As the Joint Boards Articulation Commission (JBAC) begins the important work of developing an outcomes-based framework for transferable General Education courses, this letter is being written on behalf of Chemeketa Community College’s Reading and Study Skills program faculty to urge the Board to further expand its January 16, 2006 draft description of ability to communicate effectively to include reading. Recently published study results from the American Institutes for Research indicate that more than half of four-year college students lack proficiency in prose and document literacy. Less than one-fourth of community college students were proficient. This research highlights the need for an increased emphasis on developing college students’ critical thinking and literacy skills. In addition, brain research has identified that young adults continue to develop cognitive abilities throughout their college experience making reading a developmental rather than remedial initiative. The ability to comprehend, analyze, synthesize and evaluate non-fictional text and graphic materials is a vital outcome for Oregon’s college graduates. This, we believe, requires explicit college-level instruction and the addition of critical reading as an essential component of the communication outcome.

We applaud the expansion of last year’s proposed communication outcome to now include listening and observing, as well as speaking and writing, and recommend that the Board incorporate reading as an additional critical component of the communication outcome.

Thank you for your consideration of this important issue.

Sincerely,

Louanne Whitton Claire Wheeler
Bobbi Bowman Susan Hopkins
Teresa Massey Brian Rollins
Robin Roach York Cheryl Davis
Priscilla Fischbacher