

GENERAL STUDIES

Phone: 845-257-3947

Locations: Old Main 127

Web address: <https://newpaltz.edu/online/online-degrees/bgs/>

The General Studies program is a flexible degree-completion program for individuals who have earned at least 60 college credits with a 2.5 GPA. The program can be completed through seated, hybrid, or fully online coursework. Students must earn a grade of C- or better for courses to count toward the General Studies major.

Designed for those whose original path to graduation was interrupted or redirected, this interdisciplinary Bachelor of Arts (BA) program provides an opportunity to resume college while also maximizing previous academic experience and credits earned. By exploring a few areas of inquiry, General Studies students build on their existing knowledge and expand their understanding in subjects of special interest.

With careful advisement, General Studies students structure their plan of study around three of the following seven focus areas, completing 15 credits in each (45 credits):

1. *Literature & Writing:* The Literature & Writing focus area develops students' knowledge, skills, and appreciation of the written and spoken word. "Appreciation" here means attention to aesthetic questions of genre, form, and style. These will be primarily courses in which students read or write fiction, nonfiction, poetry, song, drama, literary criticism, journalism, and/or screenplays, but will also include courses that teach students how to analyze literature and other texts from a variety of theoretical perspectives. Although all courses in the department of English might count toward the focus area, "Literature and Writing" will also include courses from other departments that teach students how to write creatively and/or analyze literature.
2. *Social Sciences:* The social sciences include the many disciplines that use quantitative and qualitative methods of inquiry to understand the human condition, our histories, our cultures, and our institutions. This focus area includes most coursework associated with the departments of Anthropology, Asian Studies, Black Studies, Economics, Geography & Environmental Studies, History, Latin American & Caribbean Studies, Political Science and International Relations, Psychology, Sociology, and Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies as well as many courses in the departments of Communication, Digital Media & Journalism, Philosophy, and Religious Studies.
3. *Global Studies:* The Global Studies focus area provides students with knowledge of the world, deepening their understanding of global issues, processes, and systems as well as world histories, arts, and culture. Coursework in this focus area spans a wide range of disciplines across all five academic colleges and includes the study of arts, humanities, languages, social sciences, natural sciences, and business from an international or world perspective.
4. *United States Studies:* The United States Studies focus area provides an interdisciplinary examination of the diverse experiences and cultures within the United States, emphasizing coursework from across many departments, including Art, Art History, Black Studies, Communication, English, History, Geography & Environmental Studies, Music, Political Science, Religious Studies, Theatre Arts, and Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies.
5. *Fine & Performing Arts:* The School of Fine & Performing Arts offers individual majors in Art and Art Education, Art History, Music, and

Theater Arts. The Fine & Performing Arts focus area offers students the opportunity to explore coursework across all four of these areas of study to gain a broad and interdisciplinary knowledge of and appreciation for the visual and performing arts.

6. *Environmental Literacy:* The Environmental Literacy focus area prepares students with a foundation in ecological and socio-political knowledge enabling them to better understand sustainability issues of our day and to develop environmentally responsible attitudes and behaviors. Coursework draws from a wide array of disciplines exploring how we understand environmental sciences, how we explore ethical and business considerations related to the environment, how we communicate with one another about the environment, and how society evaluates and responds to environmental challenges.
7. *General Business:* While the undergraduate degree programs in the School of Business focus on specific areas of Business, including Accounting, Business Analytics, Finance, Marketing, or Management, the General Business focus area offers students an interdisciplinary opportunity to explore a broad-based selection of courses across multiple areas of business as they prepare themselves for their career goals. All BUS courses can count toward the General Business focus area as well courses in other disciplines where the focus of the course is related to business skills or functions (ex: business communication). NOTE: *The General Business focus area of the General Studies major is NOT a Business degree and should not be confused with the BS General Business major. The BS General Business major is available for students who qualify for admission to the School of Business and for whom a business degree is essential.*

To link their interdisciplinary studies with intellectual, career and life interests and goals, General Studies students prepare a portfolio of original works and reflective essays associated with each of their chosen focus areas. A recorded presentation of their portfolio will complete this one-credit capstone experience.

For more information about the General Studies program, please contact:

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To apply to the General Studies program, and for information about admission as a transfer student, please visit the [Office of Undergraduate Admission](#).