Student Learning Outcomes

for the

General Education Curriculum

General comments from the open forum on August 20th:

1. Can students get back credit?

Response: not generally, no, except for Gen Ed categories that didn’t change (FSEM, NS, WI, SI, Lang, BTC). If a course is approved this year for the next academic catalog, someone who takes it this year won’t be able to count it. This may limit the number who switch.

Course designations for new categories (SS, AL, HUM, DGP, QR, DI, AMW) will take effect for the 2020-2021 academic year.

2. We should take another year, allowing departments to take a deeper dive into curricula and provide individual majors and minors with resources.

Departments are concerned with workload

Response: all courses do not have to be proposed this fall. Departments should focus on lower level courses that students tend to take to fulfill a general education requirement for this fall.

Gen Ed and OIAE can work with/advise more affected departments or to help identify likely courses for proposal.

3. Why wouldn’t we make all of our courses fulfill gen ed?

It’s a general education program. The goal is not to fill your major program.

One of the goals of the revision was to simplify the curriculum and offerings for students.

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| **FOUNDATIONS** | **DESCRIPTION** |
| **First Year Seminar** | **One** course designated as a first year seminar. |
| **Written Communication** | **Three** courses designated Writing Intensive. |
| **Oral Communication** | **One** course designated Speaking Intensive. |
| **Language** | Intermediate competency in a second language defined as the completion of any **201 course** (Completion of Level IV of a language in high school will also satisfy this requirement. Details on other options for satisfying this requirement on page 7.) |
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| **METHODS OF INVESTIGATION** | **DESCRIPTION** |
| **Arts and Literature** | **One** course focusing on visual art, performing art, and/or literature. |
| **Humanities** | **One** course in the humanities (including history). |
| **Natural Science** | **One** course in the natural sciences that includes a laboratory. |
| **Quantitative Reasoning** | **One** course focusing on quantitative information and abstract reasoning. |
| **Social Science** | **One** course in the social sciences. |
|  | **Two** additional courses from two different Methods of Investigation. |
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| **CONNECTIONS** | **DESCRIPTION** |
| **Digital Intensive** | **One** across-the-curriculum course designated as a Digital Intensive course. |
| **Diverse and Global Perspectives** | **One** across-the curriculum course focusing on global and/or diverse communities. |
| **Beyond the Classroom** | **One** faculty supervised experience involving a significant experiential learning component designed to challenge students to go outside of the bounds of the typical classroom. |
| **After Mary Washington** | **One** experience focused on translating the liberal arts experience for life after Mary Washington. |
| **Writing in the Major** | All students are required to complete **one** additional course designated Writing Intensive in their major(s). |
| **Speaking in the Major** | All students are required to complete **one** additional course designated Speaking Intensive in their major(s). |

**Beyond the Classroom (formerly Experiential Learning) Learning Outcomes:**

* Students will apply what was learned in coursework to new scenarios outside standard university courses.
* Students will identify their personal values and learning goals and direct themselves by creating personalized learning experiences that may include alternative means of learning.
* Students will clarify and refine their understanding of their strengths and weaknesses in the content of the relevant disciplines.
* Students will clarify and refine an understanding of their strengths and weaknesses related to skills such as time management, organization, and professionalism.
* Students will connect their undergraduate experiences and their post-graduation plans.

Can BTC be an ATC? It is "skills-based."

Response: No. We are at the limit of courses that can be ATC given the requirement to have 30 credits.

ATC, as the name shows, encompass skill-based competencies taught **across the curriculum.** These are skills that are not specific to any one discipline, skills that theoretically could be taught in any discipline. This helps ensure that the institution as a whole supports the competencies. Although a student might encounter this competency in their major, they do not have to do so in order to understand and achieve the skill.

These are the skills for each of our ATC requirements:

WI - Writing skill

SI - Communication skill

DI - Digital literacy / information technology

DGP – Cultural competency. Although less well known than the others, there are schools that have cultural competency across the curriculum

BtC / EL requirement is a group of quite different courses, each teaching multiple, very different skills depending on the discipline – research, practicum, community engagement, study abroad, etc. -- all loosely connected in that they help the student connect their discipline to work outside the classroom, to be sure, but not the same set of skills/topics/dispositions being taught across the curriculum. Like CE, they could theoretically all have distinct learning outcomes for each type of BtC. We’ve chosen not to do this for the sake of expediency, but such an idea does show that this is disparate group of things and is also not about integration across disciplines.

Can BtC have instructor-only designation? Should be signal to students that this section is not like others (e.g. CE courses)

Response: Yes. That has been added to the course proposal form.

**First Year Seminar Learning Outcomes:**

* Students will utilize a variety of research techniques to retrieve information efficiently, evaluate retrieved information, and synthesize information effectively to support their messages or arguments.
* Students will improve development and organization of written arguments.
* Students will demonstrate the ability to edit and revise in the writing process.
* Students will apply the basic theories and principles of oral communication.
* Students will communicate effectively in a variety of settings, including public speaking and group discussion.

No comments

**Language Learning Outcomes:**

* MLL: Students can participate in conversations and give presentations on familiar topics using complete sentences.

Classical: Students can understand the phonology of the target language and can correctly pronounce and recite prose and/or poetry in the language.

* MLL: Students can write briefly on familiar topics and present information using a series of sentences.

Classical: Students can write brief compositions in the target language.

* MLL: Students can understand the main idea in messages and presentations on familiar topics related to everyday life and personal interests and studies.

Classical: Students can understand the main idea in simple messages and presentations on familiar topics.

* MLL: Students can understand the main idea of literary and non-literary texts when the topic is familiar.

Classical: Students can understand the morphology and syntax of the target language, and can understand literary and non-literary texts.

* Both: Students are acquainted with the variety of cultures and cultural perspectives associated with the target language.

Modern Languages current SLOs work for both 201 and 202, so will not need to change. Classics made a tweak to LO 1.

**Natural Science Learning Outcomes:**

* Students will describe the scientific methods that lead to scientific knowledge.
* Students will report and display data collected, interpret experimental observations, and construct explanatory scientific hypotheses.
* Students will use theories and models as unifying principles to understand the natural world.
* Students will gain an understanding for how the natural sciences are used to address societal issues.

Question: will there be a push to have a course offered in the spring as well as fall

Response: Not from Gen ed; CAS dean says a shift may need to happen, keep an eye on it

Slight changes were made to the LOs for clarity and grammar, as suggested.

**Oral Communication Learning Outcomes:**

* Students will understand and be able to explain the conventions and expectations of oral communication as practiced within the discipline of the course taken.
* Students will apply theories and strategies for crafting messages (verbal, nonverbal, and visual) for particular audiences and purposes.
* Students will craft oral messages after a conscious process in which various options are reviewed and will be able to explain and support their choices.
* Students will meta-communicate about their own communication patterns.

No comments

**Written Communication Learning Outcomes:**

* Students will demonstrate satisfactory knowledge of the varying strategies to convey arguments, main ideas and support/evidence.
* Students will demonstrate satisfactory knowledge of the varying patterns of composition organization and development.
* Students will demonstrate satisfactory knowledge of the audience, the role of the writer, and rhetorical strategies.
* Students will demonstrate satisfactory knowledge of writing conventions and correctness.

No comments

General Education Requirements with

Altered or New Learning Outcomes

(Must Be Populated)

**After Mary Washington** **Learning Outcomes:**

* Students will explore their own values, interests, skills and strengths that guide their personal and professional aspirations.
* Students will develop and articulate their personal and professional identities in appropriate modalities.
* Students will create professional relationships which support life-long career growth and satisfaction.

Question: Are departments expected to create a course?

Response: no. However, the career center is happy to work with any department on programming or course development. E.g., the College of Business is already developing its four year program with CCPD

Question: What is the timeline for the Career Center to begin programming to meet this requirement?

Response: If desired, 2020-21.

**Arts and Literature**

**Rationale: …**

This category combines *Arts, Literature, and Performance - Appreciation* and *Process* with a renewedfocus on literature, visual and performing arts and gives students the tools and language to discuss and understand the works of others. It also provides students with an understanding of the techniques required to produce their own creative work and/or the tools of critical analysis via historical, analytical, theoretical or aesthetic frameworks. Through these courses the student is able to develop methods required for engagement in the aesthetic, ethical, moral, material and content driven issues that works of art, literature and performance can raise.

**Learning Outcomes:**

* Students will demonstrate knowledge of the processes used to create and/or interpret creative works or performances.
* Students will critically analyze and evaluate the aesthetic and/or compositional qualities of creative works or performances.
* Students will communicate about diverse perspectives, theories, values and contexts relating to works within an artistic medium or genre.

Question: the prose description of the "Arts & Literature" category mentions that it "combines" the old ALP-A and ALP-P. The working group's SLOs apply much more to understanding than to doing, so performance is compromised by the new SLOs. Can this be "three out of five" SLOs?

Response: This was not intention of Gen Ed or working group – the SLOs cover performance classes, the idea was to be as inclusive as possible.

[web comment] Should the process courses survive into the new curriculum, music is likely to propose that the ensembles (1 cr. courses) would only fulfill the requirement if taken for three semesters. We'd probably suggest that this need not be the very same ensemble (course) but could be a combination of any of the approved courses with the same MUPR prefix.

Gen Ed: The committee will be happy to consider this proposal in the future.**Digital Intensive** **Learning Outcomes:**

* Students will successfully locate and critically evaluate information using the Internet, library databases, and/or other digital tools.
* Students will use digital tools to safely, ethically, and effectively produce and exchange information and ideas.
* Students will creatively adapt to emerging and evolving technology.

There was some discussion about changing SLO 1 to include the word research, and then others responding to research being problematic, so the committee feels no further response is needed.

Question: Does SLO3 mean new to the students or new to the world?

Answer: new to the student; we trust the disciplinary experts to know what the cutting edge tools are. SLO 3 is about what are the right tools for the task that we’re doing and how do we know that.

Question about SLO 3 and tech changing over time on Google doc to be referred to DI committee, as it was addressed by Zach Whalen at the first forum.

**Diverse and Global Perspectives Learning Outcomes:**

*Courses must meet at least 3 of the 4 outcomes and note which SLOs the course is meeting.*

* Students will develop an informed understanding of an issue or a group of related issues (e.g., cultural, economic, environmental, geographical, health-related, historical, linguistic, political, social, technological) with significant influence on global systems or societies.
* Students will explore from a range of statues such as age, disability, ethnicity, gender, language, nationality, race, religion, sexuality, socioeconomic status, veteran status, and/or other salient social statuses that influence the human condition.
* Students will explicate how societies and/or global systems are influenced and/or constructed and how these systems affect the human or natural world with different consequences. Students will reflect upon their own relationship to these processes.
* Students will reflect on how knowledge of these global or intercultural connections and/or consideration of diverse perspectives can help explain conflict and establish respect for other cultures.

Question: only contemporary courses?

Response: No. We removed that word to be explicit that historical is fine.

**Humanities Learning Outcomes:**

* Students will use discipline-appropriate tools and methods to critically interpret both the form and content of a text, artifact, or other cultural expression.
* Students will explain how historical, intellectual, or cultural contexts relate to human experiences—ideas, actions, and/or perspectives.
* Students will formulate arguments, draw logical conclusions, or support ethical decisions to engage key questions about humanity – our relation to nature, to society, and to ourselves.

Question: The implication of SLO 1 is there should be a lot of what historians call primary sources. Yet some of our intro level courses have much more interpretation of primary sources than they do the sources themselves. So, should Point One read—Students should learn how scholars decide why certain tools and methods are appropriate to interpret texts, artifacts, and other cultural expressions? Or, if the goal is indeed to have students independently interpret “both the form and content” of cultural products, then the committee should make explicit how much of that work needs to be done in courses which also familiarize students with the tools they can use to make such interpretations. One assignment? An essay? Class discussion about a primary text or artifact?

Response: Because it is to be discipline-appropriate, the discipline would determine whether primary sources would be used or not and how this would be assessed.

**Quantitative Reasoning Learning Outcomes:**

* Students will demonstrate the ability to produce and interpret quantitative information in various forms such as graphs, equations, diagrams, etc.
* Students will use appropriate methodologies to draw valid conclusions based on quantitative information.
* Students will be able to discern the validity and accuracy of an argument or conclusion derived from available numerical information.
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SLO 4: Students will apply quantitative techniques to address multiple issues of contemporary significance in technology or society.

**Social Science Learning Outcomes:**

* Students will explain social experiences and issues from a social science perspective.
* Students will make evidence-based conclusions concerning social experiences and issues.
* Students will apply critical knowledge and skills to understanding aspects of social life beyond the classroom.

Question: Can education be counted as a social science?

Response: No. UMW’s definition is/was based on federal CIP codes for the social science category.

Question: *I’m confused about what point three means: “Students will apply critical knowledge and skills to understanding aspects of social life beyond the classroom.” The more I read it the less sure I am that I understand it.*

*Maybe I’m thinking too much from my department’s perspective where I’d ask: Aren’t all our classes in sociology and anthropology about understanding aspects of social life beyond the classroom?*

Response: Certainly many courses might meet the learning outcomes and still not be a general education course. Gen Ed courses must meet the SLOs and also be courses that fits the general education requirements – introductory, lower level.

Question: *But if this is an aspirational goal, I’d rewrite: Students will apply what they have learned (in the classroom and from assigned readings) to make their own analyses of data and experiences.*

Response: This rewrite is actually what SLO 2 does, so it doesn’t work as a good rewrite of the SLO 3.   
  
Question: *I still have some more general worries. Do we really think this will or can happen in an introductory level class? I doubt this happens consistently in existing courses. Should we be more humble or realistic and scratch this last outcome? Or should we make sure that in every LL that fulfills requirement there is an assignment that involves individual research? Or a test that requires arriving at answers about materials that have never been encountered in a reading or in lecture.*

Response: This SLO does not require individual research, or materials that have never been encountered before.