

Core General Education Requirements

Scope

This policy defines Core General Education Requirements for the Universities of Wisconsin and describes how Core General Education Requirements transfer and apply to degree requirements for students who transfer between different UW universities. Universities of Wisconsin Core General Education Requirements apply to both associate's and bachelor's degree programs offered by UW universities, and apply to undergraduates enrolling for the first time in fall 2026 or after and students who enrolled in earlier terms who choose to follow these Core General Education Requirements.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to define the Core General Education Requirements for the Universities of Wisconsin and describe how Core General Education Requirement courses will transfer and apply to degree requirements for students who transfer between UW universities as outlined in Wisconsin Statutes (Wis. Stat. 36.11(3)(b)). This policy also charges the Universities of Wisconsin Administration with developing new policy and revising existing UW System Administrative policies to operationalize the transfer of Core General Education Requirements between UW universities as required in Wisconsin Statutes (Wis. Stat. 36.11(3)(b)).

Policy Statement

The UW System Board of Regents establishes that Core General Education Requirements as referred to in Wis. Stat. 36.11(3)(b), 36.31 (2m)(a)2, and 36.31(2m)(d) comprise undergraduate courses in six broad categories totaling 10-12 courses and 30-36 credit hours that impart foundational knowledge and skills. The following rules govern the transfer and applicability of Core General Education Requirement credit between UW universities for all matriculated degree-seeking undergraduate students:

1. A student who completes all their Core General Education Requirements at a sending UW university will also have completed their Core General Education Requirements at the receiving UW university.
2. A student who completes a Core General Education Requirement category at a sending UW university will also have completed that Core General Education Requirement category at the receiving UW university.

3. A student who transfers and will fulfill all Core General Education Requirement categories with less than the minimum required 10 courses (30 credit hours), can fulfill the course and credit hour requirements by selecting courses that fulfill any Core General Education Requirement category.
4. A student who is awarded credit(s) toward completion of a Core General Education Requirement category at a sending UW university will have the credit(s) apply towards completion of the same Core General Education Requirement category at the receiving UW university. However, when the completed Core General Education Requirement credits can apply to multiple categories, application of credits into a specific category, that is different from the sending UW university, is at the discretion of the receiving UW university in a manner that is in the best interest of the student.
5. A student who transfers with incomplete Core General Education Requirement categories will have to finish those Core General Education Requirement categories based on the receiving UW university category rules.

In accordance with Wis. Stat. 36.31(2m)(a)2, a UW university shall not establish any university-wide graduation requirement outside of those that satisfy the Core General Education Requirements.

Oversight, Roles, and Responsibilities

The Board delegates to UW System the authority to develop policies to further define and implement this policy. As such, the Universities of Wisconsin Division of Academic and Student Affairs shall establish and provide ongoing oversight of UW System Administrative policy and procedures related to the establishment of the Core General Education Requirements and ensuring their transferability between UW universities.

Each UW university is responsible for updating and maintaining systems involved in transfer credit evaluation and degree completion (e.g., student information system, degree audit system, transfer credit equivalency system). Each UW university is responsible for ensuring and demonstrating compliance with this policy and related system policies and for maintaining a list of courses that comprise Core General Education Requirements for their university.

The Universities of Wisconsin Division of Academic and Student Affairs will monitor compliance with this policy as well as associated system policies.

Related Regent Policy Documents and Applicable Laws

- Regent Policy Document 7-1 “Undergraduate Transfer Credit and Award of Credit for Extra-Institutional Learning”
- Section 36.11 (3)(b), Wis. Stats.
- Section 36.31 (2m)(a)2, Wis. Stats.
- Section 36.31 (2m)d, Wis. Stats.

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