

GE 21 and the Oswego baccalaureate degree

General Education has long been a foundational element of an Oswego undergraduate degree. Crafted over the course of two years featuring discussions between faculty, staff, and students, GE 21 maintains the important role of liberal education in preparing Oswego graduates to engage in and contribute to the world through the combination of required categories and student choice.

Oswego faculty and staff recognize the importance of strong communication and mathematics skills. Therefore, students are required to complete coursework or demonstrate proficiency in both basic writing and mathematics. In addition, work in the major will help each student develop proficiency in oral communication while at the same time sharpening their writing and critical thinking skills.

We recognize that students need scientific as well as quantitative and communication literacy if they are to succeed now and in the future. Oswego requires that our students successfully complete a course in the natural sciences. Taken together, knowing what it means to think like a scientist, knowing how numbers can be marshaled in support of an understanding of the natural world and humankind's role in it, and knowing how to communicate effectively how scientific understanding contributes to the world in which they live will be crucial to our students' ability to make sense of and help to shape their world.

Oswego also recognizes that the world is marked by a web of connections and relationships. We do not live in isolation. In order to help prepare students to play an active part in the world, to make a difference if you will, Oswego requires that students take a course that helps them see and make sense of the connections and relationships. All courses in our World Awareness category help to foster an awareness of the history and culture of peoples and places not our own and an understanding of common problems, issues, and concerns faced by people around the world. Because having a basic knowledge of a foreign language helps one to understand and appreciate the culture of those speaking it, we also require that students either complete coursework or demonstrate a level of proficiency in a foreign language.

Students need to complete either 30 or 33 credit hours in order to fulfill our general education requirement. Breadth of knowledge is ensured in our general education program. In addition to courses in mathematics, English, the natural sciences, foreign language, and world awareness, students complete their general education program by choosing from a variety of courses in a number of categories. With choice comes the opportunity for students to develop and follow lines of inquiry and subjects of interest and concern.