

**TITLE:** Degree Breadth Policy

**Date of Approval:** April 20, 2011;  
November 24, 2016

**Mandatory Review  
Date:** January 3, 2020

**Approved By:**  
 Board of Governors  
 Senate

**Effective Date:** January 3, 2017

## 1. Purpose

The Program Content Standard, as articulated in the Postsecondary Education Quality Assessment Board (PEQAB) handbook, requires all Ontario college bachelor degrees to include coherent and substantive non-core offerings. These non-core (breadth) offerings contribute to the achievement of:

- a) critical thinking, quantitative reasoning, written and oral communication skills
- b) knowledge of society and culture, and skills relevant to civic engagement.<sup>1</sup>

This Policy establishes a framework to enable Sheridan's alignment with PEQAB's breadth requirements.

## 2. Scope

This Policy applies to Ontario Baccalaureate degrees and thus impacts students, faculty and Academic Faculties connected to these credentials.

## 3. Definitions

**Block Transfer:** This designation is used to identify a series of courses which have been used to satisfy a transfer agreement. This designation excludes the courses from the calculation of the GPA.

**Course Exclusions:** Breadth courses that have been excluded as elective choices for students registered in specific degree programs. Determination is made based on the course being too similar to the Program's core curriculum as determined by the Academic Faculty in consultation with the Centre for Teaching and Learning.

**Degree Breadth Elective:** Breadth electives which are chosen by students outside of their field of study to meet their breadth requirements.

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<sup>1</sup> PEQAB Handbook for Ontario Colleges, 2016, p. 22.

**Fields of Study:** Curricular areas of focus for core and non-core courses as defined by PEQAB.<sup>2</sup> Breadth courses are categorized within the following fields of study and disciplines:

- Humanities: English/Literature, History, Philosophy, Religious Studies
- Social Sciences: Anthropology, Psychology, Sociology/Criminology
- Global Culture: Cultural Studies, Political Science, Film Studies
- Science
- Mathematics

**Level:** Courses in each discipline within a field of study will be designed at the introductory, intermediate and advanced levels. These levels are defined as follows:

- **Introductory 1000 Level:** Level 1000 breadth courses provide the basic foundation for a given discipline, introduce an overview of the discipline and/or explore a subject area at a basic introductory level.
- **Intermediate 2000 Level:** Level 2000 breadth courses build on the knowledge base established at the 1000 level, so that students explore a subset of a discipline. These courses provide depth of knowledge within a specified area and apply a critical/theoretical approach to analysis and research. Level 2000 courses include an interdisciplinary approach when examining a specific topic.
- **Advanced 3000 Level:** Level 3000 breadth courses focus on the application of conceptual analysis and advanced critical theory to a topic in a given discipline. These courses build on prior disciplinary learning and require greater depth of critical analysis, and advanced theory and research. In these courses, students access previous knowledge and apply it in new and relevant ways.

**Mandated Breadth Courses:** Breadth courses which are identified and determined to be required by the Academic Faculty for students registered in a specific degree program as per PEQAB guidelines.

**PEQAB:** Postsecondary Education Quality Assessment Board

**Prerequisite:** A requirement which must be successfully completed prior to being registered in a course

## 4.0 Policy Statement

### 4.1 Requirements

Aligned with PEQAB's requirement for depth and breadth of non-core offerings, Sheridan's Degree Breadth curriculum for degree programs is designed to contribute to the development of critical thinking, quantitative reasoning, written and oral communication skills and to allow students to engage in more than introductory level knowledge of the distinctive assumptions and modes of analysis in the following fields of study:

- Humanities
- Social Science

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<sup>2</sup> PEQAB Handbook for Ontario Colleges, 2016, p. 22.

- Global Culture
- Mathematics
- Science

In general, the Introductory 1000 Level Degree Breadth courses are designed for first or second year students. Upper level (2000 and 3000) courses are more focused and more intellectually demanding with the standards of evaluation reflecting those which should prevail at the advanced undergraduate degree level.

In the course of their full program of study, students will be expected to successfully complete:

- An Introductory 1000 Level course in a minimum of two (2) of the five (5) above fields of study (if a course is related to the degree program of study, students will not be able to select that course)
- A minimum of two (2) courses at a level higher than Introductory 1000<sup>3</sup>
- In addition to the above, every degree program will include Composition and Rhetoric from the English/Literature discipline of Humanities; for some programs, Composition and Rhetoric may be considered part of the core curriculum and would not qualify as meeting breadth requirements
- The number of Breadth courses required by the specific degree according to PEQAB Program Content Standard
- Students must also meet the cumulative grade point average (CGPA) requirements for breadth, as articulated by the Graduation Policy.

Degree programs may have exclusions for some Degree Breadth courses when these courses are closely related to the main area of study of the particular degree and would therefore be considered "core."

#### 4.2 Block Transfer of Credit from General Education to Degree Breadth

To be eligible for Block Transfer of credit towards Degree Breadth, General Education courses must be assigned a minimum of 3.0 credit hours per course and not given credit consideration towards core degree programs of study.

##### 4.2.1 Block Transfer for 2 General Education Courses (6.0 credits)

Prior credit for 2 General Education courses with a minimum CGPA of 3.0 in those courses, where the student has earned a minimum grade of 60% (C) in each course, will be awarded a credit equivalence of 1 Degree Breadth course. Credits acquired through this block transfer arrangement serve to satisfy general introductory breadth credit in a broad field of study (Humanities, Social Science, Global Culture, Mathematics, or Science) at the degree level.

##### 4.2.2 Block Transfer for 3 General Education Courses (9.0 credits)

Prior credit for 3 General Education courses with a minimum CGPA of 3.0 in those courses, where the student has earned a minimum grade of 60% (C) in each course, will be awarded a

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<sup>3</sup> PEQAB Handbook for Ontario Colleges, 2016, p. 22.

credit equivalence of 2 Degree Breadth courses. Credits acquired through this block transfer arrangement serve to satisfy general introductory breadth credit in a broad field of study (Humanities, Social Science, Global Culture, Mathematics, or Science) at the degree level.

#### 4.2.3 Block Transfer for 4 General Education Courses (12.0 credits)

Prior credit for 4 General Education courses with a minimum CGPA of 3.0 in those courses, where the student has earned a minimum grade of 60% (C) in each course, will be awarded a credit equivalence of 3 Degree Breadth courses. Credits acquired through this block transfer arrangement serve to satisfy general introductory breadth credit in a broad field of study (Humanities, Social Science, Global Culture, Mathematics, or Science) at the degree level.

Note: While credits acquired through a block transfer arrangement may not serve to fulfill a course-specific prerequisite requirement, such credits do serve to satisfy the requirements of the Degree Breadth Policy at the introductory level in each of the designated fields of study.

#### **RESPONSIBLE EXECUTIVE:**

The Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences will interpret and apply the policy and has the responsibility to draft any associated procedures. The Provost and Vice President Academic has the responsibility to approve any associated procedures.

Responsible Executive: Provost and Vice President Academic

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#### **5. Related Documentation (Procedures/Additional Policies/Forms)**

[Degree Breadth Procedure](#)

[Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition \(PLAR\) Policy](#)

[Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition \(PLAR\) Procedure](#)

[Academic Standing Policy](#)

[Academic Standing Procedure](#)

[General Education Policy](#)

[General Education Procedure](#)

[Procedure to Develop and Approve a Sheridan Board Undergraduate Certificate](#)

[PEQAB Handbook for Ontario Colleges 2016](#)

[Graduation Policy](#)