

GENERAL EDUCATION STATEMENT

The General Education component of higher education specifically focuses on introducing students to ways of knowing, integrative knowledge, appreciation of historical context, common themes of human experience, social responsibility, analytical reasoning, civic engagement, and the development of practical skills and reflective habits of mind. The General Education requirements at Washburn University are designed with the intent of providing students with a grounding in liberal arts and sciences and shaping an informed, capable citizenry through a broad education in a range of disciplines. These courses ensure that students are equipped with the knowledge and skills necessary to engage with our rapidly changing world over their lifetimes.

Students complete a broad range of coursework in composition, mathematics, communication, natural science, arts and humanities, social science, inclusion and belonging, and scientific reasoning and literacy. General education courses are designed to focus on at least one of the following five learning outcomes:

1. **Communication.** Communications skills involve the ability to clearly express and understand ideas in written, oral and non-verbal forms. Communication includes the practical exchange of information, which can include the ability to listen, comprehend and respond to others, as well as the creative expression of ideas in the visual, written and performing arts. In oral and written communication, students will demonstrate the ability to shape a central thesis, organize an argument, and formally support that argument. Students will be able to understand and interpret creative expression based on knowledge of the forms and principles of various expressive media.
2. **Quantitative and Scientific Reasoning and Literacy.**
 - a. Quantitative reasoning involves the ability to work with numerical data and the higher-order thinking skills required to make and understand mathematical arguments. Students will be able to understand and develop arguments supported by quantitative evidence, clearly communicate those arguments using words, tables, graphs, statistical inference, or mathematical equations and functions, as appropriate, and apply mathematical methods to solve problems from a wide array of contexts and everyday situations.
 - b. Scientific reasoning and literacy involve the acquisition and application of skills and knowledge necessary to understand scientific methods and apply them to observable phenomena. Students will be able to understand, develop, and evaluate arguments supported by scientific evidence, clearly communicate those arguments in a variety of formats, and use scientific methods to solve problems from a wide array of contexts and disciplines.
3. **Information Literacy and Technology.** Information literacy and technology involves the ability to locate, select, use and evaluate information obtained from appropriate electronic and/or printed resources, including a critical analysis of the information and the credibility of the sources of information. It also involves the ability to use technology to research, organize, present and/or communicate information in meaningful ways. Additionally, information literacy and technology includes skills such as the ability to understand the development of technology and its impact on society, the ability to understand and use existing technologies and information to address

real-world issues, and the ability to recognize emerging technological trends and their possible impact on the future.

4. **Critical and Creative Thinking.** Critical thinking is the intellectually disciplined process of assessing and evaluating ideas and forms. It involves clarifying questions, reflecting upon meaning, comparing multiple viewpoints, and evaluating evidence to make an informed judgment. Creative thinking involves the production of original ideas, forms or works by making connections, generating alternatives, and elaborating or exploring new applications of accepted practices through innovation and/or invention. Critical and creative thinkers gather information from experience, observation, reasoning, reflection and communication. They explore and synthesize related ideas, connect them to prior knowledge, and apply them to new contexts.
5. **Global Citizenship, Ethics, and Diversity.** Global citizenship refers to the broad understanding of peoples and cultures in the United States and around the world, and to humankind's place and effects in the world. Global citizenship includes a respect for the commonalities and differences in peoples, including an understanding of values, beliefs and customs. It places an emphasis on the economic, religious, political, geographic, linguistic, historic, environmental, and social aspects that define cultures. It places an emphasis on ethics, equality and human rights, an appreciation for diversity, the interconnectedness of societies and cultures, and a commitment to finding solutions to problems that can affect the world.

Each general education course bases a substantial portion (typically at least 30%) of the final course grade on a specified student learning outcome. These courses are identified in the course catalog description with their relevant learning outcome.