

Guide to General Education Courses Abroad

ILLINOIS STATE STUDY ABROAD

See below for outlines of the characteristics used to determine General Education (GE) course equivalencies and their corresponding abbreviations in the [Study Abroad Course Database](#).

Navigating GE Requirements

General Education courses are broadly focused and not “pre-professional” in nature.

- For example, *‘Italian Art History’* is acceptable, but *‘Italian Fashion Industry’* is not. *‘Media and Government in Europe’* is acceptable, but *‘Reporting II’* is not.

Many courses are interdisciplinary which can make them difficult to categorize. Interpretation is necessary to determine the focus (e.g., Fine Arts, Humanities, Social Science).

- For example, in Women’s and Gender Studies, *‘British Women Writers in Cultural Context’* is probably Humanities, but *‘British Women Political Philosophers’* is likely to focus on Social Science reasoning.

For questions regarding General Education courses abroad, contact the Illinois State Study Abroad Team at StudyAbroad@IllinoisState.edu.

AMALI Graduation Requirement

Courses are defined by ISU as classes that focus on: Asia, the Middle East, Africa, Latin America or Indigenous Peoples of the World. At least 75% of the course must deal with these regions and primary writings or artifacts must be included in the course.

- Sometimes referred to as the Global Studies requirement.

Fine Arts (FA)

Courses introduce students to the ideas and methods of the disciplines of Visual Art, Music and Theatre. In these courses, students examine the interplay between disciplined inquiry in the Fine Arts, which includes the creation of art by artists and the analysis of works of art by critics and historians, and the larger world in which such inquiry is situated.

- Disciplines are generally: Architecture, Art, Film, Music, Theatre

Humanities (HU)

Courses apply ways of knowing appropriate to investigation and interpretation of problems and questions posed in the humanities.

- Disciplines are generally: History, Languages, Literature, Philosophy, Religious studies.

Individuals and Civic Life (ICL)

Courses focus on the relationship of people, political structures and other dimensions of social organization. Courses should stimulate students to think about socially responsible choices and participation in shared governance.

- Disciplines are generally: Politics and Government/ Political Science, Sociology, Anthropology, Philosophy, Criminal Justice

Language in the Humanities (LH)

Courses are characterized by a strong focus on written communication and are considered writing intensive. "Writing intensive" is generally defined as a minimum of five writing assignments that may include essays, essay examinations, journals, and other forms of formal writing. Class time should normally be spent on improvement of written communication skills.

- Disciplines are generally: Literature, Philosophy, History, and the Fine Arts.

Please Note: Courses in Language in Humanities must demonstrate significant emphasis on improving writing and have several formal writing assignments. Such courses can be difficult to find abroad.

Natural Sciences (NS)

These are basic courses in the sciences or more advanced courses if required by a student's major. They must have a lab component.

- Disciplines are generally: Biology, Chemistry, Geology (not Geography), Physics, Environmental Science.

Quantitative Reasoning (QR)

Courses generally assess basic mathematical skills, understanding of elementary mathematical concepts, and ability to reason quantitatively and to model and solve problems with quantitative methods.

Science, Math and Technology (SMT)

Courses generally have a science or math course as a prerequisite. They are not first-year introductory-level courses. Courses in this category focus on the varied nature of scientific, mathematical, and technological knowledge. Students are introduced to the methodologies which investigators in these fields use to develop principles and practices critical to their disciplines, as well as the inter-relationships between focused inquiry and the environment in which these investigations occur.

- Disciplines are generally: Biology, Chemistry, Computer Science, Physics, Physical Anthropology, Technology, and related disciplines in the sciences.

BS-SMT

This requirement only applies to students earning a Bachelor of Science Degree. These students take an additional course from the SMT category. These are courses in the sciences or applied sciences that generally require a science or math course as a prerequisite.

Social Science (SS)

Courses focus on the various ways of knowing appropriate to investigation and interpretation of problems in the social sciences, understood as those disciplines that systematically study humans and human interactions with institutions.

- Disciplines are generally: Cultural Anthropology, Criminal Justice, Economics, Government or Political Science, Psychology, Sociology

United States Traditions (UST)

Courses focus on U.S. History and are generally a survey of topics. Narrow topics, for example, U.S. military history from 1914 to 1948, are usually major electives, not Gen Ed.