

At James Madison University, General Education is based on common, liberal learning outcomes and measurable objectives. The program helps students prepare for entry into the digital age. Recent studies show that the major is no longer a guarantee of one lifelong occupation and that the skills most demanded by employers are crosscutting ones found in general education programs.

General Education Office
Maury Hall 110
MSC 1104
Harrisonburg, Virginia
22807

FIVE CLUSTERS
ONE LIBERAL
EDUCATION





Cluster One **Skills for the 21st Century**

Cluster One is the cornerstone of The Human Community and should be completed in the first year.

This cluster emphasizes knowledge and skills in the areas of oral and written communications, critical thinking, and information literacy. These are also the skills employers say they most want to see in a prospective employee.

Cluster Two **Arts and Humanities**

Cluster Two centers on those areas of academic study that invite a deepened appreciation of the human condition and the myriad ways it has been expressed—from philosophy and music to history and literature. Long valued for their intrinsic worth, the arts and humanities also help us explore our purpose, help us make sense of our world, and enable us to understand different times, places, and cultures. The multidisciplinary experience within Cluster Two also enhances cross-disciplinary, creative thinking, recognized as an essential skill in the twenty-first century. Students enrich their appreciation of the arts and humanities by taking three courses (nine credits), one from each of the three areas that comprise the cluster: Human Questions and Contexts, Visual and Performing Arts, and Literature.

Cluster Three **The Natural World**

Cluster Three focuses on understanding the world around us through mathematical and scientific models and reasoning. In Cluster Three students complete a math course, science courses from two different areas and a laboratory requirement. Cluster Three focuses on understanding the world around us through mathematical and scientific models and reasoning. In Cluster Three students complete a math course, science courses from two different areas and a laboratory requirement. Through these courses students will be introduced to a body of scientific and mathematical facts, concepts, and models. These investigations into the natural world use analytical methods to evaluate evidence, build and test and develop theories. Cluster Three courses strive to make student informed citizens capable of analyzing and using scientific and quantitative information.

Cluster Four **Social and Cultural Processes**

Cluster Four courses encourage students to explore the key social and cultural processes and structures that shape the human experience. With the rapid changes taking place in today's world, it is imperative that students obtain an understanding of the human experience both as it relates to society and also as part of the larger global community. Students learn to think critically about the theoretical perspectives and methodologies that guide analysis and inform public policy. Students take two classes to satisfy Cluster Four requirements. One course provides an in-depth exposure to the American experience, and the second course examines important contemporary global issues. These courses reflect JUM's commitment to prepare students for citizenship.

Cluster Five **Individuals in the Human Community**

Through studying the many variables that influence human behavior in contemporary society, students gain an understanding of the relationship between the individual and a diverse community and develop a sense of responsibility for self and community. Students explore how individuals develop and function in the social, intellectual, emotional, physical and spiritual dimensions.

