



**Joint Boards
Articulation Commission**
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MEMORANDUM

To: Public Post-Secondary Oregon Faculties

From: Joint-Boards Articulation Committee (JBAC)

Subject: **Campus Discussions on General Education and the AAOT**

Thank you for your willingness to participate in these campus discussions about developing State-wide criteria for General Education courses and statements that convey the broad outcomes we desire from this curriculum.

Contained in this packet, you will find draft statements of General Education outcomes and course criteria, which we would like you to review, discuss, and improve upon. There is also information related to possible revision of the AA/OT degree, and you are welcome to give us feed-back on this, as well. Some campuses may choose to address the two topics together. Others may choose to focus solely on General Education. Including information about both is intended to allow campuses to make that determination.

The drafting of outcomes and criteria statements, as well as the current campus discussion of them, is part of an unprecedented collaboration at the post-secondary level in Oregon. Community college and university faculty (both public and private) are working together to ensure maximum transferability of foundation course-work, while maintaining rigor and coherence in both General Education and major programs. Additionally, these faculties are working with our secondary education colleagues to re-invigorate the secondary curriculum and guarantee that increasing numbers of high school graduates are academically ready to succeed in our institutions.

In addition to soliciting your feedback on General Education and the AA/OT degree, we would appreciate your thoughts on the structure of the campus discussions and the usefulness of the packet of information provided. We will make changes in both as campuses let us know how best to frame these vital conversations.

The Packet:

- General Education Outcomes and Criteria
- Proposed Steps in Critical Consideration of Draft Statements of Gen Ed Outcomes & Course Criteria
- Background and Intent of the AAOT
- Language Comparison: AAOT and OTM
- Suggested Agenda
- SB342 excerpt





General Education Outcomes & Criteria

Draft Statements

The Joint Boards Articulation Commission (JBAC) is working to improve the transferability of lower division General Education throughout the state through a collaboratively-developed framework that is based on commonly agreed-upon learning outcomes and course criteria. Not only would this model improve the transferability of coursework among community colleges and universities, it could strengthen the statewide commitment to General Education without compromising the uniqueness of individual institutions' General Education curricula. Both faculty and students would benefit from such a framework. By adhering to general principles rather than a rigid template, faculty would have the freedom to design General Education courses that take advantage of their individual expertise and that reflect significant new insights. Students would benefit from faculty innovation in the classroom, while retaining assurance of the transferability of their coursework.

The focus of initial efforts has been the development of broad outcomes and criteria statements based on the 6 areas of general education included in Oregon's transferable degrees (AA/OT and AS/OT–Business) and Transfer Module (the OTM).

- The **outcomes statements** are intended to be broad, and to describe the habits of mind, skills, or insight that we want students to acquire as a result of taking courses in a particular area.
- The **criteria statements** are also broad and aim to identify the characteristics of courses within a general disciplinary area that we think have the best chance of producing the desired outcomes for students.

Faculty from Oregon community colleges, public universities and private colleges and universities came together in February and again in April 2006 to write drafts, and we are now inviting input from all faculty, as well as from anyone else who is interested in General Education.

Potential for the Future

Although the impetus for this initiative was a legislative directive ([Senate Bill 342](#), which became law in Spring, 2005), the practical effect of that prompt is greater faculty input into the General Education we offer to transfer students. We now have an opportunity for direct communication among faculty from different institutions that is new and powerful. We think it is the key to sustained educational quality at the college and university level.

Next Steps

- **IN PROCESS:** Solicitation of feedback: This is an important way for you to help guide this work in its current stage. The public forum available at http://www.ous.edu/news_and_information/forums.php provides a place for you to join your colleagues for a conversation. We would be grateful for your thoughts, concerns and suggestions for improvement of these drafts. We will continue to ask for this input into fall term and beyond.
- Fall 2006 – Winter 2007: Campus visits and conversations: We will be visiting individual campuses to collect feedback and revise the statements. Once the statements are refined we will ask campuses to put them through a normal curricular review process for approval.

For questions on this process, please contact:

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WRITING

Outcomes

As a result of taking General Education Writing courses, a student should be able to read actively, think critically, and write purposefully, capably, and ethically for a variety of audiences; use appropriate reasoning and artful communication to address complex issues in the service of learning, discovery, reflection, justice, and self expression.

Criteria

A course in Writing should:

- 1) Emphasize college-level readings that challenge students and invite them to think through complex ideas.
- 2) Create a classroom environment that fosters respectful free exchange of ideas.
- 3) Use guided discussion for students to consider and respond to the ideas of others.
- 4) Develop the ability to respond in writing to ideas generated by reading and discussion.
- 5) Require a significant and substantial amount of formal and informal writing.
- 6) Emphasize writing as a process which contributes to complete, polished texts.
- 7) Encourage the discovery and use of forms and conventions appropriate to audience needs and rhetorical situations.
- 8) Encourage self-reflection and analysis of own work.
- 9) Provide opportunities to offer and respond to comments and critiques on written drafts.
- 10) Develop skills of editing and revision to craft clear and effective writing.
- 11) Teach organization, reasoning, style, and conventions in relation to students' purposes and in response to their writing.
- 12) Engage appropriate technologies in the service of writing and learning.

Speech/Oral Communication

Outcomes

As a result of taking General Education Speech/Oral Communication courses, a student should be able to engage in ethical communication processes that allow people to accomplish goals, respond to the needs of diverse audiences and contexts, and build and manage personal and community relationships.

Criteria

A course in Oral Communication should provide:

- 1) Instruction in fundamental communication theories.
- 2) Instruction and practice of appropriate oral communication techniques.
- 3) Instruction and practice in the listening process -- including comprehending, interpreting, and critically evaluating communication.
- 4) Instruction and practice in adapting communication for the listener and communication contexts.
- 5) Instruction in the responsibilities of ethical communicators.
- 6) Instruction in the value and consequences of effective communication.

Mathematics

Outcomes

As a result of taking General Education Mathematics courses, a student should be able to use mathematics to solve problems. A student should also be able to recognize when mathematics is applicable to a scenario, apply appropriate mathematics in its solution, accurately interpret and communicate the results.

Criteria

A collegiate level mathematics course should require students to:

- 1) Use the tools of arithmetic and algebra to work with more complex mathematical concepts.
- 2) Design and follow a multi-step mathematical process through to a logical conclusion.
- 3) Create mathematical models, analyze these models, and, when appropriate, find and interpret solutions.
- 4) Choose from a variety of mathematical tools to determine the best method of analysis.
- 5) Analyze and communicate both problems and solutions in ways that are useful to others.
- 6) Use mathematical terminology and notation appropriately and correctly.

Arts & Letters

Outcomes

As a result of taking General Education Arts and Letters courses, a student should be able to:

- Interpret and engage in the Arts and Letters, making use of the creative process to enrich the quality of life.
- Critically analyze personal values and ethics within the stream of human experience and expression to engage more fully in local and global issues.

'Arts and Letters' refers to works of art, whether written, crafted or designed, and performed, and documents of particular poignancy and significance in statement or design.

CRITERIA

A course in Arts & Letters should:

- 1) Provide grounding in theory THAT informs application and practice of the discipline.
- 2) Elicit analytical and critical responses to historical and/or cultural artifacts, including literature, music, visual and performing arts.
- 3) Actively explore conventions and techniques of significant forms of human expression.
- 4) Place the discipline in historical and cultural context, and demonstrate its relationship with other areas.

Each course should also do at least one of the following:

- 5a) Foster creative individual expression with analysis, synthesis, and critical evaluation, or
- 5b) Compare/contrast attitudes and values of specific eras or world cultures, or
- 5c) Introduce and apply established ethical traditions as a tool for resolving ethical dilemmas.

Social Science

Outcomes

As a result of taking General Education Social Science courses, a student should be able to:

1. Apply analytical skills to historical and contemporary social phenomena so as to explain, evaluate, and predict human behavior
2. Apply knowledge and experience critically so as to realize an informed sense of self, family, community, and the diverse social world in which we live.

Criteria

A Social Sciences General course should:

- 1) Be broad in scope. Courses may focus on specialized subjects; however, there must be substantial course content locating the subject in the broader context of the discipline.
- 2) Provide an understanding of the structures and processes of social institutions and individual behavior as part of social interaction.
- 3) Provide perspectives on the evolution of theories and concepts utilized in the discipline.
- 4) Present basic methods of inquiry in the discipline, including limitations and understanding of the distinction between normative and empirical analysis.
- 5) Provide information literacy in the discipline (the ability to critically analyze, synthesize and evaluate various forms of information).
- 6) Provide understanding of the diversity of human experience and thought, individually and collectively.
- 7) Provide an opportunity for students to apply course knowledge and skills to their personal, social or professional lives.

Science, Computer Science, Math

Outcomes

As a result of taking General Education Science, Computer Science, Math courses, a student should be able to:

1. Use scientific modes of inquiry, individually and collaboratively, to critically evaluate diverse ideas, solve problems, and make evidence-based decisions for self, family, community and the world.
2. Gather, comprehend, and communicate scientific and technical information to generate new ideas, solutions, models and further questions confidently, creatively, and joyfully.

Criteria

A course in Science/Computer Science/Math should:

1. Require students to apply scientific/mathematical knowledge and skills, and reason from evidence to solve problems.
2. Demonstrate interrelationships or connections with other subject areas.
3. Examine the fundamental concepts and theories in physical and biological sciences, mathematics, and/or computer science.
4. Engage students in gathering, reading, comprehending, and communicating scientific and/or technical information.
5. Use scientific, mathematical, or computer science approaches to develop critical, analytical thinking that includes synthesis, evaluation and creative insight.
6. Develop understanding of mathematical reasoning and/or the process of science through collaborative, hands-on, real-life, and/or laboratory applications.
7. Science courses shall provide scientific tools to evaluate the interactions of science with society and environment.
8. Science courses shall examine the development, limitations, and value of scientific methods, models and theories.
9. Laboratory courses in the biological or physical sciences shall provide examples of how scientific theories develop through confrontation of theory with experiment or observation.
10. Courses in computer science shall engage students in the design of algorithms and their translation into computer programs that solve problems related to science or other areas of human endeavor.

(These criteria are designed to mesh with the current Associate of Arts/Oregon Transfer Degree, which requires a minimum of fifteen credits in Science/Math/Computer Science including three laboratory courses of at least twelve credits in the biological or physical sciences.)



Proposed Steps in the Critical Consideration of Draft statements of General Education Outcomes and Course Criteria

- 1. Informal comment on draft statements via the JBAC website**
(<http://www.ous.edu/aca/forums.html>): *May – August, 2006*
Draft statements for each area of the existing AA/OT are posted and links connect each area to a public forum.
- 2. Discussion of draft statements on all community college and OUS campuses:**
Fall 2006 – Winter 2007.
Campus leaders will collaborate with JBAC members to organize these discussions and encourage participation by faculty in the disciplines. If schools in the same geographic area wish to hold joint meetings, that's fine. The important thing is to encourage vigorous critique of the statements in a manner that is compatible with local campus culture.
- 3. Feed-back from campus discussions collected by JBAC: Fall 2006**
(December 15 deadline)
Feedback from all community college and OUS campuses will be collected by JBAC and analyzed to determine the extent of revision that may be required. A summary of current feed-back, and an opportunity for further discussion, will be presented at the Student Success Meeting, February, 2007.
- 4. Feedback returned to faculty committees for consideration:**
Winter or Spring 2007.
The faculty committees that drafted the original statements will review the collected feed-back from all institutions, decide what revision is needed, and recommend specific changes.
- 5. Statements will be returned to the campuses for approval:**
Spring 2007
After review by the faculty committees, statements will be returned to campuses for final consideration and approval through normal curricular review channels. If there is substantial disagreement at this point, JBAC will consult with the Council of Instructional Administrators and the Provosts' Council to negotiate an acceptable compromise.
- 6. Adoption of statements by the Joint Boards of Education and Higher Education:**
Fall 2007
After campus agreement and approval, the statements will be brought to the Joint Boards of Education and Higher Education for adoption statewide. We anticipate this stage occurring during Spring 2007, but it may occur later if extensive campus discussion and review is required in Step 5.



Background and Intent of the AA/OT

The AAOT was created in the late 1980s, through collaboration between Oregon community college faculty and OUS faculty, to ease and standardize the transfer process for students moving from community college to an OUS institution. Due to the popularity of the AAOT and the complexity of communication among all public post-secondary institutions, JBAC has, on occasion, clarified the original intent of the AAOT.

In brief, that intent was;

- Meet lower division general education requirements for baccalaureate degrees at all OUS institutions. Specific majors may specify particular courses which can be met while completing these requirements.
- Provide the recipient with junior standing for registration purposes.
- Guarantees that all credits will be accepted. The degree is a total package and cannot be “unwrapped.”
- The AAOT does not guarantee that all requirements for lower division will have been completed for a specific major. Students should work closely with an academic adviser in choosing courses which meet all pre-requisites for their major while they are completing the AAOT.

Concerns raised about the AAOT since its implementation include:

- Faculty and academic advisers recognize that the AAOT does not articulate well with many academic majors such as engineering, natural and physical sciences, and fine and performing arts.
- The AAOT does not guarantee entrance into, nor give students junior standing, in their major.
- Students earning an AAOT pursuing majors which are credit heavy at the lower division, will earn far more elective credit than is necessary for their bachelor’s degree. Even more importantly, they will likely transfer lacking specifically required courses in their chosen major.
- No two community colleges in Oregon have AAOT degrees that are exactly alike. Campus differences are most noticeable in sequential requirements.

While it has been a successful tool for many students, it’s time to clarify the purpose of students’ use of the AAOT in light of current discussions on student learning and general education revisions. JBAC believes policy makers should acknowledge that high AAOT completion rates may be in conflict with students’ educational goals and therefore should not be institutionally rewarded. JBAC would encourage alternative measures for evaluating community college effectiveness. It is expected that the CIA and the Provost’s Council will discuss a revision of the AAOT at their upcoming joint meeting. JBAC will channel all feedback from these campus discussions to those two groups.



Associate of Arts Oregon Transfer Degree Guidelines

Revised on January 18, 2002, by action of the Joint Boards.

Any student who holds an Oregon community college Associate of Arts Oregon Transfer degree that conforms to the guidelines set forth below and who transfers to any institution in the Oregon University System will have met the lower division general education requirements of that institution's baccalaureate degree programs. Course, class standing, or GPA requirements for specific majors, departments or schools are not necessarily satisfied by an Associate of Arts degree. Students transferring under this agreement will have junior standing for registration purposes.

Every Oregon community college, as well as the Oregon Institute of Technology, offers an Associate of Arts/Oregon Transfer degree that meets these broad guidelines.

GUIDELINES

A minimum of 90 credits will be required for the degree, and of these, at least 55 will conform to the general education and distribution requirements listed below. (All credit references are based on quarter credits.)

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

- ▶ *Writing*: A minimum of eight credits of college transfer writing courses, with a grade of "C" or better in each course. Designated courses are WR 121, 122, 123 or 227.
- ▶ *Mathematics*: Four credits of college level mathematics, for which at least Intermediate Algebra is a prerequisite, with a grade of "C" or better.
- ▶ *Communication/Rhetoric*: Three credits of a fundamentals of speech or communication course with a grade of "C" or better.

DISTRIBUTION REQUIREMENTS

- ▶ *Arts and Letters*: A minimum of ten credits, chosen from at least two disciplines.
- ▶ *Social Sciences*: A minimum of fifteen credits, chosen from at least two disciplines.
- ▶ *Science/Math/Computer Science*: A minimum of fifteen credits including three laboratory courses of at least twelve credits in the biological or physical sciences.

Oregon Transfer Module Guidelines

Adopted by Joint Boards of Education February 3, 2005

Any student holding an Oregon Transfer Module that conforms to the guidelines below will have met the requirements for the Transfer Module at any Oregon community college or institution in the Oregon University System. Upon transfer, the receiving institution may specify additional course work that is required for a major or for degree requirements or to make up the difference between the Transfer Module and the institution's total General Education requirements.

GUIDELINES

The Oregon Transfer Module includes the following course work, which is equivalent to 3 academic quarters. The coursework must be chosen from the courses approved for the categories below by the institution issuing the credit. In the case of community colleges, these will be courses approved for the AA/OT degree; in the case of universities and 4-year colleges, they will be courses approved for the General Education part of a baccalaureate degree. All courses must be passed with a grade of "C-" or better and must be worth at least 3 credits (quarter system). Students must have a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.0 at the time the module is posted.

FOUNDATIONAL SKILLS

- ▶ *Writing*: Two courses of college-level composition.
- ▶ *Oral Communication*: One course of fundamentals of speech or communication.
- ▶ *Mathematics*: One course of college-level mathematics, for which at least Intermediate Algebra is a prerequisite

INTRODUCTION TO DISCIPLINES

- ▶ *Arts and Letters*: Three courses.
- ▶ *Social Sciences*: Three courses.
- ▶ *Science/Math/Computer Science*: Three courses, including at least one biological or physical science with a lab.



Associate of Arts Oregon Transfer Degree Guidelines

ELECTIVES

Electives will comprise about thirty five credits, depending on the student's selection of courses to meet the requirements above.

Effective Fall term, 1998, WR 115 may be included in the Associate of Arts Oregon Transfer degree as an elective providing that the WR 115 course at the community college has been approved by the Department of Community Colleges and Workforce Development. (For a list of approved WR115 courses, click here.)

Effective Fall term, 1998, community colleges may grant Associate of Arts Oregon Transfer degrees that include up to 12 professional technical credits as electives.

Community colleges shall identify and publicize those professional technical credits available on its campus which are appropriate for inclusion in the Associate of Arts Oregon Transfer degree.

NOTES AND CLARIFICATIONS

[The following notes are not intended to be part of the actual "Guidelines" (above), but rather serve to clarify some aspects thereof. As such, they are attached to these "Guidelines" as reference material for participating institutions.]

Courses that are developmental in nature, designed to prepare students for college transfer courses, are not applicable to this degree.

The "General Requirements" above represent minimal skill competencies. As such, they may be open to demonstration of proficiency. Each community college is encouraged to establish how students may demonstrate competency in lieu of completing the course(s).

Courses used to meet the "Distribution Requirements" must be at least 3 credits each.

Computer courses used in the Math/Science/Computer Science area must meet the inter-segmental

Computer Science chairs group criteria for a science course. This includes CS 120, 121, 122, 161, 162, 171, 260, and 271 from the list of commonly numbered courses.

In Arts and Letters, the second year of a foreign language may be included, but not the first year. ASL is considered a foreign language.

Oregon Transfer Module Guidelines

ELECTIVES

► As required to bring the total credits to 45. Courses must be from the Introduction to Disciplines areas (Arts & Letters, Social Science, or Science/Math/Computer Science).

NOTES

1. Courses that are designed to prepare students for college-level work are not applicable to the transfer module.
2. When choosing courses in science and mathematics, students and advisors should check the specific requirements at receiving schools. Courses that include a laboratory component, or that deal with specific subjects, may be required for majors or degrees.
3. Computer Science courses used in the Math/Science/Computer Science area must meet Oregon Council of Computer Chairs criteria for a science course. See list of courses at (<http://cs.bmcc.cc.or.us/occc/>).
4. In Arts and Letters, the second year of a foreign language may be included, but not the first year. American Sign Language (ASL) is considered a foreign language.
5. All Oregon community colleges and Oregon University System institutions will offer students the opportunity to complete an Oregon Transfer Module and the OTM designation will be posted on the transcript by the issuing institution upon request. Regionally accredited private colleges and universities within the state are also welcome to offer and issue Transfer Modules, which will be accepted at any Oregon public college or university.
6. Oregon Transfer Module credits may not match program requirements in the receiving school. The OTM supplements, but does not supplant existing articulation agreements and does not replace effective advising.

**Oregon Community Colleges' Campus Discussions
on Development of a statewide General Education Outcomes Framework
and review of the AAOT Degree**

Suggested Agenda:

1. Context and background information

- a. History and context of the AAOT degree
- b. A common understanding of the purpose of General Education
- c. Drivers of review/change including: 1) it's time to review our students' use of degree and ease of transfer; 2) it's time to review this degree of the 80's in light of educators' current view of student learning through an outcomes lens; 3) it's time to respond to legislative request for closer alignment of post-secondary education
- d. Overview of the General Education Outcomes Initiative process: including the process thus far and the planned next steps and how that fits into the overall AAOT Revision Process

2. Review of current draft Outcomes and Criteria

- a. Writing
- b. Speech/Oral Communication
- c. Mathematics
- d. Arts & Letters
- e. Social Science
- f. Science/Computer Science/Math
- g. Others advanced

3. Group Discussion and Response to the Guiding Questions

(Please chart the responses to the guiding questions.)

Guiding Questions

1. *Does this outcome statement, in general, describe what students know and do as a result of successfully completing your distribution/skill requirement for the AAOT?*
2. *Are these outcome statements compatible with general education outcomes/expectations of students who successfully complete your two-year degrees?*
3. *When you look at these outcome statements together, what, if anything, is missing? What else should a successful graduate know and be able to do related to general education?*
4. *Do these criteria for course selection meet the intent of the outcomes?*
5. *How would you suggest making the AAOT a more successful transfer tool?*

4. Post Campus-Meeting

- a. Word-process chart responses and distribute college-wide with a window for additional comments to be submitted
- b. Send campus responses to JBAC for compilation and inclusion in the next step of the process

Senate Bill 342 (Enrolled)

SECTION 1.2 (excerpt)

In continuing to provide and improve upon an effective articulation and transfer framework for students in Oregon's post-secondary sectors, community colleges and state institutions of higher education shall:

- (a) Revise the Associate of Arts Oregon Transfer Degree offered by community colleges;
- (b) Develop specific degree pathways as deemed appropriate by state institutions of higher education and community colleges;
- (c) Develop an outcome-based framework for articulation and transfer that is derived from a common understanding of the criteria for general education curricula;
- (d) Develop a seamless transfer of credits for all level 100 and 200 general education courses;
- (e) Implement a statewide course applicability system that permits students and advisers to query and view online credit transfer options and conduct online degree auditing;
- (f) Develop uniform standards for awarding college credit for advanced placement test scores; and
- (g) Expand early college programs for 11th and 12th graders who earn college credit and intend to pursue a certificate or associate or baccalaureate degree.

(3) In addition to the requirements of subsection (2) of this section, community colleges and state institutions of higher education may also implement other measures to create an effective articulation and transfer framework for students.