

Ventura College General Education Philosophy Statement

General Education is designed to introduce students to the variety of means through which people comprehend the modern world. It reflects the conviction of the college that those who receive our degrees must possess in common certain basic principles, concepts and methodologies both unique to and shared by the various disciplines. College educated persons must be able to use this knowledge when evaluating and appreciating the physical environment, the culture, and the society in which they live. Most importantly, general education should lead to better self-understanding.

This understanding involves the ability to think and to communicate clearly and effectively, both orally and in writing; to understand and apply mathematical concepts; to understand the modes of inquiry of the major disciplines; to be aware of other cultures and times; to achieve insights gained through experience in thinking about ethical problems; and to develop the capacity for self-understanding. In addition to these accomplishments, students shall possess sufficient depth in some field of knowledge to contribute to lifetime interest.

To meet the objectives of general education:

- A. Courses in the natural sciences are those that help students examine the physical universe, its life forms, and its natural phenomena; and develop an understanding and appreciation of the scientific method and of the relationships between science and other human activities.
- B. Courses in the social and behavioral sciences help students develop an understanding of the method of scientific inquiry used in the social and behavioral sciences; stimulate in students critical thinking about human behavior; and promote an appreciation of how societies and social subgroups have operated in the past and function in the present.
- C. Courses in the humanities help students develop an awareness of how people of different cultures throughout the ages have responded to themselves, other people, and their environment in artistic and cultural creation; develop aesthetic understanding and the ability to make value judgments; and participate in creative experiences.
- D. Courses in language and rationality help students develop principles and applications of language toward logical thought, clear and precise expression, and critical evaluation of communication in whatever symbol systems the students use.
- E. Courses in health and physical education/kinesiology help students develop the understanding and skills necessary to maintain a healthful life.
- F. Courses in ethnic and gender studies help students develop an awareness of the historical roots and an appreciation of the cultural contributions of diverse ethnic populations and women; lead to an understanding of the causes and consequences of socio-economic inequality based on race, sex or ethnicity; and explore ways of eliminating such inequalities.

