

Divisional Learning Outcomes for General Education

GER Learning Outcomes: The following criteria are excerpted from the [APCC Composite Document \(2022\)](#), which sets UWM policy for general education. These criteria, in addition to the [UW System Shared Learning Goals](#), constitute the learning outcomes for general education at UWM.

IV. Divisional Criteria

A. The Arts

1. **Definition:** A branch of learning focusing on the conscious use of skill and creative imagination in the production of artistic objects or performances that stress values that stand outside conventional ideas of utility.
2. **Criteria:** Courses satisfying this requirement shall incorporate outcome (a) and at least one other of the following learning outcomes. Students will be able to:
 - a. demonstrate comprehension of historical, philosophical, theoretical, or aesthetic perspectives commonly used in the understanding of a specific art; and
 - b. apply knowledge of artistic principles, conventions, methods, and practices through the creation or production of works of art; or
 - c. compare and contrast the expressive and formal features of different artistic media and/or cultural traditions; this may be accomplished through an analytic study or as part of an original artistic work.

Additionally, per subsection III.A.2.d.iii above, courses satisfying this requirement shall explicitly identify at least one UW System Shared Learning Goal to incorporate into the course.

While most courses satisfying this requirement will be at the entry level of the discipline, departments may submit for approval by the APCC some courses in the practice of an art that require a basic level of proficiency.

Courses in the application of the arts as an experience or a method for therapeutic or other applied purposes are not eligible for GER distribution requirements. The application of an artistic methodology to a therapeutic situation, places this type of course beyond the scope and intent of the GER Distribution Requirements.

B. Humanities

1. **Definition:** The academic disciplines that investigate human constructs and values, as opposed to those that investigate natural and physical processes, and those concerned with the development of basic or professional skills.

The humanistic disciplines—such as art history, history, language and literature, philosophy, religious studies, film and media studies—are concerned with questions, issues, and concepts basic to the formation of character and the establishment of values in a human context. They also provide literary, aesthetic, and intellectual experiences that enrich and enlighten human life. In these courses, students will use humanistic means of inquiry, such as: the critical use of sources and evaluation of evidence, the exercise of judgment and expression of ideas, and the organization, logical analysis, and creative use of substantial bodies of knowledge in order to approach the subject of study.

2. **Criteria:** Courses satisfying this requirement shall incorporate outcome (a) and at least one other of the following learning outcomes. Students will be able to:
 - a. identify the formation, traditions, and ideas essential to major bodies of historical, cultural, literary, or philosophical knowledge; and
 - b. respond coherently and persuasively to the materials of humanities study; this may be through logical, textual, formal, historical, or aesthetic analysis, argument and/or interpretation; or
 - c. apply diverse humanistic theories or perspectives to other branches of knowledge or to issues of universal human concern.

Additionally, per subsection III.A.2.d.iii above, courses satisfying this requirement shall explicitly identify at least one UW System Shared Learning Goal to incorporate into the course.

C. Social Sciences

1. **Definition:** A branch of science dealing with the study of human behavior, human cultural and physical variation and evolution, and the organization, development, and consequences of human activity, both past and present.
2. **Criteria:** Courses satisfying this requirement shall incorporate outcome (a) and at least one other of the following learning outcomes. Students will be able to:
 - a. recognize and analyze intrapersonal, interpersonal, and/or socio-cultural factors associated with individual behavior, collective action, or societal development; and

- b. identify and critically evaluate the function, structure and development of human collectivities, organizations, institutions, and cultures, their infrastructures and interrelationships;
- c. recognize and contextualize human capacities for and/or techniques of creating behavior acquisition and change as viewed from both intra- and inter-cultural perspectives;
- d. demonstrate the ability to identify, apply and effectively communicate methodologies designed for conducting inquiry into human behavior, collective action, societies, or cultures; or
- e. critically evaluate and apply alternative theoretical frameworks that have been used to offer meaningful explanations of social phenomena.

Additionally, per subsection III.A.2.d.iii above, courses satisfying this requirement shall explicitly identify at least one UW System Shared Learning Goal to incorporate into the course.

D. Natural Sciences

1. **Definition:** A branch of science concerned with the physical world and its phenomena and with discovering the laws governing them. The branches of Natural Sciences—such as astronomy, geosciences, biological sciences, chemistry, physics—that deal primarily with matter, energy, and their interrelations and transformations; with living organisms and vital processes; with the laws and phenomena relating to organisms, plants and animal life; with the physical processes and phenomena of particular systems; and with the physical properties and composition of nature and its products.
2. **Criteria:** Courses satisfying this requirement shall incorporate outcome (a) and at least one other of the following learning outcomes. Students will be able to:
 - a. understand and apply the major concepts of a natural science discipline, including its breadth and its relationship to other disciplines; and
 - b. explain and illustrate the relationships between experiments, models, theories and laws;
 - c. demonstrate an understanding of the process of generating and testing data, and apply this knowledge to the solution of problems;
 - d. discuss and assess the limitations of data and the possibility of alternative interpretations; or

- e. apply ethical reasoning to questions, concepts, and practices within a natural science discipline.

Additionally, per subsection III.A.2.d.iii above, courses satisfying this requirement shall explicitly identify at least one UW System Shared Learning Goal to incorporate into the course.

At least one of the two required courses must include laboratory or field experience to satisfy the Natural Science GER Distribution Requirement.

E. Cultural Diversity: Race, Ethnicity, and Diversity in the United States

1. **Definition:** Courses in this area focus on the experiences of African Americans, Native Americans, Asian Americans, and/or U.S. Latino/as. Courses should also include perspectives on how differences other than race and ethnicity (such as economic class, gender, gender identity/expression, nationality, religion, sexual orientation, etc.) complicate cultural identity categories. While focused on the United States, courses may also include diasporic and transnational frameworks for understanding key topics.
2. **Criteria:** Courses satisfying this requirement shall incorporate outcome (a) and at least one other of the following learning outcomes. Students will be able to:
 - a. understand and analyze the perspectives, world views, methodologies, and philosophic constructs that the group(s) use(s) to describe, explain, and evaluate its/their life experiences over historical time; and
 - b. investigate critically the social, intellectual, and political structures that support oppression based on race, ethnicity, and other human differences;
 - c. explain fundamental episodes in the history and social construction of concepts of “race” and “ethnicity”;
 - d. reflect critically on how the students’ own culture and experiences influence their knowledge of, and attitudes towards, people whose cultural and social identities differ from their own;
 - e. articulate, within communities of color, the social, cultural, and political contributions of women, transgender people, and persons of varied sexual orientations;
 - f. analyze the role of diversity in the successful functioning of a multiracial democratic society; or
 - g. delineate how formations of race and ethnicity in the United States are part of a larger transnational history.

Additionally, per subsection III.A.2.d.iii above, courses satisfying this requirement shall explicitly identify at least one UW System Shared Learning Goal to incorporate into the course

QL Part B

QL Part B is satisfied by completing at least one QL-B course (at least three credits) as decided by the major according to the parameters described below.

Purpose: A QL-B course must make significant use of quantitative tools in the context of the other course material and formally assess for proficiency in applying these quantitative tools.

Objectives: Quantitative literacy includes the recognition, construction, and use of valid mathematical models to analyze and manipulate quantitative information to reach reasonable conclusions, predictions, or inferences.

Primary learning outcomes: Outcomes should include the following:

- a. Students will recognize and construct mathematical models and/or hypotheses that represent quantitative information.
- b. Students will evaluate the validity of these models and hypotheses.
- c. Students will analyze and manipulate mathematical models using quantitative information.
- d. Students will reach logical conclusions, predictions, or inferences.
- e. Students will assess the reasonableness of their conclusions.

OWC Part B

The OWC Part B requirement is satisfied by completing an approved advanced course with a significant written and/or oral communication component after completing Part A of the requirement.

Part B courses may be offered in a variety of disciplines; students are encouraged to choose the course that matches their interests and helps them meet requirements of their degree.

Purpose: The second communication course will typically be a low-enrollment course involving substantial instruction in the four modes of literacy (that is, speaking, reading, writing, and listening), with emphasis on speaking and/or writing, either in the conventions of specific fields or in more advanced courses in communication. The APCC defines this as follows: the context in which student work is assessed (i.e., lecture, discussion, lab) has an enrollment cap of 25 or fewer students. Requests to approve courses with larger class size must demonstrate clearly how the objectives and requirements of the course can be satisfied within the larger format.

Objectives: Specific objectives will vary with each discipline, but each course is expected to develop advanced skills in:

- a. Critical reading, logical thinking, and the use of argument and evidence.
- b. The use of appropriate stylistic and disciplinary conventions in writing and/or speaking.
- c. Critical analysis of information from primary or secondary sources for some portion of the speaking and/or writing.