

Charge for the Task Force on General Education Updates: Civic Discourse and Artificial Intelligence

Task Force Members

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Charge

The Task Force on General Education Updates is charged with implementing new SUNY general education requirements in the areas of **Civic Discourse** and **Artificial Intelligence**. These updated requirements are mandatory additions to the general education curriculum at the direction of the SUNY Chancellor and approved by the SUNY Board of Trustees. They must be implemented by Fall 2026.

Artificial Intelligence has been identified as a required topic for exploration within the existing Information Literacy general education competency as an addition to one of the current student learning outcomes. The task force will identify appropriate ways to satisfy this AI-focused student learning outcome in a way that satisfies the requirement while maintaining an appropriate balance with the other student learning outcomes within this competency.

Civic Discourse is a new required category. The task force should explore strategies for implementation that minimize additional course requirements for students. The goal is to enhance students' ability to engage in respectful, informed, and productive dialogue without increasing their credit-hour burden.

The task force should work collaboratively with faculty, administrators, and relevant stakeholders to ensure these updates align with institutional goals, accreditation and assessment standards, and best practices in general education. Recommendations should be made with an emphasis on flexibility, feasibility, and meaningful accomplishment of the student learning outcomes.

The SUNY requirements:

1. Information Literacy

(Revised, Effective Fall 2026; the **highlighted language** is new)

- locate information effectively using tools appropriate to their need and discipline;
- evaluate information **from a variety of sources** with an awareness of authority, validity, bias, and **origin**; and
- demonstrate an understanding of the ethical dimensions of information use, creation, and dissemination, **whether from traditional sources or emerging technologies, such as artificial intelligence.**

Guidance

Students need to acquire information literacy appropriate to the demands of the 21st century, which includes applying all three learning outcomes of this core competency to various sources of information, including emerging technologies, such as artificial intelligence.

2. Civic Discourse

(New, Effective Fall 2026)

Students will demonstrate the discourse skills necessary to participate in civic life, including:

- the deliberation of ideas through reasoned inquiry that seeks new information and considers multiple viewpoints; and
- the ethical practice of advocacy, dissent, and dialogue that constructively attends to points of conflict.

Guidance

The phrase “participate in civic life” is intentionally broad to capture the ways in which individuals engage with various communities and public spaces, which may include political and social institutions within the United States and across the globe, as well as other spaces of public life, such as digital forums and the workplace. Conceived of in this manner, the skills of civic discourse are applicable across a range of disciplines.

Civic discourse is the exchange of ideas about public matters. It is distinct from debate, which has as a primary purpose promoting one’s own ideas and attempting to convince others to agree with these ideas.

This core competency is intended to focus on students acquiring the knowledge to understand the importance of, and requirements for, civic discourse, and students will demonstrate the skills that reflect this knowledge. This competency is not intended to assess student conduct in general.