

University of Wyoming Student Learning Outcomes for the University Studies Program 2015

The University of Wyoming student learning outcomes provide a framework for the undergraduate educational experience. While students choose different academic majors, the University Studies Program provides a common experience for all undergraduate students. *Through the pursuit of a baccalaureate degree, UW students will: develop knowledge of human cultures, the physical and natural world, and the U.S. and Wyoming constitutions; acquire a core set of intellectual and practical skills; and develop personal and social responsibility.* In addition to helping students become successful in their chosen fields, UW aspires for its graduates to become life-long learners, ethical leaders, and contributing members to society.

Knowledge of Human Culture, the Physical and Natural World, and the U.S and Wyoming Constitutions

Students will develop knowledge of human culture, the physical and natural world, and the U.S. and Wyoming Constitutions through study in the arts, humanities, histories, languages, mathematics, sciences, and social sciences. Such study will be focused on engagement with big questions, both contemporary and enduring and enhanced by exposure to diversity within the United States and around the world. Due to the variety of courses offered in these areas, students will have unique experiences depending on the particular courses they choose.

Human Culture (H) (6 Credits)

Students will understand human behaviors, activities, ideas, and values in different situations and contexts.

In Human Culture courses, students will:

1. Examine values about human culture and the place of humanity in the world.
2. Explain human ideas and experiences and how those influence societies, human behavior, and human-social interactions.
3. Compare different methods and theories to interpret and explain human events and cultures.
4. Examine the role of diversity in human societies and how diversity impacts global change.
5. Analyze how culture and diversity can be depicted through different forms of expression (e.g., visual arts, performing arts, etc.).

6. Apply cultural meanings through different forms of expression (e.g., music, art, dance, etc.)

Physical and Natural World (PN) (6 Credits)

Students will understand the fundamental concepts of scientific and quantitative inquiry and develop the ability to understand the relevance of scientific, technological, and quantitative skills to contemporary society.

In Physical and Natural World courses, students will:

1. Understand the principles of the scientific method.
2. Formulate and testing ideas through analysis and interpretation of data.
3. Use scientific and quantitative logic to examine contemporary problems.
4. Use quantitative data analysis as the basis for making critical judgments and drawing conclusions.
5. Examine the impact of technology on science and society.

U.S. and Wyoming Constitutions (V) (3 Credits)

Students will demonstrate an understanding of the U.S. and Wyoming constitutions in order to develop the combination of knowledge, skills, values, and motivation to participate in and improve the life of our local and global communities.¹

In U.S. and Wyoming Constitutions courses, students will:

1. Examine the formal and informal principles, processes, and structures of the U.S. and Wyoming constitutions and political systems.
2. Analyze the historical development and cultural context of these constitutions and political systems.
3. Evaluate the roles of responsible citizens and the institutions by which they are governed.

Intellectual and Practical Skills

Students will develop foundational intellectual and practical skills essential to live and work in a rapidly changing world and to be part of an informed citizenry. These skills include communication skills, critical and creative thinking, and quantitative reasoning.

Communication Skills (COM1, COM2, & COM3) (9 Credits)

Students will develop skills in written, oral, and digital communication as appropriate to specific disciplines and courses at the introductory, intermediate, and advanced level. Through repeated instruction, practice, and feedback, the communication sequence will emphasize and progressively develop transferrable skills for students' academic work and future professions. The introductory course (COM1) will emphasize foundational skills for academic writing. Intermediate courses (COM2) will emphasize foundational oral and digital communication skills and continue to build on writing skills. Advanced courses (COM3) will emphasize using the discourse of a discipline or interdisciplinary field to communicate to academic or professional audiences through written, oral, and digital communication.

Written communication is the set of abilities required to compose, critically analyze, and present information through writing. *Oral communication* is a set of abilities required to compose, critically analyze, present, and deliver information through oral interaction. *Digital communication* is a set of abilities required to compose, critically analyze, and present information through electronic media.

In Communication courses at the introductory level (COM1) (3 Credits), students will:

1. Develop and communicate ideas in writing using appropriate technologies.
2. Find, evaluate, analyze, synthesize, and appropriately document information from a variety of sources in order to support a persuasive argument.
3. Recognize the importance of purpose, audience, and style as components of effective communication.
4. Strategically use a range of critical reading approaches to read and respond to college-level texts.
5. Make effective use of multiple drafts, revision, computer technology, peer and instructor comments, and collaboration in the achievement of a final work of communication.
6. Observe the accepted conventions of spelling, grammar, structure, and punctuation for Standard English.
7. Recognize similarities and differences in purposes and strategies of written, oral, and digital communication.

In Communication courses at the intermediate level (COM2) (3 Credits), students will:

1. Develop and communicate written, oral, and digital messages through a variety of assignments that include discipline-based or interdisciplinary purposes, forms, and audiences.
2. Find, analyze, evaluate, and document information appropriately using a variety of sources.
3. Understand the different purposes of written, oral, and digital messages and employ appropriate organizational strategies, including developing thesis statements and main ideas.
4. Make effective use of multiple drafts, revisions, progressive assignments, computer technology, peer and instructor comments, and collaboration in the achievement of a final work of communication.
5. Observe the accepted conventions including spelling, grammar, organizational structure, punctuation, delivery and documentation in oral, written, and digital messages.
6. Deliver prepared presentations in a natural, confident, and conversational manner, displaying nonverbal communication that is consistent with and supportive of the oral message.
7. Interact effectively with audience members, engage opposing viewpoints constructively, and demonstrate active listening skills.

In Communication courses at the advanced level (COM3) (3 Credits), students will:

1. Use the discourse of a discipline or interdisciplinary field to communicate that field's subject matter to academic or professional audiences through written, oral, and digital communication.
2. Find, analyze, evaluate, and document information appropriately as applicable to the discipline, interdisciplinary field, or professional setting as demonstrated by completing a substantial communication project that requires appropriate research skills.
3. Recognize and evaluate more advanced aspects of communication that respond to the purposes and needs of audiences in a discipline, interdisciplinary field, or professional setting.
4. Make effective use of multiple drafts, revision, computer technology, peer and instructor comments, and collaboration to show understanding of communication standards in a discipline or interdisciplinary field.
5. Observe the accepted conventions of spelling, grammar, organizational structure, punctuation, delivery and documentation expected in disciplinary, interdisciplinary, or professional contexts.

6. Deliver presentations in a confident and professional manner, consistent with the standards of the discipline or interdisciplinary field.
7. Interact effectively with audience members, engage opposing viewpoints constructively, and demonstrate active listening skills.

Critical and Creative Thinking (FYS) (3 Credits)

Students will critically examine and evaluate evidence, claims, beliefs, or points of view about meaningful, relevant issues. Students will be introduced to active learning, ethical reasoning, and individual and collaborative processing of ideas through the First-Year Seminar curriculum. These skills will be reinforced throughout the baccalaureate experience.

In First-Year Seminar courses, students will:

1. Access diverse information through focused research, active discussion, and collaboration with peers.
2. Separate facts from inferences and relevant from irrelevant information, and explain the limitations of information.²
3. Evaluate the credibility, accuracy, and reliability of conclusions drawn from information.
4. Recognize and synthesize multiple perspectives to develop innovative viewpoints.
5. Analyze one's own and others' assumptions and evaluate the relevance of contexts when presenting a position.³
6. Communicate ideas in writing using appropriate documentation.

Quantitative Reasoning (Q) (3 Credits)

Students will reason and solve quantitative problems from a wide array of authentic contexts and everyday life situations.

In Quantitative Reasoning courses, students will:

1. Formulate, analyze, and interpret quantitative arguments in a variety of settings.
2. Solve quantitative problems from a wide array of authentic contexts and everyday life situations.⁴
3. Communicate arguments in a variety of formats (using words, tables, graphs, mathematical equations, etc., as appropriate).⁴

Personal and Social Responsibility

Students should become more personally and socially responsible while pursuing their bachelors' degree. This is essential to work in a global world, to live and act with integrity, to take responsible and ethical action, to cultivate one's mental and physical wellness, and to learn to continue to grow in one's private, public, and professional life. At UW, there are many opportunities infused throughout coursework, program requirements, and co-curricular activities to help students further develop personal and social responsibility. These include service learning, internships, externships, club sports, athletics, ASUW leadership opportunities and sponsored organizations, Greek life, and professional societies. Because of the variety of offerings at UW, students will have unique experiences. As such, gains in personal and social responsibility will differ from student to student.

Civic Knowledge and Engagement

Students will gain an understanding of the various definitions of civic engagement and practice putting these into effect through their actions. While multiple definitions of civic engagement exist, students should develop a breadth and depth to their understanding and practice.

Through coursework and co-curricular activities, students will:

1. Participate effectively in civic life through knowing how to stay informed and understanding governmental processes.⁵
2. Exercise the rights and obligations of citizenship at local, state, national, and global levels.⁵
3. Understand the local and global implications of civic decisions.⁵

Collaborative Learning

Students will interact and collaborate with others in a group or team setting to accomplish a goal.

Through coursework and co-curricular activities, students will:

1. Treat team members respectfully by being polite and constructive in communication.⁶
2. Engage with other team members in ways to facilitate their contributions by building upon the contributions of others and noticing when someone is not participating and inviting them to engage.⁶

3. Complete all assigned individual tasks by agreed upon deadlines.⁶
4. Address inter-team conflict constructively.⁶

Personal Health and Wellness

Students will understand the implications of health and lifestyle choices for themselves and society.

Through coursework and co-curricular activities, students will:

1. Understand the relations among factors such as tobacco, alcohol and other drugs, nutrition, sleep, stress, leisure, and health related fitness activities as they influence personal wellness.⁷
2. Examine short and long-term consequences of health-related choices on personal well-being, academic performance, overall quality of life, and society at large.⁷
3. Analyze how social and cultural factors affect personal health and lifestyle choices.⁷
4. Engage in behaviors that lead to improved health and wellness.⁷

Personal Integrity and Academic Honesty

Students are expected to act with honesty, integrity, respect, and trust, as is appropriate for an academic environment.

Through coursework and co-curricular activities, students will:

1. Comply with the Student Code of Conduct (UW regulation 8-30).
2. Comply with the Academic Dishonesty Policy (UW regulation 6-802).

Ethical Reasoning

Students will assess their own ethical values and the social context of problems, recognize ethical issues in a variety of settings, think about how different ethical perspectives might be applied to ethical dilemmas, and consider the ramifications of alternative actions.

Through coursework and co-curricular activities, students will:

1. Discuss and analyze one's own core beliefs and the origins of these beliefs.⁸
2. Recognize ethical issues and separate facts from assumptions.⁸
3. Recognize the complexity of multilayered (gray) context.

4. Develop alternative responses to ethical dilemmas and consider the full implications of these alternatives.⁸

Independent Learning

Students will take responsibility for monitoring and controlling their own acquisition of knowledge and skills.

Through coursework and co-curricular activities, students will:

1. Establish clear educational goals for one's self.⁹
2. Use a systematic approach to solve education-related problems and make decisions about one's education.⁹
3. Consciously reflect on one's individual education-related plans, decisions, and actions.⁹
4. Strive to maximize one's education based on feedback (from self and others).⁹

Intercultural Knowledge and Competence

Students will acquire an understanding of diverse cultures and philosophies within and across societies and recognize the value of interacting with people different from themselves.

Through coursework and co-curricular activities, students will:

1. Understand various perspectives from within diverse traditions of cultures, regions, religions or worldviews.
2. Compare historical complexities and how those influence societies, politics, economics, social issues, and communications between groups of people.
3. Examine global organization and interdependence.

References

¹Association of American Colleges and Universities Civic Engagement VALUE Rubric (Excerpted from *Civic Responsibility and Higher Education*, edited by Thomas Ehrlich, published by Oryx Press, 2000, Preface, page vi.).

²Tennessee Tech University Critical thinking Assessment Test CAT©

³Association of American Colleges and Universities Critical Thinking VALUE Rubric

⁴Association of American Colleges and Universities Quantitative Literacy VALUE Rubric

⁵Partnership for 21st Century Skills.

⁶Association of American Colleges and Universities Teamwork VALUE Rubric

⁷ <http://www.radford.edu/content/core-curriculum/home/overview/outcomes.html>, Division of Kinesiology and Health

⁸Association of American Colleges and Universities Ethical Reasoning VALUE Rubric

⁹ <http://www.ast.org/> and <http://www.metiri.com>