

**UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-WHITEWATER
GENERAL EDUCATION REVIEW COMMITTEE**

**GENERAL EDUCATION LEARNING OUTCOMES
EFFECTIVE SPRING 2016**

Knowledge of Human Cultures and the Natural World

Students will demonstrate breadth and integration of knowledge through:

- Exploration of enduring issues, questions, and problems of human experience across the core areas of knowledge, including engagement with:
 - Fine and performing arts
 - Natural sciences and mathematics
 - Cultural, social, and humanistic studies
 - Global issues and challenges, both historical and contemporary
- Ability to contextualize knowledge through various disciplinary approaches
- Capacity to apply learning and think in interdisciplinary and integrative ways about the complexity and interconnectedness of the world

Rationale: A broad knowledge of human cultures and of the natural world provides students with a solid foundation to be successful in their major and as informed members of society. In all fields of study, the exposure to multiple perspectives, historical context, and contemporary debates helps prepare students to engage with the “big questions” that face our world today.

Critical and Creative Thinking

Students will demonstrate their critical and creative thinking by the ability to:

- Explain and analyze relevant ideas, arguments, and problems
- Evaluate the quality of ideas, evidence, materials, and arguments using appropriate criteria
- Recognize and engage multiple perspectives and alternatives
- Draw conclusions from complex information
- Synthesize existing information to produce new insights or approaches
- Craft logical and persuasive arguments supported by relevant and compelling evidence
- Design, evaluate, and implement strategies to solve problems or answer open-ended questions

Rationale: Thinking critically and creatively means the ability to analyze and evaluate complex information and to come up with new ideas and solutions to pressing problems. In an information-rich world, students need to be able to make informed decisions and develop arguments, based on relevant evidence from a variety of different sources and perspectives. Critical and creative thinking helps students develop their own perspectives in both their personal and professional lives.

Communication Skills

Students will demonstrate their communication skills by the ability to:

- Read and listen closely and critically in order to interpret, analyze and evaluate written texts, images, speech, performances and multimedia communications
- Communicate in a focused, coherent, and organized manner with appropriate attention to audience, purpose and context
- Write effective analytical, reflective and expository essays and research papers
- Speak effectively in public, small group, and interpersonal settings
- Use clear and precise language as well as appropriate conventions, tools, and technology
- Implement the process of drafting, revising and editing

Rationale: Strong communication skills, both speaking and writing to a variety of audiences and across a range of media and contexts, contribute to success in and out of the classroom. In addition, critical reading and listening skills are also key components in developing effective communication skills.

Information Literacy

Students will demonstrate their information literacy by the ability to:

- Identify and articulate information needs by precisely defining a question, topic of inquiry or problem
- Select appropriate resources for finding information and formulate effective search strategies
- Critically evaluate, analyze and integrate relevant sources using appropriate criteria
- Use and cite information sources correctly and ethically
- Choose and effectively use appropriate tools and technologies for these tasks

Rationale: Information literacy refers to the ability to determine what information is necessary for a particular purpose, and to the skills needed to gather, evaluate, understand, and use that information ethically and effectively. Information may take a variety of forms and media, including textual, visual, and quantitative. In an environment of proliferating and diverse information, information literacy skills help students make informed choices in their personal, professional, and academic lives.

Quantitative Reasoning

Students will demonstrate their quantitative reasoning by the ability to:

- Explain information presented in mathematical forms (e.g., equations, graphs, diagrams, tables, words)
- Convert relevant information into various mathematical forms (e.g., equations, graphs, diagrams, tables, words)
- Efficiently and accurately carry out calculations to solve problems using appropriate tools and technology
- Make judgments and draw appropriate conclusions based on the quantitative analysis of data
- Support arguments with quantitative information in narrative and other appropriate forms

Rationale: Quantitative reasoning refers to the use of numbers and measurable data to understand and interpret the world. But quantitative reasoning encompasses much more than simply mathematics and calculation skills. It reflects a habit of mind and a range of capacities that can explain, interpret, evaluate, and communicate quantitative information. Students need to be able to use quantitative reasoning skills to solve problems from a variety of domains and in everyday life.

Personal and Civic Responsibility

Students will demonstrate their personal and civic responsibility through:

- Self-awareness

- Recognize and examine their own values, perspectives and biases
- Understand their own roles and responsibilities as members of multiple diverse communities
- Understand the impact of their own actions on the community, the environment, and the world
- Understanding of others
 - Understand the cultures and diversity of the United States and other countries, both historical and contemporary
 - Recognize the existence and impact of discrepancies in power, privilege and access between individuals, groups and societies
 - Articulate and respect the multiple perspectives that arise from differing experiences
- Responsible action
 - Interact effectively and conscientiously with diverse people in diverse contexts including in campus, professional, and community settings
 - Make informed ethical decisions that respect the social and environmental contexts

Rationale: Personal and civic responsibility refers to skills and knowledge that help students take their place in a multi-cultural and always-changing world. In order to become informed, engaged, reflective, and responsible citizens, students need to engage with a range of ethical questions, from social issues to environmental concerns.

Foundations for Life-Long Learning

Students will demonstrate foundations for life-long learning by the ability to:

- Implement strategies and skills needed for collaborative and self-directed learning
- Monitor and reflect on their own learning
- Integrate, transfer and apply learning in new contexts
- Recognize and apply the factors and habits that are essential for personal health and well-being

Rationale: Learning is a never-ending process that requires curiosity and openness to learning. By cultivating a set of skills and dispositions associated with life-long learning, students will be able to adapt, monitor and direct their own growth and well-being throughout college and beyond.