

2.7.3 In each undergraduate degree program, the institution requires the successful completion of a general education component at the collegiate level that (1) is a substantial component of each undergraduate degree, (2) ensures breadth of knowledge, and (3) is based on a coherent rationale. For degree completion in associate programs, the component constitutes a minimum of 15 semester hours or the equivalent; for baccalaureate programs, a minimum of 30 semester hours or the equivalent. These credit hours are to be drawn from and include at least one course from each of the following areas: humanities/fine arts; social/behavioral sciences; and natural science/mathematics. The courses do not narrowly focus on those skills, techniques, and procedures specific to a particular occupation or profession. If an institution uses a unit other than semester credit hours, it provides an explanation for the equivalency. The institution also provides a justification if it allows for fewer than the required number of semester credit hours or its equivalent unit of general education courses. **(General Education)**

Judgment of Compliance

Compliance

Narrative

Albany State University (ASU) ensures that each undergraduate degree program provides all students with a general education curriculum approved by the University System of Georgia (USG) Board of Regents (BOR). General education, hereafter referred to as “**core curriculum**”, at ASU is based on requirements set forth by the University System of Georgia. Core curriculum requirements are based on Board of Regents policies on core curriculum which provide a framework for ensuring that system institutions adopt a common core curriculum that is broad enough to enable institutions some flexibility in defining learning outcomes while ensuring that the core curriculum courses are fully transferable amongst system institutions. As the general education foundation upon which all undergraduate degree programs are built, the core curriculum is designed to provide students with a comprehensive academic foundation providing the basis for successful advanced study in the variety of programs offered by the University.

The Board of Regents *Academic Affairs Handbook, Section 2.04: Core Curriculum Principles and Frameworks, Policy 303.01* [\[1\]](#) states that the Core Curriculum must consist of 60 hours (½ of the 120-hour undergraduate program) structured with the following categories and credit hours: *Essential Skills- Area A* (9 hours) , *Institutional Options – Area B*, *Humanities/Fine Arts – Area C* (6 hours), *Mathematics/Science/Technology – Area D* (10-11 hours), *Social Science – Area E* (12 hours), and *Courses Related to the Major Field of Study – Area F* (18 hours at the lower division level). Additionally, Section 2.04.01 [\[2\]](#) (General Guidelines) states that: “Since the aim of the core curriculum is to provide students with a broad background in general education, neither Core areas A-E nor specific courses may be designed or required for special groups of students such as those within programs, departments, schools, or colleges within universities.” Consistent with Policy 303.01, Albany State’s core consists of 42-43 hours (fluctuation of hours caused by 4-hour Area D lab courses) of general education courses (Areas A-E), plus 18 hours of lower level courses (Area F) unique to each major program of the University. All curricular changes must be approved by the Faculty Senate Committee on Curriculum and New Programs [\[3\]](#). ASU’s current core

was approved and is published in the *2004-2007 Albany State University Undergraduate Catalog* [4].

ASU's Core Curriculum is a Substantial Component of Each Undergraduate Program

Albany State University's baccalaureate core curriculum requirement clearly exceeds the SACS minimum of 30 semester hours, and exceeds the Board of Regents requirement of 60 semester hours. Of the 60 semester hours required by the BOR, both ASU and the BOR appropriate 42 (possibly 43 at ASU) hours for "general education" courses that **all** undergraduate programs must offer. The remaining 18 hours, as designated by ASU and the BOR, allow fundamental specialized instruction and learning in each of the University's undergraduate majors. Additionally, while much of ASU's core curriculum is common to other USG institutions, there is a slight but important difference reflected in "hours above the core." ASU sees as an important part of its mission addressing the health and fitness issues common among the citizens of its service community; therefore, in addition to ASU 1200: Freshman Seminar, three courses in health and physical education are also required. These additional courses bring ASU's total core curriculum requirement to 63 - 64 semester hours.

ASU's Core Curriculum Ensures Breadth of Knowledge

Albany State University's core curriculum contributes to each student's breadth of knowledge by requiring the study of a comprehensive range of general education components including essential skills, humanities, fine arts, science, mathematics, technology, and social science. The general education component encompassed within ASU's core curriculum is comprised of a thoroughly balanced and comprehensive body of course offerings that are in complete compliance with the policy set forth in the Board of Regents USG *Academic Affairs Handbook, Section 2.04* [5]. Five "general education" areas make up the 42(43) hours of the core (A-E) that are common to each of the University's degree programs. The remaining 18 (F) are specialized lower-level courses unique to each undergraduate major. ASU also has additional "above the core" general education requirements that are explained below. ASU's general education courses are drawn from those specified by the BOR and include at least the requisite number of courses from each of the following areas: (A) Composition and College Algebra; (B) Speech and African-Diaspora; (C) Humanities and the Arts; (D) Science, Math and Technology; and (E) Social Sciences with emphasis on Political Science, History Philosophy, Economics, Sociology. More specifically, ASU's current Core Curriculum offers the following types of courses designed to ensure breadth of knowledge upon their successful completion (SEE: *Albany State University Undergraduate Catalog, 2004-2007, Core Curriculum, page 57*) [4]:

Essential Skills (Area A)

- Required English Courses– totaling 9 hours
English 1101 and
English 1102 – Composition Courses
- Required Math Course – totaling 3 hours
MATH 1111 – College Algebra **or**
MATH 1101 – Math Modeling **or**
Math 1113 – Pre-Calculus **or**

Math 1211 – Calculus I

Institutional Options (Area B)

- Required Courses – totaling 5 hours
 COMM 1100 – Public Speaking
 HIST 1002 – Introduction to the African Diaspora

Humanities (Area C)

- Required Humanities Courses – 6 hours
 English 2111 – World Literature
 A choice of one of the following: Art Appreciation, Music Appreciation, or
 World Literature II, French, German, Spanish, or Introduction to Fine Arts

Science, Mathematics, and Technology (Area D)

- Required Natural Sciences – totaling 8 hours
 Students may choose from Biological Science, Chemistry, or Physics
- An Additional Science/Math option – two 2 or 3 hours
 Students may choose from limited number of lower-level math, science,
 or technology courses

Social Science (Area E)

- Required History, or Social Science Courses – totaling 12 hours
 Students must take POLS 1101 – US and Georgia Government
 Students must also select one History course and two other social
 science courses from among the other course offerings including courses
 in Political Science, History, Psychology, Sociology, Geography,
 Philosophy and Economics

*“Above the Core” courses ASU requires total 6 additional hours, and consist of:

- Required ASU 1200 – Freshman Seminar – 3 hours
- Choice of any three Health and Physical Education Classes, all carrying 1 hour credit each

The combination of Albany State’s Core of 42-43 hours and those courses above the core bring the total of ASU’ s general education courses to 48-49, which is why most degree programs at Albany State have a minimum program requirement of 123 hours as opposed to the BOR’s minimum requirement of 120.

ASU’s Core Curriculum is Based upon a Coherent Rationale

Albany State University’s core curriculum is directly aligned with the University’s mission as is captured on page 9 of the *Albany State University Undergraduate Catalogue* [\[6\]](#), which states:

“The primary mission of Albany State University is to educate students to become outstanding contributors to society... the university emphasizes the liberal arts as the foundation for all learning by exposing students to the humanities, fine arts, social sciences and sciences. Global learning is fostered through a broad-based curriculum...”

Furthermore, Albany State University's core curriculum follows the rationale expressed by the Board of Regents in the *USG Academic Affairs Handbook, Section 2.04* [\[5\]](#), which states:

“From the origins of intellectual study to the present, general education has been a key to a fulfilling life of self-knowledge, self-reflection, critical awareness, and lifelong learning. General education has traditionally focused on oral and written communication, quantitative reasoning and mathematics, studies in culture and society, scientific reasoning, and aesthetic appreciation. Today, general education also assists students in their understanding of technology, information literacy, diversity, and global awareness. In meeting all of these needs, general education provides college students with their best opportunity to experience the breadth of human knowledge and the ways that knowledge in various disciplines is interrelated.”

Examination of ASU's core curriculum reveals a strong coherent rationale for its design, one that is in complete alignment with the rationale set forth by the BOR and USG institutions. The rationale for the core curriculum at both the state and the university level is rooted firmly in the shared missions of the university and the university system, one as a unit within the other. In summary, Albany State's core curriculum is designed to address essential skills necessary for students to effectively communicate with language and numeracy; it also allows for students to engage in learning activities that would expose them to a world of great thinkers, writers, and masters of the arts. Through the study of science, social studies, and mathematics, in addition to the arts and humanities, the students in all majors will not only be prepared to successfully complete their chosen major, but will also have a better sense of self as they develop into intellectual and philosophical beings.

Albany State University Routinely Assesses its Core Curriculum

Albany State University views continuous assessment of its core to be of vital importance for assurance of relevancy and effectiveness, while at the same time remaining consistent with USG policy. The University's Core Curriculum Evaluation Committee is charged with regular review of the core, its content, expected outcomes, and assessment of student learning. This body makes its decisions and recommendations to the University's Curriculum and New Programs Committee based on regular and systematic assessments implemented, analyzed and summarized for the Committee by the Office of Institutional Research.

Supporting Documentation

- [1] [Core Curriculum, USG Academic Affairs Handbook, Section 2.04, Policy 303.01](#)
- [2] [Core Curriculum, USG Academic Affairs Handbook, Section 2.04.01](#)
- [3] [Changes in Curriculum, Faculty Handbook, page 28](#)
- [4] [Core Curriculum, Albany State University Undergraduate Catalog, page 57 – 58](#)

- [5] [Core Curriculum, USG Academic Affairs Handbook, Section 2.04](#)
- [6] [University Mission, Albany State University Undergraduate Catalog, p. 9](#)