

## **General Studies Degree Proposal for Eastern Kentucky University - Revised February 17, 2005**

A General Studies degree program for Eastern Kentucky University is outlined below. General studies degree programs are designed for students intending to complete a baccalaureate degree whose educational objectives are not aligned with a more traditional degree program. The Bachelor of General Studies degree is intended to establish the foundation for a lifetime of continual learning and offer flexibly scheduled highly individualized curricula. Through individualized advising, the program will help students define their educational goals and design interdisciplinary curricula drawing on a variety of course offerings. The program is also intended to allow a student who has completed most of the requirements of a major but has not yet completed the major of an approved program to complete a baccalaureate degree in a timely manner.

Eastern Kentucky University's proposed General Studies degree was discussed by a group of ECU faculty and staff. Approximately fifteen General Studies degree programs were reviewed in the process of designing the degree program outlined below. The group consisted of Carolyn Siegel, Faculty Senate Chair, Aaron Thompson, Associate Vice President of Academic Affairs and Professor of Sociology, Gary Kuhnenn, Associate Dean of Arts and Sciences and Professor of Earth Sciences, Sue Cain, Assistant Professor of Mathematics and Statistics and Director of Developmental Education and Academic Testing, Tim Ross, Associate Professor of Technology, Dennis Field, Associate Professor of Technology, Jill Allgier, Registrar, Diana McGregor, Director of Academic Advising, Scott Summers, Transfer Student Coordinator, and Rhonda Goode, Administrative Assistant for Enrollment Management. E-mail discussions of such a degree preceded the meeting.

The General Studies degree program is intended to be a "completer" degree for students transferring to Eastern Kentucky University. This degree program is compliant with KRS164.020 (see below). Students transferring to ECU with an associate degree can take advantage of the General Studies degree program and complete a baccalaureate degree in the normal number of hours required by the institution.

The development of "completer" degrees by May 2005 is mandated by the Kentucky Council for Postsecondary Education (CPE). CPE expects each four year public institution to work with faculty to develop and submit a plan for "completer" degrees. The proposed General Studies degree is an example of the degree that several other Kentucky institutions utilize as a completer degree program. It is necessary that each institution offer a completer degree to increase access to the baccalaureate degree for place bound students.

Following is information related to the CPE mandate for designing completer degrees.

- 1) Included in KRS164.020 are Council of Postsecondary Education (CPE) guidelines referred to as the Baccalaureate Program Transfer Frameworks Statute (1996). The guidelines state "The CPE in Kentucky shall develop a university track program

within the Kentucky Community and Technical College System consisting of sixty (60) hours of instruction that can be transferred and applied toward requirements for a bachelor's degree at the public institutions. The track shall consist of general education courses and pre-major courses prescribed by the Council. Courses in the university track program shall transfer and apply toward the requirements for graduation with a bachelor's degree at all public universities. Successful completion of the university track program shall meet the academic requirement for transfer to a public university as a junior. By fall semester 1997, requirements for track programs shall be established for all majors and baccalaureate degree programs.”

- 2) The revised General Education Transfer Policy, effective for all students planning to transfer in Spring 2005, has been enhanced to provide students with seamless transfer of their general education coursework. The Seamlessness Policy Group recommended that all Kentucky public universities submit a plan for the creation of a completer degree within the year (Council approved the motion in May 2004). The CPE expects that each campus will work with faculty to develop and submit their plan by May 2005. It is necessary that each institution offer a completer degree to increase access to the baccalaureate degree for place bound students. Examples of completer degrees, more commonly referred to as General Studies degrees, are attached. Key components of the completer degree are:
  - a) Students completing the AA, AS or AAS must be able to apply for admission into the program and have coursework transferred.
  - b) The degree must be structured in such a way that a student can complete the baccalaureate degree in the normal number of hours required by the institution.

Following are the EKU baccalaureate degree requirements which provide the framework for this General Studies degree proposal. This information is found on page 42 of the Eastern Kentucky University Undergraduate Catalog 2004-06.

To qualify for a baccalaureate degree, students must satisfy the following requirements:

- 1) Complete all requirements in the degree program as established by appropriate University committees.
- 2) Complete University academic requirements, including basic skills proficiencies in English, reading, and mathematics; and general education; as established by appropriate University committees for each degree program.
- 3) Complete a minimum of 128 semester credit hours, with at least 43 at the 300 level or above.
- 4) Satisfy the University Writing Requirement.
- 5) Earn a minimum grade point average (GPA) of 2.0 on all college-level work taken at Eastern Kentucky University. In addition, transfer students must earn a minimum GPA of 2.0 on the combined transfer work and Eastern Kentucky University work.
- 6) Earn a minimum of 32 semester hours through EKU.\*
- 7) Earn at least 30 of the last 36 hours through Eastern Kentucky University, exclusive of student teaching (ELE 499, EMG 499, ESE 499, and SED 499).\*

- 8) Earn the credits applicable to the degree within eight years prior to the date the degree is awarded. Credits more than eight years old may be validated by the college dean.
- 9) Students enrolled in MAT 090 are not permitted to enroll in any course with the following prefix: AST, BIO, CHE, CIS, CNM, CSC, FOR, GLY, NAT, PHY, SCI, or STA.
- 10) According to AACSB International business accreditation standards, students enrolled in University baccalaureate degree programs, other than those within EKUBusiness, will not receive credit toward their degrees for more than 25 percent of their undergraduate programs in credit hours in courses offered through EKUBusiness and/or business courses (courses commonly taught in school of business) transferred from other colleges and universities or taken from other units within Eastern Kentucky University. Students who desire to take business courses are encouraged to enroll in the Business minor.

\*Degree programs offered by the College of Business and Technology have more stringent residency requirements. Please refer to “Residency Requirements” in the College of Business and Technology section of this catalog.

#### Proposal for the General Studies Degree Requirement

The following statements would appear in the catalog concerning the degree program.

The General Studies degree program is designed for students intending to complete a baccalaureate degree whose educational objectives are not aligned with a more traditional degree program. The Bachelor of General Studies degree is intended to establish the foundation for a lifetime of continual learning and offers flexibly scheduled highly individualized curricula. Through individualized advising, the program helps students define their educational goals and design interdisciplinary curricula drawing on a variety of course offerings. The program is also intended to allow a student who has completed most of the requirements of a major but has not yet completed the major of an approved program to complete a baccalaureate degree in a timely manner.

The above baccalaureate degree requirements are helpful in defining the General Studies degree and general studies degree students are held to each of those requirements. Following are additional degree requirements for students seeking a General Studies degree.

- 1) Students must have 18 hours within an individual college outside of General Education requirements to receive their General Studies degree.
- 2) Courses used to satisfy General Education requirements may not be used to satisfy the General Studies degree requirements.
- 3) Any courses ordinarily accepted for credit by Eastern Kentucky University may be chosen as hours to apply to the 128 hours required for graduation.
- 4) Students seeking a General Studies degree must have 60 credits from a regionally accredited, four-year institution.

Note: This is important because if such a statement is not included students would be required to have only the 43 Eastern Kentucky University upper division hours outlined by the EKU degree requirements.

- 5) Students pursuing a General Studies degree are not permitted to declare any other major, minor, or concentration.

Note: This is needed because otherwise all students would have two majors completed upon graduation.

- 6) Students electing this degree program must register their intent with the Office of Academic Advising.

#### Student Goals

- Facilitate completion of a baccalaureate degree
- Ensure completion of general education requirements
- Utilize flexible instruction methods to complete remaining coursework
- Encourage exploration of upper-division coursework
- Clarify and encourage academic and career goals

#### Student Outcomes

- Develop a positive sense of closure in completing a baccalaureate degree to allow career advancement or continued education
- Establish the foundation for a lifetime of continual learning
- Apply for marketable post-graduation opportunities
- Foster a positive alumni relationship with the University