

MESSIAH COLLEGE

# GENERAL EDUCATION

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*A Faculty Guide*  
*to the*  
*General Education*  
*Curriculum*

*Eleventh Edition*  
*2008-2009*

## **INTRODUCTION**

An effective General Education program begins with a college-wide vision about the qualities of an educated person, is shaped by a curriculum that cultivates those qualities, and is implemented through courses specifically designed to support this curriculum. The Messiah College Identity and Mission Statements are the basis for the College-Wide Educational Objectives adopted by the faculty in 2004. The General Education Curriculum, including the objectives to be addressed through this program and the structure through which these objectives are to be addressed, is presented in the attached material. In addition, the General Education Committee periodically prepares related publications and guides to specialized parts of the curriculum such as writing requirements and cross-cultural studies. These materials and other information may be obtained from the Associate Dean of General Education and Common Learning.

# ***THE CURRICULUM***



## **AREA ONE**

### **ABILITIES OF THE LIBERALLY EDUCATED [9 Hours]**

*This portion of the curriculum provides students with the basis upon which to enhance their skills in thinking, reading and listening, and writing and speaking. Further development of many of the abilities emphasized in this area is expected throughout the curriculum. The seminar and small class context provides an effective way to introduce first year students to the intellectual life of college.*

- 1.1 First Year Seminar [3 hrs.]
- 1.2 Oral Communication [3 hrs.]
- 1.3 Created and Called for Community [3 hrs.]



## **AREA ONE: Abilities of the Liberally Educated**

### **1.1 First Year Seminar [3 hrs.]**

Objectives: By the completion of the course the students will demonstrate the ability to

- a. apply skills of critical thinking to reading, writing, and discussion.
- b. read analytically and critically.
- c. write essays using effective prose.
- d. apply basic methods and skills of information literacy: accessing, evaluating, and using information effectively and ethically.
- e. relate aspects of Christian faith to intellectual life.
- f. participate in conversations with students and faculty about significant ideas related to the identity of the College, thus enhancing an intellectual campus climate.

Class Size: 16 students

Course Level: 100 level three-credit course.

Requirement: One course selected from an approved list.

Sequence: Required during the first semester of the first year.

Course Proposals: Seminars appropriate to the above objectives are proposed by individual faculty who write and who are interested in the reading/writing process, their own and others'. Seminars may be proposed by faculty in any discipline, provided it is conducive to meeting the objectives delineated in this area. Seminar proposals are approved by the Associate Dean of General Education and Common Learning.

### **1.2 Oral Communication [3 hrs.]**

Objectives: By the completion of the course the students will demonstrate the ability to

- a. identify key elements of communication within a variety of contexts.
- b. analyze their own communication and recognize its effects on others.
- c. convey information and reasoned argument in spoken and visual presentation.
- d. articulate ethical responsibilities of oral communicators and, in their own communication, demonstrate adherence to those responsibilities.

Class Size: 25 students.

Course Level: 100 level three-credit courses.

Requirement: One course selected from an approved list.

Sequence: Recommended for either semester of the first year.

Course Proposals: Courses appropriate to the above objectives are proposed by the faculty in the Department of Communication, approved by the General Education and Curriculum Committees, and reported to the Community of Educators for information and review.

## AREA ONE: Abilities of the Liberally Educated

### 1.3 Created and Called for Community [3 hrs.]

Objectives: By the completion of the course the students will demonstrate the ability to

- a. explain the Mission and Confession of Faith and Foundational Values of Messiah College.
- b. describe biblical and theological implications of the Old Testament emphasis on being created in the image of God and the New Testament emphasis on becoming a new creation.
- c. articulate defining characteristics of different kinds of communities, including those that are faith-based, academic, national, international, ethnic, inter-ethnic, and professional.
- d. develop a working definition of Christian Vocation as it relates to reconciliation, service, and leadership.

Class Size: 25 students

Course Level: 100 level three-credit course.

Requirement: All students take course with common readings, assignments, and activities.

Sequence: Required during the second semester of the first year.

Syllabus Proposals: The faculty who teach sections of the *Created and Called for Community* course are expected to follow the parameters, course objectives, and the general guidelines specified in the common general course syllabus. Faculty members submit copies of their syllabi to the Director of the *Created and Called for Community* Course prior to the beginning of the semester. Syllabi are not distributed to students until they have been reviewed by the Director. The specific due dates for the submission of syllabi for this review are established and communicated by the Associate Dean for General Education and Common Learning on an annual basis.



AREA TWO  
**LIBERAL KNOWLEDGE**  
**[35 Hours]**

*The liberally educated person should have pursued knowledge in many fields of inquiry and understand how each contributes to the interdependent nature of human society. To this end the courses in this area will acquaint the student with the intellectual tradition of diverse fields in the liberal arts.*

2.1 Mathematical and Natural Sciences (9 hrs.)

- A. Mathematical Sciences
- B. Laboratory Sciences
- C. Science, Technology and the World

2.2 Social Sciences and History [6 hrs.]

- A. Social Sciences
- B. European History
- C. United States History

2.3 Humanities and Arts [9 hrs.]

- A. Literature
- B. Religion/Philosophy
- C. Arts

2.4 Languages and Cultures [9 hrs.]

2.5 Non-Western Studies [2-3 hrs.]



## AREA TWO: Liberal Education

### 2.1 Mathematical and Natural Sciences [9 hrs.]

#### A. Mathematical Sciences [3 hrs.]

- Objectives: By the completion of the course the students will demonstrate the ability to
- identify methods and assumptions of the mathematical sciences.
  - understand at least one of the three mathematical sciences of computing, mathematics, and statistics from a liberal arts perspective.
  - think logically, analytically, and abstractly through engagement in quantitative problem-solving activities.

Course Level: 100 or 200 level three-credit courses.

Requirement: One course selected from an approved list.

Sequence: Recommended for either semester of the first year.

Course Proposals: Courses appropriate to the above objectives and level designations are proposed by the faculty in the Department of Mathematical Sciences, approved by the General Education and Curriculum Committees, and reported to the Community of Educators for information and review.

#### B. Laboratory Science [3 hrs.]

- Objectives: By the completion of the course the students will demonstrate
- an increased understanding of God as Creator.
  - an appreciation of the importance of creation stewardship.
  - substantive knowledge of the content and investigative methodologies of a scientific topic.
  - an understanding of the scientific method and how the scientific community validates new knowledge.
  - the ability to conduct and analyze simple investigations in the natural sciences.
  - the ability to present scientific arguments orally and in writing using tables, graphs and charts.

Class Size: 24 students per laboratory.

Course Level: 100 or 200 level three-credit courses.

Requirement: One course selected from an approved list.

Sequence: Recommended for either semester of the first year.

## AREA TWO: Liberal Education

Course Proposals: Courses appropriate to the above objectives, level designation, and laboratory requirements are proposed by the faculty in the Departments of Biological Sciences and Chemistry and Biochemistry, approved by the General Education and Curriculum Committees, and reported to the Community of Educators for information and review.

### C. Science, Technology, and the World [3 hrs.]

Objectives: By the completion of the course the students will demonstrate

- a. a significant understanding of how science, technology, and the Christian faith complement and challenge one another.
- b. an enhanced understanding of the relationship of science and technology to other disciplines and relevant ethical, social, cultural, historical and political issues.
- c. substantive knowledge of the essential concepts, controversies and areas of exploration of a topic in the scientific and technological disciplines.
- d. the ability to critique scientific and technological arguments and claims in oral and written presentations.
- e. the ability to contribute to societal discourses on scientific and technological issues and controversies emanating from advances in science and technology.

Course Level: 200 or 300 level three-credit courses.

Requirements: One course selected from an approved list.

Sequence: Recommended for any semester of the junior or senior years.

Course Proposals: Courses meeting the above objectives and level designation are taught with a distinctively scientific orientation but may draw from resources across the curriculum. Courses in this area may include a laboratory component and may be cross-listed upon recommendation of the respective academic department. These courses are proposed by individual faculty members for approval by the General Education Committee in consultation with the Departments of Biological Sciences, Chemistry and Biochemistry, Mathematical Sciences, and Engineering.

## 2.2 Social Sciences and History [6 hrs.]

### A. Social Sciences

Objectives: By the completion of the course the students will demonstrate the ability to

- a. explain various social scientific research methodologies and the philosophical assumptions underlying them.
- b. articulate theoretical frameworks that describe socio-cultural aspects of human experience.
- c. analyze important variables contributing to one or more social problems/issues.

## AREA TWO: Liberal Education

- d. critically evaluate the use of social scientific research in popular media.

Course Level: 100 or 200 level three-credit courses.

Requirement: One course from two of the following categories [A, B, or C]

Sequence: Recommended for any semester during the first and second years.

Course Proposal: Courses appropriate to the above objectives and level designations are proposed by faculty in the Departments of Education, Human Development and Family Science, Psychology, Sociology and Social Work, Political Science Department, and the Management and Business (for economics), approved by the General Education Curriculum Committees, and reported to the Community of Educators for information and review.

### B. European History

Objectives: By the completion of the course the students will demonstrate the ability to

- a. explain traditions and methods of historical scholarship.
- b. comprehend selected ideas, peoples, institutions, and events central to the formation of Western traditions.
- c. comprehend the patterns and institutions of Western history and culture.
- d. recognize ways in which the past has shaped the contemporary world.
- e. conduct basic historical analysis of primary and secondary sources pertaining to European society and communicate that analysis in effective written and oral communication.

Course Level: 100 level three-credit courses.

Requirement: One course from two of the following categories [A, B, or C]

Sequence: Recommended for any semester during the first and second years.

Course Proposals: Courses appropriate to the above objectives and level designations are proposed by the faculty in the Department of History, approved by the General Education and Curriculum Committees, and reported to the Community of Educators for information and review.

### C. United States History

Objectives: By the completion of the course the students will demonstrate the ability to

- a. explain traditions and methods of historical scholarship.
- b. comprehend selected ideas, peoples, institutions, and events central to American history.
- c. comprehend the patterns and institutions of American history and culture.
- d. recognize ways in which the past has shaped contemporary American society.
- e. conduct basic historical analysis of primary and secondary sources pertaining to American society and communicate that analysis in effective written and oral communication.

Course Level: 100 level three-credit course.

## AREA TWO: Liberal Education

Requirement: One course from two of the following categories [A, B, or C]

Sequence: Recommended for any semester during the first and second years.

Course Proposals: Courses appropriate to the above objectives and level designations are proposed by the faculty in the Department of History, approved by the General Education and Curriculum Committees, and reported to the Community of Educators for information and review.

### 2.3 Humanities and Arts [9 hrs.]

#### A. Literature [3 hrs.]

Objectives: By the completion of the course the students will demonstrate the ability to

- a. evidence a basic understanding of some of the traditions and methods of literary study.
- b. appreciate significant works of literature.
- c. read closely and critically.
- d. respond to significant questions of textual interpretation and of the text's relationship to the student's personal world.

Course Level: 100 level English and 300 level Modern Language three-credit courses.

Requirement: One course selected from an approved list.

Sequence: Recommended for any semester during the first or second years.

Course Proposals: Courses appropriate to the above objectives and level designations are proposed by the faculty in the Department of English, approved by the General Education and Curriculum Committees, and reported to the Community of Educators for information and review.

## AREA TWO: Liberal Education

### B. One of the following

#### 1. Philosophy [3 hrs.]

- Objectives: By the completion of the course the students will demonstrate the ability to
- evidence a basic understanding of some of the traditions and methods of philosophical inquiry.
  - analyze historical philosophical problems and their relation to contemporary thought.
  - engage the work of significant thinkers.
  - think logically and critically.

Course Level: 100 and level three-credit courses.

Requirement: One course selected from an approved list.

Sequence: Recommended for any semester during the first and second years.

Course Proposals: Courses appropriate to the above objectives and level designations are proposed by the faculty in the Department of Philosophy, approved by the General Education and Curriculum Committees, and reported to the Community of Educators for information and review.

#### 2. Religion [3 hrs.]

- Objectives: By the completion of the course the students will demonstrate the ability to
- evidence a basic understanding of some of the traditions and methods of the study of religion as a humanities discipline.
  - understand the role religions play in shaping individual identity and self-understanding of adherents.
  - identify relationships between religion and culture at the local, national, and transnational levels.
  - recognize that Christianity, like other religions, can be explored historically and sociologically.
  - understand various Christian positions on religious pluralism and interfaith dialogue.

Course Level: 200 level three-credit courses.

Requirement: One course selected from an approved list.

Sequence: Recommended for any semester during the first and second years.

Course Proposals: Courses appropriate to the above objectives and level designations are proposed by the faculty in the Department of Biblical and Religious Studies, approved by the General Education and Curriculum Committees, and reported to the Community of Educators for information and review.

## AREA TWO: Liberal Education

### C. Arts [3 hrs.]

Objectives: By the completion of the course the students will demonstrate the ability to

- a. reflect on the nature and principles of art.
- b. describe artistic processes and their history.
- c. make or perform art, usually at an introductory level.
- d. "see" and "hear" through personal interaction with art media.

Class Size: Vary according to requirements of the art discipline, but not to exceed 35 students per section.

Course Level: 100, 200, and 300 level three-credit courses.

Requirement: One course selected from an approved list which includes courses in the visual arts, music, and theater. Each course must include attention to the history of the specific discipline, as well as student participation in making or performing art, and attendance at professional exhibits or performances appropriate to the discipline under study.

Sequence: Recommended for any semester during the first and second years.

Course Proposals: Courses appropriate to the above objectives and level designations are proposed by the faculty in the Departments of Visual Arts, Music, and Theatre, approved by the General Education and Curriculum Committees, and reported to the Community of Educators for information and review.

## AREA TWO: Liberal Education

### 2.4 Languages and Cultures [9 hrs.]

Objectives: By the completion of the program the students will demonstrate the ability to

- a. communicate in at least one language other than English.
- b. understand the interdependent nature of world societies.
- c. identify with cultural traditions other than their own.
- d. comprehend ways in which people who speak a language other than English perceive the world).
- e. understand and evaluate cultural relativism.

Class Size: 25 students.

Course Levels: 100, 200, and 300 level three-credit courses.

Requirement: One of the following: (1) Language study through the third semester level, or its equivalent, in one foreign language. (2) Language study through the second semester level, or its equivalent, in one foreign language and one General Education approved off-campus cross-cultural study course.

Sequence: Language study is to be initiated during the first year and continued each semester thereafter, until the requirement is completed. Cross-cultural study is recommended for any time following the first year.

Course Proposals: Language courses appropriate to the above objectives and level designations are proposed by the faculty from the Department of Modern Languages (for modern languages) and the Departments of Biblical and Religious Studies and History (for ancient languages), approved by the General Education and Curriculum Committees, and reported to the Community of Educators for information and review. Cross Cultural courses appropriate to the above objectives and level designations are proposed by individual faculty members and approved by the General Education Committee. Cross Cultural courses may be cross-listed upon recommendation of the respective academic department.

## AREA TWO: Liberal Education

### 2.5 Non-Western Studies [2-3 hrs.]

Objectives: By the completion of the course the students will demonstrate the ability to

- a. articulate a basic understanding of a culture or people whose heritage and/or present life has been significantly shaped by customs, practices, and systems of thought outside the Western tradition.
- b. engage with multiple aspects of the culture under study; these may include social customs and practices, systems of thought, and artistic expression.
- c. understand the effects of contact between Western and non-Western people.

Course Level: 100, 200, and 300 level two or three credit courses.

Requirement: One course, with a minimum of two credit hours, selected from an approved list.

Sequence: Recommended for any semester during the sophomore or junior years.

Course Proposals: Courses appropriate to the above objectives and level designation are proposed by individual faculty members and approved by the General Education Committee. Each course should deal with both the heritage and present life of the people under study, although the focus of attention may be in either direction. Courses may be cross-listed upon recommendation of the respective academic department.



AREA THREE  
**CHRISTIAN FAITH**  
**[6 Hours]**

*Knowing God is pursued through the study of the Bible and awareness of historical Christian beliefs and contemporary theological dialogue and ecclesiastical expressions. The goal of this area of study is to understand and personally appropriate the Christian faith in a manner which encourages an awareness of its relationship to all areas of life, including an exploration of the relationship of faith, reason, and Scripture.*

- 3.1 Knowledge of the Bible [3 hrs.]
- 3.2 Christian Beliefs [3 hrs.]



## AREA THREE: CHRISTIAN FAITH

### 3.1 Knowledge of the Bible [3 hrs.]

Objectives: By the completion of this course the students will demonstrate the ability to

- a. understand and evaluate the role of the Bible as an authority for Christian belief and practice.
- b. describe important aspects of the Bible's complex formation and its variety of literary genres.
- c. read the Bible as an ancient text with contemporary relevance, and develop a basic grasp of interpretive methodology.
- d. recognize how interpretive communities influence the way their members read the Bible.

Course Level: 200 level three-credit courses.

Requirement: BIBL 201,202,203,or 204

Sequence: Required for either the first or second year.

Course Proposals: Courses appropriate to the above objectives and level designations are proposed by the faculty in the Department of Biblical and Religious Studies, approved by General Education and Curriculum Committees, and reported to the Community of Educators for information and review.

### 3.2 Christian Beliefs [3 hrs.]

Objectives: By the completion of the course the students will demonstrate the ability to

- a. practice theological ways of thinking and writing.
- b. understand central beliefs of historic Christian faith about God, Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit, salvation, and the church.
- c. understand Anabaptist, Pietist, and Wesleyan theological emphases, while affirming that Christian faith can be articulated in many ways.
- d. examine their theological convictions and spiritual practices.
- e. do theological reflection on academic study.

Course Level: 200 or 300 level three-credit courses.

Prerequisite: BIBL 201,202,203,or 204

Requirement: One course selected from an approved list.

Sequence: Recommended for any semester during the sophomore and junior years.

Courses Proposals: Courses appropriate to the above objectives and level designations are proposed by the faculty in the Department of Biblical and Religious Studies, approved by General Education and Curriculum Committees, and reported to the Community of Educators for information and review.



AREA FOUR  
**SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY**  
**[6 Hours]**

*Study in this area encourages students to live healthy lives, both individually and socially. Students should recognize the need for physical well-being, the critical affirmation of values, the interdisciplinary engagement of the world, and the practice of service.*

- 4.1 Health and Physical Fitness [3 hrs.]
- 4.2 Engaging a Pluralistic World: Interdisciplinary Perspectives [3 hrs.]
  - A. Ethics in the Modern World
  - B. World Views
  - C. Pluralism in Contemporary America

## AREA FOUR: SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

### 4.1 Health and Physical Fitness [3 hrs.]

Objectives: By the completion of the course the students will demonstrate the ability to

- a. develop a program for physical activities, exercise, and related skills.
- b. describe the relationship between care of the body and well-being.
- c. exercise the body and participate in physical activities.
- d. develop habits of exercise and physical activity that could be maintained over a lifetime.

Class Size: Vary according to the requirements of specific physical activities, and not to exceed 35 students per section.

Course Level: 100 level one-credit courses.

Requirement: PHED 101 and one activity course.

Course Proposals: Courses appropriate to the above objectives and level and credit designations are proposed by the faculty in the Department of Health and Human Performance, approved by the General Education and Curriculum Committees, and sent to the Community of Educators for information and review.

### 4.2 Engaging a Pluralistic World: Interdisciplinary Perspectives [3 hrs.]

Courses in this section are designed to complete the General Education program and help students prepare to engage the world in which they will live and work. Building on study based in the specific academic disciplines in the earlier part of the General Education curriculum as well as in the student's major, these interdisciplinary courses now focus attention on understanding the world ethically, intellectually, and socially.

Objectives: By the completion of the course the students will demonstrate the ability to

- a. examine the complexities of society to gain self-knowledge and understand social change.
- b. describe the problems and opportunities associated with a culture that is both pluralistic and global.
- c. analyze at least one problem or issue posed by contemporary society from an interdisciplinary perspective.
- d. reflect on the implications of Christian faith for contemporary problems and issues.

#### A. Ethics in the Modern World

Objectives: By the completion of the course the students will demonstrate the ability to

- a. describe various approaches to philosophical ethics (e.g. virtue, natural law, utilitarianism, duty, ethical relativism) and methodological issues associated with each.
- b. articulate implications of selected ethical issues of significance in the contemporary world.
- c. apply Christian ethical approaches to selected ethical problems or issues.
- d. develop and defend a perspective on contemporary ethical issues.

#### B. World Views

Objectives: By the completion of the course the students will demonstrate the ability to

- a. describe the basic issues surrounding the concept of world view.
- b. compare and contrast a Christian world view with other world views.

## AREA FOUR: SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

- c. articulate different approaches to justifying one's world view.
- d. outline a variety of contemporary issues relevant to the development of a personal world view from a Christian perspective.

### C. Pluralism in Contemporary Society

Objectives: By the completion of the course the students will demonstrate the ability to

- a. outline contemporary issues arising out of the pluralism of race, ethnicity, social class, gender, and religion.
- b. examine contemporary society from diverse viewpoints and through these increase self-knowledge.
- c. explain some effects of inequality, prejudice, and discrimination.
- d. articulate and practice an informed and faithful Christian response to diversity.

### Parameters for Engaging a Pluralistic World Courses:

Course Level: 300 level three-credit course.

Prerequisites: Each course should have no prerequisites related to other courses of study

Requirement: One course from category A, B, or C as listed above.

Sequence: Limited to the junior and senior years. Students will generally complete most discipline-based requirements in the General Education curriculum prior to enrolling in this course.

Course Proposals: Courses meeting the above objectives for any one of the three categories are taught from an interdisciplinary perspective, drawing from resources in at least two disciplines. These courses are proposed and approved in one of two ways: (1) individual faculty members can propose an ID Engaging a Pluralistic World course to be approved by the General Education Committee, or (2) a department may propose a discipline-specific course to count for the Engaging a Pluralistic World requirement.

### Pedagogical Assumptions for Engaging a Pluralistic World Courses:

1. Courses are proposed and taught either by faculty teams of two or three members representing at least two distinct academic disciplines or an individual faculty member provided the course is taught from a distinctively interdisciplinary perspective.
2. Enrollment is limited to 35 students per faculty member up to a maximum enrollment of 105 students. When there are more than 35 students in a class, they should regularly meet in smaller groups of no more than 35 students to facilitate discussion of course content.
3. Instruction for each course will include a variety of pedagogical approaches to assure a context where students are encouraged to interact with each other and with the instructors relative to the course content.
4. Courses will require students to engage in the development of theses and arguments. Structures for this may include, but are not limited to, essay examinations, research papers, position statements, op-ed articles, class presentations, and debates.