

## General Education Courses

### Background

A general education course is one that the university recognizes as imparting breadth of knowledge in an area important to being an educated citizen. They draw students from all disciplines, not just Justice Studies or Forensic Science. These courses must meet specific criteria to qualify as general education. Instructors of those courses are expected to ensure compliance with those criteria.

The general education courses in Justice Studies are:

JS 15 (GE B4)

JS 25 (GE D3)

JS 132 (SJSU Studies S)

JS 136 (SJSU Studies S)

JS 171 (SJSU Studies V)

JS 100W (SJSU Studies Z)

Please click the link to the university's [GE Guidelines](#) and read about the area(s) in which you will be teaching. Among other things, those guidelines establish:

- Topics area courses must cover,
- GE Learning Outcomes that area courses must teach toward (and include in syllabi),
- Minimum writing requirements for area courses, and even
- Maximum class sizes--which is why instructors should not allow enrollment to exceed course caps.

The document has specific sections for each GE area devoted to providing this information. Please look up your course's GE area in it and plan to meet the requirements set forth for your course(s).

When creating the syllabus, please follow university guidelines. Also use the GE Learning Outcomes (GELOs) below (taken from the GE Guidelines) as appropriate for your course(s). Each set should have the preamble:

"Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:"

### **GE B4-JS 15**

GELO 1: use mathematical methods to solve quantitative problems, including those presented in verbal form;

GELO 2: demonstrate the ability to use mathematics to solve real life problems; and

GELO 3: arrive at conclusions based on numerical and graphical data.

### **GE D3-JS 25**

GELO 1: place contemporary developments in cultural, historical, environmental, and spatial contexts;

GELO 2: identify the dynamics of ethnic, cultural, gender/sexual, age-based, class, regional, national, transnational, and global identities and the similarities, differences, linkages, and interactions between them;

GELO 3: evaluate social science information, draw on different points of view, and formulate applications appropriate to contemporary social issues; and

GELO 4: apply multidisciplinary material to a topic relevant to policy and social action at the local, national, and/or international levels.

### **Area S-JS 132 and JS 136**

GELO 1: describe how identities (i.e. religious, gender, ethnic, racial, class, sexual orientation, disability, and/or age) are shaped by cultural and societal influences within contexts of equality and inequality;

GELO 2: describe historical, social, political, and economic processes producing diversity, equality, and structured inequalities in the U.S.;

GELO 3: describe social actions which have led to greater equality and social justice in the U.S. (i.e. religious, gender, ethnic, racial, class, sexual orientation, disability, and/or age); and

GELO 4: recognize and appreciate constructive interactions between people from different cultural, racial, and ethnic groups within the U.S.

### **Area V-JS 171**

GELO 1: compare systematically the ideas, values, images, cultural artifacts, economic structures, technological developments, and/or attitudes of people from more than one culture outside the U.S.;

GELO 2: identify the historical context of ideas and cultural traditions outside the U.S. and how they have influenced American culture; and

GELO 3: explain how a culture outside the U.S. has changed in response to internal and external pressures.

### **Area Z-JS 100W**

GELO 1: produce discipline-specific written work that demonstrates upper-division proficiency in: 1) language use, 2) grammar, and 3) clarity of expression;

GELO 2: explain, analyze, develop, and criticize ideas effectively, including ideas encountered in multiple readings and expressed in different forms of discourse;

GELO 3: organize and develop essays and documents for both professional and general audiences;

GELO 4: organize and develop essays and documents according to appropriate editorial and citation standards; and

GELO 5: locate, organize, and synthesize information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose, and to communicate that purpose in writing.

JS 100W has the most intensive focus on writing, and it demands multiple drafts of work. However, each GE and SJSU Studies area has a minimum writing requirement. Please make sure that assignments will achieve the area minimum.

Justice Studies has adopted APA Style for its professional writing standard. However, other American social science styles (e.g., ASA) are acceptable if the instructor is more expert in a different style.

The University is now expecting syllabi to link all course assignments to learning outcomes for each course. Therefore, there must be some location where specific assignments are reported as fulfilling each learning outcome. There should not be any learning outcome that is missing an assignment used to address or assess it.

To make assignment/GELO links clear, most instructors parenthetically indicate which GELO is "in play" where they list and discuss assignments. An example is: "Short Paper 1 (GELO 2)," followed by the description of the paper assignment. Others will put the GELOs in parentheses next to assignments as they are listed in the course schedule. A few actually parenthetically name assignments after each GELO is listed. There are other ways that this can be accomplished, but it should be clear to students (and accreditors) which outcome(s) each assignment addresses. These same principles apply to any additional course learning outcomes (CLOs) that you may add.

Please work with others teaching in your GE area if you need help. In addition to that, I am available to answer any questions you may have.

Finally, previous syllabi for these [courses are available on our website](#). Where previous syllabi contradict anything in the GE Guidelines or stated here, follow the guidelines and this message.