

GENERAL EDUCATION

GENERAL EDUCATION APPLIES ONLY TO STUDENTS WHO ENTERED MILLS BEFORE 2016. STUDENTS WHO ENTERED AFTER 2016 SHOULD MEET THE GOALS OF THE CORE CURRICULUM (<https://catalog.mills.edu/undergraduate/academic-requirements/core-curriculum>).

General education is the hallmark of a true liberal arts education, distinguishing it from an education focused solely on a specialized field. At Mills, we understand the importance of a student's major for developing focused skills and knowledge in a specific field; however, we also know that our students come to us to gain a breadth of experiences, ideas, and skills. At the foundation of this program is our belief that a liberal arts education should offer the opportunity to explore and master a varied set of skills, perspectives, and disciplinary experiences. The General Education (GE) Program ensures that each Mills student will graduate with confidence in their intellectual abilities, a broad awareness of diverse ideas and perspectives, and an appreciation of and capacity for lifelong learning.

Our GE Program is guided by a set of learning outcomes, rather than a strict list of courses or a single generic curriculum. Students design their general education plan in consultation with their faculty advisor, ensuring that they achieve a specific set of learning outcomes; and tailor a program suited to their own unique needs and interests. To this end, some of the courses students take to fulfill their GE requirements may be in the major. The program also places the work students do in the major in a larger context by permitting the opportunity to explore realms of learning that fall outside a specific discipline.

Infused with the principles of the College's mission, the GE Program emphasizes that all Mills College graduates should be able to write clearly, think across disciplines, work in productive collaboration with others, and offer critical analysis and logical reasoning in a variety of contexts; be technically competent in a computerized world, artistically sensitive, and adept in scientific and historical thinking; and be educated about the multicultural dimensions of our world, the influence of social institutions, and crucial issues facing women in contemporary society. The Mills Electronic Collaborative Learning Center offers students and faculty opportunities for innovative teaching that emphasizes technology and computer literacy while the ENG 001 program has been developed as an intensive first-year writing course introducing students to college-level writing.

Numerous other courses throughout the curriculum reflect our general education outcomes; students can also gain GE credit through AP credit or prior college-level course work.

General Education Requirements for the Bachelor's Degree

See General Education Courses (<https://catalog.mills.edu/undergraduate/academic-requirements/general-education/general-education-courses>).

Each of the requirements listed below can be fulfilled in a number of ways, including Mills courses, transfer credit, and/or relevant AP courses. The advisor will help the student set up a general

education plan tailored to the student's specific academic needs and interests.

The GE requirements fall into three outcome categories: skills, perspectives, and disciplines. Each outcome is listed below with a descriptive rationale and how it can be fulfilled. A list of courses meeting these requirements is available online under General Education Courses (<https://catalog.mills.edu/undergraduate/academic-requirements/general-education/general-education-courses>). A given course may meet no more than two GE requirements.

1. Skills

- **Written Communication (2.25 credits)**

Graduates of a liberal arts institution should be able to write papers in a variety of contexts, using generally accepted grammar and forms to convey ideas, research findings, and arguments.

All undergraduate students who have not completed an acceptable college-level English composition course are required to take Critical Reading and Expository Writing (ENG 001 for 1.25 credits). ENG 001 must be completed by the end of the first year at Mills. AP credit does not fulfill ENG 001.

ENG 001 (or equivalent) and a second writing-intensive course fulfill the Written Communication requirement.

- **Quantitative and Computational Reasoning (1 credit)**

Facility with quantitative and computational methods of reasoning and analysis is an important skill for all citizens in our society. It also prepares students for a broader spectrum of career options in a rapidly changing world. In addition to understanding and developing cogent logical arguments, students should be able to translate problems into the language of mathematics and computer science, and to use mathematical and computational tools to organize and analyze information.

- **Information Literacy/Information Technology Skills (0 credit)**

In a society of rapid technological change and proliferating information resources, individuals are confronted with an abundance of information in a variety of formats. Students should have the skills needed to evaluate the authenticity, validity, and reliability of information. Being information-literate is a critical component in establishing a pattern of lifelong learning, and the ability to effectively communicate information using computers is an essential aspect of a well-rounded liberal arts education. Information literacy requires basic knowledge of the nature of computers and information systems; ability to apply information technology in written communication and in conducting research; understanding the capabilities and limitations of technology; and understanding strategies and standards in the evaluation of information sources.

- **COLL 005 Information Literacy-Information Technology Skills**

fulfills this requirement. This course is taken online through Blackboard. This course is graded "P/NP" only. Please see the self-enrollment instructions (https://inside.mills.edu/administration/provosts_office/college005.php) to begin your course work for COLL 005.

2. Perspectives

- **Women and Gender (1 credit)**
Students graduating from a women's college should demonstrate the ability to think clearly and constructively about the most crucial issues that relate to women in contemporary society. They should also have an understanding of current and past ideas about women and gender.
- **Multicultural Perspectives (1 credit)**
Globalization, migration patterns, and changing demographics in the United States and around the world have highlighted the political, social, and cultural contributions of people of color. At the same time, social movements based on racial, ethnic, and national identities have made a significant impact at both the national and international levels. An understanding of multiculturalism, racial formation and stratification, and exposure to challenges to dominant discourses will enable students to comprehend and analyze these processes.

3. Disciplinary Experiences

- **Creation and Criticism in the Arts (1 credit)**
Creation in the arts is an intuitive process that combines personal vision with specific knowledge of different media and genres, specific skills in construction and presentation, and an awareness of the history of the medium. Criticism in the arts attributes meaning to creative works through interpretation, which combines an understanding of the creative act with analyses of its historical, political, and cultural contexts. Because the creation and critique of art are central to a liberal arts education, students should have a critical or creative relationship to art in at least one medium (including painting, photography, sculpture, and literature).
- **Historical Perspectives (1 credit)**
The past matters. It informs the present and shapes current affairs in complex and often obscure ways. Memories of the past are continually contested both in public discourse and within the academy. Learning to analyze critically and participate in these conversations is a core element of a liberal arts education.
- **Natural Sciences (1 credit)**
Study of the natural sciences and their methods is critical for many reasons; among them are: gaining knowledge about how the natural world is structured and how it behaves; evaluating the role knowledge of the natural world plays in the development of technologies; understanding the role scientific knowledge plays in setting many governmental policies and in dealing with health and environmental issues; and appreciating the design and value of scientific methods.
- **Human Institutions and Behavior (1 credit)**
The realm of human behavior manifests patterns that can be studied, understood, and predicted, similar to those found in nature as a whole. Both responsible citizenship and wise leadership depend on an understanding of how individuals behave and interact within social institutions. The findings, logical paradigms, and techniques of the social sciences provide essential insights into understanding these interactions.