

Academic Information for Freshmen

GENERAL EDUCATION PROGRAM

For the Bachelor of Arts, the Bachelor of Science, and the Bachelor of Fine Arts: This information is a digest of current requirements of the General Education Program at Converse College. It is important that you review it carefully.

The General Education Program (GEP) is a plan of study designed to provide Converse graduates with a broad foundation in the liberal arts. Internships and courses in applied areas which prepare students for certification or professional examination are not included in the GEP. A number of courses available for general education credit may also be taken for credit in the major, minor, or career preparation area. These courses may be used to satisfy both requirements.

CATEGORY I: START--First Year Seminar. A required 3 (or 4) hour course for incoming freshmen that will constitute a common and academically-significant experience in a student's first semester at Converse.

CATEGORY II: SKILLS Each student must meet the requirements listed below by completing specific courses or by exemption as described.

A. Written Communication

1. English 101 or 290* or exempt. *Eng 290: Advanced Composition, does not satisfy the GEP except for those placed there via an AP score of 3. Exemption is possible via: (a.) a score of 4 or higher on either AP English exam (credit awarded); (b.) a score of 4 or higher in a course completed within the International Baccalaureate Program (credit awarded); (c.) an SAT verbal score of 700 or above (no credit awarded); (d.) an ACT verbal score of 31 or above (no credit awarded).
2. One writing intensive course; a graduation requirement, not a separate course. Courses designated as *writing intensive* are indicated in the *Undergraduate Catalog*.

B. Language and Culture

1. Proficiency at the third semester level in **one** of the following languages: ASL, French, German, Italian or Spanish. Students must have upon entrance, or achieve at Converse, a competence equal to that achieved by completing three semesters of language at the college level. Exemption is possible via: (a.) a score of 4 or higher on the AP exam in a foreign language (credit awarded); (b.) a score of 4 or higher in a course completed within the International Baccalaureate Program (credit awarded); (c.) 3 or 4 years of language in high school AND passing required written and oral placement tests administered by Converse (no credit awarded). Placement at the intermediate (3rd semester) level is determined by (a.) a score of 3 on the AP exam in a foreign language AND a written placement test administered by Converse (credit awarded), or by the number of years completed in high school and the written placement test (no credit awarded).
2. At least one additional non-European or non-Anglophone (non-English speaking) course. Designations for such courses are indicated in the *Undergraduate Catalog*.

C. Quantitative Reasoning

1. Mathematics 108 or higher, or exempt. Exemption is possible via (a) a score of 3 or higher on one of the AP math exams (credit awarded); (b) a score of 4 or higher in a course completed within the International Baccalaureate Program (credit awarded); (c) an exemption exam administered by Converse (no credit awarded).
2. One additional course making substantial use of mathematical, logical, or computational reasoning. Designations for

such courses are indicated in the *Undergraduate Catalog*.

D. Health and Well-Being 1. One 2-hour or 3-hour wellness course. Designations for such courses are indicated in the *Undergraduate Catalog*. 2. One 1-hour or 2-hour activity course from among PE or dance.

CATEGORY III: PERSPECTIVES

Students are required to take the specified number of 3- or 4-hour courses from each of the five academic areas listed below. Within each academic area, each course must be in a different discipline. At least two courses from different academic areas must be at the 200 level or above. All courses that count for GEP credit are indicated by an asterisk * in the *Undergraduate Catalog*. Some courses may have prerequisites; also indicated in the Catalog.

A. Humanities: Two courses from history, philosophy, religion, women's studies or humanities.

B. Literature: One course selected from English or foreign language (in translation or upper-level literature courses in the language)

C. Fine Arts: Two history or appreciation courses from art, dance, film, interior design, music, musical theatre, or theatre.

D. Natural Sciences: Two courses from astronomy, biology, chemistry, geology, or physics. At least one course must include a laboratory. AP Environmental Science with a score of 3 or higher will also count as a natural science.

E. Social Science: Two courses from anthropology, economics, politics, psychology, sociology or world geography.

CATEGORY IV: FINISH--Capstone Experience One specific course in the major required for graduation.

***THE ACADEMIC MENTOR / ADVISOR** Converse has a two-tiered academic advising program to help the student as she develops her potential. 1) Carefully selected members of the faculty serve as **freshmen mentors** who offer individual guidance to the student from her entrance until she has selected her field(s) of concentration, and beyond. The mentor helps the student make the best possible adjustment to college life, guides her in the choice of appropriate coursework that satisfies requirements of the General Education Program, explores potential areas of interest and/or talent, or initiates entrance into a chosen major field of study. 2) When the student is ready to declare her major(s) (a student may declare her major upon entering Converse) she transfers to an advisor in that area. The **major advisor** guides the student through her selected field of concentration, and may offer advice regarding career opportunities as she progresses toward graduation. All mentors and advisors have scheduled conferences with students at regular intervals, but are available at any time for consultation. While mentors and advisors do suggest, help, and guide **it must be emphasized that each student is ultimately responsible for the fulfillment of all academic requirements.**

***CHOOSING COURSES** As you may have noticed, the General Education Program is not a list of required courses; it is a plan for the distribution of your studies over the major divisions of the liberal arts. There are very few required courses, as such, and therefore you must make a number of choices. Mentors and Advisors can help you make choices to fulfill the GEP, but you are responsible for meeting these requirements. You should keep in mind the following: **(1)** One aspect of the GEP needs your immediate attention: foreign language or ASL. **(2)** A majority of your classmates will be placed in English 101, Composition, either in the fall as they enter Converse or in the spring. **(3)** You do have four years to complete the General Education Program so you should not be concerned about taking time to explore the curriculum for your special interests. **(4)** If possible, select a major early (preferably in the spring of your freshman year) and begin the process

of planning your college career on the basis of that program. (5) During the January Term of your freshman year you should move out of the GEP and choose a course that appeals to you as a stimulating and interesting subject, not just a “requirement.” In summary, the freshman year is a time for adjustment to college and for discovery and development of your intellectual and academic abilities. You will find at Converse a broad variety of opportunities for growth. ENJOY the experience!

***CREDIT BY EXAMINATION** Converse awards credit for the nationally standardized Advanced Placement Tests of the College Board. Credit will usually be given for a score of **3** or better on these tests. For specific information about the relationship of these tests to required courses, you should consult the respective department or the Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs. In addition, Converse recognizes the International Baccalaureate program and awards credit in subject areas in which the individual scores **4** or above.

***SELECTING A MAJOR** Converse offers an excellent variety of major programs: accounting, art (education; therapy; history; studio), biology, biochemistry, business admin., chemistry, creative & professional writing, economics, education (early childhood, elementary), English, German, history, interior design, mathematics, music, politics, psychology, religion, Spanish, special education (comprehensive; mental disabilities; emotional disabilities, learning disabilities; deaf & hard of hearing), musical theatre and theatre. A special feature of the Converse curriculum is the opportunity it offers most students to complete a **double-major** within the regular four-year course of study. A double-major consists of fulfilling the requirements of two major programs offered by different academic areas. The *Undergraduate Catalog*, available online at www.converse.edu, provides more detailed information.

***TEACHER EDUCATION** To earn a teaching certificate the student must satisfy not only the Converse General Education requirements, but also the specific course requirements of the state in which she is to teach. Therefore, it is essential that any student who plans to prepare for teaching be advised by the Converse Department of Education. Be sure to consult with the faculty of the department early in your freshman year. There are special admissions criteria for teacher education programs.

***THE CALENDAR** Converse College operates within the framework of a three-term calendar, which is arranged in the following pattern: 13-14 weeks (fall term)—four weeks (January term)—13-14 weeks (spring term). The fall term extends from late-August through mid-December, and the spring term from early February until near the end of May.

***A LAST WORD** In the coming weeks you will be receiving additional information about a number of things—language placement information, *SOAR*, the orientation program, the opening schedule of events, etc.—designed to make your enrollment at Converse as pleasant and efficient as possible. We look forward to seeing you at *SOAR* during the summer and look forward to the opportunity to introduce you to the Converse community. You have chosen a **GREAT PLACE** to spend your college years!!! If you have any questions, please contact Dr. Brant Bynum, Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs/Director of Student Development & Success, at (864) 596-9092, or e-mail at brant.bynum@converse.edu.

Revised February 2016

