University Program Offerings

Associate, Bachelor’s and Master’s online programs are administered by the Forbes School of Business & Technology at Ashford University and three colleges: the College of Education, the College of Health, Human Services and Science and the College of Liberal Arts. For more information about on-time completion rates, the medial loan debt of students who complete each program listed below, and other important information, please visit [www.ashford.edu/pd](http://www.ashford.edu/pd.).

General Education Curriculum

Philosophy and Purpose

The higher education offered by the University and other colleges and universities differs from other forms of postsecondary education in the belief that education involves preparation for living life as a whole rather than simply training a student for a specific job. Typically, colleges and universities have sought to provide such preparation by requiring that students devote a substantial portion—often about one-third—of their coursework to General Education programs that provide sufficient breadth of education and mastery of essential learning skills to enable them to understand and to adapt to a changing world as well as to contribute to its betterment. While virtually all institutions of higher education have some sort of General Education requirements, there is much variety, and the pattern that a college's General Education program takes says a great deal about its values, its view of the world, and its personality.

The University's General Education requirements are grounded firmly in the University's mission statement, which places the University squarely within the liberal arts tradition of higher education. It speaks of intellectual growth and of a shared search for truth within a community that values diversity in ways of learning and forms of knowledge as well as in terms of the people the University seeks to serve.

In crafting a General Education program that reflects the mission statement, the faculty believed that students graduating from the University should first of all possess certain competencies that define a college-educated person. In curricular terms, this takes the form of a competency block in which students must demonstrate proficiency in applied ethics, information technology, critical thinking, mathematics, and written and oral communication.

These learning skills are valuable in and of themselves and, doubly so, when used as means to realize the intellectual growth and shared search for truth of the mission statement. They are also skills much in demand by employers.

A liberal arts education is rooted in the idea of preparing a person for life as a citizen in a free society and, so, demands breadth. In structuring this part of the General Education program, the faculty formulated eight general goals in the areas of cultural and aesthetic awareness, literature, science, history, diversity awareness, social and personal awareness, political science, and humanities. These goals were then defined in greater detail as learning outcomes within each subject area. Courses appropriate to the desired outcomes were identified and incorporated into the General Education curriculum. Certain subject areas relate directly to elements of the mission statement. More generally, the distribution of coursework across eight subject areas requires students to take courses in many disciplines. By experiencing a diversity of subject matter and ways of knowing, students will emerge with a broadly based education that equips them, in conjunction with studies in their major and elective coursework, not only to pursue successful careers but also to lead meaningful lives.

General Education Requirements

The General Education program incorporates a framework of specified competencies. Students must complete 21 credit of course work in the Core and 22 credits in the remaining competencies and General Education Capstone Requirement.

General Education requirements for all Ashford University Associate- and Bachelor-level programs are outlined in this section; however, specific General Education courses may be required for some programs and majors. **Every Ashford University General Education course is not available in every degree program.** Please refer to the program requirements section of this *Catalog* for information on specific degree program requirements.

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| --- | --- |
| **General Education Total** | 43 credits |
| *Core Competencies (21 credits)* |  |
| Ethical Reasoning | 3 credits |
| Written Communication I & II | 6 credits |
| Oral & Interpersonal Communication | 3 credits |
| Critical Thinking | 3 credits |
| Information Literacy | 3 credits |
| Quantitative Reasoning | 3 credits |
| *Competencies* (19 credits) |  |
| Aesthetic Awareness & Reasoning | 3 credits |
| Intercultural & Global Awareness | 3 credits |
| Civic Responsibility | 3 credits |
| Scientific Reasoning | 4 credits |
| Foundations & Skills for Lifelong Learning | 3 credits |
| Digital Literacy | 3 credits |
| *Capstone Requirement (3 credits)* | 3 credits |
| General Education Capstone | 3 credits |

Core Competencies (21 credits)

Competencies are skills deemed necessary by the faculty to demonstrate a quality college education. The following general policies apply to the competencies:

* Prerequisite courses, if needed, must be completed before taking the competency course. However, required courses listed can be waived by means of high school advanced placement (AP) coursework and/or placement/competency testing. Students should consult their Academic Advisors for additional information regarding a waiver of competency requirements;
* A minimum grade of “C–” will be required to satisfy competencies and competency prerequisites; and
* Competency courses may not simultaneously be used to satisfy subject area requirements.

Demonstration of the competencies subsequently listed is required for the AA, BA, and BS degrees. Courses offered by Ashford University to satisfy these competency requirements are listed in each area.

Ethical Reasoning Competency (3 credits)

The Ethical Reasoning competency is the examination of principles of normative and non-normative ethical theories and the application of these principles in decision-making activities including case studies and contemporary social issues. Students will explore moral character: virtues and vices, commitments and attitudes, personal relationships, and community involvement, in addition to right and wrong conduct.

*Learning Outcomes*

Students meeting this competency will be able to do the following:

1. Identify ethical issues within current events, society or one or more fields of study.
2. Present one’s own ethical position in relation to problems, issues, norms or values.
3. Compare different ethical positions in relation to problems, issues, norms or values.
4. Apply ethical theory or appropriate professional ethical codes to social and moral issues in the field of study.
5. Evaluate the application of ethical theories and codes in relation to problems, issues, norms or values.

One ethical reasoning course, 3 credits, is required. Ashford University offers the following courses to satisfy this requirement:

* ABS 415 Leadership & Ethics in a Changing World (3 credits)
* BUS 250 Corporate & Social Responsibility (3 credits)
* ECD 330 Ethics & Legal Responsibility in Early Learning Settings (3 credits)
* HIM 252 Legal Aspects of Health Information (3 credits)
* LEA 316 Ethics in Law Enforcement (3 credits)
* MIL 275 Military Ethics (3 credits)
* PHI 208 Ethics & Moral Reasoning (3 credits)
* PHI 445 Personal & Organizational Ethics (3 credits)
* SOC 120 Introduction to Ethics & Social Responsibility (3 credits)

Typically, courses that deal with ethics or morality, usually with a PHI or REL prefix, may be applied in transfer to satisfy this competency.

Written Communication Competency (6 credits)

Written communication is the use of texts to create and transmit meaning. Students will examine, analyze, and utilize different types of communication appropriate in professional and academic settings. They will also develop and assess communication strategies appropriate for certain audiences as well as determine and evaluate ethical issues that arise from communicating with others.

Learning Outcomes

In writing, students meeting this competency will be able to do the following:

1. Interpret information from various sources.
2. Integrate information to effectively communicate a central message
3. Employ successful processes for producing effective communication.
4. Use conventions of spelling, grammar, genre and style appropriate to a specific purpose or context.
5. Practice principles of academic integrity in written communication.
6. Create cohesive and effective written work for a specific purpose.

Ashford University offers the following courses to satisfy the Communication I and II requirement:

* ENG 121 Composition I (3 credits)
* ENG 122 Composition II (3 credits)
* ENG 325 Intermediate Composition (3 credits)

Students have the option of using a passing score on a CLEP examination to fulfill the Communication I and II requirement.

Oral and Interpersonal Communication Competency (3 credits)

Oral and interpersonal communication is the use of language, speech, and affect to transmit messages. Students will examine the encoding of messages for different audiences and decoding of messages to reconstruct meaning. Students will assess appropriate communication strategies for various audiences and evaluate ethical issues that arise from communicating with others as well as utilize effective oral and interpersonal presentation strategies and methods.

Learning Outcomes

In Oral and Interpersonal Communication, students meeting this competency will be able to do the following:

1. Integrate a variety of message encoding techniques based on information about audiences
2. Integrate a variety of message decoding techniques to reconstruct meaning of an incoming message
3. Utilize communication strategies appropriate for different rhetorical purposes.
4. Apply principles of ethical communication.
5. Examine the impact of communication in personal and professional contexts.

Ashford University offers the following courses to satisfy the Oral and Interpersonal Communication area:

* BUS 340 Business Communications (3 credits)
* CGD 240 Media Writing & Editing (3 credits)
* COM 200 Interpersonal Communication (3 credits)
* COM 223 Persuasion in Communication (3 credits)
* COM 325 Communication & Conflict (3 credits)
* COM 345 Media Writing for Communications (3 credits)
* COM 370 Intercultural Communication (3 credits)
* COM 425 Communication in Organizations (3 credits)
* HHS 207 Communication Skills for Health and Human Service Personnel (3 credits)
* SPE 103 Oral Communication (3 credits)

Students have the option of using a passing score on a DSST examination to fulfill the Communication III requirement.

Critical Thinking Competency (3 credits)

Critical Thinking is a set of skills and strategies for making decisions about what people ought to do and believe. Students will analyze thought processes and language, identify logically fallacious thinking, and use the essential skills of deductive and inductive argument in analysis and evaluation. Students will also learn to objectively identify problems, gather information from varied and appropriate sources, and utilize methods of decision-making to provide solutions to those problems.

Learning Outcomes

Students meeting this competency will be able to do the following:

1. Describe the issues or problems in a manner appropriate to the academic field of study
2. Interpret evidence that is used to support positions in relation to a specific topic
3. Evaluate evidence based on specific criteria
4. Compare and contrast various positions, arguments, or theses related to the examined issues.
5. Create arguments to support positions on issues or in relation to theses.

One critical thinking course, 3 credits, is required. Ashford University offers the following courses to satisfy this requirement:

* COM 223 Persuasion in Communication (3 credits)
* PHI 103 Informal Logic (3 credits)

Typically, logic courses or courses stressing critical thinking may be applied in transfer to satisfy the critical thinking competency. Most applicable courses will have a PHI or LOG prefix.

Information Literacy Competency (3 credits)

Information literacy is the set of research skills that allow individuals to recognize when information is needed, to locate it, evaluate it, and effectively use it to communicate a message or support a claim. Students will develop the skills necessary to critically evaluate sources and communicate information appropriately, effectively, and ethically.

Learning Outcomes

Students meeting this competency will be able to do the following:

1. Identify nature and extent of information needed to support a specific purpose.
2. Use relevant and credible information sources that are appropriate to the field and purpose.
3. Evaluate information and its sources critically.
4. Communicate information using appropriate tools and technology to accomplish a specific purpose.
5. Use information legally and ethically.

One information literacy course, 3 credits, is required. Ashford University offers the following courses to satisfy this requirement:

* GEN 103 Information Literacy (3 credits)    *Prerequisite: LNG 101 or LNG 321*
* LNG 330 Language and Power (3 credits)

Typically, research methods courses or courses about the gathering, evaluation, and use of information may be applied in transfer to satisfy the information literacy competency.

Quantitative Reasoning Competency (3 credits)

Quantitative Reasoning is the ability to efficiently process data, interpret it, represent it using mathematical forms, and solve numerical and applied mathematical problems. Students will use mathematical forms, logical reasoning, and valid techniques to solve problems related to their fields of study as well as their personal lives.

Learning Outcomes

Students meeting this competency will be able to do the following:

1. Represent the given information using mathematical models and forms.
2. Interpret quantitative data.
3. Perform calculations that relate to specific topics and fields of study.
4. Evaluate quantitative evidence used to support a claim.
5. Support a position using quantitative evidence.

One course, 3 credits, is required. Ashford University offers the following courses to satisfy this requirement:

* MAT 222 Intermediate Algebra (3 credits)
* MAT 232 Statistical Literacy (3 credits)

A comparable course with a grade of “C-” or better may be applied in transfer to satisfy the quantitative reasoning competency.

Competencies (19 credits)

A course may be applied only once to meet a General Education competency requirement. Whether a course may be applied simultaneously to a General Education competency requirement and to a major requirement depends on the requirements specified for each major. Courses offered to satisfy the Competency requirements are subsequently listed:

Aesthetic Awareness and Reasoning (3 credits)

Aesthetic Awareness & Reasoning is the ability to creatively examine life and objects through the lens of beauty and artistic taste. Students will interpret creative works, articulate how creative works influence and respond to society and culture, determine the key contexts of creative works, and substantiate aesthetic judgments with appropriate evidence.

Learning Outcomes

Students meeting this competency will be able to do the following:

1. Interpret creative works using a theoretical approach.
2. Articulate the ways in which creative works influence and/or respond to society and culture.
3. Determine key contexts of creative works.
4. Substantiate aesthetic judgments using appropriate evidence.

One aesthetic awareness and reasoning course, 3 credits, is required. Ashford University offers the following courses to satisfy this requirement:

* ART 101 Art Appreciation (3 credits)
* ENG 125 Introduction to Literature (3 credits)
* ENG 201 American Literature to 1865 (3 credits)
* ENG 202 American Literature after 1865 (3 credits)
* ENG 225 Introduction to Film (3 credits)
* ENG 438 Literary Theory (3 credits)
* HIS 103 World Civilizations I (3 credits)
* HIS 104 World Civilizations II (3 credits)
* LIB 202 Women, Culture & Society (3 credits)
* LIB 316 Historical Contexts & Literature (3 credits)

Typically, a course in one of the following subject areas may be applied in transfer to satisfy the cultural and aesthetic awareness requirement: art, film, photography, dance (non-PE activity), and music.

Intercultural and Global Awareness (3 credits)

Intercultural and global awareness is a recognition and understanding of knowledge and issues through the lens of various cultural perspectives. Students will examine identities, influences, and practices that shape and contribute to the diversity of culture. They will develop awareness of contemporary issues in the global community and examine multiple perspectives and responses to those issues from diverse viewpoints.

Learning Outcomes

Students meeting this competency will be able to do the following:

1. Analyze diverse modes of cultural expression and experience.
2. Interpret current global issues through multiple perspectives.
3. Evaluate the cultural biases that influence interactions.
4. Examine how social and cultural systems develop.
5. Compare modes of creative expression using intercultural and global perspectives.

One intercultural and global awareness course, 3 credits, is required. Ashford University offers the following courses to satisfy this requirement:

* ANT 101 Introduction to Cultural Anthropology (3 credits)
* ANT 348 Native American Anthropology (3 credits)
* ANT 351 Anthropology of Religion, Magic, and Ritual (3 credits)
* ART 101 Art Appreciation (3 credits)
* BUS 357 International Business (3 credits)
* ECD 335 Children & Families in a Diverse Society (3 credits)
* ELL 240 Linguistically & Culturally Diverse Learners (3 credits)
* ELL 361 Language Learning in a Global Context (3 credits)
* ENG 125 Introduction to Literature (3 credits)
* ENG 345 British Literature I (3 credits)
* ENG 346 British Literature II (3 credits)
* HHS 320 Cultural Awareness in the Human Services (3 credits)
* HIS 103 World Civilizations I (3 credits)
* HIS 104 World Civilizations II (3 credits)
* HIS 205 United States History I (3 credits)
* HIS 206 United States History II (3 credits)
* HSL 300 Social Welfare Policy & Social Programs: An Historical Perspective (3 credits)
* LIB 101 The Art of Being Human (3 credits)
* LIB 102 Human Questions (3 credits)
* LIB 318 Peacemaking: A Study of Conflict Resolution (3 credits)
* LIB 320 Global Socioeconomic Perspectives (3 credits)
* LNG 360 Language & Society (3 credits)
* POL 255 Introduction to International Relations (3 credits)
* SOC 101 Introduction to Sociology (3 credits)
* SOC 203 Social Problems (3 credits)
* SOC 301 Identity and Social Inequality (3 credits)
* SOC 304 Social Gerontology (3 credits)
* SOC 307 Gender and Sexuality (3 credits)
* SOC 308 Racial and Ethnic Groups (3 credits)
* SOC 401 Engaging in Sociology (3 credits)
* SPA 103 Beginning Spanish I (3 credits)
* SPA 104 Beginning Spanish II (3 credits)
* SSC 101 Introduction to Social Science (3 credits)
* SSC 340 Human Health and Global Environmental Change (3 credits)

Typically, a course with a cross-cultural, global context, or a context other than the United States, may be applied in transfer to satisfy the diversity awareness requirement.

Civic Responsibility (3 credits)

Civic Responsibility is the demand on a citizen to responsibly act and participate in the political and social community. Students will examine what it means to be a responsible and caring member of society. They will engage in intellectual, civic, political, and community action related to the positive development of themselves and their social environments.

Learning Outcomes

Students meeting this competency will be able to do the following:

1. Assess the civic identities of different cultures, communities, and societies, including one’s own.
2. Evaluate the impacts of various forms of civic engagement.
3. Articulate the intellectual foundations and governance processes of political systems.
4. Analyze political biases in messages in various forms of print, social and digital media.
5. Explain how government policies or political discourse impact students’ personal, academic and professional lives.

One civic responsibility course, 3 credits, is required. Ashford University offers the following courses to satisfy this requirement:

* ANT 348 Native American Anthropology (3 credits)
* CRJ 303 Corrections (3 credits)
* HIS 104 World Civilizations II (3 credits)
* HIS 205 United States History I (3 credits)
* HIS 206 United States History II (3 credits)
* POL 111 Introduction to Political Science (3 credits)
* POL 201 American National Government (3 credits)
* SOC 301 Identity and Social Inequality (3 credits)
* SOC 401 Engaging in Sociology (3 credits)

Typically, courses related to understanding the political structure and/or courses that related to the responsibilities of a citizen may be applied in transfer to satisfy the civic responsibility requirement.

Scientific Reasoning (4 credits)

Scientific reasoning is a perspective used to study and explore the natural world. Students will learn the scientific method, apply it, interpret data gathered through research, and propose solutions to problems grounded in scientific theory.

Learning Outcomes

Students meeting this competency will be able to do the following:

1. Apply the scientific method to solve problems.
2. Evaluate issues using scientific literature.
3. Interpret scientific topics using reductionist.
4. Communicate scientific information using multiple formats.
5. Analyze the intersection of scientific information.

One scientific reasoning course, 4 credits (with lab), is required. Students with transfer credits in science may substitute 6 semester credits of science without lab. Ashford University offers the following courses to satisfy this requirement:

* ANT 202 Human Origins & Prehistory (4 credits)
* HIM 205 Anatomy & Physiology for HIM I (4 credits)
* HPR 205 The Human Body, Health & Disease (4 credits)
* SCI 207 Our Dependence upon the Environment (4 credits)

Typically, introductory courses with lab, in the following areas may be applied in transfer to meet the science requirement: natural sciences including chemistry, biology, astronomy, and physics.

Foundations and Skills for Lifelong Learning (3 credits)

Foundations and Skills for Lifelong learning are the ongoing methods by which one can enhance knowledge and competence. Students will develop the fundamental skills necessary to be successful in academic pursuits through reflection about the learning process and an understanding of how prior knowledge and experiences integrate with newly acquired knowledge.

Learning Outcomes

Students meeting this competency will be able to do the following:

1. Evaluate learning processes.
2. Analyze metacognitive strategies.
3. Integrate prior knowledge and experiences with newly acquired knowledge.
4. Develop a plan for learning.

One foundation and skills for lifelong learning course, 3 credits, is required. Ashford University offers the following courses to satisfy this requirement:

* EXP 105 Personal Dimensions of Education (3 credits)

A minimum grade of C- is required to successfully complete the course. EXP 105 cannot be replaced or waived by credit in transfer, unless a student meets one of the requirements as outlined in the *Bachelor’s Program Course Sequencing*.

Digital Literacy (3 credits)

Digital Literacy is the ability to effectively utilize and protect oneself and others in a society dominated by new technologies and digital devices.  Students will develop skills in the use of digital tools related to research, decision-making, problem-solving, and virtual identity communication and protection.

Learning Outcomes

Students meeting this competency will be able to do the following:

1. Utilize digital tools to perform specific tasks.
2. Examine the ethical and social issues relevant in a digital society.
3. Assess the impact of digital technology.
4. Evaluate the importance of digital literacy.
5. Critique digital resources

One digital literacy course, 3 credits, is required. Ashford University offers the following courses to satisfy this requirement:

* GEN 102 Digital Literacy for Life and the Workplace (3 credits)
* GEO 308 GIS Software Application (3 credits)
* INF 103 Computer Literacy (3 credits)
* INF 220 IS Principles (3 credits)
* INF 231 Programming Concepts (3 credits)
* INF 325 Telecommunication & Networking Concepts (3 credits)
* JRN 101 Digital and Media Literacy (3 credits)

Typically, introductory computer courses or courses stressing the application of computers to a specific industry may be applied in transfer to satisfy the digital literacy competency requirement, if completed within the last 10 years. Most applicable courses will have a BPC, CIS, INF, or COMP prefix.

Capstone Requirement (3 credits)

The General Education Capstone provides students with a cumulative and integrated learning experience. Through the study of selected interdisciplinary topics and course-embedded assessments students will demonstrate development of the general education core competencies. Students will apply general education principles informed by ethical and critical sensibility and provide evidence of growth in acquiring the habits of active citizenship. Prior to beginning their capstone course for their major, students must successfully complete the General Education capstone, unless they previously completed a Bachelor’s degree. Refer to *Completion of Additional Undergraduate Degrees* in this section of the Catalog. A minimum grade of "C–" is required to meet course requirements. Pre-requisite: 75 credits or permission of the student’s college or school dean.

Learning Outcomes

Students meeting this requirement will be able to do the following:

1. Demonstrate the application of ethics and moral reasoning with regard to academic knowledge and societal concerns.
2. Utilize principles of critical thinking in problem-solving.
3. Communicate through investigative research and writing.
4. Utilize information literacy or digital skills appropriate to interdisciplinary studies.
5. Articulate the responsibility of global citizenship and multicultural understanding with regard to academic and professional pursuits.

One general education capstone course, 3 credits, is required. Ashford University offers the following course to satisfy this requirement:

* GEN 499 General Education Capstone (3 credits)