

# Bachelor of Arts General Education Requirements

## General Education Requirements

General education requirements constitute the core degree requirements of the curriculum. Courses are described in this catalog; general education attributes for all courses are indicated in the class and lab schedule (<http://www.stolaf.edu/sis/public-aaclasslab.cfm>).

St. Olaf's general education curriculum does not work by a distribution system (so many courses in certain disciplines); rather, it identifies an area of learning for general education and sets out a series of guidelines and intended learning outcomes that inform the construction of courses. Departments and programs submit their course proposals to the Curriculum Committee, which judges whether a course fulfills a specific general education requirement. Because the college's expectations for general education are distinctive and characteristic of St. Olaf College alone, students must be particularly careful as they plan off-campus and transfer work. The Registrar's Office determines how transfer work applies to St. Olaf's general education requirements; advisors of approved St. Olaf programs determine whether a course taken through one of these programs/approved by St. Olaf applies to the general education requirements. See Transfer of Credit to St. Olaf (<http://catalog.stolaf.edu/academic-regulations-procedures/transfer-credit>).

Some courses in the St. Olaf curriculum count for more than one graduation requirement at the same time. For example, a course taken for general education may also be the first course in a major. A course may simultaneously satisfy two different general education requirements. In addition, students may complete some requirements with approved courses taken on St. Olaf-approved international and off-campus programs.

A typical course of study may have proportions as follows:

General Education	14-16 Credits
Major	8-10 Credits
Electives	10-12 Credits
Total for graduation	35 Credits

Depending upon Advanced Placement examination results, choice of world language, prior preparation in languages and mathematics, choice of a major, and addition of a second major, a concentration, or a teaching certification, the proportions will vary.

The codes for the general education requirements are listed under each requirement. The code for each requirement fulfilled by a course is listed in the class and lab schedule (<https://www.stolaf.edu/sis/public-aaclasslab.cfm>), not in the course listings in this catalog.

Of courses taken to meet general education requirements, only .25 credit courses may be taken on a satisfactory/unsatisfactory (S/U) (<http://catalog.stolaf.edu/academic-regulations-procedures/grades/#su>) basis. Full or .50 credit courses taken S/U do not fulfill general education requirements.

An independent study or an independent research (<http://catalog.stolaf.edu/academic-regulations-procedures/registration-course-enrollment/#independent>) credit does not fulfill a general education requirement for the degree. Exception: In consultation

with the faculty supervisor and with the approval of the registrar, independent study or independent research may count as a course in writing [WRI (<http://wp.stolaf.edu/curriculum-committee/files/2013/12/WRI.pdf>)].

## Foundation Studies

### First-Year Writing [ FYW (<http://wp.stolaf.edu/curriculum-committee/files/2013/12/FYW.pdf>)] -- 1 course

First-year students are required to complete First-Year Writing (FYW), with two exceptions:

- FYW is awarded to first-year students who receive a score of 5 on the Advanced Placement (AP) English Literature or English Language Exam or a score of 5 or higher on the International Baccalaureate (IB) exam.
- Students who initially transfer 17 or more courses to St. Olaf are exempt from the FYW requirement.

### Placement

The director of writing administers a writing placement exam for first-year students whose SAT verbal and writing scores, ACT English and reading scores, or additional admissions materials indicate that they may benefit from taking WRIT 107 Introduction to Academic Writing or WRIT 110 Critical Skills in Composition before enrolling in a First-Year Writing course. New incoming students required to take the writing placement exam receive written notification, during the summer and upon arrival to campus, from the director of writing. The writing placement exam is offered only during Week One. International students take a writing placement exam as part of international student orientation.

Students who may benefit from a two-semester sequence of writing instruction complete WRIT 107 Introduction to Academic Writing, or WRIT 110 Critical Skills in Composition, in the first semester of the first year, then complete a WRIT 111 First-Year Writing in the second semester of the first year. All other students may enroll directly in a WRIT 111 First-Year Writing section.

### Writing in Context Courses [ WRI (<http://wp.stolaf.edu/curriculum-committee/files/2013/12/WRI.pdf>)] -- 4 courses in any departments/programs

### Foreign Language [FOL (<http://wp.stolaf.edu/curriculum-committee/files/2013/12/FOL.pdf>)] -- 0-4 courses

#### Requirement

All St. Olaf students must satisfy the foreign language requirement. Bachelor of Arts students must satisfactorily complete the fourth college semester course (numbered 232 or higher) taught in the French [FOL-F], German [FOL-G], or Spanish [FOL-S] languages; or the third college semester course (numbered 231 or higher) taught in the Chinese [FOL-C], Greek [FOL-K], Latin [FOL-L], Japanese [FOL-J], Norwegian [FOL-N], or Russian [FOL-R] languages, or demonstrate equivalent proficiency.

#### Requirement to be completed at St. Olaf

New matriculating students are expected to complete their foreign language (FOL) requirement with a course or courses taken at St.

Olaf. In general, students are advised to begin foreign language study in the first semester of the first year and to continue their language study in each subsequent semester until the requirement is completed. In cases where a student's schedule of courses makes that impossible, the student should consult with his or her advisor. After a student matriculates, under special circumstances, the registrar, in consultation with the appropriate foreign language department, may grant permission to a student to complete the final course for the FOL requirement through summer intensive or semester courses (through a leave of absence) taken at another institution.

### **Placement**

Foreign language departments place first-year students and other new students in appropriate language courses on the basis of placement tests or high school preparation. Students entering with previous training in a foreign language **must** take the relevant placement test if one is offered. The foreign language placement tests are relatively short diagnostic tests; they should not be considered exhaustive and do not provide a satisfactory basis for the certification of proficiency or for receiving course credit. Rather, they function entirely for placement in St. Olaf language courses.

### **Proficiency**

New matriculating or new transfer students who have taken college-level foreign language courses at another institution may receive elective credit for those courses, within the maximum number of pre-college credits allowed by St. Olaf, if the courses are deemed appropriate by the registrar. If new matriculating students decide to complete the FOL requirement in the language in which they have prior training, they must take and pass the necessary course(s) according to the placement test results and the FOL policy for the specific language. Students who place higher than the last course normally required to complete the FOL requirement may be eligible to take a proficiency exam. The foreign language proficiency tests are administered by the various foreign language departments. The foreign language proficiency tests measure proficiency at a level equivalent to the end of the corresponding number 231 or 232 language course. A student who passes the appropriate proficiency test satisfies the St. Olaf foreign language requirement (FOL) but does not receive course credit. Please consult individual departments for information about their FOL policies.

### **Languages not taught at St. Olaf**

If new matriculating students or new transfer students wish to complete their FOL requirement with courses in a language not taught at St. Olaf, including American Sign Language (ASL), the course(s) must comply with college policy for completion of the FOL requirement, as determined by the registrar. Students planning to fulfill the foreign language requirement with transfer courses from other institutions should be aware of St. Olaf's requirement of intermediate proficiency in one foreign language (including American Sign Language [ASL]). Questions regarding the transfer of foreign language courses to St. Olaf should be directed in advance to the registrar.

### **Native language other than English**

Students who enter St. Olaf College with a native language other than English should consult the registrar. Such students may have their foreign language requirement fulfilled by showing evidence of proficiency in their native language. These students must prove completion through eighth grade in their native language; or they must provide a high school transcript that shows they completed their

high school requirements in their native language; or they must pass a proficiency test through St. Olaf (see above) or administered by an outside evaluator.

Proficiency reports from persons not known to St. Olaf must be based on documented exposure or training by the student in a foreign language equivalent in length to three or four college semesters or demonstration of a sufficient length of time in a non-English speaking culture to give credence to a proficiency report. As a rule, proficiency reports from persons outside of St. Olaf are not acted upon until the student arranges for a final proficiency exam by persons and methods agreed to by members of the foreign language faculty, the registrar, and, if deemed necessary, the dean of the college. Such exams may involve an expense charged to the student.

### **Documented language learning disability**

Students with a documented language learning disability should confer with the Disability and Access Center in Buntrock Commons 108.

### **Difficulty progressing**

Students who have difficulty making progress in foreign language courses at the college should first consult the instructors of their foreign language courses and their academic advisors; these faculty may also refer students to the Academic Support Center. Students are strongly urged to seek the support of a tutor and meet with that tutor on a regular schedule.

### **Alternative route**

In very rare cases, the foreign language requirement may be fulfilled by another method: students who have not fulfilled the foreign language requirement may petition the Foreign Language Subcommittee of the Curriculum Committee to satisfy the remainder of the requirement by completing one or more substitute courses in foreign culture and civilization or in literature in English translation. In compliance with state and federal disability discrimination laws, this alternative route to fulfillment of the foreign language requirement is intended for students with disabilities specific to the learning of foreign languages. Any petition should be drawn up with the guidance of the Academic Support Center.

**Oral Communication [ ORC (<http://wp.stolaf.edu/curriculum-committee/files/2013/12/ORC.pdf>)] – 1 course**

**Abstract and Quantitative Reasoning [ AQR (<http://wp.stolaf.edu/curriculum-committee/files/2013/12/AQR.pdf>)] – 1 course**

### **Placement**

The Mathematics, Statistics, and Computer Science Department recommends courses for students to take based on their responses to the Mathematics/Statistics and Computer Science placement surveys. Students who do not need to take calculus for their major may want to wait until at least their sophomore year before deciding which mathematics, statistics, or computer science course is the best option for them to take to satisfy the AQR requirement.

## **Studies in Physical Movement [ SPM** (<http://wp.stolaf.edu/curriculum-committee/files/2013/12/SPM.pdf>)] – 2 courses (of any credit value)

### **Additional Information**

Two different courses, of any credit value, that expand students' experiences in and understanding of movement and promote lifelong health and wellness of the whole person. Students are encouraged to expand their horizons and focus on different activities or modes of movement in order to fulfill the requirements.

It is strongly recommended that both SPM requirements be completed before the senior year. The following regulations are often misunderstood:

1. If students do not appear on the first class day of an SPM course, the instructor normally assumes that the student will drop the course. In this event, the student must still officially drop the course at the Registrar's Office by the posted drop deadline. The instructor does not assume this responsibility.
2. Only one SPM course credit may be earned by students as a result of participation in an approved intercollegiate sport. This credit must be entered as ESAC 171-ESAC 194 at the registration preceding the sport/participation term. Credit cannot be claimed after the term in which participation took place unless the student completes a petition form; a late fee is assessed. It can only be used once as one half of the two-course SPM requirement.
3. At registration, students may register initially for only one SPM course. On a space-available basis a second SPM course may be added during the same term with a signed drop/add slip within the drop/add dates published on the Registrar's Office Web site.
4. After the two-course SPM requirement has been completed, students may repeat a specific exercise science activity (ESAC) course under the following conditions:
  - The SPM requirement is completed with two different courses.
  - Students repeating an ESAC course must wait until the first day of classes to register the repeated activity course, to allow all current students to register for SPM courses.
  - Students may only register on a "space available" (open courses) basis.
  - Each specific exercise science activity course may only be taken a maximum of four times (the first time plus three repeats).

## **Core Studies**

**Historical Studies in Western Culture [ HWC** (<http://wp.stolaf.edu/curriculum-committee/files/2013/12/HWC.pdf>)] – 2 courses in any departments/programs (at least one must be taken from a St. Olaf faculty instructor; exception: if a student has received credit for one HWC course through pre-college credit, s/he may receive credit for the other one via a St. Olaf-approved off-campus program)

**Multicultural Studies [MCG** (<http://wp.stolaf.edu/curriculum-committee/files/2013/12/MCG.pdf>), **MCD** (<http://wp.stolaf.edu/curriculum-committee/files/2013/12/MCD.pdf>)] – 2 courses, one MCG, one MCD (must be from two different departments/programs)

**Artistic and Literary Studies [ALS-A** (<http://wp.stolaf.edu/curriculum-committee/files/2013/12/ALS-A.pdf>), **ALS-L** (<http://wp.stolaf.edu/curriculum-committee/files/2013/12/ALS-L.pdf>)] – 2 courses, one ALS-A, one ALS-L, in any departments/programs

**Biblical and Theological Studies [BTS-B** (<http://wp.stolaf.edu/curriculum-committee/files/2013/12/BTS-B.pdf>), **BTS-T** (<http://wp.stolaf.edu/curriculum-committee/files/2013/12/BTS-T.pdf>)] – 2 courses, one BTS-B, one BTS-T

Students who initially transfer 17 or more courses to St. Olaf are required to complete only the Christian theology (BTS-T) course.

One BTS-T course is the required prerequisite for an EIN course.

**Studies in Natural Science (at least one of these two courses must be taken from a St. Olaf faculty instructor; exception: if a student has received credit for an IST or SED course through pre-college credit, s/he may receive credit for the other one via a St. Olaf-approved off-campus program)**

**Scientific Exploration and Discovery [ SED (<http://wp.stolaf.edu/curriculum-committee/files/2013/12/SED.pdf>)**

**– 1 course (SED, IST must be completed with two different courses from two different departments/programs)**

**Integrated Scientific Topics [ IST (<http://wp.stolaf.edu/curriculum-committee/files/2013/12/IST.pdf>) ] – 1 course (SED, IST must be completed with two different courses from two different departments/programs)**

**Studies in Human Behavior and Society**

**[HBS (<http://wp.stolaf.edu/curriculum-committee/files/2013/12/HBS.pdf>) ] – 2**

**courses (must be from two different departments/programs; at least one must be taken from a St. Olaf faculty instructor; exception: if a student has received credit for one HBS course through pre-college credit, s/he may receive credit for the other one via a St. Olaf-approved off-campus program)**

**Integrative Course**

**Ethical Issues and Normative Perspectives**

**[ EIN (<http://wp.stolaf.edu/curriculum-committee/files/2013/12/EIN.pdf>) ] – 1 course**

Prerequisite for all EIN courses: completion of the BTS-T requirement or permission of the instructor.