

GENERAL STUDIES SURVEY

1. The number of credit hours required by the General Studies program is:

- **Much to high:** 7
- **Too high:** 14
- **About right:** 38
- **Too low:** 2
- **Much to low:**

COMMENTS:

- “I would like to see the implementation of a foreign language requirement for all degrees.”
- “A reduction of 6-10 credits would be appropriate, bringing degree programs to approximately 120 credits, putting us in line with peer institutions.”
- “I think most of the required GS courses provide useful skills or info. However, sometimes the # of required courses prevents majors from expanding their own requirements. More integration of GS with the majors would alleviate this!”
- “Much too high- it’s a killer for comprehensive majors.”
- “About right- it gives good measure of academic content to students and challenges them to look beyond narrow specialties.”
- “About right- One of the continued great strengths of the Shepherd degree program is the substantial GenStds component. Institutionally, when something works well it should be left alone!”
- “About right- the GS Curriculum is the heart of a liberal arts ed. and one of the obvious strengths of this institution.”
- “The GenStds program works quite well, and in some majors represents the major portion of academic content required for graduation.”
- “Much too high- Credit hrs are not well balanced among the different categories: too high in some, too low in others.”
- “Much too high – no student choice. The BSN program loses students b/c of required coursework in GS”
- “It’s not the # of hours, but the thoughtfulness or content that is important.”
- “About right, although I can see the advantage in reducing the requirements by at least 9 hours or more.”
- “Much too high due to too many turf battles during it’s creation.”
- “Too high- particularly in Social Sciences”
- “About right, but I wish there were more choice in Social Sciences, ie: Psychology”
- “Too high- the more GS credit hours required, the fewer in the major or profession.”

2. The number of courses included in the General Studies program is...

- **Much too high:** 3
- **Too high:** 16
- **About right:** 37
- **Too low:** 4
- **Much too low:**

COMMENTS:

- “About right- Provides sound background without being excessive”
- “About right- Anymore would be too high, but the current level seems about right”
- “Too low- Add psychology (1); Add philosophy (1)”
- “Too high- the number of courses *required* is too high. If some of these were options the program would be easier on students and more flexible. (2)”

- “Why 6 credits of history? Why so much English?”
- “Much too high- very restrictive for students.”
- “It might be possible to actually reduce the number required and increase the options”
- “About right, but shouldn’t there be more science classes?”
- “The breadth is good, but could always be improved. Philosophy or ethics course has always been a conspicuous weakness.”

3. The General Studies course offerings provide students with:

- **Too many choices: 4**
- **The right number of choices: 22**
- **Too few choices: 36**
- **Unsure: 1**

COMMENTS:

- “It is more proscriptive than the norm, but offering a cafeteria of courses surrenders the notion that certain things are needed in a core. Cafeteria systems tend to be disintegrative rather than integrative.”
- “The first 3 questions deal only with minor concerns. The fundamental concern should be whether or not our GenStd requirements satisfy our goals.”
- “Too much choice creates competition for students and grade inflation.”
- “Too many History and English”
- “Too few choices: More options would greatly improve quality of offerings”

4. The GS goals encompass all the general *skills* that a student should possess upon graduation. Please refer to attached GS brochure for a listing of the program goals.

- **Strongly agree: 4**
- **Agree: 27**
- **Somewhat agree: 14**
- **Somewhat disagree: 10**
- **Disagree: 3**
- **Strongly disagree: 2**

COMMENTS:

- “Questions 4 & 5 are both true, but the curriculum doesn’t always match the goals.”
- “They need some practical applications/activities. They need more civics and diversity.”
- “SWD-Add philosophy and psychology to improve analytical/logical thinking skills (2)”
- “SWA- Psychology should become a part of the GenStudies Program (3)”
- “GenStds does its job well. Continued attempts to change GS, as indicated by this questionnaire, concern me.”
- “Agree - SU is supposed to be an academic institution, not a vocational one. The slant should be toward academic content.”
- “Agree- GS should include a financial component: Personal finance, mortgage, mutual, budgeting process for personal finance.”
- “Disagree – math skills are not adequate.”
- “Agree – but we might need to put more emphasis on learning to write.”
- “Need more emphasis on critical thinking and writing skills (3).”
- “Brochure is excellent and a nice addition to understanding the program offerings”
- “Somewhat disagree- Lacks foreign language for some”
- “Goals listed is correct, but outcomes: students cannot write. Too many are passed along”

“SWD – Students need to develop skills in using...writing styles other than MLA”
“SWD – Students must have much stronger computer literacy skills.”
“SWA- The contexts are fantastic, but provide an insufficient number of ways for students to express their own levels of competence in...real world situations”
“SWD- It should include a course on relationships. Few people know about [these skills]”

5. The GS goals encompass all the general *knowledge* that a student should possess upon graduation.

- **Stongly agree: 3**
- **Agree: 27**
- **Somewhat agree: 17**
- **Somewhat disagree: 9**
- **Disagree: 4**
- **Strongly disagree: 2**

COMMENTS:

“Somewhat disagree: Doesn’t encompass *all* the general knowledge.”
“Absurd question – obviously a loaded question”
“SWD – Important areas of knowledge such as philosophy and psychology are completely missing from the program (10)”
“Strongly Agree – looks very thorough”
“SWD – The lack of any exposure to Philosophy and Religious Studies is a serious deficiency in the GS program.”
“SWD – Students should have better knowledge of computers and new media.”
“SWD – Students need a basic understanding of human behavior, especially cognitive processes and learning theories. Also need understanding of logic and belief systems.”
“Strongly Disagree – Much too fragmented.”
“SWA - Is it critical that we endeavor to provide *all the general knowledge*? I really don’t think so, and we could never really do that.”
“May need more Global Knowledge”

6. The GS Intended Student Outcomes support the GS Goals.

- **Stongly agree: 5**
- **Agree: 29**
- **Somewhat agree: 15**
- **Somewhat disagree: 2**
- **Disagree: 3**
- **Strongly disagree: 2**
- **Unsure: 1**

COMMENTS:

“Agree – There are other courses that would also address the ISO’s”
“Disagree – 1) Need to add psychology and philosophy. 2) Credit requirements too high in some categories: Humanities, English, science, history. 3) Some courses are listed in categories that would appear to belong in different groups; i.e: History should be in Humanities. 4) Offer more choices among groups vs. offering only specific required courses. 5) Need more courses addressing diversity.”
“Irrelevant”

“The ISO’s support the existing goals, but I think we need to modify the existing goals, requiring additional or different ISO’s.”

“Again, on paper, OK, but in reality our ENG 101 & 102 are not getting it done.”

“Many of these outcomes have never been assessed by the departments according to the GS website.”

7. The GS Goals and Intended Student Outcomes are well-implemented by the current General Studies curriculum.

- Strongly agree: 6
- Agree: 18
- Somewhat agree: 17
- Somewhat disagree: 8
- Disagree: 6
- Strongly disagree: 4
- Unsure: 4

8. Assessing basic computer literacy is an important part of the GS program.

- Strongly agree: 12
- Agree: 17
- Somewhat agree: 7
- Somewhat disagree: 11
- Disagree: 9
- Strongly disagree: 5
- Unsure: 2

COMMENTS:

“Strongly disagree – basic computer literacy should be obtained before college.”

“Strongly disagree – it should be!”

“SWD – Computer literacy should be defined. After all, one is speaking about a machine and programs.”

“Strongly agree – and well covered in most disciplines.”

“Strongly Disagree- Students should attain, but assessing is pointless. This is a life skill, like typing.”

“Strongly agree, but this assessment ought to be discipline oriented.”

9. The current computer literacy form *does not* adequately assess students’ basic computer literacy.

- Strongly agree: 6
- Agree: 10
- Somewhat agree: 10
- Somewhat disagree: 10
- Disagree: 17
- Strongly disagree: 4
- Unsure: 5

COMMENTS:

“This can be better addressed through intro courses within the majors (i.e. Music 100, Math 100, etc.) Orientation courses.”

“It appears that this is one area in which schools do a pretty good job of preparing students. Don’t come to us with basic computer skills.”

“This form is a joke, but the majority have basic skills in any experience.”

“Somewhat disagree – PowerPoint Presentations are important and missing from requirements.”

“Agree – this form seems like an afterthought. If assessing computer literacy is important, it should be one of the goals of the program.”

“SWD – not sure how to address this to improve it.”

“Strongly agree – Embarrassing!”

“Disagree – the form is adequate. There is a conception that computers think; they do not. People do. It can be argued that students of the current day spend too much time on computers and not enough with books.”

“Strongly disagree – I am acutely aware of my advisees and their qualifications/background with computers.”

“I didn’t see a course designed for teaching how to use/search electronic databases available to students for their majors.”

“Increasingly, students coming to college have basic computer literacy. What they need is literacy within the context of their major or career.”

“Using PowerPoint, making backups, using Pdf, File sharing, etc. should be added.”

“Since I completely disagree with the whole idea of assessing computer literacy, I cannot answer this question.”

“It depends on how you define ‘literacy’ (2). E-mail does not fit my definition.”

“These skills should already be assessed within departments. Students graduating within any major today should have these skills. Do away with this.”

“Who is responsible for option C? Do all advisors know what is covered in the courses?”

“Why is it a form? Shouldn’t students verify competency in the same medium the competency requires? (2)”

“Advisor certification is not consistent throughout the campus”

“Disagree- it is important to have advisors continue to sign off on computer literacy- this keeps discipline focus and doesn’t rely on a generic course that might not suit all.”

10. Students should try to complete their General Studies requirements within their first two years at Shepherd.

- **Strongly agree: 11**
- **Agree: 15**
- **Somewhat agree: 12**
- **Somewhat disagree: 7**
- **Disagree: 8**
- **Strongly disagree: 8**

COMMENTS:

“SWD- Better to spread them out if direct parallels between GS courses and upper division courses in Major/Minor can be established.”

“Strongly disagree- Because of course sequencing in some majors, students need to space out GS throughout their 4 years at Shepherd.”

“SD – Majors should be started earlier.”

“If curriculum and strands, or “domains” are created, there are more possibilities.”

“They should, but they don’t. We need to enforce pre-requisites.”

“Is this possible given the high number of courses and time when they’re offered?”

“Strongly disagree- what difference does it really make other than in the area of writing?”

“Disagree – This is absurd! They need to place them around major courses.”

11. Accomplishment of the GS goals is *not* affected when a student transfers many GS courses from other institutions.

- **Strongly agree: 2**
- **Agree: 18**
- **Somewhat agree: 9**
- **Somewhat disagree: 13**
- **Disagree: 11**
- **Strongly disagree: 10**

COMMENTS:

“Disagree – Many other institutions have weakened structured GS, a fear I have for SU.”

“SWD – It depends on what the admissions office gives away in granting transfer credit for certain transfer courses.”

“Disagree – too many different courses are allowed. It breaks down the integrity of the program.”

“Agree, only if the courses actually satisfy our basic requirements. Transfer students do not have to meet those requirements, unfortunately.”

“Strongly agree – I hate transfer students in general.”

“Strongly disagree- English 101 at Shepherd is far superior to others”

12. Diversity is adequately addressed by the current General Studies program.

- **Strongly agree: 1**
- **Agree: 12**
- **Somewhat agree: 9**
- **Somewhat disagree: 9**
- **Disagree: 10**
- **Strongly disagree: 2**
- **Don't care: 2 Unsure: 1**

COMMENTS:

“There can be more- what is diversity? More than race! It's gender, sexual orientation...”

-It is adequately addressed in the existing courses (3)

“SWD – I suppose it depends more on the instructor than on the actual course.”

“How specifically is diversity addressed?”

“Diversity of subjects? Diversity of needs of students? Ethnic, gender, race? Specify.”

13. If you could change the GS program, what would you change?

- Need more contemporary, interdisciplinary titles (2)
- See Portland State University studies overview (www.pdx.edu)
- More options (10)
- How courses are grouped
- Develop more Learning Communities and include a FYEX component (2)
- Reduce class sizes
- Reduce reliance on Adjuncts (3)
- Require that students take GS courses earlier- add Capstone (2)
- Add foreign language; required for non-BA programs (3)
- Fewer required hours, greater flexibility (8)

- The basic structure, which is disciplinary in nature. This limits choice and encourages “turf protection.”
- More integration of GS with Upper division & the major (4-yr program) (6)
- More skills based implementation
- The GS Curriculum needs to be vertically integrated
- Increase math and science credit hour requirement or increase the “rigor” of the current requirement.
- Decrease literature requirement
- Add more diversity/civics/law information. More logic and critical thinking
- Inclusion of a one-hour intro to Liberal Arts course
- Provide more adequate facilities and technology for instructors.
- Police transfer credits more closely
- Add a course in Health (in place of 1 Humanities or SocSci.)
- Add philosophy to the program (10); Add psychology (8)
- Require fewer hours but raise requirements for Math & Writing (3)
- Missing disciplines (psych., philosophy, geography, business, Film & Religious studies, ethics) should be added, at least as options (6)
- Increase required Natural Sciences and Mathematics courses
- Expand the requirements
- Have broad categories with more options so students have choices (2)
- Make it less piece meal; more thoughtful, cohesive & effective
- Add: Intro to Philosophy, Ethics (pre-requisite: Intro to Philosophy), and Introduction to Religious Studies.
- Too many English courses
- Add an Intro to Liberal Arts/Study Skills course
- Summer reading program
- Special transfer track
- Make Art/Music worth 3 credits
- Include service learning component
- Add Theatre option- For example: Choose 2 of the following: Intro to Art, Intro to Music, Intro to Theatre
- Add Global Politics course
- Allow for choices in Hist/SocSt. For Ethics, Philosophy and General Psych as a substitute for Sociology.
- I would like to see PhysEd activities courses (golf, tennis, etc.) allowed to satisfy PE requirements.
- More specific guidelines for computer literacy requirements. Measures that are used to evaluate/determine if a student demonstrates sufficient knowledge in computer literacy.
- Increase GSPE 210 to three credit hours
- More options – wider variety of courses – less required hours(2)
- Nothing

14. If GS were to change, what would you most like to have remain the same?

- Foreign language requirement

- Nothing- make it new and unique
- Needs to remain content, as well as skills based
- The wide variety of courses is key (2)
- Overall credit hours (2)
- Involvement of a wide range of departments
- Stress the Learning Communities option
- The goals and ISO's are appropriate, it's the implementation that's a problem – look at other models for innovative ways to achieve the goals (2)
- The requirement that students have an exposure to a wide range of academic disciplines. The idea of a choice-filled menu is a very poor one.
- Art & Music (2)
- The goals and ISOs should stay the same with the possible addition of computer literacy.
- Keep the science courses
- English (7), Math (5), Literature, CIS, Economics (3), Science(2), Social Sciences (2)
- GSPE 210
- Physical Science and Math is good. Humanities and Social Science really needs to change.
- Keep everything as it is.
- I don't know of anything that should be changed. The GS Program serves SU and its inadequately prepared undergraduates quite well. It is the strength of SU (2)
- Keep the basics. Many alumni have said to me they think our GS program is one of the strengths of the institution.
- Keep Sociology as a requirement (2). I am aware of discussion of General Psychology as an option but that is unacceptable. Sociology meets the goals in a much more sophisticated method. Even though many schools do this, I think it would be a terrible mistake. I don't teach Gen Soc so this is unbiased.
- 2 English composition courses; English 103
- "Fitness for Life" requirement
- Strengthen emphasis on critical reading, thinking, writing across disciplines.
- English is excellent! They have done a wonderful job!
- Strong liberal studies core
- No one hour credits – they should all be 3 credit hours
- Government and History