

APPENDIX M: LEARNING OUTCOMES FOR GE REQUIREMENTS (DRAFT STATEMENTS)

The task force found it helpful to think about specific GE guidelines in terms of the question, What do we hope students will learn? (in addition to the familiar question that motivates each of the current guidelines, What must be included in the content of the course?). We analyzed all the guidelines, and sought to distill student learning goals from each. Following are the task force's working statements of the learning goals implied in the existing guidelines for each requirement. These are descriptive statements. Even in cases where the task force thought the college should now be pursuing different learning goals, we tried simply to discern and set down the learning goals implied in the current guidelines. Hence these statements about learning goals are intended to "mirror" the course content requirements present in the guidelines. Naming the learning goals implied in each GE requirement was helpful when we tried to identify strengths and weakness in the structure and content of GE.

Going forward, we recommend that groups proposing revisions to specific requirements develop clear statements about desired learning goals for those requirements.

I. FOUNDATION STUDIES

Writing (FYW, WRD): *Five courses that develop writing competence and confidence.*

FYW Learning Outcomes:

Students will

1. Write effective formal prose for the generally educated reader
2. Develop effective and appropriate use of essential tools for research, including library and internet resources
3. Develop effective and appropriate use of sources and the conventions of citation
4. Appreciate writing as a means of learning.

WRI Learning Outcomes:

Students will

1. Write effective formal prose in a particular disciplinary or interdisciplinary field of study
2. Use writing as an active means of learning course content

Foreign Language (FOL): *Three or four courses that develop non-English language skills to an intermediate level, deepen understanding of language as a human phenomenon, and generate insights into a culture other than one's own.*

FOL Learning Outcomes:

Students will

1. Develop effective and appropriate communications skills in a language other than one's native language, including both comprehension (reading and listening) and expressive (speaking and writing) skills at an intermediate level
2. Gain insight into a culture other than one's own
3. Gain understanding of language as a human phenomenon - awareness of language as a socio-cultural phenomenon and of the subtleties and complexities of human language, including one's own.

Oral Communication (ORC): *A quarter-credit course, or its equivalent incorporated within a full-credit course, that develops oral communication competence and confidence.*

ORC Learning Outcomes:

Students will

1. improve their ability to listen and speak effectively in interpersonal, small group, and/or public presentation settings
2. develop confidence as speakers and listeners
3. increase their ability to use speaking and listening intentionally as a means of learning.

Mathematical Reasoning (MAR): *A course that develops a student's understanding of mathematics and mathematical problem-solving*

MAR Learning Outcomes:

Students will

1. gain a greater facility with mathematical problem solving
2. gain a greater understanding of mathematics, including (a) an enhanced ability to read and explain mathematics and (b) an introductory knowledge of origins and historical development of mathematics or applications of the mathematics to other disciplines.

Physical Activity (PHA): *Two different quarter-credit courses, or one half-credit course, providing participation in a structured physical activity.*

PHA Learning Outcomes:

Students will

1. gain practice and skill in a structured physical activity, including its rules and etiquette
2. assess how the activity contributes to health and fitness

II. CORE STUDIES

Historical Studies in Western Culture (HWC): *Two courses that develop historical perspective on, and critical appreciation of, the major traditions, institutions, and achievements of Western culture.*

HWC Learning Outcomes:

1. Students have a broad knowledge of the cultural, artistic, or intellectual heritage of the West (defined as “Europe”).
2. Students are able to see that heritage in the perspective of the broader historical and cultural setting, and pay attention to the perspective of the people living in that time period or setting.
3. Students understand that history is a “constructed account of the past,” the result of many influences, and they know how to analyze historical evidence. They are familiar with reassessments of achievements and failures in Western culture.

Multicultural Studies (MCS-G, MCS-D): *Two courses intended to develop understanding and appreciation of cultural diversity.*

MCS-G Learning Outcomes:

Students gain an understanding of a culture (or cultures) outside the western tradition by focusing on patterned systems of belief regarding one or more significant aspects of a society or societies, in an intercultural way.

MCS-D Learning Outcomes:

Students gain an understanding of US society by exploring the experience of groups different from the dominant society, through a focus on race, gender, and ethnicity.

Artistic and Literary Studies (ALS-A, ALS-L): *Two courses, one in each sub-area, intended to develop appreciation and understanding of artistic and literary forms in their cultural context.*

ALS-A Learning Outcomes:

Students will

1. gain an informed appreciation of the aesthetic and formal properties of at least one of the fine arts.
2. gain an understanding of that art in the broader context of human life, the ways in which the art affects the performer, viewer or audience, and the distinctive experience and knowledge it has to offer.

ALS-L Learning Outcomes:

Students will be able to:

1. Identify and analyze the formal properties of a primary work of literature (poetry, prose, drama);
2. Make an informed aesthetic judgment of a work of literature based on a certain breadth of the experience of reading and/or writing literature;
3. Identify the cultural context of the work of literature and analyze its effect on the work as a whole;
4. Pinpoint the effect of the work of literature on themselves as persons.

Biblical and Theological Studies (BTS-B, BTS-T): *Two courses, one in each sub-area, that introduce the Biblical tradition and develop a critical and coherent understanding of Christian belief.*

BTS-B Learning Outcomes:

Students will

1. be acquainted with important methods and findings of the historical study of the Jewish and Christian Bible
2. be familiar with the diversity of types of writing in the Bible
3. recognize the theological diversity of the Bible
4. recognize Jewish and Christian understandings of the central story-line of the Bible.

BTS-T Learning Outcomes:

Students will

1. be acquainted with significant Christian theological traditions
2. be able to reflect in a critical and normative way on theological assertions
3. know rudimentary content of Christian teaching about God and Christ

Studies in Natural Science (NST-x, NSL): *Two courses that develop a student's understanding of scientific knowledge, the process of scientific discovery, and the role of the sciences in society and culture.*

NST Learning Outcomes¹:

Students will

1. gain a better understanding of basic scientific knowledge and the process of scientific discovery.
2. gain a better understanding and appreciation of the role of the sciences in society and culture, and knowledge of the interdependence of the arts, humanities, social sciences and sciences.

¹ The original TF version did not differentiate between NST-x and NST-L.

Studies in Human Behavior and Society (HBS): *Two courses, in two different disciplines, that introduce students to basic concepts, theories and methods for understanding individual and social human behavior.*

HBS Learning Outcomes:

Students will gain

1. introductory-level knowledge of individual and/or group behavior in social relations and/or social institutions
2. ability to analyze and interpret empirical evidence about human behavior
3. ability to use theories of human social behavior and to apply appropriate empirical evidence in the analysis of social issues

III. INTEGRATIVE STUDIES

Ethical Issues and Normative Perspectives (EIN): *An upper level course that analyzes ethical issues from a variety of moral and theological perspectives.*

EIN Learning Objectives:

Students will

1. gain some understanding of the idea of moral reasoning.
2. gain some understanding of particular moral theories (including some Christian theories).
3. be able to analyze current issues from a normative perspective.