

Outcomes and Criteria
For
Transferrable General Education Courses
in Oregon

Background: Attached is the joint work of 72 faculty in Oregon universities, public and private, and in Oregon community colleges. The Outcomes statements articulate the broad goals of each of the classical components of General Education, which also correspond to the principal elements of the AA/OT (Associate of Arts, Oregon Transfer) degree. These outcomes are intended to communicate the overall value of course work in each area for students. They do not define specific, discrete outcomes that are readily measurable. In contrast, the Criteria statements are more specific and describe the characteristics of courses that faculty believe have the capacity to produce the desired outcomes.

This collection creates a framework, the first in Oregon, with which to gauge the suitability of General Education courses intended to transfer among Oregon colleges and universities. It replaces an ad hoc system of approving such courses, particularly those from community colleges, and as the product of an unusually collegial effort, has broad credibility. I hope you will read the statements critically, but also with an appreciation for the remarkable collaboration and esprit de corps they represent.

Karen Sprague

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Writing

Outcomes

Upon completing the AAOT General Education Writing sequence, a student should be able to read actively, think critically, and write purposefully and capably for academic and, in some cases, professional audiences. The student should also be able to locate, evaluate, and ethically utilize information to communicate effectively and demonstrate appropriate reasoning in response to complex issues.

Criteria

A course in writing should:

1. Create a learning environment that fosters respectful and free exchange of ideas.
2. Include college-level readings that challenge students and require the analysis of complex ideas.
3. Provide guided discussion and model practices that help students listen to, reflect upon, and respond to others' ideas.
4. Foster students' ability to summarize and respond in writing to ideas generated by reading and discussion.
5. Require a substantial amount of formal and informal writing.
6. Emphasize writing as a recursive process of productive revision that results in complete, polished texts appropriate to audience needs and rhetorical situations.
7. Foreground the importance of focus, organization, and logical development of written work.
8. Guide students to reflect on their own writing, to provide feedback on peers' drafts, and to respond to peer and instructor comments.
9. Direct students to craft clear sentences and to recognize and apply the conventions of Edited Standard Written English.
10. Provide students with practice summarizing, paraphrasing, analyzing, synthesizing, and citing sources using a conventional documentation system.
11. Require appropriate technologies in the service of writing and learning.

Speech/Oral Communication

Outcomes

As a result of taking General Education Speech/Oral Communication courses, a student should be able to engage in ethical communication processes that accomplish goals, respond to the needs of diverse audiences and contexts, and build and manage relationships.

Criteria

A course in Oral Communication should provide:

- 1) Instruction in fundamental communication theories.
- 2) Instruction and practice of appropriate oral communication techniques.
- 3) Instruction and practice in the listening process
- 4) Instruction and practice in comprehension, interpretation, and critical evaluation of communication.
- 5) Instruction and practice in adapting verbal and non-verbal messages for the listener and communication contexts.
- 6) Instruction in the responsibilities of ethical communicators.
- 7) Instruction in the value and consequences of effective communication.

Mathematics

Outcomes

A student, who successfully completes General Education Mathematics courses, should be able to use appropriate mathematics to solve problems. This successful student should recognize which mathematical concepts are applicable to a scenario, apply appropriate mathematics and technology in its analysis, and then accurately interpret, validate and communicate the results.

Criteria

A collegiate level mathematics course should require students to:

1. Use the tools of arithmetic and algebra to work with more complex mathematical concepts.
2. Design and follow a multi-step mathematical process through to a logical conclusion and judge the reasonableness of the results.
3. Create mathematical models, analyze these models, and, when appropriate, find and interpret solutions.
4. Compare a variety of mathematical tools, including technology, to determine an effective method of analysis.
5. Analyze and communicate both problems and solutions in ways that are useful to themselves and to others.
6. Use mathematical terminology, notation and symbolic processes appropriately and correctly.
7. Make mathematical connections to, and solve problems from, other disciplines.

Arts & Letters

Outcomes

As a result of taking General Education Arts and Letters* courses, a student should be able to

- Interpret and engage in the Arts and Letters, making use of the creative process to enrich the quality of life;
- Critically analyze values and ethics within a range of human experience and expression to engage more fully in local and global issues.

* “Arts and Letters” refers to works of art, whether written, crafted, designed, or performed, and documents of historical or cultural significance.

Criteria

A course in Arts & Letters should

1. Introduce the fundamental ideas and practices of the discipline and allow students to apply them;
2. Elicit analytical and critical responses to historical and/or cultural works, such as literature, music, language, philosophy, religion, and the visual and performing arts;
3. Explore the conventions and techniques of significant forms of human expression;
4. Place the discipline in a historical and cultural context, and demonstrate its relationship with other disciplines.

Each course should also do at least one of the following:

- 5a. Foster creative individual expression *via* analysis, synthesis, and critical evaluation;
- 5b. Compare/contrast attitudes and values of specific historical periods or world cultures;
- 5c. Examine the origins and influences of ethical or aesthetic traditions.

Outcomes

As a result of taking General Education Social Science courses, a student should be able to:

1. Apply analytical skills to social phenomena in order to understand human behavior
2. Apply knowledge and experience to foster personal growth and better appreciate the diverse social world in which we live.

Criteria

An introductory course in the Social Sciences should be broad in scope. Courses may focus on specialized or inter-disciplinary subjects, but there must be substantial course content locating the subject in the broader context of the discipline(s). Approved courses will help students to:

1. Understand the role of individuals and institutions within the context of society.
2. Assess different theories and concepts, and understand the distinctions between empirical and other methods of inquiry.
3. Utilize appropriate information literacy skills in written and oral communication.
4. Understand the diversity of human experience and thought, individually and collectively.
5. Apply knowledge and skills to contemporary problems and issues.

Science or Computer Science

Outcomes

As a result of taking General Education Science or Computer Science courses, a student should be able to

1. Gather, comprehend, and communicate scientific and technical information in order to explore ideas, models and solutions and generate further questions;
2. Apply scientific and technical modes of inquiry, individually and collaboratively, to critically evaluate existing or alternative explanations, solve problems, and make evidence-based decisions in an ethical manner
3. Assess the strengths and weaknesses of scientific studies and critically examine the influence of scientific and technical knowledge on human society and the environment.

Criteria

A General Education course in either Science or Computer Science should

1. Analyze the development, scope, and limitations of fundamental scientific concepts, models, theories, and methods
2. Engage students in problem-solving and investigation, through the application of scientific and mathematical methods and concepts, and by using evidence to create and test models and draw conclusions. The goal should be to develop analytical thinking that includes evaluation, synthesis, and creative insight,
3. Examine relationships with other subject areas, including the ethical application of science in human society, and the relevance of science to everyday life

In addition,

a General Education course in Science should

Engage students in collaborative, hands-on and/or real-life activities that develop scientific reasoning and the capacity to apply mathematics, and that allow students to experience the exhilaration of discovery;

and

a General Education course in Computer Science should

Engage students in the design of algorithms and computer programs that solve problems.

The Outcomes and Criteria statements in Writing were developed by:

Pauline Beard	English	Pacific University
Lynda Bennett	Writing	Blue Mountain Community College
Fred Bennett	Writing	Tillamook Bay Community College
Julie Brown	Writing	Clatsop Community College
Vicki Tolar Burton	Intensive Writing	Oregon State University
John Gage	English	University of Oregon
Carol Harding	Humanities/English	Western Oregon University
Greg Jacob	English	Portland State University
Nancy Knowles	Writing	Eastern Oregon University
James Nystrom	Writing	Mt. Hood Community College
Eva Payne	Writing	Chemeketa Community College
Laura Young	University Colloquium	Southern Oregon University

The Outcomes and Criteria statements in Speech/Oral Communication were developed by:

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Alena Ruggerio	Communication	Southern Oregon University
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The Outcomes and Criteria statements in Mathematics were developed by:

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The Outcomes and Criteria statements in Arts & Letters were developed by:

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Gerd Horten	History	Concordia University
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Florence Sage	Arts & Letters	Clatsop Community College
Diane Tarter	Creative Arts	Western Oregon University
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The Outcomes and Criteria statements in Social Science were developed by:

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The Outcomes and Criteria statements in Science and Computer Science were developed by:

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Elizabeth Lundy	Mathematics	Linn Benton Community College
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Catherine Otto	Science/Computing	Oregon Institute of Technology
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