Notes on General Education

What is General Education? The University of Maryland offers a transformative general education program that will help you succeed in your career and become an engaged, global citizen. You will

- Advance your reasoning, problem solving, speaking, and writing skills and begin to use them in all aspects of your life;
- Discover new knowledge…. about the natural world, the past, and human thought and action; which will
- Further your understanding of our universe and empower you to meet its challenges.

How is it similar to other colleges/universities? You will:

- Study humanities (literature, arts), history and social sciences (history, psychology, sociology, criminal justice) and the natural sciences (physics, biology, chemistry, astronomy)
- Select the courses you wish to take. This allows you to take a course in a subject of interest to you, or you could try something new!

How is it different from other colleges/universities?

I-Series courses: “I-Series” courses are the signature feature of the new General Education program. In these you will:

- Tackle big important questions (the kinds of questions that are complicated…questions without obvious solutions and questions related to contemporary problems)
- Examine the ways in which diverse intellectual traditions and disciplinary protocols address these questions “I” stands for imagination, innovation, issues, implementation, investigation, inspiration, and intellect.

Examples of Courses:
Collisions in Space: The Threat of Asteroid Impacts
Cross-Examining Climate Change
Information 3.0: Exploring Technological Tools
The Power of Musical Performance in Social Engagement
Why Good Managers Make Bad Decisions
Hot Spots: Violence, Catastrophe and Civilian Conflict Worldwide in Historical Perspective
Philosophical Issues: The Rights and Wrongs of Killing People

Scholarship in Practice: In “Scholarship in Practice” courses, you will engage in authentic work of a particular field of study. You will learn and practice skills of critical evaluation and participate in the process of applying knowledge in the pursuit of a tangible goal. In a “Scholarship in Practice” course, you might:

- Draft a business plan
- Compose original poetry
- Develop a curriculum
- Write a grant proposal,
- Create a software program,
- Produce a documentary
- Design an architectural space.
Examples of Courses:

- Applied Ethics and Public Policy in Bioengineering
- Contemporary Issues in Entrepreneurship and Innovation
- The Future of Energy and Climate Policy: Money, Influence, and the Competing Strategies to Influence Power
- Disability Studies: Stories, Law, and Social Policy
- Special Topics in Contemporary Chinese Fiction and Film
- Citizens & Leaders: Performing Politics & Presidential Campaigns
- Introduction to Political Ethics

Diversity: In the two required “Diversity” courses, you will explore human, social, and cultural differences. “Diversity” courses may be designated as “Understanding Plural Societies” or “Cultural Competence” courses.

- “Understanding Plural Societies” courses examine how diverse cultural and ethnic groups co-exist.

Examples of Courses:

- Global Poverty and Economic Development
- The Contemporary American Musical Theatre: From Hair to Hairspray
- United States Immigration Issues
- Hot Spots: Violence, Catastrophe and Civilian Conflict Worldwide
- Special Topics in Contemporary Chinese Fiction and Film
- Language, Identity and Diversity in the U.S.
- Arabic Literature in Translation: Writing Lives in Arabic

- “Cultural Competence” courses help you develop skills to succeed in a diverse world.

Examples of Courses:

- Essentials of Intercultural Communication
- French Cinema: A Cultural Approach
- Portuguese Culture
- Ensemble African Drumming
- Ensemble Korean Percussion Ensemble
- Model United Nations

Other Changes

- You will no longer be exempted from Math or Academic Writing (ENGL 101) based on SAT scores.
- An A in Academic Writing will no longer provide an exemption from Professional Writing (ENGL 39X).
- You may use AP/IB courses for Fundamental Studies and Distributive Studies, but will only be allowed to apply a maximum of six courses to Distributive Studies. At this point, there are no AP/IB courses that give credit for the “Scholarship and Practice” requirement. You may bring in more than six AP/IB courses, but only six will apply to Distributive Studies.

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