

UCSC Bachelor's Degree Objectives and Requirements

All UCSC bachelor's degrees require completion of at least 180 quarter units with a grade point average of at least 2.0 (on a 4.0 scale) of which 35 of the last 45 units are earned in residency. In addition, all students must:

- Satisfy the UC general undergraduate program requirements.
- Satisfy the UCSC General Education requirements.
- Satisfy the requirements of at least one Major course of study.
- Satisfy the graduation requirements of the student's UCSC residential college.

The objectives of the major requirements are treated separately. Below we summarize the educational objectives of the other general components.

UC Requirements

These requirements are satisfied prior to admission to UC or by examination or coursework during the first year of enrollment.

University of California Entry Level Writing Requirement

The University of California Entry Level Writing Requirement (UC ELWR, formerly known as "subject A") is a reading and writing proficiency requirement. Each student must be able to understand and respond adequately to written material typical of reading assignments in freshman courses. The ability must be demonstrated in student writing that communicates effectively to University Faculty. [UC Academic Senate Regulation 636]

American History and Institutions

All candidates for the Bachelor's degree must demonstrate a knowledge of American history and of the principles of American institutions under the federal and state constitutions. [UC Academic Senate Regulation 638]

UCSC General Education Requirements

The UCSC General Education requirements were developed in 1986. They require that students complete a minimum of 10 courses that insure experience across the three major disciplinary divisions of the campus curriculum while addressing objectives for proficiency in writing and mathematics and exposure to the arts and ethnic studies.

Introductions to Disciplines:

These courses inform students of a discipline's scope or methodology, prepare students effectively for advanced classes, or both. Students are advised about a discipline's suitability as a major or are prepared for advanced course work in the field. Most of these courses also serve as lower-division major requirements in the discipline.

Students complete two courses from each of three categories: Humanities and Arts, Natural Sciences and Engineering, and Social Sciences (IS code).

Topical requirement:

The topical requirement is intended to show students how disciplines outside their own affect public life, how different disciplines approach a common topic, and the richness in the areas of study that lie outside or between academic disciplines. Topical courses address a topic of broad intellectual or social relevance—instead of a discipline—and study it from a broad or interdisciplinary perspective. They can provide a place for discussion of values and assumptions at an introductory level not usually found in introductory courses. They are not designed to introduce the discipline to non-majors.

Students complete three topical courses that insure exposure to each of the three breadth areas.

Arts requirement:

In recognition of the differences between the humanities and the arts and of the necessity of both in liberal arts education, one of the courses used to satisfy these requirements must provide exposure to performance, theory, or history of the arts.

U.S. Ethnic Minorities/Non-Western Society requirement:

One of the courses used to satisfy these requirements should increase students' knowledge of ethnic minorities in the US and/or non-Western society and culture; improve cross-cultural awareness, skills, and sensitivity; or explore relationships between ethnicity and other topics of liberal arts curriculum.

Quantitative requirement:

This requirement involves acquisition of technical skill in mathematics or practice in the ability to apply that mathematical skill in specific contexts, or both. A quantitative course must involve the use of advanced algebra, statistics, or calculus. These courses provide instruction in quantitative reasoning rather than merely evaluating students' mathematical ability.

Courses in logic or computers are not considered for this requirement.

Writing requirements:

Satisfaction of the UC Entry Level Writing Requirement is a prerequisite for satisfaction of two additional writing proficiency requirements.

English Composition: The senate regulations establishing the “C” requirement specify only that it be a writing course “stressing essay development”. The Writing Program can provide a more explicit inventory of objectives for the course Writing 1, which satisfies this requirement.

Writing Intensive course: One course that provides instruction and substantial practice in writing within the context of any academic subject.

College Freshman Writing seminar: Though not technically part of the general education requirement systems, the college “core courses”, which are required of all entering freshmen in their first Fall term, play a role in the lower-division writing curriculum. Typically students who enroll in the English composition course mentioned above have already successfully completed the college writing seminar in the fall term. In addition, students who have not satisfied the UC Entry Level Writing Requirement upon admission do additional tutorial work along with their college work. Students who successfully pass the ELWR examination at the end of the term are allowed to proceed to English Composition without being held for remedial work in writing.

To better integrate these courses into the objectives of the lower-division writing program, the academic senate has approved a plan under which the college provosts and the Writing program will develop a unified set of writing objectives for these courses. See the recommendations of the Committee on Educational Policy adopted by the academic senate in spring 2004. [LINK]

College Requirements

All of UCSC’s residential colleges may, through their associated academic senate faculty, impose graduate requirements. Currently all colleges require that their entering frosh enroll in the freshman writing seminar mentioned above. (Transfer students have their college requirements waived.) These courses address objectives in developing skills in university level discourse while expressing a theme associated with the college.

However some of the colleges currently impose additional requirements, though these are in practice satisfied simultaneously with the general education requirements. The current college requirements beyond the freshman writing seminar are:

Cowell: Students must raise their level of proficiency in information technology during their career at UCSC. They may do this by completing an appropriate course associated

with their major, a general computer literacy course, or by documented experience associated with an internship or research project.

Stevenson: The fall freshman writing seminar is the first component of a longer integrated course designed to develop critical writing and analytical skills.