

WSU's Learning Goals of Undergraduate Education

Bachelor's degree requirements are rooted in the University's Learning Goals of Undergraduate Education described below, which are expressed broadly so as to frame study in the major as well as in general education. The example outcomes listed under each goal provide a model set of learning outcomes through which students can demonstrate achievement of the goals, whether in general education courses or courses in the major.

Learning Goals of Undergraduate Education

CRITICAL AND CREATIVE THINKING

Graduates will use reason, evidence, and context to increase knowledge, to reason ethically, and to innovate in imaginative ways.

Example learning outcomes: Graduates may demonstrate critical and creative thinking by...

1. Defining, analyzing, and solving problems.
2. Integrating and synthesizing knowledge from multiple sources.
3. Assessing the accuracy and validity of findings and conclusions.
4. Examining how one thinks, reasons, and makes value judgments, including ethical and aesthetic judgments.
5. Identifying diverse viewpoints, including different philosophical and cultural perspectives.
6. Combining and synthesizing existing ideas, images, or expertise in original ways.
7. Thinking and working in imaginative ways characterized by innovation, divergent thinking, and risk-taking.

QUANTITATIVE REASONING

Graduates will solve quantitative problems from a wide variety of authentic contexts and everyday life situations.

Example learning outcomes: Graduates may demonstrate quantitative and symbolic reasoning by...

1. Explaining information presented in mathematical forms (e.g., equations, graphs, diagrams, tables, and words).
2. Converting relevant information into various mathematical forms (e.g., equations, graphs, diagrams, tables, and words).
3. Applying quantitative principles and methods in the solution of problems.
4. Making judgments and drawing appropriate conclusions based on the quantitative analysis of data, while recognizing the limits of this analysis.
5. Identifying and evaluating important assumptions in estimation, modeling, and data analysis.
6. Expressing quantitative evidence in support of the argument or purpose of work (in terms of what evidence is used and how it is formatted, presented, and contextualized).

SCIENTIFIC LITERACY

Graduates will have a basic understanding of major scientific concepts and processes required for personal decision-making, participation in civic affairs, economic productivity, and global stewardship.

Example learning outcomes: Graduates may demonstrate scientific literacy by...

1. Identifying scientific issues underlying global, national, local, and personal decisions and communicating positions that are scientifically and technologically informed.
2. Evaluating the quality of scientific and health-related information on the basis of its source and the methods used to generate it.
3. Posing and evaluating arguments based on evidence and applying conclusions from such arguments appropriately.
4. Recognizing the societal benefits and risks associated with scientific and technological advances.

INFORMATION LITERACY

Graduates will effectively identify, locate, evaluate, use responsibly, and share information for the problem at hand.

Example learning outcomes: Graduates may demonstrate information literacy by...

1. Determining the extent and type of information needed.
2. Implementing well-designed search strategies.
3. Accessing information effectively and efficiently from multiple sources.
4. Assessing credibility and applicability of information sources.
5. Using information to accomplish a specific purpose.
6. Accessing and using information ethically and legally.

COMMUNICATION

Graduates will communicate successfully with audiences through written, oral, and other media as appropriate for the audience and purpose.

Example learning outcomes: Graduates may demonstrate communication skills by...

1. Analyzing how circumstances, background, values, interests, and needs shape communication sent and received.
2. Tailoring messages to audiences according to purpose, occasion, and technology used.
3. Expressing concepts, propositions, and beliefs in coherent, concise, and technically correct form.
4. Choosing appropriate communication media and technology.
5. Speaking confidently and effectively in front of groups.
6. Following social and disciplinary norms for individual and small group interactions, including active listening.

DIVERSITY

Graduates will understand, respect, and interact constructively with others of similar and diverse cultures, values, and perspectives.

Example learning outcomes: Graduates may demonstrate their recognition of diverse cultures, values, and perspectives by...

1. Moving beyond perception-based comparisons, prior knowledge, and individual experiences to understand how social positioning and cultural differences and/or interrelations are constructed.
2. Recognizing how factors including history; politics; economics; systems of discrimination and inequality; structures of power and privilege; and/or cultural values, beliefs, and practices determine social and cultural conditions.
3. Using vocabulary, language, concepts, and/or theoretical models to engage and analyze how social realities are shaped and how stereotypes are created by cultural and socio-economic differences in the US and/or globally.
4. Analyzing and critiquing the cultural and social underpinnings of knowledge claims about individuals and groups and their relations to one another.
5. Assessing one's own core values, cultural assumptions, and biases in relation to those held by other individuals, cultures, and societies.

DEPTH, BREADTH, AND INTEGRATION OF LEARNING

Graduates will develop depth, breadth, and integration of learning for the benefit of themselves, their communities, their employers, and for society at large.

Example learning outcomes: Graduates may demonstrate depth, breadth, and integration of learning...

1. Through broad study in the sciences and mathematics, social sciences, humanities, history, languages, and the arts.

2. By demonstrating a depth of knowledge within the chosen academic field of study based on integration of its history, core methods, techniques, vocabulary, and unsolved problems.
3. By applying the concepts of the general and specialized studies to personal, academic, service learning, professional, and/or community activities.
4. By understanding how the methods and concepts of the chosen discipline (major) relate to those of other disciplines and by engaging in cross-disciplinary activities.
5. By synthesizing multiple bodies of knowledge to address real-world problems and issues.
6. By reflecting upon changes in learning and outlook over time and by making personal, professional, and civic plans based on that self-reflection.