

De Anza GE Philosophy Statement

Approved by the faculty as a whole November 2014

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General Education (GE) at De Anza College is intended to provide students with a diverse experience in disciplines both within and outside the students' chosen field of study. GE at De Anza has been designed to impart both breadth and depth in multiple disciplines, thereby resulting in a well-rounded, multi-dimensional education. All students graduating with an Associates degree from De Anza College will have completed the GE curriculum, which will educate students to be intellectually curious critical thinkers and problem solvers, as well as individuals who are aware of the importance of maintaining lifelong physical and mental wellness both for their own benefit and the benefit of the larger society. In addition, the De Anza GE curriculum encourages students to be culturally and socially engaged members of their communities who possess a multicultural awareness and sensitivity to diversity.

The GE philosophy is closely related to the De Anza College Mission Statement and the Institutional Core Competencies. The five major focus areas of General education at De Anza College are: A) communication, expression, critical thinking, and information literacy, B) natural sciences, C) arts and humanities, D) social and behavioral sciences, and E) physical/mental wellness and personal development.

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- A. **Communication, expression, critical thinking, and information literacy:** The ability to read, write, and communicate has been an integral part of educational curricula for hundreds of years, and its importance continues to grow in the information age. This area is divided into four sub-areas that focus on educating students in written communication, oral communication, critical thinking, and information literacy. The courses in this area are in a variety of disciplines such as English, mathematics, philosophy, and speech.
- B. **Natural sciences:** College graduates in the 21st century will encounter a wealth of knowledge related to all aspects of life. In order for members of society to discern the validity of such information and make responsible and appropriate choices, it is necessary for students to obtain a basic understanding of the scientific method and process. The courses in this area are in disciplines such as anthropology, astronomy, biology, chemistry, physics, geology, meteorology, oceanography, and environmental science.
- C. **Arts and humanities:** The arts and humanities enrich personal lives, preserve cultural history, and ensure creative thinking and ongoing curiosity. It is through

these fields that students develop multiple perspectives, build confidence, and continually problem solve. Creativity and imagination is needed across disciplines to fuel innovation and respond to an ever-changing world. This area is divided into two sub-areas. Courses in arts include disciplines such as art, dance, music, film/TV, and photography. Courses in humanities include disciplines such as humanities, English, and foreign languages.

- D. Social and Behavioral Sciences: This area focuses largely on people as members of society. An understanding of diverse people in a multicultural society and how people interact in response to their histories, societies, and cultural traditions enables students to examine ideologies and practices from multiple perspectives and is vital to preparing students to become global citizens. This area is divided into two sub-areas. The behavioral sciences sub-area includes courses from anthropology, sociology, psychology, and women's studies. The history and society sub-area includes courses from administration of justice, history, political science, journalism, and inter-cultural studies.
- E. Physical/mental wellness and personal development: Crucial for students to be able to successfully contribute to overall community wellbeing is an understanding of personal health and wellness with an emphasis on physical productivity and longevity. Students will be educated to take personal responsibility for their own wellbeing and to acquire the necessary knowledge and skills to maintain healthy bodies and minds. Understanding how different cultures in both the past and the present developed exercise and movement leads to a better multicultural understanding. Students will be able to use life-long psychomotor skills to achieve physical and mental wellness. Courses in this area include disciplines such as physical education, business, health, nutrition, and dance.