



# R470, General Education, Common Course Numbering, Lower-Division Pre-Major Requirements, Transfer of Credits, and Credit by Examination

**R470-1. Purpose:** To assure reciprocity and consistency in the structure and Core Requirements and Breadth Areas requisite for General Education (GE) programs in the Utah System of Higher Education (USHE); to provide a lower- and upper-division course numbering code for the System; to establish common lower-division Pre-Major requirements that include the Essential Learning Outcomes and support timely progress toward student graduation; to provide policies and principles for the transfer of credit and competencies leading toward fluencies and proficiencies among System institutions; and to establish a credit-by-examination policy.

## R470-2. References

- 2.1. Utah Code §53B-2-106(2)(c) (Direction of Instruction, Examination, Admission, and Classification of Students)
- 2.2. Utah Code §53B-16-102 (Changes in Curriculum)
- 2.3. Utah Code §53B-16-107 (Credit for Military Service and Training – Transferability – Reporting)
- 2.4. Definitions

**2.4.1.** The Essential Learning Outcomes are skills and competencies identified by professionals in business and industry, and higher education professors as those needed to prepare graduates for academic, professional, and societal success.

The Essential Learning Outcomes are:

**2.4.1.1. Acquire Intellectual and Practical Skills:** Including inquiry and analysis, critical and creative thinking, written and oral communication, information literacy, and teamwork and problem solving. Also included are visual, kinesthetic, design, and aural forms of artistic communication.

**2.4.1.2. Gain Knowledge of Human Cultures and the Physical and Natural Worlds:** Courses requiring study in the sciences and mathematics, social sciences, humanities, histories, languages, and the arts, focused by engagement with “big” questions – both contemporary and enduring.

<sup>1</sup> Approved August 19, 2005. Replaces R463, Credit by Examination; R465, General Education; R467, Lower Division Major Requirements; R471, Transfer of Credit and R472, Course Numbering. Amended March 25, 2011, September 16, 2016, and March 31, 2017

**2.4.1.3. Develop Personal and Social Responsibility:** Including community and civic knowledge and engagement—local and global, intercultural knowledge and competence, ethical reasoning and action, and foundations and skills for lifelong learning. These categories of General Education development must be demonstrated through involvement with diverse communities and real-world challenges.

**2.4.1.4. Demonstrate Integrative Learning:** Including synthesis and advanced accomplishment across coherent general and specialized studies, demonstrated through the application of knowledge, skills, and responsibilities to new settings and complex problems. Institutions may develop integrative courses or programs.

**2.4.2.** Competencies are used to describe the accomplishments of basic objectives within a specific course or learning experience.

**2.4.3.** Fluency is to express oneself effortlessly in speaking, writing, mathematical computations, and critical analysis.

**2.4.4.** Proficiency is a set of demonstrations of knowledge, understanding, and skill that satisfy levels of mastery sufficient to justify the award of an academic degree.

**R470-3. General Education Policy:** The purpose of General Education is to help students prepare for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century through GE programs that are founded upon principles of equity and excellence, and elements of high-impact practices that will assist students in achieving proficiencies in the Essential Learning Outcomes. This policy assures there is coherence and consistency in the structure of the Core Requirements and Breadth Areas of General Education programs at all USHE institutions, and that institutions will grant total reciprocity for General Education programs completed at other USHE institutions.

**3.1. General Education Credit Requirements:** To assure full value and reciprocity among all USHE institutions, the number of credits required in General Education for each institution shall range from 30 to 39 semester credits. This includes at least four courses in the Core Requirements (Written Communication, Quantitative Literacy, and American Institutions) and at least one course from each of the five Breadth Areas (Arts, Humanities, Life Sciences, Physical Sciences, and Social and Behavioral Sciences). Beginning in the freshman year, and continuing toward successively higher levels of achievement, students should be able to demonstrate competency in the Essential Learning Outcomes, then continue to gain greater levels of proficiency. Students should optimally complete their General Education prior to the completion of 60 credit hours and be provided learning experiences that include the Essential Learning Outcomes. Traditionally, this has been met by institutional General Education programs, but may be met through innovative programs that meet the same outcomes specified in this document. Institutions are encouraged to allow students to obtain General Education credit by other means, such as Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, College Level Examination Program,

Prior Learning Assessment, recognized assessment of military service proficiencies, and departmental challenge examinations.

**3.2. General Education Core Requirements:** Students must satisfy all of the following General Education Core Requirements, which will be included at all USHE institutions. Students shall be required to complete at least: (1) two Written Communication courses (6 credits); (2) one Quantitative Literacy course (3-4 credits); and (3) one American Institutions course (3-6 credits). An interdisciplinary course or multiple courses that fulfill the outcomes may also satisfy the requirement.

**3.2.1 Written Communication (6 credits):** Students may satisfy this requirement by completing at least two institutionally-approved courses focused on the development of academic composition skills to serve as a foundation for continued writing experiences across the curriculum. Over the course of six credit hours, students will demonstrate skill with the following: (1) Context and Purpose for Writing-includes consideration of audience, purpose, and the circumstances surrounding the writing task(s); (2) Content Development-uses appropriate, relevant, and compelling content to illustrate mastery of the subject, conveying the writer's understanding, and shaping the whole work; (3) Genre and Disciplinary Conventions-demonstrates detailed attention to and successful execution of a wide range of conventions particular to a specific discipline and/or writing task(s), including organization, content, presentation, formatting, and stylistic choices; (4) Sources and Evidence-demonstrates skillful use of high-quality, credible, relevant sources to develop ideas that are appropriate for the discipline and genre of the writing; (5) Control of Syntax and Usage-uses language that skillfully communicates meaning to readers with clarity and fluency; and (6) Revision and Feedback-shapes texts through the process of revision and feedback. Traditionally, this requirement has been fulfilled by completion of (1) ENGL 1010 Introduction to Writing, and (2) ENGL 2010 Intermediate Writing or ENGL 2100 Technical Writing.

**3.2.2. Quantitative Literacy (3-4 credits):** Students may satisfy this requirement by completing at least one institutionally-approved mathematics course that clearly demonstrates quantitative reasoning skills beyond those found within required high school Mathematics courses and that is an appropriate introductory university level. Approved courses will significantly focus on the following: (1) Interpretation-explain information presented in mathematical forms (e.g., equations, graphs, diagrams, and tables); (2) Representation-convert relevant information into various mathematical forms (e.g., equations, graphs, diagrams, and tables); (3) Calculation-demonstrate the ability to successfully complete basic calculations to solve problems; (4) Application/Analysis-make judgments and draw appropriate conclusions based on quantitative analysis of data, recognizing the limits of this analysis; (5) Assumption-make and evaluate important assumptions in estimation, modeling, and data analysis; (6) Communication-express quantitative evidence in support of the argument or purpose of the work (in terms of what evidence is used and how it is formatted, presented, and contextualized); and (7)

Creation-demonstrate the ability to problem solve using quantitative literacy across multiple disciplines. Traditionally, this requirement has been fulfilled by completion of MATH 1030 Quantitative Reasoning, MATH or STAT 1040 Statistics, MATH 1050 College Algebra, or other institutionally-approved courses.

**3.2.3 American Institutions (3-6 credits):** Consistent with Utah Code §53B-16-103(1)(b), institutionally-approved courses in this core area shall have the following learning outcome: “A student shall demonstrate reasonable understanding of the history, principles, form of government, and economic system of the United States...” Approved courses will address the following: (1) Use of Primary Documents-analyze, contextualize, and use primary source documents to understand the history, principles, form of government, and economic system of the United States; (2) Interpretation-explain and use historically, politically, and economically relevant information; (3) Communication-communicate effectively about the history, principles, form of government, and economic system of the United States; (4) Diversity-engage a diversity of viewpoints in a constructive manner that contributes to a dialogue about the history, principles, form of government, and economic system of the United States; and (5) Integration-use historical, political, and economic methods to come to an understanding of the United States that integrates those viewpoints. This requirement may be fulfilled by a discrete course, a multidisciplinary integrated course, or multiple courses. Traditionally, this requirement has been fulfilled by completion of ECON 1740 Economic History of the United States, HIST 1700 American Civilization, HIST 2700 United States to 1877/HIST 2710 United States 1877 to Present, POLS 1100 American/US National Government, or other institutionally-approved courses.

**3.3. General Education Breadth Areas:** Students are required to complete at least 15 credits within five different GE Breadth Areas, with at least one course to be taken from each of the following Breadth Areas: (1) Arts; (2) Humanities; (3) Life Sciences; (4) Physical Sciences; and (5) Social and Behavioral Sciences. USHE institutions may create additional Breadth Areas as they deem appropriate. Students transferring between USHE institutions would be required to complete these additional courses unless the transfer included a Letter or Certificate of General Education completion from another USHE institution (Section 7.1.2).

The following criteria, in addition to the Essential Learning Outcomes, are intended to guide USHE institutions in the development and approval of courses within the Breadth Areas. Courses in all five designations should ask students to connect disciplinary knowledge and ways of knowing to their own experiences. Additionally, the courses should reflect emphases of the institutions, strengths of faculties, and the varying interests of students. Disciplines that offer General Education courses within the Breadth Areas should actively engage in reaching out to similar disciplines at other USHE institutions to further establish and articulate specific course learning outcomes and objectives.

**3.3.1. Arts (at least one 3-credit course):** Courses with the GE Arts designation will generally reflect criteria such as: (1) Discuss the scope and variety of the fine arts (i.e., art,

music, theatre, or dance); (2) Recognize the aesthetic standards used in making critical judgments in various artistic fields; (3) Analyze and articulate understanding of a range of artistic processes; (4) Participate in an introductory performance, production, or design experience in the arts; or (5) Demonstrate how the creative process is informed and limited by social and historical contexts.

**3.3.2. Humanities (at least one 3-credit course):** Courses with the GE Humanities designation will generally reflect criteria such as: (1) Derive evidence from primary sources regarding the complexities and changes in human experience through analytical reading and critical thought; (2) Describe how human experience is shaped by social, cultural, linguistic, and/or historical circumstances; (3) Demonstrate attentiveness to linguistic, visual, and/or audio texts when communicating meaning; or (4) Use appropriate verbal, perceptual, or imaginative skills when organizing meanings, developing a sense of self, and balancing potentially disparate values.

**3.3.3. Life Sciences (at least one 3-credit course):** Courses with the GE Life Sciences designation will generally reflect criteria such as: (1) Demonstrate understanding of science as a way of knowing about the natural world; (2) Demonstrate basic understanding of how organisms live, grow, respond to their environment, and reproduce; (3) Discuss the organization and flow of matter and energy through biological systems; (4) Explain from evidence patterns of inheritance, structural unity, adaptation, and diversity of life on Earth; or (5) Describe how the Life Sciences have shaped and been shaped by historical, ethical, and social contexts.

**3.3.4. Physical Sciences (at least one 3-credit course):** Courses with the GE Physical Sciences designation will generally reflect criteria such as: (1) Demonstrate understanding of science as a way of knowing about the physical world; (2) Demonstrate understanding of forces in the physical world; (3) Discuss the flow of matter and energy through systems (in large and small scales); (4) Develop evidence-based arguments regarding the effect of human activity on the Earth; or (5) Describe how the Physical Sciences have shaped and been shaped by historical, ethical, and social contexts.

**3.3.5. Social and Behavioral Sciences (at least one 3-credit course):** Courses with the GE Social and Behavioral Sciences designation will generally reflect criteria such as: (1) Demonstrate understanding of social and behavioral science methods, concepts, and theories; (2) Formulate basic questions about social behavior and phenomena through interpretive and systematic analyses; (3) Develop empirically-derived and theoretically-informed explanations of human behavior in both its individual and collective dimensions; or (4) Demonstrate a critically-reasoned understanding of social patterns and individual variation congruent with and divergent from those patterns.

**3.4. Pathways to Completion through Pre-Major Courses:** Pre-Major courses are those that are taken in lower division, incorporating General Education, and that begin preparing students for their intended major course of study. The number of credits in a Pre-Major set of courses is

determined by both departmental faculty and the appropriate Major Committee (Section 6.1). Pre-Major courses should resemble those offered in four-year institutions leading to an approved major.

**3.4.1. Lower-Division Pre-Major Requirements:** In establishing policies and procedures to support ease of transfer and timely progress toward graduation for USHE students, the Board of Regents recognizes that Pre-Majors and emphases may differ because of the institutions' unique missions. Committees and procedures are therefore established to provide common lower-division Pre-Major requirements so that when students transfer or apply for upper-division majors, they will receive full value for their academic work.

### **3.5. Substitution of General Education Courses**

#### **3.5.1. Substitution of Courses in Pre-Major Area for General Education**

**Requirements:** To encourage timely decisions by students to select Pre-Major areas while promoting educational breadth, institutions may allow students with declared Pre-Majors in areas listed in Section 3.3 to substitute study and achievement in their Pre-Major area for General Education requirements. Students may achieve the required number of total General Education credits by completing additional coursework in other General Education areas. USHE transfer students who retain the same Pre-Major area will be allowed to maintain the substitution at the receiving institution and will not be required to complete additional General Education coursework.

**3.5.2. Substitution of General Education Courses as an Accommodation:** Students who provide the requisite ADA documentation of a learning disability that would preclude the successful completion of a required course within a Core Requirement area shall be provided an alternative course(s) that will cumulatively fulfill the institutional learning outcomes prescribed in that area.

#### **3.6. Similar Names, Common Numbers, and Equal Credits for General Education Courses:**

To facilitate articulation, General Education courses at USHE institutions having essentially the same learning goals and similar content, rigor, and standards should have similar names, common numbers, and equal credits. The Utah Transfer and Articulation Committee shall assure, through institutional action, that all courses satisfying General Education requirements at any USHE institution will be articulated to the fullest extent possible to satisfy comparable General Education requirements at all other USHE institutions.

**3.7. General Education Common Competencies and Learning Goals Assessment:** All General Education courses will be expected to address and assess competencies and learning goals identified by designated groups within the USHE.

**3.7.1. Collaboration among Faculty:** Faculty are expected to work collaboratively with their system-wide peers in order to establish competencies and learning goals for General Education, Pre-Majors, and all lower-division courses and learning experiences.

**3.7.2. Learning Expectations at the Culmination of the Two-Year Level:** Prior to associate degree completion or the completion of 60 hours in a four-year program, students should be provided with cumulative and integrative learning experiences in which they can demonstrate intellectual skills, specialized knowledge outlined in the Essential Learning Outcomes, and institution-specific learning expectations.

**3.7.3. Learning Outcome Assessment:** Institutions will be responsible for having policies and practices related to assessment of identified learning outcomes.

**R470-4. Committees for General Education Procedures:** To implement the General Education policy, the following committees shall be established:

**4.1. Regents' General Education Task Force:** The Regents' General Education Task Force will be comprised of one representative who oversees General Education on his/her campus, from each USHE institution, nominated by the Chief Academic Officer and appointed by the President, and non-voting or ex officio members as needed for expertise on particular issues. A member of the Commissioner's academic affairs staff with the Task Force chair will convene, but not chair, the Regents' General Education Task Force. The chair and vice chair of the Task Force will be chosen by the General Education Task Force and approved by the Commissioner. Their terms of office will be three years, and they are eligible for reelection.

This Task Force shall:

**4.1.1.** Establish overarching learning goals in the Core and Breadth Areas of General Education, based on the most current recommendations of accrediting bodies, national associations, and societies that are considered leaders in General Education, and by the General Education faculty and Major Committees.

**4.1.2.** Propose methods to assess student learning outcomes in General Education and submit those recommendations to the Chief Academic Officers and the USHE institutions.

**4.1.3.** Facilitate coordination with groups working on related tasks by appointing members of the Task Force to assist other USHE committees, such as the Utah Transfer and Articulation Committee, as requested and appropriate.

**4.2. General Education Area Work Groups:** The General Education Area Work Groups include Arts, Humanities, Life Sciences, Physical Sciences, Social and Behavioral Sciences, Written Communication, Quantitative Literacy, and American Institutions. These work groups may be comprised of two representatives from each USHE institution nominated by appropriate academic deans and appointed by the Chief Academic Officer; representatives from cross-cutting groups such as the Utah Academic Library Consortium, Utah Advising Association, or

USHE Teaching Technologies Council; or ex officio members as needed for expertise on particular issues.

These work groups shall:

**4.2.1.** Provide recommendations on competencies underlying each General Education area and suggestions on methods used to assess student learning outcomes in relation to the competencies. These recommendations are to be submitted to the General Education Task Force for review.

**4.2.2.** Meet annually during the “What is an Educated Person?” conference and, as needed, review the General Education competencies and learning goals in each area, and discuss and compare programs.

**4.2.3.** Submit recommendations for review by the General Education Task Force.

**R470-5. Course Numbering:** Course numbers provide a guide to the key learning outcomes for courses. Course numbers shall be comprised of four digits or four digits and one letter. In most cases, increasing course numbers indicate more challenging content and higher-order learning outcomes.

Courses of similar level shall be given numbers in accordance with the following:

**5.1. Precollege or Preparatory Courses (0001-0999):** These courses carry no credit applicable to a postsecondary certificate or degree, develop basic precollege concepts and principles related to an area of study, and are designed to lead to mastery of precollege learning outcomes.

**5.2. Lower-Division Courses (1000-2999):** These courses are for students beginning in the study of a discipline. Lower-division courses offer breadth, foundation, general education, preparation for employment, or preparation for continued study and may serve as prerequisites for upper-division courses. Within the same institution, a lower-division course may not be cross listed with an upper-division course.

#### **5.2.1. Special Lower-Division Course Number Designations**

- 1900-1999 and 2900-2999: Lower-division special course designations (e.g., directed reading, individual projects, seminars, special topics, workshops, tutoring)

#### **5.2.2.1000-Level Course Outcomes**

Examples of outcomes typical of first-year courses include:

- Display an introductory understanding of disciplinary content;



- Demonstrate a beginning ability to present, interpret, and evaluate data in order to develop arguments and make sound judgments;
- Develop a beginning ability to evaluate approaches for problem solving within the context of the course's subject matter.

### 5.2.3. 2000-Level Course Outcomes

Examples of outcomes typical of second-year courses include:

- Display knowledge and critical understanding of established concepts and principles related to the area of study, and an ability to evaluate and interpret these;
- Demonstrate an understanding of how concepts and principles have developed within the field;
- Display an ability to apply concepts from the course within and outside the field;
- Demonstrate a developing knowledge of the key methods of inquiry related to the field;
- Articulate a developing understanding of the limitations of students' knowledge and understanding, and how this can influence their own thinking;
- Demonstrate an increasing ability to present, interpret, and evaluate data in order to develop arguments and make sound judgments within the area of study;
- Display an ability to undertake a critical analysis of information and propose solutions to problems;
- Show an ability to communicate effectively to different audiences in a way that is relevant to the discipline.

**5.3. Upper-Division Courses (3000-4999):** These courses are for students usually beyond their first two years of study in college, and integrate and build upon learning outcomes from earlier studies. In general, upper-division courses offer specialized learning outcomes for a specific degree and provide depth, specialization, refinement, and preparation for employment or graduate study. Upper-division courses are directed toward the more central concepts of a discipline. Most 4000-level courses are more concentrated, narrower in scope, and involve more independent study, research, and projects outside of class than 3000-level courses. 4000-level courses may also be designed as capstone courses that integrate a broad array of learning outcomes from previous courses.

#### 5.3.1. Special Upper-Division Course Number Designations

- 4800-4999: Upper-division special course designations (e.g., directed reading, individual projects, festivals, institutes, workshops, seminars)
- 4800: Individual research courses (1-6 credits)
- 4830: Directed reading courses (1-6 credits)
- 4860: Practicum courses (1-12 credits)
- 4890: Internship courses (1-12 credits)
- 4920: Workshops, festivals, institutes (1-6 credits)

- 4950: Field trips (1-6 credits)
- 4990: Seminars (1-6 credits)

### 5.3.2. Upper-Division Course Outcomes

Examples of outcomes typical of 3000- and 4000-level courses include:

- Integrate and build upon concepts introduced in earlier course work to develop a deeper understanding of the subject at hand;
- Demonstrate knowledge and critical understanding of specialized terminology, ideas, and practices related to a specific topic within an area of study, and an ability to evaluate and interpret these;
- Display a developing understanding of the integrated and convergent nature of learning goals within a discipline, and an ability to demonstrate that learning (e.g., writing a computer program to solve a particular problem);
- Articulate the ways in which disciplinary concepts are applied within and outside of the field, as well as to employment situations;
- Display an understanding of the key methods of inquiry related to the field, and an ability to demonstrate these through inquiry-based activities;
- Demonstrate an ability to present, interpret, and evaluate in order to develop arguments and make sound judgments within a narrowly-defined area of the field of study;
- Complete a critical analysis of information, interpret findings, and propose solutions to problems;
- Communicate effectively to different audiences in a way that is relevant to the discipline.

**5.4. Honors Program Courses:** Honors courses will be clearly designated in institutional catalogs and meet the institutional expectations for Honors designation.

**5.5. Advanced Upper-Division Courses (5000-5999):** These courses allow for extension beyond bachelor degree requirements, preparation for a graduate degree, or a natural connection between the two. Content requires significant independent thinking on the part of the student and offers opportunity for specialized seminars, directed reading, independent study, and research.

#### 5.5.1. Special 5000-Level Course Number Designations

- 5800-5999: Advanced upper-division special course designations (e.g., directed reading, individual projects, festivals, institutes, workshops, seminars)

## 5.5.2. Conditions for 5000-Level Course Designations

**5.5.2.1.** Courses should meet one or both of the following criteria: (a) have specific prerequisites at the 4000 level; (b) be supported by a substantial body of 3000-4000-level course offerings from which a student could normally be expected to gain adequate background for a 5000-level course.

**5.5.2.2.** Credit from 5000-level course work shall not be used to fulfill master degree or graduate certificate requirements, except for specific and unusual 5000-level courses identified and approved by the institution for such purposes (e.g., courses offered by education units for the professional development of K-12 teachers).

**5.5.2.3.** For purposes of efficiency, an institution may offer a 5000-level course concurrently with a 6000-level graduate course, with the two sections meeting together under the same instructor. In such cases, students enrolled in the 6000-level course shall be required to complete additional and substantive learning objectives and assignments approved for graduate-level work beyond those required of student enrolled at the 5000 level.

**5.6. Graduate Courses (6000-7999):** These courses are limited to graduate students and graduate degrees and certificates. Graduate courses may only be offered at USHE institutions with a Regent-approved mission to offer graduate-level programs.

**5.6.1. Special Graduate Course Number Designations:** The following designation of graduate course numbers guide, but do not constrain, institutional course numbering policies.

- 6800-6899: Graduate seminars (including methodology and research seminars)
- 6900-6999: Directed reading, individual projects, thesis, etc.
- 6970-6979: Master's thesis research
- 6980-6989: Master's thesis faculty research consultation
- 6990: Master's thesis continuing registration
- 7600-7899: Advanced graduate seminars
- 7900-7969: Doctoral independent study, special topics, etc.
- 7970-7979: Doctoral dissertation and/or project research
- 7980-7989: Doctoral dissertation faculty research consultation
- 7990: Doctoral dissertation continuing registration

**R470-6. Lower-Division Pre-Major Requirements:** In establishing policies and procedures to support ease of transfer and timely progress toward graduation for USHE students, the Board of Regents recognizes that Pre-Majors and emphases may differ because of the institutions' unique missions.

Committees and procedures are therefore established to provide common lower-division Pre-Major requirements so that when students transfer or apply for upper-division majors, they will receive full value for this academic work.

**6.1. USHE Major Committees:** To achieve these objectives, the Office of the Commissioner shall organize USHE Major Committees in each of the academic disciplines. Major departments at the universities are expected to work closely with the Major Committees in order to achieve the greatest possible congruence between Pre-Major emphases at community colleges and lower-division major requirements at four-year institutions.

**6.1.1.** The Chief Academic Officer of each institution shall nominate a faculty representative from his or her institution in each discipline area. If appropriate, the Chief Academic Officer may also nominate additional faculty in major areas within a discipline and staff to attend each disciplinary meeting.

**6.1.2.** Meetings of the Major Committees shall be organized by the Office of the Commissioner and be held at least annually.

**6.1.3.** The Regents' General Education Task Force and assigned staff from the Commissioner's Office will collaborate to develop an agenda for the Majors' meetings. The agenda will be reviewed by the Chief Academic Officers, who may provide additional agenda items. Each Major Committee will review the agenda in advance of the meeting and add other issues of importance to the particular major.

**6.2. Committee Responsibilities:** It shall be the responsibility of each USHE Major Committee to:

**6.2.1.** Reach agreement on specific required lower-division Pre-Major courses that are common at all USHE institutions. It is important to note that equivalencies are based on content and mastery of subject matter, not only course level. Not all institutions offer all lower-division courses.

**6.2.2.** Continually review course learning outcomes and expected competency levels and content matter that should be satisfied in required lower-division Pre-Major area courses to assure that students who complete the coursework will be fully prepared to successfully complete upper-division coursework.

**6.2.3.** Assure that in most major programs at USHE four-year institutions, courses numbered 3000 or higher are not required for lower-division students; community colleges shall not offer courses at the lower division that the Major Committee agrees should be taught at the upper-division level. Exceptions will be dealt with by the individual Major Committees and the affected institutions.

**6.2.4.** Review lower-division courses now commonly numbered to assure they fulfill General Education and Pre-Major requirements. Additional lower-division courses may be

considered for common numbering if they are similar in content, standard, and rigor, as specified in the Utah Code.

**6.3. Maximum Credits:** Each Major Committee will establish a maximum number of credits, in keeping with institutional practices, for lower-division Pre-Major coursework required in each discipline.

**6.3.1.** Generally, the number of credits required should be limited so that students may also complete required General Education coursework within the number of credits allowed for the AA/AS degree.

**6.3.2.** Exceptions may be made when mandated by accreditation, licensing, extra-departmental professional, or other institutional requirements. When exceptions are made, students may not be able to complete required General Education coursework within the number of credits allowed for the AA/AS degree.

**6.3.3.** If Major Committees determine additional lower-division credits are needed to prepare students to successfully complete upper-division coursework, a Committee may recommend the delay of some General Education requirements until after transfer and/or acceptance to an upper-division major program. Under no circumstances will individual Major Committees be allowed to make exceptions to General Education requirements – a degree may not be awarded unless the General Education and program requirements for that degree are met.

**6.4. Admission to Upper-Division Major Program:** Completion of required lower-division Pre-Major coursework by transfer students from USHE community colleges and institutions also having a community college role shall not constitute an assurance that transfer students will be admitted into a specific major program at a USHE four-year institution. It must be understood that many programs have a limited number of openings and that admission may be highly competitive.

**6.5. Disclosure of Partial Program:** If an institution does not have the faculty or resources to offer, as part of its curriculum, all of the agreed-upon lower-division Pre-Major courses in a given discipline and emphasis, it will inform prospective students interested in that Pre-Major area that the institution does not offer all of the needed lower-division Pre-Major courses; students may consider attending another institution offering the required coursework or enroll in online courses offered elsewhere in the USHE.

**R470-7. Transfer of Credit Policy:** USHE colleges and universities shall facilitate transfer from institution to institution.

## **7.1. Transfer of General Education Credits**

**7.1.1. Transfer of Partially-Completed General Education Credits:** For transfer students from USHE institutions who have not fully satisfied the General Education

requirements, all USHE receiving institutions shall accept at full value all General Education coursework approved by the sending institution, provided it meets the minimum letter grades accepted by the receiving institution. Receiving institutions shall only require transfer students to complete any additional coursework needed to satisfy the unmet requirements of the receiving institution.

### **7.1.2. Transfer of Completed General Education Credits through Program**

**Completion:** An AA/AS degree earned at any USHE institution will meet the General Education requirements of all other USHE institutions. If a student has completed all institutional General Education requirements, a Letter of Completion (issued by the sending institution confirming General Education completion) or a Certificate of General Education completion shall be accepted by the receiving USHE institution.

**7.1.2.1. Letter of Completion Using Non-USHE Credits/Courses:** Students who enter a USHE institution with most of their General Education credits from a non-USHE regionally-accredited institution, and who want a Letter of Completion from the USHE institution, must complete at least nine credit hours or meet the minimum residency and grade point average requirements of the institution from which the Letter of Completion is requested.

**7.1.2.2. Length of Time for Acceptance and Applicability of Credit:** USHE institutions must accept credit transferred from institutions within the System. Institutional colleges and departments may review courses taken over the prior 15 years, or over a time period in compliance with institutional policies, and make a determination of applicability to current requirements of a credential or degree based on the appropriateness of course content, rigor, and standards. Students wanting transfer credits that were earned either 15 years earlier or longer may be asked to demonstrate competencies in the learning outcomes expected in General Education courses they have completed by using portfolios, challenge examinations, or other forms of evidence that demonstrate their continued competence. Students may petition an institution's transcript office for an exception to the 15-year limit, and that office will consult with the appropriate academic departments before making a decision.

**7.2. Transfer of Non-General Education Credits:** Credit for courses numbered 1000 or above earned in the USHE, regardless of being General Education credits or not, is transferable within the USHE and will be carried on the student's transcript by the receiving institution.

**7.2.1. Application of Credit:** Acceptance of credit should not be confused with its application. Transfer applicants are entitled to a clear disclosure by the receiving institution of the difference between acceptance of credits and the application of credits toward a credential or degree. Transfer credit may or may not apply to the graduation requirements of an institution, regardless of the number of credits transferred. The

receiving institution will apply credit based on the appropriateness to a particular institution's specific degree program requirements and curricula.

**7.2.2. Transfer with Upper-Division Status:** Institutions shall enable students (if they fully complete an AA/AS degree and a prescribed Pre-Major area that comports and articulates with the receiving institution's Pre-Major requirements) to transfer with upper-division status to any USHE four-year institution without taking any lower-division Pre-Major courses at the receiving institution.

**7.2.3. Exceptions to Applying Pre-Major Coursework Credit:** Exceptions may occur when mandated by institutional requirements or other accreditation, licensing, or extra-departmental professional requirements, and as provided in Sections 6.3.3, 6.4, and 6.5. In such cases, the transfer student will be expected to complete lower-division coursework required at the four-year institution.

## **R470-8. Credit Transfer Principles within USHE**

**8.1. Institutional Integrity:** In order to promote institutional integrity, each institution is responsible for developing its own transfer policies and procedures consistent with the policies established by the Board of Regents to facilitate the transfer of credits within the USHE.

**8.2. Transfer Statements:** Because USHE institutions are part of a statewide system, institutions should clearly communicate online and/or in print reasonable and definitive transfer statements to avoid confusion and possible injustice to individual applicants and promote articulation within the USHE.

**8.3. Minimum Standards:** Course quality, content, competency level, and amount of credit earned should be comparable to those courses at the receiving institution.

### **8.4. Individual Student Consideration**

**8.4.1. Anticipated Program:** Information of program and course requirements, including institutional transfer and articulation agreements between two-year and four-year institutions that go beyond those established in this policy, should be published online and/or in print and available to prospective students. Students should be encouraged to establish educational goals early in their educational program. Each student should request assistance from an academic advisor to assure the student's educational goals fit with the program at the institution to which that student intends to transfer. Transfer policies and practices should facilitate transfer once the student is prepared to enter, and has been accepted to, the anticipated program.

**8.4.2. Accredited Institutions:** A receiving institution should have reasonable confidence that students from recognized regionally-accredited institutions are qualified to undertake its educational program. Students from recognized national or specialized

accredited institutions may need to demonstrate competency only in instances where academic attainment is uncertain. A receiving institution may also need to review general education/related instruction courses that are part of applied degree and certificate programs.

**8.4.2.1. Interstate Passport Holders:** Students from regionally-accredited colleges and universities who have successfully completed the sending institution's General Education Passport block of courses and learning outcomes, agreed to by the Interstate Passport Network member institutions, shall have their entire lower-division General Education program accepted without having to repeat courses, except for American Institutions, as required in Utah statute. USHE students who complete their institutions' General Education Passport block will earn the Passport. Passport blocks will be listed in institutional catalogs and will appear on the website of the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education. USHE institutional transcripts will have a designation noting successful completion of the sending institution's Passport block and will be recognized and given full value by system registrars and academic advisors. (<http://www.wiche.edu/passport/about>)

**8.4.2.2. Students Entering with Associate Degrees from Regionally-Accredited Non-USHE Institutions:** Students, who enter USHE schools from regionally-accredited institutions and have completed the AA/AS degree, will have their transcripts reviewed to assure they have successfully completed relevant courses in the three Core Areas required of USHE students: Written Communication, Quantitative Literacy, and American Institutions. While the USHE will honor associate degrees, deficiencies found in one or more of the three Core Areas may need to be addressed.

**8.4.2.3. Students Entering from Regionally-Accredited Institutions with Associate Degrees but without Pre-Major-specific Courses:** Students who enter USHE institutions with the AA/AS degree, but are deficient in prerequisite courses required for their major course of study, may be required to successfully complete such courses at the lower-division level in order to prepare for success in their chosen major once they are accepted.

**8.4.2.4. Students Entering from Regionally-Accredited Institutions without Associate Degrees:** Students who enter the USHE from regionally-accredited institutions without having completed an associate degree must have their transcripts evaluated by the receiving institution to determine if additional Pre-Major and/or General Education coursework will be required to meet USHE institutional requirements.

**8.5. Institutions without Regional, National, or Specialized Accreditation:** Receiving institutions should evaluate on a case-by-case basis any credits earned at institutions that do not have regional, national, or specialized accreditation. Evaluation may be assisted by information



provided by or about the unaccredited institution, such as a catalog covering the years students attended, a description of courses the students completed, course syllabi, faculty credentials, and library facilities. Institutions may require verification of competency attainment through assessments or examinations.

**8.5.1. Foreign Institutions and Proprietary Schools:** In evaluating credits from foreign institutions and proprietary schools, the receiving institution should make equivalency and placement decisions in terms of its own policies and curricula.

**8.6. Credits from Extra-Institutional Settings:** In order to expand the range of educational opportunities and to incorporate them into the credit exchange system, and in order to remove unnecessary restrictions to access, institutional policies should contain statements on credits earned in extra-institutional settings (structured and non-structured), including the military, religious, career, and technical institutions.

**8.6.1. Credit for Current and Former Military Personnel:** Pursuant to Utah Code 53B-16-107, all USHE institutions shall provide written notification to each student applying for admission that the student is required to meet with a college advisor in order to receive credit for military service and training. Upon student request, USHE institutions will provide credit based on a review of recommendations from a Regent-approved postsecondary association to include the American Council on Education and other sources as may be deemed appropriate by the institution. To receive credit under this provision, current and former military personnel must meet with an academic advisor to discuss applicability of credit to program requirements, possible financial aid implications, and other factors that may impact attainment of the student's educational goals, such as competencies that are transferable to a course of study. Upon transfer within the USHE, a student may present a transcript from a USHE institution to a receiving USHE institution to determine the applicability of credit to the student's chosen major. The receiving institution shall evaluate the credit to be transferred pursuant to this policy.

**8.6.1.1. Processes for Evaluation of Credit for Current and Former Military Personnel:** Representatives from USHE institutions who have responsibility for veterans' services shall meet at least annually to review institutional policies and practices relative to awarding credit for current and former military personnel with the goal of maintaining consistent system-wide practices for evaluating and awarding credit pursuant to Section 8.6.1.

**8.6.1.2. Reporting Credits Awarded to Current and Former Military Personnel:** USHE Institutions shall report annually to the Board of Regents the number of credits awarded under Section 8.6.1 above.

**8.7. Basic Responsibilities of All Institutions:** The basic responsibilities of both sending and receiving institutions include:

- 8.7.1. Furnishing transcripts and course descriptions vital in judging the quality and quantity of transfer students' work.
- 8.7.2. Advising students as to the acceptability of credits shown on individual transcripts.
- 8.7.3. Making clear and prompt decisions on credit acceptance and application.
- 8.7.4. Informing potential students of services in the institution.

**R470-9. Credit-by-Examination Policy:** The Board of Regents accepts as valid the concept of credit-by-examination without equivalent previous college coursework. Because of the variety of testing programs, the domain of individual departments and General Education, the following specific policies shall apply:

**9.1. Examinations that Replace Specific Coursework:** Individual departments may use examinations and assessments consistent with departmental standards and those set in Major Committees to award credit that replaces specific General Education coursework.

**9.1.1. Departmentally-Devised Examinations:** Each department may determine which of its offerings may be challenged by examination and should construct, administer, and evaluate appropriate and departmentally-approved examinations upon the request of students.

**9.1.2. External Standardized Examinations:** External standardized examinations should be evaluated by individual departments as they become available to determine their appropriateness, validity, and acceptable scores. When a transfer student has completed the General Education requirements of a USHE institution, the receiving institution will honor the sending institution's determination of General Education credit awarded, including credit granted for external standardized exams.

**9.1.2.1. Advanced Placement Examinations:** The following guideline for the awarding of credit for Advanced Placement (AP) has been reviewed and recognized by the Utah Transfer and Articulation Committee with representatives from all USHE institutions:

**9.1.2.1.1.** Scores of 3, 4, or 5 may receive a maximum of 10 semester hours of credit for a foreign language exam, up to 8 semester hours of credit for a full-year course, or up to 4 semester hours of credit for a half-year course. Institutions may determine appropriate AP scores in academic departments for which there are AP examinations.

**9.1.2.2. College Level Examination Program (CLEP):** CLEP General Examination credit should be recognized and a standard should be set based on the recommendations of the Utah Transfer and Articulation Committee and CLEP Examination Guidelines. A minimum score of 50 is required to award credit with 10 semester hours per test being the maximum number of credits allowed. Each institution shall award credit as it sees fit; however, the following guidelines are for awarding General Education credit through the CLEP process.

**9.1.2.2.1. Composition:** The College Composition or College Composition Modular examination will satisfy the Introduction to Writing requirement.

**9.1.2.2.2. Quantitative Literacy:** College Algebra Subject examination or the Pre-Calculus Subject examination will satisfy the Quantitative Literacy requirement.

**9.1.2.2.3. American Institutions:** The American Government Subject examination or the American History Subject examination will satisfy the American Institutions requirement.

**9.1.2.2.4. Life Science:** The Biology Subject examination will satisfy the Life Science requirement.

**9.1.2.2.5. Physical Science:** The Chemistry Subject examination will satisfy the Physical Science requirement.

**9.1.2.2.6. Humanities:** The Analyzing and Interpreting Literature with Essay examination will satisfy the Humanities requirement.

**9.1.2.2.7. Social and Behavioral Sciences:** The Introductory Psychology or Introductory Sociology examinations will satisfy the Social and Behavioral Sciences requirement.

**9.1.2.2.8. Other General Education:** CLEP-verified General Education credit other than that for which specific guidelines are provided in this policy may be awarded as determined by each institution.

**9.1.3. International Baccalaureate:** Credit should be granted for International Baccalaureate examinations and/or diplomas as determined by each institution.

**9.2. Prior Learning Assessments:** Students may demonstrate that they have specific subject matter credit through the Prior Learning Assessment developed by the Council of Adult and Experiential Learning or the American Council on Education. Institutional departments should evaluate and accept such credit if it meets institutional and departmental standards.

**9.3. Allowable Credit:** Institutional limits may be imposed on the amount of General Education credit that may be earned by means other than taking courses directly from the institution. Institutional limits may also be imposed on the amount of credit that may be earned through departmentally-devised or standardized subject area examinations.