



DEGREE BREADTH POLICY

Approved by: Academic Coordinating Committee

Authorizer: Executive Dean, Academic Administration

Reference Code: D9 V1

Effective Date: 2/1/2014

POLICY STATEMENT:

Breadth of education is important in the development of an individual who is conscious of the diversity, complexity and richness of the human experience, and results in a citizen who contributes positively to the society in which they live and work.

Conestoga is committed to providing a breadth of education in Bachelor's degree programs by including breadth courses that meet degree-level requirements and the Postsecondary Education Quality Assessment Board Program Content Standard and Benchmarks.

SCOPE:

This policy applies to all of Conestoga's Bachelor degree programs, with the exception of the collaborative degrees. This requirement will be met by a range of breadth courses, available to all degree students as specified or elective courses.

DEFINITIONS:

Annual Program Reflections

The Annual Program Reflections is a process that results in the identification of minor program changes and refinements for the upcoming academic year to enhance program quality in support of student success.

Breadth Courses (Noncore)

A breadth course is a course outside of the main discipline of study for a particular degree; it can also be referred to as noncore. Introductory level breadth courses are offered at the 71000 and 72000 levels. They provide fundamental knowledge, an overview, or exploration and the learning outcomes are at an introductory level of study i.e. applying, remembering, and understanding. Standards of evaluation reflect those which should prevail at an introductory or intermediate degree-level. Advanced level breadth courses are offered at the 73000 and 74000 levels, or 72000 level with a specified pre-requisite. They require greater

depth in application of theory, analysis, and research, such that students access previous knowledge and apply it in new and relevant ways. Learning outcomes are at an advanced level of study, i.e. analyzing, creating, and evaluating. Standards of evaluation reflect those that should prevail at an advanced degree-level.

Co-requisite Course

A course which must be taken concurrently with the related course

Degree Program

A degree program is a planned and coordinated selection of degree-level courses delivered to an identified student body, at the successful conclusion of which an appropriate degree credential will be awarded.

Electives: Breadth

An opportunity in a program for a student to select a course from outside of the main discipline of study, which is being offered in a particular semester. The course must be completed as part of a program of study.

Electives: Program Option

An opportunity in a program for a student to select a course from within the main discipline of study, which is being offered in a particular semester. The course must be completed as part of a program of study.

Electives: Program Option Language

An opportunity in a program for a student to select a language course which is being offered in a particular semester. The course must be completed as part of a program of study.

Learning Outcomes

Learning outcomes are terminal statements that indicate what a student is reliably expected to demonstrate at the end of a course and upon which they are formally evaluated through grade allocation. Learning outcomes express a desired state and are often described in terms of knowledge, skills and abilities. Learning outcomes are set for programs, courses and units of learning.

Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (MTCU)

The MTCU has the function of authorizing the granting of degrees, assessing all degree program proposals for determination of appropriate code classification, funding weights and parameters, and program titling.

Postsecondary Education Quality Assessment Board (PEQAB)

PEQAB is an advisory agency that makes recommendations to the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities of Ontario on applications for ministerial consent under the terms of the Postsecondary Education Choice and Excellence Act, 2000.

Pre-requisite Course

A course which must be taken prior to the identified course.

Specified Course

A course identified in a program that a student is required to complete as part of a program of study.

POLICY ELABORATION:

Conestoga's degree curriculum is designed to contribute to the achievement of:

- the development of critical thinking, quantitative reasoning, written and oral communication skills;
- more than introductory knowledge in the humanities, sciences, social sciences, global cultures and/or mathematics;
- knowledge of society and culture, and skills relevant to civic engagement; and
- more than introductory knowledge of the distinctive assumptions and modes of analysis of a discipline outside the core field(s) of study.

Conestoga degree breadth courses from a variety of disciplines are grouped into the following fields of study:

- Arts and Humanities
- Business and Economics
- Language and Culture
- Science and Mathematics
- Sociology and Social Sciences

In order to qualify as a breadth course for a particular degree program, 80% or greater of the course learning outcomes will not be related to scholarship in the main field of study.

The approach to the course materials (e.g. sociological, philosophical, or generic) will expose students to new theoretical perspectives, forms of thought, or modes of enquiry and may also offer students opportunities to actively examine and assess their values, beliefs and commitments.

A student's ability to master the course content of an introductory breadth course should not depend on bringing to it any kind of specialized knowledge. In order to take advanced level courses, a student must have successfully completed two introductory level courses or the identified pre-requisite course. Successful completion of at least two advanced level breadth courses is required in order to graduate from a degree program.

Breadth curriculum must reflect current knowledge in the field and must be approved by Conestoga, the Postsecondary Education Quality Assessment Board, and the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities. Breadth courses must also meet the requirements of external accrediting bodies, where applicable.

Breadth courses are required to be outside of the main discipline of study for a particular degree and should comprise a minimum of 20% of the total program hours. (Where justified, a program may use credit hours rather than program hours for meeting this minimum standard.) At least one breadth course in a degree program must be offered as an elective.

As part of continuous quality improvement and program enhancement, breadth curriculum is reviewed in Conestoga's Annual Program Reflections.

Breadth courses are taught by faculty members having appropriate academic credentials.

REFERENCES:

- Advanced Standing and Transfer Credit Procedure
- Degree Development Procedure
- Degree Development, Review, Revision, and Renewal Policy
- Degree Breadth Procedure
- Degree Review, Revision, and Renewal Procedure
- Handbook for Ontario Colleges, 2010: Applying for Ministerial Consent under the Post-secondary Education Choice and Excellence Act, 2000; PEQAB

REVISION LOG:

- April 7, 2014 Degree Management Committee – Approved
- April 9, 2014 Policy and Procedure Committee – Approved
- April 16, 2014 Academic Coordinating Committee - Approved