

***How Solid Is the Core?:
A Study of General Education
Requirements at
11 North Carolina Institutions***

Executive Summary

How Solid Is the Core?: A Study of General Education Requirements at 11 North Carolina Institutions

The study examines the general education requirement and two bellwether majors, English and history, at 11 North Carolina universities:

Appalachian State University
East Carolina University
Fayetteville State University
North Carolina Central University
North Carolina State University – Raleigh
University of North Carolina – Chapel Hill
University of North Carolina – Charlotte
University of North Carolina – Greensboro
University of North Carolina – Pembroke
University of North Carolina – Wilmington
Western Carolina University

The study is based on information provided by the institutions in their university catalogs for the years 2002 or 2003. Different university catalogs covered slightly different years and periods—some were for a single academic year, for instance, and some for two academic years. We have taken into account the various ways in which individual universities design and publish their catalogs, and have effectively compared all the institutions for the same time frame.

General education requirements at the institutions tend to make up about one third of the total credit hours required for graduation. Most baccalaureate programs consist of 122-128 credit hours, of which general education accounts for 42-45 credits.

The typical general education requirement is composed of five or six components, including English, Humanities, the Social Sciences, the Natural Sciences and Mathematics, Physical Education, and—more often than not today—a multicultural or diversity element.

General education almost always contains an English or communications component, consisting usually of a two-semester freshman composition sequence, often with an introductory speech course as well.

The core of most general education programs is made up of Humanities, the Social Sciences, and the Natural Sciences, most often in approximately equal parts of about 12 credits each. The Humanities component usually includes literature, history, philosophy,

and fine arts, sometimes in approximately equal portions. The Social Sciences component usually requires two or three disciplines to be chosen from among the disciplines of sociology, psychology, economics, anthropology, and political science, and a few others. The Natural Sciences component usually requires about 4 credits in mathematics, and about 8 credits in laboratory sciences, such as astronomy, biology, chemistry, geology, geography, and physics.

The Physical Education component is usually limited to a course or two totaling no more than 2 or 3 credit hours, and the multicultural or diversity component usually consists of a single 3-credit course.

The study examined the quality of the general education requirement in terms of its mandating the kinds of courses that ought to make up general education. For example, general education should include:

- a two-semester composition course for freshmen
- some type of introductory literature course
- a course in Western history or Western civilization
- a United States history course
- a four-semester foreign language requirement
- and a rigorous science course.

Ten of the 11 institutions included require a two-semester freshman composition course. The exception, Appalachian State University, requires only a single-semester expository writing course, but also requires an introductory literature course with “continued emphasis on writing through literary essays.”

Just under half of our schools—45%—offer a course in remedial (aka developmental) English. The presence of a remedial course among the offerings of the English department suggests that the institution is knowingly accepting candidates who are not adequately prepared in writing skills, and that it uses this course to try to bring the new students up to entrance-level standards.

A similar fraction—45%—requires an introductory literature course.

Only 36% require some type of Western history or Western civilization course. By contrast, 64% require a multicultural or cultural diversity course, at best a sign of interest in non-Western cultures, but all too often an exercise in politically correct “education.”

Thus, the institutions within our sample were more likely to require a cultural diversity course than an introductory literature course or a course on Western history or Western civilization.

Not one institution requires all undergraduates to take a course in United States history.

Only East Carolina University requires the 12 credit hours in a foreign language needed to ensure a basic competence. Overall, the institutions studied are seven times as likely to require a course in cultural diversity as they are to mandate foreign language competence.

Not a single institution requires science courses as rigorous as those taken by undergraduates majoring in a scientific discipline. In fulfillment of general education requirements, students are given the option of taking science courses adapted to non-science students, sometimes specifically labeled “for the non-science major.” At UNC Wilmington, students may choose CHM 103, *Chemistry in Everyday Life*, “A terminal, relatively non-mathematical one-semester course in chemistry for the nonscience major,” which satisfies the laboratory requirement. Students may also choose PHY 103, *Great Ideas in Physics*, that not only “Introduces the nature of science to the nonscientist by emphasizing the concepts underlying four great ideas in physics,” but also “Explores the mutual influence of science and the humanities (literature, philosophy, history, and the arts).”

When the courses are not labeled for non-science majors, students have to rely on titles and course descriptions. The non-laboratory requirement of the Natural Sciences Perspective for the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, for example, may be satisfied with PHYS 16, *How Things Work*, described as “Demystifying the working of objects such as CD players, microwave ovens, lasers, computers, roller coasters, rockets, light bulbs, automobiles, clocks, etc.” Or a student might avoid the traditional natural sciences entirely by choosing PSYC 10, General Psychology. At the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, avenues of such possible avoidance include ATY 253, *Introduction to Physical Anthropology* and NTR 213, *Nutrition Facts & Fantasies*.

Offering students a large number of course options tends to weaken the prescriptive effect of general education. In Humanities, Social Studies, and Natural Sciences—the three areas that together comprise the core of general education—students are given such latitude in their choice of courses that little, if any, common knowledge is assured.

On average, students are required to take only 3% of qualifying courses offered in the Humanities, 4% of such courses in Social Studies, and 5% of such courses in Natural Sciences (excluding mathematics). Only three institutions require students to take more than one in ten of qualifying courses in these three areas combined. Only one school—North Carolina Central University—mandates 100% of listed courses in the three areas.

For students majoring in English, one third of the courses required for the major are designated by name. Students are required on average to take 18% of the department’s available courses to graduate.

Institutions vary in their requirement of a Shakespeare course for English majors, with 36% requiring such a course, 27% requiring a survey course including the Bard, and 36% not requiring any reading of Shakespeare.

For students majoring in history, 30% of the courses required for the major are designated by name. Students are required on average to take 15% of the department's available courses to graduate.

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Western Carolina University	2003-2004

*Changes from the catalog in the English major curriculum for North Carolina State University were documented by referring to the university's website, July 22, 2003. Changes in, and explanations of, general education requirements are based on a letter to George C. Leef from James L. Oblinger, Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, April 5, 2004.

** Anticipated changes to general education requirements at The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill are based on a letter to George C. Leef from Steve Allred, Associate Provost for Academic Initiatives, March 8, 2004.

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Introduction

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Profiles of Institutions

Appalachian State University

General education requirement

The general education requirement at Appalachian State University is referred to as the Core Curriculum, and is intended to “broaden awareness, cultivate the intellect and develop lifelong learning skills.” All students are required to take 42-44 hours in core courses distributed among a half dozen areas, including English (6 credit hours), Humanities (12 credit hours), Social Sciences (12 credit hours), Natural Sciences (6-8 credit hours), Mathematics (4 credit hours), and Physical Activity/Wellness (2 credit hours).

Under English, students must take *Expository Writing* (ENG 1000) and *Introduction to Literature* (ENG 1100). The majority of freshmen enroll in the expository writing course, but “selected categories of students” are required to take an English placement test, the results of which determine whether they are placed in ENG 1000, advanced to ENG 1100, or put back into a developmental course (ENG 0900). A freshman honors seminar (ENG 1510) may be substituted for the introduction to literature course.

Under Humanities, students must select four courses from at least three of the areas listed. These are largely equivalent to academic departments, and include art, music, theatre, dance, philosophy, religion, and a number of major world languages. Other areas include Appalachian Studies, Interdisciplinary Studies, and General Honors courses. One course each must be selected literature and the fine arts. To fulfill their four courses, students have 107 courses from which to choose, and they have eighteen subject areas from which to select a minimum of three.

Students may use foreign language courses to satisfy part of the Humanities four-course requirement, but no general foreign language competency is required of undergraduates.

Under Social Sciences, students are required to take two semesters of World Civilization (HIS 1101-1102). In addition, they must choose two courses in two different areas from among over 40 courses in 11 different categories. These include anthropology, economics, family and consumer sciences, geography, political science, psychology, sociology, and technology. Three areas—Appalachian Studies, Interdisciplinary Studies, and General Honors—are duplicates of those in the Humanities.

Under Natural Sciences, students must take six to eight semester hours of the same science (the higher number allowing for four-hour laboratory courses) or an eight-hour mini-course sequence. The mini-course sequence consists of four parts taken over two semesters; all parts must be completed to satisfy the science requirement. The four parts consist of (1) physics or astronomy, (2) chemistry, (3) geology, and (4) biology, each area of study being qualified by the modifier “General Science.” In satisfying the requirement, students are thus given the choice of attaining some depth in a single science or gaining a broad general science background.

All entering students are required to take a math competency test. The results of the test are used to place students without sufficient math credit in needed courses and to advise other students on course options. To satisfy the Mathematics requirement, students with sufficient prior credit must take one of six courses ranging in subject matter—and, presumably, degree of difficulty—from *Introduction to Mathematics* to *Calculus With Analytic Geometry II*.

The two-hour Physical Activity/Wellness requirement must be taken from a select offering of courses from the following disciplines or departments: Dance, Family and Consumer Sciences, Health Promotion, Military Science, and Physical Education Activity. The 42-44 hours of core courses amounts to approximately 35% of the total 122 semester hours required of most majors for the baccalaureate degree.

In addition to the Core Curriculum requirements, students must complete a number of specially designated courses. Distributed throughout the curriculum and overlapping to some extent the Core Curriculum requirements, the Special Designator requirements cover seven areas: writing, multicultural, numerical data, computer, speaking, cross-disciplinary, and certified proficiency in communications.

Six writing courses (designated “W”) are required, including the already-required *Expository Writing* and *Introduction to Literature*; two of the courses must be in the student’s major. Under multicultural courses (designated “MC”), the two semesters of World Civilization are counted, and two additional multicultural courses are required.

Two numerical data courses (designated “ND”) and two computer courses (designated “C”) are required. Students must take one course requiring formal speaking (designated “S”) in their major and one cross-disciplinary course (designated “CD”).

Finally, students must achieve Certified Proficiency in Communications within their major department. Besides this requirement, the designated courses total 12 (provided one takes care not to double-count the English and history courses already required by the Core Curriculum).

Requirements for selected majors

English

The English major requires 36 credit hours (12 courses) in English above the freshman level, but six credit hours may be applied to satisfying the core curriculum humanities requirement (effectively reducing the major requirement to 30 credit hours). Although at least 24 credit hours must be at the 3000 (junior) level or above, “no course in English above the freshman level is specifically required,” virtually ensuring that students majoring in English will share little common background.

Expository Writing and *Introduction to Literature* are prerequisites for “all courses which follow” numerically, that is, most courses in the department. As previously noted, these courses are required of all undergraduates as part of the core curriculum humanities requirement, and may be credited to the 36 hours required for the major. Prerequisites are otherwise rare within

the department, limited to *Advanced Expository Writing* as a prerequisite for a student teaching role, and some kind of creative writing course as a prerequisite for a *Senior Seminar in Creative Writing* (although “students may also enroll in the seminar with the permission of the instructor.”)

An optional concentration in creative writing is available within the English major, requiring that 15-21 hours (of the total 36 hours) be devoted to creative writing courses.

The department lists some 58 courses above the freshman level, including Selected Topics and Colloquium, offered “On Demand” (and described simply as “Content to vary; may be repeated for credit when content does not duplicate”), and Independent Study.

Lower level courses include two-semester surveys of English literature, world literature, and American literature; and courses in *Modern Studies* (“A study of recent literature.”), *Black Literature*, and *Introduction to Film*. At the 3000 (junior) level, courses are offered in folklore, business writing, and advanced studies in film. Several courses seemed aimed at students planning to teach at the K-12 level: *World Literature for Children*, *Adolescent Literature*, and *Theory and Practice in the Teaching of High School English*. A general course in creative writing is supplemented by specialized courses in writing poetry, fiction, and non-fiction. Specialized literature courses included those focused on the short story, poetry, drama, and women and literature.

Some 4000-level courses provide a more advanced study of subjects treated earlier, such as *World Literature*, *Studies in African-American Literature*, *Advanced Folklore*, and *Advanced Studies in Women and Literature*. Other courses include *Appalachian Literature*, *The Novel*, and *Literary Criticism*. American literature is covered in four courses focusing on the early American period, 19th century, and 20th century (pre- and post-World War II). English literature is likewise treated chronologically, beginning with the course *Early English Literature*, two courses on Shakespeare, and single courses on the 17th century, the 18th century, the Romantic period, and the Victorian era. Two courses on British literature (pre- and post-World War II) cover the 20th century.

The English department handles English and American literature in a traditional, chronological manner, covering all periods, but paying more attention to the later ones, particularly the 19th and 20th centuries. The major genres—poetry, drama, short story, and novel—are covered evenly, if perfunctorily. Topical courses and those reflective of postmodernist taste include courses on film, folklore, women and literature, pre-adult literature, and creative writing.

History

The major in history consists of 36 credit hours (12 courses) beyond the core history requirement. History 4100, *Senior Seminar*, is required of all students. The other 33 credit hours must be distributed among three geographic areas of study: European history, United States history, and non-Western history. The latter area includes Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East. Students are required to take at least 15 credit hours in one of the areas, and at least nine credit hours in each of the remaining two areas, effectively producing a major area of

concentration and two minor areas. No more than 15 credit hours from the 2000 (sophomore) level may be used in fulfillment of these requirements. Since no particular courses are required, students do not necessarily share any common historical background.

Besides the Bachelor of Arts in history described above, the department offers several other degrees. The Bachelor of Science degree with teacher licensure in secondary education consists of 30 credit hours beyond the core curriculum history requirement. The Bachelor of Science (non-teaching) degree requires 36 credit hours in history and 27 credit hours “in a career-oriented concentration.” The most highly prescribed option is the Bachelor of Science degree and teacher licensure in Social Sciences education, which requires a minimum of 123 credit hours distributed among three areas beyond the core curriculum (social science courses, a concentration, and teacher education courses). A Public History concentration is also available for students interested in such public service fields as “cultural resources management, historic site preservation and conservation techniques, records management, historic interpretation, and grantsmanship.” Its only special requirement is HIS 4575, *Introduction to Public History*.

The department’s sole offering at the freshman level is the two-semester World Civilization survey (HIS 1101-1102) previously mentioned under general education requirements. Of the 57 courses the department offers above the freshman level, courses at the 2000 level include two-semester surveys of American civilization, the history of Africa, and the history of Latin America. Single-semester courses at the 2000 level cover traditional China, the classical Islamic world, and *The World since 1945*.

The department offers a broad range of courses at the 3000 (junior) level. Western civilization is covered by courses on ancient Greece, ancient Rome, the Middle Ages, the Renaissance and Reformation, Early Modern Europe, 19th Century Europe, and 20th Century Europe. European history is handled at a more detailed level in three courses on England/Britain and two on Germany. Five courses are offered in United States history covering the colonial period to recent times. More regional American history is studied in courses like *History of the Old South*, *Post-Civil War South*, *History of the Appalachian Region*, and *History of North Carolina*. Topical studies in U.S. history include courses on *History of American Business*, *United States Foreign Policy*, *American Urban History*, and *American Church History*.

With the exception of Mexico, whose history is traced “from pre-Columbian times,” the history of the rest of the world, beyond Europe and the United States, focuses on modern times: courses on 20th Century South America and on the history of modern China, Japan, East Asia, India, and the Middle East. One course is offered on *Women in History* and another on the *Western Intellectual Tradition*.

Upper level (4000) course offerings are oddly spotty, featuring two courses on Russia and the Soviet Union, one on Canada, and five on Public History (including the introductory course previously mentioned as required for concentrators).

The department is strong in United States and European history, and offers a balanced sampling of modern history for the remainder of the globe. Topical courses are minimal, regional courses are limited to the South, and only one course solely on women is offered.

East Carolina University

General education requirement

The general education requirement at East Carolina University consists of 42 credit hours. Total requirements for a bachelor's degree range from 120 credit hours for a BA in Economics to 128 credit hours for a BS in Elementary Education (K-6), while most majors require 126 credit hours, so that the general education requirement usually comprises a third of a student's course work.

To satisfy the general education requirement, courses are required in the following six areas of study: English, science, social science, math, humanities/fine arts, and health. Most of the courses fulfilling these requirements are marked in the catalog by a prefix of GE, but the catalog states "There may be other courses that also carry general education credit."

Students must take six credit hours of English, specifically ENGL 1100 and 1200, which are composition courses. In addition to these courses, and as part of a 12-hour writing intensive requirement, students must take a three-credit writing intensive course in the major and any other three-credit writing intensive course of their choice.

The science component of the general education requirement consists of eight credit hours selected from the biology, chemistry, geology, and physics departments. At least one of the courses must require laboratory work.

The social science component requires 12 credit hours, with courses allowed in eight areas, only three of which must be selected. Since there is no specific requirement for any of the eight areas, students may graduate without taking a single course in American history, world history, democratic institutions, or Western civilization. Similarly, students are not required to take an introductory course in economics or in political science.

Humanities and fine arts require 10 credit hours, including at least one course in each of these two areas. Literature falls under the humanities requirement and, like history, is not specifically required. Students may satisfy the single course requirement in humanities through a course in philosophy or even linguistics. They may graduate without taking a course in American, British, European, or world literatures. Like social studies, the humanities and fine arts requirement guarantees no common background among undergraduates. Students choose their 3 or 4 courses (10 credit hours) from among 186 course offerings.

Students must take a single course (three credit hours) in mathematics and three credit hours in health and exercise and sport science.

In addition to the core, all candidates for the BA degree must complete the equivalent of four semesters of a foreign language: "through level 1004" Students with only high school credit in a foreign language are expected to take a placement test to determine the appropriate level for continued study in that language. Students must also complete "at least one course which exposes them to cultural diversity."

Requirements for selected majors

English

The English major requires 36 credit hours, including 12 hours of Common Core courses. Core courses consist of ENGL 2000, *Interpreting Literature*, and three survey courses: ENGL 3000, *History of Literature in English to 1700*; ENGL 3010, *History of Literature in English, 1700-1880*; and ENGL 3020, *History of Literature in English, 1880-Present*. For a concentration in English literature (a Writing concentration is also available), the remaining 24 credit hours are chosen from among three categories: writing, Shakespeare, and electives. Writing and Shakespeare account for three credit hours each. Students may take 18 credit hours in electives, all of which must be above the 2899 (sophomore) level, and at least 12 credit hours of which must be above the 3999 (junior) level.

The department offers 101 courses, including the four core courses just mentioned, for students majoring in English.

The department offers five courses that could be considered as focusing on great books, including one each on classics, great works of literature, the Bible as literature, literature and religion, and medieval literature. Genre studies are represented by two courses on drama, one course on poetry, and one course on the short story. The department offers one course in advanced composition, one in advanced grammar, four in linguistics, and 10 writing courses, including courses in writing poetry, fiction, several areas of non-fiction, literary criticism, as well as business and technical writing.

The great English authors are covered by one course on Chaucer, one on Milton, and three on Shakespeare (histories, comedies, and tragedies). Period studies include single courses in British literature of the Renaissance, 17th century, 18th century, Romantic period, and Victorian period. Survey courses of American literature cover each of the two periods 1820-1865 and 1865-1920. The modern period is represented by a single course on British and American writers since World War II.

Popular writing is represented by single courses in mystery fiction, modern fantasy, and science fiction. There are two courses in mythology and one in American folklore. Regional literature courses include a course in Northern Carolina literature and one in Southern literature, and a thematic course treats the Frontier in American Literature. Eight newer offerings include single courses in film studies, Native American literatures, black literature, women's literature, literature of the New World to 1820, ethnic American literature, world literature (i.e. non-American and British) in English, and literary theory.

The overall offering of courses provides a broad but thin representation of classical, traditional, and modern currents of literature, plus a fair number of newer courses.

History

The history major consists of 36 credit hours of Core courses. Five courses (15 semester hours) are required of all majors, including two courses on world history (*World Civilizations to 1500* and *World Civilizations Since 1500*), two on American history (*American History to 1877* and *American History Since 1877*), and one methods course (*History: Its Nature and Method*). The remaining 21 hours of electives must be taken of courses above 2999, and three credit hours must be taken at the 5000-5999 (graduate) level. Students must take a minimum of three credit hours from each of four areas: American history, European history, other world area history, and topical courses. The latter include such courses as *Sea Power: 480 BC to the Present*, *Selected Topics in History*, *Biography and History*, and *Honors*.

The department lists 111 courses for students majoring in history, including three sections of directed readings, two honors courses, and nine sections of administrative internships. There are two courses in world civilizations: to 1500 and since 1500. Offerings include three courses on the history of Greece and Rome, and one course on the history of Christianity. American history is represented by more than two dozen courses, including one in diplomatic history, two in constitutional history, two in military history, and seven period courses from colonial America to the present. Some of the more specialized courses in US history are single-semester courses on the economic history of the United States, women in American history, social history of American medicine, history of American urban life, and history of American rural life. Other topical courses cover *The Old South*, *History of African-Americans*, and *Social and Cultural History of the United States Since 1865*.

European history is well represented by three general courses, plus one course on Russia, one on Germany, two on France, and three on England. The Far East is represented by two general courses, and single courses on modern Japan and modern China. Other areas of the world are treated through three courses on Latin America, one on Mexico and Central America, one course on the Middle East, and one on Africa. Three courses deal with the teaching of history and social studies in the public schools.

Evidence of newer trends in teaching history is slight, limited to such courses as *Women in American History*, *Introduction to Oral History*, and *Living History*. The general orientation of the department appears to be toward traditional history of the United States and Europe in the past two or three centuries, with a sampling of the history of the rest of the world.

Fayetteville State University

General education requirement

The general education requirement at Fayetteville State University, called the University College Core Curriculum, consists of at least 45 credit hours. (Depending on profile examination scores and program requirements, some students may have to complete more than 45 hours.) Under Freshman Seminar/University Studies, all first-time freshmen are required to take the Freshman Seminar I and II, “a year-long, interdisciplinary introduction to the university experience.” Also required (except for transfer students entering with 30 or more credits) is University Studies, in which students “are introduced to FSU history, policies, procedures, resources, and support services.”

The more academic portion of the general education requirement consists of Critical Thinking (3 credits), English (6 credits), Speech (3 credits), Physical Education/Health Education (2 credits), Mathematics (6 credits), Natural Sciences (8 credits), History/Social Sciences (3 credits), Humanities/Fine Arts (3 credits), and University College restricted electives (9 credits). The 45 credit hours of the general education requirement comprise approximately 37% of the total 120-122 credit hours needed for graduation. Students are expected to complete the general education requirement by the end of their sophomore year.

Required under Critical Thinking is a single course of the same name, PHIL 110. This philosophy course is described as “[a]n introduction to the basic elements of argumentation, focusing on the analysis, evaluation, and development of claims and arguments in the sciences, the humanities, the social sciences, the applied sciences, and everyday life experiences.”

The six credits required under English consist of ENGL 110 and ENGL 120, *English Composition I & II*. The three credits of Speech are satisfied by *Introduction to Speech*.

The Physical Education/Health Education requirement may be fulfilled by taking a single course, HEED 112, *Health and Wellness*, or by participating in two physical activities (such as swimming, dance, jogging, soccer, etc.) from a list of more than a dozen.

Under Mathematics, students must take MATH 123, *College Algebra* (or a high level course) and one course from the following list: *Introduction to College Algebra*, *College Trigonometry*, *Algebra and Trigonometry*, *Applied Calculus*, *Calculus w/Analytic Geometry I*, and *Discrete Mathematics I*. The choice of a course may be determined by a student choice of major. By selecting the first course on the list, MATH 121, *Introduction to College Algebra*, students may oddly fulfill the remaining math requirement by taking a lower level course than the one required of all students. Customarily, the general requirement for all students is the lowest level course in a given area, to prepare them for elective courses at a higher level.

The Natural Sciences requirement is eight credits, essentially two laboratory courses. With their selection of a major in some cases helping to direct them, students must choose from among 16 courses in astronomy, biology, chemistry, physics, and zoology. Half the courses are described

as “General,” rather than “College,” suggesting that students have the option of satisfying the natural sciences requirement with relatively easy courses intended for the non-science major.

General Physics I, for example, is described as “An introductory study of the phenomena and concepts of classical physics, emphasizing mechanics, wave motion, etc.,” with a prerequisite of MATH 124, *College Trigonometry*. *College Physics I*, on the other hand, is described as “A calculus-based introductory study of Newtonian mechanics, wave motion, etc.,” with a prerequisite of MATH 142, *Calculus with Analytic Geometry I* and a corequisite of MATH 241, *Calculus with Analytic Geometry II*. Similarly, *General Biology I*, described as “An introductory study of concepts relating to the origin of organisms: cell history, reproduction, structure and function, etc.,” with no prerequisite, appears tailored to the non-science major.

By way of contrast, *Principles of Biology*, “A study of the major principles relating to the nature of organisms, with emphasis on molecular, cellular, organismic, developmental, and evolutionary concepts, etc.,” with a prerequisite of a “Minimum score of 25 on the natural science profile examination” and a prerequisite or corequisite of MATH 123, *College Algebra*, seems to confirm a two-tiered system of options within the requirements for the Natural Sciences.

The requirement under the History/Social Sciences is fulfilled by a single course (three credits) chosen from a list of 18 named courses in anthropology, economics, geography, history, political science, psychology, and sociology, as well as courses in criminal justice and human services. Under the Humanities/Fine Arts requirement, students have to take a single course from a list of 15 named courses in art, world literature, African-American literature, humanities, music appreciation, African-American music, and African-American philosophy. Additional Humanities/Fine Arts choices include introductory courses in art history, literature, philosophy, logic, and theater.

The three-credit requirement under History/Social Sciences and Humanities/Fine Arts is conditioned by the statement that “[t]he actual number of courses will vary from three to nine credits depending upon major degree program.” Similar language appears under the University College Restricted Electives, except that the number there “will vary from zero to nine credits depending upon degree program.” These three areas work together to reinforce each other, but students are not therefore assured of a strong background in either History/Social Sciences or Humanities/Fine Arts. University College Restricted Electives do include foreign languages, but do not require them; students are free to choose other electives “from either the History/Social Sciences and Humanities/Fine Arts courses listed above.”

The general education requirement seems to lack intellectual rigor. The English requirement, for example, consists solely of composition courses expected of most freshmen whether or not a core curriculum exists. Neither the Mathematics requirement nor the Natural Sciences requirement appears demanding.

The Humanities/Fine Arts requirement does include the possibility of studying various literatures, for those so inclined, but students may simply avoid literature entirely by taking their single course in art or music. The History/Social Sciences selection includes courses on

American history, political science, and the principles of American government, but none is required, so students may graduate without any knowledge of American history or the nation's founding principles.

The most praiseworthy element in the general education requirement is PHIL 110, *Critical Thinking*, which provides a common background for all freshmen.

Requirements for selected majors

English

The Bachelor of Arts in English Language and Literature requires 48 credits in major courses, six credits in foreign languages, 18 credits in a minor, and six credits in free electives.

If the student has already taken foreign language courses in partial fulfillment of University College Core Curriculum requirements, the six credit hours of the foreign language requirement may be used for free electives. Similarly, if, under Major Courses, the student has taken *African-American Literature I*, *African-American Literature II*, and/or *Introduction to Literature* in partial fulfillment of University College Core Curriculum requirements, an additional three to nine credit hours may be used for free electives.

Forty-two credit hours of the major are devoted to named courses, and six credit hours are allowed for electives within the department. The 14 required courses—almost half of the 32 courses above the freshman level offered by the department—are the following: *African-American Literature I*, *African-American Literature II*, *Advanced Grammar*, *Introduction to Literature*, *English Literature I*, *English Literature II*, *American Literature I*, *American Literature II*, *Advanced Composition*, *Junior Seminar*, *Shakespeare*, *The Eighteenth Century*, *The American Novel*, and *Senior Seminar*. The department requires “[a] grade of C or better in all major English courses,” and all students must “complete a comprehensive examination in the senior year.”

The strength of the requirements for the major lies in providing students with a solid common background in African-American Literature, American literature, English literature, and Shakespeare. Advanced grammar and advanced composition give needed improvement to skills in areas too often not pursued beyond the freshman level.

The prescribing of so many courses within the major oddly leaves students with little personal discretion in course selection at the time in their undergraduate careers when they are maturing intellectually and probably ought to be accorded greater independence in choosing courses. (Conversely, the University's curriculum is comparatively weak just where strength would be appropriate—during the first two years and under the general education rubric.)

Introduction to Literature, although required of students majoring in English, is described as “[a]vailable as a humanities option to students not majoring in English.” If the course is suitable for English majors as well, the natural time for them to take it would be sophomore year (implied

by the number 240) at the latest, but there is no such stipulation in the catalogue; apparently they could take the course during junior or even senior year.

History

The Bachelor of Arts in History requires 120 credit hours, with the 75 credit hours beyond the University College Core Curriculum being devoted to Program Requirements associated with the major. Similar to the English major, the history major is largely prescribed. In contrast to the English major, it expands requirements of the University College Core Curriculum, in this case raising the humanities and/or fine arts course requirement from three to six credit hours. Program Requirements consist of 39 credits in major courses, 12 credits in social science requirements, 18 credits in a minor, and six credits in free electives.

If, under Major Courses, the student has taken *World History to 1600*, *World History from 1600*, *African-American History*, *The United States to 1865*, or *The United States since 1865*, in partial fulfillment of University College Core Curriculum requirements, an additional three to fifteen credit hours may be used for free electives.

Twenty-four credit hours of the major are devoted to named courses, nine credit hours are allowed for electives within the department, and six credit hours are to be selected from six courses on geographies other than the U.S. and Europe. Of the 39 courses offered by the department, the following eight are required by name: *World History to 1600*, *World History since 1600*, *African-American History*, *The United States to 1865*, *The United States since 1865*, *Modern European History (1648-1848)*, *Modern European History (1848 to Present)*, and *Senior Seminar: Selected Topics*. The department requires “a C grade or higher in history courses, and must have an overall grade point average of 2.0 or higher to graduate.” No mention is made of a comprehensive examination in the major.

Besides the courses on United States history already noted, the department offers *The Era of Civil War and Reconstruction*, *American Social History*, *North Carolina History*, and *History of the South*. Other American history courses include *The Rise of Modern America, 1914 to the Present*, *Ethnic Minorities in American Urban History*, *American Diplomatic History*, *American Military Experience*, *Survey of American Urban History*, and *Problems in American History*.

Africa is studied in *An Introduction to Africa* and *Africa South of the Sahara*, while single courses are devoted to other regions of the world, including *History of Modern East Asia*, *History of Latin America*, *North Africa and the Middle East*, and *History of Mexico*.

Courses on Europe include *Medieval Europe*, *The Renaissance and the Reformation, 1300-1648*, *Twentieth Century Europe*, and *Problems in European History*. Separate countries are studied in *History of England*, *History of Modern Germany*, and *The French Revolution and Napoleon*. A single course, *Ancient History*, covers “the ancient Near Eastern, Greek, and Roman civilizations, through the fall of the Roman Empire,” while Russia is covered by two courses, *Russia to 1917* and *History of the Soviet Union*.

Topical courses include single courses on *Oral History*, *History of Women in the Western World*, and *Colonialism and Neo-Colonialism*.

The department's strength is in American history, where a third of its courses lie. The history of Europe receives a secondary emphasis, but with coverage stressing the modern era, and little is devoted to England and France before their revolutions, or Germany prior to the 19th century. Asia receives sparse treatment, and Canada and India are not covered at all.

For the number of courses it offers, the department seems overly weighted in American history. The broad sweep of Western civilization stretching from ancient Greece and Rome through the Age of Enlightenment is unevenly represented, particularly in its earlier years. In many other areas as well, the modern period seems unduly emphasized while earlier periods are slighted or ignored. For example, Asia is studied only from the mid-nineteenth century onward, *American Diplomatic History* emphasizes "U.S. foreign relations in the twentieth century," and *History of Latin America* deals with "contemporary Latin American nations." North Africa and the Middle East—in part a "study of Islamic civilization and culture"—looks at "the time period from the seventeenth century to the present day," failing to cover the birth of Islam in the seventh century, and the next millennium of Islam as well.

North Carolina Central University

General education requirement

The general education requirement at North Carolina Central University is called Critical Foundations in Arts and Sciences (CFAS). Billed as “the core curriculum for the twenty-first century,” the program aims at preparing students to be leaders “in a world of conflict, cultural diversity, information technology and interdisciplinary awareness.” CFAS is composed of five academic components: Communication Skills, Mathematics and Science, Cultural Foundations, Arts and Humanities, and Personal and Social Development.

Four themes characterize the program: writing, critical thinking, global focus, and integrative learning. In addition, “service learning and cultural exposure” are considered “integral parts of the CFAS program,” with cultural exposure being achieved through students’ attendance at various forums and presentations.

There are, besides the five components and the four themes, four goals underlying North Carolina Central University’s CFAS program. The first goal is to “provide sufficient breadth of knowledge relating to the human experience to facilitate functioning effectively in this global information society.” While breadth of knowledge is mentioned, depth of knowledge is not. Neither does this goal include transmitting the heritage of Western civilization to students or exposing them to the wisdom of the ages. It attempts instead a modest goal, “to facilitate” functioning effectively in modern society. The second goal is merely to provide opportunities for students to develop success skills. The third goal, to provide “the basic knowledge and skills to acquire and process information using traditional and electronic media,” sounds something like learning how to use the library and the Internet. The fourth goal is to provide “specific cultural exposure” for students. By and large, the four goals seem vague and over-general—what knowledge (goal #1) would not in some way relate ‘to the human experience’? Also, the goals are largely process-oriented and lacking in substance.

Communication Skills unit requires that students complete ENG 1110 and ENG 1210, *English Composition I & II* (six credit hours), and *Elements of Speech Communication* (three credit hours), essentially a public speaking course. Students must also complete two semesters (six credit hours) of a foreign language. English and foreign languages requirements together total 15 credit hours, exactly satisfying the credit hours needed for the unit. In addition to these requirements, the description of Communication Skills says that students will develop “skills and competencies . . . in the use of information technology,” but does not suggest what courses students might take to acquire those skills and competencies, and no other courses are listed than the English courses already mentioned and foreign language courses (specifically in French, Spanish, German, and Japanese).

The Mathematics and Science unit consists of seven credit hours with two mandated courses: *Science Odyssey* (four credits) and *College Algebra Concepts: Modeling with Technology* (three credits). *Science Odyssey* is described as “An integration of basic elements of energy, atomic and molecular structure, data acquisition and interpretation, and life as self-structured matter.” The course claims to develop critical thinking and analytical skills, and its readings emphasize

“the connections between science, other disciplines, and society.” It does not appear to be, strictly speaking, a science course, but a generalist’s approach to scientific applications.

The Cultural Foundations unit consists of two three-credit courses: *Society and Human Behavior*, “the study of society and cultural organization with emphasis on diversity in human behavior,” and *World Societies*, “an interdisciplinary study of patterns in history since 1450 integrating the disciplines of political science, economics, anthropology, sociology, art and literature.” In the Arts and Humanities unit, consisting of HUM 2410 and HUM 2420, *Arts and Humanities I & II*, students “will demonstrate an understanding of the aesthetic, historical, cultural, and social foundations of literature, theatre, music, dance, visual arts, philosophy, and religion.”

The final unit, Personal and Social Development, consists of three courses: *Dimensions of Learning: College and Beyond* (3 credits), *Health* (2 credits), and *Fitness* (2 credits).

The fourteen courses required by the five components of Critical Foundations in Arts and Sciences are largely mandated. The only choice students have is in their selection of a foreign language from among the four foreign languages offered, so the CFAS program provides a common undergraduate experience of considerable breadth, if not depth. Students are expected to complete the CFAS requirements during their freshman and sophomore years.

Requirements for selected majors

English

The Bachelor of Arts in English offers a choice of several concentrations: Literature, Electronic Media, Journalism, Media Communication, and Secondary English Program. Students in all concentrations must earn a grade of C or better in six prerequisite courses before being eligible to enroll in any higher-level courses. The six courses include the three English courses required of all undergraduates under the CFAS (*English Composition I & II* and *Elements of Speech Communication*) plus ENG 1300, 1400, and 1500.

These latter three courses are *Introduction to World Literature I & II* and *Techniques in the Critical Reading of Literature*. The literature survey courses introduce “world literature from ancient times through the sixteenth century” in the first semester and “world literature from the seventeenth century to the present” in the second semester. The critical reading course focuses specifically on “critical thinking and on literary texts, especially poetry.” The three-course combination seems to require a good background of literary and critical experience in preparation for more advanced courses.

Besides the courses already mentioned, the Literature concentration requires a three-semester survey of English literature (*Survey of English Literature I, II, & III*). In addition, fourteen upper-level courses are required, ten of them by name. Among the named courses required, the following are numbered at the junior (3000) level: *Advanced English Grammar*, *Advanced Composition*, *Applied Literary Criticism*, *Survey of American Literature I & II*, *Junior-Senior Seminar*, and *African American Literature I & II*. Senior-level courses include *The History of the English Language* and *Shakespeare*, the latter “A study of selected comedies, histories, and

tragedies.” One of the electives requires a choice between *The Nineteenth-Century Novel* and *The Twentieth-Century Novel*, another elective the choice between *English Drama* and *Contemporary British and American Drama*. Two final electives are to be chosen from a list of eight courses: *Women’s Literature*, *Contemporary Literature*, *Creative Writing* (either prose or poetry, but not both), *Modern African Literature*, *Twentieth-Century British Literature*, a second course in the novel, and a second course in drama.

The Literature concentration is the specialization most closely comparable to an English major at other institutions. The other concentrations are distinguished by their own sets of required courses. For example, the concentrations in Electronic Media, Journalism, and Mass Communication require Mass Communication Courses. These courses form the equivalent of a sub-department within the English department, and are even given a different code—ENGM rather than ENG. The Secondary Education major requires the bulk of its courses be taken in the School of Education.

The English department offers 41 courses. For the Literature concentration, 16 of the courses are required by name, and another four electives are required, so that students will graduate having taken approximately half the courses in the department. Other courses in the department include *Introduction to the Humanities I & II*, *Religion and Literature*, and introductory courses to such subjects as technical writing, linguistics, and public speaking. In addition, there are honors seminars for freshmen and sophomores. Upperclassmen may take ENG 4105, *Advanced Professional and Technical Writing* and ENG 4900, *Integrating Reading and Writing*, involving the study of “major problems in the reading/writing process: testing, diagnosing, and improving reading/writing skills.”

The Mass Communications part of the English department offers 22 courses covering such topics as the history of mass media, film production, writing for media outlets (newspapers, magazines, radio, television, video), investigative reporting, public relations, and mass communication theory and research.

The English major is unusual in its requirement of advanced composition and grammar and Shakespeare for all concentrations, Applied Literary Criticism for all but Secondary Education, and History of the English Language for Literature and Secondary Education. Overall, the major is largely prescribed, and has the strength of ensuring that all students read broadly in literature. However, given the few electives permitted, the course selection shows weakness in its over-emphasis on survey courses, leaving students unable to pursue much in-depth study of literature.

History

The Bachelor of Arts in History requires students to take 14 courses in the major, five of them designated by name: *World Societies to 1650*, *Historical Writing and Literature* (which must be taken in the sophomore year), *United States History to 1865*, *United States History since 1865*, and *Methods and Applications in History*. According to a recommended four-year plan for students majoring in history, all of these courses would be completed by the end of sophomore year.

Also required are two courses from two different areas among the following three: *African History*, *European History*, and *Latin American History*, and at least 18 credit hours “from any other 2000 level undergraduate history courses.” [Note: It may be that “2000 or 3000” level is intended, as there are only seven non-required 2000-level courses and 22 courses at the 3000 level.] Finally, during their senior year, students must take a senior seminar from one of the following courses: *European History*, *American History*, *African History*, *African American History*, *Latin American History*, and *African Diaspora*.

In addition to taking courses in their field, students majoring in history are required to fulfill either a minor concentration or a double major. Concentrations range from anthropology, Francophone studies, and information management to media communication, psychohistory, and education. Double majors include criminal justice, various concentrations within English, geography, health education, French, Spanish, political science, psychology, and sociology. A dozen choices are available in each category. The concentration or double major must consist of at least 24 credit hours.

The department offers 38 courses for undergraduates and 27 courses designated “for advanced undergraduates and graduates.” Courses at the 1000 level deal with world societies and the black experience in the Americas.

At the 2000 level, courses (besides the required courses already mentioned) deal with the history of women, ancient and medieval history, African history, and Latin American history.

Courses at the 3000 level offer special topics in European, American, and African history; and courses on the history of Europe (2), Russia (1), England (2), and France (2). At this level there are also courses on American military, urban, and economic history and on African history, African economic history, and African American history.

At the 4000 level, in addition to the seminars already mentioned, the department offers courses on European history (*Renaissance and Reformation*, *The French Revolution and Napoleon*, *European Intellectual History*), American history (*Foreign Relations of the United States*, *Constitutional History of the United States*, *History of North Carolina*), African history (courses on pan-Africanism, diplomatic history, modern Africa), history of the Caribbean, Latin American history (courses on revolution, the African presence, and history through literature and film), three courses dealing with oral history, and one course studying Asian history: *Asian Societies and Cultures*.

The department has obvious strengths in African history, American history, and African American history. It covers European history adequately, offers a few courses in Latin American history (though no course in Mexican history), and is weakest in Asian history. Courses tend to cover traditional broad topics and time periods. There are few in-depth courses focusing on a major time period (e.g. the American Founding, the Great Depression), but at the same time courses with special subjects such as women’s history and history through literature and film are few.

North Carolina State University-Raleigh

General education requirement

The general education requirement at North Carolina State University-Raleigh consists of 45 credit hours divided among seven areas of study.

The Mathematical and Natural Science area requires 20 hours, including two courses (6 credit hours) from mathematics, statistics, and logic. Of these, one course must be in mathematics. Three courses must be from the natural sciences, and two must be laboratory courses, for a total of 11 credit hours. Two different basic sciences must be chosen from among “biology, chemistry, earth sciences and physics.” However, all these disciplines have special courses for non-science majors. The final course in the Mathematical and Natural Science area may be selected from any course in “mathematical science; natural science; or science, technology and society.”

In Writing and Speaking, the minimum requirement is two courses (7 credit hours), including, during freshman year, one course in rhetoric and composition meeting four times a week. The remaining course in this area is to be chosen from advanced writing or speaking or foreign language, to be taken during the junior or senior year. The restriction on the foreign language course is that it be a third semester in the student’s first foreign language (adding to the two high school years of a foreign language—two semesters’ equivalent—required for admission) or any course in a second foreign language.

The Foreign Language area—separate from Writing and Speaking—gives an extended rationale for foreign language acquisition, part of which reads: “In a sense, languages are keys to the world. The continuous expansion of international relations makes the knowledge of foreign languages increasingly significant.” Yet the minimum requirements in this area are listed as zero. Although foreign language proficiency at the university is technically required, students may well be able to satisfy the foreign language requirement fully based on their high school preparation. The administration explains that “[f]oreign language proficiency is really an admissions requirement and not a graduation requirement in the true sense.”

Minimum requirements in Humanities and Social Sciences are seven courses (21 credit hours). One course is required in literature, one course in “history, philosophy, or religion,” and one course in “history or the visual and performing arts.” Two courses are required from the social sciences, which here include anthropology, cultural geography, psychology, sociology, economics, and politics and government. The two remaining required courses may be selected from anywhere within the Humanities and Social Sciences sphere. The only restriction regarding the seven courses required under Humanities and Social Sciences is that “at least one must focus on a non-English speaking culture.”

Physical Education requires two one-credit courses, one of which must be a “Fitness and Wellness course.”

A single course (3 credit hours) is required in the area of Science, Technology and Society. The course may be oriented toward science and technology or toward the humanities and social sciences, and students are advised to choose the orientation differing from their major field, that is, students in science and technology should study the topic from a humanities and social sciences perspective, and vice versa.

Another area deemed important is Communication and Information Technology, which includes the fields of Computer Literacy and Library/Information Literacy. In reference to the first field, “Today’s graduate must have a knowledge of information technology and computer applications.” In reference to the second field, “The demands of an increasingly technological and information-dependent society require that students have a basic understanding of how information is identified and defined by experts, structure, physically organized, and accessed.”

However, the minimum requirement for both fields is zero hours. By way of explanation, the administration states that “each of the curricula at the University specifies a course that fulfills this requirement,” and adds that “such topics as the advanced writing requirements and computer literacy are best addressed in the disciplines.” Still, it seems a curious practice to include certain fields under General Education Distribution Requirements and assign them zero hours, rather than the minimum number of hours actually required by the various curricula.

Overall, the General Education requirements appear strongest in the Mathematical and Natural Science area where basic competency is required in two basic sciences from a relatively restrained list: biology, chemistry, earth sciences, and physics. Although, as mentioned earlier, special courses exist, qualified by such statements as “For non-science students” (Biology) or “For humanities and social science students only” (Physics).

The Writing and Speaking area is also well prescribed, with two of the three courses designated as to subject matter (composition and rhetoric) and time frame (freshman year).

On the other hand, requirements in the Humanities and Social Sciences are relatively loose. Although a course in literature is required, the options allow students to select two courses in history and avoid exposure to philosophy, religion, and visual and performing arts; or to elect a course in philosophy or religion on the one hand and visual and performing arts on the other, and thus avoid exposure to any kind of history. Equally diffuse, if not more so, is the social science requirement of two courses from among a half dozen disciplines collectively offering dozens of courses.

In no case are introductory courses required, so that students are free to choose upper level courses, an option that may encourage them to stick with already familiar disciplines rather than venture into a new field. The requirement of two additional courses to be taken anywhere within Humanities and Social Sciences ensures no broadening of background, but allows students to select freely from among hundreds of courses, and encourages students to continue with familiar subjects rather than expand their perspective.

The administration observes that “many of the nine undergraduate colleges require additional courses which do not appear in the GER list.” For example, the College of Humanities and

Social Sciences requires its students to complete “two courses in history (one in a culture similar to our own and one different from our own)” and “two courses in literature (one in American literature and one outside the United States),” among other courses.

Apart from the additional courses that may or may not be required by a given college, the effect of the general education requirement is to encourage students to pursue a broad educational background, but hardly to require it, given the smorgasbord of courses from which they have to choose in fulfilling their obligations.

Requirements for selected majors

English

The department has recently changed its curriculum, and as of Fall 2003 offers six degree programs: LAN (English and American Literature), LIT (World Literature), LCW (Creative Writing), LTN (Teacher Education), LWR (Writing and Rhetoric), and LSN (Bachelor of Science in English).

The English major requires 36 credit hours in English for the major beyond the six hours of freshman composition. For the English and American Literature option, which is closest to a traditional English major, students must take 12 courses: two courses from Linguistics, Rhetoric, and Writing Practice (two different areas required), one course in Medieval British literature, one course in Renaissance British literature, one course in Eighteenth/Nineteenth Century British literature, one course in Pre-Twentieth Century American literature, one course in Twentieth/Twenty-First Century British or American literature, one course in a genre or an author, one course in World Literature, and three elective courses, at least two of which must be at the 300 level or above.

The department offers 105 courses above the freshman level. At the 200 level, it offers courses on genre studies, an introduction to Shakespeare, editing and article writing, and literary masterpieces from both non-Western and Western literature. *Literature of the Western World I & II* and *Contemporary World Literature I & II* are available. Special topics include *Literature and Medicine*, *Literature of the Holocaust*, and *Introduction to Film*. Several courses are offered in creative writing. There are survey courses in *African American Literature*, *Major British Writers*, *Major American Writers*, *English Literature I & II*, and *American Literature I & II*.

Upper level offerings continue these several directions with more specialized courses. Courses offered at the 300 level include *The British Novel of the 18th Century*, *American Poetry to 1900*, *African Literature in English*, *Late Twentieth-Century Fiction*, and *Classical Backgrounds of English Literature*. At the 400 level, traditional literature courses include *Medieval British Literature*, *16th-Century English Literature*, *Chaucer*, *Shakespeare* (both *The Earlier Plays* and *The Later Plays*), *The Romantic Period*, and *The Victorian Period*.

A number of courses teach writing, such *Advanced News and Article Writing*, *Advanced Composition and Rhetoric*, *Writing in the Rhetorical Tradition*, and *Communication for Engineering and Technology* (and other similar courses for business and management, science

and research) at the 300 level. Offerings at the 400 level include *Computer Documentation Design, Analysis of Scientific and Technical Writing, Amazing Style, and Screenwriting*. Special topics include *Women and Literature, Language and Gender, History of Film to 1940, Film and Literature, Film Theory, and Special Topics in Film Styles and Genres*. There are topical literature courses such subjects *Science Fiction, Fantasy, and Literature for Adolescents*.

The department has a solid base of survey courses at the lower level, but at the upper level traditional literature study seems somewhat crowded out by the many courses in writing (both technical and creative), topical subjects, and film.

History

The History major requires 30 credit hours beyond the general education courses required of all students. The 30 hours must include HI 300, *Sophomore Seminar in History* and HI 491, *Seminar in History* (requiring junior standing). At least 24 credit hours must be at the 400 level, and nine of those 24 hours must be in three areas—effectively one course in each of the following areas: U.S. History, European History, and pre-modern or non-Western history.

The requirement of having 8 out of 10 courses at the 400 level or above assures that most study for the major is at a high level. The area distribution requirement ensures a balanced historical background by being at least acquainted with Western, non-Western, and American history. The department offers 95 courses, 65 of which are at the 400 level, giving students more than an adequate choice in course selection.

At the lower (100-300) levels, the department offers courses in Western civilization, ancient history, and the history of Europe, Britain, Latin America, Asia, America, the Middle East, and Africa. It also offers courses on American military history, U.S. naval history, history of North Carolina, and two courses on African-American history.

At the 400 level, the department shows strength in early Western history with several courses on ancient Greece, Rome, and early Christianity, and even one on early Islam. European history seems evenly if sparsely covered from the Middle Ages through the end of the 18th century. Nineteenth-century European history is lightly represented (with the exception of Germany and Russia), but there are numerous offerings in the 20th century, treating Britain, France, Germany, Italy, and the Soviet Union.

The department's strongest suit is American history, with some twenty courses, including two on the Constitution, a two-semester survey on U.S. labor, a two-semester survey on American women, two courses on foreign relations, two on the South, and single courses such as *History of the Civil Rights Movement, Early American Thought, Modern American Historical Biography, and American Religion After Darwin*. The non-Western world is well represented with courses on Mexico, Latin America, China, Japan, India, South Africa, Africa, and *Women in the Middle East*, but these are largely focused on the 20th century. Finally, there is a surprising number of courses—half a dozen—on the history of science and technology, from *Scientific Revolution: 1300-1700* to *History of American Technology*.

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

General education requirement

The general education requirement at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill falls under two headings: Basic Skills and Perspectives.

To satisfy the Basic Skills component of the general education requirement, students must pass or exempt English 11 and English 12 (composition and rhetoric) and take a one-hour course called Oral Communication. They must also take three semesters of a foreign language or their equivalent, pass or exempt Mathematics 10 (algebra), and take one other mathematics course.

To satisfy the Perspectives component (roughly equivalent to the traditional core of general education), students must take 28 credit hours. Required are two courses under Aesthetic Perspective, one in literature and one in the fine arts; two courses under Natural Sciences Perspective, including one four-credit laboratory course in biochemistry, biology, chemistry, geology, or physics; and one course under Philosophical Perspective (investigating moral and ethical issues). In addition, students are required to take two courses under Social Sciences Perspective, choosing them from two different departments (but from among more than twenty departments).

Students must also take two courses from the Western Historical/Non-Western/Comparative Perspective component, including one course in a period of Western history before 1700. This last course is the most specific of the general education requirements.

Finally, students must satisfy a one-course cultural diversity requirement and a physical education requirement (including a swimming test and two courses), for a total of 5 credit hours.

Some of the laboratory courses under Natural Sciences Perspective carry a qualifier, “GC [General College] and A&S [Arts & Sciences] perspective” (e.g., Biology 41, 43, and 45). Students electing to take a non-laboratory course under Natural Sciences Perspective may choose from among such courses as *Human Evolution and Adaptation*, *Human Origins*, *Introduction to Environmental Sciences*, *The Marine Environment*, *The Dynamic Earth*, and *Earth Through Time*. The non-laboratory requirement may even be satisfied with PSYC 10, *General Psychology*, or with PHYS 16, a course called *How Things Work* (“Demystifying the working of objects such as CD players, microwave ovens, lasers, computers, roller coasters, rockets, light bulbs, automobiles, clocks, etc.”).

A special feature of the general education requirement is its continuance during the junior and senior years, when students must complete upper-level coursework in four of the five perspective areas (12 credit hours total). Significantly, “students are encouraged to pursue courses in sequence as they fulfill their requirements,” and the catalog provides examples of courses taken in sequence. The total requirements for a bachelor’s degree are 120 credit hours, so that the general education requirement—a minimum of 44 credit hours—comprises close to 40% of a student’s course work.

In 2003, the Faculty Council of the University approved a new general education curriculum, called “Making Connections.” Part of the change, expected to take effect for freshmen entering in the fall semester of 2006, involves changing naming conventions: the Perspectives section will be renamed Approaches. Under Approaches, subsection names will change as well—from “natural sciences” to “physical and life sciences,” from “philosophical” to “philosophical and moral reasoning,” and from “aesthetic” to “visual, performing, and literary arts”—while the requirements will remain essentially unchanged. One positive substantive change is the refinement of the current broad philosophy requirement to one addressing “questions of morality and values” in “a significant portion (at least one-fifth)” of the single course required.

A more significant change involves transforming the Western historical/non-Western/Comparative component, a reduction of two courses (or six credits). Compensating in part will be the addition, under the social and behavioral sciences (formerly “social sciences”), of a three-credit course engaging in “historical analysis,” and, under “Connections Courses,” of one course each on The North Atlantic World and The World Before 1750.

The important difference in the new curriculum, however, involves the elimination of the requirement to take a course covering a period of Western history prior to 1700. Under The North Atlantic World, history is not required, and students may choose a course that addresses the “culture or society of the region.” Whereas history *is* required under The World Before 1750, it need not be *Western* history. The result is that students will learn about the Western world in the first instance, and about history in the second, but they will no longer be required to study any segment of Western history. At a time when undergraduate weakness in historical knowledge is being widely recognized and decried, it seems especially unfortunate to remove the core’s most specific requirement, one that ensured undergraduates a common familiarity with the period and place most linked to our country’s settling and founding.

A laudable aspect of the new curriculum is the requirement, under “Foundations Across the Curriculum,” that students take an additional course later in their undergraduate career in each of three foundational areas: foreign language, written and oral communication, and quantitative reasoning or math.

Requirements for selected majors

English

The English major requires 30 credit hours (ten courses), including three named courses: *British Literature, Chaucer to Pope, British Literature, Wordsworth to Eliot*, and *Shakespeare*, covering “twelve to fifteen representative comedies, histories, and tragedies.” An additional four courses are to be chosen from among designated small groups of courses: a pre-1660 British Literature course (one course out of seven), a 1660-1900 British Literature course (one of seven), an American Literature course (one of four), and a post-1900 British and/or American Literature course (one of seven). The three remaining courses must be “chosen from any course numbered 30 or above.”

The English department offers 89 undergraduate courses, 18 of them at the freshman and sophomore levels, including Basic Writing (“Required of all incoming students with Verbal SAT scores of 470 or lower”), and the two semesters of *English Composition and Rhetoric* required for general education. The department lists half a dozen upper-level courses as “offered infrequently.”

At the freshman and sophomore levels, the English department offers surveys of British and American literature, introductions to poetry, drama, and fiction, and courses in creative writing, women’s lives, and literature and cultural diversity. At the junior and senior levels, the department offers 10 courses in writing (business, scientific, and creative), single courses in English literature of the Middle Ages, 16th century, and 17th century, and single courses in Chaucer, Shakespeare, and Milton.

A course called *Special Topics in Shakespeare* is listed as “Offered infrequently.” Other courses so designated are *Interpretation of Poetry*, *Principles of Literary Art*, *Studies in Fiction*, *Studies in Poetry*, and *The Literary Aspects of the Bible*.

Two courses are offered in (chiefly) 18th century English literature, one on Romantic writers, two on the Victorian period, and one on the British novel from 1870 to World War II. American literature is represented by three survey courses, a course on the novel, a course on women authors, and two courses on Afro-American literature. In covering the 20th century, the department combines British and American literature in courses on poetry, drama, and fiction.

Regional literature is represented by single courses in *Southern Women Writers*, *Southern American Literature*, and *Contemporary North Carolina Literature*. Newer offerings include single courses in *Movie Criticism*, *Canadian Literature*, *Postcolonial Literature*, *Feminist Theory and Literary Criticism*, and *Literature and Theories of Race and Ethnicity*. Nine capstone courses offer a wide range of subject matters, including courses such as *The Roots of Modernism*, *Blacks in the Literature of the Western World*, *Theology and Literature*, and *In the Eyes of Others: the South as Symbol of Self and Nation*.

Overall, the department’s offerings provide a representation of literature prior to 1800, a strong selection of courses in the 19th and 20th centuries, a fair number of newer courses, and diverse subject matter in its capstone courses.

History

The history major consists of ten history courses, or 30 credit hours. Students must concentrate in one of the following areas: American, Ancient/Medieval, Modern European, Third World/Non-Western, or Global. Each student must take a minimum of four courses in the chosen field of concentration, and a minimum of four courses outside the field of concentration. Two of the ten courses can be history courses used to fulfill the historical perspective for the general education requirement. At least six of the required courses must be “numbered 50 or above,” meaning at the upper (junior-senior) level. All students must take “at least one history department course in Third World/Non-Western history” and an Undergraduate Seminar in

History, whose subject matter “will vary with the instructor and topic.” No single course of pre-determined subject matter is required of all students.

The History department lists 89 courses at the undergraduate level, including *History of Western Civilization to 1650*, *History of Western Civilization since 1650*, *Topics in Comparative History*, *Historical Problems*, and two sections of honors.

Lower level offerings include courses in *Ancient History*, *Medieval History*, and the history of various countries and regions: Europe (early modern and 20th century), Africa (East and West), the United States (to and since 1865), Latin America (pre- and post-colonial), England (to and since 1688), Russia (to and since 1861), Southeast Asia, East Asia (traditional and modern), and Islamic Civilization (traditional and modern). Upper level offerings are more specific and topical, including courses like *Cathedral and Castle in Medieval England*, *Manor to Machine: The Economic Shaping of Europe*, *Air Power and Modern Warfare*, *The Worker and American Life*, *North Carolina History* (two semesters), and *The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade*.

A considerable number of courses focus on women and women’s issues: *Women and Marriage in Medieval and Renaissance Europe*, *Women in Europe before 1750*, *Women in Europe since 1750*, *Women in Russian and Soviet History*, *Women in American History*, *Women in the Age of Victoria*, *Women and Gender in Latin American History*, and *History of Gender in America*. However, seven of these eight courses are Women’s Studies courses cross-listed with the History department.

Overall, the department offers a balanced selection of survey courses on American, European, and global history.

University of North Carolina at Charlotte

General education requirement

The general education requirement at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte is defined by six goals: Communication; Problem Solving; Understanding Values; Understanding Science and Technology; Understanding the Arts, Literature, and Ideas; and Understanding the Individual, Society, and Culture. Each of the goals is further defined with more specific indicators. For example, under Communication is stated, “Effectively send and receive in English written and oral message in different situations for a variety of audiences, purposes and subjects,” and the first point under Problem Solving the catalog reads, “Sense, discover, and define problems.”

Goal I—Communication—is comprised of English composition, speech, Writing Intensive courses, and foreign language proficiency. Students are required to take two courses: *English Composition* and *Writing in the Academic Community*. An exception allows entering freshmen “selected by the Rhetoric and Writing Committee to ... satisfy this requirement with credit for ENGL 1103,” *Accelerated College Writing and Rhetoric*, thus fulfilling the two-semester requirement in one semester.

For the Oral Communication component of Communication, students must take one course from a list of approved courses, designated O, from the Schedule of Classes. The catalog also provides a list of approved courses, advising that approved courses are “not limited to” the list provided, which contains 71 courses representing 38 departments. Two Writing Intensive courses, designated W, are required (six semester hours). Similarly, courses are noted in the Schedule of Classes, and a list is provided in the catalog, in this case containing 146 courses in 55 departments.

Foreign language proficiency may be demonstrated in one of several ways. Students may take two or three semesters, depending on the language: two four-credit courses for Chinese, Greek, Hebrew, Italian, Japanese, Latin, Portuguese, or Russian; or three three-credit courses for French, German, or Spanish. Alternatively, students may transfer credits from another institution, present an acceptable score on an approved foreign language test, or perform satisfactorily on the University’s own foreign language placement exam.

According to the requirements of Goal II (Problem Solving), “Problem solving is a goal of all courses taught in the University, and it is integrated into all the other Goals of UNC Charlotte Education.” That said, there are additional requirements: six semester hours of mathematics, or three semester hours of mathematics and three of logic. Both options require that one of the two courses be in statistics or operations research.

Understanding Values—Goal III—requires three semester hours, and lists more than 50 courses in more than a dozen departments that will satisfy the requirement.

Under Goal IV (Understanding Science and Technology), students are offered two options. Option A requires taking three science courses, including at least one from the Life Sciences and one from the Physical Sciences. One course must include a laboratory and be from outside the

student's major. Life Sciences include biology, physical anthropology, and psychology; Physical Sciences include chemistry, engineering technology, geology, physical geography, and physics/astronomy. Option B requires taking one of eight approved two-semester sequences, all of which include a laboratory. Two of the sequences are in biology, three in chemistry, one in geology, and two in physics.

Understanding the Arts, Literature, and Ideas—Goal V—intends that University graduates be “conversant with, and have had experience in, the aims and methods of the great intellectual, spiritual, literary, and artistic expressions that have shaped the development of the human imagination.” Accordingly, students are required to take one course (three semester hours) in Literature or Ideas and one course (three semester hours) in Arts and Ideas. Students choose the course in Literature or Ideas from among at least 42 courses, and the course in Arts and Ideas from among at least 36 courses.

The final goal—Understanding the Individual, Society, and Culture—requires students to complete two courses (six semester hours), one of which must have “a cross-cultural and/or international emphasis.” For the single course in the general category of Individual, Society, and Culture, students are offered a choice of no less than 41 courses in 16 departments. For the course in the Cross-Cultural and/or International Emphasis category, students choose from among a minimum of 45 courses in 16 departments.

The wide choice in courses available to students tends to dilute the focus of any the six goals, and even more the professed purpose of general education, which is to give students broad exposure across the curriculum. A multiplicity of choices is more of an issue in Understanding Values, and other subject matter areas, where the focus is on substance, than in areas such as oral communication and writing, where the focus is on process.

Students may easily avoid exposure to general education by choosing several courses from the same department. Consider, for example, a student wishing to concentrate as much as possible on Religious Studies. To satisfy Goal III, Understanding Values, the student could choose *An Introduction to Religious Studies* (RELS 1101). For Goal V, Understanding the Arts, Literature, and Ideas, the student could choose *The Bible and its Interpreters* (RELS 1120) under Literature or Ideas; and under Arts and Ideas, *The Religious Art and Architecture of India* (RELS 3163). The student could satisfy Goal VI, Understanding the Individual, Society, and Culture, with *Religion Without Patriarchy: An Introduction* (RELS 1201) under Individual, Society, and Culture; and under Cross-Cultural and/or International Emphasis, with *The Long Search* (RELS 1110), “A survey of the major religions of the world based on the film series *The Long Search*.” It would be possible to satisfy Goal I, Communication, with *Introduction to Western Religious Thoughts* (RELS 2101) under Writing Intensive; and with a *Senior Seminar* (RELS 4600) in Religious Studies under Oral Communication.

Such a student, while staying within rather narrow limits, would have satisfied several requirements meant to teach breadth of knowledge. With the many courses available and the number of departments represented under each requirement, other similar groupings could easily be constructed.

Only the areas of mathematics (Goal II, Problem Solving goal) and science (Goal IV, Understanding Science and Technology) have course selections sufficiently limited to ensure accomplishing their goals. Given the human tendency to stick with the familiar when possible, especially when such a course is likely to maximize one's GPA, it seems likely that in practice the general education requirement falls short of its intended effect.

Requirements for selected majors

English

The English major requires 33 semester hours (eleven courses) beyond the composition courses that are part of the general education requirements, including two named courses: ENGL 2100, *Writing About Literature* and ENGL 3100, *Approaches to Literature*, the latter described in part as "Introductory study and application of major critical approaches to literature." These courses are prerequisites for any other courses at the 3000 or 4000 level. Students are required to take three survey courses, choosing one in British Literature, one in American literature, and one in either British or American literature at the 3000 level. They must also take one course in language/linguistics above the 2000 level, and five elective courses. Two of the elective courses may be at the 2000 level, and two must be at the 4000 level.

Students must complete an Introductory Speech course (one of the options satisfying the Oral Communication portion of general education requirements) and a minor. Students must also demonstrate foreign language competency through the intermediate level. Since they have already been required to show lower level competency in the foreign language portion of the general education requirements, this requirement effectively mandates two additional courses (six semester hours) in a foreign language.

The department offers 101 courses, 97 of which are at the 2000 level or above. The 19 courses at the 2000 level cover a wide range of literature and writing. The department offers survey courses on English, American, and African-American literature; introductions to poetry, drama, and film; readings in ancient and modern world literature (in English and in English translation); and introductions to creative writing, with specialized courses in poetry and fiction writing.

British literature is comprehensively covered at the 3000 level with eight courses from the medieval period to the 20th century. At the 4000 level, more specialized courses are offered, including one each in Milton and Chaucer, two on Shakespeare, and three in other British dramatists. The main currents of the British novel are covered in three courses, effectively courses on the genre in the 18th, 19th, and 20th centuries. American literature is similarly taught through four courses at the 3000 level from colonial times to the present, including *Native American Indian Literature*. There are 4000-level courses offered on the American novel in the 19th and 20th centuries, and *Literature of the American South*.

The department has uncommon offerings in children's literature, and is well represented in African-American literature and modern/contemporary literature. Three courses are offered at the 3000 level in literature for children and adolescents, and three more at the 4000 level: *Classics in British Children's Literature*, *Classics in American Children's Literature*, and

Multiculturalism and Children's Literature. The department offers courses from *Early Black American Literature* to *20th Century Black American Literature* to a course on *African-American Literary Theory and Criticism*. Modern and contemporary literature offerings, besides overlapping with African-American literature, include Jewish-American literature, contemporary poetry and fiction, modern drama, and modern European literature in translation.

The department's offerings are rounded out by several 4000-level courses in technical writing and creative writing, *History of the English Language*, and *Linguistics and Language Learning*. It is not surprising to see a course called *Modern Literary Criticism*, given the subject's popularity in English departments over the last decade or more, but it is unusual to see a course on the same subject in an earlier period as well: *Literary Criticism Through Arnold*.

The department has a generally traditional orientation, offering few courses showing the influence of postmodernism: rare examples are *Women and Literature* and *Gender and African-American Literature*. The department offers minors in African-American literature and Technical/Professional Writing. There is no honors program in English.

History

The history major consists of ten history courses, or 30 semester hours. Students are required to take five named courses, including *European History since 1660*, *Introduction to Historical Studies*, and three 4000-level colloquia: *Problems in American History*, *European History*, and *Non-Western History*. In addition, students must take at least two courses (six credit hours) in the following areas: Asian History, African History, Middle Eastern History, or Latin American History. (No more than two courses may be taken, from the half dozen available at the 1000 level, in fulfillment of the major.)

In related work, students must demonstrate foreign language competency by taking a 2000-level courses in a Latin-alphabet language or eight credit hours of a non-Latin-alphabet language (or, for non-native English speakers, a basic English course).

To qualify for honors in the Department of History, a student must complete HIST 3700, *Honors in History*, and "write an Honors thesis of *A* quality as judged by a committee of readers."

The department offers 90 courses, 82 of them at the 2000 level or above. At the 1000 level, the department offers traditional surveys in ancient history, European history, and American history, and courses on *Latin American Civilization* and *The World in the 20th Century*.

Among the 31 courses at the 2000 level, one is offered on *History of North Carolina, 1500 to the Present*, and a surprising three courses on U.S. military history (two of them on World War II). European history is well represented at this level, with two courses each on Britain, France, and Germany, and an unusual three courses on Russia. The rest of the world is evenly covered by two courses each on the history and civilization of Asia, Latin America, and Africa. Topical courses include two on U.S. women's history; one each on European women's history, disease and medicine in history, and American business history; and a two-semester sequence, *Technology and Science in Society I & II*.

At the 3000 level, separate courses on the history of Greece and Rome pursue the study of ancient history, and European history is treated in more detail through five courses covering the middle ages to the 20th century. Additional courses covering the 20th century include *World War I*, *The Third Reich*, and *The Holocaust*. Topical courses cover *History of Socialism and Communism*, *History of Sexuality*, and *European Intellectual History since 1789*.

Asia and Latin America, but not Africa, receive considerable attention at this level. Four courses are offered on China and Japan (including one on *Women and the Family in Modern East Asia*), and one on Vietnam. Five courses are offered on Latin America (including two on Colonial Spanish America), and one each on *History of Mexico*, *History of Brazil*, and *The Cuban Revolution*. Another course studies *The United States and Latin America*, examining “the complex relationship between the United States and Latin America in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.”

The department’s strong suit is in American history, with at least 15 courses at the 3000 level. The traditional sweep from colonial times to the present is covered in five courses. The South is more than adequately covered by a two-semester sequence on *History of the South*, a course on *The Urban South*, and a writing-intensive course called *Southerners*. A two-semester survey is devoted to *United States Social History*, and individual courses cover such topics as American cities, crime and the police, and the frontier in United States history. The only weakness in the offering is an apparent gap in the coverage of American political and social history for the period 1887-1932, as if a course were missing.

The department is traditional in its approach to history, with courses covering the United States, Europe, and the remainder of the globe in descending importance. The major program names 50 percent of its required courses, and the courses chosen ensure that all graduates will know modern European history and historical methodology, and be acquainted with global history.

University of North Carolina at Greensboro

General education requirement

At the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, the General Education Core Requirements (GEC) comprise three parts: GEC Category Requirements, GEC Marker Requirements, and Work toward Student Learning Goals outside the GEC.

GEC Category Requirements contain six categories: Humanities and Fine Arts, Historical Perspectives (GHP), Natural Sciences (GNS), Mathematics (GMT), Reasoning and Discourse (GRD), and Social and Behavioral Sciences (GSB). Several of the categories are further subdivided into more specialized areas. The requirements total 36-37 credit hours.

The University publishes extensive lists in its catalog of what it calls “GE Core Courses,” and refers to the lists when delineating required categories. The Humanities and Fine Arts category contains three subdivisions: Literature, Fine Arts, and Philosophical/Religious/Ethical Perspectives, each with its list of approved core courses. Students are required to complete one course from each of the subdivisions and a fourth course to be selected from any of them, for a total of 12 credit hours. The Literature subdivision offers student 44 courses from which to select; Fine Arts offers 22 courses, and Philosophical/Religious/Ethical Perspectives 31 courses. Overall, students choose four courses from among 97 approved courses.

The Historical Perspectives category requires one three-credit course; the Historical Perspectives-Western Culture list contains 57 courses.

The Mathematics category requires one three-credit course to be chosen from a list of nine courses.

The Natural Sciences category requires two courses of 6-7 hours (hence the variation in total GEC hours) selected from the Natural Sciences list with the following restrictions: one must be a laboratory course, and each course must have “a different departmental prefix.” The Natural Sciences list consists of 47 courses, 15 of which indicate a laboratory component.

There are nine different departmental prefixes from which to choose. It is possible for students to avoid the traditional sciences—such as chemistry, biology, geology, astronomy, and physics—entirely. For example, for the three-hour course, a student might choose *Introduction to Physical Anthropology*, *Introduction to Geographic Information Science*, or *Nutrition Facts & Fantasies*. For the four-credit laboratory course, the same student might select *Geosystems Lab*, *Weather & Climate Lab*, or *Physical Geography: Landscape Processes Lab*.

The Reasoning and Discourse category requires two courses (six credit hours). One of the courses must be chosen from among the following: ENG 101, *English Composition I*; FMS 115, *Freshman Seminar in Reasoning and Discourse I*; or RCO 101, Residential College course in *English Composition*. The other course must be selected from a list of seven courses, three of which are the second semester continuation of the three courses just mentioned.

The Social and Behavioral Sciences category requires two courses (six credit hours). The course list contains 38 approved courses from 17 departments.

The GEC Marker Requirements consist of one writing-intensive course, one speaking intensive course, and four Global Perspectives courses.

The Global Perspectives courses are of two sorts: Global Perspectives courses as such, designated GL, and Global/Nonwestern Perspectives, designated GN. Of the four courses students are required to take, one must carry the GN marker. The list of GL courses includes basic foreign language courses; a maximum of two foreign language courses may be used to fulfill the four-course GL/GN requirement. Up to two courses may be waived for completion of “a credit-bearing Study Abroad experience.”

The GL course list contains 139 courses designated “on a permanent basis,” and the GN course list contains 66 such courses, but these courses do not exhaust the available options. Students are advised to see the semester Schedule of Courses for a complete list of designated courses for a given semester.

Courses may count for both categories: Core Category Requirements and Marker Requirements. Any course marked with both markers may fulfill both requirements simultaneously. A General Education Course Summary Table is provided in the catalog to facilitate finding courses that count double, and the Schedule of Courses also lists marker courses. Other marker courses are available as well, including courses in the major. As the catalog puts it, “It is therefore possible to meet all GE Marker Requirements while completing the courses under [the Core Category Requirements] and/or courses required for the major.” Since they can be otherwise satisfied, the Marker Requirements do not effectively add any course requirements.

The category called Work toward Student Learning Goals outside the GEC requires, in addition to the Core Category Requirements and Marker Requirements, at least one writing intensive course and one speaking intensive course, both in the major. This category also requires a proficiency level in technology and a proficiency level in information skills/research, both as required for the major.

The General Education requirement is comprehensive in its goals, with its attention to the various traditional categories of the liberal arts (humanities, history, mathematics, natural and social sciences) and global affairs. However, its choices are in many cases so loose as to dilute, at the very least, the enforcement of foundations the goals attempt to achieve. Under Core Category Requirements, the Humanities and Fine Arts category allows students to choose approximately one in 25 courses available; for Historical Perspectives, the ratio is about one in 50; for Natural Sciences, about one in 25; for Social and Behavioral Sciences category, about one in 20. Only the Mathematics category and the Reasoning and Discourse category offer relatively restricted options, requiring one course in nine and two courses in 10, respectively.

Where student options are limited, there is a better chance of achieving specific educational goals. When options are numerous, as they often are, the coherence and effectiveness of a core curriculum are weakened.

The Marker Requirements are also diffuse, since students may choose approximately one in 50 courses available (four from over two hundred courses). The likely effect of such latitude in options is widely varied results in student selections. For example, one student might choose *Introduction to Classical Civilization: Greeks*; *Introduction to Classical Civilization, Romans*; *European Literary Classics: Ancient to Renaissance*; and (for the GN course) *Art and Archaeology of Egypt*, a selection with some variation, yet not providing significant breadth of exposure to disciplines.

Another student might satisfy the requirement with courses like *World Production & Marketing Patterns*; *Global Deviance*, which “explores and examines contemporary meaning and forms of deviant behavior using cross cultural and international perspectives”; *Spanish for Health Care*; and (for the GN course) *Teaching Music in a Multicultural Population*, an eclectic selection with little coherence or foundational value.

The two selections may be seen as merely as matter of preference, but they show the weaknesses of GE requirements, which fail to ensure coherence within any student’s selections or impart a common base of knowledge among students. (The College of Arts and Sciences Additional Requirements (CAR) add some further refinement to the GEC requirements, but do not significantly change the quality of general education.)

Requirements for selected majors

English

The English major requires a minimum of 30 semester hours (ten courses) above the 100 level. Students are required to take four named courses, including three literature surveys: *Major British Authors: Medieval to Neoclassical*, *Major British Authors: Romantic to Modern*, *Major American Authors: Colonial to Romantic*. The fourth named course is *Approaches to the Study of Literature*, “Introduction to critical approaches to literature.”

Students must also take one course from among the following subject matters: language (four choices offered), criticism (two choices), creative writing (six choices), expository writing and journalism (nine choices), or internship (two choices). In addition, four courses in literature are required, with the following restrictions: two courses are to be in literature before 1800, “only one of which may be in Shakespeare,” (14 choices offered) and two courses in literature after 1800 (28 choices offered). All four courses in literature must be 300-500 level courses. (Courses at the 500 level are “for advanced undergraduates and graduate students.) Finally, students are allowed one elective, which must be at or above the 200 level.

Besides completing the General Education Core (GEC) and major requirements, students must fulfill College of Arts and Sciences Additional Requirements (CAR). Additional requirements include a course in Historical Perspectives on Western Culture, one in Natural Sciences, one in Social and Behavioral Sciences, intermediate-level proficiency in one foreign language, and a total of four writing intensive courses. CAR, while adding required courses, do not essentially alter the nature of courses selection. For example, even though students must take an additional course, and one of the three (total) courses must be from Life Science and one from Physical

Science, students may still satisfy all distribution requirements by taking Introduction to Geographic Information Science (Physical Science), Nutrition Facts & Fantasies (Life Science), and Physical Geography: Landscape Processes Lab (Physical Science).

The department offers 80 undergraduate courses, 70 of them at the 200 level or above. At the 500 level, the department offers 20 courses, which are open to advanced undergraduates who have taken at least two approved courses in English and American literature at the 300 level or above.

At the lower (100) level, the department offers introductory courses to genres, topics in British and American literature, and—an unusual touch at the 100 level—an introductory course on Shakespeare, affording “intensive study of a limited number of plays.” At the 200 level, there are courses on European and Nonwestern literary classics, topics in global and Nonwestern literature, the required two-semester survey of British literature previously mentioned, several creative writing courses (poetry, essay, fiction), science and genre fiction, and a two-semester survey of American authors.

Upper-level (300-400) offerings include courses on postcolonial literatures, creative writing (poetry, fiction, and nonfiction), women in literature, women writers, and Southern writers. English literature is thoroughly covered in more than a dozen courses ranging from Chaucer and Shakespeare (two courses) to contemporary literature, including two courses on the novel (18th-19th centuries and 20th century). Offerings in American literature include three courses surveying the early period through the 20th century, three courses on the novel, two courses on African American writers, and one course on women’s writing. Two courses on poetry and one on drama study modern British and American literature together.

The department is strongest in English literature, and secondarily in American literature. On the lower level there is stress on literary classics, both Western and nonwestern, and at the upper level the course subject matter is largely traditional and the choice of authors within them mostly those who have stood the test of time. Postmodernism’s influence is apparent in such courses as *Science Fiction*, *Genre Fiction* [“Selected writers from a popular kind (genre) of fiction, such as horror, spy, crime, fantasy, sports.”], and several offerings on women’s writings and women in literature. On the other hand, the department displays an uncommon tilt in favor of Great Books, with—besides the strong showing in Shakespeare courses—a course on *Literary Study of the Bible*, described as a study of “The Bible as part of the world’s great literature.”

History

Besides the College of Arts and Sciences Additional Requirements (CAR), which are identical to those previously mentioned for English majors, students majoring in history must complete 30 semester hours of courses. Twelve semester hours are required at the 200 level, with no more than half of them in the Western European history. Twelve semesters are also required at the 300 level, including one “Research Intensive” course. The remaining six hours, or two courses, must be at the 500 level—technically open to advanced undergraduates and graduate students—and must include the single named course, *Seminar in Historical Research and Writing*.

To ensure breadth in students' program, the department requires that students take at least six hours in each of the fields: Western Europe, United States, and Wider World. Several dozen courses are available to choose from in each field. The progression suggests the view that for American students, history should begin with the origins of Western Civilization, then extend westward to include American history, and finally expand outward to the rest of the world.

The department offers 89 courses at the undergraduate (200-400) level (with no 100-level courses), and 42 courses at the 500 level. There are a number of lower-level survey courses, including two-semester sequences on the history of Africa, United States history, Asian civilization, Latin America, and Western science. European history is covered by four semesters starting with a course on *The Ancient World*. The combined courses at this level offer a comprehensive sweep of world history.

Most courses are at the 300 level, with the 400 level reserved for individual study and honors work. Four courses are devoted to ancient Greece and Rome, and several courses on various aspects of the medieval period in Europe. In the modern era, the focus is on separate countries, with two courses on France, one on Spain, two on England, two on Germany, and three on Russia. Several courses study Europe generally: *Europe since 1920*, *The Origins of Modern Political Thought*, and two courses on European thought. There are also courses on *The Holy Roman Empire* and *The Ottoman Empire and Republic of Turkey*.

There is a six-course chronological sequence covering the history of the United States from 1607 to the present, two courses on the South, and one on North Carolina. Other American history courses are topical, focusing on such subjects as the frontier, the American home, cultural history, women (two semesters), and relations between Latin American and the United States.

Moving to the wider world, the department offers two courses on Chinese history, one on *The Near and Middle East*, two on Japanese history, one on Central America, one on South Africa and its neighbors, one on West Africa, and one called *Islam and Popular Culture in Africa*. Several topical courses address sex and gender issues: *Daughters of Eve: Women in the Middle Ages*; *Sexuality in Historical Perspective*; and *Gender, Family, and Wealth in African History* (oddly two courses by this name are offered, with different course numbers—301 and 304—and different course descriptions). Other topical courses include *Race and Segregation*, *Darwin and the Theory of Evolution*, *Witchcraft and Magic in European History*, and *Terrorism, Nationalism and Revolution in Modern Europe*.

The department seems strongest in Western European history, with all periods covered and last two centuries in particular detail. American history is solidly presented in a chronological approach, and is enhanced with topical study of the traditional sort addressing the frontier, the home, and culture. The wider world is covered best in the Far East, secondarily in Africa, and little in the remainder of the world, such as South America and India. The relatively large number of topical courses—some good, several (like *Daughters of Eve*) showing the influence of postmodernism—take the place of what could otherwise be traditional courses to fill some gaps in coverage.

University of North Carolina at Pembroke

General education requirement

The University of North Carolina at Pembroke requires 44 credit hours to fulfill its General Education requirements, though for some majors, “certain courses may count toward both General Education and Major requirements.” Areas of concentration include Communication Skills, Academic Content and Skills, Physical Education and Wellness, and General Education Program Electives. The Academic Content and Skills section—the core of a general education curriculum—is made up of three divisions: Arts and Humanities, Social Science, and Natural Sciences and Mathematics.

Students are required to take six or nine hours in Communication Skills. Two semesters of basic composition courses constitute the six mandatory hours. A three-hour speech course, *Fundamentals of Voice and Diction*, is required of freshmen unless they test out of it.

The Arts and Humanities division requires one course from each of four areas (a total of 12 hours): Fine Arts (five course options), Literature (13 course options), History (six course options), and Philosophy and Religion (four course options).

In the Social Science division, students must choose one course from each of three areas (a total of nine hours), to be selected from among five possibilities: Economics, Geography, Political Science, Psychology, and Sociology. No more than four course options are listed in each area.

In the Natural Sciences and Mathematics division, students are required to take three courses (nine credit hours). In the Natural Sciences portion, students take two courses, one course in each of two areas (a total of six hours), to be selected from among four areas: Biology, Chemistry, Earth Science, and Physical Science. Course options vary from two (chemistry and earth science) to five (physical science). In Mathematics, students are required to take one course (three hours), with five courses from which to choose.

Physical Education and Wellness requires students to take two one-hour courses (a total of two hours) from a list of nearly twenty courses in sports areas ranging from archery, badminton, golf, swimming, bowling, and tennis to rhythms and dance, aerobic dance, and water aerobics.

General Education Program Electives consist of one or two courses (three or six hours) remaining to satisfy general education requirements. (Those students required to take *Fundamentals of Voice and Diction* are allowed one elective; those testing out of the course area allowed two electives.)

Students may satisfy their Program Electives by selecting the foreign language option; in this case, they must take two courses in the same foreign language, choosing from French, German, Italian, and Spanish. Students not taking the foreign language option may choose the one or two courses needed to satisfy Program Electives by choosing from among nearly a hundred designated Art and Humanities courses.

Especially within the Arts and Humanities Division, the general education curriculum is relatively rigorous in requiring students to take a course from each of four areas—fine arts, literature, history, and philosophy and religion—rather than simply requiring a given number of courses within the entire division. The area distribution requirement assures a certain breadth of exposure.

In the Social Science Division, students are initially given more latitude, being allowed to choose three of the five available areas. However, the option of being able to choose one's areas (within limits) is offset by the smaller number of courses available within each area.

In Natural Sciences, two disciplines of four must be chosen, and the total number of courses (about a dozen) is limited, so course selection is focused. In Mathematics, some kind of mathematics course is mandatory.

Overall, general education requirements at UNC Pembroke ensure a reasonable exposure to the broad range of study within the liberal arts, while allowing students a fair amount of leeway in course selection. No specific course in history or literature is required, but students do have to take a course in United States or World history and a course in literature.

Requirements for selected majors

English

The English major requires a minimum of 36 semester hours (twelve courses), including five named courses, beginning with ENG 205-206, a two-semester survey, *World Literature Before 1660* and *World Literature After 1660*. In addition, students must take one semester of a two-semester survey of American literature, and one semester of a two-semester survey of British literature. They must also take ENG 302, *Literary Analysis and Interpretation*; ENG 457, *Shakespeare*; and ENGS 4xx, *Seminar in Literature*. Three courses must also be taken from the following list: *The British Novel*, *The American Novel*, *Modern Drama*, *Modern Poetry*, and a second seminar in literature; one of the courses must involve "significant study of the novel." Finally, students must take two courses from the following: *Creative Writing I*, *Aspects of the English Language*, *Advanced Composition*, *English Grammar*; or take two semesters of *Special Topics in American English*. Under the latter option, "Possible topics include issues in linguistics, grammar, literacy, varieties of English, media and language, Literary Journalism, and American English as a global force."

The department of English, Theatre, and Languages offers a number of majors, including English, English Education (grades 9-12), and Middle Grades Language Arts (grades 6-9).

The department offers 45 courses in English at the 200 level or above. The department also offers courses in English education, speech, the theatre, and foreign languages (French, German, Italian, and Spanish).

English courses at the 100 level are solely composition courses. At the 200 level, the department offers the several surveys already mentioned, and single-semester courses on Southern literature,

contemporary literature, literary genres, and Studies in Literature (“a specific genre or topic in world literature”). Courses reflecting more recent trends include *Women’s Literature*, *Literature and Film*, *African American Literature*, and *Native American Literature*. In addition to these three-credit courses, the department offers six one-credit courses dealing with special aspects of language: *Spelling*, *Vocabulary Building*, *Pronunciation*, *English Usage*, *Sentence Mastery*, and *Punctuation*.

At the upper levels (300 and 400 levels), the department offers, besides the courses already noted under requirements, *Seminar in American Indian Literature*, *Phonetics and Phonology*, two additional courses in creative writing, *History of American Film I & II*, and three courses related to English as a Second Language (ESL).

The department appears relatively weak in the specific study of literary periods, with little more than survey courses at the lower level and the several genre courses mentioned (*The British Novel*, *The American Novel*, *Modern Drama*, and *Modern Poetry*) and *Shakespeare* at the upper level. There is a nominal bow to postmodernism in the inclusion of women’s literature and Native American literature, and, considering the small total number of courses offered, film is well represented. The strength of the department is in the area of language (including ESL) and writing (including creative writing). The department is more oriented toward teacher preparation than the study of literature.

History

The major in History requires a total of 37 semester hours, divided among Basic History (12 hours) and Advanced History (25 hours). Basic History, composed of 100 and 200 level courses, requires students to select four of the following six courses: a two-semester survey of *American Civilizations*, a two-semester *History of the American Indians*, and a two-semester survey of *World Civilizations*. Only one of the semesters on American Indians may be chosen.

Advanced History (300 and 400 level courses) consists of two options. Option 1 requires two courses each from “the American and European areas” and one course from “the Asian, African, and Latin American area.” In addition, students must take HST 300, *Introduction to the Study of History*, a course from *Topics in History* or a *Senior Seminar*, and two electives. Option 2 requires the approval of a [study] contract by the chairman of the department, *Introduction to the Study of History*, a course from *Topics in History*, a *Senior Seminar*, and six “approved 300-400 level electives.” Both options consist of eight three-credit courses and one named course, *Introduction to the Study of History* (a one-credit course), for a total of 25 credit hours.

The department of History offers a major in History, a major in American Studies, a licensure program in Secondary Social Studies Education (grades 9-12), and a licensure program in Social Studies for the Middle Grades (grades 6-9). The department offers 78 history courses.

Courses at the 100 level are listed as General Education Courses, and are comprised of the three two-semester surveys already referred to under requirements for the major (*American Civilizations*, *History of the American Indians*, and *World Civilizations*). No courses are listed at the 200 level.

Upper level (300 and 400 level) courses are divided into several areas, including United States and Canadian History; European History; Asian, African, and Latin American History; Seminars in History; Topics in History; and Special Advanced Courses.

Under United States and Canadian History, the department devotes six semesters to the study of American history, two to African-American history, two to women in U.S. history, and one to the history of Canada. Also included in this area are *History of North Carolina*, *U.S. Military History*, *U.S. Economic History*, *Themes in U.S. Social History*, and *History of U.S. Foreign Policy*.

Under European History, the department offers a course in ancient history, three courses covering Europe from the Middle Ages through the 20th century, a course on the Second World War, and a course on Nazi Germany. In addition, one course is offered on English history (covering 1485 to the present), one course on German history (1866 to the present), two courses on European social and cultural history, and two courses on the history of Russia.

The Asian, African, and Latin American History area includes three courses related to Asian history and civilization, one course on Islam, one course on Sub-Saharan African, three courses on various aspects of Latin America, and two courses on the Middle East.

The Seminars in History area is comprised of two courses: the mandatory *Introduction to the Study of History* previously mentioned and a *Senior Seminar*.

Topics in History include 22 courses on topics “of general interest” explored “in detail.” Some possible topics are Revolution in the Modern World, Hitler and Nazi Germany, and the American Civil War.

Special Advanced Courses include *Introduction to Public History* and various open topics courses, such as directed reading, colloquia, a workshop, and independent study.

Overall, the department is strongest in the study of U.S. history, with six consecutive semesters of traditional history bolstered by a variety of special topics like economic, military, and social history. Some influence of postmodernism is apparent in the presence of two courses on women in U.S. history.

British history is barely visible, and this is perhaps the department’s weakest area. European history is well covered in more recent times, but is lightly treated prior to 1789. In the world beyond the United States and Europe, Latin American history is given the most attention, followed by Asian, and then African history.

Topical courses with subject matter unspecified in the course catalog (*Topics in History*) constitute an unusual proportion—about 30%—of upper level courses, and such lack of specificity must make planning more difficult for students majoring in history. However, the content of topical courses is likely to imitate in its broad lines the content of listed offerings, and probably focuses on the period starting with the French Revolution.

University of North Carolina at Wilmington

General education requirement

The University of North Carolina at Wilmington requires 45 semester hours “less exemptions” to fulfill the requirements of Basic Studies, which are defined as “the acquisition of essential skills and an introduction to the broad spectrum of studies which are basic to our intellectual and cultural heritage.” Basic Studies consists of seven areas of competence (though effectively six, as Interdisciplinary Perspectives has no minimum requirement): Composition, Physical Education, Humanities, Fine Arts, Natural Sciences and Mathematical Sciences, Social and Behavioral Sciences, and Interdisciplinary Perspectives.

The Composition requirement is 6 semester hours for students who complete a two-semester course, *College Writing and Reading*. However, students who score well enough on the English placement test, or score high enough on the Advanced Placement or CLEP test, can fulfill the requirement in 3 semester hours with a one-semester advanced version of the same course.

The Physical Education requirement consists of 2 credit hours, completed by taking a single course, PED 101, *Foundations of Physical Activity*.

Students are required to take a minimum of 12 and a maximum of 18 hours credit hours in Humanities courses, with a minimum of 3 credit hours (and a maximum of 9 credit hours) in each of four categories: Literature, History, Philosophy, and Language. As it does for the major areas of Basic Studies, the University provides a list of approved courses for each category.

Students may satisfy their minimum requirement for each category by choosing one course from among 21 in Literature, 10 in History, 16 in Philosophy, and 41 in Language. Most of the courses under Language (39 out of 41) are in foreign language, and since at least 3 credit hours must be in foreign language, this requirement is essentially one of foreign language. The Language requirement is waived for a 300-level score on the foreign language placement exam.

To fulfill the Fine Arts requirement, students must take a minimum of 3 credit hours and a maximum of 9, with no more than 6 credit hours in any one of seven categories listed: Art History, Communication Studies, Creative Writing, Fine Arts, Film Studies, Music, and Theatre. The department provides a list of 24 approved courses from which students select their one-course minimum.

The requirement for Natural Sciences and Mathematical Sciences is a minimum of 10 credit hours and a maximum of 16, with Natural Sciences allotted 7-12 credit hours and Mathematical Sciences 3-8 credit hours. The Natural Sciences category is further divided into Life Science and Physical Science. Students are required to take a minimum of 3 credit hours in each area, including at least one laboratory science course (4 credit hours), so students may satisfy the requirement with a single course in each area.

Within Life Science, students choose their single required course from among 15 courses in four disciplines: one course in anthropology, 11 in biology, one in geology, and 2 in Physical

Education. The course option in anthropology is ANT 210, *Physical Anthropology*, “Introduction to the study of human evolution.” Or students may choose BIO 105, *Concepts of Modern Biology*, which is an introduction “to the diversity of life and the principles governing living systems, focusing on the role of humans in the natural world. This course employs multi-media instructional materials and is designed for the non-biology major,” and satisfies the laboratory requirement. Other Life Science options include two courses in the Physical Education department, *Human Anatomy and Physiology I & II*; the first semester is described as the study of “seven of the eleven major organ systems as each relates to human movement and health,” and also satisfies the laboratory requirement.

Within Physical Science, students choose their single required course from among 17 courses in four disciplines: 4 courses in chemistry, 2 in geography, 4 in geology, and 7 in physics. Among the options is CHM 103, *Chemistry in Everyday Life*, “A terminal, relatively non-mathematical one-semester course in chemistry for the nonscience major,” which satisfies the laboratory requirement. Another option is GLY 102, *The Earth Through Time*, which also satisfies the laboratory requirement. The catalog describes this course as “Geologic history of the earth and the fossil record. Methods of dating rocks and fossils, interpreting ancient environments and the age of the earth. Field trips.” Students may also choose PHY 103, *Great Ideas in Physics*, that not only “Introduces the nature of science to the nonscientist by emphasizing the concepts underlying four great ideas in physics,” but also “Explores the mutual influence of science and the humanities (literature, philosophy, history, and the arts).”

All of the science courses cited above by name seem to target the nonscience major, thereby allowing students to bypass serious science courses. There are enough courses of this caliber that any student wishing to avoid a real encounter with the hard sciences will be able to do so.

Students are required to take a minimum of 6 credit hours and a maximum of 12 in the Social and Behavioral Sciences, with no more than 6 hours from any one discipline. (However, since the minimum requirement is 6 credit hours, students may satisfy the requirement with courses in a single discipline.)

The list of options for Social and Behavioral Sciences includes 25 different courses in eight disciplines: 4 courses in anthropology, one in criminal justice, 3 in economics, 4 in geography (not the same courses as under Physical Science), 5 in political science, 4 in psychology, one in social work, and 4 in sociology. (A single course is counted under both anthropology and sociology.)

Interdisciplinary Perspectives, the final category in Basic Studies, has no minimum requirement, and can be avoided altogether. Students may select a maximum of 6 hours from the following five courses: *Introduction to Gerontology*, *Freshman Interdisciplinary Honors Seminar*, *Topical Interdisciplinary Honors Seminar*, *Science and Pseudoscience*, and *Introduction to Science, the Humanities and Society*.

In addition to Basic Studies requirements, students must satisfy computer competency and oral competency within their major.

The Basic Studies requirements at UNC Wilmington are relatively strongest in the Humanities, where students must take one course in each of four categories. Even here, however, the range of courses allowed in certain categories dilutes the common standard of preparation implicit in a general education requirement. For example, the minimum requirement in Literature may be satisfied with a lower-level course such as *Introduction to Literature*, a more rigorous traditional survey like *British Literature to 1800* or *American Literature since 1870*, or a topical course like *Women in Literature*.

Similarly, the History requirement may be satisfied with a general course like *Western Civilization* or *American History*, or by a topical course like *Women in Modern America* or *Evolution of Warfare*. The Philosophy requirement may be satisfied by a single course in either philosophy or religion, so that one discipline will likely be avoided.

No specific course in literature or history is required, and students may easily graduate without taking a survey of American or English literature or any course in American history or political thought. Moreover, students are free to concentrate some of their distribution selections, intended to give a breadth of background, in a topical area, e.g., women's studies.

The great number of disciplines subsumed under the Fine Arts category, and the loose understanding of what constitutes Fine Arts, ensure that students will receive little common exposure in this area. The Fine Arts requirement may be satisfied with a single course in any one of seven disciplines, including Communication Studies and Film Studies.

As suggested earlier, allowing numerous courses designed for nonscience majors weakens the Natural Sciences requirement. However, the requirement to take one course in each area—Life Science and Physical Science—does ensure greater breadth of exposure.

In contrast, the Social and Behavioral Sciences requirement unfortunately can be satisfied within a single discipline.

Overall, Basic Studies at UNC Wilmington lacks the rigor essential to a core curriculum. A specific drawback is allowing significant leeway in the number of hours students may choose to devote to a given category (e.g., 12-18 hours in the Humanities, 10-16 hours in Natural Sciences and math), which abets students' tendency to concentrate their studies in familiar areas. The likely effect—Humanities majors taking their extra courses in the Humanities, science majors taking their extra courses in the sciences—works against a broad exposure to the curriculum.

Another weakness of the curriculum is offering students a wide choice of courses to satisfy a small requirement (e.g., a 24-course option for the single course requirement in Fine Arts). The large number of options detracts from a requirement's purpose, to produce a relatively controlled educational outcome.

Requirements for selected majors

English

The English major requires 42 credit hours of course work. The literature option “allows students to take courses in a broad range of English studies, including literature, writing, film, and the English language,” and is recommended for students planning to attend graduate or professional school.

All students majoring in English literature must take ENG 205, *Approaches to the Study of Literature*, and ENG 332, *Shakespeare’s Early Plays and Poems* or ENG 333, *Shakespeare’s Later Plays*. They must take 15 additional hours in literature, including 3 hours in literature before 1900 and 3 hours in “non-Western or non-canonical literature.” Students must also take 3 hours in writing, 3 hours in the English language, and either ENG 386, *Critical Theory and Practice* or ENG 387, *History of Literary Criticism and Theory*. Finally, students are required to take 9 hours of English electives and ENG 495, *Senior Seminar in Literature/Language*.

The department of English offers several alternatives for the major, including literature, professional writing, teacher licensure, and individualized options. The department offers 85 courses in English.

Courses at the 100 level cover composition, English as a Second Language (ESL), and the *Introduction to Literature* course mentioned under Basic Studies. At the 200 level, courses include introductions to journalism and technical writing, course in classical literature (in translation) and mythology, and three two-semester surveys—covering British, American, and world literatures. Other 200-level offerings include single courses on *Women in Literature*, *African American Literature*, *The Bible as Literature*, and *Introduction to Film Study*.

At the 300 level, the department offers 10 courses in writing (for professional magazines, business, technology, etc.) and half a dozen courses in stylistics, linguistics, and history of the English language. Beyond two courses on Shakespeare, English literature is covered in four courses spanning approximately the three centuries following 1660. Several courses in the postmodernist vein include *Multiculturalism and Literature* (readings in “multicultural literatures within and outside of the United States”), *Postcolonial and Third World Literature* (providing an “introduction to postcolonial theories”), and *Studies in Non-Western or Non-Canonical Literature*.

American literature is covered by four courses on the 19th and 20th centuries, plus courses on regional literature like *Southern American Literature* and *North Carolina Writers*. Topical courses include *Ethnic Literature of the United States*, *American Indian Literature*, *The Female Tradition in Literature*, and three courses on cinema. Five “Studies in” courses deal with literary genres in some detail. Two courses survey European literature, and two others study British and American poetry of the 20th century.

Several courses—like *Literature for Young Adults* and *Ways of Teaching Literature*—target future high school teachers. Two courses—mentioned earlier under requirements for the major—examine literary theory and criticism.

Offerings at the 400 level include three courses covering English literature from Chaucer through Milton. These courses complete chronologically the aid at the 300-level, which begin at the year 1660. However, the 400-level courses—*The Age of Chaucer*, *The Age of Elizabeth*, and *The Age of Milton*—are all survey courses. Although Shakespeare is elsewhere covered in two courses, as mentioned under requirements for the major, the department has no separate courses devoted to Chaucer or Milton.

The department also offers individual study courses, senior seminars, and honors courses.

The English department at UNC Wilmington covers English, American, and world literatures comprehensively, but largely at the level of survey courses. The descriptions of the several 300-level genre courses fail to mention any authors, suggesting once again a survey approach.

Intensive upper-level courses on a single author or small number of authors are absent. A number of trendy topical courses on ethnic, postcolonial, children's, and women's literatures, and the cinema take the place of more focused studies on major authors. The department's strength seems to lie in its many courses preparing students for professional writing careers.

History

The major in History requires a total of 42 semester hours, including six named courses totaling 18 hours, and an additional 24 hours of history courses at the 300 and 400 levels. The six courses required by name are: *Western Civilization* (two semesters), *Introduction to Global History*, *American History* (two semesters), and *The Practice of History*, described as “An exploration of the nature of historical inquiry and of the techniques and methods essential to the study and writing of history.”

As part of the additional 24 hours of history courses, students must take a minimum of 6 hours of seminar work at the 400 level (with some courses excepted, such as individual study and honors work).

Students are required to satisfy distribution requirements by taking at least one upper-level course (300- and 400-level courses) in each of two areas: (1) Europe and the United States, and (2) Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East.

The department of History offers a major in History and a Teacher Licensure in Social Studies. The department offers 105 history courses.

Lower-level courses (100 and 200 level) include, in addition to the six named required courses, a disparate offering of topical courses on subjects such as women's history, Afro-American history, the sea in history, the evolution of warfare, the history of science, and contemporary issues.

At the upper levels, the department offers two courses on ancient history and many on European history. Courses studying individual countries include four courses on England and the British Empire, one on Ireland, one on Spain, two on France, two on Germany, and two on Russia. In addition, the department offers a thorough study of European history, including a six-course sequence from the medieval period to the end of the 20th century, and five seminars studying the same periods in more detail.

The history of the United States is similarly well covered, including a seven-course series from the colonial period to the present, a half dozen courses on more particular aspects of American history (e.g. urban, environmental, social histories), and a course titled *Womanhood in America: Family, Work and Community Life*. Other American history courses include two on the South, three on religion in America, three on North Carolina (including one specifically on Wilmington), and three on American Indians.

The department's coverage of the rest of the world includes four courses on East Asia, three courses on Latin American and the Caribbean, five courses on Africa, and five courses on the Middle East and Islam. Sub-Saharan Africa is studied in two courses on the continent in general and three on several regions (southern, west, central, eastern). Northern Africa is dealt with in courses on the Middle East and Islam. The latter courses include more topical offerings such as *Women and Gender in the Modern Middle East* and *History of Islamic Art and Architecture*. Coverage of the non-Western world is completed by "Topics in" courses, featuring "intensive study of a selected theme" in each of the major geographical regions just mentioned.

In addition, the department offers two courses in public history, one course in historic preservation in the United States, and two courses on international relations.

The department's primary strengths are in American history—with a full range of courses in traditional history and a broad series of seminars covering various aspects in more detail—and in European history. It offers as well a fair number of courses on American Indian history, African history, and the history of the Middle East and Islam.

Western Carolina University

General education requirement

Western Carolina University requires all candidates for a bachelor's degree to take a Liberal Studies component consisting of 42 semester hours in four areas:

The Core	21 hours
The Freshman Seminar	3 hours
The Perspectives	18 hours
Upper Level Perspectives	3 hours

The Core consists of courses in writing, physical and biological sciences, mathematics, oral communication, and wellness. A two-semester course, ENGL 101-102, *Composition I & II*, comprises the writing component. To satisfy the Physical and Biological Sciences category, students must choose two courses (six credit hours) from two different disciplines. Astronomy, biology, and geology each offers more than one course; typical offerings are *Introductory Observational Astronomy*, *Biology in the 21st Century*, *Chemistry in Society*, *Methods in Geology*, and *Natural Resource Conservation and Management*.

Students may fulfill the mathematics requirement with the three-credit MATH 101, *Mathematical Concepts*, an “introduction to applications of mathematics to daily experience,” or with any “higher-level” mathematics course. Oral Communications is satisfied by the three-credit course, CMHC 201, *Introduction to Speech Communication*. For the wellness requirement, students choose from HEAL 123, *Health and Wellness* and HSCC 101, *Nutrition, Fitness, and Wellness*.

To satisfy the Freshman Seminar requirement, students may choose a single course from among 30 courses representing a wide range of disciplines, including law, mathematics, psychology, sociology, communication media, biology, chemistry, history, English, music, and foreign languages. Among approved courses are *A User's Guide to the Mass Media*, *The Great School Wars*, *Does Inequality Make You Sick?*, *Active Citizenship: Making a Difference in Your Community*, *Plant Biodiversity*, *Personal Nutrition*, and *Triumph and Tragedy Reflected in Modern German Film*. Completion of the Freshman Seminar satisfies one course (three credit hours) in Perspectives.

The 18 credit hours devoted to Perspectives are to be apportioned in the following manner:

Social Sciences	6 hours
History	3 hours
Humanities	3 hours
Fine and Performing Arts	3 hours
World Cultures	3 hours

For Social Sciences, students must choose courses from two different disciplines—not a difficult choice, since there are nearly as many disciplines listed as courses. Courses are of a general and

introductory nature, with titles like *Origins of Civilization*, *Introduction to Appalachian Studies*, *Introduction to Law*, *Global Issues*, *General Psychology*, and *Human Society*.

Under History, students may choose their single course from a list including traditional European and American history, as well as more specialized topics such as *Turning Points in American [or European] History and Lunatics*, *Dreamers and Ordinary People: Biography in American [European] History*. Other approved courses include *Western Religious Traditions* and *Origins of Early Christian Traditions*.

Under Humanities, the list of courses includes selections from history, law, philosophy, and—most prominently—English. As in previous categories, courses are of a general or introductory nature. Students make their single selection in Humanities from courses like *Literature of Place*, *Popular Literature and Culture*, *Interpretation of Literature*, *Religion in America*, *The Ancient Empires*, *Individual Rights*, and *Western Moral Traditions*.

In the World Cultures category, the majority of courses are in modern foreign languages. Several courses follow the pattern *Experiencing French and the French-Speaking World*, substituting Spanish, German, and Cherokee. Students may satisfy this category either by passing certain higher-level foreign language courses or by choosing a three-credit course from the approved list.

Under Upper Level Perspectives, more than 30 course options are listed. Students must choose one course outside their major to satisfy the requirement. Many courses are offered in history (11) or philosophy (9), and English (5). Unlike other courses in the Liberal Studies component, which are at the 100 and 200 levels, these courses are largely at the 300 level, with a few at the 400 level. Typical courses include *Diversity in Contemporary Society*, *Ancient Greece and Rome*, *British History to 1603*, *Modern China*, *Medieval and Reformation Theology*, *Appalachian Literature*, *The Bible as Literature*, *Religion in Film*, *Philosophy of Law*, and *Alienation, Technology, and Meaning in the Postmodern Age*.

Student choice varies greatly among the several categories within the Liberal Studies component (i.e., general education as a whole). The Core allows little choice; even in the sciences category, with the highest ratio of course options to choices, students select one course in seven. The limited choice within the Core ensures that all freshmen are exposed to writing, some form of mathematics, oral communications, and wellness concepts at a basic level. Although science is part of the Core requirement, the typical science course does not appear demanding.

Students have greater choice within The Perspectives, especially in each of the first three categories—Social Sciences, History, and Humanities—where they choose from a list of more than 10 courses. In the Fine and Performing Arts category, choice is restricted, as only three approved courses are listed. Under World Cultures, 16 course options are offered. Overall, with more than 50 courses from which to choose in The Perspectives, the course selection ratio is hardly rigorous: less than 1 in 10.

The Freshman Seminar and Upper Level Perspectives are the loosest categories, allowing students to select a single course from among 30 or more courses in each category. Given the

great number of options available in these two categories, it is not clear what educational goal is intended, other than to have students take a lower level course on a subject of their choice and an upper level course outside their major.

A major drawback of allowing students such latitude is that their choices often do not result in wide exposure to subject matter. If each category is so capacious that it represents much of the curriculum, students may consistently favor one portion of the curriculum in their selections. For example, under The Freshman Seminar, a student might choose *The Human Condition*; under Social Sciences, *Global Issues*; under History, *World Culture in Historical Perspective*; under Humanities, *The Ancient Empires*; under World Cultures, *Art of World Cultures*; and under Upper Level Perspectives, *Ancient Greece and Rome*—all good courses, but taken as a whole, they do not give the kind of breadth of exposure expected in a solid general education.

The Freshman Seminar and The Perspectives offerings have the merit of being uniformly at an introductory level, appropriate to a general education requirement. The subject matter of the courses is largely general and traditional, avoiding the trendiness and overspecialization characteristic of postmodernist selections.

Requirements for selected majors

English

The English major requires 39 credit hours of course work. All students majoring in English literature must take ENG 231, *The Interpretation of Literature*; ENGL 251-252, *Survey of English Literature I & II*; one semester from ENGL 261-262, *Survey of American Literature I & II*; and a *Senior Seminar in Literature*.

Students must take three courses from a group of six 400-level courses covering classical and traditional writers: *Chaucer and His Age*; *Shakespeare and His Age*; *Milton and His Age*; *The Age of Pope, Swift, and Johnson*; *Major American and British Writers*; and *Nineteenth-Century British Writers*. As is apparent from the titles of the first three courses, Chaucer, Shakespeare, and Milton do not have entire courses devoted to them under the requirements. (However, a course titled *Introduction to Shakespeare* is offered as an elective.)

Students are required to take one course from a group of four courses on grammar, linguistics, and history of the language. They must take one course from a group of five diversity courses: *African-American Writings*, *Appalachian Literature*, *Native American Literature*, *Twentieth-Century Commonwealth Literature*, and *Literature and Gender*.

Students must also take one course from a group of eight genre-based courses, such a *The Short Story*, *Fairy Tale Literature*, *Modern Drama*, and *The American Novel*. Finally, students must choose two elective courses (6 hours) at the junior-senior level (300 and 400).

The English department offers 79 courses, 60 of them at the 300 and 400 levels. Freshman-level offerings consist of courses in composition, courses in English for non-native speakers, and freshman seminars.

At the 200 level, courses include the literature surveys mentioned under required courses. A number of courses on the “literature and” theme are offered, among them, *Past Times: Literature and History*. Other similar courses are based on literature and geography (*Literature of Place*) and literature and religion (*Literature and the Sacred*), reinforcing the impression that the department questions whether the study of literature ought to stand on its own. Two courses are offered on cultural themes: *The Literature of Culture* and *Popular Literature and Culture*; the latter includes, besides the study of popular literary genres, the examination of “film, television, and the Internet.” Non-literary interest is also evident in the description of *Introduction to Film Studies*, which does not mention literature at all, but refers to the study of film as “a means of artistic expression and as a mirror of cultural values in the twentieth century.”

At the 300 level, approximately half of the twenty-two courses are on writing, mostly nonfiction—technical and professional writing, and even *Authoring Multimedia*—and some poetry and fiction. Traditional literature is represented by such offerings as the previously mentioned *Introduction to Shakespeare* and *The Bible as Literature*. A course on the Renaissance seems to deal with a range of disciplines, examining “the rise of religious debate, print culture, humanist philosophies, voyages of discovery, and the effect these had on art and literature.” Topical and thematic courses include *The Beats, Radicals, and Avant-Garde Literature* and *The Journey in Literature*. Specialized courses cover *African-American Writings* and *Appalachian Literature* (previously mentioned under diversity options), and *Film History*.

At the 400 level, the department offers several courses in professional and creative writing, including writing internships, and a capstone course “for journalism and writing concentrations.” Literature courses include the six traditional courses already mentioned under requirements for the major, *American Literature Since 1945*, *Native American Literature*, and five genre courses, mostly focusing on modern authors. A *Senior Seminar in Literature* provides a capstone course “for the literature concentration.” The study of cinema is represented by courses such as *Film Genres*, *Film Studies*, and *Film as Literature*. This last course is a study not of film versions of literary works, but “of common literary and/or philosophical themes, such as existentialism, romanticism, naturalism, realism, views of America, or family relationships.”

The English major is characterized by a relatively prescribed curriculum, and a majority of the required courses are traditional in content. In the more traditional categories, students are especially constrained, having to take eight of 12 courses offered. Even in other categories, students have to complete three of 17 available courses—about 18%.

The relatively structured nature of the English major program and the required survey courses are merits, ensuring that all students majoring in English have at least a familiarity with many of the great works of English and American literature. Drawbacks to the program include several topical courses in the postmodernist mode, and a significant number of film courses.

History

The major in History requires a total of 39 semester hours. Students may choose between two concentrations: United States History or European History. Each concentration requires a student to take lower level survey courses in the other concentration, so that all students are exposed to both European and United States history.

Students choosing the United States History option must take HIST 221, *European History to 1517*; HIST 222, *European History Since 1517*; HIST 297, *Sophomore Seminar*; and HIST 498, *Senior Seminar*. Within their concentration, they must take three courses from a six-course survey of American history: HIST 431, *Colonial America, 1492-1763*; HIST 432, *The Revolutionary Era, 1763-1800*; HIST 433, *The Young Republic, 1800-1848*; HIST 434, *Civil War and Reconstruction, 1848-1877*; HIST 435, *Emergence of Industrial America, 1877-1929*; HIST 436, *The United States Since 1929*. In addition, students must take three upper-division courses (9 credit hours) in European and non-Western history, with at least one course in each category.

Students choosing the European History option must take HIST 231, *American History to 1865*; HIST 232, *American History Since 1865*; HIST 297, *Sophomore Seminar*; and HIST 498, *Senior Seminar*. Within their concentration, they must take three courses from a seven-course survey of ancient and European history: HIST 311, *Ancient Greece and Rome*; HIST 313, *The Medieval World*; HIST 411, *Western Imperialism, 1500 to the Present*; HIST 412, *Early Modern Europe*; HIST 413, *Europe in the Eighteenth Century*; HIST 414, *Europe in the Nineteenth Century*; and HIST 416, *Europe in the Twentieth Century*. In addition, students must take three upper-division courses (9 credit hours) in United States history and non-Western history, with at least one course in each category.

The History department offers 59 courses, 45 of them above the 200 level. At the freshman level, focus on global history is evident in such offerings as *World Cultures in Historical Perspective* and *The Ancient Empires*. The latter examines “the creation myths and history of the ancient empires of the Old and New Worlds.” *World Cultures in Historical Perspective* is also listed under the History section of The Perspectives category of the Liberal Studies component, as are *Turning Points in European [or American] History* and *Lunatics, Dreamers and Ordinary People: Biography in European [or American] History*. *The Ancient Empires* and *Religion in America* are listed under the Humanities section of The Perspectives category.

Offerings at the 200 level consist of five courses already mentioned under requirements: HIST 221-222, *European History*; HIST 231-232, *American History*; and HIST 297, *Sophomore Seminar*.

Thirteen courses are offered at the 300 level, including *Ancient Greece and Rome*; *The Medieval World*; and *The History of Twentieth-Century International Relations*. Two semesters each are offered on British history, Latin American history, and the history of China. Single-semester courses cover the history of modern Russia, modern Germany, and North Carolina. As part of the Cooperative Education Program, the department offers a three-credit course, *Cooperative Education in History*.

At the 400 level, a six-semester sequence covers United States history from 1492 to the present. An additional eight courses cover special aspects of American history, such as African American History, women's history, military history, religious history, and Cherokee history. There are also regional histories on the West, the South, and Southern Appalachia.

The study of Europe continues at the 400 level with a four-course sequence from the Reformation through the end of the 20th century, plus the course *Modern European Military History*. Similarly, the 300-level *History of Latin America* is followed by *History of the Mexican Nation*.

Several courses treat public history, such as *Introduction to Public History*, *Archives and Museum Management*, and *Historic Sites and Historic Preservation*. Single-semester courses are taught on *Methods for Teaching Social Science* and *Western Imperialism, 1500 to the Present*.

The department's greatest strength lies in its offerings on the history of the United States, with secondary strength in European history. The history of the remainder of the world is lightly touched on through courses on Latin America, China, and ancient civilizations. Apart from HIST 107, *World Cultures in Historical Perspective*, no courses are taught on the rest of Asia (i.e., Japan, Korea, Indochina), nor on India, Africa, or the Middle East and the Arab world.

The department uses a traditional approach, even in topical courses that focus on geographic regions or cover subjects like military and religious history. The influence of postmodernism seems minimal, confined to a few courses like those on Western imperialism and women's history.