

UNIV 101: Introduction to the General Education Experience

Course Description

A 1-unit course designed to provide an introduction to and a foundation for the general education experience at the University of Arizona.

Instructor Information

Various

Course Format

In this course, you can expect to engage with a combination of readings, videos, reflective writing, and weekly class meetings. Class meetings will include presentation of information by the instructor but rely extensively on small and large group discussions. You should plan to be actively engaged with the instructor and your classmates in these class meetings. As a 1-unit course, you can plan to spend an average of 3 hours per week on this class.

Course Objectives

UNIV 101 gives you a foundation for your General Education experience at the University of Arizona. It is designed to provide you with an understanding of the purpose and value of the General Education experience, its relationship to the rest of your undergraduate studies and your experience as a lifelong learner, as well as the university general education requirements. The course will also introduce you to one of the means by which you will reflect upon and document your learning in all of your General Education courses, the GenEd ePortfolio.

Course Learning Outcomes

In an ever-changing world, being able to approach complex issues and problems from an interdisciplinary perspective is essential. Your General Education experience has the potential to significantly impact how you approach the world, your specific field of study, your career, your problem-solving, and so much more. It is an integral part of your Bachelor's degree studies and is interconnected to your major(s) and minor(s). As such, after successfully completing this course, you should expect to be able to:

- communicate the **purpose** of your general education (so you know why you are taking these courses);
- explain the **structure** of your general education (so you feel empowered to determine the direction of your coursework);
- identify the **value** of your general education (so you can stay motivated as a learner);
- use an ePortfolio to document and reflect upon what you have learned to **make**

meaning of your general education (so you can tell other people, like potential employers, the value of your General Education studies); and,

- reflect on the **interrelatedness** of your general education, academic major(s) and minor(s), academic behaviors, and general well-being (so you can approach your Bachelor's degree holistically).

Required Texts or Readings

In development.

**** A Reader is being developed specifically for this course, crowdsourced from faculty, staff, administrators, and students from across the University. It will be an open educational resource, providing a no-cost reader as unique as the general education experience at UA.*

Required Materials

In order to be able to document and reflect upon your entire GenEd experience, you will be creating an ePortfolio using a system called Digication. There is no cost to use this system. In this class, you will be creating your Digication account, learning how to navigate it, and using it for your final project.

Assignments

Weekly Reflection Questions (Due each week)

As scholars in a Bachelor's degree program, it is not sufficient to simply learn and reproduce information; you must be able to think about that information, integrate it into your previous learning, make meaning of it, and be able to apply it. Reflection is a process that allows you to make meaning of information. This skill is something to be practiced, an opportunity you will get in this course and throughout your GenEd experience.

Each week you will be asked to respond to a series of reflection questions that will focus on your journey as a lifelong learner, specifics about the University of Arizona GenEd, and topics of well-being and academic success. These may be submitted in writing or as a video (see additional instructions on D2L), but in either case all questions should be addressed each week. The majority of these reflection questions will relate to, and contribute to, your two bigger assignments for the class: the GenEd Roadmap and the Story of a Lifelong Learner. The more thorough your reflections week-to-week, the easier it will be to complete those two larger assignments.

Because your responses to reflection questions will often be the basis for class discussion, reflection question responses are due by the start of our weekly class

meeting each week. A rubric for how your reflections will be graded is available on D2L.

Class Participation (Weekly)

Class attendance and participation are essential for your learning and intellectual growth, which are both active processes. In addition, your thoughts, experiences, and previous learning are valuable resources to the rest of the class. When we all benefit from each other's knowledge, our learning is greater than it can be on our own. Each class meeting, you can earn up to 10 points for your participation in class, which you earn by actively contributing to both small and large group discussions. Information on how participation is graded is available on D2L.

Of course, life happens and there are certain times when students are unable to make it to class. You have two opportunities to miss our scheduled class meeting and make up your participation points with an alternate assignment (which will vary week-to-week depending on the activities and discussions in the class).

GenEd Roadmap (Due Week 12)

A General Education has the potential to fundamentally alter your learning. It also has the potential to become nothing more than a checklist of requirements if you do not take an active role in planning it out. This assignment will utilize some of your reflection responses to help you develop your own Roadmap to the General Education so that you can make the most meaning and experience the most development from it as possible. This should be, of course, a living document that serves as a starting point that will surely change over time as you progress through the General Education program. Specific assignment instructions and a grading rubric are available on D2L.

Final Project: Story of a Lifelong Learner (Due by Final Exam Period)

Every person is a lifelong learner. You have been learning your entire life and will continue to do so. How you go about approaching your experience as a lifelong learner is up to you. This assignment will utilize some of your previous reflection responses to address three fundamental questions, each related to one of the units of the course:

- Where are you from?
- Where are you now?
- Where do you see yourself going?

You have two options for completing this project. One option is to write your story as a narrative that addresses all of the components of the project. The second option is to develop a visual story using Adobe Spark or PowerPoint and recording a narration of your story. Please be sure to review information about the fair and acceptable use of images if you select this option. Specific assignment instructions and a grading rubric are available on D2L.

This assignment should be included in your General Education ePortfolio.

Optional Assignment (Extra Credit): Office Hours (must complete by last day of regularly scheduled classes)

In all of your classes - GenEd, major, minor, and elective - visiting your instructor during office hours can help your understanding of the material, boost your grade, and help you develop professional networking skills. It can also be unnerving. For this class, you can earn extra credit by visiting me during office hours to discuss your work in the class, your GenEd experience, or other topics of your choosing. If my scheduled office hours present a conflict for you, please email me and we can set up a time that works for both of us.

Course Schedule

Week	Topic	Notes and Important Due Dates [full semester dates only] (Reflection Responses due each week by start of class meeting)
Unit 1: Where Am I From?		
1	Why are you here?: Course intro and overview	
2	Making sense of previous learning	
3	Academic SWOT analysis	
Unit 2: Where Am I Now?		
4	The University of Arizona: Its Purpose, Place, and People	
5	Why a General Education?	
6	Being a member of the UArizona community	<i>Shopping Cart available on UAccess for Spring classes.</i>

Unit 3: Where Am I Going?

7	What do I want from my general education?	
8	Making a plan for meaning making: the ePortfolio	
9	The artist and the humanist	
10	The natural scientist and the social scientist	
11	My role as a writer and quantitative thinker	
12	Diversity, equity, and global perspectives	Due: GenEd Roadmap
13	Multidisciplinarity versus interdisciplinarity	<i>Enrollment begins for First-Year Students</i>
14	Reflections on my first semester: What have I learned? What does it mean?	
15	Reflections on my first semester: What went well and what should change?	
16	Exam Week	Due: Story of a Lifelong Learner