Frequently Asked Questions
UCCS Compass Curriculum Program
Campus-Wide Undergraduate Education

The goal of this document is to provide some answers to commonly asked questions by faculty.

Overview of Program

What is the new Compass Curriculum program?

This is our first faculty approved campus-wide general education program for all colleges. This program is planned to start in the Fall of 2014 with freshman. Transfer students will begin the program in the 2015-2016 academic year.

In addition to the existing composition and quantitative reasoning requirements already shared across colleges, the new curriculum framework consists of all freshmen taking a Gateway Experience (the former Freshman Seminar) course, followed by three Explore courses, an Advanced Core course (in the third year), and a Capstone Experience. Note that the Capstone Experience may possibly be a senior seminar course and can be from 0-3 credit hours within the major.

Other integrated components include two Writing Intensive courses, an Inclusiveness Course, and a Sustainability course. Students will also be required to take a quantitative reasoning course, and everyone will still be required to do a writing portfolio. LAS area and DOG requirements remain unchanged for students in LAS.

Critical Components:

Gateway Experience- Oral Communication and Responsibility are critical components to the Gateway Experience.

Explore- These courses introduce students to a breadth of disciplinary perspectives and methods providing a broad level of understanding within a particular discipline.

Advanced Core- These courses must focus on “Knowledge in Action,” centering on how engagement in real world endeavors is informed by academic knowledge.

Capstone Experience- A Capstone Experience centers on allowing students to synthesize skill development. Capstone Experiences will include a focus on communication skills as well as critical and/or creative thinking. This course will be offered within the major.

Writing Intensive Courses (WIC)- WIC courses must emphasize writing as a process and assign at least 3000 words across assignments. This course could be integrated into students’ majors, general electives, or general education coursework.

Sustainability Courses- Students will learn about social equity, environmental protection, and economic development, among others.
Inclusiveness (Global/Diversity)- Focus on preparing students for a society with diverse experiences, perspectives and realities, both in the US and, ideally, globally. May also focus on the dynamics and consequences of inclusion and exclusion.

How will this affect my students?

Freshmen entering in 2014 (and transfer students under 30 credit hours) will be required to take a Gateway Experience course (GPS 1010). Currently around 80% of our freshman students already take Freshman Seminar.

Starting in the Fall of 2014, new students in all colleges on campus will take this intentionally designed program, giving them a signature UCCS experience and preparing them for their professional futures.

Explore courses and LAS Area requirements

How do Explore courses relate to LAS Area Requirements?

The Explore curriculum is comprised of courses focusing on 1) the Physical and Natural World, 2) the Arts, Humanities, and Cultures, and 3) Society, Social and Economic institutions, Health, and Human behavior. While these areas generally track the LAS Natural Sciences, Humanities, and Social Sciences well, Explore courses are requested from all colleges on campus.

Students will take three courses from the Explore curriculum with each course being from a different category.

Your department may consider listing up to 8 courses on the Explore list per area. For LAS departments, courses can be listed on both the Area requirement list as well as the Explore list, but students can’t double-dip. LAS students must decide if a course will count for an LAS Area requirement or an Explore course.

How many Explore courses can my department propose to the GE program?

Your department can propose up to 8 courses/area per department. In fact, LAS departments may consider proposing all of their current Area courses, or adding new courses to the Explore list that are not on the Area requirement list.

Can an Explore course be upper division?

Yes: Explore courses can be lower or upper division.

Are all Explore courses open to students from all majors?
While departments may limit entrance based upon prerequisites, courses without prerequisites or with minimal prerequisites are encouraged.

*Can a course offered from a student’s major department count towards their Explore courses?*

No.

*How many Explore courses can a student take in the area of their minor?*

Students can take two Explore courses in their minor in LAS.

*What if a student takes an Explore course worth more credits than the minimum 3 for their course? For example, what if a student takes a 5 credit course instead of a 3 credit course? Can two credits count towards their LAS area requirements for that component?*

No. While there is a minimum number of credits required, three Explore courses of at least three credit hours are required, as well as three courses from each area of the area requirements.

**LAS DOG requirements and the Inclusiveness (Diversity/Global) requirement**

*How do courses that are approved for the LAS DOG requirement fit within the new GE framework?*

The LAS DOG requirements remain unchanged for students in LAS. However, LAS courses (with C&R approval) that are currently approved on the DOG list in Diversity and Global Awareness may be submitted to the Inclusiveness (Global/Diversity) category. If courses on the current LAS approved DOG list are approved as Inclusiveness courses on the Compass Curriculum list, then LAS students may count them as their Compass Curriculum requirement. We hope that these courses will also be available to students of all colleges as well, where appropriate.

**Integrated Components (Writing Intensive, Inclusiveness, and Sustainability)**
**Are courses within the Writing Intensive, Inclusiveness, or Sustainability components required to be upper division?**

One of the Writing Intensive courses must be upper division. However, the Inclusiveness or Sustainability courses can be upper or lower division.

**What type of support is available for faculty as they revise courses to include more writing?**

We hope that existing courses can be adapted so that writing assignments help students develop disciplinary ways of knowing. Along these lines, Writing Intensive courses may be eligible for instructional support via "Writing Fellows." Writing Fellows help support writing assignments in a course by meeting with students, attending and participating in class activities, providing feedback on drafts, etc. Other instructional support includes seminars and stipends for your faculty to help with the revision of writing assignments.

**Advanced Core courses**

**Are all Advanced Core courses open to students from all majors?**

Ideally, all Advanced Core courses will be open to students of all majors, even if the course is offered for credit within a major, but this is not a requirement.

**Can an Advanced Core course be lower division?**

No. Advanced Core courses must be at the 3000 level.

**Can courses count as both Explore and Advanced Core?**

No. The intention of the program is for students to get a fundamental breadth of knowledge in a field as an Explore course. Advanced Core courses allow students to put their knowledge in action, actively applying and integrating knowledge beyond their major discipline.

**Can a course offered with a disciplinary perspective within a student's major count towards their Advanced Core?**

No. The intention is that students will take Advanced Core courses that broadly expand their perspective beyond their major discipline.
Counting courses as more than one category

*Can a course count in both a main category (Explore, Advanced Core, Capstone), and as Integrated Component (Inclusiveness, Writing Intensive, Sustainability)?*

Yes.

Course Approval and Timeline

*What is the course approval process?*

The Compass Curriculum Committee consists of faculty from all colleges. Faculty submitting a course for review should fill out the online forms including pasting in a copy of their course syllabus. *If there are multiple sections of a course, all sections will be held to the same standard if the course is approved for the Compass Curriculum.*

The department chair will sign off on the proposal and submit it to the college curriculum committee for the next meeting. Upon approval by the college curriculum committee, the proposal will go to the Compass Curriculum Review Committee. Compass Curriculum Review Committee approved courses will be updated monthly on the Compass Curriculum website. The course evaluation process will be ongoing monthly throughout the fall/spring semesters.

*How will courses be approved?*

The Compass Curriculum Committee reviews all courses and meets with faculty who submit those courses monthly. The acceptability of a course is based upon a preponderance of evidence that the course fits the GE components. This means that while all items listed on the approval sheets are required at some level, some critical components must be incorporated at a deeper level than others. Page 1 lists the critical components on which a GE course must focus for approval into the GE Curriculum.

*What do I need to do for my course to be approved by the Compass Curriculum Program?*

Fill out the Submission form online through the Provost’s website.
As faculty, after you submit a course online to the Compass Curriculum Program then an email will be generated to both you and your department chair. The order of approval before submission to the Compass Curriculum is as follows:

1. Faculty submit a course online- an email is sent to both the faculty member and their department chair indicating a course has been submitted.
2. Department Chair approval – this is done by clicking a link in the email that describes the course. If the course is not approved, the Department chair will discuss with the faculty.
3. Curriculum Chair approval- when the department chair approves of a course, emails are sent to both the college curriculum committee chair and the college associate dean.
4. College Associate Dean approval- once the Associate Dean approves of the course then the submission goes automatically to the Compass Curriculum program for review.

**What if a course offers multiple sections?**

Similar to LAS C&R rules, when a course is submitted to the Compass Curriculum Program for approval the online submission form needs only to be filled out once, and only one syllabus needs to be submitted. Please note that all sections of a course approved by the Compass Curriculum must satisfy the requirements of the Compass Curriculum in the category submitted. That means that if different faculty teach the course, and it has been approved for a Compass Curriculum category (Advanced Core, Explore, etc.), the course must still retain those components for which it has been approved.

**What if my course could count for more than one component?**

Because each component of the Compass Curriculum is different, faculty must submit the course to each area of the compass curriculum using a separate online form.

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**Student Success Related Policies**

1. Policy on students who change colleges after taking their second writing course.
The policy of the Compass Curriculum is that students who take two approved writing program courses, regardless of the approved course, have completed the requirements of the Compass Curriculum.

In some cases there may be additional college requirements, and the Compass Curriculum will defer to the college decision in those cases regarding if another course is necessary. In that case the request to take the additional course will come from the college, not the Compass Curriculum.

2. Double counting courses between the Explore curriculum and the major.

Explore courses must be taken outside of the major. If a student takes an Explore course from a department and then changes their major to one which includes that course in the major requirements, then an additional Explore course must be taken outside of the major.

3. Students who matriculate at UCCS before fall 2014 are not required to take the Compass Curriculum even if they change colleges in their continuous enrollment at UCCS.

4. Students who matriculate at UCCS before fall 2014 but then stop out for up to two years (and who do not enroll at another institution of higher learning within this time) are not required to enroll in the Compass Curriculum.

This policy is directed towards military students who are deployed.

5. Students who earn a bachelor's degree or higher from UCCS before fall 2014 and thereafter begin studies on an additional bachelor's degree are exempt from the Compass Curriculum.

6. Students who hold a bachelor's degree from another institution, but matriculate at UCCS during or after fall 2014, will be viewed as transfer students.

7. Students who enroll at UCCS with 13 or more transferrable credit hours are considered transfer students and will be exempt from the Compass Curriculum during the 2014-2015 academic year.

8. Minimum grade requirements for Compass Curriculum courses.

The minimum passing grade that will count for credit for a Compass Curriculum course is a D-. Departmental and college rules apply for courses within a student’s major.
9. **Credit for courses that are cross-listed in LAS and Advanced Core.**

Under the conditions where a student takes a cross-listed course (e.g., WEST and HUM), credit for the Advanced Core will be given for either course assuming that it is an approved course for Advanced Core in the Compass Curriculum.

10. **Appeals to the Compass Curriculum.**

The Compass Curriculum Appeals Committee will review student appeals under the following conditions: 1) Students are in their last semester at UCCS and have a valid reason to request waiver of a Compass Curriculum course, and 2) under conditions where there is a disagreement regarding transfer credit for a course that students are requesting replace a Compass Curriculum course.

This committee is comprised of faculty members at UCCS who will hear student’s appeals. The Faculty Director of the Compass Curriculum will have veto authority on all committee decisions.