

GENERAL EDUCATION PROGRAM

Introduction to General Education

SUNY New Paltz's General Education (GE) program lays the foundation for students' intellectual development by providing a broad knowledge base, essential communication skills, and opportunities to explore new perspectives, ways of thinking, arguing, and being. GE courses teach students *how* to think instead of *what* to think. Through New Paltz's diverse GE course offerings, students develop a capacity for lifetime learning and adaptability in a rapidly changing world.

In fall 2023, New Paltz introduced GE 5, our newest General Education program. GE 5 aligns with SUNY's [General Education Framework](#) and shares its goals of addressing essential skills and competencies, exploring disciplinary and interdisciplinary ways of knowing, and encouraging engaged learning and student success.

The GE 5 program applies to students who matriculate in or after fall 2023. Students who matriculated at New Paltz prior to fall 2023 will complete the General Education program under which they entered the university:

- The GE4 program applies to students who matriculated at New Paltz from fall 2019 through spring 2023.
- Students who matriculated at New Paltz prior to fall 2019 will complete the program known as GE III (GE3).

General Education 5 (GE 5)

New Paltz's General Education 5 (GE 5), in keeping with SUNY's system-wide General Education Framework, addresses the fundamental aims of undergraduate education, including proficiency with essential skills and competencies, familiarization with disciplinary and interdisciplinary ways of knowing, and enhancement of the values and disposition of an engaged 21st-century global citizenry.

What will GE 5 look like for you?

Starting college at SUNY New Paltz?

The GE 5 program offers ten knowledge and skills areas that will expose you to different ways of knowing, enabling you to make reasoned judgments outside as well as inside your academic field and develop diverse perspectives and global understanding. You'll acquire two core competencies - Critical Thinking & Reasoning and Information Literacy - that extend beyond discipline-specific knowledge and skills and infuse your learning experience.

For most new-to-college students¹, GE 5 will look like this:

| GE Category | Requirement |
|---|--|
| Mathematics (and Quantitative Reasoning) | 1 course |
| Communication - Written and Oral | 1 course: ENG170 Writing & Rhetoric (prerequisite: ENG160 Composition I or by placement) |
| Natural Sciences (and Scientific Reasoning) | 1 4-credit science lecture/laboratory or 1 3-credit science lecture course + 1 corresponding 1-credit science lab course or |

2 3-credit science courses (non-lab)

| | |
|---|--|
| Diversity: Equity, Inclusion & Social Justice | 1 course |
| Social Sciences | 1 course |
| U.S. History & Civic Engagement | 1 course |
| World History & Global Awareness | 1 course |
| Humanities | 1 course |
| The Arts | 1 course (minimum 3 credits) |
| World Languages | 2 consecutive elementary courses in a single language or 1 elementary and 1 intermediate course in a single language or 1 intermediate course (requirement depends on language placement level) |

All undergraduate degree-seeking students must also demonstrate the required student learning outcomes in two core competencies:

| | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Critical Thinking & Reasoning | Students will develop these competencies in several |
| Information Literacy | courses both inside and outside their major. |

Total credits to complete the full GE 5 program: 32 (minimum)

Transferring to New Paltz with college credits or an associate's degree?

- If you completed college-level courses prior to coming to New Paltz, your [pre-matriculation transfer credits](#) may count toward your GE 5 program. Check your progress report for details.
- GE knowledge and skills areas successfully completed at another SUNY campus will be accepted and applied to your degree at New Paltz.
- If you earned a SUNY A.A. or A.S. degree and completed SUNY's minimum General Education requirement, your GE 5 program at New Paltz will be fully satisfied.

Special note for engineering transfer students:

- If you completed a SUNY A.S. Engineering Science degree and have not yet completed SUNY's minimum General Education program, you will do so at New Paltz. Check your progress report for details.

¹ See "Modified General Education Program" for exceptions.

General Education 4 (GE4)

(for students who matriculated fall 2019 through spring 2023)

General Education 4 (GE4) provides students with a broad foundation for academic and professional development and for personal exploration. It encourages students to take chances in new and unfamiliar fields and to develop a broad knowledge base and essential communication skills that they will draw upon throughout their lives.

GE4 is organized around three categories of knowledge:

Category I: Foundation Skills

Category I GE courses develop skills in basic communication, mathematics, and foreign language.

Required knowledge and skills areas:

- Mathematics (*one course*)
- Basic Communication (*one course; a prerequisite course may be required based on placement level*)
- Foreign Language (*two consecutive elementary courses or one elementary and one intermediate course in a single language, or one intermediate course - requirement depends on language placement level*)

Category II: Exposure to the Disciplines

Category II courses *introduce art, the humanities, and the natural and social sciences and the different "ways of knowing" that these disciplines represent.*

Required knowledge and skills areas:

- The Arts (*one course, minimum 3 credits*)
- Humanities (*one course*)
- Natural Sciences (*4 credits of lab science or 6 credits of non-lab science - see details below*)
- Social Sciences (*one course*)

Category III: Regions of the World

Category III courses *explore questions about identity and encourage students to become informed, engaged, and thoughtful citizens of the world.*

Required knowledge and skills areas:

- United States Studies (*one course*)
- Western Civilization (*one course*)
- World Civilizations (*one course*)

New Paltz GE4 Requirements

Students must complete at least one course in each of the ten General Education categories.

Each major is designed to support students' progressive development of competency in Critical Thinking and Information Management.

| GE Category | Requirement |
|--------------------------------|--|
| Mathematics | 1 course |
| Basic Communication | 1 course: ENG170 Writing & Rhetoric or equivalent (prerequisite: ENG160 Composition I or by placement) |
| Natural Science | 1 4-credit science lecture/laboratory course or |
| | 1 3-credit science lecture course + 1 corresponding 1-credit science lab course or |
| | 2 3-credit science courses (non-lab) |
| Social Science | 1 course |
| United States Studies | 1 course |
| Western Civilization | 1 course |
| World Civilizations & Cultures | 1 course |
| Humanities | 1 course |
| The Arts | 1 course (minimum 3 credits) |
| Foreign Language | 2 consecutive elementary courses or |

| |
|---|
| 1 elementary and 1 intermediate course in a single language or |
| 1 intermediate course |
| (requirement depends on language placement level) |

Minimum total credits = 32

General Education III (GE3)

(for students who matriculated prior to fall 2019)

By introducing students to different fields of study and different methods of determining knowledge, General Education III provides a foundation for the liberal education that New Paltz offers. "GE III" is designed to encourage a global perspective as well as an understanding of the traditions and complexities of a democratic society. The program encompasses the SUNY-wide general education requirements in place until fall 2023. A defining feature of GE III is its attention to developing students' capacities to think critically while providing the breadth and depth of knowledge that will allow them to become active citizens and productive members of society.

New Paltz GE III Requirements

The *critical thinking competencies* of Effective Expression, Systematic Inquiry, Information Literacy, and Ethical Reflection are infused throughout the New Paltz categories of academic knowledge.

| GE Category | Requirement |
|--|--|
| Composition II (prerequisite: Composition I) | 1 course |
| Mathematics | 1 course |
| Natural Sciences | 2 courses |
| Social Sciences | 1 course |
| United States Studies | 1 course |
| Western Civilization | 1 course |
| World Civilizations & Cultures | 1 course |
| Humanities | 1 course |
| Arts | 1 course |
| Foreign Language | 1 or 2 courses, depending on placement level |
| Diversity | 1 course |

Minimum total credits = 36

Students Who Follow a Modified General Education Program

Students Majoring in Engineering

Students majoring in Computer Engineering, Electrical Engineering, or Mechanical Engineering follow a modified General Education program based on the New Paltz GE program in effect at the time of matriculation. In all cases, modifications meet or exceed SUNY's minimum General Education requirement and are reflected in students' progress reports.

Students with Written and Oral Proficiency in a Language Other Than English

New Paltz will waive the World Languages (previously "Foreign Language") requirement in instances where a student has had significant, documentable education in a country where English is not the language

of instruction. A student who can demonstrate through appropriate documentation competencies in oral, reading and written expression in a language other than English may also apply for a waiver. Approval must be obtained through the Department of Languages, Literatures and Cultures.