

A Proposal for General Education at Radford University

Mission Statement

The General Education Program is a transformative learning experience that advances the university's values and its vision of student-centered learning, positioning students as ethical community leaders in Appalachia, the Commonwealth, and beyond. Throughout the program, students will cultivate core competencies, encounter and experiment with new ways of thinking, and learn how different disciplines develop and apply knowledge to make meaningful change.

Goals of the General Education Program

Radford University aims to educate students through a General Education Program that:

- Builds on the skills and knowledge that students bring with them while also setting a new foundation for success in college, in their major, in their career, and in their life by creating educational opportunities that:
 - Provide transformative experiences that expose students to new ideas, challenge their assumptions, and encourage self-reflection
 - Engage with the world and explore the richness of human experience
 - Cultivate an understanding of and respect for different ways of knowing
 - Develop the tools and skills essential for lifelong learning
- Helps students better understand themselves and others so that they can actively participate in their communities as engaged, informed citizens by creating educational opportunities that:
 - Establish a connection to and understanding of place—Appalachia, the Commonwealth, and beyond
 - Develop ethical reasoning and self-awareness

Learning Outcomes of the General Education Program

Throughout the General Education Program, students will:

- Develop fundamental skills to acquire knowledge and establish a foundation for future success in their college career and beyond.
- Apply knowledge from a broad range of representative disciplines.
- Explore the connections between general education courses and their broader experiences with their college, major, career, and lives.

Throughout the program, students will develop complementary skills in critical thinking, digital literacy, and civic engagement.

Program Requirements

Competencies – 9 credits

- Mathematics (3 credits)
- Written Communication (6 credits)
- Introductory Writing
- Intermediate Writing

Inquiries – 18 to 20 credits

- Scientific Inquiry (6-8 credits, at least 1 lab course)
- Humanistic and Artistic Inquiry (6 credits)
- Social and Behavioral Inquiry (6 credits)

Integrations – 4+ credits

- Find Your Place: Radford 101 (3 credits) – gateway seminar to support student success in college
- Navigate Your Journey - credit-bearing culminating experience (minimum sophomore standing)

Total: Minimum 31 credits.

Competencies Goals and Outcomes

Through competency courses, students will develop fundamental skills that make possible the acquisition of knowledge to establish a foundation for future success in their college career and beyond.

Quantitative Reasoning

- Translate information among various mathematical forms (e.g., equations, graphs, diagrams, tables, words).
- Solve problems using appropriate mathematical tools.

Written Communication

Introductory

- Employ reading strategies that inform written communication.
- Engage in the writing process – including pre-writing, drafting, revising, editing, and proofreading – to improve written communication.
- Use appropriate vocabulary, mechanics, grammar, style, and documentation.

Intermediate

- Demonstrate competency in writing for specific audiences and purposes.
- Communicate through writing the understanding of content and/or texts.

Inquiries Goals and Outcomes

Critical thinking is characterized by the comprehensive exploration of issues, ideas, artifacts, and events before accepting or formulating an opinion or conclusion. Through inquiry courses, students will demonstrate their ability to acquire and apply knowledge from a broad range of representative disciplines. Students will develop and apply methodological skills that encourage continuing exploration and lifelong learning.

Scientific Inquiry

- Explain scientific concepts related to observable, measurable natural phenomena
- Discriminate between valid and invalid inferences made using scientific concepts and evidence.
- Describe data collected via the scientific method (required for lab courses only, optional for non-lab courses).

Humanistic and Artistic Inquiry

- Describe basic concepts in artistic or humanistic analysis.
- Explain the context of an artistic practice, cultural form, artifact, or philosophical idea.

Social and Behavioral Inquiry

- Describe concepts or methods used in social or behavioral analysis.
- Analyze social or behavioral interactions using disciplinarily appropriate concepts and methods.

Integrations Goals and Outcomes

Through integration courses, students will explore and demonstrate the connections between courses in the general education program and their broader experiences in college, their major, their career, and their lives.

Find Your Place (Radford 101) Learning Outcomes

Find Your Place (Radford 101) is designed to foster a strong sense of belonging while laying the foundation for student success at Radford University. The course connects students with their peers, faculty, and the broader university community, cultivating an environment in which they feel supported and valued. Through this experience, students develop essential skills for academic and personal achievement, engage with digital literacy by identifying credible information sources and using digital tools ethically, and explore the influence of place—whether Appalachia, the Commonwealth, or beyond—on their education and sense of identity. By encouraging reflection and connection, the course also promotes civic engagement and prepares students to contribute meaningfully to their communities.

This course has three specific areas of focus:

- Digital Literacy
 - Identify credible digital information sources.
 - Use a range of digital tools ethically.
- Civic Engagement
 - Explain the influence of place - Appalachia, the Commonwealth, or beyond - on their educational experience.
 - Demonstrate an awareness of personal and societal responsibilities related to civic engagement.
- Student Success
 - Demonstrate foundational skills necessary for academic and personal achievement at Radford University.

Navigate Your Journey Learning Outcomes

The culminating experience of General Education provides students with opportunities to demonstrate the relevance of General Education to their major/career and guarantees access to high-impact practices for all students. Students participate in collaborative learning, produce scholarly, creative, or clinical work, and present the outcomes to the university community and, possibly, beyond.

Courses or credit-bearing experiences will fulfill the following learning outcomes:

- Apply knowledge and skills gained through general education courses to scholarly or creative production.
- Present the outcome of learning according to professional standards.