

# THE COMMON CURRICULUM

Program Website: <http://www.union.edu/offices/gen-ed/index.php>

FYP/FYP-H	<b>First-Year Preceptorial or Honors First-Year Preceptorial</b> engages you in the exploration of ideas and diverse perspectives through critical reading, thinking, and writing.
SRS/SCH-150	<b>Sophomore Research Seminar or Scholars Research Seminar</b> ensures you have an early hands-on experience thinking and working as an academic researcher.
	<b>Literature (HUL)</b> expands the moral imagination needed to understand yourself and your fellow human beings through literary analysis, interpretation, and reflection. Any course listed in the course schedule as HUL from English (EGL), Modern Literature in Translation (MLT), or another department.
	<b>Natural Sciences with Lab (SCLB)</b> changes the way you think about the natural world when you understand the scientific method and put it to work. Any Lab course in Astronomy (AST), Biochemistry (BCH), Biological Sciences (BIO), Chemistry (CHM), Geology (GEO), Physics (PHY), certain Psychology courses (PSY 310, 312, 313, 330, 351), or any courses listed in the course schedule as SCLB. <b>Seats in SCLB courses are often limited; be pro-active in seeking out these courses.</b>
	<b>Quantitative and Mathematical Reasoning (QMR)</b> equips you with unique insights and skills necessary to solve complex problems. Any course from MTH (except MTH 100) or any courses listed in the course schedule as QMR.

	<b>Arts and Humanities (HUM)</b> enable you to find yourself and your voice in creative expression and the exploration of works of the imagination. Any course from Art History (AAH), Dance (ADA), Music (AMU), Theater (ATH), Studio Arts (AVA), Classics (CLS), English (EGL), Film Studies (FLM), Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies (GSW), Philosophy (PHL), Religious Studies (REL), or courses offered by the Department of Modern Languages and Literatures.
	<b>Social Sciences (SOCS)</b> confront you with the complexity and challenges of our world by analyzing the societies we create. Any course from Anthropology (ANT), Economics (ECO), Gender, Sexuality and Women's Studies (GSW), History (HST), Political Science (PSC), Sociology (SOC), or PSY-100.
	<b>Science, Engineering and Technology (SET)</b> introduces you to Union's unique commitment to teaching Science and Engineering as Liberal Arts and examining their impact on our humanity. Any course in Science (with or without lab, including a second SCLB), Engineering, Computer Science (CSC), certain Psychology courses (PSY 210, 311, 315, 410), or any course listed in the course schedule as SET. <b>Seats in SET courses are often limited; be pro-active in seeking out these courses.</b>

**LANGUAGES AND CULTURES (LCC)** empowers you as a citizen of a global community to contribute across cultural boundaries and shape our shared future.

1)	2)	<b>OPTION A: Language Sequence</b> (a sequence of <u>two</u> courses in the same language at 101 or higher; LAT 102 and LAT 103 or higher, or GRK 102 and GRK 103 or higher.)
<b>OR</b>		
1)	2)	<b>OPTION B: Cultural Analysis Sequence</b> (any <u>two</u> non-language courses listed as LCC).
<b>OR</b>		
		<b>OPTION C: Study Away Program</b> (see guidelines below)

**WRITING ACROSS THE CURRICULUM** courses encourage you to explore and create your own understanding of the liberal arts through your writing. (<http://www.union.edu/Resources/Academic/WAC/index.php>)

1)	2)	3)	4)	5)	<b>5 WAC credits in at least 2 Divisions</b>
					<b>Senior Writing Experience (WS)</b>

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## LEARNING GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Through the Common Curriculum, you will develop the breadth of knowledge and flexibility of mind needed to participate in meaningful conversations relevant to particular disciplines, the Academy, local society, or the global community. You will do so by achieving the following learning outcomes across the breadth of Liberal Arts represented in the Common Curriculum requirements. In doing so, you will also advance important foundational and differentiating goals in the Union College Strategic Plan (2013).

- A. **Communicate Critical and Analytical Thinking.** *You will examine, evaluate, and apply problem-solving techniques to evidence, data, objects, artefacts, arguments, and theories according to the diverse analytical traditions of the Liberal Arts; you will communicate clearly and correctly the results of such analysis.* **Explanation:** this learning outcome emphasizes the need to learn and practice critical thinking in the breadth of disciplines and analytical traditions in the Liberal Arts. **Assessment:** instructors assess your learning in this outcome by evaluating a representative sample of assignments. Learning outcome A encompasses the following learning goals in the Strategic Plan and assessment of it should incorporate those goals: **F1-G6:** Union students will graduate with the skills needed to communicate clearly and effectively, work both independently and collaboratively, have developed information, technological, and visual literacy, be prepared to live and work in a culturally-diverse world, and understand ethical considerations and act upon them; **D2-G2,** Union students will receive a broad and deep education that includes exposure to important and distinctive connections within and across the full spectrum of disciplines, including the arts, humanities, social sciences, physical and natural sciences, mathematics, and engineering; **D2-G3,** Union students will learn through a combination of theory and practice, using both critical thinking and expertise.
- B. **Make Connections or Original Contributions.** *Through your writings, theories, problems, designs, objects of art, and other projects you will make connections or original contributions to questions and concerns relevant to a particular discipline, multiple disciplines, the Academy, local society, or the global community.* **Explanation:** this learning outcome emphasizes the importance of deliberately using your coursework to engage issues, debates, schools of thought, and the like relevant to particular disciplines as well as the Academy, local society, or the global community. **Assessment:** instructors assess your learning in this outcome by evaluating a representative sample of assignments. Learning outcome B encompasses the following learning goals in the Strategic Plan and assessment of it should incorporate those goals: **F1-G3,** Union students will develop an attitude of inquiry: they will ask questions that matter, and develop the capacity to engage complex challenges with skill, creativity, and confidence; **D2-G1,** Union students will engage in disciplinary, interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary approaches, and will have opportunities to learn at the intersection of fields of study; **D2-G4,** Union students will develop a diverse set of skills that can be applied across a spectrum of disciplines and future careers; also relevant components of goal **D2-G2.**
- C. **Reflect on Your Learning.** *You will demonstrate the ability to link your experiences in the Common Curriculum with your intellectual development as a lifelong learner, including possible*

*career and life paths.* **Explanation:** this learning outcome may be viewed as asking you to draw together the practical, intrinsic, and idealistic value of the Liberal Arts as they relate to being a life-long learner and reflecting on a meaningful life. **Assessment:** the Gen Ed Board assesses learning outcome C indirectly through a student reflective essay and student interview; instructors provide direct assessment of this learning outcome **if** it is observed in their classes. Learning outcome C encompasses the following learning goals in the Strategic Plan and assessment of it should incorporate those goals: **F1-G2**, Union students will discover lifelong intellectual interests and strive to excel in them; **F2-G4**, Union students will develop a sense of themselves as a "whole person," with the skills necessary for the pursuit of life-long learning, global citizenship and effective work with others, through co-curricular programs that complement the academic mission; also relevant components of goal **D2-G4**.

### **ADDITIONAL FYP/FYP-H LEARNING OUTCOMES for Learning Outcome A**

First-Year Preceptorial (FYP) and Honors Preceptorial (FYP-H) have more specific learning outcomes under Learning Outcome A, as follows:

- A1. DISCUSS IDEAS:** critically and respectfully engage in dialogue with others about ideas in texts as well as those expressed in class.
- A2. READ TEXTS CRITICALLY:** show an understanding of/ability to evaluate complex and sophisticated ideas from multiple and diverse perspectives.
- A3. DEVELOP EFFECTIVE ARGUMENTS:**
  - A3a.** Support a focused thesis, including analysis of evidence to support conclusions.
  - A3b.** Organize information logically and clearly in essays that guide readers through the text
  - A3c.** Express ideas clearly and appropriately, with few, if any, grammar, usage, and spelling errors
  - A3d.** Integrate evidence into your argument (e.g., uses quotations appropriately, correct citation, etc.).
- A4. INCORPORATE REVISION** into the writing process as a means of improving critical thinking and the expression of ideas.

### **ADDITIONAL SRS/SCH-150 LEARNING OUTCOMES for Learning Outcome A**

The Sophomore Research Seminar (SRS) and Scholars Research Seminar (SCH-150) have more specific learning outcomes under Learning Outcome A, as follows:

- A1. DEVELOP A RESEARCH TOPIC:** Formulate a clear, focused research question or thesis appropriate to the topic of inquiry.
- A2. FIND EVIDENCE:** Identify and locate evidence appropriate for examining a research question or thesis.
- A3. EVALUATE EVIDENCE:** Critically and ethically analyze evidence obtained for examination of a research question or thesis.
- A4. DEVELOP AN EVIDENCE-BASED ARGUMENT:** Develop and organize a logical argument grounded in the analysis of evidence that supports or refutes a research question or thesis.
- A5. PRESENT RESEARCH FINDINGS:** Present a logical analytical argument supported by evidence in an appropriate written form without errors of grammar, usage, and spelling.
- A6. PRACTICE PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS OF CITATION:** Incorporate and cite evidence in a manner that meets the professional standards of the discipline most appropriate for the topic of inquiry.

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## **Policies, Administration, and Advising FAQs**

(November 2017)

Academic policies and administrative procedures for the Common Curriculum are listed below. The General Education Board oversees the general education program and formulates plans and policies relating to it. The Director of General Education serves as Chair of the Gen Ed Board and is responsible for the administration of the program. (*Faculty Manual 2014*, IV, 11-12) The Director of General Education reports directly to the Vice President for Academic Affairs. You may contact the Director of General Education or Gen Ed Board with questions and comments by emailing [education@union.edu](mailto:education@union.edu). (Selected policies and procedures below are also included in the Union College Academic Catalog. Please note that provisions of the Academic Catalog “are not to be regarded as an irrevocable contract between the student and Union College. The College reserves the right to make changes in its course offerings, degree requirements, regulations and procedures, and fees and expenses as educational and financial considerations require.” (<https://catalog.union.edu>))

### ***What courses from a student’s major and minor count towards completion of the Common Curriculum and vice versa?***

**FYP and SRS** may not be used toward completion of a major or minor. Other courses taken in the Common Curriculum may be used to meet the requirements of a major or minor unless specifically prohibited by a particular program or department.

### ***How does double counting work with the Common Curriculum?***

Students are required to complete ten (10) courses to complete the Common Curriculum. Courses may fulfill both a Common Curriculum requirement (such as SOCS) and the WAC requirement. No other double counting is allowed.

### ***Can a non-transfer student use AP, IB, or transfer credits to complete requirements in the Common Curriculum?***

Yes, ONE course may be used pre-matriculation. The ONE course may be counted in only ONE of the following categories **with the approval of the appropriate department and the Director of General Education**: HUM, SOCS, QMR, SCLB, and SET. A table listing course credits awarded by Union College for AP credit can be found at: <https://muse.union.edu/advising/department-specific-advising-tips/> Information about using transfer courses post-matriculation can be found in the Academic Catalog. (<https://catalog.union.edu>)

### ***Can a non-transfer student use AP English to complete the Literature requirement (HUL) in the Common Curriculum?***

No, the English department does not accept AP English for HUL credit. Students who receive a 5 on either AP English exam may waive the prerequisite of an EGL 100-level course and may complete a 200-level English HUL course or another HUL course.

### ***Can courses taken on a term abroad be used to complete the FYP/FYP-H or SRS/SCH-150 requirements?***

No, these Common Curriculum courses have unique pedagogical requirements and learning outcomes designed for Union College’s academic program.

### ***Can courses completed on a term abroad be used to complete other Common Curriculum requirements?***

Yes, courses completed during a full-term study away program that are accepted for full course credit (1.0) by Union College may count toward the following Common Curriculum requirements as appropriate: HUL, HUM, SOCS, QMR, SCLB, SET. Courses completed

during study abroad may count toward CC requirements contingent upon **review and approval by the Director of General Education with the Gen Ed Board and/or appropriate department**. Such courses must meet the standards, content requirements, and learning outcomes for the Common Curriculum and/or the relevant department. A complete course syllabus and supporting materials such as assignments must be submitted with the request: no reviews or approvals will be made without such materials. Submission of materials and review do not guarantee approval. No course completed during a study abroad program can double-count for more than one CC requirements, per the double-counting policy above.

***Can a practicum be used to complete Common Curriculum requirements?***

No, a practicum does not receive a letter grade. Therefore, it cannot be used.

***Can an Independent Study be used to complete Common Curriculum requirements?***

No, an Independent Study cannot be used to complete a CC requirement.

***May students withdraw from an SRS?***

Students may withdraw from an SRS according to the policies for withdrawals in the current Academic Catalog, which requires the approval of the Director of General Education. The General Education Board has approved these guidelines for handling requests to withdraw from an SRS.

- Requests to withdraw from an SRS must be made **at least two business days before** the Registrar's deadline(s) for withdrawals.
- Because of the unique enrollment management requirements for the SRS, students may withdraw from an SRS due to extraordinary circumstances. Extraordinary circumstances typically involve medical or personal reasons for leaving campus or the college for an extended period of time that are reported to the Dean of Students or Dean of Studies offices.
- Requests to withdraw in other circumstances will be considered on a strictly limited and discretionary basis only.
- For all requests, please submit a written explanation of the reasons for requesting the withdrawal and steps taken to address the issues involved to [education@union.edu](mailto:education@union.edu).

***May students defer or postpone the SRS?***

No, SRSs must be completed in the sophomore year; they may not be deferred.

***May students change their SRS section/placement?***

Students **may not** change SRS sections. Students may only request a change due to an irreconcilable scheduling conflict with a **required course in a declared major**. The course in conflict must **a)** be taught only in the time slot of the SRS, **b)** be available during the academic year only in the same term as the SRS, and **c)** be the only course that can meet a specific major requirement. No other requests will be considered. Requests must be made directly by the student (not advisers, SRS instructors, or others) to [education@union.edu](mailto:education@union.edu). Requests must include complete details about course conflicts and the name of the student's adviser. The Director of General Education reviews and approves changes. SRS instructors, advisers, and the Registrar cannot make changes. In the case of changes, students will be offered choices (when possible) based on original preferences and enrollment considerations.

***What courses count as a Literature course (HUL)?***

Courses in English, Modern Languages in Translation (MLT), and other departments that have been approved as fulfilling the Literature requirement and assigned the HUL code. AP, IB, or transfer credits may not be used to satisfy the HUL requirement; see above regarding AP English

and courses taken on a term abroad.

***What PSY (Psychology) courses count as SCLB or SET?***

PSY 210 (SET), 310 (SCLB), 311 (SET), 312 (SCLB), 313 (SCLB), 315 (SET), 330 (SCLB), 351 (SCLB), 410 (SET) count as indicated.

***Explain the different ways of satisfying the Languages and Cultures (LCC) requirement.***

A student can do any **ONE** of these things:

- **OPTION A Language Sequence:** complete a sequence of two language courses in the same language at the 101 level or higher. **PLEASE NOTE:** for Latin or Greek, you must complete LAT 102 and LAT 103 or GRK 102 and GRK 103; LAT 101 and GRK 101 do not count for LCC language sequence credit.
- **OPTION B: Cultural Analysis Sequence:** complete any two non-language courses at Union that carry the LCC code.
- **OPTION C Study Abroad:** complete a full term abroad that deals with a cultural tradition outside of the US. This satisfies both courses of the LCC requirement. Complete a mini-term that deals with a cultural tradition outside of the US. This satisfies one course of the LCC requirement. If the mini-term is associated with approved pre-departure and/or post-return coursework equivalent to a 1.0 academic credit course it satisfies the two-course LCC requirement.

***Can you use one language course and one other LCC course to fulfill the requirement?***

No, you cannot combine language and non-language LCC courses in this way.

***Do mini-terms in the USA count toward the LCC requirement?***

Only the Civil Rights, Community Service and the Mexican-American Border mini-terms count toward the LCC requirement.

***Do international students have to complete the LCC requirement?***

Yes. There are no exceptions to the completion of the LCC requirement.