

(GDR Statements taken from the *Handbook*, August 2005 posting in public folders.)

SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE

The General Degree Requirements: Purposes, Course Guidelines, and Objectives define skills and knowledge that are consistent with our mission and goals. According to these, after studying at UWSP students should be able to:

1. Read critically, think logically, research effectively, and write coherently.
2. Write appropriately to a discipline.
3. Understand human communication and deliver an effective presentation.
4. Quantify and understand the real world using mathematics.
5. Use the scientific method, understand the pure sciences and understand how science relates to individuals or society at large.
6. Understand and appreciate Non-Western ideas and institutions and how they differ from Western traditions.
7. Understand and appreciate the culture and history of racial and ethnic groups in the United States and their relationship to the white majority culture.
8. Appreciate human behavior and heritage and understand the nature, development and interaction of cultures, societies, and civilizations over time.
9. Understand, appreciate and evaluate the enduring expressions of the human mind and culture.
10. Understand human behavior, the structures of society and the interrelationships among social institutions and participate as thoughtful and informed members of society at all levels.
11. Understand and appreciate how language functions and cultures differ.
12. Understand and appreciate the ways human societies interact with and affect the natural environment.
13. Understand concepts of wellness and apply them to personal lifestyles.

OBJECTIVES AND EXPECTED OUTCOMES

Consistent with the above skills and knowledge, The General Degree Requirements: Purposes, Course Guidelines, and Objectives specify the following objectives and expected outcomes:

Verbal and Quantitative Skills: Freshman English

Upon successful completion of the Freshman English requirement, students will be able to demonstrate a capacity for sustained complex thinking and writing and the ability to document appropriately and accurately. They will be able to produce:

1. An articulate, readable text that includes
 - 1.1 A focused topic
 - 1.2 A clearly-defined purpose
 - 1.3 A pattern of organization with appropriate transitions
 - 1.4 A concern for audience
 - 1.5 Adequate and relevant support
2. Evidence of the ability to document appropriately and accurately

Verbal and Quantitative Skills: Writing Emphasis

1. Ability to recognize different writing situations with their different kinds of audiences and writing purposes.
2. Ability to identify what are the appropriate documents to use in different writing situations with their respective audiences and writing purposes.
3. Ability to organize ideas and use language in ways that are both clear and persuasive for different audiences and writing situations.
4. Attitudes and perceptions of students and faculty toward the WE experience: whether it is working, whether students are gaining value from it.

Verbal and Quantitative Skills: Communication

1. The primary behavioral outcome is to enable students to improve their public speaking skills so that they have the competencies necessary to make an effective presentation before an audience. A secondary behavioral outcome is to enable students to be more effective listeners and critics of public discourse.
2. The primary attitudinal outcomes are to reduce the anxiety often associated with public speaking, increase the confidence of students as they make public presentations, and develop a commitment to ethical advocacy. A secondary attitudinal outcome sought is to increase awareness of the important role public discourse plays in personal and professional contexts.
3. The primary cognitive outcomes are for students to know what constitutes effective presentation; to know how to support an idea through the use of evidence and reasoning; to differentiate between fact and inference; to know how to adapt messages to different audiences and situations; to know how to effectively evaluate oral discourse; and to know how communication plays a central role in the social construction of reality.

Verbal and Quantitative Skills: Mathematics

1. Students will be able to use strategies of problem solving applicable to problems inside and outside the mathematics classroom.
2. Students will be able to use the necessary tools to understand mathematics contained in scientific topics as they are expressed in the media and everyday life.
3. Students will be able to state a conclusion using mathematical justification.

Critical Thinking/Natural Science

1. Students will be able to use a scientific method to evaluate evidence or information that is pertinent to the course.
2. Students will be able to draw logical conclusions, infer relationships, solve problems, or use concepts of classification/categorization based on an evaluation of evidence or scientific information that is pertinent to the course.
3. Students will be able to describe the relevance of some aspect of natural science to their lives and/or society.
4. Students will be able to demonstrate general knowledge of at least two specific discipline areas.

Critical Thinking/Cultural Awareness: Non-Western Culture

1. Students will be able to identify the components of a Non-Western culture.
2. Students will be able to understand and analyze the political, economic, intellectual, and cultural characteristics of the particular Non-Western culture studied.
3. Students will better understand that people in different societies often make choices within political, economic, cultural, and ethical frameworks that are fundamentally different from the frameworks in, for example, the United States and Western Europe
4. Students will be able to express their understanding and interpretation of Non-Western cultures clearly and in forms appropriate to the particular discipline that they studied.

Critical Thinking/Cultural Awareness: Minority Studies

1. To understand and become more respectful of the pluralistic/diverse/multicultural nature of American society.
2. To learn about the distinctive cultural heritages of minority groups.
3. To be prepared to interact with diverse peoples in the community and workplace.
4. To understand diversity issues in the community and workplace.
5. To understand the history and current circumstances of harassment, bigotry, prejudice and discrimination in all settings through exploring scholarly views on race, gender, class, ethnicity, and religion.
6. To become more aware of and to think critically and with an open mind about gender, race, class, ethnic, and religious issues.
7. To be aware of the impact gender, race, class, ethnicity, and religion have on the lives of majority and minority people.

Critical Thinking/Cultural Awareness: History

1. Students will be able to demonstrate an understanding of the history of a relatively large cultural area, society or civilization over an extended period of time.
2. Students will be able to demonstrate an understanding of the unifying theme of the course (e.g. topical, national, regional).
3. Students will be able to demonstrate an understanding of historical perspective and the development of a culture, society, or civilization over time.
4. Students will be able to demonstrate an awareness of historical causality and consequence.
5. Students will be able to demonstrate an understanding of important social, cultural, economic, and political concepts and events.
6. Students will be able to demonstrate an awareness of the historical antecedents of current social, cultural and political trends

Critical Thinking/Cultural Awareness: Humanities

1. Students will be able to formulate ethical judgments about human conduct (in life and as represented in art), and render judgments about the merits of artistic expressions.
2. Students will be able to grasp particular intellectual, cultural, and aesthetic concepts, and also see these particulars in relation to larger, more universal, and more enduring concepts.
3. Students will be able to make an imaginative leap outside their own particular perspective, and, for example, empathize with a character in literature or the drama or another work of art, or with a historical figure, seeing the world as it existed in another time and another place.
4. Students will develop the critical ability not only to understand intellectual, cultural, and aesthetic concepts, but also to challenge them, and envision possibilities beyond the known and established.
5. Students will be able to express their understanding and interpretation of humanistic studies clearly and in forms appropriate to the particular discipline.

Critical Thinking/Cultural Awareness: Social Science

1. Students will be able to understand the fundamental theories, concepts, and research methods as applicable in the fields of at least two of the social sciences.
2. Students will be able to understand the place of individuals in social structures and the relationships among individuals, social groups and institutions.
3. Students will be able to understand how individuals and groups create, influence, and are affected by social institutions, social structures, and culture.

4. Students will be able to develop a framework for participating as informed citizens of the nation and the world.

Critical Thinking/Cultural Awareness: Foreign Language

1. Students will be able to engage in simple conversation, provide and obtain basic information, express feelings and emotions, and exchange opinions with speakers of the target language.
2. Students will be able to read basic materials on familiar topics (e.g. weather, family, personal experiences past and present) and to comprehend central concepts in selected authentic materials.
3. Students will be able to write short narratives and brief messages about personal experiences, showing signs of creativity with set language forms.
4. Students will be able to identify and describe features of the culture(s) studied, comparing them with their own.
5. Students will be able to analyze various elements of the target language (e.g. time, tense, sound systems, word formation and syntax), comparing them with comparable elements in English.

Environmental Literacy

1. Students will be able to describe the relationship of human society to natural systems and how they affect each other.
2. Students will be able to analyze a wide variety of historic and current environmental issues ranging from local to global importance.
3. Students will be able to describe the ecological, political, social economic and ethical implications of selected environmental issues and assess alternative solutions to these issues.
4. Students will be able to identify, describe and evaluate their own individual impacts on the environment.

Wellness

1. Students will be able to provide examples of healthy activities.
2. Students will be able to identify skills and behaviors that enhance a healthy lifestyle.
3. Students will be able to describe a contemporary health issue and its impact on personal, community, and global health.
4. Students will be able to demonstrate or describe a specific healthy life skill.
5. Students will be able to explain how a chosen activity or behavior promotes a healthy lifestyle.