## for Satisfying the NJCC Gen Ed Foundation

(August 15, 2007; Updated, October 4, 2007)

<b>New Jersey Community College Educational Philosophy:</b> Students are empowered to meet twenty-first century challenges by achieving learning that involves knowledge acquisition, skills mastery, critical thinking, and the exercise of personal, social, and civic responsibilities.		
<b>NJCC Goal Categories (Course Category)</b>	<b>NJCC Learning Goals*</b>	<b>Course Criteria:</b> These criteria for satisfying requirements are consistent with 1997 NJCC Gen. Ed. Foundation. Neither this nor preceding updates have modified the NJCC Gen. Ed. Foundation and their course criteria.**
1 <b>Written and Oral Communication</b> (Communication)	Students will communicate effectively in both speech and writing.	An array of courses which prepare students to speak, read, and write effectively. At least two of these must be composition courses for A.A. and A.S. degrees. At least one of these must be a composition course for other programs and certificates. This category is typically limited to courses such as English Composition I, English Composition II, and a Speech / Human Communications course.
2 <b>Quantitative Knowledge and Skills</b> (Mathematics)	Students will use appropriate mathematical and statistical concepts and operations to interpret data and to solve problems.	Any college level mathematics course including statistics, algebra, or calculus course(s). These courses should build upon a demonstrated proficiency in basic algebra. Students are expected to demonstrate proficiency in basic algebra as part of the AA and AS degrees. Institutions are free to determine a basic algebra proficiency requirement for specialized associate degrees and certificates on an individual basis.
3 <b>Scientific Knowledge and Reasoning</b> (Science)	Students will use the scientific method of inquiry, through the acquisition of scientific knowledge.	Any course[s] in the biological or physical sciences for science majors. Survey courses in biology, chemistry, and physics fulfill this requirement for non-science majors. At least one of the courses taken must have a laboratory component.
4 <b>Technological Competency or Information Literacy</b> (Technology)	Students will use computer systems or other appropriate forms of technology to achieve educational and personal goals.	Any course that emphasizes common computer technology skills (e.g. computer science, information technology) that helps students access, process, and present information. This component is not required for students who can demonstrate competency.
5 <b>Society and Human Behavior</b> (Social Science)	Students will use social science theories and concepts to analyze human behavior and social and political institutions and to act as responsible citizens.	Any introductory*** course(s) from among anthropology, economics, geography, political science, psychology, or sociology. Typically this category is limited to broad-based**** courses.
6 <b>Humanistic Perspective</b> (Humanities)	Students will analyze works in the fields of art, music, or theater; history (see note in Goal 7); literature; and philosophy and/or religious studies; and will gain competence in the use of a foreign language.	Any broad-based**** course[s] in the appreciation of art, music, or theater; literature; foreign language; history; philosophy and/or religious studies. This category may include any broad-based course which is fundamentally the appreciation of a performing or a creative art. Typically studio arts courses, both performing and creative, involve predominately performance and creation, and therefore do not satisfy this requirement. This category also includes any broad-based**** course which is fundamentally a literature course. Typically journalism, creative writing, and other specialized writing courses involve predominately writing, and therefore do not satisfy this requirement.
7 <b>Historical Perspective</b> (History)	Students will understand historical events and movements in World, Western, non-Western or American societies and assess their subsequent significance. Note: may be included in Goal 6.	Any broad-based****course(s) or sequence of courses in World, Western, non-Western, or American History.
8 <b>Global and Cultural Awareness</b> (Diversity courses)	Students will understand the importance of a global perspective and cultural diverse peoples.	Any course whose primary purpose is to expose students to a multicultural society or people possibly within the context of non-introductory study of a foreign language. If this goal is integrated into one or more general education course(s), the three credits may be moved from this category to another general education category.
9 <b>Ethical Reasoning and Action</b>	Students will understand ethical issues and situations.	These courses include the ethical implications of issues and situations. This ethical reasoning and action goal may be infused in any of the above categories.
* The Colleges maintain responsibility for offering a general education program whose learning objectives facilitate attainment of all <b>NJCC Learning Goals</b> . Local general education courses must be consistent with <b>NJCC Course Criteria</b> for satisfying requirements. (Course-level learning objectives must also be consistent with the <b>Individual College-wide Learning Objectives</b> that fulfill the <b>NJCC Gen Ed Learning Goals</b> .)		
** The NJ Academic Officers Association has the responsibility of affirming individual course classifications approved by institutions based upon the <b>NJCC General Education Learning Goals</b> and the <b>NJCC General Education Course Criteria for Satisfying the NJCC Gen Ed Foundation</b> .		
*** <b>Introductory</b> is defined as general, i.e., not focused on "majors" or academic and vocational specializations. Its object is "common learning," based on those realities, experiences, and concerns which all humans share. Its subject matter is part of what all educated people have (and should have) in common.		
**** <b>Broad based</b> is defined as having a foundation or basis that is wide in range; comprehensive, or extensive.		
<b>Note:</b> This document should be used in conjunction with the <b>General Education Foundation</b> (August 15, 2007) and the <b>NJCC GE Learning Goal &amp; Suggested Individual College-wide Learning Objectives</b> (August 15, 2007).		

## New Jersey Community College Policy on General Education Credit

August 15, 2007

### **Policy:**

Community Colleges shall construct associate degrees and certificates that are consistent with all existing and applicable NJCHE regulations and with the Academic Issues Committee Manual of the NJ President's Council. All general education courses shall satisfy the New Jersey Community College (NJCC) **General Education Foundation** criteria for course credit. The general education portion of all associate degrees and certificates shall match the distributions and totals as set forth in the NJCC **General Education Foundation**.

1. The NJCC **General Education Foundation** policy represents and specifies the number, type, and character of general education credits that degrees and certificates are licensed to contain.
  - a. General education coursework that is 1-2 credits in excess of the NJCC **General Education Foundation minimum credit specifications** may be included in the general education portions of any degree or certificate as long as the program stays within the 66 credit maximum.
  - b. Coursework in excess of the NJCC **General Education Foundation** and the 1-2 credits discussed above shall be considered support courses for the major and shall be subject to transfer and articulation policies and procedures governing the program course work.
  
2. The Academic Officers Association (AOA) is responsible for the affirmation of and continued compliance with this policy. The AOA is responsible to reaffirm course compliance every two years.

### **Rationale**

Two recent reviews of the community college curriculum have been completed in September 2006 and May 2007. The findings were the following:

- Associate degrees and certificates were identified that had either not enough (insufficient) or too much coursework when compared to the distributions and requirements as set forth in the NJCC **General Education Foundation**.
- Locally approved general education courses did not satisfy the general education course criteria set forth in the NJCC **General Education Foundation**.
- Community colleges require students to complete an array of courses that neither match the NJCC **General Education Foundation** nor fulfill requirements within a program.

**New Jersey Community College Procedure**  
**Governing the Operation of the General Education Coordinating Committee**

August 15, 2007

1. The NJ CC Academic Officers Association (AOA) shall establish a sub-committee of AOA called the General Education Coordinating Committee or GECC.
2. The GECC will be charged to
  - a. facilitate communication regarding the NJCC General Education Foundation among and on the community college campuses;
  - b. act as a repository of general education best practices (in particular assessment practices), policies, and procedures;
  - c. promote faculty development in support of the understanding and application of general education policies;
  - d. identify and report on changes in the general education landscape; and
  - e. establish procedures for and conduct statewide General Education Course Review (see 6).
3. The membership of GECC will be composed of
  - a. one faculty member from each community college who possesses an expertise broad enough to cover the nine general education goals and categories and who is asked to serve by the local chief academic officer (CAO) of the college;
  - b. additional academic officers, chief academic officers, and a student development officer who are asked to serve by AOA; and
  - c. a chair who is a CAO and is appointed by AOA.
4. The GECC will meet twice a year in the fall and spring semesters following a regular AOA meeting. As needed, additional meetings may be scheduled, including a workshop to create opportunities to investigate and discuss issues at greater length.
5. Each community college will have one vote on GECC actions involving policies and recommendations.
6. The General Education Course Review:
  - a. Each community college is responsible for reviewing and approving the courses for the institution's general education program.
  - b. All courses approved by an institution as satisfying the NJCC General Education Foundation are submitted by the institution to the GECC.
  - c. The GECC will review and affirm all courses previously approved by a community college as having satisfied the criteria for general education credit.
  - d. When the GECC acts to affirm that courses have satisfied the criteria for general education credit, then no further reviews are required.
  - e. Courses not acted upon by the GECC will be reviewed for affirmation by the AOA.
    - i. Colleges will be given an opportunity to provide additional supporting evidence to show how a particular course satisfies the criteria prior to AOA review.
    - ii. The GECC may be asked to provide additional information in support of AOA's reviews of general education course work.