

*Learning Management Guidelines of the General Education Curriculum that Promotes  
Citizenship Skills of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century in Thailand*

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The Asian Conference on Education & International Development 2021  
Official Conference Proceedings

**Abstract**

This article introduces the guidelines for teaching and learning in the general education (GE) curriculum that corresponds to the 21<sup>st</sup> century skills of global citizenship of Thailand and is being implemented in an open university. This curriculum focuses on enhancing and developing students' knowledge, skills, and competencies all of which are meant to be used as 'soft skills' in day-to-day lives in the era of post-globalization by designing the GE curriculum in accordance with the Thailand qualification framework for higher education (TQF:HEd). The principle behind this is that the GE curriculum is implemented in undergraduate programs. That is, 24 credits of GE courses are mandatory for all students, and in this regard, students will gain extensive knowledge in social science, science, mathematics, and humanities, as well as the 21<sup>st</sup> century skills of global citizenship. The GE curriculum is designed to expand intellectual perspectives, promote cognitive skills and desirable attitudes towards life. In addition, this curriculum elevates the learning management standards in the GE department in line with the concept of educational management 4.0 and in order to integrate and put such concept into practice, leading to the highest benefits for the students' lives in the digital era.

Keywords: Learning Management, General Education, Citizenship Skills of the 21<sup>st</sup>

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## Introduction

General Education Course it is the courses which aim at developing learners to have extensive knowledge, a broader world view, an understanding of self-nature, others and society, and logical thought. Learners are able to use language to communicate in the meaningful ways, obtain morality, aware of the value of arts and culture of both Thailand and the international community. Learners must be able to apply knowledge to life and live in society as well. (Ministry of Education Thailand, 2015)

Objectives of general education courses in Thailand universities explain as follows: 1) to acquire broad knowledge in various disciplines, seeing the relationship and interdependence of different disciplines, 2) to acquire the knowledge and ability of utilizing effective language in everyday communication, 3) to achieve such intelligence skills as thinking, analyzing, criticizing, initiatively loving progress, and seeing foresight with world view while being yourself, 4) to know yourself, understand society, see social problems, be ready to take responsibility, solve your own and others' problems appropriately and live happily in the societies 5) to be able to see the value and aesthetics in arts, culture and traditions. In addition the concept of Paitoon Sinlarat (Sinlarat, 2007), has mentioned and divided the objectives of general education courses into four major categories: 1) a wide knowledge purposes to provide students with basic knowledge for further study of other subjects 2) the understanding purposes; to provide students with a broader worldview, understanding of global and international society, and knowing as well as understanding both self and others 3) the utilizing all knowledge and understanding purpose to allow learners to apply the knowledge that they have acquired to be useful in their daily life 4) the cultural / moral / ethical appreciation purpose to provide learners with knowledge and awareness of the value of arts and culture and skillful.

In order for the learners to think critically, learners need the ability to make decisions, solve problems, as well as communicate. These needs are is consistent with general education guidelines at Harvard university. Harvard University's Program in General Education provides a broad foundation that enables students to make meaningful connections across disciplines. Students are required to choose and take one course in each of four perspectives: Aesthetics & Culture; Ethics & Civics; Histories, Societies, Individuals; as well as Science & Technology in Society. (Harvard college, 2019)

Twenty-first-century skills are abilities and attributes that can be taught and learned in order to enhance ways of thinking, learning, working and living in the world. Most frameworks seem to converge on a common set of 21<sup>st</sup> century skills or competences, namely: collaboration; communication; Information and Communication Technology (ICT) literacy; and social and/or cultural competencies (including citizenship). Most frameworks also mention creativity, critical thinking and problem solving. Across the various frameworks, it is acknowledged that ICT is at the core of 21<sup>st</sup> century skills. (International Bureau of Education, 2019) All people, regardless of their ages and gender, must have opportunities to gain the knowledge and skills proposed, with an inclusive, equitable and lifelong learning focus. Lifelong learning incorporates multiple and flexible learning pathways, entry and re-entry points at all ages, and strengthened links between formal and non-formal structures, including formal accreditation of the knowledge, skills and competencies acquired through non-formal and informal education. (Unesco, 2017)

Thailand Qualifications Framework (English: Thailand Qualifications Framework), popularly abbreviated as TQF (TQF), is a framework used as a base for transferring credits of higher

education institutions in Thailand. This framework has prepared using the method of teaching quality control by the Higher Education Commission. The Thai qualification standard framework was built from the concept of the National Qualifications Framework of United Kingdom in which is used for a quality control system, transferring credits of students at the secondary and tertiary level. TQF's future goals are to enable students in ASEAN countries to be able to transfer credits among ASEAN universities with the similar standards and its qualities. Currently, there are three countries participating in the program, included Thailand, Malaysia and Indonesia.

## **Methodology**

This research used curriculum analysis and synthesis methods (Levander & Mikkola, 2009) General Education in Thailand. There were 26 supervised universities, 57 public universities and 72 private universities. Researcher selected the sample universities for data analysis by using the Times Higher Education or THE's ranking scores, another famous world university ranking agency from England. It is the largest university ranking today. Researcher used the results that have been announced The World's Top University Rankings 2019. (Times Higher Education World University Rankings, 2019)

Thai universities Ranked among the top universities in Asia:

- Mahidol University
- Chulalongkorn University
- Khon Kaen University
- Chiang Mai University
- Thammasat University
- Kasetsart University
- King Mongkut's Institute of Technology Ladkrabang

The selected issues for the data analysis of general education courses consisted of:

1. Subject group
2. Learning outcomes
3. 21<sup>st</sup> century skills of global citizenship

To clarify the definition of these three topics, each topic explained as follow:

### **Subject Group**

It is a group of subjects within the general education courses in which each university in Thailand has different subdivisions. For example, Kasetsart University (Thailand) is categorized into Wellness, Entrepreneurship, Thai Citizen, Global Citizen, Language and Communication, Aesthetics, etc.

### **Learning Outcomes**

Learning outcomes is being set up that are defined in the general education course management. The achievement of the study should be consistent with the course objectives and course groups which are defined in the curriculum structure. For example, ChiangMai University has the following learning outcomes according to the following subject groups:

GELO 1 is a person who learns,

GELO 2 is a co-creator of innovation and

GELO 3 is a responsible and strong citizen of the country and the world.

## 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills Of Global Citizenship

It is a collection of knowledge, skills, work habits and personality traits which are believed by all societies and universities' stakeholders such as educators, school reformers, college professors, employers, and alumni that it is critical to success in today's world. In college and professional programs, contemporary and work basically 21<sup>st</sup> century skills can be applied in any field of study in all professional and civic education throughout the lifelong learning. (Partnership for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills, 2010)

### Results

Researchers analyzed data from general education courses and the analysis was performed, showing the results in Table 1 as follows:

Table 1: the comparison of teaching and learning management in all three areas of Thai universities.

University name	Subject group	Learning outcomes	21 <sup>st</sup> century skills of global citizenship
Mahidol University	1.Humanities 2.Social Sciences 3.Language 4.Science and Mathematics 5.Health Recreation	Outcome-Based Education (OBE) TQF	Health Literacy Digital Literacy Social and Humanity Literacy Communication Literacy Science and Environmental Literacy Finance and Management Literacy
Chulalongkorn University	1.Interdisciplinary 2.social science 3.science 4.Humanities 5.Next-Gen 1 6.GenEd 21 <sup>st</sup> Century 7.Next-Gen 2	TQF (+5) 1.Want to know and know how to learn 2.Leadership 3.Well-being 4.Public mind 5.Being-Thai	Leadership Learning Society Global Citizen Thainess & Multicultural Sustainable Development Innovation& Entrepreneur Well-being
KhonKaen University	1.Language 2.Humanities and 3.Social Sciences 4.Mathematics and Science	TQF, KKU: QF	FE = Freshman Education LA = Liberal Arts Education EC = Education for Creativity
ChiangMai University	1.Subject to developing learner skills 2.Course in developing innovation skills as a co-creator	TQF GELOs GELO 1 is a person who learns. GELO 2 is a co-creator of innovation.	Digital Literacy Language Literacy Health Literacy Financial Literacy Management Skills Thinking Skills Entrepreneurial Skills Startup and Innovation

University name	Subject group	Learning outcomes	21 <sup>st</sup> century skills of global citizenship
	3.Courses for developing strong citizenship skills	GELO 3 is a responsible and strong citizen of the country and the world.	Adaptability Civic Literacy and Environmental Concerns Culture and Art Volunteerism
Thammasat University	1.Social Science 2.Humanities 3.Science and Mathematics 4.Language	TQF	3 pillars Global Mindset Soft Skills Spirit of Thammasat
Kasetsart University	1.Wellness 2.Entrepreneurship 3.Thai Citizen and Global Citizen 4.Language and Communication 5.Aesthetics	Academic results of the 8 general education subjects of Kasetsart University	Wellness Entrepreneurship Thai Citizen and Global Citizen Language and Communication Aesthetics
King Mongkut's Institute of Technology Ladkrabang	1.Value of life 2.Way of society 3.The science of thinking 4.The art of manipulation 5.Language and communication	TQF KMITL General Education Outcomes	Desired KMITL Graduate & 21st Century Skills 1.Moral by identity Of the institute 2.Have pride in being Thai 3.Knowledgeable 4.creative 5.cognitive skills Discretion / skill Problem solving 6.volunteerism and leadership 7.IT competence 8.communication skills and Presentation

From Table 1, the analysis results are as follows:

Universities in Thailand, every university has a program of general education which is a skill-driven subject called soft skills. As shown in the table in the subject group, the courses mostly have been classified as follows: humanities, social science, science, language, mathematics, health, communication and aesthetics. Each of them has emphasized its own strengths in subjects such Chulalongkorn university :Next-Gen 1, GenEd 21<sup>st</sup> Century, Next-Gen 2, etc and King Mongkut's Institute of Technology Ladkrabang: Value of life, Way of society, The science of thinking, The art of manipulation, etc.

As for the learning outcomes of each university, most of them use TQF to determine their learning outcomes. However, there are some universities that define general education learning outcomes according to the university context. For example, Khon Kaen University has KCU: QF, ChiangMai University has GELOs, Kasetsart University has Academic results of the 8 general education. Even though we mentioned and shown examples of few universities, found

their own learning outcomes based on its context, their learning outcomes in general education subjects still must be aligned with TQF.

The universities in Thailand that provide teaching and learning general education. It will focus on the moral and ethical expectations of students, and focus on the identity of each university. Able to analyze the principles of teaching and learning into issues as follows,

### **Knowledge**

To develop learners to have basic knowledge of digital technology, economics, nanotechnology, business in trade, art creation, Innovation, knowledge of multiculturalism.

### **Concept**

To develop learners ability to think critically, have creative thinking skills, ability to think for the future, compare and strategic thinking. Develop critical thinking, problem solving, using math and reasoning skills.

### **Skill**

To develop learners with innovative skills according to their aptitude. Using science and the social sciences as a foundation for creating innovation, having the skills to learn to live with oneself, to build oneself, be a valuable citizen of society.

### **Attitude**

The ability to discriminate ethical choices has an understanding of the global nature and its belief-based significance for scientific and ethical reasons.

### **Conclusion**

Table 2: shows guidelines for teaching and learning in the general education category in the broader perspective of Thailand.

	Teaching method	Measurement and evaluation methods	21 <sup>st</sup> century skills of global citizenship	Content used for teaching general education
general education category in the broader perspective of Thailand	Online learning	Digital Literacy Skill Exam	Health Literacy Leadership Entrepreneurship	Humanities Social Sciences Language
	Learning through assigned tasks	Performance evaluation	Thai Citizen and Global Citizen Language and Communication	Science and Mathematics Wellness Entrepreneurship
	Learning in class	Authentic assessment	Aesthetics Innovation Digital Literacy	Thai Citizen and Global Citizen Aesthetics
	Communication practice Foreign language	Foreign language proficiency test	Civic Literacy and Environmental Concerns	

Learning activities through lectures, case studies and simulations	The exam actual situation
Class discussion	Observing the ideas that influence the behavior of the discussion.
Project-based or problem-based learning	Results from the project or reflection problems by the learners

From table 2, the analysis shows that most general education in Thailand has used online-teaching and learning based and emphasizing the assessments and its outcomes on digital literacy skills. This also demonstrates that they have combined global citizenship of 21<sup>st</sup> century skills with digital literacy skills—also meant that if students achieve digital literacy skills, they also accomplish in global citizenship.

The results of guidelines for teaching and learning in general education categories can be summarized as follows:

1. Must be a person with an interest in demographic change. Be reasonable, open-minded, and always listen to the opinions of others. This is the subject of knowledge in understanding world situations and understanding oneself.
2. Must be a person with an interest in a post-globalized world, and pay attention to the environmental crisis, which is knowledge in developing innovation to improve the quality of life and to solve various problems of the world in the 21<sup>st</sup> century
3. Must be able to trade and have a code of ethics in trading with the scope of knowledge in trading.
4. Must be someone who knows the value of individualism and pluralism, respect the rights freedoms of oneself and others, which is a matter of real knowledge of multiculturalism and democracy.
5. Must be someone who knows how to digitize information, must know how to combine technology. Which is about the knowledge of the use of technology and the integration of technology into one.

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