

Salisbury University Proposed General Education: 2019 Model B (Revised 3/1/2019)

COMAR General Education Requirements: 38-48 credits including 8 courses in 5 areas (designated as "COMAR"), each at least 3 credits	
Universities may add up to 8 hours in coursework outside the 5 areas (designated as "Personal Wellness" and possibly "General Education Elective").	
COMAR/SU REQUIREMENT	TITLE/DELIVERY/OUTCOMES MET: Credit count – 38 – 48 credits
SU REQUIREMENT First Year Seminar <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taken in the first year 	First Year Seminar: Academic preparation, skills and expectations for educational and professional success through exploration of a topic or issue.
	1 course, 3-4 credits
	<i>Critical Thinking and Reasoning, Effective Reading, Information Literacy, Oral Communication, Written Communication, Intellectual Curiosity</i>
SU THEMED COURSE REQUIREMENT: Themed Courses are Selected from the entire SU catalog*	
at least 1 course	Civic and Community Engagement <i>Civic and Community Engagement is integrated into themed courses</i>
at least 1 course	Environmental Sustainability <i>Environmental Sustainability is integrated into themed courses</i>
at least 1 course	Inclusion and Diversity <i>Inclusion and Diversity is integrated into themed courses</i>
COMAR 1 English composition course <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taken in the first year 	Communicating through Writing: Effective reading, writing, and information usage
	1 course, 3-4 credits
	<i>Effective Reading, Information Literacy, Written Communication</i>
COMAR 1 mathematics course	Quantitative Analysis: Numerical, analytical, statistical, and problem-solving skills
	1 course, 3-4 credits
	<i>Quantitative Reasoning</i>
COMAR 1 of 2 arts and humanities courses	Human Expression: Exploration of the different ways individuals and societies have and continue to express themselves and communicate the human experience
	1 course, 3-4 credits
	<i>Intellectual Curiosity, Knowledge of Human Experience, Ethical Reasoning</i>
COMAR 2 of 2 arts and humanities courses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In different content area than 1 of 2 	Humanity in Context: Critical and comparative analysis of humanity, emphasizing the role of history, culture, and/or language in human issues
	1 course, 3-4 credits
	<i>Effective Reading, Knowledge of Human Experience, Intercultural Competence, Critical Thinking and Reasoning, Understanding the Human World</i>
COMAR 1 of 2 social and behavioral sciences courses	Social Configurations: Quantitative and/or qualitative analysis of human behavior and/or societies
	1 course, 3-4 credits
	<i>Knowledge of Human Experience, Emerging and Enduring Global Issues, Understanding the Human World, Intercultural Competence</i>
COMAR 2 of 2 social and behavioral sciences courses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In different content area than 1 of 2 	Social Issues: Applied social science, with an emphasis on understanding and solving problems in the social or behavioral sciences
	1 course, 3-4 credits
	<i>Quantitative Reasoning, Knowledge of Human Experience, Emerging and Enduring Global Issues, Ethical Reasoning</i>
COMAR 1 of 1 physical and biological science courses (w/lab)	Hands-on Science: Experiential laboratory-based science
	1 course, 4 credits
	<i>Scientific Reasoning, Quantitative Reasoning, Knowledge of the Physical World</i>
COMAR 1 of 1 physical, biological, and technological science courses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In different content area than above 	Solutions through Science: Applied science, with an emphasis on understanding and solving problems in the natural, physical, and technological sciences (may or may not include a lab)
	1 course, 3-4 credits
	<i>Scientific Reasoning, Quantitative Reasoning, Critical Thinking & Reasoning</i>
SU REQUIREMENT Personal Wellness	Personal Wellness: Interconnected dimensions of wellness, including physical, emotional, and financial, to live a healthy, successful life
	1 course, 3-4 credits
	<i>Personal Health and Wellness</i>
SU REQUIREMENT Learning Through Literature <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires completed FYS 	Learning Through Literature: Critical reading and analysis of literature within a specific discipline or theme
	1 course, 3-4 credits
	<i>Critical Thinking and Reasoning, Effective Reading, Written Communication, Information Literacy, Understanding the Human World</i>
SU REQUIREMENT General Education Elective <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires completed FYS and chosen category 	General Education Elective: Deepening of the General Education experience by expanding on any of the General Education categories (including themed courses) except for the First Year Seminar
	1 course, 3-4 credits
	<i>No specific SLOs required</i>

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Subsequent to the Re-envisioning General Education, January 24th, 2018, a “2018 Model (April)” emerged as a coalescence of comments, discussion, and participation during over several months. With the establishment of the Elected General Education Steering Committee, whose work began Fall of 2018, and the Faculty Senate vote to approve the Student Learning Goals and Outcomes in November 2018, the committee shifted focus to model development and refinement. The Revised Model incorporates clarifications and adjustments based on faculty and Faculty Senate comments and concerns expressed in the Survey as well as during Faculty Senate meetings and other encounters. Specifically, this model better defines First Year Seminars (previously First Year Experiences); , replaces the Thematic Integrative Course with an open General Education Elective category; and clarifies Learning through Literature with the addition of the ‘Understanding the Human World’ SLO. The three essential requirements of contemporary university core curriculum: (1) meeting legally mandated COMAR state requirements; (2) clearly addressing all approved Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs); and (3) advancing curricular enhancements advocated by faculty, students, alumni, prospective families, employers and other peer institutions, as well as the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AACU) remain the central focus of the Model.

- (1) The proposed Model meets legally mandated COMAR state requirements:
 - a. Course categories clearly match the legally mandated COMAR requirements that must be completed within 38-48 credits:
 - One English composition course (3-4 credits)
 - One mathematics course (3-4 credits)
 - Two courses in arts and humanities (6-8 credits)
 - Two courses in social and behavioral sciences (6-8 credits)
 - Two courses in physical and biological sciences (one with lab, 7-8 credits)
 - Remaining credits reflecting institutional choice (up to 8 credits in areas outside of the COMAR 5)
 - Personal Wellness (3-4 credits)
 - Learning Through Literature (3-4 credits)
 - General Education Elective (3-4 credits)
 - Salisbury University Graduation Requirements that do NOT exceed 48 ‘General Education’ credits:
 - First Year Seminar is an ‘SU Experience’ course required of all students.
- (2) The proposed Model clearly addresses all Student Learning Outcomes; all courses meeting General Education requirements have a clear set of learning objectives that reflect the University’s Mission and our high educational standards and broad goals for our students.

This proposed model is more innovative and flexible than the 2000 Group I-V Model. **Faculty from all departments are encouraged to submit courses for consideration** under any course category as long as the course fits the category description, addresses each SLO listed for the category, and meets any COMAR category regulations.

- The 12 “course categories” identify students’ range of choice to complete COMAR mandated 38-48 credits of General Education in roughly 12 courses.
- **This Model maps easily to COMAR requirements**, making advising and student pathways through the program both straightforward and responsive to student interests and goals.
- **The Model lives up to the Salisbury University Mission** by transparently addressing all of the New SU Student Learning Outcomes and clearly revealing how student choices achieve the three approved Student Learning Goals
- **Faculty are encouraged to address multiple SLOs in their courses**, even in addition to those SLOs listed as required. **Theming for General Education SLO purposes is common at other USM and national universities.** For example:
 - SLOs of “Civic and Community Engagement,” “Environmental Sustainability,” and “Inclusion and Diversity,” or others, may be included in any course.
 - **(*) Any course offered by SU**, regardless of its inclusion or not in any of the General Education categories, **could be themed for these non-category specific SLOs** as long as this specific SLO can be assessed within the course for the General Education program.
 - If faculty choose to address additional SLOs beyond those required by the category, their courses will be ‘tagged’ in GullNet and advising materials indicating opportunities for students to achieve those SLOs.

(3) The proposed Model advances curricular enhancements advocated by faculty, students, alumni, prospective families, employers and other peer institutions, as well as the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AACU). These enhancements bring SU into the 21st century of higher education and increase flexibility for faculty and students, deepen engagement for our students and offers them more rigorous educational experience. **Keeping the current Group I-V model leaves SU in a dwindling group of only 8% of universities with a strictly distributional General Education with no embedded explanation of outcomes or synergy between categories (AAUP).**

- **Top requests** for improvements included: more strategic preparation for academic and professional advancement, writing throughout the curriculum and within the disciplines, financial and personal preparation for adulthood, increased awareness and application of diversity and sociopolitical issues, and cross-disciplinary exploration and synthesis of complex issues. Our new SLGs and SLOs reflect emphasis on all these top requests.
- This Model includes four course categories beyond COMAR minimums: “First Year Seminar,” “Personal Wellness,” “Learning through Literature,” and a “General Education Elective.” Collectively, **these four Salisbury University course categories explicitly address the concerns of faculty, students, and SU graduates** as documented in 2015 surveys regarding need for improvement in SU’s current Gen Ed Group I-V model.
- **Attachment of Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) to categories within the model provides clear pathways for students** to achieve the Student Learning Goals (SLGs) that the University has deemed critical. For example:
 - This Model requires native SU students to complete **3-4 courses in which Written Communication is a major component** (FYS, Communicating through Writing, Learning through Literature, and possibly General Education Elective). Transfer students are required to complete one course, the FYS, in which Written Communication is a major component.
 - **Information Literacy** is a major component of the same 3-4 courses in the Model ensuring that **students are able to complete the Information Literacy Curriculum developed by the Library Faculty.**
- This Model provides a **framework conducive to increased emphasis** in any of the above areas as well as others. **Theming** courses to provide student access to specific learning opportunities is a primary strategy for achieving such refinements and may be utilized throughout the curriculum (beyond General Education approved courses).
 - This Model allows faculty to design courses fitting any of the categories to also address any SLOs of their choosing beyond those required by the category; **themes on individual courses would identify faculty expertise and course content emphasis** by Personal, Social and Cultural Responsibility(ies) for example.
- Refining the model to ensure student levels of achievement that are satisfactory to the University is both an iterative process and one that remains open for discussion. In addition to **encouraging faculty to develop courses in any category themed with additional SLOs**, or theming existing courses with the non-category specific SLOs, departments could require their students to choose a specified number of courses themed with any (set of) SLO(s).
- The First Year Seminar provides a **distinctive Salisbury University experience**. Required of ALL SU students, regardless of credits earned prior to their arrival at SU, this course directly addresses **synergies** among SLOs and the **integrated achievement of SLGs**. In addition, such synergies are apparent in the sets of SLOs addressed in each of the other 11 course categories.
 - First Year Seminar, Learning through Literature, and General Education Elective categories are **open to all departments and disciplines across the University**, providing students with unique introductions to Salisbury University life and to integrative learning as they transition to chosen programs and professions.
 - The **Personal Wellness** category also provides a wide range of opportunities for students to choose an area of **emphasis** (physical or emotional wellness, or **financial literacy**), allowing departments and programs to provide unique opportunities to explore and facilitate student development of life-long learning and personal wellness. Courses in the Personal Wellness category could be structured as follows:
 - Each four-credit class would **emphasize one of the three target dimensions** while still covering content-specific to the other two dimensions in enough detail to fulfill the learning outcome. For example, students would choose:
 - **Emotional wellness**-focused course: one three-credit class covering all areas, plus a one-credit supplement emphasizing just emotional wellness topics, **OR**
 - **Financial literacy**-focused course: one three-credit class covering all areas, plus a one-credit supplement emphasizing just financial literacy topics, **OR**
 - **Physical wellness**-focused course: one three-credit class covering all areas, plus a one-credit supplement emphasizing just physical wellness topics.

- The Quantitative Analysis category makes explicit the COMAR emphasis on **math with practical application** for students.
- The **General Education Elective** will allow for increased choice and the opportunity for the student to delve deeper into any General Education category they have found appealing, thus improving student buy-in. This category makes the proposed Model more flexible than the current one: students could, for example, take two Wellness courses within the program, which would be impossible at present. This Elective could also help students who are unable to take some popular General Education courses as sophomores due to limited seats; once they receive priority for enrolling, they could still take the course within the program even if they have fulfilled the specific category. Logistically, this Elective could also help with overloaded tracks, where more courses from the Major could fulfill General Education Requirements.
 - The General Education Elective cannot be fulfilled by an additional First Year Seminar. First Year Seminars, as skills-focused introductory courses, would be incompatible with the goal of this category to deepen the experience of the student within one of the categories.
 - The General Education Elective would apply only after the chosen General Education Category has already been completed.
 - Any course themed with Civic and Community Engagement, Environmental Sustainability, and/or Inclusion and Diversity would also qualify for this category regardless of their status as a General Education course (Excepting FYS courses). The University has deemed all SLOs equally as important; excluding these courses as Electives would signify deeming these three SLOs as less important than the rest.
 - Transfer credits could satisfy General Education Elective requirements, making SU more transfer-friendly.
- **Academic progression** is built into the 12-course sequence, with the First Year Seminar and Communicating through Writing taken in the first year, and the General Education Elective taken further along the General Education program. As mentioned above, the FYS, Communicating through Writing, Learning through Literature, and possibly the General Education Elective courses allow us to **sequence the development of both Information Literacy and Written Communication** by, for example, recommending that students take each course in a different semester.
- Within three broader COMAR area-based categories (arts and humanities, social and behavioral sciences, and physical and biological sciences), one of the two required courses can follow a wide array of discipline-based formats, including survey courses, while the other should include a **significant problem-based component** focused on understanding and/or solving current problems by applying knowledge and skills relevant to the discipline. The implication of this distinction is that students should complete '1 of 2' before they enroll in '2 of 2' in each of the three areas.
 - These six course categories provide opportunities for departments currently excluded from General Education to offer courses that address the associated SLOs and meet COMAR guidelines for the areas.
 - The **emphasis on application** in three of the six categories encourages the development of courses that emphasize **Civic and Community Engagement and that grapple with issues of Inclusion and Diversity and Environmental Sustainability**.
 - The development of multiple courses within COMAR area categories with **themes** emphasizing these responsibilities provides students with strong **thematic pathways through General Education**.
 - **Themes** identify these pathways for students encouraging student engagement in General Education as well as the development of student agency and responsibility for their educations.
- **Theming also encourages faculty to utilize their disciplinary specialization** in developing and delivering General Education courses. Theming creates a flexible, vital and engaging General Education for students and faculty; it is an important component of a program that **emphasizes integrative learning** and the development of practices underpinning life-long learning as well as **academic excellence** in preparation for students' success in their programs of choice and future careers.

Overall this Model offers a General Education curriculum that is **unique** to Salisbury University, allows us to be **competitive** with other universities, and **better prepares** SU students for academic and professional development. The proposed Model offers a curriculum conscious of our **University's mission** and capable of offering **innovative** opportunities to faculty, while delivering the **best educational experience** we can to our community. Finally, this Model allows for discussion and refinement as we work together toward optimizing this new and exciting framework for a Re-envisioned General Education.