

# General Education

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## General Education Aims

General Education at MVCC consists of liberal arts and sciences courses and has a primary focus on the continuing intellectual development of students. These courses are both general (not program specific) and liberal (not vocational or technical). The principal aim is to present students with courses designed to enable them to demonstrate that they:

### A. Can communicate effectively.

Students will:

- Research a topic, develop an argument, and organize supporting details;
- Demonstrate coherent college-level communication (written and oral) that informs, persuades, or otherwise engages with an audience;
- Evaluate communication for substance, bias, and intended effect; and
- Demonstrate the ability to revise and improve written and oral communication.

### B. Can use mathematical processes to acquire and convey knowledge.

Students will demonstrate mathematical skills and quantitative reasoning, including the ability to:

- Interpret and draw inferences from appropriate mathematical models such as formulas, graphs, tables, or schematics;
- Represent mathematical information symbolically, visually, numerically, or verbally as appropriate; and
- Employ quantitative methods such as arithmetic, algebra, geometry, or statistics to solve problems.

### C. Have a basic knowledge and understanding of the natural world.

Students will demonstrate scientific reasoning applied to the natural world, including:

- An understanding of the methods scientists use to explore natural phenomena, including observation, hypothesis development, measurement and data collection, experimentation, evaluation of evidence, and employment of data analysis or mathematical modeling; and
- Application of scientific data, concepts, and models in one of the natural sciences.

### D. Have a basic knowledge of society, human nature, and the human condition including an understanding of individuals, cultures, and the relationships between them.

Students will:

- Describe the historical and contemporary societal factors that shape the development of individual and group identity involving race, class, and gender;
- Analyze the role that complex networks of social structures and systems play in the creation and perpetuation of the dynamics of power, privilege, oppression, and opportunity; and
- Apply the principles of rights, access, equity, and autonomous participation to past, current, or future social justice action.

### E. Can organize information, evaluate alternatives, distinguish fact from opinion, and reach logical conclusions.

Students will:

- Clearly articulate an issue or problem;
- Identify, analyze, and evaluate ideas, data, and arguments as they occur in their own or others' work;
- Acknowledge limitations such as perspective and bias; and
- Develop well-reasoned (logical) arguments to form judgments and/or draw conclusions.

## General Education Component Liberal Arts and Sciences Courses

As determined by the State Education Department, an AAS degree program requires a minimum of one-third of the credit hours (based on 60 credits) to make up the liberal arts and sciences component (20 credits); an AS degree program requires a minimum of one-half (30 credits); and an AA program requires a minimum of three-quarters (45 credits). Certificate and AOS programs are not required to include general education courses.

The General Education program at MVCC includes 12 categories. Students in AAS, AS, and AA degree programs must take at least one course from each of categories 1-6 as determined by their program:

1. Information Literacy
2. Critical Thinking and Reasoning
3. Communication – Written and Oral
4. Mathematics and Quantitative Reasoning
5. Natural Sciences and Scientific Reasoning
6. Diversity: Equity, Inclusion, and Social Justice (DEISJ)

AS and AA degree programs must also include at least one category from categories 7-9, at least one category from categories 10-12, and one additional category not already selected from categories 7-12. Courses that were used to meet categories 1-6 may also be used to meet this requirement if the course is designated in more than one category.

1. Social Sciences
2. U.S. History and Civic Engagement
3. World History and Global Awareness
4. Humanities
5. The Arts
6. World Languages

Additional General Education courses from categories 3-12, which cover the SUNY Knowledge and Skills Areas, also count toward the following necessary minimum required General Education hours for each degree (excepting courses found only in the categories Critical Thinking and Reasoning or Information Literacy):

- AAS - 20 hours
- AS - 30 hours
- AA - 45 hours

## SUNY General Education

SUNY has implemented a policy designed to enhance and coordinate general education on all SUNY campuses. Any student graduating with a four-year bachelor's degree from a SUNY campus must

complete a minimum of 30 credit hours in coursework from at least seven of the Knowledge and Skill Areas, with the starred (\*) four areas being required: \*Mathematics (and quantitative reasoning), \*Natural Sciences (and scientific reasoning), \*Communication - written and oral, \*Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Social Justice, Social Science, US History and Civic Engagement, World History and Global Awareness, Humanities, The Arts, and World Languages. In addition, students must demonstrate competence in the skill areas of critical thinking and information literacy.

Every student graduating from MVCC must complete the General Education courses required by their degree. The student who is planning on transferring to a SUNY campus for a bachelor's degree would find it advantageous to complete as much coursework as possible towards fulfilling the minimum of 30 credit hours from at least seven of the SUNY Areas. In general, if a grade of "C" or higher is earned in a course in a particular Knowledge and Skill Area, that Area is satisfied at every SUNY campus. All MVCC graduates obtaining an AA and AS will have met the SUNY General Education requirements upon graduation. SUNY has recognized the MVCC courses listed as meeting the criteria for particular Knowledge and Skill Areas within its structure. As students select General Education electives within their chosen programs, they are encouraged to consult with their advisors to compile the most beneficial transfer package. Not doing so may result in transferring students having to spend an additional semester or longer at a SUNY institution in order to meet General Education requirements. The General Education Course Lists indicate all courses at MVCC that have General Education status. See the [General Education Quick Reference Guide](#).