

GUIDE TO NAVIGATING ADVISING EQUIVALENCIES FOR GENERAL EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS

1. **BEFORE taking General Education classes elsewhere**, a student should check the online Transfer Course Equivalency Database: <https://www.messiah.edu/transferdatabase>

- If a General Education course appears in this database:
 - **Students participating in off-campus programs** still need to complete an *Off-Campus Study Course Approval Form* in which they **list the specific courses they plan to take and the specific requirements (i.e. Art, Non-Western, etc.) which they plan to meet with those courses.**
 - **Students taking a course for traditional transfer credit** do not need to submit additional pre-approval paperwork to receive credit for the existing course equivalency, once advisors review the course to ensure that students are interpreting the database correctly.
- If a course does not appear in the database, the student must submit one of the following forms **in advance** of taking the course to ensure it meets the appropriate General Education requirement:
 - *Off-Campus Study Course Approval Form* (for students studying in an approved off-campus program through, and available from, the Intercultural Office at Messiah University)
 - *Approval for Transfer Credit Form* (for students not studying in an approved study abroad program through the Intercultural Office at Messiah University; e.g., local community college)
http://www.messiah.edu/download/downloads/id/7019/UG_Approval_Transfer_Credit_Form.pdfStudents must **list the specific courses they plan to take and the specific requirements which they plan to meet with those courses** and review those expectations with their advisors to ensure that the anticipated courses meet with their degree plan.

2. **WHEN REQUESTING AN ARTICULATION (EQUIVALENCY) FOR A GENERAL EDUCATION COURSE:**

- **Students and advisors will be expected to provide** the institution, course name and description. When possible, students may be asked to provide a class syllabus. General guidelines for types of course which may potentially meet requirements appear at http://www.messiah.edu/info/200455/transfer_ap_clep_courses/151/transfer_guidelines.
- **The Registrar's Office and the Dean of General Education and Common Learning** determine whether/ how well a particular course meets the various objectives set forth in each area of General Education. These objectives were established in light of our institution's specific educational mission and goals.

For example, if a student would like a particular class to meet his/her Pluralism in Contemporary Society requirement, the class will need to meet the following objectives:

4.2.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, disability 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.*

Students and advisors can find all General Education course objectives here:

<http://www.messiah.edu/academics/coe/documents/IntroductionandGuidelines.pdf>

Important Considerations Regarding General Education Equivalencies

- **The determination of how effectively an interdisciplinary (IDS) course satisfies a particular General Education requirement rests with the Registrar and Dean of General Education and Common Learning.** When determining how effectively a distribution course (General Education course within a department) satisfies a particular General Education requirement, these parties may consult with Department Chairs, to the extent that the course meets specified discipline-related educational objectives.
- **An established partnership** with an institution (e.g., via study abroad articulation) **does not necessarily guarantee articulation** of their coursework for our particular General Education requirements.
- **Classes are *not* equated solely by the type of course** (i.e. Art, History, etc.).
- **Waivers** of General Education components are only granted in **very rare circumstances**.
- Additionally, certain General Education requirements **must be taught from a Christian perspective** (i.e., from Messiah or another institution with a similar Christian theological foundation):
 - 1.3 Created and Called for Community (Messiah only)
 - 2.1.C Science, Technology and the World
 - 3.1 Knowledge of the Bible
 - 3.2 Christian Beliefs
 - 4.2.A. Ethics in the Modern World
 - 4.2.B. World Views
 - 4.2.C. Pluralism in Contemporary Society

When in doubt, please contact Dr. Kate Oswald Wilkins, Dean of General Education and Common Learning.