



**NORTHERN
PENNSYLVANIA
REGIONAL COLLEGE**

Policy: NPRC-3015: General Education Philosophy and Goals

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Subject: General Education Philosophy and Goals

1. PURPOSE

The general education philosophy and goals of Northern Pennsylvania Regional College describe the commitment of the college to providing each graduate with a strong foundation in general education to establish the ability to pursue lifelong learning and professional success.

2. SCOPE AND APPLICABILITY

This policy is applicable to all students enrolled in credit-bearing degree or certificate programs at Northern Pennsylvania Regional College, the faculty who are responsible for instruction, and the academic administrative unit.

3. REFERENCES

3.1 INDX-0010 Master Policy Index

3.2 Pennsylvania Department of Education Transfer and Articulation Oversight Committee Governance, Policies, and Procedures, 2008-2009

4. DEFINITIONS

4.1 The philosophy of general education at Northern Pennsylvania Regional College is to produce graduates who possess a common academic foundation of knowledge, skills, attitudes, and abilities which encourages life-long learning and fosters intellectual curiosity.

4.2 The general education goals of Northern Pennsylvania Regional College are defined as follows:

- 4.2.1 Communication is the accurate and appropriate use of verbal and written language to explain, discuss, facilitate, and comprehend the exchange of relevant knowledge.
- 4.2.2 Reasoning is the development of a range of approaches for analysis, evaluation, and problem-solving that includes the ability to express informed opinions about artistic works; fluently and accurately use computational methods and mathematical reasoning to solve problems and analyze data; and apply scientific approaches to explain physical phenomena.
- 4.2.3 Respect for diversity is demonstration of an appreciation of multiculturalism, promotion of a culture of respect for others, and recognition of differing ideas or opinions.
- 4.2.4 Professionalism is the adherence to principles of ethical behavior and organizational codes of conduct, the exercise of good judgement, and the assumption of personal responsibility for one's actions and choices.

5. POLICY

- 5.1 Northern Pennsylvania Regional College is committed to providing general education foundational to the development of the qualities, skills, and abilities associated with college-educated adults. All academic degree programs shall include general education foundational courses whose content, expectations, objectives, and learning outcomes embody the general education goals. Major courses within each academic degree program shall apply the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and abilities established by the general education foundational courses to the disciplines within the major.
- 5.2 Certificate and associate degree programs must include a full complement of general education foundational course requirements appropriate to the level of the degree, including courses essential to the development of foundational knowledge, skills, attitudes, and abilities in communication, reasoning, respect for diversity, and professionalism.
 - 5.2.1 The Associate in Arts (AA) degree is intended to prepare the student to transfer to a baccalaureate degree program at the junior level. It gives emphasis to those majoring in pathways which include, but are not limited to, education, interdisciplinary studies, and social sciences. While a student may enter directly into employment upon attainment of this degree, the goal of programs that award this degree is successful transfer with junior status.

- 5.2.1.1 A minimum of 27 semester hours of coursework shall be in general education and shall be composed of general education foundational courses commonly transferable to multiple public baccalaureate institutions.
 - 5.2.1.2 Required coursework must include at least two courses whose focus is communication, at least three courses whose focus is reasoning, at least two courses whose focus is respect for diversity, and emphasize professionalism throughout the curriculum.
 - 5.2.1.3 Each general education goal must be addressed and assessed in at least one course required for degree completion.
- 5.2.2 The Associate in Science (AS) degree is intended to prepare the student to transfer to a baccalaureate degree program prepared for entry at the junior level. It gives emphasis to those majoring in pathways which include, but are not limited to, business; health sciences; and science, technology, engineering, and math fields (STEM). While a student may enter directly into employment upon attainment of this degree, the goal of programs that award this degree is successful transfer with junior status.
- 5.2.2.1 A minimum of 27 semester hours of coursework shall be in general education and shall be composed of general education foundational courses commonly transferable to multiple public baccalaureate institutions.
 - 5.2.2.2 Required coursework must include at least two courses whose focus is communication, at least three courses whose focus is reasoning, at least two courses whose focus is respect for diversity, and emphasize professionalism throughout the curriculum.
 - 5.2.2.3 Each general education goal must be addressed and assessed in at least one course required for degree completion.
- 5.2.3 The Associate in Applied Science (AAS) degree is intended to prepare the student to enter directly into employment in a specific career. It gives emphasis to those majoring in occupational programs designed with and through the input of employer advisory committees. The goal of this degree is to achieve acceptance as an employment credential. While a student may be able to achieve successful transfer of some or all courses within this degree to a baccalaureate institution, the goal of programs that award this degree is successful employment.
- 5.2.3.1 For successful entry directly into employment in a specific career and to provide a foundation for life-long learning and future career changes, a

minimum of 15 semester hours of coursework for programs awarding this degree shall be in general education unless otherwise required by the accrediting agency for the program.

- 5.2.3.2 Required general education coursework must include at least one course whose focus is communication, at least one course whose focus is reasoning, at least one course whose focus is respect for diversity, and emphasize professionalism throughout the curriculum. Other general education coursework required by the degree may be related to the specific occupational career area.
- 5.2.3.3 Each general education goal must be addressed and assessed in at least one course required for degree completion.
- 5.2.4 The Certificate in Applied Science (CAS) is a coherent, specialized curriculum designed for students in search of a specific body of knowledge for personal/career development or professional continuing education. The intent of the certificate program is to prepare the student to enter directly into employment in a specific career and meet documented workforce needs of local employers. Additionally, certificate programs often provide the foundation for the Associate of Applied Science (AAS) degree for occupational programs.
 - 5.2.4.1 As the foundation of the Certificate in Applied Science and for successful entry into employment in a specific career, a minimum of 6 semester hours of coursework for the certificate shall be in general education.
 - 5.2.4.2 Required general education foundational courses shall include at least one course whose focus is communication, at least one course whose focus is reasoning, address and assess respect for diversity within at least one required course, and emphasize professionalism throughout the curriculum.
 - 5.2.4.3 Each general education goal must be addressed and assessed in at least one required course.

6. RESPONSIBILITIES AND TIMELINES

- 6.1 Adherence to the general education philosophy and goals as defined is the responsibility of all who work and learn at Northern Pennsylvania Regional College. General education goals are addressed, imbedded, and assessed in all programs.
- 6.2 An Assessment Committee appointed and led by an academic administrator or faculty member designated by the Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs, composed of a subset of the college's academic administrators, student services unit,

support staff, full-time faculty, and part-time faculty, shall be responsible for the following actions related to this policy statement per the timeline outlined:

- 6.2.1 Development and oversight of the activities of the Assessment Plan related to the assessment of the general education goals of the College, including the following:
 - 6.2.1.1 Selection or development and maintenance of rubrics for use in assessing each general education goal
 - 6.2.1.2 Collection of student work samples related to each general education goal for each academic term from at least 20% of the general education foundational courses offered and must include all sections of a course from which samples are gathered
 - 6.2.1.3 Evaluation of student work samples using the assessment rubrics shall be conducted at least once per academic year
 - 6.2.1.4 Collection of syllabi or other evidence applicable to the assessment of each general education goal
 - 6.2.1.5 Submission of a report summarizing the activities and results of the assessment of general education goals for each academic year to the Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs prior to the first day of instruction for the fall term of the subsequent academic year
- 6.2.2 Review and, as needed, revision of the goals and activities for assessment of the general education goals for the subsequent academic year and submission of those goals and activities to the Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs annually prior to the deadline for submission of final grades during the spring academic term.
- 6.3 Faculty shall be responsible for providing the Assessment Committee with student work samples, data, and results of assessment instruments applied and activities conducted as is necessary for assessment of student learning related to the general education goals.
- 6.4 Faculty shall be responsible for inclusion of applicable general education goals as a component of the syllabus for each course.
- 6.5 The Dean of Curriculum and Instruction or designee shall be responsible for identifying which general education goals are addressed in each of the credit-bearing courses offered by the College and ensuring the syllabi of all sections of those courses

list the common general education goals addressed, imbedded, and assessed in the course.

- 6.6 The Dean of Curriculum and Instruction shall be responsible for ensuring that all general education goals are addressed, imbedded, and assessed in the curriculum of every degree and certificate program.
- 6.7 The Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs or designee of same shall be responsible for electronic dissemination of an Annual Assessment Report to college administrative personnel for each academic year prior to the conclusion of the schedule adjustment period published on the Academic Calendar for the first term in the subsequent academic year. The Annual Assessment Report shall include the findings by the Assessment Committee concerning assessment of the general education goals
- 6.8 The Chief of Staff or designee shall be responsible for dissemination of the Annual Assessment Report for each academic year through public posting on the college’s website prior to the start of the second term for the subsequent academic year.

7. REVIEW STATEMENT

This policy shall be reviewed on a regular basis at least once every five years per the Policy Review Schedule established by the President or his designee. A review of the policy may be requested prior to the timeframe outlined by the policy review schedule by any student, faculty, staff, administrator, or board member. Such a request must be submitted in writing to the office of the President and must address specific concerns. Upon receipt of such a request, a complete review of the policy will be conducted within three months. Upon review, the President or President’s designee may recommend to the Board of Trustees that the policy be amended or repealed.

8. SIGNATURES

Signature on file

_____	_____
Chair, Board of Trustees	Date

Signature on file

_____	_____
President	Date

Attachments: NPRC-3015.A Assessment Release Form
Distribution: Board of Trustees; regionalcollegepa.org