## American Institutions/Civic Learning – Foundations Model

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Pros: This requirement would receive greater emphasis in the GE curriculum by elevating it to the same status as other Foundations areas; Courses meeting this requirement would not compete directly with other courses in the EP & BC part of the GE curriculum since they would be in their own category; Designated combinations of 1-3 course groupings that meet the requirement would give students a relatively limited menu of options that might be easier to navigate than another complex attribute layered onto the existing EP & BC array of courses

Cons: Students would have to take 3-9 more units (most likely 6 units) total for General Education, unless there are reductions in other parts of the GE curriculum to compensate, such as in Building Connections, which would result in less demand for courses in those categories and students not receiving the learning benefits of taking those courses; Lists of options that are manageable for a relatively small number of courses could become unwieldy if the number of options that meet this Foundations requirement expand significantly, in which case an attribute model could be easier for students and advisors to navigate

Policy Language:

## **General Education Foundations**

## **American Institutions and Civic Learning Requirement**

Classes meeting the Foundations: American Institutions and Civic Learning requirement will focus on the following: how the history of the United States continues to shape the present; the basic principles of American constitutional democracy and how they are applied under a republican form of government; the United States Constitution and major American constitutional debates and developments; the essential founding documents and how they have shaped the nature and functions of American Institutions of self-governance; landmark Supreme Court cases that have shaped law and society; the civic actions necessary for effective citizenship and civic participation in a self-governing society – for example, civil dialog and civil disagreement; and basic economic knowledge to critically assess public policy options and to inform professional and personal decisions.

Beginning with Fall 2026 matriculants, students must take a set of 1-3 courses from an approved list of options that collectively fulfill the Foundations: American Institutions and Civic Learning requirement by addressing all 7 learning outcomes associated with this requirement across the 1-3 courses in the set.

The University's General Education curriculum helps University of Arizona graduates attain fundamental skills and a broad base of knowledge to respond effectively to a complex world.

All degree-seeking undergraduates must satisfy the requirements of the UA General Education curriculum by completing the following series of courses:

* [**Foundations**](https://catalog.arizona.edu/policy/general-education-foundations) - First-Year Writing (Composition), American Institutions and Civic Learning, Mathematics, and Second Language courses
* [**Introduction to General Education**](https://catalog.arizona.edu/policy/general-education-entry-exit-courses) course - Introduces students to General Education, reflecting on learning, and developing an ePortfolio. Required for students admitted as first-year students; optional for all other students. See policy on Entry/Exit Courses. (1 unit)
* [**Exploring Perspectives**](https://catalog.arizona.edu/policy/general-education-exploring-perspectives-building-connections) courses - Introduce students to four disciplinary domains. The emphasis is on ways of thinking, knowing, and doing in those disciplines. Students will choose at least one course from each domain (12 units minimum), including:
	+ Artist
	+ Humanist
	+ Natural Scientist
	+ Social Scientist
* [**Building Connections**](https://catalog.arizona.edu/policy/general-education-exploring-perspectives-building-connections) courses - Bring together knowledge and modes of thinking from two or more disciplines and/or perspectives. Students will choose three courses (9 units minimum).
* [**GE Capstone**](https://catalog.arizona.edu/policy/general-education-entry-exit-courses) course - Facilitates student reflection on their General Education experience to complete their ePortfolio in the GE Capstone course. Required for students admitted as first-year students; optional for all other students. See policy on Entry/Exit Courses. (1 unit)

Beginning with Fall 2026 matriculants, students must choose their Exploring Perspectives and Building Connections courses to fulfill the following [**attribute requirements**](https://catalog.arizona.edu/policy/general-education-attributes):

* Diversity and Equity Attribute - 2 courses
* Quantitative Reasoning - 2 courses
* World Cultures and Societies Attribute - 1 course
* Writing Attribute - 2 courses

All courses approved as general education courses in the current General Education program will continue to meet the same requirements for students finishing out the current program.

### **General Education policies pertaining to transfer students:**

* [**General Education Transfer Credit**](https://catalog.arizona.edu/policy/general-education-transfer-credit)

### **Your Specific Requirements:**

To see the requirements specific to your major and degree program, consult the general [**Academic Advisement Reports(link is external)**](https://uaccess.schedule.arizona.edu/psp/pubsaprd/UA_ADV_CATALOG/HRMS/h/?tab=DEFAULT) or your personal Advisement Report in **[UAccess Student(link is external)](http://uaccess.arizona.edu/%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank)**.  Please direct questions to your [**academic advisor(link is external)**](http://advising.arizona.edu/content/academic-advisor-directory).

### **Office of General Education:**

 The [**Office of General Education(link is external)**](https://gened.arizona.edu/) administers the University of Arizona's General Education Curriculum.

\**Special Note: An additional Foundations requirement could be accommodated by expanding the overall size of the General Education program or by reducing the number of courses required in other areas.*

**Learning Outcome for American Institutions and Civic Learning Attribute:**

Learning outcome for a course that meets the Foundations: American Institutions and Civic Learning requirement in a single course (described more fully in the seven learning outcomes below):

**Students will analyze and evaluate multiple perspectives on American institutions, focusing on how U.S. history has shaped the present, principles of constitutional democracy and how they have been applied under a republican form of government, debates over the U.S. Constitution and other founding documents, Supreme Court cases and their effects on law and society, civic participation and civil dialogue, and economic knowledge for public policy and personal or professional decisions.**

Combinations of 2-3 courses that collectively meet the Foundations: American Institutions and Civic Learning requirement would be approved in sets that collectively address all 7 of the learning outcomes below:

**I. Identify key events, processes, and periods in United States history, examine conflicting perspectives on those topics, and analyze how those parts of United States history continue to shape the present.**

**II. Identify and assess different perspectives on the basic principles of United States constitutional democracy, including its structure, rights, and fundamental protections, and analyze how these principles have been applied under a republican form of government as it evolved over time.**

**III. Examine the United States Constitution, including one or more amendments, major constitutional debates, and theories of constitutional interpretation, and analyze their impact on subsequent historical developments.**

**IV. Analyze primary philosophical, historical, and political documents that influenced the founding of the U.S. government and its structure, and evaluate the role these documents played in shaping U.S. institutions.**

**V. Evaluate landmark Supreme Court cases and assess the court’s role in shaping law and society.**

**VI. Demonstrate and apply the skills necessary for effective citizenship, including civil dialogue and civic participation, shaped by effective problem-solving and information literacy, by employing active learning opportunities, community-engaged learning, service learning, or experiential learning.**

**VII. Explain and assess how economic data, tools, and theories are applied to compare and**

**evaluate current or historical public policies, as well as professional and personal decisions.**