



## **GENERAL EDUCATION PROCEDURE**

Approved by: Academic Coordinating Committee

Authorizer: Executive Director, Academic Administration

Reference Code: A16\_V2

Effective Date: 4/29/2009

### **PROCEDURE STATEMENT:**

All General Education courses shall be developed and offered in accordance with Conestoga's General Education Policy and the Minister's Binding Policy Directive 3.0 Framework for Programs of Instruction, Appendix C: General Education Requirement.

### **SCOPE:**

This procedure applies to all Conestoga General Education courses (elective and/or specified) and to applicable Ontario College Certificate, Ontario College Diploma, Ontario College Advanced Diploma programs.

### **THEMES:**

All General Education courses will be developed and offered in keeping with the Ontario College Liberal Arts and Science Council and Ministry Training Colleges and Universities (MTCU) policy and procedure. See appendix for list of themes.

### **DEFINITIONS:**

#### **Course:**

A distinct and discrete teaching and learning framework, containing content that has been approved by an expert source, usually structured to be delivered over an identified period of time, with measurable learning outcomes, and formal student valuation.

**Credentials Validation Service (CVS):** The Credential Validation Service (CVS) provides timely validation of programs of instruction to the colleges.

The CVS service is consistent with the Minister of Training, Colleges and University's Binding Policy Directive, Framework for Programs of Instruction.

**Essential Employability Skills (EES):** Non-vocational skills students are to learn as part of the formal curriculum, and as stipulated by the MTCU.

**General Education Course:** A course within the program that engages students in learning that exposes them to at least one of the five themes outside their program of study.

**Ministry of Training, Colleges, and Universities (MTCU):** The MTCU has the function of assessing all program proposals for determination of appropriate code classification, funding weights and parameters, and program titling.

**Program:** A series of courses, grouped together in some identifiable manner, designed to achieve identified learning outcomes, and approved by the Board of Governors and/or external bodies.

**Specified General Education Course:** A General Education course designated as a required course in the program.

#### **RESPONSIBILITIES:**

##### **Chair of Liberal Studies will:**

- Lead and guide the academic schools in the planning and implementation of General Education consistent with Conestoga's General Education Policy and procedures,
- Review and assess applications for the development of new and revision of existing General Education courses,
- Chair Conestoga General Education Standing Committee,
- Submit all new committee approved courses to the Executive Dean Academic Administration for final review prior to that course outline being uploaded to SIS by Academic Administration.

##### **General Education Standing Committee will:**

- Recommend a General Education plan for Conestoga for approval,
- Ensure a sufficient number of courses are made available to be offered to students enrolled in certificate, diploma and advanced diploma programs to fulfill the General Education requirements of their respective programs,
- Assess new General Education course proposals to ensure that the proposed courses address current deficiencies regarding the breadth of the MTCU identified General Education themes,
- Provide guidance to academic schools to support the design and development of new General Education courses or the major revision of existing General Education courses,
- Review approval to proceed requests and approve all new General Education course outlines,

- Review all current General Education course at least once every 5 years to ensure compliance with MTCU General Education themes.

**Academic Schools will:**

- Assess existing programs as part of the Program Review requirements to ensure compliance with Conestoga’s General Education Policy,
- Coordinate course development and revision with the General Education Standing Committee,
- Ensure all proposed development or revision of General education courses (elective and/or specified) is submitted to, and approved by, the Chair of Liberal Studies, and in consultation with Academic Administration,
- Assess General Education transfer of academic credit in accordance with Conestoga’s General Education Policy.

**Academic Administration/Curriculum will:**

- Support the course development and/or revision through all stages of the process, including consultation with Educational Technology for hybrid or online courses and D2L as required,
- Confirm all General Education courses offered by Conestoga College are approved by the Credentials Validation Service, to meet related MTCU guidelines.

**Process:**

Introduction of Eligible General Education Courses within an Existing or New Program:

1. Academic Chair reviews the list of currently available and eligible general education courses.
2. Academic Chair consults with the Chair of Liberal Studies or a member of the standing Committee to confirm General Education course eligibility for the program.
3. General Education Standing Committee will review plans and documents to offer on-going support and additional feedback throughout development or revision process.
  - a. Academic School must ensure relevant documents support the General Education transfer of academic credit in accordance with Conestoga Policy.
  - b. Academic School must ensure General Education themes are incorporated at the course and program level.
  - c. Academic Administration must ensure relevant documents clearly outline how course and/or program meet all internal and external standards.
4. The Executive Dean Academic Administration will have the final approval of all new or modified General Education courses, as appropriate.

**REFERENCES:**

Advanced Standing and Transfer Credit Procedure  
 General Education Policy  
 Program Development and Review Policy  
 Program Development Procedure  
 Program Review Procedure

**REVISION LOG:**

<b>Revision Date</b>	<b>Summary of Changes</b>
7 April 2009	Approved – Academic Forum
15 April 2009	Approved – Policies and Procedures Committee
29 April 2009	Approved – Academic Coordinating Committee
27 January 2014	Approved – Academic Forum
4 February 2014	Approved – Policy and Procedure Committee

**APPENDIX:**

General Education Themes as defined by the MTCU: Framework for Programs of Instruction

Theme 1. Arts in Society

*Rationale:* The capacity of a person to recognize and evaluate artistic and creative achievements is useful in many aspects of his/her life. Since artistic expression is a fundamentally human activity, which both reflects and anticipates developments in the larger culture, its study will enhance the student’s cultural and self-awareness.

*Content:* Courses in this area should provide students with an understanding of the importance of visual and creative arts in human affairs, of the artist’s and writer’s perceptions of the world and the means by which those perceptions are translated into the language of literature and artistic expression. They will also provide an appreciation of the aesthetic values used in examining works of art and possibly, a direct experience in expression perceptions in an artistic medium.

Theme 2. Civic Life

*Rationale:* In order for individuals to live responsibly and to reach their potential as individuals and as citizens of society, they need to understand the patterns of human relationships that underlie the orderly interactions of a society’s various structural units. Informed people will have knowledge of the meaning of civic life in relation to diverse communities at the local, national, and global level, and an awareness of international issues and the effects of these on Canada, and Canada’s place in the international community.

*Content:* Courses in this area should provide students with an understanding of the meaning of freedoms, rights, and participation in community and public life, in addition to a working knowledge of the structure and function of various levels of government (municipal, provincial,

national) in Canada and/or in an international context. They may also provide a historical understanding of major political issues affecting relations between the various levels of government in Canada and their constituents.

### Theme 3. Social and Cultural Understanding

*Rationale:* Knowledge of the patterns and precedents of the past provide the means for a person to gain an awareness of his or her place in contemporary culture and society. In addition to this awareness, students will acquire a sense of the main currents of their culture and that of other cultures over an extended period of time in order to link personal history to the broader study of culture.

*Content:* Courses in this area are those that deal broadly with major social and cultural themes. These courses may also stress the nature and validity of historical evidence and the variety of historical interpretation of events. Courses will provide the students with a view and understanding of the impact of cultural, social, ethnic, or linguistic characteristics.

### Theme 4. Personal Understanding

*Rationale:* Educated people are equipped for life-long understanding and development of themselves as integrated physiological and psychological entities. They are aware of the ideal need to be fully functioning persons: mentally, physically, emotionally, socially, spiritually, and vocationally.

*Content:* Courses in this area will focus on understanding the individual: his or her evolution; situation; relationship with others; place in the environment and universe; achievements and problems; and his or her meaning and purpose. They will also allow students the opportunity to study institutionalized human social behavior in a systematic way. Courses fulfilling this requirement may be oriented to the study of the individual within a variety of contexts.

### Theme 5. Science And Technology

*Rationale:* Matter and energy are universal concepts in science, forming a basis for understanding the interactions that occur in living and non-living systems in our universe. Study in this area provides an understanding of the behavior of matter that provides a foundation for further scientific study and the creation of broader understanding about natural phenomena.

Similarly, the various applications and developments in the area of technology have an increasing impact on all aspects of human endeavor and have numerous social, economic, and philosophical implications. For example, the operation of computers to process data at high speed has invoked an interaction between machines and the human mind that is unique in human history. This development and other technological developments have a powerful impact on how we deal with many of the complex questions in our society.

*Content:* Courses in this area should stress scientific inquiry and deal with basic or fundamental questions of science rather than applied ones. They may be formulated from traditional basic courses in such areas of study as biology, chemistry, physics, astronomy, geology, or agriculture. As well, courses related to understanding the role and functions of computers (e.g., data management and information processing), and assorted computer-related technologies, should be offered in a non-applied manner to provide students with an opportunity to explore the impact of these concepts and practices on their lives.