

Develop the explicit goals and program outcomes of the General Education Program.

Explanation of GEPRC Proposal:

The first portion of the proposal is a narrative description of the goals we believe should guide our General Education Program (GEP). We opted for a narrative rather than a bulleted list in order to address one of the key failings of our current GDRs: namely, that students (and occasionally faculty) have no clear idea why UWSP requires the completion of a general education curriculum.

The proposed narrative is intended to provide this explanation in simple language with as little jargon as possible. It builds explicitly on Chancellor Bunnell's Vision 2015, which calls for "challenging learning and leadership experiences that prepare students to be GLOBAL CITIZENS." The term "global citizen" by itself has many possible definitions. Yet the committee sought to utilize the very capaciousness of the term in order to assert that a liberal education is, in fact, the best route toward becoming a responsible citizen of the world. The core value of encouraging students to view human society from other perspectives is both an apt description of a liberal education and, equally, one meaningful way of defining global citizenship.

In articulating specific program outcomes, the committee reviewed many examples from other campuses and institutions, including the "Essential Learning Outcomes" put forward by the Association of American Colleges and Universities as part of its LEAP initiative and, more recently, the UW System's own "Shared Learning Goals." (Both documents are available on the GEPRC Web site: <https://committees.uwsp.edu/gedpolrev/default.aspx>, under "Shared Documents").

We defined four GEP Learning Outcomes, each meant to be specific enough to provide structure to the curriculum yet broad enough to offer some flexibility in later shaping the more particular course requirements and their associated learning outcomes. In other words, each Learning Outcome could be satisfied in numerous ways. We deliberately sought to avoid language that would point directly at specific courses, departments, or programs.

After completing the general education curriculum, students will be able to:

- **"Demonstrate quantitative, communicative, and analytical skills necessary to succeed in a rapidly changing global society."**

Explanation: Students receiving a liberal education need to develop specific skills such as quantitative reasoning, communication, analysis, etc. These kinds of skills are essential to succeeding in today's global society.

- **“Demonstrate broad knowledge of the world’s peoples, cultures, and social institutions.”**
 Explanation: A liberal education should also contain specific knowledge components. Given our emphasis on global citizenship, this GEP Learning Outcome points specifically toward a comparative, multidisciplinary understanding of human society.

- **“Recognize the importance of personal responsibility, social equity, and environmental sustainability in managing the world’s resources.”**
 Explanation: Among UWSP’s most important defining qualities is our commitment to the stewardship of natural resources. This is reflected both in the longstanding success of the CNR as well as more recently in Chancellor Bunnell’s Vision 2015 and the newly approved university mission statement. Consequently, this GEP Learning Outcome points toward this issue, highlighting three specific aspects of effective stewardship: responsibility, equity, and sustainability.

- **“Apply their knowledge and skills, working in interdisciplinary ways to solve problems.”**
 Explanation: The committee felt strongly that a successful general education curriculum should include opportunities for students to apply the knowledge and skills they learn, and to do so in specifically interdisciplinary ways.

Please note that the terms “outcomes” and “objectives” are often used interchangeably in general education. However, the committee opted to use learning “outcomes” because this term refers to expected results that are directly assessable: in other words, they are subject to measurement by gathering evidence that students are meeting a particular standard.

GEPRC will collect comments from the campus community regarding this proposal between now and December 12. We will solicit feedback in a variety of ways.

1. First, you may post comments on our Web site at the following link:
<https://committees.uwsp.edu/gedpolrev/outcomes/default.aspx>
 - a. All users should first “Sign In” by clicking on the link in the upper right-hand corner of the screen. (Off-campus users will likely encounter difficulties accessing the site. If you must use the site from home, please utilize Windows “Remote Desktop” to access the Web site through your on-campus workstation.)
 - b. The Program Outcome Proposal and the explanation of the proposal can be viewed by clicking the appropriate links under “Shared Documents.”

- c. You may offer comments on the proposal by clicking on the Discussion of Program Outcome Proposal link under "Team Discussion."
2. GEPRC will host a public forum open to anyone on campus.
 - a. The forum will take place Tuesday, Dec. 9 from 6-8pm in CCC 321.
3. Comments may also be sent directly to the GEPRC co-chairs.
 - a. Don Guay (dguay@uwsp.edu)
 - b. Greg Summers (gsummers@uwsp.edu)