

Title: General Education Policy

Original Date:

October 22, 2014

Date of Approval

April 1, 2018

Effective Date:

April 1, 2018

Last Review Date:

April 1, 2018

Approved By:

☐ Board of Governors

☒ President and Vice
Presidents

1. Purpose

The Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development's (MAESD) Binding Policy Directive: Framework for Programs of Instruction 2005 requires that colleges develop, incorporate and deliver General Education courses in all Ontario College Certificates, Diplomas and Advanced Diplomas. This Policy sets out a framework to enable Sheridan's alignment with the MAESD General Education requirements.

2. Scope

The requirements set out in Sheridan's General Education Policy apply to Ontario College Certificates, Diplomas and Advanced Diplomas and thus impact all students, faculty and Academic Faculties connected to these credentials.

Through the establishment of a Cross-College General Education Committee, this Policy seeks to enhance collaboration and information sharing between the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences and all other Academic Faculties and support areas involved in the development, planning and implementation of General Education requirements at Sheridan. Critical stakeholders within the Sheridan community include, but are not limited to, the Centre for Teaching and Learning, Office of the Registrar, the

Student Services, Library & Learning Services, the Centre for Indigenous Learning and Support and the Student Union and will have representation on the committee.

3. Definitions

Cross-College General Education Committee: A Committee with academic and non-academic membership from across Sheridan. The Committee is responsible for vetting new and revised General Education courses (prior to College approvals) and for sharing information and best practices related to the planning and delivery of General Education requirements at Sheridan.

Core Course: Courses that contribute to the development of knowledge and skills in a specific discipline or field of study related to a program. Mandated General Education courses may contribute to the core in programs where such courses are consistent with the discipline or field of study of the program.

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.

Mandated General Education Courses: General Education courses which are identified and determined to be required by the Academic Faculty for students registered in a specific program(s).

MAESD: Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development, previously known as the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (MTCU).

Non-Vocational: Content that is not pertaining to, or connected with, a specific vocation or field of study.

Non-Skills Based: Content that does not practice and/or refine skills directly related to a specific vocation area or field of study.

Open General Education Courses: General Education courses which are chosen by students outside of their field of study to meet their General Education requirements.

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

4. Policy Statement

Sheridan's General Education Policy is aligned to the Ministry's Binding Policy Directive: Framework for Programs of Instruction which outlines the role and rationale for the delivery of General Education courses at all Ontario Colleges:

"The purpose of General Education in the Ontario college system is to contribute to the development of citizens who are conscious of the diversity, complexity,

and richness of the human experience; who are able to establish meaning through this consciousness; and, who, as a result, are able to contribute thoughtfully, creatively, and positively to the society in which they live and work. General Education curriculum is intended to strengthen students' generic skills, such as critical analysis, problem solving, and communication, in the context of an exploration of topics with broad-based personal and / or societal importance." (MAESD, 2005)

Minimum General Education Requirements Per Credential

Sheridan requires the following minimum number of General Education courses for each credential level in order to ensure compliance with the Ministry's Binding Policy Directive: Framework for Programs of Instruction. Locally approved Recognition of Achievement and Sheridan Certificates in addition to Postgraduate Certificates do not have General Education requirements.

Ontario College Certificate	Ontario College Diploma	Ontario College Advanced Diploma
Minimum 1	Minimum 3 Maximum 1 Mandated	Minimum 4 Maximum 2 Mandated

Curricular Requirements for General Education Courses

Sheridan's General Education courses must address one of the five themes as articulated in the Ministry's Binding Policy Directive: Framework for Programs of Instruction (2005) document:

- Arts in Society
- Civil Life
- Personal Understanding
- Science and Technology
- Social and Cultural Understanding

General Education Courses must be non- vocational and non-skills based. These courses are intended to provide students with opportunities to explore areas of interest outside of their fields of study while broadening their general knowledge and deepening their transferrable and generic skills (e.g. analysis, communications, critical thinking).

General Education courses should be of an introductory nature and may not have any pre-requisite(s) of knowledge. The Ministry's Binding Directive makes possible the use of Mandated courses as pre-requisites for program courses as decided upon by the Faculty.

The curriculum oversight and planning of General Education Courses rests with the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, which works collaboratively with other Academic Faculties to deliver General Education Courses and ensure compliance with the Policy. The General Education Cross-College Committee fosters greater collaboration and consultation to ensure quality curriculum, planning and delivery in the area of General Education. The committee provides a forum to review best practices and strategic directions related to General Education at Sheridan.

Credit Transfer for General Education Courses

General Education courses are eligible for credit transfer at Sheridan. If a student has eligible course(s), they should refer to the Credit Transfer Policy and Procedure which outline the process and criteria for students seeking credit transfer. General Education Courses are also eligible for Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition, unless stated otherwise on the official approved course outline.

Sheridan is committed to enhancing student pathways between our programs. Sheridan's General Education Courses are eligible for Block Transfer to degree (Breadth) electives. The requirements and process are set out in the Liberal Arts and Science (Breadth) Degree Requirements Policy. Breadth electives may also be eligible for course substitution as General Education courses.

General Education Course Exclusions

Open General Education Courses that are identified as being too closely aligned with program or course-level learning outcomes (as determined by the Faculty/Program) shall be deemed as Course Exclusions and communicated to the Office of the Registrar by the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences which oversees the impacted program(s).

Responsible Executive

The Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, in consultation with the Cross-College General Education (CCGE) Committee, will interpret and apply the policy and has the responsibility to draft any associated procedures. The Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, in consultation with the Cross-College General Education (CCGE) Committee, has the responsibility to approve any associated procedures.

Responsible Executive: Provost and Vice President Academic

Contact: Associate Dean, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

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

[General Education Procedure](#)

[Program Review Policy](#)

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

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

[Credit Transfer Policy](#)

[Credit Transfer Procedure](#)

[Degree Breadth Policy](#)

[MTCU Binding Policy Directive: Framework for Programs of Instruction \(rev. April 1, 2005\)](#)