

**William Paterson University**  
**Undergraduate General Education**  
**Curriculum Handbook**

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## **Introduction**

This handbook will help acquaint you with the common portion of the curriculum, or series of General Education courses, that you will take at WPUNJ. The total series comprising the undergraduate curriculum will not be the same for all students, as many of your courses are determined by your major area of study (and minor area, if you so choose). In addition to your major (and minor), there are common requirements that all students must meet. We hope to give you a better understanding of these requirements in this handbook. Please keep this handbook to assist you with your planning throughout your college career.

You should keep in mind that the requirements in effect when you enter WPUNJ (whether as a freshman or a transfer student) are those that apply to you at graduation. As a result, students who entered last year may have different requirements from you. You may also hear discussions of further changes throughout your years at WPUNJ. A healthy curriculum is continually examined for improvement, and we hope you will help us do this. You will hear of a process called “assessment” which is used to study courses and programs in order to identify ways to improve them. (See page 16 for more information on assessment.) Note that future changes in the programs will apply only to those students who enter after the changes have been adopted.

This handbook provides a general overview of the academic programs you will experience at WPUNJ. No handbook, however, could address every aspect of each student's specific educational program. You may want to get credit for courses completed elsewhere, you may want to substitute one course for another, or you may be unsure whether a particular requirement applies in your case. Each student can expect to have a unique college experience since everyone has unique interests, talents, experiences, problems, and circumstances that may need personal attention.

To help make your college education most meaningful, you have been assigned a faculty academic advisor who is trained to give you the individual guidance you need. It is important that you meet with your advisor early to plan your overall program as well as each semester to plan your schedule. The Gloria S. Williams Advisement Center is also prepared to help you with planning or with problems you might encounter. If you feel that you do not understand what you are supposed to do or have some difficulty with your courses, you are not alone. Most students feel that way at some time or other in their undergraduate years. If this happens, go to your faculty advisor or the Advisement Center. If they cannot respond to your specific problem, they will help you to contact the appropriate student support service on campus. These advisement services are part of your education and will ensure that you get the greatest benefit from your undergraduate experience.

## **The Purpose of General Education**

You will be taking most of your General Education Courses (referred to as “GE” in this handbook) during your first two years of college. It is important to become familiar early on with the choices and the suggested sequences for taking them. Many of you have given some thought as to what major you want to pursue in college and what career you wish to focus on after graduation, but research shows that people typically change the focus of their careers several

times over their whole work life. The GE courses you take may help you in selecting and succeeding in your major and your career. GE courses will also give you a broad experience and introduction to many different disciplines and areas of study in order to prepare you not just for work and a career but for the many roles you will assume in your life. Most important, they will help you to acquire information and develop perspectives that will give your life and the choices you make a richer, more informed context.

You must choose one or more courses of study as a major or minor, preferably by your second year of study. Your major(s) and minor(s) will focus on a particular area that will provide you with the background either to enter a profession or to continue your education. The GE Program aims to provide you with the general skills, information and confidence to enable you to succeed in the career you pursue as well as the flexibility to move from one career to another. The program is also designed to challenge you to think and experience knowledge beyond the boundaries of any one profession or discipline.

William Paterson University's GE Program is based on the Liberal Arts tradition of American higher education. The system of higher education in the United States (as contrasted with the European model) exposes students to a wide variety of academic disciplines outside of the major or intended professional field. Since many people end up switching careers at some point in their professional lives, it makes sense to educate students in a broad way. The goal of the GE Program is to produce college graduates who are informed, engaged with their communities and the world, and who are life-long learners open to new ideas and experiences.

The WPUNJ GE Program involves enrichment of each student's educational experience with exposure to a diversity of disciplines from the arts, sciences, humanities and social sciences, and enables students to experience the intellectual heritage of our diverse society.

### **Highlights of the GE Program:**

- ? The GE Program provides a solid foundation of knowledge and skills in liberal studies for all WPUNJ undergraduate students.
- ? A total of 59 credits of GE courses are required for students in most majors. (Exceptions are degree programs in the College of Business, the Bachelor of Music and the Bachelor of Fine Arts degree.)
- ? GE courses introduce students to basic concepts and methods of the major fields of knowledge.
- ? GE courses foster an appreciation of literature and the arts, an understanding of the natural world, and provide opportunities for students to attain an interdisciplinary perspective on our own and other societies and cultures.

**The three categories of courses in the GE Program include :**

1. The Humanities “core” consists of five courses: Two English courses, two courses in Western Civilization, and one course in Philosophy. A six-credit language requirement rounds out the Humanities requirement.
2. The “Distribution” courses can be selected from approved GE courses in the areas of Science, Mathematics, Social Sciences, Arts and Communication, Racism and Sexism, and Health.
3. Six credits in GE electives are chosen from upper level courses in a variety of disciplines outside of the student’s major.

How do you choose which GE courses to take? You might want to further develop an interest that you already have in a particular area, perhaps with a view towards majoring in that discipline, or you may choose to explore a field that is entirely new to you. Your college years present a unique opportunity for you to learn new things and explore new areas. The choice is yours.

***A Vision of a WPUNJ Graduate:***

The William Paterson University General Education Program aspires to instill the following qualities in students:

- A. The knowledge, skills and self-confidence to establish and pursue personal and career goals.
- B. The possession of fundamental ethical values, such as honesty and integrity.
- C. An awareness of civic responsibilities and a willingness to participate in the political process.
- D. A social conscience and a willingness to contribute to the common good.
- E. An appreciation of art and esthetic values.
- F. An awareness that an ever changing, complex and interdependent world requires knowledge of and respect for other peoples, cultures and values.
- G. A respect and empathy for differences among informed points-of-view.
- H. An ability to adapt to changing circumstances and situations in our complex world.
- I. A sense of balance and proportion with respect to the human circumstance through an appreciation of the ironies of life.
- J. An awareness of scientific and environmental issues and a concern for the future of the planet and all living things.
- K. An enthusiasm for lifelong learning.

# **The Structure of the General Education Program**

The undergraduate degree requirements for your particular major are listed on the curriculum guides that are available in your academic department office or in the Advisement Center. Obtain one during your first semester here and use it every semester to check off your courses as you take them. In the spaces provided, you can also write in your electives. These guides also contain a semester-by-semester course sequencing plan. Note that all GE courses must be taken for letter grades; The Pass/Fail option is not permitted. Your advisor also has access to your academic record electronically, and our student information system helps to keep track of your progress. If you have declared a major, you should refer to the curriculum guide for your major to ensure that you take appropriate pre-requisite courses, some of which may involve specific choices among GE courses.

The information contained here applies to all freshmen and transfer students entering in Fall 2003 or thereafter who are enrolled in B.A. or B.S. degree programs. Note that WPUNJ also offers B.F.A. (Art) and B.M. (Music), which are specialized degree programs with different GE requirements. See the department curriculum guides for details on those programs.

The GE Program provides a solid foundation of knowledge and skills in liberal studies for all WPUNJ undergraduate students. A total of 59-60 credits of GE courses are required for students in most majors. (Exceptions are degree programs from the College of Business, the Bachelor of Music and the Bachelor of Fine Arts degree.) The program consists of Core Area Requirements, Distribution Requirements, and General Education Electives. Students transferring to William Paterson University may present equivalent area courses under transfer articulation agreements and the Guidelines for General Education adopted by the Council of Presidents of New Jersey Colleges and Universities.

## **HUMANITIES CORE REQUIREMENTS:**

The GE Program at WPUNJ consists of a core of 21 credits of humanities foundations in Writing, Literature, World Language, History, and Philosophy. Currently, these requirements are satisfied by the following courses:

- Writing Effective Prose (3 credits)
- Introduction to Literature (3 credits)
- History of Western Civilization (6 credits)
- Introduction to Philosophy (3 credits)
- Foreign Language (6 credits)

## **DISTRIBUTION REQUIREMENTS:**

There are additional courses that a student selects from six areas:

- Social Sciences (9 credits)
- Math (3-4 credits)
- Science (8 credits)
- Arts and Communication (6 credits)
- Racism and Sexism (3 credits)
- Fitness/Health (3 credits)

## **GE ELECTIVES:**

An additional six (6) credits of GE electives round out the program. (Note that the GE elective courses can be applied towards a minor.)

**THE NON-WESTERN REQUIREMENT** is a distinct component of the undergraduate curriculum. It can be fulfilled within the GE Program, the major, or elective courses. (See page 14.)

## **I. HUMANITIES CORE (15-21 credits)**

The humanities requirement includes seven courses from four disciplines. Five of these courses are specified (the core); the other two courses, encompassing the foreign language requirement, depend on your choice of language and your proficiency in that language.

- Writing Effective Prose (ENG 110, 3 credits)
- Introduction to Literature (ENG 150, 3 credits)
- Foundations of Western Civilization and The West and the Modern World (HIST 101 and HIST 102, 6 credits)
- Introduction to Philosophy (PHIL 110, 3 credits)
- Foreign Language (6 credits)

The study of foreign languages gives students skills for communicating effectively in today's multilingual world and promotes an appreciation for other cultures and traditions. It fosters students' critical, analytical, and writing skills, and enhances their understanding of the English language as well. Mastery of foreign languages is essential for careers in teaching, business, science, government work, and research, and for graduate and professional studies. The United States is a multilingual and multicultural nation where knowledge of foreign languages is an asset in most endeavors.

- ? WPUNJ requires all students to take 6 credits (2 courses) of a foreign language as part of the GE Program.
- ? The Department of Languages and Cultures offers a wide variety of languages to fulfill the requirement: Arabic, Chinese, Classical Greek, French, German, Hebrew, Hindi, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Latin, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish, and Swahili. (Students wishing to start studying Arabic, Chinese, Hebrew, Hindi, Greek, Korean, and Russian are advised that the first course in those languages is offered only in Fall semesters.)
- ? Language Placement: The University does not automatically accept high school foreign language work as equivalent to college-level study. Upon admission, all incoming freshmen and transfer students are required to take a foreign language placement test to determine the appropriate level at which the student should begin

the study of a language. Students with very limited or no background in a particular language are placed in a Basic I section and choose among one of the languages currently offered in the department. If students decide to take a language they have never had before, they enroll in a Basic I course. Once enrolled in a Basic I section, students have to take a Basic II section in the same language to satisfy the requirement. Likewise, those students who are placed in a Basic II section or above (such as Intermediate I or Intermediate II) must satisfy the foreign language requirement by taking an additional higher course in the same language. The department also honors advanced placement in foreign languages, depending on test scores.

- ? Students who wish to complete their language requirement in one semester can register for Intensive Spanish I and II, SPAN 106 (6 credits). First-year students who wish to complete their language study in consecutive semesters (Basic French I or Basic Spanish I in the Fall, Basic French II or Basic Spanish II in the Spring) are encouraged to do so. This allows for faster language development through class continuity.
- ? Native speakers of Spanish with little or no academic experience in the language should enroll in Contemporary Spanish for Native Speakers (SPAN 114). See your Advisor for more information.
- ? Challenge Test: The Department of Languages and Cultures also offers students the opportunity of "challenging" their foreign language placement in second year language courses only (Intermediate I and/or Intermediate II). This option is only available for students before completing 60 college credits. The student must pay the fee for a challenge test if they desire to obtain credit (\$75.00 per level). If a student wishes to place out of the foreign language requirement in a language not offered at William Paterson University (e.g., Polish, Serbo-Croatian, etc.), the student may take a proficiency exam at an approved institution, such as New York University, before completing 70 college credits.
- ? If you have any additional questions or concerns, please contact the Department of Languages and Cultures by calling 973-720-2330, or you may visit their Web site at [www.wpunj.edu/cohss/language](http://www.wpunj.edu/cohss/language).

## **II. DISTRIBUTION REQUIREMENTS**

Distribution requirements include courses that a student selects from among major domains of knowledge: Social Sciences (9 credits); Mathematics (3-4 credits) and Science (8 credits); Arts and Communication (6 credits). In addition, students are required to take courses relating to issues of the social context of life in the United States, race and gender (3 credits) and of health and wellness, Fitness/Health (3 credits), that are important to the development of an understanding of self and society.

### **A. Arts and Communication: 6 credits.**

There are four disciplines in this area: Art, Communication, Music, and Theater. You must select the two courses from two different subject areas. Currently there are four courses being offered in this category. (For course descriptions, see the Undergraduate Catalog.)

- ? Approaches to Western Art (ARTH 101, 3 credits)
- ? Communication in Action (COMM 110, 3 credits)
- ? Music Appreciation (MUS 120, 3 credits)
- ? Introduction to Theater (COMM 101, 3 credits)

### **B. Science and Mathematics (11-12 credits)**

#### **? Mathematics: 3 credits**

Three credits of college-level mathematics are required, with courses ranging from Contemporary Math (MATH 110) to Calculus II (MATH 161). The results of your basic skills test will determine the level of basic skills math or GE math you should take. The GE requirement should be completed in your freshman year. If you have already selected a major, check the appropriate curriculum control sheet to see whether a particular mathematics course is required or recommended for that major. Many math and science courses have a prior course, or “prerequisite,” which you must complete before taking the higher level course.

#### **? Science (8 credits--two courses with laboratories)**

Knowledge of the scientific method and an appreciation of how our physical world works and interacts with us are essential to being an educated person. In order to accomplish this, every student completes two courses in the laboratory sciences. You may take both courses in the same science (following the prerequisites) or one in one field and the second in another. Several majors (e.g. Nursing, the sciences, Computer Science, Psychology, Exercise and Movement Sciences) specify a particular science course to meet the GE requirement, so it is best to check your major’s curriculum guide.

- College of Science and Health: Integrated Science (CSH 150, 4 credits)
- Biology: Human Biology (BIO 120, 4 credits), Field Biology (BIO 130, 4 credits)
- Chemistry: College Chemistry & Lab (CHEM 031 and CHEM 131, 4 credits), Organic Biochemistry & Lab (CHEM 032 and CHEM 132, 4 credits), Chemistry in Perspective (CHEM 120, 4 credits)
- Physics: Introduction to Physics (PHYS 110, 4 credits), College Physics I (PHYS 255, 4 credits) and College Physics II (PHYS 256, 4 credits)
- Environmental Science: Environmental Foundations (ENV 110, 4 credits), General Geology (ENV 115, 4 credits)

### **C. Social Sciences: 9 credits**

Every student must take three courses in the social sciences. There are six disciplines (Anthropology, Economics, Geography, Political Science, Psychology, and Sociology) from which you will choose three courses, each representing a *different* discipline. You may choose from the following list of courses:

- ? American Government and Politics (POL 120, 3 credits)
- ? General Psychology (PSY 110, 3 credits)
- ? Introduction to Anthropology (ANTH 130, 3 credits)
- ? Introduction to Politics (POL 110, 3 credits)
- ? Macroeconomics (ECON 201, 3 credits)
- ? Principles of Sociology (SOC 101, 3 credits)
- ? Social Problems (SOC 102, 3 credits)
- ? World Regional Geography (GEO 150, 3 credits)

You are free to select courses from any three disciplines of your choice. You might want to pursue a subject that you do not know much about in order to increase your perspective and resourcefulness. Or you may wish to take a course that will strengthen your ability to work in your major field of interest.

### **D. Health: 3 credits**

A state of physical well-being is the foundation for our other pursuits. The two courses in this area to choose from are:

- ? Current Health Issues (CMHL 120, 3 credits)
- ? Fitness for Life (PEGE 150, 3 credits)

### **E. Race and Gender Issues: 3 credits**

The problems of racism and sexism are so common in our present day society that specific attention is given to these areas to help students become aware of the issues. You may select one of the following:

- ? Justice and Racism (AACS 155, 3 credits)
- ? Racism and Sexism in the United States (WS 150, 3 credits)
- ? Women's Changing Roles (WS 110, 3 credits)

### III. GENERAL EDUCATION ELECTIVES

An additional six (6) elective credits in GE subjects are required to ensure that students encounter disciplines and perspectives outside the major.

? A student must successfully complete all Basic Skills courses, Writing Effective Prose, course prerequisites, and either the GE course in the subject of an elective or all required GE credits in the category of the elective course before enrolling in a GE Elective course.

? GE Electives must be selected from among courses outside of a student's major or major-related co-requirements.

? A list of approved GE Elective courses appears every semester in the Master Schedule of Courses.

? In some cases, GE Elective courses may be applied towards a minor.

#### *Student Curriculum Plan*

Students are expected to complete GE requirements in a timely fashion. Since the GE Program is designed to provide a broad foundation of knowledge and skills supporting more intensive study in the major, advanced courses and major requirements can and should rely on the development of those abilities in the core and distribution requirements. As such, a recommended curriculum plan envisions students completing most, if not all, of their GE requirements within the first 2 to 3 years of study.

##### *I. For Bachelor of Arts programs:*

- By the time a student reaches Sophomore status (32 credits), he/she is expected to complete a minimum of 24 credits in GE, plus Freshman Seminar (1-2 credits).
- By the time a student reaches *rising* Junior status (64 credits), he/she is expected to complete a minimum of 48 credits in GE.
- By the time a student reaches *upper* Junior status (80 credits), he/she is expected to complete 54 credits in GE.
- By the time a student reaches Senior status (96 credits), he/she is expected to have completed all GE requirements (59-60 credits).

##### *II. For Bachelor of Science programs:*

- By the time a student reaches Sophomore status (32 credits), he/she is expected to complete a minimum of 18 credits in GE.
- By the time a student reaches Junior status (64 credits), he/she is expected to complete a minimum of 36 credits in GE.

- By the time a student reaches Senior status (96 credits), he/she is expected to complete a minimum of 54 credits in GE, including all core and distribution requirements. (Only GE electives should be taken as a Senior.)
- In order to graduate, a total of 59-60 credits of GE must be completed.

*Departments/programs can provide suggested sequences of courses that best fit the needs of each academic major and concentration. In addition, the College of Education can help students work out a program for teacher certification that articulates with the major discipline of study. A student who has not completed the expected number of GE credits according to the GE Student Curriculum Plan must meet with his/her academic advisor in order to schedule the missing GE course(s).*

*(See the Undergraduate Catalog for details on the GE Program for B.M. and B.F.A. programs)*

## **Other Undergraduate Requirements**

### **First Year Seminar and First Year Experience**

The transition from high school to college life involves many changes, including changes in the social environment and academic demands, as well as new responsibilities and freedoms. Many freshmen experience stress and frustration during this time. Despite a few bumps in the road, most make the transition to college life successfully and enjoy their newfound independence and responsibilities.

- The First Year Seminar and Freshman Year Experience programs are designed to help students adjust to college life and become successful students.
- First Year Seminar is required of all incoming Freshman.
- More information can be obtained from the Office of the First Year Experience (973-720-3768).

### **Basic Skills Program**

Once you are admitted to WPUNJ, you will be evaluated regarding particular learning skills by means of a Basic Skills Placement Test. The test is designed to provide information regarding accurate placement of each student. It does not measure your overall ability, nor does it provide a comprehensive measure of your knowledge. Rather, it is designed to assess your ability to write essays, read on a college level with the appropriate vocabulary and speed, and perform basic mathematical computations and algebraic operations. If you are found to have problems in any of these areas, you will be required to take the Basic Skills course in the area or areas that have been identified as requiring improvement. These courses will help you develop the necessary skills so that you can succeed in your college career up to your full potential. Most students who need this help go on to do very well in their college work after they receive the preparation provided in the Basic Skills courses. Note that many of the college courses you will

be taking require that you successfully complete your basic skills requirements first. You must register for and fulfill any such requirements in the first year of college

? The test is given to students on a rolling basis after admission but prior to their enrolling in any courses at the University.

? The Office of Testing administers *Accuplacer*, which tests students in the Basic Skills areas.

? Most of the test is computerized and includes sections in each of the following areas:

- Elementary Algebra
- Essay Writing
- Reading Comprehension
- Sentence Skills

? After taking the test, you will receive a letter informing you of your Basic Skills placement.

? For more information on the Basic Skills Program, please visit the Basic Skills Web site at [www.wpunj.edu/basicskills/default.html](http://www.wpunj.edu/basicskills/default.html).

## Major Courses of Study

By the end of the sophomore year (successful completion of 60 credits), every student must choose and declare a major field of study. Ask your advisor how to do this. Each major contains a prescribed number of courses. The major curriculum is designed to provide you with the basic knowledge and practices current in your chosen field of study. As a junior and senior you may have the choice of a particular area of concentration within this field, and you will be able to explore the area of concentration in greater depth. Elective courses in your major also provide you with an opportunity to pursue in greater depth those aspects of the field that are of particular interest to you. A number of majors require co-requisite courses in related areas of study. Some majors direct students to take specific GE courses that would be most appropriate to your field of study. If you are considering or have already declared a major, be sure to find out the requirements, co-requirements and directed GE courses that are specific to your major so you can plan your program of study carefully.

## Upper Level Elective Requirement

Almost every major requires students to take at least 9 credits of upper-level electives. This part of the curriculum provides the opportunity for student to explore fields outside their majors and attain some in-depth experience in other disciplines. These courses must be 200 level courses or above, and they must be outside the major field of study. Note that many upper-level courses have prerequisites (required lower-level courses), so be sure that you satisfy these before enrolling for a course.

## **Non-Western Cultures Requirement**

Every student must take at least one course (3 credits) in some aspect of non-Western cultures. Please consult the Master Schedule for the current list of approved non-Western courses. Note that this requirement can be met by a course in the GE Program, a course in the major, or an elective course, as long as the course is found on the list of approved courses. Departments/programs in African, African American and Caribbean Studies, Anthropology, Asian Studies, Biology, Geography, History, Languages and Cultures, Latin American Studies, Music, Political Science, Sociology, Spanish and Women's Studies offer a large range of Non-Western courses.

## **Free Electives and Minor Programs**

For some students, the required curriculum may total as few as 98 credits, whereas for others, it may occupy most of the 128 credits needed for graduation. Those credits that are not required in any area except to meet the graduation requirements are called "electives." You are free to earn these credits as you wish. One possibility is to concentrate them in a discipline where a minor is offered, or even to work towards a second major. It may be helpful to have a second field that you have studied in some depth. Since most college graduates change careers at some point in their lifetimes, specializing in more than one area can provide more options for future employment. A minor usually consists of at least 18 credits in a specific field. (If carefully planned, the six credits of GE electives can be used towards a minor program.) Consult the undergraduate catalog for descriptions of minor programs. The minor field is listed on your transcript when you graduate.

## **Certification Programs**

Teacher Certification Programs at WPUNJ range from 30-33 credits in addition to the requirements listed above. Students who choose to pursue Certification Programs usually exceed the 128 credits required for an undergraduate degree. See the Undergraduate Catalog for more details on Certification Programs.

## **Special Opportunities and Programs**

### **Honors Programs and Honors General Education Courses**

WPUNJ offers a variety of honors tracks and programs. Several honors sections of standard GE courses are offered each semester. These sections are especially appropriate for students seeking an intensified course with a limited class size (20 or fewer students). As is the case for standard GE sections, students should select from these offerings to fulfill their GE Program requirements. Students interested in enrolling in these courses must contact the University Honors Program at 973-720-3657 to obtain permission.

## **Cluster Courses**

An academic cluster is a set of linked GE courses. They provide an exciting introduction to academic university life by helping students explore ways in which three of these required GE courses are connected. Freshmen and sophomores should seriously consider taking advantage of this academic opportunity. Students register for these take three courses as a package. Students are encouraged to take at least one set of clustered courses in the process of completing GE requirements. (Note that cluster courses have the section number "50" in the Master Schedule of Courses.)

Honors clusters are designed to create an intellectual climate that challenges academically talented students, supports them in trying new things and encourages them to consider ideas and fields of study in ways that are new to them.

## **Academic Support**

At the Academic Support Center, students receive one-on-one tutoring assistance for numerous lower-level and upper-level courses, as well as for basic skills math and reading courses. Workshops designed to help students develop effective study skills and strategies are frequently offered. From the Center's lab, students may access network computer facilities. Study groups and exam review sessions are also available. The Center is located in Hunziker Wing 218 and can be reached at 973-720-3324/2563. The Science Enrichment Center provides tutoring in the sciences and mathematics. It is located in Science Hall 421A and can be reached at 973-720-3340. The Writing Center, located in Atrium 128, can be reached at 973-720-2633 and provides one-on-one tutoring for students who need help with writing assignments. In addition, many academic departments have their own tutoring or support programs.

## **Community Outreach, Civic Engagement and Experiential Learning**

William Paterson University is committed to providing opportunities for students to become engaged in extracurricular activities within the campus community as well as in surrounding communities. Many majors have community outreach, civic engagement and/or experiential learning opportunities built into their programs. There are also individual GE courses and GE clusters that focus on introducing students to the ideals of community involvement and active citizenship. Students should seek out and take advantage of these opportunities to interact with the real world as these projects and learning experiences bring academic disciplines to life.

## **Distance Learning**

A number of GE courses, major courses and electives are available as online courses. Online courses differ from traditional classroom instruction in that most of the work is done independently via the Internet. Distance Learning is best suited to students who enjoy working at the computer and completing assignments in a timely way outside of the classroom. There is

no set class time other than an initial orientation session and possibly one or two additional meetings throughout the semester. The learning takes place asynchronously; that is, the students may access materials at different times, according to their needs. Students can log on 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Weekly assignments are given and must be completed by designated deadlines. Taking such a course requires much initiative, independence and persistence, but the parking is a whole lot easier! See the Master Schedule of Courses for a listing of online courses that are offered for each semester. A section number of "80-89" in the Master Schedule indicates an online course.

## **Special Information for Transfer Students**

If you are a transfer student, you must have all transcripts from other colleges and universities you have attended sent to the WPUNJ Admissions Office. Your previously earned credits must be evaluated to determine which courses will transfer and in which part of the curriculum they will be counted. For instance, a course with less than a C grade will not be counted towards your WPUNJ degree. While you are waiting for the evaluation to be completed, it is recommended that you do not take any course that is similar to one for which you hope to receive transfer credit. You should also consult with an advisor regarding Basic Skills requirements.

Once you receive the evaluation of your transfer credits, you should see your department chairperson or, if you are undeclared, an advisor at the Advisement Center. Your transfer credits will be reviewed to ensure that the maximum number of courses applicable to GE requirements and other parts of the required curriculum are properly placed in these categories. This will help you to choose courses that will fulfill the remaining GE requirements and to avoid taking courses that duplicate requirements you might have already met. You should also discuss which courses will count towards fulfilling the requirements of the major or majors that interest you. It is important to use the resources of a faculty advisor who will help you to carefully plan your first few semesters so you can maximize the credit you get for work completed elsewhere.

## **Program and Course Assessment**

A healthy curriculum is continually examined for improvement, and we hope you will help us do this. You will hear of a process called "assessment," which is used to study courses and programs in order to identify ways to improve them. You may hear the term "student learning outcomes," that is, what we are hoping students will achieve in a particular course or program. Assessment is an important part of the WPUNJ culture. It involves studying the effectiveness of courses and programs in order to improve student success. You may be asked to participate in this process by completing survey questionnaires, assignments or tests. Assessment tools such as surveys are frequently used to measure whether courses and programs are achieving their intended outcomes. Please participate and cooperate in this process whenever asked to do so. Note that future changes in the programs will apply only to those students who enter after the changes have been adopted. Be assured that assessment is not done to penalize students; it is done with an eye towards the improvement of educational endeavors at WPUNJ.

## **In Conclusion**

We hope that this General Education Handbook will be useful to you throughout your undergraduate career. It describes many of the requirements in your undergraduate curriculum and can help guide you in fulfilling them. It is important to take advantage of your faculty advisor's expertise throughout your undergraduate career. Your advisor can help you stay on track as you progress towards your degree and can answer many of the questions that arise as you advance through the curriculum. Other support services can likewise smooth over any rough spots you may encounter en route to completion of your studies. Keep in mind that the requirements in effect when you enter WPUNJ will be those you must fulfill in order to graduate.

See your advisor every semester, if not more frequently. Consult with him or her early and often. Check with the department that houses your major for new developments, such as new courses, research opportunities, internships or other educational experiences that might be attractive to you. Consult with your professors. They are wonderful resources to help you understand and appreciate the GE curriculum as well as your major and electives. Let us all help you find the best way to benefit from your William Paterson University experience.