

General Education Program

The mission of the General Education program at the American University of Ras Al Khaimah is intrinsically connected with the vision and mission of the University. Graduates of AURAK will possess the essential skills, conceptual knowledge, sensitivity to diversity, ethical and civic responsiveness, and the spirit of entrepreneurship that will enable them to negotiate with and adapt to a challenging and dynamic environment. The goals of a liberal arts education require that students take a set of courses that are outside their major to acquire a holistic awareness of a broad range of knowledge areas. The aims of the General Education program at AURAK addresses these needs in a diverse, connected, globalized environment through courses that are both broad and deep in content, and use vibrant integrated pedagogical methods to achieve the development of an empowered twenty-first global citizen through a liberal arts education.

The diverse range of topics, the interdisciplinary and globalized focus to the content, the pedagogical shift to experiential and activity-based learning, the generation of research, innovation and enhanced aesthetic sensitivity, will combine in the development of self-responsible, self-directed individuals who will engage in life-long learning.

Students in all academic programs at AURAK must complete the general education program, which complements and contributes to the fulfillment of the mission of the university. Students are required to take a set of courses outside their major to develop their understanding of broad disciplinary areas and the connections between and among them. Courses approved for general education stress experiential and activity-based learning and the application of knowledge to concrete situations.

Program Objectives

The General Education Program aims to develop self-directed individuals who:

1. Are engaged, committed citizens, and aware of the global effect of social, political, and economic change.
2. Understand the nature of tradition and world cultures, understand the impact of the past on the present, and respond sensitively in culturally diverse environments.
3. Are aware of ethical issues and think critically to make informed and responsible decisions.
4. Use empirical and logical reasoning to assess evidence, evaluate data, make decisions, and solve problems.
5. Understand scientific principles and contemporary developments in science and technology and their impact on human life and the environment.
6. Communicate clearly and effectively in writing and speech and understand the rhetorical and stylistic strategies that impact diverse audiences for various purposes.
7. Can locate, access, critically evaluate, and use information ethically and efficiently for a variety of purposes, and engage in independent investigations and research.
8. Can interpret the meaning of different forms of artistic expression within historical and theoretical contexts and respond to works of art.

Program Learning Outcomes

Upon graduation the students are able to:

1. Demonstrate effective written and oral communication skills and use current technology to create a final written or oral product.
2. Recognize, analyze, and evaluate ethical issues and defend their positions through reasoned argument.
3. Use logical and mathematical reasoning to analyze quantitative data and solve problems for personal and professional purposes.
4. Use appropriate tools to access information, evaluate sources, and conduct independent research.
5. Respect the contributions of multicultural contexts that enhance human experience, and to appreciate the interdependence of the global community to facilitate coexistence in multicultural environments.
6. Understand the historical contexts and variety of artistic forms, the nature and norms of creative processes that shape creative works, and the ability to engage in creative production of original artifacts.
7. Employ the basic concepts of ethics or one of the social sciences to analyze a contemporary issue.
8. Recognize, analyze and resolve scientific problems through the application of scientific Methods.
9. Use computers for academic purposes, to incorporate technology into academic content, and to access information efficiently.

Degree Requirements

To achieve these outcomes, the General Education Program requires students to take 31-35 credits in the following skills development and knowledge areas:

Core Competencies:

1. Communication skills
2. Quantitative literacy
3. Information technology
4. Critical thinking
5. Information literacy
6. University life

Knowledge Areas:

1. Effective communication
2. Creative and aesthetic understanding
3. Cross-cultural and ethical understanding
4. Social and global perspectives
5. Science of the natural and physical worlds
6. Empirical and mathematical reasoning

Core Courses (22-24 Credits)

A minimum of seven courses is required in this area. Students who successfully test out of ITEC 103 may take any other 3 or 4 credit course approved for general education. **UNIV 100**, University Freshman Transition is mandatory for freshmen.

- a. ENGL 100/101, Composition (3)
- b. POLI 100, Contemporary Global Issues (3)
- c. COMM 100, Public Speaking (3) or
COMM 101, Interpersonal Communication (3)
- d. PHIL 100, Critical Thinking and Reasoning (3)
- e. One of the following MATH courses
MATH 101, Numbers and Data Interpretation (3)
STAT 100, Statistics (3)
MATH 108, Business Calculus (3)
MATH 111, Calculus for Life Sciences (4)
MATH 113, Calculus I (4)
- f. ITEC 103, Introduction to Computing (3) (students have the opportunity to test out of this course and substitute the more advanced course CSCI 104 (called also Introduction to Computing) with Computer Science students) or
CSCI 112, 113, Introduction to Computer Programming (4)
- g. MEST 100, Introduction to Islam in World Culture (3)
- h. UNIV 100, University Freshman Transition (1)

Knowledge Domains

Students must complete a minimum of **9-11** credits from the following three categories:

Students

in Engineering and the Sciences programs must take 6 credit hours from Arts and Humanities and Social and Behavioral Sciences, and 3-4 from the Natural Sciences. **Students in the Business, English, and Mass Communication** programs must take 3 credit hours from the Arts and Humanities and Social and Behavioral Sciences and 6-8 from the Natural Sciences to fulfill the general education requirement.

Arts and Humanities

1. Creative and Aesthetic Understanding
 - a. ARTT 100, Introduction to Visual Arts
 - b. ARAB 110 Introduction to Arabic Literature
 - c. COMM 102, Reading Image and Film
 - d. COMM 104, Photography and Communication
2. Cross-cultural and Ethical Understanding
 - a. HIST 100, Contemporary Middle Eastern History
 - b. HIST 101, Ancient History of the Arabian Peninsula
 - c. PHIL 101, Ethics in Today's World
 - d. PHIL 102, World Philosophies

Social and Behavioral Sciences

3. Social and Global Perspectives
 - a. PSYC 100, Introduction to Psychology
 - b. SOCI 101, Contemporary Social Issues
 - c. ECON 103, Principles of Microeconomics
 - d. POLI 101, Politics of Scarcity
 - e. POLI 102, State and Society in the UAE
 - f. GEOG 200, World Regional Geography

The Natural Sciences

4. Science of the Natural and Physical Worlds
 - a. BIOL 100, Humankind in a Biological World
 - b. CHEM 100, 101, Chemistry in Everyday Life (4)
 - c. ENVS 100, 101, Energy and Environmental Science (4)
 - d. ENVS 102, Sustainability and Human-Environment Relations
 - e. CHEM 211, General Chemistry

Total No. of Credits: 31-35 (including UNIV 100 and MEST100)